



Carnegie Shul Chatter

July 28, 2022



Shabbat Services

Weekly Shabbat services are held in the sanctuary, for those who want to attend in person, as well as online, via Zoom. **Services begin at 9:30am.**

Vaccinations are required for in-person attendance. Masks are optional, and we recommend that you socially distance.

For those wishing to attend services via Zoom, a link will be emailed to Carnegie Shul members later in the week. If you don't receive it, contact Wendy Panizzi at panizziw@gmail.com.

In Tribute

As some of you may know, I served for many years as a member of the Board of the Jewish Cemetery and Burial Association, with my most recent term coming to an end earlier this year.

So why do I mention that at the beginning of this sidebar, and how does that tie in with this week's parshah?

Well, I learned just minutes ago that Jonathon Schachter, long time fellow JCBA Board Member, then Executive Director of the JCBA, had shockingly passed away on July 25.

You may also remember Jonathon as having led our High Holiday services at the Carnegie Shul five years or so ago.

So what does any of this have to do with this week's parshah? As Rabbi Weiss says in his commentary, "Thus, the Torah elaborates for an entire chapter on our journey. It teaches invaluable lessons for life: the importance of self-reckoning, the importance of changing misfortune into fortune, and the importance of realizing that lasting improvement occurs gradually rather than instantaneously."

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Well, as Jonathon Schachter and I both saw in our time serving the JCBA, lasting improvement can and does often occur gradually rather than instantaneously.

When I first became involved with JCBA we did not have the necessary resources to maintain the cemeteries under our jurisdiction nearly as well as they should have been maintained. And the number of cemeteries that needed to be placed under the auspices of the JCBA was also growing. The JCBA desperately needed to change its modus operandi in order to better serve the Pittsburgh Jewish Community.

And with some nudging from the Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh, we did just that. We rewrote our bylaws, received an infusion of much-needed cash from the Federation, and gradually began to make important changes and improvements in our organization and in our cemeteries. And we could not have done that without the hard work of Jonathon Schachter. Jonathon helped to spearhead the changes that the JCBA needed to make, and now the cemeteries that JCBA manages are much improved over what they were previously. And for that our community owes a debt of gratitude to Jonathon Schachter.

Annual Meeting This Sunday

The Carnegie Shul's Annual Meeting will take place this Sunday, **July 31, at 2 pm**. The Meeting will be held over Zoom, and the link has been sent to all synagogue members. In addition to election of synagogue officers, special guest speaker Dan Ottenheimer will tell us about his father, Holocaust survivor Fritz Ottenheimer.



Fritz Ottenheimer was born in 1925 in Konstanz, Germany, a large town with a population of around 40,000. When Hitler came to power in 1933, Fritz and his family endured increasing anti-Jewish discrimination and persecution. In November 1938, Fritz witnessed his father's arrest, on Kristallnacht, or "night of broken glass," when about 30,000 innocent Jewish men were taken to concentration camps.

After his father's release from the Dachau concentration camp, Fritz and his family immigrated to the United States in 1939. Fritz was 14 years old.



In 1944, after graduating from high school in New York, Fritz volunteered for the U.S. Army. In early 1945, he was deployed to Germany, and served in units that aided in the "de-Nazification" process of his home country. When the war ended, Fritz came back to the U.S. and earned a degree in Industrial Engineering. He was hired by a Western Pennsylvania engineering firm in 1950 and moved to Pittsburgh, where he lived for the rest of his life.

In 1982, Fritz became a volunteer speaker for the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. He subsequently spent many years speaking at schools in Western Pennsylvania, and his story was featured in Volume I of the Chutz-Pow comic book series published by the Holocaust Center. Fritz passed away in 2017, at the age of 92.

Dan Ottenheimer, Fritz's son, was born in Pittsburgh in 1957. He attended college in Boston, where he still lives.

In 2019, two years after his father passed away, Dan began to speak in the Greater Boston area about his father's experiences in Germany. And in 2021, Dan joined the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh's Generations Speakers Bureau, using video-conferencing technology to tell his father's stories at schools and organizations in the greater Pittsburgh area.

Matot-Massei in a Nutshell

Numbers 30:2–36:13

Moses conveys the laws governing the annulment of vows to the heads of the tribes of Israel. War is waged against Midian for their role in plotting the moral destruction of Israel, and the Torah gives a detailed account of the war spoils and how they were allocated amongst the people, the warriors, the Levites and the high priest.

The tribes of Reuben and Gad (later joined by half of the tribe of Manasseh) ask for the lands east of the Jordan as their portion in the Promised Land, these being prime pastureland for their cattle. Moses is initially angered by the request, but subsequently agrees on the condition that they first join, and lead, in Israel's conquest of the lands west of the Jordan.

