

The Shofar

January/February, 1994



Lamed Vov Tzaddakim campaign ends, UJC to honor 'Righteous Thirty-Six'+1 at special Shabbat service

Thanks to the generosity of 37 individual members or families, The UJC has successfully concluded the *Lamed-Vav Tzaddakim* fund-raising campaign launched in spring, 1993. The goal was to raise \$667,000 from 36 contributors as part of the larger effort to fund a resident rabbi and expanded program of activities. Because several donations at the cut-off level were of the same amount, it was decided to expand the number of those to be honored from 36 to 37.

According to a Jewish legend, in every generation there are 36 righteous persons on earth who are so good and virtuous that God does not get angry with the follies of humankind and seek to destroy the world again as he did in the time of Noah. They are called, in Hebrew, *Lamed Vav Tzad-*

dakim which means thirty-six righteous ones or saints.

The UJC will honor these members at a special Shabbat service and dinner on Friday, February 18. Details will be announced later.

The total amount donated to the Rabbi Fund as of December 1, 1993, including contributions from those listed below, was almost \$900,000, approximately \$200,000 short of the amount required to cover this year's expenses. **Those who still have not made their 'fair share' contribution are therefore urged to respond to this urgent need.** Dues for the current year were purposely kept at a very low level to encourage generosity.

Please note that names below are listed alphabetically.

MAY THEIR NAMES AND ALL BE INSCRIBED FOR BLESSING IN THE BOOK OF LIFE



Bernard & Pat Alter
Anonymous
Robert & Stephanie Bull
Jill Dodwell-Groves
Joel & Maggie Eisemann
Albert & Sharon Fine
Jonathan & Maureen Fox
Tomas & Veronica Frankenberg
Alan Frishman
Stanley P. Gold
Henry Goldstein & Carol Betson
Bob & Grace Green
David & Karen Handmaker
Leslie & Annabelle Isaacs
Joseph & Martha Josephson
Lady Kadoorie
Peter & April Kaminsky
Jeremy Leifer & Fiona Collins
Dennis & Mary Leventhal



Seth Maerowitz &
Ann-Isabel Friedman
Eugene & Anne Marie Marans
Basil & Debbie Marcus
Robert L. Meyer
Mark & Kate Michelson
Daniel Mintz & Susan Huang
William & Heather Mocatta
Charles Monat
Donald & René Morgan
Jack & Alice Ormut
David Paris & Nancy Remme
Leonard & Dianne Patsiner
Andrew Pleatman & Ellen McNally
Robert Shamis
Steven & Linda Shevick
Ronald & Lois Shulman
Larry Sloven
Paul & Cindy Theil

where we are, where we're going: perspectives from Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph
from the Rabbi's study . . .

The United Jewish Congregation is about today. It is about facilitating the spiritual and educational lives of Jewish women, men and children who will fashion Jewish life well into the 21st century. The UJC is also the place where we draw the maps and 'test drive' for that future Jewish experience.

To be worthy of your time and support, any institution in our community must be prepared to demonstrate that it has something unique to contribute to the Jewish future. Some call that Jewish continuity. So contemplating a vision for The UJC I must first identify issues that face Jewish life.

Certainly, among the greatest challenges are the low rate of synagogue affiliation, the absence of ritual in the lives of many Jews, and the rising tide of Jews marrying non-Jews and simultaneously staying away from organized Jewish life and identity. I am sure there are scores of sermons, lectures, books and articles on each of these subjects.

But let me be a bit heretical. For I believe that all these problems are only symptoms. Of course it matters whether Jewish men and women make *kiddush* on Friday night. Of course it is important that they affiliate with Jewish organizations and The UJC. And it is appropriate to be concerned about the Jewish identity and practice of their family. But remember, what people do is determined by who they are. The really important question is how they see themselves.

I believe Jewish life is about Jewish identity, because Judaism emanates from each individual Jew. When Jewish identity is strong, the rest follows.

That is where The UJC comes in. We specialize in the production of Jewish self-awareness, Jewish identity, and Jewish pride. We labor to instill these qualities in our members and their families. And in turn, we hope they export them to the rest of the Jewish community of Hong Kong, and, in time, the rest of the world at large.

In the final analysis, our *raison d'être* is Judaism. And we must never lose sight of that. We have no other desire to be just another institution or organization. We have a mission, and it is the support and enhancement of Jewish life . . . through our religious services, our educational programs for adults, families, and children, our social events, and our celebrations.

Come join us as a part of The UJC family. Help us work to create a strong Jewish identity for the next generation, and help us build a dynamic Jewish future. That future begins right here, and now, in Hong Kong.

'How Sacks shuts us out'

This is the headline of an article that appeared in the autumn 1993 edition of the Jewish periodical *Manna*. It deals with the recently published book *One People? Tradition, Modernity, and Jewish Unity* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth.

The book is Rabbi Sacks' attempt to reach out to all non-Orthodox Jews. In a fascinating essay review of the book, Senior Rabbi Dow Marmur of Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto responds to Rabbi Sacks' insights. Rabbi Marmur contends that the book may be at best patronizing towards Reform and Liberal Jews and at worst, an attack on the notion of religious pluralism.

If you would like a copy of Rabbi Marmur's essay, call or fax me and I will send it to you immediately.

Visitors to preach, teach

The UJC will renew its acquaintance with two old friends in the coming weeks — Rabbi John Levi, Senior Rabbi of Temple Beth Israel in Melbourne and Rabbi Murray Blackman, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Sinai in New Orleans.

Rabbi Levi conducted the *bnai mitzvah* of David and Jonathan Green, sons of Bob and Grace, in 1988 and 1990. His advice, support and encouragement were instrumental in the establishment of The UJC.

