



CONGREGATION  
BETH CHAIM

# CONNECTION

Beth Chaim is a Reform congregation whose mission is to provide an environment for the learning of Torah; to satisfy the religious, cultural, educational, and social needs of the local Jewish community; and to present an understanding of Jewish values to the community-at-large.

(609) 799-9401 / [www.bethchaim.org](http://www.bethchaim.org)

I Adar–Nisan 5784 / March–April 2024

Rabbi Adena Blum

Cantor Jordan Goldstein

Rabbi Rebecca Kaufman

Michael Schwartz  
President

Anne Berman-Waldorf, RJE  
Director of Lifelong  
Education

Robin Resnick  
Early Childhood Education

For all your life cycle needs, our clergy team is ready to assist you. Please call the temple office at (609) 799-9401, and if you are experiencing a pastoral emergency, dial extension 9. We are here for you in your times of joy and challenge.

**Have an article  
for our bulletin?  
Have pictures of  
Beth Chaim  
events?**

Email submissions to  
Sheryl Brown at  
[sbrown@bethchaim.org](mailto:sbrown@bethchaim.org)



## March & April at Beth Chaim

SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2024 SATURDAY, MARCH 23



## ESTHER'S STORY (TAYLOR'S VERSION)



CONGREGATION  
BETH CHAIM

**Hosts:**

## The Purim Tour SATURDAY, MARCH 23, 2024

**4:00** – Israeli Dancing with Rak Dan, a Camp Harlam favorite!

**6:00** – Middle Eastern Dinner

**7:00** – Megillah Reading and Shpiel

**For up-to-date calendar information, visit [www.bethchaim.org](http://www.bethchaim.org)**

Purim is one of my favorite Jewish holidays. Beyond the great story of political intrigue and Esther's heroism, the themes and values that we celebrate on this day are still so resonant today! On Purim there are four specific *mitzvot*, or commandments/good deeds that are asked of us and that represent these values. First is the mitzvah of *Mikrat Megillah*, or the reading of the Purim story, a chance to engage in our history and a tale that reminds us of our own power to make the world a better place in the face of pressure and fear. Second is the mitzvah of *Seudat Purim*, or the festive meal. It is in fact a commandment to eat, drink, and be merry on this day, while gathering as a community to celebrate. Third is *Mishloach Manot*, or the giving of gifts. Translating more literally to "the sending of portions," the idea is not only to send sweets and foods to friends and family, but even more so to those in need so everyone can be part of the celebration. Lastly is the mitzvah of *Matanot l'Evyon*, or giving *zedakah* (charity) to those who are less fortunate. In essence, these four deeds lead to a Purim celebration centered on community, giving, ritual, and lots of joy. That is exactly why we at Beth Chaim have a Purim celebration planned around these important tenants of the holiday!

On Saturday, March 23, join us at 4 pm to begin our great set of festivities. We'll begin with some delightful music and dancing with our special guest, Rak Dan, a Camp Harlam favorite! A fabulous Purim dinner open to all will follow, fulfilling our tradition. Then, we will hear the megillah chanted all together and hear the full Purim story performed by our incredible religious school actors and musicians. Leading up to the celebration, Men's Club and Sisterhood have given all of us the chance to participate in the other two mitzvot: you can order online your own fresh hamantaschen from the Men's Club to eat or give away, and Sisterhood's Mishloach Manot campaign allows you to send well wishes to anyone at the synagogue, while also donating funds to JFCS' Mobile Food Pantry and our community. Be sure to order your treats and pick out your gifts soon so that they'll arrive in time for the holiday!

Register for our Middle Eastern Purim dinner here: <https://www.bethchaim.org/event/purim-dinner.html>

Buy hamantaschen here: <https://www.bethchaim.org/form/hamantashen-order-form-2024.html>

Purchase Mishloach Manot here: <https://www.bethchaim.org/campaign/sisterhood-purim-campaign-2024.html>

We can't wait to see you there. In the meantime, try out some holiday tunes to get excited:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/1fLvia8wtZmoKbTKaDDl4M?si=5e2fd3b2246a4537>

No one wants to be passed over for a promotion at work or for a winning lottery ticket, but there are plenty of times we might like to be passed over: for example, when you didn't do the reading for homework or when you have spinach stuck in your teeth. The Jewish festival of Passover celebrates a very important moment in our story when the Israelites were passed over by the Angel of Death. Those who followed Moses' instructions to paint their doorways with lamb's blood escaped the worst of the ten plagues: death of the firstborn. Because we tell this dramatic tale at the Seder table every Passover using the Haggadah, it holds a special place in our collective memory. But I don't believe in a God who singles individuals out for suffering, so I struggle with the idea that God passed over us simply to punish the Egyptians and free our ancestors. However, Judaism instructs us to express gratitude any time danger passes us over, whether we believe God is behind the supposed miracle or not. The Rabbis crafted a prayer called *Birkat HaGomel* for this very purpose: one simple line that we now recite every Yom Kippur to offer our thanks to God that we survived an illness or surgery or accident or treacherous trip. Irrespective of how active God is in our daily lives, it is a powerful spiritual practice to show gratitude when we are blessed with goodness or are passed over for suffering. Maybe it was just a coincidence that my story ended up okay, but that does not change how grateful I am to be able to tell the tale. So this Passover, I invite you to join me in expressing thanks "to Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has bestowed every goodness upon us."

