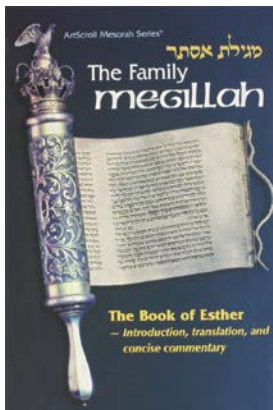




## How to Succeed in Shushan Without Really Kvetching! Purim 5781 is On-Line and so is the Spiel!

Thursday, February 25, 7:00 pm

Registration Link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZ2021Purim>



Or Zarua is on-line for this year's Purim celebration. Join us on Thursday evening, February 25, 7:00 pm by registering for the **Megillah** reading and **Purim Spiel: How to Succeed**

*in Shushan Without Really Kvetching.* Join with the OZ community for its first ever virtual Purim during this unique time in the world. Spin groggers (or bang on pots!) and make noise during our ZOOM Megillah reading and celebration. It will be the only time when we ask you to wear a mask while you're in your own home! (Any Purim costume will do!)

Join us at 7:00 pm when the fun starts with a festive Ma'ariv. Or L'Atid students will help introduce the Megillah reading, and we will chant the Megillah from ZOOM boxes. Everyone will be online! We are looking forward to the unique and creative production that our OZ Spielers have been rehearsing with writer-director Judy



Buchman-Ziv. It's a new world preparing for a ZOOM based parody play, but the spiel must go on!

As we sang in the finale of last year's Spiel, "They can't stop the Jews!" Come celebrate our raucous holiday in costume. Get your noise-maker ready and prepare to hear the parody-filled music of the on-line Purim Spiel. Register using the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZ2021Purim> and

contact us with any questions.

Shaharit for Purim will be on Friday morning, February 26, 7:15 am; use the standard daily minyan link which is: <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomDaily>. Note that registration is not required for the shaharit service.

Come for the "whole Megillah!" and join OZ on both Thursday evening and Friday morning!


An Additional Page of Purim Information is on Page 7

Or Zarua Art Gallery: *Creating the Marcus Megillah*, See Pages 4-5

Lucy S. Dawidowicz Lecture with Beth Berkowitz, PhD:  
*Are Pit Bulls Dangerous? Reflecting on Rabbinic Constructions of Risk*  
Thursday, February 4, 7:30 pm, See Page 3

Jewish History with Barry Feldman:  
*Landmark Books, Places & Moments in Jewish History*  
Two Sundays, February 7 & 21, 10 am, See Page 6

In-person services at OZ are now scheduled for every other Shabbat as well as every Wednesday morning. Please See Page 8.


  
**OrZarua**
  
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 FOUNDED 1989

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 New York, NY 10028  
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 DR. HARLAN J. WECHSLER, *Rabbi Emeritus*  
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 SIGAL HIRSCH, *Director of Youth Education  
 and Programming*  
 CHARLES SPIELHOLZ, *Newsletter Editor*

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AESTHETICS	<i>Aaron Shelden</i>
ART GALLERY	<i>Bobbi Coller</i>
BOOK DISCUSSION	<i>Reed Schneider Nora Yood</i>
BUILDING	<i>Gerry Solomon</i>
HESED	<i>Susan Lorin</i>
HEVRA KADISHA	<i>Roberta Hufnagel Gerry Solomon</i>
KESHER ISRAEL	<i>Laura Fisher</i>
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WEBMASTER	<i>Jay Palmer</i>
YOUTH EDUCATION	<i>Eric Schmutter</i>

*If you are interested in serving on a synagogue committee, please contact the office for the committee chair's email address.*

# President's Message

by Diane Okrent



Shabbat, February 29, 2020 was the last time I was at an in-person service in the Or Zarua building. Aaron and I will receive our second dose of the Pfizer COVID vaccine mid-February so we

hope to be at the in-person Shabbat service on February 27, 2021—almost a year to the day since the last time. Masked and socially-distanced, we will feel safe enough to be with other Congregants.

Like many OZ members, we have missed being together in person with other Congregants on Shabbat and holidays and for classes and events. We look forward to the time when we will be back in the building with other Congregants for all our communal celebrations and events.

In the meantime, like many of you, we have been participating in OZ services, classes, and events via Zoom. There are advantages to going to shul in our dining room. We don't have to get up so early and the weather does not adversely affect us. As I write this, it is snowing heavily but the weather did not affect morning minyan attendance.

As the pandemic has unfolded, Rabbi Bolton has encouraged reflections on davening at home. If you would like to contribute thoughts, please let me know. We can collect and publish them.

While I miss the experience of praying in the Or Zarua Sanctuary, I draw comfort and inspiration as I daven with photos of my parents and other family members in my line of sight. Several years ago, I started adding the matriarchs (Sara, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah) to the patriarchs (Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) at the beginning of my Amidah. Facing East in my dining room, I can look at photos of the women in my family as I invoke Sara (my mother), and Rebecca (my mother-in-law and my niece), and Rachel (another niece) and Leah (another niece).

On the same shelves, I see our collection of siddurim, chumashim, mahzorim, and a host of Jewish sources. To my right, I see pairs of brass candlesticks that belonged to two of my great-grandmothers. One pair was brought from Odessa more than 100 years ago (see photo). I use them every Shabbat. And, while we haven't had guests to share a meal (Shabbat or otherwise), we have shared Zoom meals from our dining table

with family and friends.

The Talmud teaches us that, with the destruction of the Second Temple, the Rabbis transposed the altar to the Jewish home, specifically "the table at which the family gathered to eat its communal meals." (Rabbi Ismar Schorsch, JTS Community Learning, March 20, 1999)

In addition to being the place where we share our meals, our dining table has become the setting for our davening and studying. I often think about the convenience of being able to rest my siddur on the table—it conjures scenes of heder study halls. This is how my ancestors, albeit only the males, studied our traditions.

Until we can come together in the OZ Sanctuary, I urge you to join our Zoom services, classes and programs. And, I encourage you to view the experience of davening and learning at home through the lens of rededicating your home as a sacred space.

Please join us this Thursday, February 4 for the annual Lucy Dawidowicz lecture to celebrate Or Zarua's 32nd birthday. On February 25, we will celebrate Purim with Zoom megillah reading and a Purim Spiel. And, join us every day for minyan, classes, and Zoom into and out of Shabbat.

Wishing you a healthy, happy and peaceful February,

*Diane*



**Lucy S. Dawidowicz Lecture with Beth Berkowitz, PhD**  
**Professor and Ingeborg Rennert Chair of Jewish Studies at Barnard College**  
***Are Pit Bulls Dangerous? Reflecting on Rabbinic Constructions of Risk***

**Thursday, February 4, 7:30 pm**

**Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/LucyD2021>**

**Zoom ID: 872 9441 1188; Zoom Passcode: 613**



**W**hen you think about it, animals have been at the core of much Jewish law and narrative.

Animals play a leading role in both Torah stories and the Talmudic legal system. From the Torah's history-altering snake in the Garden of Eden

and Bilaam's wondrous talking donkey, to the damage-causing goring ox in the Talmud, animals have been featured in our pivotal Jewish stories, halakhic regulations, and daily routines. They have been implicated in foundational sacred and mundane Jewish domains such as sacrifices, eating and torts. Talmudic rabbis even debated whether homicidal animals are entitled to a fair trial.

