



FALL AT BETH EL MEANS

lulavs, etrogs, dancing, & more.

Be.★

*Community You
Can Believe In*

TEMPLE
topics

September - October
2023

Elul 5783 -
Tishrei - Cheshvan 5784

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★ SULAM Beth El – Seek. Understand. Learn. Act. Marvel.



The Talmud in Shabbat 33b describes a story of an elderly man who was holding two bundles of myrtle branches as the sun was setting one Friday afternoon just before Shabbat. Young students approached the gentleman and asked him why he was holding two bundles as his hands were beyond full. They suggested he discard one bundle and embrace the other. The man then answered he had two because one bundle was a symbol for remembering Shabbat (Exodus 20:8) and the other was a metaphor for observing Shabbat (Deuteronomy 5:12).

When the students learned the elderly man was carrying two bundles that represented remembering AND observing Shabbat, Rabbi Shimon then declared how beloved the mitzvot are to all of Israel, and their minds were at ease. This story connects students to elders in a powerful manner. Instead of being isolated groups, teens and elders can learn together to help both groups grow and deepen their understanding of identity, community, and belonging.

Better Together

Sundays, 10:30 – 11:30 AM

Oct. 15 Jan. 21 Apr. 21
Nov. 12 Feb. 25 May 5
Dec. 10 Mar. 17

REGISTER:
tinyurl.com/BTatBET5784

This fall at BET we introduce a new program called *Better Together* which will focus on strengthening the bond between these two important groups! Meeting for

eight sessions, once a month on Sundays during SULAM, the program will be an opportunity for adults over 65 and learners in fifth grade and above to study together.

The purpose of this new intergenerational program is to build community and support the connection between teens and older adults in our community. *Better Together* is sponsored by a national organization called the Legacy Heritage Foundation. Thanks to this new grant opportunity, there is no fee to participate, but registration is critical. In addition to BET members, we are also working with residents from Brookdale Senior Living for special programming throughout the year. All middle and high school students and

interested adults over 65 in our community and beyond are invited to participate in this new, exciting program.

Thank you so much, *Todah Rabah*, to the BET community for the very warm welcome I've experienced since starting as your new Director of Education and Family Engagement.

~ Dr. Eliyahu Krigel
ekrigel@bethelwh.org

Swords to Plowshares

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29

DURING SULAM

CONTACT: Dr. Eliyahu Krigel,
ekrigel@bethelwh.org

Using a portable forge, members of *Swords to Plowshares Northeast* turn previously surrendered gun barrels from police buy back programs into gardening tools. This is a hands-on experience for our SULAM learners.

Special Programs and Events

September

Sun. 10 First day of SULAM

October

Sun. 8 Gr. 1 Torah Presentations
Sun. 15 Gr. 5 Better Together
Sun. 22 Gr. 3 Siddur Ceremony Prep
Sun. 29 Swords to Plowshares



During the summer, Educators in our greater community work on collaborative programming!

Sunday SULAM

Sep. 10
Oct. 8, 15, 22, 29

NOTE: The Craft Gallery is open these mornings.

Weekday SULAM

	<u>Tues.</u>	<u>Wed.</u>	<u>Thu.</u>
<u>Sep.</u>	12, 19, 26	13, 20, 27	14, 21, 28
<u>Oct.</u>	3, 10, 17, 24, 31	4, 11, 18, 25	5, 12, 19, 26

★ Enjoying Beth El

Back to Beth El Carnival follows SULAM Opening Day

Sunday, September 10
11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Gather with your community and learn about all that Beth El has to offer! Enjoy an inflatable obstacle course, fun, food, and information about Beth El programs and committees. The

community is invited, so come and bring your friends!

COST: no charge
INFORMATION & REGISTRATION:
tinyurl.com/BETCarnival2023
CONTACT: Info@bethelwh.org

Distinguished Service Award Banquet

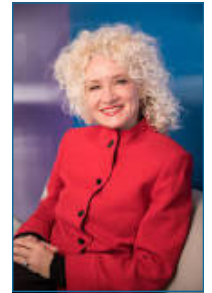
Sunday, October 22 ~ 5:00 – 8:30 PM



Honorees:

Judy and David Rosenthal for their many years of devoted service to Beth El Temple and the community.

Energy. Dr. Maric has prioritized student welfare, accessibility and affordability, and excellence in all facets of the UConn experience. Dr. Maric is a world leader in technologies for clean energy and sustainability whose career spans industry, government, and academic leadership positions.



Keynote Speaker:

Dr. Radenka Maric serves as the 17th President of the University of Connecticut. She is also the Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor in Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering and is Chair Professor in Sustainable

Master of Ceremonies:

Gerry Garfield, Beth El Temple Board of Trustees, Retired Partner, Day Pitney LLP

COST: \$75/person; see invitation for sponsorship options
REGISTER: tinyurl.com/BET2023DSA
SPONSOR: Men's Club

QUESTIONS: Dave Diamond, 860-965-3157,
daviddiamond2@comcast.net

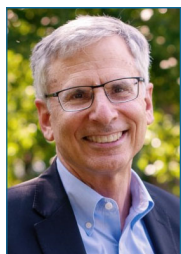
Opera Extravaganza

Concert: Sunday, Nov. 12, 2023, 7pm

VERDI, PUCCINI, BIZET PLUS MOZART CONCERTO K. 491 C MINOR
\$25; \$20 SENIORS (62+) & STUDENTS; FREE TO CHILDREN 12 & UNDER
AT BETH EL TEMPLE IN WEST HARTFORD [CLICK FOR TICKETS & INFO](#)

★ From the Rabbi's Desk

A Poignant Celebration of Service



Thirty-two times, with each arrival of the High Holidays, I've had the privilege and honor to share the sacred space of the Beth El bimah with Cantor Joseph Ness. Along with you, I have marveled at his remarkable talent, not only in leading us in prayer with his magnificent voice, but in composing original melodies for ancient prayers, thereby fulfilling the advice of a great 20th century Jewish teacher, Rav Kook, who said "*Hayashan Yitchadesh V'hechadash Yitkadesh*. Let the old be renewed and the new sanctified."

He has crafted innumerable sacred moments with adult and children's choirs, and with soloists, carefully nurtured and trained to inspire us all. Joining with organist Floyd Higgins, the result has been countless masterpieces of the heart.

