

The Star

Monthly newsletter from
Congregation Beth Elohim
in Acton, Massachusetts



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July/August 2022 •

Tammuz/Av 5782

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In this issue...

Happy 4th of July and welcome to the July/August issue of the *The Star*. What an exciting issue we have in store for you! We share an update on summer services from ritual chair Elaine Braun-Keller, profile long-time member and board member Les Kramer, learn about the pollinator garden from Matt Liebman, revive our beloved People of Chelm column, sneak a peek at Waky sharing about Shavuot at the ELC — along with simchas and nachas! As before we want to hear from you — so look for the link for feedback at the bottom. Enjoy!

Summer Services/Ritual Update



We invited Ritual Chair Elaine Braun-Keller to share the Ritual Committee's plans for the summer services.

A BLESSING FOR SUMMER, by Beth Kander-Dauphin

For the lengthening of days, stretching sunshine far past its winter bedtime,
For the bright blues and vibrant green and pops of color filling the warm world,
For the unrelenting humidity that reminds us to savor the sweetness of cooler breezes,
For all the sounds of summer – the jingling of ice cream trucks, joyful shouts of children splashing,

lingering laughter over meals shared on patios, the shuddering clap of thunderstorms demonstrating something more powerful than us,
For summer camps and vacations and time spent outside,
For good AC when we're stuck indoors,
For sun,
For shade,
For all these things and more, we thank You.
And may God bless and keep the mosquitoes... far away from us.
Amen.



Yes, folks, it's Summer! As you remember, last summer we weren't allowed in our sanctuary, so we improvised outdoor services that included picnics and frisbees and (occasionally) ice cream. This summer, while we can be in our sanctuary, we would like to continue the tradition of at least a few outdoor services during the summer. On Fridays we will be alternating between 6:00 outdoor picnic/service at the Acton Arboretum, and 7:30 in the sanctuary. For our 7:30 sanctuary service, we are hoping to arrange some sort of sweet dessert-ish Kiddush items outdoors before the service, at 7:15 or so. Don't eat dessert before you come to shul!

In addition, we will be having biweekly Saturday services at CBE. These may be innovative outdoor services, or they may be traditional, depending on what the leader wants to do.

Most of these services will be lay led, by our new cadre of trained lay leaders, however Cantor Sarra has offered to lead two in August. Thanks, Cantor!!! Possibly we can arm twist our new interim to lead a service or two, as well, if the schedule works.

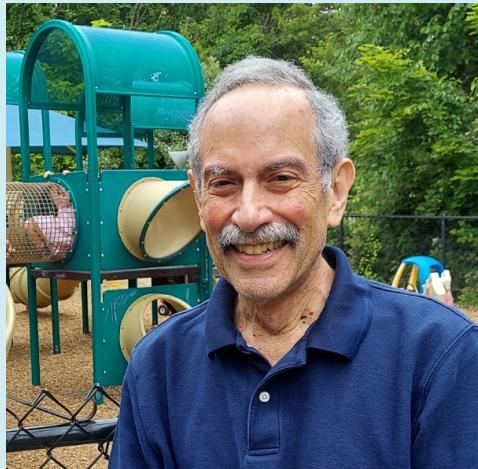
Here is the schedule:

- Friday July 1 • 7:30 pm • CBE
- Friday July 8 • 6:00 pm • Arboretum
- Saturday July 9 • 9:30 am • CBE
- Friday July 15 • 7:30 pm • CBE

Friday July 22 • 6:00 pm • Arboretum
Saturday July 23 • 9:30 am • CBE
Friday July 29 • 7:30 pm • CBE
Friday August 5 • 6:00 pm • Arboretum
Saturday August 6 • 9:30 am • CBE
Friday August 12 • 7:30 pm • CBE (Cantor Sarra will lead)
Friday August 19 • 6:00 pm • Arboretum
Saturday August 20 • 9:30 am • CBE
Friday August 26 • 7:30 pm • CBE (Cantor Sarra will lead)

See Star-lite or the [CBE website](#) for updates on our summer services schedule. Please direct questions to ritual@bethelohim.org.

Behind the scenes with board member Les Kramer



Les Kramer and his family have been CBE members for many years. In this month's Board of Director article, Les reflects on the many positions that he has held on the board and on CBE committees. Les is our acting Vice President of the Early Learning Center.

What is your board position?

I am currently Vice President of Early Education, responsible for the Early Learning Center.

How long have you been a CBE member?

Judy and I moved to Acton in 1978, and we joined CBE within a year, making us 44-year members.

What other roles have you had at CBE?

