

# HaShomer

December 2022

Congregation Beth Shalom

Kislev/Tevet 5783

## Schedule of Services

Friday, December 2  
Led by **Barry Goldfarb**  
Saturday, December 3  
Led by **Cantor Elisa**  
Torah: Vayeitzei

Friday, December 9  
Led by **Martine Thomas**  
Saturday, December 10  
Led by **Stuart Snow**  
Torah: Vayishlach

Friday, December 16  
Led by **Cantor Elisa**  
Saturday, December 17  
Led by **Cantor Elisa**  
Torah: Vayeishev

Friday, December 23  
Led by **Janet Aaronson & Cookie Kabakoff**  
Saturday, December 24  
Led by **Stuart Snow**  
Torah: Miketz

Friday, December 30  
Led by **Stephanie Posner**  
Saturday, December 31  
Led by **Lisa Rein**  
Torah: Vayigash

## Be The Light!

One of my fondest childhood memories is from when I was in preschool. Each year around Hanukkah, we would march around and sing what is now my favorite Hanukkah song, “Banu Choshech Legaresh,” which means “We Came to Send Away the Darkness.” While it may not be quite as popular as “Hanukkah O Hanukkah” or “I Have a Little Dreidel,” for me, it embodies one of the most powerful themes of Hanukkah – LIGHT!

The words are:

*Banu choshech legaresh, beyadeinu or va'esh. Kol echad hu or katan, vechulanu or eitan. Surah choshech, hal'ah sh'chor! Surah mipnei ha'or!*



*We came to send away the darkness, in our hands is light and fire. Each of us is one small light, and together we are one great light. Fight darkness, further blackness! Fight because of the light!*

On Hanukkah, we light and bless candles in our Hanukkiyah for eight nights, adding one more candle with each day that goes by. During the darkest time of the year, right around the winter solstice, when our days are the shortest and nights are the longest, we light up the night sky with our candles. We place them on our windowsills in order to illuminate the miracles of Hanukkah, and I like to think they light the way for those passing by. In Jerusalem, on the outside of many of the buildings, there are little nooks in the Jerusalem stone where people display their lit Hanukkiyot for those walking down the street to see. It looks magical! The entire city glows with light! Had Hanukkah fallen during the summer months when the days are long and the sun sets late, we would have missed the point. We can only see the true magnificence of the light when the backdrop is darkness.

I believe the Hanukkiyah offers us a bit of wisdom. Darkness will always exist. We each will have difficult moments in life, bad things will happen in the world, people will fall ill, tragedy will occur. Unfortunately, as we know, these terrible things are all part of life. Yet, in a world with so much darkness, we have a choice to either be paralyzed by these negative things, or to be leaders and do the sacred work of bringing light into dark places. The Maccabees were only able to succeed because they worked together - each of the tiny sparks within them contributed to what became a magnificent torch. Together, we have the powerful capability of making a difference. And that, for me, is one of the most powerful messages of Hanukkah. We must remember that “kol echad, hu or katan” – each of us has within us a small light, and “vechulanu or eitan” - but when we come together and collaborate, we can become a magnificent, radiant light that can change the world for the better. And so, this year, a time when there is tremendous darkness, be the light that shines. Be the light!

- **Cantor Elisa Abrams Cohn**  
Congregation Beth Shalom



CONGREGATION  
**BETH SHALOM**

A MEMBER OF THE UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM • ARLINGTON, TEXAS

## From The President

Per our Bylaws process, the Annual Meeting scheduled for December 11 at 7:30 pm will be to elect officers and trustees, to receive reports of officers, trustees, committee chairs, and the Cantor. The meeting will also provide a platform for the congregation to address any other relevant business.

Following the D'var by Cantor Elisa, I will provide a summary of the state of our congregation and appreciation for the governing Board that saw to the many things that were accomplished. The congregant of the year will be announced, followed by the various reports from our Treasurer, Controller, Religious School Director, and our different committee chairs. Some of our Board positions will change in the coming year, and appreciation to the departing Board members will be made. The meeting will close with the presentation of the Slate of Officers and Trustees for open Board positions.

My philosophy on committee operation has always been to define member roles and responsibilities for each committee. While the ultimate responsibility of the committee falls to its chair, the execution of committee activities falls to its members, who voluntarily give their time to the benefit of the committee and, ultimately, the congregation. Through the years, I have observed that committee chairs burn out from understaffed committees.

