

Garden State Region News - May 22, 2026



**STAND
WITH
ISRAEL**

Happy Shavuot



**STAND UP
TO JEWISH
HATE**

WL Week

Visit GSR Website

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MESSAGE FROM SHEILA KAUFMAN, GSR PRESIDENT

Dear Affiliate,

Shalom!

Shavuot is here. We finish counting the Omer, celebrate receiving the Torah and becoming a nation, stay up all night studying, and of course eat cheesecake and blintzes. But let's take a look at the female side of the holiday, the Book of Ruth and the matriarchal relationships and contributions to family, loyalty, and empowerment.

Naomi was married and had two married sons whose wives were named Ruth and Orpah. Naomi's husband and both sons had died before the sons had children. The daughter-in-laws stayed with Naomi and were heading back to Naomi's homeland when Naomi urged the women to return to their homelands to find husbands. Orpah left but Ruth refused as she felt devoted to Naomi. She was loyal and they had mutual support for each other. Ruth worked in the field that belonged to a relative of Naomi's husband named Boaz. Boaz noticed Ruth working in the field and saw how loyal Ruth was to Naomi. To make a long story short, Boaz



and Ruth ultimately marry and Ruth had a son. Naomi became his foster mother and so this lineage continued to King David.

This story is so special for women. When women find a person or group, like sisterhood or Women's League, that shares their beliefs they become loyal and support each other. The power of women, the power of sisterhood, the power of Women's League. Imagine what we can do together.

The **Women's League Convention** is July 12-15 in Alexandria, VA. Registration is open. There is a Shabbaton that is a separate add-on from Friday to Sunday. The Convention is Sunday to Tuesday where we will celebrate the B'not Mitzvah class, installation of the International Board, daven, shop, speakers, celebrate the Jewels in the Crown Awards, and a whole lot more. Then another add-on, from Tuesday night to Wednesday is a fun social program and ends with an open WL Board Meeting Wednesday morning. Check out the [Convention Website](#). [Teresa Samtur](#), our region Madricha, will keep us informed and help us along the way. Please let Teresa know of your plans after registering.

The Convention also has a Social Action project called [Comfort Cases](#). This initiative supports youths entering foster care in the Virginia, Washington DC region by providing them essential needs in a backpack. You do not need to go to the Convention to participate. [Amazon](#) can help you out! During checkout, please select "Gift Receipt" and include WLCJ, your Region name, Sisterhood Affiliate name, or Individual Member name so we can track our impact.

Deadlines:

- Convention Regular Registration closes June 1
- Hotel registration guaranteed rates are until June 7 and they are booked directly with the hotel.

Just a reminder, that you should plan on getting any Torah Fund donations for the 2025-2026 Torah Fund Campaign into the Torah Fund office by June 15.

Only 5.5 weeks left for me to visit your sisterhoods. If I have not been to yours, please let me know and let's make it happen!

Chag Sameach and Shabbat Shalom,



Sheila Kaufman

President, Garden State Region WLCJ

gsrpresident24@wlcj.org

"Networking to engage, enrich and empower Conservative Jewish women"

GSR SPRING CONFERENCE PHOTO HIGHLIGHTS

[More pictures are posted on the GSR website.](#)



GSR Board 2024-2026



GSR Board 2026-2029

2024-2026 EXECUTIVE OFFICERS

President - [Sheila Kaufman](#)
 VP, Programming - [Susan Winter](#)
 VP, Sisterhood/Affiliate Support - [Cheryl Sessler](#)
 VP, Torah Fund - [Sindy Manas](#)
 Secretary, Communications - [Ilene Rothman](#)
 Secretary, Corresponding - [Susan Sferas](#)
 Secretary, Financial - [Lisa Katz](#)
 Secretary, Recording - [Carol Kotch](#)
 Treasurer - [Donna Franklin](#)
 Parliamentarian - [Dorothy Cohen](#)
 Immediate Past President - [Lynette Seader](#)
 Advisor to the Board - [Meryl Balaban](#)
 Advisor to the Board - [Heddy Belman](#)

WLCJ CONVENTION DATES

- **July 10-15, 2026 - WLCJ Convention 2026; Alexandria, Va**
[REGISTRATION OPEN](#)
 - Fri.-Sat. July 10-11 - Shabbaton (add-on)
 - Sun.-Tues. July 12-14 - Convention
 - Tues.-Wed. July 14-15 - Evening Program & WLCJ Board Meeting (add-on)
- **Convention Deadlines**
 - Convention Regular Registration closes June 1
 - Hotel registration guaranteed rates are until June 7 and they are booked directly with the hotel.

