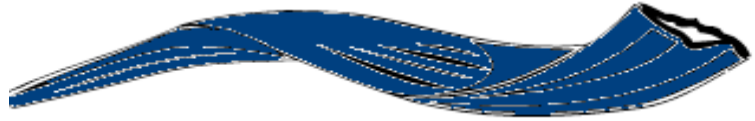


SHOFAR



Monthly Newsletter of the Monterey Peninsula Jewish Community

www.carmelbethisrael.org



Chanukah Celebration

Join us **Friday, December 3 at 6:00 PM** as we gather together for our family friendly CBI Chanukah celebration. We will begin in front of our beautiful wooden front doors under the overhang where we will light our Chanukah Menorahs. Each family is encouraged to bring their own Chanukiah (extra points if it is homemade!). Right after the candle lighting we will join with our Cantorial Soloist Suzanne Guinane as she leads us in some Chanukah songs. We will take a moment to enjoy all the Chanukah lights that burn brightly in front of our congregation. Then the rabbi will share a short Chanukah story while we are still outside before he leads us into the social hall for our annual dreidel spinning contests (with gelt prizes). After a couple more Chanukah songs with Suzanne we will move into the sanctuary for an abbreviated Chanukah/Shabbat service, probably starting at about 6:30. Reminder that all children not vaccinated are required to wear their masks during this gathering. Masks are still strongly recommended for those who are already vaccinated. Please call the CBI office at 624-2015 if you plan to join us for our Chanukah celebration. We hope you will enjoy your Chanukah meals in your homes either before you join us or following the short service.

CJFF Hanukkah Film Festival Starts Nov. 28

What a great way to spend Hanukkah nights! CJFF is offering 11 films over 8 nights for \$36 per household using the promo code CJFF21. Several of the films are family-friendly. Once you begin your first film, you will have 14 days to watch them all. There are descriptions and trailers of all the films on www.hanukkahfilmfestival.com. There are also details in this issue of The Shofar. Happy viewing!



Hebrew Liturgy Class

Since the middle of November a group of adults have been studying Prayer Book Hebrew with Rabbi Greenbaum. This group meets every Wednesday from 4:00-5:00. If you are interested in joining this class, call our Adult Education Board of Trustees member Bobbie Ehrenpreis at 915-8010. Knowledge of the Hebrew alphabet is a prerequisite for the course



From the Rabbi's Desk...

How is it possible that time is both moving so quickly and so slowly? How can it already be the end of 2021? At the same time, has it been only a few months since we

all got our vaccinations and for many of us, our booster shots? It seems like just recently the congregation helped me celebrate my 25 years serving as your rabbi. But at the end of June, I will have been part of the CBI family 28 years. Where have the years gone? What have I accomplished? How has CBI evolved?

Every Shabbat I like to take some time to evaluate the past week and consider our congregation programs, my relationships with CBI members, and recent events in my life. But rarely do I stop and contemplate the changes over the years in my life and the life of our synagogue.

One obvious change is how our CBI population has evolved over the years. When I first arrived to the Monterey Peninsula our CBI membership was just under 200 household units. Over the years our numbers increased until we had a membership of just over 300 households. For the last 5 years we have fluctuated between 220-240 households. Overall, our average member's age has increased with fewer younger families joining the congregation. This year we have had an increase in younger families and after a few years of stagnation, our religious school appears to be growing again.

After a year of not being able to hold many programs because of Covid-19, we are again doing more events in person in our building. Clearly many have missed our joining together as the response to this type of programming has been overwhelmingly positive. Last month we held an evening event concerning White Supremacy groups. With limited seating, we had to cut off reservations and turn away last-minute requests to those wishing to attend. Our new Adult Hebrew Liturgy class had 16 members join us for our first session. The demand for in-person events is clear.

CBI's senior programs remain popular, but it is getting harder for some of our older members to join us. The monthly lunch with the rabbi program has its core group who attend regularly and a few that join us every now and then. At times I wonder if I need "sexier" topics or if it is time to simply accept this program has run its course. Some are still hesitant to gather because of potential health issues. Attendance at Shabbat services has suffered since the start of Covid-19. My hope is with the increase of those who are vaccinated and by inviting some guest speakers and encouraging participation at the first of the month Family Shabbat, our attendance will increase again.

One thing we all have learned is nothing stays the same, all things change. Have we mellowed? Are we more accepting or more judgmental than we used to be? Do we fret over the 'small stuff?' Have we learned to follow more of God's attributes like being slow to anger and quick to forgive?

I like to use the new secular year as a marker in my life. It is an ideal time to reevaluate the choices we make. It is also the end of our fiscal year when it comes to paying taxes. That is why so many organizations send out those reminders about end of the year donations. I love their suggestions of "take advantage while there is still time to make your gift." All those mailings remind me to think about who I want to support and how I want to support them. As we end 2021 and start 2022 I hope you will join me in supporting our synagogue. I pray through your participation and your financial donations together we will continue to build and strengthen our Jewish home, Congregation Beth Israel. Amen.





