

June 2023
Sivan 5783

Rabbi Eric L. Abbott
Rabbi Emeritus Sunny Schnitzer

**JUNE 10
AT 3 P.M.**

**CAPITAL
PRIDE
PARADE**

**PEACE, LOVE
& REVOLUTION**

MARCH WITH US!



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**Rabbi Abbott's
Online Scheduler
is now open!**

Want to meet one-on-one?
[Click here](#) and pick a time
that works for you.

BJC REGULAR PROGRAMMING

Start Learning With Us!
Adult Hebrew Class



LEARN MORE

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Make this the year
you learn Hebrew!

**JOIN RABBI ABBOTT FOR
WEDNESDAY TORAH STUDY**
7:00 PM ONLINE
ZOOM LINK IN BJC NOW
BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG

**MAHJONGG
AT BJC**
6601 BRADLEY BLVD, BETHESDA MD
Join Our Monthly Session!
GET YOUR **RAFFLE** TIX FOR PRIZES!
FREE TO PLAY! BEGINNERS WELCOME
REGISTER AT BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG

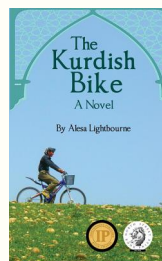
**single in
the city**
A new group for our age 50+ single members

ROSH CHODESH
join the women of BJC
for a monthly gathering

BJC Book Club Notice

The BJC Open Book Club meets virtually at 8 pm on the fourth Wednesday of the month. Our upcoming selections are:

June 28-*The Kurdish Bike* by Alesa Lightbourne follows an American teacher's adventures in northern Iraq and chronicles her cultural challenges among village women who were brutalized by Saddam Hussein's regime. Rated five stars by both the San Francisco and Manhattan Book Reviews and called a must-read for anyone interested in the Middle East, this provocative and heart-warming novel is a popular selection of book clubs around the country.



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 at eganzglass@gmail.com know and she will add you to the list.

BJC Administration

Spiritual Leader

Rabbi Eric L. Abbott

rabiabbott@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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Diane Blumenthal & Liz Sloss

Immediate Past President

Sandra Walter

Programs

Diane Horn & Joan Kaufman

Social Action

Karen Levi

Student Representative

Gabby Mendelsohn



THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

Rabbi Eric L. Abbott

This year, we celebrate Pride at BJC. But how do we do so when it can be so hard to be seen by others?

An old Chasidic tale tells us about Reb Nahman Kossover, who believed that the best way to connect with God was to consistently consider God's four-letter name, YHWH—to picture in one's mind the four letters over and over and over again. When Reb Nahman preached at the synagogue, he found it easy to see God's name on every face in the community. Yet when he sold his wares at the market, he found it significantly tougher. With the frenzied pace of buying and selling, Reb Nahman could not as easily focus on every face. He became frustrated and downcast with this disconnection—until he developed a solution. He soon hired an assistant, who only had one role: to stand there, to be Reb Nahman's reminder. Now, whenever Reb Nahman looked at his assistant, he could once again see God¹.

This story reminds us of a core Jewish value, b'tzelem Elohim. In [Genesis 1:27](#), during the creation of the world, God creates humanity b'tzelem Elohim, in God's image. The Torah implores us to see others as reflections of the Divine and to behave accordingly. Treating other people with dignity, compassion, and respect—these behaviors flow from this central idea. Granted, as the story above shows, sometimes this can be hard, such as when we're in a hurry at the grocery store or someone cuts us off on the road. Nonetheless, our aspirational goal should be to treat others as, well, humans—humans created in God's image.

Yet lately, if you have been following the news, you will have seen that more and more often, there are folks out there who do not see others through this lens. Shockingly and frighteningly, there has been a rise in anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, legislation, and actions. As of this writing, the ACLU is tracking [491 anti-LGBTQ bills in the US](#), including restrictions on [medical care for trans folks](#) and [bans on drag shows](#). Far-right insurgents continue to plan to terrorize and disrupt LGBTQ+ events. There is, of course, the infamous “Don't Say Gay” law—which Governor DeSantis [recently expanded](#). Even in Israel, far-right extremists have [threatened the Jerusalem Pride Parade](#).