How will this year be different from all other years? There's no such thing as a perfect seder. This year, whether you are leading your own seder or visiting friends or relatives, I invite you to think about the Four Children. The Four Children section of our Haggadah offers four different ways we might ask questions about Passover traditions (wise child, wicked child, simple child, and one who doesn't know how to ask). I believe around our tables, and even within ourselves, we have versions of these Four Children. Sometimes we want to ask the edgy question like the "wicked" child. Other times, we forget, or never had the chance to learn, some of the core tenets of the holiday and need to ask the Passover 101 basics like the "simple" child. Throughout different parts of your seder, consider what would each child ask? Assign roles to guests to interrupt the story-telling and ask on behalf of these identities. Pre-write questions to hand out to children (and adults!) so they can embody these roles and embrace more than the Four Questions, but the essence of asking and learning about Passover. For more seder ideas, join me at adult education on Wednesdays in March!

Click below for Beth Chaim's Passover playlist, specially curated by Cantor Goldstein:

<https://open.spotify.com/playlist/otIAN1ujN8WCNwqVvexyTu?si=34961178409c4e4a>

## Top Ten Reasons Beth Chaim Loves Cantor Goldstein



Cantor Goldstein joyfully brings Judaism alive.



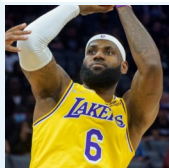
Cantor Goldstein brings fresh new energy to Congregation Beth Chaim.



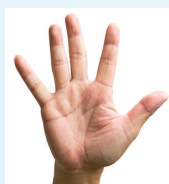
Cantor Goldstein is a gifted musician.



Cantor Goldstein has a tremendous intellect and a warm and generous spirit.



Cantor Goldstein is a phenomenal human being and an amazing addition to our Congregation.



We love Cantor Goldstein's enthusiasm when singing with preschool and religious school students!



Cantor's encouragement as they work with B'Mitzvah students and teach the congregation new songs and melodies is contagious and infectious.



Cantor Goldstein makes everyone feel welcome and included – through song, through casual conversation, really in everything they do.



Cantor Goldstein is transported by the music of Rock Shabbat – we feel their spirituality! What a rockstar!



What's your Top Ten? Send your #1 reason to Cantor Goldstein – and all of Beth Chaim – by taking out an ad in our on-line journal:

[www.bethchaim.org/form/ads-shoutouts.html](http://www.bethchaim.org/form/ads-shoutouts.html)

Share your good wishes with Cantor Goldstein as we install them as our new Cantor and officially welcome them to the Beth Chaim community!



## Shabbatot at Beth Chaim

### March 1: Rock Shabbat

5:30pm – Bagels & Blocks

6:30pm – Join your Beth Chaim family for Rock Shabbat Dinner (\$10 per person, registration encouraged)

7:30pm – Rock Shabbat Service including celebration of March birthdays and anniversaries followed by an ice cream oneg

### March 8: Shabbat Service and Formal Installation of Cantor Jordan Goldstein

7:30pm – Shabbat Service

### March 15: Learners Shabbat Service

5:30pm – Tot Shabbat

Our youngest congregants and those who love them are invited to join us for a Shabbat service and meal geared towards preschool-age children

7:30pm – Learners Shabbat Service

Join the clergy and congregation to welcome Shabbat with music, prayer, and learning as we discuss the diversity of Jewish practice.

### March 22

7:30pm – Shabbat Service with the Choir

### March 29: Shabbat Service Celebrating our Beth Chaim Volunteers

7:30pm – Shabbat Service celebrating our Beth Chaim volunteers.

All are invited to this special Shabbat service where we honor and thank all who gift the precious gift of their time as volunteers at Congregation Beth Chaim.

### April 5

5:30pm – Tot Shabbat

Our youngest congregants and those who love them are invited to join us for a Shabbat service and meal geared towards preschool-age children

7:30pm – Shabbat Service

### April 12: Rock Shabbat

5:30pm – Bagels & Blocks

6:30pm – Join your Beth Chaim family for Rock Shabbat Dinner (\$10 per person, registration encouraged)

7:30pm – Rock Shabbat Service including celebration of April birthdays and anniversaries followed by an ice cream oneg

### April 19: Shabbat Shiraz

6:30pm – Join your Beth Chaim family at 6:30pm for our wine and cheese Preneg

7:30pm – Shabbat Service Honoring Multifaith Families

*Please note that there is **no oneg** following services. All are encouraged to join us at 6:30 for the Preneg.*

### April 26

7:30pm – Shabbat Service

## SHABBAT MORNING TORAH STUDY and BAGELS

Every Saturday morning at 8:45am. No previous experience needed; knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. Please check the temple website to see if Torah Study is In-Person in the Chapel and on Zoom OR Zoom only.