From our President *Dan Nussbaum, President Board of Trustees*

It has been a difficult time, with COVID, with backing-and-filling of the rules surrounding COVID, and with a recent spike in deaths in our community. It is enough to suggest we throw up our hands, saying *"Enough! What's the Use?"* We don't do that; we continue to be -- and to function as -- the Jewish Community on the Monterey Peninsula. How do we do this? Well, In the tractate of Talmud called Pirkei Avot [(Chapters of the Fathers (or Ancestors))], we have the following from Rabbi Tarfon: *"It is not your duty to finish the work, but neither are you at liberty to neglect it"*. So, according to R. Tarfon, we should not back away from a task just because we cannot see its endpoint, or we fear that we may not be able to complete the task successfully.

In that light, this month's column is about the great pride I have in CBI, exemplified by the people who belong as congregants, or who work for CBI. They are involved; they take up tasks, sometimes hard tasks that don't seem to have an end or a resolution, but tasks that keep us going as a Jewish Community and a synagogue.

Here are some examples of recent activities that inspire me; they are just examples, both of people and what they have done recently. I know that there are more, indeed many more equally (or more) deserving shout-outs, so if I have not listed you, please forgive me in advance.

Bobbie Ehrenpreis, our adult Education Chair, has curated an in-person class, at CBI, in Biblical Hebrew, and she is talking with others about a class in "trope," that is, the cantillation marks in the Torah that guide the way the text is chanted. These are wonderful initiatives. Thank you, Bobbie.

Arlene Krebs, who put together a very fine evening event on a current topical issue, with a boxed

dinner, and attended by 50 people. The success of this event informs me that we should start to think of other in-person, events, with food. Thank you, Arlene.

Rory Lakind, Julie Chase, Marshal Blatt, Vic Feuerstein, and Abby King, who have continued to work assiduously to find ways to bolster the personal security that CBI provides during religious services, during Religious School, and for special events, such as the food festival. My appreciation goes out to all of them.

Todd Hornik, who quietly and persistently maintains, fixes, repairs, and keeps up pieces and parts of the synagogue's infrastructure, including, recently, installing a new door. Thank you, Todd.

Jim Gumberg and Bob Fenton, who have never hesitated to lend their time and their formidable legal knowledge and skills to CBI.

Members of the Religious School's Kindergarten and First grade classes, who provided food for a recent I-HELP. This is surely Tzedakah and Tikun Olam in action. You can see more of what's going on in our Religious School by reading Suzanne Guinane's column in this Shofar.

May all our efforts to improve security and return to normal interpersonal activities bring us peace.

Dan

Dan Nussbaum

(C) (831) 324-3228





From Our Cantorial Soloist and Director of Education Suzanne Guinane

G'milut Chasadim – acts of loving kindness. This is the Jewish Value our students, families and community are focusing on December –

February. We do acts of loving kindness without expecting anything in return. *Pirkei Avot* teaches that our lives are to be centered on the study of *Torah*, the worship of G-d and acts of loving kindness.



The sages of the Talmud teach that *g'milut chasadim* is more important than *tzedakah*, charity. While charity often is understood as acts of goodwill and are signs of generosity, Jewish tradition understands *tzedakah* as a moral obligation to do what is right and just. Talmudic sages outline three distinct reasons for *g'milut chasadim* being the higher of the two values: (1) *Tzedakah* can only be carried out by giving money, whereas *g'milut chasadim* involves giving of one's person, for example by a kindly word or a pat on the shoulder, or by generally offering words of comfort and consolation. (2) *Tzedakah* is directed to the poor, whereas *g'milut chasadim* involves the expression of goodwill to all, rich or poor, healthy or sick, to the successful as well as to those who fall short of success. (3) *Tzedakah* is given to the living. *G'milut chasadim* can be extended to the dead by attending to the burial and going to the funeral. The sages, then, teach that our acts of *g'milut chasadim* are what helps us be righteous (*tzadik*, which derives from the same root as *tzedakah*). In other words, the giving of *tzedakah* may be a *mitzvah* within itself, but true righteousness does not come from *tzedakah*, but what we do to touch people's lives.

During this *Shmita* year, what acts of loving kindness are you doing for yourself, the earth, others?



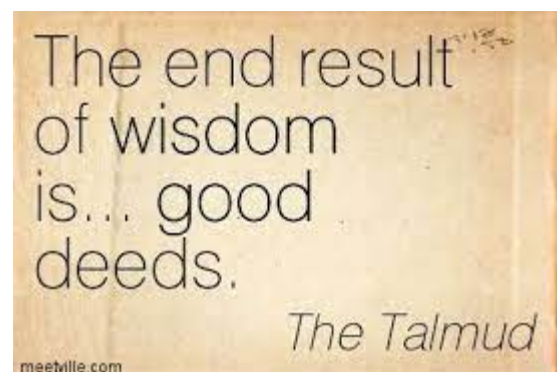
Students in Grade 4 wrote cards for people in our area nursing homes.

