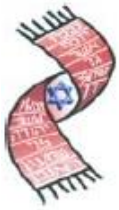


Message

Our 94th

MAY 2026 IYYAR 5786

Madison Jewish Center

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES FOR MAY 2026

Friday May 1st
Candle Lighting 7:34pm
Zoom Services 7:30pm

Saturday May 2nd
Services in the
Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
Torah Portion: Emor

Friday May 8th
Candle Lighting 7:41pm
Birthday/Anniversary Shabbat
Zoom Services 7:30pm

Saturday May 9th
Services in the
Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
Torah Portion: Behar-Bechukotai

Friday May 15
Candle Lighting 7:48pm
Yom Yerushalayim
Social Club Shabbat
Zoom Services 7:30pm

Saturday May 16
Services in the
Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
Torah portion: Bamidbar

Thursday May 21
Erev Shavuot
Zoom Services 7:30pm

Friday May 22
Candle Lighting 7:54pm
First Day of Shavuot
Zoom Services 9:30am
Shabbat Zoom Services 7:30pm

Saturday May 23
Services in the
Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
Yizkor
Second Day of Shavuot

Friday May 29
Candle Lighting 8:00pm
Zoom Services 7:30pm

Saturday May 30
Services in the
Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
Torah Portion: Nasso

Rabbi's Message

This message will be a long one, so prepare the beverage and/or snack of your choice take a seat, put your feet up and read at your own leisure and risk.

May contains Shavout and another major holiday, Mother's Day, I thought I would address my thoughts in the following direction. My dear friend and brother, Dr. Martin Evers shared a Dvar Torah with me last month that I wanted to comment on. However, Marty is the focus of the monthly message. Here are his words…

Valor is defined in the eleventh edition of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, copyright 2012 as, "Strength of mind or spirit that enables a person to encounter danger with firmness: personal bravery."

The last Proverb, Proverb 31, is best known as containing the poem, "The Woman of Valor", which men read regularly nearly every Friday night to honor the women in our world. She is described as being supportive to her husband, meeting her daily chores, caring for the poor, caring for her household, speaking wisely, and caring more for others than herself. The support she gives her husband allows him to leave the family home to work. That support extends to how she acts when angry, where she holds in her anger. She rises early and goes to sleep late, making sure all is accomplished each day. Her spirit and her brain are more important than her appearance.

In Hebrew, the poem is called, "Aishes Chayil." There are scholars that claim that the term chayil means much more than valor. This is an issue with translation. Valor can be a sign of courage. But as used here, chayil can also refer to all the good things the woman does for the world around her. There is no direct English term for the chayil, and hence it has been translated as valor. But that is not sufficient to explain it. Perhaps, it should also be explained as a quality life, guided in part by Hashem, and in part by the requirements of the situations faced.

The Torah has many women of valor. The first one is Sarai, when she joins Abram to travel from her homeland to Canaan (Genesis12:1-8). This required courage, trust in Hashem, and an understanding of the situation. She again shows her inner strength when she goes to Egypt (Genesis 12:10-13). Both of these acts required a great deal of personal fortitude, willingness to face the unknown, and belief in Hashem. Sarai demonstrated unequivocal support of her husband, Avram, during these travels.

Rebecca also meets the definition of a woman of valor. She showed it three times. The first time is when she agreed to venture into the unknown by leaving home to marry Isaac (Genesis 24:55-67), showing trust in Hashem, understanding that He would not steer her wrong. The second time is when she went with Isaac to escape the famine (Genesis 26:1-9), heading into a strange land. The last time was when Rebecca, following the will of Hashem, acts decisively to get Jacob the blessing that should have gone to Esau (Genesis 27:5-17).

Both Leah and Rachel demonstrated signs of valor when the both gave consent to Jacob to leave Laban, their kin (Genesis 31:4-16). In doing this, they showed their absolute trust in their husband. They also show a spirit of dedication to Hashem, and the future He laid out for them.

