



Congregation

OR ZARUA

NEWSLETTER / VOLUME 19:1 ELUL / TISHREI / HESHVAN 5767 SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2006

High Holy Days Alternate Services

Guided by Terry Krulwich and Mark Somerstein

One of the attractions of Congregation Or Zarua is the intimate atmosphere at our services. The relatively small size of the Congregation and the cozy design of our sanctuary enhance the warm davening experience. On the High Holy Days, we expand our signature intimacy into a larger gathering in the Ramaz auditorium.

If you prefer a more personal High Holy Day davening experience, then come to our Alternate Services on the first day of Rosh Hashanah and on

Kol Nidre. These services are held in a small chapel on the second floor at Ramaz. Guided by Terry Krulwich on Rosh Hashanah and by Mark Somerstein on Kol Nidre, the Alternate Services are interactive. They focus on participation, singing, discussions, and explorations of the history, theology, and interpretation of various prayers and customs. Participants range from novices to learned daveners who enjoy the congenial atmosphere. Knowledge of Hebrew or the liturgy is

not required.

If you are interested in attending the Alternate Services, let us know very soon because the Ramaz second-floor chapel accommodates only about 100 people.

Please call the synagogue office at 212-452-2310, extension 10 as soon as possible to indicate your choice of service or return the reservation form included with your dues statement. Reservations for the Alternate Services will be accepted on a first come, first served basis.

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message.....	2
Zohar Course.....	3
High Holy Day Services.....	3
OZY High Holy Day Services	4
Sukkot.....	5
Congregational Meals	5
Etrogrim and Lulavim	10
Rabbi David Silber, Drisha Dean	5
Reading Hebrew Class.....	8
Project Reconnect.....	5
Greetings from Jeremy Yoskowitz	8
One Hundred Years in America	9
Shabbat Across Or Zarua.....	12
"Welcome Home" Shabbat	12

FEATURES

New OZ Library Books.....	3
Youth Education Department	4
Monthly Calendars.....	6
Holiday Inspiration	8
Book Discussions	9
Hesed Committee Events	10
OZ Community	11

What's Coming Up at Congregation Or Zarua

The Or Zarua Programming Committee has been hard at work planning a rich array of educational and cultural activities leading into the High Holy Days and on into the winter.

In Elul, you can prepare for the High Holy Days by attending an intensive Hebrew Reading Course for beginners and a High Holy Day Family Workshop. You can participate in DOROT Rosh Hashanah Package Delivery. And you can learn with our own Rabbi Harlan J. Wechsler, our new rabbinic intern, Jeremy Yoskowitz, and Rabbi David Silber of Drisha.

During Sukkot, we will provide many meal opportunities in the Sukkah—some

reservation-only, some "free" lunch, and some "bring your own."

In November, we will have our new members' reception, a Shabbat dinner on November 3, and Shabbat Across Or Zarua on November 10.

December will bring our Hanukkah College Outreach, DOROT Package Delivery on December 10, and a Hanukkah Shabbat Dinner on December 15.

And on January 27, 2007, Congregation Or Zarua will celebrate its "Chai" Birthday with a Kiddush Lunch featuring "The Shabbatones."

The Programming Committee welcomes your suggestions for future programs.

ק"ק אור זרוע
CONGREGATION

**OR
ZARUA**

A CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE
FOUNDED 1989

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In this season of heat waves, vacations and late-summer lassitude—not to mention a war in Israel—it is a bracing thought that the High Holy Days are just weeks, not months, away. The yearly cycle of our religious life will begin anew with erev Rosh Hashanah on Friday, September 22, the first day of Tishrei.

This year, as in past years, Or Zarua will offer a variety of programs and activities in Elul, preceding Rosh Hashanah, aimed at enriching the Yom Tov experience. A full listing of these is provided in the flyer, "7 Ways to Prepare for the High Holy Days." But I want to illustrate the breadth and variety, so let me mention just a few:

On Wednesday, September 13, we will have another evening of teaching by Rabbi David Silber, the esteemed founder of the Drisha School, which focuses on the education of Jewish women. This year, Rabbi Silber will discuss the story of Hagar and Ishmael, the Torah reading for the first day of Rosh Hashanah.

During the two weeks preceding Rosh Hashanah, our own Mark Somerstein will teach a course to help Congregants whose Hebrew reading skills are rusty at best. Mark's course is aimed at Congregants who have some Hebrew or little or no Hebrew.

