



# Congregation Ahavath Sholom

The Creative Spirit Dwells Here

## THE CAS NEWSLETTER

## August 2020

### Upcoming services and events

All previously scheduled CAS events have been cancelled until further notice.

**Our Wednesday get-togethers and Shabbat services and events continue on a regular basis via Zoom!**

We hope in the days ahead everyone in our Berkshire community stays healthy and safe.

### This month's newsletter features:

- *We few, we happy few, we band of brothers (and sisters)*
- The CAS Theatre Group presentation
- Milchidika with Marty: *I Will Bear Witness*
- Reclaim Our Vote
- Ilene Spiewak Exhibit
- High Holy Days 5781/2020, a preview
- August Yahrzeits
- August Donations
- CAS Advertisers and Sponsors

## We few, we happy few, we band of brothers (and sisters)

By Barry R. Shapiro

It all started innocently enough, as great adventures sometimes do.

“Ever wonder what it’s like to be an actor?” Read the teaser in the synagogue newsletter. If so, it continued, join us on Sunday, April 7, 2019 when actor, director, playwright and CAS member, Linda Josephs, will peel back the curtain, so to speak.

Why not, thought I? I’ve always been interested in acting but have never done any since my role in “Convenient Modern Times,” a student written play at PS 233 in Brooklyn when I was in the sixth grade.

So, I joined about a dozen other intrepid souls that sunny day to sit with Linda Josephs and take some tentative, awkward, very self-conscious steps into the world of the “actor.”

Over the ensuing year and a half, our group of 12 slowly whittled itself down to three: Ellen Axelrod, Barbara Janoff and me. Understandably, some people found the classes simply not for them. Others said they found it too challenging. Some simply didn’t have the time.

And what have we three survivors accomplished during that time?

Well, so much more than we could have ever anticipated.

We met at least once and sometimes twice a week in the pre-Covid world and by Zoom after. We learned how fiendishly hard the craft of acting is. We tested and stretched our ability to memorize our lines. We learned how to create and develop a character, both physically and emotionally. We struggled with and overcame our inhibitions and fears. We took ourselves places we had not been before and places where, sometimes, we really didn’t want to go. We learned how to let our movements and how we speak develop organically. We took joy in watching our work develop and, without exaggeration, perhaps even more joy in watching the growth of our fellow actors with whom we now enjoy a personal and special bond. We played such diverse roles as Shylock, a Catholic priest, a schoolteacher/astronaut and even a desperate woman holding onto a phone booth in New Mexico. We learned to listen to and learn from each other. We also learned how to listen to and learn from Linda’s seemingly constant prodding and criticism without being defensive (at least most of the time). And we really laughed a lot and, despite all the hard work, had so much fun it was almost illegal.

A word about our remarkable director and friend, Linda.

We are unanimous that what has made all of this hard work so worthwhile and, candidly, transformative, has been Linda’s treatment of us as professionals and her tireless efforts to help us develop our skills as fledgling actors. Words like “relentless,” “demanding,” “uncompromising,” and “creative,” seem to fit. The more she has asked, the more we have wanted to give. The more she has said, “Good. Good. Now try it this way,” the more we have smiled, taken a deep breath, and tried to deliver our lines in the seemingly endless variations she has devised. Linda has worked so hard, with such constant good humor, and her expectations of us are so high, that none of us wants to let her down or fail to put everything we have into our work. I know that all of us are beyond grateful to her for her dedication and confidence in us. It is no wonder that our classes are consistently among the best hours of our week.

So, why not join us as we make our virtual “stage” debut on September 6, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.

We hope that you’ll be impressed by what you see and the quite diverse roles we’ve developed over the past year and a half.

And maybe, when we start our next class sometime in the fall (we hope), you’ll be tempted to join our intrepid band of brothers and sisters. We promise to welcome you with open arms (socially distant, of course, if still necessary).

The CAS Theatre Group presentation

Congregation Ahavath Sholom  
and  
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Selected Vignettes  
from

# *Hold Me*

*by*

Jules Feiffer  
and

# *Monologues*

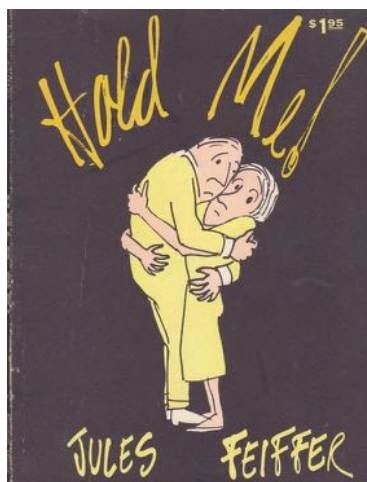
From *Zara Spook and Other Lures*, by Joan Ackermann

*Defying Gravity*, by Jane Anderson

*The Merchant of Venice*, by William Shakespeare

*Doubt*, by John Patrick Shanley

Premiere presentation on CAS website  
Sunday, September 6, 2020 at 2 p.m.



