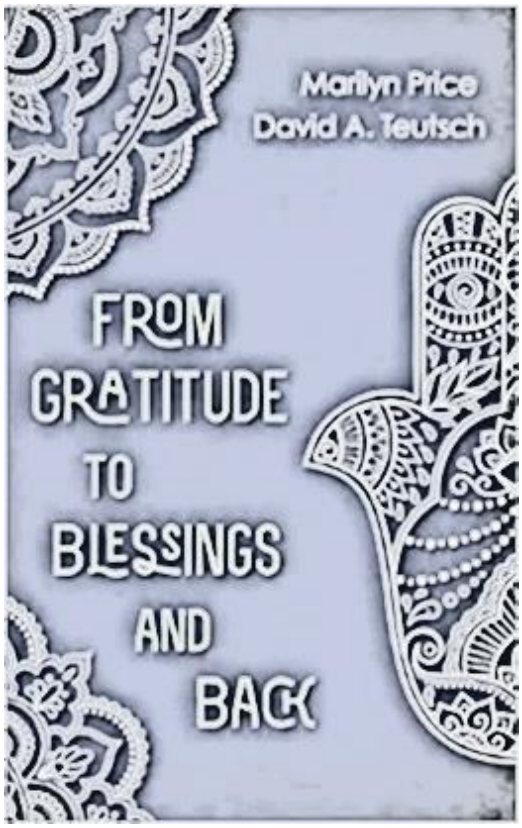
Welcome to the 2019 / 5779 Adat Shalom Retreat

From Gratitude to Blessings, and Back

With Marilyn Price, and Rabbi Dr. David Teutsch

לְדוֹר וָדוֹר נוֹדֶה לְךָ
וּנְסַפֵּר תְּהִלָּתֶךָ
עַל חַיֵּינוּ
הַמְּסוּרִים בְּיָדֶךָ,
וְעַל נִשְׁמוֹתֵינוּ
הַפְּקוּדוֹת לָךְ, וְעַל
נִסֶּיךָ שֶׁבְּכָל יוֹם
עִמָּנוּ, וְעַל
נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ וְטוֹבוֹתֶיךָ
שֶׁבְּכָל עֵת, עֶרֶב
וָבֹקֶר וְצָהֳרָיִם



From generation to generation we will appreciate You, and tell Your praises: over our lives, which are in Your hands; and over our souls, which are in Your keeping – and for Your miracles, which are with us every day – and, for Your wondrousnesses and goodnesses, which are at every moment, evening and morning and afternoon…
(from *Modim*, Amidah)

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עַל סְפִירַת הָעוֹמֶר

Happy Days 34 & 35 of the OMER! Barukh …**al sfirat ha'omer**. Hayom [*Arba'ah* / Chamisha] u'Shloshim Yom – sh'hem [*Arba'ah Shavuot v'Shisha Yamim* / Chamishah Shavuot] la'Omer.

הַיּוֹם אַרְבָּעָה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם, שֶׁהֵם אַרְבָּעָה שָׁבוּעוֹת וְשִׁשָּׁה יָמִים לָעֹמֶר: (יְסוֹד שֶׁבְּהוֹד) :י״ט אייר

הַיּוֹם חֲמִשָּׁה וּשְׁלֹשִׁים יוֹם, שֶׁהֵם חֲמִשָּׁה שָׁבוּעוֹת לָעֹמֶר: (מַלְכוּת שֶׁבְּהוֹד) :כ׳ אייר

Our enormous appreciation to Retreat co-chairs Jayme Epstein, and David Widawsky! – and all our volunteers. While at the glorious green Pearlstone Retreat Center, know that (on Shabbat especially) needs and issues, short of 911, should go through us. **Contacts**:
Jayme Epstein 202-255-7504 David Widawsky 703-517-5339 Marla Cohen 303-888-9631

BLESSINGS AND GRATITUDE

Adat Shalom's 2019 Biennial Retreat -- Pearlstone Retreat Center, Reisterstown, MD

Friday, May 24, 2019

3:00 PM - 6:30 PM – Registration (self-check-in after 5:45 PM) Main Building Lobby

5:30 PM - 6:25 PM – **Kabbalat Shabbat** Deck outside the Jubilee Room

6:30 PM - 7:45 PM – **Dinner** Harvest Dining Hall

8:00 PM - 9:20 PM – **SESSION 1**: "Gratitude and Wonder in Jewish Tradition and in Our Lives," with Rabbi David Teutsch Jubilee room

- 7:45 PM - 9:30 PM — Concurrent kids programming/in-room babysitting Earth/Stone rooms

9:30 PM - 11:00 PM – Optional / Informal Evening Gatherings Main lobby and Orchard lounges; and deck outside Jubilee

Shabbat / Saturday, May 25, 2019

5:45 AM - 8:30 AM – Optional Morning Activities

- Bird Watching (5:45) Main building entrance
- Yoga (7:00-8:00) Beit midrash
- Meditation (8:05-8:30) Orchard Room

8:00 AM - 9:30 AM – **Breakfast** Harvest Dining Hall

8:45 AM - 9:30 AM – "Approaching Sinai: A Pre-Shavuot Exploration," with Rabbi Sid Jubilee

9:30 AM – 10:25 — SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE – two **Shacharit options**:

- "All Generations Together: The Stories Continue," with Rabbi Fred and Marilyn Price Jubilee Room
- "Makom: Shabbat Chants & Reflections," with Rabbi Hazzan Rachel & friends Bet Midrash

10:30 AM - 11:00 AM **Torah Service & Sacred Stories** (all generations) Jubilee Room

11:00 AM - 12:20 PM Shabbat services continue, including **SESSION 2** – "The Structure and Theology of Hebrew Blessings," with Rabbi David Teutsch; and Kiddush Jubilee Room

- 9:30 AM - 12:25 PM – Concurrent Babysitting Stone Room
- 11:00 AM - 12:25 PM – Concurrent Children's Program Earth/Stone Rooms

12:30 PM - 1:45 PM – **Lunch** (kiddush at 12:25; z'mirot/songs & brachot/blessings after) Harvest Dining Hall

1:45 PM - 4:45 PM – FREE TIME / MENUCHA (with optional activities as listed below):

1:45-3:10: (the Swimming Pool is open, 1:45-3:45pm!)