Yet animals have also been feared as dangerous, although our perceptions of danger have changed over time as political and cultural forces shifted. People used to fear bloodhounds; now they fear pit bulls. Animals in different times and places have been viewed variously as companions, sources of sustenance, fatal threats, and fellow creatures.

In this year's Lucy S. Dawidowicz Lecture,

entitled *Are Pit Bulls Dangerous? Reflecting on Rabbinic Constructions of Risk*, Professor Beth Berkowitz of Barnard College will explore the interaction of Jewish thought and animality, and illuminate what complex and evolving attitudes towards animals can teach us about ourselves.

Professor Berkowitz will highlight rabbinic notions of dangerous animals and accompanying risk that reflect varying approaches to the world around us. We will focus on a story in the Babylonian Talmud (Bava Kamma 80a-b) about a cat that attacks a baby at a bris and discuss elements of the rabbinic culture that may have enabled the attack and led to excessive legislation resulting from it. Focusing on this Talmudic story will allow us to clarify how rabbinic constructions of danger can help us reflect critically on our own assumptions about risk in everyday life and in the world at large.

Of course, our acceptance of or aversion to risk is a cutting-edge issue during this period of pandemic health crisis. Prudently managing and navigating risk is an ongoing contemporary concern. Gaining a better understanding of Jewish constructions of risk can provide useful guidance in today's perilous environment.

In furthering what is now a long series of distinguished scholars for our annual Lucy

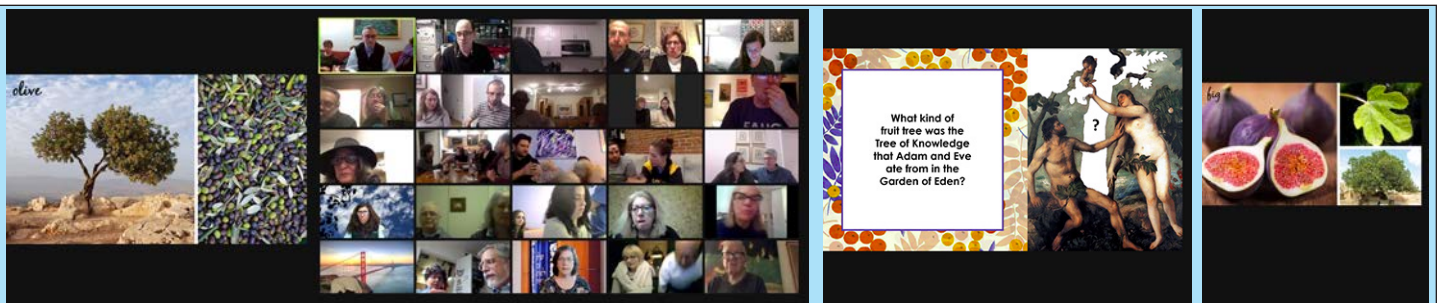
S. Dawidowicz Lecture, Professor Berkowitz is a preeminent leader in her field. She is Professor and Ingeborg Rennert Chair of Jewish Studies at Barnard College, with a specialization in classical rabbinic literature. She was previously a professor of Talmud and Rabbinics at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and has held post-doctoral fellowships in Yale University's Program in Judaic Studies, the University of Pennsylvania's Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, and New York University Law School's Tikvah Center for Law and Jewish Civilization. She is the author of *Execution and Invention: Death Penalty Discourse in Early Rabbinic and Christian Cultures* (Oxford University Press, 2006); *Defining Jewish Difference: From Antiquity to the Present* (Cambridge University Press, 2012); and *Animals and Animality in the Babylonian Talmud* (Cambridge University Press, forthcoming). She is also co-editor of *Religious Studies and Rabbinics: A Conversation* (Routledge, forthcoming). Her next book project will be a "biblical bestiary" that profiles the reception history of various animal characters in the Hebrew Bible.

Please join us for what should be an insightful exploration of ancient Jewish texts on a fascinating topic that bears relevance and resonance for our challenging times.

-Marc Ashley

**OZ has a YouTube Channel!**

**Go to: <https://tinyurl.com/OZonYouTube>**



**O**r Zarua's *A Tasting and Soiree for Tu B'Shevat*, hosted by Rabbi Bolton and Sigal Hirsch via our Zoom platform, taught us about the seven species. Each of the species used in the tasting was obtained from Israel and was as follows: wheat (hitah) as crackers; barley (se'orah) as malt beer and malted milk balls; grape (gefen) as grape juice and wine; fig (te'enhah) as dried figs; pomegranate (rimon) as dried pomegranate; olives (zayit) as green olives; date (tamar) as date spread.

# Online OZ Gallery For February Benjamin Marcus Creates Unique Illustrated Megillah



Megillah Esther - completed work (right side).

**Creating the Marcus Megillah** This beautifully illustrated *Megillat Esther* is the personal megillah of Jerome Marcus, an attorney in Pennsylvania and the brother of OZ's Benjamin Marcus. Benjamin—architect, graphic designer and illustrator, and our Shabbat Gabbai Sheini—decorated the scroll. It took a year of preparation—of study and research, of testing and working with different media, of sketching and planning—and more than a hundred hours of working on the parchment before Benjamin's vision was realized. Two years ago, Jerome purchased the base scroll from a sofer in Jerusalem and commissioned his brother to do the illustrations. Challenged to explore his own concerns about the history and tradition of Jewish art while also dealing with the ritual prescriptions for making megillot, Benjamin began his research. As *The Book of Esther* is set in ancient Persia, Benjamin looked to the Met's permanent collection of artworks from the sixth to fourth centuries BCE. There he found inspiration for patterns that would be the background of the megillah's panels, artwork that would provide context and a sense of historical accuracy.

To help Benjamin further understand the character of the Book of Esther, his brother gave him a commentary written by the 19th century commentator Malbim who, as Benjamin told Tablet magazine, "looks at the story essentially as a story of politics...about the bureaucracy that existed and the role it had in our near annihilation." Taking notes while reading the Malbim, Benjamin says, helped him work out the details of his visual storytelling.

-Text continued on the next page.



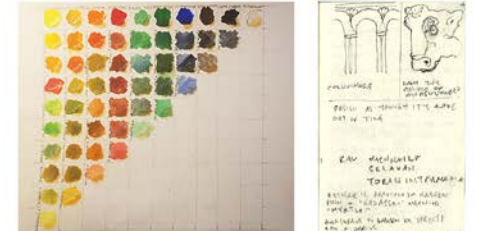
Inspirational artifacts from the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the NYU Institute for Study of the Ancient World.



Painting patterned background panels before returning to apply the figures.



