



KOL EZRAS ISRAEL



Rabbi's Message

In the book *Vintage Wein*, Rabbi Berel Wein told over the story of one of his beloved Rebbeim, Reb Mendel Kaplan ztl. Reb Mendel had recently arrived as a refugee from Europe, and had begun his first day as a rebbe in the Skokie Yeshiva in Illinois. When Reb Mendel walked into the room, the boys took one look and said to themselves, "This is gonna be a long year. The Rebbe doesn't speak English, he'll never understand us..." Actually, Reb Mendel had the same thoughts running through his head. But the next day, Reb Mendel walked in the local newspaper and spread it out on the desk. The boys then thought to themselves, "Boy, the year will be even longer! We must have really gotten to this Rebbe yesterday!" There was complete silence in the classroom. Reb Mendel turned to the boys and said "Let's make a deal. You teach me how to read the newspaper (teach me English), and I will teach you how a Jew reads the news." Reb Mendel had captured the boys' attention. And for the rest of the year, every day, Reb Mendel would come in with the newspaper, and for the first ten minutes, the boys would read the newspaper and teach him English, and then Reb Mendel would tell the class the Torah's perspective on that article.

Each day, we say in Ashrei, "ורחמי על כל מעשיו" Hashem has mercy on all His creation" - all living things. From native tribes inhabiting the frozen tundra in the North-western territories in Canada, to the most isolated tribe in the

Amazon, to the far reaches of Africa and Asia, they are all His creations and are recipients of Hashem's mercy. The Radak, an early and classical commentary on Tehillim, expounds on this verse, saying that we are called to go in Hashem's ways and exhibit compassion towards all living things.

We have been hearing, reading or seeing news about human suffering around the world. The Ebola epidemic in Africa, the brutal attack on the school in Pakistan, the crash of the airliner in the Java Sea ... When we first read about them, we obviously react with horror and disbelief along with compassion for the victims and their families. This is followed by thoughts of the implications to our own lives. Is there any concern here state-side with Ebola? Is Pakistan going to really join the global anti-terrorism fight? Are there any issues with flying that need to be considered? All this is done with a degree of detachment and it is discussed in a dispassionate way. After all these people are at the other end of the world, or indifferent to or anti Israel. However, the verse in Tehillim is a message to think compassionately about their plight. Even in Syria, where we can certainly say with a high degree of confidence that most of the civilians suffering in that civil war have a strong hatred of Israel. Nevertheless we do not seek their pain and suffering. Surely not to revel in their misery. Rather we seek total failure of any plan to harm Israel or any other Jew wherever he or she may be. Yes it can be said. Dovid Hamelech, thru the Ashrei, is teaching us, like Reb Mendel taught his class, the Torah perspective on the news — just how to react when reading or hearing such news.



President's Message

If you've been to Ezras Israel even just a few times, you know the protocol for kiddush cleanup. As people start to leave, those who remain place the used dishes and utensils in the trash, return the bottles of soda and water to the refrigerator, and place the perishables in the refrigerator. We then remove the plastic covering from the tables, and do our best to get the room ready for סעודה שלישית.

One critical step of the protocol is consolidating the salads, snacks, and condiments into serving bowls. For example, we typically place two serving bowls of tuna salad and two serving bowls of egg salad. During cleanup, we try to consolidate the two bowls of tuna salad into one bowl, the two bowls of egg salad into one bowl, and the same for other items on the table. It doesn't always make sense to consolidate, of course. If the combination results in a volume larger than a single serving bowl, then we can't consolidate. In some cases it's difficult to "eyeball" the consolidated quantity. It's at this vague borderline where confusion and uncertainty reign—and reign freely.

It was a few weeks ago on parashat Vayishlach that we had such a moment of confusion. Someone was

holding two half-empty bowls of egg salad, and it just wasn't clear if there was too much in both of them to fit into one consolidated bowl. After significant internal deliberation, I said, "Go ahead, combine the two into one. Just like we say on Rosh Hashannah and Yom Kippur, "וַיַּעֲשֵׂוּ כֻלָּם אֶגְרוֹדָה אֶחָת."

