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**CBE Adult Education Presents**

**Things We Need to Know for Ourselves and Our Parents**

A series of presentations about end of life issues

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**Estate Planning with Barbara Epstein, Sunday, March 1, 10:00-11:30 AM**

Estate planning is sometimes thought of as limited to saving taxes for people of financial means. However, the broader and more realistic view is that estate planning is necessary for anyone who wishes to direct the transfer of his or her assets on death or to manage those assets during incapacity or incompetency. In addition, for those with minor children or beneficiaries with special needs, estate planning is even more critical.

*Attorney Barbara Epstein of Scheier, Katin & Epstein in Acton, a member of CBE, will give a 60 minute presentation on the fundamentals of estate planning and then answer your questions on the topic.*

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**Jewish Burial Customs with Hal Miller-Jacobs, Sunday, March 29, 10:00-11:30 AM**

Reciting Kaddish and Yizkor for a departed loved one is a basic Jewish custom most are familiar with. Yet many are not familiar with the loving custom of how we care for the departed in preparation for what many believe is the afterlife. The process of *taharah*, ritual washing of the deceased is done by a caring cadre of individuals.

*Hal Miller-Jacobs, formerly of Acton, now resides in Lexington. He is a cofounder the Community Hevra Kadisha of Greater Boston.*

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Free and open to all. Congregation Beth Elohim, 133 Prospect Street, Acton.
March 2020

THE STAR

Congregation Beth Elohim

Schedule of Services

March 3, 4, 5  3:55 PM Mincha Service (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)
Friday,  March 6  5:30 PM Tot Shabbat Service
Friday,  March 6  7:00 PM Ruach Shabbat Service—Dalet Classe Participation
Saturday, March 7  9:30 AM Shacharit Service
Saturday, March 7  10:30 AM Torah Study Followed by Pot Luck Kiddush
Monday,  March 9  6:00 PM Erev Purim Service
Monday,  March 9  6:30 PM Megillah Reading
March 10, 11, 12  3:55 PM Mincha Service (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)
Friday,  March 13  7:30 PM Shabbat Service
Saturday, March 14  9:30 AM Shacharit Service
Saturday, March 14  10:30 AM Torah Study Followed by Pot Luck Kiddush
Sunday, March 15  8:30 AM Shacharit Service
March 17, 18, 19  3:55 PM Mincha Service (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)
Friday,  March 20  7:30 PM Shabbat Service
Saturday, March 21  9:30 AM Shacharit Service
Saturday, March 21  10:30 AM Torah Study Followed by Pot Luck Kiddush
March 24, 25, 26  3:55 PM Mincha Service (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday)
Friday,  March 27  7:30 PM Shabbat Service—Shabbat Shirah
Saturday, March 28  9:30 AM Shabbat Service—Beatrice Maxwell Bat Mitzvah
Tuesday, March 31  3:55 PM Mincha Service

Reviving the column devoted to questions about Jewish history called

The People of Chelm Want To Know...

After a decade of dormancy, this column was revived several months ago in The Star. Each month there are now two fairly difficult questions, and you should be congratulated for trying to wrestle with them. If you don't know an answer, you will find it elsewhere in this issue of The Star. March, the time of Purim, is an occasion for singing and celebration, so this month's questions have these themes. Please share your new knowledge with your neighbors, fellow congregants, and especially the people of Chelm. In Jewish folklore, the people of Chelm were famed for coming up with bizarre and incorrect answers to even the simplest questions.

1. Early this month we celebrate an atypically boisterous and crazy Jewish Holiday. Our fellow congregants mark the occasion with delightful comedic performances of Purim Spiel; this year on the weekend of March 7 and 8. As we know, Purim commemorates the victory of Mordecai and Esther over the wicked Haman and his plot to eliminate the Jews. This story takes place several decades after the Babylonian Exile and is set in the court of the Persian king Ahaseurus. Some scholars believe this king could well be the same Xerxes who ruled when the Greeks triumphed at the Battle of Marathon. The Bible's Book of Esther records the destruction of Haman. This book is one of the "Five Scrolls." Each of the five is written on its own scroll, which is read in its entirety during the appropriate holiday service. Can you match the other four scrolls: Song of Songs; the Book of Ruth; the Book of Ecclesiastes; and Lamentations, with the holiday on which it is recited? The holiday choices are: the Ninth of Av (Tisha b'Av); Passover; Sukkot; and Shavu'ot.