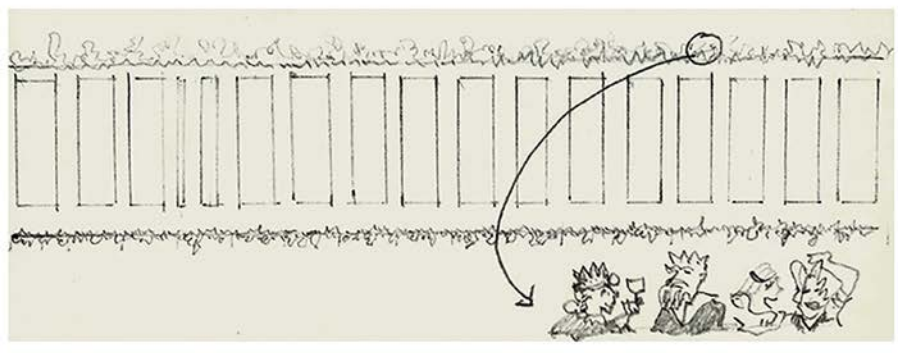
Testing paints & inks on klaf sample and mixing new colors of egg tempera.



Sketches at the Met.



Notes taken on the Malbim.



Sketching out the Megillah columns to plan figures.

-Image set continued on the next page.

# Online OZ Gallery For February Benjamin Marcus Creates Unique Illustrated Megillah



Megilat Esther - completed wok (left side).

The next step: understanding the conventions of illuminating a manuscript, the rules of working on animal-skin parchment, of Kashruth. Benjamin had to school himself in the practice of painting with egg tempera, not an easy medium to work with. Needing to practice on a spare sheet of kosher klaf parchment—which isn't easy to find—he finally located a sofer in Williamsburg. Next problem? Finding the sofer's exact address and, ".....even though he's living in the 21st century in Brooklyn, he doesn't speak any English," Benjamin said. Ultimately, they did find each other and figured out how to communicate.

A word about color scheme: Benjamin chose to illustrate a fable in which intrigue, extended feasts, and impending doom dominate the early narrative. "I started off illustrating the panels with neutral colors and then it slowly gets darker and darker as you go along," he says. Once Haman is foiled, the color scheme lightens, with more light blues and blends of orange and yellow. The end of the story is "majorly festive," says Benjamin, "with brighter colors and looser geometric patterns."

Reflecting on this years-long project Benjamin says it is the "process that interests me most. Art is about making things....knowing things, learning things. ....The artist, when he's successful, shows people how they have an innate ability to see, how to be able to engage with the world." And he adds, "When you do what you love, it goes into your head, it goes into your heart." Clearly, this illuminated manuscript, the "Marcus Megillah," comes from the heart and inspires the mind.

Yasher koach, Benjamin, and Hag Sameach Purim.

For more information, go to <https://www.benjaminmarcus.com/megillat-esther>.

-Gerry Solomon



The first feast.



Ahashverosh asks Haman what he thinks should be done for such a person who the king wants to honor; Haman answers that such a man should be led on a white horse through the kingdom (which Haman must then do for Mordechai).



Ahashverosh shocked to find Haman prostrate on the couch upon which Esther is lying.



Outside the palace gates the document declares the date of the 13th in ancient Persian cuneiform; Ahashverosh & Haman drinking together.



The ten sons of Haman put to death, (their hats on the ground below).

# Landmark Books, Places and Moments in Jewish History

## Jewish History with Barry Feldman

Sundays: February 7 & 21, 10–11:30 am

Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/JewishHistorywithBarry2021>

Zoom ID: 283 908 873; Zoom Passcode: 613

(Note that the sign-in credentials for Barry’s class are exactly the same as Sunday morning Zoom services)



This winter Or Zarua Congregant Barry Feldman is again leading a Jewish History course. The final two sessions of the course, *Landmark Books, Places and Moments in Jewish*

*History*, are independent of the initial sessions and are as follows:

**Session on February 7:**  
***South Carolina is the New Zion: Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, an American Synagogue in Transition.***

Following a brief discussion of Jewish

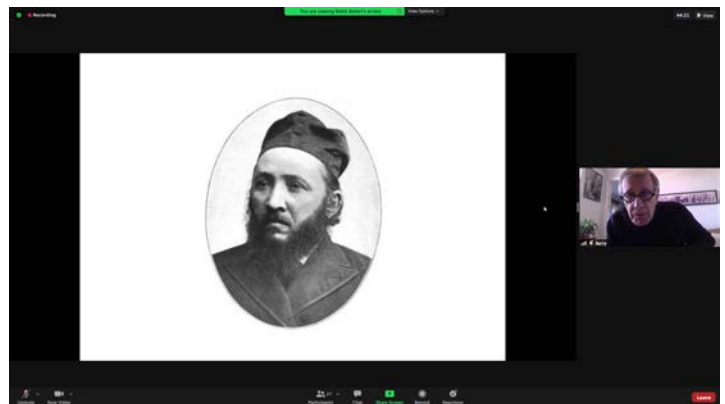
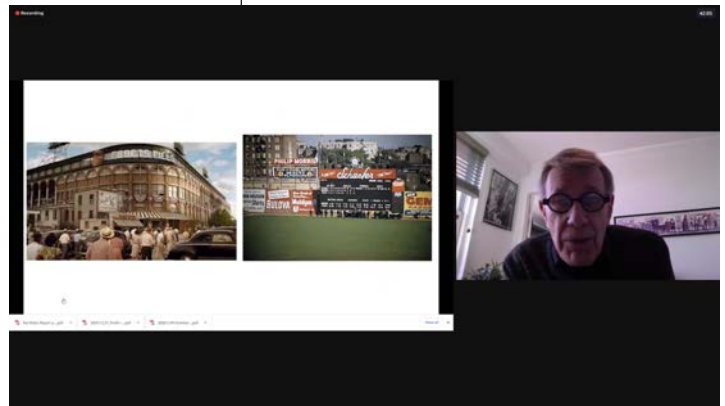
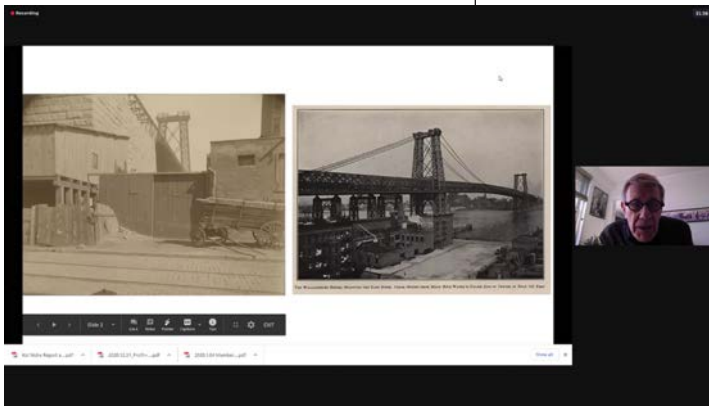
settlement in the colonial south, we will trace the transition from the congregation’s traditional Orthodox orientation to Reform Judaism, and back and forth to the vibrant present congregation.