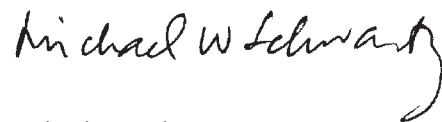
And over the weekend of September 16 and 17, we will mark the Shabbat preceding Rosh Hashanah with a special kiddush lunch, which will be open to prospective members as well as returning members. On Saturday night, we will serve "Sinful Desserts" and follow with Rabbi Wechsler's study of kabbalistic repentance and our Selihot service praying for forgiveness for our sins. On Sunday morning, we will hold a special program especially for children (and their parents and grandparents) where they can ask—and have answered—all the questions they always had about the High Holy Days but were afraid to ask.

The program will also include a special demonstration of the talents of our resident shofar blower, David Shapiro. And as part of our hesed activities, we will join with other congregations in distributing DOROT packages to home-bound seniors.

In all of these and other activities we are sponsoring, our goal is to reach out to the entire Or Zarua community to serve its diverse interests and meet its diverse needs—always with the special Or Zarua emphasis on learning and study and good works. On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I urge you to take advantage of as many of these activities as possible.

In the same spirit, on the first day of Rosh Hashanah, and on Kol Nidre (Sunday evening, October 1) we will offer both our traditional service and our Alternate Services to give members of the Congregation a choice of approaches in the celebration of the High Holy Days. (If you wish to attend the Alternate Services, please be sure to advise the synagogue office well in advance.) In addition, we will offer a full range of children's services. Here, too, our goal is to ensure that all of our Congregants have a rich and rewarding High Holy Day experience.

We welcome not only your participation in all these aspects of our synagogue life, but any suggestions as well for additional programs and activities that would deepen and strengthen the life of our community. I wish you an enjoyable remainder of the summer and look forward to seeing you at our services and our activities in Elul, Tishrei and all through the new year.



Michael W. Schwartz
President

OZ Committee Chairs

AESTHETICS	Aaron Shelden
BOOK DISCUSSION	Reed Schneider
BUILDING	Alan Ilberman
CATERING	Diane Okrent Sara Stone
CEMETERY	Andrew Frackman Morty Schwartz
DEVELOPMENT	Mimi Alperin
EVENTS/ADULT ED	Diane Okrent
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HEVRA KADISHA	Vera Silver Gerry Solomon
ISRAEL	Brett Cohen Aliza Kaplan
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MINYAN	Sheldon Adler
NEWSLETTER	Paulette Schneider
PLANNED GIVING	Jim Breznay
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SCHOOL	Pamela Gold
SHABBAT USHERS	Phyllis Solomon Gerry Solomon
TORAH/HAFTARAH	Yaakov Shechter
WEBMASTER	Jay Palmer

If you would like to serve on a synagogue committee, please contact the office for the committee chair's email address.

ZOHAR COURSE AND PARASHAT HASHAVUAH

by Yaron Milgrom-Elcott



Milgrom-Elcott

At the turn of the fourteenth century in Castile, Spain, a tightly-knit fellowship of Jewish mystics known as Kabbalists composed *Sefer Hazohar* (*The Book of Splendor*), the main masterwork of Kabbalah. The *Zohar*, often attributed to second-century Mishnaic figure Rabbi Simeon bar Yohai, narrates the wanderings, encounters, deaths, miracles, supernal secrets, and mysteries of faith experienced by a circle of ten mystics. The fantastical tales are woven into the tapestry of the parashiyot (weekly Torah portions)—letter-by-letter, word-by-word, verse-by-verse, story-by-story—exploring the mystical possibilities of biblical tales: Who is God? What is God? How was God created? What are the inner-workings of God? How do we become one with God? As the *Zohar* writes, “Woe to the human being who says Torah presents mere stories and ordinary words” (III 152a).

In our seven-week course, we will study the weekly parashah through *Zohar* commentaries and explore what is beyond “mere stories and ordinary words.” Beginners as well as scholars are welcome, and no knowledge of Hebrew is required—the text will be Daniel Matt’s new English translation of the *Zohar* along with the original. The Talmud dictates: “One completes the weekly portion of the Torah study on pace with the public recital by reading the Torah portion twice in Hebrew and once in translation” (*Berkahot* 8a-b). Let our study of *Zohar* count as a mystical translation of the Torah portion.

Taught by Yaron Milgrom-Elcott, who gave a series of well-received classes on the Kabbalistic meaning of *Lekha Dodi* during Kabbalat Shabbat last winter, the course will meet at 7:30 p.m. for seven Thursday evenings beginning on October 19. Please register at www.orzarua.org or by calling the office at 212-452-2310, extension 39.

ROSH HASHANAH AND YOM KIPPUR SERVICES 5767/2006

Friday, September 22

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Evening 6:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.
Candlelighting 6:33 p.m.

Saturday, September 23

First Day of Rosh Hashanah

Morning 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Evening 6:40 p.m.–7:40 p.m.
Candlelighting 7:35 p.m.

