



# First Friday Family Shabbat

**JANUARY 5, 2024**

**SERVICES @ 6:00 PM**

**DINNER @ 7:00 PM**

**chicken in a pot, salad bar and desserts**

**CHICKEN TENDERS FOR KIDS  
VEGGIE & GLUTEN-FREE OPTION**

**Adult Members: \$10**

**Age 13-22: \$7**

**Under 12: No Charge**

**Adult Non-Members: \$13**

**Age 13-22 Non-Members: \$9**

**Under 12: No Charge**

**PLEASE RSVP**

**PLEASE RSVP TO THE OFFICE AT 423-267-9771 OR  
EMAIL: OFFICE@MIZPAHCONGREGATION.ORG**



# New Member ICE CREAM SOCIAL

**3:00 PM - 4:30 PM**

**SUNDAY JANUARY 28TH**

**Come meet / Come greet!**

**FREE  
Ice Cream**

**For All Members!**

**423-267-9771**

**923 MCCALLIE AVE, CHATTANOOGA, TN 37403**

**"The journey of friendship between  
Jews and Catholics  
in Chattanooga"**

## LET'S TALK!



**Speaker:  
Brendan Murphy**

**Date: January 24, 2024**

**Time: 6PM - 8PM**

**Location: Mizpah Congregation**

**ENTER ON OAK STREET  
923 MCCALLIE AVENUE  
CHATTANOOGA TN**

**Sponsored by Mizpah and Holy Spirit Catholic Church**

**"In the words of our presenter, Brendan Murphy:"** I am a history teacher at Marist School in Atlanta who is about to start his 30th year at the school! Crazy. The class I'm hoping to bring to Chattanooga is one I developed as part of my position on the Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Dialogue for the Archdiocese of Atlanta and has been endorsed by Archbishop Hartmayer. The class covers the history and Christian anti-Judaism, the watershed proclamation of Nostra Aetate, and current and future Jewish-Christian relations.

## INTRODUCTION TO KABBALA

## SEEDS OF JEWISH MYSTICISM

**What it is, and what it  
isn't.**



Perhaps the most popular and the most misunderstood stream of Jewish study, Kabbala is a search for the hidden secrets of the Universe through profound Torah study. **Rabbi Lewis** will present background on the Zohar as well as some of its most famous teachings. We will also examine some of the various threads of Kabbala study and belief.

**January 10, 17, 31 6:00-7:00 pm**

**Feinstein Social Hall**

**RSVP to Office @mizpahcongregation.org**

**Class will be in-person ONLY**

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR PRESIDENT...

I was thinking this morning of all the pain in our world today. I read a Facebook post, about a woman mentioning her Jewish heart and how painful it is to see so many people not understanding how a strike against one Jew is representative of a strike against all Jews. She talked about her Jewish heart as I have done numerous times. I thought about how our synagogue is giving so many people an opportunity to express their Jewish hearts.

**Austin Center** and **Holly Schwartz** have been working together on a future vision for tomorrow, as well as dealing with practical needs that we need today.



**Vicki Lewis**

**Jed Mescon** continues to amaze me, bringing in various but different topics for us to discuss with all kinds of programs, such as the upcoming Brendan Murphy program.

**Stephanie DeOlloqui** and **Brenda Hodges-Binder** have a vision to expose us to the many nonprofits that operate in our city and how there are different ways we can support them, whether it's donating food to "The Beth", which particularly serves underprivileged children in the Alton Park southside St. Elmo area. These two women are a wonderful addition to everything **Deb Dubow** has already started, which I am sure we will continue.

**Rabbi Lewis** is taking eight children with two chaperones to Washington, DC where they will learn leadership.

**Bev Coulter**, VP-Annual Giving, has doggedly kept our finances up-to-date and in the black, and we are so fortunate,

Board members **Bob Marlowe** and **Vicki Steinberg** are helping coordinate our application for a grant for sacred places, to attain monies to repair the rotting windows in the Sanctuary.

**Andy Hodes** and **Richard Waxler** are dealing with purchasing the items we can need to protect ourselves with our security grant.

And last, but not least, **David Israel**, who has been my right hand man from the beginning. We are so lucky to have such an organized and productive individual working tirelessly for our organization.

