

THE CHRONICLE

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

SOLSTICE IN THE CITY | Rabbi Ben Spratt



Some would hesitate to call July in New York City “Edenic.” My first summer in New York, I called this city a paradise. The remarkable odors and sweaty subway rides were eclipsed by a vibrant urban landscape that beat in time with the sun. I loved it. You can imagine my surprise when I soon learned that “real” New Yorkers fled the city in the summer months. Perhaps the

heat-radiating concrete or wafting stenches send some into exile, but there’s no question that, when the temperature rises, the city begins to empty. Nine summers later, I have come to think of this regular departure as an annual reenactment of “Paradise Lost.” As recorded in the Book of Jubilees, Adam and Eve’s exile started in the middle of summer.

“...these summer months are a time for kindling light and hope for a new year.”

The early rabbis imagined that upon Adam’s expulsion from the Garden of Eden, the sun set for the first time. Surrounded by a darkness that he never before experienced, Adam trembles with fear. And in these first moments of exile, God gives Adam two flint rocks and teaches him to kindle his own flame. What Prometheus had to steal, Adam received as a gift. The beginning of exilic darkness also sparks humanity’s ability to create light.

There would be other summer exiles in our Jewish past – the darkest of all is remembered on the annual holiday of Tisha B’Av. Tisha B’Av, or the ninth day of the month of Av, commemorates a conflation of nearly every tragedy in Jewish consciousness. Most significantly, Tisha B’Av, and the three weeks leading up to it, recounts the destruction of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem and the beginning of nearly two millennia of Jewish exile. Traditionally a day of fasting and mourning, it recounts the treacherous journey of our ancestors through the seasons of history.

Like the Edenic exile, the early rabbis believed Tisha B’Av to be far more than a day of darkness. They write, “The Messiah will come only on the ninth of Av, which is set apart as our time for mourning, but which the Holy One will turn into a festive day, as it is said, ‘They shall never languish again’ (Jeremiah 31:12).” That is, the very day that marks the beginning of exile and suffering will also usher in a Utopian age. The beginning of exilic darkness also sparks Judaism’s hope for a Messianic future.

In the rabbinic imagination, these summer months are a time for kindling light and hope for a new year. The rabbis recounted the summer exiles of those before them, believing these departures to hold the seeds for the future. These seeds could be planted through reflection and repentance (*teshuvah*). For in this time of the summer solstice, “no creature has a shadow, for it is written, ‘Nothing is hidden from the heat of the sun’ (Psalm 19:7).” In the light of the longest days of the year, with the world in full splendor, we cannot hide in the shadows. Rather, summertime draws us out of our hiding places and into a clearer vision of ourselves.

Some of us will journey beyond the five boroughs, some will enjoy the warm city nights, but each of us will face both challenges and promises this summer: to take up Adam’s rocks and learn to create light ourselves; to realign ourselves to a shared vision for the future; to embrace our covenantal role with God and face a world desperately in need of recreation. For in the weeks ahead we draw ever nearer to Rosh Hashanah, the day our sages teach that God both created the world and annually recreates it. It is the day when the seeds of summer, the steps of *teshuvah*, may finally take root. Here at Rodeph Sholom, whether through our Summer Food Drive, Adult Education courses, or the ongoing opportunities to pray and reflect together, we have the chance to let the summer heat inspire a journey of spirit and action. And for those of us blessed with a summer in the city, Rodeph Sholom also gifts us with a place to cool off and bask in a different warmth – the warmth of communal belonging.

“...Rosh Hashanah...is the day when the seeds of summer, the steps of teshuvah, may finally take root.”

As Rabbi Arthur Waskow writes, “What is born on this day? When the rabbis say Messiah is born on Tisha B’Av, one way to hear them is that hope is reborn. For they speak of Messiah’s birth, not of fullness, not of the shattered world made whole again, but only of a birth, a beginning, a hope.”

May we each embrace such a hope this summer, and realize it together as we stand as one community on Rosh Hashanah. Micah, Ayalah, and I wish you days without shadow and a season of hope.

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FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT | Roger Meltzer



This is truly it, and, to be honest, I am going to resist spending any substantial time talking about the nuts and bolts of how the Congregation fared in the last year. You will hear, and can read, the reports. Suffice it to say, we seemed to have come through the economic dislocation of the last several years well.

Our investment portfolio is back to where it was, School (both Day and Religious) enrollment, curriculum, and operational excellence has never been stronger, with the School continuing to generate a surplus. In the Rodeph Sholom tradition, a new School building was bought and renovated in a trying time, community and social action thrives, programming and the Yom Kippur Appeal are robust, systems, financial and otherwise, are infinitely more reliable, user-friendly and professional due, in large measure, to stable and committed senior and junior staff. We just celebrated Robert and Gina's twentieth anniversary and Rebecca's tenth at the Congregation (in that respect, at least she and Mike decided they would reciprocate our presents to them with one of their own to us), the Cemetery has its challenges, but we are on our way to finding a better resolution. With all of that, I should probably sit down and be quiet and, for the most part, I will.

