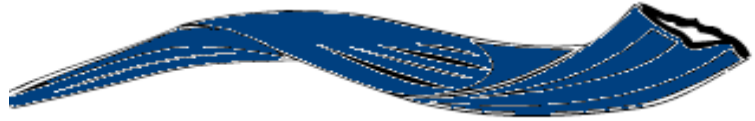


SHOFAR



Monthly Newsletter of the Monterey Peninsula Jewish Community

www.carmelbethisrael.org



Welcome Suzanne Guinane

Congratulations and thank you to our Cantor and Educator Search committees who together found one person who will serve as our Cantorial Soloist and Director of

Education. On August 1 Suzanne Guinane will join our CBI family. Suzanne brings her numerous talents that include a love for music and teaching to our congregation.

Most recently Suzanne served as the Cantorial Soloist for Temple Emanuel in Tempe, AZ. She is a gifted teacher who enjoys teaching music to children of all ages and instructing B'nai Mitzvah students as they master Torah and Haftarah chanting skills. With a degree in Music Education, Suzanne is proficient in piano and both folk and acoustic guitar. We hear she is also good on the shofar!

During our Erev Shavuot services at the end of May Suzanne joined Rabbi Greenbaum in leading the service and participating in the Torah study that followed it. A lover of Judaism, of children, and of pets (currently she owns two cats) how could Suzanne not be a wonderful addition to our community?

Whether in person or on Zoom, Suzanne's spirituality and warmth is obvious. She could not have been more delighted to learn that our congregation has a desire to sing along with her. Already there has been some whispering about building a choir under her leadership that will actively participate in services and programs once we allowed to be together! We look forward to many years of Suzanne's musical and educational leadership in her new CBI home.



Virtual Film and Q & A

The Carmel Jewish Film Festival is pleased to announce a Virtual film showing of the docudrama *Picture of His Life*. Viewers can choose their viewing time at their convenience by clicking on the link on the Home page of the CJFF website: <http://www.carmeljff.org>

Amos Nachoum, a Carmel resident, is one of the greatest wildlife photographers of all time. At age 65, he is about to face his ultimate challenge: to become the first still photographer to photograph the world's largest land carnivore, while swimming with one in open water, without any protection. In his journey to the Canadian Arctic, Nachoum will face past traumas in this intimate story of dedication, sacrifice, and personal redemption.

Both the award-winning filmmaker, Dani Menkin, and Amos Nachoum will participate in a live Zoom Q & A on **July 12 at 7:30 p.m.** The Q & A is included with the ticket. For more details, a film trailer, and tickets, visit <http://www.carmeljff.org>.

Although we showed this film in 2019, many of you may have missed it or may want to see it again. Please help spread the word about this film to anyone who may be interested.

We hope to present future virtual films if there is enough interest. We also hope to accommodate ticket holders and sponsors for these future films. Due to a special arrangement with the distributor, we are unable to do so for *Picture of His Life*. Watch the website or your email for announcements about upcoming CJFF events online.



From the Rabbi's Desk...

When we read the creation story found at the very beginning of Genesis the narrative teaches us that the last thing created was humanity. In the 28th verse of the Torah we read,

"God blessed them and God said to them, 'be fertile and increase, fill the earth and master it; and rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and all the living things that creep on earth.'" God created us last and makes us responsible for the world around us. In essence, we are assigned the job of being partners with God in caring for this creation.

While we can debate what are our real responsibilities in relationship to creation, as we read more and more in our Torah, it becomes clear that we are supposed to take care of one another. We are our brother's keeper. We are not to stand idly by while our neighbors bleed. We are supposed to love our neighbors as ourselves. We are all created in God's image.

I look around and fear that we are not doing a very good job of caring for one another. There are far too many examples of one group of people disregarding the needs of other groups. Just a few examples, we discriminate based on gender, or by race, or by age, or by ethnicity. Too often we ignore the needs of the poor, the mentally challenged, and the immigrants living among us. Instead of bringing peace (think wholeness) to others, we leave them with no assistance. Who among us would remain silent if we were hungry, could not find a job, or were discriminated against?

That is why it is time for each of us to say the words "Black lives matter." Please don't respond with "all lives matter." Of course that is true. But not all lives are being threatened today. During the Holocaust we wanted people to say "Jewish lives matter." A response of "all lives matter" would not have been an appropriate response during the Holocaust. Not all lives were targeted for destruction in the Final Solution. The Nazi goal was to kill Jews. Today, Black lives are being threatened in a way most of us with lighter skin simply don't comprehend.