In her own way, Tamar shows fortitude when she confronts Judah, her father-in-law, so that she will have children via levirate marriage (Genesis 38). Yes, it is true that Tamar tricks Judah into making her pregnant. But this also demonstrates courage and valor by holding Judah to the tradition of levirate marriage (Genesis 38:17-26). In so doing, Tamar honored the traditions previously set forth, showing the spirit needed to support the family she married into.

But perhaps, the woman of the Torah that showed the most spirit, the most valor, was Miriam. Miriam was the older sister of Moses. She took Moses to the River Nile, where he was rescued from probable death (Exodus 2:4), and then found a way for Moses to be breast fed by his natural mother (Genesis 2:8). Miriam was most likely guided by Hashem without realizing it, leading the way to the events that would follow. She follows this up leading the women in song after the crossing of the Sea of Reeds (Red Sea) (Exodus 15:20-21). Later on, she demonstrates the inner strength and courage shown by women of valor when she is willing to put herself at personal risk by speaking against Moses and his role (Numbers 12). She was willing to pay the price for her actions, which ended up being suffering tzaraas (Numbers 12:10).

Miriam shows the courage required to demonstrate that she was unafraid, part of the essence of having valor.

In modern times, many women face hardships that test them physically, spiritually, and other ways. I think of my own wife, Rhonda. She has been a woman of valor for many years, never more so that since I was incarcerated in December 2022. She has had to carry on duties that normally fell on me. She has needed to make decisions by herself that we had previously shared. She continues to show courage and spirit in the face of difficult times. She has never wavered in her support of me, despite my incarceration. Rhonda is clearly a woman of valor.

As stated above, "Aishes Chayil", translated as, "The Woman of Valor," is an incomplete translation. It represents far more than valor, as defined in the dictionary. It includes a spirit that goes beyond valor. It included an inner strength that is greater than we can imagine. The poem tells us all we really need to know to appreciate what the women in our lives accomplish. Their courage and willingness to face the unknown are both clearly signs of valor. Their unending support also is a sign of spiritual valor. Let us celebrate our women.

Martin Evers (Mordechai Leib ben Avram v'Esther) April 2026

Dr. Martin Evers is an amazing and unique person. He wrote this essay for his wife, for Mother's Day, to acknowledge to her that he spiritually has not neglected her, even though he physically cannot support her at the moment. I pray that G-d releases him from his incarceration, which at the moment is physical, not spiritual. It is directly because of him that I started my foundation, Double Taph, Inc., to assist those who are incarcerated.

I would also take issue with Mother's Day itself. I don't believe in Mother's Day, because in my world, every day is Mother's Day. Maybe we also need a 'Wife Day' or 'Significant Other Day". What Marty refers to in Ayshet Chail is about something completely different. Furthermore, a wife isn't always a mother.

The word Chayil, as Marty points out, is difficult to translate. Mishlei (Proverbs) was written by King Solomon, during the middle of his life. It is filled with many complex, spiritual and life references, quotes that are allegoric, beyond our understanding. Ayshet Chayil is actually the end of a treatise of instruction from King Lamuel, who quotes the words of his mother as a prophecy, that an Ayshet Chayil is a 'worthy woman", that they are hard to find, and this is who man is to search for as a companion, or b'shert (intended one). King Lamuel's mother prophecy may be allegoric, but the essence is to choose wisely.

If we refer to the Torah texts regarding Adam and Eve, the Torah tells us "And the Lord God said, "It is not good that man is alone; I shall make him a helpmate opposite him." (Genesis 2. 18). The great teacher and commentator Rashi expounds on this by stating; "*a helpmate opposite him*. If he is worthy, she will be a helpmate. If he is not worthy, she will be against him, to fight him."
Rashi seems to bring into the discussion the following points. First, God knew that Adam needed a companion. Her purpose wasn't for reproduction, but rather that God wanted Adam to have companionship, support and challenge, that this is present in good relationships. Hence, we can understand Rashi's point about her being a helpmate.