Friday, March 15, 2024

Friday, April 5, 2024

Bring your littlest ones and join us at 5:30pm for an interactive service to welcome Shabbat followed by pizza and time to talk (for adults!) and play (for the littles!).

Questions – reach out to Anne Berman-Waldorf  
([educator@bethchaim.org](mailto:educator@bethchaim.org))

# B'Mitzvah at Beth Chaim

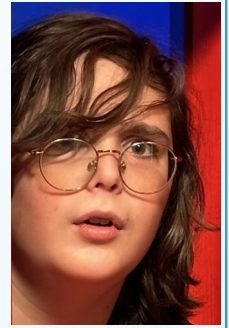
## Jakob Goldschmidt

**March 2, 2024**

Parents: Norman & Cecelia Goldschmidt

Siblings: Hannah & Micah

Being Jewish is important to me because all of my ancestors were Jewish and it is important for me to carry on the tradition with this awesome community and all of the lessons we learn.



## Arielle Esser

**March 9, 2024**

Parents: Danielle & Kenny Esser

Sister: Layla

Beth Chaim is special because it is such a warm congregation. I have had wonderful teachers and have made great friends.

## Michael Friedeman

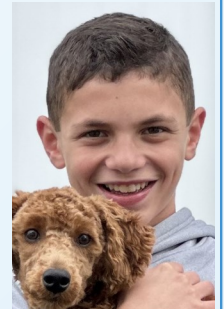
**March 16, 2024**

Parents: Shari & Rob Friedeman

Sibling: Eric

Grandparents: Joann & Les Friedeman

Being Jewish is important to me because I like to celebrate holidays and traditions with my family. I want to continue to do this after my Bar Mitzvah and pass down my Jewish beliefs in the future.



## Ryan Cohen

**April 6, 2024**

Parents: Andrew & Ellen Cohen

Siblings: Brother Sam and Sister Hailey

Being Jewish is important to me because I celebrate with all my Jewish family and my Jewish friends. Another reason why is that my ancestors were all Jewish so it is like I am carrying on the legacy.

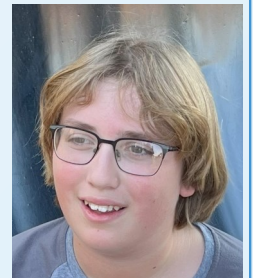
## Elio Massa

**April 13, 2024**

Parents: Jane Elefant & Salvatore Massa

Brother: Silvano

Being Jewish is important to me because it not only gives me something to believe in, but also puts me in a community that values me and gives me the opportunity to make like-minded friends.



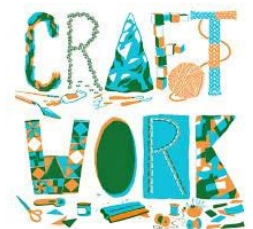
### Religious School Closed

Sunday, March 24  
Wednesday, March 27  
Sunday, March 31  
Wednesday, April 24  
Sunday, April 28

### Craftwork Chavurah – An Afternoon of Crafting and Conversation

Sunday, March 3, 1:00 – 3:00pm  
Sunday, April 7, 1:00 – 3:00pm

Bring your projects and join others for an afternoon of crafting with your Beth Chaim friends. Coffee and tea provided, participants are welcome to bring a dessert to share.



# Adult Learning Opportunities

## Wednesday Lunch and Learn

**11:00am – 12:30pm**

Bring your lunch, we provide coffee & conversation!

### March 6, 20 and 27: Beyond the Four Questions

Dig into the text and themes of the Passover seder and uncover unfamiliar stories and facts. We'll explore excerpts from different Haggadot and what the seder has meant to Jews throughout the millennia. (*In-Person and on Zoom*)

### March 13: Book Group: Shanda by Letty Cottin Pogrebin

The word “shanda” is defined as shame or disgrace in Yiddish. This book, Shanda, tells the story of three generations of complicated, intense 20th-century Jews for whom the desire to fit in and the fear of public humiliation either drove their aspirations or crushed their spirit.

In her deeply engaging, astonishingly candid memoir, author and activist Letty Cottin Pogrebin exposes the fiercely-guarded lies and intricate cover-ups woven by dozens of members of her extended family. Beginning with her own long-suppressed secret, the story spirals through the hidden lives of her parents and relatives—revealing the truth about their origins, personal traumas, marital misery, abandoned children, religious transgressions, sexual identity, radical politics, and supposedly embarrassing illnesses. While unmasking their charades and disguises, Pogrebin also showcases her family's remarkable talent for reinvention in a narrative that is, by turns, touching, searing, and surprisingly universal. (*In-Person and on Zoom*)

### April 3 and 10: Cooking for Passover

Join Anne Berman-Waldorf for a hands-on session in the kitchen as we talk about Passover traditions and prepare foods for this holiday. (*In-Person only*)

### April 17: The Music of Passover

Join Cantor Goldstein for a Passover sing-a-long, old songs and new, as they lead a musical exploration of this holiday. (*In-Person only*)

## Sunday School Isn't Only for Kids!

### From the Eyes of the Storm: A Message of Peace

[Sunday, March 3, 9:30am breakfast, program begins at 10:30am, In-Person](#)

See next page for more information and registration link.

