

Upcoming Services and Events

Monday, January 1: Wishing you a happy, healthy, peace-filled 2018

Sunday, January 7, 10:15 am: CAS Book Group will discuss "The Little Disturbances of Man" by Grace Paley. Please contact Diana Richter at drpajama1@gmail.com for location of this meeting.

Wednesday, January 10, 12:00 pm: Nosh and Drosh Study Session. * Bring a vegetarian lunch! * Nosh and Drosh: Congregation Ahavath Sholom Offers A Look at the Tradition of Mussar. If interested, please contact Barbara Cohen at info@ahavathsholom.com. See more under the the learning tab on our website.

Saturday, January 13, 10 am: Shabbat Service followed by coffee, tea, pastry and conversation

Sunday, January 21, 10:00 am: Study Session at the home of Spiritual Leader Barbara. Bagels and coffee included so a commitment is needed for planning. Firm RSVP by Thursday before to barbaracohen14@gmail.com.

Saturday, January 27, 10 am: Shabbat service marking Tu B'Shevat, followed by coffee, tea, pastry and conversation

Articles/Information

- **An Interfaith Conversation with "Abraham's Daughters"**
- **"Nosh and Drosh" and Study Sessions with Barbara Cohen**
- **Milchidika with Marty: Can You Ke Bech I In North Korea?**
- **The CAS Book Group**
- **January Yahrzeits**
- **January Donations**
- **Community Havdalah**

- **An Interfaith Conversation with "Abraham's Daughters"**

On Saturday morning, December 9th, an abbreviated Shabbat service was followed by a program featuring "Abraham's Daughters." After introductions by Spiritual Leader Barbara Cohen and Program Committee Chairperson, Sandra Flannery, four women each shared her personal religious journey with a large, rapt audience of CAS members and guests. Carol Ascher, Eileen Epperson, Nancy Latif, Vjosa Qerimi, women of Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions, spoke about what they cherish in their faiths and why they formed this group. Following an enthusiastic question and answer period, most of the audience joined our four speakers upstairs for a community oneg/lunch where many conversations and discussions continued.



Photographs by Lisa Chamberlain and Arthur Hillman

"Nosh and Drosch" and Study Sessions with Barbara Cohen

Nosh and Drosch: A Look at the Tradition of Mussar

Sessions scheduled for Wednesdays: January 10, February 28 and March 21

Spiritual Leader Barbara Cohen will begin an introductory study and discussion group exploring the Jewish tradition of Mussar. As beginners, we will learn about what Mussar practice offers to us as a means of searching and evolving in our personal and communal lives. The focus on attributes, called middot in Hebrew, gives us stepping stones to move ahead in life with the goal of spiritual growth and ways of seeing and applying our learning to enhancing our everyday life. These sessions are not meant to make us more 'religious'...they are meant to allow us to share in the worthwhile and meaningful activity of learning and sharing in a safe and sacred community. Classes are also scheduled for the dates listed above all at 12 pm. Please bring a vegetarian bag lunch. If there is interest, more frequent classes might be scheduled. Classes will be held at Congregation Ahavath Sholom, 15 North Street, Great Barrington. If interested, please contact Barbara Cohen at info@ahavathsholom.com. Please consult the web site for weather cancellations and updates. www.ahavathsholom.com

Study Sessions at Barbara's Home

Sessions scheduled for Sundays: January 21, February 18 and March 4

Bagels and Coffee at 10:00 a.m.

Study at 10:30 a.m.

Come at 10 a.m. to eat and schmooze !

RSVP or questions: Barbara Cohen info@ahavathsholom.com

There will be bagels and coffee so Firm RSVP by Thursday before is needed for planning.

Some words about past study sessions by congregant Karen Chase:

On Sunday morning, December 6, 2015 we had our first of four study gatherings at Barbara Cohen's eclectic house, which felt like an extension of our homey shul. The title of the meeting was Psalms and Proverbs, Poets and Prophets: Texts and Talk, which underscores how wide-ranging the conversation was. At one point while discussing the concept of many gods, Barbara remarked, "This talk would be considered heresy in some circles."

How stimulating it was to hear how other congregants think, joke, question and offer their expertise and knowledge.

This study group is not for you if you are looking for a linear examination of pre-arranged topics. But if you are looking for stimulating, fertile dialogue, scrumptious bagels and cream cheese and camaraderie, come to the next study group.

