



Congregation Emanu El

# Bulletin

## EDITOR'S NOTE:

We apologize for the delay in this *Bulletin* reaching homes but due to the winter storm, this *Bulletin* was delayed past the originally intended publication date for those who receive the publication via USPS.

March 4, 2021 | 20 Adar 5781

VOLUME 75 NUMBER 6

## FROM RABBI HAYON



*Most importantly, perhaps, the destruction of this storm ought to remind us once again about how vulnerable we are to unexpected changes in our circumstances, and how vital it is that we strengthen the communal ties that allow us to lend support to each other.*

The biblical Passover story is intimately familiar to all of us – whether from the seders of our childhood, or the dramatic enactments of movies and TV, or from our own studies of the Torah's text, we know its details well.

The plagues, the slaves' hasty escape at midnight, the dough snatched up before it had had time to rise, the thunderous parting of the Red Sea's waves: we know these things as well as we know our own biographies.

And, in general, the account of the exodus from Egypt endures in our collective memory as a story of joy, triumph and redemption. It was not until this year, though, that I gave any serious thought to just how frightening the first Passover would have been for our mythical ancestors. Needing to flee one's home quickly in the middle of the night, with barely enough time to prepare provisions for themselves and their families, must surely have been a wrenching experience of terror and panic.

It probably should not be surprising that I arrived at this new view of the Passover story after our community's experience with the dramatic winter storm just a couple of weeks ago. The shockingly cold weather and the cascading disasters that resulted from the failure of our

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## A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We have all had our more than enough uncertainty recently. It's been a year since the initial Covid19 lockdown. A common belief last spring was that the lockdown would be relatively short, and the virus would disappear by mid-summer. But a year later we are still navigating a pandemic-era lifestyle. Everyone learned to adapt to new ways of working, learning, shopping, volunteering, and socializing. And just as we settled into our new ways to doing things, the lights went out.



Jeri Armundsen

Then it came back on. Then out again. On again. After two nights without power during last month's historic

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## Congregation Emanu El to Host Gail Rubin for *Before I Die* Weekend Friday, March 19, 7:30 p.m. & Sunday, March 21, 4:00 p.m.

Join us as we host Gail Rubin, a certified thanatologist and The Doyenne of Death® for a pair of events online.

This visit is presented by Waldman Funeral Care and Emanu El. Register and join us on Zoom as Rubin will host a program entitled *Kicking the Bucket List: Downsizing and Organizing Things to Do Before You Die*.

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## WORSHIP SERVICES

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Locations are listed below for those seeking to use the streaming video portal on our website. Any changes will be shared via the regular synagogue communications.

Our services (with the exception of B'nei Mitzvah) are streamed to our website, Facebook page, Roku channel, and YouTube. Our Saturday morning B'nei Mitzvah services are available solely on our website.

### **Shabbat Ki Tisa** **Friday, March 5**

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Barish Sanctuary

### **Saturday, March 6**

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

7:00 p.m., Havdalah 4 All, Zoom

### **Shabbat Vayak'heil-P'kudei** **Friday, March 12**

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Barish Sanctuary

#### **Heritage Shabbat**

### **Saturday, March 13**

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

### **Shabbat Vayikra** **Friday, March 19**

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Barish Sanctuary

### **Saturday, March 20**

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

### **Shabbat Tzav** **Friday, March 26**

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Barish Sanctuary

### **Saturday, March 27**

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

### **Shabbat Yom Sh'vi-i shel Pesach** **Friday, April 2**

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Barish Sanctuary

### **Saturday, April 3**

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Barish Sanctuary

#### **Passover Festival Service & Yizkor**

7:00 p.m., Havdalah for All, Zoom

### **Shabbat Sh'mini**

#### **Friday, April 9**

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Barish Sanctuary

### **Saturday, April 10**

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Barish Sanctuary

Bar Mitzvah of **Ryan Brooks**, son of Lara Friel & Kenneth Brooks

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## **FROM RABBI HAYON** *continued from page 1*

utility infrastructure plunge me, and many of you, into a new reckoning with the fragility of our everyday lives.

Like our biblical ancestors in the story of the Exodus, hundreds of thousands of families throughout the Houston area found themselves forced to leave their homes unexpectedly, hastening to collect whatever few meager possessions they could carry, hurrying to safety with their children and pets. Like our ancient forebears, many of us found ourselves uncertain about how long the situation would last and whether the few provisions we had gathered would be enough to sustain us and our households.

Obviously, this storm has now passed, and its lingering effects have not turned out to constitute a disaster of biblical proportions. Nevertheless, the suffering it generated in our city and our state were – and are – very real, and we would do well to attend to the spiritual lessons of this experience. Most importantly, perhaps, the destruction of this storm ought to remind us once again about how vulnerable we are to unexpected changes in our circumstances, and how vital it is that we strengthen the communal ties that allow us to lend support to each other.

But like our Israelite ancestors during that first traumatic

Passover in Egypt, we should remember that although fear is an important part of our history, it is not the end of our story. For us – just as for them – redemption always lies just ahead of us, provided that we will keep our eyes trained forward, strengthen each other when we falter, and keep marching forward toward freedom.

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## **CONGREGATION EMANU EL TO HOST** **GAIL RUBIN FOR *BEFORE I DIE* WEEKEND**

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Do you plan to live forever? Do you ever plan to move? Depending on where you're going, you can't take it with you. This talk focuses on practical ways to downsize excess goods without being overwhelmed by the job, what you need to know to organize your information for your executor, and how to plan for end-of-life issues.

The weekend concludes on **Sunday afternoon, March 21** as Rubin presents Death Cafe Conversations at **4:00 p.m.**

Come join the conversation at the Death Cafe! The goal is "to increase awareness of death with a view to helping people make the most of their (finite) lives." Grab a snack, some coffee or tea, and an interesting, unstructured conversation about mortality issues. Rubin is one of the U.S. pioneers of the worldwide Death Cafe movement.

