

January / February 2024 Teiveit / Sh'vat / Adar I 5784





Lessons from History

Recent studies have shown that many people chanting slogans about the war between Israel and Hamas do not know the historical context of the conflict. Let me attempt to remind us of some necessary (somewhat oversimplified) background. Continued on page 3.



We Need a Laugh, So Here's to Mickey Katz, the Pioneer of Jewish-American Musical Parodies!

I was listening to a podcast on the History of Rock when the many cover versions of the classic country song, "Sixteen Tons" by Merle Travis, mentioned a parody version by Mickey Katz. I had a small acquaintance with Mickey Katz, so I gave it a listen and I was floored. It made me smile and laugh even though I didn't understand quite a bit of it, as there's a good bit of Yiddish. As we're living in a time when we could use a laugh, I thought I'd share it with you. Continued on page 6.



Reflecting on the First Few Months of the Year

Each school year, I find myself amazed at how quickly the time passes. Suddenly, you look up and it's the end of December. Over the last several months, we have studied, prayed, sung, and laughed together. We have also talked about some serious subjects and the importance of the work we do as Jewish educators. We welcomed the Israeli cousin of one of our students who was temporarily living in the area. We have also been delighted to have several new families join our school community. **Continued on page 6.**



Join us for an inspiring service in which we honor the life and legacy of the Reverend Martin Luther King, including rousing songs of the Civil Rights movement. Remote and in-person services.





Fridays, January 19th and February 16th, at 6:30 pm Shabbat NaShirah Service, followed by Potluck Dinner

Come elevate your soul with favorite melodies and spiritual moments in a circle of sacred song led by our *Mevarchim* ("blessers" who sing and play musical instruments). We hope you can join us for a Potluck Dinner following the *Shabbat NaShirah* service. Please remember that dishes should be free of meat, chicken, shellfish, and all nuts. Feel free to bring a bottle of wine to share.

What should you expect when you walk into the sanctuary on this special day?

- Seating in concentric circles creates a closely connected community
- Several talented musicians and singers join Cantorial Soloist David and Rabbi Ken to lead engaging melodies with beautiful accompaniment
- The music draws you in and encourages you to sing, or to get lost in the groove of a hand drum, the airy tones of a flute, the strumming of guitars, or the harmony of voices
- Your soul soars!

Sisterhood News

We've had a wonderful start to our year. Our kick-off brunch was very nice. We got to meet new members and reconnect with others. The food was delicious at the Jockey Club in Raynham, but the highlight was participating in the organizing of postage stamps for the **Holocaust Stamp Project.**

Also, Sisterhood celebrated *Chanukah* by first lighting the TCS *m'norah* and then enjoying a hot chocolate bar and sweets. We had fun creating a Star of David trivet out of wooden beads.

Upcoming events:

Sunday afternoon, Jan. 21st: Join us at a College Care Package event at TCS. We will gather as a community to create fun care packages for our students in college. Light refreshments will help served. More info to come.

Board elections will be held in March 2024. Please contact past Sisterhood president, Teresa Kempner, if you are interested in joining our Sisterhood board. She can fill you in on available openings and answer any questions.





Temple Chayai Shalom 2024 Winter Lecture Series

Sponsored by the Brotherhood and Sisterhood

Series Topic

What I Do and Why

Community members discuss their occupation and / or passion All sessions held in the Temple Chayai Shalom Sanctuary.

- Understanding America's Obesity and Diabetes Epidemics and what you can do Wednesday January 24 at 11:30 am
 - about it ... Gary Fradin, President, HealthInsuranceCE and TCS member
- How I Bought, Built and Sold an Ad Agency and Transitioned into Semi-Retirement ... Wednesday February 7 at 11:30 am
 - Joe Emerson, Partner, Red Ball Promotions and TCS member
- Easton's History of Social Justice ... Ed Hands, former Chair, History Department, Wednesday February 21 at 11:30 am
 - Oliver Ames High School and prominent local historian