Our Kindergarten/Grade 1 families provided Breakfast and Lunch for I-HELP in November.

Our Grade 2/3 Families will be providing Dinner and Breakfast for I-HELP in December.

I've seen many of our students share their snack with students that don't have one on Sunday.

I believe we do acts of *g'milut chasadim* every day without even realizing it. Our students will now add this Jewish Value to their *Torah* scrolls on Sunday. I'd like to suggest that you discuss each week what act(s) of loving kindness you did each day when you sit down to eat a meal, are driving in the car, hiking outside and/or walking our beautiful beaches. Our world so needs your acts of loving kindness, especially now, as our pandemic continues along with our pandemic fatigue. We can make a difference each day in helping to repair ourselves and our world with an act of loving kindness.



BEST YEARS

Best Years Chanukah Party

A special invitation to all those who want to help us celebrate a Chanukah that arrives early in December this year! **Join us Wednesday, December 1 at 2:30 PM** for a fun Chanukah Gathering! We will enjoy delicious beverages including some wine. We will dine on both hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. With some nice background music it will be a wonderful way to spend the afternoon together. To RSVP for this party, call the CBI office at 624-2015 by November 30. Remember, **this event is free**. Please let us know if you need a ride to this event.



Lunch with the Rabbi

If you are vaccinated, please join Rabbi Greenbaum this month on **Wednesday, December 8 at noon** at an outdoor table on the patio of Baja Cantina, located about a mile

east of CBI. If it rains we will use an indoor table. This month he will lead the discussion on "Jewish thoughts about God." Can one question God's existence and still be Jewish? Why believe? Where do our prayers go? Any proof of a God in our world today? Come prepared to question and offer your thoughts. Call the CBI office at 624-2015 to RSVP. We will order off their regular menu so expect lunch to cost approximately \$15-\$20.



CBI Book Club

IMPORTANT: You must be fully vaccinated against Covid-19 in order to attend Book Club.

Here are our next two dates and book selections. We plan to continue to try and meet in person, but we will be watchful regarding the ever-changing status of the pandemic.

December 14, 1:30 PM, home of Suellen Rubin. Book—**THE HOUSE ON ENDLESS WATERS** by Emuna Elon

January 11, 1:30 PM, home of Suellen Rubin. Book—**MOTHER DAUGHTER WIDOW WIFE** by Robin Wasserman

Our warmest thank-you to Suellen for her continuing hospitality in hosting Book Club.

In November we welcomed the return of Sharon Goldenson. She graciously shared additional book suggestions:

How Sweet It Is by Thane Rosenbaum. 208 pgs. Paperback

A powerful time capsule: open its covers and you enter a bittersweet moment in American Jewish history 1972....It's all here gangsters, survivors, flower children, school integration, Yiddish literature, the Munich Olympics, and the strange and beautiful possibilities of catastrophe and renewal in the elephant graveyard of 20th century American Jews, Miami Beach.

Monkey Boy by Francisco Goldman. 336 pages

Goldman author of *The Long Night of White Chickens* presents an intimate, funny and passionate voice of a boy growing up "halfie" in a predominately white, working class Boston suburb.

Family & Friends by Anita Brookner. 192 pages Paperback

Wealthy Jewish family in London between WWI & WWII. A social novel of lost innocence and complex nature of family bonds

Burger's Daughter by Nadine Gordimer. 368 pages Paperback

Nobel Prize author's tale of Rosa a white woman with ambitious parents trying to make a difference in apartheid South Africa

The Lost Shtetl by Max Gross. 416 pgs. HC

Winner of Nat'l Jewish book Award. About a small village in Polish forest that is so secluded that no one knows it exists, untouched by the holocaust or the cold war, until 21st century

Defectors by Joseph Kanon. 304 pgs. HC.

Two brothers caught between the KGB and the CIA is a gripping story of a family torn apart. A period tale of moral ambiguity and the world of secrets



Ashkenazi Jews have a 1 in 40 chance of carrying a cancer-causing BRCA mutation. This startling statistic is true even if there's no history of cancer in your family. In the past, BRCA testing *was* expensive. Today most genetic counselors know how to arrange a comprehensive genetic test for a maximum of \$250. Today, BRCA testing needs to be discussed, it needs to be offered, and it needs to be facilitated. All Ashkenazi Jews (male and female!) *should* get tested. The National Comprehensive Cancer Network and the federal government agree. Both have recently updated guidelines recommending that BRCA testing be considered for anyone of Ashkenazi Jewish ancestry, regardless of family history of cancer. And today, most insurance companies are more likely to cover testing.

