

Brookville Multifaith Campus



Where our doors and hearts are always open!

NEWS

January
2021

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www.brookvillemultifaithcampus.org

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Vision Statement

Through learning opportunities, essential partnerships, and occasional shared worship, our campus welcomes all who want to learn, question and grow, while making a positive and lasting impact in the community and world.

Mission

To build a multifaith community of people from different faiths who connect to one another by embracing similarities while celebrating differences.

Find a Place to Belong

Brookville Multifaith Campus invites you to discover a spiritual community made up of different religious groups. Together we promote cross cultural understanding, peace building, and a strong commitment to service. Each group maintains its own religious identity but fosters an open environment for learning, celebrating and honoring each distinct religion.

Some thoughts from campus leaders:

The Magi



Rev. Vicky Eastland

The Feast of the Epiphany is celebrated 12 days after Christmas. It falls on January 6th and follows the story of the Magi from the East searching out and finding the Christ Child. The word 'epiphany' simply means 'showing' or 'shining forth.' In the Christian Gospel of Saint Matthew, the story of the Magi is told. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, during the time of King Herod, Magi, or Wise Men as they have come to be known, came from the East, following a star. When they arrived in Jerusalem they asked around for Jesus. They said they had come to worship him. Legend tells us that these "Wise Men" were kings who came bearing gifts for Jesus. According to the Gospel of Matthew they did have gifts for Jesus, but we have learned over the years that these men were not actually kings; instead they were a caste of astrologer priests based in the ancient religion of

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Origin of the Quran



Dr. Sultan Abdulhameed

Quran is the primary scripture of Islam from which principles of Muslim living are derived. The name Quran is mentioned in the book itself which also states that it is revealed to Muhammad through the angel Gabriel and it is in Arabic so that it can be understood by the Arabs. Prophet Muhammad was born in the year 570 of the Christian calendar. The first revelation came to him when he was forty years old during the month of Ramadan. It was revealed in segments of varying length over the next twenty three years during which the Prophet was engaged in the struggle to teach his message.

Passages of the Quran were given to the prophet by the angel Gabriel (*jibreel* in Arabic). The prophet said *"It comes to me sometimes as the ringing of a bell and this is the hardest on me, then the angel leaves me and I remember what he said;*

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New Year of the Trees



Rabbi Stuart Paris HaKohen

"Every blade of grass has its Angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow, grow.""
~The Talmud

Tu B'Shevat, or the "New Year of the Trees," is Jewish Arbor Day. The holiday is observed on the 15th day (*tu*) of the Hebrew month of *Shevat* (this year corresponding to January 28th). *Tu B'Shevat* was an agricultural festival, marking the emergence of spring. The holiday has become a tree-planting festival in Israel, in which Israelis and Jews around the world plant trees in honor or in memory of loved ones and friends.

Tu B'Shevat is a holiday that brings us back to nature. After all, this is a time of year when we could easily lose sight of the beauty of nature.

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What the Holidays Mean to Us

IFCLI Guest authors: The Mankes Kids



Rosie Mankes (7 years old)

I like to celebrate Christmas and Hanukkah because I like to spend time with my family. For Hanukkah this year, I had a zoom meeting with my...



Danny Mankes (12 years old)

The holidays mean spending time with family. We thank God for all that we have and pray to God to help other people that are less fortunate.



Charlie Mankes (15 years old)

The holidays are about getting together with family. We can't really do that this year. The holidays are when we get cards from people.

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The Magi (continued from pg. 2)

Zoroastrianism and were likely from Iran. The star the Magi followed has become known as the Christmas Star and many believe it was no ordinary star. Some scholars believe that it was the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn, which only happens about once a millennia and was due to happen on December 21, 2020 after 800 years!

Matthew's Gospel tells us that when King Herod heard of these men asking around for Jesus he and all of Jerusalem were disturbed. The Magi were asking where the king of the Jews had been born. Herod secretly met with these men and asked them the exact time the star had appeared.

