Congregation Beth Israel Tishrei-Cheshvan 5782

October, 2021

SHOFAR



Monthly Newsletter of the Monterey Peninsula Jewish Community www.carmelbethisrael.org



Are You
Interested In
Learning to
Read Biblical
Hebrew?

Dear Fellow Congregants:

I hope you enjoyed our high holiday services as much as I did. Thank you so much to Rabbi Bruce and Soloist Suzanne Guinane for your hours of preparation so that these services could be so heartfelt and touching for us.

I am writing to you as the new Trustee for Adult Education. I would like to find out if there is interest in learning Biblical Hebrew!

For the last 4 or 5 years I have taken Hebrew classes on line or studied from books. I wanted to read and understand the prayers and the words of the Torah as they were written. For some reason, it is my experience that being able to read in Hebrew is in itself a religious experience. The Hebrew has been read for thousands of years. The Torah was given to us in Hebrew I am told. In itself, the prayers and attentions from millions of people through the ages would imbue the words with magic. By reading the texts and prayers in Hebrew, I feel I am tying myself to God, to my ancestors, and to other Jews around the world as they are praying with us on holidays and Shabbat.

Just like reading the Torah is easier and more meaningful in groups, I find learning Hebrew is hard to do alone.

I am asking you all to contact me if you are interested in working on your Biblical Hebrew: reading, grammar, vocabulary – using biblical texts and prayers as samples. Being able to read a tiny bit of Hebrew would be helpful but not required – learn as we go. Please call me soon!

SPECIAL NOTE TO PARENTS! If your child is in Hebrew school – while your child is studying, enrich yourself as well and share your studies with your child. Their Bar or Bat Mitzvah will be more meaningful to your whole family.

Thanks all. Looking forward to hearing from you!

Bobbie Ehrenpreis

<u>Bobbie@carmelrealtycompany.com</u>
831-915-8010



JCM United

Four years Rabbi ago Greenbaum helped create Jews, Christians and Muslims United. This interfaith organization developed a weekly soup kitchen that currently serves dinner to over 100 guests every Thursday evening Epiphany Church in Marina.

To celebrate how wonderfully our diverse community has joined together in this worthwhile effort, JCM United is holding a barbecue on **Sunday, October 3**. *Continued on page 6*.



From the Rabbi's Desk...

As I write this the High Holy Days just ended. I hope you found them as meaningful as I did. As we welcomed almost 100 people into our sanctuary and social hall to join

us in person for the different services, my heart soared. While many joined us on Zoom, many also filled our pews as we prayed and sang together. What a joy to look up between prayers and see not just an empty room and a camera, but so many faces! The stress from all the planning and preparing simply dissipated as I listened to voices joining us in songs and readings. As a people person, I've missed being together with our membership.

While still soaking in the joy of being in community, the stresses of our daily challenges manage to creep in and disturb me. Coronavirus, especially the delta variant and now mu as well, threaten too many lives. I fear most for those who have not yet received any vaccinations. Statistics continue to demonstrate that people who are not vaccinated, can become seriously ill, to the point of needing long term hospitalization or even, God-forbid, possibly dying. Even though break through cases occur with those vaccinated, they are far rarer and usually not nearly as severe. Thankfully, very few of our CBI members have suffered with coronavirus although some have lost family members to this horrendous virus.

I wish my only stress centered on the coronavirus. But so many other things around me are stress inducing. For all of us living in California we cannot ignore the ongoing drought and the raging forest fires. In the United States, depending on to what region we turn our focus, we have hurricanes and flooding and tornadoes. Climate change certainly is creating more 'natural disasters' than we have experienced in our past. The economy has left too many people struggling with basic necessities like housing and food. We see more people forced to live in temporary camps along highways and underpasses. I turn on the news and hear about more conflicts arising bringing more suffering to people across the globe.

