

January-February 2021 | Volume 66, Issue 3 | Tevet-Sh'Vat-Adar



Congregation Beth Or publishes Beth Or Spotlight through an endowment from the Florence and Rhoda Kramer Memorial Fund

#### **January Worship Schedule**

#### Friday, January 1 Shabbat Vayehi

6:30 pm Family Worship Service – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, January 2

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom
10:45 am Mourners' Kaddish – Zoom
11:00 am Heart & Soul Shabbat Winter Journey - Podcast

#### Friday, January 8 Shabbat Shemot

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship Service – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, January 9

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom
10:45 am Mourners' Kaddish – Zoom
11:00 am Heart & Soul Shabbat Winter Journey - Podcast

#### Friday, January 15 Shabbat Vaera

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship Honoring Sisterhood – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, January 16

9:30 am Torah Study — Zoom11:00 am Shabbat Worship with the Bar Mitzvah of Gavin Byruch, son of Allison Downey and Scott Byruch

#### Friday, January 22 Shabbat Bo

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship Honoring Brotherhood – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, January 23

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom11:00 am Shabbat Worship with the Bar Mitzvah of Ryan Drossner, son of Eric and Samantha Drossner

#### Friday, January 29 Shabbat Beshalah

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, January 30

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom
10:45 am Mourners' Kaddish – Zoom
11:00 am Heart & Soul Shabbat Winter Journey – Podcast

#### **February Worship Schedule**

#### Friday, February 5 Shabbat Yitro

6:30 pm 6th Grade Family Worship – Zoom 7:30 pm Shabbat Worship –

#### Saturday, February 6

Facebook Live

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom 10:45 am Mourners' Kaddish – Zoom

#### Friday, February 12 Shabbat Mishpatim/Shekalim

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship Service – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, February 13

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom 10:45 am Mourners' Kaddish - Zoom

#### Friday, February 19 Shabbat Terumah/Zachor

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship Service – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, February 20

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom
11:00 am Shabbat Worship with the
B'nai Mitzvah of Matthew Koch, son
of Robert and Kimberly Koch and
Chase Nydick, son of Mindy Adis
and Corey Nydick

#### **Thursday, February 25**

6:00 pm Purim Service, Megillah Reading & Purim Schpiel – Zoom

#### Friday, February 26 Shabbat Tetzaveh

7:30 pm Shabbat Worship – Facebook Live

#### Saturday, February 27

9:30 am Torah Study – Zoom
11:00 am Shabbat Worship with the
B'nai Mitzvah of Jacob Picker, son of
Ben and Jayme Picker and Nathan
Seligman, son of Daniel and Judy
Seligman



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# The Passing of Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

Rabbi Gregory S. Marx, Senior Rabbi

When the former chief rabbi of the United Kingdom, Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, became Lord Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, he could not bow before the Queen. As Mordecai would not bow before royalty, nor would Mattathias lower his head before Antiochus of Chanukah fame, neither would Rabbi Sacks genuflect before the Queen. To accommodate the rabbi, the Queen built a wooden box, in which the rabbi could stand. It would then be hinged forward, so that the rabbi could remain erect, while keeping his head below the Queen's. She then knighted him. When it was over, she asked, "Why is this knight different from all other knights?"



Rabbi Gregory S. Marx

Indeed, Rabbi Sacks was a knight and he was different from all others.

#### From the Rabbi's Desk

Rabbi Sacks died on Shabbat (Nov. 7) at the age of 72 after a brief and heroic struggle with cancer. He possessed a massive intellect. He spoke with a moral bearing, a "Queen's English", a deep understanding of both religious and secular texts and

taught Jew and non-Jew alike about the wonders and depth of Judaism. The beauty of Rabbi Sacks is that his writings were brought to my attention by a dear friend, Reverend Marek Zabriskie, formerly of St. Thomas Episcopal Church. How amazing is that?

His friend, Prince Charles intoning on the words of the prophets, bidding us to be a "light to the nations" saying that his friend was indeed a spreader of light, hope, ethics and spirituality to the world.

We Jews have been advanced in so many streams of thought, but not enough are teachers of Torah. There are many Jews who are influential in the arts, culture, science, literature; many are winners of the Nobel Prize, but not enough proclaimed, as did Rabbi Sacks, Jewish religious truths.

That was what was so stellar about Sacks. He took the Torah out of the ark and made it relevant. Every week he published his Torah thoughts. It is called Covenant and Conversation. https://rabbisacks.org/covenant-conversation-homepage/. Every rabbi I know has used, or should I say, "stolen" his teachings and brought them to their shul.

If you are hungry to learn about Judaism, read his book, A Letter in the Scroll: Understanding Our Jewish Identity and Exploring the Legacy of the World's Oldest Religion, one of the finest introductions to Judaism that you will ever read. Read his remarkable book,

Not in God's Name: Confronting Religious Violence, a remarkable book about confronting dualism and finding common ground between warring faiths. He argued that the Bible teaches us to be empathetic to the "other," even as God chooses one over the other. If you read one book this year, make it this one.

I recommend reading his last book, *Morality: Restoring the Common Good in Divided Times*. It is a rigorous critique of post-modernity, with its rampant individualism, reliance on technology, diminution of the family structure and enthronement of the market economy and state authority. "In a world where the market rules and its operation is driven by greed," he said, "people come to believe that their worth is measured by what you earn or can afford and not by qualities of character like honesty, integrity, and service to others."

In his short and perhaps most controversial book, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations*, Sacks makes his plea for genuine pluralism and diversity, using the Torah as the antidote to nationalistic and religious violence: "Can we recognize God's image in one who is not in my image? Can I, a Jew, hear the echoes of God's voice in that of a Hindu, Sikh, Christian or Muslim?"

He was one of the most remarkable sages of our time. It is a tragedy that he died so relatively young, but we can keep his ideas, and teachings alive by committing to study and reading his words.

### **The Roller Coaster Ride Continues**

Josh Gottlieb, Beth Or President

We have been experiencing what we now know as a full-blown pandemic for not quite nine months. It has touched some of us in profoundly sad ways, through the loss of a loved one or close friend. Certainly, life has been upended in countless ways, so that it is hard to remember what "normal" once looked like, even if that was less than a year ago.

