

BI@Home: **News from your home away from home**

A Word from Rabbi Fellman

While the building has been physically closed to our community, we have been hard at work planning both for the reopening but also providing meaningful spiritual, ritual, and communal ways of celebrating and commemorating together. The High Holidays are a big part of that.

High Holidays this year will be different. While we certainly want to be back together in person, able to sing the tunes that we love, hugging and wishing each other a Shanna Tovah, here at BI and around the world, the reality of limiting crowds to safe gathering sizes, the dangers and risks of communal singing, and so much more means that the Holidays will look different. I know that this brings feelings of continued disconnect, loss, and even grief.

This year, in holding all of that and also in looking to our strengths and gifts as a community, we are going to be offering a combination of live, pre-recorded, and experiential methods for us to connect with you over the holidays, in a way that encompasses some of our favorite and most meaningful elements of the holidays. We are also delighted to be working with the High Holiday Quintet and are talking again with Ben Krefetz to see how their singing and participation can continue to enhance and elevate our services.

Some of the pieces in the works include ensuring that you will have BI Machzors in hand to be able to follow along with services, BI High Holiday kits that will give you some of the ritual and contemplative tools of the holidays, and opportunities to participate and join us (remotely) to sing, engage in ritual, and even have an honor and role in the service. We are aware that this is not ideal, but look forward to bringing you a special, authentic, and timely experience that enables us to maintain our paramount goals of safety, welfare, and accessibility of our community.

Please keep your eyes open and look at your BI messages for ways to participate over the summer and during the holidays and about picking up your High Holiday Kits and Machzors (in early September). Thank you for your continued support and participation as we navigate being together in different ways.



Report on the Annual Meeting

Paula Sommer, President



It was great to see over 80 households joining us at our Beth Israel annual meeting on June 10. If you were not able to be with us, this is what you missed.

The meeting was conducted by Zoom, a first for many of us. The majority were able to join by computer, and several people used a phone to call in and participate with audio. We also had increased geographic distribution, with people joining from NJ and FL. It was exciting to see and hear everyone who has been staying at home, and missing each other. There was a great outpouring of sound, including many well wishes to outgoing president Nancy Spitulnik.

Our outgoing Vice President of Finance, Ira Gregerman, presented a financial report, projecting the effect of COVID-19 on our budget. Chair of the Bylaws committee, Steve Levine, presented changes to update the current bylaws with a focus on the expectations of the elected officers, establishing a flexible framework for BI that balances the work of running the synagogue among all the officers, volunteers, staff, and clergy. These changes were voted and accepted by the congregation.

We had been asked to prepare for this meeting by having a glass of our favorite beverage at hand. Deb Fins, chair of the nominating committee, proposed a toast to our outgoing president for her 4 years leading us. Then she presented our new slate of officers and board members.

As her last official act, Nancy recapped the events of the past year, and described how our plans were disrupted with the arrival of COVID in mid- March. Since then, rabbi, leadership, and the board have been planning how we can stay engaged, and our plans for reopening when it is safe to do so.

As incoming president, I talked about my feelings in accepting this position, initial hesitation, then my gratitude for the confidence you have shown in me.

We discussed staying connected with new technology and phone calls, initiatives such as new havurot, a voter registration project, the beginning of planning events to celebrate our 100th anniversary, and the question on everyone's mind: when can we get together again physically, and what will it look like? Who would have thought in March how extensive these changes would be?

In closing, I have written about our reopening plans in another article elsewhere in this edition. My great thanks to Dr. Jeremy Golding for leading our Reopening Task Force, which is coordinating our detailed planning. We will be sending out frequent updates on the reopening process. The highest priority is ensuring our health, safety, and security. Despite our desire to gather together for prayer and song, it is not safe at this time. Please let me know of your interests or issues through the BI office (507 756 6204). I look forward to hearing from you, and despite COVID, planning for a great year.

RIMON SUMMER FUN Dale Rosenberg, Director of Education/Programming

We have a new Rimon program this summer. Instead of going on our usual summer hiatus, Rimon Religious School is offering summer fun and learning in July and August, without leaving your home. Starting on July 7, there will be an online family activity each day on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Most will come to you in the form of a video recording or written material, so families can schedule their viewing and reading when it works for them.

Look at the fun and exciting offerings we have planned for each day:

Tuesday is Storytime and Crafts video with Rowan, co-sponsored by PJ Library of Central Massachusetts. Rowan Mason, Rimon's Early Childhood Educator, reads a PJ Library book and demonstrates a craft themed to the book. New videos will be released every Tuesday throughout the summer and you can watch them whenever you want. Then follow up by trying the craft yourself. The books are generally aimed at children 7 and under.