Even though the Wise Men show up in our nativity scenes, it was several years after Jesus was born that they arrived looking for Jesus. This is a story about enormous risk, because the Light that the Magi find is a threat to the political power of the day. That is the reason King Herod was so troubled. He told the Magi to make a careful search of Bethlehem for the child and when they find him to come back to Jerusalem and let him know, so that he too can go and worship Jesus.



The Magi eventually find Jesus at a house with his mother, Mary and they offer their gifts to him. They are warned in a dream not to go back to Jerusalem to see King Herod and so they return home by way of a different route. Then an angel appeared to Joseph and told him he must flee to Egypt with Jesus and Mary because Herod was looking for the child to kill him. When Herod learns he's been outwitted by these Wise Men he is furious and orders all boys two years and younger be put to death in hopes that one of them would be Jesus.

This is a very dark event in the birth story of Jesus.

The Gospel of John describes Jesus as the light of all humankind. This light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The divine light shining forth in the Child of Christmas is the light that shines in the heart of all life. It is the light from which all things come. If somehow this light were extracted from the universe, everything would cease to exist. The Epiphany story is about the light at the heart of everything. If we follow the light that is within each of us, we will never lose our way.

Shalom, Peace, Salaam,
Rev. Vicky

Brookville Church's Mission

To be a welcoming, friendly and heartfelt community who follows the teachings of Jesus; a message of love, acceptance, healing and hope. We affirm that all people are beloved children of God and therefore embrace any age, race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, marital status, family configuration, physical or mental ability or education, and invite the full inclusion of all people into the life and ministries of Brookville Church.

If you long for connection with God and others in an open and affirming Christian community, then join us on Sundays at 10 a.m. for uplifting worship and fellowship. We will continue to hold online worship through the month of January. Email: BrookvilleChurch@gmail.com for the link.



Stepping into 2021! Virtual Campus Open House & Fundraiser

January 30, 2021
7-8 PM

The Board of Directors of our new 501c3 (Multifaith Center, Inc.) which is the fundraising arm of our multifaith campus, will be hosting a **virtual Open House and Fundraiser on January 30, 2021 from 7-8 PM**. All members of our faith groups are invited to participate either live or via pre-recorded video, to tell how you became involved and what it means to you to be part of the Brookville Multifaith Campus. One way to grow is by drawing closer to one another through the telling of our stories.

How did you find our campus? How has belonging helped shape who you are today? In what ways has our multifaith family ministered to your family? What is your favorite memory or experience you have had while a part of our campus?

Stories can be up to 3 minutes long, and can be from adults, children, couples or families. All interfaith and single faith members are encouraged to participate.

We have begun collecting funds to grow an endowment that will support our physical campus for decades to come. We will be accepting donations at our Open House Event.

We hope during this holiday season that everyone in our respective organizations are happy, healthy and joyfully planning to tell us YOUR story as we celebrate a New Year and New Beginnings!

Happy Holidays to all, and looking forward to hearing from you,

Lisa M. Denison

Multifaith Center, Inc. Clerk/Compliance Officer
Brookville Church Elder

For more information email LMDENISON24@GMAIL.COM
or call/text Lisa at 516-695-1123



New Year of the Trees

(continued from page 2)

The sky is often gray. The days are often short. *Tu B'Shevat* reminds us that spring is going to happen after all, the blue sky will come back, and flowers will bloom again. It is a holiday that hinges on hope and possibility. The tree is a symbol of life; belief in the face of doubt; strength amidst uncertainty.

The Torah compares the human being to a tree. Just like a small seed can turn into a tall tree, so too the human being has infinite potential to grow, develop and change. We have the ability to produce a strong productive personality which, like fruit, will have a positive impact and be of benefit to others around us. We may sometimes feel like a small seed, but there is nothing stopping us from becoming a tall fruit-bearing tree.

To plan a successful tree, one must follow these steps: the seed must be placed in the earth; it decomposes and practically disappears before it can begin to grow; it needs plenty of water; lots of sunlight; and Divine Intervention to grow and flourish. The human tree requires the same ingredients to bring about the desired outcome:

Humility: The earth is a symbol of humility. Ambition to succeed and grow without being humble is destructive. Only a healthy balance

between the two, breeds success - we must plant our seeds of ambition in the earth of humility.