When I spoke to the trustees at the last meeting, I was reminded of Lew Steinman, who was the outgoing president when I first became a trustee. He cried and said, *"Well, I have left the place in a better shape than when I arrived."* I hope people will say that of me. Like Lew, I also cried, but have promised myself, and Robin, that I wouldn't do that tonight. I may be close but hopefully I will keep it together.

"I...am enormously grateful for the many extraordinary watershed opportunities that Rodeph Sholom has provided me..."

There are too many to thank – clergy, officers, and senior staff. I was blessed to have you all be so engaged and even more blessed that you took me at my word and delivered. Thank you all so very much but particularly, Robin, for being willing to recognize the opportunity and share me with you, as well as the real out-going president of Rodeph Sholom, Tiffany Kearney, who is much beloved by many of you, and, of course, my children, Justin, Martin, and Lizzie, who are the legacy.

So, for a few minutes, here are the punch lines of what I hope you all will remember.

- From Tom Friedman: *"Seek to create sustainable and not situational values."*
- From Jean-Paul Sartre: *"Seek to step outside your comfort zone and don't be afraid."*
- Finally, the third, the seminal question from Hamlet: *"To act, or not to act."* (Parenthetically, before I press forward, for the amateurs and professional psychoanalysts among you, draw your own conclusions as to where I may or may not fall on the Hamlet meter.)

Seriously, the dilemma – to act or not – raises a human question faced by all of us. Who has not wavered in the face of life-changing events?

During the play, Hamlet digs deeply to discover whether he has the necessary decisiveness to take action. At the end of his famous soliloquy, *"To be, or not to be,"* Hamlet seems to have convinced himself that too much thinking creates paralysis and is the enemy of bold deeds:

"Thus conscience does make cowards of us all; And thus the native hue of resolution is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought. And enterprises of great pitch and moment. With this regard their currents turn awry, And lose the name of action."

But, though we celebrate boldness in our congregational evolution, we certainly never want to reward or be characterized as reckless. Decision-making needs to be prudent, but not obsessive and paralyzed, leading towards calcification. In short, give the new leadership the wings to fly, but with landing gear and a very sound GPS system. No one in that leadership should ever believe that this Congregation will fly to the next level if you turn off that sound GPS system we have provided you and believe you live in a serendipitous world.

Running this Congregation has been, and will continue to be, a covert (and sometimes overt) high wire act, to be sure, but the courage it takes, too, can be overrated. Doing the right thing at the wrong time may be bold, but it can also be devastatingly ill-considered.

Still, despite all those alternately foreboding and many considered caveats, analysts have written that "history shows that structural shifts in the pecking orders of movements occur more often in difficult times – and these shifts endure for a long time."

"Turbulence creates extraordinary threats and opportunities," they write. "For those that are willing to act, turbulence creates a passing zone." But this is no time for reckless overtaking. "The better approach is 'slow in, fast out,' like a good driver heading into a sharp curve." "Winners in turbulence brake quickly heading into a downturn by managing costs carefully and consistently. As the downturn intensifies, they focus on what the institution does best – reinforcing its core and spending judiciously to gain share." As the environment improves, the structure of the Congregation and its platform will accelerate.

I no longer believe, with all the appropriate caveats, that a "steady as she goes" strategy is a viable and sustainable long-term option. We proved that with the purchase and renovation of the new School building. We proved it again by embarking on our Congregation-Based Community Organizing (CBCO) initiative.

The conventional wisdom is that risk and reward go together – that, to get a great upside result, you need to accept big downside risks. But risk and reward are not inextricably linked. The leaders in every area of life, business, education, community, and religion are not simply risk takers, but rather, more importantly, risk shapers. Thus, as Tom Friedman wrote this weekend, the tooth fairy is dead, and we in this current generation of leaders have given you the tools to regenerate the movement and the community. My advice, Karen: make it happen. It's a small window. Execute through with the leadership team you have assembled.

FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT continued on page 7

HOW ROBERT LEVINE BECAME OUR RABBI: THE INSIDE STORY | Jack Levitt

Most of you didn't know Rabbi Gunter Hirschberg, who died in 1989 after serving first as our Cantor, then (in an unusual transition) as our Senior Rabbi for 17 years. Gunter was a large handsome man (in the continuing tradition here), Berlin-born, UK- and Australia-trained, with a basso profundo voice. He was a terrific preacher and teacher, and much more. The congregation was devoted to him and devastated by his death.

In that context, CRS president Lew Steinman asked me to chair the search for a new rabbi and appointed a first-rate committee of nine to do the job. I will summarize what transpired, but with so complicated an effort dealing with religious, personal, psychological, and even political components, I can only scratch the surface.