Beth Or had to pivot with no notice in March. We closed the building and went remote across the board. Then through the summer we were able to slowly bring congregants of different ages back into the building in a very careful, managed fashion. As we moved into the fall, we were able to further loosen some of our restrictions regarding in person attendance. We were even to the point of researching how to possibly conduct certain parts of Religious School in person, perhaps in January.



Josh Gottlieb

Then, as is true across nearly the entire country, key COVID indicators started to increase at an alarming rate. As a result, and

#### **President's Corner**

in keeping with our philosophy of ensuring the safety and health of our clergy, staff and congregants as our top priority, above all else, in early December we pivoted once again. We canceled the outdoor Chanukah

event, we once again had the clergy conduct Friday night services from their homes, and we cut the number of attendees allowed at B'nai Mitzvah to 20.

As I write this, the first vaccine is about to be given to highest priority people. But we know that it will be at least many months before most of us will have been vaccinated. Consequently, we will continue to wear masks, observe social distancing, and place appropriate limits on in person attendance as long as necessary.

Even as this roller coaster ride continues, we have a task force beginning to look at how we will continue to connect with congregants other than in person in our building. I hope you will give your feedback so that, in the months and years to come, we can continue to best meet the needs and preferences of you and your family.

I continue to be amazed at how beautifully the clergy, staff, teachers, children and adult members of our congregation have bonded together over worship, learning, *tikkun olam* and fun in so many creative and special ways. In this way we have all linked together as a community to bring joy to each other and this is truly a blessing.

My heart goes out to those who are suffering physically, emotionally or economically. We are all experiencing this crisis differently, but together as a community, we will unite until we see brighter, healthier days.





Rabbi Jason Bonder

#### From the Rabbi's Desk

How is it even possible that each day in quarantine feels like an eternity, and each zoom meeting feels like a thousand hours, yet our lives seem to fly by in an instant?

### "Well, The Year 2020 Surely Few By!" Said No One, Ever.

Rabbi Jason Bonder, Associate Rabbi

2020 was one of the most unsettling years of our lifetime. Our routines were significantly altered, our loneliness skyrocketed, and at the moment I'm writing this, it looks like we are nowhere close to the end of this coronavirus debacle. There is no way to sugarcoat what happened in 2020. But there is a way to learn from it.

While few of us feel like 2020 flew by, it is still common to hear "life flies by" or that "kids grow up too fast." How is it even possible that each day in guarantine feels like an eternity, and each zoom meeting feels like a thousand hours, yet our lives seem to fly by in an instant? If you know the answer, please let me know. This question will continue to mystify humanity for generations to come. The psalmist encapsulates this so beautifully in Psalm 90: "Teach us to count our days

rightly, that we may obtain a wise heart."

I can't tell you why life goes by so fast. But I can tell you that there were particular reasons why 2020 felt like it dragged on forever.

We were huddled in one place for long periods of time, we were forced onto media that was not optimal for conversations, and we were glued to what was happening around us. Based on this, here are three suggestions to slow time down once life picks back up again:

- 1. Make a "Quarantine Night": What if, once a week or once a month, in the years to come, God willing long after this virus is behind us, you committed to living life like you did in 2020? What if the whole family had no choice but to be together? What if you had no choice but to be alone with your own thoughts for a while? You'd be aware, and sometimes painfully aware, of what you were missing out there in the world. But you'd also gain so much insight.
- **2. Take a screen break:** You know that feeling you feel after an 8-hour day on zoom? Like you can't look at another screen? Well, it's likely we were all feeling that way before the pandemic. We were just too busy to notice the feeling. Check in with yourself on a regular basis – how often have I been on my screen? Do I need a break?
- 3. Take time for community: 2020 felt like a slow year because we were fixated on the dire needs of others in our communities, our country, and our world. It continues to be heartbreaking to see what is happening all around us because of this horrible pandemic. If life feels rushed, take a moment to find the needs of your community. Sadly, the need will always be there. On the bright side, it means there's always a way to help.

I hope at this point you might be saying to yourself, "wow, that's insightful." If you are, thanks, but don't give me credit for it. There is an institution created millennia ago by the Jewish people that has these elements baked into it. It's called "Shabbat." Amazingly, we are not the first or the last generation to feel like life is both dragging on and flying by all at once. Shabbat gives us an opportunity to be with family around the table, get disconnected from our multiple media platforms, and connect to our community at Beth Or and beyond. What if this month, in the beginning of 2021, you decided to set a few dates on the calendar to join us for Shabbat? (Virtually at first and in person when it's safe to do so?) It might slow things down just enough so that it doesn't feel like life is flying by.

### What Do Cantors and The 'Sixers Have In Common?

Cantor David Green



Cantor David Green

Watching the Philadelphia 76ers this winter is not very satisfying. Seeing the players in an empty arena leaves me feeling not very fulfilled. Being part of a cheering crowd is exciting and exhilarating. Part of the joy of watching sports or going to a game is to see the cheering (or booing) by spectators. It adds so much to the sporting event. With the Pandemic and the resulting empty venues, it is just not the same experience.

It is the same for me as a cantor. I am so uplifted spiritually when I am chanting or leading a Shabbat service with a full sanctuary. When we are all singing together, it truly creates a sense of community worship.

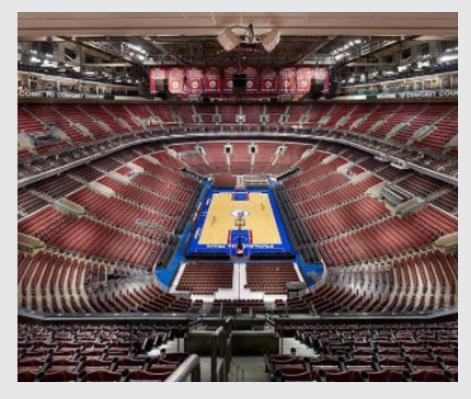
When we pre-recorded the High Holy Days in an empty Sanctuary, I felt just as Joel Embid did playing in an empty Orlando "bubble."