- Softball — Meet in lobby
- Ropes Course (for those pre-registered)
- "Creativity and Gratitude -- Exploring Jewish Text through Art," with Barb Richman[1] — Orchard Room
- Singing Hebrew Rounds, with Shlomo Cohen[2] — Citron Room
- Campus walk on your own (2-mile nature trail)

3:15-4:40:

- Lawn games — Back lawn
- Israeli dancing with Malka Kutnick and friends — Earth Room
- "A Blessed Walk in the Woods," with Marilyn Price — Meet in the lobby
- Makom chanting with Jody Shapiro — Vineyard Room

4:45 PM - 6:15 PM – **SESSION 3**: "Entering a Conversation of Blessings and Gratitude," with Rabbi David Teutsch and Marilyn Price — Jubilee Room

- 4:40 PM - 6:20 PM – Concurrent kids' programming, & babysitting — Earth/Stone rooms

6:30 PM - 7:45 PM – **Dinner** — Harvest Dining Hall

7:50 PM - 8:45 PM – "Show 'Em What You Got, Adat!" -- Variety Show — Jubilee Room

8:50 PM - 9:50 PM – Medura/Campfire (with Havdalah, s'mores, singing & more) — Back lawn

Sunday, May 26, 2019

7:00 AM - 8:45 AM – Optional morning activities

- Yoga with Rabbi Hazzan Rachel (7-8:15) — Beit midrash
- Meditation with Rabbi Hazzan Rachel (8:20-8:45) — Beit midrash

8:00 AM - 9:15 AM – **Breakfast** — Harvest Dining Room

8:30 AM - 9:30 AM – Farm Tour 1 (pre-registration required) — Meet in main lobby

8:30 AM - 9:45 AM – **Checkout** (clean out rooms; return keys)

9:45 AM - 11:30 AM — **SESSION 4**: "The Role of Blessings, Jewish Liturgy, & Paying it Forward" with Rabbi David Teutsch and friends (*todah* Amy-Cheryl-Larry-Shelley!) — Jubilee Room

- 9:40 AM - 11:30 PM – Concurrent kids' programming, and babysitting — Earth / Stone

11:35 AM - 11:55 AM – **Closing Circle** — Front lawn

12:15 PM - Farm Tour 2 (mostly pre-registered) -- or lunch with friends on your way home!

Thank You for Being Part of Our Communal Retreat ... Blessings !!!

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[1] Explore how art can help move you toward an attitude of gratitude. Following a brief text study, we'll experiment with different ways to use art to express joy and thankfulness. Maximum of 30 people. Based on a California immersive that Barb did with her daughter -- and as-of-next-weekend, Rabbi! -- Bec Richman.

[2] Learning and singing Hebrew rounds, starting with some well-known rounds, and some drawn from the Shabbat liturgy. No Hebrew or musical knowledge is required! -- songsheets will include transliteration. Shlomo and Doris were long-time Adat Shalomers, before moving to Philadelphia; we them for joining us!

Birkat Hamazon - Grace After Meals - ברכת המזון

Nodeh l'eyn hakhayim
Hazanah et hakol.

Al ha'aretz ha'tovah v'har'khav'ah
Nishmor'na, v'hi t'kay'meynu,

Unvakeysh mazon l'hasbi'a bo Kol
yosh'vey tey'vel.

נוֹדֶה לְעֵין הַחַיִּים הַזָּנָה אֶת הַכֹּל

עַל הָאָרֶץ הַטּוֹבָה וְהַרְחָבָה נִשְׁמֹר נָא וְהִיא תְּקַיְּמֵנוּ

וּנְבַקֵּשׁ מָזוֹן לְהַשְׁבִּיעַ בּוֹ כָּל יוֹשְׁבֵי תֵּבֵל

Let us acknowledge the Source of Life,
source of all nourishment.

May we protect the bountiful Earth,
that it may continue to sustain us.

And let us seek sustenance
for all who dwell in the world.

from *The Book of Blessings*, © 1996, Marcia Lee Falk.
by Marcia Falk, based on traditional Birkat Hamazon liturgy

V'akhalta, V'savata, U'verakhta

And you eat, and you are satisfied; and now you bless

וְאָכַלְתָּ, וְשָׂבָעְתָּ--וּבֵרַכְתָּ

We ate when we were hungry and now we're satisfied
We thank the Source of blessing for all that She provides

Giving and receiving You open up Your hand
From seedtime to harvest we're partners with the land

Hunger is a yearning in body and soul
Earth, air, fire, water and Spirit make us whole

We share in a vision of wholeness and release
When every child is nourished and we all live in peace

Brikh Rachamana, Malka d'Alma, Mar'eh d'Hai Pita!

בריך רחמנא מלכא דעלמא מריה דהאי פיתא

You are the Source of Life for all that is, and your blessing flows through me (us). [lit: Blessed is the Merciful One, Ruler of the World, Master of this Bread.]

Aramaic: Talmud Berakhot 40b English: Rabbi Shefa Gold

(Hebrew: Deut. 8:10. English: Hanna Tiferet Siegel, tracking the traditional rabbinic Birkat Hamazon)

Session Resources

Ben Zoma used to say: How much labor Adam must have expended before he obtained bread to eat! He ploughed, sowed, reaped, pulled up the sheaves, threshed, winnowed, selected the grain, ground and sifted the flour, kneaded and baked -- and after that, he ate. By contrast, I get up in the morning and find all this prepared for me. And how much labor must Adam have expended before he obtained a garment to wear! He sheared and washed the wool, combed and spun it, wove -- and after that, he obtained a garment to wear.

By contrast, I get up in the morning and find all this prepared for me. All artisans attend and come to the door of my house; I get up and find all these things before me.

בן זומא כשראה אוכלסין בהר הבית אמר ברוך שברא כל אלו לשמשני. כמה יגע אדם הראשון ולא טעם לוגמא אחת עד שזרע וחרש וקצר ועמר ודש וזרה וברר וטחן והרקיד ולש ואפה ואחר כך אכל, ואני עומד בשחרית ומוצא אני את כל אילו לפני. כמה יגע אדם הראשון ולא לבש חלוק עד שגזז ולבן ונפס וצבע וטווה וארג ותפר ואחר כך לבש, ואני עומד בשחרית ומוצא את כל אילו לפני. כמה אומניות שוקדות ומשכימות ואני עומד בשחרית ומוצא את כל אילו לפני.

