

Whitestone Hebrew Centre Bulletin

12-45 Clintonville St. Whitestone, NY 11357



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

שנה טובה!

5787

תשפ"ז



שלום

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Vol. XXXVII No. 1

Sept - Oct 2026

Elul 5786 - Cheshvan 5787

Schedule of High Holiday Services

S'lichot

Saturday Night September 5th — Service 11:00 PM

Rosh Hashanah

First Night - Friday September 11th - 7:00 PM

First Day - Saturday September 12th - 9:30 AM & 7:00 PM

Second Day - Sunday September 13th - 9:30 AM

Tashlich (weather permitting) - September 13th - 5:30 PM



Yom Kippur

Kol Nidrei - Sunday September 20th - 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 21st - 9:30 AM

Yizkor will be recited some time after 12 noon



Schedule of Sukkot Services

First Night - Friday September 25th - 7:00 PM

First Day - Saturday September 26th - 9:30 AM & 7:00 PM

Second Day - Sunday September 27th - 9:30 AM



Shemini Atzeret

Friday October 2nd - 7:00 PM

Saturday October 3rd (Yizkor) - 9:30 AM

Simchat Torah

Saturday October 3rd - 7:00 PM

Sunday October 4th - 9:30 AM





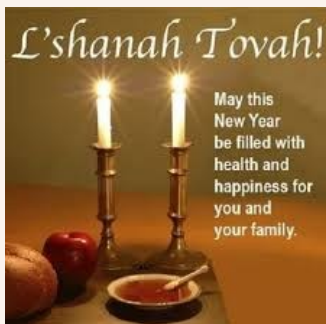
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FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

As we soon mark the beginning of a new Jewish New Year, and as I will soon begin my 24th year as the Rabbi of WHC, 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 (and others, in her temporary absence following her recent surgery).

The High Holidays are once again just around the corner, beginning with Selichos Services on Saturday night, September 5th and followed by Rosh Hashana on Friday evening September 11th.

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 14th 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.)

Per the Ashkenazi custom, Selichos are recited at least four days before Rosh Hashana. From Chabad.org and other sources, the reason for four days can be understood as: On Rosh Hashana,

(Continued on page 4)

President's Message

Can it really be the beginning of high holiday season 5787? Didn't we just dismantle the Sukkah after dancing around the sanctuary on Simchas Torah for the new year of 5786? I can't speak for anyone but myself but I don't feel there was nearly enough time to fulfill any personal goals made this year either secular or spiritual. As I write this we are in the month of Elul. Without stepping into Rabbi Axelman's "Jam", we'll just say Elul as the final month of the Hebrew calendar has been considered a crucial spiritual preparation period for the High Holidays of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur - followed by the less solemn more joyous Sukkot (when hopefully we can breathe a metaphorical sigh of relief). During Elul, we are expected to engage in self-reflection, repentance and personal stock-taking to repair earthly relationships and realign with God. I get it that anyone reading this has more than a passing sense that the Days of Awe refer not only to the two of Rosh Hashanah plus Yom Kippur (traditionally that description is the ten day period between the two). When we venture out into the world beyond our personal bubble we encounter those Jews who claim no need for the rituals and trappings of the season because they have a "Jewish Heart". If you added up all the Holiday's, Commandments, Mitzvot, etc. that organ is called on to carry, it's no wonder studies show certain hereditary risk factors and conditions affect this population's heart health out of proportion to their numbers. Pausing for this infomercial - - As anyone who has

(Continued on page 8)

SISTERHOOD

Sisterhood Message

As we get ready for all the upcoming holidays, Sisterhood wishes everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year. We all pray that there will be peace in Israel and also around the world. 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.



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".

July Happy Birthdays



Joseph Wolkin

Leon Gukowsky

August Happy Birthdays

Rabbi Axelman

Morgan Rubin

Lee Berenson

Courtney (Rubin) Pagan

Joshua Friedman

Jeffrey Young

September Happy Birthdays

Lazer Axelman

Liliya Berezovsky

Jenna (Berenson) Lundgren

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.

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

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

(Continued from page 2)

individuals are metaphorically considered to be offering themselves before God for judgment. The four days of Selichot before the New Year serve as a period of spiritual self-examination and introspection. Just as an animal being brought as an offering was inspected for physical blemishes for four days, so individuals are to use this time to examine their deeds and character for spiritual blemishes, seeking to repent and purify themselves before the day of judgment.