We wanted to resist, as far as possible, making a choice based on the candidate's charm and ability to ingratiate, though we knew that personal chemistry would, in the end, play an important role. Rather than immediately review the resumes which were submitted (a staggering 33!) and arrange for interviews, we first held six meetings to sort out our widely divergent individual views and feelings in order to come to a common understanding of what CRS is all about and what its members – with emphasis on the younger generation – would need and want in its rabbinic leader. The process worked and we started our search with an agreed statement of our goals, prioritizing a rabbi's attributes from most to least important.

Armed with our list of priorities, we examined the resumes and narrowed them to ten. They were all very impressive and included Reform luminaries who were willing to leave important pulpits to join Rodeph Sholom. We met with the ten candidates at length, exchanged views, often passionately, and narrowed the candidates to two highly qualified and good people. Neither of them was Robert. At this point we knew we were following the right path, but we could not, at least not yet, coalesce with heads and hearts on a choice.

Then we received Robert's resume. He applied at the urging of colleagues, after learning the position was still open. He was then serving as rabbi at United Jewish Center in Danbury, CT – an unusual synagogue which held Reform and Orthodox Shabbat Services – with Robert officiating at both. At age 38, Rabbi Levine was the youngest of our candidates, which concerned some of our group and encouraged others. His interviews went very well, with some committee members urging his selection, and all deeply impressed. We decided to add Robert to the group of two finalists, and held a series of discussions and final interviews with each of the three. Using our heads and hearts – and yes, acknowledging personal chemistry – Robert emerged as our unanimous recommendation.

It has been 20 years. We did well. Robert has been a superb rabbi for us. Who can tell how much was head, how much was heart, and how much was chemistry? Maybe we just got lucky.

Jack Levitt served as President of Congregation Rodeph Sholom 1994–1998.

FROM RABBI LEVINE'S INSTALLATION SERVICE | May 10, 1991

Honorary Chairman, Sidney Leader's Welcome

You come to us with great promise. You have brilliance, erudition, empathy, love, and charisma. What else! You are already recognized for your excellent sermons, for your dedication, for your initiative and for the leadership that you have shown within the congregation and within the community.

In closing, you will forgive me if I play on a beautiful passage in our prayer book. Robert, behold! A great congregation has been given you. Do not forsake it! It is a breath of life for us who are a part of it, and all who cling to it find happiness and lead to the pursuit of peace, Rodeph Sholom.

Search Committee Chair, Jack Levitt's Remarks

We were waiting for our hearts to be touched. And finally we were touched, and we rejoice tonight in making official what is already the happy fact that Robert Levine is our rabbi, and in welcoming Robert, Gina, Judah and Ezra to our community with love.

This congregation went from Clinton Street to Lexington Avenue to West 83rd Street, each time finding a solution for its own generation, for the needs of its people, and finding the Jews to serve. We know that this congregation has found the spiritual leader it needs for this next generation. He will shape what we are as a congregation. He will help us create a congregation where Jews become Jews and stay Jews, and where they will articulate with him their Jewishness, their humanity, their generosity and their need for justice in the world.

Rabbi Robert Levine's Installation Address

As your rabbi, what do I see before me, indeed before us? Nothing short of the imposing challenge of the 21st Century to which we must respond.

First...we are a people in need of caring and support, a people in need of congregational family...it will happen by reaching out to all our constituencies, young and old, new members and veterans, indeed also to constituencies that synagogues traditionally do not serve very well, the elderly, the singles, the intermarried.

Second...I believe our people want to know how to be Jewish at home, how to be Jewishly competent in the synagogue...we will work together to achieve the goal of Jewish literacy and affirmation.

Thirdly...we must serve the larger Jewish community here, abroad, and in Israel...and we must continue to serve the cause of social justice and human betterment in the City of New York.

We who yearn for the Messianic age will not do so passively, but we will bring it about with our hearts and our hands. So tonight, let us commit ourselves to build for the future.

Every square inch of this synagogue must come alive with the sounds of prayer, learning and dialogue, with the voices of children laughing and singing, with the image of parents and children approaching the Ark at Bar or Bat Mitzvah, with the breaking of glass under the Chuppah, with the anguished cry of people in need of finding comfort and strength, alive with every expression of the human heart, and the Jewish soul.

If you would like to read these historic speeches in their entirety, they are up on our website.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT CRSNYC.ORG

SAVE THE DATES

ANNUAL GLBT PRIDE
SHABBAT SERVICE AND DINNER

Friday, June 4, 6:00 PM

Celebrate 11 years of GLBT Community Shabbat Dinners at CRS, sponsored by the GLBT Outreach Committee. Everyone welcome. Dinner will immediately follow in the Schafler Forum at 7:30 pm. Reservations for dinner are required. Details on the CRS website. Contact: gibt@crsnyc.org or 646.454.3105.

GREEN SOLUTIONS HIKE

Monday, June 7, 5:30 PM

Space is limited—RSVP required!