This type of subtle humor doesn't play well in all synagogues. It does take a certain awareness of liturgy to be familiar with the verses and words, when to use them in conversation, and how to understand them out of their original context. Fortunately, the crowd at Ezras Israel has this demographic, which brings me to the concept of "community."

R. Kreiser recently gave a short talk on the values of a community. At its basic level, a community is a group of people with a common interest. The risk of such communities is that some of its members may participate only because they get something out of the community, be it an award, acceptance, or validation. This is acceptable, of course, but as soon as the awards, acceptance, or validations stop coming that particular member may drop out of the community. (I've come across some Jewish "communal organizations" that suffer from this very behavior.) This effect is amplified in the digital age. Before things went digital, there were "brick-and-mortar" communities, the members of which

(cont. on next page)

(Presidents' Msg continued) had to actually show up to a meeting or event to be considered a member. The contacts between members were more personal, and it may have been more difficult to join such a community and more difficult to leave it. Today there are "virtual communities," and starting one is no more difficult than starting a Facebook page. Almost anyone can join such a community and do so very quickly; similarly, one can leave it at any time, and also just as quickly. Digital or brick-and-mortar, a community based comprised of members that expect to get something out of it cannot be very effective or very satisfying for its membership or leadership.

On the other hand, an effective community is one in which people contribute to it in addition to getting something out of it, or in addition to achieving the community's goals. These communities evoke a desire to engage, something that is essential for the community's long-term existence. In a successful community, the members are motivated to contribute, even when—or particularly when—in some tangible scale the members receive less from the community than what they put in.

I've seen this many times at Ezras Israel. The fact that such a small synagogue continues its operations is a sign of phenomenally successful community. The participation here is at all levels. Anyone who shows up for a minyan is already contributing to everyone else's welfare and to the community's goals, as are those who provide donations (in particular those whose bids for the סמחת תורה during the Simhat Torah auction knocked me out of the action quite early). The אורחים are endless, and is something from which I have benefited many times. There are those who plan events, execute the events, buy and manage supplies, and perform all the tasks for which they get little or no public recognition. The recognition they get is internal, a satisfaction that they are promoting the community's goals. In the case of Ezras Israel, those goals are doing our best to lead a committed Jewish life on the north side of Montrose Road. For me, it has been an enormous pleasure to observe this community's working, as well as to be part of it. At the time of this writing, Hannukah is a few days away. I wish you all a שמחה האורחים along with an easy winter.

Building Expansion

By Rachmil Jacobovits

For the past few months the Board has been working with Golan Ben Nun, our resident architect, to develop a building expansion design that accommodates our immediate needs for better external access to the building, more seating in the sanctuary, a better arrangement for children's activities, a more spacious social hall and better access to rest rooms.

Local zoning requirements allows us to build a facility for "public assembly" that uses a ratio of seven (7) square-feet per person to determine how many people a sanctuary may hold. Our current facility is exempt from this requirement because we are still under a resi-

dential (not commercial) code, which permits assemblies of fifty people or less. Commercial code requirements apply to building designed for assemblies of greater than 50 people. These commercial codes also impose on us additional requirements for safety: building is required to have an automated fire sprinkler system, a minimum number of fire emergency exits, a handicap access ramp to the building a minimum number of rest rooms, including at least one handicap accessible restroom facility. The goal of the design effort was to (re)use as much as of our current infrastructure as possible, design an expansion that together with the current building will have a footprint that not exceed 35% lot coverage permitted by our zoning regulation and is affordable, both in initial construction costs and also in terms of ongoing operating costs. Our lot size is 11,178 sq-ft and current building foot print is 1897 sq-ft, which will allow to expand the footprint by 2015 sq-ft. After a few iterations we have settled on building an expansion of 1226 sq ft, accommodating a doubling of our sanctuary space to about 130 to 140 seats. We will be left with the option to add another 789 sq-ft at a future time, as our needs grow.

Construction Cost Estimates

After Golan came up with an initial design, we called a builder to give us some preliminary estimates for building. We were told that construction cost estimates range from about \$150 to \$200 a square foot. Of course that does not include more extensive landscaping both in the front and the back, interior furnishings and other synagogues design items, like an ark, mechitzas, an amud, book cases etc. So the addition will likely cost upwards of \$250K, probably in the neighborhood of \$350 to \$400K.

