

TEDPUARY 2023 INSIGHTS FEATURES COLUMNS NEWS PROGRAMS & EVENTS

February 2023 Shevat 5783 Rabbi Eric L. Abbott Rabbi Emeritus Sunny Schnitzer



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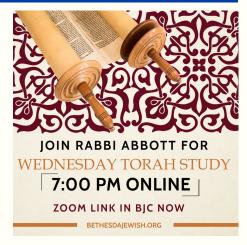


Rabbi Abbott's Calendly is now open!

Want to meet one-on-one? Click here and pick a time that works for you.

BJC REGULAR PROGRAMMING

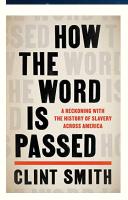












BOOK CLUB: February 22

The BJC Open Book Club meets virtually at 8 pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month.

Our February selection is:

How the Word Is Passed: A Reckoning with the History of Slavery Across America by Clint Smith. In the book Smith visits seven places across the country that memorialize or distort their link to the legacy of slavery, from Thomas Jefferson's Monticello to the African Burial Ground in Lower Manhattan and Angola prison in Louisiana.

These informative windows into the inconsistent and conflicting ways people choose to remember this history helps the reader understand why it is so difficult for this country to honestly reckon with the legacy of slavery.

If you are not already on the book club's email list and would like to join us for any or all of our meetings, please let Evelyn Ganzglass know and she will add you to the list.

BIC Administration

Spiritual Leader

Rabbi Eric L. Abbott rabbiabbott@bethesdajewish.org

Synagogue Director

Geryl Baer geryl@bethesdajewish.org

Program and Communications Director

Amy Kertesz amy@bethesdajewish.org

Rabbi Emeritus

Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer rabbisunny@bethesdajewish.org

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Rabbi Eric. L Abbott

Tu B'Shevat: Reaching Higher and Higher

When I was growing up in the Boy Scouts, we learned countless helpful skills and important facts about the world: how to tie knots; how our local, state, and federal governments work; how to swim; and endless other talents. One key skill that I learned was outdoor survival training. I'm no Bear Grylls, but I did learn basic survival techniques: how to light a fire, how to build shelter, and so on.

A fundamental aspect of this training was learning to establish basic needs first. Food, water, and shelter come before creature comforts. My camping trips in which we practiced these skills became real-world applications of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the idea that we must attain physiological needs (such as food and rest) before safety needs (security), followed by love and belonging (relationships with friends and loved ones) and then esteem (feeling proud and accomplished), and ending with self-actualization (achieving potential). When lost in the woods, it's not time to make an art project—it's time to collect firewood and build that canopy out of tree branches.

In many ways, this journey from basic, grounded needs toward the actualization of our higher desires manifests this month in the holiday of Tu B'Shevat. Tu B'Shevat, known as the "New Year of Trees," has its roots in the ancient rabbis, who declared this day as the beginning of the agricultural cycle of biblical tithes. In time, however, the holiday took on a deeper significance. In the 16th century, the Lurianic Kabbalists of Safed—mystics who followed the teachings of Rabbi Isaac Luria—created a special Tu B'Shevat Seder which infused the fruit of the Land of Israel with symbolic meaning. They believed that if they properly performed their new ritual—which involved eating ten types of fruit and four glasses of wine in a specific way—then they would bring the world closer to redemption.

In their Seder, the Kabbalists expressed the idea of four worlds. Ideally, they taught, we would climb through these worlds, attaining a higher and higher level of spirituality. The lowest realm, Assiyah, means "action" and represents the earth and groundedness. We then proceed to the next level, Yetzirah, "formation", which has to do with growth and creativity. Next comes B'riy'ah, "thought," which relates to openness and abundance. Finally, we reach Atzilut, meaning "spirit," and reflects a sense of mystery and wholeness.