We will take a guided evening stroll through the Pond and Hallett Nature Sanctuary. To make a reservation, please contact Debra Barnes at 646.454.3029 or dbarnes@crsnyc.org.

CRS OPEN HOUSE
FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

Wednesday, June 16, 5:30 PM

We invite you to drop in anytime between 5:30 and 7:00 pm to enjoy special CRS community activities. Come to experience a taste of the wonderful educational, social and spiritual programming that we have to offer. There will be fun activities for children and adults of all ages! For more information email: membership@crsnyc.org.

KAHAL, CULTURE & CAMARADERIE TRIP

Friday, June 18

KCC goes to Wave Hill. Great fun and congeniality for the active 60's and older CRS community! Contact: 646.454.3118.

HIGH HOLY DAYS 5771

Information regarding Services, seating and activities for the 5771 High Holy Days will be mailed in June. If you are thinking about changing your seating location to the Main Sanctuary it is not too early to contact the membership office with your request. Please email membership@crsnyc.org or call 646.454.3055 today! Please take note of the following dates:

Saturday Evening, September 4	Selichot
Wednesday, September 8	Erev Rosh Hashanah
Thursday, September 9	1 st Day of Rosh Hashanah
Friday, September 10	2 nd Day of Rosh Hashanah
Friday, September 17	Kol Nidre
Saturday, September 18	Yom Kippur

ADULT EDUCATION COURSES

Seminar in Jewish History

Rabbi Lisa J. Grushcow, D.Phil. | Thursday, Noon–1:30 pm
June 10

For those looking for in-depth study. This session's book is Amos Elon's The Pity of It All: A Portrait of the German–Jewish Epoch 1743-1933 (2002).

ONGOING LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Basic Judaism. Section 3: The Vocabulary of Jewish Texts

Rabbi Leora Kaye | Wednesdays, 7:00–8:30 pm
June 2, 9

How to Raise a Mentsch: The Parenting Discussion Group

Rabbi Lisa J. Grushcow, D.Phil. | Tuesday, 9:00–10:30 am
June 8

An opportunity to ask the big questions of parenting in an intimate environment.

SUMMER ADULT ED

With Rabbi Leora Kaye

Tuesdays, June 29

July 6, 13, and 20

Spirit of the Law, Letter of the Law

7:00-8:00 pm

Living an examined Jewish life requires that we apply honest and educated thought to just how and why we perform various rituals and commandments. Some seem obvious based on your own personal theology or philosophies about Judaism and religion, but what happens when tradition comes into conflict with modernity or your own moral compass?

We will look at four provocative concepts in Judaism where the "letter of the law" might differ from the "spirit of the law" and try to determine which ultimately plays a more substantial part in deciding your practice.

The concepts we will examine are:

Laws of Kashrut: Are Baco's really bacon and can I eat a California roll?

Yom Kippur: Is this the fast I am looking for?

Passover: If I really can't tell it is kosher for Passover, is it?

Prayer: Can I offer authentic prayer if I don't speak fluent Hebrew and what am I praying for if I am not sure I believe in God?

For more information, go to crsnyc.org, the Adult Ed brochure, Shabbat Shalom, or contact Debra Barnes at 646.454.3029.

"We often take for granted the very things that most deserve our gratitude."

(Cynthia Ozick)

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE PROGRAMS AND OTHER EVENTS AT CRSNYC.ORG

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BETWEEN THE LINES | Nicole Auerbach

I came to Rodeph Sholom in 2002, hoping to become a Jew. Having agreed on my fifth date with Josh that our children would be Jewish, I realized that I'd better figure out what that meant. I spent the summer reading. Books on Judaism. The conversion process. Jewish weddings. (Hint. Hint.) At some point that summer, I fell in love (again). It wasn't enough for my kids to be Jewish. I wanted to be Jewish, too.

And so I arrived at Rabbi Kaye's office one day in September, eager to begin. As Rabbi Kaye reviewed the requirements, I dutifully took notes: Introduction to Judaism; Hebrew; study with a member of the clergy. I'd always loved being a student, so all of these sounded great. Doable. And then she said I would need to demonstrate that I had "taken on the yoke of the commandments." Um, what? Which ones? And how? She explained that Reform Jews were obligated to learn as much as possible about the *mitzvot*, to wrestle with them, and to then act according to our own most honest assessment of what Jewish tradition required. To become a Jew, one must become "commanded" to act Jewishly.

As nebulous and daunting as this idea seemed at the time, it is the one that has most profoundly shaped my Jewish life. I am currently wrestling with whether to become a vegetarian. I am reading again. About factory farms. Sustainable agriculture. About omnivores and locavores. But also

about *kashrut* and blessings over meals. About what I am commanded to do as a Jew. Whatever answer I come up with will be a Jewish answer.