These folks fail to understand what we know: that we each deserve to be seen as we are; that we each deserve to receive empathy, recognition, and honor; that each of us, no matter our gender, our expressions of identity, our love lives, are children of God. And that is why—because we each are created b'tzelem Elohim—it is upon us, as Jews, to stand up with and for the LGBTQ+ community, as members and as allies. As Rabbi Rachel Timoner of Congregation Beth Elohim in Brooklyn writes:

Jews have a vital role to play in the tikkun [repair] that is needed both for the Jewish people and for the American people. First, we must assert our pluralistic, egalitarian vision for Judaism and the Jewish people. Second, we must teach an interpretation of the Hebrew Bible that allows for the full humanity, dignity, and expression of people of all sexual orientations and genders. Third, we must advocate in the public sphere for the liberation of LGBT people and all people from heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia, and sexism.

Each of us has this vital role to play. Each of us can partake in this act of tikkun olam, repair of the world.

At BJC, we're proud to start taking bold action for LGBTQ+ inclusion, acceptance, and belonging. We have recently joined Keshet's DC Shivyon Cohort, in which we're developing strategies to address our culture, policies, and programs around LGBTQ+ life. [Please let me know](#) if you want to join our team (whether as a member of the LGBTQ+ community or as an ally!).

To kick us off, we're celebrating Pride this month. Join us on Friday, June 9, for Pride Shabbat and a celebration of LGBTQ+ life. Then on Saturday, June 10, we will head into the District for the Capital Pride Parade ([click here to find out more and sign up to march](#)). Come join us—show the DMV who we are!

You can get involved in other ways, too, such as signing onto this open letter from parents and allies of trans kids seeking greater action from Jewish leaders. Beyond these events, keep an eye out for more LGBTQ+ programming and some new LGBTQ-inclusive policies.

Looking for more information? Want to know more about the intersection of Jewish and LGBTQ+ life? (Want to ask some of those questions you may have been too afraid to ask?) Here are some more resources:

- [My Jewish Learning](#) provides an excellent summary of traditional Jewish texts on gender and sexuality plus modern understandings of them
- [Keshet](#) is the leading Jewish LGBTQ+ organization. They provide wonderful resources such as:

[“LGBTQ+ terminology”](#)

[“What is an ally?”](#)

[“How to Support Someone Who's Trans and Just Came Out to You”](#)

- [The Trevor Project](#) is a nonprofit dedicated to crisis support for LGBTQ+ young people

In a world where not everyone recognizes the basic humanity in each other, may we at BJC strive to live up to that fundamental Torah teaching: that we are all created in God's image. May we each, like Reb Nahman, see God's name in every individual. And may we, through our actions and love of one another, find blessings. To help us get there, I share this excerpt from “A Blessing for Pride”:

Sh'chinah shel ahavah, Presence of love, You embrace us with Your love. May we embrace ourselves, our partners, our lovers, our friends, our children, our dear ones with the power of Your ahavah rabah, Your unending, boundless love.

Ru'ach hashalom, Spirit of peace and wholeness, open our eyes to the gifts and blessings we offer and receive from each other; open our hearts to welcome each other fully and truly; open our hands to embrace, to support, to lift each other b'gilah b'rinah uv'rei'ut—with joy, with song, and with deep friendship. ...

*We bless You, Wellspring of our lives; may You fill us with joy and sanctity.
Amen.²*

2. Rabbi Joshua Zlochow er, Rabbi Erica Steelman, and Dr. Gloria Becker, “A Blessing for Pride,” adapted, p. 130 in *Mishkan Ga'avah: Where Pride Dwells* (ed. Rabbi Denise L. Eger).



FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Harri j. Kramer and Wynne Busman

What a great annual meeting. It was so good to be able to be together and assess where we've been and get ready for the new year.

And, we approach this column with a bit of retrospection that comes with writing our last column for Insights as Co-Presidents.

As we look back, it's been a wild two years. We've weathered the Covid storm, slowly returning to in-person events, but always mindful that Zoom remains a better option for some.

We said goodbye to **Rabbi Sunny**, and after a comprehensive search led by an amazing search team, said hello to **Rabbi Eric**. Both the farewell gala in 2022 and the installation and dinner in April were amazing events in their own right and important markers in our congregational life.

We've welcomed staff. **Amy Kertesz** has grown in her role and is now the Director of Programs and Communications. **Geryl Baer** joined us in spring 2022 as Synagogue Director, and we immediately asked her to help run this year's religious school in addition to everything else in her portfolio that keeps BJC running.

After fretting about the start of the school year with 8 students, we're now up to 36. Who could have predicted this?! So a special welcome to the families who have joined BJC along with their students.

With the endorsement of a new slate of board members, it follows that some are leaving board service, but have pledged their continue involvement.