Rabbi Levi, a vice-president of the World Union for Progressive Judaism, may be described as *the* builder of Progressive Judaism in the Australian-Asian region. He helped found the Victorian Union for Progressive Judaism, an organization which now includes three congregations, and began the Australia New Zealand Union for Progressive Judaism. He also 'created' the forerunner of NETZER, the youth movement for Progressive Jews in Australia. Rabbi Levi is the founder and creator of the King David School, the first fulltime Progressive Jewish school in this part of the world, and continues to lend his support to The UJC and a new Progressive congregation in Singapore.

Rabbi Levi will preach the sermon at the Shabbat service on Friday, January 22.

Rabbi Blackman and his wife Martha will be in Hong Kong from February 2 to 7 during which time he will preach the sermon for the Shabbat service on February 4 and teach the Introduction to Judaism class on Thursday, February 3.

Now in semi-retirement, the rabbi has enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a pulpit rabbi in North America. His visit to Hong Kong comes following a two-month assignment at Temple Emanuel in Honolulu where he is serving as interim rabbi while the Congregation searches for a new rabbi. An opportunity like this is only offered to the most experienced and expert rabbis.

Rabbi Blackman conducted a Shabbat service for The UJC when he visited Hong Kong in November, 1992 and his son has lived here while on a fellowship program.

Committee installation January 7

I will have the honor and privilege of installing the newly-elected members of the Executive Committee during the January 7 Shabbat service.

Leadership is never easy. Leading a young, growing congregation is a tremendous challenge. There is little or no precedent or experience on which to base decisions. At times, it seems that each matter requiring attention is totally new.

But there can be no greater reward than leading a congregation like The UJC. The enthusiasm, the support, the energy of the membership is the 'pay' for our leaders.

We are fortunate to have such a talented congregation. And we are richly blessed to have women and men who are willing to give of their time to help chart the course of The UJC.

Gerald Godfrey elected Justice takes seat as newest Trustee

Gerald Godfrey, Justice of the Court of Appeal of Hong Kong, has accepted an invitation to become a Trustee of the Incorporated Trustees of the Jewish Community of Hong Kong.

The new Trustee's legal talents are expected to be particularly valuable at a time that new constitutions are being drafted for both the Jewish Club and Ohel Leah Synagogue.

Justice Godfrey studied at King's College, London University and was called to the Bar at Lincoln's Inn in 1954. He has since been called to the Bar in the Bahamas, Hong Kong, Kenya, Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei. Mr. Godfrey was in practice at the Chancery Bar from 1957 to 1986, at which time he took up his present appointment in Hong Kong.

Talk set for March 8 Ex-U.S. envoy joins, lends Asian perspective

The UJC is hoping to gain new insights on Asia from its newest member, Burton Levin, the former U.S. Ambassador to Burma (1987-90) and Consul-General to Hong Kong (1981-86).

Ambassador Levin, director of Asian Society Hong Kong Centre and a director of Warren Williams International, adds depth and distinction to the Congregation with his wide knowledge of Asian affairs.

Rabbi Sam Joseph, who offered the distinguished former diplomat honorary membership on behalf of The UJC, is arranging an adult education seminar for Tuesday, March 8 at which the ambassador will be the featured speaker. Details will be announced at a later date.

During his 36 years in the U.S. Foreign Service, Ambassador Levin also served in Taiwan, Indonesia and Thailand in Asia, and in the United States at Harvard, Stanford, and in Washington, D.C. A native New Yorker, he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Brooklyn College and a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University.

Two Trustees attend AGM

Trustees affirm support

Trustees attended a UJC Annual General Meeting for the first time last month thereby making, by their presence alone, what some members saw as an important statement of support.

Mr. Michael Green, chairman of The Incorporated Trustees of the Jewish Community of Hong Kong, and Mr. Robert Dorfman attended the meeting. In both cordial discussions with various members and during the course of the meeting, they voiced support for ways that Jewish life could be enhanced in Hong Kong with support from The UJC.

In presenting the Trustees' outlook, Mr. Dorfman said 'that the role of The UJC was very important in the Hong Kong Jewish community. Some may see every new group as a fracture, but we, the Trustees, do not see it this way. We expect you to come for support, and we hope to find it. . . All elements of this community are important. Hong Kong is an exciting place and being Jewish here is exciting. We will always have some who say otherwise, but more Jewish life in Hong Kong is better. We have to find a common ground.'

Anne Godfrey looks ahead

Rising to the challenge

The following is extracted from the report submitted by Anne Godfrey, Hong Kong representative to the Commonwealth Jewish Council, on the Council's recent biennial conference in London. Mrs. Godfrey is former chairman of The Jewish Club's General Committee and ex-officio member of the present Committee.

This year the keynote lecture was given by the Chief Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. His subject was 'Jewish Continuity'. He said that the Jewish people since 1789 have gone through two distinct eras, the first being integration and the second survival. The time has now come to enter a third era — Jewish Continuity — to ensure the survival of the Jews of the Diaspora. As he so succinctly put it 'The question is no longer 'Can a Jew live as a European?' or 'Can a Jew live?' but 'Can a Jew live as a Jew?'' He emphasized that to enter the third era we have to change our priorities and the way in which resources are allocated. 'A strategy for continuity would look at *all* Jews and the ways Jewish Identity is reinforced.' He has published five short pamphlets on this theme. I have a set if you would like to read them.

