

# Whitestone Hebrew Centre Bulletin

12-45 Clintonville St. Whitestone, NY 11357



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

שנה טובה!

תשפ"ד 5784



## שלום

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Volume XXXIII No. 1      September 2023      Elul 5783 — Tishrei 5784

## Schedule of High Holiday Services

### S'lichot

Saturday Night September 9th — Service 11:00 PM

### Rosh Hashanah

First Night - Friday September 15th - 6:00 PM

First Day - Saturday September 16th - 9:30 AM & 6:00 PM

Second Day - Sunday September 17th - 9:30 AM

Tashlich (weather permitting) - Sunday September 17th - 5:30 PM



### Yom Kippur

Kol Nidrei - Sunday September 24th - 6:15 PM

(The Rabbi's Yom Kippur sermon

will be delivered at the end of Kol Nidrei Services)

Yom Kippur Day (Yizkor) - Monday September 25th - 9:30 AM

Yizkor will be recited at the end of Services--some time after 12 noon



## Schedule of Sukkot Services

First Night - Friday September 29th - 7:00 PM

First Day - Saturday September 30th - 9:30 AM & 7:00 PM

Second Day - Sunday October 1st - 9:30 AM



### Shemini Atzeret

Friday October 6th - 7:00 PM

Saturday October 7th (Yizkor) - 9:30 AM

### Simchat Torah

Saturday October 7th - 7:00 PM

Sunday October 8th - 9:30 AM





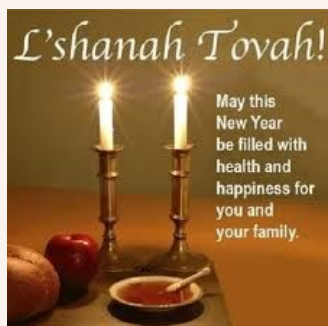
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*L'shanah Tovah!*

May this  
New Year  
be filled with  
health and  
happiness for  
you and  
your family.

### WHC ADMINISTRATION

#### 2023-24 Officers

Rabbi & Cantor - Steven Axelman  
President - Bruce Berenson  
Vice-President - Ellis Rosenblatt  
Corresponding/Recording Secretary -  
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Sisterhood President -  
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### FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

### President's Message

My Dear Friends and Fellow Congregants,

I was very much wanting to forgo my usual trope for the article immediately preceding the 5784 High Holidays, losing count how many times I'd hammered the concept of how crucial the need to thank HaShem for His blessings every day regardless of one's situation in life. And that the proper place for doing so was in the Synagogue (specifically the WHC) always here for you serving just that purpose. Even as I type these words I realize "Ugggh - I'm doing it again". But what else is there to say more important at the beginning of this season? While I understand most lifestyles in what passes for our Conservative belief system don't allow scheduling the inclusion of a daily morning minyan (let alone those for afternoon and evening), we do stand ready for every Yom Tov (major and minor) on the Jewish calendar. Chief among the many things I love about our faith is the notion that every time you open your eyes in the morning it's another opportunity for renewal and re-engagement with our Maker. Rabbi Axelman makes certain that the schedule for all High Holiday Services (beginning with Selichot "kick-off" evening of September 9th) are listed in the Bulletin and on the website - so I humbly suggest in the spirit of our prayers for health, safety, happiness and prosperity during these Days of Awe, you take advantage of the open Gates giving direct access to The Creator.

On a related topic (if I hadn't yet chased you away) - a brief promotion for one of our Holiest days, occurring every 7th day of the week we all know as Shabbat.

*(Continued on page 5)*

As we welcome people back from this summer and we mark the beginning of a new Jewish New Year, I am proud to say that we continue to have a minyan for services almost every Shabbat. We remain a place for people to pray together as well as to socialize at our Friday night oneg and Shabbat morning kiddush, thanks to the commitment and hard work of our Rebbetzin.

The High Holidays are once again just around the corner, beginning with Selichos Services on Saturday night, September 9th and followed by Rosh Hashana on Friday evening September 15<sup>th</sup>.