60 minute lecture and discussion

Click Here to Register followed by a light lunch

Please register in advance at garyfradin1234@gmail.com

Two more Lecture Sessions will be added in the spring. Watch for more information about speaker, dates, and times. Part of the complication of competing narratives is when one chooses to start the story. For Jews, I believe, the story begins in Biblical times, when the 12 tribes of Israel, after having escaped from slavery in Egypt and wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, entered and settled the land of Canaan. The mythological history of the Bible began to intersect with archeological evidence around the time of King David, in roughly the year 1000 BCE. King David joined the 12 tribes' holdings into one unified kingdom. Following the reign of David's son King Solomon, however, the kingdom split. Eventually, the northern kingdom (consisting of 10 tribes, who would be "lost" to history) was conquered by the Assyrians in 722 BCE, and the southern kingdom (led by the tribe of Judah, called in Hebrew Y'hudah, whose inhabitants were known as Y'hudim, translated now as Jews) endured until the Babylonian conquest of 586 BCE. 50 years later, the Persian empire allowed the Judean refugees to return and rebuild their Temple which the Babylonians had destroyed. Roughly 350 years later, Judah Maccabee and his followers expelled the Syrian ruler Antiochus and re-established a Jewish kingdom. Roughly 250 years after that, in the year 70 CE, the Roman Empire destroyed the Second Temple and exiled much (but not all) of the Judean population. The Romans referred to the land as Palestine instead of Judea, in part to attempt to sever the connection between the refugees and their homeland. But they failed, as Jews began to create liturgy, ritual, and custom to keep alive the historical memory of the land and their longing to return someday. Even under Roman rule, some Jews remained, especially in cities like Jerusalem, Tz'fat, Hebron, and Tiberias. There were Jews living in the land when the Muslim Arabs conquered it in the 7th century. They fought against the Crusaders, and other Jews returned to the land after being expelled from European countries, or to escape pogroms, which in turn contributed to the development, in the late 19th century, of political Zionism - that is, the effort to re-establish a Jewish state as a homeland for the Jews.

This historical record disproves the modern accusation that Israel is a "colonialist" enterprise. Colonialism has three characteristics that do not apply to the Jews populating Israel. First, colonists are brand-new to the area they settle; the British Empire, for example, had no historical connection to India before colonizing it. Second, colonists represent their home country; the British in India still considered themselves and remained British. Third, colonists are always free to return to the land of their origin; the British could have left India any time they wanted and gone back to Great Britain. None of these aspects is true of the Jews. As I have described, Jews have deep and continuous historical roots in the land of Israel. Jews coming to Israel after the expulsion from Spain certainly did not consider themselves still to be Spanish. Jews fleeing from pogroms or the Holocaust had no ability to return to the countries they had left. They were not colonizers; they were returning home, often when they had nowhere else to go.

To return to the history: especially as a result of persecution elsewhere, Jewish settlement in the land increased in the late 19th century. Although many Jews legitimately purchased the land, sometimes from distant landlords, there was conflict between the returning Jews and the settled Arabs. The Zionists scored a major accomplishment with the Balfour Declaration in 1917, when Britain acknowledged the right of the Jews to a homeland in Palestine. At the end of World War I, out of the ruins of the Ottoman Empire, Palestine was given to Britain as its mandate. In 1922, the British carved out of this territory the kingdom of Transjordan, now called Jordan, but which was originally part of Palestine. Jews continued to immigrate to the land, despite British attempts to restrict it. The Jews and the Arabs fought each other, and each of them fought against the British. Eventually, Britain decided to withdraw from its mandate. On November 29, 1947, the United Nations approved a plan to partition what was left of Palestine into two neighboring states: one Jewish, one Arab. The Jews accepted and rejoiced at this plan; the surrounding Arab countries raged and planned for war.

In May of 1948, Britain completed its withdrawal. On May 14, Israel established the state of Israel on the land approved in the partition plan and issued its Declaration of Independence, which said in part, "We extend our hand to all neighboring states and their peoples in an offer of peace and good neighborliness, and appeal to them to establish bonds of cooperation and mutual help with the sovereign Jewish people settled in its own land." The response from the Arab countries was to attack Israel from all sides. Tens of thousands of Jews were expelled from Arab countries, their land and property confiscated; they came to Israel, which welcomed them, absorbed them, and integrated them into society. Tens of thousands of Arabs who fled the fighting in Palestine - or were told by surrounding Arab countries to leave until the Arabs won the war - were not resettled or reabsorbed by the surrounding Arab countries; instead, the countries permitted the construction of refugee neighborhoods, intended to be temporary housing until they could conquer Israel. These neighborhoods remain, even 75 years later, as what continue to be called refugee camps. Somehow, Israel won the war; when an armistice ended the conflict, Israel had taken some of the land that was envisioned by the partition as the Palestinian Arab state. The rest of that theoretical state was controlled by the Arab countries: Jordan annexed the West Bank, and Egypt possessed Gaza. That Palestinian state never came into being.