### Cantor Installation Concert: Rabbi Noah Diamondstein

[Sunday, March 10, 9:30am celebratory brunch, 10:30am concert, In-Person](#)

Our musician-in-residence, Rabbi Noah Diamondstein, gives a concert performance in honor of the formal installation of Cantor Jordan Goldstein as Cantor at Congregation Beth Chaim.

### Pathways Through the Prayerbook

[9:30am-10:30am, In-Person and on Zoom](#)

[Sunday, March 17, April 14, April 21](#)

Join us for a conversation on the Shabbat prayers – what our ancestors were thinking about when they included these in the service and how we can use them to find meaning in our lives today.

### A Seder to Lift Up the Voices of Women

[Sunday, April 14, In-Person](#)

This Passover we celebrate women's voices through prayer, stories and food, empowering women by sharing our experiences.

### When Will Redemption Come? Passover and Talmud

[Sunday, April 21, 11:00am, In-Person and on Zoom](#)

The Exodus narrative is not a simple story of good versus evil. It is a critique of the politics of power, empires, historical societies and the division of populations into free humans and slaves. We read in our Haggadah that “until all are free, none are free.” Join us for a look at liberation and redemption in texts ancient and modern.



### Amplifying the Voices of the Women of Passover

[An interactive program including singing, stories and eating](#)

**Sunday, April 14, 10:30am**

All are invited to share in this pre-Passover experience focusing on the fewer-told stories of the women of the Exodus. Sing, dance and add your voice to this ancient tale. There will be Passover foods to taste and Passover recipes to share.



## Men's Club

### Calling all High School Seniors

The Congregation Beth Chaim Men's Club is ready for entrants to the annual Senior Student Challenge. The contest is open to all high school seniors, regardless of gender, whose parents are members of Congregation Beth Chaim in good standing. The first prize is \$1,080! Go to the [Men's Club website](#) for more information and to download the flyer and entry form. The application deadline is March 15, 2024! You have to be in it to win it. Make sure you apply.

## Sisterhood

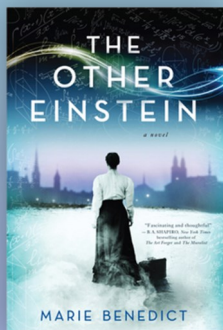
### Applications are now Being Accepted for the 2024 Sisterhood Stoller Scholarship

**WHO:** All Beth Chaim congregants who will be starting their first year of post-high school education, including vocational school, in the 2024-2025 school year. Those applying for the Men's Club Senior Student Challenge may not also apply for the Sisterhood Scholarship.

**WHAT:** Sisterhood invites you to write a 1-to-2-page (typed, double spaced) essay describing your community service activities. Please include your contributions to Beth Chaim, the Jewish community, and the greater community. You must discuss why you made those choices, what you gained from those experiences, and how your participation helped to make a difference. Please also include the role Beth Chaim has played in your life.

**WHEN:** Applications should be submitted by April 3, 2024.  
*Applications are available at the Beth Chaim office.*

Sisterhood Dinner and book discussion

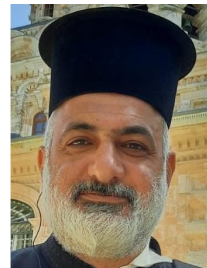


The story of Einstein's wife, a brilliant physicist in her own right, whose contribution to the special theory of relativity is hotly debated and may have been inspired by her own profound and very personal insight. It offers us a window into a brilliant, fascinating woman whose light was lost in Einstein's enormous shadow.

Book discussion, 3/13, 6-8 pm  
Dinner- Swiss themed - Vegetable Quiche, Rosti (potato pancakes), Fondue, Swiss Chocolate!  
\$10.00 per person

Register for book club & dinner at:  
<https://www.bethchaim.org/event/book-discussion--dinner.html>

### From the Eyes of the Storm, A Message of Peace Sunday, March 3; 9:30am Breakfast; program begins at 10am



Two distinguished Religious community leaders from the Galilee in Israel, Rabbi Or Zohar and Fr. Saba Haj, will join us to share words of peace shared by each tradition and their thoughts on "what next" for the Middle East. Rabbi Or Zohar serves as the Reform Rabbi of the Misgav region and also directs the Spirit of the Galilee Association. Fr. Saba Haj is the leader of a 5,000 member Christian-Arab-Orthodox Church in the town of Iblin. Through their partnership and collaboration, these two exemplify that "Peace in the Middle East" is not merely an unattainable dream, but a living reality embraced by numerous Arabs and Jews who reject the grip of hatred and violence, even amidst the tragic circumstances of today.