My teacher, Rabbi Sonja Pilz, PhD, once compared the ascension through these worlds to reaching up through Maslow's Hierarchy. We begin with a grounded sense of realism, of providing for our earthly needs, but as we make our way up, we become more and more aware of the aspects of our lives that move beyond the physical. We become attuned to our relationships with loved ones, our ability to hold thought-provoking discussions, and a sense of meaning and fullness. Ideally, when all other needs are met, we can sense satisfaction with our world and even, perhaps, a glimpse of the Divine.

We are not all mystics (I still debate whether I am or not!), but we all can work toward this journey of leaving the realm of Assiyah, of physical groundedness, and moving upward toward higher and higher spiritual planes. How can each of us climb out of the grind of our day-to-day lives and reach for something more meaningful? How can we be more in touch with the things that really matter—our relationships with friends and loved ones, our sense of accomplishment and purpose—and let go of the things that we think matter—money, bills, administrative duties, etc.? Not that those things do not matter—after all, we need food and shelter before we can be creative—but how can we move beyond them?

During this month of Shevat and beyond, may we continue to reach higher and higher, leaving the grounded, physical world and finding purpose, creativity, relationships, and meaning.

LET THE RABBI PROVIDE PASTORAL SUPPORT

Please be in touch with me in times of joy, sadness, or illness in your life or in the lives of a loved one or another member of the congregation. If you have a pastoral need, please call the BJC office at (301) 469-8636 or email me at rabbiabbott@bethesdajewish.org. For a lifecycle emergency during non-office hours, please call (301) 664-4585.



FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Harrij. Kramer and Wynne Busman

We are excited about our many upcoming activities and hope that you will join us! Check out this line up:

- Tu B'Shevat provides an adult opportunity for Paint and Sip on February 2.
- The monthly Family Education Program is on Saturday, February 4 from 1-3 PM and is a Tu B'Shevat Celebration. Everyone is welcome to attend it's an ice cream seder. Yum!
- Zooming with the Jews of Uganda is right around the corner on February 5 and is an opportunity to learn about this fascinating community of Jews a world away. Thank you to our Social Action Committee and Program Committee for putting this together.
- February 11 is a Consecration service for our new students, followed by Shabbat Lunch. This is an opportunity to meet and to welcome new members and re-connect with friends.
- We'll celebrate Purim on March 4. We'll get ready for this holiday by once again purchasing and sending Mishloach Manot bags to friends and family, and we will assemble the bags on February 25. Last year, we thoroughly enjoyed putting together the bags and having dinner together, so please come and join us. Our big event is on March 4: our Adult Purim Dinner and Show.
- We look forward to another Authors Among Us event organized by our Inter-Congregational Partnership Committee on March 14.
- And our monthly Single In The City 50 +Chavurah, Mahjongg, and Rosh Chodesh Women's Circle-Lounge activities continue to thrive.

Thank you to all of our Committee Chairpersons and staff for these many activities. We are definitely keeping busy this winter!

We're so excited to have a date for Rabbi Eric's Installation! We look forward to celebrating with the Rabbi and his family on Friday, April 14 for a dinner and a service. Stay tuned for the details.

The beginning of our calendar year means one thing for your board: It's the beginning of putting together our budget for the next fiscal year. It's a complex process that involves the Rabbi, staff, committee chairs, and most critically our Treasurer. We have done a great job holding our costs down this year, and we hope to develop a budget that takes into account all of the financial demands on congregants during these inflationary times.

The new calendar year also means we are starting the work of the nominations process. If you want to get more involved with the Board or a committee, please reach out to Co-Vice Presidents Issie Resti and Ken Fine.

Our Good As We Give fundraising campaign has been going strong in December and January. Thank you to all who have made a donation to the campaign! If you have not donated yet, the fundraising campaign runs through the end of our fiscal year, which is June 30, 2023. Please help us make our budget with a generous contribution so that we continue to offer the events, camaraderie, and warm and caring spiritual experiences that makes BJC who we are.

