

Please check the online Beth El calendar or email office@bethelhebrew.org before leaving to attend ANY event. As we go to press, there are no in-person events in February!



Beth El Bulletin

Beth El Hebrew Congregation

February 2021
Sh'vat/Adar 5781

Worship Services

Friday, February 5
Erev Shabbat Services
6:30 pm

Saturday, February 6
Shabbat Morning Services
10:30 am

Friday, February 12
Erev Shabbat Services
6:30 pm
Sixth Grade Student-Led
Services
7:30 pm

Saturday, February 13
Shabbat Morning Services
10:30 am
Tot Shabbat
11:00 am

Friday, February 19
Erev Shabbat Services
6:30 pm

Saturday, February 20
Shabbat Morning Services
10:30 am

Friday, February 26
Erev Shabbat Services
6:30 pm

Saturday, February 27
Shabbat Morning Services
10:30 am
Purim Tot Shabbat
11:00 am



Beth El is Going Strong! Connect with us! Connect with each other!

Opportunities to Chat

Noon Drop-In Chat
Wednesdays, Noon

Coffee and Clergy
Fridays, 11 am

Shabbat Social Hour
Fridays, 6 pm

Oneg Table Talk
Fridays, 7:30 pm

Adult Education

Introduction to
Judaism

Genius of the Rabbis

Interfaith Learning

For Those Who Can't
Believe

Torah Study

Special Events

Brotherhood Public
Policy Forum on
Antisemitism

Jesus and Judaism:
Why the Connection
Matters

International
Scholars in their
Residence:
Jews of Australia
Jews of the Balkans

Purim Spiel

Think. Feel. Do. Jewish

HaMakom: A Time
and a Place to Pray
Tuesdays, 6 pm

Candles with the
Cantor
Fridays, 6:45 pm

Erev Shabbat
Services
Fridays, 6:30 pm

Shabbat Morning
Services
Saturdays, 10:30 am

In this Issue

| | | | | | |
|-------------------------------------|----|-------------------------|----|---|----|
| Rabbi's Remarks | 2 | Brotherhood News..... | 8 | Member News..... | 15 |
| Divorce/Separation | | WRJ News..... | 9 | Jewish Disability Month . | 16 |
| Support Group | 2 | Carpenter's Shelter | | The Ark in the Chapel in | |
| Cantor's Corner | 3 | News..... | 9 | the Woods | 17 |
| Tot Shabbat | 3 | WRJ Social Action..... | 10 | Jesus and Judaism | 18 |
| President's Point of View | .4 | Ross Scholarship Nomina | | International Scholars in | |
| Book Sale | 4 | tion Period Opens..... | 10 | Their Residences..... | 18 |
| Congregational Kudos | 4 | Israel Committee News.. | 11 | Hamantaschen at Home. | 19 |
| Religious School Report.... | 5 | ALIVE!..... | 11 | Ernie Levy z"l | 20 |
| Readers of Beth El | 5 | Calendar..... | 12 | Erica Danty z"l | 20 |
| Executive Director's Entry | 6 | Donations..... | 14 | <i>...and lots of tantalizing tidbits scattered through- out, so don't skip a page!</i> | |
| J-Care Journal | 7 | Permanent Endowment | | | |
| Caring Community Committee | 7 | Fund News..... | 15 | | |
| | | Bar Mitzvah..... | 15 | | |





Rabbi's Remarks: *Allowing Ourselves to Receive*

THE MISHNAH tractate *Pe'ah* ("corners," referring to the corners of one's fields) devotes long pages to the many laws of giving to the poor. In *Pe'ah*, our sages teach us about the three gifts for the poor that come from the fields – *pe'ah*, *leket* (gleanings of grain that fell from a reaper's hand or the sickle during harvest), and *shich'chah* (forgotten sheaves left or forgotten in the field as well as overlooked produce). It also teaches us about gifts due to the poor from vineyards or trees: *oleot* (immature clusters of grapes), and *peret* (grapes that fall from their clusters while being taken from the vine). Further, *Pe'ah* teaches about the "*ma'aser ani*," the commanded tithe for the poor every third and sixth year of the tithing cycle as well as laws of *tzedakah*. Taken from the Torah, these teachings form the foundational backbone of Jewish giving, all of which are undergirded by the belief that we are caretakers of the earth and all material possessions. Any abundance we enjoy ultimately belongs to God, or, as Tom Waits reminds us, "It ain't a purchase, it's a rental."

We have pages and pages of laws that give shape to righteous giving. But when it comes to righteous *receiving*, our tradition does not teach that it is also a mitzvah to accept *tzedakah* from others, be it *tzedakah* from individuals or from organizations whose missions include helping those in great need. Put simply, in the classic, commanded sense, while it is a mitzvah to give, it is not a mitzvah to receive. It would be one thing if all that kept us from receiving help when we needed it was that it is not a mitzvah to accept help. Certainly, there are other reasons that transcend religiosity, for many of us remain more comfortable when we give than when we receive. Why? Psychologist John Amodeo invites us to consider five possible explanations:

1. We may refuse to accept help as a defense mechanism against intimacy.
2. We may believe that receiving means letting go of control in a relationship.
3. We fear that when we receive, it comes with strings attached.
4. We believed others when they told us that it was selfish to receive.
5. We feel a self-imposed pressure to reciprocate.

In truth, in our times of need, when we allow ourselves to receive we create connections through softened hearts that allow us to get closer to others. Receiving is less about ceding control of a relationship and more about gaining control over difficult circumstances. It is not selfish to receive when we have unmet basic needs – we each have a basic human right to safety, shelter, food, and clothing. Remember, Judaism teaches that "Pride comes before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Proverbs 16:18).

At the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic, Beth El established an emergency relief fund. While it may not be commanded by God to receive *tzedakah* and no one can make us accept help even when we need it most, may none of the above obstacles interfere with any person's willingness to reach out confidentially to me for financial assistance. If you or if another member of our congregation is in need during these difficult times, please contact me: dspinrad@bethelhebrew.org.

Now and always, we are Beth El Hebrew Congregation, a sacred Jewish community for all who seek connection, meaning, and healing.

— Rabbi David Spinrad

Divorce and Separation Support Group

ALDERSGATE CHURCH is holding a new, non-denominational (non-religious) virtual weekly evening support group for anyone who is thinking of or going through separation and divorce. Our group fosters healing from the pain of separation or divorce. The video is available to view prior to the weekly discussions. The DivorceCare videos cover topics essential to recovering from the hurt of separation or divorce. Please see the DivorceCare.org website for additional information about the program.

There is an associated workbook you can purchase directly from DivorceCare. There is no charge for the support group, but Aldersgate welcomes your donations. Beth El members have participated in this program in the past and have thought highly of it.

The 2021 workshops started on Jan. 26, but new participants are welcome at any time. You can get more information from Joan Weber at joanweber@icloud.com.

Cantor's Corner



HOW ARE YOU?

No really, I mean it.

How are you?

We have had quite a year. Pandemic. Political turmoil. Loss. Loneliness. It's a lot to manage.

Sometimes when we are asked how we are, we feel the need to say "fine," even when we aren't. Perhaps we want to be agreeable and we want to make those around us comfortable by just saying we are "OK," even if we aren't. But what if we answered differently?

What if we felt comfortable giving a more thorough answer?

I feel so blessed to be the cantor at Beth El. Beth El is the Jewish community I would want to be a part of even if I weren't its cantor. Through the work of our Caring Community Committee – as well as all of the other acts of *tzedakah* that our community engages in – we aspire to create a Jewish community that values healing and connection. It's because of these values that I pray that we can feel comfortable and safe sharing how we are doing – even if it's more complicated than just "OK."