## Milchidika with Marty: *I Will Bear Witness*

I have just finished reading the first volume of a two-volume diary kept by a German Jew, Victor Klemperer, who resided in his modest home in the city of Dolzschen, which is a suburb of Dresden, Germany. The first set of diaries cover the years 1933 to 1941. Victor Klemperer was a cousin of the famous orchestra conductor, Otto Klemperer.

The second volume of diaries covers the years 1942 to 1948.

Victor managed to survive the Nazi terror because he had a non-Jewish wife and had served in the trenches during the First World War. Although he was born Jewish, and his father was a Rabbi, he was baptized as a Protestant. But first and foremost, he considered himself a German. Religion was not part of his life.

Victor was a professor of Romance Languages and Literature at Dresden Technical Institute from 1920 until his dismissal in 1935.

What is interesting in reading his diaries, is how the Nazis under Adolf Hitler gradually gained control of the country, imposing more and more anti-Jewish laws as time went on.

Below are excerpts from his diaries and the ultimate effect on his life:

1933	January 30	Hitler was made Chancellor of Germany.
	March 20	Jewish attorneys in Breslau forbidden to appear in court.
	21	Jewish judges dismissed.
	April 03	Posters in the shops "Recognize German Christian Enterprise." "Whoever buys from the Jew supports the foreign boycott and destroys the German economy."
	12	Provision of the Civil Service Law "Anyone with one Jewish grandparent is a Jew."
	25	All Non-Aryan teachers are to leave all committees and are no longer permitted to give exams to students.
	July 28	The Hitler greeting of "Heil Hitler" is made obligatory.
	October 23	Germany withdraws from the League of Nations.
1934	February 15	Assistant Professor Scheffler appears before his class while wearing his SA uniform.
	July 14	New building regulations: Individual homes with flat roofs are "Un-German." The Third Reich requires all houses to have a "German Gable."
	August 02	Hindenberg, the President of Germany, dies.
	04	Hitler takes on the position of both Chancellor and President.
1935	May 02	Under the Law for the Restoration of the Civil Service-Klemperer Is discharged from his teaching job since he is a Non-Aryan.
	August 11	Jew baiting becomes extreme. "Whoever buys from a Jew is a traitor to the nation."
	September 17	The Reichstag in Nuremberg passed laws on German blood and German honor – Prison for marriage and extra-marital intercourse between Jews and "Germans." Prohibition on "German" maids under the age of 45 to work for Jews.
1936	April 28	A decree for civil servants; they are prohibited from "consorting with Jews."
	October 09	As a "Non-Aryan," Victor is not allowed into the reading room of the local library.
1938	June 29	Must fill out a form "Inventory of Assets of Jews."
	August 10	All Jewish doctors are struck from the Medical Register and can no longer practice as "healers".
	24	A new law- All Jewish men are to take the forename "Israel" and all Jewish women the name "Sara." Author is now known as Victor Israel Klemperer.
	December 03	Day of German Solidarity. Curfew for Jews from 12 noon until 8 In the morning.

		06	Decree from Police Minister Himmler – withdrawal of driver’s license from all Jews. Justification: Because Jews are unreliable, they are not permitted to sit behind the wheel.
1939	March	06	All silverware is to be turned over to the government and a new tax has been imposed on the Jews.
		14	Gave the silverware to an Aryan friend to return to us in better times, if she cannot return it, she can have it. If the confiscation of silverware is extended to Aryans, she is to throw it into the Elbe.
	September	13	House is searched for a radio.
		14	Government order: All Jews forbidden to leave the house after 8 PM. Forbidden to put up Jewish relatives as guests.
	October	16	House is searched by the Gestapo for books to be confiscated. Searching for valuable First Editions.
	December	06	Clothing has been rationed as well as food. Jews no longer allowed to buy clothing. Told he may no longer live in a private residence. Must sell, rent or abandon the house by April 1, 1940 and move into a Jewish Community home and share two rooms with another couple.
1940	July	06	Jews not allowed to enter the public gardens in Dresden.
	August	11	Jews forbidden to have a telephone. Children of mixed race (Jew and Aryan) no longer permitted in Secondary School.
		30	Jews are allowed to go shopping between three and four o’clock on weekdays and between eleven and twelve on Saturdays. Yellow arm bands to distinguish the Jews in factories. Confiscation of Jewish sewing machines and typewriters.

