

# Kol HaLev Happenings

The Newsletter of Cleveland's Jewish Reconstructionist Community

DECEMBER 2011

## VIRTUAL KOL HALEV: THE NEXT BEST THING TO BEING THERE

By HANNAH BAXTER

Friends and relatives on two continents witnessed Hadas Scher-Marcus' recent bat mitzvah ceremony without boarding a plane, thanks to some technical ingenuity on the part of fellow congregants. Israeli relatives on both her mother's and her father's side and a cousin in California were among those who viewed the proceedings online via streaming video—as did local members of Kol HaLev who were not able to attend personally and tuned in from home.

Hadas and her father Bill worked with Brian Miller to fulfill her wish to share the day with faraway loved ones. Brian piloted the scheme by setting up a live broadcast of Kol HaLev's Rosh Hashanah services. The enthusiastic response from members prompted the broadcast of Yom Kippur services also. A video player was embedded on Kol HaLev's home page so that anyone who visited the site could tune in live.

Julian Barnett's bar mitzvah was scheduled before that of Hadas, and that was streamed live, too. And paternal relatives of the most recent member to become a bar mitzvah, Will Raddock, viewed that service from their home in Sweden.

"This was officially just a test," said president Greg Selker. "But the response from members has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, members who viewed a service at home said they found it to be a very fulfilling and enriching experience. One member said that she was standing when we stood, sitting when we sat, and really felt like she was here."

Interactivity would be the ultimate next step. In an ideal world, Hadas would have loved to see and

interact with her friends and relatives around the world—technically a possibility with services like Skype available. But having a laptop on the bimah would have been too intrusive and distracting.

"A wireless iPad on a music stand might be an idea for the future," Bill suggested.



Bill, Hadas, and Michal Scher-Marcus on bat mitzvah day. Family in Israel who couldn't attend could watch the service via live feed.

"I would welcome interactivity," said Pauline Raymond, who tuned in for the High Holy Days services and Julian's bar mitzvah service. Reading aloud and following along with the siddur and the service, she said, helped her feel like part of the congregation even though she was not there in person. "The more engaged one can be, the better the experience."

Brian was pleased with the visual fidelity he was able to offer remote viewers. "We are at a great [continued on page 10](#)

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**WEEKLY UPDATE**

Ron Kohn

Art Lieberman

**YOUTH AND FAMILY EDUCATION**

Lynn Liebling

**NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINE: THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15**

## The December Dilemma Revisited



When I started rabbinical school in the late 1980s, colleagues often discussed “the December Dilemma.” The phrase referred to the attraction and envy that Jewish children often feel towards their friends, neighbors and sometimes their family members who celebrate Christmas. The most attractive part of this holiday, of course, turns out to be the fun and substantial gifts that children in families that celebrate Christmas would receive.

One of the strategies employed within Jewish families during that period of time was to “out-Christmas Christmas.” Which is to say, take advantage of all eight days of Hanukkah and make this relatively minor Jewish holiday into such a gift-giving extravaganza that “Christmas-envy” would all but disappear.

Now, at the tail end of 2011, this original version of the December dilemma has receded, but it has been replaced by a new, and possibly worse, dilemma. The new dilemma has grown directly from our apparent success in resolving the original December dilemma. Hanukkah and Christmas now share a common challenge: a high percentage of people in each tradition have come to understand these holidays as merely occasions for gift-giving (or receiving). Ironically, the deeper meanings and teachings our holidays contain have faded far into the background, if they remain at all.

Both holidays have been so co-opted by the consumer-commercial establishment that it is often difficult to carve out time and space to engage with the actual themes and ideas that lie at their foundation. Obviously, as a rabbi, I am in

**Both holidays have been co-opted by the consumer-commercial establishment.**



Hanft

much better position to speak about and address these challenges within a Jewish context, but I find it helpful and instructive that many of my Christian colleagues feel a similar type of concern vis-a-vis Christmas. I believe that our two communities might be able to learn from one another strategies for recalibrating the type of energy and focus that these holidays receive.

