

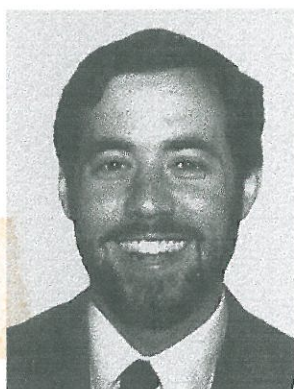
# The Shofar

THE UNITED JEWISH CONGREGATION OF HONG KONG

JANUARY/FEBRUARY, 1998



## Visitors to teach, preach, conduct Tot Shabbats during February and March visits UJC Pulpit Opening Attracts Multi-Talented Candidate, Couple



Most college grads would be happy enough starting their career by helping grow sales five times, like Mark Stephen Bloom did as marketing manager for a Silicon Valley software firm. But just a few years out of Northwestern University with a Masters and Bachelors in Speech/Communications Studies, he had other ambitions in mind.

And so it was back to school, this time Hebrew Union College (HUC) in Cincinnati where five

years later, 1995, Mark Bloom was ordained Rabbi Mark Bloom, having earned a Master of Arts in Hebrew Letters from HUC the year before.

For the past year, he has worked as Associate Rabbi at the 1100-family Congregation Emanuel in Sydney, Australia while Rabbi Jeffrey Kamins in on sabbatical. As main Rabbi for the 250-family 'Conservative Synagogue' within the congregation, Rabbi Bloom leads weekly 'traditional' Shabbat services and Monday morning *minyanim*.

Rabbi Bloom's special talents are seen in the prizes, honors, and awards he has won for 'outstanding sermon skills' and essays on the Holocaust, Reform Judaism, and social action — and in his musical experience. He has served as song-leader and choir director for numerous congregations, summer camps, youth groups, nursery schools and nursing homes in the U.S. and Australia.

A popular guest speaker in Sydney, the 31-year-old San Francisco native describes himself as 'a huge sports fan, a little man with a big heart (I stand only 5' 3") and, along with my adorable wife Karen, still act like a newlywed.'

'I have heard wonderful things about The UJC from the previous rabbis who have served there. It seems to be an exciting, dynamic place, with lots of young families and great potential for programs and growth.'

Among his many duties at Congregation Emanuel, Rabbi Bloom preaches every week, conducts weekly Torah discussions, officiates life-cycle ceremonies, oversees the religious school, leads weekly services for all grades, teaches a conversion class, and leads weekly 'Breakfast with the Rabbi' sessions. He also serves as Rabbinic Advisor and Storyteller to Jewish Day School.

His first position following ordination was as Rabbi for the 165-family Jewish Family Congregation in South Salem, New York (1995-1997) where he doubled weekly Shabbat attendance; established family and children's

Storyteller, writer, soloist, composer, and touring artist are among the many skills and accomplishments Rabbi Jordan D. Cohen, 36, and wife Cantor Janece Ermen Cohen bring to Hong Kong. Both have been serving North Shore Temple Emanuel in Chatswood (Sydney), Australia since 1993.

In addition to congregational work, Rabbi Cohen, a native of Toronto, has worked extensively in the areas of Jewish education (youth and adult), inter-faith relations and Jewish folklore. An avid story-teller, Rabbi Cohen has published in the areas of Jewish education and folklore, served on the faculty of the internationally renowned Brandeis-Bardin Institute, and has received numerous awards including the prestigious title of 'Reform Jewish Educator'.

As Associate Rabbi in Sydney, Rabbi Cohen started an outreach program to interfaith couples and established the Academy of Life-Long Jewish Learning. He also developed and led early childhood family worship programs and was in charge of educational programming for the 200-student Hebrew and religion school.

Rabbi Cohen has a B.A. in English literature from University of Waterloo in Ontario and Masters degrees in both Hebrew Letters and Jewish Education from HUC's Los Angeles campus. After ordination in 1990 at the HUC campus in New York, he served as Assistant Rabbi at Temple Sinai in Oakland, California for two years. As director of the 500-student religious school, he initiated a program for

Jewish students with special educational needs, established a new pre-school, and developed and directed the Academy for Adult Jewish Studies.

Cantor Cohen graduated from HUC's School of Sacred Music with a Masters Degree in Sacred Music in 1990 and was invested as cantor at the same time.

In Los Angeles, she collaborated with well-known composer Bruce Langhorne (*Swing Shift*) in scoring the movie *The Fourth Wise Man* (Martin Sheen, Eileen Brennan, and Allen Arkin). She was also part of *SHIR MAGIC*, a women cantors duo that toured the US and produced several recordings, and was the featured soloist in concerts in the US, Canada, Israel, Australia, and New Zealand. Cantor



### Meet our Visitors

Rabbi Mark Bloom

**Thursday February 12, 7 p.m.,** King David Lounge — teaches adult education class

**Friday, February 13, 7 p.m.,** Auditorium — conducts Shabbat evening service

**Saturday February 14, 10:30 a.m.** Auditorium — leads Tot Shabbat service

Rabbi Jordan Cohen, Cantor Janece Cohen

**Thursday March 5, 7 p.m.,** King David Lounge — Rabbi teaches adult education class

**Friday, March 6, 7 p.m.,** Auditorium — Rabbi, Cantor conduct Shabbat evening service

**Saturday March 7, 10:30 a.m.** Auditorium — Rabbi, Cantor lead Tot Shabbat service

(continued page 3)

(continued page 3)



## From the Rabbi's desk . . .

# A Totality of Life's Experiences — All Rolled Into One Megilah

Although we don't officially read the Megilah of Esther until Purim begins on Wednesday evening, March 11, we do 'get ready' so to speak when the month of Adar begins on February 27 (Purim falls in this month). According to the Talmud, 'When Adar arrives we multiply mirth'. This fun-filled even bawdy side of Purim is quite familiar to us. The Book of Esther is replete with humor, sex, mockery and a gigantic dose of hyperbole which has the Jews wiping out nearly 75,000 anti-Semitic Persians throughout the land at the end of the story.