Sunday, September 24

Second Day of Rosh Hashanah

Morning 8:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Tashlikh 5:45 p.m.–6:30 p.m.
(Central Park)
Evening 6:45 p.m.–7:40 p.m.

Sunday, October 1

Erev Yom Kippur

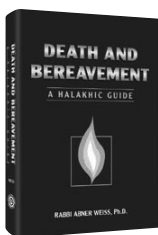
Minhah 1:15 p.m.–1:45 p.m.
(at Or Zarua)
Kol Nidre 6:15 p.m.–9:15 p.m.
Candlelighting 6:20 p.m.

Monday, October 2

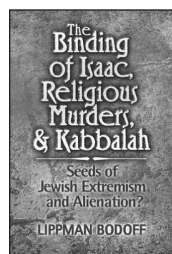
Yom Kippur 9:00 a.m.–7:23 p.m.

New Books in the OZ Library

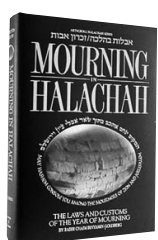
The OZ library is a welcoming place to spend some free time. Our wide selection of books includes histories, biographies, novels, encyclopedias, biblical commentaries, and more. Here are some recent acquisitions:



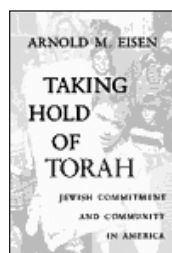
Death and Bereavement: A Halakhic Guide
by Rabbi Abner Weiss, Ph.D.



The Binding of Isaac: Religious Murders and Kabbalah
by Lippman Bodoff



Mourning in Halachah: The Laws and Customs of the Year of Mourning
by Rabbi Chaim Binyamim Goldberg



Taking Hold of Torah: Jewish Commitment and Community in America
by Arnold M. Eisen

OR ZARUA YOUTH HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES

By Ilana Burgess

It is important that the children and teens of Or Zarua attend the special High Holy Day Services we prepared for them. We generally divide the groups by age, but your child may participate in a service for an older group if you feel that it is appropriate. The children who attend these services come from different schools and from homes with a variety of

observance levels, so it is difficult to make the groups homogeneous.

An adult must accompany a child in the youngest group, but school-aged children should attend on their own so that we have sufficient space in each classroom to teach effectively.

This year we have special sessions for grades 7 and above on the two days of

Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur day. Our rabbinic intern, Jeremy Yoskowitz, will teach these sessions. Our teens will have a wonderful opportunity to learn and pray with a highly knowledgeable teacher who will challenge their intellect and spark their curiosity.

I sincerely hope that all of the children and teens will enjoy these services.

OZY HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES 5767/2006

Rosh Hashanah

Saturday, September 23 (First Day)
10:45 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

2-4 years old (accompanied by an adult)
Kindergarten-Grade 1
Grades 2-3
Grades 4-6
Grades 7 and above

Sunday, September 24 (Second Day)
10:45 a.m.–12:45 p.m.

2-4 years old (accompanied by an adult)
Kindergarten-Grade 2
Grades 3-6
Grades 7 and above

Kol Nidre

Sunday, October 1
6:15 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

Grades 1-3
Grades 4-6

Yom Kippur

Monday, October 2
11:15 a.m.–1:15 p.m.

2-4 years old (accompanied by an adult)
Kindergarten-Grade 2
Grades 3-6
Grades 7 and above

A playroom will be open during all services for very young children who are accompanied and supervised by an adult. Children may not be left alone in this room.

Hebrew School Events

SEPTEMBER 2006

Wednesday 6	In service (for teachers)
Thursday 7	In service (for teachers)
Monday 11	First day of Hebrew School
Tuesday 12	First day of Hebrew School

OCTOBER 2006

Monday 2	Yom Kippur (no classes)
Wednesday 4	Sukkah decoration, 5:00 p.m. (everyone is invited)
Thursday 5	Sukkah decoration, 5:00 p.m. (everyone is invited)
Saturday 7	Sukkah Sleepover (3rd-7th grade students are invited)
Monday 9	Columbus Day (no classes)
Wednesday 11	Hebrew School Dinner in the Sukkah, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Thursday 12	Hebrew School Dinner in the Sukkah, 5:30-6:30 p.m.
Tuesday 17	Hebrew School Open House, 7:00 p.m.
Friday 27	Friday Night Dinner, 4th and 5th grades, 7:00 p.m.
Saturday 28	Hebrew School Shabbat Class, 10:00 a.m.

OZY SERVICES

Each Shabbat, we have three different grade-level services:

Infant through Kindergarten

11:00 a.m. to noon

Alef Bet Corner

First through Third Grades

10:00 a.m. to noon

Junior Congregation

Fourth through Sixth Grades

10:00 a.m. to noon

Each month during the school year, we have a special Hebrew School Shabbat Class, which all Hebrew School students in the third through sixth grades are expected to attend. Parents and students from other schools are welcome as well.