Wednesday is time for an assortment of Jewish family activities. Each week we'll release a video for families with school-age children, with a rotating series of themes. I'm busy working on producing the Wednesday programs, in which I am joined by with some guest lecturers/performers. Themes will include: Jewish Heroes; Hebrew Songs; Cooking Corner; Values through Story; Games and Puzzles.



On Thursday, I will send out activities to Rimon families to try over the weekend, as I had been doing during the school year. These "Thursday Thoughts" consist of links, ideas, and files full of activities for Shabbat and the weekend in general. Activities represent an assortment of topics to interest a variety of Jewish families. Links and documents have covered Jewish art, American Jewish history, food, text, and more. Thursdays Thoughts are aimed at families with children of school age.

On Fridays at 11:00 a.m. Rowan Mason leads our Tot Shabbat Service, designed for children five and under with an accompanying adult. This all singing, all dancing, all praying half hour gets everyone in the Shabbat mood. Patterned on a traditional service, Rowan introduces the ideas in the main Jewish prayers through song and dance. To represent Torah reading, Rowan reads an appropriately themed story. This is a half hour Zoom meeting – one you and your children will leave in the right frame of mind for Shabbat.

The Rimon Summer Program 2020 is not limited to current Rimon families, or BI Members. There is no charge for the program, although donations to Congregation Beth Israel are always welcome. For more information, contact office at 508-756-6204 or send me an email at dale.rosenberg@bethisraelworc.org

We hope this message finds you and your loved ones well. We are writing today to give you an update on where Congregation Beth Israel stands on the topic of reopening.

The current challenges we're navigating – individually, in our families, and as a community – have often felt even harder because we can't come together in person to support each other the way we normally would in difficult times. Yet we're inspired by the ways our community has gotten creative and stayed connected and by the enthusiasm of individuals who've stepped up to lead those initiatives.

Almost four months ago, we affirmed that no religious observance or service could be prioritized over the health and safety of each and any member of our community. This physical distance we have experienced has certainly been a burden on so many members of our community, in joy and in pain, in loss and in success. While the world has progressed in its fight against the COVID pandemic, we all know that it is indeed still spreading, extremely dangerous, and puts lives at risk.

As a community built upon a foundation of Pikuach Nefesh - saving a life has utmost priority - we carry the extra serious burden of ensuring the spaces under our supervision remain as safe as possible. We have an obligation to go beyond the letter of the law. Practically, this means that even as MA has moved into Phase Two, we will take extra-precaution with our physical gathering space through the summer months, letting our building rest, and planning for a phased, incremental return, while continuing to provide an array of physically distant, yet emotionally and spiritually close programming and worship experiences. The Rabbinical Assembly has strongly suggested a cautious approach to reopening, even as individual states proceed through reopening stages.



While we don't yet have an exact timeline, please know that when we meet, we will adhere to or exceed the safety guidance provided by local authorities and best practices for prayer communities in MA. We will rely on each member of the community to uphold the guidance and will lean on leadership to enforce it. To minimize risk, we will have relatively low risk tolerance when it comes to the physical risk of gathering. This means that we will take a somewhat slower and more conservative approach than the one permitted by state and city guidelines.

So, this is what we know at the present time.

For at least the next 6 weeks, through mid-August, we will be meeting exclusively on Zoom. We will continue to offer excellent weekly programs and twice daily weekday services.

We know that the High Holidays will be different from the full High Holiday services we have had in the past. Please read the Rabbi's article for more information.

Our Reopening task force is developing a plan to regain the use of the building. This task force includes our rabbi, staff, president, and leaders of our medical task force, ritual committee, facilities committee, and security committee. They are meeting regularly to ensure a safe environment for all, as we make decisions regarding how and when to reopen. That process will unfold over the coming months, not weeks.

We are committed to keeping you apprised of this process, and communicating our plans as they develop. Stay tuned for ongoing updates by email, and please plan to attend our virtual Town Hall on Monday, July 13 after minyan, so that we can address some of your questions.

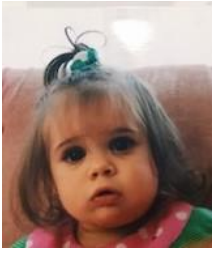
Right now, this leadership is united in the belief that it is not yet safe for us to open the building. We are living our Jewish values, where Pikuach Nefesh, saving a life, and the safety of all who are a part of our community, is paramount.

Our synagogue is not a building; we are a community that sometimes uses one. We will continue to find ways to enhance the beautiful community that is the congregation of Beth Israel. What can you do now to help us? Please fill out the survey from the ritual committee promptly. Your ideas and input will help with our planning.

If there is any way we can support you during these difficult times, please contact the BI office by phone (508 756-6204) or Rabbi Fellman by email: rabbi@bethisraelworc.org.

Congratulations to Beth Israel's Graduates!