In this spirit, I would like to share the following eight ideas for a meaningful Hanukkah celebration from the website of my colleague Rabbi Goldie Milgram, [ReclaimingJudaism.org](http://ReclaimingJudaism.org). I hope that one or more of these ideas will be inspiring and will help

to deepen your family’s connection to our tradition’s winter holiday, and that this will, in turn, help us to resolve the newest version of the December dilemma.

**1. Family history night.** One night of Hanukkah, invite family of reference (the people we are related to by birth or adoption) and/or family of preference (the close people we add to our lives to enhance our sense of expanded family) to come over for candle lighting. Be sure to have a video camera or tape recorder. Ask each person to

*[continued on page 4](#)*

Rabbi Steve is available to meet with Kol HaLev members on a range of issues by appointment on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Please contact him by phone at the office (216-320-1498) or at [rabbisteve@kolhalev.net](mailto:rabbisteve@kolhalev.net) to schedule a meeting.

*continued from page 3*

come prepared to share one story about someone in “the family” who is no longer alive or able to share her own story. Done each year, this will result in a rich treasure chest of family memories.

**2. Personal or family spiritual check-in.**

One night have family members check in with questions like: In what ways are we spiritually alive and vital as a person/family? How are we coping under the norms of the larger culture? How can we dedicate ourselves to spiritual vitality? Brainstorm a family list of exciting and helpful options for a more alive, soulful existence. Set a few dates for implementation of important ideas which arise and perhaps give individual assignments.

**3. Study readings on the theme of light.**

By yourself or with guests, gather items, poems, and other things that bring light into the world. Ask each person to bring one item or idea that has brought the pleasure of light into his life. The item might be shown, shared or swapped with someone else’s to experience light in a new form!

**4. Israel Night.** Everyone comes to the candlelighting with a clipping, item or idea about the modern Maccabees and their state: Israel. The clippings would be about both amazing and challenging things that are going on in Israel or about Israel. Let each person present what her or she has brought and figure out a way to bless it after a thorough discussion.

**5. On one of the nights of Hanukkah open all of the tzedakah boxes in the house and count the money** in preparation for giving to a worthy cause.

**6. On the next night of Hanukkah, decide which important causes to send the money to.**

Have all the guests bring information about a cause they believe needs funding in the most immediate way. Each person also brings three blank checks. Have everyone present his cause and reasons. Have each person privately fill in each of his checks in the amount of their choice for the causes which most strike them as important to send light to on this Hanukkah night. Families who are doing the tzedakah



box collection described earlier in this list can regroup on the last night of Hanukkah to allocate the funds to the causes presented tonight.

**7. Bring light into someone’s life.**

Bring your menorah to a refuge that shelters battered women, homeless persons or the elderly. Invite the residents to light a candle and express their greatest hopes for their future or most precious memory of light. Listen to the Torah of each person’s life with care. Bless them to attain their dreams. Talk to the center director and find out what is needed. With money from the tzedakah box project obtain something needed by that

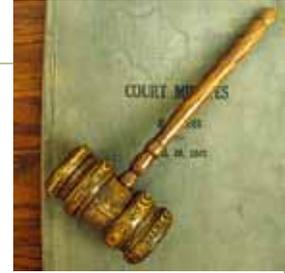
community and bring it over. If you have children in your life, make sure they come along with you and help with the blessings and decisions!

**8. A long-standing practice is to silently watch the candles burn. This is a form of Jewish meditation practice that goes as far back as the Talmudic period.**

Loosely focus your eyes on the menorah and savor the minutes of pure light. Notice what comes up for you, even after the last flame has sizzle-fizzled out. What blessings have occurred for you during the eight nights of lights? Share your experiences or preserve them in your journal.



## THE VERDICT: THE TRIAL WAS A TRIUMPH!



“The People vs. King David: A Trial” was a success as a fundraiser, a community outreach event and a dramatization of Kol HaLev’s Reconstructionist philosophy.

More than 250 tickets were sold and more than \$15,000 was raised at the November 12 event in the Moot Courtroom at Cleveland-Marshall College of Law, according to Judy Harris, chair of the planning committee. She noted that many of those who attended were from the general community, both Jewish and non-Jewish.