So, Jewish life continues at Mizpah. And those people who understand are members of our Mizpah Congregation - with their Jewish Hearts.

L'dor va dor,

From Generation to generation

**Vicki**

## MAZAL TOV TO...

...**Warren Dropkin** and his Team Latke for Mizpah Hanukkah night celebration. Also thanks to **Paula Israel** for cooking the delicious brisket.



From left: David Israel, David Solovey, Andy Hodes, Warren Dropkin, John Steinberg, Art Lewis, Tom Bledsoe, Not pictured: Richard Zachary



...**Eliot Berz**, son of **Robert Berz**, who was promoted to Executive Director of the Tennessee River Gorge Trust.



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR RABBI...

We all know the Jewish new year was in early Autumn. The secular new year, aka January 1st, falls much closer to another Jewish New Year, Tu B'Shevat, the New Year for the trees. While at this time of year, we in Chattanooga see most of our trees barren, their leaves long since shed, and hopefully picked up by city workers, we no less look to our trees for inspiration as a source for celebration. We remember the trees in full bloom knowing they will soon bud again, gradually filling our fields of vision with green, the color of life. This on-going cycle, whether in anticipation of harvest, as it was for our ancestors in Israel, or for us in anticipation of a verdant Spring, is a reminder to embrace the moment, while also thinking about the future.



Rabbi Craig Lewis

At Mizpah, we are entering 2024, building on successes of the past and even adding some new programs that already promise to bear fruit, brightening our Winter and carrying us toward Summer. On the horizon, I will be teaching a 3-part introduction to "Kabbala, the Seeds of Jewish Mysticism." Based on recent interest in our "Pirke Avot's Greatest Hits" Lunch and Learn and the excitement around piloting the new Torah Commentary being developed by the CCAR, we see renewed interest in adult learning opportunities. Many more will follow. We will also, mostly for fun, have improvisation classes for our Mizpah community called "Whose Temple Is It Anyway?" It is something we have never tried before, and, in addition to developing our quick thinking and group building skills (yes, I am participating), we will inject humor and Yiddishkeit into this discipline we are honing together.

Also, after six years, I am also hearing rumblings that some members want to make my wish come true of creating a band to play contemporary Jewish music during services. It may not happen right away, and it won't be every week, but there is much to look forward to with this project. In the field of Social Action, we are providing new opportunities to become more aware of the many agencies we can partner with, like The Bethlehem Center that we recently toured, learning about their work fighting poverty and connecting families with needed resources. On the horizon are more projects like helping inmates who have served their time to re-enter society - and more.

Richard III may have thought Winter was "of discontent." However, at Mizpah, we see Winter as a time to "develop content." January and Tu B'Shevat will launch us toward Passover and Shavuot, when we eat green vegetables and celebrate first fruits, respectively. The world is not evergreen, but is ever in the process of getting to green.

Now, I would be remiss if I did not address some of the real darkness that we, the Jewish people are experiencing this Winter. Between Simchat Torah and now, Israel has been healing from a vicious terrorist attack, and has been engaged in a costly war. We continue to pray for Israel, the safe return of the remaining hostages, and a cessation of hostilities that includes assurances of Israel's ongoing existence and security. Too many innocent lives have been lost while antisemitism and anti-Zionism are on the rise. Beyond our words and donations and all those ways we can show our support directly to our brothers and sisters in Israel, our best answer to this conflict and its fallout is to continue to be openly and proudly Jewish, praying, celebrating, learning, experiencing, and joyfully embracing our heritage that has survived many dark seasons, emerging with new life and promise for the future. Ecclesiastes teaches, "God makes everything beautiful in its time." The world always is always on the verge of more beauty. May it come soon and may it endure.

**Rabbi Craig Lewis**

## IMPROV WORKSHOPS @ MIZPAH

- **No experience required!**
- **No limit to the fun!**
- **No cost!**
- **No more saying "No!"**
- **Learn the art of "Yes and..."**

Improv is more than comedy. It builds confidence and assertiveness. It helps you think on your feet. It helps improve non-verbal communication. And it helps to work in teams. As a bonus, it frequently is funny.