Graduations this year were kind of different from other years. Whether graduation happened via Zoom, in a parking lot, or at a drive-in movie theater, BI is proud of our community's children and grandchildren who have recently completed high school or college. Here is a little bit about them, as reported by parents, grandparents, or the graduates themselves.



From Anna Perlin:

Rebecca - graduated from Desautels Faculty of Management at McGill University with a business commerce degree with major in Marketing and a concentration in International Business. She is currently exploring her options to land her dream job in Advertising/Marketing in the Boston or New York area.



Sam - graduated from the Advanced Math and Science Academy Charter School. He is starting Wentworth Institute of Technology in the fall studying architecture.



From Mary Jane Rein:

Julian Kates is graduating from Worcester Academy. He plans to attend the Stern Business School at NYU.



From Leah Silverstein:

After I graduate Worcester Technical High School, my plans are to attend Quinsigamond Community College in the fall and major in Graphic Arts.



From Minna and Ira Gregerman: Our granddaughter Kayla graduated Virginia Tech Magna cum Laude and is going on to Veterinary school. It has been her goal since she was 6 years old. We are very proud of her.



From Wayne and Suzan Ushman:

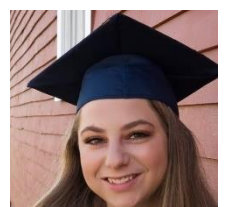
Benjamin graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with a major in International Affairs, and double minored in Middle East Studies and Organization & Strategic Management. He is now looking for a position in International Relations or Political Risk Analysis - if you have any ideas, let him know!



Dov graduated from Worcester Academy and will be attending Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) in the fall. He plans on majoring in Computer Science.



From Sandy Tall: Shira Tall currently works as a Communication Specialist for LUK, Inc., a non-profit social service agency in Fitchburg. She graduated in December 2019 from the University of Connecticut with a BA in human rights and communication; honors and cum laude. Her future plans include adopting a dog and returning to school for a Master of Social Work.



News from the BI Sharing/Caring Clearinghouse: Letters to the Elderly

Love for the Elderly: A Local Letter Writing Campaign from Elder Services of Worcester Area

We need your help. We want you to write letter(s) that will uplift an elderly person in the Worcester Area! You can write by yourself, with friends, or your family. Take a few minutes right now, write a letter to an elder, maybe tell a joke, draw a picture or doodle, and let them know they are loved. Making a difference can be so simple, yet can be incredibly impactful!



Before you write your letter(s), here are some guidelines:

1. Letters must be legible (large print) and handwritten. No worries if you're not artistic—your card as what you'd like to receive.
2. Avoid religion/politics, your letter should resonate with anyone.
3. Exclude the date (day, month, and year).
4. Start your letter with a simple generic phrase for your letter may be delivered to a woman or a man, for example, "Dear Friend," "Hello Neighbor," "Howdy," or "Good Day."
5. Embrace creativity! Recipients love it when the letters are personal. We encourage you to make your letters detailed, colorful, thoughtful and heartfelt.
6. Be kind and thoughtful. This is a one-way letter exchange, meaning you will not receive a letter back, so remember that no reciprocation attached is part of the beauty of your act of kindness, and the recipients don't feel burdened by feeling obligated or being unable to respond.
7. Envelope your letters if you can! But please DO NOT SEAL the envelope.
8. Share your act of kindness! We love seeing photos of your letter writing, and it helps promote our cause more than you know. Tag us @ESWAorg #ESWALoveForElderly
9. Send us as many letters as you'd like!

Ready to mail? Please send to:

Elder Services of Worcester Area
Attn: Love for the Elderly
67 Millbrook St., Suite 100
Worcester, MA 01606

Have questions? Reach out to Jenn at jknight@eswa.org or 508-756-1545 ext.318



Desperately Seeking Video Editor

Are you hiding your talent? We are looking for you (or a friend) with expertise in Video editing to help us create a BI Family video. If you have these skills and the time to volunteer for an upcoming project for the BI Community, please contact Dale Rosenberg at dale.rosenberg@bethisraelworc.org



Be remembered forever by including Beth Israel in your estate plan (will, trust, retirement plan, or life insurance policy).

Beth Israel Legacy Circle, so far ...