Unless you are Black, you probably have never been scared, felt really threatened when a police

officer has pulled you over for a simple traffic ticket. You have never been afraid to go jogging in your neighborhood and seen as running from a crime scene. You've never worried about showing anger in public. But if you are Black, all these moments can lead to serious consequences. George Floyd is just one of hundreds of examples in recent months of how Blacks have been killed or suffered terrible simply because of the color of their skin. Their lives matter. It is time for all of us to say it. It is time for all of us to speak out in their support. And when we speak out for the Black community, we are speaking out for ourselves at the same time. For we are speaking out in support of all humanity.

A chain is only as strong as its weakest link. Society is only as strong as its weakest member. Let us not ignore the plight of those suffering because of the color of their skin. I have not marched in demonstrations because of my fear of Covid-19. But it has not stopped me from speaking out on the phone, on the internet, or in letters. Make a sign and put it in a visible location sharing the message 'Black Lives Matter.' Share this message with all those with whom you interact. For too long we have ignored the suffering of others. Join me in speaking out. Black lives matter.

**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**



From our President *Cara Lieb, President Board of Trustees*

Spotlight on the Membership Pledge System

The world may seem to have stopped in these unusual times, but our community of faith continues its work. The pandemic brings challenges not only to the way we worship and socialize, but to our fiscal health as well. The economy doesn't stop outside our doors, and we are facing financial challenges like so many businesses, organizations, and families around us. Your contributions, both financial and spiritual, are more important than ever this year as we continue to create a dynamic, vibrant center for Jewish life in the Monterey Peninsula area—one that can support us as we face challenges together.

We invite you to become a member of Congregation Beth Israel by making a Membership Pledge. This is the fourth year of the Pledge System for membership contributions, replacing an older system of requiring dues. We refer to this as ***terumah***, a gift of the heart. Last month's column outlined the success we have had with this new approach—not only financial success, but success toward our efforts to be an inclusive, welcoming, and thriving Jewish community.

In making our budget plans for 2020-21, because of the broader economic downturn, we anticipate our income will be less, with our tenants closed and our two festivals uncertain. We continue to ask that our members give what they can, trusting that those with greater financial means will pledge more to offset the smaller pledges of those who cannot give as much at this time. **Your generosity makes it possible for us to include all who wish to be members, regardless of economic status.** To guide your contributions, we have calculated a Sustaining Pledge amount, simply by dividing the Congregation's total expenses by the number of Congregants. This year's Sustaining Pledge for families is \$2500, and \$1750 for singles and one-parent families.

Also, since our aging building needs maintenance, repairs, and significant security improvements, we ask that every family contribute an additional \$200 toward these efforts.

We ask you to let your heart, as well as your finances, dictate your pledge. **Everyone who contributes at any level is considered a Member of CBI.** With your help, we will nurture our dynamic Religious and Hebrew Schools, continue to support our well-attended adult education programs, and develop a lively and responsive spiritual life led by our clergy—whether in person or online. With such a strong community, we will certainly meet the special challenges of helping and caring for each other during the pandemic crisis. We are grateful that you are joining us on this journey.

I leave you with these words from Pirkei Avot 1:2:

Deeds of giving are the very foundation of the world.



"I recognize that there are true costs to running the synagogue — and my pledge feels like a fair price to pay to maintain a vibrant Jewish community."

short green person

WE ASKED: WHY DO YOU PLEDGE?

From: Cara Lieb, President CBI Nominations and Elections

Our Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for **5:00pm Sunday, August 16, 2020**. The agenda for the meeting will be sent out at a later date. This article is concerned specifically with the Board Nominations and a by-laws amendment to be voted on at the Annual Meeting. We encourage your attendance at the Annual Meeting, as we need a quorum of at least 10% of member families (about 23) in order to vote on these items.

A huge thank-you goes out to our Nominating Committee for putting together a great slate of nominees for the 2020-21 Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee is: Marsha Kelly, Ken Kroopf, Dan Nussbaum, Wendy Schmidt, and myself.

An important reminder—In order to attend and vote at the Annual Meeting, you must be a member in good standing of Congregation Beth Israel, that is, **you have submitted a Membership Pledge for 2020-21**. Please contact Julie Chase in the CBI office (831-624-2015) if you have any questions about your pledge status.

Item 1, By-Laws Change

Last year, you may recall that we added an Interfaith Trustee to the Board. But we neglected to increase the maximum number of members allowed on the Board from 15 to 16. We propose to remedy that oversight this year. The By-Laws currently state:

The Board shall consist of no fewer than twelve (12) members and no more than fifteen (15) members.

The Nominating Committee proposes to change the By-Laws to read:

The Board shall consist of now fewer than twelve (12) members and no more than sixteen (16) members.

Item 2, Board Elections

The following list shows the Board of Trustees positions that come up for election for the 2020-22 term and our nominees for those positions.

