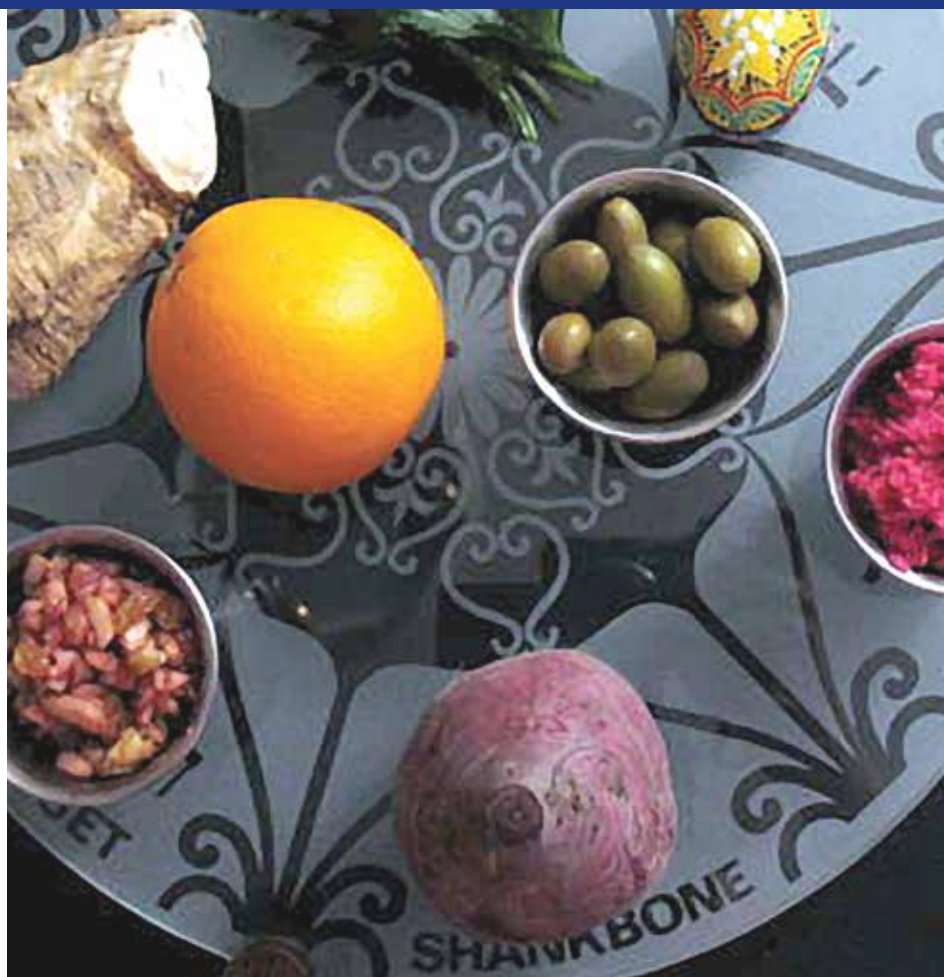


KOL JESHURUN קול ישרון

The Voice of BJ This Week

B'nai Jeshurun  
בני ישרון



April 12–19, 2019 • 7–14 Nisan, 5779 • Shabbat Metzora

**WELCOME TO BJ!** We build our kehillah kedoshah—sacred community—with creativity and intention to present a compelling, energizing, and transformational vision of Judaism in the 21st century.

**PLEASE JOIN US:**

● **Prayer & Spirituality** ● **Limud / Learning** ● **Family Life & Learning** ● **Community Events**

● **Tzedek & Hesed / Justice & Acts of Loving-Kindness** ● **Israel Programming**

 **Pesach Events & Services**

((•)) Indicates events that can be viewed on the BJ livestream at [www.bj.org/live](http://www.bj.org/live).

**RABBIS:** J. Rolando Matalon • Felicia L. Sol • Erin R. Glazer • Marcelo R. Bronstein

**HAZZAN:** Ari Priven

**MARSHALL T. MEYER RABBINIC FELLOWS:** Tobias Divack Moss • Margo Hughes-Robinson • Abi Weber

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:** Colin A. Weil

**SANCTUARY:** 257 West 88th Street • **OFFICE:** 270 West 89th Street, New York, NY 10024-1705  
**TEL:** 212-787-7600 • **FAX:** 212-496-7600 • [www.bj.org](http://www.bj.org) • [facebook.com/bnai.jeshurun](https://www.facebook.com/bnai.jeshurun) • [Twitter: @bjnyc](https://twitter.com/bjnyc)

# OUR COMMUNITY

## HA-MAKOM YENAHEM / CONDOLENCES

The community of B'nai Jeshurun mourns the death of our member Sanford Cohen and we extend our sincere condolences to his wife, Holly Schneier, their children, Joanna and Alexander Cohen, and their entire family.

