

# THE OXFORD SYNAGOGUE-CENTRE

20 North Avenue, Riviera

✉ P.O. Box 87406, Houghton, 2041

☎ 011-646-6020 📠 086-580-2624

🌐 [www.oxfordshul.com](http://www.oxfordshul.com) 📧 [info@oxfordshul.com](mailto:info@oxfordshul.com)

📘 [facebook.com/oxfordshul](https://facebook.com/oxfordshul)

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

June 2021

Sivan/Tammuz 5781

### SHABBAT TIMES

🔊 Parasha - 🕯 Candle Lighting  
🕯 Shabbat ends (Maariv & Havdalah)  
*For service times see page 3*

4 & 5 June – 25 Sivan

🔊 Shelach

🕯 5:05 – 🕯 5:57

11 & 12 June – 2 Tammuz

🔊 Korach

🕯 5:05 – 🕯 5:57

18 & 19 June – 9 Tammuz

🔊 Chukat

🕯 5:06 – 🕯 5:58

25 & 26 June – 16 Tammuz

🔊 Balak

🕯 5:08 – 🕯 6:00

2 & 3 July – 23 Tammuz

🔊 Pinchas

🕯 5:10 – 🕯 6:02

### RABBI'S MESSAGE

It was cold the other morning for Shul. Very cold. Charlie, who greets us cheerfully every day with his thermometer on the way in, told me it was "Toronto cold." [Some background: For the participants' health we hold services with all windows and doors open. It has not been very pleasant lately but everyone has been really polite about it. So to put things in perspective, I shared a picture with the regulars of an outdoor Shacharit that took place in over a foot of snow in Toronto, back in

January.] At least in Johannesburg, it seldom goes below 0° C.

After Shul, I got into my car. After turning the thermostat setting on the heater to MAX, I switched on a shiur to listen during the long drive ahead of me. The lecturer was talking about an event that had been spoiled due to bad weather. I turned the volume up... "The Weather is not up to us," he said, "the How we deal with it is in our control." "In fact," he added, the same is true about the Whether. We cannot control if something will occur or not, but the How, our reaction is totally in our hands."

There is nothing we can do about the current cold front. But how we act as a result, this is entirely our choice. Will I renege on my commitment to come to shul this morning (or having consulted the weather app on my phone, will I opt not to commit in the first place)? Or will I pull myself together (i.e. out of bed) and do the correct thing?

Thank G-d our daily morning service consists of the latter category. Which is why we are successfully getting a minyan, day after day, since we resumed the 7-times-a-week routine just over a month ago. So I digress here to offer a special vote of thanks to the brave Shacharit men, for making the shul function as a real shul should and enabling those with Kadish to acquit themselves of this holy duty.

But it is not just about the weather. The same is true with the whether. If the last year and a half has taught us anything, it is how little control we have. But it has also given us the opportunity to show resilience, patience, care, kindness, altruism... We can remain in control through our reaction to events and circumstances beyond our control

We all long for a return to routine... and less inclement weather. In the meantime, keep warm and keep safe.

*Rabbi Yossi Chaikin*

## FROM THE REBBETZIN

My baby is finishing school.

For the last 33 years or so I have been a school mom. I have pushed swings, packed school lunch, spent the afternoons doing lifts and the evenings doing homework. I have learned my times table's nine times (and still can't tell you what 6x7 is without using my fingers). I have learned endless lists of spelling words (and still can't spell) and now Ita has one more day left of regular school.

Life is not static.

Things are continuously changing. Lockdown, Covid, and quarantine have made many of us feel like time was standing still. Wondering when we will shop, socialise and entertain again. But life is not static, and during this time babies were born, little children grew up, people got engaged and married. We have learnt to use technology better, we use the telephone more, and we socialise in the garden. We have also become more comfortable with ourselves and our own company. We have all changed.

In my life one of the big changes will be my baby finishing school. She isn't leaving home quite yet, so it isn't an empty nest yet. But it will be a change. I will try to embrace it, and once again try to figure out who I am.