The next Hebrew School Shabbat Class will take place on Saturday, October 28.

PROJECT RECONNECT: OZ Reaches Out to College Students

Our College Committee, chaired by Eileen Cohen, is collecting the school addresses of Congregants' children who are away at college. The College Committee will be mailing food packages to the students on Hanukkah and Purim.

To help us remain in contact with these family members while they are away from home, please send your child's name, school address, and email address to the synagogue office by email (admin@orzarua.org), fax (212-452-2103), or mail to the attention of College Committee.

If you would like to participate in the committee, please call Eileen at 212-288-8541 or email her at escohen297@aol.com.

Rabbi David Silber: *Hagar and Ishmael*



Rabbi David Silber will speak on Wednesday, September 13 at 8:00 p.m. in the OZ library. He will discuss the Torah reading

for the first day of Rosh Hashanah, focusing on Hagar and Ishmael.

Rabbi Silber is the founder and dean of Drisha Institute for Jewish Education, which provides advanced studies for women. He compares the exclusion of women from certain posts to the segregation that kept black athletes out of certain team positions. He feels that "the women's movement can allow Torah to speak with a louder voice to the entire Jewish community."

HIGH HOLY DAYS, 5767

The Jewish New Year for the year 5767 begins Friday evening, September 22.

- As in previous years, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services will be held at the Ramaz School, 60 East 78th Street.

- Shahrarit for the first day of Rosh Hashanah begins at 8:30 a.m. Minhah and Ma'ariv begin at 6:40 p.m.

- Services for the second day of Rosh Hashanah will also begin at 8:30 a.m.

- For Tashlikh, we will meet at the Central Park Reservoir on the second day of Rosh Hashanah, Sunday, September 24

at 5:45 p.m. Evening services at the synagogue will follow at 6:45 p.m.

- Kol Nidre services begin at 6:15 p.m. on Erev Yom Kippur, Sunday, October 1. Yom Kippur services begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, October 2 and include Yizkor. The Yom Kippur fast concludes with the shofar blast after Neilah services at 7:23 p.m.

- There are Alternate Services for the first day of Rosh Hashanah and for Kol Nidre. Both services will be held in the chapel on the second floor at Ramaz.

Eating in the Sukkah

It is a mitzvah to eat in a sukkah during Sukkot. We will help you fulfill this mitzvah—Congregants are welcome to dine in the OZ sukkah throughout the holiday.

Any food you bring to the sukkah must be kosher. You also need to bring all service items for your meal, including beverages, plates, cups, napkins, and utensils.

Please notify the office whenever you plan to dine in the sukkah. We ask that you conclude your meal by 9:00 p.m.

Join us for the following Congregational meals:

Reservations Required

Friday, October 6: Erev Sukkot Dinner

Saturday, October 7:

Sukkot Shabbat Lunch

Free—No Reservations Required

Saturday, October 7:

Bring Your Own Dinner

(we will provide challah and dessert)

Sunday, October 8: Sukkot Lunch

Sunday, October 15: Simhat Torah Lunch

Don't Miss Meals in the OZ Sukkah!

DINNER IN THE OZ SUKKAH

Erev Sukkot, Friday, October 6

Services begin at 6:10 p.m., Dinner at 7:15 p.m.

SHABBAT LUNCH IN THE OZ SUKKAH

Saturday, October 7

Immediately following services

Reservations for either event are essential.

\$30 adults; \$20 children (ages 5-12); \$5 children (under 5)

