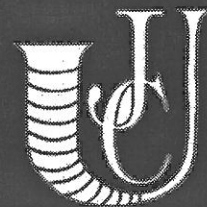


The Shofar



PUBLISHED BY THE UNITED JEWISH CONGREGATION OF HONG KONG

MARCH/APRIL, 1997

Arrives with family April 12 for week-long 'get acquainted' visit Educator, Community Activist Takes UJC Pulpit Starting August

Rabbi Joshua M. Aaronson, Associate Rabbi at one of North America's largest and most vibrant congregations, Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple [ACFT] in Cleveland, Ohio, will arrive in late summer as the new UJC rabbi. He takes over the pulpit from Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman who will be returning to his congregation Kol HaNesha-ma in Jerusalem upon completion of his sabbatical year in Hong Kong.

The UJC will be getting, in the 36-year-old rabbi, someone who can rightfully take credit for, and a great deal of satisfaction from a number of creative initiatives in synagogue and community work — everything from writing and adapting the music for a Purim Musical Extravaganza to organizing an Interfaith Seder (attended by over 700 people). A resumé of activities at his previous congregations, Temple Beth Zion in Buffalo, New York and ACFT, paints the picture of someone who devotes considerable energy to getting people involved.

We see, then, an emphasis on shared decision-making, educational and religious programs that involve the entire family, and involvement in projects to help AIDS patients, the needy, and Pro-Choice groups, among others. It means spending lots of time with 9th graders as co-leader of a trip to New York; teaching religion at a Catholic college; and working with Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Unitarian and Bahai ministers to sponsor an Interfaith Holocaust Commemoration.

This is just the tip of the iceberg — an iceberg that is quite remarkable considering Rabbi Aaronson only received his ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York in 1990. Someday, he will explain to us what his rabbinic thesis — *Tannaitic Authority in the Amoraic Sources* — is all about. Significantly, for a Congregation whose Executive Committee has been dominated by University of Michigan graduates for the last few years, Rabbi Aaronson received his B.A. in History at Ann Arbor.

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Message from Rabbi Aaronson

CLEVELAND. One of the defining themes of Jewish history is the idea that through the ages, Jews have migrated from one place to another with great frequency. Until relatively recently, these migrations have been forced. Yet, even in the most difficult circumstances, each new migration gave rise to a profound new interpretation of our sacred tradition.

To our ancestors that were exiled to Babylonia or expelled from Spain, the idea that a Jew living in comfort and free to practice Judaism would voluntarily choose to move his family half-way around the globe to a fairly small and in many ways isolated Jewish community would be incomprehensible. And yet, that is precisely what I, Debbie, Hanna, Harry and Simi (our dog) have decided to do.

We are embarking upon our own migration for many reasons. Most fundamentally, I believe that there is the potential in Hong Kong to participate in the development of one of the most unique, vibrant and creative Jewish communities in the Diaspora. I believe that Asia will be the locus of growth in the 21st century and we learn from Jewish history that Jews have historically been on the vanguard of nascent regional creation, be it in Europe, Russia or the Americas.

After visiting with members of the UJC in January, I came to learn that there is a great desire for a truly pastoral rabbi to serve this community. This year, The UJC has seen the effects a truly *hamische*, learned and caring rabbi can have on a congregation with Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman. The single most important priority during my first year shall be to build upon the foundation Levi has laid of turning the UJC into a spiritually fulfilling community in which all of us, so far from 'home' can find comfort, solace and sustenance.

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Personal Statement

I love being Jewish. I am passionate about being Jewish and I want to communicate that passion to other Jews. This is the core of my rabbinate. Passion is not something that can easily be incorporated into a curriculum. Passion is something communicated more by deed and example, than by the intellectual dissemination of information. Thus, underlying all study, all Torah, there must be a basic commitment that flows from one's passion for being Jewish.

Clearly, passion is not, in itself, enough to sustain a rabbinate (although it is most certainly enough to sustain a long life as a Jew). Hence, a few basic principles guide my rabbinate and imbue all that I teach and all that I preach.

I feel that all rabbis should have a succinct, cogent definition of the Jewish experience. I offer mine: Jews are a community of people attempting to make God's presence immediate in their lives, as a community. The essential Jewish experience is participation in that community. Much of my rabbinate is an effort to define, refine, teach and communicate this premise.

Another core principle is the idea that all Jews must be empowered to participate in the Jewish community. The highest title our tradition can bestow upon an individual is that of 'Jew.' To earn that title and participate as a full member, a Jew must be able to make decisions based on knowledge. My role as a rabbi is to provide the tools for that language.

From the Rabbi's Study . . .

According to tradition *k'sheh-nichnas Adar marbim be'simcha* — 'When the [month of] Adar begins let the joy increase!' We have a few weeks of required frivolity to prepare for Purim. This holiday is characterized by excessive eating and drinking by the adults many of whom, like the children, are in costume. This is a day when normal rules don't apply. The *megillah*, the scroll of Esther, is a most un-pious, un-Biblical kind of story. It tells of court intrigue, debauchery and seduction. Our fate is determined by the capricious whims of a drunken king and there is no mention of God! On Purim, nothing is as it appears.

Throughout the centuries the tale of Mordechai and Esther's rise to power and their triumph over Haman stood in stark contrast to our actual precarious political position in the Diaspora. At the end of the *megillah*, we read of the Jews slaughtering thousands of their enemies. There is no historical evidence that this, or any of the events reported in the *megillah*, actually happened. It seems to reflect a fantasy of Jewish power in the face of the reality of Jewish powerlessness.

As Purim approaches this year I find that I am overwhelmed with memories of Purims past. Since the Purim morning when Baruch Goldstein opened fire in the mosque in the Cave of Machpela in Hevron we read the *megillah* differently. We can no longer dismiss the slaughter of anti-Semites as fantasy. These verses can now be read as a warning as to the excesses of power. Since the Hevron massacre many non-Orthodox Israeli congregations read these verses in a whisper.

Twice this season last year I was awakened by the sounds of explosions not far from our apartment in Jerusalem. The bus bombings struck at the heart of my congregation since many of our members live near that particular route and use it to get to and from our neighborhood, (Ba'ka) and downtown Jerusalem.

As Purim approached last year, and another bomb exploded in the midst of holiday shoppers in Tel Aviv, school parties were called off. The congregation didn't cancel the *megillah* reading, but only the youngest kids came in costume. We opened the service by praying for the recovery of those injured and the mood remained subdued.

For contemporary Jews, especially in Israel, Purim has become an even more mixed up day. We celebrate our people's survival in ancient Persia. We celebrate that today we have a sovereign state, with a powerful army. At the same time our joy is tempered. It seems like our fate is sometimes determined by people drunk with religious fanaticism. The actions of the enemies of peace on both sides reminds us of the limits of military power. May this Purim be a safe and joyous one for our people in Israel and throughout the world.

Lewi Weiman-Kelman

Megillah Readers Needed

Get into the spirit of the Purim story by reading from the *Megillah* at the UJC Purim Party on Saturday, March 22 at the Ladies Recreation Club. For details, please give Rabbi Weiman-Kelman a call at 2523-2985.

Message from Rabbi Aaronson

(continued from page 1)

We hope to start this process from our very first visit as a family to Hong Kong and the UJC during the week of April 14 (pending confirmation from the powers-that-be). At that time, Debbie, Hanna, Harry and I (we'll be leaving Simi home, then) will hope to meet and greet as many of you as possible. All of us want very much not merely to be the 'rabbi's family' but to be part of your community and your lives.