President — **Dan Nussbaum**

Vice President — **Ken Kroopf**

Treasurer — **Rich Ader** (incumbent)

Secretary* — **Dennis Niekro**

Development/Fundraising — **Malina Breaux** (incumbent)

Marketing/Social Media — **Jillian Heisman** (incumbent)

Adult Education — **Bob Fenton**

At Large — **Scott Lyons** (incumbent)

At Large — **Marshal Blatt**

*The Secretary position is on a 2019-21 term. Due to a mid-term resignation, the person filling this role will serve for one year. The Secretary position will be up for election again in 2021.

The Board Members who are continuing their terms (and therefore not part of the election) are:

Social Action — **Arlene Krebs**

Youth Activities — **Julie Schnitzer**

Interfaith — **Sandy Leader**

Membership — **Megan Felthoven**

At Large — **Jim Gumberg**

Immediate Past President — **Cara Lieb**

Rabbi (ex officio non-voting member) — **Bruce Greenbaum**

We welcome anyone else who wants to serve on the Board to apply to run for one of the positions that are up for election this year. If you are interested, please submit your application by **Tuesday, July 7 by 4:00** to the CBI office. As it states in the By-Laws:

Nominations for Trustee or Officer may be made by any individual desirous of serving by filing a written Application with the Executive Committee or with the office administrator at least forty (40) days prior to the date set for the Annual Meeting stating the name of the Applicant and the office for which the Applicant wishes to run.

As I said at the outset, the election will be held at the **Annual Meeting on Sunday, August 16 at 5:00**. With the challenges and shifting protocols around large-group meetings, we have decided to hold the meeting via Zoom. So, mark your calendars and stay tuned for further developments regarding how to log in.

Respectfully submitted,
Cara Lieb, President





Lunch with the Rabbi

Join Rabbi Greenbaum this month on **Thursday, July 2 at noon** online as he leads a virtual discussion on "Racism in America Today." Are people of color treated differently in our society? Do the police protect us equally? Why did protests grow across our country following George Floyd's murder? Can we separate the rioting and looting from the legitimate protests? How do we move forward in the months ahead? What can I do? Enjoy your lunch that you prepared for yourself. No RSVP is needed. Just look for the link to this meeting which will be in the CBI Weekly eblast. Click on the link and join our zoom discussion.



Coffee or Tea with Rabbi G.

We will continue our morning visits on **July 8 and July 22, at 10:00 AM**. Join Rabbi Greenbaum with your favorite

breakfast beverage for a short visit and check in with others as well. Temple Beth El members are invited to join us. Together we will relax and visit and share our thoughts. No need to dress up or even wear shoes! Pets and kids are expected in the background. What a nice way to visit and get support as we continue to shelter in place. On July 8 you are invited to share stories about highlights from the past few months. What recently has "rocked your world?" On July 22 we will share interesting moments with the animal kingdom. Maybe it's about a pet, or maybe about an animal that found its way inside your home. Let's relax together and enjoy each other's stories.



Schmooze and Booze

We will gather for more sipping and socializing on **Tuesday evening, July 14**. Let's zoom together at **5 PM** for a one hour "Schmooze and Booze with Jews

instead of the News." Pick your favorite pre-dinner beverage and join the link that will appear in the weekly CBI eblast. This hour is set aside to visit, maybe complain a little, and laugh. Let's continue to stay safe and practice social distancing as we join together online for our own happy hour. No set topic or agenda is needed. Let's just visit and share with each other. The rabbi hopes you will join him. Rumor has it he will be sipping wine



CBI's Back Yard

You're invited! Call up your Chavurah, or a couple of friends and plan a picnic. Many groups have discovered that setting up chairs in

a large circle (safe distancing) on our blacktop below our building is a great place to visit. There are already some tables and chairs just waiting for you. Some have brought lunches or wine and snacks to enjoy while supporting each other. Our lower lot is pet friendly (leashes suggested) and open every day. Call the rabbi if you want him to stop in for a short visit as well. He'll even help lead a discussion if you want. You are welcome to take advantage of this prime meeting space that allows for safe distancing while still socializing. Please watch your children, be safe, and ~~congregate~~ at your own risk

It's Membership Month at CBI

Please Make Your 2020-21 Pledge

- To support CBI programs and operations
- To ensure a Jewish education for our children
- To sustain a vibrant Jewish community in the area
- To be eligible to vote at our August 16 Annual Meeting



UJC Donations

David Sabih & Anna Swartley in honor of Danny Nathanson

Building & Grounds

Malina Breaux in honor of Marshal & Angelica Blatt
Imogene Speiser in memory of her beloved husband Zane

Safety & Security Fund

Marshal & Angelica Blatt in honor of Ava & Sara Martin becoming B'nai Mitzvah
Alex & Galena Bordetsky in memory of Alex's mother's yahrtzeit