The program also reflected the insights of Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan who believed that American Jews live “in two civilizations” at once. In the dual perspectives of American Jewish consciousness, Kaplan saw a powerful tool for rediscovering meaning and relevance in traditional Judaism by engaging, rather than discounting, our modern, secular understanding of justice and humanity.

“The People vs. King David: A Trial” made Kaplan’s insight into more than an abstract idea. It posed the question: If King David were tried in a modern courtroom on charges of murder and conspiracy to commit murder, would we find him guilty or not guilty? How do we understand David and his actions if we look at them through the lens of our secular, codified justice system?

The trial began with Judge Solomon Oliver Jr. (in real life, the Chief Judge of the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Ohio) instructing the ladies and gentlemen of the jury to disregard any notions they might have about David and reach a verdict only on the evidence they heard presented by the evening’s distinguished attorneys.

Prosecutor Geoffrey S. Mearns (whose day job is Provost of Cleveland State University) called King David a “serial murderer,” citing many instances in which David was linked to murderous acts. Defense Attorney Avery Friedman (a nationally-known local civil rights attorney) countered with important procedural issues and pointed out that rules of war may be different from laws that govern society in times of peace. He asked the jury to consider the mitigating circumstances of David’s life and concluded with the moving lines of the 23rd Psalm, authored by David. In one motion, Friedman argued that according to Biblical law, a capital case requires two eye-witnesses, which the prosecution had failed to produce. The judge overruled the objection.

“As a lawyer myself, I was awed and highly appreciative of the presentations made by Prosecutor Geoff Mearns and Defense Lawyer Avery Friedman,” Kol HaLev board member Allen Binstock said. “It was a great treat to experience not only their expert legal arguments but also their oratorical skills.”

After the arguments, a panel of clergy -- Rabbi Robert Nosanchuk of Anshe Chesed Fairmount Temple, Rev. Leah C.K. Lewis of Olivet Institutional Baptist Church and our own Rabbi Steve Segar -- discussed the story of King David from a modern perspective, finding relevance and surprising parallels in modern examples of the abuse of power.

The jury (the audience) listened to the arguments and discussion before casting their votes: King David was found guilty by a margin of two to one.

The evening’s last and best laugh went to Judge Oliver, who announced at the trial’s end that the “next case on the docket” would be “The People vs. Eve.”

## KOL HALEV WOMEN'S BRUNCH

The next meeting of the Kol HaLev Women's Group is a brunch on Sunday, December 18, from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. The topic is:

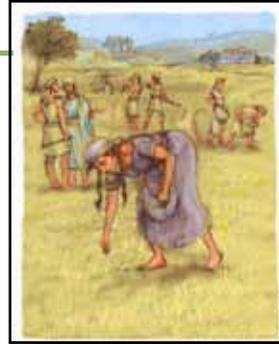
### **Ruth: Paragon of Virtue, Victim, or Political Convenience?**

A fresh look at Ruth from a contemporary (and Reconstructionist) point of view.

Presenter: Leah Kamionkowski

Where: The home of Anita Cohn (2112 Acacia Park Drive, #106, Lyndhurst, 44124).

RSVP to Anita at 440-446-9336 or [iccohn@majicom.com](mailto:iccohn@majicom.com).



## BOARD REPORT

The Board met on November 14, 2011, at Linda Gross's home. Treasurer Ami Kopstein reported that we have collected 75% of 2011-12 dues. The Mock Trial will net about \$15,000 once all revenue and expenses are tallied. We need to raise another \$50,000 to meet our expenses for the fiscal year. There are some significant amounts due from last year that remain uncollected.

Judy Harris and the Mock Trial committee received the board's praise and appreciation for their hard work and a job well done. Many KHL members contributed greatly to the effort. Paid attendance was approximately 260, including many KHL members.