The last Shabbat in January is the Torah portion, Beshalach, better known as Shabbat Shira, the Sabbath of Song. It celebrates the Israelites escaping from Pharoah and gaining their freedom. The Israelites react by singing. They sing *Ozi V'Zimrat Yah*, which celebrates the

Jewish people's strength and "singing the eternal will of God." (Exodus 15:2)

The Torah teaches that song itself is a route to God's saving power. So how do we capture this saving power through song in an empty sanctuary at Beth Or? Lisa Eisen suggests an answer. She states: "For the first time in Jewish history, it looks like we need to transcend the traditional boundaries and silos of Jewish engagement." We are doing that at Beth Or along with most synagogues across North America. We are using modern technology to open new vistas to worship and sing together. Virtually, our attendance at Shabbat services, Torah study and Life Long Learning are much higher than before Covid-19 began.

Of course, virtual attendance cannot replace being there in person, and being part of communal experience. However, it can bring us together to sing and worship, even it is only on a computer screen



The Talmud talks about Nachshon, who was the one brave Israelite in this Torah portion, who took the lead and crossed the sea before other Israelites would do so.

Once the Israelites saw Nachshon cross, they followed. We need to do the same, embracing the new technologies of Zoom, Facebook Live and Webstreaming so we can continue to sing, pray and worship as a Jewish community.

An upcoming example of this is the **Cantors' Concert on Sunday, January 31 at 3 pm**. Watch on live webstream or the Beth Or Facebook page and sing out, and hopefully we will soon all be together, in person, for Beth Or activities and services and cheering crowds at Wells Fargo for Sixers and Flyers games.

### **Creative Thinking**



#### Cantor Jaime Murley, Junior Choir Director

If you ever worry about the future of Judaism, look no further than the Youth Choirs at Beth Or to give you faith that the future is strong for the Jewish people. As many of you saw during Chanukah, the choirs of Beth Or have been hard at work! To be honest, I had no idea how our choirs would survive a time when singing was deemed one of the most dangerous activities. But, almost a year into the pandemic, and with a little creativity, I'm thrilled to announce that our choirs are stronger than ever!





Jaime Murley



synagogue into an arena with forts and bunkers! We all had a fantastic time and there were lots of smiles behind the masks. Now that the weather has turned chillier, we will move our social events to Zoom, with plans to have a choir talent show, a pet fashion show, and a cooking demonstration!

As far as music is concerned, we have made multiple videos utilizing two movie making apps called iMovie and Acapella. Hours of work go into each movie even though they are only about two minutes long. The kids AND the parents have worked hard to master the technology involved and I am eternally grateful to all of them for their support. If you have missed the videos, you'll be able to find them on Beth Or's YouTube page. Check them out!! You won't be sorry.

Next on the agenda is our annual Purimschpiel. Normally, the junior choir is responsible for putting on a live production of the Purim story based on a secular theme. The kids always look forward to this event. Like everything else during the pandemic, we will need to switch gears and get creative. I don't want to give away our secrets and surprises, but suffice it to say, the choir will be up to the task and will surely do a fantastic job, so be sure not to miss it!

If your child is interested in being in the choir, it is never too late to sign up. We have more than 10 new children in the choir this year!!!! Your child could be one of them. Just get in touch with me at <a href="mailto:jmurley@bethor.org">jmurley@bethor.org</a>



# Religious School **NEWS**

#### **Important School Dates**

Sunday, January 17

No School: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Monday & Tuesday, January 18 & 19

No School: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Friday, February 5 6th Grade Shabbat

Sunday, February 14 No School: Presidents' Day

Monday & Tuesday, February 15 & 16 No School: Presidents' Day Aaron Nielsenshultz, Director of Religious School

**Making Connections** 

**During COVID** 

By this point, we're all in our routines due to the pandemic, and I was looking for ways to shake up our online learning. The best opportunity came along in the form of Soferet Julie Seltzer. Soferet is the Hebrew name for a female scribe and Soferet Seltzer has written parchments for mezuzot, Purim megillot, and even Torah scrolls. She's visited our 6th grade before, and this year

we wanted to make sure that our online students would get the full benefit of a hands-on experience. To that end, each student received a calligraphy pen and some watercolor paper in the mail, and so on the day of the class, not only did



Aaron Nielsenshultz



CONGREGATION BETH OR

Soferet Seltzer show students how to make letters and write for Torah scrolls, each student got to practice themselves.

To say this experience was a hit would really undersell the success. One student told his parents, "It was really fun! We had an actual famous person on the call. She wrote the Torah! Well, she makes Torahs." A parent shared with me, "Just wanted to let you know how much [my daughter] enjoyed class today. She immediately came out of her room afterwards and showed me the letters she'd written and commented on how much fun she had in class" Check out their work!

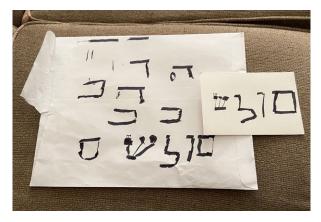


photo credit: leff Green

How's that for a way to get to know the Torah? Mazal tov to 6th grade for a great day!

### **Staying Healthy This Winter**

Sara Baum, Early Childhood Director

With the start of winter we come indoors to keep warm from the cold weather. As with every year, the teachers at the CECE take this time to remind the children of the importance of keeping healthy from coughs and colds. This year is no different. We have been working hard protecting the health of our community during the course of the pandemic. The children have been wearing masks, the teachers have created lesson plans to teach good hand hygiene, maintenance has stepped up their efforts in cleaning and disinfecting, and the community has come together in ways we have never seen before. Below are the tips we are giving to the children and families of the CECE:

- Wash your hands! Washing your hands with warm water and soap is very important. Make sure you wash for at least 20 seconds. Try singing the alphabet twice to make sure you are washing long enough.
- Sneeze and cough safely! When you feel a sneeze or cough coming get ready. Use your elbow to catch your sneeze/ cough. Then wash your hands.

Sara Baum

Zipporah S. Abramson Center for Early hildhood Education

CONGREGATION BETH OR

- Wear a mask! Superheroes wear masks and so do we! If you are two years old or older wear your mask when you leave the house. Make sure it is covering your mouth and nose.
- **Keep your distance!** Luckily we have technology to keep us close even when we have to be apart. Send a video to Bubbe or video chat with Saba.
- **Stay home!** When you are not feeling well or do not need to go out, stay home. Staying home saves lives.

Wishing everyone a wonderful and healthy winter season!