We remember that on Purim even the rabbis said you could drink in excess, until you could no longer distinguish between 'blessed be Mordechai' and 'cursed be Haman'. Purim seems to be one joke after another. Yet, like most Jewish texts which have been canonized into the Hebrew Scripture (and it is interesting to note that the Book of Esther was actually the very last Book to be included in the Hebrew Bible due to intense popular lobbying against a rabbinate which felt the Book to be too secular — God's name is not mentioned even once — and irreverent) the more one searches the more one finds. Let's begin our search.

Take for example the fact that the Shabbat just before Purim is always called *Shabbat Zachor*, the Sabbath of Remembrance.

We are commanded to remember the enemy of our People named Amalek who we read in Deuteronomy 25:17-19 attacked the Israelites as they came out of Egypt, but did so in a most despicable fashion. Amalek chose to wait to attack until the fighters had passed leaving exposed the stragglers (mostly women and children) at their most vulnerable point. And it is the legacy of Amalek which is passed on from the generations to Haman himself, a descendent of the evil Amalek.

Another piece of the puzzle is added to Purim as we are forced to consider the Amalek story and the larger truth that in every generation there are those who rise up (like Amalek) to destroy us. We must be ever on guard even as we are commanded to let our guard down this night of Purim.

And is it just a coincidence that another Jewish holiday is so different from Purim yet so much alike in name (*Yom Hakipurim*, the Day of Atonement). As scholars suggest, both days deal with the concept

of lottery — the lots cast by Haman to choose the day on which to destroy the Jews; the lots chosen on Yom Kippur to determine which animals will be sacrificed and which sent off with the sins of the people. Both days indicating the important role which chance plays in the world, both days dealing with matters of life and death, yet both days so totally different in tone and spirit.

Perhaps no Purim message teaches us better to acknowledge the totality of life's experiences than the utter simplicity in comparing the two statements: Blessed is Mordechai and Cursed is Haman. Not only are we to drink until we confuse the two but in a certain respect there is no difference between them! Using Gematria (the technique whereby each Hebrew letter has a numerical equivalent) you learn that both statements add up to the same number, 502!

Does this suggest that there is no difference between the goodness of Mordechai and the evil of Haman? Of course not. Does this suggest that in the total perspective of Life's Experience we will find both

Mordechai and Haman at every turn — neither one nor the other able to establish a monopoly in Life. Perhaps.

Purim, therefore, with all its light-heartedness and frivolity carries with it the undertone of stark reality. Haman the evil which has faced

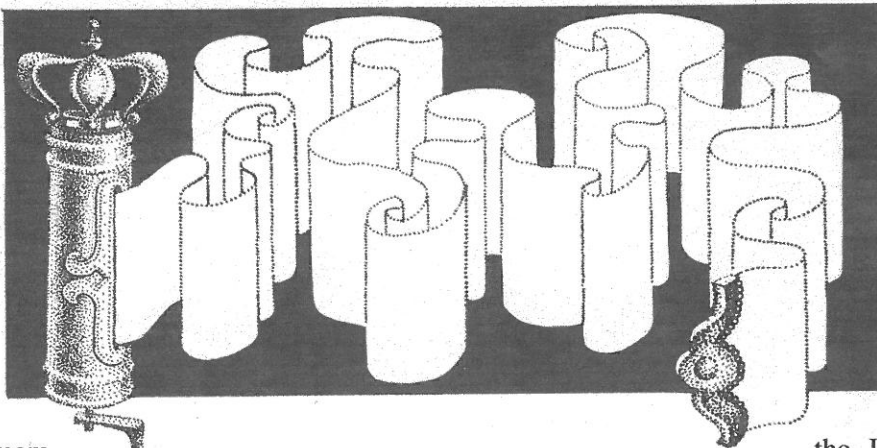
the Jew since Amalek

through Hitler and beyond is part and parcel of the Jew's life experience. We can, on occasion, let our hair down and play with the realities and even thoroughly defeat them in the end (witness the last chapter of Esther), but never can we Forget Amalek.

And perhaps it is for this very reason that Purim manages to integrate into one *Ganza Megilah* (one great story) all the contradictory yet imperative lessons of life. So important are these lessons for the Jewish People that our rabbis concluded that 'all festivals will one day cease, but the days of Purim will never cease'. Purim will continue even into the Messianic Age because its messages are vital for us even then!

A wish to you all for a joyous and meaningful Purim holiday.

*Rabbi Joel D. Oseran*





Arrives mid-February at UJC's invitation

## Rabbi Arnold Sher, Head of Rabbi Placement Service, to Visit UJC

After playing a key role in earlier Rabbi search efforts by The UJC, Rabbi Arnold I. Sher, one of the most important persons in the process by which Reform rabbis get their jobs, will come to Hong Kong for a first-hand look and get-acquainted opportunity with The UJC.

Plans are in motion to provide Rabbi Sher with the chance to meet both Congregational and Community leaders during the time he spends with The UJC — Wednesday, February 18 through Saturday, February 21.

In the words of Rabbi Joel Oseran, 'He will see a very lively Shabbat service on Friday night, February 20 which is a Family-Friendly Service'.