If you ask Cantor Ness about his approach to Jewish prayer, he will tell you how important it is for him to interpret a text, to allow it to become alive, to have it fill the space within him until he artistically refines the vision to share with us all.

We all have our favorite moments of prayer with Cantor Ness: Kol Nidrei, the very special *Ein*

Keilohinu featuring young children as lead singers, and his haunting, almost overwhelming, original composition of *Unetaneh Tokef*. I have several other favorites of my own. Just one example is the perfect, contemplative ending to the day of Yom Kippur with his rendition of *Neilah*.

If you want to experience the essence of Cantor Ness and how much his prayer is a reflection of his deep, spiritual soul, pay attention to the Cantor's Prayer, the *Hineni*. It is a personal prayer that the prayer leader recites, the words a reflection of personal vulnerability and hope. Never will you find a more sincere expression of pure Jewish *Neshama* (soul), then at that moment.

It will be a bittersweet Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this year – wonderful that we are privileged to pray with Cantor Ness and sad that this will be his concluding season with us as he prepares for retirement.

Let us honor him, our tradition, and the God of Israel, by gathering together on these days of awe with open hearts and souls, our collective voices of yearning, uniting in music and in hope.

~ Jim Rosen

★ Reflections from the President



And just like that, we turn the page and welcome the holiday season with the start of a New Year. Our thoughts turn from beaches, campfires, outdoor concerts, and summer activities to back-to-school, apple picking, the beauty of the New England foliage, and pulling out sweaters for chillier days. Reflecting on the High Holiday season, I recall wonderful memories. Growing up in New York in a close-knit family, we had

many opportunities to connect for holidays. By tradition, the first night of Rosh Hashanah was dinner at my parents' home, the second at my aunt and uncle's. There were apples and honey, challah, delicious food, and a fruit tart for dessert. If the holidays were "early," perhaps plums; when they were "late," apples! Much like Beth El, my childhood synagogue had a variety of services to choose from. As an adult, my father joked that he hadn't been aware there was also an outside service. That, of course, was in reference to finding

me with my friends at the small park across the street from our synagogue!

Why did I choose to share these memories with you? These memories have helped shape who I am and allow me to appreciate how meaningful it was to be part of a community of family and friends. A community takes on many flavors: your neighborhood, the people you go to school with, the people you work with, and certainly the people and experiences that connect us in our Jewish journey.

(continues)

★ Cantor's Corner

One Door Closing Leads to Another Opening



In many real and profound ways, the history of the State of Israel can be defined by its poetry and song.

There is a beautiful *piyyut* (poem) in the *Neilah* service, the closing service of Yom Kippur, that states...

*Open for us the gate [of prayer]
at the time of closing the gate (literally, Neilah)*

for the day has declined.

*The day recedes (departs),
the sun goes down and declines.*

As I was orchestrating the song *B'Motza'e Shabbat*, exquisitely composed by Joel Engel with wonderful text by Shalom Ben-Zion, I realized the powerful connection in the *Neilah* poem, *Bemotza'e Menucha*, that was just presented with this wonderful passage in the Engel song:

The sun goes down, the Sabbath recedes (departs)

Both texts use the words *yifneh* – indicating a departure. In the *Neilah* text, we are realizing that the time of the High Holidays are almost departed. In the Engel song, we are realizing that the Sabbath is ebbing into the past.

In *B'Motza'e Shabbat*, amazingly, the doors of Shabbat are “closing” but we “open the doors” later that evening

onto the period of the *Yamim Noraim* (the Days of Awe).

The singer in this Joel Engel song (a mother), in the final stanza of this song, asks God, in the moments just after Shabbat concludes, “to accept her prayer to protect her children and family by having compassion and kindness for them....”

If the *B'Motza'e Shabbat* were to be sung at the conclusion of Shabbat, in the moments just before the *Selichot* service, an additional implication appears: even though there is the regret of Shabbat leaving, the prayers by the mother for “protection and compassion” are exactly echoed in another important and seminal *Sh'ma Koleinu* text that will be immediately recited in the *Selichot* services, a bit later that night asking exactly what the mother asks for in the ritual poetry of our tradition!

With all of this in mind, as a door may close in our lives, so may another open to new opportunities to be enriched by all that Judaism has to offer.

Shanah Tovah – A meaningful and healthy year to all!

~ Joseph Ness

Recordings can be found on YouTube:

B'Motza'e Shabbat tinyurl.com/BethElBMS
Shema Koleinu tinyurl.com/BethElSK

(President's Reflections cont.)

It's no surprise that as we have emerged from the pandemic, we desire to be with people. There have been numerous studies in the past few years demonstrating that the isolation we experienced has led to increased feelings of loneliness. Our Jewish faith and traditions encourage us to gather as a community. Whether that's to ensure there are 10 adults to make a minyan or simply coming

together for a study group, music experience, or festive meal, the strength of belonging is embedded in so much of our heritage.

As we start the New Year, I encourage each of you to explore all that Beth El has to offer. Dip your toes in the water or dive in to the deep end. Details for all our services, programs, and activities can be found in Temple Topics, on the Beth El Temple web-site, as

well as through our email communications.

On behalf of the Officers and Board of Trustees, our warmest wishes for a happy, healthy, and sweet year. We look forward to greeting you throughout our holiday season. Let's make some new memories together. And remember, Beth El is truly a *Community You Can Believe In!*

~ Leah Katz

★ Worshipping Together – Shabbat

Family Program

Shababa

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 27

5:30 PM Snack and Activity

5:45 PM Service

6:15 PM Dinner

GEARED TO: children 0-8
and their families

COST: free; opt. suggested donation \$18/family

REGISTER: by 10/24 at noon,
tinyurl.com/ShababaOct2023

to enable us to plan for dinner

QUESTIONS: Jason Kay,
engagement@bethelwh.org

Experience the joy of Shabbat with dancing, singing, stories, and prayers. Shabbat dinner for kids and grown-ups follows.



Summer Speaker Series

We thank our wonderful *darshanim* (teachers) who shared their own *divrei Torah* with us from the *bimah* this summer.

Ron Apter
Rabbi Ilana Garber &
Adam Berkowitz
Bobby Klau
Ted Lazarus

Steve Rabb
Phil Schulz
Eliana Simmons
Rachel Leventhal-
Weiner

Saturday – weekly

Shabbat Morning & Torah Services

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

Livestream and in person

A traditional service; may include b'nei mitzvah or special programming.