### **New Initiative:** Community Impact/Save A Life

Due to the tremendous success of our Blood Drives and our desire to spread awareness and encourage participation in other worthy life-saving causes, Beth Or has started a new program where we will highlight a different cause/issue each month. This initiative is led by Stu Briefer. Be on the lookout for information throughout the year.



### **Transplanting Kidneys. Transforming Lives.**

To save a life is to save the world — we have heard this before, but what does it mean? If I save a life, have I saved the entire world? No, not in a global sense, however when you look at it from a personal view, saving a life is saving the world to all those who love and rely on that person. Saving that life saves the world for that family and community.

You can make a difference. We are partnering with 2 major agencies in January to screen and test for compatibility. The agencies provide compatible pairs the best chance of safely finding a well-matched donor which increases graft survival and is correlated with more kidney life years.

By testing and donating, you will join the ranks of over 50,000 living donors who have donated their kidneys to people facing kidney failure. Since 1954, when the first successful living donor transplant took place in Boston, living donors have been giving the gift of life and making a difference. This tradition has allowed thousands of people facing kidney failure to live longer, healthier lives, free from the challenging routine of dialysis. Donating a kidney not only helps the person who receives the kidney but also shortens the deceased donor wait list, helping others get a deceased donor's kidney sooner. Also, all living donors are awarded points for their donation so if they ever need a kidney later in life, they will be given priority on the deceased donor list.

A living donor must be in good health and free from diabetes, high blood pressure, cancer, kidney, or heart disease. Living donors usually are between 18 and 60 years old. The living donor must undergo a series of tests to determine if they are truly compatible with the recipient.

There are four types of living kidney donation: direct donation, paired exchange donation, Good Samaritan donation, and advanced donation.

Aaron Nielsenshultz is one of these amazing people who donated a kidney to help another live. When I interviewed him, he said that one of his mentors, a great rabbi had donated a kidney too. This gave him the idea to investigate it. When he went to the hospital, it was not to diagnose what was wrong with him, but rather to see how healthy he is. What a change... to test and see how healthy you are.

Please chat with friends, colleagues, relatives who have donated and ask them why they did this. Two members of Beth Or are facing severe kidney failure, and you could be the answer to help them survive. Please look for announcements in January when we will run our testing and qualification campaign.

Thank you for taking a moment to read this and to consider this life changing, lifesaving move.

#### Stu Briefer

# The Spirit of Tzedekah at Beth Or During the 2020 Pandemic

SOCIAL Action, a 'lighthouse',

During a recent Torah study session, Rabbi Bonder referred to Beth Or as a 'lighthouse,' a community that is a beacon of light to others.

If you are reading this column, you are a member of this community that has brought light to our neighbors in distress and in need. Below are the challenges that you have helped alleviate in 2020 and recipient organizations:

#### **Food Insecurity**

Bethlehem Baptist Food Pantry Interfaith Housing Alliance Manna on Main Street Mattie N. Dixon Community Cupboard

#### **Essential Clothing**

Cradles to Crayons
Family Matters (formerly JAFCO)
Mitzvah Circle
Our Closet

#### **Women's Personal Products**

Distributina Dianity

#### **Personal Products**

Hematology Floor at St. Christopher's Hospital

#### Masks

Covenant House Horsham Center for Jewish Life Horsham Clinic Manna on Main Street

#### **Disaster Relief**

Oroville Hope Center through St. Matthew Lutheran Church (California wildfires) Project Youth+ (Oregon wildfires) SBPUSA (Hurricane Laura)

You also reached out to residents of senior living facilities with flower bouquets, afghans, and cheerful cards; sent messages of appreciation to front-line workers and local police; provided food to the Abington SPCA for animals in their care; contributed to Children's Rights that protects youth in the foster care system; and helped make sleep mats for the homeless.

Thank you for bringing the Beth Or vision to life: To inspire lives of Jewish meaning, purpose, and practice in order to be a "light unto the nations."

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2021!

Susy Krimker, Social Action Chair, susykrimker@gmail.com Margie Chachkin, Social Action Vice-Chair, chachkin@aol.com

Beth Or members were busy at
Thanksgiving! Abby Gilbert-Freedman,
Cindi and Vince Pasceri, and Lynn and
Mitch Edelman helped to provide turkeys
to the "JFCS in Your Neighborhood" event
for older adults in the Rhawnhurst area.

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\*\*JFCS IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

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Left to Right - Vince, Cindi, Abby

## Beth Or Brotherhood

### **Helping or Serving?**

Allan Posner, Brotherhood President



Allan Posner



I hope all our members as well as everyone in our synagogue had a festive Chanukah. While we are currently still in a time of uncertainty with limited access to family and friends, the brightness of our candles will always stand as a reminder of hope for a new and better day. A special thank you to Bob Cohen and all the Brotherhood members who graciously volunteered this past fall to make our Car Show a great success. Also, thank you to Stu Briefer for again organizing the Red Cross Blood Drive. Despite Covid-19, Beth Or congregants answered the call as we again sold out slots and saved countless lives.

Helping or Serving? There is a very big difference in those two words and their meaning. I, along with Brotherhood members, have been involved in volunteer work for many years. Brotherhood as a group partners with many organizations whose mission is to do mitzvot.

We partner with YOBO, Social Action Committee, Religious School, Clergy, Manna On Main Street, Interfaith Housing, Mattie Dixon, Red Cross and so many other worthwhile organizations and groups. This fall our car show was a Cars for A Cause and thanks to our members and guests, we raised an astounding amount of non-perishables which were distributed to Manna and Bethlehem Baptist Church.

Did I/we Help or did we Serve? It's a matter of language or perception. I used to think volunteering was "helping" the community around me. But since being a part of Brotherhood, I have come to realize volunteering is far more than "helping" others. Perhaps

there is a deeper meaning and one that is rooted in "serving" rather than "helping."

Rachel Naomi Remen stated: "There is a vast difference between helping and serving that we normally do not pay attention to." Helping is not a relationship of equals. Helping implies we are better than the person we are assisting; perhaps more for ourselves or our own egos than we are for others.

When we "serve" one another, we see the humanity within each person we are helping. We see the person we are helping as a human being, like ourselves, rather than below us. As we serve those in need, I believe they have more to teach us. Service can't be defined as the one special day we volunteer in the community Beth Or resides in. I am proud to say that members of Brotherhood "serve" others in our community year-round.

