



Summer/Fall 2016

Congregation Am Haskalah offers a creative, participatory approach to Judaism, blending tradition with innovation.

We are:

A friendly, caring, welcoming community

Family activities and involvement

A unique, dynamic Hebrew School

Jewish holiday celebrations and Shabbat services with meaning and relevance Jewish learning on all levels in a supportive atmosphere

Democracy and equality in all aspects of synagogue life

Social, cultural and community events

Open to people with diverse life situations, cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, political philosophies and religious perspectives

Welcomes both traditional and non-traditional family units.

Specifically mixed-faith couples are encouraged to experience our nurturing environment and see the support that is available

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Meet Our Student Rabbi

Dear Congregants,

I am deeply honored to serve as your student rabbi this upcoming year. As I enter my fourth year at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College, I bring with me stories from my time working for the Jewish community and all the other parts that make me who I am today. What I look forward to the most is not only sharing these stories with you but *hearing your stories*. There's an old Yiddish saying that asks, "Why were human beings created? Because God loves stories." I love this saying because it embodies the playfulness of Yid-

dish culture, while also acknowledging that our lives play out in ways we might not have expected- but at least it humors God!

This saying is also connects with another piece of Yiddish wisdom, "What happens when people make plans? God laughs." I'll tell you a story about a girl who knew she wanted to be a rabbi since she was young. She even used to play "rabbi" with her stuffed-animals and line them up for her shabbat services in the living room. This girl grew up, went to college at Temple University, and decided the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College was where she belonged. However, she felt that she

needed some real work experience between college and rabbinical school and decided to take a chance and apply for an Education Fellowship at the Institute of Southern Jewish Life. She had never been to Jackson, MS, and knew no one there, but she decided she'd take the plunge. It was just a two year fellowship, after all, and once it was over she'd be back in Philadelphia and would begin rabbinical school! Before she left for Jackson, she called the rabbinical college and said, "I'm off to Jackson, see you in two years!" Well, that was one moment when God must have had a great laugh.



Find our 5777 High Holiday Schedule on the back page!

From Our President

Am Haskalah is very proud to be included in all Pride happenings within the Lehigh Valley area.

We are a small, vibrant congregation committed to the values of Reconstructionist Judaism. Reconstructionist Judaism affirms the belief that Judaism is an evolving religious civilization and as such, communal decisions are informed both by the richness of Jewish tradition and the gifts of contemporary society.

Am Haskalah is a spiritual, multi-generational community – one in which individuals, couples and families come together for learning,

prayer, life-cycle events, music, creative arts, sharing food, mutual support and friendship. We welcome people with diverse cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, political philosophies and religious perspectives, and we embrace inter-faith families, as well as individuals studying to become Jewish. We believe in our commitment to each other, and our Chesed (Kindness) Committee is there for you in times of need.

We experience Judaism in a way that makes sense, adds meaning to your life and feels good!

Am Haskalah is honored to be a continued contributing part of PRIDE Lehigh Valley!

Shalom,

Risa Dorfman

Student Rabbi, continued

As you probably guessed, this girl was me. As the two years in Jackson went by, I fell in love with the South. I decided it was time to realize a dream I always had, to one day move to New Orleans. Making the move to New Orleans was one of the easiest decisions I ever had to make, and also the hardest. It meant not moving back home to my family and not enrolling in rabbinical school. But something felt so

right about the decision. I felt pulled there. As a result of the time I spent in New Orleans, I learned so much about who I am as a person, found and rescued my wonderful dog Fitzgerald, and met the man who is now my husband. When I had originally made the decision to go to Jackson for two years, God must have laughed knowing all the great (and difficult) things that were in store for me.

And now, I'm here! It is my privilege to get to know the Am Haskalah community as your student rabbi, so let's start meeting! I want to hear your stories and learn about you. Thank you for this wonderful opportunity. I look forward to getting to know you this upcoming year.



Find us on Facebook—
for updated event information, to connect with other congregants,
to share great pictures from events!

facebook.com/AmHaskalah

The Borscht Belt Comes To Bethlehem, PA!

By Joy Scott

The 'Borsht Belt or 'Jewish Alps' is a colloquial term for the (now mostly defunct) summer resorts of the beautiful Catskill mountains. 'Borsht Belt' hotels, bungalow colonies, and summer camps were frequented by Jews from New York, New Jersey, and Philadelphia. These families were often denied accommodations in other hotels and resorts, due to anti-Semitism, particularly in the 1940's—1960's.

