

The Israelight

*Congregation Beth Israel of Media
A Reconstructionist Jewish Community*

The Beth Israel Community Seder will be held on the second night of Passover, Thursday, April 6, 2023 at 5:45. It will be a potluck seder.



This is an organized potluck. We are asking everyone to help by preparing and bringing seder foods, main dishes and sides, and also to help with set up and clean up. You are welcome to bring a guest. So that we have enough tables and chairs set up, please register everyone who will be attending at <https://www.bethisraelmedia.org/event/passover-community-potluck-seder.html>, and then sign up for your potluck contribution using this link. More details about what to bring are on the sign up link:

[https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30eo545adad22a6fb6-community2- /](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30eo545adad22a6fb6-community2-/)

Any questions, please contact Andy Coleman at ahndroo@aol.com.



Location: Pendle Hill in Wallingford PA

Rates: Full weekend → \$275-240/adult, \$150/child

Day only → \$65/adult, \$30/child*

*For day only: children under 4 attend free; if you have more than two children over the age of 4, the third child + are free

Register at:

<https://www.bethisraelmedia.org/form/beth-israel-retreat-2023.html>

<https://www.bethisraelmedia.org/form/beth-israel-retreat-2023.html>

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Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Nathan Martin

**RETELLING OUR
LIBERATION STORY**

In the midst of the narrative of the ten plagues the Torah takes an interesting pause to describe in detail the preparations and celebration of the Passover holiday. The Torah even imagines at the moment a time when the need to re-tell the story will be inevitable, "And when your children ask you, 'What do

you mean by this rite?' you shall say, 'It is the passover sacrifice to YHVH who passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when smiting the Egyptians, but saved our houses.' (Ex. 12:26-27).

I love that the essence of Passover, from its origins, is not only the food and the cleaning (which it is) but also the understanding that the only way to truly keep a historical event meaningful is to continue to creatively retell it generation after generation.

Some commentators, such as Noam Zion from the Shalom Hartman Institute, posit that the Haggadah itself is simply a teacher's outline for how to structure an interesting story telling about the Exodus. And when it came to key verses from the narrative, the traditional Haggadah suggests that we do what Jews do best, engage in close reading and exegesis of the text — playing with the words of Torah. Even the central Mah Nishtanah prayer, Zion argues, is meant to provide a model for how to ask questions about the story and the ritual; any answers that come along are secondary to the questions.

In our contemporary Sedarim, we continue and extend this creative exegesis in new ways. The Reconstructionist Haggadah, A Night of Questions, includes a play to act out. We often turn to first person narrative, inviting participants in the seder to reflect on liberation in their own lives and circumstances. And of course — from Rabbi Arthur Waskow's Freedom Seder in 1969 and beyond, we also have a tradition of using the seder to connect to liberation struggles around the globe through the lens of the seder rituals.

Even the seder plate continues to grow with additional symbols of liberation. There's the orange on the seder plate for Feminism and later LGBTQ equality, (which my children think was put there by Miriam herself,) a tomato to recognize the Immolakee workers in Florida seeking fairer wages and representing the rights of workers more broadly, an acorn to represent and acknowledge the indigenous land on which we are living and the people who have stewarded this land for many generations. I'm sure you can think of others.

The beauty of the seder and the retelling of the Exodus tale is that it is not a static ritual, but continues to evolve and change, allowing us to regularly inject meaningful new narratives and to "reconstruct" this ritual so that it continues to provide meaning and depth for current and future generations.

Whether you are joining our Seder at Beth Israel this year and/or attending other Seders, I invite you to consider bringing your own reflections and creativity to this Jewish moment. Here are some options for consideration of ways to bring the seder more directly into the lives of those sitting around the table:

- Find a way for those who would like to share a story from their family or their own lives that illustrates the power of liberation?
- Invite seder-goers to bring with them an object that represents liberation and find a time during the seder (Perhaps during dinner) in which everyone can tell the story of their object.
- Bring back old or start new traditions at your seder! Include special foods, songs or melodies that connect you to your family and brings in a piece of your personal ancestry that you get to carry with you on your journey.

I want to bless us, as we enter this ritual passage of the seder and connect with friends and family, that we allow ourselves to be open to new and innovative teachings and experiences that will generate new meanings for us in our own journeys of liberation.

With best wishes for a sweet and healthy Passover!


Rabbis' Note

Rabbi Linda Potemken



All year long we are invited to reflect upon the Jewish redemption narrative through the daily liturgy, but for the week of Pesach it is front and center. The simplest of seders can be created by exhibiting the traditional seder plate items along with matzoh and then exploring their significance. Some years people add one or more additional items to signify a contemporary struggle against oppression.

This year, I am going to add a whole second seder plate to the table, with items representing the many ways we are still working to uplift our world from apathy, exploitation and inequity. Like the traditional seder plate that has items representing both pain and liberation and some exemplifying both, this plate will not only illustrate the pain and perils of this moment in time, but will contain items that signify hope. Join me in creating this second seder plate. What might you place on it this year?



Is BIMAS* right for you?

♪ Play an instrument but miss the opportunity to make soul-stirring music?

♪ Really want to play klezmer but suffer from lack of confidence?

♪ Haven't dusted off your instrument since your Bat Mitzvah?

♪ BIMAS might be just what the doctor ordered!

For more information contact larry@hamermesh.com

Side effects may include
severe euphoria,
earworms
repetitive foot tapping, and
infectious joy.