In the meantime, we'd love to hear from you with moving tips, living-in-HK tips or information about your family, who you are, where you're from, etc. We're on-line in Cleveland at 73062.3257@compuserve.com.

My hope is that in a generation, Jews around the world will be able to look at Asian Jewry in general and Hong Kong in particular as an example of the greatness a Diasporan Jewish community can achieve, a greatness built not on close proximity to a plethora of good delicatessens or elected officials with 'Jewish' surnames, but upon the most basic Jewish values and beliefs: a shared commitment to grappling with God, the search for Holiness in encountering each other and a community whose vision, compassion and destiny transcends the sum of its individual parts. And my hope is that in a generation, you and I can say that we played some small part in this sacred transformation.

Rabbi Joshua Aaronson

Cleveland Rabbi Takes UJC Pulpit

(continued from page 1)

Rabbi Aaronson is involved in all aspects of rabbinical work at the 2,000-family ACFT — pulpit, pastoral, and life-cycle plus programming for youth, seniors, Sisterhood, Brotherhood, adult education, outreach, social action, fund-raising and leadership development. But his biggest responsibility, perhaps, comes as interim Director for Religious Education at the Temple's 800-student religious school, widely recognized as one of the country's finest. The school offers extensive family programming, retreat programming, and a Hebrew and Jewish studies curricula.

Rabbi Aaronson also serves as Rabbi of the Young People's Congregation. This congregation of nearly 300 families within the larger Temple is served by its own Board of Trustees and conducts its own services, holiday programming, social action projects and fundraising.

Before coming to Fairmount in July, 1995, he served as Assistant and later Associate Rabbi at Temple Beth Zion in Buffalo, New York from 1990-1995, during which time he was also Director of Education. 'I believe my most significant educational innovation at Temple Beth Zion was the creation and implementation of a wide variety of family educational programs,' Rabbi Aaronson writes. 'These programs included family Shabbatot, classroom projects and projects completed at home.'

As Director of Education at Temple Beth Zion, he was directly responsible for all the Temple's educational programs, pre-school through adult.

Rabbi Aaronson, his wife Debora, daughter Hanna, 2, and newly-born son Harold (February 9) will visit Hong Kong from April 12 to 18. They hope to move here around the end of July or early August.

The UJC has scheduled a get acquainted evening at the JCC on Sunday, April 13.

Thanks to me and the rest of us Veterans Make Way

The departure of Al Fine (see page 5), the decisions by Janet Golden, Ben Frankel, Elane Fine and Mel Satok not to run again, and my own decision to step down as chairman of the Executive Committee make for some of the more significant changes in our short history.

As a Committee member from the very beginning, Janet Golden has organized more seders, High Holidays, and other events, projects, and programs than she might care to remember, not to mention all the work put into producing membership directories, publicity flyers, etc. Fortunately, The UJC will not be losing the benefit of her experience, skills and organizational talents, if, as expected, she is named an honorary, ex-officio Committee member at the March 11 meeting.

Ben Frankel's contributions have been singular, having had more to do with shaping the course of both community and congregational life in the last few years than probably any other member. This includes work on search committees for The UJC, JCC and Carmel School; creating a relationship with the Joint Distribution Committee; spearheading the effort to build a *succah*; arranging holiday and festival celebrations; and advising on policy and procedural matters — all making for the kind of involvement rarely seen.

Elane Fine's tenure as secretary and chairperson of the Membership Committee closely parallels those years of The UJC's greatest growth and activity. There is a definite connection. It doesn't seem enough to simply say 'thank you' when I think of all the afternoons and evenings she gave up to record our discussions and all the hours spent afterwards typing them up, not to mention the time she gave to membership activities. Fortunately, her husband, Joe, is coming on board with a promise to 'Tell it like it is,' (something I'm not sure we're prepared to hear).

Mel Satok has been a voice of experience, reason, and moderation for several terms, making for a valuable balance and resource on the Committee and in the Congregation. He once asked about term limits for Committee members and I said we didn't need them because most people leave Hong Kong after a few years anyhow. I was a notable exception, of course, and in the process of becoming a dinosaur, failed to recognize how healthy change can be for organizations as well as individuals. As Robert Meyer observed at the AGM, however, the Congregation can save on a gold watch since I will be staying on the Committee, albeit not as chairman. It's about time.

■ Bob Green

Exco Gains Business, Financial, Management, Teaching Skills

The five new members of the Executive Committee elected at the February 27 AGM — David Zweig, Diana Goldman, Joseph Fine, Julie Silberberger, and Brian Blank — bring valuable new skills to The UJC.

Brian Blank was brought up in the Orthodox tradition in London where he chaired the PTA in his synagogue for eight years, served on the Board of Management for five years, helped with security issues, and managed the Mill Jewish Youth Club. Arriving in Hong Kong just prior to Rosh Hashana, 1995, Mr. Blank says, 'I misread the advert for services at the Arts Centre and thought it was the United Synagogue (the coalition of Orthodox Synagogues I belonged to in Britain) I was going to. I found myself instead at the UJC where I was welcomed with such enthusiasm and genuine friendship that I joined there and then.' Brian runs a company that does ISO 9000 certification — assessing and certifying the quality aspects of a business and its management. Recently divorced with two grown-up sons, Mr. Blank says he is 'single at the moment, but open to offers.'

Joseph Fine, a native of Boston, Massachusetts, ran a shoe jobbing and importing company in Boston and New York for many years. He moved to Hong Kong six years ago to start a trading company dealing mostly with leather. He is also involved in a joint venture tannery in China. He travels extensively throughout Asia both sourcing and selling product. Mr. Fine is married to Elane [a retiring Committee member] who publishes a newsletter for mid-life women. They have two children both of whom are in school in the U.S. He is interested in financial matters for the UJC and community liaison.

Diana Goldman, with a Masters of Education from Harvard University, has been actively involved in planning children's programs and holiday events for The UJC since moving here from Singapore last year with her husband Dan and daughters Rachel, 3 (at Carmel) and Katie, 2, scheduled to enroll at Carmel next year. Mrs. Goldman met her husband, Dan, at Cornell University where she received a B.S. degree in Nutritional Science. While in Singapore, she taught high school chemistry at the International School and served as Vice-President of the United Hebrew Congregation. Mrs. Goldman's efforts were instrumental in making the Sukkot party, Chanukah party, and Tu B'Shvat seder great successes. She is currently heading up the planning for the Purim party and Passover seder. She has also expressed an interest in helping build membership in The UJC.

Although Julie Silberberger is a lady on the move, we managed to catch up with her at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo (by fax and phone) where we learned that she is a Yale grad with an MBA from Harvard, speaks Chinese and Japanese, is from the Boston area and most recently, has lived in New York and Tokyo. Her job is marketing and new product development for Institutional Investor. She is interested in adult education and for starters, has begun working on plans for a UJC retreat.

David Zweig, Associate Professor of Social Science, Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, moved to Hong Kong in August, 1997 with his wife Joy, daughter Rachel, 4, and son Aaron, 9 months. A native of Toronto, he has a Ph.D. in Political Science (Chinese politics and East Asian international relations) from The University of Michigan and has written several books about Chinese politics. He has lived in China for four years, taught for 10 years at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, and was a member of the Executive Committee of the Fairbank Center at Harvard University. Joy was a vice-president of Jordan Marsh department stores and has her own company in Hong Kong consulting with manufacturers in home furnishings. In the U.S., David was active on issues related to Israeli politics and is interested in Jewish communities in China.