I've filled a variety of roles at CBE over the years. I was first on the Board as Vice President in 1983, when the Board included only one Vice President, responsible for programming and development. I've lead several committees, e.g., ritual, strategic planning, information technology, and the initial committee that investigated how to approach finding our successor to Rabbi Mintz when he announced his plan to retire as of June 2017. I have been ELC Treasurer and a member of the Preschool Advisory Council since the fall of 2013, continuing to serve in these roles while also as VP of Early Education for the past several years.

What have been the most memorable or rewarding experiences during your tenure on the board?

Helping lead the Early Learning Center as it doubled in size since 2013, when CBE began operating the preschool ourselves, while establishing ourselves as one of the best preschools in the area (demonstrated by our having a waiting list for enrollment each year) and simultaneously making a major financial contribution to CBE has been my most memorable and rewarding activity.

What are you most proud of accomplishing as a CBE as a board member?

CBE has grown from about 50 member-families when Judy and I first joined to nearly 300 families currently. During that time, we have had to continuously grow and adapt as an organization to meet the increasingly diverse and complex needs of our community. I am proud to have participated as a Board member and as the chair or member of several operational committees in defining and organizing that process of growth over the past 39 years.

What is one of your biggest takeaways from your experience on the board?

Expect the unexpected. The challenges the Board comes to grips with each year are never limited to those noted at the first Board meeting of each year.

What would you like congregants to know about being a board member?

Just as CBE's membership is diverse in many ways, so the Board includes diverse perspectives on how to meet the needs of our entire community. To paraphrase a well-known observation, one cannot delight all of the people all of the time. Being a Board member gives each of us the opportunity, but also the responsibility, to work together as a group to reach a consensus on what will work best for our community. Achieving this can be frustrating along the way but accomplishing it can be hugely rewarding. And it can build lifelong friendships. Join the Board and see for yourself!

Anything else you'd like to mention?

Nope

Our pollinator garden at CBE



The following article was submitted by congregant Matt Liebman. Matt is well known for being active in Brotherhood and CBE's Green Team and co-chairing Adult Education, and — on the side — being a professional environmental scientist and avid biker. Thank you, Matt, for taking time out of your busy schedule to tell us about the pollinator garden at CBE.

Hi everyone, you may have noticed a small plot of land on the parking island dedicated to new plantings. These plants are part of the growing pollinator garden here at Congregation Beth Elohim. Many of you probably know the benefits of a pollinator garden. Butterflies and bees are in decline due to loss of habitat (e.g., converting meadows to lawns, and to pavement), and the use of pesticides. At CBE, we unfortunately have contributed to this decline, because about 20 years ago, when we expanded, we converted a small forest to three paved parking lots. But we are constantly restoring the habitat (a little bit of Tikkun Olam in Acton) with plantings of native shrubs and trees. In the parking island, after we removed the overgrown and randomly sprawling white pines to make room for the solar panels, we planted native shrubs like serviceberry, ninebark, and trees like hornbeam and cedar.

This winter we learned about an opportunity to plant a pollinator garden. The Jewish Climate Action Network (JCAN), run by Rabbi Katy Allen of Wayland, received a small grant from Kehillat Israel Tzedakah Teens, a program of Kehillat Israel Reconstructionist Congregation of Pacific Palisades, CA. The purpose of the grant was to encourage synagogues to plant pollinator gardens on their property, and educate congregations, including the kids, about the habitat value of pollinator gardens. In addition to wildlife habitat, native pollinator gardens also help soils store carbon, store water, control erosion and adapt to the climate crisis.

JCAN recruited Barbara Passero of Meadowscaping for Biodiversity (<https://meadowmaking.org/>) to help congregations select plants and design a garden. We are working directly with Barbara to select species. These included joe-pye weed, coreopsis, black-eyed susan, wild bergamot, swamp milkweed and bee balm and others. She purchased plants at Garden in the Woods in Framingham, and with our assistance, transported them to CBE. A small crew of volunteers cleared the land of weeds and amended the soil with compost from the Acton Transfer Station, and with compost from Black Earth. We also have a group of volunteers who are watering the plot daily.

If you are interested in volunteering to water, or to plant, or maintain the garden, please contact me, or sign up here:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10RGu-oxpPAxmbyjlLqqzCZqGUEwZfkB6LUVRcpeYPuU/edit?
usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10RGu-oxpPAxmbyjlLqqzCZqGUEwZfkB6LUVRcpeYPuU/edit?usp=sharing)





Barbara Passero from Meadowscaping for Biodiversity and George Morton, planting the garden.



The parking island is also supporting some additional flowering plants that have habitat value, such as lupine, and dogbane, which is related to milkweed and is an alternate plant used by the monarch butterfly.

I am sure that many of you are familiar with many of the flowers in the garden. So, that means you are on your way to plant your own pollinator garden! If you would like our species list or other resources to plant a pollinator garden, feel free to contact me. But I am not an expert so there are other resources, such as Meadowscaping for Biodiversity or the Native Plant Trust (<https://www.nativeplanttrust.org/>) from which to learn.

