



Congregation Ahavath Sholom

The Creative Spirit Dwells Here

CAS Newsletter

May 2024

Upcoming services and events

Wednesday, May 1 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Barbara Cohen via Zoom

Friday, May 3 at 5:00 PM: Shabbat candle lighting with Rabbi Barbara Cohen via Zoom

Wednesday, May 8 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Barbara Cohen via Zoom

Saturday, May 11 at 10:00 AM: Shabbat Study with Rabbi Barbara Cohen at the synagogue

Monday, May 13 at 5:00 PM: May Board Meeting

Wednesday, May 15 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Barbara Cohen via Zoom

Sunday, May 19 from 2:00-4:00 PM: Jewish Community Day, High Lawn Farm, 535 Summer Street, Lee

Monday, May 20 at 12:00 PM: Memoir Workshop via Zoom

at 7:00 PM: Photography Workshop via Zoom

Wednesday, May 22 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Barbara Cohen via Zoom

Friday, May 24 at 5:00 PM: Erev Shabbat with Rabbi Barbara Cohen at the synagogue

Wednesday, May 29 at 10:00 AM: Café Kehillah with Rabbi Barbara Cohen via Zoom

This month's newsletter features:

CAS Second Night Seder

***I, Teresa de Lucena* book talk**

Study Session with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin

A Reminder about an Opportunity to Explore your Family Roots

The People's Pantry

May Creative Arts Workshops

May Yahrzeits

May Donations

Upcoming Community Events

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CAS Second Night Seder

Twenty-four congregants and guests attended the CAS April 23rd Second Night Seder at the synagogue. Rabbi Barbara reminded us to consider the central themes of Pesach...freedom, redemption, and the willingness and courage to leave the familiar for a potentially improved but undefined life. She also posed the question: "what are the plagues in our lives that keep us stuck and unable to make decisions that could help us go forward? We are sometimes our own Pharaoh!" A central table in the sanctuary contained the seder plate, matzohs, wine, a variety of charoset dishes and some light desserts. After our service and discussion, each of us returned to our homes for a Passover dinner.



I, Teresa de Lucena: How We Built the Book

On Sunday, April 28, at the Quaker Meeting House in Great Barrington, author Ellen Kanner, illustrator Annie Zeybekoglu, and Rabbi Barbara Cohen discussed *I, Teresa de Lucena: Reflections on the Trial of a Conversa*. Using visual examples from the book, Ellen spoke of the history and lengthy development of the project and the interplay between text, interpretation, and design in completing the book, Rabbi Barbara spoke about the interplay between the creative process and Jewish tradition in the production of the text. Annie discussed the creation and design of the book pages and also brought a number of her artist's books to the event. Light refreshments were served afterwards.

I, Teresa de Lucena: Reflections on the Trial of a Conversa is the result of a unique collaboration between a translator, an artist, and a rabbi who joined forces and their respective talents to tell the story of Teresa de Lucena (1467-1545), a woman who faced the Spanish Inquisition twice. It is a work of microhistory, a nonfiction genre that places an individual at the center of the narrative and then zooms out to create the larger context of her life and times. Where did she live? How old was she when her father fled from Spain? Who were the witnesses against her? The book, based on Kanner's translations of the original Inquisition transcripts, Zeybekoglu's evocative illustrations, and Rabbi Cohen's insights into Jewish culture, creates an intimate portrait of a conversa in tumultuous times.



The wall in Annie's studio where Ellen and Annie storyboarded the book in two-page spreads. Annie's illustration of Santa Maria la Blanca, formerly Ibn Shushan Synagogue, Toledo, Spain The book cover, *I, Teresa de Lucena*



Study Session with Rabbi Jennifer Rudin

On Saturday, April 13th we welcomed Rabbi Jennifer for a study session; on the 20th we held the third of her three scheduled visits as she led the congregation in a Shabbat morning service.

All of you who have attended Rabbi Jennifer Rudin's services or study session will have received a phone call by a CAS representative to hear your thoughts. The congregation's feedback is critical to any decisions by our Board of Directors regarding our spiritual leadership. We thank all of you who participated in this process.



A Reminder about an Opportunity to Explore your Family Roots

Sit with an experienced genealogist and learn more about your family history.

CAS member Keren Weiner, a genealogist with twenty years of experience, will work with you, in real time, to find documents that could uncover country of origin, date of immigration, dates of marriage and birth, siblings, occupations, and other clues to your roots. With you as co-pilot, she will guide you to the sources where you are most likely to find results and teach you how to use these sources yourself. Using various databases to solve mysteries, she will break through brick walls, or simply give you a start as you walk in the footsteps of your ancestors, and she will save the records to a thumb drive you can take home, save, print, and share with family.

Some of our members who have worked with Keren have reported wonderful surprises: one member discovered that her second great grandfather had been a saloon keeper! Another, calling Keren's work "meticulous," offered that Keren's research had led her to reframe what she thought she knew about her mother's family, in particular, her grandmother. Each one who worked with Keren had a rich and meaningful experience.

"Sitting together, we located documents I had never seen before. This renewed interest in the family history stimulated memories and sharing, and gave me the idea to look further – for myself and generations to come."

Another appreciated her organized process and added: "Even though we began our meeting having already gathered quite a bit of information from Ancestry.com and family sources, Keren was able to open new avenues of inquiry that helped deepen and expand our family knowledge."