Cantorial Restricted Fund

Michael & Debora Waxer in honor of Past President Todd Hornik

College Scholarship Fund

Michael & Constance Kean in honor of Alisa & Louise with gratitude for your loving dedication to our congregation

LeRoy Kohn Adult Education Fund

Kenneth & Shelley Kroopf in memory of Ken's father, Henry Kroopf & Ken's brother, Russell Kroopf

Rucka Travel & Enrichment Fund

Victor & Rena Feuerstein in honor of Ellyn Gelson's Birthday

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Barry R. Harrow
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss in honor of Alan & Barbara Bienenfeld
Susan Schwartz in memory of Linda Hornik

General Fund Donations

Anita Artstein-Dunsay in memory of Richard Dunsay
David & Lois Epel
Ellyn Gelson in honor of June birthdays & anniversaries
Robert & Raya Hoskinson in memory of Morris Weintraub
Lewis A. & Sandra Leader
Clark Miller & Cara Lieb in honor of the wedding of Laura Arnow & Matthew Englund

Diana Rosenthal in memory of Marjorie & Robert

Rosenthal & Millard B. White

Suellen S. Rubin in Memory of Abraham Rubin

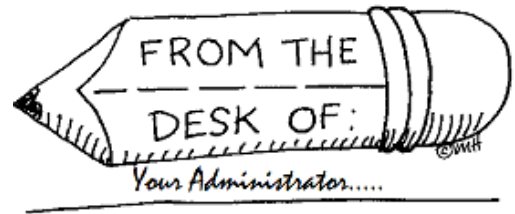
Gary & Judy Simon in memory of Irene Lefkowitz at the time of her yahrtzeit

Gary & Judy Simon with thanks to Dan & Bev Nussbaum, Rabbi Greenbaum and CBI for the Zoom minyan for Gary's brother's Shiva

Illia Thompson in Memory of Locksin Thompson

Bill Pardue & Barbara Mitchell in appreciation for Rabbi's perseverance in these difficult times

Bill Pardue & Barbara Mitchell in gratitude of Cantor Alisa Fineman



- We have been busy working with the Safety & Security Committee writing requirements and soliciting quotes for all the projects funded by our Cal OES Security Grant. We hope to begin work on doors, windows, and locks by the beginning of August.
- Please remember to return your membership pledge forms. The deadline to be eligible to vote at the **August 16** Annual Meeting is **Friday, August 14**. If you have any questions about your account or about our pledge system please call me at 831 624 2015 or email me at juliec@carmelbethisrael.org.
- I know I'm repeating myself but here's one more shout out for checks and auto-bill-pay. CBI paid more than \$7500 in credit card fees during the last fiscal year. If you are able to pay your pledges and Religious School fees by check or auto-bill-pay we would appreciate it. This year, we are able to offer E-check. Provide us with your banking information and chosen payment schedule and we can set up payments directly from your checking account.

Julie Chase

B'n't Mitzvah

Ava Pearl Martin and Sara Claire Martin daughters of Stephen and Jill Martin were called to the Torah as B'n't Mitzvot on Saturday, June 20, 2020. Both girls most recently completed a very active and successful year as 7th graders at Carmel Middle School.

Ava, a 4.0 student, is a member of CMS golf team, as well as the AT&T Pebble Beach Junior Golf Association, and a member of the California Junior Scholarship Federation Honor Society. Ava is an avid reader, skateboarder, boogie boarder, and enjoys cooking.

Sara, an honor student, has been studying ballet and jazz dance at The Dance Center and was most recently invited to go on pointe. She plays the violin in the school's orchestra, has been active in drama and loves to skateboard, bake, swim and read.

Some of the girl's favorite things also include summers at Camp Newman, taking family trips, bike riding, geo caching and spending time with Mom and Dad and friends. They love all their 10 pets, but especially our pooch, Ollie.

Ava and Sara are best friends!

They are both extremely kind and caring of others.

For their Mitzvah project, they will be raising awareness for DIPG (Diffuse Intrinsic Pontine Gloma)

This is what took their dear sweet friend Olivia De-Sola Barnes.

They will be supporting the efforts of #unravelpediatriccancer a non-profit organization that is fighting to secure funding for pediatric cancer research with a fundraiser (date tbd).

For more information:

<http://unravelfor.everydayhero.com/us/olivia-de-sola-barnes>

Ava and Sara's family are overjoyed by their accomplishments, studying Hebrew and Judaism over the past 9 years and they celebrate their becoming a Bat Mitzvah.

Mazel Tov, Ava and Sara!





We Thank Our Tzadakim Members

We are grateful for all our members who support CBI. At this time we offer a special thank you for the generosity of those members who contributed at the Tzadakim level in 2019-20. Their extraordinary generosity allows us to provide the robust programming that we all enjoy.