Have a good month

*Rivky*

## A STORY

### THE TAILOR

*(chabad.org)*

Two simple tailors worked as partners in Vilna. They weren't making much money in the large city, where there were already many established and well-known tailors around.

They decided to circulate among the small cities of the region to find their luck. With G-d's help, they were successful, serving simple villagers and peasants.

In one town they passed through, they saw that the Jewish village manager was distraught. He explained that the nobleman, who was the local landowner, would soon be holding a wedding, and had asked the manager to bring the best Jewish tailors to his service. However, the nobleman had not been satisfied with any of the work and was now threatening to fire the manager, and perhaps also expel the Jewish tenants from his properties.

Upon hearing this, the tailors said, "Why don't you present us to the nobleman?"

"Well," the manager warily replied, "you aren't

acquainted with high fashion clothing."

"True," they replied, "but the nobleman has been dismissing the high fashion, so maybe he'll appreciate our simpler style." The manager agreed to give it a shot.

The nobleman asked for a sample dress, and after seeing what they had created, he was thrilled. He contracted them to tailor the wedding clothing for his entire extended family and all of his servants.

After the job was done, they walked away with a hefty sum of money. They also felt good that they had saved the livelihood of the village manager and the Jewish people of the vicinity.

When the tailors were about to leave town, the nobleman's wife spoke to her husband. "Look," she said. "We see how these Jews care so much about their co-religionists. Perhaps we should tell them about our Jewish prisoner who couldn't pay the rent for his inn and is still languishing in prison. Maybe these tailors would care enough to pay off his debt and free him."

She approached the Jewish tailors. When they asked how much the man owed, they were told that he owed 300 rubles. One

tailor said that this was too steep a price to pay. The other, however, said, "How can I just walk away from another Jew's plight?"

He told his partner: "Let us split up our partnership, and see how much each of us truly owns." It turned out that each was left with precisely the amount needed—300 rubles. The generous tailor immediately gave the money to the nobleman's wife, and said, "Let the prisoner go free."

Both tailors returned to Vilna. The one who kept his money was able to establish a professional business in the big city. The other was empty-handed, with no partner, and no cash with which to restart his business. He fell into a deep depression, and the only thing he could manage was to collect donations. He became a beggar, and it seemed to the local population that he had lost his mind.

Very desperate one day, he directly approached a wealthy man, asking him to spare a few coins. The wealthy man asked what he would receive in return, and the beggar answered, "I will pray for you."

The wealthy man chuckled, and said: "What will your prayer do for me? But here's a few coins either way." The wealthy man went on with his

business meetings that day and was very successful. He thought that perhaps it had something to do with the beggar's blessing.

So the next time he was to have a business meeting, he made a point to pass by the beggar again. After giving him a few coins, he asked for a blessing. Again, he was fabulously successful with his business affairs.

This went on for quite a few months, until one day, while gathered with family, they asked what was the secret to his newfound, absolute success. He told them about the blessings he made sure to receive, and how they were always fulfilled.

Before long, the erstwhile tailor had a large following of people who would seek his blessings, which consistently came true.

A group of the Baal Shem Tov's disciples were passing through town and heard the peculiar story of the beggar whose blessings were always fulfilled. They told their master about it, and he said that this must be a very special man, with an especially lofty soul. "Bring him to me," he said. "I'd like to speak with him."

The Baal Shem Tov questioned him, asking what special deeds he had

done. The beggar said that he really did not know of any exceptional heroics he could claim. "I'm just a simple man," he said, "No one unique or important."

The Baal Shem Tov had the man tell his entire life story. When he reached the part where he parted with 300 rubles to save a man from prison, the Baal Shem Tov exclaimed, "Aha! This is it! This eminent and selfless action of yours is what causes your blessings to come true."

Hearing this from the Baal Shem Tov, and realizing the uniqueness of his act, left a great impression on the man, and he was able to crawl out of his depression.

The Baal Shem Tov spent time with the sincere tailor and taught him Torah. Eventually, he became an accomplished scholar and a great tzaddik.