What he had to say seemed to me to have particular relevance for us here in Hong Kong as we stand at the cross-roads of a new era in the history of the community and we look forward to the new premises in Robinson Road. We too should grasp the nettle of Jewish Continuity. We need to ensure that significant changes are made in the way resources are allocated in our community. We need an excellent Hebrew School with teachers trained in the needs of a Diaspora community. We must see that our teenagers leave here for university with a sense of what it means to be a Jew and have the experience of being part of a Hong Kong Jewish Youth movement with a trained leader. We should employ a Community Director and create meaningful programmes for all of us but especially the 200 or so singles who are the most recent arrivals to ensure they meet a Jewish partner and start a Jewish family. We should send our 'pre' and 'post' graduates on leadership training schemes. We must educate our adults so that what our children learn can be reinforced in the home. We do not need to spend so much of our resources on a kosher restaurant; some of these resources could be re-directed elsewhere. We must harness the enormous potential of this community, set aside our differences and work together for Jewish Continuity. This is the challenge of Hong Kong. Can we rise to meet it?

■ Anne Godfrey, November 1993

Simple Shofar Special: Blender Carrot Soup — perfect for Passover

one diced onion
five sliced carrots
two sliced potatoes
five cups water
one tsp. salt, one tsp. sugar

- ① Place vegetables in salted water and simmer until soft, about one-half hour.
- ② Pour soup into blender and 'puree' until thick. Serves 4.

Correspondence

Trustees seek understanding, respect

On reading the November/December 1993 issue of The Shofar I feel compelled to write you this letter which please print in the next issue of The Shofar.

What particularly took my attention was the many references to the Trustees and the Ohel Leah Synagogue. The theme of the references generally appeared conciliatory, but the underlying message was not. This reached a crescendo in the unfortunate article by David Shapiro headed 'Am I a Jew?'. This article was in many cases factually incorrect and in my opinion offensive. I do not wish to refute each inaccuracy but as a Member of the Ohel Leah Synagogue I certainly resent being characterized as 'medieval' or wearing 'black knickers and long sideburns.'

The basis of working together as a community must be founded on mutual understanding and respect. I felt Rabbi Joseph's introduction was sensitive and helpful. Other references less so and Mr. Shapiro's characterizations reminiscent of those seen in anti-semitic organs.

The trustees have been working quietly and energetically to bring the various parts of the Jewish Community of Hong Kong closer together. The lack of respect and understanding demonstrated in The Shofar is disappointing and unhelpful in this pursuit.

Michael J. Green

Chairman

*The Incorporated Trustees of the
Jewish Community of Hong Kong*

Thanks for Thanksgiving

Give thanks . . . for Pastor Gene and Rabbi Sam!

What a memorable service [Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Union Church, November 24] you gave your congregations tonight and I want to thank you both for the privilege of being part of such an unique occasion! Nobody but nobody that I met this evening had ever witnessed anything quite like this service before in their lives and the memory will stay strong for many a year.

I am sure that our one God was so proud of you both this evening as He watched over you at our service. It takes considerable courage, understanding, compassion as well as confidence in your own beliefs to mount such a service and I feel it was pitched to perfection. The thrill of the service was in its simplicity, its joy and the revelation that our one God brought us together through the two of you which I would have thought, until tonight, to be impossible. It was a service which was meaningful and significant for both congregations.

May God bless you both as you continue your great work both within your own congregations and with those of different faiths — and Hannah and I give thanks, yet again.

Hannah & Steve Miller

World Union praises progress

I received your bulletin 'The Shofar' and was pleased to read it from cover to cover and to see the fine progress which is being made under the leadership of Rabbi Joseph. The program of the congregation, both educational and cultural, appears to have taken off nicely and it is thrilling to see the way you are developing.

Please let us have reports from you every once in a while. We would like to publicize the activities within the World Union family.

It now looks as if my projected trip to Australia will not take place. This means that I will not be coming to Hong Kong as originally planned. However, if there is a change, I will certainly look forward to being with you.

Your many friends in the World Union join in extending to you best wishes for a continued success in behalf of our common cause.

Rabbi Richard G. Hirsch

*Director, World Union for Progressive Judaism
Jerusalem*

UJC strengthens family, community

Our family joined the United Jewish Congregation on our arrival here almost two years ago. I must admit that my spouse forced it on me as a way of keeping a vestige of our way of life, while living abroad.

As it worked out, it was a wonderful decision for All of us.

The UJC has given us what we have never had before in a Jewish congregation, *togetherness*.

Not only this, but our six year old son, Haris, has really reaped the benefits denied both my spouse and myself when we were young, the perspective of being a Jew in modern times.

Moreover, with the arrival of Rabbi Joseph a whole new chapter in his Jewish life is being written. In one PACE [Parents and Children for Education] session, our son learned more about Judaism than in one year at Sunday school at the Jewish Club!

Thanks for making our community a real *Jewish home*. One of the reasons for trying to remain here in Hong Kong is *The UJC*.

May it prosper, may it grow, may it continue to enrich our lives.

Paulette Bazerman

Please address letters intended for publication to the Editor, The Shofar, GPO Box 6083, Hong Kong and provide your name and address. Letters may be sent via fax to (852) 730-5507. Shorter letters stand a better chance of being printed. Letters may be edited for space and style.



Texans hope to return

We want you to know how thrilling it is to receive your bulletins and mailings. We have read them cover to cover and it brings us to you in a way even though we are so many miles apart.

Congratulations on all the new members who have joined the Congregation. It is quite an impressive number and we know The UJC will continue to grow under the superb leadership of Rabbi Sam. We so wish that we might have stayed in Hong Kong for at least another year. We enjoyed the Shabbat services and the dinners following at the American Club. We enjoyed the fellowship and just had a good 'feeling' when we were with you on Friday evenings. You have so many things upcoming, and some that have taken place since we left three-and-a-half weeks ago, that we wish we could experience.

We particularly enjoyed the articles by Rabbi Joseph, by David Shapiro, Robert Meyer and Bob Green. We enjoyed all the little bits of news about the members and the happenings. Please do NOT remove us from your mailing list. We will share your bulletins with our Rabbis here.