In a small congregation, there is a small pool of people from which to draw a sustaining workforce to support its many activities. While I would hope that some of the participating members have aspirations to lead a committee, it takes all of us to contribute, even if only to support a single activity. By contributing, we will safeguard the burnout of various people who serve in the same function year after year. So, as you vote to support our slate of Officers, Trustees and committee chairs, please commit to serving on a committee or two. In doing so, you will ensure the health of our congregation for years to come.

Contributions of your time can be made to serving on the Board of Trustees, as a Chair or supporting member of one of the following committees including Ritual, Membership, House, Adult Education, Social Action, Social Justice, Caring, Administrative, Security, Programming/Fundraising, Brotherhood, Sisterhood or Sylvia Gray. Please contact the President, Vice-President, or various committee chairs to state how you wish to support Congregation Beth Shalom in the coming year.

- *Dr. Michael Kapin*  
*President, Congregation Beth Shalom*



## The Ritual Life

Rabbi Moshe Druin of Sofer on Site will once again visit our campus on **Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>**, as part of our Torah Maintenance Plan; to review and repair our 3 Torah scrolls. This annual visit ensures that our most prized possessions are in good condition and maintain their kosher status. Anyone wishing to visit our campus to watch Rabbi Druin in action are welcome to do so, and once we know what time that he will be with us, will be communicated to our community.

It has been the Ritual Committees hope and intention to return our Friday evening services back to campus, as we did on Saturday mornings almost 1 1/2 years ago. Recognizing that our "Friday nighters" are satisfied and comfortable on Zoom, it was decided to start meeting on campus once a month. Our first service took place Friday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, led by **Martine Thomas and Barry Goldfarb**. The service was Beatles-themed, whereby many of the prayers in our liturgy were sung to well-known Beatles songs! It was heartwarming to see such a great turnout among our community that night. While Zoom has a function, it can not replace actually being together and worshipping as a community!

Mark your calendars now for our upcoming **Friday Night Live on December 16<sup>th</sup>**, when **Cantor Elisa** will be leading us in worship. In addition, we will be serving Janet's famous chicken dinner beforehand, for only \$5.00 per person! Registration for dinner is a **must**, with no walk ins allowed, so we have sufficient food for everyone attending. This should be a wonderful evening of food, fellowship, faith and community. Join us, won't you? What's that you say, you don't drive at night. No worries, just let the office know in advance and we will arrange transportation for you!

Finally, I wish to point out **Shabbat morning, December 24<sup>th</sup>**, is not only Shabbat Chanukah, but Rosh Chodesh Tevet as well! What this means is that there will be many moving parts-special prayers inserted for Chanukah, the psalms of Hallel, and readings from 3 Torah scrolls! My hope is that all will consider attending and bring their children and other family members with them, for reading from 3 scrolls is a rare occurrence, indeed. I will have the honor and privilege of leading our community in worship and fervently hope that we can count you among our minyan.

Parshat Miketz is always read on Shabbat Chanukah, so come to find out the link between this parsha and the Festival of Lights.

May the glow of the Chanukiah illuminate your home, body and souls!

Chag Chanukah Semeach!

- *Stuart Snow*  
*Interim Ritual Chair*

### Hashomer

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**Editor:** Lauren Atkens | **Production Assistance:** Laura Galloway | **Proofreading:** Stuart Snow

## Spotlight on... Laura Galloway

Meet Laura Galloway. Or, perhaps you already have.

The new office manager at Beth Shalom has so many quirky connections with the synagogue and with synagogue members it's almost like she was destined to work for CBS.

Growing up in Grand Prairie, Laura lived down the street from former Beth Shalom members Carin and Roy Adams and she baby-sit for their family. That connection led to Laura being involved with two big Beth Shalom projects in the '90s. Carin was the youth group leader and in 1996 she started Camp Impact, the day camp for disadvantaged children. Through her friendship with Carin, Laura, who was 16 at the time, had the pleasure of working at Camp Impact that first year. Laura also recalls the years of the CBS youth group making PB&Js on Sunday nights for takeaway lunches for the residents of the Arlington Life Shelter.



After high school, CBS' new office staffer attended the University of Texas at Arlington, where she earned a bachelor's degree and then a master's degree in education. She taught third and sixth grade at Ashworth Elementary in Arlington. Next connection: Stephanie Posner's daughters attended Ashworth Elementary, where Laura later taught and, naturally, Laura and Stephanie have discovered mutual Ashworth friends.