If you are doing great – say that. If you are celebrating something, share the news so others can share your joy.

But if you are struggling; if you are experiencing loneliness; if you need the friendship and care of the Beth El community – please let our clergy team know.

Let us be your community, not just in good times, but in challenging times as well.

If you are struggling financially, contact **Rabbi Spinrad** to see if you qualify for assistance from our COVID 19 Emergency Relief Fund.

If you're struggling with loneliness, consider joining us on one of our many Zoom calls throughout the week.

If you are struggling in school, please let your teachers or your student teachers know.

If you are struggling in your religious studies or b'nei mitzvah preparation, please let us know.

If you are struggling in any way with your health, whether physical or emotional, please make sure you reach out to a doctor.

Here at Beth El we are a sacred community, and we truly care about you.

And: if we haven't spoken in a while, please send me an email, and let's set up a phone conversation. I'd love to ask you how you're doing.

— Cantor Kaufman



Tot Shabbat Does Purim and More!

AT THE SATURDAY, Feb. 13, Tot Shabbat, we will talk about being careful with the words we use. Remember the old story about trying to gather back the feathers that were shaken out of the pillow? We will also sing about *shalom bayit*, peace in our homes.

And then, on Feb. 27, we'll celebrate Purim! While Purim 2020 was our last in-person Tot Shabbat — the photo shows Beverly and me looking just like sisters at that Tot Shabbat — I'll do my best to make our online Purim 2021 just as much fun. Children can dress up as their favorite person or animal. I'll share my kiddie Megillah up close. And having fun will be the name of the game!

Tot Shabbat, Feb. 13 at 11:00 am:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89278163807>

Purim Tot Shabbat, Feb. 27 at 11:00 am:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89053888114>

Zoom gali gali! Let's stay connected!

Miss Carol (Carol Boyd Leon)





President's Point of View *Hello Friends*

DURING THESE DAYS of change and stress, I lean on positivity and happiness and the occasional laugh as a way to approach each day, week and month.

We at Beth El are quite fortunate to have two members who wear multiple hats with exactly the same approach, **Dana Arnold** and **Janet Hlatky**.

While the building has been closed Dana and Janet's commitment to Beth El have been a marvel.

Although we are short-staffed, Dana has managed to keep the front office, which mostly operates from home these days, operating efficiently, smartly, and kindly, and, as always, with her trademark immense grace. In addition, Dana has ably managed to chair the Permanent Endowment Fund Board helping to insure a long-term, viable set of funds are available to the temple for major capital projects. It's a lot to juggle, and I wanted you — the membership — to know how much as Temple President we all appreciate her. I want to publicly thank her for all she does.

By the time you receive this *Bulletin*, it is quite possible that the Temple Board will have successfully agreed to (and will have made public) its selection for the new Executive Director. But before that happens, I wanted to let you know what an incredible leader, member of our Board, Editor-in-Chief of *The Bulletin*, website manager, and most thankfully, Interim Executive Director upon Adam Wallach's departure **Janet Hlatky** has been. Janet is a Super Volunteer! Janet's passion and commitment to Beth El are boundless. As president, I am incredibly thankful for her skills and partnership, as she has been tremendous in managing the office during this time of transition. It's great to call Janet a friend, and I look forward to her continued support and love of Beth El.

This is my column for the month. Joy and thanks.

We are Beth El and we are moving forward.

L'Shalom,
— Alan Cohn

We Are Looking Forward to Our 19th Annual Book Sale (Someday) and It Will Be Bigger Than Ever!

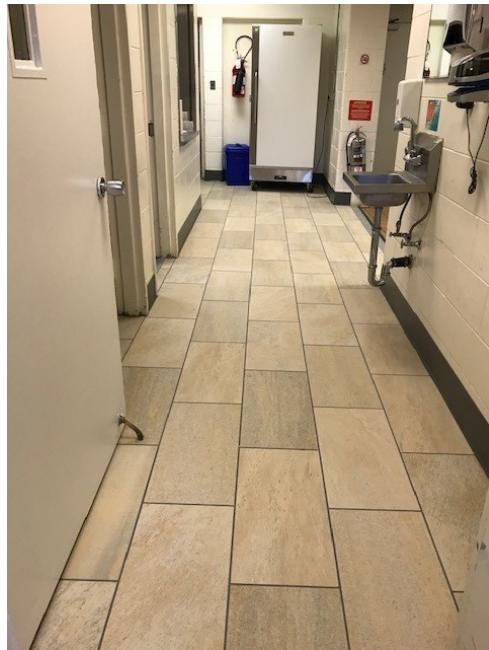
Now is a great time to go through your book shelves and put aside the books, movies, and puzzles you no longer want for this very popular fundraiser.

Even while we are closed, you can bring your contributions to the building and leave them in the vestibule. If the stairs are a problem or you have a lot, unload near the loading dock and ring the bell there to let the staff know you have brought books. If you need help, just let us know and we will pick them up. Eventually we will be asking for volunteers to help with this gigantic fundraiser.

Questions or need help? Contact **Rhoda Goldman** at lennieg@cox.net or 703-992-9370.



Congregational Kudos



Look at our beautiful new asbestos-free kitchen flooring! Thank you, Helene Cohen, for getting this done.

Religious School Report

The Value of Simcha



I KNEW very little about *Rosh Chodesh* before my year in Israel. I was surprised to see how many of my teachers and peers showed up to class on the first day of the Hebrew month of Adar in costume. Together they sang, “*Mishnichnas Adar, marbim b’simcha!*” These words in English mean, “When we welcome Adar, we increase our joy.” When I think of joy in Judaism, Purim is the first holiday that comes to mind. Purim is one of the happiest holidays of the Jewish year, and it is one of my favorites.

Simcha, joy, is a central Jewish spiritual practice. There are many Hebrew words for happy states of consciousness in Judaism; *simcha, sasson, chedva, gila, reena, ditza*. Each of these words has its own flavor and use in Jewish prayer, rituals, and sacred texts. Judaism recognizes that *simcha*, joy, isn’t something we experience all the time. We have to create space for it. So, you might be surprised to know that *simcha* is actually a commandment. In the words of a great Hasidic rabbi, “*mitzvah gedolah lihiyot b’simcha tamid*,” it’s a *mitzvah* to always be happy.” It’s a *mitzvah* or a commandment because we have to try at it. Happiness is not second nature.

We are taught in the Torah that the Israelites responded to the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai by saying, “*naaseh v’nishmah*, we will do, and we will listen.” Our ancestors recognized that sometimes we have to do something that leads us towards happiness even if we don’t always feel that way.

Creating moments of great joy doesn’t have to be as grand as Simchat Torah, Purim, a B’nei Mitzvah, wedding, bris, or baby naming. It can be as simple as taking

time to laugh with a friend, play with a pet, or stare up at the clouds. According to Hasidic rabbis, “joy breaks through barriers.” When someone is happy, their happiness can break through the barriers of their own sadness or someone else’s.” In essence, happiness is contagious — in a good way!

During COVID, it has been so easy to fall into sadness and grief. It’s been that much harder to find moments to truly be joyful and to celebrate wholeheartedly, and yet it’s possible. This year Purim won’t be the same, but it sure will be fun! We’ll come together online as a community for the Muppets Purim Spiel on Sunday, Feb. 21 at 10:00 am, followed by a Purim celebration online. We know it won’t be the same, but we hope that you’ll come dressed up and ready to laugh and smile even if only for a little while.