In 1964, the Palestine Liberation Organization was formed, before there were any so-called occupied territories; instead, its goal was to liberate all of Palestine, from the Jordan to the Mediterranean ("from the river to the sea"), eliminating the Jewish state entirely. In 1967, as Arab armies once more prepared for war, Israel launched a pre-emptive strike, ending the war six days later with the capture of significantly more territory in the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and the Golan Heights, and reunifying Jerusalem. From the moment the war ended, however, Israel offered the return of some territory in exchange for peace, a concept crystallized in United Nations Resolution 242 that November. But the Arab countries, meeting that summer in Khartoum, Sudan, emerged with what have been called "the three no's:" no peace with Israel, no recognition of Israel, no negotiations with Israel. This philosophy erupted again in the Yom Kippur War of 1973, which Israel again survived. Finally, in 1979, Egypt broke ranks to conclude a peace agreement with Israel, in which Israel returned the Sinai Peninsula to Egypt—but Egypt did not take back the Gaza Strip. In 1993, Jordan also signed a peace treaty with Israel.

But as the state of war with other countries diminished, the issue of the Palestinian Arabs became more prominent. The PLO, and other similar entities, fought Israel through terrorist attacks. Faced with this kind of threat, Israel's response had to be different. They targeted Palestinian leaders and attacked their headquarters in Lebanon, where they had been located since 1970 (when Jordan expelled them). In 1978, and again in 1982, Israel invaded Lebanon in order to drive PLO terrorists away from the border, creating a buffer zone beyond the range of Palestinian weaponry. In 1987, the Palestinians changed tactics again, starting the intifada, street riots. In addition, Palestinian organizations coordinated suicide bombings and rocket attacks from the territories. In 1988, the Islamic Resistance Movement, known by its Arabic acronym Hamas, was founded, with its charter calling for ongoing attacks until the complete elimination of Israel. When Israel and the Palestinians entered peace negotiations and signed the Oslo accords in 1993 (intended to increase Palestinian control over the territories in confidence-building steps that could then lead to a more permanent solution), Yasser Arafat compared it to a famous treaty that Mohammed had signed, only to break it when the time was right. He thus sent a message to the Palestinian people that negotiations and peace agreements were a temporary stage in the quest for conquest. Finally, at Camp David in the summer of 2000, Ehud Barak made the most generous offer conceivable by an Israeli prime minister: a Palestinian state on 97 percent of the territory of the West Bank and Gaza, excluding only certain Jewish settlements, with a trade of the other 3 percent of the land to come from inside the 1967 armistice lines. But instead of continuing the negotiations, Arafat walked away, never even making a counteroffer. This green light to terror led to an upsurge in homicide bombings targeted at Israeli civilians. The other casualty of this "second intifada" was the Israeli peace camp, which felt that if Arafat's response to the best possible offer was more violence, then the only alternative was forcefully preventing the Palestinians from being able to injure and kill more Israelis.

I need now to pause the history once more to address another implication of today's slogans. Some people assert that Palestinian attacks against Israel are their legitimate resistance to the occupation by Israel of what was intended to be Palestinian land and the mistreatment by Israel of the Palestinians who live there. So I will acknowledge three facts about Israeli actions since the 1967 war, but suggest that they are not the "obstacles to peace" that these people claim. First, it is true that some religious fundamentalists object to giving up any part of the "Holy Land" and would attempt to block a Palestinian state established there. Towns in the West Bank such as Hebron, Nablus, and Bethlehem have religious significance to Jews from the Biblical history, and relinquishing them to Palestinian control would sever the Jewish connection. Thus some Palestinian sympathizers argue that armed resistance is required to force Israel to give up this land. But until recently these fundamentalists were never in power in Israel's government. Israel repeatedly made clear its willingness and intention to exchange those lands for peace.