***Beth Israel Music Appreciation Society**

Anti-Racism Coordinating Committee

April 28 7:30 pm at Friday night services in the BI sanctuary

John Alston, Founding Director of the Chester Children's Chorus, will speak on "History, Race and Genes in Chester"

FROM Antiracism Discussion Module 8- Each module contains Jewish texts, an antiracism resource and discussion questions. Here is a sample from Module 8, discussed on March 29. We invite you to explore the text and to listen to the 16 minute Ted Talk: (See page 6 information about Module 9)

FROM: Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzatto, *Mesillat Yesharim* (Path of the Upright) 18th century text: "The task of watchfulness involves a person being cautious in their actions and their interests, which is to say, conscious and aware of whether their deeds and their ways are for the good or not. The point is to avoid abandoning their soul to the danger of destruction (God forbid) and not to go in their habitual ways as a blind person in darkness. This is a thing that our intelligence knows and ought to dictate."

| TED Talk: *How to Deconstruct Racism, One Headline at a Time* https://www.ted.com/talks/baratunde_thurston_how...

How to Reach our Rabbis

By phone: (610) 566-4645, choose option 1 if Diane does not answer. A voice message left for either Rabbi will reach them quickly.

By e-mail: Rabbi Linda: ravltp@bethisraelmedia.org Rabbi Nathan: rabbinate@bethisraelmedia.org

Not sure who's 'on' this weekend? Check the calendar, easily available at bethisraelmedia.org and on the penultimate page of this Israelight. Also, each rabbi's e-mail account responds with a message indicating which rabbi is 'on.'

In cases of a real emergency...

Senior Rabbi Linda's and Associate Rabbi Nathan's home phone numbers can be found in the Member's Area of our website under How to Reach Our Rabbis and in our Directory.

The Rabbinic Liaison Committee exists in most Reconstructionist communities to ensure the maintenance of a good working relationship between the rabbis and the congregation. While congregants are always welcome and encouraged to discuss questions or concerns directly with Rabbi Linda or Rabbi Nathan, they may at times feel more comfortable talking to the Rabbinic Liaison committee. Issues raised by congregants are discussed confidentially and, when appropriate, are shared with a Rabbi in a constructive manner. To discuss a question or concern with a lay member of the committee please feel free to contact: Julian Yates (jyates@udel.edu) Deb Erie (debjoerie@gmail.com), Emily Levine (emily@emilysquireslevine.com), or Linda Cohen (lhc@comcast.net).

President's Messages:

EMMA LEFKOWITZ



Dear Beth Israel Community,

Our community's governance high-season is nearly upon us. In April, the Board begins working on our Annual Budget, which is then approved by the community at May's Congregational Meeting (Sunday 5/21 at 10am). We also vote on the new slate of candidates for the Board itself at that meeting. In June, the Board gathers as two selves: old and new. The Board of the past year, along with the new members, convene at the June meeting to say welcomes/hellos and goodbyes/thank yous, in addition to working on the business at hand. This is a special meeting, in my experience on the Board, marking past and future all at once.

Indeed, my term as President will end in this season, and Mark Rosenberg will move from Executive Vice President to our new President at that May Congregational meeting. Mark has been an incredible partner to me in these last two years and I want to publicly thank him for his equanimity in the face of challenge, his unfailing honesty, his wisdom and intelligence, his ever present humor and his readiness to learn. Oh, and his genial willingness to pick up (a lot of) the slack with my own shift back to full time work. Mark, you are a hero among volunteers and a wizard among workers. Thank you for everything you've done to help me and to help Beth Israel be all it can be. Shalom!

Come dance! Israeli Dancing at BI taught by Andi and Sharon! April 11, 7:00 - 8:30pm

We will meet the **2nd Tuesday of every month** from 7:00 to 8:30 in the sanctuary.

Ring and enter at the main entrance or phone Sharon. (RSVP to SharonLKleban@gmail.com; she will send her cell number)

No partner or experience is needed. The evening will include both beginner/liturgical dances and intermediate/modern dances. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes and bring your own water bottle. You may bring your own smile or one will be provided for you :)



Contact Andi at andiwallach@gmail.com or Sharon at sharonkleban@gmail.com for more information.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP? For those of you who may need some assistance for your small business or other financial issues that have arisen from the pandemic, consider consulting the following resources: The Hebrew Free Loan Society of Philadelphia: <https://hflphilly.org/> Grants, loans, other resources: jewishtgether.org run by the Jewish Federations of North America.

As usual, check your email for more information and for zoom links.

BI BOARD OF DIRECTORS**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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Larry Hamermesh

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Marion Hamermesh, Rich Remenick

Elaine Feldman, Ron Romoff

Lynn Cashell

Steve Platt

Sea Amundsen, Jeff Golan, Randi Raskin Nash,

Jessie Reagen Mann, Jonathan Washington



Congregation Beth Israel's Indoor Rummage Sale

**Sunday, June 11
9 AM - 1 PM**

Items needed: household goods, small electronics, small appliances, toys, games, furniture, etc. Please do NOT donate computers, monitors, clothing, or books. Contact Joe Deutsch (jdbugeye@hotmail.com) or Lynn Cashell (lynncashell@gmail.com) Location and times for donations will be announced later. DO NOT bring anything to Beth Israel at this time.

Legacy Gifts for Congregation Beth Israel

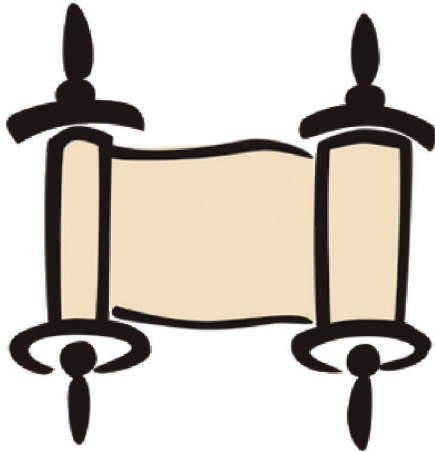
As you are probably aware, four of our beloved congregants passed away this past year. They are sorely missed and will be for many years to come.

We show our continuing love for our departed congregants through prayer, memorial gifts, naming committees or events honoring them.