In addition, The Board approved guidelines for setting up Named Funds. Eight weeks of paid maternity leave was approved for Robyn Novick.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 12, 2011, at 7:30 p.m. at Alan Weinstein's home

## YAHARZEITS

*They are now a part of us, as we remember them.*

Members of Kol HaLev will mark the following yahrzeits during December:

- 
- **Estelle Paul (Esther)** – Shawn Zevit
- **Asnat Kelman** – mother of Sam Kelman
- **Zelig Resnick** – grandfather of Linda Gross
- **Mary R. Manny** – mother of Meg Manny
- **Marguerite Dresden** – aunt of Phyllis Maris

Kol HaLev members may include the yahrzeit of family members in *KHL Happenings* by submitting the name of the deceased, the relationship to the member, and the date of death, including the year, in either the secular or Jewish calendar to [JudyHerdering@kolhalev.net](mailto:JudyHerdering@kolhalev.net).

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Kol HaLev gratefully acknowledges contributions from:

- **Dick and Deena Epstein** in honor of Robyn Novick and Andy Oster's new son, Ari
- **Anita Cohn** in memory of Paul Klein, brother of Ruth Ness and Gary Glazer, and brother of Gwen Glazer
- **Kevin and Sue Weidenbaum** in honor of Julian Barnett's bar mitzvah
- **Eda Weiss** in commemoration of the yahrzeits of Alfred Weiss, Rose Beckerman and Harry Beckerman
- **Ruth Ness** to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- **Richard and Jayne Jones** in honor of Gabriel Sugerman's bar mitzvah
- **Abe and Muriel Chasin** in memory of Paul Klein, brother of Ruth Ness
- **Franklin and Maggie Malemud** in thanks to Rabbi Steve for his involvement with our son Lux Malemud's bris
- **Sandy and Allan Rosenfield** in honor of Julian Barnett's bar mitzvah
- **Dick and Deena Epstein** in honor of the birth of Eric Hagesfeld and the b'nai mitzvah of Gabe Sugerman, Julian Barnett and Will Raddock

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

GREG SELKER

While we are still basking in the success of our recent fundraising event, "The People vs. King David," our efforts to close this fiscal year's deficit are not done.

We are in the midst of our end-of-year annual fundraising campaign. Every Kol HaLev member family should have received the fundraising letter and envelope (for mailing in your contribution), which went out last month. While many of our members have mailed in their annual contribution (thank you!), many still have not done so.

I hope each one of us will make a donation to Kol HaLev that is consistent and appropriate within your personal financial picture, and also represents a heartfelt commitment to our sacred community. If you have not mailed in your commitment for our annual campaign, please take a moment over the next few weeks to do so. It does take the combined efforts of all of us to continue to provide our level of services and ensure that Kol HaLev is an accessible community to all.

## LUNCH AND LEARN SERIES: PRAYER

Rabbi Jeffrey Schein will lead a session of the Lunch and Learn series on Saturday, December 3. His topic is "What is Unique about Prayer in a Reconstructionist Context." The session starts at 1 p.m and ends at 2 p.m. Child care will be available

Lunch is potluck. People with a last name beginning with G, H, I, or J should bring drinks or a dessert. Everyone else should bring a main course or side dish.

For more information, contact Adina Davidson at [adina.davidsonphd@gmail.com](mailto:adina.davidsonphd@gmail.com).



## ADULT EDUCATION

RECON 201: BY POPULAR DEMAND!

### FURTHER ADVENTURES IN RECONSTRUCTIONIST JUDAISM

For our first session of Reconstructionism 201, we will examine the thought of Reconstructionism founder Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan, and compare and contrast Kaplan's ideas with those of two other giants of modern Jewish philosophy, Martin Buber and Abraham Joshua Heschel.

We'll use as a starting point a chapter from *The American Judaism of Mordecai Kaplan*, edited by Goldsmith, Scult and Seltzer. The book is available through Amazon, and a copy of the chapter will be available from Rabbi Steve ahead of time for those who would like to do the reading.

When: December 4 at 7:30

Where: Sue & Eric Kisch

21850 Byron Rd, Shaker Heights OH

RSVP: 216-295-1324

All are welcome but RSVP if possible so we can set out the correct number of chairs.

## HUMAN RIGHTS SHABBAT

Kol HaLev will be joining dozens of other Jewish communities across the country in the Human Rights Shabbat on Saturday, December 17, 2011.

