



Rabbi's message

Bal Tashchit—Do Not Waste—Living our Values in the World

On February 5-6, we will be celebrating Tu B'Shvat, the New Year of the Trees. In recent years, the Jewish concern for the trees has been used to make Tu B'shvat the Jewish Earth Day because Jewish values tell us to protect our environment. This holiday is a time for us to reflect on how we can live out our Jewish values in the world around us.

With regards to protecting the environment, one of the most important Jewish values is *bal tashchit*, do not waste. In the creation story, the first human beings are told to “fill the earth and master it.” The command against wasting provides a limitation on the command to master the earth. Elsewhere in the Torah we are told that everything ultimately belongs to God. If everything belongs to God and we are masters of the earth, this must indicate that, ultimately, we are caretakers of the earth. Every possession is given to us on the condition that we will make wise use of them and ensure that our resources are protected.

The specific commandment to not waste is derived from a command to protect trees. In the Torah we are told, “When in war against a city you have to besiege it a long time in order to capture it, you must not destroy its trees, wielding the ax against them. You may eat of them, but you must not cut them down. Are trees of the field human to withdraw before you into the besieged city? Only trees which you know do not yield food may be destroyed; you may cut them down for constructing siege works against the city that is waging war on you.” This commandment is expanded upon to state that it is a violation to engage in any wasteful destruction as we are told in the Talmud, “Whoever breaks vessels, or tears garments, or destroys a building, or clogs a well, or does away with food in a destructive manner violates the negative mitzvah of *bal tashchit*”. In the medieval commentary on the commandments, the *Sefer Hachinuch*, the author explains that *bal tashchit* is a core value for an ethical person: “This is the way of the kindly people of piety and the conscientiously observant...They will not destroy even a mustard seed in the world, and they are distressed at every ruination and spoilage that they see; and if they are able to do any rescuing, they will save anything from destruction, with all their power.”

In the United States today, we live in the most wasteful society in the history of the earth. We use far more resources than we need to, violating this commandment and causing needless destruction of the earth. We should be distressed to see the wasteful ruination of

Friday Evening Services

January

- 6** - Service **7:00 p.m.**
- 13** - Kids' Shabbat service 5 **5:30-6:30 p.m.**
MLK, Jr. service **7:00 p.m.**
Sister Melinda Pellerin will speak.
- 20** - Interfaith Shabbat dinner with
First Church Longmeadow **6:00 p.m.**
Service **7:00 p.m.**
- 27** - Religious School service **6:00 p.m.**
followed by dinner. No 7 p.m. service

February

- 3** - Special musical service
with Cantor Lisa Levine **7:00 p.m.**
- 10** - Kids' Shabbat service 5 **5:30-6:30 p.m.**
- 17** - Service **7:00 p.m.**
- 24** - Service **7:00 p.m.**

Sinai Temple Legacy Society

Make a gift of any size to benefit
future generations of Sinai Temple.
Call Mandy Greene, 413-682-1310

JUDAICA SHOP CORNER

Our Chanukah season actually started before Thanksgiving so families could shop, especially for the “snowbirds” who would soon be flying South.

The rest of the season made so many people happy to find “just the right thing”.

And now we head toward spring, with B'nai Mitzvah, weddings and more happy occasions. Many appropriate gifts are right here!

Thais Fischel
413-786-9577

President's Message - Rich Alpert

With many of you, I celebrated Sinai's 90th anniversary in October 2022, even though, delayed by COVID, it was a year later than its actual anniversary. The events, planned so ably by its committee, provided an opportunity for all of us to take pride in the long life of the Temple and the many people who contributed to Sinai's longevity. Institutional endurance should not be taken for granted. Many congregations do not have such a long history, and we should all feel pride in what has been achieved.

The 90th anniversary was a time to look back and appreciate all that has been accomplished. But, now we must build on that foundation for the foreseeable future. The environment with which the Temple must contend and the congregation it serves have changed markedly, and we must find a way forward that both preserves the best of our traditions and customs, and meets the needs of the times. In order to address Sinai's future, we have established a Visioning Task Force.

Visioning is the process of identifying a clear expression of a Temple's highest aspirations. A vision articulates, literally and graphically, the guiding principles upon which the temple will base decisions that shape its efforts such as religious services, pastoral care, programs, social action.

The goal of the Task Force is to answer the "why" of Sinai Temple. What is the Temple's purpose beyond perpetuating itself? What do current and prospective congregants want from the Temple? What is the balance among value and spiritual needs and interests, ritual and traditional religious practice, the desire for community, and for social action? Is there other content that congregants and prospective congregants want from the Temple? Understanding that the Temple cannot be everything to everyone, how should the Temple balance the differing wishes among different constituencies?