Congratulations on the upcoming Bar Mitzvahs of Michael Meyer and Benjamin Hornak. We know these will be wonderful events for their families as well as for the entire congregation. Congratulations also to Don DaSaro, Sharon Fine and Susan Millodot on their conversion to Judaism. These are all milestones, both personal and in the events of the Congregation.

The Interfaith Thanksgiving sounds wonderful. When we had been in Hong Kong for only a few weeks we had decided to have a Thanksgiving for our new friends when we got settled in our 'flat.' Unfortunately, our job did not materialize as we had anticipated but hopefully, something will materialize that will bring us back to Hong Kong within the coming year. Be assured that we will be with you is such is the case.

As Hanukkah approaches, we wish for each and everyone of you a happy Hannukah, a joyous New Year and our hope for your continued success in Hong Kong or wherever life may carry you. If ever any of you are in Dallas we would welcome you into our home. We miss you. Please keep in touch! Love to all,

David and Caroline Garber
Dallas, Texas

Mel was right

My husband Mel and myself are new members of The UJC having recently moved from Toronto. Mel comes from a Conservative background and I from a Reform. Mel was here on his own for the High Holidays and kept reporting back to me in Toronto on how wonderful the services were, how welcoming the Congregation was and how glad he was to be a part of The UJC.

I arrived in mid-October and went to a service the first Friday night I was here. At that time I was feeling pretty overwhelmed by all the changes in my life and upon attending the service felt for the first time that I was at home. Now I knew what Mel was speaking about. The service was beautiful and there was something there for both of us incorporating both our Jewish identities. I felt comfortable and serene sitting in that little room hearing the familiar prayers and songs. The Rabbi, his family and the Congregation opened their arms to us and helped us to integrate into our new lives. We want to thank you all. This is the essence of Judaism — to care and accept others.

Diana Satok

Planners try to measure interest

UJC Trip to Kaifeng Studied

Planners of a prospective U.J.C. three-day excursion to Kaifeng, site of the ancient Chinese Jewish community, have asked interested members to get in touch.

Committee member Al Fine is trying to arrange for a Thursday evening departure, Sunday afternoon return journey sometime in May that would include a day in the Chinese city of Zhengzhou, a Shabbat service Saturday morning in Kaifeng, and a visit to the ancient Jewish remains of Kaifeng.

These remains consist of the site of the ancient synagogue (built in 1163), two Jewish steles which belonged to the synagogue (now in the city's museum), and the ancient Jewish cemetery. The organizers would also arrange a visit with a Sino-Judaic scholar and a family who claim to be descendants of members of the community. The package will include airfare and accommodation at a two or three star hotel in Kaifeng.

Interested parties should call Amy DaSaro at the UJC office for more information.

The Chinese Jewish community is believed by scholars to date to around 951 C.E. Their synagogue had a number of Torahs; they observed most of the traditional Jewish holidays, refrained from eating pork and circumcised their infant sons. These traditions evidently continued at least into the 18th century.

Rabbi to instruct HKIS staff

Rabbi Joseph, at the request of the instructors of Hong Kong International School's high school, will spend a day with them leading a seminar on Judaism and religious thought.

Religious courses are required of all students at HKIS High School. Students may study aspects of Western and Eastern religions. Since HKIS is sponsored by the Lutheran Church and is an international school with many religions practiced by its students, religious studies are considered an integral aspect of the curriculum.

Rabbi Joseph will be lecturing on Jewish history and thought, Christianity's roots in Judaism, and Jewish theology.

call office for copies

Periodical publishes Rabbi on Jewish views of death, evil

The magazine *Aeropagus: A Living Encounter with Today's Religious World* has published two articles by Rabbi Sam Joseph. One of the articles explains Jewish views concerning life after death; the other is an explanation of how 'evil' fits into Jewish thought and theology.

Both articles are available from The UJC office. Just call or fax the office for a copy.

**Note venue, time changes for
Introduction to Judaism classes**

Adult Education: Continuing

'Wednesday series' **Lunch and Learn**

Wednesday, January 5
12:40 P.M. — 1:20 P.M.

Fashioned to fit the fast-paced, time-conscious Hong Kong lifestyle, this midday Jewish study program begins and finishes exactly on time. Brown-bag it or grab a sandwich on the way (The Big Apple on the first floor of Dina House). Come earlier and stay later if you wish, but give us your attention for 40 minutes of study.

Using the Talmud and other Jewish texts (all in English), Rabbi Joseph leads a spiritual journey that will touch your mind and soul. You will look at the holy and profane, piety and apostasy, authority and creativity.

The Lunch and Learn program is designed to enable people to attend as often as they wish.

January 5, 12, 19, 26
February 2, 23

702 Dina House,
11 Duddell Street,
Central District

'Thursday series' **Introduction to Judaism**

Thursday, January 6
7:30 P.M. — 9:30 P.M.

UJC members who want to know more about the basic content of Judaism will find this course particularly helpful. Rabbi Joseph leads regular, Thursday night sessions in a discussion of holidays, life cycle events, and Jewish beliefs, practices, concepts and history. The course includes information essential to those planning to convert and as such is a prerequisite as part of a larger program of study and participation in UJC activities.

Please note the new time and venue. A nominal fee will be collected to cover the cost of room rental.

January 6, 13, 20, 27
February 3, 17, 24

City Hall, High Block, 7/f
Committee Room South
Central District

'mostly Mondays' **Adult B'Nai Mitzvah**

Monday, January 31
7:30 P.M. — 9:00 P.M.

This belated bar/bat mitzvah program is for adults who missed their chance the first time around. The six-month course with Rabbi Joseph includes basic Hebrew and a number of other subjects of Jewish interest and importance. The course concludes with a B'Nai Mitzvah service on the night of Shavuot, May 15, 1994 at which all 'graduates' will participate and share the joy of the occasion.