Children's Playroom up to age 5

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM

NOTE: children must be supervised by a grownup

A place to take a break with your energetic child.

Youth Shabbat Services

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

no Virtual Options

QUESTIONS: Dr. Eliyahu, ekrigel@bethelwh.org

★ Mazel Tots

Featuring songs and stories geared for children 6 and under with their families.



★ Shabbat Club

Prayers, games, and activities for students in grades 1-5.



Shabbat Mincha Service

12:30 – 1:00 PM

Livestream and in person

The brief afternoon service, complete with Torah readings, has returned to the Levine-Shein Chapel. Mourner's *Kaddish* will be recited for Sunday *yahrzeits*.

Havdallah

LOCATION: Home

Zoom only

NOTE: see chart for timing; it follows sunset

We transition from Shabbat to the new week with this brief service using the traditional symbols of a burning candle, a spice box, and wine. This will not include an evening service; Mourner's *Kaddish* will not be recited.

Friday – weekly

Kabbalat Shabbat

6:00 PM

Zoom and in person

We welcome Shabbat with joyous song and prayer led by Cantor Ness, *d'var Torah* from one of our rabbis, and special guest soloists.

Saturday – monthly

Birthday Shabbat

all ages!

SATURDAYS, SEPTEMBER 2, OCTOBER 7, NOVEMBER 4

On the first Shabbat of every month we celebrate birthdays with a group *aliyah* (Torah honor) and a blessing from the Rabbi.

Candle & Havdallah Times; plus Havdallah Service Time

Shabbat	Friday	Saturday	
	Candle	Havdallah	Service
Sept 1-2	7:07 PM	8:03 PM	8:25 PM
Sept 8-9	6:55 PM	7:51 PM	9:00 PM
Sept 15-16	See High Holiday Booklet		
Sept 22-23	6:31 PM	7:27 PM	7:50 PM
Sept 29-30	See High Holiday Booklet		
Oct 6-7	See High Holiday Booklet		
Oct 13-14	5:55 PM	6:52 PM	7:10 PM
Oct 20-21	5:44 PM	6:41 PM	7:00 PM
Oct 27-28	5:34 PM	6:31 PM	6:50 PM

★ Worshipping Together – Daily

Mincha & Ma'ariv

Zoom and in person

SUNDAYS-THURSDAYS

5:30 PM

Our daily *minyan* (prayer service with at least 10 Jewish adults) includes *Kaddish* for those in mourning or observing *yahrzeit* (the anniversary of a person's passing).

Shacharit

Zoom and in person

SUNDAYS

8:45 AM

MONDAY-FRIDAY

7:00 AM

NOTE: Mon, Sept 4

9:00 AM

The morning *minyan* also includes reading Torah on Mondays, Thursdays, and *Rosh Chodesh*.

★ Ritual Committee – Shiva Minyan Initiative

The only place to provide healing comfort, and an abiding sense of God's love and communal support is in the home of the mourner. ~ Kabbalists

Scholars have taught that it is impossible to be a Jew alone. As a community, we provide our members with the mitzvah of *neechum aveileem* (comforting the mourners), both at a mourner's home and at minyan in the synagogue. The silent presence of fellow Jews sitting together often speaks louder than articulated compassion.

Five years ago, the Ritual Committee took up the call to ensure that all congregants mourning a loss would be supported as they observed the Shiva period. With a forced Covid-19 hiatus now behind us, we are renewing that initiative.

We are looking for volunteers to become a Neighborhood Shiva Minyan Point Person. When a Shiva Minyan is needed in your neighborhood, you will reach out to congregants on your list to help ensure that a Minyan (10 Jewish adults) will be at the mourner's home, or in some cases, at Beth El's late afternoon minyan.

FAQ

Will the Point Person need to attend every Shiva Minyan? No.

Can one attend if they do not know the mourners? Absolutely! A true Mitzvah!

What if someone is not familiar with the service?
Their presence says it all and one can learn by attending evening minyan at Beth El or reaching out to our clergy.

CONTACT:

Diane Lieberfarb,
diane.lieberfarb@gmail.com;
Richard Gutcheon, gutcheon@pbins.com

★ Health & COVID Update

Let's Stay Healthy

With the holiday season upon us and the beginning of many programs and activities in this new year, it's important that we continue to consider the health and well-being of our congregants. We ask that if you or your family members are experiencing any illness, including flu, respiratory symptoms, viruses, or COVID, you remain home and not attend in-person services or events.

Additionally, if you do test positive for COVID, follow the guidelines outlined by the CDC:

www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/isolation.html

Beth El continues to monitor local and national COVID guidelines. Wishing all of our congregants good health in the New Year.

★ Celebrating Together – Sukkot and more

Congregational Sukkot Dinner

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

6:00 PM Shabbat and Festival Services

6:45 PM Dinner in the Sukkah

COST FOR DINNER: \$18/adult and teen; \$12/child under 12; family max of \$65; free for children under 5

RSVP REQUIRED FOR DINNER: by 9/22,

tinyurl.com/BETSukkot

QUESTIONS: Jason Kay, engagement@bethelwh.org

On Sukkot, it is customary to dwell in the Sukkah, to be joyful, to enjoy delicious food, and to welcome guests. We will enjoy all these mitzvot and more as we gather together as a community in the Sukkah for a delicious, festive meal in celebration of Shabbat and Sukkot.

Book in the Sukkah with Jennifer Anne Moses: *The Man Who Loved His Wife*

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 3 5:45 – 7:30 PM

COST: \$0 for WN members,
\$10 for other BET members,
\$18 for non-BET attendees

REGISTER: tinyurl.com/BookintheSukkah2023

CONTACT: Michelle Kunzman, 860-729-4201,
michellekunzman1@gmail.com

NOTE: books available for advanced sale, \$15

SPONSOR: Women's Network



A conversation in the sukkah with author Jennifer Anne Moses about her first book of short stories, *The Man Who Loved His Wife*. She is the author of several books and has published dozens

of essays, articles, Op Ed pieces, and short stories. Moses tells the stories of regular people faced with the problems of daily life but weighted with the 4000-year-old history of Judaism. These wide-ranging stories are by turn funny, sly, poignant, and intelligent, but they share one common trait: they are all thoroughly and profoundly Jewish.