How does one balance the joy of celebrating a New Year with endless possibilities with the suffering of so many all around us? To answer this challenging question I use our tradition to guide me. I do what I can to help others which continues to lift my spirits as it supports some who are in need. I recognize that I cannot repair the world, but I can do my part towards Tikkun Olam. We are taught that we are not obligated to fix everything. At the same time we should not use this as a reason to ignore what we can do. I cannot help everyone but I can help someone. That alone makes a difference, at least for that person's existence.

I cannot stop the drought but I can personally try to ration how I use water. I cannot end pollution but I can make sure always to pick up after myself and clean up my own yard. I love the fact that one of my friends always takes a bag with him to the beach so he can pick up any trash that he finds on his daily beach strolls. Each of us can make a difference. Let us be partners with God in caring for creation. This task certainly gives us a purpose to our presence today.

May we add meaning to this New Year 5782 in how we care for ourselves, help one another, and work to keep God's creation healthy. I pray we use our Jewish heritage to guide us towards healthy responses to the challenges and stresses we will face in the weeks and months ahead. Amen.





From our President Dan Nussbaum, President Board of Trustees

•Safety and Security Committee — Michael Marshall has stepped down

from the Chair of the SSC to attend to personal and professional matters. My fullest thanks to him for his leadership and commitment to CBI. Under his leadership, CBI made great strides in enhancing our safety and security. Many thanks to Michael! Dr. Marshal Blatt has agreed to step up into this leadership role, and I am thankful to him for doing so. One of his first tasks is to fashion a "door policy," of when the front door is open, and how to decide who can enter.

High Holy Days — We held successful multi-access services with no untoward incidents, neither COVID nor security. Great kudos to all who planned and participated. There are plenty of thank yous and recognition for planning all that had to be done and then actually doing all the work. I want to offer my Bravos and Kudos to all concerned, starting with the clergy team, and including the musical team (Pauline, Noah, Dennis, Laura, Cara, Grace, Diane), those who operated the sound and camera systems (thank you, Bob and Kevin), all the administrative and executive planning and execution (Julie and Abby), and all the readers and chanters too numerous to fit here, but you know who you are, AND you were wonderful). If I left anyone off this list, I apologize; the error is entirely benign, but mine, and you have my thanks too.

Board of Trustees — Claire Blatt will be our youth trustee for this year. Claire is a member of the Madrichim Team, attends Aleynu, and chanted Torah beautifully during High Holy days. I am delighted to welcome her to the Board.

Adult Education — Bobbie Ehrenpreis is our new Adult Education Trustee. I know she is working on several ideas---and you are welcome to give her your ideas too -- but I want to bring one of them to your attention. That is the Biblical Hebrew grammar. You can read more about it in her letter, on page 1, in this

Shofar, and I encourage you to reach out to her if you are interested.

Religious School — This year has started with good overall attendance, as well as with a complement of new participants and new members. Many thanks to Suzanne, our Religious School Director and to her team of parents and teachers. It is all very encouraging, and you can see more in Suzanne's column, in this Shofar.

Post COVID — We thought we were done, and then we weren't. We are attentive to the dynamic, and not always consistent, rules from state, local, federal, and professional sources. We have policies in place, we maintain contact with our local medical experts, we're attentive to what's going on in the outside world and are agile enough to make changes. There will certainly be more on this topic, and it will be a major component of almost everything that we do at CBI.

As we think of the coming shorter days, we are cheered by the thought that Hanukkah is "just around the corner." We know the history: Hanukkah, our Festival of Lights, commemorates the recovery of Jerusalem, the subsequent rededication of the Second Temple and the lighting of the menorah as the result of the Maccabean revolt against King Antiochus' Seleucid Empire in the 2nd century BCE. Do we know where the story is told and how it comes down to us? It is not in our Hebrew Bible (although the Christian world recounts the story in their books of First and Second Maccabees), but rather it is an aside, and a short one at that, in a Talmudic digression. Does this make a difference in how I understand the story and its messages? No. It's still a story of hope, of religious freedom, and a cheerful spot in Winter's darkening tale.