You can:

1. Participate in a study.

On the Monterey Peninsula, we might be able to enroll online for a **free** BRCA testing that is open to both men and women known as the **UCSF PHACT Study**. This free study is available in San Francisco and nine Bay Area counties. The UCSF Center for BRCA Research offers testing to local residents over the age of 21 with at least one Ashkenazi Jewish grandparent and **no significant family history of BRCA-related cancers or a known familial BRCA mutation**. This is an at-home saliva test, that tests a 30-gene panel, including BRCA and other known breast cancer-causing mutations. All study participants can speak to a certified genetic counselor free of charge.

2. Connect with a non-profit.

Yodeah (which means “to know” in Hebrew) is an all-volunteer organization headed by Dr. Elizabeth Etkin-

Kramer, a gynecologist who feels strongly about Ashkenazi Jewish BRCA population testing. “We can educate all we want about the 1 in 40 risk,” she says, “but unless we’re actually doing the testing we’re not doing our job.”

Etkin-Kramer’s philanthropically-funded organization offers Jews nationwide the opportunity to have a 30-gene panel at-home saliva test (which includes BRCA and other cancer-causing mutations) for \$149. To get the test kit, visit Yodeah’s website.

3. Order a “Direct-to-Consumer” test, but think carefully about which one.

Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) tests are now readily available to the health-savvy public. They have the advantage of making BRCA testing private, easy, and relatively affordable. They also “cut out the middleman,” meaning there’s no need to involve your doctor. Some possible resources include:

- 23andMe “Ancestry and Health” service
- Physician-mediated DTC tests, such as Color Genomics and Invitae

4. Find a genetic counselor.

The National Society of Genetic Counselors has a [Find A Genetic Counselor tool](#), which allows you to easily search for a counselor nationwide and by specialty. Sharsheret, a non-profit which supports Jewish women and families living with or at increased genetic risk for breast or ovarian cancer, offers free genetic counseling to Jewish families over the phone and can help guide the decision-making process around testing and test results. They also provide crucial peer support for those who test positive.

Finely, don’t wait until it’s too late.

Ultimately, no matter how you pursue testing, the key is to be proactive. And if you do get a positive result on a BRCA test — whether it’s expected or catches you completely by surprise — it’s important to know that you’re not alone. Nonprofits like FORCE, Sharsheret, and Right Action for Women will support you throughout your journey, and strong communities of “previvors” (people who have tested positive before cancer hits) exist online and in person.

This year, think about taking charge of your health. Our tradition teaches that if you save one life, you save the world. It might be time to consider that the life you save is your own.



A Guide to Jewish Acronyms and Abbreviations

For centuries before text-messaging and emailing birthed ubiquitous linguistic shorthand terms like LOL, TTYL and IMHO, Jews were not just the People of the Book, but the People of the Acronym.

Acronyms — in Hebrew, Aramaic and transliteration — appear frequently in Jewish correspondence, books, spoken conversation and even on gravestones. Famous rabbis are frequently referred to by their acronyms. Even books themselves, like the Hebrew Bible are often identified in this abbreviated manner.

Modern Hebrew has its own ever-growing roster of acronyms, such as its FBI equivalent, *Shabak* (שב"כ), also known as the *Shin Bet*. (Stands for *Sherut Habitakhon Haklali*, or General Security Service.)

Below are some of the most common acronyms and abbreviations

ע"ה א"ה

Stands for: *alav hashalom* (עליו השלום), *aleha hashalom* (עליה השלום) or *aleihem hashalom* (עליהם השלום)

Pronounced: ah-LAHV hah-shah-LOHM, ah-lay-HAH hah-shah-LOHM

What it means: Hebrew for “peace be upon him.” Alternately “upon her” or “upon them.”

When it's used: Following the name of someone who is dead.

בד"ע

Stands for: *Baruch dayan emet* (ברוך דיין אמת)

Pronounced: bah-ROOKH dah-YAHN eh-METT

What it means: Hebrew for “blessed is the true judge.”

When it's used: Commonly said to a mourner upon learning of their loss.

ב"ה

Stands for: *B'ezrat hashem* (בעזרת השם)

Pronounced: b'ez-RAHT hah-SHEM.

What it means: Hebrew for “with God's help.”

Note: This acronym also stands for *Baruch HaShem* (ברוך השם) or Blessed is God.

בס"ד

Stands for: *B'siyata dishmaya* (בסייעתא דשמיא)

Pronounced: bah-SAHHD.

What it means: Aramaic for “with the help of Heaven.”

When it's used: Some traditional Jews put these letters on the upper corner of every piece of written material.

אי"ה

Stands for: *Im yirtzeh hashem* (אם ירצה השם)

Pronounced: eem yeer-TZEH hah-SHEM

What it means: Hebrew for “if it will be God's will” or “if it is God's will.”

נ"י

Stands for: *Nehro* (נרו) or *nehrah* (נרה) *yair* (יאיר)

Pronounced: noon yood (the two Hebrew letters), or neh-ee-ROH yah-EER (for a man), neh-ee-RAH yah-EER (for a woman)

What it means: Hebrew for “his/her candle should burn bright.”

