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**INTERFAITH FOCUS FOR TOWN OF FAIRFIELD HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION**

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In a powerful sign of interfaith unity, the Town of Fairfield will gather to commemorate the Holocaust with a Yom HaShoah observance on Wednesday, May 1st at First Church Congregational. This is the 39th year the Town has sponsored the commemoration, which has been hosted by First Church since its inception.

 “It is our honor to provide physical and spiritual space every year for this sacred work of remembering the people who were murdered in the Shoah and to listen to the lessons from survivors ,” said Rev. Vanessa Rose of First Church Congregational. “First Church’s members and clergy are committed to our long-standing relationships with our Jewish siblings and are grateful to be a part of interfaith efforts to work for a repaired world.”

This year’s keynote speaker, Sara Aldouby, will share her personal story of survival. Sara was born in Hungary in 1938, northeast of Budapest. In addition to two ghettos and three labor camps, she survived Theresienstadt with her mother and eight siblings, while her father survived Bergen-Belsen.

“We hid under my mother’s skirt while she sewed uniforms for German soldiers,” Aldouby recounted. “I remember hiding. I also remember the night the Russians liberated us, the Nazis running to escape, but shooting at us to kill as many Jews as they could while they escaped.”

The family was reunited after the war and settled in Rehovot, Israel. While raising her children in Israel, Aldouby enrolled in art classes in the local artists’ colony, and studied sculpture and sketching, launching her career as an artist. Aldouby arrived in the United States from Israel during the summer of 1986. She is a member of the Connecticut Sculpture Association and resides with her husband in Trumbull.

Aldouby’s works are included in private collections in the U.S., Israel, England, Hungary, Canada, Austria, and South America. Her commissioned sculptures include several Holocaust memorials – including at the Mozaic Jewish Senior Services campus in Bridgeport, the Virginia War Museum, and the Jewish Museum in Budapest, Hungary – as well as Tree of Life sculptures of Jerusalem olive wood and bronze at Congregation B’nai Israel in Bridgeport and Temple Beth Sholom in Hamden. Her nine-foot sculpture, “Wings of Peace,” stands on the shores of the Sea of Galilee in Israel and other sculptures grace the Trumbull Library and the Stamford JCC.

When she designs a Holocaust memorial, “the process is crazy, very painful, very difficult,” she says. “It takes out your soul. I do it because, afterwards, it feels good and I know it’s going to a good place. It’s important to have these pieces in educational settings.”

The Fairfield Holocaust Commemoration Committee is chaired by Adele Jacobs, the daughter of two survivors of Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps.

“At this time of unbridled hatred and antisemitism, it is a pivotal moment for all of our Fairfield citizens to stand together in remembrance,” Adele said. “This commemoration is not only for the six million Jews that were mercilessly murdered during the Holocaust, but a stark reminder of what evil and hatred will produce, and what it has produced just five months ago.  For almost 80 years, we have said ‘Never Again’.  Never again is now.    We hope that our Town will come out and remind the world that we will not let hatred win.  Let Fairfield be the light.  Please join us.”

The commemoration will begin with a candlelight procession in the church, where volunteers will read the names of the Nazi concentration camps. The Fairfield First Selectman’s Office, Fairfield County Children’s Choir, Fairfield Warde High School String Quartet and Fairfield Ludlowe High School will be among the many town organizations participating in the ceremony.

**This year’s commemoration will begin at 7:30 pm at First Church Congregational, 148 Beach Road, Fairfield.**

**For more information, contact Adele Jacobs, Fairfield Holocaust Commemoration Committee chair:** ajacobs@ajqlaw.com

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