



SHEVAT-ADAR 5786

A Publication of Congregation Sha'arey Israel

A conservative congregation serving Macon and Middle Georgia

Affiliated with United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism

www.uscj.org

Rabbi Aaron Rubinstein



Upcoming Services

Thursday, February 5
7:00 Minyan

Friday, February 6
6:15 pm Service

Saturday, February 7
9:30 am Service

Thursday, February 12
7:00 Minyan

Friday, February 13
6:15 pm Service

Saturday, February 14
9:30 am Service

Thursday, February 19
7:00 Minyan

Friday, February 20
6:15 pm Service

Saturday, February 21
9:30 am Service

Thursday, February 26
7:00 Minyan

Friday, February 27
6:15 pm Service

Saturday, February 28
9:30 am Service



Zoom Davening

All services can be viewed via Zoom. You can access these either via computer, smart phone or call in and listen to services with any phone.

We are using one link for ALL services. All services dealing with praying/davening and Torah Study will use the link below.

<https://zoom.us/j/94484008047?pwd=NkN2eVNiOTIMc3kwakpwdFdJdVVPUT09>

Passcode: 420674

By Phone: 1-929-436-2866

Meeting ID: 944 8400 8047 Password: 420674

Service Dates and Times:

Wednesday Torah Study - February 4, 11, 18, 25 at 7 pm

Thursday Morning Minyan - February 5, 12, 19, 26 at 7 am

Friday Evening Kabbalat Shabbat - February 6, 13, 20, 27 at 6:15 pm

Saturday Morning Service - February 7, 14, 21, 28 at 9:30 am



A Word From the Rabbi

מתיר אסורים The One Who Frees the Captives

February is upon us, and I'll start off by quickly noting three wonderful happenings coming up soon. They are (1) Our annual Super Bowl Fundraiser, (2) our upcoming scholar-in-residence, and (3) Purim. I hope to see you at those special events.

As you know, not long ago, the remains of Ran Gvili, the last hostage in Gaza, were brought home to Israel. In some ways, an incredibly painful chapter was closed. I won't ever forget the moment each Shabbat morning in shul when Sabrina — before reading the Prayer for Israel — would intone his name, reminding us of our obligation to him and his family. In my Torah chanter's mind, Joseph makes his brothers take an oath that they won't leave his bones in Egypt. Ambassador Huckabee spoke with heartfelt eloquence about his taking off the yellow ribbon pin and hoping never to need to see it again. Israeli soldiers sang Hatikvah and recited Kaddish in the presence of the coffin bearing Ran Givli's remains, and that scene powerfully drives home the Hebrew term for a funeral — levaya (לוויה), which means 'to accompany.' We leave no one behind. But another Israeli official (I can't currently recall his name) gave voice to a deeper level of complexity to this ancient and modern imperative of pidyon sh'b'uyim (פדיון שבויים), redeeming the captives. He reminded us all (not that we could forget) that Hamas is very much remaining in the Gaza picture, and that they (and other terrorist groups) have taken home the lesson — hostages continue to fetch a high price; they make for excellent bargaining chips.

Terrorists in the Old World (call them pirates if you like) knew this as well, and our sages who crafted Jewish Law have been struggling over this for a very long time. That's why the (above-cited) Israeli spokesman told us that while he was relieved to take off the yellow ribbon pin, he would be sure to remember where he put it. We are grateful that the Gvili family can finally mourn properly. The yellow ribbon pin serves as shorthand for many intermixed, complex emotions. And so, we recite the blessing thanking God for redeeming the captives, and we cannot forget the Psalmist's words — Behold, the Guardian of Israel neither slumbers nor sleeps.

Rabbi Aaron is meeting with congregants by appointment.
You can call him at 478-250-5952 to schedule an appointment.



A WORD FROM CSI CO-PRESIDENTS

Dear CSI Congregants,

February is here—and it is cold outside! The past few weeks have brought temperatures we're not quite used to in the South. Still, we have several exciting events coming up at CSI, and despite the chill, it will be well worth your while to come to shul.

First, our annual **Super Bowl Fundraiser** is just two weeks away, on **Sunday, February 8**. This has always been a wonderful opportunity for congregants and friends to gather, enjoy good food, spend time together, and support the shul while watching the biggest game of the year. Please see the attached flyer for details—we would love to have you join us!