## Reclaim Our Vote

### *Vote Forward and Reclaim Our Vote*

An article in last month’s newsletter introduced the “**Vote Forward**” letter writing campaign to “empower grassroots volunteers to help register voters from under-represented demographics and encourage them to vote” (see <https://votefwd.org/>) for further information.

The synagogue recently received a note about another organization, “**Reclaim Our Vote**,” from Rafaella Spielberg, a resident of Great Barrington. She included this information:

“I’m a student intern with Reclaim Our Vote, a non-partisan organization that works to fight minority voter suppression in the South. Mainly, Reclaim Our Vote sends postcards to voters who are unregistered or who have been purged from voter rolls. Postcards have shown to boost voter registration by as much as 25%. Reclaim Our Vote is looking for volunteers to help send postcards in advance of the November elections. Would congregants at Ahavath Sholom be interested in volunteering? If so, I would provide all of the necessary materials. The opportunity is open to both kids and adults. Please let me know if this sounds like something you would be interested in.”

Thank you,  
Rafaella Spielberg ([rafaellaspielberg@gmail.com](mailto:rafaellaspielberg@gmail.com))

Please consider working with either (or both) of these groups!

## Ilene Spiewak exhibit

Another Most Hopeful Of Things To Do

A *real* exhibition of my paintings. OPEN.

From August through December 2020. Public Eat and Drink in North Adams. OPEN 7 days from 4pm.

Good art. Good food.

Hope you'll come!

Ilene Spiewak



Embodiment. A painting Of Two Paintings Make Three Calling Me Forth.



Plat.  
We're Not Sad.  
An Occasion For Lunch  
Time To Eat.

## High Holy Days 5781/2020, a preview

NOTE: You should be receiving a copy of this letter, registration form and Yizkor form in the mail during the early part of this month. We print it here for those of you who would like a preview of Ahavath Sholom's High Holy Days plan. **Please note that both members and non-members need to register for these online events.**

### BE WITH US...

Dear Members and Friends of Congregation Ahavath Sholom,

Every year at this time we announce the Ahavath Sholom High Holy Day services and community celebration of the Jewish New Year. These sacred days have been observed by Jews for centuries around the world, in times of war and peace, health and distress. This year, in the time of Covid-19, we have been working and planning to create meaningful and safe spiritual worship experiences for the High Holy Days. The Days of Awe begin at sundown on September 18, the beginning of the Jewish New Year 5781.



Keeping everyone safe is and has been our highest priority during these months of the pandemic. After much honest and difficult deliberation, we have decided that all of our services for the Holy Days 5781 will be offered online using a Zoom format. Rabbi Barbara Cohen will lead us from our beautiful historic building. Within the online structure we are striving to create a unique experience with traditional and contemporary liturgical elements, singing, poetry and prayer. The schedule of services is included and will also be available on our website at [www.ahavathsholom.com](http://www.ahavathsholom.com) . Because we are going to be online for all services, we will be offering the spiritual quality and meaningful experience that you have come to cherish from our Ahavath Sholom services in a more time considerate way. Our Rosh HaShanah Day One service will be approximately one and a half hours as will our Yom Kippur daytime service including Yizkor. The evening services for Erev Rosh HaShanah and Kol Nidrei will be approximately one hour.

**PLEASE NOTE: To ensure our online security we must know who will be joining us for these services. Both Ahavath Sholom members and non-members must register in advance for the High Holy Days by emailing to the synagogue or returning the enclosed registration form (also located on our website) with Yizkor names and payment. The guests, friends and family of CAS members not at the same household must also register to access and join the online services.**

#### TO OUR MEMBERS--

High Holy Day services are one of the benefits of your membership in our Ahavath Sholom community. Without your continued support, we could not maintain our creative and inclusive synagogue community and our beautiful and historic building. In this challenging time, we ask for and appreciate your support more than ever.

#### TO OUR GUESTS--

If you are not yet a member of our community and would like to access and join us for these online services, please follow the enclosed registration information.

