



CELEBRATE PURIM AT BETH EL

MEGILLAH READING SATURDAY, MARCH 23

Ma'ariv & Havdallah 8:00 pm
Followed by Megillah Reading
Costumes Encouraged

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THE CELEBRATION CONTINUES...



SUNDAY, MARCH 24

Shacharit - 9:30 am

Megillah Reading - 10:00 am

Purim Carnival - 11:00 am

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We encourage donations to Bags of Fun, whose mission is to deliver a Bag of Fun to every child fighting a long-term or life-threatening condition. Donate at www.bagsoffunomaha.org.





BETH EL USY- BILU PRESENTS

PURIM CARNIVAL 2024

Sunday, March 24, 2024 11 am to 1 pm

Games, exciting prizes, bounce house, art area and more. Preorder tickets here for special deals or get your tickets at the door.

For lunch this year, as voted on by our kids, teachers, parents and staff: Breakfast! This will include waffles, scrambled eggs and hash browns.

All proceeds go to support our youth programming and scholarships. Thank you to all our amazing donors!

Purchase tickets and make donations online at www.bethel-omaha.org.

BETH EL SYNAGOGUE

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Purim.....	Page 1	Education Director's Corner.....	Page 10
Hazzan's Column.....	Pages 3, 5	Birthdays.....	Page 10
Hamantashen Baking & Orders	Page 4	Friday Night Candle Lighting	Page 10
Mahjong Shabbat.....	Page 4	Havdallah.....	Page 10
Chesed Committee	Page 4	Women's Book Group.....	Page 11
President's Corner	Page 6	Dinner at the Stephen Center.....	Page 11
We Share Your Joy	Page 6	Our Shabbat Tables.....	Page 11
Israeli Wine Tasting.....	Page 7	Contributions & In Memoriam	Page 12
Meals That Heal	Page 7	Cantor's Concert	Page 12
Yad Squad	Page 8	March Calendar.....	Page 13
Tot Shabbat & Torah Tots	Page 8	Mental Health Series	Pages 14-15
Kiddush Sponsored by the Remer Family.....	Page 8	Kamp KEF	Page 15
PJP What Jews Think Series.....	Page 9	Passover Seder.....	Page 16
Movie Time Shabbat's Cool.....	Page 9	Kiddush Sponsored by Janie Kulakofsky....	Page 16

The Israel Wine Girl Is Coming to Beth El

By Hazzan Michael Krausman



One of the common elements that bridge Purim and Passover is the consumption of wine. In the Talmud, we are instructed in this

regard by the 4th-century sage Rava, "One must drink on Purim until that person cannot distinguish between cursing Haman and blessing Mordechai" (Megillah 7b). While any beverage will do the job, Rava probably had wine at his Purim celebration.

Purim is one of the most joyous occasions in the Jewish calendar. In addition to drinking, Purim is celebrated by a boisterous reading of the Megillah (the Book of Esther) complete with the wearing of costumes and making enough noise to blot out the name of Haman, the evil villain of the Esther story. Other customs include special Purim songs, a Purim feast, the giving of portions of food to friends (Hamentashen, yummy), and providing for those in the community who are less fortunate.

Centuries after the story of Esther took place, in the year 70 C.E., a watershed moment in Jewish history occurred – the destruction of the Holy Temple in Jerusalem. This monumental tragedy precipitated a profound change in the practice of Judaism; the transformation from a sacrificial cult controlled by priests and Levites to a system of prayers, customs, and laws presided over by the Rabbis.

In response to this calamity, the Rabbis decreed that the Jewish people should be in a perpetual state of mourning. All forms of music and merriment were curtailed; the service in the synagogue could not look or sound like that of the Holy Temple, so instrumental music was banned on Shabbat. Every service now must contain a petition for the restoration of the temple and its sacrificial cult. Two exceptions to the above rules were established: music and merriment were sanctioned at Jewish weddings and in celebration of Purim.

Sadly, on October 7, 2023, another overwhelming tragedy occurred – the despicable terrorist attack on Israel by Hamas, "slaughtering babies, raping women, burning whole families alive, and taking hundreds of innocent civilians hostage. Since October 7, more than 1,200 Israelis have been killed. Terrorists are still holding 132 men, women, and children in captivity" (*American Jewish Congress*). Not since the Shoah which resulted in the devastation of European Jewry and the murder of six million of our people, has such a horrific event occurred.