Laura has been married to her husband, Rip, for 18 years. They have a 15-year-old daughter, Lily, and a 12-year-old son, Rhett, which brings us to connection number 3: Rhett and Shai Sasley have known each other since kindergarten, and through the boys, the Galloways and the Sasleys have become close friends.

As guests of the Sasleys, Laura and her husband attended several CBS functions, such as the Derby Day gala. "The people I met were the most welcoming and nicest group of people," Laura said.

And just a few weeks ago, Beth Shalom members got to hear Laura and Rip recite the Prayer for Peace at Shai Sasley's bar mitzvah.

Laura will be working from 9-3, Monday to Thursday, and 9-2, on Fridays. Reach her at [info@bethshalom.org](mailto:info@bethshalom.org) or call the office.

## Anniversaries



### December 1

Stan & Dorit Mikulencak

### December 10

Barrett & Yesenia Garrison

### December 20

Mark & Arlene Schwartz

### December 29

Jay & Lynda Feinberg

### December 30

Nachshon & Joyce Atkens

## Situational Awareness

Be aware of your surroundings all the time. You are responsible for your own safety. Be safe, not sorry! If you see something, say something to somebody.

If you observe someone that has one or more of the following:

Unusual behavior, a specious person doing something out of place, a person wearing the wrong clothing, ie: wearing a heavy coat in the summer heat, someone tampering with a door or locks or a window, committing a crime, taking unusual photos of you or your home or the synagogue with no know reason, Report it!

Pay attention to others when in a store or at the gas pump. Don't get so engrossed in looking at your cell phone you don't notice traffic, or objects, or obstacles that might cause harm to yourself or others.

When you see anything described above do the following:

**Call 911**, take photos if you have your phone, check the time and location and make a note of what you observed. Better safe, than sorry.

***If you see something, say something to somebody or call 911***

## Life's Tests - Nisayon

Many of you know I have had a rough go in the health department the last couple of months. I want to personally thank all who stepped up and helped my family during this challenging time and those who supported me as I made my way through the tzuris of it all. When challenges like these occur in our lives, we often question why they are happening to us. We most often become depressed, stressed, or experience a multitude of varying emotions depending on the day.

For me personally, something helpful is rooted in three key things that I believe, from my understanding of the Torah, are the primary purposes of life:

1. To Serve G-d
2. To Fulfill Mitzvot
3. To Stand Strong in Ordeals

One of the great sages expounds on this and states that all life is one great ordeal. When you face difficulties in your life, they are not obstructions; rather, they are your life's elements and story. These three purposes are very closely related to one another.

Many people think tests are just the great things in your life that cause pain or stress. But, a test can be as simple as a conversation with your friend and what you choose to speak about. Even waking up in the morning feeling good, being healthy, and having no financial trouble is a test itself! One of the great Rebbes I follow states that this very thing, waking up in the morning feeling good and being healthy, is one of the ultimate tests. When you are ill, and your only test is to muster one more smile or one less complaint, the test of being healthy and feeling good leaves the world at your fingertips. You have the most remarkable test; what will you do with that blessing?

I once heard some great advice from a different Rabbi from Israel. He said, "each day, your worst self tries to destroy your best self." By no means are these struggles easy, nor should we treat them as if they are nothing. However, working to put yourself in the right mindset about them is a step in the right direction. Unfortunately, I have witnessed this can be challenging for many people and seems chronic among fellow Jews I have met over the years. We all know the classic stereotype of the Jewish mother schvitzing or acting totally verklempt over every little thing in life or the Jewish businessman the same over business struggles.

Maimonides (Rambam) and Nachmanides (Ramban) have different ideas on the purpose of life's tests. The Rambam states the reason that G-d test us is not so we know what we are capable of, but because others need to see. When Hashem finds an Avraham walking in the world, he says, "I need you to teach the world." And then he says, leave all your people and everything you know and Lech Lecha! The test, the ordeal, the tzuris. Avraham is famously given ten tests, and they are not for G-d's sake, they are not for Avraham's sake, but they are for the world's sake! Hashem uses Avraham, a human being, to manifest his Torah in the world.

The Ramban, who lived a little later than the Rambam, conversely states it is ourselves that need to learn what we are capable of – not Hashem and not others in the world around us. However, he has no problems with this theory as well. The reason you are tested is to bring your potential into the actual.