Rabbi Sher works out of offices in Manhattan where he is Director of Placement/Rabbi Emeritus, Joint Placement Commission for CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis), UAHC (Union of American Hebrew Rabbis), and HUC (Hebrew Union College). Born in Boston, the 61-year-old rabbi and his wife Eve have two sons and two daughters.

### Cohens' visit (continued from page 1)

Cohen has been invited to perform in this year's Adelaide Theatre Festival.

A number of Jewish organizations including B'nai Brith, Brandeis Bardin, and many congregations in America and Australasia have engaged the Cantor as scholar/musician-in-residence for seminars and retreats.

Her areas of special expertise include developing music programs for small congregations, forming and working with congregational choirs — both professional and volunteer, and lecturing on topics like 'The History of Jewish Music While Standing on One Foot'. Her Junior Choir at the North Shore Temple Emanuel has toured throughout Australia to rave reviews.

Before coming to North Shore Temple Emanuel Cantor Cohen served as cantor at Temple Beth El and Center in San Pedro, California, Brooklyn Heights Synagogue in Brooklyn, New York, and Congregation B'nai Tikvah in Walnut Creek, California.

At all these congregations she has been involved in preparing B'nai Mitzvah students, planning religious and Hebrew School music curricula, and teaching Hebrew classes and adult education courses.

She and her husband have one son, Zachary, 6.

### Bloom visit (continued from page 1)

services for Shabbat and High Holidays; and wrote and/or ran creative services for festivals and celebrations.

He also taught Confirmation class and helped establish a youth group and nursery school; worked with B'nai Mitzvah students on *derash*; and worked privately with developmentally disabled adults for B'nai Mitzvah.

In the area of adult education, Rabbi Bloom taught a 'Taste of Judaism' pilot program for the unaffiliated; established weekly Torah study; established 'Parallel Learning' where parents learn the same subjects as children; and taught Hebrew courses and courses on Jewish film, Jewish women, history and sexuality.

As a student rabbi, he worked with the 80-family Congregation B'nai Israel in Riverdale, Georgia, a South Atlanta suburb; the 35-family Congregation Aitz Chaim in Great Falls, Montana; and the 290-family congregation Temple Beth Torah in Fremont, California.

## Why I'll eat today (a Jewish fast day)

BY YOSEF I. ABRAMOWITZ

Today I am going to have breakfast with my children as a declaration of spiritual independence.

It is Asarah B Tevet, one of three minor fast days in the Jewish calendar, when religious Jews abstain from eating or drinking from sunrise until sunset. For the past decade I have observed these fast days — which commemorate the stages of the destruction of ancient Jerusalem — to join my consciousness with Jewish history and martyrdom. By denying my body sustenance, I have re-created the sense of vulnerability that the Jewish people have felt in diaspora since our expulsion from the Holy City. By observing these days, I have tied my spirituality to Jerusalem, as I am commanded to do.

No more. Jerusalem's holiness is wrapped up in the holiness not of the stones, but of the actions of its inhabitants. We are taught that when the Temple was destroyed more than 2,000 years ago, God's spirit left Jerusalem to dwell with the exiled people. In recapturing and reclaiming Jerusalem in 1967, the Israel Defense Forces opened the door for God to return. And by most accounts, the reunited and rebuilt Jerusalem has emerged once again as the spiritual and political center of world Jewry.

Yet I wonder if God recently has returned to exile.

I do not have the heart to tell my daughters that they are not allowed to have their bat mitzvah at the Western Wall, the only remaining part of the ancient temples, even though boys regularly celebrate their bar mitzvahs there. It is not only the ultra-Orthodox who prevent this, but Israel's civil government and police.

How do I tell them that their mother was tear-gassed at the Wall because she chose to pray there with a prayer shawl along with other women? How do I tell them that feces were thrown at American Jewish worshippers by ultra-Orthodox Jews during the holy festival of Shavuot? How do I explain the violence, curses, and spit heaped upon Jews like us by Jews like them? And most significantly, how do I explain the indifference of Israeli society to the corruption of Judaism in the Jewish state?

I refuse to make excuses to my children for the growing extremism of Israeli society, as many of Israel's apologists do. It is wrong, and the religious leaders have to take responsibility for their silence and the actions of their devout followers. Who would have ever thought that the only remaining place on Earth where Jews are denied freedom of religion is in Jerusalem?

So I am reluctantly severing my connection to you, Jerusalem, for at least three days a year. And this is only a first step. I want my Judaism to be filled not with hatred and anger, as yours is, but with joy and blessing. On this day, when I am commanded to mourn for your ancient destructions, I choose to affirm instead that you no longer have a monopoly on God's spirit. Indeed, I choose to testify that my children's Judaism is not built on martyrdom and a sense of spiritual inferiority.

Real Jewish values are being taught, lived, and reinvigorated — with God's blessing — 6,000 miles away.

Pass the bagels, please.

■ Submitted by Al Fine

Yosef I. Abramowitz is editor of [www.Jewishfamily.com](http://www.Jewishfamily.com) and co-author with Rabbi Susan Silverman of *Jewish Family & Life: Traditions, Holidays, and Values for Today's Parents and Children*.



# 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 (totally cool)

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.

## How WE celebrate?

join us for The (promise you'll enjoy) UJC's'

## **Tu B'Shvat Seder**

light dinner, special readings, and songs

Tuesday, February 10, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.  
Jewish Community Centre

# Hamentaschen on the Net: Two Views

## Purim Goodies

Purim is known as a time of delicious smells emanating from the kitchen from the baking of the delicious sweets and goodies. Hamantaschen, a Purim cookie named for the three-cornered hat that Haman wore, is one of the favorites. Below is a recipe for you to make your own hamantaschen.