-- Tosefta Berakhot 6:5; in *From Gratitude to Blessings and Back* (Price & Teutsch, 2019!), p. 8

מוֹדֶה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיָּם, שֶׁהֶחֱזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחֶמְלָה, רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתֶךָ

Grateful am I before You, living & enduring Ruler - who has returned to me my soul, in mercy – great is Your faithfulness! *Modeh ani l'fanecha, Ruach (Melekh) chai v'kayam, sh'hechezarta bi nishmati b'chemla – Rabbah emunatecha!* (-- traditional liturgy, first thing we say)

What's Ours?! – Blessings and Right Relationship

אמר רב יהודה אמר שמואל: כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה כאילו נהנה מקדשי שמים —שנאמר, לה' הארץ ומלואה. רבי לוי רמי: כתיב לה' הארץ ומלואה, וכתיב השמים שמים לה' והארץ נתן לבני אדם! לא קשיא: כאן קודם ברכה , כאן לאחר ברכה. אמר רבי חנינא בר פפא: כל הנהנה מן העולם הזה בלא ברכה, כאילו גוזל להקדוש ברוך הוא וכנסת ישראל.

Rav Yehuda said that **Shmuel said: One who derives benefit from this world without a blessing, it is as if they enjoyed objects consecrated to the heavens – as it is stated, "The Earth and all it contains is God's;** the world, and all those who live in it" (**Psalms 24:1**). **Rabbi Levi raised a contradiction:** yes **it is written, "The earth and all it contains is God's;" yet it is written** elsewhere, **"The heavens are God's heavens, while God gave the Earth to humankind"** (**Psalms 115:16**)! But really, resolving this apparent contradiction is **not difficult. Here, *before* a blessing** is recited, the Earth is still God's – while **here**, ***after* a blessing** is said, it's as if God gave the Earth to humankind. **Rabbi Ḥanina bar Pappa** relatedly **said: Anyone who derives benefit from this world without a blessing, it is as if they stole from God and the community of Israel…** **(-- *Babylonian Talmud, Berakhot 35a-b*)**

Talmud Shabbat 127a, adapted for traditional siddur via Mishnah Peah 1:1, Midrash Mishlei 27:3, et al:

אֵלּוּ דְבָרִים שֶׁאָדָם אוֹכֵל פֵּרוֹתֵיהֶם בָּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה וְהַקֶּרֶן קַיֶּמֶת לוֹ לָעוֹלָם הַבָּא, וְאֵלּוּ הֵן: כִּבּוּד אָב וָאֵם, וּגְמִילוּת חֲסָדִים, וְהַשְׁכָּמַת בֵּית הַמִּדְרָשׁ שַׁחֲרִית וְעַרְבִית, וְהַכְנָסַת אוֹרְחִים, וּבִקּוּר חוֹלִים, וְהַכְנָסַת כַּלָּה, וּלְוָיַת הַמֵּת, וְעִיּוּן תְּפִלָּה, וַהֲבָאַת שָׁלוֹם בֵּין אָדָם לַחֲבֵרוֹ, וְתַלְמוּד תּוֹרָה כְּנֶגֶד כֻּלָּם.

Eilu d'varim (sh'ein lahem shiur), sh'adam ochel peroteichem ba'olam hazeh, v'ha'keren kayemet lo la'olam haba; v'eilu hen: kibud av va'eim; u'g'milut hasadim; v'hashkamat beit hamidrash, shacharit v'arvit; v'hachnasat orchim; u'vikur holim; v'hachnasat kalah; ul'vayat ha'met; v'iyun t'filah; v'hava'at shalom bein adam l'chavero – v'Talmud Torah k'neged kulam.

These are the (limitless) things, from whose fruits a person partakes in this world, and whose bounty remains for them in the world that is coming. They are: honoring one's parents; doing acts of lovingkindness; attending (upholding) the synagogue (house of study) morning and night; welcoming guests; visiting the sick; rejoicing with brides (and/or grooms); accompanying the dead (and the mourners); learning prayer; and bringing peace between one person and another – and the study of Torah is equal to them all [because, or when, it leads to them all].

On "Telling Our Stories" (from Marilyn Price)

There are so many ways to get to your story. There's the genealogical approach. There's the "talk to your people now and not wait." There's a legacy.com search to get details. The internet has offered us many opportunities to find our family and tell the story -- but the best ways are still to just have the conversation. Talk to all the family members you can find before it is too late. Find photos and identify the people in them while those around you remember who's pictured! And not just pictures: Recipes tell stories about our families – who made what, and where'd they make it, and why are we still eating it?

Make your children curious about their family. What objects in your home belonged to someone in your past, and landed with you? Things brought over by immigrant families, or passed down from generation to generation? We can now access records from Ellis Island, with documentation on ship arrivals, that give wonderful details on our families (if that is how they came over), and what they had when they arrived. As archaic as it may seem to us, kids often love those stories. They are richly blessed – and they make us grateful that this country, which we rightly denigrate, remains in many ways the pinnacle of freedom.

And so, a story…. I have had the privilege of recording 3 biographies of women in their 90s who valued their history in this country, each in their own ways: One as a daughter of immigrants landing in a suburb of Chicago – the first Jewish family, creating a place of importance in this then-small now-quite-large town, buying up much of downtown Naperville and making it their own while living above the store. One as the daughter of immigrants who lost everything in the depression – who pulled the family through with a sense of style, and relocated from NYC to a town near Chicago to become the scion of the community. And one who married into the richest family in Chicago, from a town in central Indiana, who with true grit and determination turned early widowhood into a life of service and devotion, always with a sense of humor.

All those stories were rich in history, and showed the character of these women. Those are the stories we want our children to cherish and value, as they emulate pieces of the lives of our ancestors. Tell them. Be them! In the book FROM GRATITUDE TO BLESSINGS AND BACK, which you have, there is no blessing for family from our tradition – but there are blessings for numerous moments *with* family as we celebrate their lives, bless everyday acts, and offer timely blessings from the moment we get up. And last but certainly not least, I am always available to share a story, or a hint on how to glean the story from a family member, or even help you relocate the stories you forgot. That is how our lives continue. – Marilyn