On Feb. 12, *Rosh Chodesh Adar*, I invite you to join me in welcoming the new month, and may it be a new month filled with increased joy and laughter that helps us to break through the barriers of sadness and to be reminded of all that there is to celebrate in our lives together.

Chag Purim Sameach!
Rabbi Bailey Romano
bromano@bethelhebrew.org

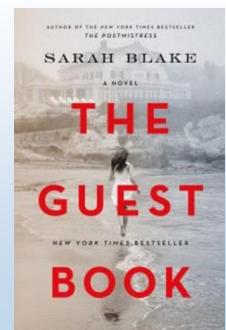


Readers of Beth El

THE READERS OF BETH EL will “meet” next on March 1 at 7:00 pm to discuss *The Guest Book* by Sarah Blake. This book has been described as a poignant family saga that illuminates the great divide that separates the rich and poor, black and white, Protestant and Jew. It is a very long novel so don’t plan to read it the night before!

For those who want to read ahead, our book for April will be *The Only Woman in the Room* by Marie Benedict.

— Lynne Orens





Executive Director's Entry: Technology at Beth El

LET'S TALK BASIC technology: light switches. There are switches all over our building. Some of them don't appear to do anything. Tiz a puzzlement. In January I found the switch that makes the shades on the clerestory windows above and at the rear of the sanctuary go up and down. It's in a closet, of sorts. Next to it is a light switch for that space ... that only works if some other switch somewhere else is already in the on position. I have not found the magic enabler switch yet. Maybe it is one of the switches that don't seem to do anything. Hmm...

In the arena of computing and phone technology, big changes are afoot in the office. We are slowly replacing some very old desktop computers with newer models. We are getting ready to replace our antiquated office phone system with a new one (at no increase in cost) that will give staff so much more capability. For instance, we will be able to receive our voice mails from the office in email or on our smartphones! We are looking at moving away from VPN connectivity for staff to true cloud-based computing, which (among lots of other benefits) will make it possible for staff to view the security cameras at Beth El from computers at work and at home. This is a major enhancement to security for our building; when one of our alarms goes off, senior staff will be able to check the cameras immediately instead of driving to the building to see what is going on. We can be in touch with police on the scene while viewing the scene. Especially now, immediate response capability is critical.

We are working on automating more of our forms and processes within ShulCloud. The next step is a "real" online membership form and member interest survey rather than providing a PDF that people have to fill in on paper and mail in. Some of you have not updated your skills and interests information since you joined...

whenever that was! Beth El definitely has lots more activities being offered these days (book clubs! yoga!! knitting!!!) You probably have new skills and interests to share! Stay tuned this winter/spring for an email inviting each adult to log in and update us.

Many of you have by now discovered how easy it is to make payments and donations on ShulCloud. The office is always ready to help you update your information, but here's some other information you can manage yourself (if you are logged in).

Start by clicking on My Account to:

- Add/update yahrzeits by scrolling down to My Yahrzeits.
- Update your own address or add a alternate address (such as a winter address) by scrolling down to Edit My Addresses.
- See your recent statement by scrolling down to My Statements.
- Control how much of your information is visible to other members (only to members who log in) in the directory by scrolling down to Edit My Directory.
- Store a credit card (secure and encrypted) for future donation and payment use, or update one you already have on file, by scrolling down to My Payment Methods.

Go to the Directory to:

- Add a directory entry photo.
- Hide any or all of your member information from the online directory.

If you have any questions about any of that, email me or email the office and we will assist.

Janet Hlatky

Interim Executive Director

jhlatky@bethelhebrew.org

Thank you to everyone who donated in support of the Cantor's Concert 2021, *Songs for the Journey*. Whether you were a sponsor, a participant, or a viewer, I'm grateful for your continued support.

Your donations this year supported the sacred work of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (The RAC). As the newsletter goes to press in mid-January, before the concert will have occurred, please see next months bulletin for a complete list of sponsors so I can thank you appropriately.

With gratitude for being your cantor,
Cantor Jason Kaufman

J-Care Journal

So Proud of the School We Are NOT!



THOSE WHO know us know that we do not consider ourselves a traditional, run-of-the-mill preschool. In incorporating the Reggio Emilia Philosophy, we have let go of many of the old standards. We have broken new ground, and our kids are thriving. I want to share my pride in our ability to shed the old and embrace the new.

I am proud that:

- Our kids are not learning by rote, but instead are learning to explore and question the world around them.
- We are not in an “academic” setting where kids are learning about letters, numbers, etc., by sitting at a table and repeating after a teacher, but instead are learning in the context of the daily explorations that respond to the children’s interests and curiosity.
- Our explorations are not an exercise in one-dimensional learning, but that our teachers are adept at tying in science, art, math, and language arts as the classes explore each topic.
- We are not a school that sends home cookie-cutter projects, but rather focuses more on the process of art in learning as well as documentation of the process to demonstrate learning.
- Our rooms do not display (many) pre-fabricated bulletin boards and decorations, but rather the walls of

each classroom show the personalities of the community in the classroom.

- We are replacing our plastics, colored roll paper, and packaged materials with natural fibers, cloth, and organic materials that bring a natural feel into our classrooms.
- We don’t hide inside away from the beautiful grounds of our synagogue. Nature, as the third classroom, is a huge part of our day and our learning. The trails, the front lawn and, now, finally, the **Rabbi Brett Isserow** outdoor play space offer incredible opportunities for learning and exploring.
- We never say never. Our wonderful educators found new ways to guide our kids when the pandemic forced a change in the way we work together.

Finally, I am proud of the parents who don’t close their minds to new possibilities, but instead trust in us and allow us to have this wonderful adventure with their children. Our school thrives in the partnership we have with the parents.

Dina Backer
Director, J-Care Alexandria



The Caring Community Committee Is Here for You

WE’VE ADDED a button to the Beth El website that allows its members to access Caring Community Committee services with one click. By going to www.bethelhebrew.org and clicking on the yellow button part way down the left margin, those who are ill, grieving a loss, or simply feeling the need to talk with a friendly listener may find the help they are seeking or advice to point them toward needed services. All such calls and subsequent services are strictly confidential.

Although we cannot meet in person due to the pandemic, our clergy have been leading a Shabbat service every Friday night on Zoom. If you have a computer, you can join with other congregants to maintain your connection to those in our community and to reduce the feelings of isolation and separation that so many of us are experiencing. However, note that the start time has changed; services now begin at 6:30 pm.

In January the committee called families in the congregation to check on how they were doing. Although the CCC cannot maintain all of its projects during the pandemic, it has continued to provide helping hands and listening ears to those who reach out to its chair, **Ruth Perlstein**, at 703-978-9341 or rperl8607@gmail.com. Please don’t hesitate to contact Ruth for assistance, or to let her know that you would like to join the group of mitzvah-makers who serve on the committee or its on-call list.

Brotherhood News

DUE TO social distancing protocols, the number of Brotherhood events remains limited. Yet in early January your Brotherhood once again hosted a Sunday morning on-line Bagels and Banter, providing an opportunity for Beth El men to schmooze with friends about (this month) politics, football, and Israel. Thanks to **Ron Sturman** for once again organizing this monthly social gathering.