Pizza in the Hut

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4 5:00 – 6:30 PM

COST: \$7/pizza eater

REGISTER: by 9/29, tinyurl.com/BETPizza2023

CONTACT: Dr. Eliyahu, 860-233-9696,
ekrigel@bethelwh.org

Shake the lulav and etrog, bond with friends, sing songs together, and eat pizza in our Sukkah. Geared to families with children ages newborn – twelve.

See the special High Holiday issue of Temple Topics for all High Holiday service schedules and descriptions.

12th Annual Sukkahfest: Grilled Steaks & Israeli Red Wine

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 5 6:00 – 8:30 PM

COST: \$25

REGISTER: tinyurl.com/Sukkahfest2023

CONTACT: Jacob Kovel, 860-651-9366, eaglewars@aol.com

SPONSOR: Men's Club

Come and socialize with the Beth El community. Rabbi Sowalsky will discuss the various Israeli red wines we'll taste. *It's a Mitzvah to eat in the Sukkah!*

Simchat Torah Story Slam

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 7

7:00 PM Festival Ma'ariv

8:00 PM Hors D'Oeuvres and Story Slam

COST: \$8 for hors d'oeuvres

REGISTER: by 9/29, tinyurl.com/BETStorySlam

QUESTIONS: Rabbi Zerin, rzerin@bethelwh.org

Following a festive service including *Hakafot* (singing and dancing with the Torah), enjoy wine, cheese, hot hors d'oeuvres, and our first ever Simchat Torah Story Slam – an interpretive and entertaining journey through the Five Books of Moses through the lens of stories told by Jonathan Alter, Michael Isko, Jason Kay, Bobby Klau, and Mina Nemirow.

Sleepover in the Sukkah

SATURDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7-8

7:00 PM Starting time

AGE GROUP: grades 3-8

COST: \$20, includes dinner, breakfast, snacks

REGISTER: tinyurl.com/BETSleepover1007

QUESTIONS: Dr. Eliyahu Krigel, ekrigel@bethelwh.org

Come to a sleepover at the Sukkah! We will spend quality time in the Sukkah, have fun and bond as a group, and then sleep indoors. Parents please join us at 9:00 AM for the Family Service and Simchat Torah LIVE! Morning Edition.

Simchat Torah Live! Morning Edition

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8 9:00 AM

COST: no charge

RSVP: to plan for lunch, tinyurl.com/MorningSTLive

Service complete with singing and dancing with the Torah scrolls, blessing of the new babies, 1st grade Torah Ceremony, and family programming! We will read the end and the beginning of the Torah, and honor *Justin Kudler*, *Jeremy Kempner*, and *Robin Santiago*.

★ Engaging Generations

Mazel Tov! and Appreciation for Sponsoring Shabbat Kiddush

Esther & Stephen Aronson in honor of Aufruf of Jacob Aronson and Melissa Brill

Lindsay & Samuel Reiss in honor of Lily's Baby Naming

Diane Biegel & Joel Pachter in honor of Aufruf of Rachael Pachter and Eli Kessing

Bendor family, in honor of Eli's Bar Mitzvah

Welcome to New Members

Sydney Ladenheim

Bruce Rothschild

Cheryl Upton

Congratulations

Esther & Stephen Aronson, on wedding of son Jacob and Melissa Brill

Laurie & Bruce Goldsmith, on wedding of daughter Brooke and Ziv Shwartz

Sarah & Steven Montag, on birth of child Mia Jordyn Montag

Diane Biegel & Joel Pachter, on wedding of daughter Rachael Pachter and Eli Kessing

Shari Roth & Russell Selzer on wedding of son Evan Selzer and Lauren Rosenstock

Ruth & Gilbert Small, on wedding of granddaughter Leah Small and Joseph Zindang

Carolyn & Jeffrey Weiser, on the engagement of daughter Emily and Michael Helgerman

Of Blessed Memory

Joanne Amy Cowles, step-daughter of H. Donald Golden

Martha Ehrlich, member and mother of Jackie Cohen

Jean Gladstein, mother of Eric Gladstein

Mary Ann Greenebaum, mother of Tom Greenebaum

Marsha Spencer Kamins, sister of Elaine Dombroff

Dr. Jonas Leifer, brother-in-law of Robert Green

Gerald Perloff

If you would like to share your Simchas and Sorrows with the Beth El Community, please send your Life Cycle announcements to: info@bethelwh.org.

Information on B'nei Mitzvah celebrations is available from the Temple Office.

★ Lifelong Learning

All services and classes can be accessed directly from the weekly e-blast to members (no login necessary) or by following the links on our website (login required).

Classes with Clergy

Musical Chat with Cantor Ness

MONDAYS, 7:00 – 8:00 PM

Zoom

SEPTEMBER 4 *The Prayers of Forgiveness, Opening the Doors*

OCTOBER 23 *From Vienna to Berlin: The liturgical music of the Western Traditions, Sulzer & Lewandowski*



Dirshuni – Israeli Women's Midrash and the Missing Half of the Jewish Bookshelf with Rabbi Zerlin

1ST AND 3RD WEDNESDAYS OF THE MONTH (mostly)

BEGINNING OCTOBER 18, NOVEMBER 1, 15, DECEMBER 6, 20

5:30 – 5:55 PM Minyan

6:00 – 7:30 PM Class

COST: no charge

REGISTER: tinyurl.com/Dirshuni5784

QUESTIONS: Michelle Kunzman,

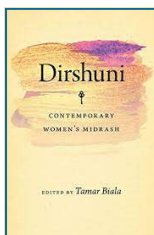
860-729-4201,

michellekunzman1@gmail.com

REFRESHMENTS: snacks provided

NOTE: Zoom option available

SPONSOR: Women's Network



What can we discover if we read between the lines of the Torah? What were the people in the Torah thinking or feeling? What backstories were we never told? Dirshuni is a collection of *Midrashim* – imaginative interpretations of the Torah – written by modern Israeli women that answer these questions and more. We will read and discuss the texts together.

No previous knowledge or background is necessary. All are welcome to these classes; join us for one or more classes. Each stands on its own & enhances the others.

Ongoing Weekly Adult Classes

New participants welcome!

Come occasionally or come weekly.

