



## Message from the Rabbi February 2015

Dear friends,

What if I told you that you could participate in shaping Israeli policy without leaving your home, right from your own desk and computer? And that the only cost to you would be a one-time fee of \$10? And that the more widely you share this information, the greater the opportunity to support pluralism, egalitarianism, human rights, LGBT rights and peace in Israel?

Two weeks ago, on January 13th, 2015, elections opened for a legislative body with far greater reach than the Knesset (Israeli parliament) and for an executive position more influential than the Israeli Prime Minister's office. ***You can participate by voting in the World Zionist Congress elections.*** By doing so, you will directly influence and impact the future of the State of Israel and support the future of our Reform Movement there as well as the Jewish people around the globe.

### What is the World Zionist Organization?

Established in 1897, the World Zionist Organization (WZO) is often called the "Parliament of the Jewish People." It was convened by Theodor Herzl in Basel, Switzerland, and since its inception its goal was to unite the Jewish people and bring about the establishment of the Jewish state. The World Zionist Organization is a global organization supported by *Keren Kayemeth Lelsrael* (the Jewish National Fund), the Jewish Agency for Israel, *Keren Hayesod* (United Jewish Appeal) and the Government of Israel. Israeli citizens are represented in the elections through political

compete in elections for their representation, such as the Orthodox, Conservative, Reform (ARZENU), Reconstructionists, World Likud, Meretz, Shas, etc.

2. International Jewish organizations which have fixed representation and do not compete in elections (the World Union for Progressive Judaism, World Mizrachi, Hadassah, WIZO, B'nai Brith, Maccabi, and others)
3. Since the establishment of the State of Israel, Israeli political parties have been represented in the WZO based on their relative strength in the Israeli Knesset elections (Likud, Labor, Shas, Meretz, Israel Beiteinu, etc.).

Every five years the WZO convenes a Congress whose representation is determined by democratic elections among the international Zionist political parties. Between Congresses the Zionist General Council (the *Vaad Hapoel*) convenes annually for discussions on pressing matters on the agenda of the Jewish people. Participation in one election is effective for five full years!

If you care about the Reform Movement in Israel, if you support egalitarian prayer, if you believe in freedom of religion, the right of Reform rabbis to conduct marriage, divorce, burial and conversion, if you believe that women should have equal status – and I hope that you do - here is your chance to make a difference. Join **ARZA U.S.**, the American branch of Reform Zionism, and vote in the World Zionist Congress elections. **ARZENU** ("Our Homeland") is the umbrella organization for all Reform Zionist organizations worldwide. As with the Israel Knesset elections, whoever wins the most votes receives the most important positions and control of budgets, and so it is with the World Zionist Congress elections. Whoever has the largest

number of representatives in Congress will set goals and have access to the centers of power and money.

I have often spoken with you about issues affecting progressive Judaism in Israel. Many of us are deeply concerned about the often-stranglehold grip of the Israeli Orthodox rabbinate, from issues such as civil marriage and divorce to conversion to the peace and security of Israel. That is why I am such a strong supporter of the Reform Movement in Israel through whose agencies and offices so much important work is being done today to ensure an Israel that is both militarily safe and domestically democratic. Every member country in the WZO has an allocation of delegates based on the Jewish population of that country. For example, the U.S. has 145 delegates at the World Zionist Congress (out of 500 delegates in total). In the last elections, ARZA US gained 56 representatives (out of 145). The entire ARZENU political party received 83 delegates worldwide out of 500. By joining forces with its partners, ARZENU became the leader of the largest faction in the WZO with a combined total of 159 representatives. The goal this time is to increase this representation. In order to do this, people need to register and vote.

### **Who can vote?**

Anyone who is Jewish is over the age of 18 and signs the "Jerusalem Program" \* (see below) is eligible to vote. The modest fee does not support any organization; it only covers the costs of administering the election. Voting is open until April 30, but please do this right now so that you don't forget!

There are just a few simple steps. Here's how you do it: <https://www.reformjews4israel.org/vote/>

And here's an excellent source of more information:

[http://www.natenet.org/kd/Items/actions.cfm?action=Show&item\\_id=2156&destination=ShowItem](http://www.natenet.org/kd/Items/actions.cfm?action=Show&item_id=2156&destination=ShowItem)

I've voted. I hope you will join me in both voting and in supporting ARZA U.S. and that you will share this information widely!

