



# The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong

Welcoming all who seek a Progressive vision of Jewish life

## SHABBAT SHALOM

18 – 19 May, 2012

27 Iyar 5772

Parashat Behar-Bechukotai  
(Leviticus 25:1-27:34)

Rabbi Stanton M. Zamek  
Education & Programming Director Rabbi Martha Bergadine  
Cantorial Soloist/Programming Assistant Diego Edelberg

### FRIDAY, 18<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Early Family Shabbat Dinner 6:00 PM – JCC Coffee Shop  
Shabbat Service 7:00 PM – UJC Sanctuary  
UJC Shabbat Dinner 8:00 PM – JCC Coffee Shop  
Children whose birthdays are in April and May will receive a special birthday blessing and a sweet treat.  
Shabbat Dinner Cost: HK\$125 (Adult), HK\$65 (Children's meal up to 12).

### SATURDAY, 19<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Torah Study 11:00 AM – 3C, One Robinson Place  
*(Note time changed for this week only)*  
Havdalah Pajama Party 5:30 PM – UJC Sanctuary

### SUNDAY, 20<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Shorashim 9:30 AM – UJC Sanctuary  
Bagels and Binah 10:15 AM – UJC Sanctuary

### MONDAY, 21<sup>ST</sup> MAY

Rosh Chodesh Group 8:30 PM – 3C, One Robinson Place

### TUESDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> MAY

Introduction to Judaism class 7:00 PM – UJC Sanctuary

### WEDNESDAY, 23<sup>RD</sup> MAY

OOMF (Details at page 2) 7:30 PM – 3C, One Robinson Place

### FRIDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Breakfast Chavurah with Dr. Daniel Matt 8:00 AM – Starbucks Coffee  
Cost: HK\$100 for Continental breakfast. M2, Baskerville House, 13 Duddell St.  
Please RSVP to the UJC office by Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> May.

Shabbat Service 7:00 PM – UJC Sanctuary  
UJC Shabbat Dinner 8:00 PM – JCC Coffee Shop

Guest speaker: Dr. Daniel Matt. Dr. Matt's talk will begin at Shabbat Services and continue at Shabbat Dinner.

Shabbat Dinner Cost: HK\$125 (Adult), HK\$65 (Children's meal up to 12).  
Please RSVP with the UJC office by Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> May.

### SATURDAY, 26<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Special Torah Study with Dr. Daniel Matt 9:30 AM – 3C, One Robinson Place  
Tikkun Leil Shavuot Study 8:30 PM – UJC Sanctuary  
& Siyyum of the "One Congregation, One Book" Project  
with special guest speaker Dr. Daniel Matt

### SUNDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> MAY

No Shorashim this week Classes resume 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2012  
Dessert Reception with Dr. Daniel Matt 7:30 PM – 3C, One Robinson Place

### MONDAY, 28<sup>TH</sup> MAY

Shavuot Day 2 Morning Service & Yizkor 8:00 AM – UJC Sanctuary

### Mazal Tov

To Ilan & Honest Ozer on the birth of their son on Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> May.

### Todah Rabah

To Jordan Potash for delivering the D'var Torah at Shabbat Service last Friday.

### Yahrzeits

The following yahrzeits will be observed at services **this week**:  
Dr. Michael Seddon—Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> May. Brother of Mary Seddon.

The following yahrzeits will be observed at services **next week**:  
Orlando J. Salata—Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> May. Father of Jean Eric Salata.  
Emil Friedlander—Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> May. Brother of Jesse Friedlander.



**DR. DANIEL MATT**  
Scholar-in-Residence &  
Tikkun Leil Shavuot  
Special Guest Speaker

Dr. Matt is one of the world's leading authorities on Kabbalah and is the author of over ten books, including *God and the Big Bang* and *The Essential Kabbalah*.

### Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012

8:00 AM – Translating the Zohar

Breakfast Chavurah

Dr. Matt will share the story of his groundbreaking scholarship.