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....

What an incredible gift to welcome in 5782 praying with you in the Sanctuary and online! I'm still processing and trying to find the words. To finally hear your voice and pray together.... I still cannot find the words. *Todah rabbah* (huge thanks) for following our COVID-19 protocols to make this happen. I was *faklempt* before we even began our opening song, "We Return" by Noah Aronson and Elana Arian, to see your beautiful, masked faces in our Sanctuary and Social Hall and on Zoom. Yes, I could see and feel the

smiles behind your masks. As we davened the *Amidah* together you wrapped me in a *tallit* of *avodah* (love), finally having the opportunity to accompany you during Debbie Friedman's *z"l Mi Shebeirach* — I was *taka faklempt*. To Pauline Troia, our amazingly gifted accompanist, members of our Ensemble: Dennis Niekro, Cara Lieb, Grace Dean (how we loved having you with us for *Rosh Hashanah* services before you returned to Dartmouth!) Laura Arnow and Diana Rosenthal all I can say is "Have I told you lately how much I love and adore you?!". *Todah rabbah v'kol hakavod* for your time, talent and gift of music. Shayna Blatt and Claire Blatt, *todah rabbah v'kol hakavod* for honoring us with chanting *Torah* at our *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur* outdoor Family Services and for reminding us how bright our present and future are because of your commitment and dedication to your Jewish Education and our Community. Noah Freedman, *todah rabbah* for allowing so many to *shep nachas* playing *Kol Nidrei* from your *neshumah*. We are so incredibly blessed! May we always remember this as we continue to forge our way through this pandemic. May these blessings feed our weary souls, bodies, and minds and help us to always be grateful and treat each other with *chesed* (kindness).

Chesed is the Jewish Value we are studying in Sunday School September through November. What is kindness? How can we be kind to ourselves? Each other? The world? Our 2nd & 3rd graders made *Chesed* Chains for our *Sukkah* on the first day of school. All our students in K – Grade 6 made beautiful, meaningful decorations for our *Sukkah*. Our Teens in grades 7 – 10 learned about *Ushpizin* – people that are no longer with us that we'd like to invite into our *Sukkah* – and created an *ushpizin* chair with names of people they will be inviting into their *Sukkah* each night of *Sukkot*.





Still time to Register for Sunday School and join in the fun!

Information and Forms are on the website and I'm always happy to help, too. Please reach out to me at

suzanneg@carmelbethisrael.org



BEST YEARS

Best Years Forest Theater Night

Want to go to the Theater for free? If you are a CBI member and want to join our Best Years night at the Theater you can! CBI is inviting all Best Year members (those over 60) to the play "Julius Caesar" which will be at the Forest Theater in Carmel. Join us Saturday night, October 9. The show starts at 7:30 PM but we will gather in the theater at 7:00 PM and will have snacks and drinks for all those from CBI joining us. We recommend you bring a cushion or a blanket to sit on (the benches are a little hard) and warm jackets for the cool Carmel evenings. Call the CBI office by October 5 to reserve your tickets! Those under 60 are welcome to join us but must pay for their tickets!



Lunch with the Rabbi

If you are vaccinated, please join Rabbi Greenbaum this month on **Wednesday, October 20 at noon** at an outdoor table on the patio of Baja Cantina, located about a

mile east of CBI when he leads the lunch with the rabbi discussion. This month he will lead a discussion on "Abortion in Jewish Teaching." With the recent change in Texas, is Roe v. Wade threatened? Why as Jews should we be worried? What does the Torah and the Talmud say about abortion? Come prepared to 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.

October 12, 1:30 PM, home of Suellen Rubin (suellenrubin@hotmail.com). Please RSVP to Suellen with your best contact telephone number in case plans change suddenly.