On Sunday, Feb. 7 (10:00 am – noon), Brotherhood will host an on-line Public Policy Forum on “Recognizing and Combating Antisemitism at Home and Abroad.” Panel members will include **Kenneth Stern** (AJC, Bard College), **Meredith Weisel** (ADL), and **Ira Forman** (Georgetown University). Thanks to **Jeff Davidson** and the Brotherhood Program Committee for arranging this timely event. See the program’s flyer and the weekly email for the forum’s zoom link, or contact **Ron Sturman** (rgsturman@msn.com) for more information. No registration is required.

On Feb. 21, under the leadership of **Rabbi Bailey Romano** and Brotherhood Vice-President **Matt Mutterperl**, our annual **Purim Carnival** will be held online. The specifics are unknown at the time of writing, but check your Beth El office and Religious School emails for information and updates. Joining in the fun will be free. Among the ideas being discussed by the planning committee are scavenger hunts, raffles, jackbox games, and a magic show.

However, as noted last month, the 63rd Annual Interfaith Dinner between Beth El and Fairlington United Methodist Church, normally scheduled for a Tuesday evening in February, has officially been postponed and will be rescheduled to a later date by FUMC, this year’s host for the event.

In terms of other core Brotherhood activities, this issue of the *Bulletin* includes a full-page display of changes to the Chapel in the Woods’ new ark doors. Back in September, we noted that after 18 years of exposure to the elements, the ark doors needed replacement.

Those doors have arrived and have been installed. Joshua Perelman at Trophy Mart did the engraving (at no charge!). We thank Brotherhood’s **Stuart Davis** and **Jay Jarvis** (from California, no less) for spearheading this effort. Under the proposal and guidance of **Jeremy Flachs**, the old doors have been refurbished and are being donated to the Beth El Preschool. Socially distanced dedication ceremonies are anticipated for when the weather warms up.

Also in this past month, the Brotherhood Catering Committee met virtually to discuss the status of its services and likely future options. Thank you to Committee members for your time and insights: **Joel Bernstein**, **Jake Gallun**, **Bobbie Gershman**, **Judy Jankowski**, **Matt Mutterperl**, **Sue Rabin**, and **Howard Wahlberg**. There was broad agreement that the earliest event Brotherhood would be able to cater would not be until June (although we will reassess the situation in March). Once we resume operations (a decision that will be based on what is allowed by state guidelines), it is likely that Brotherhood would be able to provide “fancy” boxed luncheons for outdoor consumption within a Beth El-provided tent. Until further notice, Brotherhood will not be able to provide indoor service, buffet luncheons (neither served nor self-serve), hot meals, or catered dinners.

To the previously-published names of the many donors who have provided gifts to Brotherhood this year, we add **Annette Kilian**, **Russell Koffler**, **Michael Tanner**, **Werner Whitacre**, and **Michael Wiener**. Thank you. In the absence of catering profits and our intentional forgoing of dues revenues, such gifts have helped enable Brotherhood to continue its support for worthwhile activities.

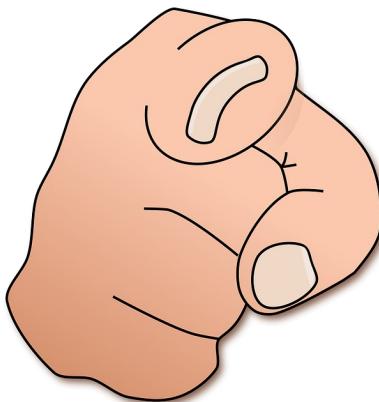
John Jankowski
Brotherhood President
brotherhood@bethelhebrew.org

It IS your business! And it's OUR business!

Do you have a business that Beth El could be doing business with? We want to support you and do business with you, if you do. Beth El wants to “keep it in the family” if we can. Let the Interim Executive Director know at jhlatky@bethelhebrew.org.

Also, let us help you advertise your small business on our website and in *The Bulletin*. Email bulletin@bethelhebrew.org about that.

Together we are Beth El.



WRJ News

WITH PURIM COMING at the end of this month, we've inevitably been asked whether WRJ will be baking and selling hamantaschen this year. Well sadly, WRJ's hamantaschen are another casualty of the pandemic. It's just not logistically feasible. If you want to make your own, WRJ's time-tested recipe is on page 19. You can bake and, in light of current events, (we hope) reflect on the significance of Purim.

We offer this bit of revisionist history (ignoring for the moment that the Book of Esther is closer to parable than historical fact). Imagine that — after learning of Haman's proclamations to the people of Persia, ordering them to rise up against the Jews and kill them all — Esther had sent out her own proclamations to the people, addressing them as Persian patriots and asking them to kill the Jews in a peaceful and nonviolent manner, rather than begging Ahasuerus to save her life and the lives of her people from annihilation. Where would we be now? Certainly not baking hamantaschen in our kitchens!

What, then, are we to make of any response to the Jan. 6 storming of the US Capitol that fell short of condemnation?

Live footage showed, and multiple news sources reported, rioters carrying Nazi (that is, swastika-emblazoned) flags and wearing clothing bearing slogans such as "Camp Auschwitz STAFF," "Work Brings Freedom" and "6MWE." We should not need reminding that "Work Brings Freedom" is a rough translation of the words over the gate to Auschwitz, and that the Nazis murdered some 1 million people there. "6MWE" stands for "six million weren't enough," a reference to the number of Jewish people murdered in the Holocaust.

In the midst of the chaos, Ivanka Trump, daughter of President Donald Trump and a Jew, tweeted "American Patriots — any security breach or disrespect to our law enforcement is unacceptable." She was swiftly and

sharply criticized for her blanket characterization of the rioters as patriots, when some visibly flaunted Nazi and anti-Semitic symbols and slogans.



Ivanka Trump
@IvankaTrump

American Patriots - any security breach or disrespect to our law enforcement is unacceptable.

The violence must stop immediately. Please be peaceful.

3:15 PM · Jan 6, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

Yes, Ivanka quickly deleted her tweet, but not before it had been seen by those "American Patriots" and horrified those who realized that she was encouraging those who would advocate death for her, her children, and her husband. She forgot Mordecai's message to Esther (Esther 4:13-14): "Do not imagine that you, of all the Jews, will escape with your life by being in the king's palace. On the contrary, if you keep silent in this crisis, relief and deliverance will come to the Jews from another quarter, while you and your father's house will perish. And who knows, perhaps you have attained to royal position for just such a crisis."

So when you take those hamantaschen out of the oven and their fragrance fills your kitchen, remember that they're not just cookies — they are symbols of our duty to speak up for ourselves, for the Jewish people, and for those around the world who are targets of injustice.

And to those who object that our message this month might be "too political," we close with this quote from Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel: "We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

Pat Collins and Linda Shapiro
WRJ Co-Presidents

Carpenter's Shelter News

Do you like to Cook or Bake? Here's a Mitzvah Opportunity



**Carpenter's
Shelter**

FOR MANY YEARS, Esther Belenker has coordinated WRJ volunteers to prepare and serve a monthly dinner at the Carpenter's Shelter in Old Town Alexandria. Another group of Beth El volunteers has prepared and delivered lunch to the shelter on a bi-monthly basis. The two groups have now combined their efforts for both the monthly Monday night dinner and the bi-monthly Sunday lunch.

A Signup Genius app for both the monthly Monday night dinners and the bi-monthly Sunday lunches is now available for Beth El members to contribute to one or more of the meals. Members can volunteer to provide a main dish, starch (e.g., pasta, rice), salad, rolls, or dessert for whatever date(s) they choose. Volunteers will prepare and deliver the food to the shelter for the staff to serve. If it is more convenient, food can be delivered ahead of time.

If you would like to receive the Signup Genius to participate in one or more meals throughout the year or have any questions about this mitzvah opportunity, contact Susan Wartel at susanwartel@gmail.com.