**Session on February 21:**  
***An-Sky’s Expedition, “The Dark Continent”: An Exploration Into the Past Folklore of Eastern Europe.***

At the turn of the 20th century, Shloyme Zanvl Rappaport, aka Szymon An-Sky, journalist, ethnographer, dramatist (*The Dybbuk*) recognized that the diminished shtetlach of Jewish eastern Europe were disappearing along with generations of folklore. This class will discuss An-Sky

ethnographic investigation, the questions asked, the origins of traditional practices, rituals and superstitions. References include “*The Dark Continent*” written by Nathan Deutsch and the notes of Avrom Rechtman, an original expedition ethnographer.

Barry is an urban historian, museum educator, and licensed New York City tour guide. He has created and developed tours of the Jewish Lower East Side, Jewish Harlem, and other New York neighborhoods. He has been teaching at OZ since 2014. Barry’s classes are open to all. Prior knowledge is not required, and you may attend any or all sessions. We hope to see you this year, via Zoom, as we continue to study NYC Jewish history with Barry.



Previous Zoom classes with Barry Feldman in the *Landmark Books, Places and Moments in Jewish History* series were: (photos on top) *The Second Great Migration: Moving out of the Lower East Side to Greater New York* and (photos on bottom) *Let’s Revisit The Kosher Meat Boycott*.



## Attention!! Purim Issue Contributions Needed!!

Or Zarua will publish a Purim issue of the OZ Newsletter. To help with this critically acclaimed monument to literature and news we need your goofy contributions. If you wish to contribute please contact either Raanan Korinow (raanan.korinow@gmail.com) or Charlie Spielholz (CharlesSpielholz@gmail.com).



## Popcorn & Pizza For Purim!

On Purim day, Friday, February 26th, come to the OZ lobby to pick up your sweets and a coupon for a slice of pizza pie from Saba's! Reserve using this link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZ2021PurimOnline> In addition, you can drop off your Matanot L'Evyonim (gifts for the poor) in our oversized tzedakah box.

## Purim Events for Youth

Weekend Update—Purim Edition  
Purim Puppet Pegillah

Please see Page 12



## Hamentaschen Bake with Sigal Tuesday, February 23, 5:00 pm All are invited!

Join Sigal to get ready for Purim with a Hamentaschen Bake. Make your own Hamentaschen with a variety of fillings. Use them to fill Mishloach Manot for socially-distant friends and family, or keep them to enjoy yourself! The whole community is invited to bake with Sigal. No baking experience required. Make your first Hamentaschen ever, or enjoy baking your annual batch with other OZ-ers.

Register to receive the Zoom information:  
<https://tinyurl.com/HamentaschenWithSigal>

In advance of the event, Sigal will send a list of ingredients and supplies needed to all registrants.



## Purim Package: The Whole Megillah is Coming Your Way!

So that you can follow along with the megillah reading online, we are sending one copy of the Megillah and graggers to each member household, along with a small nosh. If you would like to pick up your package in

person or if you would like to have it sent to an alternate address, please submit the information using the Purim 2021 Form, by February 10, using the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZ2021PurimOnline>



## Matanot L'Evyonim: Help the hungry in our community.

Observe the Purim mitzvah of Matanot L'aEvyonim, giving gifts to the needy. While at OZ for Pizza and Popcorn, drop a donation in our tzedakah box, send a check made out to Or Zarua with "Matanot

LaEvyonim" in the memo line or donate online through ShulCloud:  
<https://tinyurl.com/OZ2021MLE>

## Purim Campus Connection

Or Zarua strives to maintain contact with our young adults who are away at college. For Purim, we send a "holiday package" to remind them that they are still part of our extended family. This year Purim is Friday, February 26. If your children at college have received a package from OZ for Hanukkah this year, they will receive a Purim package. However, if your children are not in our College Connection file or if their college address has changed, and you would like them to receive a free package, please reply to Deborah Wenger, at [dwenger@orzarua.org](mailto:dwenger@orzarua.org) or 212-452-2310, ext 12, by Thursday, February 4, with their names, and complete school addresses. Also, please include their email addresses and cell phone numbers so that Rabbi Bolton can stay in touch with them.

# In-Person Services have Resumed On Alternate Shabbatot and on Wednesday Mornings

## Pre-Registration for each day is Required

On the following Shabbatot in February OZ will have an in-person service beginning at 10:00 am and ending at 12 noon:  
February 13  
February 27

In order to attend the in-person service on Shabbat one must pre-register; to register please use the following link:  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZPerson>

For in-person services on Shabbat after February 27, see upcoming issues of the OZ Newsletter and eblasts. Note that Shabbat services will not be available via Zoom.

On Wednesdays at 7:15 am the Shaharit (morning) service will be available either in-person or via Zoom (a “hybrid” service).

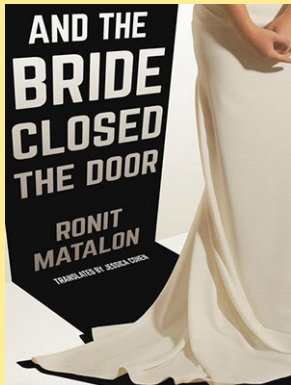
For participants attending the service via Zoom, you will be joining the participants attending in-person in the OZ Sanctuary.

To attend in-person you must pre-register using the following link:  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZPerson>

To attend the Wednesday morning service via Zoom please continue to use the Zoom credentials that have already been established for participation in the Monday-Friday daily morning service:  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomDaily>  
**Zoom ID: 518 639 181; Zoom Password: 613**

- When registering for in-person services, answers to several questions must be provided.
- Be sure to bring preferred ritual items (e.g., tallit, tefillin, head covering) as these items will not be available due to current safety procedures.
- For in-person services, please plan to arrive early enough to find seats that allow for social distancing before services begin.
- Remember to keep your mask on over your nose and mouth while you are in the building.

## Or Zarua Book Discussions



*And the Bride Closed the Door*  
by Ronit Matalon  
Sunday, February 21, 7:00 pm  
Moderator: Volunteer Appreciated  
Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZBkDisc>  
Meeting ID: 840 2954 6173  
Passcode: 613

This riotous satire of wedding-day jitters is an absurdist comedy of contemporary Israeli family life. It takes place in Tel Aviv and begins with Margie making a big announcement through her bedroom door: “Not getting married.” However, look deeper and it can also stand as a parable of a country divided. Elusive yet powerful, by turns laugh-out-loud funny and tragically sad. Join us on Zoom for this perfectly relevant pre-Purim discussion.