Let Go: Real change only occurs when we let go of all preconceived ideas and damaging attitudes. When we remain trapped in our old habits and mindsets we cannot move forward. Like the seed that decomposes, we too need to let go and lose our old identity, generating freshness and newness in our life experiences.

Direction: The Torah is compared to water. The Torah with its nourishing Divine insight is a manual for life, providing instruction and direction. By learning and absorbing the lessons taught by the Torah we create a value system that will drive and guide our personal journey.

Be Positive: The rays of the sun symbolize warmth, hope, positivity, and joy. In our personal experiences we can only take the next step if we believe that we *can*, approaching it with a strong and positive attitude.

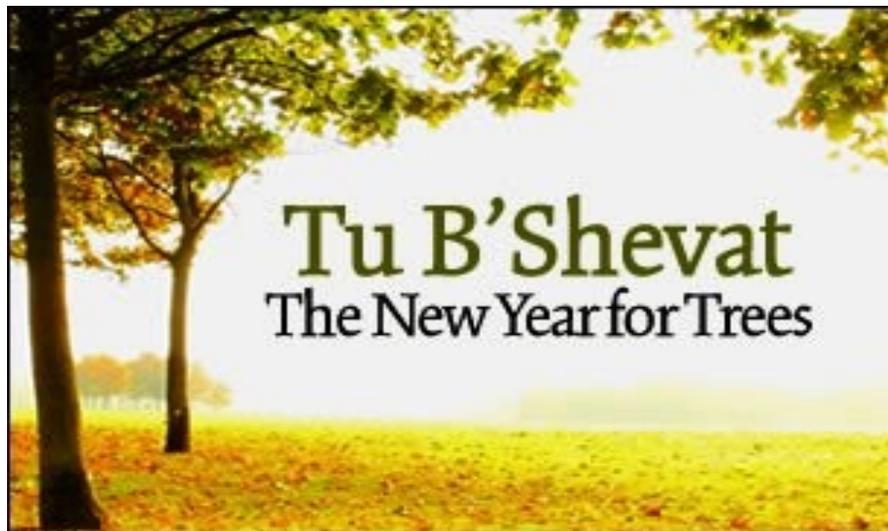
Faith: After we have taken all the necessary steps, all that is left is to pray to G-d and have faith that G-d will bless our tree so that it blossoms and produces beautiful fruit.

There is no better day to begin planting our own personal tree of growth. Happy planting!

"As my ancestors planted for me, so too I plant for my children and my children's children."

~The Talmud

Rabbi Stuart A. Paris



SYNAGOGUE OF THE MONTH VIRTUAL SHABBAT SERVICE 5781

ב'ה

The New Synagogue of Long Island The Synagogue for Spiritual Judaism

Rabbi Stuart Paris, Hakohen
Rabbi Scott Matous
Cantor Irene Failenbogen

Synagogue of the Month Virtual Shabbat Service at 7:00 PM

Please join us on Fridays:
January 8 & 22, 2021

The Zoom Meeting link is the same. Save it as a Favorite!

If you need the link, please email:

Amy Schombs: amy@interfaithli.org

We have no membership dues or fees. All are welcome.

Please support The New Synagogue of Long Island as generously as you can. Your contributions are the life blood of The New Synagogue. Please help us keep alive our inspiring teachings of Spiritual Judaism.

Kindly send your responses to:

Rabbi Stuart Paris ~ 10 Cuttermill Road, Suite 302 ~ Great Neck, NY 11021
NewSynagogue.LI@gmail.com ~ www.newsynagogue-li.org

I / We are happy to join you for the Synagogue of the Month Service.
Enclosed is a free will donation made out to **The New Synagogue of Long Island:**