Plans Going Forward

Golan is working to refine the design so that it can be presented to the congregation for comment and feedback. We are announcing a congregational meeting and **melave-malka on February 28th at 8PM** at the shul to introduce the current Board approved building design. Members of the Congregation will have an opportunity to ask questions about the building design, design tradeoff decisions that were made, and comment on specifics of the new shul building design. Following that meeting, the

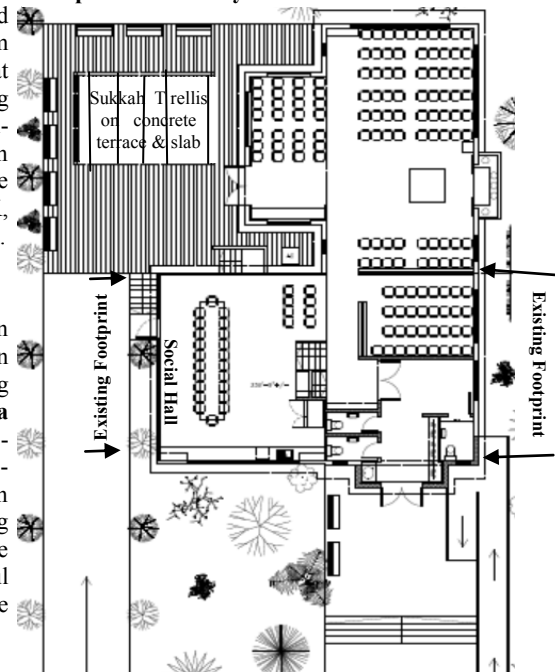
Board will meet with Golan to make sure that members comments and feedback get incorporated into an updated design. Golan, working with some licensed engineers and architects to get "permit-ready" detailed designs, sufficient to get building permits and get detailed building quotes from builders willing to compete for this business.

We expect to go out for builder quotes sometimes in the month of June 2015, select a builder by end of August and initiate construction immediately after Labor Day. During the High Holidays, as in previous years, we expect to be at the Ring House and possibly extend our stay through sukkot and lasting until December. We hope to inaugurate the new building on Sunday December 6, or Erev Hanukkah, including a Hanukat a Bait Dinner on the first night of Hannukah.

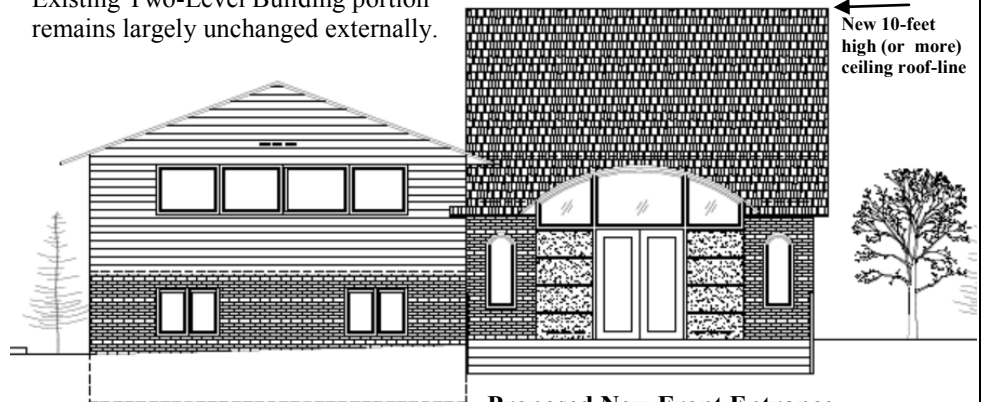
Paying for the Building Expansion

The shul has about a third of the funds needed to complete the building. Preliminary plans are to identify new building dedication opportunities that will allow us to raise the bulk of the needed funds from voluntary contributions. The next step would be to levy a 5-year commitment from the membership that will allow us to support a mortgage for the balance.

Proposed Sanctuary & 2nd floor Social Hall



Existing Two-Level Building portion remains largely unchanged externally.



SOUTH ELEVATION

Proposed New Front Entrance

Learning Schedule

- Shabbat mornings, Rabbi's shiur on the weekly **Parsha**, 8:15am at the shul. Open to all.
- Sunday mornings following Shacharis, Rabbi's **Talmud Class** at the Ring House (men only) **Wednesday Learning Nights** on Wednesdays at 9:00 pm at the shul (men only) (contact Rabbi Kreiser to confirm dates)

Baruchim Habaim

New Members:

Are you receiving the weekly Ezras Israel e-mail update?