Members must attend at least four sessions of the Adult B'Nai Mitzvah class and four other adult education sessions. A working knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet will be helpful although not essential.

home of
Al & Sharon Fine
18C Vienna Court
41 Conduit Road, Mid-Levels

Venues for future sessions of the above classes and seminars will be announced.

Contemporary affairs evening: two UJC members — professor and journalist — discuss ethics, morality

Global Disasters: Inquiries into Management Ethics

This recently-published book by Dr. Robert Allinson will provide the basis for a fascinating evening of discussion and debate moderated by longtime UPI correspondent Arnold Zeitlin. Dr. Allinson is a member of the Graduate Faculty and the Department of Philosophy at The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

As described by his publisher, 'The book addresses the question of how to design a humanistic organization in our technological century where people continue to matter foremost. It stresses the place of moral responsibility in corporations and its importance for forming a corporate ethos.'

We will try, in the course of the evening, to see how Dr. Allinson's theories may apply or relate to a wider range of moral and ethical issues.

Monday, January 17, 7:30 P.M.

home of David and Diana Muller
Estoril Court, 29A, Block 1, Mid-Levels

celebrate nature, spring and 'The New Year of the Trees'

What the Torah said (Deut. 8:8):

Partake of the fruit with which the land of Israel is blessed ('a land of wheat and barley, of vines, figs and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey').

What the mystics believed:

Never take nature for granted. For the kabbalists, trees were a symbol of humans, as it says: 'For a human is like the tree of the field (Deut. 20:19). In line with their general concern for *tikkun olam* — spiritually repairing the world — the kabbalists regarded eating a variety of fruits on *Tu B'Shvat* (15th day of the Hebrew month of *Shvat*) as a way of improving our spiritual selves. More specifically, they believed that eating fruit was a way of expiating the first sin — eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden. Similarly, trees were symbolic of *the tree* — the Tree of Life, which carries divine goodness and blessing into the world.

What the mystics did:

To encourage this flow and to effect *tikkun olam*, the kabbalists of Safed (northern Israel, 16th century) created a *Tu B'Shvat* seder and wrote a special haggadah loosely modeled after the Passover seder. It involved drinking four cups of wine and eating many different fruits while reciting appropriate verses and prayers.

How they celebrated:

They ate many kinds of fruits, nuts and berries; drank many kinds of wine — white, pink, rosé, red; and sang songs and told stories about creation and the natural world. Although not mentioned in the verse from Deuteronomy, *bokser* — carob or St. John's bread — was the most popular fruit to use in the diaspora since it could survive the long trip from Israel to Jewish communities in Europe, North Africa, etc.)

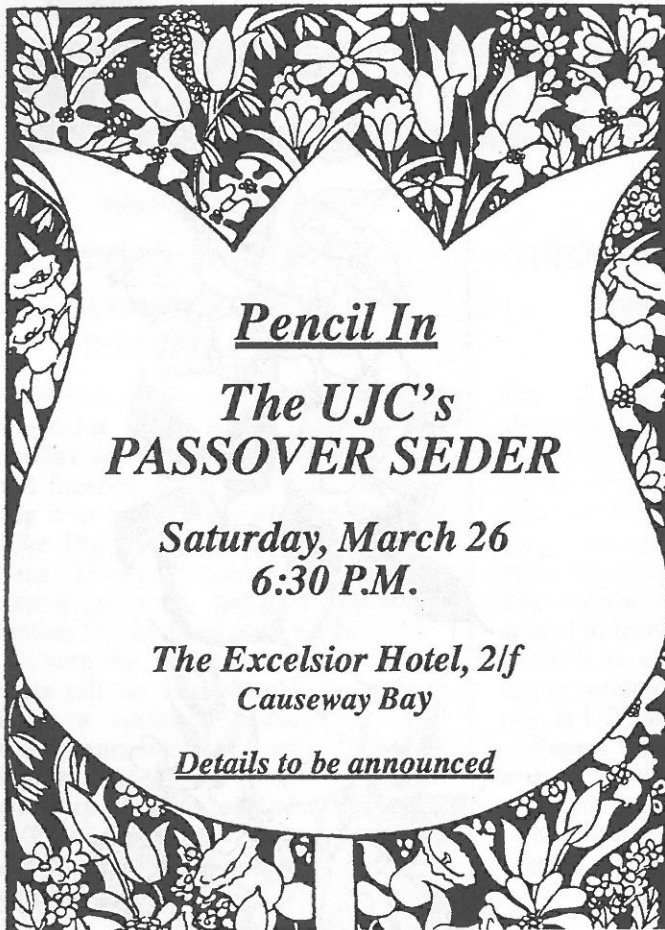


Celebrate with us at The UJC's first-ever (and free)

Tu B'Shvat Seder

Saturday, January 29, 7:30 P.M.

City Hall, High Block, Committee Room North, 7th floor



Pencil In
The UJC's
PASSOVER SEDER

Saturday, March 26
6:30 P.M.

The Excelsior Hotel, 2/f
Causeway Bay

Details to be announced



Pencil In
The UJC's
PURIM PARTY

Saturday, February 26
The American Club, Tai Tam
Main Dining Room

Children's Party: 4:30 P.M.
Megillah Reading: 5:30 P.M.
BBQ Buffet: 6:00 P.M.