David Awerbuck & Astrid Holberg
Malina Breaux
Barry & Randi Brookstein
Michael Dicus & Catherine Winter & Winter
Bee Epstein-Shepherd
Robert Fenton & Debra Givner
Ellyn Gelson
Diana Greenbaum
Jim Gumberg & Nina Patane
Adrienne Herman
Ann Jory
Marsha Kelly
Richard Klein
Ronald & Darcie Kroll
Kenneth & Shelley Kroopf
Arthur Latimer
Laela Leavy
Alan Lefkof & Ann Gordon
Tobi & Michael Marcus
Clark Miller & Cara Lieb
Robert Moskowitz & Jeannette Stern
Steve & Karen Radin
Lawrence & Ruth Rosen
Corrina Joan Rucka
Stephen L. & Wendie A. Ryter
David Sabih & Anna Swartley
Jim & Natalie Sammet
Jason & Julie Schnitzer
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss
Susan Schwartz
Susan Simon
Todd & Veena Waldman
Dan & Ellen Weiner
Stanley Weiss
Eby Wold
Edward & Mona Zander

We Thank Our Members Who Have Made Their 2020-21 Pledges

Laura Arnow
Anita Artstein-Dunsay
Dr. Oscar Biblarz
Marshal & Angelica Blatt
Richard & Marilyn Bloom
Leonard & Sheri Chodosh
Fred & Wendy Cohn
Hersh & Lizbeth Davis
Bee Epstein-Shepherd
Robert Feller
Robert L. Fenton & Debra A. Givner
Vivi & Paul Fenwick
Ms. Selina Glater & Cheryl Crose
Diana Greenbaum
Michael & Constance Kean
Ronald Kohen & Barabara Ashby-Kohen
Thomas & Ellen G. Krause
Victor & Sylvia Krimsley
Rory & Toni Lakind
Rosemary Lande
Arthur Latimer
Alan Lefkof & Ann Gordon
Samuel & Gabriela Lipsky
Amanda & Joe Mello
Leonid & Larisa Modorsky
Daniel & Beverly Nussbaum
Cele Passin
Steven & Karen Radin
Daniel Robbins & Zia Shapiro
Suellen S. Rubin
Stephen L. & Wendie A. Ryter
Wendy & Andrew Schmidt
Matthew Schuss & Charlene Webber-Schuss
Gary & Judy Simon
Ellie Sorkin & Deborah Stewart
Mrs. Imogene Speiser
Herbert Stern
Cary & Jana Stiebel
Illia Thompson
Lester Tockerman
Mike & Leslie Vitiello
Michael & Debora Waxer
Joel & Bonni Weinstein



The Summer of 2020

"It's summertime, summertime, sum sum summertime." *

Does that 1958 song ring a bell for you? Happy Memories! Or what about one of the most famous lyrics: *"Summertime and the living is easy."* These echo in my mind, but what a different summer this is. Not too easy, and not too much fun for many people. Nonetheless, we persevere, and we continue doing what we are able—Tikkun Olam.

UPDATES!

Loaves, Fishes & Computers: From Helter-in-Place on March 17th to June 17th, LFC has distributed 1,222 computers to low-income families and individuals. Thanks to Julie & Abby for the CBI office donation of computers, monitors and accessories, when the office installed a new computer system! If you have equipment which you can donate, please do contact me to arrange a pick up.

Gathering for Women held a virtual fundraiser on June 4th, with over 60 attendees. Congressman Jimmy Panetta joined via zoom from his home to provide updates on legislative initiatives, including police reform. He also offered much encouragement and praise for Gathering's good work. Our CBI Congregation contributed \$500 towards a matching fund for Gathering!

I-HELP

Thanks to the Carmel Rotary Club and Rabbi Bruce for the contribution to purchase meals for the I-HELP Men on June 7th. The Kavanat HaLev--Jewish Renewal Community of the Monterey region—also contributed foods by baking desserts, and providing breakfast items, drinks and snacks. There are 14 men sheltering at a Monterey Church, and they are

very helpful when we arrive with the foods! The men enjoyed a Mexican themed dinner, with next day's luncheon sandwiches prepared by Matthew and Charlene Schuss.

Matthew, Susan Schwartz and I attended the monthly I-HELP forum via zoom, and participated in break out rooms to help brainstorm I-HELP's annual fundraiser "Pasta with the Pastors," which will be a virtual event on Thursday, August 20th. Many good ideas, including an online auction and entertainment. Stay tuned for more info!