This ghastly attack has had a profound impact on Israeli culture, society, and economy. While we in America have found various ways to support Israel in these trying times, Jody Nestel of Princeton, N.J. decided to focus on a vital component of the culture and economy of the Land of Israel.

(continued on page 5)



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Hamantashen Bake

Chaired by
Hollie Fineman & M'Lee Hasslinger

Sundays, 9:30 am - 12:00 pm

- March 3
- March 10

Come bake with us and take home 1/2 dozen Hamantashen

Register online at www.bethel-omaha.org.

Hamantashen Orders

\$15 per Dozen



Orders include an assortment of:
apricot, cherry, chocolate and raspberry flavors.
Poppy seed and prune flavors available upon request

Order Deadline: Thursday, March 7
Order online at www.bethel-omaha.org.





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MAHJONG SHABBAT

Saturday, March 23

*Following Shabbat Morning Services
and Kiddush Lunch at Beth El*

Hosted by Eadie Tsabari

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Chesed Caring Committee

Beth El's Chesed Committee focuses on acts of lovingkindness. We are there when times are the most difficult (illness, aging, death) and also at the most joyous times (birth). If you know of a congregant who is ill and would like the Chesed Committee to offer support, contact us at 402-492-8550.

Hazzan's Column

(continued from page 3)

It is in an area in which she has great expertise, the Israeli wine industry. As a result of the war with Hamas, wineries in Israel suffer in two ways. First, most of their workers have been deployed so there is a shortage of labor, also, those wineries located in the North are under constant threat from Hezbollah rockets so it's too dangerous to work the fields.

Having trained at the Wine School of Philadelphia and being the lead wine taster at a popular New Jersey winery, Jody, a professional wine educator, decided to advocate for the Israeli wine industry through private tastings and her "Israel Wine Girl Blog" where she recommends a different Israeli wine for our Shabbat tables every week. "Make Shabbat a delight, drink blue and white" is her tagline at israelwinegirl.com.

We are fortunate to be hosting Jody, the "Israel Wine Girl," at Beth El on Saturday, March 9. Jody will give us an update on the

state of the wine industry and introduce us to some of the producers from across Israel. We will then be invited to taste and learn about at least six different wines. There will also be a raffle for an exclusive bottle of Israeli wine. Of course, delicious Israeli food will be served as well. In addition, we will have the opportunity to order Israeli wine for our seders with a special discount!

At the Passover seder, we are commanded to drink four cups of wine corresponding to the four elements of God's promise of deliverance from Egyptian slavery: "I will free you from the labors of the Egyptians and I will deliver you from their bondage. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and through extraordinary punishments" (Exodus 6:6). Not surprisingly, there is a disagreement among the great sages as to the existence of another element of this promise so the fifth cup or the cup of Elijah, who will one day come and settle all Rabbinic disputes, was introduced.

Our evening with the Israel Wine Girl will enable us to fulfill two profound mitzvot: supporting Israel in these desperate times and procuring wine for the seder. Jody pointed out that since October 7 she has been contributing to all sorts of worthy causes in Israel. By purchasing Israeli wine, she not only is supporting this important segment of the Israeli culture and economy, but she is also enjoying some delicious wine.

Be sure to join us for this important event so that you, too, can support Israel, have a delightful evening, and sample some fantastic wine. Whether it is for Purim, Passover, or Shabbat, now is an excellent time to discover and purchase Israeli wine. See page 7 for details.

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President's Corner: Grateful For Our Beth El Community

By Linda Saltzman, President of the Board of Trustees



Recently, Kevin and I watched the Netflix film "The Greatest Night in Pop," the documentary about the making of the

recording and video of the song "We Are the World" on January 28, 1985. Having grown up in the 1970s and 1980s, Kevin and I loved seeing the musicians that shaped our youth including, sadly, the many who are no longer with us. The film is an amazing look inside the creation of a song that literally rocked the world and raised \$80 million, equivalent to \$214 million today, for humanitarian aid to Africa.