Approaching Sinai: A Pre-Shavuot Exploration

Maimonides, Mishnah Torah (1165 CE), 8:1

Israel did not believe in Moses, our teacher, on account of the tokens he showed. For when one's faith is founded on tokens, a lurking doubt always remains in the mind that these tokens may have been performed with the aid of occult arts and witchcraft. All the signs Moses showed in the Wilderness, he performed because they were needed, and not to support his prophetic claims. Thus, when it was necessary that the Egyptians should be drowned, he divided the Red Sea and drowned them in its depths. We needed material sustenance; he brought down the Manna for us. The people thirsted; he clave the rock for them. Korach's company denied his authority; the earth swallowed them up. And so, with all the other tokens. What then were the grounds of the faith in him? The Revelation on Sinai which we saw with our own eyes, and heard with our own ears, not having to depend on the testimony of others, we ourselves witnessing the fire, the thunder, the lightening -- Moses entering the thick darkness after which the Divine Voice spoke to him, while we heard the call, "Moses, Moses, go tell them thus and thus." And so it is said, "God spoke with you, face to face (*panim el panim*, Deut. 5:4) – and furthermore, "God made this

מֹשֶׁה רַבֵּנוּ לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בּוֹ יִשְׂרָאֵל מִפְּנֵי הָאוֹתוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה. שֶׁהַמַּאֲמִין עַל פִּי הָאוֹתוֹת יֵשׁ בְּלִבּוֹ דֹּפִי שֶׁאֶפְשָׁר שֶׁיַּעֲשֶׂה הָאוֹת בְּלָט וְכִשּׁוּף. אֶלָּא כָּל הָאוֹתוֹת שֶׁעָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה בַּמִּדְבָּר לְפִי הַצֹּרֶךְ עֲשָׂאָם. לֹא לְהָבִיא רְאָיָה עַל הַנְּבוּאָה. הָיָה צָרִיךְ לְהַשְׁקִיעַ אֶת הַמִּצְרִיִּים קָרַע אֶת הַיָּם וְהִצִּילָן בְּתוֹכוֹ. צָרְכָנוּ לְמָזוֹן הוֹרִיד לָנוּ אֶת הַמָּן. צָמְאוּ בָּקַע לָהֶן אֶת הָאֶבֶן. כָּפְרוּ בּוֹ עֲדַת קֹרַח בָּלְעָה אוֹתָן הָאָרֶץ. וְכֵן שְׁאָר כָּל הָאוֹתוֹת. וּבַמֶּה הֶאֱמִינוּ בּוֹ. בְּמַעֲמַד הַר סִינַי שֶׁעֵינֵינוּ רָאוּ וְלֹא זָר וְאָזְנֵינוּ שָׁמְעוּ וְלֹא אַחֵר הָאֵשׁ וְהַקּוֹלוֹת וְהַלַּפִּידִים וְהוּא נִגַּשׁ אֶל הָעֲרָפֶל וְהַקּוֹל מִדַּבֵּר אֵלָיו וְאָנוּ שׁוֹמְעִים מֹשֶׁה מֹשֶׁה לֵךְ אֱמֹר לָהֶן כָּךְ וְכָךְ. וְכֵן הוּא אוֹמֵר (דברים ה ד) "פָּנִים בְּפָנִים דִּבֶּר ה' עִמָּכֶם". וְנֶאֱמַר (דברים ה ג) "לֹא אֶת אֲבֹתֵינוּ כָּרַת ה' אֶת הַבְּרִית הַזֹּאת". וּמִנַּיִן שֶׁמַּעֲמַד הַר סִינַי לְבַדּוֹ הִיא הָרְאָיָה לִנְבוּאָתוֹ שֶׁהִיא אֱמֶת שֶׁאֵין בּוֹ דֹּפִי שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שמות יט ט) "הִנֵּה אָנֹכִי בָּא אֵלֶיךָ בְּעַב הָעָנָן בַּעֲבוּר יִשְׁמַע הָעָם בְּדַבְּרִי עִמָּךְ וְגַם בְּךָ יַאֲמִינוּ לְעוֹלָם". מִכְּלַל שֶׁקֹּדֶם דָּבָר זֶה לֹא הֶאֱמִינוּ בּוֹ נֶאֱמָנוּת שֶׁהִיא עוֹמֶדֶת לְעוֹלָם אֶלָּא נֶאֱמָנוּת שֶׁיֵּשׁ אַחֲרֶיהָ הִרְהוּר וּמַחֲשָׁבָה:

covenant not with our ancestors only, [but with us, *even us*, who are all of us here alive this day"] (Deut. 5:3 & 29:11). Whence do we know that the Sinaitic Revelation is the sole proof that Moses' prophetic mission is true? From the text, "Lo, I come to you in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with you, and may also believe in you forever" (Ex. 19:9). Hence the inference that before that event, they did not believe with a faith that would endure forever, but only with a faith followed by hesitating and doubting speculation.

Rabbi Arthur Green, *Radical Judaism: Rethinking God and Tradition*, 2010, p. 106-7

Sinai and Covenant

When we approach Sinai, however, we stand directly in the face of Israel's myth: its faith in its uniqueness and its singular covenant with God. How can a religious universalist live with these, and how can one imagine a Judaism without them? I remain an affirmer of both Sinai and covenant, but in very carefully defined ways, including both restriction and expansion of their meaning.

We Jews began our life together as a sacred community by an act of covenantal engagement. That is the original community of Israel, gathered at the base of Mount Sinai, a gathering that takes place throughout all eternity, one at which each of us (including all who choose to join the people Israel) is ever present. This is when we become "a kingdom of priests, a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6). Priesthood makes no sense without a laity, in this case one that includes the entire human family. The task of the priest is to teach and to serve in such ways as to help others come close to God. The teaching this family of nations is to receive (not only from us) needs to be a universal one, applicable to them all. Its most basic principles are two: *all of being is one in Y-H-W-H, and every person is the image of God.* This is our message, the reason we continue to exist. All the rest is commentary.

As a religious Jew, I remain fully committed to this priesthood. I understand, in the language of tradition, that "Israel stand under oath since Mount Sinai."[50] The covenant is one of joy as well as burden. Sinai is the moment in which each heart leaps forward and says *na'aseh ve-nishma'* ("Let us do! Let us hear!" [Ex. 24:7]), committing us to live in response to the Word even before it is fully uttered. Because that covenantal moment is so central to the life of Judaism, I need to offer some clear statement as to how I understand it in the context of the theology I am proposing.

First I need to remind us that we are living within the story, dwelling in the land of myth. I make no claim for the literal historicity of Sinai. Like the seven-day Creation, it is a sacred tale around which our lives are woven, representing a truth that resides in the realm of myth and symbol, a deeper truth than that of history, but one that should not be confused with it.