A few weeks later, we will host our **Scholar in Residence** weekend from **February 20–22**. Rabbi Perry Rank of New York & New Jersey will be joining us in Macon for several events

throughout the weekend. Our Adult Education Committee, chaired by Rozy Simson, has worked hard to put together a meaningful and engaging program, so please plan to attend.

Hard as it is to believe, **Purim** is not far off. Rabbi Aaron is once again preparing a memorable **Purim Schpiel** for the evening of **Monday, March 2**. A great deal of effort goes into this event, and we encourage everyone to come to shul and support all those involved. I know Rabbi will make it a memorable one.

I also want to address something that has been on many of our minds—the **security of Jews in America**. Recent incidents, including one at a synagogue in Mississippi, serve as sobering reminders. As a Jewish community, it is vital that we continue to show up and remain committed to living our Jewish lives openly and proudly. Please know that security remains our top priority, and we will continue to have security in place for all events at the shul. My sincere thanks to Theresa Rosengart and the Security Committee for their ongoing coordination with the Bibb County Sheriff's Office.

Stay warm, everyone!

Shalom,

Jan and Michael

The parents of Lu Borgia will sponsor kiddush lunch Saturday, February 28th in her honor. For those who may not know, Lu is a Mercer student who attends shul.

**Sponsor a Kiddush Lunch at
Congregation Sha'arey Israel**

Honor a Loved One, Celebrate a Milestone, or Remember Someone Special

Congregation Sha'arey Israel invites you to sponsor a Kiddush lunch, a meaningful way to mark important occasions while supporting our community.

Why Sponsor a Kiddush Lunch?

- Commemorate a special event
- Honor a friend or family member
- Remember a loved one
- Support our congregation

Sponsorship Details:

- Minimum sponsorship: \$36
- Your sponsorship helps defray the costs of our complimentary Kiddush Lunches

Recognition:

- Sponsorship announced in our weekly congregational email
- Acknowledged during Friday and Saturday announcements from the Bima

How to Sponsor:

Contact our office to arrange your Kiddush lunch sponsorship today!

Phone: 478-745-4571

Email: secretary@csimacon.org

Join us in this mitzvah and create lasting memories for our community!

Congregation Sha'arey Israel
611 First Street
Macon, Georgia 31210



RSVP for Super Bowl Party

A logo for a book club. It features the word "Book" in a stylized font with a person reading a book inside the letter 'o', and the word "CLUB" in a bold, blocky font with a person sitting on a book inside the letter 'U'.

The CSI Book Club will next meet Sunday, 2/15 to discuss *Starstruck in the Promised Land*, by Shalom Goldman. All are welcome. For more information, please contact Jan Lewis at janlewis73@gmail.com.

Hebrew Courses for Spring 2026

CSI is considering two Hebrew courses for Spring 2026, both offered via Zoom and taught by Zohar Rubinstein. Each will cost \$100 for ten sessions.

Introduction to Reading Hebrew
This is a repeat of the course Zohar taught in Fall 2025. The purpose of the class is to enable adults to become familiar enough with Hebrew to be able to read from our prayer book without using transliteration.

Hebrew Reading Part II: Introduction to Shabbat Prayers

The course will take participants through reading and speaking some of the most important of the Shabbat prayers. A beginning knowledge of Hebrew is necessary.

Anyone who took the Beginning Hebrew class in the fall and would like some review is welcome to retake the class.

Please reply to Jan Lewis (janlewis73@gmail.com) if you would like to take either one by **Friday, February 6.**

The Keenum family is organizing monthly care packages for Gabe Fresca, a military friend of CSI members. Please drop off non-perishable food items in the collection box in the hallway leading to the courtyard. The post



Hamantaschen Bake

Bake, laugh, & prepare for Purim!
Sunday, February 15
10 a.m. @ Sha'arey Israel

Interested?
Text Sabrina Wengier 305-283-7439

office has a long list of items that are prohibited. To keep it simple, Gabe has requested items like K-cups and caffeinated drink mixes and non-perishable Kosher items such as Oreos.

Thanks.

Jewish Educational Loan Fund

Need college money? [Stand here.](#)

JANUARY - APRIL 30
MAY - JULY 31
AUGUST - SEPT 30
OCTOBER - DECEMBER 31

Higher Ed is *expensive!* but 0% interest helps

JELF provides interest-free loans for college, graduate and vocational programs to Jewish students with demonstrated financial need. Our gift is in the savings!