Venue: Starbucks Coffee (M2, Baskerville House, 13 Duddell St.)

Cost: HK\$100 per person for Continental breakfast

### Friday, 25<sup>th</sup> May 2012

7:00 PM – Shekhinah: The Feminine Half of God

Dr. Matt's talk will begin at Shabbat Services and continue at Shabbat dinner

Venue: UJC Sanctuary

Shabbat Dinner Cost: HK\$125 (Adult), HK\$65 (Children's meal up to 12). Please RSVP to the UJC office.

### Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012

10:00 AM – Raising the Sparks: Finding God in the Material World

Special Torah Study with Bagel Breakfast

Venue: Rabbi's Apartment (Apt. 3C, One Robinson Place)

### Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012

TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT

Venue: UJC Sanctuary

8:30 PM – Siyyum of the One Congregation, One Book Project

An opportunity to ask some final questions about *The Essential Kabbalah*.

9:15 PM – The Zohar: Masterpiece of Kabbalah

11:00 PM – Mystical Meaning of Torah

### Sunday, 27<sup>th</sup> May 2012

7:30 PM – God and the Big Bang

Dessert Reception

Venue: Rabbi's Apartment (Apt. 3C, One Robinson Place)

Full details are attached. For all events, please RSVP to the UJC office ([ujc@ujc.org.hk](mailto:ujc@ujc.org.hk)) by Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> May.

### Tikkun Leil Shavuot



Come recreate the experience of Sinai at Tikkun Leil Shavuot, a late night study celebration of the Giving of Torah. We will begin at 8:30 PM and study until the last Jew falls. Our celebration will include the Siyyum of the "One Congregation, One Book" Project.

Will you study longer than all others and be named Iron Jew of 5772? There is only one way to find out.

When: Saturday, 26<sup>th</sup> May at 8:30 PM

Where: UJC Sanctuary

Please RSVP to the UJC office by Thursday, 24<sup>th</sup> May.



### Shavuot Day 2 Morning Service & Yizkor

When: Monday, 28<sup>th</sup> May at 8:00 AM

Where: UJC Sanctuary

## Shorashim

Shorashim meets as usual this Sunday, 20<sup>th</sup> May at 9:30 AM in The UJC Sanctuary. Shorashim will **NOT** meet on 27<sup>th</sup> May because of Shavuot.

Plan on joining us for the **Early Family Shabbat dinner on this Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May at 6:00PM**. During the service at 7:00 PM, children whose birthdays are in April and May (and anyone we may have missed) will receive a special blessing and a sweet treat. Please RSVP to the UJC office if you'll be attending the Early Shabbat Dinner.

Mark your calendars — the **Shorashim end of the year lunch** will be held on **Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> June**. Please make sure to join us to honor our teachers and madrichim, distribute tzedakah, and say goodbye for the summer. Full details to follow, but plan on joining us on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Finally, Gan and Kitah Alef parents, please look around your home for any JCC Library books that you may still have. The end of the year is approaching fast and we need to start getting all our library books returned.

See you at Shorashim,

Rabbi Martha ([rabbimartha@ujc.org.hk](mailto:rabbimartha@ujc.org.hk))

## Havdalah Pajama Party

**Havdalah Pajama Party is coming up!**

This program is for our “older twos” and 3 year old members and their parents. Come in your PJ's to sing and dance, make a craft, and say goodbye to Shabbat and hello to the new week.

This time our theme will be Shavuot

Date: **Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> May**  
When: **5:30 PM — 6:30 PM**  
Where: **UJC Sanctuary**



Please RSVP to The UJC office ([ujc@ujc.org.hk](mailto:ujc@ujc.org.hk)) by Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May.

## Rosh Chodesh

The Rosh Chodesh group will meet on **Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> May at 8:30 PM** at the Rabbi's apartment (Apt. 3C, One Robinson Place).