The community of B'nai Jeshurun extends our sincere condolences to Chuck Gold and Anne Kohn, their children, Sami and Jacob Gold, and their entire family on the death of Chuck's mother, Sherry Gold.

## MAZAL TOV / CONGRATULATIONS

To the following members and their families:

- John Ruskay and Alisa Rubin Kurshan, on being recognized for their guidance of The Jewish Education Project on its journey in partnership with UJA-Federation of New York.
- Vicki Been, on being named NYC Deputy Mayor for Housing and Economic Development.
- Ariana, Eric, and Maisie Berry on the birth of their daughter and sister, Celeste Arabella Berry. We also extend a mazal tov to Celeste's grandparents, Liz and Jay Cooper, and her uncle, aunt, and cousin, Michael, Katelyn, and Violet Cooper.

## B'RUKHIM HABA'IM / WELCOME

- Robert Selfaison and members, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, New York, New York.
- Rabbi Linda Joseph and Confirmation Class, Har Sinai Congregation, Owings Mills, Maryland.
- Teens and leaders of Youth Bridge–Munich, visiting from Germany in partnership with Youth Bridge–New York, a project of the Jewish Community Relations Council.
- **Welcome to all who are visiting us for the first time!** If we haven't approached you already, come say hi to one of the rabbis, a staff member, or an usher, and we'll introduce you to the people who make BJ the warm, transformative, open place that it is.



### WHAT YOU CAN DO:

#### ● **Pre-Pesah WSCAH Food Drive**

**Through Wednesday, April 17**, during Community House open hours, Sanctuary and Community House: Get rid of your hametz by donating food to the West Side Campaign Against Hunger (WSCAH). Drop off items in the boxes at the Sanctuary foyer and the Community House entrance. For more information, visit [www.bj.org/pesahdrive19](http://www.bj.org/pesahdrive19).

#### ● **Shelter Sleepover Volunteers Needed**

**Sunday–Thursday, 9:00 PM–7:00AM**, SPSA or Frankel Hall: Our shelter is in need of reliable volunteers for a once-a-month sleepover shift. This is the only mitzvah you can literally do in your sleep! It's easy, and it makes a huge difference in the lives of our guests. Contact Larissa, [lwohl@bj.org](mailto:lwohl@bj.org) to learn more and sign up.

(\*) This event can be viewed on the BJ livestream at [www.bj.org/live](http://www.bj.org/live).

We are happy to share BJ's services with those unable to attend in person through automated recording and livestreaming, available on our website and on our YouTube channel. The camera will be focused on the bimah and areas in front of the Ark. Your presence in those areas indicates your consent to your image appearing on the livestream. Tune in live—and to watch previously streamed services and programs—at [www.bj.org/live](http://www.bj.org/live).

# THIS WEEK AT BJ

## FRIDAY, APRIL 12

-  **Sell Your Hametz at BJ** Through Thursday, April 18 at 12:00 noon  
Once again, Rabbi Roly Matalon will be your agent for selling hametz. Sign up by Thursday, April 18 at 12:00 noon. For more information, and to sign up, visit [www.bj.org/hametz2019](http://www.bj.org/hametz2019).
- 
- **Mindfulness Kabbalat Shabbat** 6:30 PM – Community House 3rd Floor  
Join us for an intimate service featuring meditation, reflection, deep listening, and personal engagement with the parashah. Contact Kristen Kersey at [kkersey@bj.org](mailto:kkersey@bj.org), or x255, with any questions.
- 
- **Kabbalat Shabbat Service** 6:30 PM – Sanctuary (●●)
- 
- ● **Family Shabbat: Shabbat Israeli Cool!** Following the Kabbalat Shabbat service – Chapel and Middle Room  
Join us for an Israeli-themed Shabbat dinner celebrating Israeli culture. Register by Monday, April 8, at [www.bj.org/israelishabbat](http://www.bj.org/israelishabbat).