And yet another congregant shares:

"I have some experience doing searches on sites like Ancestry.com, but Keren's ability to navigate genealogical resources was clearly light years ahead of mine. She easily overcame obstacles that would have presented me with dead ends.... In a little over an hour she discovered the names of a set of great-great grandparents, where they came from, the ships that brought them to the United States in the 1870s, and the street where they lived after their arrival, all things previously unknown to me. She was also able to refine a legend that the family was in the tobacco business--in fact, they were cigarette makers. In addition to this information, Keren offered several suggestions for possible future research. In all, this was a highly productive session that far exceeded my expectations."

Keren is offering an hour of her time for congregation members with the request that a one-time donation be made to Congregation Ahavath Sholom in the amount of \$100 for this genealogical journey. To schedule an appointment, email her at kweiner2@gmail.com. Start your journey now!

The People's Pantry



Check our weekly email blasts for specific requests from the Pantry. Please bring items to CAS when attending services or study groups. They count on us for help!

May Creative Arts Workshops

The next Memoir Writing Workshop is scheduled for Monday, May 20th at noon. Shared readings and short writing exercises. Each of these sessions is stand-alone. Please RSVP to Barbara Janoff at bjanoff1@gmail.com. Suggested donation to CAS is \$10 to support our Creative Arts Programs.

Barbara Janoff Ph.D. recently retired from the Fashion Institute of Technology, State University of New York in Manhattan, where she taught writing and literature. Her poetry and essays have appeared in a number of journals, including Communication Arts, Women's Work: The Journal of the Columbia College Women's Center and the Berkshire Review.



Photograph by Kaitlyn Baker on unsplash

The next Photography Workshop will also take place on Monday, May 20th, but at 7:00 PM. Participants in the workshop can submit any images they would like discussed, regardless of subject matter or content, using phone or camera. They can also share their screen with the group. These workshops are stand-alone sessions, open to all. Please RSVP to arthurhillman54@gmail.com. Suggested donation to CAS is \$10 to support our Creative Arts Programs.

Photographer and printmaker Arthur Hillman has been exhibiting his prints for more than 50 years. He has delivered a variety of lectures and presentations on photography and printmaking, juried many exhibits, and was a founding member of the Berkshire Photography Group. He is Professor Emeritus, Photography, Printmaking and Design, Bard College at Simon's Rock.

On Unsplash



Photograph by Jeshoots on Unsplash

May Yahrzeits

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

	Hebrew Date	Original Date	This Year
Irma Waller	Nisan 23 5761	4/16/2001	5/1
Clifford Greenside	Nisan 26 5779	5/1/2019	5/4
Jack Osterweil	Nisan 30 5750	4/25/1990	5/8
Rose Clarin	Nisan 30 5741	5/4/1981	5/8
Julius Greenstein	Iyyar 2 5762	4/14/2002	5/10
Frances Schmetterling Innerfield	Iyyar 06 5769	4/30/2009	5/14
Susan McGreevy	Iyyar 8 5782	5/9/2022	5/16
Muriel F. Goldman	Iyyar 8 5757	5/15/1997	5/16
Joseph Fisher	Iyyar 09 5731	5/4/1971	5/17
Helen D. Rawitz	Iyyar 09 5753	4/30/1993	5/17
Sidney Weinstein	Iyyar 10 5780	5/4/2020	5/18
Louis Levine	Iyyar 17 5733	5/19/1973	5/25
Mae Osterweil	Iyyar 18 5772	5/10/2012	5/26

May Donations

In memory of Fran Lippmann, Gail Phillips, Vivian Scheinmann
Irene Goldman-Price

In memory of Malvin Guralnick, Elizabeth Burkhard
Joan and Dan Burkhard

People's Pantry
Jane Kavanau

In support of the Creative Arts Workshops

Bill Barth (Photography)
Ross Bettinger (Memoir)
Csroline Forsman (Photography and Memoir)
Bruce Frishkoff (Memoir)
Linda Geffin (Memoir)
Arthur Hillman (Memoir)
Louise Hillman (Photography)
Barbara Janoff (Photography)
Carol Killian (Memoir)

General donation
Stuart Greenberg

Upcoming Community Events

IN HONOR OF YOM HASHOAH
HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE DAY



Songs of the Lost Communities

Concert and Memorial Candle Lighting
Sunday, May 5 at 2 pm
The Berkshire Museum, 39 South Street, Pittsfield


Performing artist and lecturer Laura Wetzler will share the music and history of Sephardic and Ashkenazi communities celebrating the vitality of prewar Jewish life. Laura's father Rudi was a Nazi era survivor from Frankfurt, Germany.

AFTER THE CONCERT
A candle lighting, prayers, and a moment of reflection in memory of the victims of the Holocaust.



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Shabbat

Across

The Berkshires

Shabbat Across the Berkshires Friday, June 7 at 5:45 pm

Hosted by
Congregation Knesset Israel
16 Colt Road, Pittsfield, MA

Join the extended Berkshire Jewish Community as we come together to celebrate a joyous Kabbalat Shabbat with a musical family-friendly service led by our local Rabbis, followed by a delicious kosher Shabbat dinner.

REGISTER FOR DINNER BY JUNE 2: Adults \$20, Children free.
Reserve at knessetisrael.org/rsvp or call (413) 445-4872, ext 10.

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