RSVP: Tel 212-452-2310, ext. 39 / Fax 212-452-2103 / www.orzarua.org

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
3 8:45 AM Minyan	4 Labor Day 8:45 AM Minyan	5 7:15 AM Minyan	6 7:15 AM Minyan 6:45 PM Hebrew Reading Course	7 7:15 AM Minyan	8 7:15 AM Minyan 6:15 PM Minhah and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:57 PM Candlelighting	9 9:00 AM Shahrith Keep Tavo Bar Mitzvah Brian Sussman 4:00 PM Shabbat in the Park
10 8:45 AM Minyan	11 7:15 AM Minyan 6:45 PM Hebrew Reading Course First Day Hebrew School for Monday classes	12 7:15 AM Minyan 6:45 PM Hebrew Reading Course 7:00 PM Taste of Me'ah First Day Hebrew School for Tuesday classes	13 7:15 AM Minyan 8:00 PM Rabbi David Silber Lecture	14 7:15 AM Minyan	15 7:15 AM Minyan 6:15 PM Minhah and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:45 PM Candlelighting	16 23 Elul <i>Selihot</i> 9:00 AM Shahrith Nitzavim-Vayeilekh Welcome to Or Zarua Kiddush Lunch 8:30 PM Selihot and Sinful Desserts
17 8:45 AM Minyan 10:00 AM High Holy Day Family Workshop 11:00 AM DOROT Rosh Hashanah Package Delivery at Park Avenue Synagogue 7:30 PM Book Discussion: <i>Born to Kvetch</i>	18 7:00 AM Minyan 6:45 PM Hebrew Reading Course 8:00 PM Rabbinic Intern Jeremy Yoskowitz Lecture	19 7:00 AM Minyan 6:45 PM Hebrew Reading Course	20 7:00 AM Minyan	21 7:00 AM Minyan	22 <i>Erev Rosh Hashanah</i> 7:00 AM Minyan 6:00 PM Erev Rosh Hashanah Services 6:33 PM Candlelighting	23 1 Tishrei <i>Rosh Hashanah</i> 8:30 AM Shahrith 6:40 PM Minhah-Ma'ariv 7:35 PM Candlelighting
24 2 Tishrei <i>Rosh Hashanah</i> 8:30 AM Shahrith 5:45 PM Tashlikh - Central Park 6:45 PM Minhah-Ma'ariv	25 3 Tishrei <i>Tzom Gedaliah</i> 7:15 AM Minyan	26 7:15 AM Minyan 4 Tishrei	27 7:15 AM Minyan 5 Tishrei	28 7:15 AM Minyan 6 Tishrei	29 7:15 AM Minyan 6:15 PM Minhah and Kabbalat Shabbat 6:22 PM Candlelighting 7 Tishrei	30 8 Tishrei <i>Shabbat Shuvah</i> 9:00 AM Shahrith Ha'azinu Bar Mitzvah Reuben Dizengoff

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 <i>9 Tishrei</i> Erev Yom Kippur 8:45 AM Minyan 1:15 PM Minhah at OZ 6:15 PM Kol Nidre 6:20 PM Candlelighting	2 <i>10 Tishrei</i> Yom Kippur 9:00 AM - 7:23 PM Yom Kippur Services	3 <i>11 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan	4 <i>12 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan	5 <i>13 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan	6 <i>14 Tishrei</i> Erev Sukkot 7:15 AM Minyan 6:12 PM Candlelighting, Minhah and Kabbalat Shabbat Congregational Dinner in OZ Sukkah	7 <i>15 Tishrei</i> Sukkot Day 1 9:00 AM Shahrut Congregational Lunch in OZ sukkah 7:09 PM Candlelighting Hebrew School Sukkah Sleepover
8 <i>16 Tishrei</i> Sukkot Day 2 9:00 AM Shahrut Kiddush Lunch in Sukkah	9 <i>17 Tishrei</i> Hol Hamoed Sukkot Columbus Day 7:00 AM Minyan Hebrew School Closed	10 <i>18 Tishrei</i> Hol Hamoed Sukkot 7:00 AM Minyan	11 <i>19 Tishrei</i> Hol Hamoed Sukkot 7:00 AM Minyan 5:30 PM Hebrew School Sukkot Dinner	12 <i>20 Tishrei</i> Hol Hamoed Sukkot 7:00 AM Minyan 5:30 PM Hebrew School Sukkot Dinner	13 <i>21 Tishrei</i> Hoshana Rabbah Erev Shemini Atzeret 7:00 AM Minyan 6:01 PM Candlelighting, Minhah and Shemini Atzeret	14 <i>22 Tishrei</i> Shemini Atzeret 9:00 AM Shahrut Yizkor 6:58 PM Candlelighting, Minhah and Simhat Torah
15 <i>23 Tishrei</i> Simhat Torah 9:00 AM Shahrut Simhat Torah Kiddush Lunch	16 <i>24 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan	17 <i>25 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 7:00 PM Hebrew School Open House 7:00 PM Me'ah classes	18 <i>26 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 8:00 PM Talmud Class	19 <i>27 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 7:30 PM Parashat HaShavua Course with Yaron Milgrom-Eicott	20 <i>28 Tishrei</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 5:50 PM Candlelighting, Minhah and Kabbalat Shabbat	21 <i>29 Tishrei</i> 9:00 AM Shahrut Bereshit Bar Mitzvah Evan Haberman
22 <i>30 Tishrei</i> Rosh Hodesh Heshvan 9:00 Shahrut Bat Mitzvah Rebecca Mack	23 <i>1 Heshvan</i> Rosh Hodesh Heshvan 7:00 AM Minyan	24 <i>2 Heshvan</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 7:00 PM Me'ah classes	25 <i>3 Heshvan</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 6:15 PM Heshd Committee Meeting 8:00 PM Talmud Class	26 <i>4 Heshvan</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 7:30 PM Parashat HaShavua Course with Yaron Milgrom-Eicott	27 <i>5 Heshvan</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 5:41 PM Candlelighting, Minhah and Kabbalat Shabbat Hebrew School Grades 4 and 5 Shabbat Dinner	28 <i>6 Heshvan</i> 9:00 AM Shahrut 10:00 AM Hebrew School Shabbat Class
29 <i>7 Heshvan</i> 8:45 AM Minyan 7:30 PM Book Discussion Group: Ester and Ruzya	30 <i>8 Heshvan</i> 7:15 AM Minyan	31 <i>9 Heshvan</i> 7:15 AM Minyan 7:00 PM Me'ah classes				