## SATURDAY, APRIL 13

- **Hakhanah laTefillah** 8:45 AM – Chapel  
Join Rabbi Roly Matalon to prepare the soul and open the heart for Shabbat morning prayers through the singing of piyutim and reflections on kavannah. This series is open to all, no registration necessary. Meets every other Saturday.
- 
- **Shabbat Morning Services** 9:30 AM – Sanctuary (●●)
- 
- ● **Family Service (0-Pre-K/K-Grade 2)** 10:45 AM – Middle & Reception Rooms
- 
- ● **Family Service (Grades 3-6)** 10:45 AM – Chapel
- 
- ● **Community Kiddush** Following services – Community House 3rd Floor
- 
- ● **Shabbat Basketball** Various times – Community House 3rd Floor  
Wondering what to do on a cold Shabbat afternoon? Join us for a casual pick-up basketball game. All skill levels are welcome. Sign up now at [www.bj.org/shabbatbasketball2019](http://www.bj.org/shabbatbasketball2019).

## SUNDAY, APRIL 14

- **Morning Minyan** 9:30 AM – Chapel
- 
- **Putting the Mitzvah in B'nai Mitzvah** 11:00 AM – Chapel  
Fifth grade families are invited to come explore the idea of mitzvot, and think more about the meaning behind the ritual of B'nai Mitzvot. Breakfast will be served. Sign up now at [www.bj.org/5thgrademitzvah](http://www.bj.org/5thgrademitzvah).
- 
- **Israeli Book Clubs** 5:00 PM – location given upon registration  
BJ's Israeli Book Club will be reading *Spies of No Country: Secret Lives at the Birth of Israel*. For more information and to register, visit at [www.bj.org/bookclub](http://www.bj.org/bookclub).
- 
- **Hebrew-Speaking Havurah** 5:30 PM – location given upon registration  
Get together with other Hebrew speakers and Rabbi Yisrael Serok on the second Sunday of each month to discuss current affairs in Hebrew. For more information, visit [www.bj.org/hebrewspeakinghavurah](http://www.bj.org/hebrewspeakinghavurah). Email Nili at [ngitig@gmail.com](mailto:ngitig@gmail.com) with any questions.

## MONDAY, APRIL 15

- **Morning Minyan** 7:30 AM – Chapel
- 
- **Monday Meditation Minyan** 6:30 PM – Chapel
- 
- **From Generation to Generation: A Grandparenting Series** 7:30 PM – Community House  
Join BJ's Jewish Home Project to explore grandparenting in an interactive setting filled with learning, sharing, and support. All are welcome to attend this final session. Sign up now at [www.bj.org/grandparentingseries](http://www.bj.org/grandparentingseries).

## TUESDAY, APRIL 16

- **Morning Minyan** 7:30 AM – Chapel
- **The Prophets with Rabbi Hillel Friedman** 9:00 AM – Offsite
- **“Soul Food” Lunch and Learn with Rabbi Felicia Sol** 12:30 PM – Middle Room
- **Weekday Evening Minyan: A Pilot of the Center for Prayer and Spirituality** 6:30 PM – Community House  
We are excited to announce that we will be starting a three-month pilot of an evening minyan on Tuesdays–Thursdays at BJ, with the hope that—through communal engagement—it will become a long-term practice. For more information, visit [www.bj.org/eveningminyan](http://www.bj.org/eveningminyan).
- **Everyday Ethics with Rabbi Adina Lewittes** 7:00 PM – Reception Room
- **Moving Stories** 7:00 PM – Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan, 334 Amsterdam Avenue  
Join us as we co-present a screening of the film *Moving Stories*. The screening will be followed by a Q&A with the filmmakers and some of the film’s stars. Register now at [www.bj.org/movingstories](http://www.bj.org/movingstories).

## WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17

- **Morning Minyan** 7:30 AM – Chapel
- **Evening Minyan** 6:30 PM – Community House
- **Introduction to Judaism** No class this week

## THURSDAY, APRIL 18

- **Morning Minyan** 7:30 AM – Chapel
- **Evening Minyan** 6:30 PM – Community House

## FRIDAY, APRIL 19 | TA'ANIT BEKHOROT | EREV PESAH—1st SEDER

BJ Office closes at 1:00 PM

- **Morning Minyan** 7:30 AM – Chapel
- **Ta'anit Bekhorot Siyyum and Se'udat Mitzvah** Following Morning Minyan – Middle Room  
All are welcome to join Rabbinic Fellow Margo Hughes-Robinson as she leads us in the completion of a volume of rabbinic literature. All firstborns in attendance are then permitted to eat and break the Fast of the Firstborn.