To help us plan, we are asking for **RSVPs for both Friday night and Sunday afternoon** programming so plans can be made accordingly.

To RSVP, visit [emanuelhouston.org](http://emanuelhouston.org) or call 713.529.5771.



## LIFECYCLE EVENTS

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### BIRTHS

**George Sartor Freedman**, son of Auna & Sam Freedman; grandson of Martha & Donald Freedman, Barbara & Al Denson; great-grandson of Betty Freedman, Therese Brandl; great-great-grandson of Leonard (Tut) Sokolowski

**Madelyn Rose Levine**, daughter of Corinna & Andrew Levine; granddaughter of Paulette & Mel Levine, Lilian Klinger, Kathy & Steve Klinger; great-granddaughter of Alfred Levine

**Birdie Rose Marcus**, daughter of Eby Harvey & Matt Marcus; granddaughter of Barbara & Al Marcus, Cristi & Winthrop Harvey; great-granddaughter of Joann Sowell

**Emery June Waldman**, daughter of Allison & Todd Waldman; granddaughter of Marilyn Waldman, Robin & Mark Weintraub

### DEATHS

**Raymond Brudno**, father of Debra & Larry Linzer, Jill & Tim Macy; grandfather of Sharon & Chad Friedsohn, Denise & Joel Kanter, Gina & Alex Johnson, Stephanie & Kerry Macy; great-grandfather of Ella and Lily Friedsohn, Riley Kanter, Trevor Johnson, Justin Palermo, Christian Musachio, Audrey and Amalia Macy

**Joyce Cohan**, wife of Stuart Cohan; mother of Priscilla & Steve Cohan, Leslie Cohan & Richard Caplan, Caryn Cohan, Andy & Mitch Kwartler; grandmother of Valerie & Efi Karchmer, Kat & Mark Cohan, Callie & Eric Kwartler, Shina Bharadwaja & Drew Kwartler, Kailey Caplan & Henry Ubelaker, Koby Caplan; great-grandmother of Sarah and Claire Karchmer, Josiah Kwartler; sister of Linda & Harris Miller

**Estelle Jucker**, mother of Renee & Alan Helfman, Maurine & Marc Rothschild, Marsha & Keith Rubenstein; sister of Marion Lewis; sister-in-law of Edith Jucker; grandmother of Hilary & Blake Helfman, Eric Helfman, Caitlin Helfman, Andrew Rubenstein, Cameron Rubenstein, Lauren Rubenstein, Jamie Rubenstein; great-grandmother of Hudson Helfman

**Marlene Kaplan**, mother of Diana & Brian Kaplan, Linda & Steven Albert, Lee & Bernard Kaplan; sister of Terri & Mike Bayer, Harriet & Taghi Hajizade; grandmother of Gina & Andrew Kaplan, Michael Albert, Lindsay Albert, Joanna & Jeffrey Schaffer, Mallory Kaplan & John Hubbard, Palmer Kaplan; great-grandmother of Mortimer Kaplan

**Natalie Kurtin**, mother of Ronnie Kurtin & Gary Lew, Susan Kurtin & Michael Loewy, Steven Kurtin; grandmother of Max Lew, Bethany Lew, Aaron Loewy, Matthew Loewy, Kimberly Kurtin Rosen, Nathan Kurtin, Rosalie Kurtin

**Netty Pogach**, mother-in-law of our member Myra Mayer, mother of Ken Pogach, grandmother of Amanda & Alex Panaccione, Amy & Joel Pogach; great-grandmother of Peyton and Carson Pogach

**Aaron Schneider**, husband of Joyce Schneider; father of Alan Schneider, Debbie & Rodney Lerner; brother of Barbara Sue Schneider; grandfather of Crystal & Ryan Peel, Shawn Peel; great-grandfather of Audrey Peel

**William (Bill) Spitz**, father of Ronna & Clay Spitz, Jill & Leelan Spitz, Tracey & Nelson Spitz, Julie & Jonathan Spitz; grandfather of 9; great-grandfather

### A Notice About Bereavement Communications

Bereavement notices for our Temple family are distributed with the permission of the deceased's family, and the timing of these notices is dictated by the family's request. Of course, each family grieves in its own way, and we are grateful for our congregation's patience and understanding with different families' preferences about how their loss is publicized.

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### A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Arctic storm (or was it two storms?), my family was cold, cranky and in the dark. Spotty cell service made it difficult to check in with others. We had little water pressure, then came the boil notice. When would the power come back? Are my pipes frozen . . . will they burst? How low will the mercury dip tonight? We didn't know when things would get better. The uncertainty made everything worse.

We filled pitchers of water. We charged our devices when and where we could. When cell service was available, we checked on friends and family. Once again, we were adapting to a new set of circumstances.

Synagogues are adapting, too. In January, Rabbi Hayon, Rabbi Silk, David Lamden, and I had the privilege of participating in the URJ's conference "Leading Change: A URJ Accelerator Network Gathering for Large Congregations." It was no surprise to learn that every congregation throughout North America is grappling with the same challenges and uncertainties triggered or amplified by the pandemic. The conference reminded us that the disruption of the pandemic also provides us with an opportunity to reflect on what we have learned over the last year and how we can shape our future. For example, Emanu El is learning the advantages and

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## UPCOMING PROGRAMS AT EMANU EL

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### Taste of Talmud

**Thursdays, March 4 & April 7, at 12:30 p.m.**

Did you enjoy Stefani's recent presentation to Sisterhood? Do you want all the benefits of a book discussion group without the need to commit to extensive reading ahead of time? Are you curious about what this "Daf Yomi" thing you've heard people mention is? Do you want to connect with both your Judaism and a fun group of people?

If your answer to any of these questions is yes, then join us for *A Taste of Talmud*, our monthly study of rabbinic texts, led by Director of Congregational Learning Stefani Carlson. No experience or Hebrew knowledge required: all texts are provided in translation. We are currently meeting on Zoom – all are welcome. We'd love to have you add your voice to our virtual beit midrash (house of study)!