One of our recently departed friends left a legacy donation to Beth Israel, which we also want to acknowledge. This individual had purchased an annuity for retirement and named Beth Israel as the beneficiary of the remaining balance after their death. The balance was substantial, and the Board determined to transfer the donation into the synagogue's Endowment Fund which will help Beth Israel to provide services and education for years to come. Another way that a legacy gift may be made to Beth Israel is by naming Beth Israel as a beneficiary of a sum certain or residual in your will.

We are mentioning these opportunities for giving, because the Congregation is so grateful - not only for the generous gift- but, also that a member remembered Beth Israel and wanted to support our Congregation even when they were no longer here. To the extent that you want to support BI for many years, you may be able to do the same thing in your Estate plan. While some members may want to leave a legacy to Beth Israel in a will or trust, you also could name BI as a beneficiary on an annuity, insurance policy or IRA. Most institutions will accept naming a charity as a beneficiary to even a small percentage of any balance left.

Contact Steven Goldfield, Chair of Burt Cohen Endowment Committee at Goldfield.Steven@verizon.net or Larrye Loss, Vice President of Finance (larrye.loss@gmail.com) if you have any questions.



This year, we will use traditional & contemporary commentary to study the Parshat HaShavua (portion of the week) with an accent on learning how Jews learn. Inspired by John Dewey who wrote: *Perhaps the greatest of all pedagogical fallacies... is the notion that a person learns only the particular thing he is studying at the time*, this year's Torah Treks teachers have been asked to be transparent about the styles of Jewish text study they are offering because these different ways of engaging with a text are central to who we are as Jews.

Monthly through May 2023, *in the sanctuary*, on Shabbat mornings at 11:00, following an abbreviated service.

April 22 Parshat Acharei Mot-Kedoshim - A look at Hasidism Richard Remenick

For many of us, the term Hasidism conjures images of strange clothing and hair-styles, insular communities, and stodgy political and cultural values. But soon after it became a movement in the 18th century, Hasidism was seen by many Jews as too radical! How did this shift happen? On April 22, Richard Remenick will provide some perspective on how and why Hasidism developed, what Hasidic practice was like, how they engaged with Torah, and what message it may have for Jews today.

BI is taking the lead to expose "hard history."

Presented with the **Anti-Racism Coordinating Committee**

ANTIRACISM DISCUSSIONS THE EXPLORATIONS CONTINUE



JUSTICE, JUSTICE YOU SHALL PURSUE
DEUTERONOMY 16:20

BI CONVERSATIONS ON ANTIRACISM

Please check your email for the modules that are delivered to your inbox. Each module includes a Jewish text, an antiracism resource and several questions to contemplate. The material is sent for you to explore at your convenience. The community will then gather on zoom for a discussion of the module, 7-9 days after you first receive it.

A discussion of module 9 at 7:30 on April 19 on Zoom

Journey Through Judaism – Once a month at 7:30 on Zoom with Aya Baron

April 25 7:30 The Season of the Omer

May 17 7:30 Shavuot, What Happened at Revelation?

MUSSAR with Rabbi Linda

Thursday, April 20 11:30 Mussar on zoom

This is a closed group but if you are interested in studying mussar, in this group or at another time, please contact Rabbi Linda

See page 7 for learnings with the Richards - Rabbi Hirsh and Remenick

RESCHEDULED

**Awe and Intimacy in Jewish Tradition
Learning on ZOOM with Rabbi Richard Hirsh
May 16, 23, 30 at 7:30**

Jewish tradition embraces a continuum of experience, from the internal and intimate to the external and overpowering. While these have often been presented as oppositional (example: the "cathedral synagogue" vs. the living-room havura), they can also be approached as complementary.

We will explore the dynamics of awe and intimacy in Jewish ritual and liturgical practice; in Jewish spiritual tradition, including conceptions of God; and in the realm of Jewish moral-ethical imperatives, with attention to the collective demands of the prophets and the interior cultivation of the mussar tradition.



From the Pen of Richard Remenick

In 1920, the German-Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) opened the House of Jewish Learning (sometimes referred to as the Lehrhaus) in Frankfurt, Germany. The Lehrhaus was not a Hebrew school in our modern sense, but a space in which Jewish adults could gather and reestablish their connection to Judaism through learning. Crucially, Rosenzweig realized that many of these adults were deeply educated in secular, non-Jewish subjects, (the “outside” books) and therefore partially alienated from Judaism.

Rosenzweig’s approach was not “to adorn life with a few pearls of thought from the Talmud” but to develop a new kind of learning, “... learning in reverse order. A learning that no longer starts from the Torah and leads into life, but the other way round: from life, from a world that knows nothing of the Law, or pretends to know nothing, back to the Torah”. In this way Jews could find their way back into “the heart of our life. And of being confident that this heart is a Jewish heart. For we are Jews”.

Accordingly, a physician, chemist, politician, or historian could become learners and teachers at the Lehrhaus and not only that, but these secular professionals could use whatever they had learned in the secular world and bring it into their understanding of Judaism. Even though the Lehrhaus only existed for about a decade, Rosenzweig’s vision of Jewish adult education remains powerful and extremely moving.

from the desk of Jackie Gelman

Our Tot Shabbat program is going strong! Since last fall we've met on the 2nd Friday of every month, coming together to sing, color, play, eat, tell stories and celebrate Shabbat together as a community. Over the past 6 months we've had 30 families participate, with about 5-7 families per month.

Many thanks to our adult and teen volunteers, who make it all possible: Gabrielle Rosenthal, Randi Raskin-Nash, Lynn Cashell, Elaine Feldman, Dina Jacobs and Emma Wilson, Alisa Herman-Liu, Kathy Trow, Alan Ross. And of course Rabbi Nathan and Rabbi Linda. Special thanks to Aya Baron who led blessings and a story at our March Tot Shabbat.

If you'd like to attend or help out at a future Tot Shabbat please reach out to Jackie Gelman. Future dates: 4/14, 5/12 and 6/9.