וְנָתַתִּי לָכֶם לֵב חָדָשׁ וְרוּחַ חָדָשׁ אֶתֵּן בְּקִרְבְּכֶם.

'I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you.

(Ezekiel 36:26)

Why You Should Bother Being Jewish

BY DAVID WOLPE

Judaism takes time, energy, resources. It will not swell your bank balance or increase your leisure time. Why bother?

Certain things are worth the effort. We invest tremendous energy and resources to improve our intellects, bolster our finances, safeguard the health of our babies. Think of the time spent ensuring that our children acquire knowledge, skills, self-confidence.

Yet how will you train your soul?

We would never buy a car or a plot of land without expert advice, yet we take our most valuable possession, our souls, and throw them haphazardly into this world. The soul ensures human uniqueness: There has never been another human being like you, like your beloved, like your child. You may believe the uniqueness of your child resides entirely in her environment's interaction with her DNA. But if you believe there is more, that there exists an ineffable, sublime essence to being human, then how will you honor that essence? Souls can grow. The great aim of life is to end it with a soul more beautiful, more burnished than when we began. Judaism can teach you how to accomplish that sacred task. Judaism is the longest continuous tradition in the world that educates humanity how to grow its souls. It has changed with time, but retains the vitality and authenticity of antiquity. It contains an unsurpassable reservoir of spiritual richness and emotional wisdom.

Judaism does not only grow souls, it forges communities. Why are Jewish charities so powerful and Jewish activism so potent? Because they are built on a tradition that binds people together. There were other persecuted groups in the Soviet Union, and other persecuted faiths. Why was it the Jewish world that forced the international community to listen? Because of the principle of mutual aid, inculcated through the centuries. For thousands of years Jews gathered together the fringes of their *talitot* each morning, each fringe representing Jews scattered across the globe. When the time came that an in-gathering was possible, we had been spiritually conditioned to respond.

Jewish social action will not endure in the absence of a spiritual tradition. We are practicing what the philosopher Will Herberg called 'cut-flower ethics.' Cut off from the soil that nourished them, flowers will stay in bloom for a while. Eventually they will wither. If we do not raise our children with a tradition, their goodness has no roots. In time it will dwindle and die.

Some shy away from intensive Jewish involvement because it seems 'narrow' or 'parochial.' That is an absurd inversion of the truth. There is nothing more universal than being Jewish. Natan Sharansky wrote that there were two kinds of Jews in the Soviet Union. Some thought caring for Jews was too narrow; they wished to save the whole world. They became *refuseniks* and ended up liberating the entire Soviet Union. As Cynthia Ozick pointed out, the shofar has two ends, a narrow end and a broad end: If you blow into the broad end you get nothing, but if you blow into the narrow end, you get a sound everyone can hear.

Children need a community and a faith. They need a solid place to stand in this world. Both they and we need to know the most powerful guarantor of self-worth — that we are in the image of God.

We all want our children to know they are important, so I urge an experiment: Ask your children, 'Why are you important?' The usual answers are, 'I am important because I am handsome, or pretty, or get good grades, or am good in sports or my parents love me.'

All these answers spell trouble. For all such answers are based on something human and everything human can change. What becomes of such a person the day he gets a bad grade, or fails, or (to use the adult equivalent) retires or is fired, or divorced or betrayed? He will feel worthless. Not disappointed, not resolved to do better, but worthless.

Judaism does not judge importance based on I.Q., or skills or our parents' affection. Rather all human beings are in the image of God, and that is true in times of success and times of failure, when we are surrounded and loved, and when we are alone and bereft.

Family life in Judaism is designed to reflect this idea that all are in God's image. Jewish ritual provides a sanctified family framework. Sitting at the Shabbat dinner table, in the glow of the candles, here is a sense of family gathering surrounded by holiness. I didn't always want to be there as a child, but I realized something profound: I was willing to sit at the Shabbat table because my parents had to follow the same rules. Through ritual I was encouraged to realize that my parents were children, too. They acknowledged something greater than themselves. We were in this together.

Jewish ritual forces people to confront each other as participants in the sacred. For a moment we reach beyond ourselves.

Judaism does not hide us from the pain of the world. As the Kotzker Rebbe teaches, 'The only whole heart is a broken one.' In a world of such pain, if your heart is whole there is something wrong with it. We must be broken to be whole. The question of life is, being broken, how do we seek to be healed? Where can we turn for the gentle guidance, the ethical insight and the spiritual exhilaration to move ourselves and our families through this world?

We find it in Judaism, but not Judaism as an ethnic clique or a social action club. The Judaism that shaped the spirits of our people is a deep, rich faith tradition that seeks to nourish our souls, to improve the world, to advance decency, to insist on the dignity of moral striving.

We are often embarrassed to seem 'too Jewish.' We do not want to stick out too much. We tell our children that they should have courage, be self-realized, not worry about what other people think — except when it comes to Judaism. Then they should hide, cower in the face of public opinion, or of Jews' own embarrassment. That is a shameful teaching. Jewish children must learn that it is a foolish life that is lived in the minds of other people.

Why be Jewish? Because out of the tumult of the centuries, Jews have fashioned a faith that enables them to nourish their souls, to create communities, to better the world, to seek God. Ours is a passionate and enduring legacy. For your own sake, as well as that of your children, don't miss out.

Rabbi Wolpe is the author of 'Why Be Jewish?' (Henry Holt & Co.). He teaches at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York.

reprinted from FORWARD, December 13, 1996

■ submitted by Robert Meyer

Hebonics, or The Jewish Grandmother's language

The Encino (CA) School Board has declared Jewish English a second language. Backers of the move say the district is the first in the nation to recognize Hebonics as the language of many of America's Jews. Therefore, hereafter teachers will recognize, study and accept Hebonics as another language.

Following are just a few descriptions of the characteristics of the language, and samples of phrases in standard English and Jewish English.

Samples of Pronunciation Characteristics

Jewish English or 'Hebonics' hardens consonants at the ends of words.

Thus, 'hand' becomes 'handt.'

The letter "W" is always pronounced as if it were a 'V'. Thus 'walking' becomes 'valking'.

'R' sounds are transformed to a guttural utterance that is virtually impossible to spell in English. It is 'ghraining' 'alghready.'

Samples of Idiomatic Characteristics

Questions are always answered with questions:

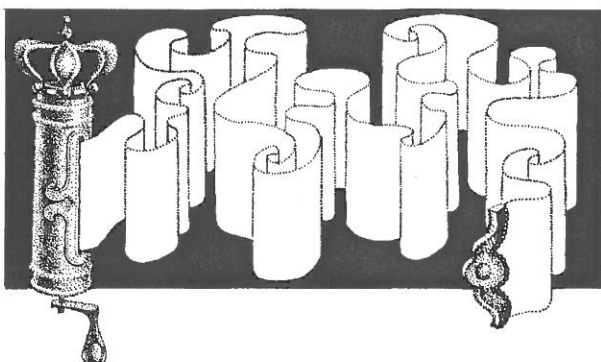
- Question: 'How do you feel?' Hebonics response: 'How should I feel?'
- The subject is often placed at the end of a sentence after a pronoun has been used at the beginning: 'She dances beautifully, that girl.'
- The sarcastic repetition of words by adding 'sh' to the front is used for emphasis: mountains becomes 'shmountains'; turtle becomes 'shmurtle.'
- 'Th' is pronounced as a 'd' or a 't', as in: 'De Dodgers shoulda never went to Elay.' or 'Help! Dere's a mot in de sweaters!'