When it's used: When writing a letter to someone who is alive. As in, “Dear David N”Y, How are you?...”

שליט"א

Stands for: *Sh'yichyeh l'orekh yamim tovim amen.* (שיחיה לאורך ימים טובים אמן)

Pronounced: SHLEE-tuh

What it means: May he (or she) live for many good days, Amen.

When it's used: Often said after the name of a prominent living rabbi.

ש"צ

Stands for: *Shaliach tzibur* (שליח ציבור)

Pronounced: SHAHTZ or shah-LEE-ahkh tzee-BOHR

What it means: Hebrew for the person leading a prayer service (literally “public emissary”).

תנ"ך

Stands for: *Torah* (תורה), *Nevi'im* (נביאים),

Ketuvim (כתובים) — known in English as Torah (also Five Books of Moses), Prophets and Writings

Pronounced: tah-NAKH

What it means: The Hebrew Bible, which Christians refer to as the Old Testament.

Learn more here:

<https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/a-guide-to-jewish-acronyms-and-abbreviations/>



1 TICKET - 8 NIGHTS - 11 FILMS

NOVEMBER 28th - DECEMBER 5th

Celebrate the Hanukkah season with eight nights of exclusive, award-winning new film, available to view from the comfort of home via your TV, computer, or mobile devices.



Your ticket provides limited-time access to this series of 11 films, exclusive filmmaker discussions and more, with new content added each night of Hanukkah.

Enter the special promo code provided below at checkout to receive a discount and support your local Jewish community!

~~\$48~~ \$36 25% OFF WITH
PROMO CODE!



WATCH AT HANUKKAHFILMFESTIVAL.COM

ENTER PROMO CODE CJFF21 AT CHECKOUT!



Holiday Thoughts

Thanks to each of you who are generously donating food, household items and clothing for Safe Place, the International Rescue Committee for the Afghanistan refugees, the Food Bank, and I-HELP. You may only have an item or two, however it all adds up.

Safe Place Monterey

Jennifer Stone and Lew Bauman donated a large backpack, stuffed with easy-to-carry foods and some new clothes, which I delivered to Safe Place (590 Pearl Street, Monterey). Before going there, I checked my closets and found two backpacks—one brand new given as a gift, and another favorite that I'm no longer using. Cleaning closets presents opportunities to give to those less fortunate. You may bring your items to the Lobby and we'll deliver these for you. Backpacks, small stuffed toys, foods, new socks and underwear, hats, and blankets are needed.

I-HELP

We are up and running with I-HELP with our committed Social Action team: Susan Schwartz, Nancy & Barry Rund, Lorraine & Hugo Gerstel, and Matthew and Charlene Schuss, plus me! Thanks to Suzanne's oversight, the Religious School parents are now providing dinner and breakfast for the men. Six new men recently joined and we are hosting a total of 13 this December! The Women's program will be re-opening in December, and we will be hosting them on Monday, January 31st.

In November, when we last hosted the men, we asked them what they'd like for holiday gifts. Nancy, Barry, and I are in the process of purchasing new shoes and clothes for them. We're organizing a special Chanukah celebration on Sunday, December 5th, with Hugo playing Chanukah music, prayers led by Rabbi Bruce, and a giving circle to deliver their gifts. Please join us!

I-HELP will soon celebrate its 30th year of assistance, overnight shelter, meals and services for unsheltered men and women. Founded in 1992, the original 7 congregations included CBI! Hats off to Rabbi Bruce's commitments to the community, and to our Congregation for its steadfast support.

White Supremacy Here & Abroad Event

This event was so stimulating and a huge success in terms of the discussion we shared and funds raised (\$1,300) for CBI. We had about 60 in attendance, including 8 of Professor Jason Blazakis's MIIS students, who we hosted.

Jason's talk was an "eye-opener" for sure. He described the various hate groups and extremists in the US and abroad, how these may be connected, how their funding (with crypto currency) supports them internationally, their messages and operations.

Jason stated that two of these hate groups are significantly worrisome now in our country: the Evangelists are partnering with QAnon believers. These represent hundreds of thousands into the millions of supporters.

Rabbi Bruce and Abdul Seck, the President of the Islamic Society of Monterey County, reacted to the presentation with their unique perspectives, offering advice on how we can tackle these groups that advocate their hatred through their carefully crafted propaganda messages. There are many organizations tracking these hate groups and extremists.

Two that Jason recommends are the Southern Poverty Law Center, which produces a state-by-state US map documenting the various groups (Ku Klux Klan, Proud Boys, white nationalists, VDARE and many others). I've been a member of the SPLC for years, and for my donations, I receive newsletters, magazines, maps, and curriculum for Teaching Tolerance for K-12 educators. The Anti-Defamation League/ADL is another organization comprehensively documenting the activities and messages of these hate groups.