Register at:  
<https://www.bethchaim.org/event/from-the-eyes-of-the-storm.html>



### Sunday, May 5, 9:00am Breakfast Come Celebrate Beth Chaim

...with music, words and art! All congregants are invited to join us and recognize all that happened in this past year. The program will include music, dedication of an art installation, election of officers and approval of the annual budget.

## An Interview with Cantor Goldstein

**MS: Thank you, Cantor Goldstein, for this opportunity to chat with you and to share your thoughts with our Congregation.**

**Our Cantor Search Committee included in its application to the American Conference of Cantors a letter from Rabbi Blum to her prospective clergy partner. In that letter, Rabbi wrote that she was looking for more in a Cantor than just a “Jewish jukebox.” How would you describe some of the many roles you play here at Beth Chaim?**

CJG: The role of a cantor goes beyond being the musical presence in a congregation because music in Judaism isn’t just to be listened to or performed — it’s an experience we’re supposed to share in together during worship.

I wear many hats here, one of those being an educator for all segments of our community. For example, I tutor the students in our B’Mitzvah program and guide them through the process and journey. I also act as an educator for our community as a whole, through our adult (and other) education programs and through services themselves, where I try to teach and give context to why we’re doing the melodies we’re doing, and why we’re singing the texts that we sing.

I also wear the clergy hat when I provide pastoral care. I support our community through all different types of life cycle events and occurrences, whether visiting congregants who are hurt or sick, supporting our community when we’re dealing with loss, officiating at *simchas* (or joyous events) like baby namings, or having conversations with folks who are getting married.

I’ve also taken on an administrative role. Because I have some background in this, I’ve been working closely with our new Marketing and Communications Committee to help develop and professionalize a lot of what we do. Sheryl Brown, in our office, works on this and has been doing incredible work on learning a whole bunch of new programs so we can up our game and hopefully make our online interactive pieces a lot more accessible for everyone.

**MS: You engage with and teach Pre-School children, Religious School children, B’Mitzvah students, older teens, and adults. What are you looking to bring to those groups and what do you learn from or cherish about engaging or teaching them?**

CJG: Oh, I love this question. One of the big principles in Jewish learning is not necessarily getting to one singular correct answer but to encourage more questions. For me, the point where I’ve hit my goal (especially when we’re talking about our teens and adult learning programs where we can think a little more in depth) is having, at the end of the class, multiple participants who have more questions, who want to think deeper and further into the topic at hand, and who are just a little more hungry to dive further into the pieces we’re talking about — that to me is the mark of success.

Some of our pre-school students and younger religious school students are capable of engaging in similar ways. When pre-school students don’t want to leave after pre-school Shabbat or music is over, or when religious school students ask after a music session, “What’s that song? I want to listen to it at home!” — that is success. The ultimate goal is that we as a community want to continue learning and talking (and singing) long after we leave these learning settings.

What I really get excited about is having students who challenge me. Our teens have been asking some incredible, thoughtful, deep questions about what it means to be thinking about the Israel-Gaza conflict at this time and what it means to be right or morally correct in a situation where there’s frankly a lot of grey on both sides. We’ve also talked about what it means to be a prophet and to stand up for those who do not have as much of a voice; what justice versus mercy means; and the ways we see justice in our world today versus what it could (or should) mean. That stops me in my tracks. They’ve been so deeply thoughtful and make me rethink how I speak about these things as well. I get something out of learning from them even though I’m the one teaching! Similar things happen all the time in our adult education classes as well.

**MS: You and Rabbi Blum work very closely to put together Shabbat and Holiday services, and I’m really always impressed with the outcome. What process do you follow and what principles guide you in constructing services and choosing which prayers (or which version of a prayer) we’ll be using?**

CJG: My approach to creating a service starts with how I want our community to feel at the end of the service. And from there, having that overarching idea, we can use the elements of the service and liturgy as building blocks to create that emotion. For example, in the months since October 7<sup>th</sup>, our community has had a weight on our hearts as we see and feel the pain, loss, and suffering happening in Israel. One of the goals Rabbi Blum, Rabbi Kaufman, and I have in these services is to make sure we can find the sense of hope we need to move forward from that and to create change in our world rather than just sitting in despair. And so that affects how we frame the service, how we talk about this situation, and what we sing, particularly around peace. We’ve been talking about that conflict to introduce *Shalom Rav* and using the melody that is so dear to all of us in an uplifting way to create that hope and that feeling that we can still create “*Shalom Rav*” — this abundant peace — in our world.

When it comes to choosing melodies, I try to create a balance between things that are new, and therefore maybe a little challenging, and things that feel very comfortable and familiar. We want a mix of readings from the prayer book and sometimes *yyunim*, or meditative explanations of what’s going on, that one of our rabbis might write. We want a mix of higher-energy melodies, so we can feel a sense of majesty and energy in our worship, but also moments of calm and gentleness, because everyone comes to the prayer experience with a different set of emotions, feelings and thoughts. And while I can’t make everyone perfectly happy all the time, I want to make sure every person in the room has at least one moment when they feel they can truly pray in the way that best fits them; this means it’s going to be a little eclectic, and it’s going to be a little all



over the place! That's how we can reach as many people as possible.