For many days afterward, I couldn't stop thinking about the film. An array of thoughts kept creeping into my mind.

The recording session took place late at night after the American Music Awards because so many of the artists were in Los Angeles. It didn't conclude until after 6:00 am the next morning. A sign at the entrance told the stars to "Check your egos at the door." I can't help but wonder if such an event could take place today. No one seemed to care about anyone else's wealth, religion, background or politics. The mission was all that mattered. Could a group of

superstars come together like that today? I doubt it.

The general public was not informed of the gathering of pop music royalty. The 46 artists showed up to A&M Recording Studios in Hollywood in their limousines, or, in the case of Bruce Springsteen, a rental car he drove himself and parked nearby. In today's world, could so many celebrities assemble without anyone catching wind of it? Again, I doubt it.

"We Are the World" was recorded a couple of months after 37 British and Irish musicians recorded "Do They Know It's Christmas?" The latter song, also intended to raise money for aid to Africa, generated \$24 million, or \$68 million in 2024. Seven months after the recording of "We Are the World," in July 1985, 70 artists from around the world joined together for two Live Aid concerts, in London and Philadelphia. The concerts raised \$140 million, or nearly \$400 million today, for famine relief. Could people join from around the world to support a single cause today? I continue to doubt it.

Times have changed since 1985. The world is more divided. Tensions are higher. People are quick to judge one another and quicker still to take offense. Social

media prevents almost anything from happening undetected. The concept of working together for the greater good has withered.

Given the changes in society over the past four decades, I am so grateful for our Beth El community. Here, we support one another. At Beth El, we do not seek to expose or cancel fellow congregants. Rather, we try to lift each other up and create a place where our own egos are checked at the door. Spiritual growth and community are what matter. Everyone is welcome — full stop. We are so lucky to have a home at Beth El and a refuge from the extraneous noise and nonsense.

I couldn't be more proud to be part of the Beth El family. I hope you feel the same.

Bonus side note: In a few weeks, we will celebrate Purim, referred to by many as the "Jolliest Day of the Year." By the time you read this, you may have received a phone call from one of our teens, asking for your support of the Purim Carnival on March 24, which raises funds for youth programming. Thank you to everyone who has donated to this fun, festive annual event.

We Share Your Joy



Mazel Tov on the Wedding of:

Rabbi Steven Abraham & Pam Berkowitz

For the latest information about
Beth El programming & services,
visit www.bethel-omaha.org.



Sip, Savor & Support Israel With



Israel Wine *girl*
Jody Nestel

**Saturday, March 9
Beth El Synagogue**

7:00 pm - Havdallah
7:30 pm - Wine Tasting &
Light Israeli Dinner

\$18 - General Admission

\$36 - Guardian of the Vineyard
(includes 1 free raffle ticket)

Raffle for a special bottle of Israeli wine

\$5 per ticket/\$20 for 5 tickets

Program Chairs

Laurel Krausman & Abigail Kutler

Program Sponsors

Sharon Brodkey, Judi & David Finkle, Margie & Bruce Gutnik, Linda & Joe Fischer, Elysia & Gene Kowel, Abigail & Adam Kutler, several generous anonymous donors

Register online at
www.bethel-omaha.org.



Meals That Heal



**Sunday, March 17
3:30 - 6:00 pm**

Join us to cook and serve dinner at
The Ronald McDonald House.

Space is limited and participants must be 18+. Donations to help fund this program would be greatly appreciated.

Program Chair: Joan K. Marcus

Register online at
www.bethel-omaha.org.



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- Alan Shulewitz
- Marty Shukert
- Ben Shapiro
- Haftarah: M'Lee Hasslinger

Vaera

- Marty Shukert
- Georgianne Oman
- Jason Dubrow
- Ben Shapiro
- Haftarah: Marty Shukert

Bo

- Ben Shapiro
- Georgianne Oman
- Marty Shukert
- Jay Gordman
- Sharon Brodkey
- Haftarah: Nancy Rips

Beshalach

- Laurel Krausman
- Haftarah: Dr. Sam Meisels

TOT SHABBAT

March 1

Beth El

Light Pre-Neg 5:30 pm
Fun Family Service 6 pm

Shabbat Songs
Stories
Friends
Family

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PURIM and PZAY

TORAH TOTS

SUNDAY MARCH 10

WITH MISS ALEX!