Davening times, upcoming events, and more! To subscribe, visit
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ezrasisrael>



Mazel Tov !

Sheldon and Roz Needle on the birth of their grandson Ilan Yehuda to Rena & Robbi Majzner
Itzhak & Odette Goldberg on the birth of their granddaughter Yaffa Rachel to Nadav & Sarah Goldberg

Yasher Koach!



Strulson and families for donating the shul's new prayer announcement board.

- Judy Lowitz for sponsoring the Simchat Torah Auction Dinner.

Simchat Torah Auction Donors

Altschuler, Morris & Harriet
Au Peter, Eva
Beroukhim, Benjamin & Naomi
Drawos, David
Fastovsky, Uri
Grossman, Ira & Miriam
Jacobovits, Rachmil & Agi
Katz, Zev & Shana
Kelly, Jean
Lautman, Mark D. & Tamira
Needle, Sheldon & Roslyn B
Roschwalb, Jerold
Schlaifer, Jonathan & Meredith
Tartakovsky, Yevgeny
Warren, Jeremy
Yahoudain, Vahid & Rena

-Perel, Tzirel Leah, Chani & Rabbi Kreiser for preparing the Shabbos Program dinner and lunch for the community

- Beril Sinnreich's children Simon Sinnreich, Yetti Strulson and grandson Ari

\$250 Co-sponsors of the Shabbat Hanukkah Dinner:

- Johnathan & Meredith Schlaifer in honor of the birth of their son Sammy—Shmuel Chaim,
— Zev and Shana Katz in honor of their daughter Leah's 1st Birthday,
-- Rachmil Jacobovits in commemoration of his paternal grandmother Gittel bas Isroel yarhzeit on Kislev 24

Patron Dinner Donors

Bachrach, Yisroel
Chaimovich, Mark
Disler, Mark & Charlene Saportin
Fastovsky, Uri
Futrovsky, Charles
Hirsch, Emil & Greta
Hurwitz, Sam
Jacobovits, Rachmil & Agi
Lautman, Mark
Needle, Sheldon & Roslyn
Roschwalb, Jerold
Sandler, Theodor
Weiss, Dora
Zymelman, Manny & Nancy

For sponsoring a kiddush

- Sheldon & Roslyn Needle in honor of his 70th birthday ,

- Doreen Blech and June Graff in commemoration of their mothers' yahrzeits, רבקה בת צבי הערש נפטרת ט בחשוון Rita Wacks רחל בת יעקב נפטרת י"א בחשוון .

- Kiddush sponsored by Ben-Nun family in memory of Golan's father Yaakov ben David and by the Jacobovits family in memory of Rachmil's mother Misie Devora bas Moshe Dov v'Rachel, whose yahrzeit was 6 Kislev.

- Manny and Nancy Zymelman to celebrate the visit of their daughter Naomi Weinberg and her family.

- Jerry Roschwalb in memory of his mother's, Itta Bas Tzvi Halevi yahrzeit on Rosh Chodesh Kislev,

- Beril Sinnreich's children Simon Sinnreich and Yetti Strulson and grandson Ari Strulson in honor of Beril's 100th birthday

- Jerry Roschwalb in memory of his father's yahrzeit, Shmuel Zanvil ben Ya'akov on 8 Tevet

Cemetery Spaces Available

Gan Zikaron (Garden of Remembrance) is a Jewish community owned and operated cemetery. Spaces are available in the section previously purchased by Ezras Israel Congregation of Rockville for \$1,900 each. You will have the benefit of a tax deduction. Please contact Morris Altschuler at (301) 770-5591 for further information and a tour of the site.