When I stood on the *bimah* at my conversion ceremony, ready to say the *Shema*, Rabbi Kaye handed me the Torah, and told me that it was mine. Every letter in it and every space in between. And like so many in our tradition, and so many of you, I will forever be trying to read between the lines, to find the shape of a Jewish life that is my own.

My relationship with Rodeph Sholom has changed and evolved over time. When we had babies, Chapel Service gave way to Tot Shabbat. But now I once again find myself here several times a week: taking classes, attending meetings, and participating in Rodeph Sholom's Congregation-Based Community Organizing (CBCO) initiative. Once central to how I saw myself within the community, my status as a convert now seems incidental. Through the CBCO process, I've heard many congregants tell their stories about how they came to Rodeph Sholom, and it is now clear to me that we are all "Jews by choice" who have chosen each other.

When a convert takes a Hebrew name, she is known as a "daughter of Abraham and Sarah." Just as all converts claim the lineage of our ancestors, I will always see the members of this congregation as members of my Jewish family of origin. Thank you for helping me find and grow my Jewish soul.

*“A person sees only what is visible.
But God sees into the heart.”
(1 Samuel 16:7)*

A GOOD LANDING | Rodrick Dial

Shavuot was just upon us. Commemorating the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, it reminds us that our continuing quest for freedom and perfection of the world requires our help. To me it seems as if God says, "OK, now you're out of Egypt. I showed my commitment to you, now where is yours to me and the world?" As our rabbis teach, Shavuot places us all front and center at the foot of Sinai not just to receive Torah, but to affirm our covenant with God and say, "yes, we are here and we will try to live by it." Fortunately we don't stand at Sinai alone. We have each other. And much more than that, we have a synagogue as a kind of bulwark to make our journey that much easier.

Rodeph Sholom was the last in a series of synagogues my partner and I visited five years ago in our quest to find the right place. We landed here one Erev Shabbat for the Consecration Service and were immediately hooked. Seeing Rabbi Levine smiling, joking, and preaching amidst the mayhem of the Religious School kids and their plastic Torah scrolls was my first clue that this was the place.

The next in a series of warm and welcoming faces belonged to Rabbi Kaye as we met to discuss my beginning the Basic Judaism class. I felt very comfortable starting a journey here to see if conversion was the right thing for me. During my first 18 months, I was also impressed at how easy it was to meet the clergy and ask questions. As a group, they never missed an

opportunity to introduce Adam and me to people in the congregation with whom we would "hit it off." And they were never wrong.

I'm now the Vice President of Brotherhood and can count as friends so many of the great men in the congregation. In the last five years it has been my privilege to get to know volunteers in the Sisterhood, the Israel Committee, and the Mitzvah Day Committee. And I'm diving into my third musical as part of the Rodeph Sholom Theater Company. I've nurtured my mind and soul in Adult Ed classes, at "Conversations with the Clergy" lunches, at the Chapel Service on Saturday mornings, and in the monthly Brotherhood Torah Study. But in the midst of these varied activities, I've always been welcomed as a person. And every time I try something new I feel like there is someone reaching out to make the transition easier. As a daddy I've been supported in so many ways. As half of a same-sex couple, I've never felt so respected and at ease. Happily, my daughter and son, 5 and 2, feel like they own the place!

As a Jew by choice, my extended family here has given me the wonderful example of what being Jewish can mean. I want to tell you that one of my most indelible memories will always be standing on the *bimah* for the first time with the Torah in my arms. On this and every Shavuot I will try to remember that day and say "yes, I am here and I will try." And I count myself lucky to have your help.

SUMMER PLANS | Deborah Siegel

We made it through a cold and snowy winter and were treated to a beautiful spring. Now we are entering into what I hope will be a warm and leisurely summer for all. But while life will slow down some and many of us will get away and relax a bit, your clergy and staff are already preparing for the year ahead, beginning with the High Holy Days in early September. As a Rodeph Sholom member, there are a few things you, too, can do now.

In a few weeks you will receive information about the **Roll of Remembrance**, the booklet distributed during Yom Kippur Yizkor Services on September 18. The window of opportunity for preparation of this booklet will be short this year, so please look for this mailing and return your list by the deadline to be sure that your loved one(s) will be included.

Also remember that the lights beside all **Memorial Plaques** at the back of the Main Sanctuary will be lit during Yizkor Service on Yom Kippur (as well as Yizkor Services on Shemeni Atzeret/Simchat Torah, Passover, and Shavuot). If you would like to order this perpetual reminder for your loved one or reserve one for yourself or other family members, please remember that fabrication of each plaque may take up to six weeks. You should be in touch with me, at 646.454.3050, as early as possible if you wish to discuss ordering a plaque. Each memorial plaque is \$3,000 and is tax deductible. We are happy to work with you to set up an automatic recurring payment plan to make the purchase of your plaque(s) more comfortable for you if necessary.