Book—BENEATH A SCARLET SKY: A NOVEL by Mark Sullivan. This book is long but a few of us have found it to be a fast read, so if you haven't started it yet, it's not too late.

<u>November 9, 1:30 PM</u>, location to be determined. Book—THE TUNNEL by A.B. Yeshoshua



Seth & Naomi Pollack	14
Brynie Kaplan-Dau & Daniel J. Dau	18
Vivi & Paul Fenwick	25
Jonathan Silberman & Debra Fields	26
Ms. Selina Glater & Cheryl Crose	27

A New Year and a New Calendar of Holidays





Welcome to Our New Members and Their Families

Jefferey & Alison David
Judd & Tybe Franklin
Rosetta Friedman
Louis Kaplan & Kathy Goode
Sheila Kaplan & Tom Emerson
Jonathan Silberman & Debra Fields
Ellison & Maureen (Mo) Wittels

JCM United

Continued from page 1

Join us from 12:30 to 2:30 at Whispering Pines Park on Pacific Street in Monterey. Bring something to put on the grill for yourself (hamburgers, hotdogs, chicken, fish, or veggies...) and a side dish to share with others (please no pork products!). JCM United will provide drinks and desserts. This is a FREE event with fun for the entire family. Of course donations to JCM United are always welcome.

JCM United's Mission is "To build and strengthen the understanding and ties between religious communities through social justice programs, including serving meals to the homeless, as well as joining in social and educational activities."

HAPPYBRIHDAY!

Sara Hinds	1	Lizbeth Davis	19
Barbara Neil	7		20
Marva Hoffman	8	Diana Jacobson Tricia Popky	20
Maureen Chodosh	10	Philip Sammet	21
Rabbi Bruce Greenbaum	12	Shel Lyons	24
Robin Pelc	12	Roger Shiffman	24
Robert Block	13	Mindy Maschmeyer	26
David Ehrenpreis	14	Jason Schnitzer	27
Ruth Rubin	14	Evan Vitiello	28
Richard Baguio	17	Beth Cort	28
Jeannette Stern	17	Fred Cohn	30
Amanda Freedman	18	Jeffrey David	30
Robin Goldberg	18	Scott Lyons	30
Stuart Chase	19	ocon Lyons	UPL



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.

Thinking about honoring a loved one or a special occasion?

Consider a plaque at CBI

A leaf on the Tree of Life \$180 A Yahrzeit Plaque in our sanctuary \$360



WON OPEN!



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TODAH RABBAH!

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

General Endowment

Anita Artstein-Dunsay Malina Breaux Michael Dicus & Catherine Winter Rosetta Friedman Ellyn Gelson Richard S. Gerber & Laurie A. Kleinman

Israel Bonds for the Endowment

Michael & Constance Kean

AMCS Medical, Marshal & Angelica Blatt Thomas & Gloria Edwards Rabbi Bruce & Susan Greenbaum Victor & Sylvia Krimsley Rosemary Lande Barbara Lipman Diana Rosenthal

Safety Security Fund

Dr. Alex & Galena Bordetsky: in memory of Boris Solomon Bordetsky

Cantorial Restricted

Steven & Robin Goldberg
Michael & Debora Waxer: in honor of Rabbi
Jeffrey Schulman & Cantor Alisa Fineman

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

William & Myrna Brandwein: in memory of Joseph Kessler Barry Harrow

Carmel Jewish Film Festival

Margaret & Stuart Winter: in honor of Andrew Dicus becoming Bar Mitzvah

I-Help

David Sabih: in honor of Jane Bednar

General Donations

Nancy Callahan: in honor of Robert Taylor Fletcher III

Vic & Rena Feuerstein: in honor of Lester & Debbie Tockerman

Ellyn Gelson: in honor of September Anniversaries & Birthdays

River Gurtin & Diana Case-Gurtin: in memory of Beatrice Baskin-Gurtin

Randa Jacobs: in honor of Lester & Debbie Tockerman

Marsha Kelly

Victor & Sylvia Krimsley: in memory of Sandy Kahn

Clark Miller & Cara Lieb: in loving memory of Clark Richardson Miller & Robert Pelham Lieb