Night life in the Borscht Belt was typically comprised of Jewish stand-up comedians. These performers created a style of humor, character-

ized by self-deprecation, playing on Jewish stereotypes, and liberal use of Yiddish expressions. In an ironic twist of fate, this unique form of humor became hugely popular in the entertainment industry, as did the long list of groundbreaking performers.

This year, we introduced a monthly program: "The Borscht Belt Comes to Bethlehem, Pa". On Sunday afternoons, our congregation came together to enjoy watching movies of Jackie Mason, Don Rickles, and Jack Klugman (What To Eat For Passover), while munching on popcorn and drinking their favorite beverage. We continue our series on

Sunday, September 11, with 'Zelig', starring Woody Allen and Mia Farrow. Upon its release, the New York Times' reported, "Woody Allen's new film is uproariously funny and a cinematic marvel".

Sunday, October 30, we bring our members the movie: "The Producers", (written by Mel Brooks) and starring Zero Mostel and Gene Wilder. Our upcoming movies will feature Joan Rivers, Henny Youngman, Rodney Dangerfield, Billy Crystal, along with the movies: "Keeping Up With The Steins" and "Oy Vey, My Son is Gay".

Wandering Jews—Finding Food in the Valley

By Rachel Zane

The Wandering Jews prove you don't have to travel far to experience the world.

The Am Haskalah community has begun a new monthly dining experience this year called "Wandering Jews." So far the group has dined at Carmel (Mediterranean fusion), Clove (Indian), Yanni's Taverna

(Greek), Lilly Sushi (Japanese), Nawab (Indian), and next week (8/24) Thai Avenue (Thai).

In keeping with our commitment to keep our money local, the group is trying to experience the many different cultures and nationalities as the Valley has to offer.

We know that these events offer another social community experi-

ence for our congregation beyond our worship and services that we love! And you don't have to be a member of the congregation to join us. Come for the food, leave with friends!

For more info or to RSVP contact our President, Risa Dorfman
risa.dorfman@gmail.com

Tikun Torah: Celebrating the Return of our Torah!

By Rena Fraade

Last winter, an anonymous donor contacted our Rabbinical Student to discuss the possibility of repairing one of our Torahs. This Torah has been part of our congregation for many years and needed repair of its parchment and ink. Fast forward to

last summer and our Torah was given to sofer Neil Yermen in the suburbs of New York City to begin the process of repairing our Torah.

We had an incredible afternoon in May when Neil returned the Torah - we had the opportunity to learn with him and celebrate our Torah's

return. Participants learned to write Hebrew Calligraphy, like in the Torah and hear about Hebrew letters and what their meanings and origins are...and of course, we were able to help repair some of the final letters of the Torah. Neil and our, then, Rabbinical Student, Shelley Goldman, lead a Service of Rededication.

Dream with Us!

Last year, the Jewish Reconstructionist Communities (JRC) gave their annual report a new twist with a video that explains what the Reconstructionist Movement is. The video won the MarCom Gold Award in the e-annual report category; the Silver Award for redesign/rebrand by the Summit International Awards; Gold Quill Merit Award for digital communication from the International Association of Business Communicators; and the Bronze Anvil Award for annual reports from the Public Relations Society of America.



Not to be outdone, in this year's video they are highlighting what Reconstructionists do in the greater world. Through the work of our rabbis, leaders, children and communities, we're making Judaism relevant in the 21st century.

Check out this year's video to learn more and connect. If you have any questions, contact Rena Fraade and she will help connect you with the right people!

https://youtu.be/_F-GsR73qJE

From the people who brought you the bat mitzvah..

WHAT IS RECONSTRUCTIONIST JUDAISM?

- A progressive approach to Judaism that makes sense for 2016 and beyond
- A simultaneous respect for traditional ritual and a longing to create new rituals that better fit contemporary American Jewish life
- Inclusive and egalitarian communities that welcome Jews of all races, genders, sexual identities and delineations to participate as equals in congregational life

To learn more, visit
 amhaskalah.org or contact
 amhaskalahdirector@gmail.com



“A Bissel of Fun!” Answers

Answers to Logic Puzzle:

ANNE, SISTER, BOOK, \$75 / BEN, FATHER, NECKLACE, \$25 /

CARLA, MOTHER, MUSIC BOX, \$50 / DAVID, BROTHER, PAINTING, \$100

Answers to Trivia

1. TRUE 2. FALSE 3. TRUE 4. FALSE

Answers for to Crypto

1. MOUNTAINS CANNOT MEET, BUT MEN CAN.

2. IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO SEND A LAZY MAN FOR THE ANGEL OF DEATH.

A Bissel of Fun!