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 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 September 20th 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 often 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), and other than the fact that we are subject to anti-semitism, (even when trying to fit in, see [Jewish Democratic congressional candidate accosted at New York protest](http://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-907053) at www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-907053), 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 will just 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 lies 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 25th. From Friday evening until dark on Sunday the 27th of September 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 2nd through October 4th, 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 take the *Arba Minim* (four kinds), i.e., the *Lulav* (palm frond), *Etrog* (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 *Etrog* 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!



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



The Israeli force-multiplier factor in US military strength

Yoram Ettinger, Aug 28, 2026

www.israelnationalnews.com



According to Prof. Walter Russell Mead, a leading historian of US foreign policy, "Israel did not grow strong because it had an American alliance. It acquired an American alliance because it had grown strong." The \$3.8bn annual US investment in Israel - misperceived as "foreign aid" - has provided Israel with advanced US-made military systems, bolstering Israel's performance as the leading force-multiplier for the US. Israel is the hub of research and development centers of some 250 US high tech giants, which has solidified their global superiority, bolstered US export and expanded US employment. In addition, Israel has evolved into the biggest, self-manned, largely self-funded and cost-effective, battle-tested "US military base" with no combat US soldiers on the ground. The Israeli factor has amplified the US' global posture of deterrence and constrained Chinese and Russian regional and global maneuverability, while enabling the US to minimize its military presence in the Middle East, which has never experienced intra-Muslim peaceful coexistence since the 7th century. It has, also, upgraded the battle tactics of the US Armed Forces, dramatically enhanced the productivity of the US' defense and aerospace industries, and has deterred anti-US Islamic terrorism. During the 2025 and 2026 US wars against the Ayatollah regime - which has conducted a 47-year-war on the US irrespective of Israel's existence - Israel has provided the US with strategic benefits, which no other ally could have provided. Israel has operated as a technologically sophisticated regional ally, conducting complex intelligence, cyber, and air operations. It has been highlighted by disabling Iran's air defenses and air force, which has minimized the threat to US soldiers and has reduced the need for US ground forces, enabling the US Air Force to bomb Iran's three major nuclear facilities, unimpeded by Iran's military. Israel's strikes exposed the vulnerabilities of Chinese, Russian and North Korean air defenses, combat aircraft, ballistic missiles and underground fortifications, which are deployed throughout the world. The 1981 Israeli destruction of Iraq's nuclear reactor spared the US a potential nuclear confrontation during the 1991 Gulf War. The 2007 Israeli destruction of the Syria-North

Korea-Iran nuclear reactor, spared the region and the globe the consequences of nuclear capabilities in the hands of the pro-Russian "Butcher of Damascus" and a potential nuclearized civil war in Syria. Israel's 1973 War provided the US real combat data of USSR vs. US military systems (e.g., surface-to-air and anti-tank missiles), supplying the US combat evidence it couldn't get otherwise. These lessons were fed directly into the development of AirLand Battle doctrine, SEAD (suppression of enemy air defense) tactics, and TOW missile and armor upgrades that enhanced the US defense industries and Army doctrine. Just as in the 1967 precedent, instead of US forces having to fight Soviet-designed systems, in order to learn how they performed, Israel did the fighting and the US studied the results. In 1966 and 1989 Israel acquired MIG-21 and MIG-23 Soviet combat planes through defecting Iraqi and Syrian pilots. The planes were shared with the US, impacting the global balance of power, and enhancing the performance of the US Air Force and the US aerospace industry. Israel's October 1982 "Operation Mole Cricket 19" was the first time that a Western-equipped air force destroyed a Soviet-built surface-to-air missile network, eradicating 20 leading Soviet surface-to-air missile batteries operated by Syria, which were perceived to be impregnable. The Israeli battle tactics, including electronic warfare technologies, were shared with the US, bolstering its military edge over Moscow, serving (until today) as a cardinal element in the training program of US combat pilots. From the Cold War era until today, Israel has functioned as a forward strategic asset for US national security, combat-tested (against Russian, Chinese and Western military systems). Israel has provided a battle-tested laboratory for advanced US military systems, counterterrorism and missile defense testing ground, and intelligence collecting, with no presence of US combat troops. Israel has systematically provided the US strategic lessons that would otherwise have required a much greater US military exposure. Advancing US-Israel mutual interests in the face of mutual threats and challenges, Israel absorbs the military risk, provides the manpower, the intelligence burden and battlefield experimentation that the US otherwise might have had to undertake itself.