Sample Usage Comparisons

Standard English Phrase	Hebonics Phrase
'He walks slow.'	'Like he's in deep mud he walks.'
'You're sexy.'	(unknown concept)
'Sorry, I don't know the time.'	'What do I look like, a clock?'
'I hope things turn out for best.'	'You should BE so lucky.'
'Anything can happen.'	'It is never so bad it can't get worse.'

Please be sensitive to those speakers of Hebonics. Since it is its own language, do not attempt to correct its speakers, but rather you should make every effort to learn and use it.

■ submitted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman



It's Farewell, Not Goodbye for the Fines: 'We'll Be Back'

UJC members said farewell to Al and Sharon Fine at a barbeque dinner January 26 at the JCC that was not quite a roast-ing. All the speakers tried to think of nice things to say about Al and, for the most part, succeeded. The somewhat emotional event was a tribute to the many contributions by the Fines that stretch back to the very early days of The UJC.

'I knew Al was for real the first time we met,' Bob Green recalled. 'He saw me packing up prayer books following our first High Holiday service seven years ago and immediately came over to help. I could tell by the way he was packing those books that he was real leadership material — the kind you don't find too often and the kind we need the most — a hands-on leader.'

"Al and I joke occasionally about that television ad in which the guy says: 'We make money the old fashioned way: we work for it.' That's what Al and Sharon did for The UJC. They worked for it."

Bob told of the Fines' many financial contributions, the flowers they donated every year for High Holidays, their work in organizing retreats and heritage trips, and their many kindnesses to other members. 'Very few people in the history of this congregation served with greater dedication, very few.'

Although Al looked like a night club bouncer or hit man to some people, he was, in the words of Neal Horwitz, 'the first person you saw when you arrived for Friday night services, standing near the entrance with the biggest smile you've ever seen, welcoming both newcomers and regulars.' Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman told how Al gave him his first real introduction to Hong Kong, spending lots of time taking him around when he first arrived.

Neal spoke affectionately about Al's role in organizing Shabbat dinners at the American Club — counting heads after the service, followed by the weekly, ritual battles with Gino, the headwaiter (R.I.P.), for enough tables and chairs. Others recalled Al's 'challah' auctions after services in the Kam Sham room.

Carol Betson remembered the time Al approached her after a Committee meeting in which they had strongly disagreed about a particular issue, gave her a big hug and said 'I don't care what you think. I still love you.'

Robert Meyer told members how impressed he was with Sharon as both a student in his Introduction to Judaism classes, and later, as someone with keen skills in financial analysis. He said he was surprised to find some of her stock picks doing better than his, 'and I do this for a living.' Once he got to know Al, he said, he could appreciate the many fine qualities Sharon saw in him.

Dennis Leventhal said testimony to his and Mary's friendship with the Fines lay in the fact that Al and Sharon were the only other people in town who had a key to their apartment.

Other friends honoring the Fines included Mark Michelson, Mel Bazerman, Janet Golden and Daniel Kirwin.

Paulette Bazerman, on behalf of The UJC, presented the Fines with pair of glass mugs with elaborate silver holders in the design of dragons.

Both Al and Sharon spoke of their strong feelings about The UJC and the many friends they had made. 'The UJC is my family,' Sharon said.

The Fines asked members to visit them in Florida where Sharon will be studying in university and Al will be developing real estate. They plan periodic visits to Hong Kong and to maintain contacts with members in the U.S. Friends can stay in touch, as follows:

1900 Sunset Harbour Drive, Apartment 1511, Miami Beach, FL 33139. Tel. (305) 538-3268, fax (305) 672-3368.

A Law to Divide Us

by HIRSH GOODMAN

At first glance, it is difficult to understand why the proposed law denying state recognition to Reform and Conservative conversions in Israel should cause alarm. After all, the law the government now wants to promulgate ostensibly only formalizes an existing reality and takes us back to the status quo ante — to the situation that existed before the Supreme Court decided in a 1995 ruling that the Knesset, not the court, should decide this key religious issue.

But in truth the law that makes only Orthodox conversions in Israel kosher is both insidious and dangerous, for it is the first time that the Knesset is actually passing a law that formally delegitimizes Reform and Conservative Judaism. Until now the situation had been left vague and unlegislated.

Now it will be formal: Unless you are Orthodox, you are not really one of us. You can die for us, pay your taxes and enjoy the other benefits of being an Israeli citizen under the Law of Return, but your Judaism isn't really legitimate if you follow the Conservative or Reform or any non-Orthodox spiritual path.

In Israel we are used to living with fictions. Where the real danger lies is in the gulf this law will create between Israel and the Diaspora, where at least two-thirds of the religiously active Jewish population is either Conservative or Reform.

What this law tells them is, essentially, that we don't recognize their brand of Judaism and, therefore, they are not our brethren. They belong to another tribe. Thank you for your campaign contributions and loyal support, but you and your children and your children's children are, by our law, *goyim*. If you want to come and live here you can do so as a citizen but not as a Jew.

This law is dangerous because it opens a Pandora's box and because we know it is only the tip of the iceberg. Shas, the Sephardi ultra-Orthodox party, knows that it has this government over a barrel. With 10 seats in the Knesset, if it bolts the coalition, Netanyahu loses his majority and, probably, his premiership. Shas, as its spokesmen have made abundantly clear, considers Reform and Conservative Jewry the devil incarnate.

A non-observant person is seen as a person who has the potential for becoming a true Jew, as someone harmless who has yet to discover God. Reform and Conservative Jews, on the contrary, are tampering with the sanctity of the religion; abusing the name of God to worship idols, a heinous crime. And the unspoken, logical outcome of such thinking is that such tampering is theoretically punishable by stoning. They have said openly and without shame that from their perspective, better a Jewish people half the size of the current international Jewish community, than a diluted one. Faith is to be found in unquestioned adherence to the law of God, not in numbers.

Shas will not stop here. It is against its understanding of religion to do so. God delivered it a unique political opportunity whereby it is the holder of the political balance. The first step has been taken. You can bet there are more to come.

Netanyahu, like prime ministers before him, should have done all he could to resist this piece of legislation, as should have Natan Sharansky, many of whose constituents, new immigrants from the former Soviet Union, do not qualify as *halakhic* Jews.

It goes way beyond limiting conversion in Israel to Orthodoxy. It is legislation that actually defines who is not a Jew. It is divisive and prejudiced. It is a victory for fundamentalism and contrary to the liberal ethos of what used to be Israel — a home to all Jews.

Shas has every right to submit the law. They believe in it. The prime minister, as the prime minister of all Jews, had every right to reject it and one is left wondering, yet again, what he actually believes in.

Seek Solidarity with Israeli Colleagues Reform Bigs Lobbying Netanyahu on Pluralism

JERUSALEM — Fifty American Reform rabbis are visiting Israel to build support for the local Reform movement at the same time as the government is preparing formally to outlaw Reform and Conservative conversions performed here.

The group's goal is as much to show solidarity with their beleaguered Israeli colleagues as it is to lobby Prime Minister Netanyahu and the Knesset against a bill that would codify the current practice of recognizing only Orthodox conversions performed in Israel. The group is not assuaged that the bill, unlike an earlier version filed by several members of the ultra-Orthodox Shas Party, would not affect conversions performed abroad.