Larry Rosen: in loving memory of Ruth Rosen
Jim & Natalie Sammet: in honor of Lester &
Debbie Tockerman

Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss: in memory of Albert Schuss

Stanley Semmel: in loving memory of Leah & Sidney Semmel

Gary & Judy Simon: in memory of Abram Simon at the time of his yahrzeit

Abra Teitler: in memory of her mother & father Albert & Helen Teitler

Lester Tockerman: in memory of Brett Rothfeld

Bari Tolliver: in memory of Leah Semmel Martin & Karen Wiskoff: in honor of Lester & Debbie Tockerman's wedding.

Special thanks to Asher Heisman for being our Shofar production coordinator



Thank You from the Worship Committee Chair, Sylvia Krimsley

Why is our prayer book for the High Holy Days entitled <u>Mishkan Hanefesh</u>, <u>Sanctuary of the Soul?</u> For the past two High Holy Days season our "physical" sanctuary has been a hybrid of congregating in our temple's sanctuary as well as in our homes on Zoom. But we seek more.

The act of prayer on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur during the days of awe is also about creating a sanctuary or dwelling place within our souls. There the real work takes place. We make a personal, internal journey wherein we return to the land of our soul, the ways G-d prescribed for us to live a life of goodness, caring, repairing, responsibility and gratefulness.

The Worship Committee is so grateful that our temple has found the way to help us experience that journey. How can we adequately thank Rabbi Bruce Greenbaum for attending to every facet of reaching every one of us, wherever we have been during the many months of this pandemic and during this High Holy Days season. He leads us with chazak v'ematz – strength and courage.

And how can we adequately thank Cantorial Soloist Suzanne Guinane for orchestrating and singing the soul lifting notes of song and prayer.

For the afternoon service on Yom Kippur Rabbi Jeff Schulman, Cantorial Soloist Suzanne Guinane, and Rabbi Bruce Greenbaum designed a spiritual service encompassing a peaceful, calm, inspiring, journey of words, considerations, music, and movement enabling us to value the world G-d has given us in love, our blessings, and how to grow and improve ourselves within.

The Worship Committee appreciates everyone who participated in the services. We would like to thank:

Pauline Troia, for her splendid, gifted musical accompaniment;

Our High Holy Days Ensemble composed of Diana Rosenthal, Laura Arnow, Grace Dean, Cara Lieb, and Dennis Niekro for their beautiful voices;

Noah Freedman for his exquisite violin rendition of Kol Nidre;

Rabbi Jeff Schulman and Cantorial Soloist Suzanne Guinane for leading the presentations on Selichot;

Beryl Levinger and David Sabih for leading the discussions on Yom Kippur;

President Dan Nussbaum for his announcements and address;

Malina Breaux for her appeal to support Congregation Beth Israel & Israel Bonds;

The Torah chanters for their dedication to learning and chanting the High Holy Day trope;

This year's chanters were: Cara Lieb, Victor Krimsley, Susan Newton, Cantorial Soloist Suzanne Guinane, Cantor Margaret Bruner, Zia Shapiro, Rabbi Bruce Greenbaum, Rabbi Jeff Schulman, Lorraine Gerstl, Seth Pollack, Laura Arnow, David Awerbuck, Pauline Troia, Daniel Nussbaum, and Sylvia Krimsley.

The Haftorah readers and those who gave the Haftorah blessings;

This year's Haftorah readers and chanters were: Imogene Speiser, Rabbi Jeff Schulman, and Abra Teitler.

The Haftorah blessings were given by Dennis Niekro, Sylvia Krimsley, and Victor Krimsley.