Zoom information can be found on our website. For more information, contact Stefani Carlson at stefanic@emanuelhouston.org or 713.529.5771, ext. 251.

### Havdalah for All

**Saturdays, March 6, 2021, 7:00 p.m. & April 3, 7:00 p.m.**

Join Cantor Simmons and Barbara Loeser for a spirited singalong to mark the end of Shabbat. The rituals of Havdalah help us to engage all of our senses as we come together to savor the last sweet moments of Shabbat and prepare for the week ahead. All ages welcome!

This event will be held exclusively on Zoom, and a song sheet will be made available on our website during the week leading up to the evening. To get the Zoom link, please register online at emanuelhouston.org.

For more information, contact Jason Plotkin at jasonp@emanuelhouston.org or 713.535.6414.

### Work of Our Hands

**Thursdays, March 11 & April 8, at 10:00 a.m.**

We are excited to bring Work of Our Hands back into the building!

Join us on the second Thursday of the month as we host a group that enjoys companionship while knitting and/or crocheting shawls, bonnets, booties, lap blankets etc. for patients in the Texas Medical Center. The beauty of this mitzvah covers neo-natal infants to patients at MD Anderson.

If you don't know how to knit but want to learn, let us know. We'll be happy to teach you.

Please know that all attendees will be required to check-in at the Rotunda, wear masks during their stay in the building and help us maintain social distancing in

the board room. Due to limited space, we are requiring pre-event registration to Donnie Bundman at dbundman@gmail.com.

### Mental Health First Training

**Monday, March 15, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.**



Congregation Emanu El is once again partnering with Jewish Family Service of Houston for a Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training. The training session for MHFA is designed for participants to learn the signs, symptoms and risk factors of behavioral and mental health conditions as well as addictions. Those who successfully complete the training will receive a certificate valid for three years.

The program is offered for free and will take place on Zoom. A 30-minute lunch break will take place in between the two parts of the program, which will be led by a MHFA certified national instructor.

Registration can be found on the website calendar at emanuelhouston.org, and it is requested that all interested participants sign up by **Friday, March 5**.

For more information, please contact Gittel Francis at gfrancis@jfshouston.org.

### Take Flight with The Classics – Virtual Tour of Jewish Portugal & Lisbon

**Sunday, March 14, 3:00 p.m.**

Leaving on a jet plane . . . at least virtually! Join the Classics as we continue our series of events to pique your sense of adventure.

Scratch your travel itch as we take a live virtual tour of Jewish Lisbon and Portugal. Our tour will be led by Gloria Ribeiro of Tours by Locals. Ms. Ribeiro lives in Sixel, Portugal and is passionate about her work, having worked as a licensed tour guide since 2004 after completing a university degree on Portugal Tourist guiding. "Visit" Lisbon's hidden 100-year-old synagogue, "walk" through the Jewish areas of Lisbon, learn about Jewish roots in the Portuguese culture . . . all without leaving your house!

Registration is limited to the first 20 screens and the cost is \$10 per screen, so register online by visiting our web calendar at emanuelhouston.org or by calling

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713.529.5771. Please note that the deadline for registering for this event is **Wednesday, March 10**. The Zoom link to access the program will be sent to registrants the week of the event.

The Classics is Emanu El's social group for those in their 50's and 60's, singles and couples alike. Questions? If you have any questions or suggestions for future events, please reach out to emanuelclassics@gmail.com.

## Heritage Shabbat Friday, March 12, 6:00 p.m.

Join us for Heritage Shabbat, featuring Cantor Simmons and our organist, Ann Frohbieter. We will share the treasured music of our heritage, featuring classical settings that convey the majesty, tranquility, and joy of Shabbat.

This service will be available on our streaming video page (select Barish Sanctuary), Facebook, YouTube, and Roku channel.

## Online Trivia Night Sunday, March 21, 7:00 p.m.

We are back for another fun-filled night of online trivia hosted by Game Time Adventures!

Every month, our game host Mike presents new trivia games featuring everything from music and popular culture to sports and price-guessing games.

The custom-built game nights are fun and challenging adventures where players muse a variety of different skill sets and ways of thinking to win. It's an experience beyond your average game night.

Register by 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 21 by visiting emanuelhouston.org to receive information about how to connect on the night of the event.

The information on how to connect will be sent roughly 60-90 minutes before the game. Individuals and teams are encouraged to join the trivia room at 5:30 p.m. for a pre-game schmooze and/or stay afterward. If this is your first time playing with Emanu El and Game Time Adventures, it is strongly encouraged that you show up no later than 6:45 p.m. to make sure your devices are working appropriately.

Previous winners include individuals or teams captained by the following individuals: Katherine Kardesch (November & February), Joy Krohn (January), Andrew Gass (October), Chip Ware (September), Fredi Bleeker Franks (August) and Jeff Silk (July).

For more information, contact Jason Plotkin at jasonp@emanuelhouston.org or 713.535.6414.

## The Qu'ran and the Jews Tuesday, April 6, 5:00 p.m.

Congregation Emanu El is partnering with Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institution of Religion (HUC-JIR), our Reform Movement's seminary to partner in a new program entitled *HUC Connect*. This program includes adult educational opportunities with members of the HUC faculty and visiting scholars.

Our second program will be led by **Dr. Reuven Firestone**, the Regenstein Professor in Medieval Judaism and Islam from HUC's Los Angeles campus.

Firestone has written over one hundred scholarly chapters and articles and eight books, with translations into German, French, Hebrew, Turkish, Arabic, Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Macedonian, Indonesian, and Urdu. He served as Vice President of the Association for Jewish Studies (AJS) and president of the International Qur'anic Studies Association (IQSA) and has initiated and continues to be involved in numerous projects and initiatives which bring together Jews Muslims and Christians, Jews and Arabs, and Israelis and Palestinians. He received rabbinical ordination from HUC-JIR in 1982.

To register for this program, please visit [huc.edu/HUCConnect](http://huc.edu/HUCConnect) – a second offering through HUC Connect can be found on page 7 of this edition of the *Bulletin*.