No registration, no charge.

Classes are both on Zoom and in person, unless otherwise noted.

Classes that took a summer break will resume the week of October 16.

Lunch & Learn

TUESDAYS

12:00 – 1:00 PM

NOTE: class resumes 10/17



Now in its 30th year, Rabbi Rosen invites you to join us as we explore the Hebrew Bible together. We will continue to study *B'reisheet* (Genesis).

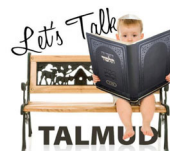
Talmud Study

WEDNESDAYS

10:15 – 11:15 AM

Zoom

only



We are a self-guided group of learners currently studying the tractate *Shevuot*. The only prerequisite is a desire to learn Torah as explored by our great sages.

Bible & Breakfast

THURSDAYS

8:00 – 9:00 AM



Participants share their viewpoints and insights about the weekly parsha, guided by our rabbis. We all learn by listening, thinking, and sharing. People from all backgrounds are welcome; an ability to read Hebrew or knowledge of Hebrew text is not needed.

Pirkei Avot Study

THURSDAYS

1:30 – 2:30 PM

NOTE: class will meet 10/19, 10/26, and 11/2



This small book of wisdom has been a source of inspiration for centuries. Rabbi Rosen leads us as we explore the nature of the good life from an ancient (and still very relevant) Rabbinic perspective.

★ Doing Mitzvot

KNITzvah Group

MONTHLY SUNDAYS, SEPTEMBER 10, OCTOBER 15

10:00 – 11:00 AM

CONTACT: BJ, 860-523-4918, and
Fran, knitzvahgrp@gmail.com



The KNITzvah Group creates lapghans and other knitted or crocheted gifts which we donate to various organizations working with people who can use the extra love that is woven into our creations. We are looking forward to resuming our in-person meetings. We welcome knitters and crocheters of all levels to join us as we *make strings into things* to warm the hearts of those in need. If you have any questions, please email.

Chesed (Kindness) Committee Supporting Our Members

COORDINATOR: Leah Katz, mitzvahbethel@gmail.com

If you are in need of some assistance or would like to be part of our volunteer corps, please contact us. Your Beth El community is prepared to be of help with any life challenges (illness, loss of a loved one).

Sorting Food Drive Donations

Sunday, October 15

9:15 – 11:30 AM

CONTACT: Sharon Levine-Shein,
ms.lib@comcast.net

Many hands are needed to sort all the bags of food donated to the Kol Nidrei Food Drive before they are delivered to the Food Pantry. See the High Holiday booklet for donation information.



The Anja Rosenberg Kosher Food Pantry continually needs to be restocked. Throughout the year, when coming to Beth El, please bring a can of vegetables or fruit, peanut butter, tuna, pasta, or a bag of groceries. Place your donations in the box at the entrance across from the Community Room.

3-Season Opportunities

Garden Club News

CONTACT: Alison Demarest, 860-810-2084,
alisonsupermom@comcast.net;
Robin Santiago, 860-490-7661,
robin@rsantiagodmd.com

DONATIONS: gently used garden tools, hoses, or the funds to purchase them are gratefully accepted



Greetings from the gardens! This summer was a “Shmita” year for the Beth El gardens. The days were too hot, too humid, and too smokey to work outside, while we gardeners were dealing with injury, surgery, sickness, and aging parents. God did the watering for us!

The perennials (which are plants that come back every year) bloomed beautifully without any help from us! Perennials are like the regular attendees at Minyan and Shabbat services. They bloom and grow, prosper and glow, reminding us that with God, all is possible. Regular attendance at shul helps us deal with many hardships & joys, by showing up and believing. We are supported by our faith and the faith and friendship of the other “regulars.” Perennials are like that; they keep showing up regardless of the weather.

This fall, we hope to divide the larger perennials and plant them in new spots so that next year we will have more color and beauty around Beth El. Join us in the garden and at services, and feel the joys of companionship, service work you can see, feel, and smell, and faith.

A special thank you to Felicia Wilion for donating 3 reels with hoses to help us water.

Jessie’s Community Garden

CONTACT: Dan Kulakofsky, 860-214-0881, dpk18@hotmail.com

Our vegetable garden was founded by the Kostin family to honor the memory of their daughter Jessica. The vegetables we grow are given to the Anja Rosenberg Kosher Food Pantry at JFS so their clients can have fresh vegetables.

This is the first fallow year as the deteriorated beds are rebuilt and automatic sprinklers are installed. This will allow the garden volunteers to work together as a community on Sundays. We are blessed to have a dedicated core group of volunteers and are hopeful that the new approach to gardening at Beth El will keep our garden viable for years to come.

Both of these outdoor activities make great b’nei mitzvah projects. Volunteers are invited to come with friends, as a family, or solo.

★ Israel Education Committee

The Jews of Iraq – An Ancient Community That Is Disappearing

This ancient Jewish community dates back to the Babylonian exile in 586 BCE. Some nine centuries later the community produced the scholars who wrote the authoritative Babylonian Talmud. The Babylonian Jewish community was wealthy and influential during this time and helped support the Jewish community in Israel. Calling themselves *Bavlim* (Babylonians), this Jewish community followed the history of diaspora communities with their highs and lows, depending on the attitudes of the rulers.

For much of the centuries between 1200-1700, Babylon was a poor country, unhappily caught between the warring Ottomans and the Persians. The fortunes of the country and its Jewish citizens began improving by the late 1700s. Their trading in textiles and cotton saw the rise of several famous Baghdadi families with a vast trading empire that stretched from India to England via Shanghai and Cuba.

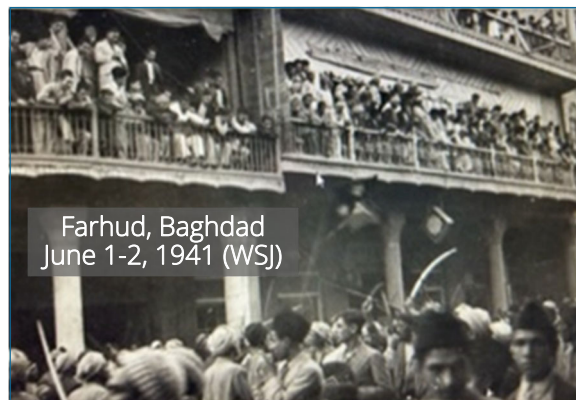


Baghdad family, 1914
(ANU Museum)

By WWI, the Jewish community constituted a third of the population of Baghdad. The British took control of the area in 1917 at the fall of the Turkish Empire and appointed King Faisal I as ruler. Under his reign Jews once again flourished, rising to key positions in government and trade. Iraq won her

independence in 1932 at the conclusion of the 10-year British Mandate. Iraqi Jews were an important and valued force in this national development, especially in the postal and judicial systems. The officially acknowledged Jewish community numbered some 150,000 by 1948. Hebrew was named as one of Iraq's six languages. Until the tables turned....