The honorees who held the Torah aloft, recited the Aliyot blessings, lit the candles, led

the V'ahavta, and led the Kiddush;

Julie Chase, Abby King, and Bob Fenton, for their supporting efforts.

Todah Rabah, thank you so much.

Magnolia Sumer

Virtual Havdalah

Miriam Sheli will become a bat mitzvah on October 2, 2021. You are invited! She would like to include the CBI community to her virtual Havdalah service on Saturday, October 2 2021, at 4:30 PM Pacific Time.

The formal invitation is available at:

https://pp.events/aaz79Bkj

For guests who prefer to attend in-person, we can accommodate a limited number of guests in our front yard for the half-hour outdoor service with advance notice.

Mitzvah Project: <u>MAZON</u>

MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger, is a very special non-profit for Miriam, due to her passion for baking and cooking for others. She has made over 100 challah magnets to raise awareness for MAZON and its efforts to end World hunger:

http://give.mazon.org/miriam

For CBI members who would like to purchase a handmade clay challah magnet, 100% of the proceeds will support her mitzvah project to feed the hungry.



About the Bat Mitzvah

Miriam is the second oldest of four children. She loves horses, drawing, guitar, and math. She expected to simply follow in her big sister's footsteps after her older sister became a bat mitzvah on November 16, 2019, a day before the first Covid-19 case. The World had a different plan!

Due to the incredible support of her family & community, Miri successfully completed her studies & her mitzvah project during the largest global health crisis in 100 years. She would particularly like to thank her tutor Liotte Greenbaum, Cantor Alisa Fineman, & her guitar teacher Nina Harmer as well as the clergy, teachers, & staff at CBI.



BAR MITZVAH

Andrew Dicus is currently an 8th grader at San Benancio Middle School. He enjoys video games especially playing online Destiny 2 with his friends. He likes to play Dungeons and Dragons and enjoys reading, especially fantasy and science fiction books. He recently attended the Jewish summer camp 6-Points Sci-Tech in Los Angeles, where he enjoyed learning how to program, code, and design a video game, all the while participating in Jewish activities and making new friends. He likes to swim, hike, and play tennis. Andrew is a kind person who is good with people of all ages and loves animals. He is very determined when trying to achieve a goal.

Andrew received his early religious education at Temple Beth El, and later both classes and Bar Mitzvah training through Congregation Beth Israel. continues to have ties and friends in both synagogues.

For his Bar Mitzvah project, Andrew would like to support the refugees from Afghanistan settling in California. Please consider providing donations to the East Bay Jewish Family Services, who are arranging welcome and home starter kits to the refugees. We will provide contact information and details to the religious school and Cantor Suzanne Guinane.

If you would like to attend Andrew's Bar Mitzvah on Saturday October 9th at CBI, please RSVP to Catherine Winter at catwin30@hotmail.com.







Tackling the Tough Issues

As we celebrated the High Holy Days, delighted to gather in our synagogue and participate with our members on-site and over Zoom, we remain, nonetheless, vigilant concerning the ongoing, increasingly difficult issues of our times. Climate Change, the refugee crises at our borders and around the world, the Pandemic and its variants, political divisiveness in our nation, and racial and ethnic hatred—here and abroad.

One of the "best ways" that I know to handle these issues is to learn firsthand from those whose commitment and research bring the issues, challenges and possible solutions to light. And so, we urge you to join us for what we hope will offer a stimulating discussion:

White Supremacy Here & Abroad Saturday, November 6th, 2021 5:00-7:00pm CBI Social Hall Heavy Hors D'oeuvres & Wine



Dr. Jason Blazakis,
Director of
Middlebury
Institute's Center on
Terrorism,
Extremism, and
Counterterrorism
(CTEC) will discuss
"Counterterrorism
Research on White
Supremacist
Movements."
Previously, he served
for a decade as the
director of the Office

of Counterterrorism Finance at the U.S. State Department.