This will be the third consecutive year that Kol HaLev has participated in this international program, which is coordinated by Rabbis for Human Rights. About 90 congregations, including many of our Reconstructionist sister congregations, have signed up to participate.

Our last two Human Rights Shabbat services focused on international human rights issues. This year the topic of the service is one closer to home: The local efforts of Greater Cleveland Congregations (GCC), the interfaith organization of which Kol HaLev is a participating member.

In addition to the discussion of GCC during the service, we'll add an action component to our Human Rights Shabbat with a one-hour "house" meeting at Ratner after the service, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. During this meeting, we will first break up into three groups organized around our action areas for GCC: education, jobs, and health care. After these breakout groups have had a chance to discuss what is happening in GCC and have worked at suggesting new initiatives, we will all gather together to share what has happened in each group.

There has been a high level of interest among Kol HaLev members in GCC and we hope there will again be a good turnout for this program. For those interested in learning more about the Human Rights Shabbat, visit the website for Rabbis for Human Rights: <http://www.rhr-na.org/resources/human-rights-shabbat.html>. To learn more about Greater Cleveland Congregations, see their website at <http://www.greaterclevelandcongregations.org>.

Allen Binstock  
Kol HaLev GCC Coordinator



## KVELL CORNER

*Mazal tov* to KHL member **Gloria Plevin**, whose solo exhibition, Favorite Flowers, will be on view at the Cleveland Botanical Garden's Guren Gallery from November 18 through January 8. Favorite Flowers is a collection of her watercolor botanical portraits, which Gloria has painted over the past few years. The Botanical Garden is located at 11030 East Blvd. in University Circle, and is open Tues.-Sat. 10-5 and Sun. 12-5. Learn more at <http://www.cb garden.org/GurenGallery/GloriaPlevin.html>.



*Yasher Koach* to brothers **Julian and Maxwell Barnett**, ages 13 and 16, who have surpassed their fundraising goal in support of the building of Camp JRF's Eco-Village. They have raised more than \$850 as of 11/16, and want to say "Thanks SO MUCH" to everyone who contributed and attended the rollicking concerts at their home. It is still possible to contribute online at [http://campjrf.givezooks.com/grassroots\\_fundraisers/barnett-brothers-help-us-build-the-camp-jrf-ecovillage](http://campjrf.givezooks.com/grassroots_fundraisers/barnett-brothers-help-us-build-the-camp-jrf-ecovillage).

*If you know of achievements in the Kol HaLev community that we ought to be kvelling over, please let us know at [newsletter@kolhalev.net](mailto:newsletter@kolhalev.net).*

## HESED

We send *refuah sh'lema* and continued healing to **Vicki Sussman, Robyn Novick, and Sammy Cheifitz**.

*Mazal Tov* to Kol HaLev members **Mike, Elise and Dana Hagesfeld** and **Maxine Collin** on the birth of **Eric Everett Hagesfeld**, their new son, brother and grandson, respectively, .

*Mazal tov* to Kol HaLev members **Dick and Deena Epstein** and Tishrei members **Andy, Joanna and Isaac Laytin** on the birth of their daughter, granddaughter and sister respectively, **Chava Devorah**.

### MONTHLY HESED COORDINATORS NEEDED:

IT'S NOT AS HARD AS YOU THINK!

If you like helping people, but don't know if you're up to the role of Monthly Hesed Coordinator, this should reassure you. Did you know . . .

- That you don't need ANY special skills to serve as Monthly Hesed Coordinator?
- That Hesed needs are usually very simple -- a meal, a ride, a shiva visit, a phone check?
- That there's a website for organizing volunteers to help with Hesed needs?
- That you won't have to worry about overlooking or intruding upon anyone needing help; Jane Arnoff and Rabbi Steve will tell you who does (and doesn't) want help from Hesed?
- That there are many experienced Hesed volunteers who can help?
- That Hesed is one of the most rewarding ways to give back to the KHL community?