'The importance of the law is more symbolic than anything else for American Jews,' said one of the leaders of the Reform mission, Rabbi Ammiel Hirsch. 'For the first time, the state of Israel would be codifying and legalizing having first-class and second-class Jews. They're saying, 'Give us your money, your political support, your moral support, your tourism, even send us your children for *aliya*, but don't think of coming here and building synagogues and seeking equal status.'"

It would appear that Mr. Netanyahu —who spent much of his life in America and whose second wife underwent a Conservative conversion just before their marriage — would be especially alert to Diaspora sensitivities. The premier's aides, however, portray him as being stuck with little political alternative but to support the bill — a refrain also used last week to justify the signing of the Hebron redeployment agreement.

'The thing probably would be better off remaining as it has been for the last few years, but unfortunately some people took it to court,' said Bobby Brown, Mr. Netanyahu's adviser on Diaspora affairs. 'The prime minister is doing his best to make sure that the same status quo that has been in effect in this country for the last 50 years will continue. It may not be the best solution for everyone, but it will keep a lid on this potentially explosive issue.'

The pot has been boiling since late 1995, when the Supreme Court ruled there was no legal basis not to recognize conversions performed by Israel's burgeoning Reform and Conservative movements and asked the Knesset to clarify the issue through legislation. Not wanting to touch a political hot potato, the Labor government postponed the parliamentary showdown.

Mr. Netanyahu, who won a slim victory in May on the strength of the Orthodox vote, enjoys no such luxury. He promised to maintain the status quo on religious issues to woo the religious parties to his government, and a law recognizing only Orthodox conversions formalizes

(continued page 7)

(continued from page 6)

that status quo, Mr. Brown said. Critics claim that Mr. Netanyahu offered the conversion law as a quid pro quo to religious parties whose support of the Hebron redeployment agreement was questionable, a charge Mr. Brown denies.

The conversion law would be a blow to Israel's growing Reform and Conservative movements. The country now has 49 Conservative shuls with between 15,000 and 20,000 participants, and 23 Reform congregations where more than 10,000 people pray. Conservative rabbis performed 120 conversions here in the past year, while the Reform movement performed 90. Though the ceremonies have never been accepted by Israel's Orthodox establishment, the proposed law would be the first legal measure against them.

While here, the American rabbis will do their best to draw attention and support to their colleagues' plight. 'This is going to be a blow in the face to the non-Orthodox movements in Israel that are just starting to grow,' said Rabbi Einat Ramon, spokeswoman for the Conservative movement. 'At this point, to make a statement like this would be more than just a conversion law. They're trying to close any means of Israelis bypassing the Chief Rabbinate, which is definitely a change to the status quo.'

After a few days on Reform *kibbutzim* near Eilat, the group will take part in conversion ceremonies in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, *daven* with Mayor Milo of Tel Aviv and hold a co-ed *Shachrit* service at the Western Wall, where both sexes will don tefillin and tallitot. They will also meet with Mr. Netanyahu, Industry and Trade Minister Sharansky, Internal Security Minister Kahalani, Jewish Agency Chairman Avraham Burg and several Knesset members from the Labor and Meretz parties.

Though the bill would not affect their ability to perform conversions, Rabbi Hirsch said the American rabbis hope to avert a potential rift in world Jewry. 'This destroys the very basis of the relationship between Israel and the Diaspora, which Jews took seriously,' Rabbi Hirsch said.

Yet even Mr. Sharansky — many of whose Russian immigrant constituents are not *halachically* Jewish — said he will support a conversion law as long as it doesn't affect the Diaspora. The centrist Third Way Party is expected to agree as well. The Justice Ministry is asking the court for permission not to legislate the issue, but it appears unlikely to win a reprieve. Failing that, the bill should be presented to the government within the next few weeks.

reprinted from FORWARD, January 14, 1977

■ submitted by Robert L. Meyer

RESERVE THIS DATE

June 5, 1997

Carmel School Annual Dinner
Garden Room, JCC

Get Acquainted

Join Rabbi Josh and Debora Aaronson and family
Sunday, April 13, at the JCC
for a delicious

BBQ BUFFET

from 6 P.M. in the Garden Room

followed by

Dialogue and Discussion

King David Room, 8 P.M.

To help him plan for his rabbinate starting this fall, Rabbi Aaronson is eager to meet UJC members and learn how he can best meet your family and community needs

IN HONOR OF THEIR
B'NOT MITZVOT

MELINDA PAULE

DAUGHTER OF JEFF AND TERRY PAULE

AND

ASHLEY BRENNER

DAUGHTER OF ALAN AND NANCY BRENNER

WARMLY INVITE THE CONGREGATION
TO JOIN THEM FOR
SHABBAT SERVICE AND DINNER

FRIDAY, MAY 16, 1997, 6:30 P.M.

UJC AUDITORIUM

RSVP TO THE UJC OFFICE

2523-2985

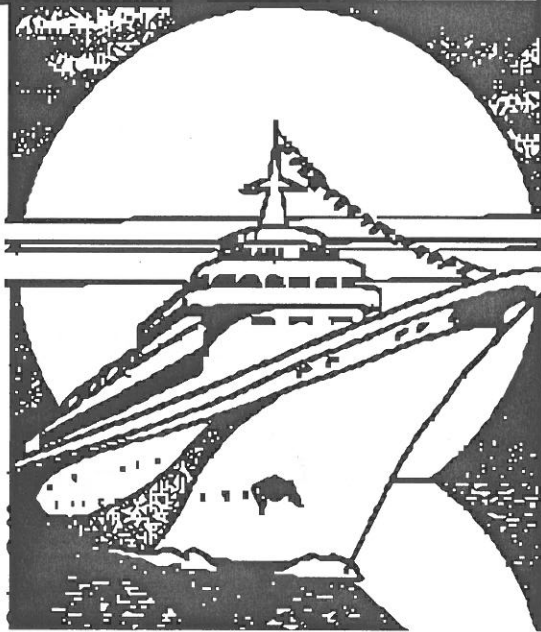


You Loved *Shabbat at Sea I & II* to Yah Mu-kah Bay. Now join us for:

Shabbat at Sea III

Saturday, May 3, 12:30 P.M.

*Attention: 4 to 74-year-olds.
Don't miss this creative
Shabbat experience!*



*Hop aboard the S.S. Shabbat for The UJC's
Cruise to a Mystery Destination in the South China Sea*

'Captain' Levi Weiman-Kelman, with guitar, will conduct, topside

& Saturday Afternoon Service

and, simultaneously, on the lower deck, there will be

& Special Shabbat Activities for children

& On Board Buffet

\$140.00 adults, \$80.00 children

& Nature Walk or Swim

*Departure: 12:30 P.M.. from Queen's Pier next
to Star Ferry. Return: approximately 5:00 P.M..*

**IF YOU HAVE A
BETTER WAY TO
SPEND SATURDAY
AFTERNOON, WE'D
LIKE TO HEAR
ABOUT IT.**

Does your way combine
Shabbat rest and joy with
glorious spring weather,
music, and the compan-
ionship of good friends and
family?

Does it include salt air,
ocean breezes, and a
glass of white wine?

Does it satisfy an appetite
for delicious food and stim-
ulating conversation?

Does it connect you with a
tradition that tells you how
to get more out of resting
than working?

**Yes! I (we) want to join The UJC
Shabbat at Sea III**

Enclosed is my (our) check for \$ _____ for _____ adult(s) and _____
children made payable to The United Jewish Congregation of H.K.