Along with his colleagues at CTEC, Dr. Blazakis has been working on extremism research projects - in particular studying far-right extremism messaging online, why certain messages resonate with audiences, what key phrases and words are used to spread that message, and what messaging is effective or not effective. Learn about the increased spotlight on various white supremacist movements and the threats of domestic terrorism in recent months and weeks.

A panel representing diverse ethnic and racial groups will interact with Dr. Blazakis following his presentation. These panelists currently include Rabbi Greenbaum and Abdel Seck, an African American and a Muslim, who is President of the Islamic Society of Monterey County.

This is a fundraiser. The cost is \$20 per person! To attend, please call the office and verify that you have been vaccinated. Please be aware that masks will be required. We will also arrange seating at safe distances. Please call the office at 831.624.2015 or email us at shalomcbi@aol.com to confirm your attendance!

Thank you to our sponsors: Beth Cort, Marlene & Gadi Maier

I-HELP Updates

We continue supporting the I-HELP Men who gathered at CBI in mid-September. Charlene and Matthew Schuss organized and served a dinner from the Great Wall Chinese Restaurant in Monterey, which always contributes foods to the meal. The men "loved the dinner!" Thanks to Nancy and Barry Rund who generously provided breakfast and to Susan Schwartz who provided dinner, dessert, and lunch.

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>



Congregation Beth Israel

October 2021 Tishri ~ Cheshvan 5782

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					7:30 PM Indoor & in Person Shabbat Service with Birthday Blessings, also on 2200m	2 10:30 AM Torah Study @ CBI & on Zoom
3 9:00 AM Religious School at CBI 1:00 PM Aleynu 12:30 PM JCM United BBQ	4	5	6	7	7:30 PM Indoor & in person Erev Shabbat Service, also on 220000	9 10:30 AM Shabbat Service when Andrew Dicus becomes a Bar Mitzvah @ CBI & on Zoom 7:00 PM Best Years Goes to the Theatre Julius Caesar @ the Forest Theatre
10 No Religious School – Columbus Day	11	7:00 PM CBI Executive Committee Meets	13	14	7:30 PM Indoor & in person Erev Shabbat Service, also on 2000m	16 10:30 AM Torah Study @ CBI & on Zoom
17 9:00 AM Religious School at CBI 1:00 PM Aleynu	18	7:00 PM CBI Board of Trustees Meets	12:00 PM Lunch with the Rabbi at Baja Cantina	21	7:30 PM Indoor & in person Erev Shabbat Service, also on 200000	23 10:30 AM Torah Study @ CBI & on Zoom
24 9:00 AM Religious School at CBI 31 9:00 AM Religious School at CBI	25	26		28	7:30 PM Outdoor & in person Erev Shabbat Service w/ Anniversary Blessings, also on 2200m	30 10:30 AM Torah Study @ CBI & on Zoom



Torah Connections:

Vol. 161 October 2021, 5782

By Michael L. Waxer

Where are you?

We just completed the annual cycle of renewal, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This is the annual opportunity to clean one's slate, and to hopefully be written into the 'book of life'. This is a good custom in that it brings a temporal urgency to us, so we don't keep putting off this annual self-analysis. But, as regards HaShem and each of us, the door may always be 'open'.

As we conclude the annual cycle of reading the Torah, we start anew on Simchat Torah, and have the pleasure to read about **creation** once again. There is so much to discuss in the creation story, but today we will focus on a single word. It is found in Genesis (**Beresheet**) 3:9,

"And HaShem called out to the man and said to him 'Where are you?"

'Where are you', or 'Ayekah', is a question we each should ask ourselves. Where are we on our life journey? Where are we on being the person we want to be? Where are we in our spiritual development? Where are we in our relationship with HaShem? Surprisingly, the Torah tells us there is a 'correct' answer to this question.

