

ANSHE EMETH'S E-NEWS FOR APRIL 2024

Temple Shabbat Service – Saturday, April 13 - In-person or Zoom! Led by Rabbinic Intern Gretchen Johnson. Come and wish her well as this is her last service with us for the school year.

10 a.m. – **Shabbat Service and *new* Torah Scroll dedication**

By Noon: **Carry-in dairy luncheon to follow**

1:30 p.m. – **Class on Jewish History thru Cookbooks** (see below for a further description)

Yahrzeit's for April... of Blessed memory:

Jackson Hogenkamp, Harry Max Asher, Lil Feinstein, Florence Kastner, Lillian Katz, Rusty Litchfield, Hortense Louis, Joseph Shuchat.

Piqua Synagogue's Yearly "Judaism 101" Class, Saturday, April 13

Saturday, April 13, members of Congregation Anshe Emeth, Piqua, welcome the public to our yearly "Judaism 101" class. It will be held from 1:30 – 2:30 PM . The class, taught by our Rabbinic Intern, Gretchen Johnson provides a new perspective on teaching about Judaism by sharing Jewish history through cookbooks.

Jewish Americans have been part of American history since colonial times. Jews arrived from different parts of the world. We will look at four early Jewish American cookbooks, the first of which was published in 1871. These which will teach us about the values and lifestyles of Jews in each of these waves of immigration. We will learn a little bit of Jewish American history, including some humorous incidents, and maybe sample a tasty recipe or two.

Offered at no cost, all are welcomed. The class will be offered in-person and also by Zoom. Registration is needed at ansheemeth@gmail.com for in-person attendance or the Zoom link.

The goal of the Judaism 101 classes is to share information, not impose beliefs. Gretchen Johnson is a 4th year rabbinical and education student at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Cincinnati. She expects to be ordained in May of 2025. She is excited to have this opportunity to teach Jewish American history through the lens of early Jewish American cookbooks.

With grateful thanks:

Judie and David Thomson, Newton, MA for their very generous gift to Anshe Emeth for the Cemetery Fund and also General operating fund. Judie is the daughter of the late Herman and Clara Barr. Without them, the congregation would no longer be operating as they conducted lay led services in the 1960's when we couldn't even afford a student Rabbi. Many thanks.

MisheBerach – Prayers for Healing:

David Ferrell, Terry Livingston, Neal Schmidt

Letter from Rabbinic Intern Gretchen:

Dear Congregation Anshe Emeth,

Our Torah portion for the week of April 13 is Tazria. Most rabbis would agree that this is one of the most challenging portions to write a sermon about. The majority of Tazria is essentially an ancient dermatology textbook for Israelite priests. Some might find the detailed descriptions of the symptoms of various skin diseases a bit unappetizing. That wouldn't do at all, since my upcoming visit will include a lesson about early Jewish American cookbooks!

I scoured Tazria for something else to talk about, and what I found was...laundry. It seems that one of the many hardships our ancestors endured during their long years in the wilderness was mold or mildew that could grow on wool, linen, or leather garments, causing a green or red streaky discoloration. The Torah treats this as a very serious matter. The discolored garment must be brought to a priest, and the priest spends weeks inspecting the garment, treating it, and inspecting it again to determine if there is a way to purify the garment from the dreaded fabric destroying plague, or if the garment must be burned for the safety of the whole community's fabric goods.

What impressed me was the time and effort our ancestors put into trying to save a garment. After all, as soon as the priests saw that the garment had the dreaded green or red streaks, they could have said, "Better safe than sorry!" and burned it immediately. Instead, they spent weeks trying to save this valuable piece of property. Can you imagine a modern-day American going through all that to save a used garment? For me, this really highlights the wastefulness of modern fashion culture.

In the last thirty years, the fast fashion trend has greatly increased the environmental damage and exploitation of workers caused by the fashion industry. Cheap knockoffs of the latest catwalk trends quickly find their way to clothing stores and online retailers. The prices are too low to be believed - \$5 for a T shirt! This is because the clothes are made from the cheapest materials in overseas factories with no

environmental regulation. The factory workers, many of whom are underage, may work up to sixteen hours a day in unsafe conditions for much less than a living wage. This is particularly heartbreaking considering that many recent Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe, mainly girls and women aged 14 to 23 years, were killed in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire of 1911. History tragically repeated itself in 2013, when the Rana Plaza clothing manufacturing complex in Bangladesh collapsed, killing over 1000 workers.

The culture of fast fashion teaches us that we should be able to choose from a huge selection of the latest trends, and if possible, we should never repeat an outfit. Fast fashion marketing is based on FOMO (fear of missing out). If you have tried to shop for clothes online you have probably noticed the warnings that only a handful of the item you want remains, so buy now! Even if people want to wear the same clothing for a long time, some fast fashion items are so flimsy that they start to break down after a few wears. And so clothing that was produced at such a great environmental and human cost quickly finds its way into a landfill, to make room for more fast fashion sales.

What can we do? We can use and care for the clothing that we already own. When we need to buy clothing, we can shop second hand. When we must buy new clothing, we can do research to find a brand with acceptable environmental and labor practices and buy a few durable items, then wear them until they wear out. Changing our buying patterns may seem difficult at first, but our current fashion culture is a very recent development. With mindfulness and commitment, we can return to a lifestyle that reflects our Torah values rather than the messages of advertisers.

JOIN IN PERSON OR ON ZOOM.... ZOOM LINK HERE:

To Join Zoom

Service: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7643723318?pwd=STJIR1drNXFoL29XRGw0L1AzMThxQT09>

Or go to your Zoom App and put in this information:

Meeting ID: 764 372 3318 Passcode: 0092

Or simply dial by your location: 646 876 9923 US (New York)

When prompted, put in for the Meeting ID: 764 372 3318 and push #Passcode: 0092 and push # TEMPLE E-NEWS APRIL 2024