The Task Force had its first meeting on December 14 and is working through how it will address these questions. We are fortunate that so many people have agreed to serve. They include: Rich Alpert, Matt Bertuzzi, Beth Chafetz, Trish Freedman, Rabbi Master, Kate Monge, Jackie Nieman, Frank Roberts, Sarah Shtrax, and Steve Sussman. The Task Force plans to meet monthly and to both collect existing

information about the local Jewish demography and interact with congregants to find out what they most want from the Temple.

A great deal of energetic and creative expressions of Judaism is taking place throughout the country. The chavurah movement, for example, provides many Jews an opportunity and vehicle for reinforcing their Jewish identity. Congregations in the Upper Valley are benefitting from the influx of many new families. However, neither the chavurah movement nor the experience of the Upper Valley can guide our future. Although non-Temple expressions of Judaism are important, we need to find a way to make the Temple as exciting and as compelling as non-synagogue expressions do. We also have to recognize our own demographic reality. In contrast to the Upper Valley, the population in the Springfield metropolitan area is not growing, especially not with young Jewish families. Therefore, in many ways we have a tougher challenge, to make our Temple vital and enduring even though we live in a stagnant demographic environment.

I am optimistic about the prospects for Sinai Temple. Working together, we can make the next 10 years meaningful to those we serve and to the broader Jewish community. As always, I look forward to hearing any thoughts or concerns you might have.

Rich Alpert, *President*

Social Action Committee

As a social action committee, we want to encourage continued donations to Ukraine during these difficult winter months. Please consider using the url below to consider donating to one of these important causes to support Ukraine.

Sincerely, The Social Action Committee

www.forbes.com/advisor/personal-finance/donate-rel

The Sinai Temple Bulletin is published six times a year by Sinai Temple, Springfield, Massachusetts. This is Issue Number 3 for 2022-2023.

Jeremy Master Rabbi
Mark Dov Shapiro z"l Rabbi Emeritus
Molly Bajgot Director of Education,
B'Yachad Springfield
Rich Alpert President

Robin Fein-Krevolin Vice President
Sarah Shtrax Vice President
Robin Dunn-McDonagh Treasurer
Maggy Cohn Recording Secretary
Mandy Greene Financial Secretary

Letter from Director of Education

Molly Bajgot - director@byachadspringfield.org



Dear Sinai Temple Community,

This December, our *B'Yachad* students revisited the story of Hanukkah and its connection to *gevurah*, strength. *Gevurah* does not refer to physical strength alone, but also to internal resilience and spiritual courage. The Maccabees, the stars of our Hanukkah story, exhibited *gevurah* in these ways and more, overcoming odds and fighting against religious persecution. The *ner tamid*, eternal light, in our sanctuary, is a reminder of the *gevurah* our ancestors carried, and the importance of keeping our own internal light burning amidst the challenges of our world today.

Moving to Temple Beth El

This December, we also carried the internal light of *B'Yachad* across the street to Temple Beth El, moving our school's location from Sinai Temple. With parent volunteers and support from our Temple Beth El staff, our teachers and the Boy Scouts, we were able to transition our school smoothly to our sister site. We look forward to settling into our classrooms over these next few months. This building transition offers us a host of opportunities to learn about pluralism, dive into conversations about differences in Jewish practice, and to share in the experience of both of the homes of our two congregations.

In the Classroom

This January, students will participate in a unit on *achrayut*, responsibility, with lessons on different types of mitzvot. Our 7th grade class will study tzedakah and choose this year's site for our school-wide tzedakah donation at the end of the year. February brings the holiday of Tu B'Shevat and our celebration of the birthday of the trees. This will be followed by a mini-unit on Purim and we will return from February break in March for a festive Purim Carnival!

Shabbat

B'Yachad families come together for the third of our five family Shabbat experiences on Friday, January 27th, 6:00-7:30 p.m. at Sinai Temple for a Shabbat service and dinner. These Shabbat experiences make space for our growing *B'Yachad* community to be in Shabbat together outside of our regular Sunday school hours. They are also open to the wider community as well. You are welcome to join us!



B'Yachad Dates

First class at Temple Beth El:
Sunday, January 8th, 9:30-11:30 a.m., Temple Beth El

B'Yachad Family Shabbat Service & Dinner:
Friday, January 27th, 6:00-7:30 p.m., Sinai Temple

Teen Life: Na'arut Movie Night:
Saturday, January 28th, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Temple Beth El



Na'arut teens in Northampton making sandwiches for Cathedral in the Night.