- **Milchidika with Marty: Can You Ke Bech I In North Korea?**

If you were a dinner guest at the home of Kim Jong un, would you dare to complain that the Kim-chi was too spicy? I doubt it. Complaining, or really, really complaining is called "ke bech i" in Korean, which is their version of what we know as "kvetching." But if you want to kvetch, you must be living in freedom. Slaves can't kvetch. At least not openly.

And kvetching is more than just complaining. It is to grumble, complain, and belly ache at length. It's always annoying and no one really wants to listen to it.

Since freedom is the first requirement, it's hard to believe that the oarsman on a Roman galley, who is chained to his seat, could complain to the ship master. "Boy, does it stink down there. Nobody uses a deodorant. And the toilets stopped flushing. Can't you do something about it?"

Or, the poor Israelite, in the days of the pharaohs, while schlepping large stones in the building of the pyramids, could complain to the task master, "Why do you have to build these things so tall? Can't you just make them wider instead?"

There are certain rules about kvetching. So, if you are going to complain, you must consider the other persons feelings. If you're visiting someone in the hospital who has just undergone some type of surgery, and is lying in the hospital bed recuperating, and giving you all the gory details of the operation; you're not supposed to say, "Yeah, but mine was worse."

Therefore the "Ring Theory of Kvetching" has been invented. It is a method on how not to say the wrong thing when listening to someone who may be having a financial, medical, legal, romantic, or any other kind of problem. The idea is not to say, "So, you think you have a problem? You should hear what happened to me."

This is how it works. Draw a circle. This is the center ring. In it, put the name of the person at the center who has just had the operation. So, we'll put "Martin" in that circle. Now draw a larger circle around the first one. In that circle put the name of the person closest to the trauma, such as their spouse or child. In my example. we'll put my wife's name, "Isabelle. Now we'll draw another circle and put in the name of a child or close friend. This time our daughter, "Judy."

When you have finished, you now have a "kvetching" order. Martin can complain about his medical problem to Isabelle; he can moan and curse the heavens and say, "Life is unfair" and "why me?" That's the one advantage of being in the center ring. Everyone must listen to Martin.

Isabelle can't complain back to Martin about the medical problem that she once had. Isabelle can only complain to the next circle or to our daughter Judy. If you make the circle larger, to include friends, then Judy could complain to one of the friends, etc. etc. You can only complain to whoever is in the next outer ring to you, but you can never complain to anyone in an inner ring. Sounds reasonable.

Now a kvetching joke:

Morris gets a new dog and can't wait to show him off to his friend Bernie. So, he invites Bernie to his house to see his dog. When Bernie arrives, Morris calls the dog into the house, bragging how smart he is. The dog quickly comes running in and stands looking at his master, tail wagging furiously, mouth open, tongue hanging out, eyes bright with anticipation.

Morris points to the newspaper on the couch and commands, "FETCH!"

Immediately the dog climbs onto the couch and sits down. His tail-wagging stops and the doggie smile disappears.

Looking balefully up at the master, the dog says in a whiny voice, "You think this is easy wagging my tail all the time? Oy vay. It hurts from so much wagging. And do you think the expensive organic dog food that you are feeding me is tasty? You try it. It's dreck. Much too salty. And you just don't seem to care about me anymore. You just push me out the door to take a leak three times a day. I can't remember the last time you took me out for a walk."

Bernie is amazed. "What was that? Your dog is sitting there talking."

"Oh, I know," explains Morris. "He's young and I'm still training him. He thought I said KVETCH!"