10:45 am to 12 pm
for ages 3-pre-k and their families

FUTURE 2024 TORAH TOTS DATES: MARCH 10, APRIL 7, MAY 5



Kiddush Lunch Sponsored by The Remer Family In Celebration of Miles' 91st Birthday

Saturday, March 2 following Shabbat Morning Services

What Jews Think Series

Thursday, March 14, 7:30 pm via Zoom

Dr. Michah Gottlieb, New York University
 "A Rabbinic Debate about Slavery on the Eve of the Civil War"

As civil war loomed, President James Buchanan designated January 4, 1861 as a national day for fasting and prayer. That day Rabbi Morris Raphall of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in Manhattan gave a sermon arguing that a civil war should not be waged over slavery since slavery was a biblically sanctioned institution. The Baltimore Rabbi David Einhorn responded with an essay excoriating Raphall for his terrible misunderstanding of the Bible. Does the Bible consider slavery legitimate? In this session, we'll explore a rabbinic debate over this question.

Sponsored by Jeffrey & Sherry Taxman
 Register online at www.bethel-omaha.org.



MOVIE TIME SHABBAT

Saturday, March 16, 2024
 10am to 10pm

Admit: All BESTT students grades 2-7
 This Shabbat's Cool is part of the BESTT program and is **free** for all BESTT students but **please register at bethel-omaha.org**. Non-members may join us for \$15 per child. **Lunch and Dinner are included. Fun, learning, games, and more! Our evening will conclude with a movie theater-like experience.**

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Support Our Teens at the Purim Carnival

by Mark Kelln, Education Director

When we begin to build the calendar each summer for the upcoming year, not many events have more gravity around them than the Purim Carnival. This two-hour event has so much visible and hidden benefit for the entire community. Our teens have been preparing for the Purim Carnival since mid-January, and the staff even before that. It is an event that our children and families look forward to and that is a blast to put on. Here is just a small list of the:

Top 10 Reasons to Support the BILU USY Purim Carnival

10. Tradition: Many people have their way of supporting and participating in the Purim Carnival that they look forward to each year. It may be running the prize booth, serving food, sponsoring a booth, winning a High Holy Days parking spot in the silent auction, or just celebrating the youthful energy. Many of our recent graduates love to come back and help as well. Don't have your tradition yet? Great year to start one!

9. Food: Our volunteers always do an amazing job filling our bellies at the carnival. This year, we let the community decide what our lunch was going to be, and it is something different. Breakfast overwhelmingly won our poll. We will be enjoying scrambled eggs, waffles and hash browns this year.

8. Games: This year our teens were insistent! They wanted to create all of the games. Who am I to say no to that level of drive? The games will be a nice mix of classics with some new favorites. There will be something for everyone.

7. Bounce House: Always a favorite, especially among our littlest ones. Not a bad way to keep them contained for a moment or two as well!

6. Costumes: Who will surprise us this year with an out-of-this-world costume?

5. Silent Auction: The thrill of the chase! This year there will be some expected and unexpected offerings.

4. Raffle: Possibly the most exhilarating moments of the carnival. Our teens are very excited about this year's prizes.

3. Skill building for our teens: The Purim Carnival is such an important skill-building opportunity for our teens. Putting on the Purim Carnival gives them an authentic and engaging opportunity to develop important leadership and executive functioning skills.

2. Hamantaschen: They will be dairy! You will get some with every lunch purchased. We are hoping to make some extra this year to be available for sale. There will be Hamantaschen baking opportunities throughout the lead-up to Purim.

And, the Number One reason to support the BILU USY Purim Carnival...

Supporting our USY programs: The proceeds raised by the Purim Carnival allow us to provide free or discounted opportunities to our kids throughout the year. We are so fortunate to have an amazing group of young people that are well worth investing in!

Join us Sunday, March 24 at 11:00 am for the Purim Carnival. See page 2 for details.

