

From the Desk of Rabbi Rebecca P. Shinder

Florida, New York

Friends, I believe that preaching a sermon is much like playing a piece of jazz. When improvising, the jazz musician must play in an established key, in an agreed-upon time signature, most honor the original composition while finding a unique "voice" to offer an interpretation of the piece. The same can be said about presenting a sermon to a full congregation. There is a structure, there is a text, but true preaching, involves a give and take with a community and should never be confined to the words written on the page. With that caveat in mind, I share with you two of my three Rosh Hashana sermons.

Erev RH '22/5783 - Part I: Shehechiyanu Anyway, Service opening:

I recently heard about one of the first live storytelling events that took place once "the world began to open up last year," through The Moth. Everyone was masked and vaxxed, and there was a palpable excitement that had been missing from the previous events that had taken place online. At the beginning of the night, the host said to the in -person crowd, "I want you to turn to your neighbor, whether you know them or not, take a deep breath, (or what we call a neshema amuka) and say to each other, 'We made it.'And they did. It was a hopeful-all-too-brief moment when we were grateful and hopeful that everything would be back to normal soon. That brings us to services tonight. I want you to turn to your neighbor, whether you know them or not especially if not, take a deep breath, (or what we call a *neshema amuka*) and say to each other, 'We made it.'

The Jewish tradition is rich with prayers that essentially mean, "We made it." After surviving an illness, an accident, or a dangerous journey, we are to recite *Birkat* HaGomel, a blessing giving thanks for healing and safety. In addition, any time we gather for a special occasion such as a baby naming, bat mitzvah or wedding, we recite Shehecheyanu, giving thanks to God for giving us life, sustaining us, and enabling us to reach this moment.

We are here, and there are so many reasons to offer blessings of thanksgiving and acknowledgment. Yet these blessings must have an asterisk, because, as I have experienced in these past 2 weeks up close and way too personal with my parents' difficulties with Covid, we aren't entirely through this yet. I can offer a partial birkat hagomeil blessing to God on their behalf because their lives are no longer in danger, and I do offer my profound thanks to the scientists and government officials who made their vaccinations and boosters possible, but they are not out of the woods yet and my father, the rabbi of Congregation of Agudas Achim, will be leading services over zoom with my mother out of the room so that her cough will not disrupt the worship.

They have come so far. My brother has been taking care of them every day with me shopping and cooking from a distance. Even though they both have rattling coughs, scratchy throats, and feel very weak, I am mindful of a song sung, not by Debbie Friedman or Jeff Klepper, but by soul, gospel, and even disco singer-songwriter: Candi Staton, which might capture all of our mixed feelings as we celebrate this new year. Staton sang:

"Praise God till your blessings come down Praise God till your situation turns around You gotta to lift up your voice and say: Hallelujah anyway."

continued on next page

So we aren't quite ready to say "we made it, - fully" and thus we aren't quite ready for a pure *birkat ha-gomel* for the end of the entire pandemic. There are new variants and the CDC recommends that we get the latest booster as soon as possible. Remember the teaching - we must pray as if everything depends upon God and act as if everything depends on us. In spite of these medical miracles, and although we may feel that we are done with this pandemic, clearly, the pandemic is not done with us. BUT, after Wendy and Loretta read our opening meditation, light the candles, and bless God who commands us to kindle the lights of Yom Tov, AND after Scott leads us in chanting that blessing...we're gonna lift our voice with him and say: Shehecheyanu Anyway.

Part II: Soul Repair

Known to many as the Zen Rabbi, the late, Rabbi Alan Lew wrote a kind of spiritual guide to High Holidays entitled: This Is Real and You Are Completely Unprepared: The Days of Awe as a Journey of Transformation. Among his teachings is the following:

Every soul needs to express itself. Every heart needs to crack itself open. Every one of us needs to move from anger to healing, from denial to consciousness, from boredom to renewal. These needs did not arise vesterday. They are among the most ancient of human yearnings, and they are fully expressed in the great journey we make between Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. Our people have been on this journey for millennia. We have adapted and adopted ways to connect with ourselves, with our community, and with our God. Just as our worship transformed from the first offerings of sacrifices to God via *kohanim* in the Jerusalem Temple to the gathering for communal prayer led by a service leader, to worship that was codified as a result of the invention of the printing press – and the generation after generation of prayer books that followed to the ways in which we gathered in community via our zoom stained glass windows during our Covid quarantines. We have sought ways for connection, devotion, self-awareness, self-improvement and commitment to the pursuit of justice in our world. The trappings and organization of our worship have changed over time, but the journey is the same. As we move through the Days of Awe, both as a community and as individuals, I'd like for you to consider these questions that my colleague Rabbi Naomi Levy has offered:

-What has my soul been trying to say to me that I've been ignoring?