Shavout in many ways parallels the wisdom of the Ayshet Chayil text. It would seem that King Lamuel's mothers' advice is to choose and to choose wisely. The Torah was a choice that we, the children of Israel made at Mt. Sinai, and we have maintained this choice for over 3800 years. It is a choice that defines the many definitions of Chayil; valor, courage, trust and also something that King Lamuel's mother instructs us to maintain…worthiness.
Our relationship with God also parallels Rashi's point to the Genesis text. When we are worthy, God is our helpmate, when we are not worthy, God will be against us, and fight us, to return to being worthy. The tool that God has given us to be worthy of his help is the Torah.
Shavuot is a reminder of this. The gift of the Torah was given at Sinai to the Children of Israel just a mere seven weeks after being freed as slaves from Egypt. God gave us this gift because their transformation in just seven short weeks, made them and their future generations worthy of his companionship, support and challenge. It is a relationship that cannot be broken, it may at times be challenging, difficult but the ultimate is the joy and blessings that God gives us.

Marty Evers acknowledges his wife is worthy, but also, she recognizes his worthiness as well. While incarcerated, Marty has not allowed his situation to deter his relationship with God either. He studies, teaches other inmates, observes our faith with the same determination that he was blessed with while being among us. He is in a challenging environment and yet he gets support from both God and Rhonda whom God has blessed him with. Perhaps through that support, Marty finds his strength and uses that strength to help others.

Shavuot and Mother's Day have common spiritual themes. As our Ayshet Chayil provide us with companionship, support and challenge, may God grant us the blessings of his everlasting companionship and support.

B'shalom,
Rabbi B.

President's Message

It is hard to believe that Passover has come and gone. I hope everyone had a happy, peaceful, fulfilling holiday as you gathered around your Seder tables with friends and family.

Spring is a busy time at Madison and the affiliates have been hard at work planning exciting programs. Join us at a morning zoom service, stop in for a Shabbat service and kiddush luncheon and participate in our many social activities. Mark your calendars for our Social Club Shabbat Zoom service Friday evening May 15th. Come out for Sisterhood's Spring Fling Gala, dedicated in memory of Mady Kiner Thursday June 4th. Join us as we honor Irma & Roy Alexander at our annual Social Club barbecue Sunday afternoon June 14th. Hop on Zoom for Rabbi Bickhardt's Adult Education Classes the first Wednesday of every month.

Madison can only remain a vibrant part of our community if we, the members, put in the time and effort. Don't be a stranger. Spring would not be complete, of course, without the celebration of the festival of Shavuot. The schedule of services, most of which are on Zoom can be found on page 9. Yizkor services will be in person on Saturday May 23rd and will be followed by a dairy luncheon. Please let Ellen or me know if you plan on attending. Please be generous as you honor your dearly departed with your Shavuot Yizkor Pledge.

I hope to see many of you at our spring services and events.

Wishing all of the mothers and special women in our lives a Happy Mother's Day. May you always be surrounded by the love of family and friends.

Linda

The Latest from Sisterhood
May 2026

This is a busy time for Sisterhood. Many exciting things are happening.

The new Tree of Life project is still going on. Elyse Glenn, Fran Liebowitz, Teresa Gottesmann, and Arlene Kane are the chairs. Leaves can still be added.

The Sunday afternoon Maj and Mingle games continue monthly and are hosted at the homes of Sisterhood members on a rotating basis. The events take place from 1 to 4. The cost is $7. Thank you Teresa Gottesmann for sponsoring the April event. Ilene Marcus is the chair.

Our annual Torah Fund brunch was held on Sunday, April 19th, from 10 - 12. The guest speaker was Brooklyn historian Ron Schweiger. We all remembered the very interesting power point presentation about Movie Theaters in Brooklyn. Thank you Marene Podell for chairing this event.

Our annual "Spring Fling Event", which is in memory of Mady Kiner, will take place on Thursday evening, June 4th. The theme this year is Dance, Dance, Dance. Barbara Stein, Bonnie Solomon, and Ilene Marcus are the chairs.

The end of year dinner will take place on Wednesday, June 17th, at Florencia. More information is forthcoming.

Watch for flyers, check your email or our new website madisonjc.org for further information. A phone tree also goes out every week.

Hag Shavuot Sameah
Ilene Karpas

SOCIAL CLUB

HAPPENINGS
MAY 2026

Spring is finally here. The Social Club, as always, has been hard at work developing enjoyable activities that will help provide funds for Madison Jewish Center.