Myra & Jay Aframe Howard and Susan Alfred Elizabeth & Joel Baker
Bernard Bailin Patricia Bizzell Lydia Borenstein
Eric Capellari Michelle Cochran David Cohen
Herbert Daroff Marlene Farbman Deborah Fins
Norman Glick Z'L Minna & Ira Gregerman
Peter Herman & Stefanie Bradie
Joel Kaufman & Carol Goodman Kaufman
Sharon & Elliott Krefetz Anna Krendel Benjamin & Cara Lyons
Judith Markowitz Deborah Martin Sondra Padow
Mary Jane Rein Toby Z'L & Chuck Richmond Ida Rotman Z'L
Merna & Edward Z'L Siff Bonnie & Richard Silver Ronald Silver
Richard Silverman Paula Sommer Steven & Denise Sosnoff
Morty Sreiberg Nina & Alan Stoll Laura & Richard Traiger
Dr. Sheila Trugman Selma & Irving White David Wilner
Steve & Judy Wolfe Sharon & Alan Yaffe
Anonymous (6)

**Thank you for your generous commitment to
our continuing success**

For more information:

<http://bethisraelworc.org/donate-to-beth-israel/life-legacy/>
or contact: ecapellari9928@charter.net or
HillelKarl@gmail.com or je45marko@aol.com or
danbshertzer@gmail.com or
stevesosnoff@gmail.com or stollam@aol.com

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Office Hours (Phone and Fax only): Monday thru Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.



Congregation Beth Israel

Welcome. Engage. Inspire. Grow.

Upcoming Events at Beth Israel July 2020

Remember: All programs can be accessed via computer, tablet, smartphone, or regular telephone. Call the office at 508 756-6204 for assistance in accessing any program.

Wednesday, July 1	7:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Writing Group with Pat Bizzell Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Reopening Task Force Meeting Playground Meeting
Thursday, July 2	7:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish 100 th Celebration Committee Meeting Evening Services with Mishneh Study including Mourner's Kaddish Ritual Committee Meeting
Friday, July 3	Office Closed – Independence Day Observed 7:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m. 8:09 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Kabbalat Shabbat B'Yachad Candle Lighting
Saturday, July 4	Shabbat Shalom and Happy Independence Day! 9:20 p.m.	Havdalah with the Fellmans
Sunday, July 5	8:15 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish
Monday, July 6	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Security Committee Meeting
Tuesday, July 7	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Rimon -Story and Crafts Corner with Rowan
Wednesday, July 8	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Reopening Task Force Meeting Rimon – Hebrew Songs about Hope with Dale and Shannon
Thursday, July 9	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services with Mishneh Study including Mourner's Kaddish Rimon – Thursday Thoughts
Friday, July 10	7:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 8:07 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish TGIF with Rabbi Fellman Rimon: Tot Shabbat with Rowan Yoga with Caryn Gold Kabbalat Shabbat b'Yachad Candle lighting
Saturday, July 11	Shabbat Shalom! 9:15 p.m.	Havdalah with the Fellman family
Sunday, July 12	8:15 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish
Monday, July 13	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Reopening Town Hall
Tuesday, July 14	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Rimon -Story and Crafts Corner with Rowan

Wednesday, July 15	7:30 a.m. 5:00 p.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Writing Group with Pat Bizzell Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Finance Committee Meeting Rimon – Cooking Corner with Dale
Thursday, July 16	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services with Mishneh Study including Mourner's Kaddish Rimon – Thursday Thoughts
Friday, July 17	7:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 8:02 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish TGIF with Rabbi Fellman Rimon: Tot Shabbat with Rowan Yoga with Caryn Gold Kabbalat Shabbat b'Yachad Candle lighting
Saturday, July 18	Shabbat Shalom! 9:10 p.m.	Havdalah with the Fellman family
Sunday, July 19	8:15 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish
Monday, July 20	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish
Tuesday, July 21	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Rimon -Story and Crafts Corner with Rowan
Wednesday, July 22	Rosh Hodesh Av 7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Reopening Task Force Meeting Rimon – Jewish Heroes (Jonas Salk)
Thursday, July 23	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services with Mishneh Study including Mourner's Kaddish BI Board Meeting Rimon – Thursday Thoughts
Friday, July 24	7:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 7:56 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish TGIF with Rabbi Fellman Rimon: Tot Shabbat with Rowan Yoga with Caryn Gold Kabbalat Shabbat b'Yachad Candle lighting
Saturday, July 25	Shabbat Shalom! 9:10 p.m.	Havdalah with the Fellman family
Sunday, July 26	8:15 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish
Monday, July 27	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish
Tuesday, July 28	7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish Rimon -Story and Crafts Corner with Rowan
Wednesday, July 29	Erev Tisha B'Av 7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish Evening Services including Mourner's Kaddish and Eicha Reopening Task Force Meeting Rimon – Values Through Story
Thursday, July 30	Tisha B'Av 7:30 a.m. 7:00 p.m. 7:30 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish and Eicha Evening Services with Mishneh Study including Mourner's Kaddish Ritual Committee Meeting Rimon – Thursday Thoughts
Friday, July 31	7:30 a.m. 10:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m. 1:00 p.m. 6:00 p.m. 7:49 p.m.	Shacharit Services including Mourner's Kaddish TGIF with Rabbi Fellman Rimon: Tot Shabbat with Rowan Yoga with Caryn Gold Kabbalat Shabbat b'Yachad Candle lighting