Birthdays



With 5-Year Multiples

Adam Frank - 3/1
Sandra Kurland - 3/2
Debi Kutler - 3/2
Sidney Rosenblatt - 3/3
Marti Rosen-Atherton - 3/5
Bruce Meyers - 3/7
David Beckman - 3/9
Ian Yellin - 3/14
Megan Dubrow - 3/18
Janie Kulakofsky - 3/22
Richard Lebovitz - 3/22
Suzanne Carter - 3/23
Mary Lou Walker - 3/24

Friday Evening Candle Lighting

March 1.....5:58 pm
March 8.....6:06 pm
March 15.....7:14 pm
March 22.....7:21 pm
March 29.....7:29 pm

Havdallah

Saturday Evenings on Zoom
<https://zoom.us/j/944133237>

March 26:50 pm
March 9*7:00 pm
March 168:05 pm
March 23*8:00 pm
March 30.....8:25 pm

*March 9 & 23 sessions at
Beth El and on Zoom

Women's Book Group

Monday, March 25, 2:00 pm

At the next Women's Book Group meeting, we will discuss "The Emerald Necklace" by Linda Rosen. We will meet at the home of Gail Veitzer and via Zoom. Newcomers are always welcome. For more information, contact Darlene Golbitz at 402-334-7862, darlene.golbitz@gmail.com.



Dinner at the Stephen Center

Sunday, March 31, 5:00 pm
2723 Q Street



Under the auspices of our Social Action Committee, congregants cook and serve dinner several times a year. If you would like to volunteer, contact Chairman M'Lee Hasslinger at mlee011@gmail.com. Limited spots available for servers, so please RSVP.

OUR SHABBAT TABLES

April 5 at Beth El
Italian Night!

FOLLOWING KABBALAT SHABBAT



RSVP BY MARCH 21

Whether you're an Our Shabbat Tables regular or not, we would love to have you join us at Beth El for Our Shabbat Tables - Italian Night! Cost: \$18 per adult, \$10 per child ages 6-12, no charge for those who have already registered and paid for the Our Shabbat Tables 2023-2024 series.

Generously Sponsored by: Staenberg Family Foundation Anything Grants, Herbert Goldsten Donor-Advised Fund, Dr. Jeffrey & Sandra Passer and two anonymous donors.

Register by Thursday, March 21 at www.bethel-omaha.org.

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Contributions to Named Endowment & Synagogue Funds

This Kol lists contributions received by January 31. Donations received after that date will be listed in the next issue.

Contributions to Named Endowment Funds

1st Benjamin and Anna Wiesman Chapel Endowment Fund

In Honor of: Rabbi Steven Abraham
In Memory of: Anna Wiesman

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Birthday of: Sandy Passer
Yahrzeit of: Sonia Epstein

J. Alvin Ginsberg Endowment Fund

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60th Anniversary of: Allan & Eden Ostravich

Birthday of: Sandy Passer
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Education For The Future Fund

Engagement of: Rabbi Steven Abraham & Pam Berkowitz

General Fund

Birthday of: Sandy Passer, Linda Saltzman
Yahrzeit of: David Epstein, Harold Kaplan, Boris May

Little Free Pantry Fund

Birthday of: Linda Saltzman

Music Fund

In Memory of: Dr. Sherrell Najman

Rabbi Abraham's Discretionary Fund

In Honor of: Ethan Finkelstein

Yahrzeit of: Dorlene Mae Graham, Sylvia Jess, Ida Ruth Meisels, Steve Rothenberg, Ira Trachtenbarg

Seth Rich Memorial Camp Scholarship Fund

Recovery of: Hollie Fineman

In Memory of: Michael Klein, Dr. Sherrell Najman

Yahrzeit of: Yehudah Ben Shlomo

In Memoriam

Beth El extends our profound sympathy to the family of:

Rabbi Jules Harlow

May his memory always be for a blessing.