Raffle ticket packets have been mailed. Tickets are $25 each. If you buy five, you get one for free. There is still time to buy tickets. Additional tickets are available in the office. The drawing will be held at the barbecue in June.

The Social Club Shabbat is scheduled for Friday evening, May 15th at 7:30. It coincides with Yom Yerushalayim. It has been changed to a virtual event due to a scheduling conflict. There will be no dinner or oneg. Please join us on zoom. Ilene Karpas is the chair.

The annual barbecue will take place on Sunday, June 14th. This year's honorees are Irma and Roy Alexander. Please try to attend.

Watch for flyers, check your email, or our new website madisonjc.org to further information. A phone tree also goes out every week.

Hag Shavuot Sameah.
Ilene Karpas

Honor Fund-Mazal Tov & Best Wishes

To: Linda & Michael Parnes
Donations have been made in honor of the birth of your new granddaughter Noa Miko Nakayama

By: Ellen Green
Marlene Podell
Irma & Roy Alexander
Bunny & Brian Bender
Linda & Stephen Bell
Shelli & Ronald Feldman
Harriett & Stephen Cohen
Stu & Adam Cohen
Terri Miller
Ilene Karpas
Michael Sosin
Fran Liebowitz
Irina Makarovskaya
Teresa & Mario Gottesmann
Barbara & Barry Stein

R'fuah Sh'leimah Prayer

For: Diane Posniack
By: Judy Posniack

☆

I would like to thank Madison Jewish Center and its members for the generosity they showed regarding the passing of Zandra Greene. So many people made donations in her name. It was very touching. In addition, the sympathy the members shared in the past month and travelled all the way from Brooklyn to the funeral and to Nassau County, was greatly appreciated.
Madison feels like home.

Deborah.

*

To our wonderful Madison family:

Thank you for the good wishes and donations made in honor of the birth of our granddaughter Noa Miko Nakayama. We are blessed to be a part of such a loving community.

Linda and Michael Parnes

*

Thanks to Linda & Michael Parnes, Michelle & Larry Blatt, Harriett, Rose & Irina for the rides during the freezing winter weather!!!
Greatly appreciated!!

Stu Cohen

*

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND SERVICES FOR *SHAVUOT* 5786-2026

FIRST DAY

Thursday Evening May 21

on ZOOM at 7:30 PM

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88152143878?pwd=R3lIMihxAWIbbS4aJHkwUaFIvL5lDb.1

Meeting ID: 881 5214 3878

Passcode: 069259

Friday Morning May 22

On ZOOM at 9:30 AM

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83645230030?pwd=CwM7zJ87NKYFzdU8fkGIIGANZjIzFH.1

Meeting ID: 836 4523 0030

Passcode: 869562

SECOND DAY

Friday Evening May 22

on ZOOM at 7:30 PM

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88305698632?pwd=bmFSUUInMlgwMmhNbTd5aEhWd1c5dz09

Meeting ID: 883 0569 8632

Passcode: 7AxMZi

Saturday Morning May 23

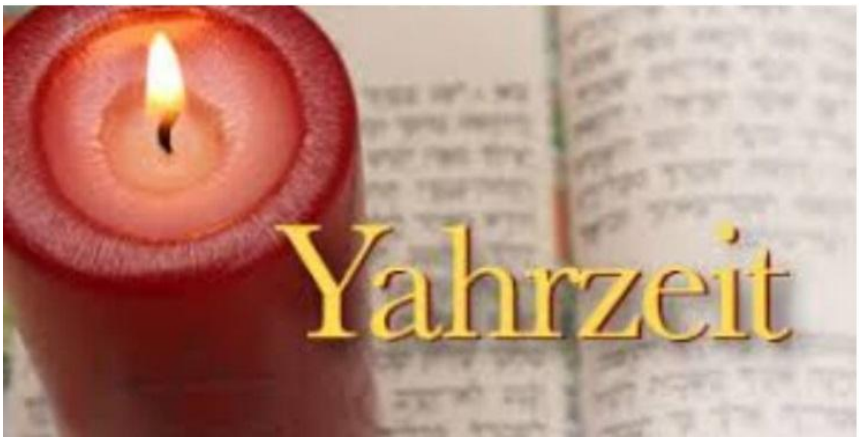
9:30 AM In Person

****YIZKOR****

Traditional dairy Shavuot luncheon following services.