Our instructor Bethany Morgan is a graduate of Second City, Improv Olympic, and the Annoyance Theatre training centers. She has learned from the major players in Chicago's improv scene. She "pushes herself and students to play authentically, intelligently, and fueled with emotional commitment."

**WHO? MIZPAH MEMBERS AGE 11 TO 111**  
**WHEN? 2ND AND 4TH SATURDAYS FROM**  
**JANUARY THROUGH APRIL**  
**TIME? 1-3 PM**  
**WHERE? MIZPAH**

**SPACE IS LIMITED! SIGN UP TODAY!**

## MIZPAH CONGREGATION YAHRZEITS - December 31– February 3

### Dec. 31– Jan. 6

Jacob Bach  
Fannie Bach  
Benjamin Bissinger  
Marx Block  
Rabbi E. K. Fischer  
Caroline Fischer  
Frances Goldman  
Levine  
Louis Merenbloom  
Elizabeth Raisin  
Simon Steinau  
Fannie Bar Steinau  
William Tepper  
Malvin Brock  
Mae Greenberg Kaset  
Edward Lodge  
Fred Morris  
Anna Abish  
Craig Eugene Vance  
Sol Edelstein  
Ben Lerner  
Rose Moses

### January 7-13

Gloria Epstein  
Fershko  
David B. Karr  
Joy Effron Adams  
Ruth Chazen  
Louis Lebovitz  
Richard E. Lencer  
Harry Wise, Sr.  
Gussie T. Joseph  
Lena Brody Bloch  
Fischer  
Marjorie Oxman  
Tepper  
Stephen Joseph  
Koplan  
Jefrey Lawrence Thal  
James Baumgardner  
August Gould  
Milton Longway  
Bettie Mihalovits  
David Minnen  
Louis Isaac Brody  
Alvin Hodes

### January 14-21

Frank Goldman  
Esther Diamond Cohn  
Miriam Spitalny  
Rosa P. Richelson  
Shelton Goldblatt  
David H. Mindes  
David Myron Stock  
Paul E. Kalman  
Paul Goldblatt  
Rose Hite

### January 21-27

Mickey Leventhal  
DeAnna L. Elis  
Odineal  
Walter Dinberg  
Samuel Edelstein  
Samuel John Young  
Louis Richelson  
Rhonda Seeber  
Abraham Effron  
Bethany Schklar  
Mollie Feintuch  
Jacob Sherman  
Carroll Messing  
Rosenhein

### January 28-Feb. 3

Arline Dubow  
Elsie L. Goldberg  
Hilda Herzfeld  
Joseph Mallen  
Jack Spitalny  
Emily Hershfield  
Garry  
Sophie Siegel  
Sarah Louise Trivers  
Joyce Abish  
Benjamin Harris Cove  
Sam P. Diamond  
Frances Levin  
Greenburg  
Florence Adler Jacob  
Tom Bledsoe, Sr.  
Judith Ann Marks

### 72 Miles to Kentucky—A Podcast

**Nathan Vaughan**, son of **Margaret Friedman-Vaughan** (z"l) has created this podcast. The current edition traces their journey to rural Kentucky, a journey familiar to many of us "southern Jews" who came from far and wide. Even if you did not personally know Margaret or Willard, this podcast is educational and uplifting. Give it a try. <https://www.nathanjvaughan.com/72-miles-to-kentucky/chapter-3-the-untold-jewish-history-of-bowling-green-ky>



### UPCOMING EVENTS

Torah Study: Every Shabbat 9:00 am Feinstein Hall

Shirei Shalom: Every 3rd Erev Shabbat 6:00 pm

Mussar: Ethics, with Rabbi Lewis: Wednesdays 7:30 am (zoom only)

Improv! RSVP to Office; 2nd and 4th Saturdays, January thru April 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Mizpah Feinstein Hall