Tutoring the children of the Chester Eastside Inc. Tutoring by BI members, led by Louis Friedler, continues with new and continuing leadership at CEI. We have about 11 BI members (or friends of BI members) currently coaching in CEI's Out of School Time Program this semester.

Ala Hamilton Day is coordinating our annual **Passover Food Drive**, benefiting the Media Food Bank. Some donations were collected after the Purimspiel and delivered to the food bank. Another call for donations will go out in concert with Passover and the BI Seder.

The committee is working with Rabbi Nathan on the **Mitzvah Day** activity on April 23, focused on putting together "must have" packages of personal toiletries for recent immigrants aided by HIASPA. The HS children and the rest of the congregation will be invited to help assemble the bags. Basha Silverman is chairing the event for BI and has put up a Signup Genius for needed items.

The committee hosted a **presentation by Fran Stier, the founder of the Chester Community Coalition**, which is providing trauma-informed counseling to victims and family members affected by violence in Chester. She covered research that showed how such programs have been having noticeable results, both locally and nationwide. A video of her presentation was posted to the Forum.

Judy Kinman, Amy Strauss, John Greenstine, and Amy Binder joined David Cashell at one of his regular shifts at the Jewish Family and Children Services' "In Closet" warehouse in Springfield. The team sorted clothing by gender and type, discarding soiled or damaged garments. Another volunteer date will be announced soon.



Through SAC, BI sponsored Mei'ra to purchase much-needed Hebrew textbooks for **Abayudaya Hebrew School** students in Uganda. The Ugandan Jewish tribal schools are in need of texts and a variety of learning materials. Mei'ra has been teaching online in classrooms there and has worked with Rabbi Nathan and Kulanu.org, a US organization that supports the Jews of that country. A rabbi will hand-carry the books to the classrooms when she

returns home in April from her rabbinical training. Mei'ra's work to identify a personal delivery to Uganda was critical, as we have learned that funds donated and items ordered for delivery there are highly likely to be stolen.

Operation Gratitude,

The mission of Operation Gratitude to honor the service of our Military and First Responders by creating opportunities to express gratitude. Check out the website OperationGratitude.com or contact Lynn Cashell (lynncashell@gmail.com)

Please remember to donate personal care items and toiletries for the homeless shelters and the Community Action Agency. The collection box is on the main floor, under the coat rack. Thank you

Mourner	Remembering	Relationship	Yahrzeit 2023	Yahrzeit 5783
David Wasser	Morris Wasser	Father	April 01	10 Nissan
Joshua Waterston	Buzz Waterston*	Father	April 02	11 Nissan
Wendy Reier Waterston	Buzz Waterston*	Husband	April 02	11 Nissan
Me'ira Pitkapaasi	Eleanor Adelman	Grandmother	April 04	13 Nissan
Stuart Isaacs	Howard Isaacs*	Father	April 04	13 Nissan
Arnie Schwartz	Charles Silverstein	uncle	April 04	13 Nissan
Peter Bernstein	Shirley Glasserman	Aunt	April 04	13 Nissan
Helene Gumerman	Carl Gumerman	Husband	April 05	14 Nissan
Susan Klein	Eliott Klein	Cousin	April 05	14 Nissan
Stuart Pittel	Lee Pittel*	Mother	April 07	16 Nissan
Natalia Zhukovskaya	Zinaida Zhukovskaya	Grandmother	April 07	16 Nissan
Stephen Platt	Felice Ruth Platt	Mother	April 07	16 Nissan
Elaine Wasekanes	Ethel Kesselman	Mother	April 11	20 Nissan
Me'ira Pitkapaasi	Jonah Elliott-Adelman	Son	April 14	23 Nissan
David Wasser	Amy Keller	Sister	April 14	23 Nissan
David Markman	Shirley Markman*	Mother	April 15	24 Nissan
Eleanor Skale	Gloria Rutberg	Sister	April 17	26 Nissan
Deborah Erie	Barbara Drill	Sister	April 18	27 Nissan
Carol Briselli	Sheldon Isaacson	Brother	April 21	30 Nissan
Susannah Friedman	Marianne Friedenber	Mother	April 22	1 Iyyar
Helene Gumerman	Samuel Abrams	Father	April 24	3 Iyyar
Cameron Vanore	Mary (Gran) McNeely	Grandmother	April 24	3 Iyyar
Miriam Paikoff	Kenneth Kinman	Father	April 24	3 Iyyar
Amy Fantalis	Rhoda Fantalis*	Mother	April 25	4 Iyyar
Stanley Sklar	Rhoda Fantalis*	Sister	April 25	4 Iyyar
Marilyn Verbits	Philip Verbits	Father	April 25	4 Iyyar
Ralph Kaufman	Dorothy Kaufman	Mother	April 27	6 Iyyar
Chris Pragman	Robert Pragman	Father	April 29	8 Iyyar
Randy Tiffany	Marjorie Yudkin*	Wife	April 29	8 Iyyar
Shoshanna Gottlieb	Ruth Gottlieb	Mother	April 29	8 Iyyar

*after a name indicates that there is a plaque.



Yahrzeit begins at sundown the evening before the date shown.

Me'ira Pitkapaasi
**Hebrew, B'nai Mitzvah,
Math, Special Ed**

M.A. Education, T.C. Math & Special Ed
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GROCERY CARDS ARE IN STOCK AT BETH ISRAEL —YES! I shop at Acme or Giant and I'm happy to purchase gift cards through BI! (for every card purchased, BI receives \$5 - it adds up and makes a difference!) Let Mikayla know if you'd like to purchase some. Phone 610-566-4645 or send her an email: mikayla.losanowych@bethisraelmedia.org

BIMAS Fund

Steven Smith with thanks for adding so much to my 50th Bar Mitzvah anniversary celebration.

Ellie Festival Fund

Benjamin Alouf

David & Lynn Cashell in memory of Eliana Anderson, beloved daughter of Dan and Kathy Andersen.

Susan Klein

Jean Fleschute in memory of Eugene Kroch.