R. Larry Kushner, *Honey from the Rock*, 1977 (rev. 2000), p. 135

Organized religion is our attempt to keep visions of other worlds present in this one. And this is why the religious endeavor tangles us in self-contradiction. For to speak of the other world in the language of this world is impossible.

Judaism focuses on the point where the two worlds meet: Sinai. And the inscrutable record of that encounter: Torah.

We seem to gain our invitation to the holy world by virtue of our presence there at that awesome mountain. Because the Jew is a member of a community who was present when the other world flooded this one with meaning, we are able to return as often as we wish, simply by remembering. (#85)

At the center of any great religious movement – be it historical or personal – are encounters with the Holy One. So awesome and life-changing is their force, that to remember them without word or act would constitute a denial of life. Such is the origin of ritual and story. They give witness through sacred act and holy word to some meeting with the Nameless One. But to our great frustration, in the processes of transmitting the kernel, the moments they would recall became encrusted. Ossified through centuries of unquestioning repetition. But the kernel remains within them, for any who are daring and desirous enough. A spiritual fire: Sacred ritual and holy story are none other than the detritus of the lost encounter between [humanity] and the Holy One. A record of a meeting that has taken place. Is taking place. Will continue to take place. As long as souls yearn… (#86)

Liturgical Chants & Songs

Note: we can use many names for God! Each is a metaphor, pointing to a partial reality, so mixing and matching among them might be truest. See the "blessing box," on page 5 of our Shabbat siddur (whose early '90's editing was led by Rabbi Dr. David Teutsch!). Expanding on our options for Whom or What we bless, consider these common and/or recommended images:

YHVH *– Yod-Hey-Vav-Hey, God's (unpronounced) name*

Adonai *– "My Master/Lord"* ***HaShem*** *– "The Name"*

Shechinah *– (God's feminine indwelling) "Presence"*

Eheyeh *– אהיה - "I Am / I Will Be" (Ex. 3:14)*

Ein HaChayim *– "Source / Wellspring of Life"*

Havayah *הֲוָיָה – "Existence"*

Melech *– "King / Ruler"*

Ruach *- רוּחַ – "Spirit / Wind"*

Echad *- אֶחָד – "One"*

Makom *- מָקוֹם – "Place"*

מוֹדֶה אֲנִי לְפָנֶיךָ, מֶלֶךְ חַי וְקַיָּם, שֶׁהֶחֱזַרְתָּ בִּי נִשְׁמָתִי בְּחֶמְלָה, רַבָּה אֱמוּנָתֶךָ

Modeh ani l'fanecha, Ruach (Melekh) chai v'kayam, sh'hechezarta bi nishmati b'chemla – Rabbah emunatecha! *Grateful am I before You, living & enduring Ruler - who has returned to me my soul, in mercy – great is Your faithfulness!* (-- traditional liturgy, first thing we say)

הריני מקבל עלי את מצות הבורא ואהבת לרעך כמוך

Harayni m'kabel alai et mitzvat haBoreh v'ahavta l'reyacha kamocha

Behold, I take upon myself the commandment of the Creator to love one's neighbor as oneself

---

הלא חי אני? ומי הוא החיות שלי? הלא הבורא יתברך!?

Ha'loh chai ani? U'mi hu hachayut sheli? Ha'loh haBoreh yitbarach!?

Am I not alive? And Who is this 'aliveness' of mine? Is it not the Blessed Creator!?

Ayn Od Milvado *There is nothing but G-d / nothing but This* אין עוד מלבדו

אהבה ורחמים חסד ושלום

Ahava v'rachamim chesed v'shalom *Love and compassion, kindness and peace*

Olam Chesed Yibaneh (*yai-l'lai, lai-lai, yai-l'lai-lai*) עולם חסד יבנה

I will build this world from Love… You must build this world from Love…

And if we build this world from Love… Then G-d will build this world from Love…

וְעַל יְדֵי מִצְוַת צִיצִת תִּנָּצֵל נַפְשִׁי וְרוּחִי וְנִשְׁמָתִי וּתְפִלָּתִי מִן הַחִיצוֹנִים. וְהַטַּלִּית יִפְרוֹשׂ כְּנָפָיו עֲלֵיהֶם כְּנֶשֶׁר יָעִיר קִנּוֹ, עַל גּוֹזָלָיו יְרַחֵף

V'al y'dei Mitzvat Tzitzit, tinatzel nafshi v'ruchi v'nishmati u't'filati min ha'chitzonim. V'ha'talit yifros k'nafav aleihem, k'nesher ya'ir keeno, al gozalav y'rachef.

And by way of the commandment of the fringes: may my being, my spirit, my soul and my prayer be protected from negative distractions. And may the tallit spread its wings over them, "like an eagle rousing its nestlings, gliding down to [protect] its young."

Shabbat Morning Torah Service

Sh'ma, b'ni, musar avicha; v'al titosh torat imecha (Proverbs 1:8)

Torah, Torah, tzivah lanu Moshe: morasha, morasha, kehilat Ya'akov (Deut. 33:4)

ח שְׁמַע בְּנִי, מוּסַר אָבִיךָ; וְאַל-תִּטֹּשׁ, תּוֹרַת אִמֶּךָ
ד תּוֹרָה צִוָּה-לָנוּ, מֹשֶׁה: מוֹרָשָׁה, קְהִלַּת יַעֲקֹב

"Listen, my child, to the ethical instruction of your father; and don't turn away from the Torah of your mother."
"The Torah, commanded to us by Moses: it's an inheritance for the community of Jacob."

Parashat Behukotai – Leviticus 26 (Prologue)

אִם-בְּחֻקֹּתַי תֵּלֵכוּ וְאֶת-מִצְוֹתַי תִּשְׁמְרוּ, וַעֲשִׂיתֶם אֹתָם… My commandments, I will grant your rains in their season, so that the earth shall yield its produce and the trees of the field their fruit. Your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and your vintage shall overtake the sowing—you shall eat your fill of bread, and dwell securely in the land. I will grant peace in the land, and you shall lie down untroubled by anyone (26: 3-6)…

But if you do not obey Me and do not observe all these commandments – if you reject My laws and spurn My rules, so that you do not observe all My commandments and you break My covenant – I in turn will do this to you: I will wreak misery upon you (26: 14-16)… I will make the land desolate, so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled by it. And you will scatter among the nations, and I will unsheathe the sword against you (26: 32-33).