With persecution on the rise since 1932, the Farhud pogrom on Sukkot 1941 saw the deaths of hundreds of Jews with thousands more injured. British intervention eased matters temporarily, but 1947 again brought a tremendous upsurge of anti-Jewish rioting. In 1948, Zionism became a capital crime with a corresponding rise in Jewish oppression. Operations Ezra and Nechemia saw the evacuation of 104,000 Iraqi Jews who relinquished their possessions and



Farhud, Baghdad
June 1-2, 1941 (WSJ)

their citizenship. Another 20,000 Jews escaped via Iran. Over the ensuing decades the few remaining thousands departed, fleeing increasingly harsh discrimination. Today (as of 2021) there are three to four thousand remaining Jews and a decreasing number of Jewish heritage sites, all but erasing a presence that had lasted some 2600 years.

Life was far from rosy in the Israel of 1948-1951. Then she was a poor country and the immigrants along with the sabras suffered from lack of housing, adequate food, and employment. But they were alive, thanks to the existence of the State of Israel.

For more information about this fascinating community, visit www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jews-of-iraq

Interviews from Israel: *My Tree in Israel*

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 7 Zoom only
7:00 PM

RSVP: tinyurl.com/MyTreeConvo

The next interview in the ongoing series – learn how you can adopt a vine or olive tree in the Holy Land and receive your own personalized bottle of wine or oil! Adopt through our partnership with a donation to My Tree in Israel: tinyurl.com/BETTreeinIsrael.



CO-CHAIRS: Sharon Efron, sgredancer@yahoo.com;
Robin Santiago, Robin@rsantiagodmd.com

★ Making Connections

JTConnect

Monday Night JTConnect at Beth El Temple

SEPTEMBER 11 Classes begin
6:15 – 7:45 PM

INFORMATION: www.JTConnect.org

REGISTER: [Linktr.ee/jtconnect](https://linktr.ee/jtconnect)

CONTACT: Caroline Poland,
Executive Director, office@jtconnect.org

AGES: grades 8-12



Registration for JTConnect is open! Dr. Eliyahu Krigel will be teaching a class this fall.

United Synagogue Youth

WHUSY, the local chapter of the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism's youth movement, serves teens from Beth El Temple and The Emanuel Synagogue. USY offers local and regional programs and conventions, local social and social justice activities, and more!

CONTACT: Marisa and Max Beede,
Advisors, whusyadvisor@gmail.com
AGES: grades 6-12



College Connection

Do you have a child in college? We'd like to stay connected with them! We will send them holiday greetings and goodies throughout the year! First up will be a High Holiday message.

Please send us their new or updated contact information (name, mailing address for school, and email address).

Stephanie Kudler, Chair
collegeconnections@bethelwh.org
(note: new email address)



The generosity of the *Gavens Family College Youth Fund* makes this project possible.



Dr. Eliyahu visits
Camp Laurelwood

Beth El Community Hike

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29

11:30 AM Meet at BET;
bring a picnic lunch
12:15 PM Caravan to the Park

LOCATION: White and Pink Trail Loop, Case
Mountain Park, Manchester

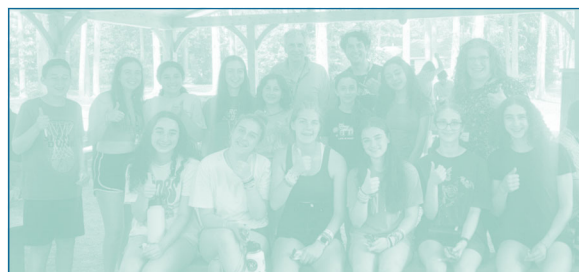
COST: no charge

REGISTER: tinyurl.com/BETHike2023, not
required, but helpful for last minute updates

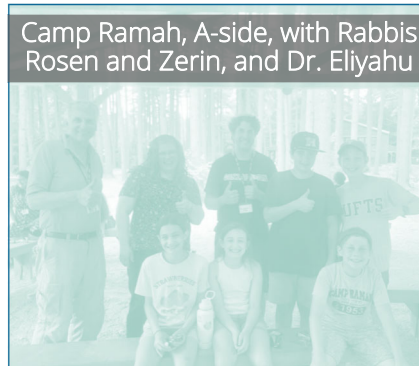
CONTACT: Dr. Eliyahu Krigel,
ekrigel@bethelwh.org

Parsha Vayera begins with three special visitors dropping in on Abraham. He and Sarah show hospitality and welcome these guests into their home. We are nature's guests, exploring her beauty and connecting with each other. In this parsha Abraham also advocates for the good people that are left in Sodom and Gomorrah, which will soon be destroyed. Be an advocate and stand up for our beautiful, natural world by surrounding yourself in nature!

While not difficult, the hike is a 2.8-mile loop and will take an average of a 1.5 hours to complete. Dogs are welcome to join but must be on a leash. Don't forget good walking shoes, snacks, water, and bug spray.



Camp Ramah, B-side (post b'nei mitzvah), with
Rabbis Rosen and Zerin, and Dr. Eliyahu



Camp Ramah, A-side, with Rabbis
Rosen and Zerin, and Dr. Eliyahu

★ Making Connections, cont.

Fantasy Football League Draft

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6

7:00 PM

COST: \$10/team

RSVP: tinyurl.com/BETFantasy2023

CONTACT: David Sabino, 917-453-2553, dnsabino@gmail.com

We are forming two-person teams and are encouraging family teams. The draft will be held in person the evening prior to the beginning of the 2023 NFL season. Prizes for the winning teams! Our league will be run through ESPN's website; details will be provided at the event. No experience required!