Name _____

Tel _____ Fax _____

Please mail to The UJC, GPO Box 5259, Hong Kong
or call 2523-2985 to book by phone

**OUR'S IS NO
SECRET.
IS YOUR'S?**

Welcome New Members

LEO CSAKY AND JUSTINE OBRART (U.K.)

Leo: editor, CEF-GC Brokerage;
Justine: production coordinator, Focal Point Productions
prev. affil.: New North London (Masorati)
special talents or skills: Hebrew school teacher

ANN LUBART(USA)

consultant, Chase Manhattan Bank
special talents or skills: French, Russian, Spanish; writing
prev. affil.: Ahavath Israel, Kingston, NY (Conservative)
B'nai Jeshurun, NYC (Reform)

MARTIN GERSHON (U.K.)

lecturer (see article, page 12)
special talents or skills: teaching tennis, aerobics
prev. affil.: Orthodox

DAVID AND KEESLER CRONIN (USA)

& CHARLOTTE, 6, DYLAN, 3
David: marketing, American Express
special talents or skills: interior design; organizational skills
prev. affil.: Larchmount Temple, NY

MARK AND SUSAN BLUMENTHAL (USA)

& RACHEL, 6, EMILY, 5, CHELSEA, 2
Mark: partner, Arthur Andersen
prev. affil.: Am Shalom, Glencoe, IL (Reform)

ANTON AND BERNADENE MARCUS (SOUTH AFRICA)

Anton: jockey
prev. affil.: Temple Israel (Reform)

PHILIP GREGORY AND VICTORIA ELEGANT (U.K.)

& SACHA, 3, ROSIE, 2, BEN, 1
Philip: marketing, Rhone Poulenc Rorer;
Victoria, Doctor, Austin Pugh Associates

ARTHUR KROEBER AND DEBORAH SELIGSOHN (USA)

& SUSANNAH, 7, AARON, 2
Arthur: journalist;
Deborah: diplomat, U.S. State Department
prev. affil.: Arlington Fairfax Congregation, VA (Conservative)

MARCUS (GERMANY) AND EVA ELIASON (ISRAEL)

& AVITAL (F), 18, DAVID, 13
Marcus: journalist, Associated Press
Eva: teacher, Carmel School

GEORGE AND ANDREA MILLER (USA)

& DAPHNE, 13, THEODORE, 3
George: lawyer, Simpson Thatcher & Bartlett
Andrea: TV executive for TNT & Cartoon Network, Asia

ALAN SHUSTER AND KATHRYN ANN YOUNG (CANADA)

Alan: lawyer; Kathryn: consultant
prev. affil.: Reconstructionist Synagogue (Montreal)

ANDREW LAWRENCE (U.K.)

engineer, Ove Arup
prev. affil.: Orthodox, London

FRANKLIN AND ANN LAVIN (USA)

& ABBY, 12, NAT, 8, ELIZABETH, 4
Franklin: banker, Citibank
Ann: U.S. Government, Department of Energy
prev. affil.: Temple Sinai (Reform), Washington, D.C.

JOHN COLMEY AND ANNE-MARIE GORDON (U.K.)

& HANNAH, 8 MOS.
John: journalist, Time Magazine
Anne-Marie: barrister, Gilt Chambers
prev. affil.: Ohel Leah

LAURENT AND DELPHINE OLIVIER (FRANCE)

& MARIE-CAMILLE, 1
Laurent: Managing Director, Polly Flame Concept
Delphine: Sales Executive
prev. affil.: Temple Sinai (Reform), Washington, D.C.

RACHEL TAYLOR (UK)

Waitress, Bit Point

JUAN CUCKER AND ANTONIA MARTORELL (SPAIN)

& CLAUDIA, 6, FEDERICO, 1
Juan: professor, City University of Hong Kong

JWA GARAGE SALE

- Good as new clothing
- Expensive mistakes
- White Elephant items
(furniture, household goods)
- Gifts, books
- Refreshments



Sunday, March 16
11 A.M. — 4 P.M.
JCC Garage
70 Robinson Road
Entrance Free

Purim at the JCC

Sunday, March 23
from 4 P.M.

Join Community members for

- ☆ costume parade
- ☆ pony rides
- ☆ 9 ft. tall puppets
- ☆ Purim buffet
- ☆ dinner music

adults: \$120.00

children: \$60.00

Volunteers needed from UJC to
help decorate walls and tables.
Please call Jody Hirsh, JCC

Celebrate Purim

*with friends from The UJC,
noisemakers, and lots of hamantaschen*

Saturday, March 22
2:00 - 5:30 P.M.



UJC Purim Party

Ladies Recreation Club
10 Old Peak Road, Mid-Levels

- ★ **Megillah Reading** — crank up your greggers and boo Haman
- ★ **Music** — by Jheena, one of HK's most charming entertainers
- ★ **Costume parade** — dress up or down, adults included
- ★ **Delicious buffet** — prepared by the LRC's fabulous chefs

ADULTS, \$120.00; CHILDREN 3 — 11, \$80.00; TODDLERS, FREE

Book by mail (below), fax, or credit card (2523-2985)

Name _____

Address _____

I enclose a check for \$_____ for _____ adults(s) _____ child(ren) _____ toddlers,
made payable to The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong.

Please mail to The UJC, GPO Box 5259, Hong Kong

PASSOVER IS A FAMILY HOLIDAY BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE IT PLACES ON CONVEYING THE STORY AND MEANING OF PASSOVER TO THE NEXT GENERATION. IT IS THE CHILDREN'S ROLE TO ASK THE FOUR QUESTIONS; IT IS OUR ROLE TO IMPRESS UPON THEM THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ANSWERS, FOR WE UNDERSTAND FULLY WHAT OUR CHILDREN DO NOT: THAT THE FUTURE OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE LIES WITH THEM. FOR THAT PEOPLE TO CONTINUE ITS 3,000-YEAR HISTORY, IN EVERY GENERATION EACH OF US AND EACH OF OUR CHILDREN MUST FEEL AS THOUGH THEY THEMSELVES WERE SLAVES IN EGYPT AND WERE REDEEMED. IN THIS WAY, EACH NEW GENERATION CAN TAKE ITS PLACE IN THE CHAIN OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE LEADING DOWN FROM THE EXODUS TO THE PRESENT.

Jewish Holidays, Michael Strassfeld, Harper & Row

THE GATHERING OF JEWS AT THE SEDER IS AN ARCHETYPAL EVENT. MUCH GOES ON THIS NIGHT BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE TEXT. LIKE THE MYSTERIOUS FORCE RETURNING THE SWALLOWS TO CAPISTRANO, EVEN THOSE JEWS ALIENATED FROM THE TRADITION GATHER TOGETHER ON THE FULL MOON OF THE VERNAL EQUINOX FOR THE SEDER. IT IS, TO USE THE PHRASE OF MORDECAI KAPLAN, A MOMENT WHEN 'THE RECONSTITUTION OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE' TAKES PLACE.

Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, in *Jewish Holidays* (see above)

Book Now!

UJC Family Seder

conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Monday, April 21, 6:00 P.M.

Marina Rooms, 2nd floor

The Excelsior Hotel

Gloucester Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong

Members: adults, \$295.00; children 4 — 11, \$195.00; toddlers 1 — 3, free
Non-members: adults, \$395.00; children, \$295.00; toddlers, \$100.00

Inclusive of wine and grape juice. Cash bar available for soft drinks and other beverages. Families with infants up to 12 months are asked to provide their own infant seating.