Nefesh Mountain **SAVE THE DATE**


Cantor's Concert **TO BENEFIT THE Seth Rich Memorial Camp Scholarship Fund**

Sunday, May 19, 4:00PM

For more information: www.bethel-omaha.org www.nefeshmountain.com

BETH EL SYNAGOGUE
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March 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
 <p>3 9:30 am - Hamantaschen Baking 9:30 am - Shacharit Service 9:30 am - BESTT (K-7) 10:00 am - Torah Study 10:30 am - Hebrew Reading with Hazan Krausman 11:15 am - Adult B'nai Mitzvah with Hazan Krausman 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>4 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>5 10:30 am - Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Abraham 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>6 4:15 pm - BESTT (3-7) 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv 6:00 pm - Hebrew High (8-12)</p>	<p>7 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv Hamantaschen Orders Due</p>	<p>8 6:00 pm - Kabbalat Shabbat</p>	<p>9 10:00 am - Shabbat Services 10:00 am - Jr. Congregation (K-12) 7:00 pm - Havdallah & Israeli Wine Tasting</p>
<p>10 9:30 am - Hamantaschen Baking 9:30 am - Shacharit Service 9:30 am - BESTT (K-7) 10:00 am - Torah Study 10:30 am - Hebrew Reading with Hazan Krausman 10:45 am - Torah Tots 11:15 am - Adult B'nai Mitzvah with Hazan Krausman 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>11 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>12 10:30 am - Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Abraham 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>13 4:15 pm - BESTT (3-7) 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv 6:00 pm - Hebrew High (8-12)</p>	<p>14 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv 7:30 pm - PJPW What Jews Think Series: Dr. Michah Gottlieb</p>	<p>15 6:00 pm - Kabbalat Shabbat</p>	<p>16 10:00 am - Shabbat Services 10:00 am - Movie Time Shabbat's Cool (2-7) 8:05 pm - Havdallah USY Lock-In</p>
<p>17 9:30 am - Shacharit Service 9:30 am - BESTT (K-7) 10:00 am - Torah Study 10:30 am - Hebrew Reading with Hazan Krausman 11:15 am - Adult B'nai Mitzvah with Hazan Krausman 3:30 pm - Cooking Dinner at the Ronald McDonald House 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>18 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>19 10:30 am - Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Abraham 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv 7:00 pm - Board of Trustees Meeting</p>	<p>20 4:15 pm - BESTT (3-7) 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv 6:00 pm - Hebrew High (8-12)</p>	<p>21 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>22 10:00 am - Hamantaschen Pick Up 11:30 am - Nebraska AIDS Project Lunch 6:00 pm - Kabbalat Shabbat</p>	<p>23 Erev Purim 10:00 am - Shabbat Services 10:00 am - Jr. Congregation (K-12) 12:30 pm - Mahjong Shabbat 8:00 pm - Havdallah & Megillah Reading</p>
<p>24 Purim 9:30 am - Shacharit Service 9:30 am - BESTT (K-7) 10:00 am - Megillah Reading 11:00 am - Purim Carnival 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>25 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 2:00 pm - Women's Book Group 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>26 10:30 am - Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Abraham 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>27 4:15 pm - BESTT (3-7) 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv 6:00 pm - Hebrew High (8-12)</p>	<p>28 7:00 am - Shacharit Service 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>	<p>29 6:00 pm - Kabbalat Shabbat</p>	<p>30 10:00 am - Shabbat Services 10:00 am - Jr. Congregation (K-12) Kiddush Sponsored by Janie Kulakofsky 8:25 pm - Havdallah</p>
<p>31 9:30 am - Shacharit Service 9:30 am - BESTT (K-7) 10:00 am - Torah Study 10:30 am - Hebrew Reading with Hazan Krausman 11:15 am - Adult B'nai Mitzvah with Hazan Krausman 5:00 pm - Cooking Dinner at the Stephen Center 5:30 pm - Mincha/Ma'ariv</p>						



Mental Health Series: Change and Mental Health

By **Glen Fineman, MSW, LIMHP, Therapist**

How is your mental health, and how are your coping strategies in

regard to your mental health? A main ingredient for each of us to live a happy, successful life is that we recognize change exists, and that change seems to be the only constant and permanent thing in this world. To help ensure success and develop a meaningful life, we need to accept the fact that nearly everything in our world changes. Acceptance is a crucial part of the change process. Motivation to adapt to change can be difficult, and often involves changing thoughts, long standing belief systems and behaviors.

The best way each of us can ensure we have good mental health is to accept that change exists, learn how to prepare for it, be willing to make adjustments in our lives and develop personal strategies to adjust and cope with change.

There are many types of changes in life, such as time changes, seasonal changes, the aging process, stages of development, loss of a job, moving and loss of a loved one.