Teen Life

Na'arut is our collaborative teen life program between Sinai Temple, Temple Beth El, B'nai Torah and PJ Our Way for grades 6-12. This November *Na'arut* headed to Northampton and met up with teens from the Upper Valley to serve dinner at Cathedral in the Night, an outdoor community in downtown Northampton that provides spiritual space and warm meals to houseless folks. In December, *Na'arut* students celebrated Hanukkah by making latkes from scratch and shopping for gifts to give to patients at Baystate Children's Hospital. In January, on Saturday the 28th, *Na'arut* will get together for a movie night at Temple Beth El. In February, *Na'arut* will be hosting a havdalah and *Tu B'Shevat* seder. All of these opportunities for teens and more can be found on the *B'Yachad* website and in the *B'Yachad* newsletter!

May we enjoy this season of darkness and find within it, where we can, the sparks of light.

**Service Celebrating
Shabbat Shirah**
with Cantor Lisa Levine



February 3 at 7 p.m.

Lisa earned a BA from UCI and received her Ordination from HUC-JIR DFSSM. Lisa is the author of “Yoga Shalom” a popular Jewish Yoga book as well as the prayer voice of “Hebrew In Harmony” curriculum published by Behrman House Books. Lisa received Ordination as Rabbinic Pastor through Aleph Alliance for Jewish Renewal in 2018. She serves as a JSSA (Jewish Social Services) Chaplain and Chaplain of Riderwood Jewish Community in Silver Spring, MD. She is currently the Artist-In-Residence at Temple Rodeph Torah in Marlboro, NJ and freelances around the country.

VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Sinai Temple has need of the following;

File Clerk/Junior Archivist – we are expecting a sizeable amount of paperwork to be coming to the Office which will need to be stored in our Archives as appropriate. If you are interested in Public History and/or interested in organizing files, we could use your talents to maintain the records of our Temple history. Please reply to Maggy Cohn at magmag40@telecomguru.org .

We ask that you be in high school or older. Enthusiasm, a willingness to learn and a good work ethic will be very welcome. Successful candidates may earn letters of recommendation if appropriate!

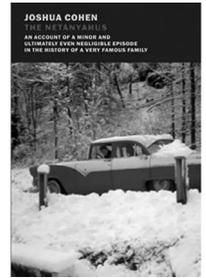
Adult Opportunities

Book Club

January 18 at 7 p.m.

The Netanyahus by Joshua Cohen

Winner of the 2022 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Mixing fiction with nonfiction, the campus novel with the lecture, *The Netanyahus* is a wildly inventive, genre-bending comedy of blending, identity, and politics.



February 15 at 7 p.m.

One Hundred Saturdays: Stella Levi and the Search for a Lost World by Michael Frank, about the Jews of the island of Rhodes

The remarkable story of ninety-nine-year-old Stella Levi whose conversations with the writer Michael Frank over the course of six years bring to life the vibrant world of Jewish Rhodes, the deportation to Auschwitz that extinguished ninety percent of her community, and the resilience and wisdom of the woman who lived to tell the tale.



Israeli Film/Book Series with Rachel Korazim

We will be celebrating Israel's 75th birthday through study, song, literature, comedy and so much more.

Every two months we will have the opportunity to watch a documentary about an Israeli author, and read and discuss some of his work. In our email communication we will share the links to the films, which will be available for viewing for 3 weeks, and dates for the book discussions, which will be led via Zoom by Rachel Korazim.

***The Fourth Window* - Amos Oz**

Behind the international success story of Amos Oz, a symbol of the Israeli conscience and a writer translated into 45 languages, lurked a double tragedy. When he was 12 years old, his mother committed suicide, and a few years before his death his daughter accused him of being physically and mentally violent, ending all communication with him. A series of conversations with his latest biographer, presented in the film, weaves biographical passages, literature and conversations with the main people in his life, as Amos Oz tells his last story.

Film info to be released on January 2 and people should be able to view until January 22.

Sunday January 22 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom Rachel will discuss the movie.

Sunday February 12 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom Rachel will discuss the book *Judas*.

Ritual Committee

by *By Maggy Cohn, Chair*

(413)565-2424 • magmag40@telecomguru.org

Anticipation is in the air as I write this article. Holidays are coming with parties, dinners, family, presents, candle lighting. However, you are reading this after all the festivities are over (or most of them, anyway). I am worried about my latkes; Will I have enough? Will they be cooked through enough? And, you will catch the lingering and fading odors of fried potatoes and onions, and you will know whether or not to change the recipe for next year. In a few days I will observe the Winter Solstice, and we can begin anticipating the lengthening of daylight hours. Together, we can appreciate the celebration of light during the darkest time of the year and take some time to reflect on the past year and what we hope will evolve in the coming secular New Year. And some of us will hibernate for a little while to recharge our souls in anticipation of a busy spring.