If you will be meeting with your professional advisor this summer to discuss your personal estate, please remember that your **Planned Gift** to the Synagogue will ensure that your devotion to and support of this community will be felt for many seasons to come. Bequests and wills have been the cornerstone of giving at Rodeph Sholom since the 19th Century. They account for a valuable portion of the Rodeph Sholom endowment and can provide significant funding for our programs, facilities, and student aid. They can also reduce your estate's taxable assessment for your heirs. Suggested language for a bequest can be found on the CRS website at <http://rodephsholom.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/Bequest-language.pdf>.

There is one last thing. You do not have to wait until you receive your pledge card (attached to your High Holy Days tickets) or until Yom Kippur to make your donation to the **2010 Yom Kippur Appeal**. We are counting on every member to participate and assure you that no gift is too small. Your gift during the summer will set the pace for your fellow congregants and will allow us to determine how well we will be able to meet the many needs of the congregation in the year to come, from programming, facilities upkeep, and aid to members who continue to be impacted by the economy. Gifts may be made via our secure website or by calling the Development Office at 646.454.3051. Please consider using the automatic recurring payment option if this will make it possible for you to participate.

All the best for a great summer!

“... Giving is a holy act. Help me to find the truly needy. And help them find me.”

(Rabbi Nachman of Breslov)

UNDERWRITING OPPORTUNITIES

You may fund new initiatives or provide budget relief for costly projects so that more funds will be available for education and other activities. A donor can either totally or partially underwrite a project.

Look for updated information on our website about projects that are of particularly timely importance or contact Deborah Siegel, Director of Development, at 646.454.3050 or dsiegel@crsnyc.org to discuss how you can help.

Here are a few current suggestions:

Family B'nei Mitzvah Program Dinners As children attend this important and required program after school, and parents often come directly from work, the evening would be more pleasant and productive for all with “real food” offered, rather than the cookies and a beverage as budgeted. A gift of \$15,000 will provide for over 75 individuals during the five weeks of the program.

Young Families Dinner CRS sponsors two dinners a year for our Young Families, for which we charge each participant. Your gift of \$4,000 would make it possible to offer these meals without charge, an “inviting invitation” for this group representing the future of CRS.

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

THE FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY

The Food Bank for NYC distributes food donations from manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, and government agencies to more than 1,000 food programs throughout the five boroughs supplying over 300,000 meals a day for families, the elderly, homeless and homebound, low-income workers and people living with HIV/AIDS. Please drop off canned and packaged non-perishable foods in the donation box in the Temple lobby.

“God comes to the hungry in the form of food.” (Gandhi)

JOIN A COMMITTEE

If you are interested in getting to know your fellow congregants better, making friends, having a voice in what happens, contributing to events or sharing your expertise, then find a committee that is of interest to you! Being active is a deeply rewarding experience and your input will be graciously appreciated! There is information about all the committees on the CRS website. For more information, contact Nadine Kochavi at 646.454.3055 or email membership@crsnyc.org.

Make a difference for your Synagogue and for yourself!

Religious School

SUMMERTIME | Tirza Arad

Everything is brighter and lighter in the summer. Summer means lighter clothes, lighter hair (sun kissed), and even our eyes seem lighter.

The Hebrew month of Tamuz begins the "season" of the summer and this is the month that the spies sent by Moses travelled through the land of Israel to see it and report to the people. The summer (the period of Tamuz) is the "holiday" of the eyes. It is the time that one must see only that which is good (in the world in general and in our fellow man in particular). The Hebrew month of Av continues in the summer and here we read in the Torah: "See, I give before you today blessing and curse..." and subsequently, "See, I have given before you today life and good, and death and evil...and you shall choose life (Deuteronomy 30:15-19)."

There never seems to be enough time to do what is meaningful and important to us. Summer therefore gives us the time and opportunity to refocus, to look at the future and decide what we should occupy our time with and if we are on course to actualize the dreams we have for ourselves and our family.

For us the summer is the time to evaluate the Religious School and Youth programs, events, and curriculum and to be evaluated by our students and staff. We look toward the future and focus on making the Jewish experience at Rodeph Sholom more meaningful and more exciting.

Have a great summer!

**PLEASE REGISTER FOR
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL BEFORE JUNE 15!**

FROM THE OUTGOING PRESIDENT continued from page 2

In the end, the buck stops with leaders. Debate has to cease. Decisions have to be taken. A commitment to a course of action has to be made. After three or more hours in the theater, the audience learns that Hamlet has abandoned hesitation and finally resolved to act.

Despite my trepidations and protestations, I firmly believe that I acted with resolve and the right levels of courage and prudence. I am enormously grateful for the many extraordinary watershed opportunities that Rodeph Sholom has provided me and the many kindnesses it, and you, have bestowed upon me. I hope I have reciprocated in a way that makes you all proud to have been associated with the Congregation during my tenure.