Details to be announced

Shabbat, Shabbat, Shabbat

Friday, January 7 Family Service

Conducted by
 Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph
 Installation of
 new Executive Committee members
 (see page 9)

Friday, January 21 Family Service

Conducted by
 Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph
 Sermon to be preached by
 Senior Rabbi John Levi
 Temple Beth Israel, Melbourne

Friday, February 4 Family Service

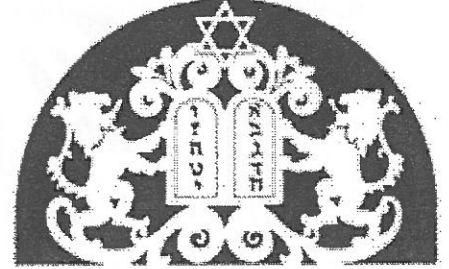
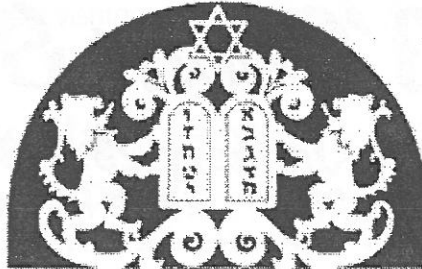
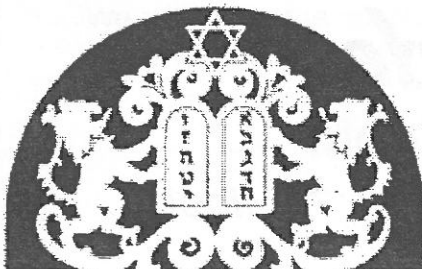
Conducted by
 Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph
 Sermon to be preached by
 Rabbi Emeritus Murray Blackman
 Temple Sinai, New Orleans

The American Club, Kam Shan Room, 6:30 P.M.
Exchange Square II, 49th floor

followed by

Italian Buffet Supper

Members: adults \$125.00, children \$75.00 Non-members: Adults \$140.00, children \$90.00



Join us for The UJC's first Installation Shabbat

conducted by Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph

This special, creative installation ritual (incorporated into the regular Shabbat service) symbolizes the connection of The UJC's new Executive Committee members (as listed below, right) to their important task of leading the Congregation. It also helps assure that experience and devotion will always be accorded recognition and utilized.

Friday, January 7, 6:30 P.M.

The American Club, 49/f, Exchange Square II, Central

P.A.C.E.

(Parents and Children for Education)

P.A.C.E., a hands-on, interactive way of learning about and doing Jewish things, is designed for parents and children to learn together. It is most suited for children from 6 to 16. Children should be accompanied by at least one parent.

The topic for this meeting will be blessings. Together with Rabbi Joseph, we will explore 'blessings of the senses', 'blessings that are a mitzvah', and 'thanks-creating blessings'. Using different stations we will explore these areas and, of course, have many hand-on activities. A small fee will be collected for materials.

Sunday, January 9, 9:00 A.M. - 11:00 A.M.

Ladies Recreation Club, 10 Old Peak Road, Mid-Levels

Tot Shabbat

Tot Shabbats are special shabbats with stories, songs, arts and crafts, dance and Torah. Come celebrate Shabbat especially geared for tots from 1 to 5 and their parents. This month we will also prepare for the celebration of *Tu B'Shvat* — 'The New Year of the Trees'. A snack will be provided. Conducted by Rabbi Joseph.

Saturday, January 15, 9:30 A.M. - 11:15 A.M.

Branksome School Building, 3 Tregunter Path, Mid-Levels

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Chavurah

This is a monthly study morning conducted by Rabbi Joseph for pre-bar/bat mitzvah students and their families. The topic this month will be 'Judaism and Bio-Ethics: Life and Death Decisions'.

Sunday, January 16, 10:30 A.M. - noon

Home of Tomas and Veronica Frankenberg

7 Pacific View, 22 Cape Road, Chung Hom Kok, Hong Kong



Free! *

Shabbat cassette tape and home celebration booklet

All you need to know to make a special Friday night Shabbat at your home is now available from the UJC office — free! The Shabbat Kit includes basic blessings, recipes, planning ideas, and family involvement suggestions. There is also a super audio tape of Shabbat blessings and songs that goes with the booklet.

This material is being made available to UJC members by a loving benefactor of the Congregation. To get your kit, just call the office or fax or mail the form below.

* there will be a nominal charge for postage and handling

**I would like to receive a
Shabbat Kit.**

name _____

address _____

MAIL: THE UJC, GPO BOX 5259, HK
FAX: 523-3961
TEL: 523-2985

The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong

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Tel. 523-2985; Fax 523-3961

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The Shofar is published bi-monthly by The UJC. Requests for copies and notification of address changes should be addressed to The UJC office.

New book relates concerns of prominent Israeli: We are not one

Top fundraiser rails against tragic splits in world Jewry

Relations between Israel and the Diaspora have been a hot topic of conversation for years. 'We are One' has been a crucial slogan in the global fund-raising campaigns that have sent billions of dollars to Israel since its founding. But according to a former world chairman of Keren Hayesod-United Israel Appeal, the umbrella organization of all UJA campaigns worldwide, that slogan is becoming less meaningful every day.

The title of Avraham Avi-hai's new book tells the story. *Danger! Three Jewish Peoples* chronicles what Avi-hai sees as an ill-fated and tragic split within world Jewry. Rather than focusing on the commonly viewed division between Jews here [Israel] and abroad, however, he goes even further in his work, released in early November, 1993 by Shengold in New York in cooperation with Jerusalem's Herzl Press.

He maintains that the problem goes beyond the Israel-Diaspora split that preoccupies so many people. In fact, he says, not two but three distinct Jewish peoples are emerging — or, indeed, may already have emerged.

The opening paragraph of the book sets forth the problem: 'There is a new Jewish people being born in Israel,' Avi-hai writes. 'Israeli Jews are different from Jews elsewhere. They are not only different from the Jews of the modern Diaspora — wherever they may live outside of Israel — they are also [different] from the ultra-Orthodox in Israel and abroad.'