JEWISH LOGIC PUZZLE:

IT IS SARAH'S BAT MITZVAH, AND HER SISTER, BROTHER, MOTHER, AND FATHER, EACH BOUGHT HER A DIFFERENT GIFT FOR THE OCCASION. USE THE CLUES AND DEDUCTIVE REASONING TO DETERMINE EACH PERSON'S RELATIONSHIP TO SARAH, THE GIFT EACH RELATIVE BOUGHT, AND THE COST OF THE GIFT.

INSTRUCTIONS: ON A BLANK SHEET OF PAPER, CREATE A CHART, WITH FOUR COLUMNS AND FIVE ROWS. STARTING FROM THE LEFT, FILL IN THE TOP ROW OF EACH COLUMN, AS FOLLOWS: NAME, RELATIONSHIP, GIFT, AND COST. IN THE FOUR ROWS, UNDER 'NAME', WRITE: ANN, BEN, CARLA, DAVID. ENTER YOUR ANSWERS FOR THE GIFTS, YOU DETERMINE THAT EACH PERSON GAVE TO SARAH, USING ONLY THE WORDS IN CAPITAL LETTERS.

RELATIONSHIP: FATHER, MOTHER, SISTER, BROTHER

GIFTS: MUSIC BOX, which plays Hatikva (Israeli National anthem), NECKLACE, with Star of David, PAINTING of Ten Commandments, BOOK about the history of the Jewish people.

COSTS: \$25, \$50, \$75, \$100

CLUES: Sarah's mother's name is not Anne; Anne spent \$25 more than the person, who bought the MUSIC BOX; David spent the most; but, he did not purchase the NECKLACE, or the BOOK; Sarah's father spent the least amount, but he was not the one who bought the MUSIC BOX; Sarah's sister did not buy the NECKLACE.

TORAH TRIVIA

1. The name of the Princess (the Pharaoh's daughter), who found Moses, as an infant floating in the Nile is Batya **True or False?**
2. The second plague, which God imposed upon Egypt was a 10 day heat wave, equivalent to 125 degrees **True or False?**
3. Jacob had two sons with his wife Rachel; the oldest was named Joseph, the younger named Benjamin **True or False?**
4. The King of the enemy nation Moab was named Balaam **True or False?**

CRYPTOPROVERBS

Solve each of the following cryptograms, and learn a new Yiddish Proverb.

1. CFGTBJSTM WJTTFB CAAB, ZGB CAT WJI
2. DG'A Q BXXZ DZMQ GX AMRZ Q PQYE CQR SXH GKM QRBMP XS ZMQGK



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AmHaskalah.org

Contact us:

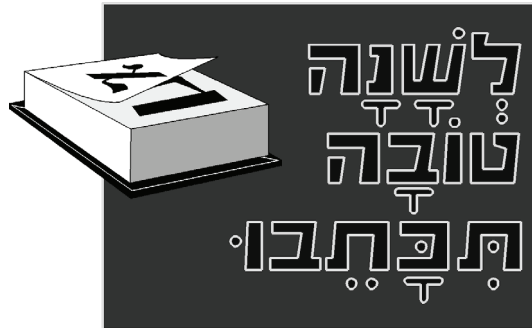
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L'shana Tovah Tikateivu

From all of us at Congregation Am Haskalah, wishing you, your friends and your family, a happy new year, a sweet new year, may you be written in the Book of Life and may you have a great year!

High Holidays 5777/2016

The High Holidays with Am Haskalah...Open to ALL; Welcoming & Diverse Community; Perfect for every kind of family

We pray at the **Jewish Community Center 702 N 22nd St, Allentown** for the High Holidays.

SLICHOT: Saturday, September 25 More info coming soon!

ROSH HASHANAH

Erev: Sunday, October 2, 6pm *Family Friendly*

Day 1: Monday, October 3, 9am

*Immediately followed by tashlich at
Ceder Creek Beach 1pm*

Day 2: Tuesday, October 4, 9am

YOM KIPPUR

Erev/Kol Nidre: Tuesday, October 11, 6:30pm

Day: Wednesday, October 12, 9am

Yizkor, 11:45am

Havdalah and Break fast, 7:15pm

Sukkot Festivities:

Sunday, October 16—Sukkah Building and Potluck at the home of Rena & Rabbi Melissa 3:30pm-5:30pm

Friday, October 21 - Shabbat Sukkot Potluck and Services 6:30pm