Amy Strauss

Kathy Trow

Katherine Sibley & Joe Horwitz in memory of Ann Green and Bob Stone, our beloved departed members of BI.

General Fund

Alvin Martin in honor of Rabbi Nathan Martin.

Wendy Waterston towards greening and sustainability efforts at BI.

Golden Book Fund

Rabbi Linda Potemken, in memory of Vitali's mom, Klara Eskinazi. May her memory be for a blessing and may you find comfort as you absorb this profound loss.

Rabbi Linda Potemken, in memory of Kim Dumoff's beloved sister, Michele Slotnick. May her memory be for a blessing and may you find comfort as you walk the path of mourning.

Rabbi Linda Potemken, to Kevin Nash, Randi Raskin Nash & Elan Nash, in memory of your beloved Myrtle Nash, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother, friend. May her memory be a blessing in the years to come.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Sharon Kleban

Steven Smith in gratitude for making my 50th Bar Mitzvah anniversary such a wonderful and meaningful occasion.

Social Action Fund

Kathy & Terry Adamson for the Better Start for Babies donation drive.

Miriam Sigler for the Better Start for Babies donation drive.

Jean Fleschute in memory of Eugene Kroch.

Richard Lowe & Marjorie McAboy in honor of the 50th anniversary of Steve Smith's Bar Mitzvah.

Rachel Ginzberg & Michael Palazzo in honor of Steve Smith on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.

REFUAH SHLEIMAH There are many in the BI family in need of healing. Our blessings go out to everyone in need of refuah - healing of body and/or healing of spirit. Join us at Shabbat or weekday services where we pray for healing.

Please be sure to let the Rabbis know when you or someone in the congregation is in need of a blessing for healing.

Your generous support not only enables Beth Israel to provide a robust variety of programs that foster the spiritual needs of our community, your support also enhances our ability to bring about tikkun olam through our social action initiatives. Your generosity is appreciated now more than ever. Please consider honoring a friend or a loved one through a contribution to any of our designated funds.

DID YOU KNOW... if you're going to make a contribution by check to a restricted fund, like the Rabbi's Discretionary or Social Action Funds, that it's better for you (and for us), if you make your check payable to "Congregation Beth Israel of Media." You can always note any special purpose for the contribution in the memo line of your check. Why? "Congregation Beth Israel" is the correct payee. Also, by noting the special purpose, if any, on your check, we can make absolutely certain that your donation is directed to the appropriate fund, your account is properly credited, and your end-of-year tax letter is accurate. Like you, the rabbis, administrative staff, directors and officers of BI are absolutely committed to making certain your donation is put to its intended purpose. Please help us help you to make certain that happens. Thank you.





EARTH MONTH UPDATE: SOLAR PROJECT AT BETH ISRAEL IS NOW COMPLETE!

Beth Israel's solar team is pleased to report that with the installation and activation of bidirectional metering and the permit to operate, our 26kW, 61-panel solar array is now fully installed. We expect that the 31.2 MWh that the array is expected to generate annually should meet the vast majority of the synagogue's electricity needs by providing clean, renewable energy.

How did we get here?

The installation of the solar array reflects over a decade of Greening and Sustainability work undertaken by many BI volunteers. Some particular efforts, among the many who have helped include:

Elaine Feldman for her general leadership on our BI efficiency projects,
 Rabbi Linda's leadership in supporting sustainability work at Beth Israel
 Chris Pragman in lending his expertise and assuring the building thermostats were optimally chosen and also programmed
 The tech team - Josh Waterston, John Greenstine and Steve Platt in assuring the electronic communications of this equipment is ever-more robust
 Jennifer Lenway's and Steve Goldfield's leadership on our oil to gas furnace conversion
 Denny Waldman, Josh Waterston, and Reisa Mukamal's work in the early relamping of the sanctuary and other synagogue lighting
 Others in our facilities committee resiliently maintain equipment to reduce our energy consumption and work on other efficiency projects.

Since 2007 we have managed to halve our energy use and carbon emission!

Some of the highlights of this previous work included:

- ☀ Careful benchmarking and tracking of our energy consumption over time to identify and repair inefficient equipment.
- ☀ Thorough auditing of our building systems and good communication with congregants and committees to make sure we are using our building efficiently.
- ☀ Reducing our electricity use by upgrading our internal and external lighting and control systems, and switching out inefficient lighting systems to higher efficiency CFL and LED technology
- ☀ Reducing our heating and cooling costs by converting an inefficient oil furnace and boiler system to high efficiency gas units, correcting heating zones and appropriate air circulation equipment, and adding programmable thermostats. We also installed high efficiency heat pump systems in the well-used offices that have saved on heating costs as well!
- ☀ Replacing an oil furnace with a high efficiency gas furnace in the "Green House" and other measures to reduce greenhouse heating costs

These major HVAC upgrades, recycling and early relamping efforts were shortly followed in 2013, by our involvement with Greenfaith, a grassroots, multi-faith movement for the climate, which allowed Beth Israel to earn a Green synagogue certification. This was due to the additional initiative of Jennifer Lenway and the combined efforts of Elaine Feldman, Marion Hamermesh, Shoshanna Gottlieb, Debbie Wile, Don Huddler, Anita Weber, and Rabbi Linda Potemken

Why install solar now?

Beth Israel has previously explored the possibility of installing a solar array, but the conditions were ripe for making this project a reality. Solar array costs have dropped and solar panel efficiency has significantly improved over the years, and we learned from our successful oil to gas furnace conversion project (a \$70,000 effort) that congregants are willing to lend money to help our building become more sustainable.

After some initial exploration of this possibility with a local faith-based solar consultant, the Congregation, with the support of Rabbi Nathan, formed an ad-hoc solar committee that pulled together some needed expertise to move a solar project forward. The committee included people who could help with developing and issuing a request for proposals, developing

continued on p 17

and reviewing contracting, creating financing models, gathering investors, generating publicity, reviewing designs, and more. Most of the heavy lifting for this project was done by Elaine Feldman, Harry Chen, and Steve Goldfield. And, after selecting a solid partner with Solar States the project was able to move forward.