## An Invitation from Cantor Simmons, *The Man Upstairs? Questioning God Through Music* Tuesday, April 13, 7:00 p.m.

I hope you will mark your calendars and join me for an online concert experience entitled *The Man Upstairs? Questioning God Through Music*. Together, we will embark on a thought-provoking journey, using music to explore varying perceptions and experiences of God. I am honored to be joined by a team of renowned Jewish musicians who will help to create this extraordinary evening: Cantor Josh Breitzer and Donna Breitzer, Noah Aronson and Happie Hoffman, and Elana Arian and Cantor Julia Cadrain. Through the magic of technology, these talented pairs will be joining us from their respective homes in New York to present a unique genre-defying program.

Musical collaboration is one of the most inspiring parts of my work. Over the coming weeks, my concert team



Cantor Rollin Simmons

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will connect as musicians, colleagues and friends to develop our concert program together. I know that you will be able to feel the warmth of our relationships come through in the performance of the music.

There is something about singing with friends – even through the airwaves – that is different than singing with strangers. Our Emanu El community has already developed relationships with Elana Arian and Noah Aronson at community milestones: my installation in 2017 and our 75th anniversary welcome concert in 2019.

I look forward to welcoming Elana and Noah back and to introducing you to some new friends who bring depth of talent and soul. This concert will leave you thinking, questioning and wondering about your own connection to God. I look forward to sharing this special evening with you!

Warmly,  
Cantor Rollin Simmons

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The concert will be broadcast on the Barish Sanctuary channel of our streaming video page of the Emanu El website, in addition to our Facebook page, YouTube and Roku channels. An archived copy of the concert will be available in similar locations. Additional publicity will be shared in the coming weeks.)

## Film Discussion: *They Ain't Ready for Me* Thursday, April 15, 7:00 p.m.

Join Rabbi Silk as she discusses the documentary film entitled *They Ain't Ready for Me* alongside the film's director Brad Rothschild.



*They Ain't Ready for Me* is the story of Tamar Manasseh, an African American rabbinical student who is leading the fight against senseless killings on the south side of Chicago.

The film explores the challenges and motivations of this fearless community leader as she works to prevent more people from being killed by gun violence. Tamar's complex identity

and magnetic personality combine to make her a force to be reckoned with, and she hasn't even hit her stride yet.

Tamar and the organization she founded, MASK (Mothers and Men Against Senseless Killings) are proving all of the naysayers wrong; something can be done, the situation is not hopeless. Tamar is trying to restore the traditional role of the family back into the community. With just her presence on the block, talking, joking, and hanging out, she is making the forgotten people of the neighborhood believe that there are people who care whether they live or die in the Englewood section of Chicago.

Please register by Thursday, April 8 to receive a password protected link to view the film in the days leading up to the program. A subsequent Zoom link for the discussion will also be sent to registrants.

For more information about this program, contact Jason Plotkin at 713.535.6414 or [jasonp@emanuhouston.org](mailto:jasonp@emanuhouston.org).

## Emanu El Annual Meeting Sunday, April 18, 4:00 p.m.

Please mark your calendars for **Sunday, April 18 at 4:00 p.m.** as Congregation Emanu El hosts its annual meeting. This year's annual meeting will once again be held on Zoom.

Information about the meeting including the coming year's budget, nominating slate, an opportunity to register and more will be shared during the coming month.

For more information or assistance in registering, please contact the synagogue at 713.529.5771.

## Conversations Select Wednesdays, 12:00 p.m.

Join us for "Conversations" as Program Director Jason Plotkin sits down with a member of the congregation, community or from the sports world to discuss the current state of affairs while we are separated due to the COVID-19 pandemic. This series airs on select Wednesdays and will be shared on our website and in synagogue communications.

February guests included Ryan Posner of the Sugar Land Skeeters and Dee Dee Dochen of ReelMusic. Previous guests have included Harris County Judge Lina Hidalgo, Houston Symphony principal cellist Brinton Smith, Houston Independent School District (HISD) school board member Elizabeth Santos and more.

Do you have a suggestion or connection to a potential future guest? Let Jason know! Email him at [jasonp@emanuhouston.org](mailto:jasonp@emanuhouston.org) or 713.535.6414.

"Conversations" is available on Emanu El's Facebook page and our streaming video page (select Proler Chapel). Archived editions are available on the Emanu El YouTube Channel.



## PASSOVER WITH EMANU EL

Due to the pandemic, Congregation Emanu El will once again be taking its Passover experience online. As was the case last year, we will be creating a Passover resource page on our website which will feature content and resources to help you prepare for the holiday. You will also be able to find online haggadot, tips for doing a virtual seder, content put forth by our schools and more.

### ***Let My People Go: Personal Reflections on Freedom and Injustice*** Tuesday, March 23, 5:00 p.m.



**Charles Holman III, who was wrongly convicted for a 1991 murder and featured in the Netflix docuseries *The Innocence Files* will speak as part of a program held in-conjunction with Hebrew Union College.**

Congregation Emanu El is partnering with Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institution of Religion (HUC-JIR), our Reform Movement’s seminary to partner in a new program entitled *HUC Connect*. This program includes adult educational opportunities with members of the HUC faculty and visiting scholars.

Our first involvement with this program will take place on **Tuesday, March 23 at 5:00 p.m.** as Chester Holman III, Alan J. Tauber and Rabbi Andrea Weiss lead a session entitled *Let My People Go: Personal Reflections on Freedom and Injustice*.

Holman was featured in the Netflix docuseries, *The Innocence Files*, chronicling his release from prison after being convicted for a 1991 murder he did not commit. Tauber is the first assistant defender at the Defender Association of Philadelphia while Weiss may be a familiar name to our congregants, having visited Houston as the Rozelle & Rabbi Robert I. Kahn Scholar-in-Residence in 2019. Rabbi Weiss is the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Provost at HUC.