___ \$50 ___ \$75 ___ \$100 ___ \$180 Other Amount: \$ _____

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Origin of the Quran

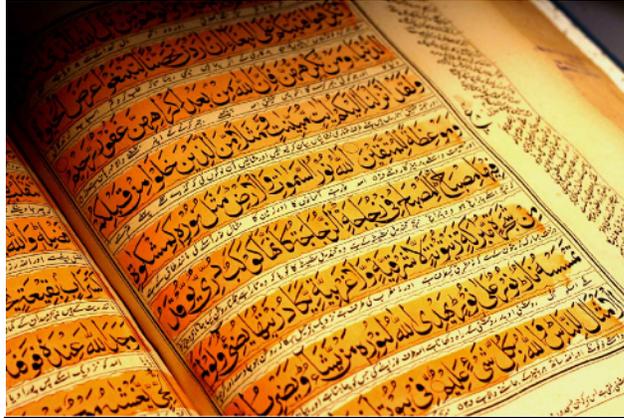
(continued from page 2)

and sometimes the angel comes to me in the shape of a man; he speaks to me and I remember what he said."

The prophet's wife Aisha said that "when revelation came to him, perspiration ran down his forehead even on a very cold day". The prophet memorized the words revealed to him, he conveyed these words to his companions and they also memorized them. (Prophet Muhammad's disciples are called his companions). Some of the companions recorded the revelations they heard by writing them down. Prophet Muhammad took great care to make sure that what he received by revelation was written down by some of his companions.

The writers changed over the twenty three years which included his flight from Makkah to Medina and wars in which some of his companions died. But a remarkable fact is that a large number of his followers continued to memorize the Quran as its volume grew. From the

beginning, passages of the Quran were recited in prayers as well as in inviting others to Islam. The revelations as they came were arranged in order by Prophet Muhammad and divided into chapters (called Suras). When the prophet passed away, the Quran existed in a complete and ordered form in the memories of many people but no complete written copy of it existed. About a year after the prophet passed away, his successor (Caliph) Abu Bakr compiled a standard written copy by bringing together all those who had written segments with them. The written copy was made consistent with the oral recitation of those who had memorized the whole Quran by heart. By the time of the third Caliph, Uthman bin Affan, Islam had spread to a vast region. He had several copies made and sent them to the governors of the provinces.



In this copy of the original Arabic text of the Quran it is printed in **bold**. Below it is translation in Urdu, the language spoken in Pakistan and parts of India.

Muslims have continued the tradition of memorizing the Quran. Although every Muslim memorizes some suras, there are many who memorize the whole Quran. In this

way the integrity of the Holy Book has been preserved continuously from the beginning to the present time.

~ Dr. Sultan Abdulhameed

Muslim Reform Movement Organization



Quran Study by Zoom

Every Sunday
2:30 - 4:30 p.m.
All are welcome!

To be invited to the meeting, please send an email to <mailto:muslimreform@hotmail.com>
Hosted by: **Dr. Sultan Abdulhameed**, author of "The Quran & the Life of Excellence"

Rosie (continued) from page 2

... grandma, aunt, uncle and cousins. We light the menorah together. I also help light the candles at home each night. I have to remember not to burn myself and I try not to get wax on my fingers. I like when my Elf on the Shelf comes. His name is Geronimo. I miss him when he is gone. Sometimes I write letters to him and sometimes he writes back. This year was different because when Geronimo came to our house, he had to be quarantined for 14 days to make sure it was safe. On Christmas we celebrate the birthday of Jesus. It is also my Great-Grandma Natalie's birthday. I never got to meet her because she died before I was born. Her family was a little poor. She didn't have a very big house, but Mom told me she was very kind and nice. In our house I love our decorations for Christmas and Hanukkah. I like playing dreidel. I also like watching the Nutcracker and I got to watch some of it in school. In school, I am making a lot of holiday projects. I made a reindeer thing that's all facts about reindeer. Right before Christmas my school has spirit days and we get to dress in different holiday and winter colors. Holidays are important because I spend time with my family.



