

THE SHOFAR

The Monthly Bulletin of the BJCC

March 2021 / Adar-Nisan 5781



Blacksburg Jewish Community Center
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SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

[Saturday Shabbat services begin at 10:00 AM]

Mar. 6–Ki Tissa–R. Scheckler

Mar. 13–Vayak'hel/Pekudei–E. Hallerman

Mar. 20–Vayikra–T. Hindman

Mar. 27–Tzav–S&M Kranowski

SERVICES WILL STILL BE REMOTE

As we become more accustomed to life in the Zoomiverse, our weekly services become even more meaningful and fun. We welcome our regular members, as well as friends and former members (some of whom attend from across the country and as far away as Japan). Drop in on Saturday mornings at 10:00 AM. You will receive an email a day or two before the services, telling you how to join the upcoming session.

REFUGEE SHABBAT: WELCOME THE STRANGER, MAR. 6

Sat., Mar. 6, will be Refugee Shabbat. In conjunction with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) and the Blacksburg Refugee Partnership, we will learn about refugee resettlement. Services will start at 10:00 AM, as usual, and will end at about 11:30 AM. At noon, we will screen a movie (about 1.5 hours long) called “For Sama,” which deals with Syrian refugees. After a short break, we will welcome a speaker on refugee resettlement in Blacksburg. Please join us for all or some of these special Shabbat events. Zoom links will be sent out the week of the event to members and friends lists and to others on request.

Remember: we all started as strangers in this land.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

The festival of Purim contains a commandment including the listening to the Megillat Esther, sending Mishloach Manot (gift baskets), having a Seudah (a festive meal), and practicing Matanot La'evyonim (giving to the poor). It strikes me how well thought out these four practices are. We feed our spirit with Torah, give nutrition to our bodies, remember our friends, and help those less fortunate.

I am really excited this year that Gil and Nicole Hersch are helping coordinate Mishloach Manot. What a wonderful way to keep us all connected.

Also, I hope you will join us on Thurs., Feb. 25 as Muriel Kranowski organizes a Zoom reading of the Megillah

As many of you are aware, Virginia Tech's Giving Day will take place on Feb. 24-25, and the Roanoke Valley Gives day occurs on Mar. 10. These are two great ways to support local causes, and I encourage you to participate.

As we exit our deep freeze, my thoughts begin with the flood of maple sap I am dealing with. A friend convinced me to tap some trees, which seemed like a good idea. But now I realize that I did not comprehend the sheer volume of liquid I would find. At first, the maple sap tastes like water, with just a hint of flavor. Boiling and boiling and boiling yields an amber colored liquid that tastes like tea, with a splash of honey stirred in. As the fluid becomes more concentrated, the characteristic maple taste appears. The final step is the stovetop boil to reach syrup consistency. Wish me luck.

There's probably some deep meaning in this maple syrup story—maybe about time and patience and potential. Whatever the case, I'm excited by the idea of 'tapping in' to a tree that sits quietly in my yard and gaining more understanding about it.

I hope you can enjoy the benefits of warmer weather and experience some of the wonderful sites around Blacksburg.

Happy Purim, and much silliness!
Shalom from Dan, BJCC President

JEWISH EDUCATIONAL LOAN FUND

The Jewish Educational Loan Fund (JELF), based in Atlanta, GA, was founded in 1899 and has \$2.2 million in revenue and \$10 million in assets. On Mar. 1, it opens its application for financial aid, offering a chance for Jewish students in our region to apply for interest-free loans that can save them thousands over the life of the loan. Criteria: JELF serves Jewish students from the five-state region of Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Virginia (excluding metro DC). Students can attend any U.S. accredited college of their choice, but must remain enrolled in school full-time, be in good academic standing, have a cosigner, and plan to accept federal aid. For more information, contact JELF at <https://jelf.org>.

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

If you would like to memorialize a loved one while contributing to the BJCC, our beautiful wall memorial at the rear of our sanctuary still has places for your tribute. Contact Linda Deemer with the English and Hebrew name of your loved one and a brief tribute (ex.: "In Loving Memory," "Devoted Wife and Mother," "1934-2018," age, etc.), and she will have the plaque engraved. The contribution for this plaque is \$180, payable to the BJCC. You can donate through our website or send a check to the BJCC, Attn.: Steve Scheckler, Treasurer. You can reach Linda at lrdeemer@comcast.net. We look forward to seeing these memorials when we once again open our doors for in-person services.



A ZOOM TU BISHVAT CELEBRATION

We may not be able to get together in person, but that does not mean that we can't spend time together! On Jan. 30, we celebrated Tu BiShvat with a family-style Zoom Seder for seven families and a few guests. We sampled fruits that have skins or shells that can't be eaten, like nuts, citrus, chocolate, and bananas. We then moved on to fruits that have hard pits in the middle, like olives, peaches, and dates. Finally, we ate fruits that can be consumed in toto, like apples, pears, and figs. We also said some prayers over grape juice and fruits of the tree, while still saving some time for socializing. All in all—good food and good times as we appreciated this beautiful little holiday.



SHOFAR DEADLINE, MAR. 21

The deadline for submitting news for the next issue of the *Shofar* is Mar. 21. Send information to Richard at richard@vt.edu.

HILLEL NEWS

See the Hillel calendar, and obtain more info at <http://hillelatvirginiatech.com>.

LOOK AT THE IMPROVEMENTS IN THE SYNAGOGUE!

One day, perhaps not too far in the future, we'll be able to see—in person—the new additions to the synagogue. Thanks to Ed Tuchler and colleagues for doing such a wonderful job. See the pictures on the next page.

This picture (at right) shows the building BEFORE the new emergency exit addition.





March / Adar-Nisan 5781

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 17 Adar	2 18 Adar	3 19 Adar	4 20 Adar	5 21 Adar	6 22 Adar Shabbat Parah Parashat Ki Tissa Special refugee shabbat service
7 23 Adar	8 24 Adar	9 25 Adar	10 26 Adar	11 27 Adar	12 28 Adar	13 29 Adar Shabbat HaChodesh Parashat Vayak'hel/Pekudei
14 1 Nisan Rosh Chodesh Nisan	15 2 Nisan	16 3 Nisan	17 4 Nisan	18 5 Nisan	19 6 Nisan	20 7 Nisan Parashat Vayikra
21 8 Nisan Deadline for next issue of the <i>Shofar</i>	22 9 Nisan	23 10 Nisan	24 11 Nisan	25 12 Nisan	26 13 Nisan	27 14 Nisan Shabbat HaGadol Erev Pesach Parashat Tzav
28 15 Nisan Pesach I	29 16 Nisan Pesach II	30 17 Nisan Pesach III (CH"M)	31 18 Nisan Pesach IV (CH"M)			

BJCC Officers and Board Members 2020-21

(Officers are definite; some committee chairs need to be verified)

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