### Upcoming Titles

*The Last Trial of Kafka* by Benjamin Balint  
Sunday, April 18, 7:00 pm  
Discussion to be led by Rabbi Bolton

*Apeirogon* by Colum McCann  
Sunday, May 23, 7:00 pm

Meeting and background information for upcoming book discussions will be published in future issues of the OZ Newsletter.  
If you would like to be a discussion leader please contact Nora Yood via email:  
[nbmjdy@gmail.com](mailto:nbmjdy@gmail.com)

## ZOOM Into OZ’s Daily Shaharit Minyan

Monday-Friday, 7:15 am  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomDaily>  
**Zoom ID: 518 639 181**  
**Zoom Password: 613**

Sundays, 8:45 am  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomSunday>  
**Zoom ID: 283 908 873**  
**Zoom Password: 613**

## ZOOM Into & Out of Shabbat with OZ

Zoom into Shabbat on Friday Nights  
See Calendar for times  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomIntoShabbat>  
**Zoom ID: 854 630 476**  
**Zoom Password: 613**

Zoom out of Shabbat on Saturday Nights  
See Calendar for times  
**Link:** <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomOutOfShabbat>  
**Zoom ID: 775 962 249**  
**Zoom Password: 613**



# Or Zarua Community Torah Study

**Mondays, 12:00 pm (see the calendar in this newsletter)**

**Zoom Link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZMondayTorahStudy>**

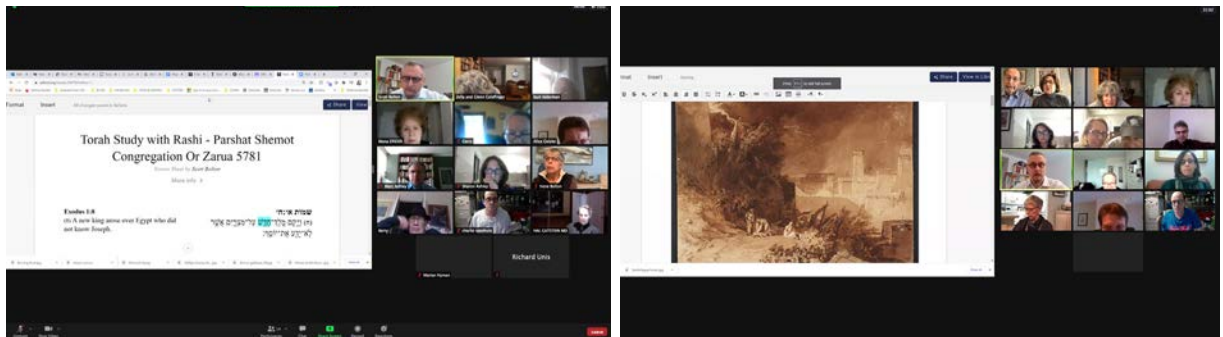
**Zoom ID: 8152 249 6147; Passcode: 613**

The mishnah in Avot (1:15) states: "Shammai says: Make your Torah keva" (keva meaning fixed: make your study of Torah a fixed and routine habit!) This is one area of Jewish life when we rule like Beit Shammai! At Or Zarua we not only fix a time for Torah study; annually we choose a Torah commentator to study together in depth. This approach is not typical to Jewish communities around the globe but a wonderful and unique feature of the Or Zarua experience.

While we are taking walks and fortifying in new ways (thank God for quiet reading and study time as well as our parks) on Shabbat mornings, the Or Zarua community is invited to take a break from normal Monday endeavors and join for communal Torah study on Mondays at noon. Rabbi Bolton will teach from the weekly parashah and explore Rashi's commentaries that illuminate the text and make evident what Rashi intended to accomplish as he taught Torah in his Diaspora community of Troyes, France in the 11th Century.

We pride ourselves as a congregation on having weekly, interactive Torah study. Join with other congregants and Rabbi Bolton as he leads learning and discussion of the weekly parashah. The classic commentary of Rashi is thought of as foundational and central to understanding Torah's words and narratives.

Additionally, Rabbi Bolton will show how some of Rashi's comments speak to psychological or existential issues that Jews of medieval France faced and modern NYC folks still contend with.



Scenes from Community Torah study at OZ via Zoom. Each Monday Rabbi Bolton leads a Torah study session covering the parashah (section) to be read on the following Shabbat. As a bonus a piece of art work related to parashah is included. Above left: Shemot. Above right: Bo.

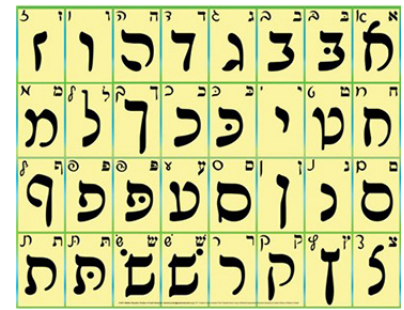


Image above: Did you know that "Rashi Script" was not Rashi's handwriting but an early printer's font that differentiated commentary from Torah text in early volumes?

## Talmud and Siddur Classes with Rabbi Bolton

**Talmud Class for 5781**  
**Wednesdays, 7:30–9:00 pm**  
**See the Calendar for Dates**

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZWedTalmudClass>  
 Zoom ID: 858 1909 5662; Passcode: 613

**Jews in a Non-Jewish World: Idol Worship and Living With Others. Chapter 1 of Masekhet Avodah Zarah**

Throughout history, Jews have maintained strong religious beliefs and cultural ties. The Talmudic Sages, through the paradigm of exploring the mitzvah of refraining from and even abolishing idol worship, confront us with questions: how do we, as Jews, navigate living in a non-Jewish world? How much interaction and integration is acceptable, when it comes to business or socializing with neighbors? Should there be any limits? The Rabbis' discussions and debates about the prohibition against idol worship is engaged as a framework of thought concerning the Jewish People's place among the nations of the world. From the beginning of Tractate Avodah Zarah (Idol Worship) the Sages expand on laws that seem black and white on their face but move us into discussions about living in the complex world of kaleidoscopic humanity. Join the learning no matter what your background. Students may use either the *Artscroll Schottenstein Volume 1 Avodah Zarah* or the *Koren Talmud Bavli Avoda Zara -Horayot*. Class meets at 7:30 pm on Wednesday evenings throughout the year.

*Either class may be joined at any time. For additional information contact Rabbi Bolton ([rabbibolton@orzarua.org](mailto:rabbibolton@orzarua.org))*

**Siddur Class for 5781**  
**Thursdays, 8:40–9:40 am**  
**See the Calendar for Dates**

Link: <https://tinyurl.com/OZZoomSiddur>  
 Zoom ID: 832 425 240; Passcode: 613

**"I Thought the Service Was Over!"**  
**Readings, Songs and Passages of Study After the Official Morning Prayers**

The Siddur is not only a prayerbook but a repository for passages of study, hymns to sing, and glorious, poetic songs. We will study passages from the Rambam such as the Thirteen Principles of Faith, collections of Torah verses prepared for the worshipper who wanted to go right to study after prayers and other materials that were inserted into the post-service sections of printed siddurim stemming from manuscripts of the Middle Ages. Of course, already in the Talmud, certain Sages would add personal prayers and pleas of their own after their recitations of the Amidah. Those personal prayer passages have made their way into some prayer rites at the end of morning services as well. They stand on their own as petitionary poetry, and we will study them as stand alone liturgy. In this class we sing, listen to the music of prayer, discuss prayer life and examine prayer language closely. Gain understandings and add meaning to prayer life. Join us at 8:40 am on Thursdays.