Many of the event attendees stated that they could have listened for longer, and want to know more. Jason is amenable, per his travel and teaching schedule, to engage with our community and others in the spring. We'll be looking to organize other events around this salient and disturbing topic.

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Beth Cort for providing the individually packaged appetizers, wines, soft drinks, desserts and table flowers, and to Marlene and Gadi Maier for their sponsorship.

If you'd like to participate in our Social Action activities or have Social Action recommendations, please contact me and we'll plan what works best for you.

Arlene Krebs, Social Action Trustee
<arlenekrebs123@gmail.com>



CBI Interest-Free Loan

Because of the generosity of an anonymous donor, CBI is now offering interest-free loans up to \$500 for CBI members. Please contact our Administrative

Assistant, Abby King, or Rabbi Greenbaum at 831-624-2015 and ask for the simple, one-page loan application. Loans will be made for both personal and professional needs. All requests will be kept confidential. Our congregation is here to support those in need during these challenging financial times



End-of Year Donations: Support the Endowment Fund !

One of the most important efforts currently underway at our Synagogue is to grow our Endowment Fund to \$2 million dollars over the next five years. As with every home and business in our country, the basic costs to run CBI keep going up year after year. But the size of our CBI family remains relatively constant, and the ability of younger families to make the sustaining pledge amount each year is declining. An Endowment Fund of \$2 million dollars would generate enough interest and dividends each year to keep our Synagogue financially viable for the generations to come.

There are 4 ways for you to make end-of-year donations that can help us grow the Endowment Fund and provide you with a tax benefit at the same time.

- One, you can donate stock that has increased in value. Regardless of the cost of the stock at the time you bought it, your donation will be valued at the price of the stock when you make the donation, and that will also be the charitable value you can claim on your 2021 tax return.

- Second, you can establish a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) through your Financial Advisor. Whatever money you donate to the DAF will generate a tax reduction in the year you contribute the funds. However, you get to maintain control over the distribution of the funds to the charities of your choice over a timeframe decided by you. For example, if a hypothetical David and Ruth Greenstein contribute \$50,000 to a DAF, they can make contributions to the charities of their choice over the next several years in the amounts and at the times of their choosing.
- Third, if you are over age 70½, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) directly from your IRA to CBI. The QCD is considered part or all of the Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) that you must start taking from your IRA at this age. However, unlike the RMD, which is considered part of your taxable income for the year, the QCD is not considered part of your income and is not taxed.
- Finally, if you wish to help the Endowment Fund grow, you can make a cash contribution, in your name or the name of a loved one.

Please consider performing a year-end Mitzvah, and contribute something to the Endowment Fund this year.

As with any tax strategy, you should consult your tax professional on whether any of these approaches are right for you.

Do you have a great idea for a fun fundraiser? In your other pursuits have you seen or attended an event that you thought was terrific? We would love to hear your ideas. Please email ShalomCBI@aol.com or call us at 831-624-2015.

TODAH RABBAH!

Thank you to those who have recently given generously to
Congregation Beth Israel

Rabbi's Discretionary

Malina BreauX: in memory of Bari Tolliver
Maureen Chodosh: in memory of Bari Toliver
& in memory of Erwin Lieberman
The Mahjong Group: in memory of Bari
Tolliver
Bee Epstein-Shepherd: in memory of Bari
Tolliver
Victor & Rena Feuerstein: in memory of Bari
Tolliver
Barry R. Harrow
Norman & Diana B. Jacobson: in memory of
Bari Tolliver
Michael & Constance Kean: in memory of
Bari Tolliver
Thomas & Ellen G. Krause: in memory of Bari
Toliver
Diana Rosenthal: in memory of Bari Tolliver
Suellen S. Rubin: in memory of Fannie Safir
Suellen S. Rubin: in memory of Bari Tolliver
David Sabih & Anna Swartley: with thanks to
the CJFF Committee
Rabbi Jeffrey Schulman & Susan Alnes: in
memory of Bari Tolliver
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss:
in memory of Bari Tolliver
Jill & Jim Sleeper: in memory of Jill's mother
Mylle Perkins
Herbert Stern: in memory of Bari Tolliver
Lester Tockerman: in memory of Bari Tolliver