Last point we want to make: BJC runs on volunteer renewable energy. We need every household to volunteer to sponsor an Oneg! It's easy, (almost fun), and it fulfills one of your commitments of being a BJC member. One email to **Amy Kertesz**, and you'll be given a full set of instructions. You can even pick your date! If we can't get enough volunteers, we'll be calling you.....





BJC YOUTH EDUCATION

Shoshanah Drake and Amy Rubinstein Education Committee Co-Chairs

At our January Family Education program, participants exploring the

Achrayut (Responsibility) had the unique and exciting opportunity to hear

Capt. (N) Guy Barak, Israeli Naval Attaché to Washington about his experiences in the Israeli defense force. He discussed the meaning of global responsibility in that context and followed up by answering a wide variety of questions from curious children and teenagers. To explore the idea of communal responsibility, students and families then learned how to braid Challah from congregant Lauren Kline. Moving on to personal responsibility, students discussed scenarios where they may or may not share responsibility.

If you missed this one, we have another family, community-wide event coming up next weekend! The school will be participating in an ice cream seder for Tu B'Shevat on February 4. We hope to see you there. Please be sure to RSVP on the Bethesda Jewish Congregation website so that we will be sure to have enough ice cream.

As always, the Education committee is open for all BJC members. If you are interested in attending a meeting or getting more involved in our youth education programs, please contact co-chairs **Shoshanah Drake** or **Amy Rubinstein** for more information.

Todah Rabah! Thank you to everyone who has donated to BJC through the year, including our Good As We Give campaign. We are more than half-way toward our goal of \$90,000 - and there's still time to participate. The Good As We Give campaign continues through June 30 when BJC's fiscal year ends.

- Tribute donations are always welcome in memory or celebration
- Gifts are tax deductible BJC is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization
- Pledge now pay monthly by credit card
- Consider tax benefits for donation of stocks
- Age 70.5+? Give directly from your IRA for added benefits

Give through BIC website, by mail, or call the office for assistance.

Updating your will/estate plan? Please consider including a bequest to BJC. Here's a suggestion for simple language to include in your will:

I give, devise, and bequeath \$_____(amount) or ____% (percentage) [Optional: and residue of my estate] to the Bethesda Jewish Congregation (BJC), 6601 Bradley Boulevard, Bethesda, Maryland 20817, recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization. Funds from my bequest should be designated for operational and/or program needs as recommended by the Rabbi, Board President, and Treasurer, upon approval of the Board of Trustees.

To talk about making a meaningful gift; or for help with stock, IRA, or language for your will, please reach out to:

Geryl Baer, BJC Synagogue Director, geryl@bethesdajewish.org 301.469.8636 Sandra Walter, Past President & Fundraising Chair, sandra4bjc@gmail.com 1.202.550.7692

Want to remember or celebrate someone on a birthday, an anniversary, a milestone, or just because you were thinking of them?

Make the moment meaningful by giving a gift of tzedakah in their name and BJC will send them a beautiful tribute card that you are honoring them or their loved one. Donate online, or send donation by mail to BJC Office.

Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery of the card to the person you designate.

N CASE YOU VISSED T

Speaker Mark Vandroff: The Abraham Accords

By Harri j. Kramer

A rapt audience focused intently as Retired U.S. Navy Captain Mark Vandroff addressed BJC on January 8 about the history of the Abraham Accords. He was one of the key figures on the American team behind the scenes working on the development of the Accords. At that time, he served as Deputy Assistant to the President and Senior Director for



Defense Policy on the National Security Council staff at the White House. He saw his value to the team as the one who "spoke DoD," meaning he understood how to work with the Defense Department to advance various objectives. In his presentation, "The Abraham Accords, A Personal View of a Historical Achievement," Cpt. Vandroff both entertained and enlightened us as he showed the gallery of key players—The Unsung Heroes—and told us the backstory behind each and the role they played.