Unbeknownst to many, the Selichot services held in most synagogues on a Saturday night are not a one-time event but rather the beginning of a daily service ending only the day before Yom Kippur. Sefardic Jews begin reciting daily Selichot services at the beginning of the Jewish month of Elul, this year on August 18th and continue until Yom Kippur. This corresponds to the 40 days that Moses spent on Mount Sinai pleading with God to replace the Two Tablets on which the Ten Commandments had been inscribed, which Moses had shattered upon witnessing the Jews worshipping the Golden Calf immediately on his descent from the mountain.

(For those jealous of Sefardic Jews (possibly) being able to eat rice on Pesach, bear this in mind.)

For many, this season evokes memories of apples dipped in honey, the sound of the shofar, family meals; for me, the memories are mostly of upside-down cake. But to me

*(Continued on page 4)*

# SISTERHOOD

## Sisterhood President's Message

As we get ready for all the upcoming holidays, Sisterhood wishes everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year. Please do a mitzvah and call our senior members to ask if they need anything or just to chat for a while. Hearing a friendly voice will lift their spirits.

Naomi Gukowsky  
Sisterhood President

## September Happy Birthdays



Lazer Axelman                      Liliya Berezovsky  
Jenna Berenson                      Judi Glass

\*Editor's note: If your birthday should be listed on this page and is not, please call the office at (718) 767-1500 and give us your date of birth. Thank you.

## Making Contributions

For many years Sisterhood has offered the service of sending cards from all those who wish to acknowledge both Simchas and Condolences. The response from the recipients is most heart warming. The following funds are available:

- Simcha Fund.....\$10
- Chai Fund .....\$18
- Prayer Book Fund.....\$10
- Inscribed Prayer Books .....\$25

The recipient receives an acknowledgement of the contribution and it is printed in the monthly Bulletin, so all can share the feelings expressed. To place orders, call Patricia Smolker at (718) 746-7068.

Checks for the above funds should be made payable to "Sisterhood of WHC".

## Prayer for the Sick

If you would like a name mentioned in the weekly Prayer for the Sick, please email the name of the sick person and the name of that person's mother (if available) to the Rabbi, at rabbiaxelman@outlook.com. If you do not have access to email, please leave a message on the WHC office voice mail. There are names on our list for a very long time and we have no way of knowing who are still in need of prayers.  
Thank you.



Rabbi Axelman

## Thank you

to our Rebbetzin Sharon Samet for donating a beautiful Torah Cover in memory of her relatives and our congregants, Aaron and Shirley Safran



## FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

(Continued from page 2)

and hopefully millions of other Jews, there has to be a bit more about God and Judaism to make these holidays meaningful (and worth all the preparation). Traditional Judaism sees this period as a time of reflection and repentance, culminating in Yom Kippur, the day on which all our sins are forgiven, though the conditions for this to happen are too complicated for a bulletin article. This year Yom Kippur begins the evening of Sunday evening September 24<sup>th</sup> and concludes at dark the next night. Please note that the evening of Yom Kippur on which we recite Kol Nidrei is the only time of the year that a tallit is worn by the congregation at night. There was a time not too long ago that almost every Jew would attend services on Yom Kippur; sadly, this is no longer true. But as I have said in the past, the only guarantee I can make is that if you do not attend services, you will not be inspired by them!

At the very minimum, I believe we all need to use this time of the year for reflection over what it means for us to be Jewish. Other than the fact that we were born that way (or converted), what makes us Jewish? What do we do or refrain from doing because we are Jewish? For those who see the expression of their Judaism in charity, helping and being kind to others, there is no question that those things are a great part of what a Jew is or should be. But honestly, they are a great part of what any human being should be, are they not?

So, what is a Jew? As the answer to this question literally takes up thousands of pages, if not more, I would just like to quote from the book of Deuteronomy 10:12--21 (Parshat Eikev), translation from JTS: And now, O Israel, what does the Lord your God demand of you? Only this: to revere the Lord your God, to walk only in His paths, to love Him, and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and soul. Keeping the Lord's commandments and laws, which I enjoin upon you today, for your good...

Within this sentence lie an acceptance of the yoke of all God's commandments, those between man and man and those between man and God. Though in no way does attendance at our Monday evening Judaism 101 class fulfill these commandments, it is a great place to start for those wishing to know more about their obligations as a Jew and even to debate what they do or do not believe in. We continue to hold this class every Monday evening at 7:00 on zoom, with some possible changes during the upcoming Holiday period.