B'not Mitzvah Women from GSR

Mazel Tov to our Region Women who will become a Bat Mitzvah at the WL Convention 2026!



- ❖ Betty Needleman - Torah Beth O'r Beth Torah, Clark
- ❖ Ilene Rothman - EBJC, East Brunswick
- ❖ Janice Saferstein - EBJC, East Brunswick

JEWELS IN THE CROWN AWARD RECIPIENTS

Mazel Tov to the GSR Region recipients of the Jewels in the Crown Award to



- ❖ Congregation Agudath Israel, Caldwell
- ❖ East Brunswick Jewish Center, East Brunswick
- ❖ Highland Park Conservative Temple-
Congregation Anshe Emeth, Highland Park
- ❖ Morristown Jewish Center Beit Yisrael, Morristown
- ❖ Congregation Torat El, Oakhurst
- ❖ B'nai Shalom, West Orange

REGISTER FOR WLCJ CONVENTION 2026 TODAY



WLCJ SHABBATON & CONVENTION 2026

Friday–Wednesday, July 10–15, 2026

Hotel room rates are guaranteed through **June 7, 2026**, so be sure to make your reservations early.

Click [here](#) to register and learn more. We look forward to seeing you there!

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

GET YOUR VIRTUAL JOURNAL AD TODAY

Whether you want to honor a trailblazing President, past or present, celebrate a major Sisterhood Affiliate milestone, or simply share a heartfelt message of gratitude, a virtual ad ensures your tribute will be seen and celebrated by attendees far and wide.

PLACE A VIRTUAL AD



SUPPORT THE WL CONVENTION 2026 SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT

COMFORT CASES

No child's suitcase should be a trash bag. Join us in supporting **Comfort Cases**. Help us bring dignity to youth entering foster care by replacing trash bags with backpacks filled with pajamas, fresh toiletries, and comforting blankets.

There is a critical need for teen items! Teenagers are often the most underserved group in the foster system. Your donations of adult-sized pajamas, full-size hygiene products, and journals will make a massive difference to an older child navigating a difficult transition.



DONATE

SISTERHOOD AFFILIATE PROGRAMS

Sisterhood Affiliates,

Do you have any programs that you would like others to know about? Either to publicize your event in advance or to share your affiliate program afterwards.

- To publicize your event in advance, send a flyer in jpg or pdf format with Registration link.
- To showcase your affiliate programs post event, submit up to 3 photos with captions and a few sentences to describe your program. (We will shorten if necessary.)

Please e-mail your programs that you would like posted in this newsletter to both [Ilene Rothman](#) AND [Sheila Kaufman](#).



Torah Fund supports programs and scholarships at the five Conservative/Masorti global institutes of higher education.





May 2026

Women's League for Conservative Judaism is pleased to announce that we will assume the administration of the **Torah Fund Campaign of Women's League for Conservative Judaism**, effective July 1st, 2026, marking a new chapter in the program's proud 84-year history of supporting Conservative/Masorti Jewish education and leadership. This transition will streamline operations and enable WLCJ to enhance engagement and efficiency while continuing to ensure robust support for all beneficiary institutions.

As of July 1, 2026, the new Torah Fund office will be located in the WLCJ offices:

Torah Fund
3080 Broadway, Suite K900
New York, NY 10027

We proudly announce that the 2026-2027 Torah Fund Campaign theme is:

Shema Koleinu

שמע קולנו

Hear our Voice

This year's campaign launches on July 1. Checks will continue to be made payable to Torah Fund. The donor button on the JTS website will directly connect to our new donation page on the WLCJ website. *From June 27 until June 30, 2026, the link for on-line donations will not be operational due to the transition.*

Please join us in welcoming Morgan Long, Torah Fund Manager, to our Torah Fund team.

As the transition goes forward, we will continue to provide Torah Fund Campaign updates.