The key goal of the Accords was to maintain and strengthen peace in the Middle East and around the world based on mutual understanding and coexistence, as well as respect for human dignity and freedom, including religious freedom. The signators encouraged efforts to promote interfaith and intercultural dialogue to advance a culture of peace among the three Abrahamic religions and all humanity. The key countries involved were Israel, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, with the United States serving as mediator. The signing ceremony was on September 15, 2020.

What we appreciated most was Cpt. Vandroff's summary of what he learned. Foremost was that peace is possible and that "anything is possible if no one cares who gets the credit." He explained that as a result of the Accords, flights of various airspaces stopped being restricted. His last point was, "A trip to Jerusalem is wonderful—a trip to Jerusalem with a stopover in Abu Dhabi is even better."



SNAPSHOTS

Getting Together for Worship, Meaning, and Fun,

WORSHIP SCHEDULE UPDATE

BJC continues our Friday night worship at 7:30 PM and Saturday morning services at 10:30 AM. Consult BJC Now for the latest information and for links to services if you prefer to worship virtually.



BJC IS READY FOR OUR SECOND YEAR OF MISHLOACH MANOT!

Did you know it is a tradition of Purim to give gifts to friends and to the needy? You can give anyone a mishloach manot! It's a Mitzvah, and meant to ensure that everyone has enough food for the Purim feast. The custom of 'sending portions' is Mishloach Manot in Hebrew.

We've made it very easy to send Purim treats! Check It Out And Order Here

https://www.bethesdajewish.org/campaign/purim-mishloach-manot-2023.html

Feb 2- Tu B'Shevat Paint & Sip at 7 PM

Bring in the Jewish "Arbor Day" with a fun and practical art project! Paint a birdhouse, sip some wine (or soda), and tap into your inner artist.





Feb 4- Tu B'Shevat Ice Cream Seder at 1 PM

We're making Tu B'Shevat extra delicious with ice cream. Join our Hebrew school for this Family Education program. There is a small \$5 fee for any non-member families.

Feb 5- Meet the Abayudaya at 10AM

Online only! Get to know members of the Jewish community of Nasenyi B, Uganda. Bring your questions!

Zoom link will be in BJC Now.





Feb 25- Mishloach Manot Assembly Dinner and a Movie

Help us put the purim bags together and stay for dinner and "Spaceballs"!



PCOMING O **VENTS**

BJC SOCIAL ACTION

January was Blood Donor Month

There is a nationwide blood shortage, and it's hitting close to home, affecting our BJC family. Geryl Baer's mom is quite ill and has needed many transfusions at a time when transfusions are being rationed. We're asking the BJC community to step up and donate blood between now and February 21 in honor of Geryl's mom.

BLOOD DONOR MONTH

While it's not possible at this time to have American Red Cross come to us, we encourage you to a convenient donation site. It's easy! Go to https://www.redcross.org/give-blood.html and find a time and place that works for you. Another good option for our community is NIH., found here: https://clinicalcenter.nih.gov/blooddonor

Beth El of Montgomery County is having a blood drive on Sunday, February 19 from 8 AM – 1PM in their large social hall. Snacks and refreshments will be served to all donors. Parking is available at Beth El's parking lot or on Old Georgetowne Road. Please note: all donors must be vaccinated against Covid and must wear a mask while they are in the donation area. To register: go to https://tinyurl.com/39zuwhbx

We would like to celebrate BJC's participation. When you're done, please email the office at admin@bethesdajewish.org to let us know you've participated.

On average, the blood of each donor is able to save or extend the lives of 3 people! THANK YOU in advance for participating in this mitzvah!

BJC and Stepping Stones

What does BJC do?

Stepping Stones has a limited budget for food and it relies on dinners provided by volunteers. Once a month, BJC volunteers provide a dinner. "Provide" can mean purchasing a meal (think Costco), or cooking a meal, alone or with others. We deliver the meal to Stepping Stones, along with instructions, such as reheating. Students receive 3 SSL hours for each meal provided.