LEARN MORE ABOUT JELF [JELF.ORG](#) [INFO@JELF.ORG](#) [f@JELFLOANS](#)

Congregation Sha'arey Israel of Macon

CONGREGATION
SHA'AREY ISRAEL
FEBRUARY 20-22

RABBI PERRY RANK

SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE WEEKEND

FRI 2/20 6:15 PM
Shabbat Services & Dinner
Dinner Torah by Rabbi Rank
Hanging the Bible with Haggadah
How Can We Move Faith in a Text With So Many Fictions?

SAT 2/21 9:30 AM
Shabbat Service
Rabbi Rank: Are We Here for Thinking or Singing?
What Happens When Jews Gather for Prayer?
Kiddush Lunch (12:15 pm)
Rabbi Rank's New Book: Two Minute Torah - Ancient Wisdom & Modern Thought for Every Day & Every Night

SAT 2/21 7:30 PM
Havdalah & Dessert
Rozzy & Gary Simon's Home, 1180 Oakcliff Rd.
CSI's New Strategic Plan
Building Momentum for the Next 120 Years
A Discussion led by Rabbi Rank

SUN 2/22 10:30 AM
Rabbi Rank will meet with Sunday School students and their families
Topic: Jewish Identity in a Majority Christian Environment

There is no charge for the meals, but you must RSVP no later than Friday, February 6, so that the appropriate amount of food can be prepared.

RSVP Here for Scholar-In-Residence Events

SAVE THESE DATES
EVENTS at CSI

2/8/26 Super Bowl Party @ CSI

2/20/26 Scholar in Residence Shabbat Dinner

2/21/26 Scholar in Residence

3/2/26 Purim Shpiel

4/12/26 Yom HaShoah Program @ CSI

5/8/26 Family Shabbat



Please call Stephanie at the synagogue office 478-745-4571 or email her at secretary@csimacon.org for donations to all funds except The Wall of Jerusalem.

For donations to the Wall of Jerusalem Fund, please call Shelley Kruger at 478-474-0060.

For donations to the Noah's Ark Fund, please call the CSI secretary.

Yahrzeit donations should be mailed directly to synagogue.

Please note that you can also make donations to the various CSI funds through our website:

www.csimacon.org



Introducing Macon Rikud!

(Rikud = Dance in Hebrew)

CSI is now offering a creative dance class with a Jewish flavor for children and adults age 3 and up, taught by Sharona Rubinstein!

The class will include:

- Basic dance technique
- Structured improvisation to explore the elements of dance
- Exercises that build strength and increase flexibility
- Israeli Line and Circle Dances
- Group and partner activities
- Performance opportunities
- Lots of fun for everyone!!

The classes meet on the Sundays when Sunday school is in session, and will take place in the social hall from 1-2PM beginning Oct. 20th, except on Dec. 14 when it will be from 3-4 since Sunday school starts later at 4 to occur before the family night.

Fees per child (parents come for free) are as follows:

\$15 per class if you pay by the class
\$50 if you pay for the 5 classes of the Fall semester
\$144 for the 12 classes of the Winter/Spring semester.

Parents must fill out a liability waiver form for their child and themselves if they participate. Bring a light lunch if your child attends Sunday school so they can take a lunch break from 12:30-1:00. They should bring dance clothes or workout clothes and have hair pulled back. If you want more information, Call Sharona at 478-250-5586.

It's easy and quick!
You can designate which fund to
honor your loved ones.



SYNAGOGUE & MAZEL TOV FUND DONATIONS

In memory of Frances Paller

Rabbi Aaron & Sharona
Rubinstein

In memory of Alan Goldman's sister, Paula

Alan & Fran Kirsh

Happy birthday to Fran Kirsh

Alan & Hershene Goldman

ANNUAL FUND DONATIONS

David & Laura Ilan
Rabbi Aaron & Sharona
Rubinstein
Gerald & Francie Marshall



February Birthdays

- 1 - Jan Lewis
- 3 - Hershene Goldman
- 5 - Carol Bashuk
- 9 - Majida Al-Husaan
- 10 - Charles Brown
- 10 - Frank Jeffrey Cohen
- 11 - Morris Purcel
- 13 - Jonathan Carter
- 15 - Candace Geiger
- 17 - David Frolich
- 23 - Robert Rosengart



KRUGER TORAH FUND DONATIONS

Happy Birthday to Fran Kirsh

David & Terri Frolich

Happy Birthday to Hershene Goldman

David & Terri Frolich



February Anniversaries

14 - Markus & Pamela Hill
20 - Ethan & Trichelle Hutten
23 - Allison & Brian Bloodworth



Congregation Sha'arey Israel is a partner with DAYBREAK, a daytime safe haven for members of our community who are either homeless or are in need of a place to spend a day with people, a place where they can shower, get a light snack, and feel part of a community. DAYBREAK needs volunteers. If interested, call (478) 216-9119 or visit <https://depaulusa.org/programs/macon/>. You can also drop off donated items at their Macon location at 174 Walnut Street. You can also ship directly from Amazon.