Donations welcome!! – contact Ellen – emg522@aol.com

** Please be generous with your Yizkor Donations**



DONATIONS FOR May 2026 HAVE BEEN MADE BY

Ronni Ableman
Bunny Bender
Brian Bender
Jeffrey Bernstein
Terri Bobrow
Amy Feinstein
Myra Lee Fleischman
Susan Gilbert
Paul Gruber
Ivan Kushner
Edward Lerner
George Nicholas
Alan North
Ken Novikoff
Larry Novikoff
Phylis Pack
Alan Rada
Elaine Rafael
Judith Schneier
Jerry Schreibstein
Irene Stundel
Robin Sutherland
Curtis Wanderer
Marc Weiner

The Paul Podell Roof and Building Repair Fund

Paul devoted himself to Madison and worked tirelessly to make sure that Madison's bills were paid, that repairs were made, and that Madison was always open to all.

Our building is aging and is in desperate need of expensive repairs. Linda's message asked, "What would Paul do?" Paul would say we can't wait and must raise the funds needed ASAP.
Therefore the Podells have made a sizable donation to spearhead the roof repair fund. Join us in giving what you can to keep our roof from collapsing and to keep Madison the vibrant, welcoming synagogue it has always been.

Paul Podell Memorial Roofing Fund Donors

Marlene Podell (Founding Donor)
Irma & Roy Alexander
Bunny & Brian Bender
Robert Bienstock
Karen & Stanley Black
Michele Blatt
Debra Brown
Stuart Cohen
Fleischman family in memory of their beloved Albert
Elyse & Mel Glenn
Ellen Green
Ellen Hamou
Ilene Karpas
Fran Liebowitzn
MJC Social Club
Terri Miller
Linda & Michael Parnes
Judy Posniack
Gail Resnick
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Michael Sosin
Eva & Eli Hirsch
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Kiddush Sponsors

Platinum Sponsors:
Sam Ainbinder and Norma Rothstein
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Myra Lee Fleischman
Ellen Green
Ellen Hamou
Linda and Michael Parnes
Marlene Podell
Michael Sosin

Regular Sponsors:
Stuart Cohen
Ilene Karpas
Terri Miller
Barbara and Barry Stein

We are deeply grateful for the generosity and ongoing support of our regular sponsors,
whose commitment makes our programs and community initiatives possible. Their dedication helps us celebrate milestones, honor achievements, and extend kindness throughout our community.

SAVE THE DATE

Sisterhood

Thursday June 4th – Annual Gala "Dance, Dance, Dance"
Wednesday, June 17th – End Year Dinner at Florenzia

Social Club

Friday evening, May 15, 2026 Social Club Shabbat on Zoom
Sunday afternoon, June 14, 2026 Annual Barbecue

Congregation

Shavuot Services - See Page 8

THE MESSAGE

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Fax: 718-375-2271
Website: Madisonjc.org

Rabbi Johanan Bickhardt…….Rabbi

Linda Parnes……..President

Sisterhood Presidents
Harriett Cohen & Shelli Feldman

MJC Social Club President
Ellen Green

Editorial Staff

Roy Alexander **Rabbi Johanan Bickhardt**
Michele Blatt **Ellen Green** **Bruce Herman**
Ilene Karpas **Linda Parnes** **Marlene Podell**

SERVICE SCHEDULE

Friday Evening 7:30 PM
Saturday Morning …9:30 AM
Weekday Minyanim (Monday & Thursday)
on ZOOM……..7:15 AM

If you need a Minyan at any other time, please call the office and we will attempt to arrange one.

If you have Yahrzeit and need a minyan on a day when we don't have a service scheduled, please contact the office, so we can schedule a service for that day.