SSL OPPORTUNITY FOR TEENS

What Is Stepping Stones?

A shelter for homeless families with children in a converted old farmhouse in the middle of Rockville. Stepping Stones helps families into permanent housing, while providing tutoring for children, and financial and other life skills services for parents.



Interested? Upcoming dates are March 1, and April 10

Dinner consists of a main course, plus one or two side dishes. Dessert is optional.

For ideas, go to the signup genius site:

https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409044fa5ae29a4fa7-dinner#/

We provide food for 7 adults/teens, and 15 children, so don't make too much!

Contact Terri Reicher tlreicher@verizon.net, or text at 301.758.5166.



Support the Uyghurs- Oppose Chinese Genocide

Last week we commemorated Holocaust Rememberance Day. Washington Post columnist Fred Hiatt wrote that in China, every day is Kristallnacht, the Nazi destruction of Jewish synagogues and cemeteries. The Uyghur Human Rights Project has documented the demolition and desecration of over 15,000 Uyghur mosques and cemeteries by the Chinese Government. Please continue to boycott Chinese products.

OUR MEMBERS

THANK YOUS

Donation General

Peg and Burt Bachrach in Memory of Esther Bachrach Cheryl and Hal Bordy in Memory of Eugene Levine Al and Ginnie Cover in Memory of Frank Cover, Ralph Cover and George Issacs

Shoshanah and Brian Drake in Memory of Dr. William Baer Alan Dubin

Judy and Al Folsom in Memory of Cecelia Folsom

Marsha and Leslie Levine

Bruce and Amy Mehlman

Rabbi Bill Rudolph and Gail Fribush in Memory of Dr. William Baer Carie Schaffer

David and Judith Scott in Memory of Bruce Scott

Craig Winslow and Diane Blumenthal in Memory of Polly Winslow

Craig Winslow and Diane Blumenthal in Memory of Phyllis

Blumenthal

As Good as We Give

Nancy Allinson and Martin Dickinson Cindy Bogorad in Memory of Len Bogorad Wynne and Bruce Busman in Memory of Dr. William Baer Wynne and Bruce Busman in Memory of Mary Baggett Landsman Shoshanah and Brian Drake Edward Elson and Hannah Friedman Elson Anita and Warren Farb Stuart and Michelle Frank Nancy Glassman Brian and Marissa Gould Joan Kaufman and Louis Hecht Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya Paul and Melissa Klein Mitchell and Julie Kraus Susan Kraut and Eric Benderson Karen Levi in honor of Larry Levi Wendy Mellinger and Robert Poogach Ted Posner and Karen Anderson Richard Ratner Terri Reicher Carie Schaffer in Memory of Jeff Schaffer Alan and Geraldine Schechter David Slacter

Ed and Norma Stern

Emily and Antoine van Agtmael

David Wall and Wendy Shay

Sandra Walter

David Williams and Rachel Mosher-Williams

Lorrie Van Akkeren

Gerson and Shirley Yalowitz

Rabbi Eric Abbott's Discretionary Fund

Diane and Dennis Horn in Memory of Shirley Lang Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya in Memory of Sharon Berk Joan Kaufman and Louis Hecht Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya in Memory of Bernice Kramer, Nathan Kramer and Abe Sherman Lorrie Van Akkeren

Rabbi Schnitzer Legacy Fund

Howard Teitelbaum

Maran Gluckstein Education Fund

Nancy Glassman

Craig Winslow and Diane Blumenthal in Memory of Dr. William Baer

THANK YOU TO OUR JANUARY ONEG VOLUNTEERS

Jeremy and Sarah Pelter Liz Sloss and Jim Korelitz Hal and Cheryl Bordy

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Jaclyn & Daniel Chappell

NACHAS NOTES

Editor's Note: Share the joys in your life! Send to: amy@bethesdajewish.org

- Mazel Tov to the Pelter Family on Joseph's Bar Mitzvah
- · Mazel Tov to Michelle and Jim Goldstein on the birth of their new granddaughter

REMEMBRANCES

Ever confused about when we remember the yahrzeit of your loved one? You can choose to remember this special date according to the Hebrew or English calendar. Get in touch with Geryl Baer in the office to review and verify the accuracy of your records.

