Congregation B’nai Zion invites you to a dinner Welcoming Rabbi Royi Israel Shaffin and Shoshanna Schecter-Shaffin

Friday, December 16, 2016 6:15 p.m. services Shabbos dinner to follow in the Friedman Social Hall
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B’nai Zion Officers & Staff
Rabbi Royi Shaffin
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USY Advisor Rachel Leon
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Synagogue Services
Monday - Friday 7:00 am
Monday - Thursday 6:30 pm
Friday evening 6:15 pm
Saturday Services:
Torah Study 9:00 am
Shabbat 9:30 am
Saturday Mincha - 5:00 pm
(followed by Seudah Shlesheet & Ma’ariv)
Sunday 8:30 am & 5:00 pm

PLEASE JOIN US FOR SERVICES

The Messenger is published monthly.
DEADLINE FOR THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE MESSANGER IS Dec. 15TH.

Articles and photos should be emailed to the synagogue office at:
messenger@cbzep.org

Congregation B’nai Zion
805 Cherry Hill
El Paso, TX 79912
915-833-2222

www.congregationbnaizion.org

PLEASE JOIN US FOR OUR UPCOMING EVENTS

America’s Choice in Homecare - Visiting Angels
LIVING ASSISTANCE SERVICES
915-799-0141
www.visitingangels.com
Come Home To B’nai Zion

As I am writing this, I am getting ready to go to our Jewish community night at El Paso Playhouse featuring The Diary of Anne Frank. Over the past few days, in my conversations with people, I have experienced a Jewish community of many stripes and many different feelings regarding recent political developments. It is difficult to place a finger on exactly what is going on in Washington, DC and on what the future holds.

The Diary of Anne Frank reminds us that much of our history is one of suffering. It also makes us recall that much of Judaism is about maintaining one’s faith during the most difficult of circumstances and always aiming to do the right thing. I think that this wisdom spans the ages and illuminates our path in our own time.

It is our role to observe the Torah and to teach from its wisdom to anyone who will listen. It is our role to inspire our government as our prayer book says “to safeguard the ideals and free institutions which are the pride and glory of our country.” It is our role, as Jewish tradition dictates, to pray for our country and for its government and for God to impart wisdom unto our leaders. It is our job to make sure that “Never again” means “Never again” - to anyone. It is our job to be open-minded and not blinded by party lines or affiliations. As the Talmud teaches us, every text and every event can be looked at through an intellectual prism with a multitude of different perspectives. It is our duty to be strong and to support each other and not to let our heightened emotions get the best of us so that we start turning on one another.

B’nai Zion has historically been a source of light and strength, camaraderie and friendship, community and solidarity. During this time of political upheaval and emotional intensity in America, I encourage us all to come home to B’nai Zion to envelop ourselves in the warmth and security of Jewish communal life.

Rabbi Royi Shaffin
For those of you who have not yet heard, Ken Kahn has resigned from B’nai Zion as our Executive Director. Effective around the seventh of November, Annalie Rollins and I assumed this role to help maintain B’nai Zion’s business on an interim basis until we can get the position filled. Annalie will handle mornings and I will handle the afternoons. During this period of time, I have relegated my presidential duties to Shane Lipson, our Second Vice President. Even though our faces may be different in the office, our goal remains the same, to serve you.

During the High Holidays, I had the honor to present the Kol Nidre appeal and would like to reiterate a portion at this time. There is a paradigm shift occurring in conservative congregations across the country concerning shul finances. Dues alone are no longer enough to sustain congregations financially. In many congregations, dues were held to a modest level by the parliamentary process while costs marched forward. This has been our experience at B’nai Zion and dues will need to rise. However, that funding alone is not enough to sustain our shul and has not been for some time. We collect over 95% of dues billed out and in many years even 100%. The simple truth of the matter is the dues we bill out only cover 65-70% of our operating budget. All dues are set at a target amount that is one to one and one half percent of gross family incomes. We ask you, the membership to keep in mind this shortfall. If we have understated your dues relative to the metrics mentioned, then I ask you to please contribute additionally. Likewise, any donations made for life-cycle events or “just because” are always appreciated as the mitzvot they represent.

While each of you contemplates your financial abilities and relationship with our congregation, I ask you all to recall Bereishit 28:22, the end of the story of Jacob’s ladder. When Jacob anoints the rock with oil and declares… “and everything that You give me, I will surely tithe to You...” A tithe in the ancient world was generally one tenth. Many other faiths use this as the standard for giving to their house of worship. How much you deem appropriate based on your circumstances is a personal decision, but we ask if you can give more, please do so. Likewise, rather than pay your dues in one lump sum at the end of the fiscal year like so many do, it would be of greater financial assistance if you could provide payments throughout the year. To that end, the office is now sending monthly statements. Our “spiritual home’s” needs are real and great but with everyone’s help we can better sustain. I thank you in advance for your support!