After knowing these two differing views, we can look at how each of their ideas also differs when it comes to their opinions on which of the ten tests were the most important in Avrahams life.

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## Sisterhood

Chai, y'all.

November Sisterhood activities included writing Chanukah cards for Jewish members of the military and a road trip to a harvest festival near Waco. Thanks, Danielle, for arranging this event.

Sisterhood is collecting items for their annual Chanukah adoption. If you would like to provide an item for a child in need, contact Stephanie Posner (817-675-4353) for a list of requested items. The requests come from Jewish Family Services and are anonymous. Sisterhood is always wonderfully generous with this project and your participation can make it even more so.

The annual Sisterhood/Brotherhood Chanukah party will take place on Saturday, Dec. 17<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 p.m. at the Frisinger home at 5615 Hunterwood Lane, Arlington. A few slight changes to the format this year. Pizza, pasta and desserts will be provided. Please bring an appetizer/pre-dinner snack or a salad/side dish. Adults should bring a wrapped gift of about \$10-\$15 value for the gift exchange. Teens and children should NOT bring a gift as gift bags will be provided for them. RSVP to Cathy at 817-773-4942.

And, finally, we will be doing our annual gift-wrap fundraiser at North East Mall, details to be determined. Helping hands much appreciated. Look for further information to come.

- Cathy Frisinger

## Donations

Received thru Nov. 21<sup>st</sup>

### General Fund

Donation to IDF

From Sherwin Rubin

In Honor Of Thressa Lobel

From Rubin Sherwin

In Memory Of Lew Pincus

From Ellen Pincus

In Memory Of Burt Friedman & Martin Kirshbaum

From Ruth Friedman

In Honor Of the anniversary of Janet & Jerry Aaronson

From Ruth Friedman

In Honor Of Thressa Lobel

From Debbie & Marty Goldsmith

In Memory Of Paul Rosenberg

From Rochelle & Gary Bowyer

In Memory Of Ida Barken

From Alice & Steve Ginsburgh

In Memory Of Nancy Massaro

From Ellen Pincus

### Cantor's Discretionary Fund

In Memory Of Dolores Schneider

From Barry & Charwynne Schneider

### Security Fund

In Honor Of Stuart Snow

From Steve Weiss

Donation from Sherwin Rubin

# Yahrzeits



## December 1

Selma Schneider\*  
Vivian Pock\*

## December 2

William Rubin\*  
Saul Mandel\*

## December 5

Mary Shapiro\*  
Chai Sassoon

## December 6

Rose Stern\*  
Ben Rafi Mayeri\*

Stefani Eisenstat

Edna Betty Schwartz\*

## December 7

Bernie Coleman  
Hershel Sobel  
Diane Teitelbaum

## December 8

William Mason\*

## December 9

Henrietta Voet

## December 10

James R. Smock

## December 11

Louis Bernstein\*

## December 13

Seymour Roberts Sr.\*

Ruth Zadwick

## December 14

Ann Siegel  
Maurice Blonsky\*

## December 15

Mickey Kohn\*  
Ann Sheen\*

## December 16

Ester Siegel Schatten\*  
June Feinberg

## December 17

Lee Wenokur\*

## December 18

Fay Kleir  
Lena Pack\*

## December 20

Sylvia Rubin\*  
Nathan Rothschild\*

## December 22

Evelyn Theodora Dube\*  
Dirk Hellwig\*

Florence Lucas\*

## December 23

Elizabeth Lifschitz\*  
Vernon Smith

## December 24

Rheda Licker\*

Nancy Massaro\*

Adolph N. Solomon\*

## December 25

Milton Weiss

Phyllis Cohen

Thomas Brennan

## December 26

Harriet Mintz Flack\*

David Siegel

## December 30

Charles Coplin\*  
Lee Bystock

## Life's Tests - Nisayon

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Rambam's lists are all comprised of public events that Avraham experienced, such as the war of the four kings against the five kings, Sara's abduction, etc. The ordeals must be public so that Avraham is the spiritual teacher.

On the other hand Rashi's lists (much related to Ramban) include private tests such as Avraham being told his children would go through hundreds of years of slavery and being cast into a pit or living in cave for years and having to hide from Nimrod. No one knew his internal thoughts and struggles, but they were equally tests. Based on Ramban's principles, this is not just so you know what you are capable of but to know that you have actually manifested this test in the world and been uplifted spiritually through the fact of what you have accomplished.