Walk Around the Reservoir

TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS 9:15 AM

COST: no charge

LOCATION: Reservoir on Route 44, Albany Ave; meet in parking lot

CONTACT: Stu Bernstein, 860-232-2012, scbernste@aol.com

Men's Club

Breakfast Program: *Talking Art with Art*

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5

9:15 – 11:15 AM

COST: no charge

RSVP: by 10/31, tinyurl.com/ArtwithArt

CONTACT: David Sabino, 917-453-2553, dnsabino@gmail.com

SPONSOR: the family of Stanley Wiesen in his memory

Our kickoff breakfast features Arthur Freedman, Men's Club President, a retired dentist and professional artist who has exhibited his work at numerous prestigious juried art shows throughout the Northeast.



The growing and increasingly diverse reservoir walking group!

L-R: Bruce Shein, Phil Schulz, Arthur Freedman, Mark Rubin, Jacob Kovel, Sheila Diamond, Dave Diamond, Carolyn Bernstein, Stu Bernstein, Dave Klau, David Brandwein, Judy Singer, Cindy Krish, Irwin Singer, Jeff Rudolph

★ Lifelong Learning – High Holidays

What is it all about? ~ Question & Answers about our traditions.

Why is the Havdallah service different on Rosh

Hashanah and Yom Kippur? All festivals and Shabbat conclude with Havdallah prayers. On Rosh Hashanah and other festivals it is modified and does not include the spices or flame. Since Yom Kippur is described in the Torah as *Shabbat Shabaton Hee Lachem* (Sabbath of Sabbaths it will be for you), a full Havdalah is at the end of *Neilah* (similar to Shabbat each week). If a festival ends as Shabbat begins, Havdalah comes after both holidays on Saturday night. With one festival leading into the next, we don't pause for Havdalah.

Why do we visit the cemetery before Yom Kippur?

It is a traditional time of remembrance and recalling loved ones who have passed.

Why do we wear white and sneakers on Yom Kippur?

White is a sign of purity. Shoes without leather (some sneaker brands) are worn so as to have no luxury; leather is considered a luxury.

Why is a Tallit worn at night only on Yom Kippur?

Yom Kippur is considered one full day of prayers, starting with Kol Nidrei. We continue to wear the tallit through *Neilah*, the end of the full day. The tallit is not worn during *regular* weekday evening services.

Why is Neilah such a special service at Beth El?

Neilah literally means the closing of the gates. This is the final service on Yom Kippur, and the Ark is open for about an hour. While it is open, we have one last chance to seek repentance and be sealed in the Book of Life. At Beth El, everyone, including non-Jewish relatives, is invited to stand for a private moment at the open Ark.

What are the special honors on Simchat Torah?

There are three special *aliyot*, and to receive one during the Torah reading is a great honor at all synagogues. For the first, we read the last section of the Torah, when Moses passes away. The second goes back to the beginning with the story of Creation and the establishment of Shabbat. The third is a portion that precedes the Haftarah reading for the day – the first chapter of Joshua, which is the book that immediately follows the Five Books of the Torah. The honors are called Kallah or Chatan, “bride or bridegroom” of the Torah, which reflects on the specialness of these honors. At Beth El, each of the honorees is brought to the bimah under a chuppah, signifying the “wedding-like” atmosphere of the moment, with special blessings recited over the honoree.

★ Lifelong Learning – High Holidays

What does it all mean? ~ Explanations of words for the High Holiday season

Aliyah/Aliyot (pl) ~ means “going up,” an honor to ascend the bimah.

Hakafot ~ the seven circuits around the sanctuary during which the Torah scrolls are carried on Simchat Torah. During this joyful custom each *hakafah* is accompanied by much singing and dancing. Often, the Torah procession is followed by children waving flags.



Hoshanah Rabbah ~ the seventh day of Sukkot is marked by a synagogue service, during which seven processions are made by all in attendance with lulav and etrog, while special prayers are recited. The Cantor wears his kittel for parts of the service, and the melodies echo those from Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

Kol Nidrei ~ the opening prayer recited the evening that Yom Kippur begins, acknowledging and releasing our obligations to our vows. It is traditionally recited 3 times, and has become the special name of the service for that evening as well.



Lulav and Etrog ~ the *arbah meeneem*, or Four Species, referring to the Four Species used – branches from the palm, willow, and myrtle trees, and the etrog, a citrus fruit similar to a lemon. During the morning service each day of Sukkot (except Shabbat), the lulav and etrog are held together and waved in every direction symbolizing God's presence.

Machzor ~ the High Holiday prayer book.

Neilah ~ the final service on Yom Kippur, after which you get to eat. See prior page for what makes this service special at Beth El.

Rosh Hashanah ~ the Jewish New Year; a two-day holiday that begins the High Holidays, a period of 10 days ending with Yom Kippur, also known as the Ten Days of Repentance.

Selichot ~ Jewish penitential prayers and poems, generally said during the period beginning with the Saturday night before Rosh Hashanah, leading up to the actual holiday.

Shabbat Shuvah ~ the Shabbat between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, also the Shabbat of Repentance. Its name comes from the opening word of the special Haftarah (portion of prophets) read that day in services.

Shemini Atzeret ~ the eighth day of assembly, following the conclusion of Sukkot. In Israel and in some Diaspora communities, Shemini Atzeret is combined with Simchat Torah. It is the first day on which the prayer for rain is recited, marking the beginning of the rainy season in Israel.

Shofar ~ a ram's horn that is used to make a blast of noise like a trumpet, used in Rosh Hashanah services and at the end of Yom Kippur.



Simchat Torah ~ means “rejoicing in Torah.” This holiday (in much of the Diaspora) immediately follows Shemini Atzeret and the conclusion of Sukkot and marks the end AND the beginning of the cycle of Torah reading. The celebration is especially festive, centering on synagogue services during which the Torah scrolls are taken out and paraded around the sanctuary and even spilling out into the street, where Torah holders often will break into joyful dancing. It is customary for everyone in the congregation to receive an aliyah on Simchat Torah.

Sukkah ~ a dwelling built specially for the holiday of Sukkot. We “dwell” in the sukka during the holiday, eating our meals and, for many, sleeping in the sukka as well. There are many rules regarding the building of the sukka. It can be made out of a variety of materials but the roof must consist of natural materials which allows one to see the sky and the stars at night. Historically, it represents the farmers' huts that were built in the fields of ancient Israel during the Fall harvest and the dwellings of the Israelites in the wilderness of the Exodus. It is by definition a flimsy structure, symbolizing the fragile nature of life and our dependence on God's protection.