There was no article from me in the last bulletin because life got just too 'lifelike' for me for a while. There was infection, calls to 911, days in the emergency room, and lots of antibiotics. Many thanks to the Caring Community and other folks who checked in with me or enabled me to step away from some of my responsibilities so that I could catch my breath as things calmed down. Sinai Temple supported me during this trying time and made it possible to carry on when my schedule just blew up. This is where Ritual really kicked in. Sometimes we think of ritual as being mindless procedure and words, and I have said it is a path to a greater understanding of where we are in this vast universe. But when your life collapses down to trips up and down I91 and various hallways at Baystate Hospital, ritual is a structure that withstands those buffeting winds of life interrupted. When it is necessary to become the person who remembers what happened and the order of events and what the last nurse said and did, snippets of remembered prayers come floating by during a quiet moment and hope silently seeps into the room. The rituals that we practice in Sinai Temple today are 90 years in the making. So far, so good.

When I was teaching the 'Reasons for the Seasons' to my students, I compared the passage of time to a spiral (I used a Slinky toy as an example). The structure was the same, year to year – circular – but each cycle was a little different from the one before, for various reasons. During this hibernation time we are actually thinking about and planning for the rest of the ritual year, or, until the summer break. One of our big events is Purim. We need some input from you, dear readers, as to what you have liked or disliked about our past celebrations. Would you like to celebrate with Beth El again or bring the party back to Sinai? You can drop me an email, address below. While you are thinking about that, if there is anything else you would like comment about regarding Friday evening services, or other

religious events we conduct, please feel free to let me know about your thoughts. I would like Sinai to be as supportive for everyone as it has been for me. So, I hope your holiday season was joyful, fun, refreshing, and maybe a little bit snowy. Looking forward to a healthy (!) and happy New Year that lives up to most of our anticipation.

Rabbi's Message *continued from page 1*

our earth and we need to do whatever we can to save our world from destruction by living this important value. We must try and reduce, reuse, and recycle to decrease our wasteful ways in order to save the earth from preventable destruction. As we celebrate the New Year of the Trees, I invite everyone to consider this important ethical principle.

Rabbi Jeremy Master

FLOTSAM AND JETSAM, aka EPHEMERA

In preparation for our Sinai Temple 90th Anniversary Celebration we have been taking deep dives into the Temple Archives for information on where and how our Congregation of today came to be. We have noticed that there are some holes in our collections, and we are appealing to you to help us fill them. If you are cleaning out a relative's home or doing some downsizing or just trying to clean out the closet, you may have something we could use. In the archive business ephemera mainly refers to paper information such as letters, notices, invitations, handouts, programs, pictures and other pre-electronic means of disseminating news, advertising and information. If you find such items that are related to Sinai Temple and/or the Religious School, directly or indirectly, and you don't want/need them, we would like to have them. Anything from before 2000 may be very helpful for the completeness of our records. Please do not fold any of the items. You can drop them off to the office or mail them addressed to Maggy Cohn, c/o Sinai Temple, 1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108. Please be advised that once we have received these items, they are ours to keep or discard as we deem appropriate. If you have any questions, email me at magmag40@telecomguru.org.

Thank you for your support!

Take a look at some of the pictures from our wonderful 90th Anniversary weekend celebration on page 12

*Happy Birthday to our congregants including
children born in January*

David Bader	Ellen Follett	Joan Lesser	Gregory Schneider
Benjamin Black	Lauren Follett	Barbara Levine	Lindsay Schulz
Callan Blanchard	Charles Goldblatt	Jane Lindfors	Kenneth Shusterman
Glen Brooks	Patricia Gootzit	Spencer Locke	Daniel Skiest
Frank Cannizzo	Lindsay Hanford	Robert Morse	Hannah Skiest
Robert Chasen	Lewis Hoff	Jaime Parish Toscano	Karenna Stern
Jesse Cohen- Lindfors	Emily Hoffer	Marilyn Peskin	Patricia Sussman
Selma Cooley	Hannah Jackson	Stephan Peskin	Zachary Sweeney
Ellie Covey	Jennie Jackson	Robert Radner	Cathy Warshaw
Emily Dash	Susan Kaplan	Gregory Radner	Jesse Weinberg
Kessler Despain	Stephen Kaplan	Josephine Lorenza Roberts	Suzanne Weisenberg
Jane Engelman	Marc Katz	Zachary Samol	
Robin Fein-Krevolin	Lauren Kittredge		
	Benjamin Leavitt		