Your land shall become a desolation and your cities a ruin. Then shall the land make up for its sabbath years throughout the time that it is desolate, and you are in the land of your enemies; then shall the land rest, and make up for its sabbath years. Throughout the time that it is desolate, it shall observe the rest that it did not observe in your sabbath years, while you were dwelling upon it (Lev. 26: 33-35)…

Rabbi Liz Bolton (RRC '96), "*Mir Zaynen Do* –We Are Here," *Women's Torah Commentary*, 2000:

To the last, *Parashat Bechukotai* challenges us… If the text excludes us [women] when we are *not* named, then should we include ourselves in such passages as blessings and curses? Surely contemporary Jewish praxis would look different if we read the covenanting passages as excluding or exempting a whole class of Jews. And yet this has been the experience of many Jewish women, who have searched in vain for a reflection of themselves in Torah, particularly once they move beyond the family narratives of Genesis and the nation-founding narratives of Exodus….

Can a feminist rereading of *Bechukotai* and other Torah with difficult theological implications help reconfigure a healthy relationship with *brit* (covenant) for girls, women, Jews by choice, lesbian and gay Jews, Jews with disabilities and all who question the notion of a Divine figure and punishes?

It can, and it must, for the simple reason that we were all *there*. We were at Sinai, we witnessed the Temple's destruction, we stood at the abyss of history and *we are here.*

Today's Torah Reading – Parashat Behukotai – Leviticus 27

ט וְאִם-בְּהֵמָה--אֲשֶׁר יַקְרִיבוּ מִמֶּנָּה קָרְבָּן, לַיהוָה: כֹּל אֲשֶׁר יִתֵּן מִמֶּנּוּ לַיהוָה, יִהְיֶה-קֹּדֶשׁ. **י** לֹא
יַחֲלִיפֶנּוּ, וְלֹא-יָמִיר אֹתוֹ טוֹב בְּרָע--אוֹ-רַע בְּטוֹב; וְאִם-הָמֵר יָמִיר בְּהֵמָה בִּבְהֵמָה, וְהָיָה-הוּא וּתְמוּרָתוֹ
יִהְיֶה-קֹּדֶשׁ. **יא** וְאִם, כָּל-בְּהֵמָה טְמֵאָה, אֲשֶׁר לֹא-יַקְרִיבוּ מִמֶּנָּה קָרְבָּן, לַיהוָה--וְהֶעֱמִיד אֶת-הַבְּהֵמָה,
לִפְנֵי הַכֹּהֵן. **יב** וְהֶעֱרִיךְ הַכֹּהֵן אֹתָהּ, בֵּין טוֹב וּבֵין רָע: כְּעֶרְכְּךָ הַכֹּהֵן, כֵּן יִהְיֶה.

[2-3 When anyone explicitly vows to the Eternal the equivalent for a human being, the following scale shall apply...] 9 And if [the vow concerns] any animal that may be brought as an offering to the Eternal, any such that may be given to the Eternal shall be holy. 10 One may not exchange or substitute another for it, either good for bad, or bad for good; if one does substitute one animal for another, the thing vowed and its substitute shall both be holy. 11 If [the vow concerns] any impure animal that may

not be brought as an offering to the Eternal, the animal shall be presented before the priest, 12 and the priest shall assess it. Whether high or low, whatever assessment is set by the priest shall stand;

יג וְאִם-גָּאֹל, יִגְאָלֶנָּה--וְיָסַף חֲמִישִׁתוֹ, עַל-עֶרְכֶּךָ. **יד** וְאִישׁ, כִּי-יַקְדִּישׁ אֶת-בֵּיתוֹ קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה--וְהֶעֱרִיכוֹ
הַכֹּהֵן, בֵּין טוֹב וּבֵין רָע: כַּאֲשֶׁר יַעֲרִיךְ אֹתוֹ הַכֹּהֵן, כֵּן יָקוּם. **טו** וְאִם-הַמַּקְדִּישׁ--יִגְאַל, אֶת-
בֵּיתוֹ: וְיָסַף חֲמִישִׁית כֶּסֶף-עֶרְכְּךָ, עָלָיו--וְהָיָה לוֹ. 13 and if one wishes to redeem it,
one-fifth must be added to its assessment. 14 If anyone consecrates a house to the Eternal, the priest shall assess it. Whether high or low, as the priest assesses it so it [the valuation] shall stand; 15 and if the one who has consecrated the house wishes to redeem it, one-fifth must be added to the sum at which it was assessed, and then it shall be returned.

טז וְאִם מִשְׂדֵה אֲחֻזָּתוֹ, יַקְדִּישׁ אִישׁ לַיהוָה--וְהָיָה עֶרְכְּךָ, לְפִי זַרְעוֹ: זֶרַע חֹמֶר שְׂעֹרִים, בַּחֲמִשִּׁים שֶׁקֶל
כָּסֶף. **יז** אִם-מִשְּׁנַת הַיֹּבֵל, יַקְדִּישׁ שָׂדֵהוּ--כְּעֶרְכְּךָ, יָקוּם. **יח** וְאִם-אַחַר הַיֹּבֵל, יַקְדִּישׁ שָׂדֵהוּ--וְחִשַּׁב-לוֹ
הַכֹּהֵן אֶת-הַכֶּסֶף עַל-פִּי הַשָּׁנִים הַנּוֹתָרֹת, עַד שְׁנַת הַיֹּבֵל; וְנִגְרַע, מֵעֶרְכֶּךָ. If anyone consecrates to
the Eternal any holding, its assessment shall be in accordance with its seed requirement: fifty shekels of silver to a *chomer* of barley seed. 17 If the land is consecrated as of the jubilee year, its assessment stands. 18 But if the land is consecrated after the jubilee, the priest shall compute the price according to the years that are left until the jubilee year, and its assessment shall be so reduced…

Mi'sh'berakh (from Yedid Nefesh & Num 12:13): **נַפְשִׁי חוֹלַת אַהֲבָתֶךָ אָנָּא אֵל נָא רְפָא נָא לָהּ**
Nafshi cholat ahavatecha anah el na r'fa na la — *My soul is sick with longing for Your love; please G-d, heal her*