Upcoming events will keep you busy throughout December. Our Shabbat meal this month is Mexican and available December 2nd. If you missed it, just ask the office about the next cycle and featured cuisine! Other activities include Challah Days on December 15th. Then on December 16th, the long-awaited Welcome Dinner for Rabbi Shaffin and family occurs. Finally, at the end of the month, Talmud Torah and our Lots of Latkes event will occur on December 21st. A lot of programs to enjoy, so come and share in the fun! Our spiritual home is not complete, without you.

- Alan Cohen
As the year 5777 of our calendar enters full swing, B’nai Zion is undergoing some changes. As you may know, our prior Executive Director has moved to a new position out of town. The search for a permanent replacement is well underway and we are fortunate to have some familiar faces assisting us during this interim period. Alan Cohen has temporarily joined the office staff and Annalie Rollins has agreed to come back part time. Each is bringing their own skills and knowledge to act as co-Executive Directors. Until Alan returns to his role as Board President, I am acting as Interim President.

We are using this period of time to review and address issues with ShulCloud, the system that manages our member information and finances. Unfortunately, as some of you have experienced, there were some issues with its implementation at B’nai Zion. It is currently our top priority to fix this, because a steady flow and accurate accounting of member payments and contributions is what enables our congregation to function. On the positive front, ShulCloud has already streamlined many of our daily transactions and communications, and we look forward to being able to use it to its full advantage.

With all the new things happening at B’nai Zion, sometimes it seems like we have found ourselves in a perfect storm. The office and our members began training on a new system. We experienced the hiring and departure of an Executive Director within a year, and then added the predictable challenges of welcoming a new Rabbi, who is just starting to get to know our community. All this has meant that we cannot rely on things we have taken for granted to run smoothly, and the understanding our fellow congregants has been truly appreciated.

With the multiple changes that have been surrounding and challenging us, and as I have found myself in the heart of it, it causes me to reflect on what hasn’t changed: our core values as Conservative Jews. I am proud to be a member of B’nai Zion not because of the capabilities of our office (which are ever improving), or because we are over 100 years old, or even because it was where I was Bar Mitzvahed many years ago --I’m proud of being a member here because I find it the right place to explore my relationship with G-d. I’m proud that we have a commercial scale kosher split kitchen, a full mikvah and a regular Talmud Torah. I’m reminded that we are one of the few Conservative Congregations remaining with a daily (much less twice daily) Minyan, and that we have been able to maintain ongoing Torah studies and adult education programs. Most importantly, I’m proud of our Conservative heritage in liturgy, observance, and education. I am proud to be an active member of B’nai Zion because it supports my observance and faith in G-d, just as Conservative Jews have done for generations.

Many of us make use of B’nai Zion in our hours of need or hours of celebration. As we continue to fix office processes, help our new Rabbi be a part of our home, and grow as a Community, I invite you walk on this spiritual path with us. Please join me, our clergy, Board Members, staff and core of volunteers, in working together to enrich our experience not just on special occasions but every day, so that B’nai Zion can continue to provide a positive spiritual home for all of us.

-Shane Lipson
Congregation B’nai Zion Sisterhood is celebrating its 96th anniversary this year. We began this year with a very successful Membership Luncheon which included a wonderful presentation by Shoshanna Schecter-Shaffin. We followed that event with our sponsorship of the always successful “Evening in the Sukkah” with Rabbi Royi Shaffin. We look forward to many other Sisterhood sponsored events such as the Sisterhood Shabbat on January 21. If you are interested in participating in that event, please contact me, Blanco Carrasco, or Eileen Armour. We are looking for Sisterhood members who read Torah, will accept an Aliyah, read special readings for that day, open the ark, carry the Torah, do the haftarah, lead the Schacharit and Musaf services, and serve as Hagbe or Galilah. We also need a Kohen for our first Aliyah, and a Levi for the second Aliyah. Please contact us as soon as possible so we may fill the volunteers for this special service.

Sisterhood membership remains open. If you want to be registered as a member of the Women’s League for Conservative Judaism as well as a B’nai Zion Sisterhood member, you need to complete a form (found in this issue) and return it and your check to B’nai Zion Sisterhood to the CBZ office no later than December 15. After that date, you may still join the Sisterhood but you will not be registered as a WLCJ member. Membership dues remain the same after December 15.