This is a recipe for hamantaschen dough developed by reading several dozen recipes for dough, including some not originally intended for hamantaschen, making lots of batches of dough, and conducting extensive taste tests. So this is the one our family likes — it's sweeter than many doughs (we like that!), but it is very easy to handle (we like that, too).

Makes enough for about 40 cookies.

1 cup sugar  
1 cup vegetable oil  
2 eggs  
3-1/2 cups flour (we use 2 unbleached white, 1-1/2 whole wheat)  
2 teaspoons honey

1. Beat oil and sugar together.
2. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each.
3. Add honey, continuing beating.
4. Gradually add flour and baking powder (sift them together if you insist - we never do). Mix well, using hands at the end if absolutely necessary.
5. Roll dough out to 1/4-inch thickness (don't roll too thin). Batter may be slightly oily. We sometimes roll the dough between pieces of waxed paper if it seems necessary, but usually we don't.
6. Cut dough into 3-inch circles, or a near approximation. Put a generous amount of filling in the center of each circle and fold up the sides to form a triangle shape.
7. Bake on greased cookie sheets at 350 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes until golden brown.

### Learn from our experiences department

Don't double the recipe, don't refrigerate the dough.

### What to put in the Hamantaschen

Chocolate is very popular in our house, especially when the kids are the ones making the cookies. Chocolate chips (especially the milk chocolate ones) and chunks off a dark chocolate bar work equally well for us. We also use fruit preserves or preserves - the type that are all fruit rather than mostly sugar.

For the adults in our house and among our acquaintances, [we] make *mohn* (poppy seed) filling from scratch every year. *Mohn* is a little hard to describe, but it's got poppy seeds and nuts and raisins in it, so how bad can it be? We aren't going to put the recipe here because it involves a lot of messing around in the kitchen and the recipe we use is published in Arthur Waskow's wonderful book *Seasons of Our Joy*. *Mohn* is also available commercially in cans, usually in the kosher food section of your supermarket (but it's not as good as the home-made variety).

[www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/](http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/)

## Proustly Purim

I was holding a soggy Hamantasch dipped in chicken soup, savoring the aroma. As the fragrance filled my nostrils, images of Mordelyn, a childhood friend, flooded through me. I pray no one ever writes a novel about the power of smell to evoke memories. It would be too tedious to bear.

Thinking about that whole episode, reminds me though, that there hasn't been a scholarly re-evaluation of Hamantaschen or their use as mystical metaphor in a number of years. Kabbalistically speaking, I can tell you at the outset, the white dough is symbolic of *chesed*, (loving-kindness, one of the ten Kabbalistical attributes, or *sephirot*).

Now with Kreplach for example, the whole thing is simple to decipher. The Kreplach, you see, contains mince meat: obviously a symbol of harsh judgments, (*din*). The whole Kreplach is then an icon of love-enshrouded judgment. The traditional Hamantaschen on the other hand are filled with poppy seeds, Kabbalistically inert, so to speak — go explain.

More perplexing than the filling is the enigmatic name. Yiddish scholarship currently entertains one of three theoretical origins. The Yiddish name for poppy seeds is *mohn*. German/Yiddish *taschen*, translates as pockets. So *mohntaschen* becomes Hamantaschen. It is all very neat as a theory, of course, but wholly insupportable in the light of the evidence. Which brings us to the second school of thought.

In the rabbinical Responsa arising out of a dispute concerning the kashruth of foodstuffs purchased from gentiles, jurists of the twelfth century in Morocco and Damascus refer to a popular, seed-filled confection known as *Chimamtasheen*. Shimon Abdulla of Aleppo, travelling through Egypt and Sinai in the fifteenth century, mentions having been served a *confitti Ham-an-Tasheen* by his host in Alexandria.

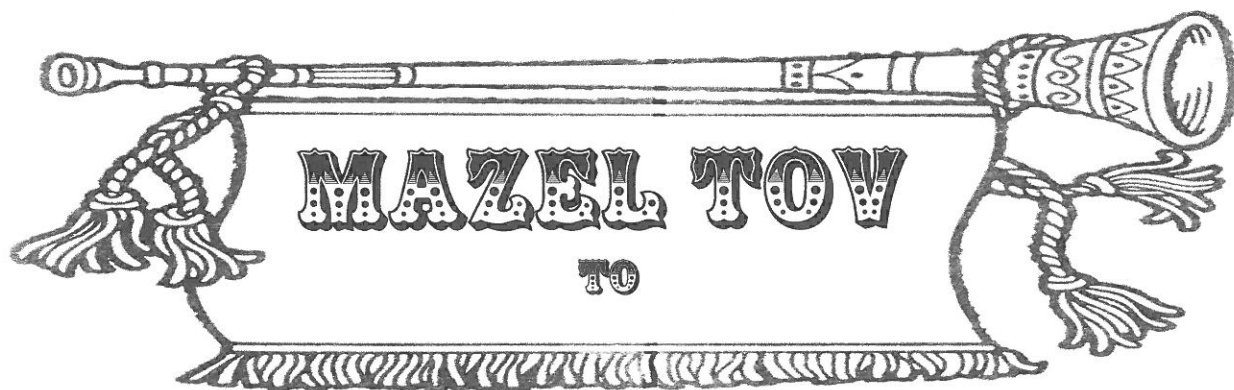
The third side of the (so to speak) triangle as it were, refers us through 'Semitic cognates' to the original Sanskrit word *Hamanta*. The Hamanta is the triangular locket or purse full of seed worn around the neck of the Buddha on his journey. It is thought by most proponents of this theory that the *shin* on the end of the word *Hamanta* is of Arabic origins, most probably the word *djin*. More commonly known to the English speaker as 'Genie'; the *djin* is a powerful demon in the bestiary of the Middle-East, mistaken in this instance for the Buddha. Here in *Hamanta shin* we find a curious admixture of the cross-cultural taxonomy, typically associated with the culinary transmigration of words.