Brotherhood will continue doing what it does best... Serving.

### **KOSHER WINE SALES**

Now you can purchase kosher wine all year long and benefit Beth Or!

Use the Beth Or affiliate link on kosherwine.com: http://bit.ly/BethOrBrotherhood or click the KosherWine symbol on the bottom right side of the Beth Or website home page, "Connect With Us" section.

- Seasonal Specials and New Releases
- Easy On-line Ordering Ships directly to your home or anywhere in the U.S.

5% of all sales given back to Brotherhood to benefit Beth Or programming!

Questions? Contact info@bethorbrotherhood.org.



# Beth Or Sisterhood

### Would You Rather Give a Gift or Receive a Gift?

Lois Lambersky, Sisterhood President

What a great question to ponder as we are just finished celebrating the holiday season. There is a good answer...obviously giving. According to Brian Tracy, a motivational speaker, "the receivers are not blessed but instead the givers are."

An opportunity to give is a blessing and Beth Or Sisterhood aspires to give back to our congregational members and the community at large. The Covid-19 pandemic has encouraged us to take care of our vulnerable neighbors. Sisterhood has come together to make masks, blankets, hats, scarves and supported the food collections and clothing drives sponsored by Beth Or's Social Action committee. This health crisis has shown us the value of patience and gratitude towards mankind. We at Beth Or have been so fortunate to have such caring leaders, both in our clergy and administrators, who give so much of themselves to keep our congregation strong and safe. We look forward to the time in the future when we can be together in prayer, laughter and social gatherings.

In the meantime, Sisterhood is committed to offering virtual activities, meetings and fundraisers to help maintain social connections with our members. Stay connected with our Constant Contact emails and Sisterhood Face Book page to see our latest activities and events.

Remember, we are stronger together and there is light at the end of the tunnel. Until then, from my family to yours, I wish you a healthy and very happy 2021 New Year.



Lois Lambersky



# Please Support the Tanshis Jift Shop Proceeds Benefit Beth Or Sisterhood Programs

#### Stop in for these items and more:

- Holiday Items
- Mezuzot
- Hamsas and other Wall Art
- Tallit and Kippot

- Bar/Bat Mitzvah Gifts
- Wedding Smash Glasses and Gifts
- Jewelry
- Home Giftware

- Books for Adults and Children
- Children's Toys and Games
- Baby Gifts
- Occasion Cards

#### Hours:

Currently open by appointment only, Monday - Thursday, 9 am - 2 pm. Contact Holly Green (215-805-8597) or email *tarshisgiftshop@gmail.com* to schedule your appointment.

Discounts available for Sisterhood Members and Beth Or Staff I Great Monthly Sales and New Arrivals

### Meet Our B'nai Mitzvah Students

#### **Will Rice**

#### **December 5**

For my Mitzvah Project, I chose to dedicate time to help raise funds and awareness for dogs who are in need of adoption and fostering by supporting **Hinde Animal Safe Haven Shelter**. We have been fortunate enough to foster and adopt our dog, Lola almost two years ago. I plan on having a Bake Sale along with other ideas



to raise funds when it's safe to do so. You can visit the website: www.hindeanimalsafehaven.org to find out ways to help.

### **Gavin Byruch**January 16

For my Mitzvah Project, I volunteered my time to work on a **Mask Up video** to help students at **Delaware Valley University** be prepared to return to campus in a safe and healthy way during the COVID-19 pandemic. I acted as the school mascot and was recorded showing students the right way to wear a mask, observe social distancing, wash their hands, wipe down



classroom tables, report their illness to the Health Center and more. The video was played at Welcome Weekend, on social media and throughout the campus to reinforce the #KeepingAggiesHealthy campaign.

### **Ryan Drossner** January 23

For my Mitzvah Project, I knew I wanted to support the **Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF)**, because in 2017 I was diagnosed with Type 1 Diabetes. JDRF is the leader in the fight against Type 1 Diabetes by funding research, advocating for policies and providing a support network for millions. On March 1 of last year, I held a bake sale at Beth Or and



sold my mom's famous hamantaschen. We baked over 2,000 hamantaschen and raised over \$2,100! It was a huge success. In addition, I've participated in JDRF's One Walk Philadelphia, where I walked with over 35 of my family and closest friends to bring more awareness of T1D. It felt great to see how many people supported me and JDRF.

### **Matthew Koch** February 20

For my Mitzvah Project I am collecting new and gently-used board games to donate to womens shelters and homeless shelters in the area for the children. I will be dropping them off at the beginning of February. If you would like to donate a game please contact my mother at kim\_bordman@hotmail.com. Thank you.



### **Nathan Seligman** February 27

My Mitzvah project focuses on making the world a better place. My grandparents live in California, and due to the pandemic, I have not seen them since last December. During that time, they have been quarantined and have not seen many people. With my Papa living in long term care, it has gotten



more and more difficult to see loved ones. This made me think of all the residents living at the **Los Angeles Jewish Home**, so I decided to write to the residents and let them know I was thinking of them. I sent out Thanksgiving cards and Chanukah greetings. I also sent letters of gratitude to the nurses, social workers and staff thanking them for taking care of my Papa and for the love and care they gave my grandmother before she passed away this past October. I hope I was able to make each and every resident know that someone cares about them!

### **Jacob Picker** February 27

For my Mitzvah Project, I am collecting donations to benefit **Mitzvah Circle** and **Dog Town Rescue**. Mitzvah Circle is a volunteer-driven, nonprofit organization that supports individuals and families in times of crisis. As my family and I have volunteered some of our time for Mitzvah Circle in the past, I know that it is a worthwhile charity. Dog Town



Rescue is a volunteer-run dog rescue organization that provides medical care, food and supplies for foster dogs and puppies. Dog Town Rescue's mission is important to me because I know how much a dog needs a loving family, and how much joy a dog can bring to a family, especially during difficult times.

### Virtual and In-Person **Events**

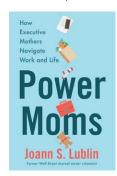
### **GET CONNECTED:** Beth Or Business & Career Network

GET CONNECTED is our business & career group. We meet on the 2nd Monday of each month to network, brainstorm, and build meaningful relationships that may help grow our businesses or help us find our next career or job. All members of Beth Or are welcome. Join us every month or just pop in when a topic intrigues you. Look for details about upcoming meeting agendas in your weekly Chai Lights email. Monthly programs currently take place on Zoom. Contact Evan Segal, evan@segalfinancial.com, or Elisa Heisman,

elisa\_heisman@yahoo.com, with any questions or topic ideas.