The word Nisayon roughly means to struggle in Hebrew, however the root of the word means to be uplifted. The end result by our tests are that we should arise and come out more uplifted spiritually on the other side of these ordeals. I understand this is easier stated than done – especially when we are in a dark despair or a particularly trying test. We have all been there. But understanding what the end result should be offers a way to comfort and understanding that may give you an edge to make it another day or even hour and get that much closer to the other side.

Now, there is one element we still need to discuss. We should never ask HaShem for tests. There is a midrash where David HaMelech, the ultimate example in Torah of one who is devoid of ego, early in his kingship asks HaShem why his name is not set next to HaShem's. "G-d of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – why not G-d of David? Even the kabbalistic throne stands on four legs, yet I am not the fourth leg. What have I not done to deserve this?"

Hashem responded. "the reason my name is set with those great three individuals as they were tested and they prevailed. You have never been tested." This is where the gemara states David made his fatal mistake. "I am here L-rd, please test me." The test was Bathsheba and David failed mightily. This is to teach us that if we ask for a test we will fail that test.

The gemara goes on to show us that at the same, when we pass a test that we are given, our name is spiritually set aside with HaShem's name because we bring G-d's name into the world. Yes, we do have the honor of HaShem being referred as "The G-d of (insert your name here)". How powerful is that!?

One final thought. The first test of man in this world was not to show how great he is or what he can accomplish; rather it was an admonishment to ensure that ego was tamped down. "DO NOT... eat from the tree". By ourselves experiencing and making it through life's ordeals without giving up we are helping HaShem to manifest his presence in the world. The world sees us struggle and prevail, we give the glory to HaShem, and we are all spiritually uplifted by it. These ordeals are our story and our life's elements.

"Jews have six senses. Touch, taste, sight, smell, hearing, and memory... For Jews, memory is no less primary than the prick of a pin, or its silver glimmer, or the taste of the blood it pulls from the finger. The Jew is pricked by a pin and remembers other pins. It is only by tracing the pinprick back to other pinpricks—when his mother tried to fix his sleeve while his arm was still in it, when his grandfather's fingers fell asleep from stroking his great-grandfather's damp forehead, when Abraham tested the knife point to be sure Isaac would feel no pain—that the Jew is able to know why it hurts. When a Jew encounters a pin, he asks: What does it remember like?" — Jonathan Safran Foer

## When there is a need.....

Congregation Beth Shalom has a very active Caring Committee ready to respond to the needs of our congregation. Whether it be a cheery card, a personal phone call, a meal, a visit, or even a grocery drop off for a shut in, we would like to respond but we have to know. Rather than calling the office and having the information forwarded on to me, a new email has been created to expedite the information and thus coming in a more timely manner.

Please feel free to contact me directly at [caring@bethshalom.org](mailto:caring@bethshalom.org), or any of the following committee members listed below. As always, your privacy will be guarded if you choose and you can feel confident that if you contact me I will honor that.

We are a family and each one of you is an important member. If you would like to make a donation to the Caring Committee Restricted Fund, that will assure that funds are available to meet our future needs.

Thank you for your continued support.

Janet Aaronson - [caring@bethshalom.org](mailto:caring@bethshalom.org)

Caring Committee Chair

### Members:

Joyce and Nachshon Atkens

Karen and Bob Burns

Sarita Cabrero

Cathy Frisinger

Cookie Kabakoff

Stephanie Posner

Fran and Ben Weiger

## Birthdays



### December 1

Stephen Cole

### December 5

Rochelle Bekerman

Norm Epstein

Samuel Posnock

### December 7

Pamela Sudbury

### December 9

Jason Snailer

### December 10

Barrett Garrison

### December 12

Billy Udes

Nicholas Markson

### December 13

Dr. Aimee Israel-Pelletier

Molly Frisinger

### December 14

Shaun Levy

### December 16

Dina Lindell

Barry Goldfarb

Patricia Cushman

### December 17

Daniel Epstein

### December 18

Aubrey Markson

### December 19

Linda Licker

Max Spindler

### December 22

Julie Levy

Brent Sasley

### December 23

Brandon Snailer

### December 24

Debbie Goldsmith

### December 25

Lili Weiner

Joe Bekerman

### December 27

Gabriel Relyea