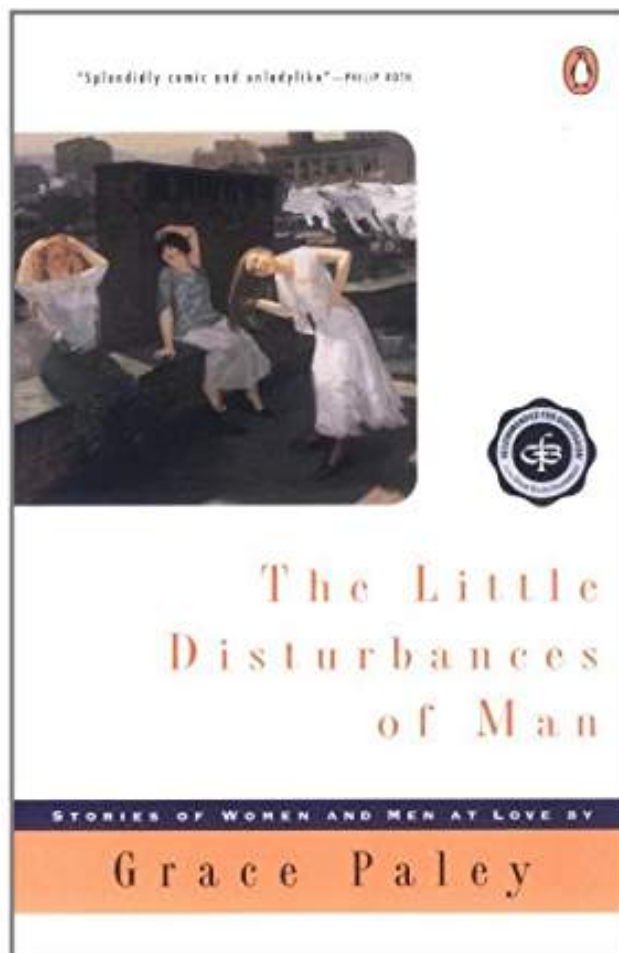
- **The CAS Book Group**

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The CAS Book Group will meet on January 7th at 10:15 a.m. to discuss Grace Paley's *The Little Disturbances of Man*.

Grace Paley was a short story writer, poet, pacifist, political activist, and professor. She weaves the personal and the political in an empathic, pointed, and funny depiction of small and large events that make up every day life.

Gail & Walter Orenstein will lead the discussion. Please contact Diana Richter at drpajama1@gmail.com for location.



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- **January Yahrzeits**

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

Kol Haneshamah

Morris Goldberg Tevet 20 5726	1/7
Maurice Millimet Tevet 20 5730	1/7
Schelema Tevet 21 5739	1/8
Louis Bissel Tevet 23 5682	1/10
Rose London Orenstein Tevet 23 5731	1/10
Ann Louise Zenowitz Tevet 23 5750	1/10
Bella Axelrod Tevet 25 5721	1/12
Robert Scheinmann Tevet 25 5729	1/12
Diana Uttal Ruiz Tevet 25 5747	1/12
Paul Broverman Tevet 25 5748	1/12
Hy Radin Tevet 27 5755	1/14
Rabbi Jacob Axelrod Tevet 28 5746	1/15
Arthur John Rothstein Tevet 29 5752	1/16
Helen Dorothy Rothberg Shevat 01 5660	1/17
David Victor Shevat 01 5732	1/17
Kenneth Tukel Shevat 2 5766	1/18

Abraham Raflowitz Shevat 04 5719	1/20
Arthur H. Kahn Shevat 05 5761	1/21
Melvina Shimmin Shevat 06 5756	1/22
Harry Moskowitz Shevat 07 5743	1/23
Frances Letofsky Shevat 07 5769	1/23
Pauline Spiegelman Shevat 8 5760	1/24
Jacob Cohen Shevat 08 5696	1/24
Larry Hillman Shevat 09 5722	1/25
Robert Cummins Shevat 09 5730	1/25
Diane Rausch Shevat 10 5752	1/26
George Shimmin Shevat 12 5713	1/28
Dan Bongini Shevat 12 5765	1/28
Miriam Karp Shevat 13 5695	1/29
Fannie Kaplan Shevat 13 5737	1/29
Celia G. Maron Shevat 16 5758	2/1
Jeff Axelrod Shevat 19 5775	2/4

- **January Donations**

In memory of Mark Cohen

Dr. Eric and Ami Gewold
Andi and Jeff Goodman
Elaine Roberts
Karen and Stanley Winer

In memory of Mildred Hillman

Arthur and Louise Hillman

Annual Year-End Fundraising Campaign

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Alison and Stephen Weinberg
Keren Weiner
Patricia Whitehead
Sharon Wiles
Ali Winston
Arthur and Joan Winston
Elisabeth Youngerman and Jonathan Gottlieb

Other Donations

Andre Gordon and Harvey Wiener
Irving Marks and Alice Nathan
Amy Olshever

- Community Havdalah



COMMUNITY WIDE HAVDALAH

Sharing the Light

Join with the entire Berkshire Jewish Community as we bid farewell to Shabbat with good company, soulful melodies, warm hot chocolate and other treats.

**SATURDAY, FEB 10
7:00 P.M.**

Hosted by
Temple Anshe Amunim
26 Broad Street, Pittsfield

Sponsored by