Many thanks to the Sisterhood Mitzvah and Torah sponsors whose advanced membership dues have allowed us to plan for special needs such as kitchen equipment repair and purchase. These Mitzvah and Torah sponsors are listed in this edition of The Messenger. Additionally, many thanks to the Chaver members as well. All of your membership dues allow us to continue our funding of USY and Talmud Torah as well as maintain our synagogue kitchen.

Finally, if you are willing to serve on the Sisterhood Board or as an officer for the 2017-2019 term, please contact Blanca Carrasco. We are hoping to bring on board some talented people who want to serve their Sisterhood, their synagogue, and their community.

In Sisterhood,
Patty Hutman
Sisterhood President
pahutman@gmail.com
Sisterhood Membership Sponsors

Mitzvah sponsors:
Martha Eisenberg
Dana Frank
Robin Furman
Patty Hutman
Judy Weiser

Torah sponsors:
Leslie Beckoff
Blanca Carrasco
Linda Corral
Mona Goldberg
Kristin Kimmelman
Joan Korn
Amy Marcus
Leticia Neiman
Dora Roe
Rose Schecter
Gail Slater
Laura Tolentino
Sarah Williams

Sisterhood Gift Shop
The shop offers beautiful Judaica, mezuzahs and the scrolls needed for the mezuzahs, Kiddush cups, serving dishes, books, challah covers, and so much more!
Start shopping now for Hannukah!
Watch for featured items in the E-Blast each week.
Contact the office for the Gift Shop Schedule or to schedule an appointment.
Come in and see what tickles your fancy!
Let us know what types of items you would like to see stocked in the gift shop.
Shop our gift shop before you go online.
Support the CBZ Sisterhood!
Yes! Please include me for membership in Congregation B’nai Zion Sisterhood!
I want to support the synagogue, maintain the Kosher kitchens, provide complete catering services for weekly Oneg Shabbats and life cycle events, help the Talmud Torah, USY, Kadima, and maintenance of the cemetery, as well as special programs sponsored by Sisterhood during the year.

Name ______________________________________________________

Address _____________________________________________________

City ___________________________ State ___________ Zip _________

Telephone (home) ____________________ (Cell) _____________________

E-mail _______________________________________________________

I am a first-time member of Sisterhood.   Yes _______   No ________

We have a new membership structure as determined by the Sisterhood Board of Directors. Please select the category of membership you desire.

☐ Mitzvah Sponsor................. $236.00 (listed as sponsor for all Sisterhood events this year
And in every issue of The Messenger; no further fees are assessed for any Sisterhood event this year)

☐ Torah Sponsor..................... $118.00   (listed as sponsor for all Sisterhood events and in The Messenger)

☐ Chaver Sponsor...............    $30.00   (this is the basic membership fee)

☐ optional $5.00 donation to the Hinda Goodman Cemetery Fund

Total amount enclosed $______________

Please enclose your check made out to Congregation B’nai Zion Sisterhood and send it with this form to CBZ Sisterhood, 805 Cherry Hill Lane, El Paso, Texas 79912.
Rabbi Royi the cartoon is hidden somewhere in The Messenger. Can you spot him? Hint: It’s not on this page.
Road to Engagement Update:

Help B’nai Zion Serve You!

Dear Members,

In August, you should have received a letter about our Road to Engagement project with a questionnaire included. The purpose of this project is to ensure that we have the most current information about you and your family—from address, phone, and email to yarzheits, bar mitzyahs, and anniversaries.

Our goal is to complete this update by the end of December. Help us reach that goal! Everyone who completes a questionnaire or updates the information on his or her own will be entered into a drawing. Winners will be selected at our Lots of Latkes Dinner on Wednesday, December 21.

Not sure if you received the questionnaire or where it is now? Ask the office for another copy of the questionnaire or download one from our website. Also, some of the information may already be in your account. You can check by going to www.congregationbnaizion.org and registering as a user or logging in if you already created an account. If you need help, please call Denise Tolentino at 915-833-2222 or Kristin Kimmelman. (You can also update your own information online—just let Denise know (programs@cbzep.org) so that we can mark you off the list and enter you in our Road to Engagement drawing.)

Thank you for your help! This information update will help the shul better serve you. If you have any questions or need help filling out the questionnaire, please contact any of the committee members below.

