

Congregation Ahavas Achim

P.O. Box 334

Westfield, MA 01086

MAR / APR / MAY 2025 NEWSLETTER

<http://www.congregationahavasachim.org/>

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Sat. 3/15 @ 6:00pm – Purim service – details to follow

Sat. 4/5 @ 10:00am – Shabbat Morning Service

Sun. 4/13 – Passover Seder (details to follow)

Sat. 5/10 @ 10:00am – Shabbat Morning Service

Fri. 6/13 @ 7:00pm – Shabbat Evening Service

Sat. 6/28 @ 10:00am – Shabbat Morning Service and pot luck picnic gathering (details to follow)

Please contact us at ahavasachiminquiry@gmail.com or leave a voicemail message at (413) 642-1797 if you want to say Kaddish or have any suggestions for us.

Board Meeting: Meetings are held via conference calls. Our next meeting is scheduled for April 9th. All are welcome to join. Please let us know if you are interested so that we may include you in our call by emailing ablumenthal@congregationahavasachim.org

Hebrew School:

Coordinator: Andy Blumenthal

(Please call him at (413) 569-8399 if you or another member of our community has expressed interest.)

Yahrzeit

With great sadness, we remember the following people on the Yahrzeit of their passing:

		<u>2025</u>
Shirley Goldstein	Adar II 1	3/1
Murray Sanders	Adar 9	3/9
Gail Wertel	Adar II 10	3/10
Irwin Rosenak	Adar II 12	3/12
Betty Grodzen	Adar 17	3/17
Doris Goldberg	Adar 18	3/18
Miriam Shepard	Adar 20	3/20
Harvey Roazen	Adar 22	3/22
Max Flax	Adar 27	3/27
Lauren Rosenthal	Adar 30	3/30
Howard Mackler	Nisan 9	4/7
Wally Goldstein	Nisan 11	4/9
Irene Bernstein	Nisan 14	4/12
Richard Lee Kaufman	Nisan 15	4/13
Blanche Schachter	Nisan 16	4/14
Phyllis Brody	Nisan 21	4/19
Pauline Tucker	Nisan 21	4/19
Hyman Schachter	Nisan 29	4/27
Janice Bowman	Iyar 5	5/3
Abraham Haselkorn	Iyar 14	5/12
Don Riddle	Iyar 14	5/12
Alda Haselkorn	Iyar 17	5/15
Esther Goldstein	Iyar 18	5/16
Stanley Lewin	Iyar 28	5/26

Congregation Ahavas Achim wishes to thank all its friends and members for their generous donations:

Sandy Mackler - in honor of Fran Eisenberg, with gratitude for her kindness, and in honor of Nancy Rapisarda, with hope for a speedy recovery – General Fund

**Donations received as of 2/28/25*

Congregation Ahavas Achim wishes to thank all its friends and members for their generous donations (cont'd):

Time, monetary and/or food donations made toward Christmas day dinner at the soup kitchen:

Fran Eisenberg & Arthur Haselkorn
Sandy Mackler
Susan Mackler
Lynne Goldberg
Carol & Nate Rosenthal
Maureen Cain
Rissa Larsen
Elsa Rosenak
Rabbi Shahar Colt & Family
Bob & Judy Brown
Wendy & Bob Blondin
Barbara & Michael Davenport

Christmas Day Soup Kitchen

(December 25, 2024):

We wish to thank all those who had a hand in providing a very special Christmas meal on Monday, December 25th at Our Community Table Soup Kitchen in Westfield. Our volunteers were very happy to prepare in-person and to-go meals to very appreciative diners at Our Community Table. We gave out approximately 50 meals. Everyone said the meal was really great and they appreciated all the extras that were not part of their usual Monday night meal. They also greatly appreciated their gifts, which included socks, gloves, hats and personal care items.

Our group of volunteers really stepped up to meet the needs of the community. Their generosity and willingness to share their time and talents brightened this Christmas for us all. Putting this together is truly a community effort. Bob and Judy once again cooked the meat to perfection and they even delivered it sliced with gravy.

Special thanks to Fran and Sandy for organizing this event and to everyone who provided their time, food, and monetary contributions to make this meal possible.

Chanukah in Westfield:

The city-wide Menorah Lighting Ceremony in Westfield took place at 5:30pm on Sunday, December 29th at Elm Street Plaza in downtown Westfield. Thank you to Mayor Mike McCabe for having the outdoor Menorah, honoring the wonderful Jewish community of Westfield and hosting the Community Menorah Lighting. Thank you also to Rabbi Shahar Colt who led us in prayer and songs. Lastly, we'd like to thank the Jewish Endowment Foundation of the Western Mass Jewish Foundation for their support. The ceremony and celebration was very well attended by many members of our Jewish community, as well as other people from Westfield and other surrounding areas. After the lighting ceremony, everyone was invited back to the First United Methodist Church for delicious latkes while many played games of dreidel with wagers of gelt. A great time was had by all.

Happy Birthday!

Birthday wishes go out to the following:

Jason Blondin	March 2 nd
Nate Rosenthal	March 14 th
Fran Eisenberg	April 6 th
Carol Rosenthal	April 7 th
Nancy Rapisarda	April 15 th
Bob Blondin	April 18 th
Lynne Goldberg	April 21 st

Happy Anniversary!

Anniversary wishes go out to the following:

Leslie & Rich O'Donnell May 26th

Hebrew Free Loan Association:

The Hebrew Free Loan Association of Greater Springfield offers interest-free loans to Jewish individuals and families whose needs are urgent and who may not qualify for personal loans from a bank or other financial institution. For more information, go to:

<https://hebrewfreeloanassociation.org/>

Message from Rabbi Colt:

Dear Ahavas Achim community,

“May the ruler of the land judge your people with righteousness, and your poor with justice... May the ruler champion the cause of the poor among the people, give deliverance to the needy” (Psalm 72:2, 4)

On Christmas day, for the first time I joined the Ahavas Achim community in the mitzvah of feeding the hungry at the Westfield Soup Kitchen. I was so moved by the experience of being there, and by this synagogue's long-term commitment to serving the Westfield community in this way, that I knew I wanted to participate again. And I wanted to find a way for youth in our community to participate and learn about Jewish values through action.

In conversation with Sandy and a few other community members, we have put together a new crew- a mix of adults and youth- to provide a few meals this spring. The process of gathering this group has been an interesting one for me. I have invited volunteer support through Ahavas Achim connections as well as through my connections at Amherst College. My colleague, the Muslim chaplain at Amherst plans to connect us with Muslim families in Westfield (whom he also serves

intermittently as well). Ultimately, we will be a multi-religious, multi-racial, multi-age group from Westfield and beyond, all of whom understand the power and necessity of coming together to care for each other and the vulnerable in our communities. And we are committed to modelling these values for our children- even and especially as our political leaders too often abandon those who are vulnerable and the value of caring for them.

We plan to serve a meal on Sundays March 2nd and April 6th. If you know any youth (or families with children who are old enough to help in a kitchen), please have them be in touch with me. We would love to have greater involvement. Also, if you would like to contribute financially towards the cost of these meals, please be in touch with me.

We are entering the Jewish month of Adar, a month associated with joy. I look forward to being with you on Saturday March 15th for a Purim program. Chodesh Tov- may it be a good month, a month where we all work towards bringing goodness, joy and justice into the world.

Rabbi Shahar