

# The Holiness Code

We are now beginning a section of the Torah known as the “Holiness Code.” A central idea of this section is that the entire people of Israel bear the responsibility of seeking to achieve holiness. It is spelled out by putting these three weeks of portions next to one another “Aharei Mot, Kedoshim Emor”-after the deaths (of Aaron’s sons) you are commanded to be holy; or set apart from others.

Being set apart is not very comforting language in this day and age. Some feel that to be special implies that one is superior and others by definition are inferior. Yet what it means is that each of us has a unique destiny or path that is only for us. In that way we are set apart from everyone else.

How are we set apart from those around us? One way is through following in the footsteps of those for whom we are named. Each of us needs to embrace the positive attributes of those who came before us.

Magnolia Fay’s Hebrew name is *Perach Emunah*. *Perach* means flower,

just as magnolia is a type of flower. We pray that Magnolia will be nurtured and that she will blossom and grow strong each and every day.

*Emunah* means faith. When times are not going well, we pray that Magnolia have faith and that she take comfort from our tradition. The refrain *Amen*, from the same root as *Emunah*, is our communal response to having the faith we need to believe in G-d even when we are filled with doubt and uncertainty.

Magnolia's English middle name, Fay, is after Sandy Kassimir's mother. Fay and Lou Staub were devoted members of the Jericho Jewish Center. They purchased a Torah which is in our top row in the Sanctuary, and they also dedicated a school classroom. Many meetings in the early years of the Jericho Jewish Center occurred in their home.

We know of great-grandparents Bill and Sandy's contributions to the Jericho Jewish Center, with Bill being a Past-President, designing and donating a *Tallit* rack and the *Tefillan* drawer in the Beit Midrash, being the steward of the Holocaust Memorial Garden and a regular service leader, Haftarah reader and minyan attendee. We know of

Sandy's contributions through doing the calligraphy for every Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Baby Naming and being last year's Sisterhood Woman of Achievement. We also know of her parents, Fay and Lou Staub's great love for the Jericho Jewish Center and their building our congregation in its nascent years. These are big shoes to fill but Magnolia will become a leader in her own right and who knows? Maybe a future Synagogue President.

Let us pray that Jaclyn and Chris will raise Magnolia Fay with the values imparted from those who lived before us, and that she will be viewed through those positive attributes. Let us also recognize the blessing of this special day. May Magnolia Fay always be blessed with an outpouring of loving, doting parents, grandparents who spoil, aunts and uncles who cuddle, cousins who love and all of the blessings of life. *Mazal Tov* on this special day! So that we can celebrate together let us turn to Page 840 and read responsively.