Through the leadership of Rabbi Levine, Cantor Garfein, and the evolved clergy, we have spent all this time pushing the borders of our culture to make it more accommodating, rewarding, stimulating, and central to the core of American Jewish life. That's all well and good but, in the end, it's personal and, for me, it became pretty simple; it has made me a better person and a better Jew. Beyond that, I can't ask for much.

Thank you.

Roger delivered this speech at the Annual Congregational Meeting on May 10, 2010.

Rodeph Sholom School

**The Rodeph Sholom School
and Congregation Rodeph Sholom
cordially invite you to attend**

The Annual 8th Grade Graduation Service

Friday, June 18 at 10:00 AM

Honoring our Graduates

<i>Eli Auerbach</i>	<i>Josh Kotran</i>
<i>Chase Axelrod</i>	<i>Sam Kramer</i>
<i>Julia Bailen</i>	<i>Zachary Landow</i>
<i>Molly Baraff</i>	<i>Jamie Lichtenstein</i>
<i>Joshua Coven</i>	<i>Maya Linden</i>
<i>Jason Dessen</i>	<i>Anna Lipin</i>
<i>Molly DeVries</i>	<i>Jacob Lurye</i>
<i>Joseph Epstein</i>	<i>Allison Mansbach</i>
<i>Martha Epstein</i>	<i>Joseph Piaker</i>
<i>Sarah Fine</i>	<i>Nathan Press</i>
<i>Jay Fleischer</i>	<i>Jay Rappaport</i>
<i>Gabriel Frieberg</i>	<i>Jeremy Roth</i>
<i>Max Friedman</i>	<i>Mischa Rothko</i>
<i>Alexander Goldberg</i>	<i>Brady Schneider</i>
<i>Lydia Goldberg</i>	<i>Nicholas Shaerf</i>
<i>Madeline Gordon</i>	<i>Samuel Shapiro</i>
<i>Josh Hofing</i>	<i>Andres Vaamonde</i>
<i>Hannah Kates</i>	<i>Karli Wachtel</i>
<i>Amanda Kerbel</i>	<i>Nathaniel Wiener</i>
<i>Jonah Koplin</i>	

B'NEI MITZVAH

June 5

Theo Eckler Cooper, *son of Sari Eckler Cooper and Steven Cooper*
Jack Javer, *son of Elizabeth Wolff and Harry Javer*

June 5 – Schnurmacher Chapel

Alexander Oltarsh, *son of Rosa Reyes-Oltarsh and Frederic Oltarsh*
Benjamin Stern, *son of Dr. Stephanie Rein and Edward Stern*

June 12

Gabriella Kahan, *daughter of Noelle and Jason Kahan*

June 19

Amanda Rozenywaig, *daughter of Karen and Bryan Rozenywaig*

June 19 – Schnurmacher Chapel

Eli and Noah Krauss, *sons of Kristen and David Krauss*

I N M E M O R I A M

Lillian Schoninger, mother of Richard Schoninger

Fred Fine, father of Jeffrey Fine

Phillip Kleiner, father of Marcy Kleiner

Marcy Beth Sharkey Farkas, wife of Michael Farkas,
daughter in law of Diana and Robert Farkas

Robert Stein, son of the late Peggy and Bernie Stein, partner of
Alice Trone, father of Brian and Craig, and brother of Lynn Igel

Edith Green, mother of Eric Green

Ida Tannenbaum, mother of Susan Nemens

Sidney Shafran, father of Charles Shafran, grandfather of
Rachel and Hannah

Ruth Knight, mother of Dr. Marcia Knight

Rose Slosberg, grandmother of Hilary Klotz Steinman

Harold J. Slosberg, grandfather of Hilary Klotz Steinman

Irving Sauerhoff, father of Claire Sauerhoff

Rita Scotti, sister of Alicia Scotti, aunt of Leah and Matt Mandel

Rose Gradstein Goldberg, mother Harriet Saxon and
grandmother of Jerilyn Perman

Betty Altman Fradin, mother of Gary Fradin

Barbara Goldstein, mother of Jonathan Goldstein

Ingo Oertel, brother of Harold Oertel

Martin Siegel, father of Glen Siegel

Professor Melvin J. Unger, father of Barbara Simon

Martin Bernstein, husband of Debra Bernstein

Rick Schneider, husband of Tami Schneider, father of
Brady and Casey

Dorothy Gometz, long time and devoted member

David A. Bernstein, long time and devoted member

Bea Linder, grandmother of Karen Benett

Rena Fondiler, mother of Susan Berkon

Rose Cancelmo, mother of Dr. Joseph Cancelmo,
grandmother of Leo and Cara

M A Z E L T O V

Cantor Shayna Peavey and Melissa DeLowe on their wedding on June 20. Rabbi Levine and Cantor Garfein will officiate. Shayna has been our assistant cantor since July 2007. Melissa is a first grade teacher at the Hannah Senesh Community Day School in Brooklyn. Congratulations to a terrific couple!