# From Compassion to Action: OZ Hessed Opportunities

“The reward for charity depends entirely upon the extent of the kindness in it.”—Talmud Bavli

## New York Common Pantry Helping the Hungry

Our long-time partner has remained open and is deemed an essential service during the COVID-19 crisis. They are seeing huge demand for their services. The best way to help is to make a donation through our Hessed Fund. You can learn more about the Pantry here: <http://nycommonpantry.org>.

You can also donate needed pantry staples—particularly rice and pasta—via the Pantry’s Amazon list. While Or Zarua has not resumed in-person Hessed activities due to the pandemic, please note that NYCP posts its volunteer shifts at [www.nycommonpantry.org](http://www.nycommonpantry.org). Volunteers can manage their own sign-ups and signing-in is done electronically as well. Shifts are 3.5 hours and include lifting 30 pound bags of groceries. Before arrival, volunteers need to know their user name and password for Volunteer Hub as it is used for sign in. It’s easy to reset your password if needed. When you arrive, please head straight to the pantry. For more information, contact Stacy at [sgonzalez@nycommonpantry.org](mailto:sgonzalez@nycommonpantry.org).

## Volunteer to help pack groceries at a Met Council pantry and distribute to a Senior Residence on the Upper East Side

The OZ Hessed committee is working with the Metropolitan New York Coordinating

Council on Jewish Poverty (Met Council) on a new project to bring food to Seniors. We will be packing groceries at a Met Council pantry (Lexington Avenue and 31st Street) for delivery to and distribution at a Senior Residence on East 92nd Street. This monthly project, which began on Sunday, January 24, is set to continue on Sunday, February 21 and the final Sunday of each month thereafter. Individuals and families are welcome to volunteer. If interested please contact Jeff Haberman at: [jeff32449@verizon.net](mailto:jeff32449@verizon.net) or (917) 697-1677.

## Thursday Night Pasta and Salad at the Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter

Unfortunately, because of the spike in COVID cases, NCS has reinstated its policy of not having volunteers on site at the residence on 81st Street, so that volunteers are not needed at this time. However, please look for further notices for when volunteers may once again go to 81st Street to package or serve food. Donations to the Hessed Fund are needed. To volunteer when NCS is able to resume operations please contact Jeff Haberman at [jeff32449@verizon.net](mailto:jeff32449@verizon.net).

## Volunteer to make Friendly Phone Calls to Seniors

Help homebound seniors stay connected. Isolated seniors have been hit hard by the pandemic. Encore Community Services, a wonderful nonprofit in midtown Manhattan, is seeking Friendly Callers to reach out on a weekly basis by phone to homebound seniors. They are serving 2,000 seniors and need more volunteers. If you are interested please contact Gigi Verkaik at [gigi@encorenyc.org](mailto:gigi@encorenyc.org) for more information.

## Or Zarua Hessed Fund

Please consider making a donation to the OZ Hessed Fund using Shulcloud (<https://tinyurl.com/OZDonationPage>) for disbursement to our partners. You may learn more about them at the links below:

**New York Common Pantry:** <http://nycommonpantry.org>

**Met Council for Jewish Poverty:** <https://www.metcouncil.org>

**Project ORE:** <https://edalliance.org/our-programs/community-centers/project-ore>

**Food Bank for New York City:** <https://www.foodbanknyc.org>

**UJA Federation of New York:** <https://www.ujafedny.org>

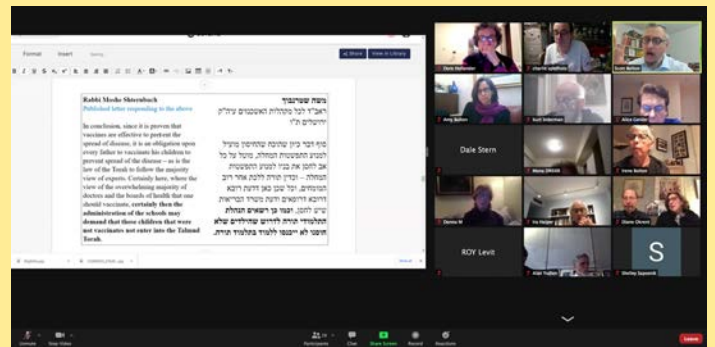
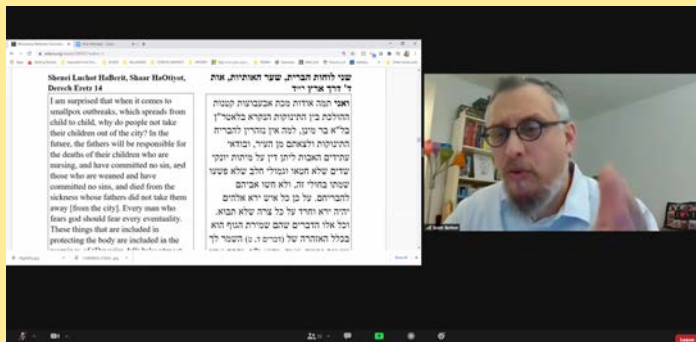
**Leket, Table to Table (Israeli):** <https://www.leket.org/en/>

# Or Zarua’s New Accounting Team

Or Zarua is pleased to announce that we have engaged the services of ShulSource, a firm that specializes in outsourced synagogue financial bookkeeping, as our new accounting team. Based in Baltimore, their team has expertise in ShulCloud, QuickBooks, and the unique needs of a congregation using these tools. They will function as part of our team, working hand in hand with Helene and Deborah in the Or Zarua office on financial matters and related tasks. To reach them with questions related to your ShulCloud balances, statements, or payment schedules you can either email [accounting@orzarua.org](mailto:accounting@orzarua.org) or call 516-399-4613. Rachelle is our assigned bookkeeper and Azi and his team will be working with Rachelle to support the needs of our synagogue.

## Miraculous Medicine: Vaccinations, Midrash and Jewish Law

Source Sheet by Scott Bolton with thanks to many who compiled sources on vaccination on Sefaria. More info >