To register for this program, please visit [huc.edu/HUCConnect](http://huc.edu/HUCConnect) – a second offering through HUC Connect can be found on page 5 of this edition of the *Bulletin*.

### **Virtual Seder** Saturday, March 27

Emanu El will offer a virtual Seder for the first night of Passover across multiple platforms led by our clergy –

including our website’s streaming video (select Proler Chapel), Facebook, YouTube, and more.

The video will be available during the day ahead of the first night of Passover on Saturday, March 27, and remain available for members of our community to utilize as they see fit throughout the holidays. Additional information on this offering will be shared in communications closer to the holiday.

### **Houston Catering Providing Seder Options**

Emanu El’s preferred caterer Houston Catering Concepts will be offering “Passover To-Go” once more this year.



A full menu of options including individual and family boxes can be found on the HCC website at [houstoncatering.com](http://houstoncatering.com).

HCC is accepting pre-orders through **Friday, March 19**. Curbside pickup will take place from **11:00 a.m - 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, March 27** with delivery also available during the same time frame for \$25 additional.

For more information or assistance with ordering, visit [houstoncatering.com](http://houstoncatering.com) or call 713.257.9898.

### **Jewish Family Service Offers Passover Assistance**



Whether you are together, or socially distanced for Passover Seder, now is the time Jewish Family Service can offer families or individuals Passover Assistance.

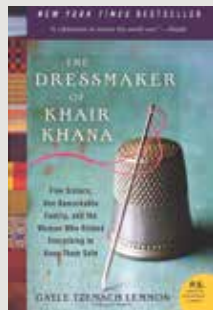
Jewish Family Service helps over 1,200 people each year and this year we need your help more than ever.

For those needing assistance, please call JFS 713.986.7844 or 713.986.7836 (for those speaking Russian, call 713.986.7847) and explain you are calling to apply for Passover Assistance.

A staff member will take your information and offer each family member a gift card to the H-E-B in Meyerland Shopping Center, which has the largest Passover product selection in Houston.

# Sisterhood News & Happenings

March – April 2021



## BOOK REVIEW:

*The Dressmaker of Khair Khana*

by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon; reviewed by Judy Meyers

THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 7:00 PM

Sisterhood hosts bi-monthly book reviews throughout the year that are open to the public.

**Please Note:** This book review will be held by Zoom and the information to access will be emailed ahead of time to those who register.

A summary of our March book, *The Dressmaker of Khair Khana*, by Gayle Tzemach Lemmon:

Kamila Sidiqui's life changed overnight when the Taliban seized control of Afghanistan. After her father and brother were forced to flee, she became the sole financial support of her five siblings. Banned from school, confined to her home, and armed only with determination, she picked up a needle and thread to create a thriving business that saved their lives. This book encourages a reader to consider the role of women regarding self, family and community – under the most stressful and impossibly-aligned circumstances.

To help us plan and/or to receive communications about future book reviews, we ask that you kindly **RSVP by Wednesday, March 10**, either online or by contacting the Sisterhood at [sishood@emanuelhouston.org](mailto:sishood@emanuelhouston.org) or 713.529.5771, ext. 233.

## Judaism through the Arts Delves into Art Nouveau

Thursday, March 18, 1:00 p.m.

Join Sisterhood for a virtual Judaism Through the Arts program as we explore the ornamental style of Art Nouveau that flourished from 1890 to 1910. This style was embodied by the Eiffel Tower, the epitome of technology!

The term "Art Nouveau" stems from the name of the Parisian art gallery, "La Maison de l'Art Nouveau," owned by the extraordinary Jewish avant-garde art collector, Siegfried Bing.



An Emile Galle vase.

The Museum of Fine Arts Houston's Helga Aurisch, curator of European art, and Christine Gervais, curator of decorative arts, will present a Gustav Klimt inspired painting by Hermen Camarasa and stained glass windows by Louis Comfort Tiffany. They'll also explore the wonderful sculptures, paintings, silver art pieces, and furniture in the newly installed Art Nouveau gallery in the MFAH Beck Building. There will be much more, including the role that Siegfried Bing played in putting Art Nouveau on the map.

There is no charge for this Zoom event, but please register by **Friday, March 12**, so that our traditional JTTA desserts can be hand delivered to your home before the program. Register RSVP online at [emanuelhouston.org](http://emanuelhouston.org) or to the Sisterhood office at 713.529.5771, ext. 233 or [sishood@](mailto:sishood@)



A painting of Louis Comfort Tiffany by artist Joaquin Sorolla Y Bastida.

[emanuelhouston.org](http://emanuelhouston.org). Zoom information will be sent prior to the program.

## All About Cupcakes with Sara Brook of Dessert Gallery

Wednesday, April 7, 7:00 p.m.

If you have ever wondered what a piñata cupcake is, how to dazzle your friends with cupcakes in a jar, or even how to "fill" a cupcake, here is your



Sara Brook

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chance to learn! Join Sisterhood for a virtual program as Sara Brook demonstrates how to assemble these fabulous cupcakes. Sara is the owner of Dessert Gallery Bakery & Café, a fairytale land of desserts, including beautiful cakes, pies, cookie bars, and theme-decorated cookies.

There is no charge for this Zoom program, but reservations are a must. All those who register by **Friday, April 2** will be welcome to a kit, supplied by Dessert Gallery, containing cupcakes and other items they will need to assemble the decorated cupcakes along with Sara that evening. **The kits can be picked up on the day of the program between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.** at the Rotunda (west side) of Congregation Emanu El. We ask those who are participating in the drive through to remain in their car and the materials will be loaded into your vehicle.

Please RSVP online at [emanuelhouston.org](http://emanuelhouston.org) or to the Sisterhood office at 713.529.5771, ext. 233 or [sishood@emanuelhouston.org](mailto:sishood@emanuelhouston.org). Zoom information will be sent prior to the program.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS

### Welcome Our Newest Members

We are pleased to welcome the newest members to our congregational family. Please be sure to introduce yourself to our newcomers as they become a part of our community.