If you then decide to become a member of Ahavath Sholom (and we hope you do!), your High Holy Day donation will be applied toward your membership dues. If you would like to discuss the benefits of membership, please call Rabbi Barbara Cohen at 413-528-4197 or email her at [info@ahavathsholom.com](mailto:info@ahavathsholom.com).

#### YIZKOR INFORMATION--

The enclosed reservation form (also available on our website) includes a section where you can list the names of people who you would like to remember during our Yizkor memorial service on Yom Kippur morning.

We are currently working on ways to make some of the High Holy Days text we will be using, in English and in Hebrew, available. We will all be journeying together in this uncharted territory and, as always, the important word is 'TOGETHER'. No one could have predicted what this year would bring, and we are committed to creating holy space and time to inspire and support each other as we move forward into the year 5781.

This year more than ever we value our relationships with each other and are deeply grateful for our close-knit Ahavath Sholom community. We face this new year, 5781, with courage and hope, and strengthened by our enduring traditions and relationships. We

warmly encourage you to be with us.

With gratitude and prayers for peace and positive change,

Rabbi Barbara Cohen, the Board of Directors and the Ritual and Spiritual Life Committee

The registration and Yizkor forms:

## Congregation Ahavath Sholom

### The High Holy Days 5781/2020

*Services to be held online using Zoom*

Friday, September 18 Erev Rosh HaShanah 6:30PM

Saturday, September 19 Rosh HaShanah 10:00AM

Sunday, September 27 Kol Nidre 6:00PM

Monday, September 28 Yom Kippur 10:00AM

Listed times leave room for gathering, orderly admittance from the waiting room and working out any potential technical issues prior to the start of services a half hour later.

### EVERYONE MUST REGISTER

#### Registration

Both Ahavath Sholom members and non-members need to register for the High Holy Days by replying to us by email ([casoffice15@gmail.com](mailto:casoffice15@gmail.com)) or by mail (Congregation Ahavath Sholom, P.O. Box 464, Great Barrington, MA 01230). Please include your Yizkor lists (the Yizkor form is on the back of this sheet) at this time. You will receive a return confirmation by email within a few days. The Zoom meeting number and pass code will be sent to you in early September.

#### Payment

**There are no registration costs for members.**

**Costs for the households of non-members is \$75 for Rosh HaShanah and \$75 for Yom Kippur.**

Non-members making payments or members making Yizkor donations or general contributions can send us a check (payable to Ahavath Sholom) or your credit card information by mail. Please fill out the section below.

Name on credit card \_\_\_\_\_

Billing address \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card type (Visa or MasterCard only) \_\_\_\_\_

Credit card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration date \_\_\_\_\_ CVV code \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code associated with card \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed for non-member registration \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed for Yizkor remembrances \_\_\_\_\_

Amount enclosed as an additional High Holy Day donation \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount forwarded to Congregation Ahavath Sholom \_\_\_\_\_

Payments may also be made on our website ([www.ahavathsholom.com](http://www.ahavathsholom.com)) using PayPal or your Visa or MasterCard. Please use the "Donate" button on our home page and be sure to specify what the payment covers in the "Write a note" section of the payment form.





## August Yahrzeits

“Much of our experience of divine goodness, grace and love has come to us through those whose lives have touched our own.”

	Original date	Original date	This year's date
Meyer David Graubard	Av 13 5660	8/8/1900	8/3
Ira Rogovin	Av 15 5763	8/13/2003	8/5
Mitsue Mitsuda	Av 15 5768	8/16/2008	8/5
Doris Deborah Kassler	Av 20 5730	8/22/1970	8/10
Al Silverstein	Av 21 5767	8/5/2007	8/11
Rebecca Isserson	Av 25 5757	8/28/1997	8/15
Beatrice Alson	Av 27 5769	8/17/2009	8/17
Ella Schaeffer	Av 29 5762	8/7/02	8/19
Esther Altschuler Sydlosky	Av 29 5755	8/25/1995	8/19
Phyllis Kirshen	Elul 02 5772	8/20/2012	8/22
Bea Guralnick	Elul 6 5775	8/21/2015	8/26
Leo Kaplan	Elul 08 5754	8/15/1994	8/28
Benjamin Pilcer	Elul 09 5773	8/15/2013	8/29
Chaim Witkowski	Elul 10 5762	8/18/2002	8/30

## August Donations

### In memory of Al Silverstein

Barbara Janoff

### In support of the acting class video

Ellen Axelrod

### In memory of Mitsue Mitsuda

Arthur and Louise Hillman

### Other donations

Ellen Axelrod

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