Julia Loeb
President
jloeb@wlcj.org

Pam Schlosberg
Incoming President
pschlosberg@wlcj.org

Lori Snow
Torah Fund Vice President
lsnow@wlcj.org

Janet Kirschner
Incoming Torah Fund Vice President
jkirschner@wlcj.org

Announcing Our 2025-2026 Campaign Theme:

Oseh Shalom

עשה שלום

Maker of Peace

We strive to make a significant impact through scholarships and programs that benefit students at The Jewish Theological Seminary, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies, Schechter Institutes, Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano, and The Abraham J. Heschel Seminary.

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, we help committed Jewish students become the rabbis, cantors, educators, synagogue administrators, social workers, scholars, researchers and lay leaders of tomorrow.

When you support Torah Fund, you help educate students in New York, Los Angeles, Israel, Latin America and Europe—and you align with those who value learning, knowledge and providing the future generation with relevant skills to fortify the Jewish people.

Visit www.jtsa.edu/torah-fund

Oseh Shalom Bimromav, "may the One who makes peace in the heavens, make peace for us and all the people of Israel," appears at the end of Kaddish and in other prayers, and is also a song. We help foster Jewish unity by our support of the five global Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher education.



PLEASE GIVE GENEROUSLY TO TORAH FUND!

TORAH FUND GIVING LEVELS

Golden Supporter: \$8,100
Keter Kavod \$5,000
Scholarship Patron \$2,500
Patron \$1,200
Associate Patron \$600
Guardian \$300
Benefactor \$180

FOR OUR U.S. SUPPORTERS, go to inspired.jtsa.edu/torahfund
Or send your check to the Torah Fund office.

FOR OUR CANADIAN SUPPORTERS, go to torahfundecards.jtsa.edu/canadian
Make a donation of any amount with the minimum purchase of one ecard.
Or send a check to The Jewish Theological Society, 100 Elder Street, North York, Ontario, M3H 5G7.

The dedicated philanthropy of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism, Torah Fund supports scholarships and programs in the worldwide Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher Jewish learning.

TORAH FUND

3080 Broadway, New York, NY 10027
(212) 678-8876
www.jtsa.edu/torah-fund • torahfund@jtsa.edu

We have beautiful new ecards! Think of Torah Fund for any greeting.

We're expanding our collection with two new designs by Israeli artist Bracha Lavee—a thank-you card and a mazal tov card.

Show you care by sending a Torah Fund ecard for any occasion. For only \$5 per recipient you can send an attractive ecard—and you can even schedule it for a specific time!

Revenue from ecard purchases benefits the Torah Fund general campaign, and our affiliates receive credit for purchases. Make your selection today at torahfundecards.jtsa.edu

For our Canadian supporters, go to torahfundecards.jtsa.edu/canadian

And for our Canadian donors:
Make your gift to Torah Fund online via our ecards!
For a minimum C\$5 ecard purchase, you can add a contribution of any amount to Torah Fund.

It's easy! Select the card design you'd like to send and follow the user-friendly prompts to complete your transaction.



Torah Fund supports scholarships and programs at the five worldwide Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher education:

Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, Ziegler School of Rabbinic Studies in Los Angeles, Schechter Institutes in Jerusalem, Seminario Rabinico Latinoamericano in Buenos Aires, and The Abraham J. Heschel Seminary.

Thanks to our donors, we ensure quality education and diverse opportunities for students to become future Jewish leaders serving the broader Jewish community.

Our Jewish future is in your hands!
Visit torahfundecards.jtsa.edu
and send an ecard today.

TORAH FUND
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

TORAH FUND
The Jewish Theological Seminary
3080 Broadway
New York, NY 10027

www.jtsa.edu/torah-fund
torahfund@jtsa.edu

[Click HERE](#) to send a Torah Fund E-Card
[Click HERE](#) to donate to this year's 2025-26 Torah Fund Campaign
[Click HERE](#) to donate to the Torah Fund Legacy Society
[Click HERE](#) for the Torah Fund Chadashot Newsletter

Any questions please e-mail Sindy Manas at smanas750e@gmail.com.

GOOD & WELFARE - GARDEN STATE REGION *Share your news and nachas with us!*

Let us know if you have any simchas, special birthdays/anniversaries, well wishes, and sorrows to pass on to [Sheila Kaufman](#).