**MS: At Shabbat evening services, you always seem to enjoy yourself on the bimah, and you do a great job of engaging the congregation. What's your secret?**

CJG: I don't know how to answer that! That's just who I am. Genuinely, I just love what I do. Shabbat is the part of the week that fills me up most spiritually. I not only love singing and making music, of course, but the piece I love so much and has led me to become a cantor rather than a performer, is singing *with* people.

There's something I just can't explain — sometimes we can call it holy and divine. I don't know exactly how to label it and I don't necessarily want to. It's something really incredibly powerful when you have a room of people singing and engaging together. That fills me up. Sometimes folks talk about the role of cantor as a kind of a conduit that connects us to something larger than ourselves, however you may define that. But to be in that role, to watch it happen and feel and experience it, is really cool. And, it certainly doesn't hurt that I very much love and appreciate Rabbi Blum and Rabbi Kaufman, so having partners who are just as engaged and just as excited as I am amplifies that feeling even more. I've worked for over a decade now to learn how to lead services, so I no longer have to be as much in the details of what chord I'm playing or what note I'm singing, and I can be in that larger moment and feel the feedback between us on the *bimah* and the congregation and make that grow. To me, there's no other feeling like it.

**MS: Not really a question, but one of my favorite times at services is when you and Rabbi Blum are harmonizing and singing together. It's really fantastic.**

We love it too. It's a lot of fun! Not every community has both a rabbi and cantor capable of that skill, and our clergy team is sufficiently without ego to share in that way. I feel so lucky that not only does Rabbi Blum give me the space to do my thing as the cantor, but that she also wants to engage with it. I'm more than happy to give her that room. She also gives me the space to be able to speak in services and share *iyyunim* (teachings) and *divrei torah* occasionally. It's one of those places where, because we have that trust and have built that relationship, we're able to blend into each other's roles and not adhere to such a strict rule of "this is a Rabbi thing or this is a Cantor thing," when on the bimah. It's a strong partnership, and that's something I know both of us were hoping to find, and both of us feel really good about now that we're doing it.

**MS: During your five years of Cantorial School, you worked in a professional capacity at three different synagogues in the U.S. and a fourth in Israel. You were also very involved in the Jewish world long before Cantorial School. Looking ahead, are there things you've learned or seen in those experiences that you'd like to try here?**

CJG: Absolutely. I have a lot of ideas brewing, but I'm not pushing them all out to our community at once. I've learned in my work that it's usually more effective to try these things out together and grow slowly. Beyond my partnership with Rabbi Blum and Rabbi Kaufman, I hope to partner with the larger Beth Chaim community, because you all are part of this too. I've been slowly sprinkling in some ideas by introducing new melodies to the Rock Shabbat band and Choir and getting their feedback.

Beyond the musical side of things, one of our larger initiatives is some restructuring of the B'Mitzvah program. Most of my working experience before I came here was with youth in many different capacities. I learned, through my work in those three synagogues in the U.S. and at URJ summer camps, how to help create a program that best supports Jewish learning and the sustained Jewish identity of our youth. The focus of the changes will be to make the service more meaningful to our B'Mitzvah students and to better incorporate our students into Saturday morning services.

Rabbi Blum and I both want to increase some of our prayer book literacy in our community. During the pandemic, Beth Chaim began to rely heavily on PowerPoint slides, but there's something we lose when we rely on the slides without having the breadth of the prayer book in front of us. Our current prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*, is great for being able to explore what's going on in the prayers during the service, with footnotes about where some of our prayers come from, English readings, interpretations that include more poetic translations to give context to what we're doing and why we're doing it. And the more we're in the prayer book practicing our Hebrew skills reading as adults, the more we can encourage our children and grandchildren to engage with what's in there.

Over time, I would also like to be able to bring more of the ancient art of *nusach*, the cantorial tradition of chanting, into our service in just little bits here and there to better reflect the breadth of our Jewish musical heritage and engage with more of it. We already hear small bits of *nusach* on Friday nights when I chant the *chatimah*, or the very last sentence that sums up the prayer, for *Maariv Aravim* or *Ahavat Olam*.

**MS: You're now more than halfway through your first year here. Is there anything about Congregation Beth Chaim or the Beth Chaim community that has surprised you?**

CJG: Every community has its own ways of doing things, or *minhag*. Since I arrived here last July, I've been learning the Beth Chaim way. There's a rich tradition and sense of history in this community to work and play with, and a lot of those things just come up as we work our way through the Jewish calendar. For example, not every community does *Shalom Rav* every single Friday night — it might be something that gets rotated out with *Oseh Shalom* or anything else in that peace section in our prayer book. But *Shalom Rav* was a really important prayer to this community long before so much conflict and war erupted in October. That's a really special little piece of Beth Chaim that I've gotten to learn about and love as well.