Matt Liebman
adulted@bethelohim.org

The People of Chelm Want to Know...



For many years, the People of Chelm challenged STAR readers with questions drawn from the long and rich history of Judaism and the accomplishments and the trials of Jewish people. The digital STAR continues this tradition, with abundant thanks to congregant Bob Ferrara.

Illustration by Maurice Sendak.

QUESTION: As Rabbinic Judaism was taking shape in the first century of the Common Era, there

was a constant debate between the school of Rabbi Hillel and that of Rabbi Shammai. Our traditions are derived more from the thinking of Hillel, who is famed for his response to the challenge of reciting the code of Jewish laws while standing on one foot. How did he manage this challenge?

Ponder your response – and find the answer below.

What's up at the CBE Early Learning Center



Waky shows off all of CBE's different Torah scrolls to ELC students for Shavuot.

To learn more about the CBE Early Learning Center visit www.cbeelc.org

Lifecycle and milestone events in our community

Has your family celebrated a recent simcha or milestone? Send us a photo along with a caption (limited to 80 words) so we can include them in our next newsletter. Email communications@bethelohim.org.



Mackenzie Carruthers-Grey had his upsherin!

On Lag B'Omer (May 19th), Mackenzie Ezra Nathaniel Carruthers-Grey had his upsherin! Mackenzie turned three on May 10th, and the ritual haircut was at home with Rabbi Mike leading the ceremony. Mommy (Aurora Carruthers-Grey) and Mama (Ashley Carruthers-Grey) were there, along with Mackenzie's older brother, Remington. Mackenzie was given his first kippah and tzitzit, as well as his very own tzedakah box! At the time, he was in denial about being three (he adamantly claimed he was still two), but has since adjusted to being a young Jewish boy!

Evelyn Carruthers-Grey receives a warm welcome and her Hebrew name!

Mama (Ashley) Carruthers-Grey is holding the newest addition to the CG family, Evelyn, and they are standing next



to Mommy (Aurora) Carruthers-Grey. Baby Evie had her naming ceremony and Brit Rehitzah, or covenant of washing, on June 11th, eight days after she was born. Evelyn's English name was after her beloved older cousin, E.V., and her Hebrew name is Yana Seraphina. At first, big brother Remington "didn't like Evie - [he] only liked Mackenzie", and big brother Mackenzie thought Evie was "boring". They have since come around!



Sarah Coletti named co-winner of the 2022 Acton Coffee House/Silver Unicorn Bookstore Poetry Contest!

Sarah submitted four poems, including one reflecting on Rosh Hashanah. To read Sarah's and the other winner's poetry visit <https://www.actoncoffeehouse.com/poetry>.



Gary and Judy Budiansky's Granddaughter Graduates College!

Gary and Judy Budiansky's oldest grandchild, Hannah Goldberg, graduated Amherst College on May 29th. From left to right in the photograph are Gary, Leah, Howard, Lilly, Hannah, Abby, Ethan, Rachel, Elizabeth, and Judy. Lilly and Abby are Hannah's sisters. Hannah's Dad and Mom, Howard and Rachel, were married at CBE in 1998 by Rabbi Mintz. Leah, Ethan, and Rachel are all graduates of CBE's religious school. Leah, Ethan, Rachel and their brother Noah (not in picture) were also B'nai Mitzvah at CBE.

What's happening at CBE?

Visit our [online calendar](#) for up-to-the-minute programming.

Donations

The congregation thanks our members, their relatives and friends, and the larger community for donations recently received, and take this opportunity to acknowledge them. If you do not see your

donation, please look for it in our next newsletter, or contact communications@bethelohim.org.

Amy Naparstek Israel Scholarship Fund

Chips and David Naparstek / With love and best wishes to Denis Friedman on his birthday

Ronni Kenger / In memory of Moshe Jacob

Linda and Denis Friedman / In honor of Chips and David Naparstek's 54th wedding anniversary

Greg and Debbie Hoff / In memory of Moshe Jacob

Cantoral Fund

Michelle Jacob and family / For Cantor Sarra's beautiful voice and spirit supporting us during Moshe's funeral and Shiva

Chuck Pollak and Jaymi Formaggio / In memory of Bernie Goodman, brother of Rachel Spierer and uncle of Cantor Sarra

Chesed Fund

Michelle Jacob and family / We thank the Chesed Committee for all their support during this sad and difficult time.

Choir Fund

Marcy and Don Hoban / In honor of Bob Becker for his years of dedication in publishing CBE's monthly Star.

Marcy and Don Hoban / In memory of our dear friend George Schaffer. May his memory be for a blessing.

