



From the
Beit Midrash of
Rav Julius



Lifelong Learning as a Journey of Heart and Mind

Having recently survived the long hours of High Holy Day services sitting in our sanctuary chairs, you might expect a quiet break. Well, your reward for all that endurance: even more time with me! I would like to take this opportunity to introduce you to an exciting lineup of adult education classes planned or considered for the next year or two to keep our minds and spirits active.

I. The Vital Importance of Adult Education

When we think about Jewish education in synagogues, we often picture loud Sunday school classrooms, Bar or Bat Mitzvah practice, or children making paper chains for a Sukkah.

But in Jewish tradition, or what we in modern times title, 'lifelong-learning,' is not something we finish at any time. No degrees or prizes are awarded, and it is unlikely that there is a career, let alone a job, that will materialize from your efforts.

But adult education is the lifeblood of a synagogue. It is where our ancient tradition meets our real lives as Jewish adults -- our joys, our doubts, our struggles, and our questions.

When adults gather to study, we do not just memorize historical facts. We wrestle with big ideas, question old assumptions, and build deep friendships with one another. Studying together as adults turns our synagogue into more than just a place to show up. It makes it a true home where we belong. As we look ahead, I invite each of you to join this ongoing conversation.

II. Our Current Continuing Classes

Our current adult learning schedule focuses on two major areas of Jewish thought: ethics and mysticism.

Messilat Yesharim (The Path of the Just)

For the last year, and likely to continue for another two to three years, we have been reading and discussing Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto's classic 18th-century book on ethics, *Messilat Yesharim*. The author gives us a step-by-step guide for personal growth. He moves from simple mindfulness -- yes, that mindfulness that has been the rage of the 21st century -- to piety and holiness. This book is not an old-fashioned lecture. Instead, it acts like a mirror. It forces us to look closely at our character traits, improve how we treat others, and build an ethical inner life in a busy world. (And you are welcome to join us; or gener-

ate your own 4- or 5-person group and I'll be happy to organize and/or lead that group as well.)

Essential Kabbalah

Our study of Daniel Matt's book, *Essential Kabbalah*, is likely to conclude within the next month. In this class, we have explored key mystical ideas as articulated by kabbalists over the last millennia. Among other things, we studied the ten divine energies called the *Sefirot*, the infinite nature of God called *Ein Sof*, and the idea of *Tikkun Olam*, healing a broken world through spiritual awareness. It has given us a solid foundation in how Jewish mystics understood God's presence in our world.

Bible Study with Park Congregational Church

Over the last two years, we have initiated a study regimen with this Congregational Church in Norwich, across the street from NFA. The journey that we took with them this past summer was an outgrowth of a sermon that I delivered in 2025 -- modern day (mis)use of the Book of Joshua. And it coincidentally dovetailed with a subject they were pursuing as a church project: Christian Nationalism.

Up until now, most of our studies have been in the Tanach, the Jewish Bible. However, at this time, both Park's Rev. Erica and I believe that we have matured to the point where we can study portions of the Book of Matthew from the New Testament -- and to do so through the lens of Jewish commentators in the 21st century, as well as Jewish sources from the Middle Ages. If you have not joined us in the past, I suggest that you might want to redouble your efforts.

III. Core Themes from Recent Teachings

Building on the precedent set by my sermon last year on the Book of Joshua, I will be examining the subjects raised in two of my Yom Kippur sermons and determine, with you, whether either or both subjects are ripe for study in our midst,

"Commandment is Not a Dirty Word"

This teaching looks at why modern liberal Jews often reject religious obligation in favor of expressing their autonomy through personal choice. While personal freedom is valuable, relying only on what is easy or convenient can weaken our community and spiritual lives. By separating fear-based obedience or 'submission,' from joy-based 'surrender,' this lesson shows how accepting *mitzvot* -- like attending a shiva minyan, keeping

Shabbat, or helping others -- out of commandment and not desire -- creates deeper meaning and binds us together in a shared covenant.