Parking available at the World Trade Centre next to Excelsior.

Please call Jackie Vachha at 2523-2985 if you have special dietary requirements or any questions.

The office also needs to know if you can bring your family Seder Plate, Elijah Cup and Matzoh cover. Please clearly label these items and plan to arrive at least 15 minutes early so they can be properly placed on the tables prior to the start of the Seder.

Menu: Hors d'Oeuvres • Gefilte fish • Chicken soup with matzoh ball • Roasted turkey with matzoh kugel • Carrot tzimmes and broccoli, served with gravy and cranberry sauce • Fresh fruit salad or chocolate mousse • Coffee or tea • Almond macaroons

MAIL to The UJC, GPO Box 5259, Hong Kong with your check or call 2523-2985 to book by credit card.

Name _____

Tel. _____ Fax _____

Members

Non-members

_____ adults at \$295.00 = \$ _____

_____ adults at \$395.00 = \$ _____

_____ children at \$195.00 = \$ _____

_____ children at \$295.00 = \$ _____

_____ toddlers at \$100.00 = \$ _____

I(we) have enclosed a check for \$ _____ made payable to the United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong.

My (our) group includes _____ adults and _____ children for a total of _____ people.

Our names are (please indicate childrens' birthdates) _____

I/we would like to sit with _____

I will bring a Seder plate _____, matzoh plate _____ and/or Elijah's Cup _____

Reservations accepted on first-come, first serve basis. Limited seating.



February 14, 1997

Dear Rabbi Weiman-Kelman:

I am writing to thank you on behalf of the many friends and colleagues of Jeff Cohen who found comfort in yesterday's memorial service.

As I'm sure you will appreciate from the many moving tributes paid to Jeff, we have lost a loved and respected member of our community. The chance to gather together and share our memories, grief and laughter was both necessary and welcomed. We thank you for helping us to do so.

As a small gesture of our appreciation, please find enclosed a donation to the United Jewish Congregation.

Sincerely yours,

Owen D. Nee, Jr.
Partner, Coudert Brothers

January 28, 1997

Dear UJC members,

I had one heck of a good time last sabbath — fine and warm worship, good food and table fellowship, a bravura talk by the Chief Rabbi, and Chinese vermouth to top it off with very cheery Paula hosting. Thank you for inviting me and serving as a superior host.

Gene Preston
Reverend
The Interdenominational Communion Church of Hong Kong

March 4, 1997

Dear Jackie,

Many thanks for all your help during my time in Hong Kong. The UJC has really added a complete extra dimension to my time out here and for that I am truly grateful.

I shall certainly look forward to returning to Hong Kong and to The UJC in years to come.

Best regards,

Andrew Lawrence
49 Belsize Park
NW3 4EE, London

Introducing Martin

In case a man answers, don't hang up. Nor is the new voice in The UJC office Jackie in a lower register. Its Martin Gershon, whose resumé, which reads more like a travel itinerary, shows why he is perfectly suited to be Our Man at Robinson Place: Lecturer of Geography in Australia, Resort Manager for an adventure sports company in Austria, tennis coach in New Zealand...

Born in London, Mr. Gershon studied in university in Plymouth and Norwich before returning to what he calls 'the real world' with degrees in Environmental Science and Rural Development. While maintaining strong links with higher education as a writer, researcher and lecturer, he has continued to pursue his passion for outdoor activities.

A new arrival in Hong Kong, Mr. Gershon will be assisting Jackie in the UJC office for the next couple of months. So it's very likely you will make his acquaintance there or in the swimming pool, gym, or tennis court.

Directory Update Deadline Nears

Members wishing to update their entries in the UJC Membership Directory must return the update form without delay. UJC staff have nearly completed entering all the new data and the 1997 'Blue Book' will be going to press soon.

UJC Seeking Shabbat Menu Planners

An expert chef or trained nutritionist you don't have to be. Just someone who would like to work with Jackie and the JCC kitchen staff to create the best Shabbat meals ever for the UJC. Give Jackie a call at 2523-2985 or hold your tongue forever.

Condolences

to family
and friends
on the death of
Jeffrey Cohen

*The memory of the righteous
is a blessing*

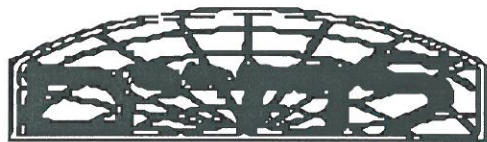
Silbergs departing for U.S. Exco Seeks Treasurer

Gary Silberg and his very-pregnant wife Aline head for Chicago March 25 where Gary will take up a new assignment with his company. The Silbergs cordially invite the Congregation to join them for the Shabbat meal on March 21 at the JCC.

Gary's departure leaves The UJC in urgent need of someone with an accounting or financial background to take over the treasurer's slot on the Executive Committee. Interested candidates should contact Mark Michelson.

The Silbergs will leave behind many good friends and an excellent amah whom they are trying to place in a new home. For more information, contact Aline at 2530-9051.

The UJC will miss the Silbergs, not only Gary's contributions to the Committee, but their irrepressible good humor and acts of kindness as well.



The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong

Address for correspondence:
GPO Box 5259, Hong Kong

Office: Jewish Community Centre
70 Robinson Rd., Mid-Levels, Hong Kong
Tel. 2523-2985; Fax 2523-3961

Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman: Tel. 2523-2663
Home Tel: 2517-7967; Home Fax: 2803-0709

Executive Administrator: Ms Jacqueline Vachha
Staff assistant: Martin Gershon

Chairman: GPO Box 6083, Hong Kong
Tel. 2735-3037, Fax 2730-5507

Executive Committee

Bob Green Chairman, Editor, *The Shofar*
Mark Michelson Vice-chairman
Gary Silberg Treasurer
Robert Meyer Legal, Liaison
Ken Bell Ritual
Charles Monat Community Affairs
Terry Paule Membership/Youth
Cara Case Fundraising, Outreach
Jonathan Feiger Education, Administration
Daniel Kirwin Fundraising, Administration
David Zweig pending
Diana Goldman pending
Julie Silberger pending
Joseph Fine pending
Brian Blank pending
Honorary: Carol Betson, Peter Kaminsky

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

Thanks!

Robert L. Meyer for hosting Rabbi Josh Aaronson in his apartment during his stay in Hong Kong

Diana Goldman, Ben Frankel, Maggie Eiseman, Rhonda Sturtz, Terry Paule, Ken Bell, Aline Silberg for organizing the Chanukah party

Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman and Diana Goldman for organizing the Tu B'Shvat seder

Rabbi and Paula Weiman-Kelman and family for hosting havdallah and post-service bar and mitzvah celebrations and get-togethers in their apartment

Zoe Weiman-Kelman for helping at a number of programs, services, and activities

Paulette Bazerman for sourcing and purchasing the gift for the Al and Sharon Fine farewell party

Janet Golden for researching various retreat locations

Mark Michelson, Terry Paule, David Zweig and all the other members of the search committee for bringing Rabbi Josh Aaronson to Hong Kong

Jeremy Leifer, our longtime member and legal adviser, for his help again this year in preparing for the Annual General Meeting

Martin Weil for leading services and **Jonathan Feiger** for giving a D'var Torah on January 3 when the Rabbi was in Singapore

Neil Horwitz for leading services and **Jody Hirsh** for giving a D'var Torah on January 31

Ken Bell for representing the Congregation at bar/bat mitzvahs and making bible presentations

Mazel Tov!