The forty-two journeys and encampments of Israel are listed, from the Exodus to their encampment on the plains of Moab across the river from the land of Canaan. The boundaries of the Promised Land are given, and cities of refuge are designated as havens and places of exile for inadvertent murderers. The daughters of Tzelafchad marry within their own tribe of Manasseh, so that the estate which they inherit from their father should not pass to the province of another tribe.



This Week's Torah Portion

Matot-Massie

This week's Torah commentary that I have elected to share with you, by Rabbi Avi Weiss, is one of the shortest commentaries that I have shared, but I think it provides some valuable insights about how this week's parshah can impact our lives today, and is not just a history lesson or even a collection of mitzvot from those days in the wilderness. I hope you find it enlightening.

Matot-Massei: A time for reflection, accountability

By Rabbi Avi Weiss

Special to the Jewish Journal

Why does the Torah spend an entire chapter outlining all of the Israelites encampments in the desert (Numbers 33)?

Rashi, quoting the Midrash, suggests it illustrates God's love for His people. "It can be compared to a king whose son was ill and whom he took to a distant place to cure. As...they returned, the king would recount to the lad all the experiences they went through... 'here we slept, here we had a cool resting place, here you had a headache'" (Midrash Tanchuma). Just as a parent cares endlessly for a child, so did God lovingly carry His children through the most difficult moments in our travels through the desert.



Sforno sees the mentioning of these places as revealing the Jewish People's love for God. In his words: "He [Moses, as per God's instructions] wrote down...the details of their journeys, because it involved leaving for a new destination without any previous notice, which was very trying." Similarly, Jeremiah recalls God's expression of love for Israel, who, despite all odds, followed Him into the wilderness. In Jeremiah's words: "I accounted to your favor the devotion of your youth, your love as a bride – how you followed Me into the wilderness, in a land not sown" (Jeremiah 2:2).

Considering that the Israelites were just days before entering Israel brings another approach to mind. When taking any major step in life, it is a good idea to carefully reevaluate one's past. The listing of each resting place reminded the nation of these moments. It allowed for serious individual and national reflection and accountability. No doubt some of these places evoked memories of rebellion and even betrayal of God. Rather than avoid such memories, we should remember them with the goal of learning from those mistakes.

Also, bearing in mind that Am Yisrael was assuredly overwhelmed with enthusiasm, believing that the liberation of the Land of Israel would come in an instant, we needed to be reminded that accomplishments come in small steps, much like the Jews' incremental travel through the desert.

Thus, the Torah elaborates for an entire chapter on our journey. It teaches invaluable lessons for life: the importance of self-reckoning, the importance of changing misfortune into fortune, and the importance of realizing that lasting improvement occurs gradually rather than instantaneously.

Marion “Mimie” Zlotnik

June 2, 1928 - July 19, 2022

The Carnegie Shul is deeply saddened by the recent passing of Marion “Mimie” Zlotnik, mother of shul member Cliff Zlotnik. May her memory be for a blessing.

MARION “MIMIE” ZLOTNIK: Of Pittsburgh, born June 2, 1928, passed away on July 19, 2022, at 94 years of age. Dearest daughter of the late Harry and Ida Surloff. Wife of the late Milton Zlotnik. Survived by her sons Cliff (Judee) and Arnold of Pittsburgh, and Stuart (Donna) of Montville, New Jersey. Grandmother of Zachary, Bryan (Sonya) and Lindsay of Pittsburgh, Robert of New York, New York, Hayley of West Palm Beach, Florida, Joshua of Shelton, Connecticut, Ian of Houston, Texas and Eric of Horsham, Pennsylvania. Great-grandmother of Patrick and Ezra of Pittsburgh.

Mimie was surrounded by her family and caregivers and passed peacefully. Mimie was a native of Pittsburgh where she attended Taylor Allderdice High School and the Pittsburgh Art Institute. After marrying her beloved husband Milton, they started and built a local pest control company that is still operated today, Pestco. Mimie was known as an avid and accomplished artist. Her artwork was frequently featured at local exhibitions and adorns the walls of the homes of her family and friends as well as Weinberg Terrace, where she lived for the last ten years. Mimie lived for her family and was the consummate care giver.

Yahrtzeits

This week the Carnegie Shul acknowledges the yahrtzeits of:

Tillie Mallinger

Joel Kruman

Jacob Liberman

Bob Roteman

Henry C. Bales

May their memories be for a blessing.

Donations

The Carnegie Shul is most grateful for the following recent donations:

Howard and Shelly Miller

In memory of Larry Miller

Carl and Roni Schiffman

In memory of Ethal Ray Adler *In Memory*