A major recent change in our lifetime has been the Covid-19 pandemic, which became a major life change for all of us in different ways, both during and after the "official" end to the pandemic.

In some ways, the pandemic left us with permanent changes. We needed to learn healthy ways to come out of our homes, reconnect with people and readjust into what almost felt like a different and changed world. Many of us have

had and are still dealing with depressed and anxious feelings triggered by loss, illness and withdrawal.

Another example, the change from autumn to winter, brings shorter days and colder weather. For many of us, the change in seasons results in "seasonal affective disorder," which can lead to depression and withdrawal from some routines.

Loss of a family member or close friend involves working through the stages of grief and adjustment to loss — a process which takes time and often is a major change in one's life. Difficult aspects of change can involve a break in our normal routine, threats to our emotional security and alterations in our lifestyle. These unknowns often challenge old beliefs and patterns.

Some people perceive change with fear and dread because of its unknown, ambiguous nature. A typical reaction to change is to ignore it, get angry with people who try to help us or get angry with ourselves. We often avoid talking about emotional changes, pretending they don't exist. Reaction to change often involves irrational beliefs, such as "change is bad" or "if I pretend the event never happened it will go away," or staying stuck in one of the stages of grief (such as denial or anger), or telling ourselves "change is hard and besides I'm fine, it's others who need to change." Any one of these irrational beliefs, which are a common reaction to life's changes, can trigger depression and feelings of despair.

To improve our mental health and move with change, we need to

recognize that acceptance of any change in our lives does exist, that it is a process of adjustment and we need to internalize it.

Five areas of acceptance to change include assessment, asking ourselves questions about each aspect of the particular issues in a specific change, including the nature of it, possible outcomes, and how it will affect myself, my family and friends.

Secondly, formulate a positive view of what the change would be like.

Thirdly, create a visual self image of where you could be in three months and six months from now, including such variables as how the image could affect other people, my job, my family, but mostly how this new projected image could affect us in a positive manner.

Fourthly, using this type of visualization or new self image, we want to work toward improving self-esteem, action steps to self-actualization, which can also include developing relaxation exercises, stress management and new coping strategies to build or re-build positive self-image.

The fifth area — in case the first four incur some resistance — is to repeat these steps and don't give up, as the change process takes time, and is different for everyone.

Seeking professional help can facilitate this process for some people and is seen as a strength, can augment or facilitate building self-esteem, and provide additional emotional support and guidance.

(continued on page 15)

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Mental Health Series

(continued from page 14)

Reactions to life situations that often give us a loss of self-esteem, loss of self-worth or residual effects to the recent pandemic, can feel catastrophic. Feeling a failure when we try to change something that is not in our control, we need to remind ourselves we can only control or change ourselves – and yes, we have the inner power and control within us to make these changes, and change our perspectives of life and its constant changes. We can improve our mental health by reducing stress induced by the need for change, as well as developing new perspectives on our life situations and relationships.

The overall goal in the change process is recognition that change exists and is a part of our lives, which involves acceptance, and the adaptation for the achievement of a sense of well-being, higher self-esteem and self-worth, all of which we need and to believe are possible, and with a sense of purpose. The primary objective to achieve these goals is “empowerment” – the feeling that we have the ability and opportunity to make choices and have input in our lives for better mental health.

Glen Fineman

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Passover Seder

Tuesday, April 23

Mincha at 5:30 pm
Seder to follow at 6:00 pm

Adults: \$52/\$48 Children 6-12: \$18/\$15
Children under 6: No charge

Early Bird Deadline: March 27
Reservations Close: April 9

Menu

Entree: Brisket or Salmon
Vegan Option: Eggplant Casserole

Matzo Ball Soup, Gefilte Fish, Chopped Liver,
Charoset, Sweet Potatoes Stuffed with
Quinoa & Raisins, Heirloom Carrots Roasted
with Pears, Dried Cranberries & Prunes

Lemon Cake topped with Parve Crème
Fraiche, Blueberries & Raspberries.

Register online at www.bethel-omaha.org.



**Kiddush Lunch Sponsored by Janie Kulakofsky
In Celebration of Her Birthday**

Saturday, March 30 following Shabbat Morning Services