Birthday Wishes

Wishing all who have June anniversaries and birthdays, **Yom Huledet Sameach!**

Mazel Tov

- **Arlene Bernhardt**, GSR Torah Fund team, son, David, graduated from college.

- **Cory Schneider**, Past Women's League International President, granddaughter and grandson graduated from college.

Baruch Dayan HaEmet

- **Mimi Pollack**, Affiliations Chair and Past President of the Mid-Atlantic Region of WLCJ, on the passing of her beloved husband Bernard "Bernie" Pollack, z"l. Funeral services will be held on Sunday, May 24th, at Ohev Shalom of Bucks County, 944 Second Street Pike, Richboro, Pennsylvania 18954. A livestream of the funeral will be available [at this link](#). A livestream of the committal service will be available [at this link](#). Shiva will be observed at the home of Mimi Pollack, 70 Buckhorn Road, Richboro, Pennsylvania 18954 Monday, May 25th through Thursday, May 28th, from 12:00 to 4:00 PM and 6:00 to 9:00 PM, and on Friday, May 29th from 12:00 to 4:00 PM. Messages of condolence may be sent to Mimi Pollack at the address above and by email to MimiPollack@comcast.net.

DONATION OPPORTUNITIES

Make a Donation to the Garden State Region to:

- Honor someone special
- Wish a Mazel Tov to a Bar/Bat Mitzvah family
- Send get well wishes
- Send condolences

Our **Scholarship Fund** helps to send women to WLCJ Convention and Leadership Institute where they learn necessary skills to share with our sisterhoods.

The **Sunshine Fund** supports members of the GSR Board in their time of need.

The **Evelyn Auerbach Education Fund** to sponsor an annual GSR Region educational event.

To make donations, contact Donna Franklin, GSR Treasurer, at gstrtreasurer@wlcj.org and include which fund(s) to make the donation to.

Or mail your check payable to "GSR-WLCJ" to
Donna Franklin, 7 Liddy Place, West Caldwell, NJ 07006
Donations can also be made via Credit Card.

Donate to GSR using Credit Card

WLCJ PROGRAMS AND MESSAGES

SHAVUOT/SHABBAT MESSAGE FROM RABBI ELLEN WOLINTZ-FIELDS



REVELATION IS NOT OVER

Standing at Sinai Today: Shavuot marks the giving of the Torah, but revelation is an ongoing story. Read our Executive Director, Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields' message on how we bring Torah to life today through community, learning, and leadership.

READ

WL RESOLUTIONS

YOUR VOICE, OUR PLANET: VOTE ON THE CLIMATE CHANGE RESOLUTION

Thank you to everyone who joined our recent Zoom session and shared feedback on the proposed Resolution on Climate Change. Your insights are invaluable as we work together.

Human-induced climate change is an existential threat driven by fossil fuel emissions that trap heat, causing global temperatures to rise. This shift leads to catastrophic weather events and irreversible environmental damage. Jewish tradition provides a moral framework for this crisis, emphasizing our responsibility to "till and tend" the Earth as stewards.

Immediate action is required to prevent reaching critical temperature thresholds that would lead to worsening devastation for future generations.



CLIMATE CHANGE RESOLUTION

VOTE

PREPARE FOR WL CONVENTION 2026



REGISTER

DRESS AS YOUR BEST SELF!

Thurs | May 28 | 12:00 pm ET | Online

In preparation for Convention, join us for an exclusive webinar on mastering your Convention wardrobe. Learn from **travel expert Alexandra Jimenez** (*Travel Fashion Girl*) on how to "Dress as Your Best Self," and get creative tips from **WLCJ Creative Judaic Arts Chairperson Jody Glass** on perfecting your look for our "Midnight at the Masquerade" gala. From capsule wardrobes to masquerade masks, we've got you covered.

WL KEHILAT/EDUCATION

STRATEGIES FOR PROGRAM SUCCESS

Thurs | May 28 | 7:30 pm ET | Online

Ready to add some serious zest and zing to your sisterhood events? Join Kehilah-Education for an energizing workshop dedicated entirely to strategic programming and fresh ideas. You'll learn proven best practices directly from **Region Vice Presidents Gilda Schwartz, Rona Walters, and Susan Winter**. Additionally, **WLCJ Vice President Anise Parnes** will show you exactly how to unlock available program materials on the WLCJ website.