Etz Chaim Rock for Rabbi Mike

Cindi and Rick Silverman

Susanna Wood

Ronni Kenger

Bob and Deena Ferrara

Denis and Linda Friedman

Lindsay and Erik Rosenman

Dan and Shelley Klein

Sue and Stuart Wachter

Jaymi and Joseph Formaggio

Marcy and Don Hoban

Edward and Nancy Kleiman / In recognition of his part in the spiritual journey of Congregation Beth Elohim

Barbara and Carl Bender

Laura Vilain

Beth Hellerbach-Rozek and Leon Rozek

Michelle Jacob / In memory of Moshe Jacob

Daniel and Courtney Carp

Ellen Valade

Randi and Roger Taylor

Arlene and Alan Weiss

Jessica Rosenblatt and Taylor Curtis

Frances Osman and Bill Freeman

Chuck and Lauren Pollak

Ethan Sokol and Kristine Fong

Danya Zimmer-Bloomstone and Benjamin Bloomstone
Matthew Liebman and Amy Michelson
David Caplan and Barbara Epstein
Sandy Roschelle and Peter Darlow
Barbara Frank and Mitchell Sprung
Martin Segal

Fred and Doris Goldstein / To honor Rabbi Mike and to celebrate our community. Warmly and with great appreciation
Larry and Rita Grossman
Judy and Gary Budiansky
Chips and David Naparstek

General Fund

Lindsay and Erik Rosenman / A little extra for the Faux Food Truck Festival
Karen Coll / In memory of Zolman and Ruth Helfand
Anonymous / In memory of George Schaffer.
Martin Segal / In appreciation for all the help from David Manalan & Marcy Hoban

Rabbi Mintz Fund

Herman and Suzanne Kabakoff

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Maureen Parker / For Rabbi Mike's discretionary fund to thank him for his help with Vivian Parker's funeral.

Religious School Fund

The Rosenman Family / Mazel Tov to the CBE Confirmation Class and a huge Todah Rabah to the inspiring religious school teachers who guided these teens throughout the years, encouraged them to lean in to their Judaism, and taught them to never stop learning."
Michael and Emily Blumberg / In honor of the 10th Grade Confirmation Class

Ritual Fund

Dan and Shelley Klein / In memory of David H. Klein, Dan's father of blessed memory
Chips and David Naparstek / With gratitude to all the minyannaires who made it possible for me to continue to say Kaddish for 11 months to honor my mother's memory. You are all a source of comfort and strength.

The People of Chelm Want to Know...



ANSWER TO QUESTION POSED ABOVE:

The beloved Rabbi Hillel almost always seemed to carry the day in his debates with the austere Shammai. There is a legend that, when asked if it were possible to state the essence of Judaic Law while standing on one foot, Hillel lifted up one foot and responded with the Golden Rule, saying "What is hateful

to you, do not to your fellows; that is the whole Law; the rest is mere commentary. Now go learn!" This learned and saintly man was born in Babylon, and later moved to Jerusalem where his period of leadership extended from about 30 B.C.E. to his death in 10 C. E. Hillel is widely credited with laying the foundation for modern rabbinic Judaism.

Selected CBE and external resources

CBE's [Chesed Committee](#) | Contact us in a time of need
[18 Doors](#) (formerly InterfaithFamily of Greater Boston)
[Anti-Defamation League incident reporting](#)
[CJP \(Combined Jewish Philanthropies\)](#)
[CJP SeniorDirect](#)
[Coalition on the Environment and Jewish Life](#)
[Hadassah of Nashoba Valley Facebook](#)
[Hadassah of Northern New England](#)
[Hebrew College](#)
[Jewish Bereavement Support Group](#)
[JewishBoston.com](#)
[Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston](#)

[Jewish Family Service of Metrowest](#)
[Keshet](#) | A national organization that works for full LGBTQ equality and inclusion in Jewish life
[Mayyim Hayyim](#) | Living Waters Community Mikveh
[Oneinforty.org](#) | BRCA awareness, education, and support
[Synagogue Council of Massachusetts](#)
[Yad Chessed](#) | Emergency financial assistance to Jewish individuals and families in need
[Yerusha.com](#) | A Website for Older Childless Jews

Visit the [Resources](#) page on our website for our complete resource list.

Feedback/get in touch with us!

Let us know what think!

Do you like this new format? What about the content? If there is someone or additional content you'd like to see featured, please let us know!

Please also don't hesitate to let us know if you had any issues with downloading, reading, or if you had any issues accessing your email version of *The Star*.

For all of the above, please write to communications@bethelohim.org.

Until next time,

The Star editorial and design team —

Gary Budiansky, Maida Fund, Rick Green, Beth Schrager, Lauren Solomon, Shoshana Zuckerman

Visit us at www.bethelohim.org