Did you know that the N.E.C. (Nuclear Energy Commission) decided upon their choice of logo only after the famous post-war conference at the laboratory in Brookhaven, New York 1947? Rabbi Solvay Konferenz, my predecessor there, was hosting some informal discussions with refugee physicists at that time, he recalls:

'We were enjoying the Hamantaschen my wife had sent to the conference for the delectation of those Jewish scientists newly arrived from Europe. It was the week of Purim . . . the general feeling was one of optimism. Richard Feynman was chewing while admiring the cookie in his hand. Von Neuman demanded an explanation of the history of the Hamantaschen. Gamow and Feynman took turns entertaining us with their versions of the Purim story. I don't remember who it was suggested that the three triangles in the Hamantaschen might suggest the atomic radiation thing. None of them ever claimed credit for the flash of inspiration. But the idea was taken up and passed into common usage in no time at all.'

■ J. Hershy Worch

[www.jacsweb.org/rabbis/holidays/purim.html](http://www.jacsweb.org/rabbis/holidays/purim.html)



### January

03 Al Fine  
 05 Rachel Mocatta  
 09 Terry Paule  
 09 Anna Louisa Borenstein  
 09 Alon Zwick  
 11 Leigh Fetzer  
 11 Judah Frankel  
 12 Boe Leung  
 13 Lauren Brown  
 13 Philip Kadoorie  
 14 Peter Lighte  
 20 Daphne Miller  
 21 Stephanie Fox  
 21 Zachery Gould-Wilson  
 21 Aliana Weil  
 22 Frederick Leifer  
 23 Jason Greenberg  
 24 Hannah Abelow  
 25 Max Michelson  
 26 Dennis Leventhal  
 27 Leah Feiger  
 27 Jonathan Levi-Minzi  
 30 David Mocatta  
 31 Mei Leung

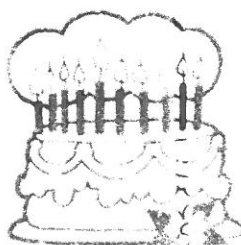
### February

03 Hara Frankel  
 03 Natalie Kadoorie  
 03 Glenn Marcus  
 04 Joshua Benjamin Biers  
 04 Rachel Sarah Biers  
 07 Leo Homler  
 08 Philip Ross  
 11 John Donald Maleuris  
 13 Harriet Lighte  
 13 Melvin Bazerman  
 14 Tessa Louise Harris  
 14 Yasha Durbin  
 14 Sarah Paule  
 15 Kimberley Pleatman  
 18 Elah Horwitz  
 18 Hank Horwitz  
 18 Dylan Kuzmik  
 18 Elizabeth Lavin  
 18 Peter Kaminsky  
 19 Jonathan Feiger  
 20 Adam Marcus  
 22 Perry Eiseman  
 23 Jeff Follick  
 28 Lisa Johnstone

### March

01 Michael Handleman  
 01 Daniel Pleatman  
 02 Samantha Cohen  
 02 Daniel Kaminsky  
 03 Celia Reingold  
 09 Justin Arnold  
 09 Sarah Abelow  
 10 Anna Berman  
 10 Nicki Dlugash  
 11 Hannah Lu  
 12 Emma Dodwell-Groves  
 12 J. Morgan Drutchas  
 15 Gabriel Lewis  
 18 Marilyn Carsley  
 19 Elane Fine  
 19 Rachel Miller  
 24 Elizabeth Belfer  
 24 Kevin Kasten  
 26 Jessica Rose Neville  
 27 Zachary Eisemann  
 28 Tami Lempert-Schwartz  
 29 Mae Devorah Biers  
 30 Robyn Bell  
 31 Zagny Durbin

## ON THEIR SPECIAL BIRTHDAYS





# Shabbat,

# Shabbat,

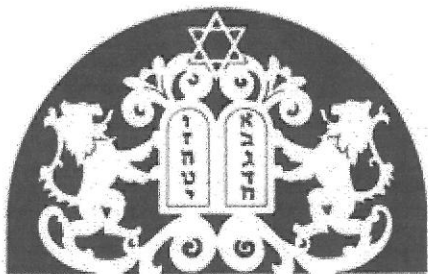
# Shabbat

Friday, February 13, 7:00 P.M.

## Evening Service

Conducted by  
Rabbi Mark Bloom (visiting)

Auditorium, Robinson Place  
followed by Shabbat Dinner, JCC



Saturday, February 14, 10 A.M.

## Tot Shabbat

with  
Rabbi Mark Bloom

Auditorium, Robinson Place  
followed by Kiddush Lunch, JCC

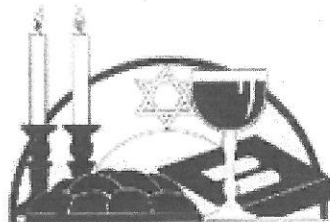
Friday, February 20, 6:30 P.M.

## 'Family Friendly' Service

Conducted by  
Rabbi Joel Oseran  
Auditorium, Robinson Place  
followed by Shabbat Dinner, JCC

### Join us in welcoming

Rabbi Arnold Sher (visiting)  
Director/Rabbi Emeritus,  
Joint Placement Commission



## Tot Shabbats

are special Shabbats with stories, songs, arts and crafts, dance and Torah for 2-5 year-olds and their parents. The focus is on creating a 'together' celebration, and what we do will be moving for everyone. Experience the joy of Shabbat with our visiting rabbis.