A special thanks to **Sandra Walter** for serving as our Immediate Past President and guiding our transition, and for her many years of service on the board, particularly as our fundraising guru. We're thrilled she will continue to produce our beautiful Yizkor book, along with **Robin Sorkin**.

And to Robin Sorkin, our deepest appreciation for her work on fundraising and for her many years also working on communications and marketing.

And many thanks to **David Slacter** who has completed his trustee term on the board, but will be continuing to provide his wisdom as our counsel. David's sound advice has steered us through many a contract review and negotiation.

We'd also like to acknowledge and thank **Amy Rubinstein** for serving as the Education Committee Co-Chair for the past two years. As we think about the religious school, we have a special shout out to **Steve Turow** and **Linda Blumberg** for volunteering their time as our Tichon teachers for the past three years and have helped our young people think about social justice issues in the context of Jewish law, tradition, and teachings.

Our other religious school teachers deserve our thanks: **Malka Ostchega** and **Marina Milbert** for Judaics and Hebrew, and this years addition of **Michael Kertesz** teaching Hebrew. And, of course, our deepest thanks to **Maran Gluckstein** for continuing our adult Hebrew program to such acclaim from all the participants.

A lot of what happens at BJC starts with our committees. We're indebted to:

- Our Social Action Committee, led by **Karen Levi**, which has focused on repairing our world and our community
- The Intercongregational Partnership Committee led by **Marty Ganzglass** and his counterpart at Bradley Hills, who are so committed to building bridges between our communities and the mosques that also worship here
- The Education Committee, led by **Shoshanah Drake** and **Amy Rubinstein**, who have helped navigate our growth and planned such fabulous Family Education events
- Our Membership Committee led by **Diane Blumenthal** and **Liz Sloss**, who are making it their business to welcome all at BJC and oversaw our Membership Lunch
- Our Program Committee chairs, **Diane Horn** and **Joan Kaufman**, who working with Amy, have brought us all manner of interesting events
- Thanks to **Jim Korelitz**, our High Holy Days Coordinator, whose efforts to take care of all of the little things behind the scenes, ensures a meaningful worship experience for all
- And to **Lorrie Van Akkeren** and the **Chesed Society**, our thanks for your assistance in helping our congregation when we come together as community in solidarity with each other.

We must acknowledge the amazing year with **Rabbi Eric and Amy and Geryl**. What a joy it has been to welcome a new Rabbi this past year, as we have held onto BJC traditions, and explored so many new ways of engaging with each other. Amy and Geryl are our dream team, keeping us going with amazing programs and doing all the behind-the scenes things that must go on for us to operate.

And our final thanks is to **you**. We appreciate your generosity: your support for our annual food drives for Manna and the extra food drives during the pandemic. We appreciate that you donated school supplies for our neighbor, the National Center for Children and Families, as well as needed personal goods for the Yad Yehuda shelter in Silver Spring as part of Good Deeds Week. And thanks to all who donated money or sweat equity at the beginning of the school year for our Habitat playground build. And, last, but certainly not least, thanks to all who have contributed so generously to our annual Good As We Give Campaigns.

In short, the past two years have flown by. This last year, in particular, has been a great year with inspirational services, many wonderful activities, and a phenomenal education program many wonderful activities, and a phenomenal education program. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to serve BJC. We leave you in the capable hands of **Issie Resti** and **Ken Fine** as our President and Vice-President.

B'Shalom,

Harri and Wynne



We need volunteers in June for Friday Night Oneg!

This is a wonderful way to celebrate a birthday or anniversary with BJC by sponsoring a Friday night nosh. [Pick a date here.](#)

Beginning with the new fiscal year, onegs will be assigned by alphabetical order.



BJC Youth Education

Shoshanah Drake & Amy Rubinstein
Education Committee Co-Chairs

The BJC Religious School year concluded with its final family education event/end-of year celebration on Saturday, May 20. Following pizza and informal gathering, students and families participated in an outdoor Havdalah service to celebrate the end of Shabbat. After the service, it was great to see kids of all ages competing together in a game of capture the flag. We even managed to roast marshmallows and enjoy S'mores before the rain arrived!

Families also came together to thank the Judaics and Hebrew teachers, Marina Milbert, Malka Ostchega and Michael Kertesz, Synagogue/Religious School director Geryl Baer, and Tichon instructors Stephen Turow and Linda Blumberg for their hard work with our students this year.