**Rabbi Martha** will lead the discussion on *Love and Duty: The Book of Ruth*.

To help us plan, please RSVP to The UJC office ([ujc@ujc.org.hk](mailto:ujc@ujc.org.hk)) by Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> May.

## UJC Israel Trip

**The UJC Israel Trip is a Go!**

**Spend Chinese New Year 2013 in Israel with The UJC**

**February 8 — February 16, 2013**

The trip will be a wonderful experience for both first-time visitors and those who have previously visited Israel.

Everyone is welcome — young and old, singles, couples, families!

For more information, please email us at [Israel2013@ujc.org.hk](mailto:Israel2013@ujc.org.hk) to let us know you are interested and we will send you the information packet for the trip or view the itinerary at [www.arzaworld.com/United-Jewish-Congregation-of-Hong-Kong.aspx](http://www.arzaworld.com/United-Jewish-Congregation-of-Hong-Kong.aspx).

Questions? Please use our special email address [Israel2013@ujc.org.hk](mailto:Israel2013@ujc.org.hk).



## OOMF



## THIRD GATHERING OF OOMF *OOMF, Assemble!*

OOMF is the UJC affinity group for lovers of nerd culture in all its myriad forms.

Come prepared to share what you are reading, watching, or are otherwise obsessed with for “The Transference” — the pooling of geek knowledge that will occur at every gathering of OOMF.

Take your rightful place as an Overlord on **Wednesday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May at 7:30 PM** at the Rabbi's flat. RSVP by emailing us at [rabbizamek@ujc.org.hk](mailto:rabbizamek@ujc.org.hk).

Signed and Sealed on this day

**THE GRAND MAGISTERIUM OF OOMF**

Joshua Lavin

Ross O'Brien

Rabbi Stanton M. Zamek



## UJC Book Group — The Bookers

Join the Bookers, The UJC's book group, as we discuss **Hope: A Tragedy by Shalom Auslander**.

We'll meet on **Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> June at 7:30 PM** in the Rabbi's flat. *Hope: A Tragedy* has been called a “A wonderful, twisted, transgressive, heartbreaking, true, and hugely funny book.” Provocative and irreverent, this book is sure to provoke a lively discussion. *Hope: A Tragedy* is available both in conventional book and e-book forms. To help us plan, please RSVP to The UJC office ([ujc@ujc.org.hk](mailto:ujc@ujc.org.hk)) by Tuesday, 5<sup>th</sup> June.



## Meet Noa Sattath

Learn About the Struggle for Civil Society in Israel with **Noa Sattath**, Director, Israel Religious Action Center.



**Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> June**

8:30 PM — ROSH CHODESH GROUP

Topic: **“Women to the Front, Men in the Back”**

A discussion on gender segregation in the public sphere in Israel, the un-orthodox coalitions that achieved major victories, and the struggles still ahead.

Venue: *Rabbi's Apartment (Apt. 3C, One Robinson Place)*

**Thursday, 21<sup>st</sup> June**

8:00 AM — BREAKFAST CHAVURAH

Topic: **“Pride and Tolerance in Jerusalem”**

The story of the Jerusalem Open House, the only LGBT community center in Jerusalem, which has withstood unprecedented attacks by Christian, Muslim and Jewish religious leaders.

Venue: *Starbucks Coffee*

(M2, Baskerville House, 13 Duddell Street)

Cost: HK\$100 per person for Continental breakfast

**Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> June**

7:00 PM — SHABBAT SERVICES

Topic: **“Racist Rabbis And The State That Ignores Them”**

At services, Noa will speak on the troubling phenomenon of state-employed Rabbis that incite against minorities in Israel, and the struggle against them by progressive Jewish organizations in Israel. The discussion will continue at Shabbat dinner following services.

Venue: *UJC Sanctuary*

For all events, please RSVP to the UJC office ([ujc@ujc.org.hk](mailto:ujc@ujc.org.hk)) by Monday, 18<sup>th</sup> June.