Ariel Lindorff, daughter of **Joyce and David Lindorff**, on her Bat Mitzvah on February 15

David Eliason, son of **Marcus and Eva Eliason**, on his Bar Mitzvah February 22

Masako and Steve Levitt, on the birth of their son **Jake Morio** November 13, 1996

Natalie Richter and Gideon Sheps, on the birth of their son **Azriel Sheps**

Bernadene and Anton Marcus, on the birth of their son **Devan Jack Marcus** on February 17

Ken Adler, on his new job

Donations

Anonymous (\$18,000)

Al and Sharon Fine

Robin and James Kaptzan, on the occasion of the bris of their son **David** by Rabbi Samuel K. Joseph

Andrew and Cara Case, on the occasion of the bris of their son **Zachary Ryan** by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Joanne Cheung and Edward 'Woody' Abram

Gideon Sheps, Natalie Richter, and Stephanie Mitchell on the occasion of their B'nai Mitzvot

Coudert Brothers, on the occasion of the memorial service conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman for **Jeff Cohen**

David Zweig (Robyn Helzner fund)

Brad Abelow (15 prayer shawls)

Daniel Kirwin

Diane and Leonard Patsiner

Larry Sloven

Ken Bell (prayer book fund - Torah dedications)

Shabbat Sponsorships

Charles Monat in support of The UJC's Shabbat Sponsorship program (November 15)

Rabbi Levi and Paula Weiman-Kelman in honor of their 16th wedding anniversary (November 22)

Terry and Jeff Paule on the occasion of the visit of Terry's parents **Celia and Norman Besbris** from Kalamazoo, MI (November 29)

Joanne Cheung and Edward 'Woody' Abram, on the occasion of **Woody's** birthday (December 13)

Dennis and Mary Leventhal in honor of their 30th wedding anniversary (December 20)

Clare and Robin Ray on the occasion of the anniversary of the adoption of their daughter, **Rebecca** (December 21)

Rene and Morton Levitt, in honor of the birth of their grandson **Jake Morio** to **Steve and Masako Levitt** (December 27)

Steven Sperber, in support of The UJC's Shabbat Sponsorship program (January 3)

Ken and Wanna Adler, on the occasion of the visit by Rabbi Josh Aaronson (January 10)

Dan and Diana Goldman, in celebration of Tu B'Shvat (January 25)

Neal and Jane Horwitz, on the occasion of the first birthday of son, **Jake**, and daughter **Ella** (February 14)

Joyce and David Lindorff, on the occasion of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter **Ariel** (February 15)

Mel and Diana Satok, in celebration of the birth of their grandson **Adam William Satok** (February 21)

Eva and Marcus Eliason, on the occasion of the Bar Mitzvah of their son **David** (February 22)

Farewell

Al and Sharon Fine (Miami Beach - see page 5)

Gary and Aline Silberg (Chicago - see page 12)

Martin Weil, Patricia Theiler (Washington, D.C.)
c/o ABC Inc., 1401 H St. NW, Suite 1050, Washington, D.C. 20005. Tel. (202) 414-6873, fax 789-2227

Jeff Loeb, Margaret Beal and family
139 N. Central Avwe., #H, St. Louis, MO 63105

Andrew Gordon

Anne and Michael Markowitz
50 Robert Topham Drive, Wrentham MA 020931258

Andrew Lawrence (London - see page 12)

Get Well Soon

Robyn Helzner's mother, recovering from an operation
Max Michelson, recovering nicely at home following an appendicitis operation at Adventist Hospital

Schedule: March, April, May

Shabbat services are held every Friday night at 7 P.M. in the Auditorium, Robinson Place, Jewish Community Centre, 70 Robinson Road, Mid-Levels, followed by a dinner in the JCC coffee shop. A pre-service Fellowship Oneg begins at 6:30 P.M. Saturday Shabbat services normally start at 11:00 A.M. (earlier for bar/bat mitzvot) and are followed by a kiddush lunch.

Friday, March 14, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Saturday, March 15

Havdalah Service
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
time, place to be announced

Tuesday, March 18, 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, March 21, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
sponsored by Gary and Aline Silberg
on the occasion of their departure from H.K.

Sat., March 22, 10:15 A.M.

Shabbat Service
Bar Mitzvah of Asaf Malamud
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Sat., March 22, 2:00 - 5:30 P.M.

Purim Party
Ladies Recreation Club, Old Peak Road

Friday, March 28, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Robert L. Meyer
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Friday, April 4, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Tuesday, April 8, 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, April 11, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Sat., April 12, 11:00 A.M.

Shabbat Service
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Sunday, April 13, 6:00 P.M.

Barbeque Supper (at JCC)
Meet Rabbi Josh Aaronson & family
Discussion follows in King David Room, 8 p.m.

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

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, April 18, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Monday, April 21, 6:00 P.M.

Passover Seder (Excelsior Hotel)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, April 25, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Monday, April 28

Morning Service (last day of Passover)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
time to be announced

Friday, May 2, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Saturday, May 3, 12:30 P.M.

Shabbat at Sea III (see page 8) or retreat
with Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Sunday, May 4

Holocaust Memorial Day
events to be announced

Tuesday, May 6, 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, May 9, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Saturday, May 10, 10:15 A.M.

Shabbat Service
Bat Mitzvah of Abby Lavin
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Monday, May 12

Israeli Independence Day
Events to be announced

Tuesday, May 13, 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, May 16, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
sponsored by Jeff and Terry Paule and Alan and Nancy Brenner to celebrate the B'Not Mitzvot of Melinda Paule and Ashey Brenner

Saturday, May 17

Havdalah Shabbat Service
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
Melinda Paule and Ashey Brenner B'Not Mitzvot

Tuesday, May 20, 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, May 23, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman
You can be the sponsor, call Jackie

Tuesday, May 27, 7:00 P.M.

Introduction to Judaism (at JCC)
taught by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Friday, May 30, 7:00 P.M.

Shabbat Service (Kabalat Shabbat)
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Saturday, May 31, 10:15 A.M.

Shabbat Service
Bat Mitzvah of Nicki Dlugash
conducted by Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman

Dear fellow-member —

I am concerned that our Shabbat meal sponsorship program is not working as well as hoped.

Many of you will recall the logistical burden of our previous system in which we collected money from each individual after services. This was a real headache for The UJC — trying to get volunteers to collect, making sure everyone paid, the embarrassment of charging visitors, getting the money back to the office, the accounting, etc.

In simplifying the process by asking members to sponsor a meal once a year or so (at an average cost of \$1,800), we hoped everyone would do their fair share, individually or with a friend.

If you have enjoyed our Shabbat dinners and lunches — the ease with which you can show up without a reservation, the convenience of bringing friends and visitors, the fellowship around the Shabbat table — then please do not force us to return to the old system and all the difficulties it entailed.

Call Jackie and book a date. I'm counting on you — as a member of The UJC family — to do your share. This is what makes a family and community work. Thank you.

Bob Green

UJC Funds

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 are:

- **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**, used by the Rabbi to subvert program expenses and help those who may need financial support to participate in a program;
- **Services Fund** to help defray the expenses of renting function rooms for special festivals and holidays;
- **Prayerbook/Bible Bookplate Fund** which enables you to dedicate a prayerbook or Torah to a special person or event;
- **Rabbi's Fund and The UJC General Fund**, both of which help our Congregation with its expenses.

Please consider a donation to one of these UJC Funds as a beautiful tribute to someone or something special.