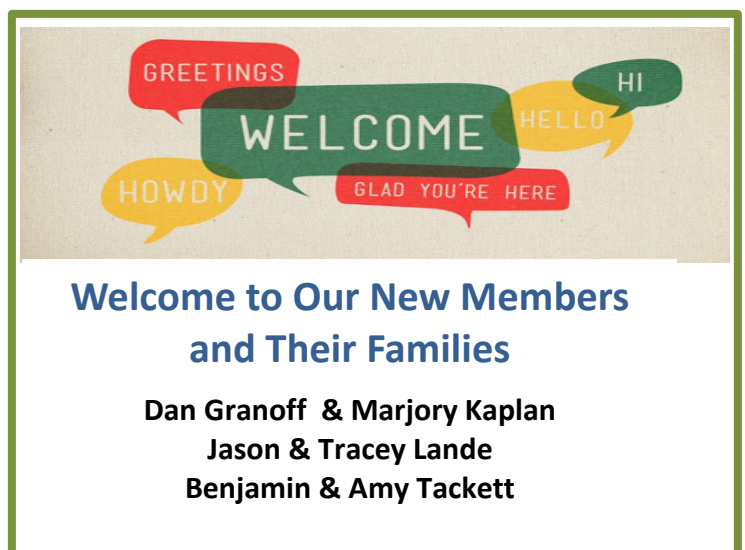
General Donations

Malina BreauX: in memory of Peter Levin
Stuart Dicus: honor of Andrew Dicus' Bar
Mitzvah
Bette Nybakken : in memory of Roberta
Singer
Chris Campbell: in memory of Sandra Kahn
Trish & Jerry McNeil: in memory of Ann Sams
Bee Epstein-Shepherd: in memory of Ann
Sams
Bee Epstein-Shepherd: in memory of Fay
Simon

Robert L. Fenton & Debra A. Givner: in
memory of Ann Sams
Ellyn Gelson: Anniversaries & Birthdays
November
Ellyn Gelson: in memory of Julie Chase's
mother
Melvin F. & Susan N. Gorelick: in memory of
Jeny Ugoretz & Dorothy Gorelick
Diana Greenbaum: in memory of Ann Sams
Thomas & Ellen G. Krause: in memory of
Tom's father Thomas Krause
Kenneth & Shelley Kroopf: in memory of Edith
Kroopf
Rosemary Lande: in memory of all we have
recently lost
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-
Schuss: In loving memory of Sylvia Schuss
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss:
in memory of Elinor Schuss
Susan Simon: In memory of beloved
companion Percy
Susan Simon: in memory of Peter Levin
Lester Tockerman
Michael & Debora Waxer: in memory of
Herbert H and Eleanor Luehrs
Martin & Karen Wiskoff: in memory of Rose
Prupes, Karen's Mother
Martin & Karen Wiskoff: in memory of Ann
Sams
Martin & Karen Wiskoff: in memory Fay
Simon

Social Action

Bill Pardue & Barbara Mitchell: in memory of
Rae and Morris Mitchell



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Peggy Harmatz	1
Kenneth Kroopf	2
David Goldberg	4
Sara Rubin	4
Anita Artstein-Dunsay	5
Gabrielle Kaatz	8
Robert Conner	10
Howard Messinger	10
Lois Epel	15
Larisa Modorsky	16
Daniel Nussbaum	16
Rosemary Lande	17
Wendy Schmidt	17
Rich Ader	20

Marce Humphrey	20
Seth Pollack	20
Samuel Levinger	21
Wendie Ryter	21
Deborah Kosmont	22
Julie Schnitzer	22
Maureen Wittels	22
Sarah Kaatz	24
Asher Heisman	26
Reese Felthoven	28
Susan Galvin	28
Dennis Niekro	29
David Sabih	31

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Gary & Judy Simon	4
Scott & Shel Lyons	7
Edward & Mona Zander	11
Gadi & Marlene Maier	12
Richard & Barbara Kreitman	13
Jim & Natalie Sammet	16
Dennis & Gail Bates	17
David & Lois Epel	18
Michael Leavy & Susan Galvin	19
Elaine Gallup Conner & Robert Conner	22
Melvin F. & Susan N. Gorelick	23
Victor & Sylvia Krimsley	24
Mike & Leslie Vitiello	27
Marshall & Angelica Blatt	28
Ben & Sarah Kaatz	29

Family News

We mourn the loss of long- time CBI member Roberta Singer
We mourn the passing of Ann Sams, mother of Julie Chase.
May their memories be a blessing.



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Congregation Beth Israel

December 2021

Kislev ~ Tevet

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Chanukah 2:30 PM Best Years Chanukah Celebration at CBI	2 Chanukah 	3 Chanukah 6:00 PM Chanukah Celebration & Family Shabbat Services with Birthday Blessings also on 	4 Chanukah 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on 
5 Chanukah 9:00 AM Religious School 1:00 PM Aleynu	6 Chanukah 	7	8 12:00 PM Lunch with the Rabbi at Baja Cantina 	9 6:00 PM CBI Executive Committee Meets	10 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services also on 	11 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on 
12 9:00 AM Religious School	13	14 6:00 PM CBI Executive Committee Meets	15	16	17  7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services also on 	18 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on 
19 9:00 AM Religious School 1:00 PM Aleynu	20	21	22	23	24 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services also on 	25 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on 
26 No Religious School	27	28	29	30	31  7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services with Anniversary Blessings 	1 January 2022 New Year's Day 10:30 Shabbat Torah Study Also on 



Torah Connections:

Vol. 163 December 2021, 5782

By Michael L. Waxer

For most of my life I just assumed it was **up to each of us** to figure things out, as to whether we will choose to believe in HaShem, or not. It seems to be a common question, **‘Do you believe in God?’** In this view, **we** are the seeker, and God is the responder. But there is another way to interpret Torah, and particularly the relationship between each of us and HaShem.