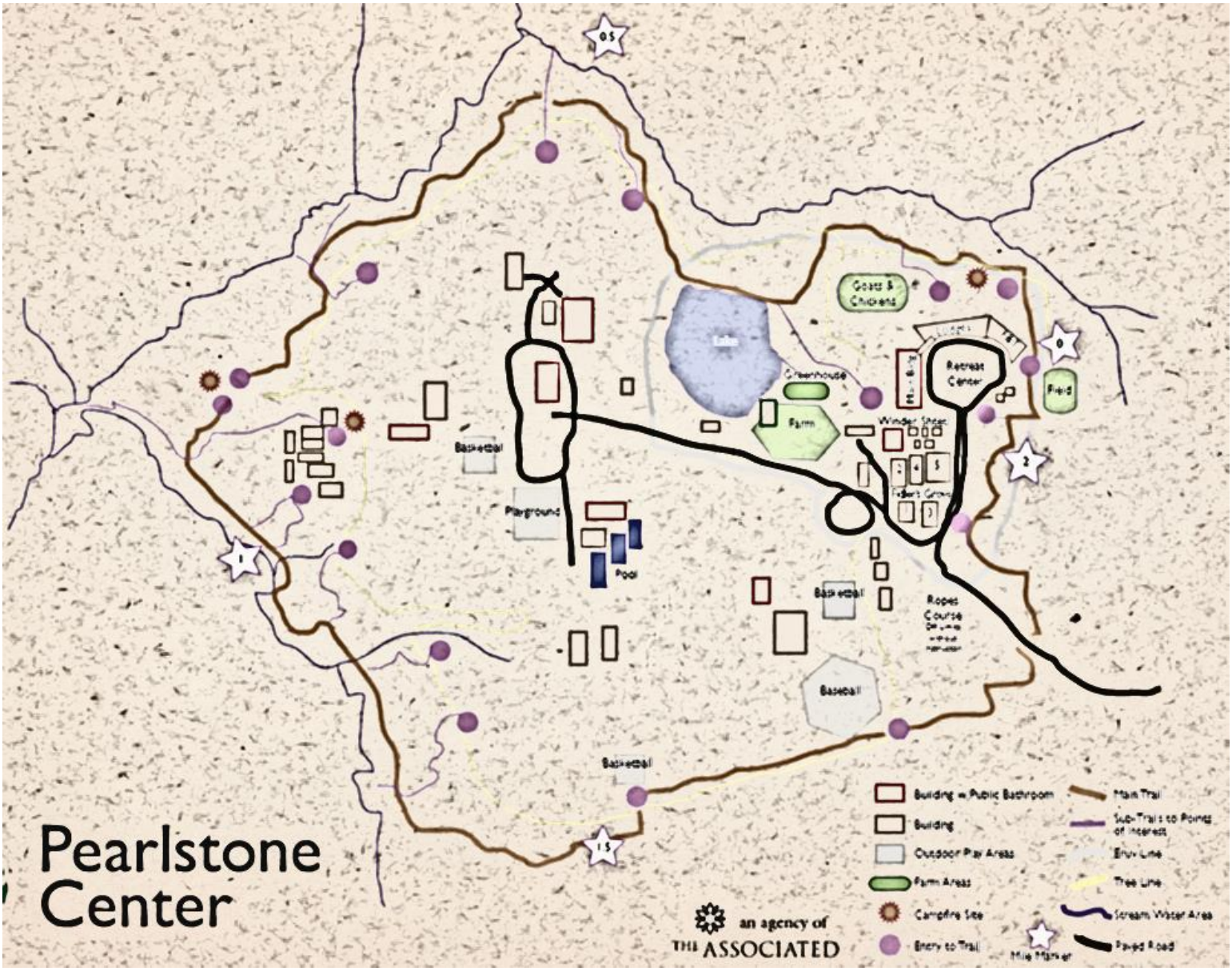
Maftir: **לב** וְכָל-מַעְשַׂר בָּקָר וָצֹאן, כֹּל אֲשֶׁר-יַעֲבֹר תַּחַת הַשָּׁבֶט--הָעֲשִׂירִי, יִהְיֶה-קֹדֶשׁ לַיהוָה.
לג לֹא יְבַקֵּר בֵּין-טוֹב לָרַע, וְלֹא יְמִירֶנּוּ; וְאִם-הָמֵר יְמִירֶנּוּ, וְהָיָה-הוּא וּתְמוּרָתוֹ יִהְיֶה-קֹדֶשׁ לֹא יִגָּאֵל.
לד אֵלֶּה הַמִּצְוֹת, אֲשֶׁר צִוָּה יְהוָה אֶת-מֹשֶׁה--אֶל-בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל: בְּהַר, סִינָי. {ש}
32 ...All tithes of the herd or flock—of all that passes under the shepherd's staff, every tenth one—shall be holy to the Eternal. 33 One must not look out for good as against bad, or make substitution for it. If one does make substitution for it, then it and its substitute shall both be holy: it cannot be redeemed. 34 These are the commandments that the Eternal gave Moses for the Israelites on Mount Sinai.

[New Plaut 872: These verses are baffling… From a modern critical perspective, these laws appear to represent an entirely divergent tithe system—either a fragment of an old tradition otherwise discarded, or an ill-fated attempt at reform.]

TAKING IT HOME: Notes Toward Our Own New BLESSING and GRATITUDE PRACTICES

Stroll Around the Grounds, Until You Feel at Home…

(color trail map available in the lobby)



Reflections on Makom / Place:

The creeks of Pearlstone flow south, into the North Branch of the Patapsco, at the top of Liberty Reservoir. Nearby, along the Patapsco's South Branch, the early Quaker Ellicotts collaborated with the Catholic Carrolls to move the dominant area crop from tobacco, to more sustainable wheat. Ellicott descendant Sarah Wolcott asks, "what seeds were the people *before* the Carrolls planting? What knowledge did they have, embedded in their seeds, that we might lift up?" – and adds, "To adapt to climate change [as the land now must] is a process of decolonization; is to dismantle racism; is to return to [religion] the gospels; is to reclaim our birthright."