Several days after Yom Kippur we begin the holiday of Succot, this year on the evening of Friday September 29th. From Friday evening until dark on Sunday the 1st of October are the first two days of what is technically a seven-day holiday.

These two days and the two days immediately following Succot, known as Sh'mini Atzeret and Simchat Torah, from

sundown on Friday, October 6th through October 8th, are Holy Days, with the restrictions on activity that they bring per Jewish Law. In between these first two days and last two days are five days known as Chol Hamoed, which unbeknownst to many, are halachically closer to Holidays than to weekdays. In many places, especially in Israel, people wear "Shabbos-clothes" the entire time, eat festive meals daily and take off work. For the first eight of the nine-day holiday all meals are to be eaten in a Succah and many Jews still sleep inside the Succah.

Per Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch (19th-century Germany), there is an amazing message to be learned from the materials that go into making a Succah. The rules of the walls being kosher no matter their material but the roof (*s'chach*) having to be something that grows, is no longer attached to the ground and not yet been formed by man's hands into something useful convey a lesson that however greatly we may differ in the social conditions that separate us here below on earth, whether the space that one man calls his own is enclosed in marble walls, wooden ones, or walls that barely protect at all, in that which protects us from above we are all equal. The *s'chach* is the same for all; the beggar and the millionaire both are to reject both Man and Nature as the protective power of their lives. In living temporarily under *s'chach*, we are all to be reminded that, in what protects us and in God's eyes, we are all fundamentally the same.

The other Mitzvah on Succot is to shake the *Arba Minim* (four kinds), i.e., the *Lulav* (palm frond), *Eitrog* (citron), *Hadassim* (myrtles) and *Aravot* (willows). Though some like to associate these with the bounties of a harvest, Rabbi Hirsch points out that since none of these are edible, nor are they among the fruits that Israel is noted for, that is a rather silly notion. Among the various symbolisms ascribed to these objects is the idea that the *Eitrog* looks similar to a heart, the *Lulav* to a spine, the *Hadassim* to eyes and the *Aravot* to lips, suggesting that all the parts of the body come together in the service of God.

The day immediately following Succot (or the 8th day if we look at the entire 9 days as one holiday) is known as Sh'mini Atzeret. On that day, Jews around the world say a special prayer that rain should fall in the proper time and amounts, as this is the beginning of the rainy season in Israel.

The final day is known as Simchat Torah.

Both the evening before and the day of, Jews around the world celebrate the end of the annual cycle of reading the Torah each Shabbat and beginning anew with singing, dancing and joy.



With best wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year to all!



Rabbi Axelman at the Whitestone Memorial Day Parade on May 29th  
From left to right: with NYS Senator (and Congregant) Toby Stavisky,  
Parade Grand Marshall Louis Clavell, Jr., NYC Councilwoman Vickie Paladino  
and Whitestone VFW Post 4787 Commander Fred Hensel

## SHOFAR AT HOME

### The Torah states In the Book of Bamidbar (Numbers):



*And in the seventh month, on the first day, there shall be a holy convocation for you; you shall not perform any mundane work. It shall be a day of shofar sounding for you.*

The mitzvah of hearing the shofar is the primary mitzvah of the day. As this year the first day of Rosh Hashanah (September 16, 2023) is on Shabbat, we do not sound the shofar on that day. But we do sound the shofar on the second day of Rosh Hashanah (Sunday, September 17, 2023). Hearing the sounds of the shofar surrounded by your friends and neighbors at the Whitestone Hebrew Centre is always a special and meaningful experience. We hope you all can join our congregation that morning. But we realize that some are unable, due to medical or other reasons, to attend services. If you are unable to attend services, please let us know at (718) 767-1500, and we will come to your house at approximately 3PM and sound the shofar, so that you can observe this important mitzvah.

Wishing everyone a sweet and healthy new year,  
Bruce Berenson and Ronald Kohn

## President's Message

*(Continued from page 2)*

Throughout Scripture - Judaism honors Shabbat and in many ways gives it the status of being the most important of days on the Jewish calendar. Notably, it is the first Holy Day mentioned in the Bible, and God was the first to observe it at the end of the first six days of Creation. If any Fast Day (excepting Yom Kippur which is in fact referred to as the Shabbat of Shabbats) falls on that date - it is postponed till the following day. Shabbat is a time of joyous observance and it is also considered to be a very small taste of the World To Come. An added bonus, a tradition described in the Talmud (Shabbat 118b) states that the Messiah will come if every Jew properly observes two consecutive Shabbatot.