A recording of Rabbi Bolton’s presentation *Miraculous Medicine: Vaccinations, Midrash, and Jewish Law* is on YouTube and can be found by clicking: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VlhH1kdlxAw>.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	<b>1 • 19 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 12:00p Community Torah Study 4:00p Hebrew School: K-5th Grades 6:30p B'nei Mitzvah Scholars: 6th-7th Grades	<b>2 • 20 Shevet t</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom)	<b>3 • 21 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Hybrid Service: in-person with pre-registration or Zoom) 4:00p Hebrew School: 3rd-5th Grades 7:15p 8th-9th Grade Hebrew 7:30p Talmud Class	<b>4 • 22 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 8:40a Siddur Class 4:00p Aleph-Bet Cooking & Cookies 7:30p Lucy S. Dawidowicz Lecture with Professor Beth Berkowitz: <i>Are Pit Bulls Dangerous? Reflecting on Rabbinic Constructions of Risk</i>	<b>5 • 23 Shevet t</b> 7:15a Shaharit 4:15p Zoom into Shabbat 5:00p Candlelighting	<b>6 • 24 Shevet Yitro</b> 5:57p Shabbat Ends 6:05p Zoom Out of Shabbat
<b>7 • 25 Shevet</b> 8:45a Shaharit (Zoom) 10:00a Jewish History with Barry Feldman: <i>South Carolina is the New Zion: Kahal Kadosh Beth Elohim, an American Synagogue in Transition</i> 4:00p Bir'nana Rehearsal	<b>8 • 26 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 12:00p Community Torah Study 4:00p Hebrew School: K-5th Grades 6:30p B'nei Mitzvah Scholars: 6th-7th Grades	<b>9 • 27 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 4:00p Weekend Update-Purim Edition Preparation	<b>10 • 28 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Hybrid Service: in-person with pre-registration or Zoom) 4:00p Hebrew School: 3rd-5th Grades 7:15p 8th-9th Grade Hebrew 7:30p Talmud Class	<b>11 • 29 Shevet</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 8:40a Siddur Class 4:00p Aleph-Bet Cooking & Cookies 5:00p Start Spreading the Jews! Cooking with Sigal 6:00p Start Spreading the Jews! Class with Rabbi Bolton	<b>12 • 30 Shevet Rosh Hodesh</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 4:15p Zoom into Shabbat 5:08p Candlelighting	<b>13 • 1 Adar Rosh Hodesh Shabbat Shekalim Mishpatim</b> 10:00a In-Person Shabbat Service: Pre-registration required (No Zoom Service) 6:06p Shabbat Ends 6:15p Zoom Out of Shabbat
<b>14 • 2 Adar</b> 8:45a Shaharit (Zoom) 4:00p Bir'nana Rehearsal	<b>15 • 3 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 12:00p Community Torah Study <i>No Hebrew School</i> <i>OZ Office Closed</i>	<b>16 • 4 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom)	<b>17 • 5 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Hybrid Service: in-person with pre-registration or Zoom) 4:00p Purim Package Pickup (until 6:00p) 7:30p Talmud Class <i>No Hebrew School</i>	<b>18 • 6 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 8:40a Siddur Class <i>No Aleph-Bet Cooking and Cookies</i>	<b>19 • 7 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 4:30p Zoom into Shabbat 5:17p Candlelighting	<b>20 • 8 Adar Shabbat Zahor Terumah</b> 6:13p Shabbat Ends 6:20p Zoom Out of Shabbat
<b>21 • 9 Adar</b> MET Council Volunteers 8:45a Shaharit (Zoom) 10:00a Jewish History with Barry Feldman: <i>An-Sky's Expedition, "The Dark Continent": An exploration Into the Past Folklore of Eastern Europe</i> 4:00p Bir'nana Rehearsal	<b>22 • 10 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 10:00a Purim Package Pickup (until 2:00p) 12:00p Community Torah Study 4:00p Hebrew School: K-5th Grades 6:30p B'nei Mitzvah Scholars: 6th-7th Grades	<b>23 • 11 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 10:00a Purim Package Pickup (until 2:00p) 4:00p Weekend Update-Purim Edition Preparation 5:00 pm Hamentaschen Bake with Sigal	<b>24 • 12 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Hybrid Service: in-person with pre-registration or Zoom) 4:00p Hebrew School: 3rd-5th Grades 7:15p 8th-9th Grade Hebrew 7:30p Talmud Class	<b>25 • 13 Adar Ta'anit Esther/Erev Purim</b> 5:23a Fast begins 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 8:40a Siddur Class. 6:13p Fast Ends 7:00p Weekend Update-Purim Edition 7:00p Purim Services & Spiel beginning with the reading of the Megillah	<b>26 • 14 Adar Purim</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 11:00a Purim Puppet Pegillah 12:00p Pizza & Popcorn for Purim 4:30p Zoom into Shabbat 5:25p Candlelighting	<b>27 • 15 Adar Tetzaveh</b> 10:00a In-Person Shabbat Service: Pre-registration required (No Zoom Service) 6:21p Shabbat Ends 6:30p Zoom Out of Shabbat
<b>28 • 16 Adar Shushan Purim</b> 8:45a Shaharit (Zoom) <i>No Bir'nana Rehearsal</i>	<b>1 • 17 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 12:00p Community Torah Study 4:00p Hebrew School: K-5th Grades 6:30p B'nei Mitzvah Scholars: 6th-7th Grades	<b>2 • 18 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom)	<b>3 • 19 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Hybrid Service: in-person with pre-registration or Zoom) 4:00p Hebrew School: 3rd-5th Grades 7:15p 8th-9th Grade Hebrew 7:30p Talmud Class	<b>4 • 20 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit (Zoom) 8:40a Siddur Class	<b>5 • 21 Adar</b> 7:15a Shaharit 4:30p Zoom into Shabbat 5:33p Candlelighting	<b>6 • 22 Adar Bat Mitzvah: Sonia Kranich Shabbat Parah Ki Tissa</b> 6:29p Shabbat Ends 6:35p Zoom Out of Shabbat

Be sure to check the Or Zarua Website ([www.orzarua.org](http://www.orzarua.org)) and the weekly eblasts for updates to the calendar.

Except as noted in-person services are temporarily suspended and are being conducted virtually via Zoom; all in-person services require registration with OZ prior to attending.



Above: Students are getting ready for Purim in Hebrew School! Their silly Queen Esther puppets are ready for Megillah reading.



Above: Tu B'Shevat connected us with the earth and with Eretz Yisrael. Students made Herzl Chia heads, and planted arugula sprouts. They're excited to watch them grow.



Above: Students explored Parashat Yitro with a video from BimBam, and then explored why Yitro was so important to Moses and the Israelites.

For information about Youth Education and Programming contact Sigal Hirsch, Director, at [shirsch@orzarua.org](mailto:shirsch@orzarua.org) or 212-452-2310, ext 15.

**Celebrate Purim with Or Zarua**



**Hamentaschen Bake with Sigal**  
**Tuesday, February 23, 5:00 pm**  
**All are invited!**

Join Sigal to get ready for Purim with a Hamentaschen Bake. Make your own Hamentaschen with a variety of fillings. Use them to fill Mishloach Manot for socially-distant friends and family, or keep them to enjoy yourself! The whole community is invited to bake with Sigal. No baking experience required. Make your first Hamentaschen ever, or enjoy baking your annual batch with other OZ-ers.

Register to receive the Zoom information:  
<https://tinyurl.com/HamentaschenWithSigal>

In advance of the event, Sigal will send a list of ingredients and supplies needed to all registrants.



**Weekend Update—Purim Edition**  
**Thursday, February 25 7:00 pm**  
**Preparation Dates: Tuesdays, February 9 & 23, 4:00 pm**

Kids of all ages are invited to participate in **Weekend Update—Purim Edition!**

Add lots of laughs to the community-wide Purim celebration on Thursday, February 25, with original hysterical headlines!

Our performers will join Sigal on Tuesdays, February 9 and February 23, at 4:00 pm to write our own Purim headlines. We'll put them together for a fun newscast to introduce and wrap up our Megillah reading.

Email Sigal, [shirsch@orzarua.org](mailto:shirsch@orzarua.org), by Monday, February 8, to sign up! For more information about the Megillah reading and community-wide Purim celebrations, see page 1.