That ideal answer is 'I am here', or 'Hineni'. This may sound familiar as there are a handful of other occurrences in the Torah of 'Hineni'... the right answer at the right time. In the Akedah story, the binding of Isaac, Abraham responds to the calls of HaShem, as does Moses when he first encounters HaShem (as the Burning Bush), they each respond, 'Hineni', 'I am here'.

Unfortunately, in this first opportunity to answer the question correctly, when HaShem asks the man, Adam, 'Where are you?', Adam does not give the right answer. In fact, since Adam and Eve had just eaten from one of the forbidden trees, Adam's answer to HaShem's questions was:

"And he (Adam) said 'I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid because I am naked and I hid myself. And He (HaShem) said 'Who told you that you are naked? Could it be that you have eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from..." (Genesis [Beresheet] 3:10-11).

HaShem is always available to us, even though we may sin or fail frequently. We just completed the process of 'teshuvah', which could be thought of as a *continual state of renewal*. Although formally the 'gates are closed' for the year, after Yom Kippur ends, **HaShem is always accessible**. What we need to focus on is this next moment, the 'present'.

It is easy to get stuck in our life journey, because we are trapped by our past. Feelings or memories of things that happened to us, or things we may have done to others can hold us back, preventing us from moving forward in our life. To be the person we want to be, the first step is to recognize the **importance of the present**, of this moment.

What 'Hineni' is saying, in effect, is 'I am here', 'I am present', 'I am ready to take the next step'. Today is the day, and now is the moment.

HaShem may call to us, Ayeka, or we may call on HaShem... anytime, anywhere. This is a critical part of our heritage, that HaShem chooses to be available to us, ready to help us. Our sages say that invoking one of the names of HaShem is one method. Other methods occur when saying a blessing, and also each week during Shabbat. But we must be present, we must want to confront our 'demons', and we must want to move forward, spiritually.

Hineni, 'I am here, and I am ready'. The present is the time to make a decision, to get back on the pathway. This moment in time.

Each of us should pause, now, today. Ask yourself, 'Ayeka', 'Where are you?' Are you spending time on the things that are truly important to you? Are you paying attention now, this present moment, seizing this opportunity to connect? Can you sense your 'Neshama', your Godly soul, your essence that has chosen to reside in your physical body?

We are living in interesting times, yet every generation has its blessings and curses that dominate at any one time. Our personal journey in this life has a Godly purpose, and our Jewish heritage has given us many tools to learn why we are here, and what our mission is in this world, and also how the fulfilling of our mission helps to rectify us.

It is worth noting, that the related word, Aicha, which is spelled the same as Ayeka, is the very profound word for 'How', as in 'How could things have started out so well, but turned out so awful?' 'Aicha' is the Hebrew name for the book of 'Lamentations', the book we customarily read on the most solemn of Jewish holidays, Tisha B'Av, recalling the destruction of the Temple.

Perhaps the relationship between these nearly identical words (Ayeka, and Aicha), yet different meanings, gives us a unique insight: We need to embrace the opportunity of this moment, to be present, Hineni, so we can answer our inner call to rectify, teshuvah. Over time, however, if we ignore this call, we may find ourselves at 'Aicha' - How did the time pass, How did my life pass, without me seizing the opportunity to move forward, to spread the light, to spiritually grow?

Ayeka? (Where are you [on your life journey])? Hineni! (I am here, [I am ready, I am present])!

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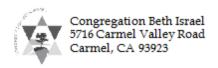
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Parshiot

October 2, Beresheet

T: Genesis 1:1-6:8

H: Isaiah 42:5-43:10

October 9, Noah

T: Genesis 6:9-11:32

H: Isaiah 54:1-55:5

October 16, Lech Lecha

T: Genesis 12:1-17:27

H: Isaiah 40:27-41:16

October 23, Vayera

T: Genesis 18:1-22:24

H: II Kings 4:1-37

October 30: Chaye Sarah

T: Genesis 23:1-25:18

H: I Kings 1:1-31