Friday, March 6, 7:00 P.M.

## Evening Service

Conducted by  
Rabbi Jordan Cohen (visiting)  
&  
Cantor Janece Cohen (visiting)  
Auditorium, Robinson Place  
followed by Shabbat Dinner, JCC



Saturday, March 7, 10 A.M.

## Tot Shabbat

with  
Rabbi Jordan Cohen  
&  
Cantor Janece Cohen

Auditorium, Robinson Place  
followed by Kiddush Lunch, JCC

**Pencil In**  
**The UJC's**  
**PASSOVER SEDER**

**Friday, April 10**  
**6:30 P.M.**

**The Excelsior Hotel, 2/f**  
**Causeway Bay**

**Details to be announced**

**PURIM**

**Pencil In**  
**Purim Party**  
**for adults**  
**Wednesday, March 11**  
23A Nicholson, 109 Repulse Bay Road  
(home of Dan & Diana Goldman)  
further details to be announced  
&  
**Purim Party**  
**for children**  
**Saturday, March 14 (mid-day)**  
☆ costume contest ☆ Megillah reading  
☆ special guest  
☆ hamentaschen ☆ buffet lunch  
venue, details to be announced



## UJC Funds

There are many wonderful ways to honor, thank, and/or remember friends and loved ones in our tradition. One special way is to make a donation to one of the UJC Funds. These include *The General Fund*; the *Prayerbook/Bible Bookplate Fund* which enables you to dedicate a prayerbook or Bible in honor or remembrance of a special person or event; the *Shabbat Sponsorship Fund* to help defray the expenses of Shabbat dinners, altar flowers, and Oneg Shabbat; and the *Rabbi's Discretionary Fund*. Each fund has a specific purpose which in the main help our Congregation with its expenses. Please consider a donation to a UJC Fund as a beautiful tribute to someone or something special.

### Donations, General Fund

**Bella Garber**, in memory of her visit to Hong Kong  
**Rebecca Haase**, in honour of the visit to Hong Kong of her mother, Bella Garber and her sister, Sarah Lerner  
**Walter Heiser**  
**Marion Levin**  
**Lisa Kasten**, in memory of the late Julius Barnathan  
**Lisa Kasten**, in honour of the naming of Rose Goodman, daughter to Lynn and Wayne  
**Joyce Barnathan and Steve Strasser**, in appreciation of Robyn Helzner's visit

### Corrections

The **Serfaty/Hipwell** and the **Fetzer/Zimmerman** donations listed in the November/December issue as High Holiday donations should have been entered as Circle Donations.

### Apology

The editor of *The Shofar* extends his apologies to **Jason Strasser** for failing to note his contribution to the Circle Campaign in the November/December of *The Shofar*.

### Farewell

Dear Rabbi —

Sophie and I wish to thank you very, very much for your warm and caring prayers and remarks during the Shabbat Kiddush's service and lunch.

The UJC has been a fantastic community, a welcoming family, a steady Rock of familiar and reassuring values on this rocky island, and we leave with regrets, but also with joy at the knowledge that under your guidance it will continue to grow in its own path of friendliness and spiritualism.

We wish Rachel, your children and yourself only the very best for the Year of The Tiger, and look forward to seeing you again soon in Shanghai!

With our best regards, *a bien tot!*

Stephane and Sophie Wilmet  
 N.5 A, Lane 249, An Fu Road  
 Shanghai, China 200031  
 e-mail: stephane@swebs.com  
 tel 00 86 21 6467 8137

## Program offers wide 'mitzvot' options Drop in Shabbat Dinner Sponsors Threatens UJC's Funding Ability

A fall-off in Shabbat Sponsorships in recent months is threatening The UJC's ability to continue the program as presently constructed under which members can join for dinner without paying on a regular, individual basis.

The program, launched in 1996, offers members the opportunity to share their special occasions with the entire community at a very reasonable cost of around \$1,800 by sponsoring a Shabbat dinner or lunch.

'Combining, as they do, Jewish and social aspects, the community Shabbat meals have always been one of the highlights and hallmarks of UJC programming,' member Ben Frankel wrote in *The Shofar* when the program was introduced. 'They are an ideal way to meet new friends and visit with old ones; a much-needed oasis from the rigors of our busy, Hong Kong lives; and a meaningful way to welcome Shabbat'.

Sponsoring a Shabbat dinner is an excellent way to celebrate a marriage, anniversary, bar/bat mitzvah, child naming, birth, visit or some other occasion or life cycle event, honor a family member or friend, or just 'do your bit' in underwriting the cost of this program.

Without much effort, members can come up with dozens of reasons to host, or join with friends to co-host a Shabbat dinner. Sponsorships will be publicized in advance in *The Shofar* or flyers to enable special friends to join with sponsors and the rest of the community in celebration or commemoration.

Call Jackie or Michael at the Temple office to schedule the day at 2523 2985, fax 2523 3961.

### Shabbat Dinner Bookings Essential

All members must book a place with the Temple office if they want to stay for Shabbat dinner or kiddush lunch.

Bookings should be made no later than 1 P.M. Wednesdays, preferably earlier. Without bookings, The UJC cannot ensure there will be enough food and places for everybody. It also results in higher bills to The UJC if the office staff overestimates the number coming. Regular dinner-goers may book on-going reservations but need to inform the office in advance for those occasions they cannot come.