Sukkot ~ The week long holiday which begins five days after Yom Kippur, named for the huts or booths, in which Jews are required to “dwell” during the festival (see above). One of the three pilgrimage festivals of ancient Israel, Sukkot celebrates the Fall harvest.



Tashlich ~ the symbolic “casting off” of our sins during the High Holiday period, is marked by a ceremony on Rosh Hashanah where we take pieces of bread (representing our sins) and toss them into a natural body of water.

Ushpizin ~ Biblical ancestors who are symbolically invited to enter the sukka on each day of the holiday and welcomed in a short ceremony. The men who are invited are Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Aaron, Joseph, and David. Many also invite these Biblical women as well: Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, Hannah, Miriam, and Esther.

Yizkor ~ a memorial service, recited four times a year during services, for our departed relatives and loved ones. It is recited on Yom Kippur and Shemini Atzeret and lasts about 15 minutes.

Yom Kippur ~ also known as the Day of Atonement, is the holiest day of the Jewish year. We traditionally observe this with a 25 hour period of fasting and intensive prayer.

★ Supporting Beth El

We deeply appreciate the following Thoughtful Contributions.

- ★ This list reflects contributions received and processed through July 18, 2023.
- ★ For the next edition of Temple Topics, contributions need to be received in the office by September 19, 2023.

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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF

Leon Sundel – Carol Johnson

Rabbi Rosen's Discretionary Fund

IN APPRECIATION OF

Rabbi Rosen – Caren Evans, Rebecca & Aaron Gladstein, Jen & Randy Kabakoff, Julie Kagan, Tammy Kagan Levine, Lori Newman & Dale Schwartz, Liz & Steve Rafalowsky, Shari & Louis Schwartz, Ted Zachs & family

Marshall Rulnick, Ruth & Gil Small, Linda Severi for help in the parking lot – Deborah R. Rosenfeld

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The marriage of Lara Solinsky, daughter of Susan & Alan, and Dr. Daniel Shaw – Meryl & Mitchell Danitz

Bar mitzvah of grandson, Leo Sternschein; bar mitzvah of Asher Wolfson, grandson of Susan & Michael Schenker – Norma Jean & Robert Sternschein

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Bar mitzvah of William MacDermott, son of Janel & Kevin – Barbara & Robert Green

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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF

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There are two ways to make a donation:

- ★ Go to the Beth El website: www.bethelwesthartford.org/giving
- ★ Mail it in

Please be sure to include:

- ◇ the name of the fund
- ◇ whom you wish to honor/remember and your relationship to the person
- ◇ their address for an acknowledgment card
- ◇ your address/phone/email

Print clearly – or submit the information typed.

Every dollar contributed can and does make a difference and will be acknowledged.

The minimum donation for each listing is \$10.

Unrestricted funds support the timely needs of Beth El Temple. Restricted funds benefit specific purposes and objectives. For a complete list of funds and any specific designations, please visit our website.

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IN APPRECIATION OF

Rabbi Rosen – the Kulakofsky family

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Hilda Lamkin Satz, mother; Ruzena Stern, Holocaust remembrance – Linda Stanger

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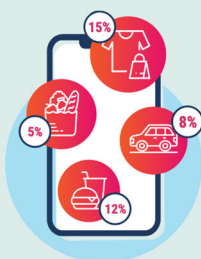
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IN MEMORY OF

Mildred & Woodrow Weissman, parents;
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David Klau for his generous computer help
– **Marianne G. Finnegan**

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IN HONOR OF

Marriage of Jason Kleinman, son of Myra
& Bill, and Julie Cutler; Barbara Brown's
service as chair of the Ben Bronz
Academy; 90th birthday of Arnold
Greenberg; Gary Starr's service to Beth El
– **Michele & Dane Kostin**

IN MEMORY OF

Mary Epstein – **Karen & Gordon
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Special birthday of Diane Lieberfarb – **Jeanne Elman**

IN MEMORY OF

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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF

Mildred Glasband, mother – **Linda Glasband Platt**

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IN APPRECIATION OF

Shera Golder – **Steve Rabb**

IN HONOR OF

Special birthday of Fred Golder – **Alison & Alan Gittleman**

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IN HONOR OF

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 Jace Brett being honored by Men's Club for his SULAM mitzvah project – **Judy Rosenthal**

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IN APPRECIATION OF
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 88th birthdays of Michael Cohen & David Klau; 80th birthday of Stu Bernstein; birth of Estelle Billie Steinhardt, granddaughter of Meryl & Mitchell Danitz; birth of Henry Isaac Eager, grandson of Diane & Scott Dolin – **Sharon Levine-Shein & Bruce Shein**

IN MEMORY OF
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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF
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IN APPRECIATION OF
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IN HONOR OF
 Engagement of Amanda Cohen, daughter of Jackie & Dan, and Evan Kase; birth of Lily Tova Reiss, daughter of Lindsay & Sam; Leah Katz becoming President of Beth El – **Diane & Richard Lieberfarb**

IN MEMORY OF
 David Prensky; Kenneth Schwartz – **Diane & Richard Lieberfarb**

WISHING A COMPLETE RETURN TO GOOD HEALTH TO
 Richard Lieberfarb – **Meryl & Mitchell Danitz, Abbey Kreinik, Judy & David Rosenthal, Susan & Michael Schenker**

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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF
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IN HONOR OF
 Steve Rabb's service as President of Beth El – **Leah Katz, Lois & Chuck Koteen**

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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF
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(continues)



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FOR THE YAHRZEIT OF

George Widem, uncle; I. Milton Widem, father; Elsie Widem, grandmother; Hilda Waxman, grandmother
– Susan Widem

Beth El is Warm and Welcoming



The sign at our front entrance states "All are welcome." Torah instructs "You shall not wrong nor oppress a stranger..." (Exodus 22:21). If we're

required to be kind to strangers, how much more so is the mandate to be considerate of fellow Beth El members and staff? About 30% of the U.S. population is sensitive to scented products on other people; some even have allergic reactions. Please avoid wearing fragrances and any scented products at Beth El.

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