-What activities and experiences nourish my soul that I don't do enough of? -What does my soul want to repair that my ego is too stubborn or too fearful to repair?

With those questions in mind, we turn to our prayer book to learn a teaching from 19th c. Rabbi Israel Salanter, founder of the Musar movement: a way of life devoted to character improvement, ethical refinement, and spiritual growth.

Rabbi Israel Salanter once spent the night at a shoemaker's home. Late at night, he saw the man working by the light of a flickering candle. "Look how late it is," the rabbi said. "Your candle is about to go out. Why are you still working?" The shoemaker replied, "As long as the candle is burning, it is still possible to mend." For weeks afterward Rabbi Salanter was heard repeating the shoemaker's words to himself: "As long as the candle is burning, it is still possible to mend."

As long as the candle burns - as long as the spark of life still shines- we can mend and heal, seek forgiveness and reconciliation, begin again.



SAVE THE DATE... SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 13TH, 4 TO 8PM TBS 75TH ANNIVSERARY GALA AT THE WALLKILL GOLF CLUB DETAILS COMING SOON VIA EMAIL AND USPS



Small Kindnesses, Rosh Hashana I

In a recent Wall Street Journal opinion piece, the author cited a line from Steven Spielberg's film, "Lincoln." In the movie, the 16th president reflects on a lesson he learned while working as a surveyor. "A compass," Lincoln says, will "point you true north from where you're standing, but it's got no advice about the (swamps and deserts and chasms) that you'll encounter along the way. If, in pursuit of your destination, you plunge ahead, heedless of obstacles and achieve nothing more than to sink in a swamp, what's the use of knowing true north?" I've been thinking a lot of true north lately.

No, not Miriam Webster's definition of the direction that leads to the North Pole. I mean the goal that can only be found by employing our inner compass.

That *neshame* (the inner soul) that guides us to overcome the obstacles, the swamps, and even the pandemics we encounter with humanity and with the value the rabbis call *chesed* or kindness. Some of you have heard me preach about the following teaching.. I discovered it not in some Talmudic tomb, but on someone's t-shirt I saw at a college football game:



This will be our guiding principle for these Days of Awe. Human/Kind: Be Both. When we see humanity IN each other and not just categorize someone as THE other, we all can do divine work here on earth. Moreover, the value of *chesed*, or kindness, specifically the *chesed* of God is also a theme woven throughout our High Holiday liturgy. We'll return to that in a moment, but back to the task of kindness here

on earth. As I was searching for relevant Jewish texts for bolstering this point, Sharon Halper reminded me of a poem I once saw in the NY Times Magazine poetry section. Perhaps you've seen it too.

Here is a modern teaching: Danusha Lameris' work: Small Kindness.

I've been thinking about the way, when you walk down a crowded aisle, people pull in their legs to let you by. Or how strangers still say "bless you" when someone sneezes, a leftover from the Bubonic plague. "Don't die," we are saying. And sometimes, when you spill lemons from your grocery bag, someone else will help you pick them up. Mostly, we don't want to harm each other. We want to be handed our cup of coffee hot, and to say thank you to the person handing it. To smile at them and for them to smile back. For the waitress to call us honey when she sets down the bowl of clam chowder, and for the driver in the red pick-up truck to let us pass. We have so little of each other, now. So far from tribe and fire. Only these brief moments of exchange. What if they are the true dwelling of the holy, these fleeting temples we make together when we say, "Here,/have my seat," "Go ahead you first," "I like your hat."

These brief moments of exchange," or what the poet calls "fleeting temples" speak to the final lines of *Une Tane Tokef*. Inspired by images from the book of Ezekiel, the prayer tells us that God does not wish for the death of sinners, but above all is compassionate and full of *chesed* or kindness. The prayer's crescendo of *Uteshuva*, *v'tefilla u'tzedakah*, affirms that through return to the right path, through prayer, and through extending our hands to others in righteousness and kindness, we imbue our lives with meaning and goodness. The prayer teaches that extending benefit to others also benefits us. When we offer kindnesses, both large and small, God's presence is made manifest in the world. Rabbi Joseph Meszler has written an alternative to this poem, hear what small kindnesses have the potential to do:

On Rosh HaShanah it is written, on Yom Kippur it is sealed: That this year people will live and die, some more gently than others and nothing lives forever.

But amidst overwhelming forces of nature and humankind, we still write our own Book of Life, and our actions are the words in it, and the stages of our lives are the chapters, and nothing goes unrecorded, ever. Every deed counts.

Everything you do matters.

And we never know what act or word will leave an impression or tip the scale.

So if not now, then when?

For the things we can change, there is t'shuvah, realignment,

For the things we cannot change, there is t'filah, prayer,

For the help we can give, there is tzedakah, justice.