Second, it is true that Israel continues to expand settlements in the West Bank. These settlements take land that the Palestinians want for their own state, and make a contiguous Palestinian state less and less possible. These "facts on the ground" strengthen Israel's hold on the land, and again lead Palestinian sympathizers to claim that armed resistance is the only way to dislodge them. But Israel has repeatedly shown its willingness to uproot settlements in exchange for peace, as they did in the Sinai in 1979 and as they did in Gaza in 2005. In a true peace agreement, these settlers would have been evicted too (or the Palestinians would have received compensatory land).

Third, it is true that life for the Palestinians who live in the territories under Israeli control is very rough. Israel subjects them to checkpoints that restrict their ability to travel. In many places, the security fence divides Palestinian villages, even separating families, and it greatly complicates the provision of civil services to these towns. Palestinians too often face humiliating treatment by Israeli soldiers. But the simple truth is that because of the intifadah and attackers coming from the territories into Israel proper, Israel has had to be suspicious. The solution to these issues would have been a peace agreement, any of the numerous times that Israel offered one. These conditions do not justify armed resistance and terror attacks; such violence only makes the situation worse for both Israelis and Palestinians.

Which mostly brings us to today. In 2005, Israel withdrew from the Gaza Strip, leaving infrastructure like greenhouses and orchards to enable the Palestinians to start to build their own economy and lay the foundation for a state. Instead, in 2007, Hamas won elections to take control in Gaza, and they transformed Gaza into a launching pad for attacks on Israel. They turned irrigation pipes into missile tubes; they diverted international humanitarian assistance funds into buying weapons; they embedded themselves into civilian institutions, hiding their weapons and command centers in residential areas, schools, hospitals, and mosques, turning Gaza itself into one large human shield. Periodically, in response to ongoing rocket attacks from Gaza, Israel had to respond with its own bombs or occasional incursions. But even then, Israel's intention was only to protect the Israeli civilians whom Hamas targets, not to reoccupy Gaza or to kill Palestinians.

But the Hamas attack of October 7 was of a totally different order of magnitude, and thus has triggered a different reaction. The killing of 1200 Israeli civilians, the abduction of 240 hostages, the brutality to which the victims, hostages, and survivors were subjected, necessitated a much stronger Israeli response. After 16 years of repeated Hamas attacks, Israel is no longer able to tolerate an existential threat on its border. Meanwhile, Hamas continues to hold captive Israeli civilians, female and male, young and old, sick and injured. So in the face of this attack, Israel has had to go to war to protect herself. One tragic consequence has been the devastation that Israeli bombs have inflicted on Gaza, both in terms of civilian deaths and the destruction of infrastructure. For the most part, Israel goes to great lengths to minimize civilian

casualties, but it is a dreadful outcome of war that people die, including innocent bystanders—and it was Hamas' attacks on Israeli civilians that catalyzed the Israeli response that has brought such suffering to the people of Gaza. We mourn their heartrending loss, and we mourn their subjection to a "leadership" that has gotten them into this catastrophic situation.

Nevertheless, those who now call for a ceasefire forget that there was a ceasefire in effect until Hamas broke it on October 7. They neglect to mention that when Hamas agreed to release hostages, Israel agreed to a ceasefire, which lasted until Hamas stopped releasing hostages and started firing rockets again. They ignore the reality that the only reason there is fighting happening now is that Hamas attacked Israel. If Hamas put down its weapons, there would be no more war. If Israel put down its weapons first, there would be no more Israel.

Let me be clear about my politics. I consider myself to be a disillusioned dove. All my life, I have supported a two-state solution. I have never been a supporter of Benjamin Netanyahu; I believe that he has often been wrong and likely criminal as a prime minister. I wonder what his endgame strategy is now; I will most likely disagree with it, but I pray that he at least has one. All that notwithstanding, I believe that Israel is doing now what needs to be done, and must continue to do so until the threat from Hamas is eliminated and the remaining hostages are returned. May that time come soon, and with as little loss of life as possible.

I hope that this background helps to inform our response to this terrible time, and gives us a firm foundation with which to discuss it with other people. The truth is that right now, Israel is not only fighting Hamas, but the vast majority of world opinion. So while other people, and maybe some of you, may disagree with my assessment, either to the right or to the left, I hope that responses will at least be grounded in a clear-eyed understanding of the history of this conflict.