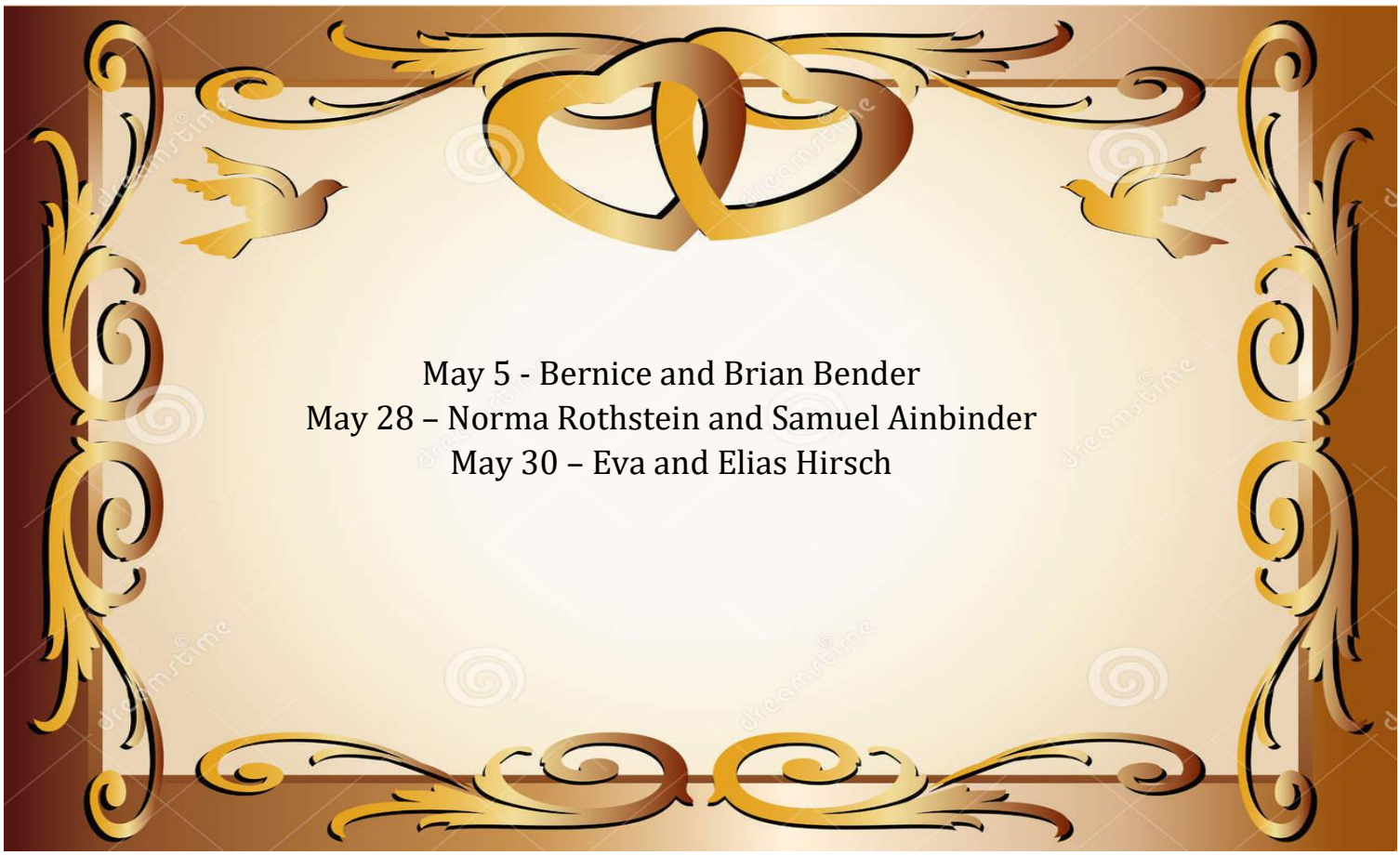
TEMPLE OFFICE HOURS

The Synagogue office will be open Monday through Thursday from 9:00am to 4:00pm, Friday from 9:00am - 12 noon
We are closed on all Jewish and legal holidays.