I would also suggest it well worth your while to attend our on-line Judaism 101 class (Monday evenings at 7PM) as well as

our Talmud class, loose as far as a specific time but always Sunday mornings (let us know if you're interested and we'll make sure to keep you informed). Both of these offerings are a true Master Class in the Jewish faith - expertly curated and led by our own Rabbi Axelman.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in person this Holiday Season at - where else? - The Whitestone Hebrew Centre. My best wishes for a happy, healthy New Year filled with a renewed appreciation for God's Blessings.

L'Shana Tovah Tikatevu

Bruce Berenson



## Thank you for Donations -- Summer 2023

### Yahrzeit

Judith Abbot  
 Jean & Richard Appel  
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 Jill Dee  
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 Martha Dressler  
 Barbara Dublin  
 Curtis and Allison Faver  
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 Alan & Sheldon Goldberg  
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### General Donations

**In honor of  
 the birth of their granddaughter,  
 Sunny Reese Pagan**

Mark and Cheryl Rubin

**Kiddush in honor of the naming of  
 their granddaughter,  
 Mia Selene Wagner**

Barry and Harriet Katzman

**Kiddush in honor of  
 David Friedman's Bar Mitzvah and  
 Josh Friedman for all the care  
 he gave for his parents**

Jerrold and Abby Appelbaum

**Donation to WHC**

Neil and Susan Ovadia

**Kiddush in honor of the naming of  
 their granddaughter,  
 Anna Paige**

Bruce and Lee Berenson

**For Mi Shebeirach**

Madelaine Kasden

## SCHEDULE OF WHC CLASSES

(led by Rabbi Axelman)

**Sundays @ Time TBA -- Talmud Class**

**Mondays @ 7:00 PM -- Judaism 101  
 Explore Your Questions**



Please check our website for updated days and times of classes.  
 Currently classes are being streamed on zoom and not being held in person.

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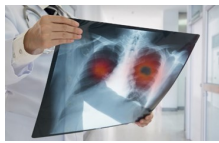
Recent positive news generated by Israel, of which we can all be proud. (Articles below are excerpts of originals only)



**Potential new lung cancer treatment discovered by Israeli researchers**

August 11, 2023

[All Israel News](#)



Researchers from Israel's Weizmann Institute of Science have reportedly discovered a potential treatment for lung cancer, offering new hope to millions of patients around the world. "We found a potential biological marker that could change the course of treatment," [said](#) Prof. Yosef Yarden who led the new study. "Just as certain mutations in the BRCA gene predict the response to drugs used for breast and ovarian cancer, the

marker we've discovered might enable personalized treatment for lung cancer with improved chances of success," he added. [Lung cancer](#) is reportedly the most common cancer type, responsible for about 25% of all cancer cases worldwide. In 2020, there were over 2 million new lung cancer cases worldwide, while approximately 1.8 million people died from the disease.

**No more stethoscopes? Israeli device diagnoses heart problems almost instantly**

August 27, 2023

[World Israel News](#)

A revolution in heart health is seemingly imminent as an Israeli startup has invented a machine that diagnoses heart problems at a patient's bedside within minutes – with a success rate of over 90%. A small group of technological wizards and heart specialists from Sheba Medical Center developed a platform called AISAP, which stands for Artificial Intelligence and the acronym for "as soon as possible," whose software is linked through a tablet to a standard, hand-held ultrasound scanner. Having hundreds of millions of previous cardiac images in its database, AISAP can diagnose eight vital heart functions from only two scan points in a matter of

minutes. It also has a safety feature that "knows" when an image is not clear enough to provide a diagnosis and will tell the person to perform the scan again on the spot. The screening process has been used on about 1,000 patients so far, and half of them resulted in a finding that required medical intervention. In a full 25% of the cases, the 5-15 minute test actually changed the doctors' plans for the patients, sending scores for life-saving procedures as a result.



*Now together, serving the Jewish community just as we have for generations.*



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**Cemetery Committee Chair**  
**at WHC (718) 767-1500**