**Contact Michael at 2523 2985, fax: 2523 3961, or e-mail [ujc@hk.super.net](mailto:ujc@hk.super.net).**

### Condolences to

Joyce Barnathan and family  
 on the death of Joyce's father,  
 Julius Barnathan

Paul Theil and family  
 on the passing of Paul's mother,  
 Charlotte Gordon

*The memory of the righteous  
 is a blessing*



## Mazel Tov

**Ken and Wanna Adler** on the birth of a son,  
Max Jaron Adler, January 2

**Edward (Woody) and Joanne Abram** on the  
birth of a daughter, Stefanie Jean Abram

**Jason Strasser**, on his Bar Mitzvah, January 10

**Fred and Allison Greenbaum** on the birth of a  
son, Richard Rubin Greenbaum, November 24

**David and Ivich Neuville** on the birth of a  
daughter, Madeleine Lian Neuville, Nov. 25

## Shabbat dinner sponsors

**Peter Lighte**, to celebrate the naming of his  
daughter, Hattie, January 16

**Carla Rapoport & Philip Milner-Barry** in  
honour of the visit to Hong Kong of her father,  
David Rapoport, February 6

**Sophie & Stephane Wilmet**, sponsored the  
kiddush lunch on January 17 to bid farewell

## Circumcisions seen as tourist draw in Malaysia

**By Ian Stewart.** The [Malaysian] Tourism  
Minister has proposed that circumcision  
ceremonies be opened to tourists for a  
small fee.

Sabbaruddin Chik has been looking for  
ways to encourage tourism growth, fol-  
lowing a sharp decline this year due to the  
smoke haze that blanketed the region for  
several months. He made the proposal  
while attending a circumcision ceremony  
for 48 boys.

Circumcision, which is an important re-  
ligious rite for Muslim boys, is usually a  
mass event preceded by an open-air cer-  
emony featuring drums and a religious  
blessing for the participants. The boys then  
walk in procession to the site where the  
surgery takes place.

Mr. Sabbaruddin said cultural events,  
such as circumcision ceremonies, could be  
turned into money-making ventures, which  
could help the people.

'By charging tourists a small fee of be-  
tween M\$4 and M\$5 (HK\$8 and HK\$16)  
to watch cultural events, the organizational  
costs can be covered,' he said.

The minister said he was confident tour-  
ists would enjoy watching a circumcision  
ceremony because it was something differ-  
ent from the norm.

But he warned organizers that once a  
ceremony was scheduled, it should not be  
postponed, even if it rained.

Reprinted from the South China Morning Post,  
December 12, 1997. Submitted by Richard  
Reitknecht and forwarded to The UJC's fund-  
raising subcommittee.

## Welcome New Members

### **Ira Kasoff (USA) and Ellen Eliasoph (USA) & Sarah Jenya, 4**

Ira: diplomat, U.S. Consulate  
Sarah: executive, Warner Brothers  
special talents, skills: Ira — fluent in Chinese, Japanese  
special talents, skills: Ellen — attorney

### **Joshua Goldman and Lauren Brown (USA)**

Joshua: Strategic Planning, Bechtel Corp.  
Lauren: teacher, Carmel School  
prev. affil.: Beth Miriam, New Jersey  
(Rabbi Joe Goldman is father, father-in-law)

### **Charles Rosenblum & Titi Mina Liu (USA)**

Charles: Management Consultant, Boston Consulting Group  
Titi Mina: lawyer, Paul Weiss Rifkind Wharton & Garrison  
prev. affil. **Steubenville, Ohio (Reform)**

### **Stephane Lambert (France)**

General Manager, Citime Mfg. Ltd.  
prev. affil.: parents, family very active in Jewish communities  
of Paris and Geneva; cousin is founder of a Liberal synagogue

### **Jeff Follick (USA)**

Manager, Edward Keller Ltd  
special talents, skills: cooking; computers  
prev. affil.: Temple Emanuel, Livingston, NJ (Reform)

### **Rafe and Felicia Lerner (USA) & Daniel Jeremy (8 months)**

Rafe: Venture Development Manager, Amoco Corp.  
Felicia: mother  
prev. affil.: Anshe Emet, Chicago (Conservative)

### **Finola Lewis (UK)**

Business Development Manager, Tesco Stores Ltd  
special talents, skills: fluency in Mandarin

### **Peter Lighte (USA)**

### **& Harriet (Hattie), 2**

banker, Chase Manhattan  
special talents, skills: Chinese classics; calligraphy; painting, mosaic making

### **Jeffrey Schwartz (USA)**

engineer, Hughes Asia Pacific  
prev. affil.: Conservative

### **Richard Selby (UK)**

freelance T.V. producer  
prev. affil.: Southgate, North London (Orthodox)

### **Lori Amada (USA)**

musician

## Thanks!

**Janet Golden, Rabbi Oseran, Jackie Vachha, Mark and Kate  
Michelson, Jon Feiger, Terry Paule, David Zweig, Robert Meyer,  
Sally Riddelsdell** and all those who donated pictures — for their  
help in producing an outstanding UJC promotional brochure and new  
membership application.

**Robert Meyer** for standing in as guest teacher of the Introduction to  
Judaism class during the Rabbi's absence

**Benjamin Frankel** for leading Services in the Rabbi's absence.

**Joy Zweig, Kathie Zwick & Ellen Levi-Minzi** for making 'The  
Great UJC Chanukah Party' such a memorable success.

**Bob Green** for organizing Shabbat at Sea IV

**Shai and Ilan Oseran** for helping carry the drinks to the MV Shab-  
bat for Shabbat at Sea IV



## Prayer, Worship, Study

Shabbat services conducted by Rabbi Joel Oseran, visiting rabbis, or lay members are held every Friday night in the Auditorium, Robinson Place, Jewish Community Centre, 70 Robinson Road, Mid-Levels, followed by dinner in the JCC coffee shop. A pre-service Fellowship Oneg begins at 6:45 P.M. Saturday morning services (when scheduled) begin at 10:00 A.M. and are followed by a kiddush/lunch.