2. On Friday night March 27 our synagogue celebrates Shabbat Shirah, the Sabbath of Song. Under the direction of longtime leader Judy Kramer and with help from Cantor Sarra Spierer, our choir rehearses rigorously for months hoping to be their absolute best on this joyous evening. Like many traditions in Judaism, Shabbat Shirah’s roots are in the Torah. Do you know what event inspired the Sabbath of Song and who were the first singers?
**CBE Annual Music Shabbat**

Judy Kramer  
[mailto:judy.kramer@comcast.net]

**Kol Isha—A Woman’s Voice**  
**Celebrating Jewish Women Composers**  
**Friday, March 27, 7:30**

For centuries, the voices of Jewish women were silent. Kol Isha, a woman’s voice, was meant as a strict prohibition of hearing women singing and essentially no women were composing music for liturgical use. It was not until the mid-20th century that Jewish women really began to make their voices heard both in Israel and in America. The CBE Choir’s annual music service will focus on just some of these amazing Jewish women with lyrical liturgical settings by Debbie Friedman, Benjie-Ellen Schiller and Daphna Rosenberg of the Israeli community Nava Tehilla; gospel-inspired songs by Liz Swados (Miriam) and Lisa Levine (Hallelu); uplifting a cappella settings by British composer Judith Silver; some surprise local connections; Israeli favorites like Dodi Li and Bashanah Haba’ah (yes, composed by women!) and so much more.

We’ll have accompaniment by piano, guitar, flute, clarinet, violin and percussion. Celebrate our matriarchs and the women in your life by joining us for an inspiring and uplifting evening of music and worship. We look forward to seeing everyone at this always popular annual choir event!

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**How to Reach Us**

**Telephone**

The congregation office telephone number is 978–263–3061. Dial these extensions for:

- Ezra Habif 1
- Rabbi Rothbaum 2
- Cantor Spierer 3
- Beth Goldstein 4
- Susan C. Perry & ELC 5
- Lori Lafayette 7

**Web Site**

Our congregation web site, [www.bethelohim.org](http://www.bethelohim.org), includes the online edition of *The Star* as well as a variety of other information including a [bookstore link](http://www.amazon.com) and a [donation form](http://www.bethelohim.org).
On Kol Nidre, I spoke about Israel—specifically, about our Jewish obligation to speak openly and lovingly about our connection to the land and its peoples. I quoted former Knesset member Rabbi Michael Melchior, whom I was blessed to learn with a few years ago, along with a group of Jewish professionals. He talked about his desire for Israel to be a better place, to live up to its most cherished values. His strategy was not, however, to speak only of Israel's achievements, considerable as they are.

Rather, “the best way of connecting people to Israel,” Melchior told us, “is to tell them about its dilemmas.”

Of course, normally American Jews don’t have much of a say in how Israel conducts its affairs. We rightly cannot vote in Knesset elections. We can debate and argue, but it is Israelis who decide how Israel is governed.

At the moment, however, we do have an unusual opportunity to cast a ballot about Israel. Until March 11, US citizens can vote in elections for the 38th World Zionist Congress.

Established by Theodor Herzl in 1897, the Zionist Congress was the legislative body of the World Zionist Organization (WZO), a non-governmental entity that promotes Zionism. The first Zionist Congress, held in 1897 in Basel, Switzerland, was attended by some 200 participants who formulated the Zionist platform, known as the “Basel programme.” It took a clear stance in favor of political Zionism, stating that “Zionism seeks for the Jewish people a publicly recognized legally secured homeland in Palestine.”

Today, the Zionist Congress is known as the World Zionist Congress, and is composed of 500 delegates, who meet in Jerusalem every five years. It’s also sometimes known as the “Parliament of the Jewish People,” and for good reason. It enables delegates to exert influence on both Israeli society and the global Jewish agenda, as well as allocate financial and other resources to various organizations.