Sponsor a New Sefer to our growing Torah Library

There are opportunities to sponsor new sforim for the shul - from a \$65 donation to sponsor a regular Stone Edition Chumash, and \$50 for a new Art Scroll Siddur to a set of Mishnayot or a full Shas, for a small premium above costs. Interested in other sforim sponsorship? Ask Rabbi Kreiser or contact Rachmil.301-461-4984

Refuah Sheleima

Norm Pollack

Memorialize a loved one with a Memorial Plaque or by Donating a Machzor, Siddur or Chumash
Call Rachmil at 301-770-4342 or 301-461-4984 or e-mail milujaco@gmail.com

Donate to the Ezras Israel Hachnosat Orchim Fund to support the hospitality the Rabbi extends to the community.

For the holidays and all your special occasions, send personalized **Chesed Cards** and Help Ezras Israel at the same time
Call June Graff 301.770.7129

Celebrate a special occasion!
Sponsor a Kiddush
Call Rachmil Jacobovits or by e-mail milujaco@gmail.com or reserve online at www.ezrasisrael.org

Minyan Times

Luach Hazmanim

Shab- Shabbat / Yom Tov bat / Yom Tov	Shabbat/ Yom Tov Mincha	Latest Time for morning Shema	Friday / Erev Yom Tov Mincha	Can- dle Erev- light- ing	Parsha - Chag - Event	Fri-Sat	Day	Date
5:49	4:30	9:51A	4:45	4:45	Shemot -	Fri-Sat		9 - Jan
5:56	4:35	9:52A	4:55	4:53	Va'eira — (Mevorchim Shevat—Wed)	Fri-Sat		16 - Jan
6:03	4:45	9:51A	5:00	5:00	Bo	Fri-Sat		23 - Jan
6:10	4:55	9:46A	5:10	5:08	Beshalach—Shabbat Shira (Tu B'Shvat on Wed 2/4)	Fri-Sat		30 - Jan
6:18	5:00	9:48A	5:15	5:17	Yitro	Fri-Sat		6 - Feb
6:25	5:10	9:42A	5:25	5:25	Mishpatim-Shabbat Shkalim (Mevorchim Adar—Thur/Fri)	Fri-Sat		13 - Feb
6:33	5:20	9:37A	5:35	5:33	Terumah	Fri-Sat		20 - Feb
6:40	5:25	9:32A	5:40	5:40	Tezaveh-Shabbat Zachor	Fri-Sat		27 - Feb
6:30P -	Maariv	9:28A	6:44P - Megillah	6:44P - Megillah Reading	Fast of Esther Observed—Start 5:18AM / Ends After Megillah Reading	Wed		4 - Mar
6:47	5:35	9:26A	5:50	5:48	Ki Sissa	Fri-Sat		6 - Mar
7:54	6:40	10:19A	6:55	6:55	Vayakhel-Pekudei—Shabbat Parah (Mevorchim Nisan—Sat)	Fri-Sat		13 - Mar
8:01	6:45	10:13A	7:00	7:02	Vayikra—Shabbat HaChodesh—Rosh Chodesh Nisan	Fri-Sat		20 - Mar
8:08	6:50	10:06A	7:10	7:09	Tzav—Shabbat Hagadol	Fri-Sat		27 - Mar
8:16	7:00	10:00A	7:15	7:15	Pesach-Day 1—Latest Time for eating/burn Chametz Mon 10:37/11:55A	Fri-Sat		3/4-Apr
8:17	7:20	9:59A	8:16	After 8:16	Pesach—Day 2—No food Prep for Day 2 until after 8:17PM Sat Nite	Sat/Sun		4/5-Apr
8:22	7:20	9:54A	7:20	7:21	Pesach—7th Day/Make Eruv Tavshilin Th before candle light	Th/Fri		9/10-Apr
8:24	7:10	9:54A	7:20	7:22	Pesach—8th Day—Yizkor at Approx 10:45AM	Fri-Sat		10/11-Apr

Shabbat at Ezras Israel: Call 240-627-1661 for Eruv status.
 Shacharit 9:00 a.m. Mincha/Maariv See above. Followed by Seudah Shlishit and Maariv
 Shacharit at Ring House, Activity Room 3: Sunday through Friday.
 Mincha minyan—4:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday @ Ring House #3
 Sunday
 Monday, Thursday 8:05 a.m. Followed by Rabbi's shir (men only)
 Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 8:15 a.m. (Also the time on Rosh Chodes & other weekdays with Torah readings)

Kol Ezras Israel

Congregation Ezras Israel
 P.O. Box 2281
 Rockville, MD 20847