I've also been overwhelmed by a lot of love and support from this community, too. I'm very aware that as a non-binary person entering our community, I'm not only the first trans person on our staff, I'm also the first queer staff person we've ever had here. Honestly, I was a little tentative and concerned about how I might be received when I first got here. Yet so many families have shown me so much love and support, not only in spite of who I am but because of who I am, and that is

incredibly heartwarming. It's given me the room to feel I can be myself in my work. I've had a lot of our LGBTQ+ youth embrace me in that way too, and as I'm getting to know them so quickly, I can be a safe space for them and represent a wider group of people on our *bimah*. We've had a lot more families with queer experience join our synagogue since this summer. It really is heartwarming for me to be able to be that person and bring those families into our space just by being myself, just by existing, and without trying to bring along any agendas.

**MS: And now the most important question: which place in the area is your personal favorite for ice cream — and why?**

CJG: I will say I've become a major Bent Spoon fan. I don't know if it's mostly because of how close it is to me and that it's so easy to get to. And though I've also tried out Halo Pub and a lot of other places in the area, I really do like a funky flavor to try and something new to try every time I'm in the area — similar to my Jewish music taste. So, I'm always ready to experiment, and the Bent Spoon does a really good job of giving a lot of choices. That doesn't mean it's the only one I'll go to, but it's in the lead for now. I'm still willing to be swayed if any congregants want to take me to other ice cream shops though.

**MS: Finally, I want to congratulate you on your upcoming [March 8-10] Installation as Beth Chaim's full-time Cantor. It's going to be a great weekend for young and old. Ellen and I have already purchased tickets for the Casino Night. Since you grew up in Las Vegas, do you have any gaming tips to share with us?**

CJG: Unfortunately, the house does always win! However, in this case, that just means all your money is going to the great cause of supporting our community and our synagogue. So even when you lose, you're going to win at Casino Night. Be careful in blackjack because you always think you can go further than you can when it comes to the counting. I mostly stick with poker. I'm not that good at the luck or odds games of chance. We'll see if you can beat me at Texas Hold'em — how about that?

**MS: Thank you so much for your time, Cantor, and your willingness to share these candid thoughts with our Beth Chaim community. I'm looking forward to your Installation Weekend, to hearing some great music and seeing you operate at the poker tables!**

## Summer Camp 2024

### Come Sail Away, Come Sail Away...



**"Seas the Day" on Beth Chaim's Sailboat**

Ahoy Mates! Welcome aboard "Seas the Day" as we set sail on our summer adventure. Who knows where we will end up, we might even encounter some pirates! Be shore to join us and don't be shellfish. Invite your friends! Make friends not anemones.  
Stories, Music, Arts and Crafts, Science, Water Play and More!

**10 Weeks of Fun, Learning & Adventure on the High Seas**

**June 10 – August 16, 2024**

For more information and to register please contact Robin at [earlychildhood@bethchaim.org](mailto:earlychildhood@bethchaim.org)

Congregation Beth Chaim



**...with me**



**Beth Chaim was delighted to host Israeli artist Igal Fedida on February 1**





## Wherever You Go...

Cheryl Wexler

On a road trip to bring some Beth Chaim community to the Sunshine State, Rabbi Blum spent 4 days (January 9 to January 12) visiting with, talking to, and breaking bread with congregants on both Florida coasts.

Arriving at the Ft. Lauderdale airport and driving North to Boynton Beach, Rabbi Blum visited with congregants, and former congregants who now call Florida home for all or part of the year.

Rabbi Blum put out the call for the former and current members of the Beth Chaim family on the East Coast of Florida to come to dinner on Tuesday evening, January 9, in a lovely Italian restaurant in Del Ray. Sharing delicious food, great company, welcome camaraderie and lively conversation with Rabbi Blum were Beth Chaim folks from Boca Raton, Delray, Boynton Beach, Deerfield Beach, and Singer Island. It was a great dinner with some folks getting reacquainted with people they knew, some people meeting folks for the first time, and some meeting, in person, folks whose names they knew, but had never met. Several NJ towns were represented – Plainsboro, East Windsor, and West Windsor, among others. It was a lovely evening of enjoying the feeling of community that the Beth Chaim family embodies so well.

Rabbi Blum also met with Beth Chaim community members in Palm City, Port St. Lucie, Palm Beach Gardens, Wellington, Lakewood Ranch and Nokomis while in Florida.

We're looking forward to enjoying more of these Florida get togethers, with even more of the Beth Chaim family, in the future.