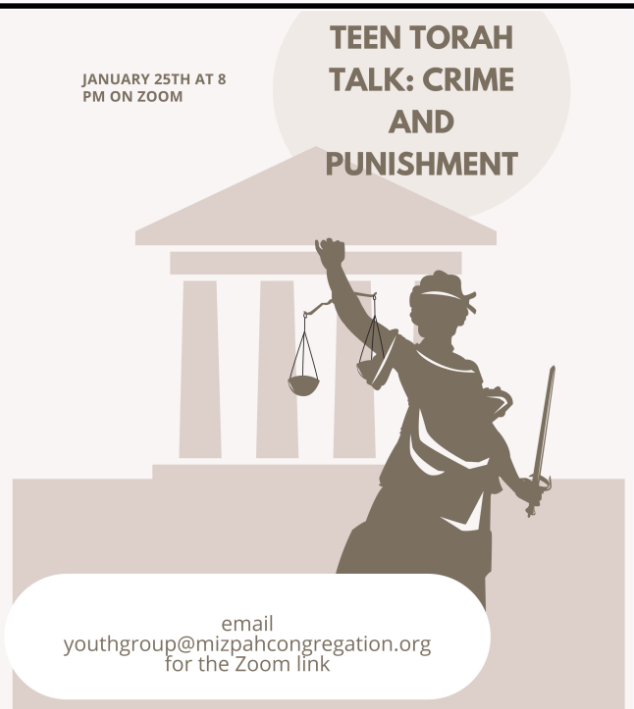
Community Coffee House: JCC - Saturday January 13, 2024 - 7:00 pm at the JCC. Live entertainment - adult beverages - all local talent. JCC art exhibit opens

Jewish Federation Annual Meeting: Sunday, January 28th: 12:30 pm . Brunch served. JCC on North Terrace

Federation Documentary Series 2024: In-person showing Sundays January 7, 14, 21, 28 at 3:00 pm (new time!)

JANUARY 25TH AT 8 PM ON ZOOM

### TEEN TORAH TALK: CRIME AND PUNISHMENT



## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR EDUCATION AND YOUTH COORDINATOR...



Susan Caminez

Dear Mizpah Families,

It's the start of another New Year! As you know I LOVE fresh beginnings wherever I can get Them. I've been thinking about my word for the New Year—what will be the common thread I will try to carry throughout the year. Do you do that? I'd love to hear your words. I haven't landed on one, but this past year I learned a great lesson that I wanted to share. The funny thing about lessons is I keep having to learn them. Does that happen to you too? Whooo, it is hard. This is a lesson I have to keep learning.

Back in October, in my non-Mizpah job, I was sort of "volun-told" I would be attending a conference. Truth be told, I did not want to go at all. I tried to think of every excuse to find a way to not make it work—I'm tired, I work too much, I have kids I need to drive all over town, I don't know where to go, I have to talk to people, I don't know what this is for, why does it matter, no one will miss me if I don't go. The list was long, but it was a done deal. I had to go. So off I went to the conference I had already decided I hated. I imagine you know the outcome. It was awesome and I'm really glad I went. I met really cool people that shared my vision and resulted in more collaboration and successful partnerships. I even gained clarity on decisions I was making by being surrounded by other creative thinkers. Ugh—Lessons 4,567: Susan 0

Yup. The lesson always wins. We know it, but we don't want to do it. **We've gotta show up.** It's not easy. It's hard to be present. Especially in a world designed to keep us doom-scrolling.

So how can you show up this New Year? How can you connect and be present? Being present and showing up can mean different things or the same thing—funny how it does that. Maybe we can stop learning this lesson over and over again together.

Let's go to the conference willingly and know it will be great. Let's unplug and connect with our families. Let's show up at Mizpah for events (see how I did that? Yeah, I said it). Why? Because we know this a lesson we have to keep learning. When we're together and we show up, something great comes of it. We're teaching our children an important part of who they are and that they are not alone. They are a part of a greater community. And, just for the record, we do miss you if you don't go! Happy, healthy New Year from my family to yours! Here's to showing up in the New Year! - **Susan**

## Upcoming JANUARY Mizpah Family Events



**Family Shabbat &  
First Friday Dinner**

**Fri, Jan 5 at 6 PM**



**Bluebirds & Birthdays—Sat, Jan 20 at 4 PM**

Celebrate The Birthday of the Trees with the Chattanooga Bluebird Society! Cupcakes, crafts and fun! All ages! RSVP on the Mizpah website for a surprise treat!