In particular, Beth Israel created an innovative way of financing the \$72,000 project, and we are grateful to Timothy Mann and Jessie Reagan Mann who formed a Limited Liability Company (18 Rays) which invested its own principle and was lent money by six BI investors and the BI capital fund to raise the monies needed to purchase the panels. With the 30% Federal Tax Credit on solar installations, along with an investment depreciation incentive, Solar Renewable Energy Credit payments, and a special \$5,000 donation by a BI congregant to the project, 18 Rays and all the lenders to the project should all receive their loans back within six to seven years.

And in the meantime, Beth Israel will be both lowering its long-term electricity costs while also doing its part to lessen its impact on global warming caused by the use of fossil fuels by reducing its fossil fuel emissions by 10 tons/year through the solar array.

What's Next?

The solar committee is extremely pleased with the successful installation of our solar array. It is a daily reminder that when we can put our heads together and dedicate time, energy, and resources, we can make a difference in creating a more sustainable Beth Israel.

And we realize that there is more work yet to come. Given the urgency of the rapidly changing climate we know that we will need to continue to explore additional opportunities for further greening and sustainability. As Rabbi Tarfon teaches in our mishnah, "it is not incumbent on us to finish the work but we must not desist in doing it."

As we begin earth month and celebrate our solar array, we hope that BI members can take pride in our work and also continue to explore with us ways that they can support further sustainability improvements both at the synagogue as well as in their own homes. Rabbi Nathan is happy to explore possibilities for people who would like to volunteer their time and energy as well.

- Submitted by Rabbi Nathan, Harry Chen, Steve Goldfield, and Elaine Feldman



BI's FACILITIES

In the Israelite at the end of 2021, we reported about projects underway and upcoming. Since then, besides the normal operations, we've addressed a number of issues that impact the resiliency, security, visual impact, efficiency and effectiveness of the facilities.

1. *The new doors and security systems:*

- The installation of the new exterior doors by **Matus Windows and Doors**, in May/June 2021 had a couple of needed adjustments. These have been addressed; the doors are working well.
- Many security upgrades and items have been given attention beyond the upgraded **DELCO Alarm** fob entry system:
 - Exterior lighting with motion detected capability are now on four sides of the building.
 - DELCO Alarms added/moved security cameras.
 - Steve Platt has made upgrades in the office to support these systems, including the installation of NVR screen, a new computer for office/security use, system upgrades/trouble shooting and cabling upgrades.
- Boulder Benches- We still await their installation in the next months by **Think Green**.

Much credit to Alan Ross for all his advocating, monitoring, and liaising with the greater Jewish community and DELCO alarms for identifying and seeking relevant security grants to allow most of this work to take place. Also, to Steve Platt for his significant focus on tech that supports these efforts. Also, it is important to remember the original tech support and impetus from Josh Waterston. Each has facilitated this progress and continuously makes sure that these systems are both robust and do not interfere with the welcoming culture of our community.

2. *The Green House sewer system:* Last March 2022, **Gartland Plumbing** installed the estimated 225' sewer line, to connect the Green House to Beth Israel's sewer main. This now allows for proper use of the building.
3. *Electrical Outlets in the office:* Josh Waterston and Steve Platt replaced and upgraded the electrical outlets in the office with 3 and 6-Outlet Extender/ Grounded Wall Taps.
4. *Trees and gardens:* We continue to be mindful to keep Trees and other vegetation around the property trimmed and cared for to remove those that are dead, keep them healthy, and away from overhead wires and other issues. In particular:
- **Steve Linvill** removed three additional dead (cherry) trees and pruned the others along the south end of the parking lot in January 2022.
 - Dave Cashell donated and planted a Metasequoia Genus (dawn redwood) and a white oak on May 2nd, either side of the top of the grove to the west of the parking lot, which are thriving.
 - Gardens: Dave also continues to cultivate and maintain the garden on the far end of the parking lot. He also worked tirelessly with a team on the project Rabbi Nathan initiated to have raised bed gardens just north of the west end of the parking lot, which provides great light, space and produced much vegetables for the Media food bank and other. Kathy Anderson continues to nurture the gardens near the synagogue entry.
 - Mark Rosenberg removed the failing dogwood tree, between the house and the GaGa courts this past fall.
 - On January 27th PECO had (4) Asplundh trucks in our driveway. They trimmed the trees around the wires along our north property line, from the street to the power pole.

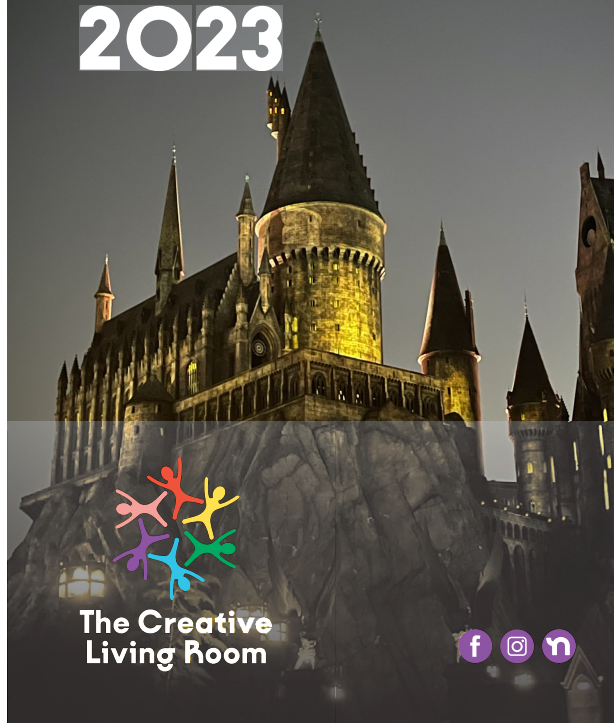
5. *Computers and Core Network:*

- The core networking area in the main office was reorganized and cleaned up. All equipment was placed in a 19" rack, and all cables were bundled and labeled.
- Computers continue to be replaced and upgraded.
- We have started to evaluate a candidate to replace the library's (computer) catalog software.