## WHAT'S NEXT

- **Register for BJ Hazorim CSA 2019**  
*Tuesdays, June 4-October 29*, 4:30-7:30PM, Community House: Registration is now open for BJ's Community Supported Agriculture. Pick up fresh, organic vegetables, eggs, fruit, and/or butter from Free Bird Farm at BJ once a week for 22 weeks. Register now at [www.bj.org/csa2019](http://www.bj.org/csa2019).
- **Paying it Forward Shabbat Dinners**  
*Ongoing*, various times and locations: Reserve your spot at one of these upcoming dinners, and then take your turn and host a meal yourself for other BJ members in your own social circle. For more information, and to sign up, visit [www.bj.org/pif](http://www.bj.org/pif).
- **Seeking Second Night Seder Hosts**  
*Saturday, April 20*, various times and location: We are looking for Seder hosts who are able to open up their table to members of the BJ community on the second night of Pesah. If you are interested, please email Kristen at [kkersey@bj.org](mailto:kkersey@bj.org).

## WHAT'S NEXT *continued from panel 4*

### ● Seder BaBayit

**Saturday, April 20**, various times and locations: Please note, all spots are currently filled. Are you looking for a friendly home where you can eat, schmooze, sing, and celebrate Pesah with fellow BJ members? Sign up to join our waitlist now at [www.bj.org/sederbabayit](http://www.bj.org/sederbabayit).

### ● Next Stop...Marriage

**Tuesday beginning April 30**, 7:00-8:30PM, Chapel: Prepare for your wedding and beyond with our pre-marriage series. Session one with Rabbi Felicia Sol, session two with financial planners Donna Nadler and Arthur Belkin, and session three with couples therapist Sherri Kauderer. Register at [www.bj.org/nextstopmarriage](http://www.bj.org/nextstopmarriage).

### ● Podcasts, Popcorn, and Prosecco

**Wednesday, May 1**, 7:00-10:00PM, location given upon registration: Join other 20s and 30s for a series of guided conversations, each centered around a different podcast! Fueled by popcorn and prosecco, this session will explore antisemitism with Rabbi Shuli Passow. Sign up is required at [www.bj.org/avivpodcasts](http://www.bj.org/avivpodcasts).

---

## WHAT'S LATER

### ● Aviv: Death Over Dinner

**Friday, May 3**, following the Kabbalat Shabbat Service, Rooftop: Community members in their 20s and 30s: join us for a lively and uplifting conversation about death. Over dinner, we'll explore Jewish and medical perspectives on death, dying, and mourning. Register now at [www.bj.org/avivdeathdinner](http://www.bj.org/avivdeathdinner).

### ● Young Families Retreat

**Friday, May 3-Sunday, May 5**, Camp Ramah Nyack, Christian Herald Rd, Nyack, NY: Join us for a Shabbat weekend filled with outdoor games, music, hiking, learning opportunities, community building, a campfire, and more. Register by April 15 at [www.bj.org/youngfamiliesretreat2019](http://www.bj.org/youngfamiliesretreat2019).

### ● UWS Celebrates Israel 2019

**Sunday, May 5**, 11:00AM-9:00PM, Sanctuary, Community House, and various locations on the Upper West Side: The Marlene Meyerson JCC Manhattan and UWS synagogues, schools, and Jewish organizations invite everyone to come together for a neighborhood-wide celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut. For the full itinerary and registration for ticketed events, visit [www.bj.org/uwsisrael](http://www.bj.org/uwsisrael).

### ● "Sing—Now!—to God!"—Miriam and Moses

**Monday, May 6**, 7:00PM, Sanctuary: Join Avivah Zornberg for a discussion on the history of the prophetess Miriam and her relationship with her brother Moses. Registration is \$25 (\$30 at the door) and \$15 for students. Register now at [www.bj.org/miriamandmoses](http://www.bj.org/miriamandmoses).

### ● Interpretive Challah Shaping: A Masterclass with @lechlechallah

**Thursday, May 9**, 7:00-9:00PM, Frankel Hall: This class, taught by Student Rabbi Vanessa Harper (@lechlechallah), includes an introduction to advanced bread shaping, an Omer study, and the creation of interpretive challah. No artistic skill required; familiarity with challah/bread making recommended. Register at [www.bj.org/lechlechallah](http://www.bj.org/lechlechallah).