Avi-hai describes this 'new Jew' as one who lives Judaism as a civil religion. Life in the Jewish state revolves around a Jewish calendar, the Hebrew language and many other trappings of a Jewish reality. Even the most secular Israeli Jew celebrates Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Purim and Pessah . . . know about Jewish sources and live them in countless, natural ways.

'Much of our literature and poetry relate to Jewish themes,' he says. American Jews, on the other hand, feel American, a part of the melting pot to which their forebears migrated. They are part of a society whose civil religion is a mix of Christianity and Americanism, including such holidays as Easter, Independence Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The third group transcends geographical borders. The ultra-Orthodox live in Israel, America and elsewhere. Wherever they live, Avi-hai says, they remain separate and resist the temptation to blend into whatever civil religion exists around them.

Whose place is in question in this big picture? Avi-hai terms the modern Orthodox as 'odd man out.' They embrace both Jewish nationalism and traditional religion. In some cases their sympathies lie with the Israelis, while in other situations they lean toward the ultra-Orthodox. Wherever they live, some level of internal conflict exists.

Avi-hai, 62, came to Israel in 1962 from his native Canada. He lived for a time in a kibbutz in the south, but subsequently moved to Jerusalem.

He developed the ideas put forth in *Danger!* during the years he worked for prime ministers David Ben-Gurion and Levi Eshkol, and when he served in the Jewish Agency and Karen Hayesod. While each of the three emerging groups may feel it is doing just fine, Avi Hai-strees that the ideal of one Jewish people deserves to be a top priority.

To a point, he says, each of the three groups could get on sufficiently without the others, or by keeping the others at arm's length. Though not an ideal situation, he adds, such a reality could be sustained indefinitely. The problems have been compounded, however, in recent years, as the ultra-Orthodox and some modern Orthodox circles have essentially excommunicated the Reform stream of Judaism, because of the latter's decision to accept patrilineal descent.

'It's not a *de jure* excommunication,' Avi-hai says, 'but I'm afraid that may happen.' Avi-hai admits that his purpose in writing *Danger!* is to alarm readers. The gradual shifting of sands over the past decades has created a new reality that many people have barely noticed, he says. 'My drive is to make people worry and think,' he says.

Tragically, he says, the best way to unify the Jewish people is through external pressures. 'Hitler, history and the Holocaust made us more unified,' Avi-hai says, noting that historically antisemitism forced Jews to close ranks.

Today, nearly half a century after the Holocaust, the good fortune of relative stability and acceptance in the West, coupled with the reality of a strong, independent Israel, sets the scene for internal divisiveness.

Without greater Jewish education in the Diaspora, Avi-hai warns, the link to Israel will lose its importance. And if that link interests fewer Jews, without being replaced by anything else, then two questions remain: What will American Jewry look like? What possible common ground will it share with the other two Jewish peoples?

Avi-hai maintains that the only real chance to save the Jewish people from becoming so deeply divided lies in solid Jewish education. If this does not happen, then there may be no one left to unite. . .

'While working in the Prime Minister's office [under Ben-Gurion and Eshkol], I encouraged the leadership of the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform movements to build part of their seminaries here, in order to strengthen Israeli-Diaspora relations,' he says.

Avi-hai also helped build the School for Overseas Students at the Hebrew University. 'It creates a bridge for potential *aliya*, and over the years tens of thousands of young people have studied there.

Despite his achievements, and those of others, Avi-hai is candid about the shortcomings. He says that Diaspora Jews as a whole have not succeeded in using Israel as a resource to their best advantage.

'In the Orthodox, Conservative and Reform worlds we have a great thinness of learning,' he says. While he charges the Orthodox world with cases of teaching newly religious people without what he terms 'depth of learning,' he says that the Reform and Conservative movements simply 'do not require enough learning. They produce congregational leaders, not spiritual leaders.'

■ Carl Schrag

[adapted, abridged from *The Jerusalem Post International Edition*, week ending November 27, 1993]

Today, nearly half a century after the Holocaust, the good fortune of relative stability and acceptance in the West, coupled with the reality of a strong, independent Israel, sets the scene for internal divisiveness.

Donations

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

(used by our Rabbi to subvent program expenses and help those who may need financial support to participate in a program)

Amy and Don DaSaro, Robert Meyer (in gratitude for the bar mitzvah of his son Michael), **Susan and Michel Milladot, Mollie Blaum-Sherbin**

General Operating Fund

Carol Betson, Hank Goldstein

Services Fund

(to help defray the expenses of renting function rooms for Shabbat and Holiday services)

Amy and Don DaSaro, Sharon and Al Fine, Susan and Michel Milladot
Vickie and Arnold Zeitlin

Mazel Tov!

Michael Meyer, Robert Meyer, and grandmother Jean Meyer on the Michael's

Bar Mitzvah on December 18

Ben Hornak, Amy and Don Saro, Daniel Hornak, Dan Hornak and John Hornak on Ben's Bar Mitzvah on December 25.

Gerald Godfrey, on becoming one of the Incorporated Trustees of the Jewish Community of Hong Kong

Mel Bazerman, Elane Fine, Albert Fine, Neal Horowitz and Dennis Leventahl on their election as members of the Executive Committee, and to the sitting Committee members on their re-election.

Thanks!

Victor Falk, Martha Josephson, and Jacqueline Blinderman, retiring Committee members, for their service to the Congregation and Community.

Charles Monat for sponsoring the entire cost of printing the membership directory.

Veronica Frankenberg (chairperson), **Mollie Blaum-Sherbin**, and **Ann Isabel Friedman** for organizing the Chanukah party, the **Blindermans** for the Chanukah gelt, **Steve Kahn** for the toys given as prizes and favors, and **Sharon Fine, Lois Shulman and Nancy Pyatt** for handling registration. Also, thanks to the many families whose donations helped us make the party free for children.