BI'S FACILITIES CONTINUED

6. Green house and outdoor furniture: May/June 2022- In May and June numbers of projects were undertaken with the help of Doug Rosenberg, to more resiliently enclosed the Gas line into the side of the Green house, replace missing or loose aluminum capping on windows and doors, tighten some siding and upgrade and helped restore the 5 outside benches.
7. Additional work on the Green House: At the end of the summer 2022, **The Tradesmen**, fixed a soffit that was falling apart in which family of birds were nesting, and installed more siding and flashing on the west side of the house above the old kitchen. This significantly reduced the potential for degradation.
8. Carpet in main sanctuary- Which still needs to be replaced, but the sanctuary, the Gan and the stairway landing carpets were shampooed in August 2022 by **First Choice Carpet Cleaning**, which made a significant improvement.
9. The South End of the Building: In August/Early 2022 **The Tradesmen** restored the south [sanctuary end] outside and inside walls, columns and windows of the building. This included re-glazing, restoring wood, stripping and painting. This staved off worse degradation and the likelihood that that beautiful sanctuary windows would need to be replaced. This was done as Part B of the Portico Capital project.
10. New Solar Array: Following years of exploring, recent focused efforts to define, fund, and contract this array, work began in September after the July inspection and "tightening" of the synagogue roof. The installation of a 26KW solar array by Solar States, came live on October 12 and has been on a monitoring system live since October 17. The out meter was tied in to PECO's system on February 14 and shortly thereafter the Permit to Operate [PTO] was received from PECO. In a month or two, we will begin seeing the electrical reduction reflected in our electric bill. We monthly track and bench mark our utilities and will add this to our tracking.
11. The Portico: In September 2022, work got underway to restore and upgrade the portico. This was on the needed Capital Project list for many years. **The Tradesmen** performed and completed this work meticulously. If you look at the photos in the stairway walls, you can see that the portico had been installed when the Baptist Church was built, in 1967. The steel and roof remained structurally robust but the remainder had rotting wood, birds living in the ceiling, gutter and roof issues, and old soffit and can lamps. The wooden wall columns were rotting as much as 3' above grade. To avoid the ongoing degradation of the portico, this project was undertaken. The last of the work was completed in early March 2023. Due to supply chain issues, some of the work was delayed into the winter, at which time the weather/temperature became limiting factors. The I-Beams were packed out and enclosed with resilient Azek, as were the steel columns. Stone covered columns were installed, which added resilience and aesthetics. The soffits and all the lights were replaced, and the wall columns were replaced with trimmed out Azek. This work was done in collaboration with the design team Reisa Mukamal, Kathy Anderson and Candy Berlin, and Alan Ross.
12. Other Plumbing: Gartland Plumbing:
 - Replaced the garbage disposal in the Kitchen.
 - Replaced the valves on sinks and toilets, and repaired the urinals.
 - In addition, the wall mounted sinks [including the one that fell off the wall] in the Men's room were replaced by one with a subcabinet
13. The main Beth Israel sign, which is seriously deteriorated: The design committee and others worked together with Aerial signs, to select a sign to replace this sign. It required a variance from Middletown Township. The variance was granted with a minor modification by written notice on 2/23. We contracted with **The Tradesmen** on 3/17 to perform the upgrade to the brick base and to install new lights, and to coordinate with **Aerial signs**, who designed and is making and will install the sign. Dependent on supply chain for the stone and lights, we anticipate this work being completed this spring. In addition, Jackie Gelman will be working with **John Kelly from Hollywood Landscape**, who volunteered to install a perennial garden on the ground immediately around the sign, pro bono.
14. The Stucco: The stucco is quite dirty and stained in significant patches. Most of the integrity of the stucco appears to be in good shape, except for a few locations. But there are some hairline cracks that could lead to greater degradation. The work to wash, repair and paint the stucco will be let at the beginning of the new fiscal year in July. It is anticipated that this work will be completed by the fall.

SUMMER CAMPS 2023



Be Curiously Creative This Summer!

Our weekly themed creative camps for kids 5-11 explore different worlds, tell stories, build and experiment, and ignite the imagination. Our two unique locations provide a canvas for creativity.

THEMES-Park Avenue Community Center

Jun 19 – Jun 23	Sewing Circle*
Jun 26 – Jun 30	The Royal Swarthmore Ball
Jul 5 – Jul 7	Animation Station*
Jul 10 – Jul 14	Musical Theatre Revue
Jul 17 – Jul 21	Halls of Hogwarts II
Jul 24 – Jul 28	Law & Order: Mock-Trial*
Jul 31 – Aug 4	Play-in-a-Week
Aug 7 – Aug 11	Hollywood Studios

* Programs for Middle Schoolers (Grades 6-8)
Programs and dates subject to change.

These camps will be held at:

Park Avenue Community Center
129 Park Avenue | Swarthmore, PA 19081

For more information and to register, visit
www.thecreativelivingroom.com



THEMES-Congregation Beth Israel of Media

Jun 26 – Jun 30	Halls of Hogwarts I
Jul 5 – Jul 7	Splash Art, Water Park & STEAM
Jul 10 – Jul 14	Creative Olympics
Jul 17 – Jul 21	Bricks & Blocks
Jul 24 – Jul 28	Camp Sustainability
Jul 31 – Aug 4	Create Your Own Adventure
Aug 7 – Aug 11	DIY Crafts, Cooking & Sewing
Aug 14 – Aug 18	SPY Academy
Aug 21 – Aug 25	Halls of Hogwarts III

These camps will be held at:

Congregation Beth Israel
542 S. New Middletown Road | Media, PA 19063

For more information and to register, visit
www.thecreativelivingroom.com

WEEKLY RATES

\$230 Half Day | \$395 Full Day

Early Bird Rates through 2/12!