Danny (continued)

We pray that they are comfortable and live life with more ease. For Hanukkah, we light the menorah every night. I help to light it. We hang out together and play games. My favorite game that we have played this year is Boggle. I help to say the prayers when we light the menorah too. I love potato pancakes at Hanukkah - I eat them plain and also with applesauce. This year we had a zoom with some family members and we each lit our menorahs. My Grandma Leni was talking about the song "The Rainbow Connection" so we actually decided to sing it while I played the acoustic guitar. In the past, for Christmas we had a big party at our house for Christmas Eve. We eat a lot of food, play games and we usually have a visit from Santa. He comes and brings each of the kids a present and says "more are coming later." I used to go to midnight mass with my Grandma and Grandpa. We would say different prayers and sing Christmas songs celebrating the day Jesus was born. This holiday is different because we don't get to have our big party or go to midnight mass or see a lot of people. But, we can see some people socially distant and others on zoom. Because we don't get to see people as often, when we do get together, we appreciate it more.

Charlie (continued)

Some of the cards are from people that we don't really see or even talk to very much. But getting and sending holiday cards is a nice way to check up on someone and let someone know that we are thinking about them. For me, celebrating Christmas and Hanukkah is kind of always the way I have been celebrating it. It may seem different to other people, but to me, it's all I have ever known. It's normal for me. Some kids have asked me about celebrating both holidays over the years, but it has always been a respectful discussion. In the past, I have participated in the Brookville Church Holiday Show. It was always so much fun. I liked the rehearsals and then the day we put on the show, it was really fun! One song I remember was "Dude, you hear what I hear?" After the show, Fellowship Hall was set up with different stations decorating gingerbread men, writing letters to Santa and then some of the older kids would have fun running around outside playing tag. This year, the holidays are so different. We have to be at home, we can't participate in the show or go to services. Next year, I hope that things will be more back to normal and we will return to some of our old, fun traditions that we have had in the past with the IFC.



From our family to yours: Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Happy New Year to our Brookville Multifaith Campus



Please stay tuned! Emails will be sent with more information about online IFC classes. If you would like to be added to our email distribution list, please email

amy@interfaithli.org

Also, check us out on Facebook at the Interfaith Community of Long Island and our website:

www.interfaithli.org

Support Brookville Reformed Church by shopping at smile.amazon.com



Poinsettias for Christmas were given in Loving Memory of:

Surryia Azad by her daughter, Rukhsana Anwar

Joan Wark by her daughter, Karen Wark

William Wark by his daughter, Karen Wark

BRAG BOX



David Hees (son of Linda Hees) volunteers at **Long Island Cares** (licares.org) distribution center in Bethpage. David picks food off of the shelves and boxes it up for Nassau County residents who come to the center. Thank you, David!

Emilia Cortale and Jericho Senior High School's



a cappella group, Noteworthy, recently released a cover of *Sweater Weather*. You can listen to it on [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com).



We are rostered as an Open and Affirming campus to the **LBGTQIA+** Community through Room for All

We are pleased to share the installation of our Pride Flag





Denison family

Happy Holidays!



Berkin-Albers family



Mankes family



Cortale family



Bilawsky family



Kalvert family



Zoom Christmas Eve

Over 80 people joined us for our special service that was filled with music, song, candles and hope. Check out our version of Silent Night [Facebook page](#).





The Next Chapter



This story starts during the Great Depression 1929-1936. Everyone I knew or was related to, were products of those defining years.



Branch Worsham My grandparents were from a different era - born in the 1870s, coming from Europe and going to the Midwest where they found work and land for farm animal husbandry and agrarian life. They had twelve children who became the workers needed to care for the gardens and animals while striving for the future.



They were like everyone else in that Minnesota mining town - just starting out! So was the town, it started in 1910 and eight years later the 1918 Flu Epidemic hit the nation. Our family was not affected, but they told me it was frightful.



In 1929 the Great Depression overpowered the nation and the small town. The two parents had escaped from the problematic eastern cities to build a future and stayed with the task. They survived through the Flu Epidemic and the Depression.



A simple example of their dedication is evident in how they treated their potatoes. Some potatoes were stored each fall in the cellar where they slowly grew small eyes on their skin. When spring arrived these seed potatoes were brought out and peeled, the seed eyes were cut out and set aside to warm up and germinate a week before planting. The rest of the potato was eaten.

I have told you before that the Grandparents' house had three bedrooms - one for the parents and one room each for all of the boys and another room for the six girls. That's sleeping three in a bed. There was no indoor plumbing, just a red, long-handled water pump outside the house.