Susan is spearheading the Women's Dinner on June 29th. Currently, there are 6 women in the group and they've been sheltered at a Church in Carmel Valley, but will need to leave when the Church re-opens. Next location TBD. I-HELP says there are various issues in recruiting new women, including Covid testing, which must be done currently via a car drive-in and a necessary 2-week quarantine. Gathering for Women is providing breakfast and lunch, and access to showers for the 6 women. Please contact Susan if you're able to help with this dinner. <schwartzs@redshift.com>

Men's I-HELP on July 5th! **Allegro Pizzeria** in the Barnyard, will generously provide Pizza, Pasta, Salad & Dessert for the men's dinner! Owner Gino said he is delighted to help. In return, I hope that members of our congregation will order their next Pizza dinner from Allegro! Great to support those who support our CBI initiatives. If you can help with the lunch and breakfast items for July 5th, please do contact me.

*If you'd like to hear the lyrics to Summertime: <https://genius.com/The-jamies-summertime-summertime-lyrics>

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



Congregation Beth Israel
July 2020
Tamuz ~ Av 5780

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Services/, Studies, and Meetings will be scheduled through Zoom, accessible online or by phone, until such time as we have the clearance to resume physical gatherings.			1	2 12:00 PM Zoom Lunch with Rabbi	3 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services with Birthday Blessings via Zoom	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY  10:30 AM Shabbat Torah Study Via Zoom
5	6	7	8 10:00 AM Zoom Coffee & Tea with Rabbi G	9	10 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services with Temple Beth El via Zoom	11 10:30 AM Shabbat Torah Study Via Zoom
12  7:30 PM Carmel Jewish Film Festival Zoom Program	13	14 5:00 PM Zoom Booze & Schmooze with Jews	15	16	17  7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services via Zoom	18 10:30 AM Shabbat Torah Study Via Zoom
19	20	21 6:30 PM Executive Committee meets Via Zoom	22 10:00 AM Zoom Coffee & Tea with Rabbi G	23	24 7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services Via Zoom	25 10:30 AM Shabbat Torah Study Via Zoom
26	27	28 5:00 PM Zoom Booze & Schmooze with Jews 7:15 PM CBI Board of Trustees Meet via Zoom	29	30	31  7:30 PM Erev Shabbat Services With special Birthday Blessings Via Zoom	1 AUGUST 10:30 AM Shabbat Torah Study Via Zoom

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Judy Simon	1	Susan Krome Neben	15
Charlene Webber-Schuss	2	Cele Passin	16
Oscar Biblarz	4	Shelagh Baseman	17
Wendy Fried	4	Christopher Chambers	18
Michael Marcus	5	Joan Schiffer	19
Marilyn Bloom	8	Judi Lang	20
Lori Addison	9	Angelica Blatt	21
Joel Jacobson	9	Jennifer Stone	21
Jade Granbery	11	Madelon Zimmer	21
Stephen Holber	11	Wendy Cohn	22
Jason Phillips	12	Michael Krasner	22
Lenny Popky	13	Andrew Sisolak	23
Carlos Ramirez	13	David Awerbuck	26
Adina Abeles	14	Samuel Ezekiel	27
Bee Epstein-Shepherd	14	Alan Bienenfeld	28
Rafael Lyons	14	Beverly Nussbaum	28
		Beryl Levinger	31

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Todd Hornik & Donna Shore	4
Lori Silver & Syd Shaber	4
Howard Messinger & Leta McCarty Messinger	7
Richard & Marilyn Bloom	9
Joel & Bonni Weinstein	10
Jill & Jim Sleeper	11
Martin & Karen Wiskoff	12
Eric & Judi Lang	15
Jonathan & Kara Aborn	17
Leonid & Larisa Modorsky	17
Alan & Lyn A. Rosen	20
Barry & Nancy Rund	29

Family News

**We're delighted to announce
the wedding of Laura Arnow and
Matthew Englund on June 20.
Mazel Tov!**





Musings by Hugo Gerstl

THE TERROR OF THE PANDEMIC – OR A NEW BEGINNING?

June 1, 2020 – “stuck at home in Carmel, California” – some random thoughts.

It is now the beginning of the fifth month since COVID-19 was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. On March 15, I closed down my law office and started operating out of my home. 2½ months later, I’m still in “Shelter-in-Place.” Simultaneously, my wife Lorraine had to suspend in-class operations for Omni Learning Center, her educational enrichment program for home schoolers. Since we’re in the high-risk age group, our adult children, over whom we’ve always believed we exercise control, have ordered us, their parents, to stay at home while they bring us groceries, shopping needs, even toilet paper. And, of course, they will not come into our home or come within six feet (two meters) of us “for the duration” – however long that will be.

Are we concerned? Of course – who wouldn’t be, with over 100,000 deaths in the U.S. alone? With a “Fractured and Fragmented States of America” where we seem to be so consumed by our unwillingness to hear the “other side” of an argument with which we disagree that we stubbornly refuse to give an inch or “compromise” our principles for the common good? Sometimes it seems that a large portion of the American population turned their brains off and turned their backs on the reality that

would be second nature to any person who dares to *think*?