#### January Networking Event: Guest Speaker Joann Lublin Monday, January 11 • 7pm - 8pm

This month's featured speaker is Beth Or congregant, journalist & author, Joann Lublin, who will provide insights from her much-anticipated second book, *Power Moms: How Executive Mothers Navigate Work and Life*, which will be published in February 2021.



Joann Lublin is the former management news editor for the Wall Street Journal. She created the Journal's first career advice column and wrote it until 2020. She shared its 2003 Pulitzer Prize for stories about corporate scandals. She won the 2018 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Gerald Loeb Awards, the highest honor in business journalism.

### February Networking Event

Monday, February 8 • 7pm - 8pm

Topic to be announced soon!

## BROTHERHOOD/SISTERHOOD EVENTS

### Thursday Fun with Sisterhood: COVID-19 Stress Relief Support

#### Thursday, January 28 • 7 pm (date may change)

Are you feeling isolated or alone and want to connect with other women? Beth Or member & licensed social worker, Stefani Bohm will lead an interactive program in addition to teaching some relaxation techniques as well as making suggestions for coping mechanisms specifically geared toward women as we continue to deal with COVID-19. Visit the website calendar listing for the Zoom meeting link.

Stefani Bohm has been a practicing licensed Social Worker since 1998. She has vast experience working with children, adolescents and adults in an individual, group, couples or family setting. She specializes in cognitive behavioral therapy with people who struggle with anxiety disorders, mood disorders, ADHD, PTSD, relationship struggles and stress management. Stefani currently has a private practice in Lafayette Hill.

### HOLIDAYS AND SHABBAT EVENTS

#### Heart & Soul Shabbat Winter Journey Saturdays, January 2, 9 & 30 • on your own or 11 am

Rabbi Bonder and exercise specialist & Board Member Paul Brooks have prepared some motivational Podcasts to keep us moving spiritually during the cold weather this Winter. Stream Shabbat experiences to your device that will get your heart pumping and stir your soul as well. Listen



anytime at your leisure, or plan to participate around 11am, knowing that while we can not be together as a group, other congregants will be sharing this experience at the same time. Download the podcasts at www.bethor.org/cbopodcasts

### Tu B'Shevat for Tots Wednesday, January 25 • 5:30 pm

Join the CECE on Zoom for a special Tu B'Shevat story time and activity. We will plant seeds and do creative movement with Miss Aren. Check your weekly email for the Zoom link.

#### Tu B'Shevat with the Buxmont Kehillah Saturday, January 23 - Wednesday, January 27

We are partnering with our friends across the Buxmont Kehillah for several virtual events related to Tu B'Shevat. Details, times and links will be shared as soon as they are available.

### Tu B'Shevat Israeli Wine Tour & Tasting Date & Time to be announced

Meet Israeli sommeliers who will share their expertise while taking participants on a tour through Israeli wineries. You can purchase bottles of Israeli wine in advance to taste during this program. More details, wine ordering, and Zoom link to come soon!



### Virtual and In-Person **Events**

### **PURIM 2021**

Visit www.bethor.org/Purim2021 for full event details and participation links.



### Purim Gifts for Beth Or Friends – Mishloach Manot

### Send your Personalized Greetings from February 1 - 19

Give a gift and good wishes in a Mishloach Manot bag with a personal note to the other members of our Beth Or community. Please watch your email for a personalized login link. Packages will be no cost to the sender and available to pick up at Beth Or during our Worst Purim CARnival Ever drive-through event on February 21 (see below).

#### **WORST PURIM CARnival EVER!**

### Sunday, February 21 • 11am - 2pm • Beth Or Parking Lot

Come join us for the Worst Purim CARnival Ever! Since this year is so bizarre, and Purim is a topsy-turvy day, we will REVel in the fact that this will be the worst Purim CARnival you've ever attended. And for that very reason, this event will be one you don't want to miss. Buckle up for this fun drive-thru event with multiple interactive stations filled with activities, giveaways and prizes you can enjoy from your car. We look forward to seeing you there, from a distance! This event requires an RSVP so we know to expect you and can have your family's goodie bag ready. If the weather doesn't cooperate, the Purim CARnival will take place the following Sunday, 2/28.



### Hamantashen Baking with Samantha and Haley Drossner

### Monday, February 22 • 7 pm • Facebook Live

Learn from two Hamantashen enthusiasts, Beth Or members Samantha and Haley Drossner as they make the delicious Purim pastry which reminds us of that wicked, wicked man's hat! The recipe will be posted on the Purim webpage

before the event so that you can gather your ingredients ahead of time. Join us live on the Beth Or Facebook page.



### Megillah Reading, Ma'ariv and Purim Schpiel Thursday, February 25 • 6pm – 7pm • Zoom

You've booed at the mention of Haman's name. But have you ever MUTED Haman's name? Here's your chance as we listen to the Purim story read by our Beth Or clergy and congregants. Also, enjoy a virtual schpiel performed by our Jr. Choir. Join us on Zoom. Check the website calendar or your weekly email for the Zoom link.

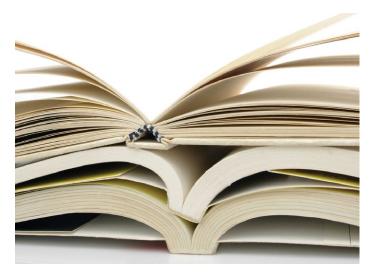
#### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

### 2nd Night Community Seder with Rabbi Bonder Sunday, March 28 • 6 pm

Rabbi Bonder will lead the community through a Seder from his home. Join the Bonder family on Zoom.

#### LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong Learning Classes are free for Beth Or members (Suggested donation of \$50 for non-members). Winter classes will take place on Zoom. Refer to the event listing on the website calendar or your weekly Chai Lights email for Zoom registration links. Contact Barbara Murtha, bmurtha@bethor.org, 215-646-5806 ext. 220 with any questions.