MAY Birthday List

May 2 – Susan Lurie
May 3 – Matthew Cohen
May 3 – Warren Leibowitz
May 8 – Harriett Cohen
May 10 – Mel Glenn
May 11 – Elias Hirsch
May 11 – Barry Stein
May 12 – Charles Shulamit
May 15 – Linda Parnes
May 17 – Eva Hirsch
May 21 – Ilene Marcus
May 22 - Ellen Green
May 22 – Randi Herman
May 25 – Jodie Cohen
May 27 – Richard Charles
May 28 – Karen Black

MAY Anniversaries



A TREE OF LIFE AND LOVE GROWS IN BROOKLYN

Join the Excitement at MJC'S Night of Dance, Dance, Dance

Dedicated In Memory of Madeline Kiner

New & Exciting Menu,
Raffle Prizes,
DJ Style Music & Dance
Tips with Fran E. Zumba
$70.00 pp

Thursday,
June 4, 2026
6:30 P.M.
Doors open
at 6:00

2989 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, NY. 11229

Price: $70.00 pp includes Dinner provided by Mechy's Gourmet & DJ Style Music & Dancing Tips with Fran E. Zumba.

Raffles will be sold for prizes with proceeds going to MJC.

If possible please bring return address labels to expedite raffles.

Children under 12 $25.00

RSVP no later than **May 21, 2026** with paid reservation.
If you require a vegetarian meal please advise in advance.

Check addressed to Sisterhood of Madison Jewish Center
Mail reservation to Irene Cimini
1579 E. 34 Street
Brooklyn, NY 11234

or

Reservations can be made through Zelle 718 490-6735 to Teresa Gottesman. Please clarify in the message box who the reservations are for.

Please text or phone inquiries to Irene at 917 992-5307

Doors open 6:00 pm Event begins 6:30 pm
Include with your reservation with whom you would like to sit. We will try our best to honor seating requests.

The Tree of Life is on page 15

The Kiddush Fund Sponsors list is on page 12
Add your name to our sponsors!

Join us in all our activities – both social and religious!

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Thank you to
Meisner's Kosher Prepared Food
2924 Ave I
for working with us to provide delicious chicken dinners for our functions.

MAY 2026 Iyyar- Sivan 5786

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 Iyyar 14 Candle Lighting 7:34 pm Zoom services 7:30 PM	2 Iyyar 15 Services in the Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
3 Iyyar 16	4 Iyyar 17 ZOOM services At 7:15am	5 Iyyar 18	6 Iyyar 19 Rabbi's Class	7 Iyyar 20 ZOOM services At 7:15am	8 Iyyar 21 Candle Lighting 7:41pm ZOOM Service birthday/anniversary Shabbat	9 Iyyar 22 Services in Beit Hamidrash, at 9:30am
10 Iyyar 23	11 Iyyar 24 Zoom services 7:15 AM	12 Iyyar 25 Exec Bd. 6:30pm Admin Bd. 7:30pm	13 Iyyar 26	14 Iyyar 27 ZOOM services at 7:15am	15 Iyyar 28 Candle Lighting 7:48pm Social Club Shabbat Zoom Services 7:30pm	16 Iyyar 29 Services in the Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am
17 Sivan 1	18 Sivan 2 ZOOM services at 7:15am	19 Sivan 3	20 Sivan 4 Sisterhood Meeting Zoom 7:30pm	21 Sivan 5 7:15 AM Zoom services Erev Shavuot Zoom Services 7:30pm	22 Sivan 6 Shavuot Zoom services 9:30am Candle Lighting 7:54pm ZOOM Services 7:30pm	23 Sivan 7 Second Day of Shavuot Services in the Beit Hamidrash Yizkor at 9:30am
24 Sivan 8 _____ 31 Sivan 15	25 Sivan 9 ZOOM services at 8:30am Memorial Day	26 Sivan 10 Social Club Zoom Meeting 8:00pm	27 Sivan 11	28 Sivan 12 7:15 AM zoom services	29 Sivan 13 Candle Lighting 8:00pm ZOOM Services 7:30pm	30 Sivan 14 Services in the Beit Hamidrash at 9:30am