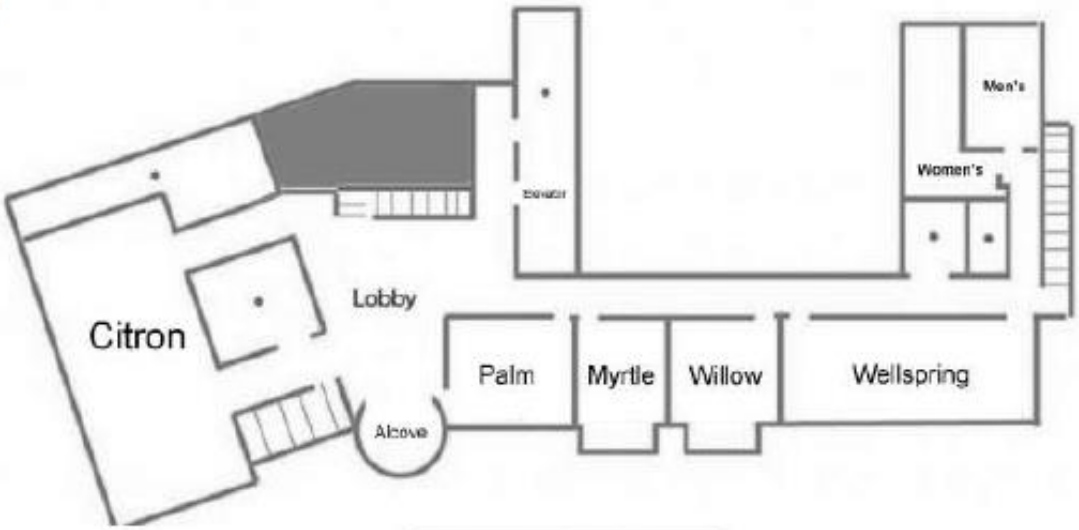
These were long Piscataway-Susquehannock lands. Per NMAI's Chesapeake Resource, "The 1666 Articles of Peace and Amity was a treaty between the Maryland Colony and the Piscataway Chiefdom. It stated, *That from this day forward there be an <u>inviolable peace and amity</u> between the Right honorable the Lord Proprietor of this Province, and the Indians…to endure.* [Archives of Maryland Online, Vol. 15, pp. 28991]. Among other rights, it ensured that the Piscataway would not have to give up their lands. The Articles also promised that the Piscataway could fish, hunt, and gather crabs without disturbance."

As across this "middle state," enslaved Blacks toiled here until 1865. Jim Crow then held sway, until The Associated bought these 180 acres in the mid-20th century (Milldale 1966; Pearlstone 2001; Kayam 2006).

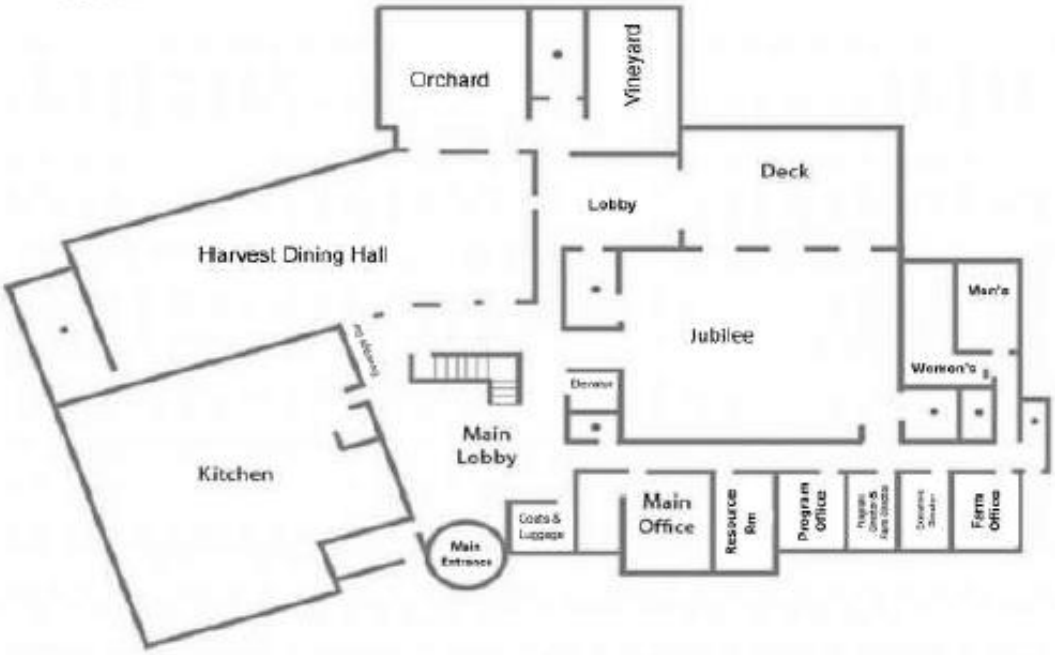
Just downstream—at Baltimore, amid contradictions and hope—the Patapsco widens into that great estuary, Chesapeake Bay. Estuaries are creative spaces, where freshwater and salt species mix and mingle, where habitat edges touch: where many things are possible, when beings come together across differences.

Pearlstone Center

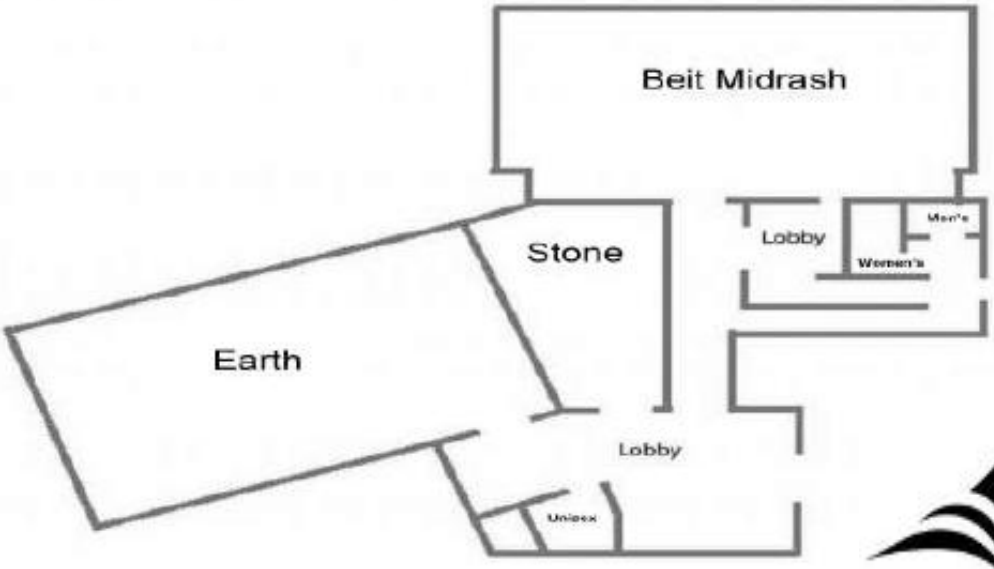
2nd Level



Main Level



Lower Level



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