Sincerely,

Road to Engagement Committee:

Leslie Beckoff - (915-833-4321)

Leah Chayes - (915-373-0170)

Joyce Gronich - (915-833-1326)

Patty Hutman - (915-525-6882)

Kristin Kimmelman - (575-640-5806)
December:
  3: Chanukah Party
  11: USY Board Meeting - 10:30 AM
  11: Menorah Making - 1:30 PM

February:
  10-11: BZUSY Shabbat
  12: BZUSY Extravaganza - 5:30 PM

March:
  16-19: Shabbaton

HELP THE RONALD MCDONALD
HOUSE CHARITIES

BZUSY is running a drive for the Ronald McDonald House of Charities. Please help out and donate.
ADULT EDUCATION

In their own words:
Women in the Torah

How much do you really know about the women of the Hebrew Bible?

Classes will take place on
December 15, 22, 29 and Jan 5.
From 7-8 pm

No Hebrew or Jewish studies background is necessary and all are welcome!

Hosted by:
Shoshanna Schecter-Shaffin

Shabbat Dinners

Shabbat Meals To Go
Don't have the time to cook on Friday nights? Don't worry we are now offering Shabbat Dinners to go. Are you in need of Kosher meals? Congregation B'na'i Zion will now be offering catering services, please call the office for more information.

Menu for January 6th, 2017:
Salmon
Rice
Apple Waldorf Salad
Dessert
Included: (1) Challah, (1) Set of Shabbat candles, Shabbat Program.
RSVP: All orders must be placed by Tuesday, December 27th at noon.
Pickup: Friday, January 6th from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.
Cost: $20 for a dinner that serves 2-3,
$60 for a communal dinner that serves 4-6 people.
Please call the office at (915) 833-2922 or email bnaizion.congregation1@gmail.com to place your order. All orders must be paid in full at time of reservation. All proceeds benefit Congregation B'na'i Zion.

EPJA
El Paso Jewish Academy
Invites the B’Nai Zion Talmud Torah Students to Join Us!

Student Council Fundraiser
Havdallah

Movie Night
Bring your blankets and pillows and wear your PJ's!!
Saturday, December 10th
6:30pm - 8:45pm
B’Nai Zion Friedman Social Hall

Per Family Ticket Prices
$5 one child
$7 two children
$10 three or more children

Cash or checks accepted. Checks may be made out to EPJA
(please RSVP with your payment by December 8th)

Popcorn and water will be served
Children may bring in their own snacks/candy
(no nuts or peanut products)

All school-age children welcome!

Congregation B’na’i Zion
and Talmud Torah
PRESENTS:
LOTS OF LATKES
WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 21, 2016
6:15 P.M. SERVICES
LATKES & REFRESHMENTS AND
PRE-CRANUKAH
CELEBRATION TO FOLLOW

In the spirit of giving, Congregation B’na’i Zion would like to join the Braden Aboud Foundation, and help with their annual Blanket drive.

Please bring a new blanket to our Lots of Latkes dinner. These blankets will be distributed to the people of El Paso and Juarez who are in desperate need.
There was a sold-out crowd at the Jewish Community Night hosted by Congregation B’nai Zion at the El Paso Playhouse’s production of The Diary of Anne Frank on November 17. Actors and the audience had a meaningful discussion after the play led by Rabbi Royi Israel Shaffin, who had also acted as Judaic consultant for the play. Thanks to Mike Batkin for generously underwriting the special evening.

Photos by: L. Beckoff
In honor of the birth of my granddaughter Charlotte May Naparstek.
-Dorene Naparstek

Sidney Blum – Happy Birthday.
-Miriam & Louis Rosenbaum

Meralee Schlusselberg– Happy Birthday.
-Miriam & Louis Rosenbaum

Kristin & David Kimmelman - Thank you for your service on the B’nai Zion board.
-Maurice Kurland

Miriam Rosenbaum – Speedy Recovery.
-Maurice Kurland

Cliff Eisenberg– Happy Special Birthday.
-Cindy & Louis Cohen
-Evelyn Goodman
-Leslie & Robert Beckoff

Ann and Tibor Schaechner – Thank you for being so kind to my parents.
-Lynn & Scott Kobren

Harold Peitzer– Speedy Recovery.
-Miriam & Louis Rosenbaum

Eitan Lavi – In honor of becoming president of the Federation.
-Maurice Kurland

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK
If a relative or friend is suffering from an illness, perhaps you would like to recite a special prayer for the speedy recovery of the ailing person. Traditionally, the Hebrew name of the sick person and the Hebrew name of the sick person’s mother are mentioned during the prayer. It would be helpful if you would provide us with this information when you make your request.

Prayers for the recovery of the sick are customarily accompanied by a gift to a deserving charity. The merit of this kind deed arouses God’s mercy and His powers of healing. Although any amount is deemed appropriate on such an occasion, a gift of CHAI - $18 - or multiples of 18 - is particularly fitting when pleading for a person’s recovery from sickness.