## SERVICE TIMES

*Services have now TG resumed. All services are by prior booking. Please call the office.*

### SHACHARIT (A.M.)

**Sunday & Public Holidays** 8:00

**Monday to Friday** 7:15

*10/06 & 11/06 (Rosh Chodesh): 7:00*

**Shabbat & Festivals** 9:30

### MINCHA AND MAARIV (P.M.)

**Sunday to Thursday** 5:15

**Friday (Maariv only)** 6:00

**Shabbat** 5:00

**MAZALTOV**

We wish a hearty Mazal Tov to:

**BIRTHDAYS**

- Gertie Feinstein on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 17<sup>th</sup> June.
- Deborah Jankelow on her 55<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 20<sup>th</sup> June.

- Jeanette Markovitz on her 90<sup>th</sup> birthday on the 26<sup>th</sup> June.

**MARRIAGES**

- Karen & Alan Shkudsky and to Marion Rapp on the wedding of their son and grandson, Martin Cook to Helene Rosenblatt on 30<sup>th</sup> May.

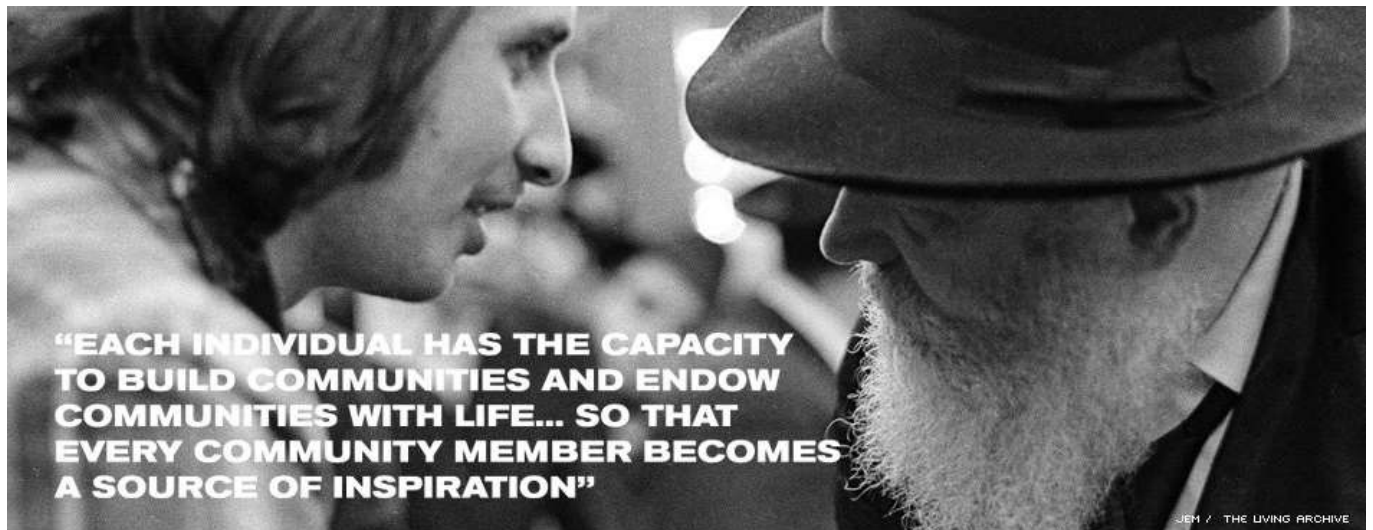
**BEREAVEMENTS**

We wish long life to

- Hazel Lasovsky on the death of her husband, Monty.

- Jessica Smith on the death of her father, Mervyn.
- Veronica Brenner, Jo-An Epstein, Raine Cohen, Shannon Brenner and families, on the death of their husband and father, Charles Brenner

May Hashem comfort them and their families among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem and grant them long life.



*The Rebbe's 27<sup>th</sup> Yartzeit is on 3 Tammuz, 13 June 2021*