Martha Josephson (chairperson), **Ann-Isabel Friedman**, and **Karen Handmaker** for organizing *Tot Shabbat*, **Jennifer Betson** for creating our 'Beary Mazal Tov' *Tot Shabbat* Certificate, **Lisa Pollack** for leading the singing, and **Rachel Joseph** for all-around helping.

The **Blindermans** and **Frankenbergs** for lending their homes for Bar-Bat Mitzvah Chavurah meetings.

Diana and David Muller, Nancy Pyatt, and Paulette and Mel Bazerman for lending their homes for various programs.

Amy Meyer for the volunteer time and secretarial help she give The UJC

Victor Falk, Ben Frankel, Amy Meyer, Mark Michelson, Sonia Park, and Laura Vinogradov for helping with mailings.

Get well soon

Bonnie Palitz, recovering from back surgery

Welcome, new members

Burton Levin
Alan Frishman
Andrea & George Miller
Lisa Pollock
Ruth and Jeffrey Sacks
Mary Seddon
Lynne Krazelsky

UJC Honors Treasurer, Committee members

Victor Falk, retiring as UJC's Treasurer after three terms, was singled out for special praise at the Annual General Meeting on December 14, 1993.

In presenting resented Mr. Falk with a Certificate of Appreciation from the Congregation, Chairman **Bob Green** said he had run out of adjectives to describe Mr. Falk's dedication and painstaking efforts.

Fellow-Committee member **Janet Golden** presented him with a bronze replica of a horse made into a lamp. She pointed out that the lamp was a symbolic gift recognizing how the Treasurer had illuminated the Committee and Congregation on so many occasions with his insights, observations, and financial acumen. In reply, Mr. Falk demonstrated the constant concern he has shown about UJC expenditures by inquiring where the funds had come from to pay for the lamp.

Mr. Falk is retiring as consequence of a possible career change and contemplated relocation but is serving in the meantime as an advisor to the Executive Committee.

Certificates of Appreciation for retiring Committee members **Martha Josephson** and **Jacqueline Blinderman**, unable to attend the meeting, will be presented on a future occasion.

Carmel Announces New Prenursery Class

Carmel School has announced a new prenursery class beginning January 3. Children must be two years old by October 31, 1993. Interested parents should contact **Susan Lipsey** at 567-4635.

UJC funds Opportunities for giving

There are many wonderful ways to honor, thank, and/or memorialize friends and loved ones in our tradition. One special way is to make a donation to one of the UJC Funds. These funds have specific purposes which in the main help our Congregation with its expenses. Please consider a donation to a UJC Fund as a beautiful tribute to someone special.



UJC Calendar: January/February, 1994

see notes below for addresses of venues

Wednesday, January 5, 12:40 P.M.

Lunch and Learn
Dina House

Thursday, January 6, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
City Hall

Friday, January 7, 6:30 P.M.

*Shabbat Family Service and
installation ceremony*
The American Club

Sunday, January 9, 9:00 A.M.

P.A.C.E. Holiday Workshop: Blessings
Ladies Recreation Club

Wednesday, January 12, 12:40 P.M.

Lunch and Learn
Dina House

Thursday, January 13, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
Dina House

Saturday, January 15, 9:30 A.M.

Tot Shabbat
Branksome School Bldg.,
3 Tregunter Path, Mid-Levels

Sunday, January 16, 10:30 A.M.

B'Nai Mitzvah Chavurah
(families of pre-bar/bat mitzvah students)
home of: Tomas & Veronica Frankenberg
(see page 9)

Monday, January 17, 7:00 P.M.

Contemporary Issues Seminar: Management Ethics
with Dr. Robert Allinson, Arnold Zeitlin
David & Diana Muller's home (see page 6)

Wednesday, January 19, 12:40 P.M.

Lunch and Learn
Dina House

Thursday, January 20, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
City Hall

Friday, January 21, 6:30 P.M.

Shabbat Family Service
The American Club

Wednesday, January 26, 12:40 P.M.

Lunch and Learn
Dina House

Thursday, January 27, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
City Hall

Saturday, January 29, 7:30 P.M.

Tu B'Shvat Seder
City Hall

Monday, January 31, 7:30 P.M.

Adult B'Nai Mitzvah
home of Al & Sharon Fine (see p. 6)

Wednesday, February 2, 12:40 P.M.

Lunch and Learn
Dina House

Thursday, February 3, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
City Hall

Friday, February 4, 6:30 P.M.

Shabbat Family Service
The American Club

Tuesday, February 15, 7:00 P.M.

'Judaism and New Age Spirituality' workshop
with Rabbi Joseph
venue to be announced

Thursday, February 17, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
City Hall

Friday, February 18, 6:30 P.M.

*Shabbat Family Service and
Lamed-Vav recognition ceremony*
The American Club

Sunday, February 20, 9:00 A.M.

P.A.C.E. Holiday Workshop: Purim
Ladies Recreation Club

Wednesday, February 23, 12:40 P.M.

Lunch and Learn
Dina House

Thursday, February 24, 7:30 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism
City Hall

Saturday, February 26, 7:30 P.M.

Purim Party
American Club, Tai Tam (see page 8)

Notes

702 Dina House
Rutonjee Center,
11 Duddell Street, Central District
(office of Charles Monat)

The American Club
Kam Shan Room, 49/f,
Exchange Square II, Central District
Services are followed by Italian buffet supper
Dinner for members, \$125.00 adults, \$75.00, children
under 12; non-members, \$140.00 and \$90.00

Ladies Recreation Club
10 Old Peak Road, Mid-Levels, Hong Kong

City Hall
High Block, 7th floor
Committee Room South or North
(same building as public library)
Edinburgh Place, Central District