### Shalom Aleichem was the Jewish Mark Twain with Rabbi Marx

#### Tuesdays, January 5, 12 & 19 • 7 pm - 8:30 pm

Shalom Aleichem wrote about shtetl life of the Jews in Russia and Poland during a time of anti-Semitism, seismic culture change and a crisis of Jewish meaning and faith. Join Rabbi Marx for an intimate look back on 3 short stories of this remarkable author: A Yom Kippur Scandal, The Clock and Dreyfus in Kasrilevke. Visit http://sholemaleichem.org/three-stories to download the stories.

### Pod Drash: A Deep Dive into T'Shuvah (Repentance) with Rabbi Bonder

Sundays, January 10, 24, 31 & February 7, 21, 28 • 9:30 am – 11 am

Join Rabbi Bonder for a deep dive into Jewish thought around the issue of T'shuvah - repentance. The "text" for this course will be a brand new Jewish podcast called Pod Drash, hosted by Rabbi Dr. Leon Wiener Dow. We will listen to the podcast before class and then join together to share reactions, discuss and grow in the process. Note: This course will run simultaneously with Rabbi Bonder's On One Foot: Exploring Judaism class. All are welcome to participate. Visit the website calendar listing to learn more about Pod Drash.

#### News & Nosh with Rabbi Marx

#### Sunday, January 10 • 10 am - 11 am

Rabbi Marx leads an open and informative discussion on today's events affecting the larger Jewish community and our role in and beyond local politics. Participants are welcome to share their own articles that they would like to discuss with the group.

#### Pinnacle of Creation with Aaron Nielsenshultz Tuesdays, January 26 & February 2, 9 • 7 pm – 8 pm

The pinnacle of creation, or the cause of all of its problems? Is humanity God's favorite creation? Are we the root of all the world's problems? The answer might surprise you! Let's see what our sacred texts tell us about our role in the world and how we can learn to love our place in it, no matter which one we are.

#### MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

#### Beit Sefer Café – Virtually!

Tuesday, March 16 • 2 class sessions: 6:30 pm - 9 pm

Here is a taste of what is planned for a night of virtual learning in Zoom class groups, where participants will be able to interact with the instructors and



each other. Look for an online brochure with full details and Zoom meeting links to be posted by late January.

#### Early Session Topics/Instructors:

Rabbi Jason Bonder • Matriarchs, a Prophetess, and A Judge Walk into a Café in Tel Aviv...

Larry Silver (UPenn emeritis Art History Professor) • What is Jewish Art?

Tyi Marx & Moriah Amit (Reference & Geneology Librarians, Center for Jewish History) • Genealogy Basics

Alyson Gass • Cooking Class Theme to Come Soon!

#### **Late Session Topics/Instructors:**

Rabbi Gregory S. Marx • Good Religion/Bad Religion

John Ghazvinian (Exec. Dir., UPenn Middle East Center)

• Iran, Israel and the United States: A View from History

Tyi Marx & Sara Belasco (Reference Librarians, Center for Jewish History) • Preserving Your Family Photos and Documents at Home

Surprise Guest Speaker • Topic to Come

### Virtual and In-Person **Events**

#### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### **Virtual Israel Tour**

Ein Hod: Thursday, January 7 • 7 pm - 8:30 pm Visit a Kibbutz: Thursday, February 4 • 7 pm - 8:30 pm

Our popular virtual exploration of Israel continues on the first Thursday of each month through May 2021. Our Israeli Tour Guide, Rotem Shahar, shows us the sites and stops along the way for an interactive discussion. Join us for all of the destinations along our journey, or just come on the months that you can. Register for



the Zoom link on the website calendar listing. You only need to register the first time you join us.

### Special Congregational Meeting

#### Thursday, January 14 • 7 pm

A Special Meeting of the Congregation will be held via Zoom with the sole purpose of soliciting the views of the membership, as required by the Constitution, on extending the engagement of Gregory S. Marx as Senior Rabbi. Visit the website calendar for the Zoom meeting link.

#### **Art with Allison!**

Spend some creative time and unwind with your Beth Or friends this winter with a once-a-month hands-on art activity on Zoom! Congregant, Board Member and Art Teacher, Allison Levin leads these classes. A list of supplies for each project will be provided in advance.



#### Painting on Glassware! Wednesday, January 20 • 7:30 pm

Create your own personalized wine glasses, or choose your own glass/mug/plate to paint on with glass pens. With Tu B'shevat the following week, you can make your own personalized glassware.

### Painting on Canvas! Monday, February 22 • 7:30 pm

Create a beautiful masterpiece on a canvas! Allison will lead the group in creating a beautiful painting on a canvas, teaching step by step with an easy-to-follow process.

### Painting on Fabric! Monday, March 22 • 7:30 pm

Create your own Matzah cover to use on your Seder table or give as a gift or you can learn to paint on any other fabric — a tote, sweatshirt, jean jacket and more.

### **Speaker Program: Democracy at Home & Around the World with Michael Abramowitz**

#### Thursday, January 21 • 7 pm

Join Rabbi Gregory Marx on Zoom as he hosts Michael Abramowitz, President of Freedom House, to discuss democracy at home and around the world. Freedom House works to defend human rights and promote democratic change, with a focus on political rights and civil liberties. Freedom House acts as a catalyst for freedom through



a combination of analysis, advocacy, and action. Their analysis focuses on 13 central issues, including the rise of authoritarianism, the decline of democracy, freedom of expression and election integrity. Visit the website calendar for the Zoom meeting link.

### Cooking with Gass: Comfort Food Monday, January 25 • 7 pm - 8 pm

Alyson Gass and her assistant Allison Levin are back with an inspired virtual cooking class! It's cold outside, so we'll warm-up together with some delicious comfort food. Get cozy on your couch by the fire and join Alyson & Allison for a fun night on Zoom!

#### Virtual Cantors' Concert Sunday, January 31 • 3 pm

Cantor Green and Cantor Murley will entertain you with a medley of their favorite Broadway tunes, pop and rock songs. Watch the concert on live webstream or on the Beth Or Facebook page.





### Teddy Bear PJ Party for Young Families Wednesday, February 10 • 6pm

This event will be hosted on Zoom by our CECE for preschool aged children. Details to come!