**Jennifer & Matthew Pittsford, children Lindsey & Oliver**  
**Leah & Josh Rotenberg; children Ari, Nava, Benjamin and Orli**  
**Joyce Schneider**  
**Callie & Benjamin Seidman; sons Lucas & William**  
**Howard Siegel**  
**Kimberly & Adam Siegel**

New members will be shared in the *Bulletin* regularly. Know someone interested in becoming a part of our community? New to town or looking to find a way to connect with Emanu El? Contact Jason Plotkin at [jasonp@emanuelhouston.org](mailto:jasonp@emanuelhouston.org) or 713.535.6414.

## Our clergy want to know . . .

If you or a loved one is sick or hospitalized please let us know.

Contact the synagogue at 713.529.5771, so that our rabbis can reach out and visit and be a source of strength and support.

Visiting the sick and praying for those who are ill are important and meaningful mitzvot.



### Get Social With Us!

Did you know Congregation Emanu El is on Instagram? In addition to our active Facebook pages, be sure to follow us on Instagram to catch snap shots of happenings around the synagogue. From camel sightings to social action, a thriving youth group to clergy in action and more!

Find us on Instagram at [instagram.com/emanuelhouston](https://www.instagram.com/emanuelhouston) or if you are already a member, find us at [@emanuelhouston](https://www.instagram.com/@emanuelhouston). And yes, please feel free to “check-in” at Emanu El when you are here for events and happenings!



### Find Us On YouTube!

Looking for a one-stop shop to catch the latest worship services, musical selections, Chanukah highlights, videos from our schools and more?

Over 600 videos of new content created since the pandemic have been shared to Emanu El's YouTube page with dozens and dozens more from the archives also shared. YouTube also serves as a way to watch live services and other events.

Find us on YouTube by searching “Emanu El Houston Video” and subscribe today!



### Fun with Scarves at Becker Music

While our music teacher Ms. Alex is not in the classroom this year due to COVID measures, our Becker students are still able to engage with her via video. Here's one of our Becker School friends having fun with a scarf during Becker Music time.

### Helfman Makes Donation to Undies for Everyone

Director of Congregational Learning Stefani Carlson recently stopped by Undies for Everyone to drop off the collection of underwear donated during a Helfman drive-thru event held around Chanukah time in the winter. Thanks to all our Helfman families for their contributions.



### Shushan Night Live

Rabbi Fixler, Cantor Simmons and Rabbi Hayon in a scene from the Purim Schpiel entitled "Shushan Night Live" that aired in late February across all Emanu El's digital platforms. Miss the schpiel and megillah reading? Tune in to the Emanu El YouTube channel to catch what you missed!



### EVER OPEN Viewing Party & Talk Back Available for Viewing

EVER OPEN was produced for the congregation's 75th anniversary in 2019.



The documentary was written and directed by congregant Steven Fenberg and produced by Carrithers Studio with the participation of the synagogue's Senior Rabbi, Oren Hayon. The film debuted during "EE75 Ever Forward," a celebration held in November 2019 to commemorate the milestone anniversary. In addition to Rabbi Hayon, the film includes interviews with Rabbi Roy Walter, Dolores Wilkenfeld (pictured), Susan Farb Morris, Dawn Blitz, Madeline Canfield, Al Kahn, Amanda & Marc Eichenbaum, and Evyn Rudin.

On February 7, Rabbi Hayon moderated a conversation with Fenberg, during which guests had an opportunity to ask questions about the film, as well as Fenberg's observations and association with Emanu El as a lifelong member. The program is available on our YouTube channel.

### Congregation Emanu El Moves Back Into Phase 3



NOTE: The following note was sent to the congregation on February 9 with an update on Emanu El's phased reopening from COVID-19. As of the press date of this communication, the synagogue remained in Phase 3 and provided limited spaces on a week-to-week basis with pre-registration for in-person Friday night Shabbat worship in the Barish Sanctuary. For more information, our current status and to register for Shabbat worship, visit our website or call the synagogue at 713.529.5771.

February 9, 2021  
Dear Congregants,

We are writing to provide you with an update in Emanu El's response to COVID-19 and our congregational reopening plan. As you may be aware, our community has seen downward trends for several weeks in the three public health measures we are monitoring to determine moving from one reopening phase to another:

- Test Positivity Rates for TMC Hospital Systems
- Effective Reproduction Rate for the Greater Houston Metropolitan Statistical Area
- TMC Daily New COVID-19 Hospitalizations

If the downward trends continue, and if we receive positive affirmation from public health agencies and our medical advisors, Emanu El will move to Phase 3 of our Reopening Plan on February 15.

While complete details of Phase 3 are on our website, this Phase allows for limited in-person attendance for Friday night Shabbat worship and an increase in the number of guests that Bar/Bat Mitzvah families may invite to the Saturday morning service. In addition, life cycle events, meetings and the gift shop will be available for more in person attendance than under Phase 2.

Finally, the website has been updated to recognize that a number of our congregants have received COVID-19 immunizations and may now wish to worship or attend other functions. Based on guidance from public health agencies and our medical advisors, these congregants will still be required to wear face coverings and spread apart following social distancing standards.

*Regards,  
David Lamden*

### In Person Programming Note

Over the coming weeks, we will begin increasing the amount of in-person programming offerings at Emanu El beyond worship.

These events will be limited in participation and follow the guidelines set forth by the congregation's COVID-19 Task Force.

As of the print deadline, we are excited to share that our Confirmation class will host a havdalah program and that we will be welcoming Work of Our Hands back into the building.

A small group of lay leaders recently came together to begin exploring other possibilities.

Please stay tuned to the weekly Coming Events email for more opportunities. If you have a suggestion for a program, please contact program director Jason Plotkin at [jasonp@emanuelhouston.org](mailto:jasonp@emanuelhouston.org) or 713.535.6414.



We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who remember and honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions through February 14, 2021.