And yet, is the Pandemic Nature’s way of saying it’s time to “recalculate” – if you want to challenge and mess with Nature, you’d better be prepared for the consequences? If we want to get religious about it, I always think of the old *Yiddish* saying, “A mensch trach, un Gott lacht!” – “Man proposes, God disposes.”

Think, for a moment: a substantial number of earth’s human inhabitants deny that Global Warming exists. We’ve discovered and invented genetically-altered food, farmed seafood, and vaccines to deal with a plethora of bacteria and viruses. The result: viruses like COVID-19 that “trump” our vaccines and produce vaccine-resistant killer diseases. Air that is so foul, it would have killed people a hundred years ago. An increasingly large hole in the ozone layer and increasingly shrinking polar icecaps. The elimination of species through deforestation, increased desertification of the Earth, the destruction or elimination of more than 90% of nonhuman species through overfishing, destruction of habitats, and just plain irresponsible greed.

But in all the fear generated by the present pandemic, its political chaos, its increase in violence, tribalism, and xenophobia, perhaps we should stop and consider that this might – just *might* – be an opportunity to change for the better – a “come to Jesus” message.

Looking at the changes in my own personal life “caused” by the present “crisis” –

- I get to spend 24 hours a day, every day, with, my wife, my most beloved and precious companion. Instead of working outside the home 8 hours or more a day, 5 days or more a week – we work from home *together*. We walk three times a day – more exercise than we’ve had in years. At least one of those walks is with my best friends of 54 years, which lets me realize how special and important they are to me.
- I have always appreciated how much I love our children, grandchildren, brothers, and sister, and our family members, and how much they love us. But that’s something we’ve always taken for granted. No more. We’ve come to realize how much the loss of any of them would mean to us, or how much the loss of us would mean to them.
- Amazing how much more “religious” we’ve become – in the true sense of the word – when we can ZOOM to our place of worship each week and listen – *really listen* – to the meaning of universal truths that bind the human family *together* as children of the same God, rather than tear us asunder in divisive and truly *meaningless* wars.

CBI Religious School

- I realize that I can actually accomplish more in less time if I take the opportunity to *think* about what I'm doing before I simply do it.
 - I find that I drive significantly less now – planning to do more things on the same trip, which saves a lot of time and a lot of money.
 - I've learned that there are others who are suffering every day because they've lost their job, because they've lost a loved one, or because they've lost a way of life they were used to. That's why, more than ever, I'll donate to a food bank or I'll pay in advance to reserve a series of haircuts for when my barber is back in business or I'll leave an extra large tip for a person who provides services to me. In the grand scheme of things, how much extra will it cost me as opposed to how much I can assuage someone else's needless suffering?
 - My wife Lorraine has shown creativity, originality, flexibility, and brilliance. While she may not be able to conduct in-person classes, she replaced them by making meaningful, often hilarious, YouTube videos and has written two books, including the ultimate modern guide to, of all things, Manners and Etiquette!
 - Staying at home does not stop me from writing books. Or listening to Strauss Waltzes or *Die Moldau* or Tchaikovsky or Lady Gaga. Or watching *The Princess Bride* or *Blazing Saddles*. Or dreaming ahead to my next life when I will be a famous orchestra conductor and share eternity with my Lorraine – both of us young again (even though I picture her today as more beautiful than ever) – and with our family and close friends.
 - And I hear that for the first time in recent memory, you can see Mount Everest from Katmandu, Or the Griffith Park Observatory from West Los Angeles. Or breathe air that hasn't been so clean for more than fifty years. And that's nothing new. As early as Biblical days, it was written that every seventh year people stopped planting to let the Earth rest and regroup. Throughout history, man has known that all things need time to rest and recharge, whether it's lying down to sleep each night, rotating crops, or, to use the modern vernacular, simply "chilling out."
- Maybe this horrible pandemic is Nature's, God's, the Earth's way of saying, "I need a rest. You need a rest. We all need a rest. We need to re-evaluate our values, what it means to be a human being, what it means to work together, what it means to *really* seek out peace and brotherhood, and what it means to practice *tikkun olam* – repairing the world." And maybe that's not necessarily a bad thing.

June 2020 – Hugo N. Gerstl

Summer has just begun, but here at CBI we are already looking ahead to the next school year. There are many changes that will take place in the coming year, including a new Director of Education, Suzanne Guinane. The restrictions caused by Corona Virus continue to leave us unsure of the safest way to implement our school programs in the fall. What remains consistent is CBI's commitment to the safety and health of our students and staff. We are planning exciting learning opportunities that can be effectively modified for in-person, distance learning, or hybrid models.