## SAVE THE DATE

**Techilah:** Judaism for our littlest learners will be back **Saturday, February 17** as we learn about Mitzvot through music, crafts and interactive play. Be sure to mark your calendar! Great for families with children not yet ready for Machanooga.

**MIZPAH FUNDS: YOUR DONATIONS ARE GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

**Donations received by the 15th of prior month \$18 - "chai" - minimum donation**

Archives  
Building  
Capital Campaign  
Cemetery  
Educator  
Endowment  
Flower  
Garden of Life  
Goldman/Moses  
Mary W. and Jacob L. Levine

Leadership Development  
Library  
Miller/Lefkoff  
Marks Memorial  
Mazon (Feed the Hungry)  
Miller/Schwartz  
Music  
NFTY (Youth Group)  
Operating  
Oneg  
Prayer Book

Physical Property  
Religious Activities  
Rabbi's Discretionary Fund  
Rabbinic Endowment  
Rita Russ Speer  
Religious School  
Social Action  
Staff Support  
Kindertransport Chapel

**Rabbi's Discretionary**  
***In Memory of Joan Cohen***

Teddi Shalett Mendel

**Operating**  
***In Memory of Lawrence Levine***

Anita Levine

***In Memory of Joan Cohen***

Pris and Robert Siskin

Art and Vicki Lewis

***In Memory of Rosalyn Vogel***

Wayne Vogel

***In Memory of Nathan Miller***

Art and Vicki Lewis

***In Memory of George Dagley***

Art and Vicki Lewis

***In Memory of Fred Glusman***

Florence Abelson

Mizpah Grants - Submitted by **David Israel**, VP of Administration

Mizpah Congregation has received two (2) grants this year. One from the Federal Government (thanks to our Mizpah Security Committee), and one from the State of Tennessee (thanks to the Federation).

\$150,000 Federal Grant from Homeland Security to help facilitate security changes to Mizpah's building. Thank you **Richard Waxler, Frank Miller, Vicki Lewis, Gary Chazen and Andy Hodes** for all your hard work. The following work has been approved by the Federal Government:

- (1) Exterior Doors: Install Three forced entry-resistant exterior doors with hardware. Will provide a physical barrier to deny/delay an attacker.
- (2) Interior Doors Install 3 formed entry-resistant interior doors with hardware. Will create safe rooms to help prevent unauthorized persons from harming occupants.
- (3) 8 Concrete barriers, 32 metal Bollards.
- (4) Exterior Lighting, Install 6 high-grade security lights on building and parking lot to improve protection and CCTV operation.
- (5) Radio communications will acquire 5 NFPA compliant radio units to react to physical security.
- (6) Fencing, Approx 150 feet 6 feet high installed. Address hostile or unauthorized access.
- (7) Planning: develop plans to further increase preparedness for likely terrorist attempts.
- (8) Administration, keeping program and financial reports.

\$16,764 TN Department of Safety & Homeland Security - Houses of Worship Security Grant to help with security personnel for Mizpah Congregation, B'nai Zion Congregation and Machanooga. Thank you **Michael Dzik** for helping to obtain this grant. The grant was for our building security. We were able to split this to pay for off duty police officers for all three organizations.

If you would like to become involved, serving on the Security Committee, please call **Andy Hodes** at 423-595-7355.



## SOCIAL ACTION

For January, we are going to partner with **Chattanooga Endeavors**, which helps individuals with community reentry after incarceration. One of their campaigns is to ask people to write letters/send cards to those in the system of care. More on this later.

*Here is a synopsis of this organization:*

Established in 1988 as Dismas House of Chattanooga and the first reentry program in East Tennessee, Chattanooga Endeavors has consistently provided innovative solutions to the unique challenges faced by people while they are incarcerated and as they strive to rebuild their lives when they come home. The organization's initial contact with those it serves is when they enter prison. For many, that is the beginning of a regular exchange of letters that helps to maintain the social ties to their hometown. If you have time to write a letter and would like to make a difference, please contact Chattanooga Endeavors at 423 266-1888 or at [info@chattanoogaendeavors.org](mailto:info@chattanoogaendeavors.org).