**ALL YOU NEED IS A WILLINGNESS TO HELP!**

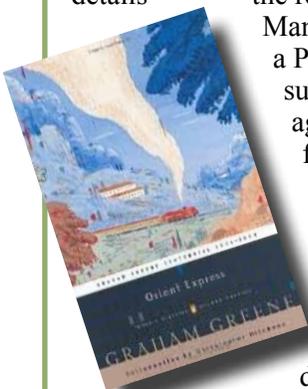
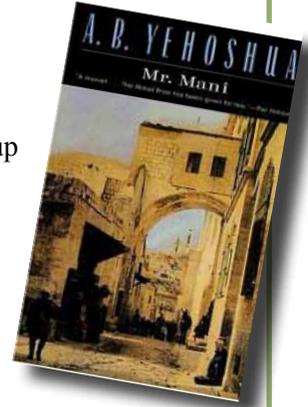
To volunteer or find out more, contact Jane Arnoff at [janealogsdon@gmail.com](mailto:janealogsdon@gmail.com).

## HUG HASEFER: BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The December book group meeting will be Thursday, December 29, at 7:30 at the home of Deena and Dick Epstein. Deena will facilitate our discussion of *Mr. Mani* by A. B. Yehoshua (369 pages). The novel was named a New York Times Notable Book of the Year, chosen as one of the 50 Best Books of 1992 by Publishers Weekly, and awarded the National Jewish Book Award and the first Israeli Literature Prize.

From Kirkus Reviews: "A self-consciously experimental novel from Israeli writer Yehoshua in which a family's history is told backwards in one-sided conversations. There are five conversations, each accompanied by a brief foreword and afterword--sort of program notes--that explicate as well as wrap up the story. The conversations themselves, with the exception of the final one, are those of strangers who recall their subsequently significant interventions in the history of the Mani family, currently of Jerusalem but once residents of Greece. Beginning in present-day Israel, Hagar Shiloh, back on the kibbutz where she was reared, tells her mother how she saved Mr. Mani, the father of her lover, from committing suicide. Conversation number two, between a German soldier and his grandmother, takes place on Crete during WW II and accounts for Mr. Mani's childhood escape from the Germans. The third conversation details the reprieve that British authorities devise in WW I for the then-current Mr.

Mani, on trial for treason. And so genealogy retreats through conversations with a Polish doctor, whose sister's departure from Jerusalem drove Moshe Mani to suicide in 1899, and ends as Avraham Mani, in Athens, confesses in 1848 to his aged rabbi that he has impregnated his widowed daughter-in-law so that the family would continue." -- Copyright ©1992, Kirkus Associates, LP.



Although the group normally meets on the fourth Thursday of each month, the December meeting is being held on the fifth Thursday. This is because the **November meeting will be held on December 1<sup>st</sup> due to Thanksgiving. At this meeting at Anne Adamson's home, the group will discuss Orient Express by Graham Greene.** See the November newsletter for a description of this book.

All KHL members are welcome to attend. For more information about the group and being added to the group's e-mail list, contact Kevin Weidenbaum ([KJW@oberlin.net](mailto:KJW@oberlin.net)).

### [Virtual Kol HaLev, continued from page 1](#)

"We are at a great crossroads now, where I can stream high-quality video live, rather than broadcasting jpegs, which is what a web cam does," he said.

Rabbi Steve spoke to the community's *minhag* (tradition), which does not allow still photography during services.

"When a member videotapes a bar or bat mitzvah, they set their video camera up unobtrusively, and we, as a community, find that to be a reasonable way of capturing the experience. Similarly, when we've live-streamed these ceremonies, no one has even detected the video camera, which is set up at a distance."



Brian Miller,  
KHL Tech Guru

In the November/December issue of *Moment* magazine, Rabbi Adam Chalom of the Kol Hadash Humanistic Congregation (Chicago) offers an interesting statistic about the practice of Jewish ritual: 80% of American Jews participate in Hanukkah and Passover observances, 20% light Shabbat candles at home and 15% keep kosher. People participate in rituals for many reasons: some enjoy the sense of purpose surrounding them, while others relish their role in the continuity of our history. Some participate out of a sense of obligation, while others achieve a greater connectedness with our traditions or with the Divine.

I'm most interested in this final element: connectedness. As Rabbi Chalom's figures suggest, the intentional practice of rituals and observances offers us many opportunities to increase and deepen our connections to our traditions and to the Divine. So, where do we start? What should we do and how should we do it? What rituals make sense to us? And what if the traditional forms do not address our needs?