Daybreak's current needs are:

canned or fresh fruit	large sturdy back packs
applesauce	Bio freeze
breakfast bars (soft)	Claritin
sandwich cookie packs	daytime cold medicine-no alcohol
powered lemonade/tea	eye drops
coffee creamer	insect repellent
instant grits	hydrocortisone cream
sugar	reader glasses - 2.00/higher
brown paper snack bags	Benadryl
plastic spoons	ponchos
lawn bags - 33 gallon	disinfectant spray
vinegar	air freshner
bleach	hand/foot towels
men's T-shirts (white, size lg, XL, 2X)	\$10 gift cards
men & women's underwear	



February 2026 Yahrzeits

Evening of
February 6th/7th-February 13th
Jack Bresler

Evening of
February 20th/21st-February 27th
Rita Govern

Louis Avrunin*
David Thaler
Lauren Bullington

Carol Besser
Canton Joseph Schwartzman
Pearl Brooks
Marcia K. Singer*
Eric Lipson
Norma Potosky

Evening of

February 13th/14th-February 20th

Lillian Rudnick
Victor Hyman Dayan
Hyman Marshall*
Charles R. Sussman*
Rodolph Richards
Abraham Davidson*
Barbara Jelks Crider

** Indicates names listed on a plaque in the main sanctuary.*

5786 2026		February		shevat adar		KAR-BEN <small>www.karben.com</small>	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
1 14 shevat SUNDAY SCHOOL	2 15 shevat	3 16 shevat	4 17 shevat TORAH STUDY - 7 PM	5 18 shevat 7 AM MINYAN	6 19 shevat 5:54 PM 6:15 PM SERVICE	7 20 shevat 8:51 PM 9:30 AM SERVICE	
8 21 shevat SUNDAY SCHOOL	TU B'SHEVAT 22 shevat		10 23 shevat	11 24 shevat TORAH STUDY - 7 PM	12 25 shevat 7 AM MINYAN	13 26 shevat 6:00 PM 6:15 PM SERVICE	14 27 shevat 8:57 PM 9:30 AM SERVICE
15 28 shevat	16 29 shevat	17 30 shevat	18 1 adar TORAH STUDY - 7 PM	19 2 adar 7 AM MINYAN	20 3 adar 6:06 PM 6:15 PM SERVICE SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE WEEKEND	21 4 adar 7:02 PM 9:30 AM SERVICE SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE WEEKEND	
22 5 adar SUNDAY SCHOOL SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE WEEKEND	23 6 adar	24 7 adar ROSH CHODESH	25 8 adar TORAH STUDY - 7 PM	26 9 adar 7 AM MINYAN	27 10 adar 6:12 PM 6:15 PM SERVICE	28 11 adar 7:08 PM 9:30 AM SERVICE	
JANUARY S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31		MARCH S M T W T F S 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31					

2025-2026

Executive Committee

Co-Presidents - Jan Lewis, Michael Kruger
Vice President - Lara Geller
Treasurer - Evan Koplin
Recording Secretary - Pamela Hill
Corresponding Secretary - Allison Bloodworth
Ex-Officio - Shelley Davidson
Rabbi - Aaron Rubinstein

2025-2026

Committee Chairs

Adult Education - Rosalind Simson
Board Of Education - Jennifer Bernstein, Shalom Keenum
Cemetery - Marty Koplin
Gifts and Memorials - TBA
House - Jonathan Atzman, Markus Hill
Kitchen - Shelley Davidson
Long-Range Planning - Sabrina Wengier
Marketing/Communications - Chip Koplin
Membership - Pamela Webster
Ritual - Jeff Lehman
Security/Parliamentarian - Theresa Rosengart

Social Action - Bonnie Cornelius
Special Projects - Gary Simson



Secretary - Stephanie Johnson

Office Hours

8 am - 4 pm Monday, Wednesday & Thursday

8 am - 12 pm Friday

Lunch 1:00pm - 2:00pm

Our mailing address is:

611 First Street Macon, Georgia 31201

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