(continued on next page)



Medical miracle in Tzfat

Aug 4, 2026

www.israelnationalnews.com



A 66-year-old man diagnosed with advanced metastatic prostate cancer has shown a complete response to an innovative targeted therapy at Ziv Medical Center in Tzfat, with follow-up imaging and blood tests showing no detectable evidence of disease, according to the hospital. According to the medical team, imaging performed after a series of treatments found no signs of the cancer, while his prostate-specific antigen (PSA) level fell to zero. The therapy works by attaching a radioactive

substance to a protein found in high concentrations on prostate cancer cells, delivering radiation directly to the tumor while minimizing exposure to surrounding healthy tissue. Dr. Yisrael Sandler, director of the Institute of Nuclear Medicine at Ziv Medical Center, said the treatment typically helps slow the progression of metastatic prostate cancer and improve patients' quality of life, but described Klein's outcome as exceptional. "The great advantage of the treatment is the ability to target the radiation in a focused and specific way at the tumor cells," he said.

Israeli surgeons replace teenager's pelvis in 19-hour operation

Aug 27, 2026

www.israelnationalnews.com

In a historic medical achievement for Israel, a multidisciplinary team of surgeons from Clalit-Schneider Children's Medical Center and Clalit-Beilinson Hospital, has successfully replaced half of a 15-year-old patient's pelvis using a custom-designed, 3D-printed titanium and advanced polymer implant. The patient, Mark, traveled to Israel from Russia seeking advanced medical options. Diagnosed with rhabdomyosarcoma at age two, Mark had beaten cancer once before. However, at age 14, he faced a severe recurrence: osteosarcoma- a rare and aggressive bone cancer- in his pelvic region, accompanied by lung metastases. Given the location and extensive spread across multiple pelvic bones, top global specialists initially classified the tumor as inoperable. Complete surgical removal is crucial for survival in osteosarcoma cases. Recognizing Israel's world-class medical network, Mark's mother brought him to Clalit-Schneider Children's Medical Center. Following targeted chemotherapy led by Dr. Orli Michaeli, Pediatric Hematology-Oncology Specialist, the lung metastases cleared,

and the primary tumor shrank, but the structural surgical challenge remained immense. Refusing to accept the "inoperable" diagnosis, a joint team of surgical experts from Clalit-Schneider and Clalit-Beilinson Hospital mobilized. After hundreds of hours of precise digital planning, the team embarked on a marathon 19-hour procedure, successfully resecting half the pelvis and replacing it with a pioneering 3D implant tailored specifically to Mark's unique anatomy. "This was one of the most complex and challenging cases we have ever encountered," said Dr. Israel Weiss, Head of the Orthopedic Oncology Unit at Clalit-Schneider and Clalit-Beilinson Hospitals. "Instead of accepting that the tumor was inoperable, our cross-institutional teams combined custom 3D design and advanced printing technology to open a new horizon of possibilities. This breakthrough showcases the power of integrated expertise across our network."



Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, October 20th -- 7:30 PM

Congregation Meeting

Tuesday, October 27th -- 7:30 PM



SCHEDULE OF WHC CLASSES

(led by Rabbi Axelman)

Sundays @ Time TBA -- Talmud Class

Mondays @ 7:00 PM -- Judaism 101

Please check our website for updated days and times of classes.

Currently classes are being streamed on zoom and not being held in person.





Thank you for Donations -- Summer 2026

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President's Message

(Continued from page 2)

joined us online for Rabbi Axelman's Judaism 101 sessions (Monday nights at 7:00) or the much deeper dive of our Talmud class (usually Sunday mornings at 9:30) will tell you, our Faith is so rich, deep and comprehensive there is literally no modern topic that is not addressed somewhere in some way over the (more than) 2000 years of Writings. If you join us (at no extra charge!) the argument that our liturgy has no place in the current world will melt before your eyes. Returning to this month of Elul: A famous metaphor commonly referred to as "The King in the Field" teaches that G-d is unusually accessible during this time, leaving His palace to meet people where they are in daily life. Too many have

the notion that if you can't do everything you need not bother doing anything. Well, to my fellow Jews I'd say here is your golden ticket to approach our Maker more easily and with less effort than other times of the year. Don't waste this opportunity - The Whitestone Hebrew Centre is here for you. L'Shanah Tovah Tikatevu v'Techatemu - "May you and your family be written and sealed for a good year".

See you in Shul!

Bruce Berenson

Whitestone Hebrew Centre Congregational Cemetery

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