The family worked the land and was just beginning to start their own lives, often out of town. The oldest three sisters got married and started their families -- which were me, my brother, and our cousins. The next group to leave included four of my uncles who moved into the Twin Cities (Minneapolis and St. Paul) which were the center of the world in Minnesota as everyone crawled out of the Depression.

The aunts and uncles would come home for the Christmas Holiday, but that was all they would or could do in the winter; their old home was too small for the bunch of adults and the trip was actually too dangerous. My brother and I remember parts and pieces of early Christmas's and some church pageants. Only years later did I realize all twelve of those aunts and uncles were once performers during Christmas pageants just as my brother and I had to do.



All of this occurs during happy, simple times. There were no snowmobiles, ski-slopes, TV or cellphones. There weren't any ice skates, and I don't remember ever seeing a sled. Just fishing.



Too soon the pleasant times ended as World War Two started and the uncles were drafted into the Navy, the aunts became factory workers and everyone buckled down to times only slightly easier than the current Coronavirus restrictions. Those War Years were hard, but everyone was cooperating; as I write this I remember that nobody knew when it would be over, so working kept on.



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The Next Chapter

(continued from page 11)



The sailors all had one trip home in their uniforms before they went back to their duty on ships in the Pacific. Christmas during the war was pretty quiet, there wasn't anybody or anything to celebrate. God was kind to our family, all of the men came home. Finally, peace came, the kind of peace that brought the family together again, knowing each year would be better, and all the boys, now men, went to work and started their families. My brother and I were aged out of the Christmas pageants, but the family traditions at the Grandparent's house were revived. There were only about five years and then the Korean War interfered with the families and homes again. By then nearly everything from the past was changed and Christmas traditions were diminished to the ones each family kept and enjoyed without the large family gatherings.



My brother and I built snow houses during the winter holiday; there seems to have been more snow back then. Dad got a car and we could go to a lake to fish through the ice. We took a train ride to Oregon for one Christmas with the other side of the family.



Christmas was still simple, television did not come to town until 1954. To put that in perspective, ours was the third set in town, with a black and white screen about 15" wide by 12" high with an antenna mounted on the roof, called rabbit ears, which would frequently sputter out due to weak transmission from Minneapolis or during a snowstorm. The earlier entertainment for the holidays were two-hour radio extravaganzas with all of the known performers doing a song or skit.



And it was cold! Always cold. Writing this in the middle of December, 2020 there has been a lot of talk about the biggest storm in two years and about the cold, which was between 20-30 degrees. That is not cold! Cars in the northland did not always start. They needed blankets

covering the engine at night and jumper cables to boost the battery.

The town had a Main Street about 5 1/2 blocks long with stores of every sort lining both sides. It wasn't necessary to go out of town to shop for anything. JC Penny had a department store, actually just a one-story building as large as the grocery across the street. Two drug stores, and a Ben Franklin 5 & 10 variety store. I remember doing the Christmas shopping 'downtown'. In the 1960's the town had reached its zenith of about 2,400 people and then the decline began. Now the store buildings are antique shops and tourist gimmicks.



When Mom and Dad died in 1985 it was the same year the church closed and joined with the church in the town next door, to build a new church on the lake. They probably should have done that years before because the towns had shared the same pastors for about sixty years. Two towns were just four miles apart, but back then that was far enough to be their own community.



One thing I distinctly remember is that Christmas ALWAYS had snow all over the state. The colored lights would shine so bright hung on the trees and homes. During the day the decorations of wreaths and bows stood out in prominent view. Usually, homes had ice cycles on one or two roof edges. From Christmas on into February, the side streets were not plowed, just snow-packed. I have written before that we would skate on the streets as often as at the skating rink.

I don't long for the old times. The times and the people are gone. The buildings have been repurposed or replaced. I have these echoes in my mind that join me when something triggers a memory; they are pleasant thoughts that stay a while then recede behind a curtain until another time.



Happy New Year to all!

~ Branch Worsham



"BEAT NAVY"