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Thursdays, January 4th, February 1st, and February 29th

Join Rabbi Ken for informal learning over lunch at Bertucci's in Mansfield Crossing. Each session is organized around a theme – something in the news or relevant on the Jewish calendar.

Tot Shabbat



Fridays, January 12th and February 2nd 5:45 pm to 7:00 pm Dinner Included



Join us on the following Sundays for an exploration of Jewish topics through music, games, movement, and crafts. Young children make friends and have fun while exploring Jewish holidays and Bible stories!

Young Explorers (Sunday Mornings from 9:30-10:30am):

January 21st (*Tu bì-Sh'vat Seder*) February 11th (*Shabbat*)

Geared to children ages 3 to 5, \$20/session. Register at: https://forms.gle/wdGwdykYcehv9smW9

Throughout the year, we offer engaging programming for both families and adults. If you have any questions, would like us to add your name to our mailing list, are interested in hosting an event, or would like to become more involved with planning, please contact **Jeri Robins**, Director of Education.

We Need a Laugh...

Mickey Katz may be best known today, if at all, as the father of Joel Grey and grandfather of Jennifer Grey. But in his time, primarily in the 1950s, he was well-known as a great Yiddish-American musical comic, producing parodies of popular songs of the day.

The Jewish-American musical parodies that I grew up with were those of Allan Sherman, from My Son, the Folksinger, and other albums of the early 1960s. Now we have Adam Sandler and Jack Black. But they were all preceded by Mickey Katz, the pioneer of the genre, who recorded primarily in the 1950s. And even without understanding a lot of his lyrics, I think he's probably the best.

Katz was a very fine Jazz and Klezmer clarinet and sax player in some of the top Jazz bands of the day. He was also an excellent band leader, as you can hear from the great playing and arrangements on his recordings. His parodies contain more Yiddish and more of a Jewish flavor musically than his successors, with virtuosic Klezmer interludes, as well as various Klezmer flourishes, in most pieces. It helps that Klezmer as a musical style, even when it's instrumental, has an inherent humor, playfulness, and showmanship that transcends language.

When Katz decided to create a second career as a musical comic, there was some opposition to his work from Jewish executives in the music business, who were in favor of assimilation and fearful of reinforcing negative stereotypes. Despite some refusal to play his music on the radio or sign him to record deals, many of his recordings became surprise hits. I suspect that they may have been popular not only among Jews, but among the "Jewish-adjacent."

Here are three of example of his hits, in which he manages to transfer the hard life of coal mining, the frontiersman life, and an Italian love song to the wacky world of Jewish American immigrants.

Sixteen Tons of Latkes

Duvid Crockett

That's Morris (That's Amore)

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Reflecting...

From a programming standpoint, we have had two successful larger programs. First, in October, we hosted the Whalemobile and heard about our ocean friends and the many reasons to take care of our waterways. For our students, we tied the experience into the story of Jonah and the Whale. For both our Young Families and our SULAM/Gesher students it was exciting to be "inside" a whale!

2023 E aston, MA





In early **December**, we had a special Sunday afternoon with Jordan Gorfinkle, known as Gorf, who is a former Batman editor and also worked on several Marvel comics. A

gifted artist and educator, he brought out our creative sides and shared with CHANUSAH COMICS us some of the Jewish roots of our favorite comic book heroes. We created a Chanukah Comic Book; every SULAM student participated, as well as a few of our Gesher students, TCS families, and guests. It was so much fun to learn about cartooning and to work together to produce the finished product. Everyone had a chance to complete a page or two for the story and let their inner artists out. Here is the link to our completed creation.

Looking ahead to **January**, SULAM *Shabbat* is on Saturday morning, January 6th. There is a service at 10:00 am, followed by a pot-luck lunch. While this event is geared to our religious school families, the congregation is welcome. If you'd like to join us, please **RSVP** to bring something to the lunch.

We look forward to an exciting spring for our religious school families, as well as our Young Families. Please share our events, including Tot Shabbats, Young Explorers, and SULAM.

Wishing you all a very happy 2024, Jeri

Temple Chayai Shalom's 16th Annual Team Trivia Night and Dinner Saturday, January 27th 7:00 pm at the Temple

Bring your brain AND your stomach! Put together your own team of four, or we'll help place you with other couples or singles, and compete by answering questions in various categories including current events, sports, entertainment and more! Prizes for the winning team!