By voting you will be able to choose one of the many slates representing diverse political beliefs, religious denominations and cultural traditions. The 152 delegates elected from the United States will join hundreds from Israel and around the world at the 38th World Zionist Congress in October 2020, the international “parliament of the Jewish people”, to make decisions and set policies regarding key institutions that support global Jewish life and which allocate nearly $1 Billion annually to support Israel and World Jewry (including the World Zionist Organization, Jewish National Fund and the Jewish Agency for Israel).

There are fifteen slates running in the 2020 US Election for the 38th World Zionist Congress, and they represent a wide spectrum of approaches to Zionism and Jewish life. The American Forum for Israel, for example, is specifically focused on outreach to Russian Jews; the Vote Reform slate is a combination of Reform and Reconstructionist Jews, and mentions support for a two-state solution; the ZOA coalition seeks to expand settlement construction; the Hatikva slate promotes LGBTQ rights and anti-racism work.

I invite you to visit www.zionistelection.org today, and cast your vote.

Because, regardless of who you support, voting in the WZO election gives you as an American Jew a voice in determining the allocation of over one billion dollars in annual funding. It also allows American Jews an opportunity to have a say on issues like settlement expansion, religious pluralism, gender and LGBTQ equality, and economic justice.

Many of these are challenging problems for our beloved Israel. May we continue to talk about these dilemmas, and in doing so deepen and broaden our connection to Israel—both the Israel of today, and the Israel of our dreams.

According to the election website, www.zionistelection.org:

Yiddish & Contemporary Israeli Music
WERS, 88.9 FM, broadcasts Chagigah, Sunday mornings 8:00–11:00.
Dear CBE'rs,

As a former CBE congregant, it warms the cockles of my heart to see these great photos from last month. So happy to see Carolee and George sitting on their couch, Sue Heschel's inspiring visit and the general affection and activity which abounds.

I'm not far away, happily down-sized to Waltham-on-a-pond, have visited CBE and Rabbi Mike has visited with us at BnaiOr of Boston.

It's wonderful to see CBE thriving. I'm glad that my late husband, Mark, got to sing in your choir and I got to strengthen my Judaism as a member of Rabbi Emeritus Lewis' second group Bat Mitzvah class. Despite my husband's illness, we held a lovely Bat Mitzvah for my daughter Ariana, there.

When we moved to Acton in '89, we were already BnaiOr members, but wanted to affiliate locally. After we chose CBE, a few people reflected that we seemed more like Kerem Shalom congregants. I never regretted our choice, and especially now, thirty years later, I can say with a full heart, “We've come a long way, Baby!”

From strength to strength,
Lois G Rosenfeld

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**50 Years, 50 Words**

For 50 years, Congregation Beth Elohim has been here for us in times of joy, sorrow and every moment in between. We will be celebrating this exciting Congregational milestone all year, so we ask that you share, in 50 words or less, your reflections of your time at Congregation Beth Elohim or how you hope CBE will support you and the Jewish community in the future.

We look forward to hearing from all of you, new and old members, to help archive the first 50 years of this vibrant community. Thanks!

Questions: Contact Ellen Valade at ellenvalade@yahoo.com or Beth Schrager at bschrager@comcast.net.

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### Answers for the people of Chelm and any other curious souls.

1. Five of the books of Ketuvim (the Writings) share with the Five Books of Moses (the Torah) the distinction of being read completely during the synagogue service each year. These books are traditionally called the five scrolls (megillot) since each is written on its own scroll. Thus we hear, "the whole megilla" on the customary holiday for each. As noted in the question itself, the Book of Esther is read on Purim. The Song of Songs, with its sensuous love poems, is recited on Passover, followed by the Book of Ruth, the story of the first Jewish convert, on Shavu'ot. The Book of Lamentations is read on Tisha b'Av, when we lament the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. And on Sukkot, the reading of the Book of Ecclesiastes completes the cycle of the megillot.

2. Shabbat Shirah typically occurs in January, when the Torah reading contains the “Song of the Sea.” After the escape from Pharaoh's army through the Sea of Reeds, the Israelites celebrated their good fortune in song. Verses 20 and 21 of Chapter 15 in Exodus relate that “Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her in dance with timbrels. And Miriam chanted for them, “Sing to God, for God has triumphed gloriously….” Our choir spends several months practicing for this very special event. They want to make sure it does not get snowed out, so that's why we wait until March for this not-to-be-missed service in song.