Andrew J. Levander was honored on January 28 with the 40th Annual George A. Katz Torch of Learning Award. This award, from the American Friends of The Hebrew University (AFHU) and its Greater New York Region, is presented annually to a distinguished member of the legal community in recognition for outstanding leadership, scholarship, and dedication to society.

Sara Lavipour and Scott Hansen on their wedding on March 13. Rabbi Levine officiated. Sara, a Bat Mitzvah and Confirmand of CRS, is the daughter of long time members Marcia and David Lavipour.

Amanda and Daniel Weisenfeld on the birth of their son, Brody Harris, on April 15. Amanda is the daughter of our devoted friends and benefactors, Janet and Fred Plotkin.

Eric Greenfield and Hailey Genicoff on their wedding on April 25. Rabbi Levine officiated. Eric, a Bar Mitzvah and Confirmand of CRS, is the son of long time members, Hilda and Paul Greenfield.

Zach Miller and Alissa Bersin, on their wedding on May 30. Rabbi Levine officiated. Zach, a Bar Mitzvah and Confirmand of CRS, is the son of long time member John Miller and the late Joan Miller.

CRS WEBSITE

We invite you to check out our new and improved website. Along with current CRS happenings, you will find the latest information on all the exciting events and program offerings. Refer to the monthly worship and events calendars. Find out what the Committees and Auxiliaries are up to and how you may join them. Learn about special initiatives such as End-of-Life, the Homeless Shelter, our CRS Theater Company, reproductive rights, and global relief efforts, to name just a few. Our website reflects the diversity within our spiritual home. We encourage you to check it as often as possible. In fact, why not make it part of your daily routine?

Find us on Facebook.

Keep up with the conversation at: [Congregation Rodeph Sholom](#).

END-OF-LIFE CARE INITIATIVE

CRS's End-of-Life Initiative has a presence on the website and a Resource Library on the fourth floor of the Synagogue. The initiative openly addresses and actively promotes dialogue about death, dying and the quality of end-of-life. The supportive services that are offered, which anticipate and address the needs of individuals and families concerned with end-of-life care, include: Adult Ed classes, counseling groups, messages from the bimah, bikkur cholim, the Resource Library and other responses that evolve as we journey together. Contact: rabbikaye@crsnyc.org.

UNION FIELD CEMETERY

Owned and operated by Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Union Field Cemetery is located at Cypress Avenue in Queens. The Cemetery Committee invites you to visit anytime to experience the quiet serenity of our grounds, to meditate, to remember departed family members, and to consider plans for the future. There is a refurbished chapel on the premises for memorial services. To learn more about the very special care we offer, call Antonio Jones at 718.366.3748 and visit unionfieldcemetery.org.

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CONTRIBUTE
TO THE
RODEPH SHOLOM
FOOD
DRIVE
THIS SUMMER

ABOUT CONGREGATION RODEPH SHOLOM

Rodeph Sholom, one of New York's most distinguished Reform congregations, embodies a strong commitment to purposeful Jewish living and the pursuit of human dignity. Our congregation is a true community, excelling in meaningful worship, educational opportunity for all ages, social and tzedakah programs. We strive to be an extended family of people who care about each other and our community.

Founded in 1842 on the Lower East Side, Rodeph Sholom has always sought to blend the teachings of our Jewish heritage with the best lessons of modern culture. We are proud of our beautiful worship services, our commitment to social action, and our emphasis on Jewish education for people of all ages. Rodeph Sholom was the first Reform congregation to open a Jewish Day School. Our schools, like our congregation, are flourishing. Remaining true to our name which is Hebrew for "pursuer of peace," Rodeph Sholom takes great pride in our history and is hard at work to fulfill the promise of our future.



Congregation Rodeph Sholom

Robert N. Levine, D.D. Senior Rabbi
Lisa J. Grushcow, D.Phil. Associate Rabbi
Sari R. Laufer Associate Rabbi
Benjamin H. Spratt Assistant Rabbi
Rebecca Garfein Senior Cantor
Shayna Peavey Assistant Cantor
Ephraim Biran Cantor Emeritus
Melanie Cooperman Cantorial Intern
Michael Kimmel Executive Director
Marc Fried Chief Financial Officer
Deborah Siegel Director of Development
Rabbi Leora Kaye Program Director
Gail Becker Sexton

Rodeph Sholom Religious School

Triza Arad Director
Kerith Braunfeld Associate Director

Rodeph Sholom School

Paul Druzinsky Head of School
Susan Weiss Newman Head of Schnurmacher Early Childhood Division
Colleen Dundon Head of Hirschberg Elementary Division
Maxine Borenstein Head of Middle School Division
Erin Korn Director of Admissions



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Ben Sheridan Sr. Youth Group President

The Chronicle

Yvette Perry Editor

VISIT OUR WEBSITE CRSNYC.ORG