**ACCESS FOR ALL FUND**

*To ensure Emanu El is a welcoming, accessible and inclusive community*

In Honor of

**Carol Fradkin's Birthday**

Pat & Aaron Fradkin

In Memory of

**Jerome Passen**

fredi Bleeker Franks

**Aaron Schneider**

Pat & Aaron Fradkin

**ALAN GAYLOR TEACHER ASSISTANT FUND**

*To support Helfman Religious School teacher assistants*

In Memory of

**Dorys Sandra Sussman**

Joni & Gary Lewis

**AUBREY & SYLVIA FARB COMMUNITY SERVICE FUND**

*To support small and emerging organizations that improve life for underserved Houstonians*

In Memory of

**Pearl Shub**

Rochelle Cyprus

**BECKER EARLY CHILDHOOD FUND**

*To provide and enhance Becker School programs*

In Memory of

**Richard Bamberger**

Nancy & Arthur Brand,  
Jennifer & David  
Stockel, Adam Brand  
& Maya Kriseman

**BECKER EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

*To provide scholarships for Becker School*

In Honor of

**Sarah Williams being chosen as the Director of Becker School**

Judy Lazor

**The B'nai Mitzvah of Marin Pollock**

Sara Astrich

**CERSONSKY CEMETERY BEAUTIFICATION FUND**

*To maintain and enhance Emanu El Memorial Park*

In Memory of

**Ida Fradkin, Mack Michael**

**Martin & Selma Bradspies**

Pat & Aaron Fradkin

**CLERGY'S GOOD WORKS FUND**

*To provide Emanu El's clergy with funds to help individuals in need and to support organizations that benefit the community*

In Appreciation of

**Rabbis Hayon, Silk, Fixler, Walter, & Cantor**

**Simmons for their help and support**

Susie & David Askanase

In Honor of

**The Speedy Recovery of**

**Barry Goodfriend**

Rozanne & Howard Rubin

In Memory of

**Elizabeth "Betty" Laville Bagot**

Friends at Levey Group

**Mordo Berker**

Marianne & Larry  
Greenfield & Family

**Rosalee Baer Fink**

Perri & Aaron Fink

**Emilie Bendix Slohm**

Barbara Burgower  
Hordern

**EDIS LEWIS PARKANS EMANU ELDERS FUND**

*To provide programming for Emanu Elders*

In Memory of

**Carl Hess**

Bonnie & Michael  
Grossfeld

**EDWARD WAYNE HUNGER FUND**

*To feed the hungry of Houston*

In Honor of

**The B'nai Mitzvah of**

**Ben Rosenthal**

Sara Astrich

**The Speedy Recovery of**

**Perri Fink**

Phyllis & Miles Cohn

In Memory of

**Bonnie Zuber Beerman**

Linda & Joseph Pulaski

**Nathan Lewis**

Beadie Lewis

**Evelyn Snyder**

Linda & Joseph Pulaski

**FREDELL LACK EICHHORN CANTOR'S MUSIC FUND**

*To enhance musical programming*

In Honor of

**Cantor Rollin Simmons**

ReelAbilities Houston

**Cantor Rollin Simmons' Birthday**

Gloria & Joe Pryzant

**GREENE FAMILY CAMP FUND**

*To support Greene Family Camp*

In Memory of

**Jerry Silverman**

**Louis Silverman**

Jeffrey Ross

**HAROLD REINGOLD RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND**

*To enhance Helfman Religious School programs*

In Honor of

**The Bar Mitzvah of**

**Levi Brooks**

Nancy Peskin

In Memory of

**Gail Shapiro**

Paula & Barry Druckman  
& Eliana & Renee Lockey

**JASON & DAVID MARCUS PLAYSPACE FUND**

*To enhance the playgrounds at Emanu El*

In Honor of

**Ruby Sondock**

Sharon Rich & Renie  
Rich Carniol & Families

**JULIUS & HARRIET ZINN FUND**

*To provide and enhance congregation programs*

In Memory of

**Harriet Zinn**

Betty Lou Blumrosen  
Lynne Lipsitz  
ZCommercial Properties  
& Holdings

**JULIUS NATHAN MUSIC FUND**

*To provide musical programming*

In Honor of

**The Speedy Recovery of**

**Stuart Baum**

Bobby & Rabbi Gene Levy

**MAX & LOUISE BAMBERGER MEMORIAL FUND**

*To create and promote programs that strengthen Emanu El's ties to Israel*

In Memory of

**Richard Bamberger**

Lynne Lipsitz  
Claudia and Joel Selzer

**RABBI ROY & LINDA WALTER ENRICHMENT FUND**

*To support spiritual and cultural enrichment*

In Memory of

**Jake Fradkin**

**Sylvia Fradkin**

Carol & Larry Fradkin

**Larry Riklin**

Phyllis & Allen Applebaum

**Linda Cohn Walter**

Sharon Rich & Renie Rich  
Carniol & Families

*continued next page*



**RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

To provide Helfman Religious School scholarships

In Memory of

**Gail Shapiro**

Hillary, Matthew, Evan & Addy Rosenthal

**RICKY SCHNURR CAMPERSHIP FUND**

To provide Greene Family Camp scholarships

In Memory of

**Steve Bleichner**

**Sharon Kaye Saladino**

Don & Larry Barr-Meyer & Family

**ROBERT I. KAHN SOCIAL JUSTICE FUND**

To send congregants to the Consultation on Conscience at the Religious Action Center

In Memory of

**Bernard Bentch**

Barbara Golub

**RONALD BROCHSTEIN EARLY CHILDHOOD FUND**

To enhance preschool education

In Memory of

**Peggy & Louis Ashe**

Sharon & Herb Cohn

**Tom Avery**

Sandy & Richard Brochstein

**ROSE GOODFRIEND ISRAEL PILGRIMAGE**

To help send Confirmation students to Israel

In Honor of

**The Speedy Recovery of**

**Barry Goodfriend**

Myra Lipper

**SHIRLEY BARISH MEMORIAL ISRAEL EXPERIENCE FUND**

To send Helfman Religious School students to Israel

In Honor of

**Noah Septimus**

Claire & Dick Brooks

**SISTERHOOD FLOWER FUND**

To provide flowers at Congregation Emanu El

In Honor of

**The Bat Mitzvah of**

**Addy Rosenthal**

Hillary & Matthew Rosenthal

**SUSMAN FUND FOR FAMILY PROGRAMMING**

To support programs for families

In Honor of

**Bernice Feld's Birthday**

Lila Rauch

**TEMPLE FUND**

To support the needs of the Temple and to fulfill the mission of Congregation Emanu El