With my deepest thanks! Have a very good month.

Rabbi Kim S. Geringer

\*The "Jerusalem Program" is the shared vision of all organizations and institutions of WZO and includes among its principles:

- Unity of the Jewish people and the connection to Israel
- A democratic and egalitarian state according to the vision of the prophets
- Aliyah and settlement in Israel
- The centrality of Israel to the Jewish world
- Dissemination of Jewish culture and education
- Hebrew language
- Fighting anti-Semitism

### **GUEST ARTICLE TU B'SHEBAT**

Hello Fellow Congregants,

After the excitement of the Hanukkah season and right on the cusp of Purim, the holiday of Tu B'Shevat marks an important time in the reflection and change that so often comes with Jewish holidays. The Torah does not make any direct mention of this holiday; in fact, it may have festival origins acknowledging the changing of seasons from winter to spring. Today, it is seen as a holiday to celebrate the connection between Judaism and the appreciation of nature. In Israel it marks the beginning of the fruit crop. Seders, like the annual one held by our congregation, are the most common way to celebrate the holiday of rebirth and renewal after wintertime. Because of the Israeli connection, most fruits eaten originate from Israel, such as olives, dates, figs, and pomegranates. Other popular ways to commemorate, as most know, are to plants

trees or send money to Israel for the planting of a tree there. Tree planting has become a festive event in Israel, and as the celebration has grown the holiday's meaning has deepened.

This holiday is a time to examine the relationship we have with our environments personally and as a community. Taking care of the earth is a blessing and responsibility on all people, and it can be easy to push earth-conscious ideas to the side to make way for convenience. The most important thing one can do is to be constantly conscious of the impact they are making individually: clean eating, recycling and reducing waste, and, of course, plant trees. It is a constant awareness coupled with immediate action that will bring about positive change in the mindset of many. If you are interested in putting the modern human and plant relationship into a visual, Lauren Henkin is a photographer who captures images of trees and other greenery growing in “unlikely places”, such as the side of a building and even through metal



fences. © Lauren Henkin

It is hard to imagine such a manipulated ecosystem where plants would have to become resilient to grow, but this is parallel to the human condition as well; the strongest among men and trees will always persevere, if only the power is kept in equilibrium. These photographs put to mind the urgent need for space where nature can grow unbound and unabashedly. The most impactful move one can make in the direction of climate change is to call on national governments to place more emphasis on a healthier environment and cleaner energy, and taking personal steps toward greener living.

The global climate crisis is a term often heard in the media. It brings to mind images of big businesses, crude oil companies, and melting polar ice caps. In reality, climate change is the impact that rising gas levels in the earth's atmosphere are having on the weather patterns. It shows extreme increases in temperature and events often seen as “natural disasters”, fires, floods, and hurricanes, becoming more common. This is not something that should be ruled by politics or opinions any more, as the earth is everyone's home, regardless of opinion. Taking care of the planet now to ensure minimal and natural climate change is the best way to promise a safe planet for generations to come. This is the true responsibility we have as not only Jews, but borrowers of the earth. Tu B'Shevat is a time to look at the impact we are personally making on the planet, and look forward to the changes that can be made in our daily lives. Spiritually, the connection of the soul to the outside world is the only way to act compassionately toward one another and our world. So go ahead and make a donation for a tree to be planted in Israel. It will ensure the future of a clean planet and the promise of a kindred community among Jews and all people.

**Regards,**

**Emily Miller, Recent Hebrew School Graduate**



**Yahrzeits**



בראבא יתגדל

February 2	Mortimer Krupnick, Father of Madelyn Dunn & Sheila Ehrlich
February 3	Harold Sagman, Father of Dolly Weiss
February 9	Eleanor Beckman, Grandmother of Wendi Higgins
February 12	Morris Bleiweis, father of Ernie Bleiweis
February 13	Arthur Levine, Father of Michael Levine
February 19	Olive H. Davenport, Grandmother of Laura Miller
February 26	Leah Crespy, Mother of Jack Crespy, 7th Adar

May the memories of our loved ones be a blessing.