WRJ Social Action

AS MANY OF YOU know, Beth El has supported the efforts of Alexandria's Carpenter's Shelter for decades. Under the guidance of **Esther Belenker** and **Susan Wartel**, we currently deliver meals 18 times a year to feed the residents of the shelter. While we used to provide volunteers to serve the meals as well, the pandemic reduced our efforts to meal delivery only. But our strong connection to the Carpenter's Shelter remains. (If you are interested in helping prepare meals for the shelter, see the article elsewhere in this issue of the *Bulletin*.)

In 2018, Carpenter's Shelter moved from its long time permanent shelter on N. Henry Street in Alexandria to temporary quarters in the former Macy's location in Landmark Mall. A new shelter was built on the N. Henry Street location. In December 2020, Carpenter's Shelter moved back to the old location, into a brand new, 60-bed, full-service homeless shelter. In the floors above the shelter, there are now 87 affordable apartments and 10 permanent supportive housing units for chronically homeless adults. This facility, with innovative, comprehensive services is a dream come true! Beth El is so proud to be one of many organizations supporting Carpenter's Shelter.

With the new facility, Beth El wants to help Carpenter's Shelter beyond the meals we are already providing. Carpenter's Shelter has indicated that there are a number of items that they could use to support their residents and to continue accommodating safe food service in this pandemic. If you are able, these are the items that Carpenter's Shelter needs:

- Individual boxes of cereal (single serving size)
- Individual condiment packages (BBQ sauce, creamer, honey, ketchup, mayo, mustard, salad dressing, etc.)
- Twin blankets and comforters (new or gently used)
- New pillows
- Air mattresses with pump — twin size (new or gently used)

As we have done for the past few months, we will collect your donations on the cart located between the two sets of glass entrance doors to Beth El. We will collect donations from Monday, Feb. 22 through Friday, Feb. 26. The outer glass doors will be open for donation drop offs Monday – Thursday 9:00 am – 5:00 pm and Friday 9:00 am – 3:00 pm.

Thanks so much for supporting our community!!

Janet Garber and Esther Belenker

garberj123@gmail.com

703-598-7904

Ross Scholarship Nomination Period Opens

YOUR OPPORTUNITY to recognize and recommend an outstanding graduating senior for Beth El's prestigious **Marc S. Ross Scholarship** is now underway. The **Marc S. Ross** Scholarship Committee is presently accepting nominations. The scholarship is awarded annually to a graduating high school senior continuing in higher education who has made a significant contribution during his/her high school years to the temple and/or the Jewish community. The recipient will be a Beth El member who best exemplifies the values of scholarship, integrity, and devotion that were so embodied in the life of Beth El Past President **Marc S. Ross**. The award will not be based on financial need.

The deadline for receiving nominations is Monday, March 15, 2021. Nominations can be made by anyone, including parents. All temple members are encouraged to nominate a young man or woman whom they feel would be eligible for the award. Nominees will be informed of their anonymous recommendation, and will be required to complete a short application and personal statement. Without being nominated, an otherwise qualified candidate will never be considered by the committee.

A nomination letter, no longer than two pages, should be sent to: **John Jankowski**, Chair, 3930 Lincolnshire Street, Annandale, VA 22003 or to johnsimcha@cox.net. Any questions regarding the scholarship should be directed to John, who may be reached at 571-236-4051 or by email at johnsimcha@cox.net.



Israel Committee News

*The Israel Committee values diversity of opinion regarding Israel. This includes opportunities for committee members to alert the congregation of learning opportunities representing different perspectives that inform our decisions about Israel. This article was written by **Len Rubenstein**.*

THE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION is expected to shift US policy in the Middle East in dramatic ways from that of the Trump presidency. But what initiatives might we expect? After the Trump Administration moved away from the two-state solution, which has been a hallmark of US policy toward peace between Israelis and Palestinians for decades, what will the new administration do to advance it, as President Biden urged in his campaign? What are the prospects for re-entering or re-shaping a nuclear deal with Iran, another pillar of the new President's foreign policy platform?

Other tough challenges will confront the new administration. These include how it will address what many have called "creeping annexation" in the West Bank as settlement growth continues unchecked; whether it will reverse the Trump Administration's acceptance of occupied territory as part of Israel; how the administration can encourage pluralism within Israel and press the Palestinians to reform governance, embrace democracy, and be accountable; and how it can encourage Gulf and other states that have established relations with Israel to play a productive role in resolving the conflict.

All these questions, and the role of the American Jewish community in resolving them, will be front and center at the J Street national virtual conference, to be held Feb. 20 – 22. J Street is a pro-Israel, pro-peace organization that promotes US policies that further deeply-held Jewish and democratic values and that help secure the State of Israel as a democratic homeland for the Jewish people. It believes that a negotiated resolution to the conflict by Israelis and Palestinians is essential to meet the legitimate needs and national aspirations of both peoples.

The conference has always had dynamic and provocative speakers and in-depth discussions with experts, members of the Knesset, Palestinians, and US officials and members of Congress of diverse views. And this year, because the conference is virtual, registration is only \$50, and less for students and those for whom even that price is too steep.

I encourage you to attend. You can learn more and register at <https://jstreet.org/conference>. Or contact me at len.rubenstein@gmail.com.

Alex Buttgenbach

Co-Chair

buttgenbach@gmail.com

Ron Sturman

Co-Chair

rgsturman@msn.com



ALIVE!

A LIVE! continues to serve Alexandrians in need during the pandemic. Based on the last six months and growing needs, the food program plans on distributing around 175,000 pounds of food a month for the next six months. This will happen through four to six mass distribution events, support of 12 food pantries, and delivering a week's worth of food to 15 to 30 quarantined families a day. In the last six months, we have spent \$1.1 million and distributed 1.1 million pounds of food. You can see how far your contributions have gone.

Other program updates:

The Family Assistance Program is helping twice as many families as usual pay their rent, utility bills, and medical expenses. ALIVE! House currently has three family residents. They cannot take in more due to COVID-19 safety precautions. ALIVE! has been working with the Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership (AEPP). Some activities we have undertaken include participating in outreach events and coordinating with grassroots organizations and community partners. We've also worked on intake and referring individuals to rental assistance resources.

Continue to support ALIVE! however you can. There are some volunteer opportunities. Go to the website <https://www.alive-inc.org> for information about volunteering and/or to make a donation. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Deborah Schaffer - schaffer4@gmail.com