**Monday, February 9, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
'It's never too late to join'  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Tuesday, February 10, 6:00 — 8:00 P.M.**

*Tu B'Shvat Seder  
JCC*

**Wednesday, February 11, 8:00 P.M.**

*Introduction to Judaism  
taught by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
King David Lounge, JCC*

**Thursday, February 12, 7:00 P.M.**

*Adult Education  
taught by Rabbi Mark Bloom (visiting)  
JCC*

**Friday, February 13, 7:00 P.M.**

*Shabbat Evening Service  
led by Rabbi Mark Bloom (visiting)*

**Saturday, February 14, 10:30 A.M.**

*Tot Shabbat Family Service  
led by Rabbi Mark Bloom (visiting)*

**Monday, February 16, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Wednesday, February 18, 8:00 P.M.**

*Introduction to Judaism  
taught by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
King David Lounge, JCC*

**Friday, February 20, 6:30 P.M.**

*'Family Friendly' Shabbat Service  
led by Rabbi Joel Oseran*

**Monday, February 23, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Wednesday, February 25, 8:00 P.M.**

*Introduction to Judaism  
taught by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
King David Lounge*

**Friday, February 27, 7:00 P.M.**

*Shabbat Evening Service  
led by Rabbi Joel Oseran*

**Saturday, February 28, 10:00 A.M.**

*Shabbat Morning Service  
led by Rabbi Joel Oseran*

**Monday, March 2, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Wednesday, March 4, 8:00 P.M.**

*Introduction to Judaism  
taught by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
King David Lounge*

**Thursday, March 5, 7:00 P.M.**

*Adult Education  
taught by Rabbi Jordan Cohen (visiting)  
JCC*

**Friday, March 6, 7:00 P.M.**

*Shabbat Evening Service  
led by Rabbi Jordan Cohen (visiting)*

**Saturday, March 7, 10:30 A.M.**

*Tot Shabbat Family Service  
led by Rabbi Jordan Cohen (visiting)*

**Monday, March 9, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
'It's never too late to join'  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Wednesday, March 11**

*Purim Party (Adults only)  
home of Dan & Diana Goldman*

**Friday, March 13, 7:00 P.M.**

*Shabbat Evening Service  
led by Rabbi Joel Oseran*

**Saturday, March 14**

*Children's Purim Party  
details to be announced*

**Monday, March 16, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
'It's never too late to join'  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Wednesday, March 18, 8:00 P.M.**

*Introduction to Judaism  
taught by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
King David Lounge, JCC*

**Friday, March 20, 6:30 P.M.**

*'Family Friendly' Shabbat Service  
led by Rabbi Joel Oseran*

**Monday, March 23, 7:30 P.M.**

*Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class  
with Rabbi Joel Oseran  
'It's never too late to join'  
JCC Coffee Shop*

**Wednesday, March 25, 8:00 P.M.**

*Introduction to Judaism  
taught by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
King David Lounge, JCC*

**Monday, March 26 — 29**

*UJC Shanghai Tour and Retreat*

**Friday, March 27, 7:00 P.M.**

*Shabbat Evening Service  
led by lay member*

**Friday, April 10, 6:30 P.M.**

*UJC Passover Seder  
led by Rabbi Joel Oseran  
The Excelsior Hotel*

## The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong

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email: [jvujc@hk.super.net](mailto:jvujc@hk.super.net)

Chairman: tel. 2866-2313, fax 2866-1917

### Executive Committee

Mark Michelson ..... Chairman  
Jonathan Feiger ..... Vice-chairman; Educ.; Admin.  
Terry Paule ..... Vice-chairman; Membership  
Robert L. Meyer ..... Treasurer; Legal; Liaison  
Ken Bell ..... Secretary; Religious & Ritual  
Brian Blank ..... Education  
Cara Case ..... Fundraising, Outreach  
Joseph Fine ..... Membership  
Diana Goldman ..... Social, Planning  
Robert Green ..... Editor, *The Shofar*  
Daniel Kirwin ..... Fundraising, Administration  
Charles Monat ..... Community Relations; Liaison  
Julie Silberger ..... Education  
David Zweig ..... Without Portfolio

Honorary: Carol Betson, Benjamin Frankel, Albert Fine, Janet Golden, Peter Kaminsky

*The Shofar* is published tri-monthly by The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong. Requests for copies and notification of address changes should be addressed to The UJC office.

Articles and letters from members and friends are welcome and encouraged. Address all submissions to Editor, The Shofar, G.P.O. Box 6083, Hong Kong; by fax to 2730-5507; or e-mail to [rghenhk@hk.super.net](mailto:rghenhk@hk.super.net)

## Volunteers. Who needs them?

Ever think about what goes into organizing a seder for 350 people? Or the time and energy it takes to put together a Purim party? A lot. Why would anyone want to do it, especially when you don't get paid a cent?

Joy Zweig knows. So do Ed Handelman, Kathie Zwick, Ann Lavin, Masako Levitt, Ellen Levi-Minzi, Suzanne Glickman, Jane Horwitz, Jody Kuzmik, Maureen Fox, Molly Homler, Janet Golden, Diana Goldman, and Jon Feiger, to name a few.

If you'd like to find out, get in touch.

Who needs volunteers?

**We do.**