**CONGREGATION SHA'AREY HA-YAM BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<b>President</b>	Philip Miller	609-698-3933	pmmlegal@aol.com
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</b>	Philip Altland	609-492-2751	paltland@elliman.com
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</b>	Wendi Higgins	732-232-1861	wendi.higgins@verizon.net
<b>Secretary</b>	Rosalie Donadio	609-296-0408	raisele@comcast.net
<b>Treasurer</b>	Ernie Bleiweis	609-978-4240	sybern3539@comcast.net
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Cyndy Friedland	609-698-4459	cfriedland119@comcast.net
<b>Board of Trustees at Large</b>	Dayna Otto	609-597-3239	yoursdayna@comcast.net
	Charles Flum	732-228-7991	cflum1@comcast.net
<b>Past President</b>	Aaron Shapiro	609-242-2390	shap1010@comcast.net

**Welcome**  
**New Members**

**Evelyn Sullivan of Waretown**  
**Rand Helfont of Waretown**  
**Justin Friedland of Ship Bottom**

Please look for these new members and introduce yourself...you never know what you have in common!!





# Fundraisers... We need your support!!!

**Amazon Smile** - When shopping at [www.SMILE.Amazon.com](http://www.SMILE.Amazon.com) you can designate **REFORM JEWISH COMMUNITY of BARNEGAT** (there no additional fees, the congregation makes a percentage). We have already received a check from this fundraiser :)

**ShopRite Cards** are always sold at services, but can be purchased anytime by contacting Dayna (609.709.9410) or Syble (609.978.4240)

**Tribute Cards** can be sent to anyone for any reason with a *minimum* donation of \$5. JOAN SILVERMAN at 609-698-0000 from December 28, 2014 until February 8, 2015



Get well wishes to:

Phyllis and Stan Blum

Rosalie Donadio

Dolly Weiss



## Birthdays

- February 07 Robert Dunn
- February 09 Philip Altland
- February 10 Roy Spiegel
- February 11 Wendi Higgins
- February 24 Matthew Daley
- February 25 Laura Miller
- February 25 Michael Levine

**2015 Services Dates**Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup> Tu'B Shavat Seder

Friday, February 20, 7:30pm

Friday, March 6, 7:30pm

Friday, March 20, 7:30pm

Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> Second night Seder

Friday, April 17, 7:30pm

Friday, May 8, 7:30pm

Friday, May 22, 7:30pm

Friday, June 5, 7:30pm

Friday, June 26, 7:30pm


**TEMPLE COMMITTEES**  
**New Members Welcome**

Temple Committees	Chair/Members
Birthdays & Anniversaries	
Choir	<u>Philip Altland</u> Cyndy Friedland, Wendi Higgins, Pat Barndt, Madelyn Dunn, Robert Dunn, Syble Bleiweis, Rena Kreisler
Finance	Treasurer, Financial Secretary, President
Fundraising	<u>Dayna Otto</u> Pat Barndt, Syble Bleiweis, Bari Cohen, Madelyn Dunn, Cyndy Friedland, Wendi Higgins, Joan Silverman, Blanche Spiegel
Greeters	<u>Hope Gardiner</u> Pat Barndt, Syble Bleiweis, Wendi Higgins, Thelma Polon
Hospital Visits	<u>Jack Crespy</u>
Membership	<u>Cyndy Friedland</u> Syble Bleiweis, Joan Silverman
Music	<u>Philip Altland</u> Stan Jackson
Newsletter	<u>Rose Jackson</u> Hope Gardiner
Oneg & Dinners	<u>Madelyn Dunn</u> Pat Barndt, Wendi Higgins
Publicity	<u>Cyndy Friedland</u>
Religious School	<u>Cyndy Friedland/ Phil Miller</u>
Ritual	<u>Allan Levy</u> Charles Flum Philip Altland, Stan Jackson
Sunshine	<u>Syble Bleiweis</u> Ruth Schlyen, Phyllis Blum, Harriet Cohen
Tributes	<u>Syble Bleiweis</u>
Yahrzeits	<u>Harriet Cohen</u>