**SINFUL DESSERTS
AND...
REPENTANCE**

An evening of community will usher in the Yomim Noraim for Congregation Or Zarua. Beginning at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, September 16, Congregants will gather for a dessert reception followed by Rabbi Wechsler's Selihot lecture on Rav Kook's kabbalistic ideas of repentance. At 10:00 p.m., Selihot services will be held in the sanctuary. Everyone is invited.

WWW.ORZARUA.ORG

Use our award-winning website to:

- View calendar and service times
- Sign up for meals and events
- Make donations online
- Learn about educational programs

**SELIHOT:
The Beginning of the Beginning**

By Ron Meyers

There are a few observances during the year that take us into the wee hours. Tikkun Leyl Shavuot is our small marathon of study as we celebrate the giving of the Torah. The Passover Haggadah recounts the ancient rabbis studying the Exodus until it was time for the morning Shema.

In contrast, our late-night Selihot service is not a run-on of enthusiastic study from the night before. It originated, rather, as an early, pre-dawn awakening in anticipation of the upcoming High Holy Days. It comes toward the end of the month of Elul, in which awakening ourselves is a key undertaking. We sound the shofar each morning to rouse our

consciences as we prepare for the approaching season of penitence.

Selihot occurs in the week before Rosh Hashanah, corresponding with the time which Jewish legend posits as the beginning of Creation (25 Elul). It is interesting to consider that Creation itself had a beginning. The text of Genesis—which in many modern translations opens with the words “At the beginning of God’s Creation”—reflects that even the beginning has a beginning. And as we look forward to a new beginning in the High Holy Days, Selihot is the beginning of our new beginning.

Selihot events will be held on Saturday, September 16 starting at 8:30 p.m.

OZ GOES WIRELESS Or Zarua has installed a wireless network that is accessible throughout the synagogue building. Bring your laptop and try it out! The OZ library is a relaxing place to spend some free time or do some work during the day.

Greetings from Rabbinic Intern Jeremy Yoskowitz

Shalom aleikhem from the beautiful North Woods of Wisconsin! I'd like to introduce myself to you and tell you how excited I am to be your rabbinic intern for this coming year. I've heard wonderful things about the Congregation and am very much looking forward to becoming a part of it.

Currently I'm at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, where I am serving as a teacher for 12- and 15-year-olds. I am also responsible for coordinating tefilot for the camp and for all B'nai Mitzvah tutoring. I've spent a great many summers here, and it is very much my second home.

This summer I came to camp almost straight from Israel, where I was studying at Machon Schechter with colleagues from around the world. The trip provided a marvelous opportunity to study Torah

in the locations recounted in the text.

This year I begin my fourth year of study at Jewish Theological Seminary, and I am in my second year of courses towards a Masters Degree in Jewish Education from the William B. Davidson School of Jewish Education. At the seminary, I also serve as the head mashgiah.

Prior to entering JTS, I graduated in 1997 from Washington University in St. Louis and worked in banking, project management, staff training and development, and database development.

I am quite excited to have the opportunity to learn from Rabbi Wechsler and spend time with the Or Zarua community. My classmate and friend Jeff Cymet has told me how incredible his experiences with you have been, and I can't wait to meet you all in the coming months.

READING HEBREW

Do you feel that it's too late to learn how to read Hebrew? Do you regret that you've never taken a course before and think it would be too difficult to start now? Then think again! Right before the High Holy Days, you will have an opportunity for Hebrew reading redemption. Join Mark Somerstein's crash course and learn to read Hebrew in five 90-minute sessions. The dates are: Wednesday, September 6; Monday and Tuesday, September 11 and 12; and Monday and Tuesday, September 18 and 19. Classes will begin at 6:45 p.m. and meet on the seventh floor at OZ. No previous knowledge is required and all materials will be provided.

Or Zarua Book Discussions

Please join our discussion of some wonderful Jewish books in the Or Zarua library on Sundays at 7:30 p.m. this fall. We welcome all Congregants and their guests.