Recently, Executive Director **Reginald Smith II** (below right with **Vicki Lewis**) treated Mizpah members to a tour and detailed explanation of **The Bethlehem Center (The Beth)**, a long-standing nonprofit which our Mizpah Social Action Committee is supporting. Attendees were **Judy Sachsman, Brenda Hodges Binder, David Binder, Richard Zachary, Vivian Hershey, Paula Israel, Flossie Weill, Vicki Lewis, Lynn Howard, Alan Richelson, Bev Coulter, MJ Levine and Stefanie deOlloqui**. See photos below.



Here are some quotes from their website <https://www.thebeth.org/>

*"We build lasting relationships with Chattanooga's youth and families by encouraging spiritual growth, education, and leadership development."*

From their Mission Statement: *The Bethlehem Center is a beacon of hope through its ability to serve as a community-based education and resource access organization serving the Chattanooga community. We focus on resource access and addressing the needs of those with barriers to self-sufficiency. We also seek to proactively address the vicious cycles of poverty through our Youth and Family Development programs. By partnering with schools and local agencies, we have successfully provided education and wrap-around services to the Chattanooga community for over 100 years.*

See you next month!

**Stefanie DeOlloqui**  
**Brenda Hodges-Binder**





923 McCallie Ave., Chatt. TN 37403

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No. 281

Mizpah is a Reform Jewish Congregation. We offer worship, learning and social action / social justice programs designed to enhance our lives and improve our world. Mizpah is a welcoming congregation as we embrace interfaith couples, those of all faith-traditions and culturally-diverse backgrounds as well as families in all forms.



Find us on:  
**facebook®**

[www.MizpahCongregation.org](http://www.MizpahCongregation.org)  
[Office@mizpahcongregation.org](mailto:Office@mizpahcongregation.org)  
[www.urj.org](http://www.urj.org)

Email: [Office@mizpahcongregation.org](mailto:Office@mizpahcongregation.org)  
[www.mizpahcongregation.org](http://www.mizpahcongregation.org)  
Monday-Friday: 9:00 am - 4:00 pm  
423-267-9771

Craig Lewis, Rabbi  
[Rabbi@mizpahcongregation.org](mailto:Rabbi@mizpahcongregation.org)  
Vicki Lewis, President  
[President@mizpahcongregation.org](mailto:President@mizpahcongregation.org)  
Angela Rickert, Administrator  
Susan Caminez, Education Coordinator  
Richard Zachary, Newsletter

#### TEMPLE OFFICERS AND BOARD

**July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024**

Craig Lewis, Rabbi  
Susan Caminez, Education Coordinator  
Angela Rickert, Temple Administrator

#### OFFICERS:

President:	Vicki Lewis
VP-Administration	David Israel
VP-Programming:	Jed Mescon
VP-Annual Giving	Bev Coulter
Treasurer:	Mike Birghenthal
Board Secretary:	Beth Thomas
Immed. Past President:	Frank Miller

#### BOARD MEMBERS

Austin Center Gary Chazen Amy Cohen  
Bob Marlowe Caroline Kaplan  
Rachael Ruiz Holly Schwartz Edie Weiss

#### CEMETERY CONTROL BOARD

Dana Banks, Board Representative  
Gary Chazen Donna White-Dropkin David Israel  
Ruth Longway Andy Stone

#### TRUSTEES

Bob Berz, Board Representative  
Gary Chazen Sandy Dittus  
Jim Levine Flossie Weill

## MIZPAH BOOK CLUB

The Mizpah Book Club will next meet on Sunday, January 14 at 10:30 for potluck brunch at the home of **Dana and Sam Banks**. We are reading the award-winning *Koshersoul: The Faith and Food Journey of an African American Jew*, by Michael Twitty. Feel free to email Amy at [amycohen@gmail.com](mailto:amycohen@gmail.com) if you would like to join this literary group.

*In Koshersoul, Michael W. Twitty considers the marriage of two of the most distinctive culinary cultures in the world today: the foods and traditions of the African Atlantic and the global Jewish diaspora. To Twitty, the creation of African-Jewish cooking is a conversation of migrations and a dialogue of diasporas offering a rich background for inventive recipes and the people who create them.*