The Kol HaLev community is an amazing wellspring of knowledge and practice. Over time, members have told me about many interesting things they do—both traditional and “reconstructed”—to “plug in” to our Jewish traditions, values, community and G-d. In the spirit of deepening our own connections, I want to share some of those with you.

The blessing of the children is a traditional part of the Shabbat evening ritual. Traditionally, the father blesses each male child, expressing the explicit hope that he will be virtuous like Joseph's sons Ephraim and Manasseh. Today, families also bless their daughters with the hope they'll be like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. But these blessings don't resonate universally with our twenty-first-century kids, the effect, perhaps, of low Jewish literacy, blended or interfaith families, or just the 100-generation gap between the ancients and themselves.

Two Kol HaLev families have shared with me their “reconstructed” approaches to the blessing of the children. One family blesses each child with the hope that he will continue to grow in some important quality, perhaps one the child is in particular need of: “Evan, may you be blessed with patience!” In another family, Mom and Dad turn to each child separately, praising her by recognizing something good she did in the past week: “Susan, we were so proud of you for raking the leaves in your grandparents' yard without even being asked!” Kids invariably appreciate parents' recognition and, in praising our children, we parents are reminded that our kids are always worthy of our praise.

***Help “Connections” become a monthly column! What rituals and observances connect you to our traditions and to the Divine? E-mail them to me at [david@estophile.com](mailto:david@estophile.com) or pull me aside after Kiddush. I may incorporate them into future columns! Let me know if you would prefer that I not use your name.***



## FAMILY POTLUCK SHABBAT DINNERS

The Membership Committee reminds KHL members that we are reviving the popular practice of potluck family Shabbat dinners. The first will occur on Friday, December 2. We need to hear from members who would like to host such a dinner as well as members who would like to attend. Contact Eda Weiss at [edaweiss@gmail.com](mailto:edaweiss@gmail.com) or at 216-297-9980.

## DECEMBER 2011 KOL HALEV CALENDAR

- Thu., Dec. 1 7:30 p.m. – **Book Group** at the home of Anne Adamson, 17100 Van Aken Boulevard, Apt. 506, Shaker Heights, 216-751-3628 ([see more on page 10](#))
- Fri. Dec. 2 **Shabbat Potluck** in member's homes ([see more on page 11](#))
- Sat., Dec. 3 10:30 a.m. – **Shabbat Service** preceded by Torah Discussion at 9:45 a.m. at Ratner Chapel; *Vayetzei*; Service leader Rabbi Steve; Discussion leader: Rabbi Steve; Kiddush co-hosted by Mark and Adina Davidson in honor of finishing teaching for the semester and by Mike Armin
- Sat., Dec. 3 10:30 a.m. – **Hagiga and Zorim Family Day**  
10:45 – **Tot-Parent Shabbat Program** for families with children in preschool and under in Rooms 113 & 114. The program is about a half an hour, led by Rachel Williams. Babysitting is available before and after Tot Shabbat, also in Rooms 113 & 114.
- Sat., Dec. 3 1-2 p.m. – **Lunch and Learn** led by Rabbi Jeffrey; The topic will be "What is Unique about Prayer in a Reconstructionist Context?" Child care will be available. The lunch will be potluck. If people's last name begins with G, H, I, or J, they should bring drinks or a dessert. Everyone else should bring a main course or side dish.
- Sun., Dec. 4 3:00-5:00 p.m. – **Chalutzim Chai** at the Rock Hall of Fame
- Sun., Dec. 4 7:30 p.m. -- **Adult Education: Recon 201** at the home of Sue & Eric Kisch, 21850 Byron Rd, Shaker Hts, 216-295-1324 ([see more on page 8](#))
- Sat., Dec. 10 No service. *Vayishlach*
- Mon., Dec. 12 7:30 p.m. – **Board Meeting** at the home of Alan Weinstein, 2121 Euclid Avenue, LB 138, Cleveland, 216.687.3758; all Kol HaLev members are welcome
- Tue., Dec. 13 8:30 a.m. – **Schmooze With the Rabbi** at the Stone Oven on Chagrin Boulevard
- Sat., Dec. 17 10:30 a.m. – **Third Annual Human Rights Shabbat Service** ([see more on page 8](#)), preceded by Torah Discussion at 9:45 a.m. at Ratner Chapel; *Vayeshev*; Service leaders: Allen Binstock and Rabbi Steve; Discussion leader: Art Biagianti; Kiddush co-hosted by Mimi Plevin-Foust and by Gloria Plevin
- Sat., Dec. 17 9:45 a.m. – **Family Service**  
10:30 a.m. – **Hagiga**  
10:45 – **Tot-Parent Shabbat Program** for families with children in preschool and under in Rooms 113 & 114. The program is about a half an hour, led by Rachel Williams. Babysitting is available before and after Tot Shabbat, also in Rooms 113 & 114.
- Sun., Dec. 18 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. – **Women's Group Sunday Brunch** ([see more on page 6](#))
- Sun., Dec. 18 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. – **Chaluzim Chai** at a member's home