Sibling and multi-week discounts available!

DAILY SCHEDULE

9:00am – 1:00pm Half Day (M-F)

9:00am – 4:00pm Full Day (M-F)

Lunch Included in both options.

Optional after care available from 4:00-5:00pm
at the Media location only. \$10 per camper per day.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Call **484-443-8224** or email Lisa Oster
at lisa@creativelivingroom.com

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
26 Nisan 4 9:30am Hebrew School 2:00pm Interfaith Book Trail at Swarthmore Presbyterian Church	27 Nisan 5 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	28 Nisan 6 7:30pm Adult Ed: God is Here (with Rabbi Linda, on Zoom)	29 Nisan 7 7:30pm Antiracism Discussion of Module 8 w/ Rabbi Linda & Julie Mayer	30 Nisan 8 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	31 Nisan 9 7:07pm Candle Lighting 7:30pm Shabbat Service (On Zoom with Rabbi Nathan)	1 Nisan 10 Shabbat HaGadol Tzav 9:45am Shabbat Service (In Person with Rabbi Nathan) 8:16pm Havdalah
2 Nisan 11 9:30am Hebrew School: Model Seder - Passover Themed Learning	3 Nisan 12 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	4 Nisan 13	5 Nisan 14 Erev Pesach Ta'anit Bechorot 7:12pm Candle Lighting	6 Nisan 15 Pesach 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom) 5:45pm Passover Community Potluck Seder 8:13pm Candle Lighting	7 Nisan 16 Pesach 1st Day Omer 7:14pm Candle Lighting 7:30pm Shabbat Service (On Zoom with Rabbi Nathan)	8 Nisan 17 Chol Hamoed Pesach 2nd Day Omer 9:45am Shabbat Service (In Person with Rabbi Nathan) 8:23pm Havdalah
9 Nisan 18 Chol Hamoed Pesach 3rd Day Omer No Hebrew School Today!	10 Nisan 19 Chol Hamoed Pesach 4th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	11 Nisan 20 Chol Hamoed Pesach 5th Day Omer 7:00pm Israeli Dancing (in person) 7:18pm Candle Lighting	12 Nisan 21 Pesach 6th Day Omer 8:19pm Candle Lighting	13 Nisan 22 Pesach Yizkor 7th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom) 2:00pm Executive Committee Meeting (on Zoom) 8:28pm Havdalah	14 Nisan 23 8th Day Omer 5:45pm Tot Shabbat (In Person - Passover Theme) 7:21pm Candle Lighting 7:30pm Shabbat Service with Drum Circle (In Person) with Rabbi Linda	15 Nisan 24 Shabbat Mevarchim 9th Day Omer Shmini 9:45am Shabbat Service (On Zoom with Rabbi Linda) 8:30pm Havdalah
16 Nisan 25 10th Day Omer No Hebrew School Today! 10:15am Board of Directors Meeting (on Zoom)	17 Nisan 26 11th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	18 Nisan 27 Yom HaShoah 12th Day Omer	19 Nisan 28 13th Day Omer 7:30pm Antiracism Discussion of Module 9 with Julie Mayer and Rabbi Linda	20 Nisan 29 14th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom) 11:30am Mussar with Rabbi Linda (Closed Group; On Zoom)	21 Nisan 30 Rosh Chodesh Iyyar 15th Day Omer 7:28pm Candle Lighting 7:30pm Shabbat Service (On Zoom with Aya Baron)	22 Iyyar 1 Rosh Chodesh Iyyar 16th Day Omer Tazria-Metzora 9:45am Shabbat Service (In Person with Aya Baron) 11:00am Torah Treks, Portion of the Week with Rich Reminick (in person) 8:37pm Havdalah
23 Iyyar 2 17th Day Omer 9:30am Mechina Session 9:30am Hebrew School 12:00pm Mitzvah Day	24 Iyyar 3 18th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	25 Iyyar 4 Yom Hazikaron 19th Day Omer 7:30pm Journeyming Through Judaism with Aya Baron: The Season of the Omer	26 Iyyar 5 Yom Ha'Atzmaut 20th Day Omer 7:30pm SAC Meeting (on Zoom)	27 Iyyar 6 21st Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	28 Iyyar 7 22nd Day Omer 7:30pm Shabbat Service (In Person with Rabbi Linda) 7:35pm Candle Lighting	29 Iyyar 8 23rd Day Omer Achrei Mot-Kedoshim 9:45am Shabbat Service (On Zoom with Rabbi Linda) 8:44pm Havdalah
30 Iyyar 9 24th Day Omer 9:30am Hebrew School	1 Iyyar 10 25th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	2 Iyyar 11 26th Day Omer	3 Iyyar 12 27th Day Omer	4 Iyyar 13 28th Day Omer 8:30am Morning Spiritual Practice (on Zoom)	5 Iyyar 14 Pesach Sheni 29th Day Omer 7:30pm Shabbat Service (On Zoom) 7:42pm Candle Lighting	6 Iyyar 15 30th Day Omer Emor 8:51pm Havdalah



Congregation Beth Israel of Media
A Reconstructionist Jewish Community
542 South New Middletown Road
Media, Pennsylvania 19063-2240
Ph. 610-566-4645 Fax 610-566-2240
<http://www.bethisraelmedia.org>

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President	Emma Lefkowitz
Senior Rabbi	Linda Potemken
Associate Rabbi	Nathan Martin
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Editor, Production	Marion Hamermesh
Editor, Contributions List	Mikayla Losanowych

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Israelight@bethisraelmedia.org

Next Issue: May Deadline: April 15

*Wishing everyone a
Zissen Pesach*



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