The Torah could be seen as **HaShem being the seeker**, searching us out, where we are the responder. We can read Torah as **HaShem searching for a righteous human being in a sinful world**. After having created the earthling (Adam), and the life giver (Chava), the world experienced ten generations to the point that HaShem ‘yenachem’ (typically translated as ‘regretted’) having created the Adam. Then,

“But Noah (Noah) found favor in the eyes of HaShem.” (Beresheet [Genesis] 6:8)

HaShem was searching for someone, and the next verse tells us *why Noah* found favor:

“...Noah, a righteous man, perfect was he in his generations, with God Noah walked.”

In a world that seemed to get more sinful in each generation, it was *ten generations* before one man was righteous. Some say that this *first set of ten generations* was to let us know, even today, that having the knowledge of God and knowing right from wrong *‘in our hearts’*, was not sufficient to build humanity up. Humanity became filled with ‘amas’ (violence), until Noah.

After the flood there was *another set of ten generations* until Abram. Our Sages teach us that there were a few who were noteworthy, such as Noah’s son Shem and his great-grandson Eber who established a Torah academy. But this second set of ten generations was to let us know, even today, that starting over with the best DNA (remember, it was Noah *and his family* who were saved) still yields the same results... a sinful world. (This was the Nazi concept, that the Aryans would be a better type of human, a superior DNA).

Ultimately God found Abraham, the one person who might be able to receive the divine message. Perhaps Abraham had that perfect combination of faith, compassion, and wisdom. In Beresheet (Genesis) 26:5.

“Because Abramam listened to my voice, and he observed My safeguards, My commandments, My decrees, and My teachings.”

We can learn from this, today, that being open to listening, *‘shma’*, is a keyway to HaShem selecting each, or any, of us. *But there is more....*

HaShem promises us that we already have HaShem’s blessings, *just on the merits of our ancestors*. Furthermore, we learn about HaShem that He is our God,

“And Who acts with kindness for thousands of generations to those who love Me and to those who observe My commandments.” (Shemot [Exodus] 20:6)

Instead of us struggling, at times, in our personal belief in HaShem, perhaps we should open ourselves up to the idea that HaShem may be seeking us

HaShem may be seeking us simply because we are the children of Abraham. Or, He may be seeking us because of the merits of any righteous people who came before us. Or, He may be seeking us due to our own merits, perhaps we have some of the same attributes as our forefathers Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. Do you approach each day with love, compassion, and goodness? Or, He may be seeking us because we are doing, or trying to do, the mitzvot, such as observing the weekly Shabbat, or not eating animals which God told us that we should not eat.

Each day there is a brand new opportunity to open yourself up to hearing the voice. Listen for HaShem speaking to you, personally.

Don’t you hear Him?

This Torah Connection is the sole responsibility of the author and specifically does NOT necessarily reflect those of the Board of Trustees of CBI, CBI, its membership, Reform Judaism, or Judaism. Please send any comments to the author at: mlwaxer@sbcglobal.net

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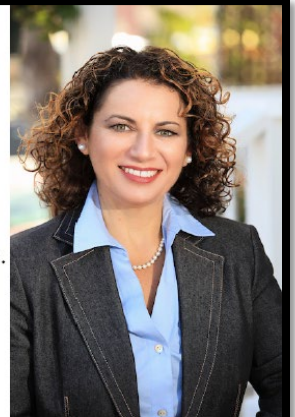


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Chartered in 1954 as the Jewish Community of the Monterey Peninsula, Congregation Beth Israel today serves the spiritual, educational, and social needs of Jews on the Peninsula. We derive programming and administrative strength from our affiliation with the Union for Reform Judaism and offer traditional programming to meet the needs of most Jews on the Monterey Peninsula. The Congregation sponsors weekly worship services on Shabbat evening and Shabbat morning; observances of all holidays and festivals; and formal educational programs from toddler through adult. We operate our own school on weekend mornings and midweek afternoons, and we also maintain a Judaic library.

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Suzanne Guinane - *Cantorial Soloist &
Director of Education*

Julie Chase- *Executive Director*

Abby King- *Administrative Assistant/Facility Use Coordinator*
Ruby Cohan-*Bookkeeper*

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Parshiot

December 4, Miketz

T: Genesis 41:1-44:17

H: I Kings 3:15-4:1

December 11, Vayigash

T: Genesis 44:18-47:27

H: Ezekiel 37:15-28

December 18, Vayechi

T: Genesis 47:28-50:26

H: I Kings 2:1-12

December 25, Shemot

T: Exodus 1:1-6:1

H: Isaiah 27:6-28:13