On **September 17**, Or Zarua librarian, Yiddishist, and walking tour guide Barry Feldman will lead our discussion of *Born to Kvetch: Yiddish Language and Culture in All Its Moods*, by Michael Wex. A Jewish Week columnist, professor, translator, and stand-up comic, Wex has produced a treasure trove of linguistics, sociology, history and folklore that offers a humorous and fascinating look at how, through the centuries, this unique and enduring language has reflected an equally unique and enduring culture.

On **October 29**, Congregant and memoirist Mark Kinn will lead our discussion of a deeply moving family memoir, *Ester and Ruzya: How My Grandmothers Survived Hitler's War and Stalin's Peace*, by journalist Masha Gessen. Gessen peels back layers of secrecy



surrounding her grandmothers' lives, candidly describing their survival as young Jewish women in wartime Russia, how they crossed paths in Moscow, became the closest of friends, and learned to trust each other with their lives.

Their friendship, their children, their literary work, and a talent for skepticism helped them survive and eventually flourish through decades of anti-Semitism, fear, and privation. This memoir reads like a novel, an extraordinary testament to the bonds of family and the power of hope, love, and endurance.

Also, mark Sunday evening, **December 3** on your calendar for our discussion of Rebecca Goldstein's illuminating biography, *Betraying Spinoza*.

If you would like more information on Or Zarua book discussions or would like to be on our email roster to receive updates, contact Reed Schneider at (212) 860-8611 or arlm1199@aol.com.

ONE HUNDRED YEARS IN AMERICA

By Diane Okrent

Ellis Island records show that my paternal grandmother, Becky Klion Okrent, and her brother, Jack Klion, arrived in America on July 29, 1906. To celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of their arrival in America on Saturday, July 29, 2006, my husband, Aaron Shelden, and I sponsored a kiddush and hosted a luncheon for 38 relatives at our home.

The response from my family was overwhelming. I expected that only a dozen people would want to attend. A second cousin, whom I hadn't seen in 18 years, brought his family. Another cousin came from California, one of my father's first cousins drove down from New Hampshire, and yet another decided

on Friday morning to make the trip from Florida. We gathered to celebrate our establishment as an American family. Our Mayflower was a ship actually named *Amerika*.

When they arrived, Becky and Jack were 15 and 18, respectively. They had been sent from Odessa to an aunt in Port Chester. Both went to work. Within two years, they were able to bring over their parents and younger sister and brother. In time, Jack became a storekeeper in Westfield, New Jersey, and a founder of the town's first synagogue. Becky raised her family in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Even with some traveling distance between them, the family was very close-knit and has remained so. Jack and

Becky both lived well into their 80s.

In tributes to Jack and Becky, we talked about their leaving Odessa in order to perpetuate Jewish values and family values. Their children spoke of their overarching commitment to education. Together, Jack and Becky produced 51 direct descendants: 6 children, 16 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, and 2 great-great-grandchildren (to date). All of us are grateful for their courage, their wisdom, and the example of their lives.

Our family story is not unique. Life for Jews in Europe was always precarious, and most of our families came here within the last century. After a hundred years here, we feel secure. A century in America—something to celebrate!

SHABBAT USHERS NEEDED Please contact Phyllis Solomon (pslegal@aol.com) or Gerry Solomon (gsolomon2@aol.com).

HESED COMMITTEE EVENTS

Hesed is the expression of *gemilut hasadim*—loving kindness. According to *Pirkei Avot*, hesed is one of the three pillars upon which the world stands, and it is incumbent upon every Jew to participate in acts of hesed. The Or Zarua Hesed Committee leads various projects to assist the needy in our local community, in Israel, and throughout the world.

Our first committee meeting of the new year will take place on Wednesday, October 25 at 6:15 p.m. in the OZ social hall. Please join us to discuss ongoing projects and to share your compassion and desire to improve the lives of others. Pizza will be served. For more information, please contact Stephanie Failla at 212-480-0003 or civilib@aol.com, or Robin Blumenthal at 212-420-2942 or rblument@chpnet.org.

OR ZARUA AND DOROT:

A Tradition of Service to the East Side Community

On Sunday, September 17, in keeping with our Rosh Hashanah tradition, Congregation Or Zarua will once again join DOROT to help bring the warmth of good company plus hearty and nutritious packages of food to elderly residents on the East Side of Manhattan. This tradition is welcomed by many seniors who are alone and homebound. It provides a great opportunity to instill in our young people at an early age the importance of making hesed an integral part of their lives. Our visits are a memorable and rewarding experience for volunteers of all ages.