## A Generous Invitation From Robert Meyer UIA Solidarity and Appeal Dinner

Dear UJC Members and Friends,

As a co-founder of the UJC and a board member of the United Israel Appeal Hong Kong, I have great pleasure in underwriting the cost this year of two tables (24 persons) for UJC Members and Friends at the upcoming UIAHK Annual Gala Cocktail and Dinner themed, "Delicacies of the Diaspora," featuring a Member of the Israeli Knesset and an Israeli who has benefited in the past from the UIA. The Gala will be held **at 7:00 pm on Tuesday, June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012 at the JCC** on Robinson Road. (Please see the attached flyer for details.)

I would like to invite you to attend this worthwhile event which raises needed funds for the education and absorption of new immigrants to Israel. I hope that you will attend the Gala to learn more about the United Israel Appeal and will dig into your pockets to help the UIAHK meet its fundraising targets for 2012.

Please respond to Nancy and Charlene at the UJC office at: [ujc@ujc.org.hk](mailto:ujc@ujc.org.hk) to confirm your attendance.

Thank you very much in advance and best regards to all.

Yours truly,  
Bob

### From the Rabbi's desk

#### *Chaverim*

*Rabbi Martha wrote a splendid D'var Torah this week for the UPJ Parashat HaShavuah newsletter. I am not sure our whole chevre got a chance to see it, so I asked her to be a guest columnist in this week's in Shabbat Shalom. I know you will appreciate this insightful message.*

While the financial side of communal life has become an issue of central importance in these uncertain economic times, it is a very, very old concern. No matter what the level of standard dues, synagogues and communal institutions have always been dependent on generous voluntary donations made in addition to those required for membership. The Torah even addresses funding the Sanctuary at the end of this week's *parashah*, *B'chukkotai*.

Several methods of funding the Sanctuary, both required and voluntary, are outlined. One of these is a votive pledge of silver described as the "equivalent of a human being." This gift of silver harks back to a time when people would dedicate themselves, or their children, to Temple service. The story of Hannah's dedication of Samuel to the sanctuary at Shiloh is one example. However, donating the equivalent of one's life in silver allowed the Sanctuary to receive necessary funding, while at the same time satisfying the ancient tradition of dedication.

But if silver is to be accepted in place of a lifetime of service, how is the amount to be determined? Leviticus 27:3-7 specifies the amounts that are to be paid in "shekels of silver by the sanctuary weight." The amounts are presented in the chart below:

<u>Age</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
20-60 years of age	50 shekels	30 shekels
5-20 years of age	20 shekels	10 shekels
1 month – 5 years of age	5 shekels	3 shekels
over 60 years of age	15 shekels	10 shekels

A quick glance at the chart seems to indicate that the age ranges reflect productive capacity — people age 20-60 are in their prime working years. The differences between males and females may be linked to presumptions of productivity or reflect the social status of women. In any case, the Torah specifies a value in silver as the "equivalent" of each human being.

Determining the worth of a human being in this way seems very foreign. While insurance companies and lawyers may at times determine certain payouts based on age and projected productivity, outside of these narrow contexts this kind of calculus makes us squirm. Those of us who live in progressive, egalitarian societies espouse that all people, regardless of age or sex, are equal.

But if we look closer, it becomes apparent that the world at large does indeed find some people more valuable than others. We value the rich over the poor, the beautiful more than the ugly, the successful more than the unsuccessful, and the clever over the dull. These are more subjective measures than those of age and sex used in the Torah, and perhaps more insidious.

The synagogue is part of the world, surrounded by a semi-permeable membrane. This allows Jewish ethics to diffuse into the wider world, but there's no denying that, for good or for ill, the values of the wider world do filter into our sacred communities.

We strive to create egalitarian communities where all are welcomed and appreciated, and yet at times some are valued more than others. If we are honest, all of us have seen this at one time or another: the member whose outrageous demands are met because he is a large donor; the painfully awkward teen left on the periphery of the youth group; the woman who yields undue influence because she presides over a clique; the man that no one talks to at the Oneg Shabbat because he is "odd." Despite our best intentions, our very human attraction to wealth, beauty, and charm, can distort our vision and prevent us from seeing the true worth of an individual.