Religious School registration is now available online. All payments will go directly through the CBI office. Checks can be mailed to 5716 Carmel Valley Rd, Carmel 93923. Please call the CBI office at 624-2015 if paying by credit card. Online subscribers click here:

[Returning Student Re-enrollment](#)

[New Student Registration form](#)

The early bird discount, of \$35 per child, is available to all who register before August 1 and late fees are charged after August 31.

Let us know if you have any difficulty with the system by calling the office at 624-2015.

We look forward to learning with you and your child again in the fall.

Have a good
Summer!



Torah Connections:

Torah Connections:

Vol. 146 - July 2020, 5780

Michael Waxer

Desire to Descend

Last month we discussed the concept that the fall from the Garden of Eden was not actually an error, but a choice made to descend into the lower world (our physical universe). Adam and Eve (although reluctantly) chose this descent in order to ultimately ascend higher, which is best done by using free will in this world, so that we may *develop spiritually*.

But we are not alone on this journey. We have company.

HaShem also wanted to descend, for us, to help us. There is a Midrash that teaches that “God had a passion to have for Himself a dwelling place in the lower worlds” [Midrash Tanchuma, Naso 16]. Similarly, in the Torah it says,

“They will make for Me a Sanctuary and I will dwell in their midst.” (Exodus 25:8)

This suggests two immediate meanings, a physical place such as the Tabernacle and Sanctuary, but also about each of us. That each of us has the ability to make space so HaShem can be part of our lives. Remember that Moses saw God only after he fled into the desert, another metaphor that space is required to let God in.

Now we know that HaShem had a desire to descend into the lower world, just as Adam and Eve chose to. This is pretty amazing! HaShem knew the best way for us to spiritually develop was to descend into this physical world, and to have all the physical distractions that we each struggle with daily, throughout our lives. ***Facing and overcoming the numerous challenges in life is what builds our spiritual ‘muscles’.*** We all know it is a daunting task. But HaShem didn’t want us to be alone on our journey, so HaShem chose to also descend.

Part of the instructions we are given in the Torah are to assist HaShem in having a place to be ***with us***. Actually, ***not just a place, but also a time***. The holy land that HaShem chose, Israel today, is the ***physical place*** where HaShem is perhaps closest to us. Shabbat, the weekly gift and celebration, is ***the time*** when HaShem is perhaps closest to us. Yom Kippur is another holiday, an annual occurrence, which may be the one day a year we are able to get closest to HaShem.

In the Torah portion ‘Balak’, the king of Moab hires a non-Jewish sorcerer named Balaam, to curse the Jews. The commentary explains that the king was terrified that the Jewish people, by entering the Land of Israel, would be able to ***harness holiness and elevate reality***. This world view undermined the view that existed at that time, that idolatry, magic, and humans indulging their physical desires was the way things worked. But, how different is our world today?

In the past several decades the Western world has waged a war, of sorts, on God. Schools mostly teach that God is an anachronism, a crutch that educated people no longer need since we now have other things, like science.

However, can science explain why there is growing anti-semitism today? **Is this not the same story as Balak? People and cultures today create reasons to curse the Jews.** There is a clash of ideologies, and the rift is only growing. Instead of hiring a sorcerer we use scientists and politicians to confirm a *limited* version of truth, so that the Jewish ideology, the unlimited and eternal HaShem, is no longer threatening.

HaShem purposely created us in this unique way, so that we could develop the ability to become one with HaShem, distinct even from the angels, who do not have free choice but are assigned tasks. Think of this ultimate joining as each of our souls, our ‘*neshama*’, is like a drop of water in the ocean of HaShem, where each of us has distinctness, yet we are part of a whole, a unity.

HaShem chose to descend with us, and wants to be close to us. We can best experience HaShem by creating space and time for HaShem. The physical space most open to connect with HaShem is Israel, and the time most open is the weekly Shabbat. One good way to start, to be with HaShem, is to create personal space and time within yourself... and this is something each of us can do right now.

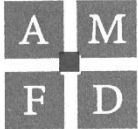
This Torah Connection was inspired by the book ‘Orchard of Delights’ by Rabbi Avraham Trugman but is the sole responsibility of the author and specifically does NOT necessarily reflect those of the Board of Trustees of CBI, CBI, its membership, Reform Judaism, or Judaism. Please send any comments to the author at: mlwaxer@sbcglobal.net.

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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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Parshiot

July 4, Chukat-Balak

T: Numbers 19:1-25:9

H: Judges 11:1-33

July 11, Pinchas

T: Numbers 25:10-30:1

H: 1 Kings 18:46-19:21

July 18, Matot-Masei

T: Numbers 30:2-36:13

H: Jeremiah 1:1-2:2

July 25, Devarim

T: Deuteronomy

1:1- 3:22

H: Isaiah 1:1-27