Together, let us write a beautiful Book of Life for the Holy One to read. With this age-old central poem in mind, we can return to our modern one. In early April, the Times invited teenagers to read the poem and asked, "What small kindnesses do you appreciate?" 1,300 teens sent in submissions. Here is a sampling of the compilation, curated by the poet herself and here is the art that accompanied it:



-Kindness is neighbors saying "Buenos Dias" -The crinkle in someone's eyes, behind their mask, as they wave back -In elevators, it's how one passenger seamlessly assumes the role of the old-time operator, pushing all our floors

-And sometimes, especially during the

pandemic, the way you say a short prayer for whoever is in the blaring red and white ambulance when you walk by

These teens seem to intuit what Rabbi Meszler's interpretation of the *Une Tane Tokef* prayer taught: Every deed counts and everything you do matters. With this in mind, what is your version of a small kindness? What line would you add to a TBS composition of such a poem in this new year? Would it be about the congregant who drove your child to Hebrew School/ or about the teacher who taught him once he got there? Would it be about the card you received when you were ill? Or about the leader of the shiva service when your husband passed away? Would it be about the first person who said hello to you at school, at services, or in a Zoom Torah class?

At the conclusion of today's service, you are all welcome to join in a kiddush luncheon prepared with love by TBS volunteers who provide sustenance and community to us throughout the year (and we thank them for this more-than-small kindness). While you are in the social hall, in between your (noshing and schmoozing), please make your way to the table with a poster frame, post-its and markers. I invite you, both congregants and guests of all ages to record your own interpretation or interpretations of " a small kindness." You can choose whether or not to sign your name. If you are unable to write one today, and/or you would like to give it some further thought, the frame will remain downstairs until our BreakFast. At its conclusion, we'll hang it in the social hall. These kindnesses can remind us all of where our true north may be found.

~ CARING COMMUNITY ~

Our Sincerest Condolences

To Rabbi Rebecca Shinder for the loss of her dear friend, Barbara Bar Nissim Batyamina bat Zlote Kayla v'Yosef

May her memory be for a blessing.

We warmly welcome our newest members

Janet Moss and Barry Kass of Bloomingburg, NY

We thank the following donors for their generosity:

Lisa and Mario Perez, who will honor the memory of Lisa's beloved brother Ira Gottlieb by installing a memorial plaque in our sanctuary.

Flo and Andy Hannes for making repairs to our handicap ramp so it is safe and secure.

Todah Rabah to

Shari Rake for spearheading the Daffodil Project for our synagogue.

Beth Kalet and David Schiff for hosting a delightful Selichot evening at their home.

Our newest Oneg ambassador, Kim Sumner Mayer for reaching out to our congregation to sponsor Shabbat onegs.

The Joseph N. Garlick Funeral Home for printing 5783 Calendars for our congregation.

We thank the following donors for their High Holiday contributions:

Shannon and Pollock
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Shabbat for Kaddish: Hyman Ball Viola Mae Friedman Marcella Feinman Ben Auerbach Abraham Kintish Max Weinberger Silvia Nemo Leon Polin Yetta Katz Sidnee Morell Minnie Spitzer Alexander Dinstag Leroy Ronald Levin Steve Ostrove. Alice Wolff	<i>October 7, 2022</i> 7 Tishri 7 Tishri 8 Tishri 9 Tishri 9 Tishri 10 Tishri 11 Tishri 11 Tishri 12 Tishri 1-Oct 1-Oct 1-Oct 2-Oct 3-Oct	Shabbat for Kaddish: O David Seltzer Patricia B. Cohen Esther Schwartz Regina Wayman Zino Davidoff Rose Heller Morris Werner Amy Sheryl Auerbach Salima Mukamal Carole Pearson Ethel Miller Shabbat for Kaddish: O Rabbi Regina Jonas Abraham Elkin Bichard Parker	20 Tishri 20 Tishri 17 Tishri 21 Tishri 21 Tishri 23 Tishri 25 Tishri 25 Tishri 16-Oct 18-Oct 21-Oct <i>ctober 28, 2022</i> 27 Tishri 27 Tishri
Seymour Schoenholz Edith Brodsky Minnie Kanofsky	3-Oct 5-Oct 5-Oct	Richard Parker Keith Mann Isador Sachat Philip Essner	27 Tishri 28 Tishri 28 Tishri 28 Tishri
Shabbat for Kaddish: Al Posner Robert H. Hannes Sarah Brenner Lind Bella Braun Rae Chiron Benjamin Savitt Herbert Frankel Corrine Brown Mae Mizrachi Gary Bergenfield Irving Korn Wanda Conklin	13 Tishri 15 Tishri 17 Tishri 19 Tishri 19 Tishri 9-Oct 11-Oct 12-Oct 13-Oct 14-Oct 14-Oct	Barry Singer Buddy Orbach Mollie Masour Mina Muhlrad Morris Cohen William M. Cohen Harriet Tischler Jean Melzak Seymour Siegel Nathan Markowitz Arlene S. Shindler Mark German Esther Martha Goldsmith Sylvia DeLorenzo	29 Tishri 1 Cheshvan 1 Cheshvan 2 Cheshvan 3 Cheshvan 3 Cheshvan 23-Oct 23-Oct 24-Oct 24-Oct 24-Oct 24-Oct 27-Oct 27-Oct 28-Oct
A candle may be lit at home the evening before the		Shabbat for Kaddish: N Murray Kittay	6 Cheshvan