~ February 2021 ~

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed |
|---|---|--|---|
|  <p>FEBRUARY</p> | 1 No Politics Day/ National Serpent Day | 2 Groundhog Day 12:30p Positive Aging Workshop 6:00p HaMakom: A Place and Time to Pray 7:00p Introduction to Judaism 7:00p Executive Committee Meeting | 3 The Day the Music Died/Carrot Cake Day Noon Member Online Drop-In Chat 6:15p Religious School 7:00p WRJ Meeting 7:00p For Those Who Can't Believe |
| 7 Superbowl Sunday/ Charles Dickens Day 10:00a Religious School 10:00a Beginning Adult Hebrew 10:00a Brotherhood Public Policy Forum: Anti-Semitism 11:00a Intermediate Adult Hebrew | 8 National Boy Scouts Day | 9 National Pizza Day/ Toothache Day 6:00p HaMakom: A Place and Time to Pray 7:00p Genius of the Rabbis 7:00p Introduction to Judaism | 10 Umbrella Day/Home Warranty Day Noon Member Online Drop-In Chat 6:15p Religious School 7:00p For Those Who Can't Believe |
| 14 Valentine's Day/ Organ Donor Day NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL | 15 Presidents' Day OFFICE CLOSED | 16 Do a Grouch a Favor Day/Almond Day 12:30p HaMakom: A Place and Time to Pray 7:00p Introduction to Judaism 7:00p Board of Directors Meeting | 17 Random Acts of Kindness Day Noon Member Online Drop-In Chat 6:15p Religious School 7:30p Jesus and Judaism: Why the Connection Matters |
| 21 Tarot Card Reading Day 10:00a Religious School 10:00a Purim Spiel 10:00a Beginning Adult Hebrew 11:00a Intermediate Adult Hebrew 8:00p International Scholars in Their Residence | 22 National Margarita Day/Be Humble Day | 23 International Dog Biscuit Appreciation Day 6:00p HaMakom: A Place and Time to Pray 7:00p Introduction to Judaism 7:00p Genius of the Rabbis | 24 World Bartender Day Noon Member Online Drop-In Chat 6:15p Religious School 7:00p For Those Who Can't Believe |
| 28 National Chili Day/ Tooth Fairy Day 10:00a Religious School 10:00a Beginning Adult Hebrew 11:00a Intermediate Adult Hebrew | Thoughts on February | <p>Without Valentine's Day, February would be... Well, January.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">JIM GAFFIGAN</p> | |

Sh'vat/Adar 5781 ~

| | Thu | Fri | Sat | Torah |
|-----------|---|---|---|--|
| 4 | Thank a Mail Carrier Day | 5 National Weatherman's Day/World Nutella Day 11:00a Coffee and Clergy 6:00p Shabbat Social Hour 6:30p Erev Shabbat Services 7:30p Oneg Table Talk <i>Candle lighting 5:16p</i> | 6 Eat Ice Cream for Breakfast Day 9:00a Torah Study 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services <i>Havdalah 6:26p</i> | Yitro Isaiah 6:1 - 7:6; 9:5 - 9:6 Exodus 18:1-20:23 |
| 11 | National Inventors' Day/ Peppermint Patty Day 7:30p Interfaith Learning | 12 Chinese New Year/ Plum Pudding Day 11:00a Coffee and Clergy 6:00p Family Services 6:00p Shabbat Social Hour 6:30p Erev Shabbat Services 7:30p Oneg Table Talk 7:30p Sixth-Grade Student-Led Services <i>Candle lighting 5:24p</i> | 13 National Cheddar Cheese Day 9:00a Torah Study 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services 11:00a Tot Shabbat <i>Havdalah 6:34p</i> | Mishpatim Exodus 21:1-24:18 II Kings 12:1 - 12:17 |
| 18 | National Drink Wine Day | 19 National Chocolate Mint Day/Caregivers Day 11:00a Coffee and Clergy 6:00p Shabbat Social Hour 6:30p Erev Shabbat Services 7:30p Oneg Table Talk <i>Candle lighting 5:32p</i> | 20 Cherry Pie Day/Love Your Pet Day 9:00a Torah Study 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services <i>Havdalah 6:41p</i> | Terumah Exodus 25:1-27:19 Samuel 15:2 - 15:34 |
| 25 | Erev Purim | 26 Purim 11:00a Coffee and Clergy 6:00p Shabbat Social Hour 6:30p Erev Shabbat Services 7:30p Oneg Table Talk <i>Candle lighting 5:40p</i> | 27 International Polar Bear Day 9:00a Torah Study 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services 11:00a Purim Tot Shabbat <i>Havdalah 6:09p</i> | Tetzaveh Exodus 27:20-10:10 Ezekiel 43:10 - 43:27 |



IN FEBRUARY THERE
IS EVERYTHING TO
HOPE FOR AND
NOTHING TO REGRET

PATIENCE STRONG

The Congregation Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

ARNOLD G. FINK LEARNING CENTER

Donor
Florine & Frank Fry.....

In Memory of
Yvette Mandell

PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND

Donor
Janet Cady & Jeffrey Davidson
Ann Levy

In Appreciation of

Dana Arnold Linda Waller's kindness & generosity

In Memory of

Melody Kokola Ernie Levy

In Memory of

Paul & Myrna Beck Irving Beck

Ken Berger Martin Seidman

Colleen & Barrett Weiser Our parents

Ken Berger Esther Miriam Berger

BETH EL GENERAL FUND

Donor
Dorothy & Nelson Saks
Meg & Brian Goldstein
Gabrielle Kaufman
Arlene & Sidney Sachs
Joyce & Richard Gordon

Donor
Janet Horwitz.....

In Appreciation of
Rabbi Spinrad & Cantor Kaufman
& their compassion & creativity in
each week's Shabbat streaming services

Board of Lady Managers..... Our partnership with Beth El
Abel Ferreira-Mendes The Interfaith Study Group, for
welcoming him

Donor
Ronald & Susan Stern..... Eugene Lerner
Barbara Gilbert..... William Kramer
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The Wallach Family..... Paul Wallach & Irving Wallach
Gerrie & Ron Sturman..... Charlie Hauptman
Gerrie & Ron Sturman..... Lidija Piskunova
Gerrie & Ron Sturman..... Harriet Katz
Lois Frieman..... Helen & Henry Frieman
Howard Cohen & Lucy Civitello Shirley Cohen

CHAPEL IN THE WOODS

Donor
Janice Rosales..... Nancy & Stuart Davis in celebration
of the holidays & to purchase
tree saplings or other plants

Donor
Carol Boyd Leon & John Miuccio..... Alan Soschin

RICHARD FAKOURY MUSIC FUND

Donor
Janet Horwitz..... Murray Horwitz

HIGH HOLIDAYS FUNDRAISING APPEAL

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Felisa & David Klubes

MARC ROSS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Donor
Neil Schlussel..... Donna & Warren Rothman's
special anniversary

Donor
Fara Damelin..... Marc Ross
Judy and Charlie Kramer Peggy Osterbach

RABBI'S GOOD DEED FUND

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Donor
Judith Anne Wink & Michael Zumoff..... Linda Waller

Donor
Marcy & Greg Babitz..... Jeanette Center
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& Gertrude Weiner
Arlene Tave..... Beatrice Tave
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RABBI'S GOOD DEED FUND/COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND

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Laura & Mark Mandel..... Melvin & Marian Lewis

RABBI ISSEROW PLAYGROUND FUND

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Norman & Sandra Dovberg

SHAPIRO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Donor
Jennifer Lytle..... The Shapiro Family for Hanukkah!
Donor
Julie Rosenberg & Michael Shapiro Marshall Baram Shapiro

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

Donor
Susan & Lloyd Whitman
Zonta International

Thank you for your generous donations. No donation is too small. All donations are acknowledged in The Bulletin two months following their receipt. Acknowledgements are mailed with a minimum of \$18 per person per acknowledgement.



Permanent Endowment Fund News

THE PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND welcomes the following new member and upgrade in membership categories in December:

Visionaries

Ann Levy and Ernie Levy z'l

Members

Janet Cady and Jeffrey Davidson
(new member)

If you'd like information about joining the Permanent Endowment Fund and contributing to Beth El's future, please contact any of the trustees: **Dana Arnold**, chair; **Michael Bluestein**, treasurer; **Jeremy Flachs**, secretary; **Ann Levy**; **Janet Garber**; **Dorrit Lowson**; and **Dan Rothschild**.