**Purim Puppet Pegillah**  
**Friday, February 26, 11:00 am**

Little ones are invited to join Sigal and Rabbi Bolton for a Zoom Pegillah... oh wait, MEGILLAH extravaganza! Experience a puppet show like no other as we learn the Purim story together. Kids and parents are invited to dress up in costume! Grandparents, aunts, uncles, and of course, older siblings, are welcome.



Geared towards early childhood. Register at: <https://tinyurl.com/OZPegillah> for Zoom information.

**Our new semester is underway!  
It's not too late to sign up.**



**Thursdays, 4:00-4:45 pm  
Time to get cooking with  
ALEPH-BET Cooking and Cookies!**

Please note, class will not meet on February 18 or 25. Instead, join Sigal on February 23 for the Hamentaschen Bake!

Cook and bake your way from Aleph-to-Tav with delicious alphabetical confections. With Sigal's instruction, you'll learn new recipes and new Hebrew words each week.

**Kids kindergarten and older are welcome.  
Younger children will require adult participation or supervision.  
For kids of ALL educational backgrounds!  
This is not a Hebrew School program.**

Bring the joy of Jewish and Hebrew baking into your home with this new virtual after-school program! Ingredient and supplies lists will be provided in advance, along with information about where to purchase special supplies when needed.

**Families can sign up for the semester (Now through June) or drop in for one class**

\$10 per class

Member Families: \$100 for the semester

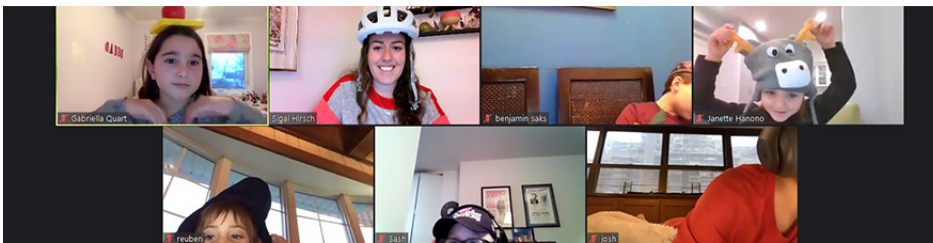
Non-Member Families: \$120 for the semester

Please note all registration fees are per household.

Families can enroll multiple children for one fee.

**Refer a friend to a program and sign up for free if they register for the class!**

Visit <https://www.orzarua.org/or-latid/after-school-programs/> for more information and to sign up!



**We eat apples and honey on Yom Kippur.**



**Thursday,  
February 11**

**5:00 pm  
Cooking with Sigal**

**6:00 pm  
Class with Rabbi Bolton**

For Middle School and High School Students

**Join Rabbi Bolton for his class:  
"Start Spreading the Jews! We want to be a part of it, New York, NY..."**

**Class dates for the rest of the year  
have been scheduled!  
February 11, March 11, April 8, May 6**

Come explore the kaleidoscope of Jewish New Yorkers on this culinary and historical journey. When did they get here? By choice or chance? What tastes did they establish for all of New York? How did their new situation get reflected in media and on Broadway? Each session will feature a taste of Jewish New York and an exploration of the various Jewish communities that make up the larger Jewish community of the Big Apple (and honey, of course)!

Sign up for the year,  
or to drop in for a class:  
<https://tinyurl.com/StartSpreadingJews>

Left: Our younger students had a blast with *The Hat Game*, reviewing what we learned so far this year about the holidays.

# The Or Zarua Community

Fund contributions received between December 5, 2020 and January 1, 2021

**OZ's Young Professionals** are a group in their 20s and 30s committed to building a welcoming and vibrant Jewish community within Or Zarua. For more details, follow their Facebook page (Or Zarua Young Professionals). Contact OZ's Young Professionals with any questions, suggestions, or just to say hi via email: [OZYoungPros@gmail.com](mailto:OZYoungPros@gmail.com).

## Celebrate a Birthday or Anniversary with OZ: Be a Virtual Sponsor

Sponsor a Zoom program or minyan at Or Zarua to celebrate a birthday or anniversary with fellow Congregants or as a meaningful way to remember a loved one. Contact Deborah Wenger ([dwenger@orzarua.org](mailto:dwenger@orzarua.org)) for details.

## Helping Or Zarua

**O**r Zarua is a vibrant community, and all communities need their members. Here are some quick and easy ways to help:

Choose to pay via ACH when paying online. This is a direct debit from your checking account. It saves the congregation credit card transaction fees.

Still want to pay via credit card? Choose to include the transaction fee in your payment. This ensures that the entire payment comes to OZ.

Start your **shopping at Amazon Smile!** Go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) when you shop on Amazon and choose Or Zarua as your beneficiary. Then shop as usual. OZ earns a percentage of every eligible purchase.

Sponsor a lecture, Shabbat Zoom, or other program. Our online programming has been varied and well attended. This will defray the costs to the congregation of having these wonderful events. Please contact Helene Santo for more information.

## The Or Zarua Social Hall will be available to rent once NYC is no longer (semi)-paused

Contact Helene Santo, 212-452-2310, ext 14, for information.

**Visit OZ on the Web!**  
Go to <https://orzarua.org>



**CONGREGATION OR ZARUA**  
127 East 82nd Street  
New York, NY 10028-0807

## Or Zarua's Memorial Wall

For information about plaques for our Memorial Wall, please contact Helene Santo at [hsanto@orzarua.org](mailto:hsanto@orzarua.org) or 212-452-2310, ext 14. We will place another order when we have sufficient interest.

Order forms are available online at <http://tinyurl.com/OZMemorialPlaque> or from the OZ office by calling Deborah Wenger at 212-452-2310, ext 12.



**Get Social:** Follow us on social media to learn, participate, and connect.

Find us on Facebook as Congregation Or Zarua, on Instagram as @or\_zarua and on Twitter as @Or\_Zarua.

## Help Keep Our Daily Minyan Strong Even on Zoom

Please donate ONE HOUR • ONE MORNING per month to our Shaharit minyan. Contact Sheldon Adler: [sadler@skadden.com](mailto:sadler@skadden.com)  
See Zoom Details on Page 8.



Join us for Zoom Out of Shabbat just after the Sabbath ends which includes: Havdalah, songs to start the week, a prayer for those who are ill, and Kaddish when we have a minyan to remember loved ones. See the blue boxes on page 8 for Zoom sign-in details.

# Sing Out With Bir'nana!



**P**andemic schmandemic! Bir'nana, Or Zarua's a cappella group, has been meeting via Zoom to learn new music, revisit our oldies but goodies, and keep up the musical community we've built over the last seven years. We're on hiatus now, but virtual rehearsals will resume after the holidays. If you love to sing—and that's the only qualification—please join us. For more information, contact Rabbi Amy Bolton ([rabamy@gmail.com](mailto:rabamy@gmail.com)) or Dore Hollander ([dore.hollander@gmail.com](mailto:dore.hollander@gmail.com)).