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The next time you want to buy a book—or practically anything else.

When you shop using Amazon Smile, Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase amount to Congregation Beth Elohim. For easy, one-time directions, visit www.bethelohim.org. Pull down the “Give” menu at the upper right, and click on “Shop Amazon.”
## Donations

The congregation thanks our members, their relatives and friends, and the larger community for donations recently received...

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<tr>
<th>To the General Fund from:</th>
<th>Chesed Fund from:</th>
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<td>Harold &amp; Judith Salant</td>
<td>Dan &amp; Shelley Klein in memory of Elaine Epstein, mother of Marcy Epstein Hoban.</td>
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<td>Dan &amp; Shelley Klein in memory of Leonard &amp; Ruth Kassman.</td>
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<td>Bob &amp; Kathie Becker in memory of Elaine Epstein, mother of Marcy Epstein Hoban.</td>
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<th>To the Adult Education Fund from:</th>
<th>Amy Naparstek Fund from:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Anonymous in appreciation of the Scholar in Residence Weekend.</td>
<td>Chips &amp; David Naparstek in loving memory of our daughter, Amy, on the occasion of her <em>yahrzeit</em>.</td>
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<th>Choir Fund from:</th>
<th>Chips &amp; David Naparstek in loving memory of Chips’ father, Ben Harris, on the occasion of his <em>yahrzeit</em>.</th>
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<tr>
<td>George &amp; Carolee Schaffer in memory of my brother, Arthur Schaffer.</td>
<td>Chips &amp; David Naparstek in loving memory of David’s mother, Ida Naparstek, on the occasion of her <em>yahrzeit</em>.</td>
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<td>George &amp; Carolee Schaffer in memory of Michael Ferrara.</td>
<td>Chips &amp; David Naparstek in honor of Meryl Widman on the occasion of her special birthday, with love and best wishes.</td>
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<th>CBE 50th Anniversary Campaign from:</th>
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<td>Jaymi &amp; Joseph Formaggio</td>
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Support, Encouragement & Connection
As Your Child Grows

Parenting Children Ages 0-9

Timeless texts to learn from and other parents to lean on.

GUIDED DISCUSSIONS ON:

❤ Becoming a purposeful parent

💬 Making difficult topics easier

นม Finding balance in everyday life

⭐ Fostering Jewish values

We warmly welcome parents from all faiths, cultures and family structures.

Generous financial assistance is available.

Free Childcare Available!

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO REGISTER
hebrewcollege.edu/parenting | 617-559-8743 | parenting/hebrewcollege.edu
SATURDAY, MARCH 7th
6:45 pm - Havdalah
7:00 pm - Performance ($25 in advance, $30 at the door)
8:00 - 9:30 - Party!

SUNDAY, MARCH 8th
10:00 am - Performance (FREE with Acton Food Pantry Donation)
11:30 am - 1:00 pm - Purim Carnival
2:00 pm - Performance (FREE with Acton Food Pantry Donation)

Congregation Beth Elohim
133 Prospect Street, Acton

For more info contact: Producer Liz Walker at lizsarawalker@gmail.com
Purim Pizza Dinner!

Join us before Purim Services for Pizza and Salad.

When: Monday, March 9, 2020
5:30-6:00pm

Who: Everyone!

Cost: $8 per person; $25 per family maximum.

Please RSVP online at the CBE website or to Beth Goldstein at bethg@bethelohim.org by March 6th.
Congregation Beth Elohim Choir, Cantor Sarra Spierer, and Rabbi Michael Rothbaum present

CBE ANNUAL MUSIC SHABBAT

MARCH 27, 2020
7:30 PM

Kol Isha
A WOMAN’S VOICE

Celebrating Jewish Women Composers

Congregation Beth Elohim
133 Prospect Street
Acton, MA
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<td>8:30 - 1:30 AM Religious School: Parent Program Vayikra</td>
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The congregation calendar is also online at [http://www.bethelohim.org/calendar](http://www.bethelohim.org/calendar)
The deadline for the April issue of *The Star* is March 15

Articles submitted to *The Star* must include a contact name in case of questions.

Congregant email addresses listed in the CBE Directory are to be used solely for CBE matters.