### ● Refugee Culinary Exchange

**Sunday, May 12**, 6:00-7:30PM, Frankel Hall: Join us for a refugee culinary exchange led by Kourtegue, a Chadian mother. Learn about our new neighbors, help support them, eat delicious food, and meet other BJ members! For more information, and to register, visit [www.bj.org/refugeeculinaryexchange](http://www.bj.org/refugeeculinaryexchange).

### ● Rise Up: Music of Justice, Resistance, and Hope

**Wednesday, May 29**, 7:00PM, Sanctuary: Our spring fundraising concert will celebrate how social change movements throughout the ages have been powered by the music of justice, resistance, and hope. Sponsorships and tickets available now at [www.bj.org/riseup](http://www.bj.org/riseup).

# A TASTE OF TORAH: SHABBAT METZORA

וַיֵּצֵא, הַכֹּהֵן, אֶל-מַחוּץ, לַמִּחֲנֶה; וְרָאָה, הַכֹּהֵן, וְהִנֵּה נִרְפָּא נֶגַע-הַצִּרְעָת, מִן-הַצָּרוּעַ.  
וַיֵּצֵא, הַכֹּהֵן, וְלָקַח לַמַּטְהָר שְׁתֵּי-צִפְרִים חַיּוֹת, טְהוֹרוֹת; וְעֵץ אֲרֶז, וְשָׁנִי תוֹלַעַת וְאַזָּב.

And the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two living clean birds, and cedar-wood, and scarlet, and hyssop.

—Leviticus 14:3-4

Consider the hyssop. Within the drama of the metzora cleansing ceremony, it is easy to miss this little plant amongst the birds, fragrant cedar, and special colors employed in this healing moment. All of the other ritual elements employed by the kohen have a certain sharpness and immediacy—the movement of the birds, the pungency of the cedar. Why is this little plant so necessary for this public ceremony?

It is this very question that the Midrash seeks to answer. In Exodus Rabbah, the question is asked: Why does this small little plant, not particularly fragrant or beautiful, feature so heavily in transformational biblical ritual? The text cautions us, replying that the hyssop only seems insignificant if we focus solely on its immediate physical characteristics. If we only focus on the plant’s taste, smell, and appearance, we, in fact, ignore its spiritual power for ritual cleansing.

Like the red heifer of the future messianic era (whose foretold sacrifice was a rabbinic prerequisite to redemption), this humble plant has served as a powerful protective and spiritual cleansing agent throughout Jewish history. As well as being an integral part of the metzora ritual, hyssop was also used to apply the blood of the paschal sacrifice on the doorposts of the Israelites during the plague of the firstborn. (Exodus 12:22) What seems to our untrained senses to be rabbinic esoterica is actually deeply potent, even if we cannot see its power on the surface.

When people in our lives are ill, this same principle holds true. Like in the case of the kohen and the person with tzaarat, it is often the so-called “little things,” performed with great intention, that have the most power. A phone call, a brief visit, or running an errand can have tremendous impact, bringing a little more healing into the world.

It may also seem to some, the Midrash continues, that the Torah itself is a kind of hyssop—on the surface, it can be difficult to connect with its many pieces, and to find the “taam,” the taste or deeper meaning, of some of its contents, its minutiae. The intention, we are cautioned, is not to obfuscate the Torah’s sacred nature, but rather to remind us to pay attention: Even in small things—especially in small things—there is potential for great meaning.

— Margo Hughes-Robinson

## TORAH PORTION

### METZORA

SHABBAT HAGADOL

**Torah: Annual** Leviticus 14:1-15:33

**Triennial** Leviticus 14:33-15:33

- 1: 14:33-14:38
- 2: 14:39-14:47
- 3: 14:48-14:53
- 4: 14:54-15:7
- 5: 15:08-15:15
- 6: 15:16-15:28
- 7: 15:29-15:33
- Maftir: 15:31-15:33

**Haftarah** Malachi 3:4-3:24

**NEXT WEEK: SHABBAT 1ST DAY PESAH**

**Torah** Exodus 12:21-12:51

**Haftarah** Joshua 5:2-6:1, 6:27

Coffee not delivering its usual zing? Come to morning minyan and get a spiritual jolt to start your day. Develop a daily Jewish practice, meet new people in an intimate setting, and help us make a minyan so our members can say kaddish for their loved ones. Visit [www.bj.org/minyan](http://www.bj.org/minyan).

 Printed on Recycled Paper

**BJ RECYCLES AND COMPOSTS.** Please look for bins throughout our spaces.

BJ’s Ner Tamid at the BJ Sanctuary is powered by the energy of the sun.