Entry fee for Brotherhood members is \$20/person or \$36/couple. For non-members it is \$26/person or \$44/couple. Your entry covers Dinner and the game.

We ask that each competitor bring either a non-alcoholic drink, dessert or appetizer.
You are also allowed to bring alcoholic beverages for your own table.

This event is hosted by the TCS Brotherhood AND is open to all members of the congregation.

Detach the portion below & return with your entry fee by Friday January 19th to: Temple Chayai Shalom, attn: Trivia Night, 239 Depot Street, South Easton, MA 02375

Temple Chayai Shalom Trivia Night & Potluck Dinner Saturday, January 27th - 7:00 PM at the Temple

S	Saturday, January 27th -	7:00 PM at the Temple
•		le. If you do not have a specific group of 4
check here and	d we will be happy to place	e you with other members to form a team.
Name	Phone	Bringing (Circle One)
		DRINKS APPETIZER DESSERT
Contact Email:		
Number of Bridge Table	es you can bring:	
Total Brotherho	od Entrants @ \$20 : Total H	Brotherhood Couples @ \$36 : = \$
Total Non-Brotherhoo	od Entrants @ \$26: Total 1	Non-Brotherhood Couples @ \$44 : = \$
Enclose	d Check pavable to TEMPL	E CHAYAI SHALOM BROTHERHOOD

Please write names of other entrants registering separately that you expect to form a team with.

Or Pay by Paypal through the Temple Website Brotherhood Page

Giving Tz'dakah is a Primary Jewish Value

A donation to the temple is a meaningful way to mark any occasion to celebrate a life cycle event, to honor someone, to remember a loved one, to thank the professional staff, or for any other reason and is always appreciated. A big thank you to everyone who has contributed.

Click Here to Donate

General Giving Fund

Norm & Sharlene Azer, in memory of Miriam Azer

Craig & Elaine Barger, in memory of Paul Sturman's mother, Diana Sturman

Nathalie Berkowitz, in memory of Judy Bradley & Mollie Meyerhoff, sister & mother of Nathalie Berkowitz

Aaron & Liz Bornstein, in memory of our grandparents, Marion Menkes and Leo & Marcia Smith

Rabbi Ken & Rebecca Carr

Brian & Lisy DeLano, in memory of Paul Sturman's mother, Diana Sturman

Gerry & Linda Labourene, in memory of Diana Sturman

Lenny Levine, in memory of the *yahrzeit* of his mother, Pearl Levine

Martin & Adele Miller, in loving memory of our parents, Louis and Rhoda Miller

Jack & Bertha Shear, in memory of Terry Dunlop

Richard Slotnick, in memory of his beloved mother, Gertrude Slotnick

Rona Slotnick, in memory of her beloved father, Edward Goldman

Howard & Veronica Wiseman, and family, in memory of our beloved father & grandfather, Irving Allan Wiseman

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Mike Cohen, in memory of his beloved mother, Diane Cohen

Matt & Melissa Gilman, in memory of Melissa's father, Bud Gorman

Myra Lapides, in memory of Polly & Samuel Lapides

Joni Mayer, in memory of her beloved father & grandfather, Julius L. Wilensky

Joni Mayer, in memory of her beloved brother & uncle, Neil Howard Wilensky

Jon & Denise Morgan, in memory of Ivan Morgan, Frank Bortugno, Barbara Bortugno,

Barbara Morgan, Doug Morgan, and Dan Morgan

High Holy Days Appeal

Ruth Albert

Jon & Denise Morgan

Social Action -T.O.R.C.H.

Ben & Denise Kravitz, in memory of Paul Sturman's mother, Diana Sturman, may her memory be a blessing

Rabbi Levenson/Sol Krumins Youth Scholarship Fund

Mike & Elissa Cohen, in memory of Joel Schwartz, beloved uncle of Brian Schwartz and family

Family Table Needs our Help Every Month Are you coming to TCS?

We need 30 cans of tuna and 30 cans of vegetarian soup!

Some people who cannot give the food may want to donate money to Family Table monthly instead. Click below if you would like to donate.

Thank you so very much.

https://www.jfcsboston.org/give/donate-online