In Appreciation of

**Rabbi Oren Hayon**

Donna & Philip Tenenbaum

In Honor of

**Lisa Brooks**

**Stefani Carlson**

**Rabbi Oren Hayon,**

**Rabbi Pamela Silk,**

**Rabbi Joshua Fixler &**

**Cantor Rollin Simmons**

Claire & Dick Brooks

**Linda Hayon**

Sisterhood

**Lawrence Kagan's**

**Birthday**

Ann Plantowsky

**Jason Plotkin being named Vice President of Program & Engagement Professionals of Reform Judaism**

Jeff Basen-Engquist

Linda & Richard Zoll

**The Bar Mitzvah of**

**Levi Brooks**

Claire & Dick Brooks

In Memory of

**Henia & Benjamin**

**Friedberger**

Gloria & Ben Tobor

**Reba Schultz Goldberg**

Herman J. Schultz

**Estelle Jucker**

Andi & Sandy Gaitz

Elyse, Lewis, Aerin,

Kendall and Tali Kalmans

**Natalie Kurtin**

Mary Jo & Gerald

Goodman

**Hillary Rose**

Sharon & Bret Curran

From Vivian's Work

Family

**Morris Schultz**

Herman J. Schultz

**Kathryn Hecht Turcott**

**Milton Lee Wagner**

Lynne Lipsitz

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**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT** *continued from page 3*

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the limits of an online platform. Livestreamed worship services work for many people. In fact, remote services and programming are engaging congregants who we did not see before. Online learning, including Helfman's small group Hebrew, has been very successful. And Committee and board meetings over Zoom are well-attended since no one has to commute.

Comparing notes with other presidents at the conference, I was certain of one thing: our members are incredible. During a year of unprecedented challenges, our members have eased the strain on our sacred congregation by sharing their time, talent and philanthropy. To date, over 340 members, including 100% of the Board of Trustees and Executive Committee, have contributed to our Covid Relief Fund, providing critical support for our future financial stability.

The turmoil and uncertainty of the past year also high-

lighted what we already knew: Belonging to a community matters. Connection matters. And while connecting virtually is safe, and even meaningful, in-person fellowship is sorely missed. We long for a return to connecting safely in the halls and sacred spaces of 1500 Sunset. As temple leadership begins to unpack what we've learned over the past year and plan for the future, our beautiful campus will be front and center. We're looking forward to the spontaneous encounter with another congregant or staff in the rotunda, the joyful energy of a crowded chapel on a Friday night, the pulse of the cantor's music in the sanctuary, a quick pop-in to the New Traditions.

The news about vaccines is encouraging, and it looks like we are at the beginning of the end of the pandemic. It's not certain, but the power is back on and there is light at the end of the tunnel.

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**SUNDAY, MARCH 21 7:00 PM**

**REGISTER ONLINE: [EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG](http://EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG)**

 Congregation Emanu El



**grat·i·tude**  
*/gradə,t(y)ʊd/ noun*

*Definition: the quality of being thankful; readiness to show appreciation for and to return kindness.*


I want to thank everyone for the honor and privilege of serving families within the community. It is most humbling to be given your trust and the great responsibility of taking care of your loved ones.

We serve our families from our hearts.

  
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**THE MAN UPSTAIRS?**

**QUESTIONING GOD THROUGH MUSIC**  
**AN ONLINE CONCERT EXPERIENCE**  
**TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2021 • 7:00 PM**

 Congregation Emanu El [EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG](http://EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG)

RED SHIELD PICTURES and 3 GENERATIONS  
present


**They Ain't Ready for Me**

**ONE MOTHER. ONE CORNER. ONE MISSION.**

Featuring  
**TAMAR MANASSEH**

Directed by  
**BRAD ROTHCHILD**

Produced by Brad Rothschild and Connor Kalista  
Director of Photography  
Daniel Kullman  
Edited by Connor Kalista  
Featuring music by Intelligent



**FILM DISCUSSION**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 15 | 7:00 PM**  
**REGISTER: [EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG](http://EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG)**



This Bulletin is printed on recycled paper.



Congregation Emanu El

Oren J. Hayon, Senior Rabbi  
Pamela B. Silk, Associate Rabbi  
Joshua R.S. Fixler, Associate Rabbi  
Roy A. Walter, Rabbi Emeritus  
Rollin Simmons, Cantor  
David Lamden, Executive Director  
Jason Plotkin, Program Director  
Sarah Williams, Early Childhood Director  
Stefani Carlson, Director of  
Congregational Learning

Jeri Amundsen, President  
Stuart Gaylor, Senior Vice President  
Dawn Blitz, Vice President  
Melissa Carson, Vice President  
Ronnie Kurtin, Vice President  
Ben Miller, Vice President

fredi Bleeker Franks, Treasurer  
Laura Mayer, Secretary  
Rodney Roth, Honorary Past President  
Andrew Gass, Brotherhood President  
Claire Brooks & Carol Sue Zions,  
Sisterhood Presidents

EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG

# NEW TRADITIONS

## SISTERHOOD JUDAICA SHOP

CONGREGATION EMANU EL

### New Traditions Gift Shop Now Open by Appointment

In conjunction with Congregation Emanu El's move to Phase 3, the New Traditions gift shop is open by appointment only on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. The gift shop reopened on Wednesday, February 24.

The New Traditions gift shop is well stocked for your Passover needs! Please call 713.529.5771, ext. 234 to make an appointment or for more information.



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