REGISTER

Following the ceasefire, political machinations have continued, and we are writing to inform you about important developments regarding the coalition's Kotel Legislation, which threatens those who pray in an egalitarian fashion at the Egalitarian Kotel with a **seven-year prison sentence**.

The legislation, which passed a preliminary reading in the Knesset plenum earlier this year, is now scheduled to be discussed at a Constitution, Law and Justice Committee hearing on May 20th. We at MERCAZ are working closely with our allies and partners across the Conservative/Masorti Movement and in Israel to make our voices - your voices - heard at this hearing and to stop this legislation from moving further forward before elections later this year. We are grateful to the over **13,000** of you who signed our Conservative/Masorti petition against the legislation – but with this hearing on the horizon, we are asking for your help in spreading this petition further so we can collect even more signatures and strengthen our position before Israeli legislators. Our communities have stood by Israel these trying past few years – and this legislation threatens to undermine the crucial bond between Israel and Jewish communities around the world.



To increase your impact, we ask that you sign onto this urgent petition <https://lp6.me/6NN2S?i=213> and forward the link to your family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. Thank you for your continued support. Together, we'll continue to stand up for a Jewish and democratic Israel that's safe and a welcoming home for every Jew.

SIGN THE PETITION

MASORTI WOMEN'S DAYS OF STUDY

"Lu Yehi" (May It Be)

Fri | Jun 12 | 2:30 - 8:30 am ET | Online

Join Conservative/Masorti women from across Israel and around the diaspora for the Masorti Women's Day of Study this June! Broadcasted in-person and on Zoom from the Schechter Institutes in Jerusalem, this year's theme explores Naomi Shemer's iconic song "Lu Yehi" to help us renew ourselves, our values, and our people. Don't miss this incredible opportunity to pray, sing, and study alongside our Israeli sisters with sessions offered in English, Hebrew, Spanish, and Russian.



VIEW SCHEDULE

REGISTER



Shavuot 5786

by Rabbi Ellen S. Wolintz-Fields

As Shavuot approaches, we prepare once again to stand at Sinai and receive the Torah anew. Yet the blessing we end many prayers with, *Oseh Shalom bimromav* — “May the One who makes peace in the heavens make peace for us” — reminds us that Torah is not only about learning; it is about how we live with one another.

The rabbis teach that the Torah was given when the Jewish people stood together “as one person with one heart.” Revelation required unity. Even with different opinions, backgrounds, and perspectives, the people had to create a community worthy of receiving Torah.

That message feels especially important today. Torah cannot flourish in an atmosphere of division, anger, or indifference. To truly receive Torah on Shavuot means striving to bring peace into our homes, our synagogues, and our communities.

When we say *Oseh Shalom*, we pray not only for peace from heaven, but for the wisdom and courage to become makers of peace ourselves

OTHER WLCJ PROGRAM REMINDERS

Click the image to explore each program series and to register.



Sessions will meet on a Tuesday night each month over Zoom at 7:30PM ET Nov 11, Dec 9, Jan 13, Feb 10, March 10, April 14, May 12, June 9

MAKOM B'YACHAD



There will be no Makom B'Yachad on Friday, May 22.

Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday

12 noon ET, 9am PT, 10am MT, and 11am CT

A virtual service for our WLCJ Sisters to recite *Mishaberach* (the Prayer for Healing) and Psalms, and study *Kaddish*.

<https://zoom.us/j/630830287>

Meeting ID: 630 830 287

Password: 875936

SHARE YOUR SISTERHOOD HAPPENINGS WITH US!

Look for all the info both here and on our Website & Facebook pages.

Follow the Garden State Region!

If you would like to contribute a flyer or picture to our newsletter please forward to [Ilene Rothman](#) and [Sheila Kaufman](#).

[Click here to connect with the Garden State Region Facebook page.](#)

[Click here to visit the Garden State Region website.](#)

Make sure to click both **Like** and **Follow**.

It's another great way to learn about everything happening in our Region.



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Garden State Region
WOMEN'S LEAGUE FOR CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM



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GSR Secretary Communications / Newsletter Editor
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