evening before the yahrtzheit date. These names will be read during the erev Shabbat service before



kaddish is recited. If you have a loved one you wish to add to our yahrtzheit list, or if you have not been getting yahrtzheit reminders from us, please email tbs-ny@optimum.net.

May the Source of peace send peace to all who mourn, and comfort to all who are bereaved.

7 Cheshvan

8 Cheshvan

8 Cheshvan

9 Cheshvan

9 Cheshvan

30-Oct

1 Nov

1-Nov

2-Nov

10 Cheshvan

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FOR ALL AGES

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THE MONTH

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SUNDAYS

FIRST FRIDAY OF THE

MONTH

5:30PM

PIZZA PARTY

7рм

SCHOOL SHABBAT

SERVICE B'DAY/ANNY BLESSINGS



Thursdays - weekly TBS Zoom School

10/7 - 7PM Shabbat Services with Birthday Blessings

10/8 - 8:15AM TBS Mitzvah Day @ Goshen Ecumenical Food Pantry & Sukkah Bagel Brunch**

10/14 - 5:30PM First Shabbat Dinner and Sukkot under the Stars

10/16 - Simchat Torah Yachad Celebration



November Educational Events

Thursdays - weekly TBS Zoom School

11/4 - 5:30PM Shabbat Pizza Party/ Services with Birthday Blessings 11/5 - 10AM Shabbat Learning Service/Pre-B'nei Mitzvah Meeting

11/6 - 10AM Mitzvah Sunday

11/20 - 10AM Yachad

December Educational Events

Thursdays - weekly TBS Zoom School

12/2 - 5:30PM Shabbat Pizza Party/ Services with Birthday Blessings

12/3 - 10AM Shabbat Learning Service

12/4 - 10AM Mitzvah Day

12/18 - 10AM Yachad Hannukah Party

TBS Community Service Club Opportunities

Saturday, 10/8 8:15-10am: Goshen Ecumenical Food Pantry and TBS Sukkot Brunch - Participants will earn 3 hours of community service. RSVP to tbs-ny@optimum.net

SISTERHOOD PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



L'Shana tova, Happy and Healthy New Year to everyone. Sisterhood wants to thank everyone who contributed to our Rosh Hashanah greeting card that was sent out to the congregation. Your generous donations throughout the year help us support many events at our temple.

Sisterhood is very excited to bring back our Open House. This is a fun evening where we gather together and catch up with one another. Please join us for a light dinner and

dessert on Wednesday October 12th, 6PM at the home of Robin Bordman, 5 Melissa Court, Warwick. Please bring any ideas to share.

We would like to bring back our Penny Social in honor of beloved Roberta Frischman. We are asking anyone who is interested in helping organize this event please reach out to Robin Bordman 845-699 6460. We are looking to hold the event in the spring.

Mah Jongg Night Calling all Mah Jongg Mavens or anyone who wants to learn how to play we will meet on Saturday, November 12th at 6PM at temple. Anyone who plays and is willing to teach that would be amazing. There are always yummy snacks when sisterhood gathers together.

We are looking ahead to Hanukkah and planning our Hanukkah Holiday dinner on Wednesday, December 14th at 110 Grill in Middletown. There will be raffle baskets as well.

We are looking forward to seeing many of you at all our sisterhood events this year.

Hope to see you soon, Robin, theboardmans@aol.com

SISTERHOOD UPCOMING EVENTS AT A GLANCE

Open House - Wed., 10/12, 6PM Mah Jongg - Sat., 11/12, 6PM Holiday Dinner - Wed., 12/14 6PM





September 11, 2022 Planting 250 bulbs, continued on Pg. 12

All Photos by Gail Conklin















Opening Day BBQ











Selicot 9/17/22 at the home of Beth Kalet and David Schiff























Jewish Cultural Festival Sunday, September 18th















Roah HaShana Morning 1 and Family Service 9/26/22



















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Published Monthly

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Rabbi Rebecca P. Shinder

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