## CALENDAR

Tue., Dec. 20 **Erev Hanukkah**

Wed., Dec. 21 **First Day of Hanukkah**

Fri., Dec. 23 **Shabbat Potluck Dinner and Hanukkah Intergenerational Celebration** in a member's home (to be announced) at 6:30 p.m.

Sat., Dec. 24 10:30 a.m. **Musical Shabbat** service at the home of Sue Wolpert and Ray Lesser. Service leader: Rabbi Steve and participants. *Miketz*. After the kiddush, Ari Lesser will perform spoken-word rap accompanied by Ray on guitar. All participants are welcome to stay, sing, and enjoy. RSVPs appreciated but not required.

Wed., Dec. 28 **Last Day of Hanukkah**

Thu., Dec. 29 7:30 p.m. – **Book Group** at the home of Deena Epstein, 20949 Colby Road, Shaker Heights, 216-321-9218 ([see more on page 10](#))

Sat., Dec. 31 No Service. *Vayigash*

This calendar is accurate as of the time of publication, but sometimes dates, times, and locations for Kol HaLev events may change. To stay up-to-date, please read the Weekly Update emailed to you every Thursday and check Kol HaLev's [website calendar](#).

## FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Reader,

Coming up on my one-year anniversary of joining Kol HaLev, I'm aware that this splendid and multi-faceted community still contains many members I've yet to meet and many good stories I've yet to hear. If you have news or a story you'd like to share with the Kol HaLev community, don't be shy about bringing story ideas to me at [newsletter@kolhalev.net](mailto:newsletter@kolhalev.net). I'm always looking for front page stories and photos, as well as:

- **Kvells!** Who is doing something we should be kvelling about?
- **Photos** of KHL special events and Hagiga activities we can share with absent members.\*
- **Original artwork** with Jewish themes made by adults or children. (This issue contains a Shabbat drawing my 13-year-old made when he was five— it's good! The artist's mother loves it!— but your artwork, or your children's or grandchildren's, would be a marvelous thing to share with our community.)

**Two new bylines** this month: New member **Hannah Baxter** contributed our front-page story about KHL's new [streaming video project](#). A communications professional at Case, Hannah will be writing more stories for the newsletter. KHL member **David Conn** is not new, but he begins a [new column](#) this month which we hope will be a regular feature.

Lila Hanft,  
Editor, *Kol HaLev Happenings*

*\*No photos of children under 18 will be published without parental consent.*

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER

*Kol HaLev Happenings* is the newsletter of Kol HaLev, Cleveland's Jewish Reconstructionist Community. Our new digital format, part of our movement toward more environmentally friendly communications, can be read it onscreen in Adobe Reader or it can printed out on paper. Please email [newsletter@kolhalev.net](mailto:newsletter@kolhalev.net) with comments, complaints, corrections, suggestions, or notices for upcoming issues. [Back issues of \*Kol HaLev Happenings\*](#) can be downloaded from the [Kol HaLev website](#).

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# Kol HaLev Happenings

The Newsletter of Cleveland's Jewish Reconstructionist Community

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