There are three levels of voting membership: Member (\$500), Sponsor (\$1,500), and Visionary (\$5,000). Membership can be accrued through donations over time to remember loved ones, express appreciation of others, celebrate life cycle simchas such as special birthdays, anniversaries, and the birth of children, and other notable events.

Dana Arnold

darnold.57@gmail.com

Bar Mitzvah

Tobey Phinney February 20, 2021

Tobey is a seventh grade honors student at Glasgow Middle School where he participates in the advanced academic program. He enjoys playing baseball with his brother and video games. He also likes to ride his bike and swim, and was active in his school's drama club prior to the pandemic.

For his mitzvah project, Tobey is choosing 13 volunteer activities to perform over the course of 2021. Such activities include laying wreaths at veteran's cemeteries and delivering food to people in need. He continues to look for additional opportunities to continue this quest and is keeping a journal to record and share his experience when it is complete.

Tobey would like to thank his tireless tutor, Lisa Sheldone, all of his religious school teachers who helped to instill his love of being Jewish, Rabbi Spinrad, and Cantor Kaufman, for helping prepare him for this special day. He also wants to thank his parents and brother Lucas for their love and support.



Member News

Welcome New Members:

Stacey Rudolph and Ken Suslowitz, and Shayne and Chase Suslowitz

Mazel Tov to:

Harvey Ostrow, Ellen Ostrow, Martin Weiner, Marsha Reiser, Doris Lerner, Gregory Babitz, Denise Shauer, and Sara Sohmer who have special birthdays in February

Charles Tobin & Nancy Isaacson-Tobin who have a special anniversary in February

Condolences to:

Inna Naygauz and Howard Walhberg on the loss of beloved aunt Lidija Piskunova

Sandi Goldman, Adam House and Hayley Silver, Michael and Teresa House, and Sarah and Neil O'Brien, and Rachel Hettler, and David, Katie, Abigail, Eric, Rachel, and Jake House, and Clarisse, Tristan, and Conor O'Brien on the loss of beloved husband, father, grandfather, and **Beth El member** Steven House

Richard Regal and Colleen Griffith-Regal, Jonathan and Deborah Regal, Asher Regal, Benjamin Regal, Fred and Sherri Inscho, and Brendan Inscho and Amy Fuhrman, on the loss of beloved mother Shirley Regal

Mark and Sherry Trachtman, Marjorie Trachtman, Corinne Brail, Nora and Seth Croll, and Wyatt Croll, on the death of beloved mother, sister, grandmother, and great-grandmother Charlotte Trachtman

To the friends and family of **Beth El member** Eugene Stein

February is Jewish Disability Awareness, Acceptance, and Inclusion Month (JDAIM) and Jewish Disability Advocacy Month (JDAM)



WE CERTAINLY are not in the same physical or mental space as we were last year in terms of offering special programs for February. However, there is still a lot going on in the Jewish Community.

JDAIM is a unified effort among Jewish organizations worldwide to raise awareness and foster acceptance and inclusion of people with disabilities and mental health conditions, and all those who love them. Established in 2009 by the Jewish Special Education International Consortium, JDAIM is a call to action s to act in accordance with our Jewish values, honoring the gifts and strengths that we each possess.

February 2021 is also JDAM, a month of education, solidarity-building, and empowerment in support of people with disabilities that is powered by the Jewish Federations of North America. The Jewish Federation, one of JDAIM's Community Without Walls Partners, has a webpage with information about online JDAM events for each week of the month. Highlights include:

- Networking and Community Building Workshop, Feb. 4 (repeated throughout the month)
 - Mental Health and Isolation, Feb. 8
 - Supporting & Including Youth with Disabilities
 - Fighting Stigma with Effective Storytelling
- Find out more at <https://www.jewishtogether.org/JDAM>.

JDAIM is also partnering with Community For All to host an online Interfaith Disability Inclusion Weekend Feb. 26-28. Structured like a professional conference, there are learning tracks for families and caregivers, self-advocacy, and congregations and ministry. Find out more at https://www.eventbrite.com/e/fin-community-for-all-c4a-conference-tickets-128518768095?fbclid=IwAR1PJhkHCSacwXdIseJmtgMKEgUD5M4W1fNAAm_LTr-jGcE0h9WTuW9dDPI.

The Ruderman Chabad Inclusion Initiative is partnering with JDAIM to celebrate the 3rd annual ShabbaTTTogether on Feb. 12, Rosh Chodesh Adar. Recognizing that all communities are struggling to maintain

mental wellness given the uncertainty of the pandemic and associated

restrictions, a main focus will be mental wellness. For those with a disability or a history of mental health conditions, this struggle may be even more difficult. This event will have activities for all ages. Find out more at <https://shabbattogether.com/>.

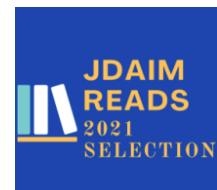


Jewish Learning Venture's new website jkidACCESS.org is a virtual space for resources and information for families raising Jewish children with disabilities. They are here as a resource for you to find the support and accommoda-

tions needed for full inclusion in Jewish life. Jewish Learning Venture's Whole Community Inclusion initiative helps to ensure that families raising Jewish children with disabilities find the support and accommodations needed for full inclusion in Jewish life. JDAIM values-based lesson plans for preschool, elementary and teens are free.

JDAIM READS 2021 recommends:

- For adults, *We Walk: Life with Severe Autism*, by Amy Lutz. In this collection of beautiful and raw essays, Amy S. F. Lutz writes openly about her experience — the positive and the negative — as a mother of a now 21-year-old son with severe autism. Lutz's human emotion drives through each page and challenges commonly held ideas that define autism either as a disease or as neurodiversity. *We Walk* directly—and humanly—examines social issues such as inclusion, religion, therapeutics, and friendship through the lens of severe autism.
- For children, *Just Elliot*, By Sue Baer. *Just Elliot* is a simple but groundbreaking story about a six-year-old boy with autism attempting to explain the challenges of his life on the spectrum, from the sensation of stinging bees on his head as he gets his haircut, to his revulsion of certain colored foods, to the simple need to hum as he concentrates on his schoolwork. Certain to be eye opening to Just Elliot's intended audience of young, non-autistic readers. A Readers Guide for parents is presented at the back of the book.



You can get more information about planning for JDAIM/JDAM activities and learn about other partners in the JDAIM guide for 2021 at <https://inclusioninnovations.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Final-JDAM-2021-Guide-12.14.20.pdf>.

The Ark in the Chapel in the Woods

A LONG TIME AGO in a galaxy far, far away, Brotherhood set up the ark in the Chapel in the Woods so we could have services and ceremonies out there, and it was beautiful. They had beautiful ark doors made from one of our own red oaks.

And lo and behold, time passed, and it became less beautiful. At least the wood doors became less beautiful after years of wind and weather.



And so the Chapel in the Woods team removed the old doors and had new ones made and now they are beautiful.



And what became of the old, once beautiful doors, you may ask? They are now beautiful again (refurbished by Alex Juarez) and have been donated to the preschool (**Dina Backer**, director) to decorate our new **Rabbi Brett Isserow** Outdoor Play Space. Our preschool children can enjoy the old doors in the play space, and all our children can enjoy the new doors at future Tot Shabbats in the Chapel in the Woods.