### Chai-Lights — January/February 2021

#### **New Members**

Allan Goldshteyn, Chelsea Shull & Lexie Goldshteyn (>1)

Derek Richardson & Taylor Cohn Lee, Fernanda & Bryce (1) Frank Brad, Julie, Kyle (8) & Jake (6) Nemzer

#### **May Their Memory Be A Blessing**

Illene Suplee, sister of Rosalie Goldberg Joseph P. Murphy, brother of Rosemary Melnick

Patricia R. Murphy, sister of Rosemary Melnick

William Kanefsky, father of Sharon Carlin Albert "Albie" Brandow, husband of Sheila Heller Brandow

Irvin Krum, father of Ellyn Klein Alvin Seltzer, family member of Jane Liebman

Donald Barrett, uncle of Bob Sklenar Barbara Wessel, congregant & wife of Henry Wessel, z"l

Michael Sagel, step father of Ryan Frost Eric Fishman, step father of Eric Drossner Evelyn Silvert, mother of Joan Kober Bruce Sklar, congregant, husband of Vicki Sklar, z"l, father of Jeremy Sklar

Sandra Brecher, mother of Andrew Brecher Saul Katzman, father of Marc Katzman Irving Berman, father of Arlene Slobodzian Michael Brenner, congregant and father of Rob, Sam and Jesse

#### **Mazel Tov**

Birth of Maddison Deanna Gross, granddaughter of Mark Gross & Janessa Althouse

Birth of Benjamin Eli Cohen, grandson of Bob & Marlene Cohen

Birth of Kayla Sadie Leibovitz, granddaughter of Howard & Ronda Moses

Birth of Shoshana Bracha Miller, granddaughter of Bob & Faye Miller

Birth of Charlotte Elizabeth Krepp, granddaughter of Laine & Fred Kaplan

Birth of Jacob Hawke Freiman, son of Dan & Becky Freiman & grandson of Cliff & Sherrie Ehrlich

Birth of Andrew James Hofer, grandson of Steve & Melanie Beifel

Baby Naming of Annie Rose Gottlieb, granddaughter of Josh Gottlieb

Baby Naming of Sophia Kayden Sloane, daughter of David & Eleanor Sloane Engagement of Erica Brownstein & Marc Neff

Engagement of Jeff Brown, son of Donald & Helaine Brown, to Ilana Rotberg

Engagement of Ben Milakofsky, son of Steve & Marsha Milakofsky & grandson of Myer Bernstein, to Alicia "Ali" Barrett

Engagement of Candice Chachkin, daughter of Margie Chachkin & granddaughter of Sylvia Chachkin, to Bryan Beauchamp Wedding of Jeffrey Berest, son of Doreen Berest to Julia Cohen Bar Mitzvah of Gavin Byruch Bar Mitzvah of Ryan Drossner Bar Mitzvah of Matthew Koch Bar Mitzvah of Chase Nydick Bar Mitzvah of Jacob Picker Bar Mitzvah of Nathan Seligman

### **Flower Donations**

#### **January Donations:**

January 16 • Allison Downey and Scott Byruch in honor of Gavin Byruch's Bar Mitzvah

January 23 • Eric and Samantha Drossner in honor of Ryan Drossner's Bar Mitzvah

#### **February Donations:**

**February 20 •** Robert and Kimberly Koch in honor of Matthew Koch's Bar Mitzvah Mindy Adis and Corey Nydick in honor of Chase Nydick's Bar Mitzvah

**February 27 •** Benjamin and Jayme Picker in honor of Jacob Picker's Bar Mitzvah Daniel and Judy Seligman in honor of Nathan Seligman's Bar Mitzvah





Our beautiful building provides the perfect place to celebrate your family's simchas.

Our catering partners on the Approved Caterer List — shown below and published on our website (www.bethor.org) stand ready to provide delicious food for your event. They can provide menu options at a range of prices designed to meet your specific needs and budget.

We hope that you will consider having your celebrations at Beth Or. To learn more about hosting an event at Beth Or, please contact Amy Abrams at 215-646-5806.

Approved Caterer List — 2020/21	
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Ben & Irv's Deli · Lennie or Michael	215-355-2000
Classical Caterers • Evan Bernstein	732-297-6444
Go2eventplanner (new Phila. based) • Arlene Rotfeld	516-909-8580
Infinity Caterers • Fred Morganstein	215-509-7280
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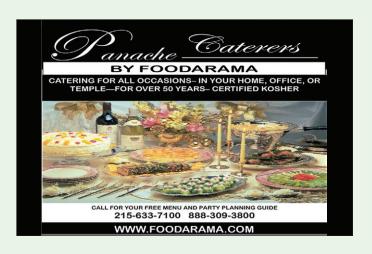
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Joan & Harvey Azarva

#### Congratulations

B'nai Mitzvah of HOWARD & ANDREA GOLDSTEIN's Sons B'nai Mitzvah of SANDI

GOLDSTEIN's Grandsons

Bar Mitzvah of KAREN SILVERBERG's Grandson

Jerry & Harriet Silberman

In Appreciation of

**RABBI MARX** 

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Joan & Alan Kober

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Lisa & Paul Rovner

Sandy & Warren Soll

ANNIE GOTTLIEB'S NAMING

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DANIEL's Bar Mitzvah

Peter, Stefanie, Daniel &

Joshua Somerman

HARRISON's Bar Mitzvah

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High Holy Days Service

Sharon Labow

ANDREW SCHWARTZ's

Bar Mitzvah

The Schwartz Family Speedy Recovery to

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Marian Wolfert

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Lisa & Paul Rovner

Philip Gerson

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DANIEL's Bar Mitzvah

Peter, Stefanie, Daniel &

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HARRISON's Bar Mitzvah

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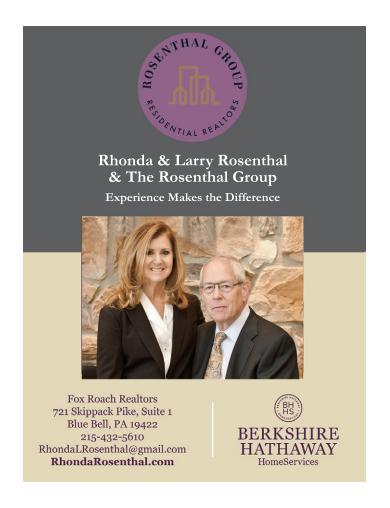


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