Chai in Hebrew means life. The two Hebrew letters which constitute the word - CHET and YUD - have the numerical equivalents of eight and ten respectively, together yielding the sum of eighteen. For this reason it has become a custom to give charity in the amount of CHAI when praying for the well-being of a suffering person.

Enclosed please find a contribution in the sum of $ ___________

Please make a Misheberach (Prayer for the recovery) for:
Name (English) ___________________________________________
(Hebrew) ____________________________________________
Mother’s Name (Hebrew) __________________________________
In Memory Of

Moses Holland
-Rose Holland

Allen Levine
-Charles Ramenofsky
-Tibor & Ann Schaechner
-Philip Rothstein
-Arline Ellenburg
-Libby Feldmesser
-Ruth Erlich
-Jeffrey & Wendy Siegel
-Maxine & Martin Pomerantz
-Maurice Kurland
-Sam & Gayle Belford
-Robert & Elaine Krasne
-Eugenia & David Kaplan
-Martha & Cliff Eisenberg
-Wendy & Lester Rothschild
-Sue Bendalin
-Amy Frankel
-Barbara Ettinger
-Leah & Robert Beckoff
-Linda & Art Corral
-Jacqueline & Richard Zehden

Ida Cinofsky
-Dorene Naparstek

Rose Rosenberg
-Barbara & Ben Rosenberg

Fred Barko
-Miriam & Louis Rosenbaum

Morris Horowitz
-Jane & Robert Warach

Diane Friedman
-Jack Eisenberg

Larry Baskin
-Judi Lieberman and Peter Shugart

Jeannette Fenenbock
-Leah & Robert Beckoff
-Martha & Clifford Eisenberg

Maxine Friedman
-Martha & Clifford Eisenberg

Morey Stein
-Sam & Gayle Belford
-Tibor & Ann Schaechner
-Robert & Elaine Krasne
-Charlotte Roth
-Sheri Delany
-Alice Kasner
-Jacqueline & Richard Zehden
-Joan Becker
-Wendy & Jeffrey Siegel
-Wendy & Lester Rothschild
-Sue Bendalin
-Cindy & Louis Cohen
-Bonnie & Marty Colton
-Audrey & Eitan Lavi
-Marsha & Ralph Pitter
-Renee Tanner
-Felicia Rubin
-Harry Wolinksy
-Leah & Robert Beckoff
-Saul & Norma Sidransky
-Martha & Clifford Eisenberg
-Peter Shugart & Judi Lieberman

Paula and Samuel Feldman
-Michelle and James Holland

Bernard Chasens
-Selma Chasens

Jacob Chasens
-Selma Chasens

Jennie Chasens
-Selma Chasens

Isaac Gniazdowicz
-Ruth Gniazdowicz

Joseph Gniazdowicz
-Ruth Gniazdowicz
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<td>Ida Epstein, Jacobo Svarzbein, Sara Hauptman, Goldie Cohen, Ahida Wiener, Louis Thompson</td>
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<td>12/26</td>
<td>Ida Epstein, Joseph Ovetsky, Alexander Jaffee</td>
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<td>Bessie Thompson</td>
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<td>Mary Koortz, Malka Fahn</td>
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<td>Sophie Liebman, Doris Jacobson, C.L. Scoggins, Sr.</td>
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<td>Necha Silver, Frymet Gritz Gottlieb</td>
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Congregation B’nai Zion invites you to a dinner

Welcoming
Rabbi Royi Israel Shaffin and
Shoshanna Schecter-Shaffin

Friday, December 16, 2016
6:15 p.m. services
Shabbos dinner to follow in the
Friedman Social Hall

Tickets:
$36.00 for adults ($42.00 without RSVP)
$15.00 for children 12 & under
Children 5 & under free
Your RSVP and payment must be made by
Monday, December 12.
You can pay for this event online at
congregationbnaizion.org
or by calling our office at 833-2222.
RABBI ROYI
&
SHOSHANNA
SHAFFIN

INVITE YOU TO A
CONGREGATIONAL
CHANUKAH CELEBRATION
AT THEIR HOUSE.
DECEMBER 27TH FROM
6-8 P.M.
PLEASE R.S.V.P. WITH THE
OFFICE BY DECEMBER 20
TO BE GIVEN THE ADDRESS.
MINYAN SERVICES TO BE HELD AT THEIR HOME
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* Chanukah Celebrat. refers to Chanukah celebrations.
* Times are approximate and may vary slightly.