Thank you to volunteers **Stuart Davis, Jeremy Flachs, and Jay Jarvis!**



Beth El Hebrew Congregation



Jesus and Judaism: Why the Connection Matters

A joint program of Beth El, the Haberman Institute, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington

Wednesday, Feb. 17, 7:30 pm – 9:00 pm
With Dr. Amy-Jill Levine

University Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies; Mary Jane Werthan Professor of Jewish Studies; Professor of New Testament Studies; Divinity School and College of Arts and Science at Vanderbilt University

Jesus of Nazareth is often seen as rejecting a Judaism incorrectly characterized as legalistic, misogynistic, vengeful, and xenophobic. Understanding Jesus in his Jewish context corrects false stereotypes, brings new meaning to his parables, politics, and piety, and it offers a new path for Jewish-Christian relations.

Register at <https://habermaninstituteforjewishstudies.z2systems.com/np/clients/habermaninstituteforjewishstudies/eventRegistration.jsp?event=1150>

This program will take place online and all registrants will receive the Zoom link prior to the event.

This program is free of charge.

Beth El Hebrew Congregation



ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA



International Scholars in Their Residences

A joint program of Beth El and Congregation Albert in New Mexico

Rabbi Simon John Levi
Jews of Australia

Sunday, Feb. 2, 8:00 pm

Rabbi Levi is the first Australian-born rabbi and a pioneer of inter-religious dialogue in Australia.



Stefan Sablic
Jews of the Balkans

Sunday, Feb. 21, 8:00 pm

Stefan is the founder of Shira uT'fila, which combines musical styles and languages from throughout the Balkans.



Marcelo Cynovich
Jews of Southern South America

Sunday, March 7, 8:00 pm

Marcelo serves as president of Hillel Uruguay and is also the volunteer cantor at the Yavne Community Center in Montevideo suburb Pocitos.



These programs are free of charge. Watch the weekly emails for links and more information.

Hamantaschen at Home

Ingredients:

4 cups flour
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
 1 tablespoon baking powder
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup orange juice
 3 large eggs
 1 cup sugar
 1 teaspoon vanilla
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup canola oil



To make the dough:

Beat eggs and add sugar gradually [if using a stand mixer, use medium speed].

Add vanilla and oil and beat well.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, salt, and baking powder.

Add the flour mixture alternately with the orange juice, starting and ending with the flour mixture. Mix well after each addition. [If using a stand mixer, set to low speed.]

Dough will be sticky; you will be adding flour when the cookies are rolled.

Divide the dough into two or three portions (depending on how fast you expect to work when rolling and filling the hamantaschen), and place each portion in a zipper topped bag or other air-tight container.

Refrigerate at least 4 hours.

Baking instructions:

Prep: Preheat the oven to 350° F. Remove one portion of the dough from the fridge. Let it stand at room temperature until malleable, but not too soft.

Roll: Flour a clean work surface. Divide the dough into two portions and roll the dough to about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. Cut rounds of dough with a 3½ cookie/biscuit cutter, dipped in flour. Repeat rolling and cutting rounds with remaining scraps of dough.

Fill: Place no more than 1 teaspoon of filling in the center of each round. Dab a little water on the perimeter of the round to help the dough adhere when you pick up the sides and pinch them together to form a triangle, leaving the filling in the center exposed.

Bake: Line baking trays with parchment paper. Place the hamantaschen about 1 inch apart. Bake until golden brown, about 12 minutes.



Ah, the good old days...



To Know Them Was To Love Them

ERNEST M. LEVY "Ernie"
June 7, 1939 — July 19, 2020



ERNIE loved Beth El and was always thinking of out-of-the-box ideas to make it a better place. For years, Ernie was a one-man Ways and Means Committee. Where others saw roadblocks, Ernie saw opportunities and he could never understand why people were hesitant to just try new things. He would lament "What's so hard about this?" Or "It's so obvious!"

For years, Ernie was the lone voice for getting the Beth El board to accept credit cards for on-line payments, which he succeeded in doing in 2002. As a marketing guru, he emphasized the practical: Use your credit card to pay Beth El dues and earn mileage awards. Ernie was also an early advocate for linking businesses to the Beth El website where one-click shopping would automatically result in a few dollars for Beth El. However, when he stumbled across a CafePress link offering boxer shorts and thongs emblazoned with the Beth El 150th anniversary logo, he suggested that those items might not be the image of Beth El that we should be endorsing. Ever the entrepreneur, even Ernie had his limits.

Ernie had a wonderful sense of humor that so many of us appreciated. For example, he was a strong advocate that the *bimah* chairs should never be empty at Friday night services. In letters sent to congregants, he wrote this guidance: "When you are called upon to have the honor of sitting on the *bimah* on a Friday night, please remember that it is an honor and is completely painless. You will be honored normally for a milestone in your life or for your service to the congregation. You will need to do only the same things you normally do: stand up, sit down and participate. This is also your way of being able to see who is in attendance, who is late and who is wearing a new fur coat... all without craning your neck."

Ernie was a devoted family man. He delighted in marching band competitions, theater performances, and hockey games alike if his children or grandchildren were participating. He also loved camping, sailing, and skiing with the family. Ernie loved to laugh, and to make others laugh. He was known for his great sense of humor and would strike up a conversation with everyone he met. He had an inventive spirit that prompted him to send suggestions to businesses for improving products and procedures. He also loved cars and keeping up to date with their latest technology.

At Beth El he served at various times as Board Member and Executive Committee Member, synagogue Vice President, chair of the Ways and Means Committee, and trustee of the Permanent Endowment Fund.

Based on remarks at Ernie's funeral offered by John Jankowski

ERICA I. DANTY
March 19, 1922 — May 18, 2020



IN NOVEMBER 1934, at age 12, Erika Danty boarded the S.S. New York to the United States. Erika stayed with her uncle in New York City until she finished school. Often interviewed about her experiences in Nazi Germany and during and after the war, and a participant in the One Thousand Children Project to document the secret exfiltration of German Jewish children to the U.S., she said, "My experience does not contain the deep pain and grief so many of our survivors endured, because I was one of the fortunate to be one of the children of the kinder-transport."

Still, her family suffered. Her father had lost his job as a traveling salesman and then was diagnosed with cancer. He died in 1934. The situation in Freiburg deteriorated to such a degree that when her family saw an ad in a newspaper about foster family adoption in America, Danty applied and was accepted.

"Little did I know this ad would save me from the agony of the concentration camps and possible death," Danty said. "My mother was glad I was accepted but found it a hardship to let me go."

She remained committed to Holocaust education, speaking about her experiences to audiences young and old, and in 2006 donated her collection of documents from the war years to the Virginia Holocaust museum.

In 1945, Erika married Bernie Danty. She entered the dental field, holding positions at the US Public Health Hospital in Staten Island, NY and later as an instructor with the US Army Dental Corps in Virginia. Years after the war, her mother immigrated to the United States.

Erica Danty, 98, died May 18 at an assisted-living center in Alexandria, VA. The cause was senile degeneration, said a son, Michael Danty.

Mrs. Danty was a White House volunteer in the administrations of Presidents Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Barack Obama.





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Watch for information at the end of February
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For more information or a virtual tour, please contact

Director Dina Backer
dina.backer@thej.org

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Hold the Date

Adult Education: *For Those Who Can't Believe*, March 3

Pozez JCC and American Red Cross Blood Drive,
March 8

First Seder, March 27

Congregational Passover Celebration, March 28

Passover Festival/Yizkor Services, April 3

Edlavitch JCC: JxJ Washington Jewish Film and Music
Festival, May 2021

Confirmation Shabbat Service, May 14

Last Day of Religious School, May 23



Please check the online Beth El calendar or email office@bethelhebrew.org before leaving to attend ANY event. As we go to press, the building may start opening up SLOWLY but there are no in-person events in February.