*Happy Birthday to our congregants including
children born in February*

Neil August	Matthew Cooper	Joan Katz	Nancy Schreiber
Michael Bader	Carol Daigle	Robert Kay	Elliot Shapiro
Kyle Barr	Julia Dash	Eric Lesser	Rachel Shusterman
Joli Basch	Bari DeMichele	Joan Lissauer	Scott Skolnick
David Bashein	Diane Friedberg	Sandra Lotterman	Bari Snieder
Elyana Bassell	Shawn Giroux	Peri Master	Richard (Rick) Sobey
Sophie Bauer	Linda Goldrick	Maxwell Merrill	Nelson Stone
Kenneth Bernstein	Alexander Grodd	John Mirkin	Joshua Tariff
Allison Bertuzzi	Philip Harris	Nancy Nathan	Kyle Thomas
Rebecca Blanchard	Jack Henrie	James Orenstein	Nanette Weisenberg
Stacy Blonder	William Horowitz	Allan Robinson	Julia Winer
Natanya Braun	Eve Kaplan	Ellen Rowles	
Carly Chase	Nicholas Katz	Scott Sadowsky	



January B'Yachad Family Shabbat Service and Dinner

Friday, January 27th

Sinai Temple, Springfield MA

6:00 Arrival & Appetizers

6:15 Shabbat Service

7:00 Dinner

open to all!

**RSVP at
byachadspringfield.org**

B'Yachad ביחד

A still life photograph of Shabbat dinner items. In the foreground, there is a large, braided challah roll covered in sesame seeds. To its left is a dark wine bottle. To the right of the challah are several silver salt and pepper shakers, some with their lids on and some with their lids off, showing the salt and pepper. The background is a light, textured surface.

Summer Camp Scholarships

With winter upon us, it may seem odd to be thinking about next summer, but now is the time when registration opens for the 2023 summer camping season. Jewish summer camping strengthens our children's Jewish identities and creates memories and friendships that will last a lifetime. The URJ offers two sleep-away camps right here in Western Massachusetts; Eisner and Crane Lakes Camps. In addition, the URJ operates three specialty camps: Six-Points Sports Academy, Six-Points Sci-Tech, and Six-Points Creative Arts. Other options include Mitzvah Corps, Camp Ramah, and the countless other private Jewish camps throughout our region. Sinai Temple strongly encourages our families to consider Jewish overnight camping, but we also know it can be expensive. To help defray the cost, both the Harold Grinspoon Foundation and Sinai Temple offer scholarships for anyone interested in a summer time Jewish experience. If you are interested to learn more about Jewish camping in our area, feel free to contact our Camp Ambassador, Buff Maniscalco at (413) 563-2153. **If you are interested in a scholarship, please contact Robin in the Sinai Temple Office, rblanchettegage@sinai-temple.org, or call 736-3619 no later than February 15, 2023. Please provide your child's name, the camp attending with address and a camp contact.**

If anyone wants to talk about camp in general (the benefits, signs of child readiness, what to pack...anything!), Kate Monge happens to be an assistant director of a private Jewish overnight camp in Maine and is available to our Sinai community as a resident expert in the field (with a promise of no sales pitches for her own camp)

Shabbat Service with Noah Aronson

March 10 at 7pm



Known for his unique, engaging, and deeply soulful approach, Noah Aronson is considered one of the most sought after Jewish musicians in North America, making over 65 community appearances each year.

Come and join us for this fun Shabbat service with Noah!

Supported in part by a grant from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Funding for this program was provided by the Jewish Endowment Foundation of Western Massachusetts

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90th Anniversary Committee candlelighting at the 90th anniversary service.
L-r- Mandy Greene, Rabbi Master, Esta Sobey, Linda Kay, Laurie Weinberg, Judy Cohen, Maggy Cohn, Jackie Neiman and Cantor Ruben



Rabbi Master, Rich Alpert, Sinai President and Mayor Dominic Sarno



Musicians Sue Kurian, Michael Nix and Elisabeth Weber at the temple service.



Filling the time capsule on Sunday morning of the 90th anniversary weekend.
Picture by Jackie Neiman



David Morse peruses the history of Sinai temple in the lobby.

Blueberry Hill Boys entertain at the Saturday evening celebration.



Enjoying the social time are (l-r) Stan Glazer, Jennifer Mensch, Ronnie Leavitt, Judy Ruben, Cantor Ruben, Candy Glazer and State Senator Eric Lesser



Sinai President Rich Alpert, Rabbi Master, State Senator Eric Lesser and MOC Steve Sussman display the citation honoring Sinai's 90 years.