*(Left) Rabbi Blum visits with Allan & Barbara Marcus.*

*(Center) The East Coast dinner included Leona & George Gati, Barbara Blayne & Howard Spitzer, Marcy Samet, Sara & Devin Friedlander, Ricki & Dick Bobeck, Cheryl Wexler & Art Rosenberg, and Bonni & Bob Kempler.*

*(Right top) Rabbi Blum visits with Ilene & Mark Janofsky.*

*(Right bottom) Rabbi Blum visits with Judy & Cheryl Wexler.*



*(Left) Our congregants Barbara and Charles Lavine participated in Friday night services at sea on their way to the Panama Canal.*

## ...There's Always Someone Jewish



# Condolences

The Board of Trustees of Congregation Beth Chaim extends their sincerest condolences to the families of the following individuals upon their passing:

*Alan Carlton, husband of Diane Carlton*

*Gloria Vena, mother-in-law of Amy Vena (David Vena)*

*Maurice Silberman, father of Pamela Mills (Mark Mills) and Mark Silberman (Marlana Bancone)*

*Hal Panzer, husband of Eileen Panzer, father of Rob Panzer (Wendye Panzer)*

*Irwin Wishnow, father of Kim Wishnow-Per (Steven Per)*

*Paul Eland, father of Richard Eland (Holly Singer-Eland)*

# Good & Welfare

## College Outreach

*In honor of Susan Bershad, a wonderful friend and mensch!*

Stuart & Wendy Breiterman

## General Donation

*In honor of those celebrating a January birthday*

Jill Kross

*In gratitude for Rabbi Blum's visit*

Hal Panzer

*In appreciation of Rabbi Blum*

Leona & George Gati

## Gilbert Fund

*In memory of Arthur Lederman*

Barbara, Doug, and Jen Gilbert

## Religious School Fund

*In memory of Lester Rosenberg*

Cheryl Wexler & Arthur Rosenberg

## Senior Rabbi Discretionary Fund

*Thank you for including us in the Florida Beth Chaim group*

Sara Friedlander

*In memory of Arnie Levine*

Donna & Philip Sher

*In memory of Maurice Silberman and appreciation of Rabbi Blum officiating at the memorial service*

Pamela Mills

*Thank you for a wonderful time during your visit to Florida!*

Robert & Bonni Kempler

*In loving memory of Evan Rafkin*

Shelli, Mark, Stacy, Lisa, Emma & Alexandra Rafkin

*In memory of my mom, Elaine H. Siegel*

Gerald & Nancy Siegel

*In gratitude for officiating the baby naming of our granddaughter Mia*

Don Leibowitz & Karen Brodsky

*In memory of Robert Silver*

Joni & Ken Freedman

*In loving memory of our fathers Marvin Rosengarten & Morton Gekoski*

Maida & Arthur Rosengarten

## Sisterhood Stoller Scholarship Fund

*In memory of Lauren Suslak*

Donna & Philip Sher

## Yahrzeit Fund

*In memory of Bert Friedeman*

Les & Joan Friedeman

*In memory of Irving Kantrowitz, father of Paula Bacall*

Robert & Paula Bacall

*In memory of Julius Weisenberg*

Cecelia Weisenberg

*In memory of Jacqueline Zlotkin*

Diane Carlton

*In memory of Marvin Mandell*

Marcey & Jeffrey Mandell

*In memory of Samuel Robbins*

Myrna & Richard Robbins

# Ring in a new era at Beth Chaim as we formally welcome Cantor Jordan Goldstein!

CANTOR  
INSTALLATION  
WEEKEND

## EVENT SCHEDULE



FRIDAY, MARCH 8, 2024, 7:30 PM

### INSTALLATION SHABBAT SERVICE

Featuring special guests including **Leo Henkin**, **Cantor Josh Breitzer**, and Artist-in-Residence, **Rabbi Noah Diamondstein** & a brand-new piece of music written by Rabbi Diamondstein for this event! **PLUS:** A special musical jam session for tweens & teens to follow

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2024, 7PM-11PM

### CASINO NIGHT!

Test your luck and celebrate all night with a party inspired by Cantor's hometown, Las Vegas!



**TICKETS STILL  
AVAILABLE!**

SUNDAY, MARCH 10, 2024

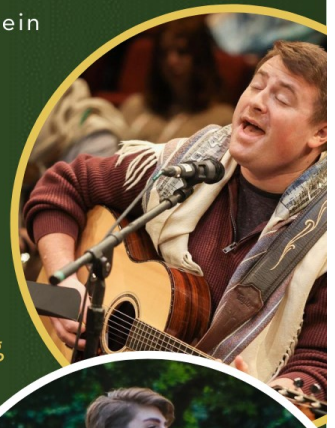
Coffee & Doors open at 9:30,

### RABBI NOAH DIAMONDSTEIN IN CONCERT WITH CANTOR JORDAN GOLDSTEIN

AT 10:00-11:30 – Everyone is invited! **FREE FOR ALL AGES**

Come sing with these musicians as they share their own original music as well as beloved classics!

*For advertising &  
sponsorships contact:  
cantorInstallation@bethchaim.org*



#### Links to Cantor Goldstein's playlists:

Purim: <http://tinyurl.com/3ut8cf8r>

Passover: <http://tinyurl.com/32s6cmh9>

Saturday morning: <http://tinyurl.com/bdz3uvca>