Yahrzeits: February 2023

Esther Bachrach, mother of Burton Bachrach Amy Barsky, sister of Lisa Strauss Elisha Barsky, mother of Lisa Strauss Edward Baum, father of Bruce Baum Linda Belkin, sister of Sharon Sinalevich Harold Bernard, brother of Cathy Bernard Norma Bernard, mother of Cathy Bernard Blanche Blaney, mother of Maureen Pelter and grandmother of Jeremy Pelter Mildred Busman, mother of Bruce Busman Herbert Nathan David Cahan, grandfather of Sandra Walter Rita Chorney, aunt of Joan G Kaufman Charles Coplan, father of Lois Rose Ralph Cover, brother of Albert Cover Samuel Druckman, grandfather of Linda Blumberg Anna Dubrow, grandmother of Laurie Dubrow Mordechai Frank, father of Stuart Frank Eleanor Getter, mother of Lisa Getter Peterson Fritz Gluckstein, husband of Maran Gluckstein Georg Gluckstein, father-in-law of Maran Gluckstein Ida Goldstein, mother of Lorrie Van Akkeren Ilse Judas, mother of Allen Grunes Bernice Kramer, mother of Harri Kramer Nathan Kramer, uncle of Harri Kramer Eugene Levine, brother of Cheryl Bordy Charlotte Panton, sister of Barbara Faigin Morris Pelter, father of Lance Pelter and grandfather of Jeremy Pelter Morton Peterson, father of Jonathan Peterson Sarah Roger, grandmother of Robert Poogach

Ann Schmalz, mother of Lorraine McMillen Barbara Schwartz, mother of Melissa Schwartz Klein Abraham Sherman, grandfather of Harri Kramer Jo Stein, mother of Helen DiStefano William Sternfeld, father of Eliot Sternfeld Dorothy Teitelbaum, sister-in-law of Howard Teitelbaum Harry Walders, father of Larry Walders Polly Winslow, mother of Craig Winslow



CONSULT BJC NOW FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION AND LINKS TO CONNECT VIA ZOOM

CALENDAR for FEBRUARY 2023

Day	Date	Starting Time	EVENT
Wednesday	2/1	7:00 PM	,
Thursday	2/2	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
		7:00 PM	Tu B'Shevat Paint & Sip- Library
Friday	2/3	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	2/4	9:00 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge
		10:30 AM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
		1:00 PM	BJC Family Education Tu B'Shevat Ice Cream
			Seder- Memorial Hall
Sunday	2/5	10:00 AM	Meet the Abayudaya- Online
Wednesday	2/8	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online
Thursday	2/9	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
		7:30 PM	Board Meeting-Online
Friday	2/10	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	2/11	9:00 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge
		9:30 AM	Youth Education
		10:30 AM	Shabbat Services and Youth Concrecration-
			Covenant Hall and Online
		12:15 PM	Member Lunch- Memorial Hall
Wednesday	2/15	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online
Thursday	2/16	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
		7:00 PM	Mahjongg- Lounge
		7:30 PM	Bnai Mitzvah Prep Meeting- Online
Friday	2/17	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	2/18	9:00 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge
		9:30 AM	Youth Education
		10:30 AM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Monday	2/20	7:00 PM	Rosh Chodesh Women's Circle- Lounge
Wednesday	2/22	7:00 PM	Torah Today- Online
		8:00 PM	Book Club- Online
Thursday	2/23	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
Friday	2/24	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	2/25	9:00 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge
		10:30 AM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
		3:00 PM	Mishloach Manot Bag Assembly/Dinner & A
			Movie- Memorial Hall and Lounge