“Beyond the Gates of Repentance”

This lesson addresses the mistaken idea that *Teshuvah* (repentance and positive change) ends when Yom Kippur is over. In reality, the holidays are just a starting point. The work continues right away when we build a Sukkah and practice living with open hearts under the stars. It carries on through our daily routine using the three daily prayer times (*Shacharit*, *Mincha*, and *Ma'ariv*). These built-in daily pauses give us simple moments to reset our goals, catch mistakes early, and work on becoming better people every day.

Upcoming Historical Series: *The Parting of the Ways*

Looking further ahead, I am developing a new course on the historical relationship between Jewish and early Christian groups during the first few centuries following the death of Jesus. Many people assume that Judaism and Christianity split completely relatively soon after the time of Jesus, or after the destruction of the Second Temple, thereby resulting in the Christian Church. However, modern historians show that the separation took a much longer time, and the boundaries remained blurred for generations. By reading ancient historical texts, this class could explore how these groups must have interacted, where their religious beliefs parted ways, and how their shared roots still affect interfaith relations today.

Final Wrap-Up & Call to Arms

Adult education is not a passive hobby. It is the engine that keeps our spiritual community growing and strong. Whether you are interested in character ethics, Jewish mysticism, or ancient history, there is a seat saved for you at the table.

I have introduced or presented other ideas for study. Or perhaps you have ideas of what you would like to study -- please let me know.

I challenge each of you to join at least one adult learning program. Bring your curiosity, your questions, and your honest doubts. Let us continue to study, question, and grow together as a holy community.

B'Shalom,
Rav Julius

Candle Light Times October 2026

October 2	6:10pm
October 9	5:58 pm
October 16	5:47 pm
October 23	5:37 pm
October 30	5:27 pm

**Ba-rukH atah A-do-nai, e-lo-hay-nu-me-lekh ha-
olam, a-she- kid-sha-nu-bemitz-vo-tav ve-tzi-vanu
Le-had-lik ner shel Shabbat.**

**Blessed are you, Lord our God, Sovereign of the
Universe, who has sanctified us by Your com-
mandments and has commanded us to kindle
the Shabbat lights.**

Mishebeirach

Mi shebeirach avoteinu
M'kor hab'racha l'imoteinu
May the source of strength,
Who blessed the ones before us,
Help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing, and let us
say, Amen.
Mi shebeirach imoteinu
M'kor habrachah l'avoteinu
Bless those in need of healing with r'fuah sh'leimah,
The renewal of body, the renewal of spirit, And let us say,
Amen

We are saying prayers for healing for:

Susan Andrlé	Michelle Nash
Berneé Vasquez Kapili	Pamela Magliano Cannata
Beth Camassar	Patricia Tilley
Billy Maynard	Tiffany Gravel
Bonnie Curkin	Tim Menard
Emma Fries	Ahoova Hana bat Gila
Shirley Christian	Chaim ben Libba
Seth Curkin	Michal ben Sarah
Rabbi Gary Atkins	Moshe Ben Rochel
Jenn Rockwell	Tzvi ben Basha
Jeremy Federman	Yosefah Chaya bat Leah
Marvin Levine	

October Birthdays

October 3	Steven Morse
October 7	Michael Gordon
October 12	Jane Katzoff
October 14	Pepi Green
October 16	Kathleen McFadden
	Evert Gawendo
	Arlene Dressler
	Martin Rutchik
October 19	Clara Kalnitsky
October 24	Kimberly Fischburg
	Robert Labb
October 31	Kenneth Fischburg

October Anniversaries

October 14	Gabriel Stern
	Kathleen McFadden

Donations

**We gratefully acknowledge the
following contributions to
Beth Jacob Synagogue's Special Funds.**

Building Fund

In Memory of Harriet Gere

Michael & Rosa Goldblatt

In Memory of Jerry Navick

Michael & Rosa Goldblatt

Hazel (Judy) Brown

Kay & Gene Winakor

In Memory of Henry Drobiarz

Michael & Rosa Goldblatt

Commemorating Three Years Since October 7th

Come together with our community as we gather to:

Remember the lives we lost and cherish their
memory.

Honor the strength and resilience of those who
survived and continue to rebuild.

Pray for peace, safety and healing for all the lives
affected by October 7th.