But the Torah portion provides a remedy for this as well. It says, "But if one can not afford the equivalent, he shall be presented before the priest, and the priest shall assess him" (Lev. 27:8). The priest was to look at the person who could not pay the specified amount in silver, and determine an appropriate contribution. To do this, the priest would have to look at the person and truly see him as an individual. What if we, like the priest, were to focus our gaze on all those around us and see their true worth? Not bank balances, or beauty, or superficial, easy charm, but kindness, patience, and wisdom. A willingness to listen, support, and encourage. A longing to be a part of a community and to contribute to it. This is the true value of a human life.

*B'chukkotai* specifies that the shekels donated were to be assessed by "the sanctuary weight" — a holy measure for a holy act. May we too value others "by the sanctuary weight," assessing their worth, not by the world's measure, but by God's.

# UJC Calendar

May 2012      Iyar / Sivan 5772						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 <i>UJC office closed</i> <b>12:00pm Jewish Tzofim of HK Celebration event for Israel Independence Day</b>	2	3	4 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	5 9:30am Torah Study
6 9:30am Shorashim (No Bagels & Binah) <b>10:15am Torah Boot Camp</b>	7	8 No Academy of Adult Learning classes	9	10	11 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	12 9:30am Torah Study
13 9:30am Shorashim (No Bagels & Binah) <b>10:15am Torah Boot Camp</b> <b>6:30pm JWA Ball</b>	14	15 7:00pm Introduction to Judaism (Cycle 2)	16	17 <b>6:30pm Jewish Beer Drinking Association</b>	18 <b>6:00pm Early Family Shabbat Dinner</b> 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	19 11:00am Torah Study ( <i>note time changed for this week only</i> ) <b>5:30pm Havdalah Pajama Party</b>
20 9:30am Shorashim	21 7:00pm ExCo Meeting <b>8:30pm Rosh Chodesh Group</b>	22 7:00pm Introduction to Judaism (Cycle 2) - <i>final class</i>	23 <b>7:30pm OOMF</b>	24	25 <b>8:00am Breakfast Chavurah with Dr. Daniel Matt</b> 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner <b>Guest speaker: Dr. Daniel Matt</b>	26 <b>10:00am Special Torah Study with Dr. Daniel Matt</b> <b>8:30pm Tikkun Leil Shavuot with guest speaker: Dr. Daniel Matt</b>
27 No Shorashim <b>7:30pm Dessert Reception with Dr. Daniel Matt</b>	28 <i>UJC office closed</i> <b>8:00am Shavuot Day 2 Morning Service and Yizkor</b>	29	30	31		

June 2012      Sivan / Tammuz 5772						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 <b>6:00pm Early Family Shabbat Dinner</b> 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	2 9:30am Torah Study
3 9:30am Shorashim 10:00am Bagels & Binah	4	5 <b>7:00pm UIA Solidarity and Appeal Dinner</b>	6 <b>7:30pm The Bookers</b>	7	8 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	9 <b>10:00am Shabbat Morning Service and Bat Mitzvah of Mya Miller</b>
10 9:30am Shorashim - End of Year Lunch	11 <b>7:00pm UJC Annual General Meeting</b>	12	13	14 <b>6:30pm Jewish Beer Drinking Association</b>	15 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	16 9:30am Torah Study
17	18	19 <b>8:30pm Rosh Chodesh Group with Guest speaker: Noa Sattath</b>	20	21 <b>8:00am Breakfast Chavurah with Noa Sattath</b>	22 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner <b>Guest speaker: Noa Sattath</b>	23 9:30am Torah Study
24	25	26	27	28	29 7:00pm Shabbat Service & Dinner	30 9:30am Torah Study