OZ participants will join DOROT at 11 a.m. at the Park Avenue Synagogue. (Or you can first daven at the Or Zarua minyan at 8:45 a.m. and accomplish two mitzvot in the same day!) Following a brief orientation, volunteers will be assigned a senior to visit for up to an hour.

DOROT—the Hebrew word for “generations”—is a multi-service agency that serves the elderly through a partnership between volunteers and professionals to foster interaction among generations. Or Zarua spearheaded the holiday package delivery program for elderly East Side residents, and we have

been a committed participant in this vital hesed activity for the past six years.

Please make your commitment early so DOROT will have sufficient time to match you with an elderly person to visit. If you would like to contribute just two hours of your time for this Hesed Committee activity, please contact Aaron Shelden at 212-734-2888, ashelden@aol.com, or call the Or Zarua office at 212-452-2310, extension 39. For more information about DOROT, visit www.dorotusa.org. Let's make an especially strong showing this year!

UNWANTED COMPUTERS NEEDED

Don't toss that computer into the landfill! Help disadvantaged adults in our neighborhood to join the digital mainstream. The Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter (NCS), one of our community partners on the Upper East Side, welcomes donations of used computers for its formerly homeless clients who are now in permanent housing. To donate IBM-compatible computers, monitors, keyboards and printers that are no more than five years old, contact Richard Stadin at 212-879-0448 or Stadin1@aol.com. Or Zarua volunteers with technical expertise, led by Noah Eisenbruch, will help arrange delivery, delete your data, and install the computer for NCS clients. If you know about computers and would like to volunteer for any or all of these tasks, please also contact Richard. This project, in addition to being environmentally responsible, is a great community service opportunity for student volunteers.

ENHANCE YOUR SPIRITUAL SEARCH

Would a better understanding of the texts enhance your High Holy Day experience? Our rabbinic intern, Jeremy Yoskowitz, will speak on “Where Are You? Self-Examination Through a Rabbinic Lens” on Monday, September 18 at 8:00 p.m.

Etrogim and Lulavim for Sukkot

The joyous holiday of Sukkot begins Friday evening, October 6. Congregation Or Zarua will arrange for the purchase of etrogim and lulavim. All orders are delivered in complete sets: etrog in a box, lulav with hadassim and aravot in a bag. Three different sets, each certified for use on Sukkot, are available:

- Standard Sets, \$48.00 each
- Muvchar (Choice) Sets, \$60.00 each
- Mehudar (Gorgeous) Sets, \$72.00 each

If you wish to purchase a set, please be sure that your order is received at the Or Zarua office by noon on Friday, September 29.

There are three easy ways to order etrogim and lulavim sets:

- Online: www.orzarua.org
- By fax: 212-452-2103
- By phone: 212-452-2310, x10

They may be picked up at the Or Zarua office on Thursday, October 5 from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. and Friday, October 6 from 8 a.m. until noon.

Be a Guest at Shabbat Across Or Zarua

By *Helene Wolff*

You are cordially invited to share Shabbat dinner at the home of another member of the synagogue at Shabbat Across Or Zarua on Friday, November 10. Singles, couples, families with children or without—members of all ages will be enthusiastically welcomed.

Each time I've been a guest at Or Zarua's annual observance of Jewish hospitality, I've had a great time. Last year, the weather was frigid, but the atmosphere at my Shabbat hosts' home was glowing. They made us feel like family.

The conversation was lively. I met people I hadn't known before and learned more about those I had only exchanged a few words with at synagogue. Two of the guests were pleasantly surprised to discover they had been in the same class at Hunter College.

Candles, wine, challah, the traditional blessings, and a delicious, gracious kosher dinner infused the evening with the special spirit of Shabbat. A memorable Shabbat like this can be yours by registering online at www.orzarua.org or calling the synagogue office at 212-452-2310, extension 39.

If you think asking to be a guest takes too much chutzpah, consider yourself already invited. Just sign up. We can't have Shabbat Across Or Zarua without a guest like you.

SHABBAT IN THE PARK • SEPTEMBER 9 AT 4:00 P.M.

Enter Central Park at East 79th Street and go to the bottom of Cedar Hill.

Bring a blanket to sit on and a dairy or pareve snack to share.

Please contact Meredith Katz at 212-879-5408 or 2mlk@netzero.com.

"WELCOME HOME TO OR ZARUA" SHABBAT

Saturday, September 16

Feed your soul—and your body, too! Join us on September 16 for a "Welcome Home" Kiddush Lunch after Shabbat to greet prospective members and to welcome existing members back to OZ from their summer vacations. This event will provide a wonderful opportunity to socialize a bit longer after services and introduce people to our Congregation. Please invite friends who may be interested in joining our community!

Services begin at 9:00 a.m., and a sumptuous kiddush lunch will follow. See you there!

CONGREGATION OR ZARUA

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