Wednesday, October 7th

7:10 PM

Location provided upon registration



The Jewish Federation
OF EASTERN CONNECTICUT



OCTOBER 2026 YAHREZEITS



October 1 20 Tishri

Israel Chait
Mildred Kaplan —
Mother of Arlene Dressler
Sylvia Blinderman
Samuel Mandel

October 2 21 Tishri

Ron Brauman —
Father of Stacy Gould
Donald Sakowitz

October 4 23 Tishri

Florence Kenig Swett
Sander Golub
Milton Kalnitsky —
Father-in-Law Clara Kalnitsky
Salomon Seroussi —
Father of Michael Seroussi

October 5 24 Tishri

Rose Cooper —
Mother of Harriet Burchman
Abraham Levine
Nachman Swatzburg

October 6 25 Tishri

Benjamin Simon
Lazar Abraham
Leon Bruckner
Molly Rachel Steinman
Charlotte Rosenthal
Jerome Mopsik

October 7 26 Tishri

Louis Navick —
Grandfather of Murray Navick and Kaye Winakor
Harry Schatz
A. Charles Rosen
Esther Fern

October 8 27 Tishri

Bessie Deutsch
Rebecca Fertman
Kuna Libo
Beatrice Baker

October 9 28 Tishri

Rose Ringel —
Grandmother of Faye Ringel
Anna Israelit
Akiva Weisman —
Uncle of Murray Navick and Kaye Winakor

October 10 29 Tishri

Betty Schwartz
Arlene Shapiro —
Sister-in-Law Marc Kashar
Samuel Tashman
Benjamin Lahn
Isadore Selkowitz

October 11 30 Tishri

Theodore Engel
Harold Welling

October 12 1 Heshvan

Barnett Goldblatt
Rebecca Snitkin

October 13 2 Heshvan

Jennie Swartz
Milton Foster
Karol S. Glick
Rudolph Henschel
Julie Kenig

October 14 3 Heshvan

Necha Stein
Clara Kaplan Markoff

October 15 4 Heshvan

Bessie Tashman
Chayye Ida Toba
Sandy Block
Dr. Leonard Zuckerbraun —
Father of Dr. Joel Zuckerbraun
Jack Berk

October 16 5 Heshvan

Freida Kosansky
Dorothy Goldblatt —
Mother of Michael Goldblatt and Ellen DeLeon

October 18 7 Heshvan

Freda Bruckner
May Friedman —
Mother of Larry Friedman
Helen Krawiec —
Mother-in-Law of Marc Kashar

October 19 8 Heshvan

Florence May Levine
Chaim Cooper —
Grandfather of Irene Schienberg
Huga Herman

October 20 9 Heshvan

Louis Rosenberg
Dr. Paul Abel Schwartz
Miriam Mandell Cohen
Ruby Fox —
Father of Kim Brissette

October 21 10 Heshvan

Bertha Landmen
Anna Schwartz
Szloma Gejdenson
Gussie Kaufman

October 22 11 Heshvan

William Pearson
Abraham Ptachik —
Uncle of Martin Shapiro

October 23 12 Heshvan

Aaron Goldblatt
Meyer Labensky

October 24 13 Heshvan

Minnie Jacobson
Dr. Bertram Friedman —
Father-in-Law of Joe Goldberg

October 25 14 Heshvan

Rose Katz
Mayer Simon
Esther Goldberg —
Mother of Joe Goldberg and Lois Taylor

Juda Udell Aaron

October 26 15 Heshvan

Tessie Alexander

October 27 16 Heshvan

Joseph Goldabiter
Anna Goldberg
Bronya Goldabiter

October 28 17 Heshvan

Irving Daniels
Anna Palma Goldblatt
Irving Snitkin
Phillip Tashman —
Grandfather of Brian Burchman

October 29 18 Heshvan

William Kronick
Winifred Kirstein —
Aunt of Michael Goldblatt and Ellen DeLeon

October 30 19 Heshvan

Nada Bernstein
Abraham Abkowitz
Fannie Blum

October 31 20 Heshvan

Lois Mopsik
Bessie Shabecoff
Henriette Harris
Ethel Alexander
Leon Dorsky
Ida Jainchill
Jacob Sears