Kaitlin Blackburn will join Shoshanah Drake as Co-Chair of the Education Committee next year when Amy Rubinstein rotates off (though remaining on the committee). Parents are welcome to join the Education Committee at any time as we gear up for next year's programs- feel free to reach out to [Shoshanah](#) or [Kaitlin](#) for information about meeting times.

[Don't forget to register for BJC religious school next year!](#) Early bird discount will continue through August 1. Have a great summer, everyone.

YOUTH EDUCATION 2023-2024 OPEN FOR REGISTRATION!



YOUTH EDUCATION 2023-2024

Come See What We Offer!

A UNIQUE ALTERNATIVE TO TRADITIONAL SCHOOLING

- Saturday Judaics for Grades K-7
- B'nai Mitzvah Prep
- Tichon Teen Class for Grades 8-10
- One-on-One Hebrew Instruction
- Interactive Learning
- Family Education Programming
- First Year Synagogue Membership Included for New Families

[BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG/YOUTH](https://bethesdajewish.org/youth)



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Musical Shabbat/ Food Truck Friday

The weather was perfect as the BJC community came together in early May for Shabbat outside with the band!

Dalia's Falafel and Clayboys Shaved Ice were on hand for dinner and dessert. Thank you to both trucks for coming!

Musical Shabbat is always a special time, but there's something extra amazing when we're able to be outside.

We hope everyone had as much fun as we did, and we're looking forward to the next one. Keep an eye out for a July date!

End of Year Celebration- Youth Education

BJC Youth Education closed out another wonderful year on Saturday with Havdalah, pizza, and s'mores. YUM!

Thank you to all of our BJC parents- and kids!- who made the school year so successful.



MUSICAL SHABBAT AND FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY



HAVDALAH, PIZZA & S'MORES

END OF YEAR YOUTH EDUCATION

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



Glenstone Museum

BJC had perfect weather as we visited Glenstone Museum. The "Split-Rocker" by Jeff Koons was in bloom!

We hope everyone enjoyed the exhibits and sculptures. We certainly got our steps in that Sunday afternoon.

Did you miss out? Make sure you are subscribed to our email list so you know what's going on in our community. We have several more exciting museum outings planned for the future!



Do you have ideas for BJC programming? Let us know! Contact [Amy Kertesz](#) or the program Committee Chairs, [Joan Kaufman](#) and [Diane Horn](#). Get on board and get involved! We love hearing from members.



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.



UPCOMING EVENTS

June 10- Capital Pride at 3:00 PM

We are delighted to be marching in the Capital Pride Parade! Please grab your friends and family and march to represent Bethesda Jewish Congregation at DC's most popular parade.



June 17- Bethesda Big Train at 5:30 PM

Join BJC for a Picnic Dinner and baseball at Bethesda Big Train! This is a great family event for Father's Day Weekend. \$25 per person for dinner and game ticket.

June 23- Shabbat Shabang at 5:30 PM

Families with young kids! Come join Rabbi Abbott at the Bender JCC for a kid friendly and fun sing along shabbat by the pool.



June 25- Chant Circle at 2:00 PM

We're delighted to welcome Rebbitzin Yaffah Schnitzer back to BJC to lead a chant circle! RSVP is requested.

[BETHESDAJEWISH.ORG/EVENTS](https://bethesdajewish.org/events)

UPCOMING EVENTS

SOCIAL ACTION



Juneteenth

By Karen Levi

The Emancipation Proclamation became law at the stroke of midnight on January 1, 1863. But not all enslaved people would be unshackled; those in the western Confederate states were not emancipated until June 19, 1865, when 2,000 Union soldiers arrived in Texas to announce that the black people in bondage were liberated by executive decree. This day came to be known as

Juneteenth in Texas.

The day has been commemorated in Texas and in the African American community. However, most Americans remain unaware of the significance of the day. President Biden signed the bill in 2021 to make Juneteenth a national holiday. The first Juneteenth commenced the fight for full citizenship rights and autonomy for African Americans. Those freed could not have imagined that 158 years later, their descendants would continue “to fight structural erasure of their lives, history and even their sacred burial ground”, according to Dr. Marsha Adebayo of the BACC.

There will be other celebrations around the county. For example, the BACC (Bethesda African Cemetery Coalition) will hold a Juneteenth Celebration (on June 19) at the site of the former Moses Cemetery, next to 5124 River Road, from 2-4 p.m. They will hold a service of Interfaith Healing and Reconciliation on June 17, 2 p.m., at the Macedonia Baptist Church (5119 River Road).

This year BJC members will participate with BHPC members at Cabin John Mall, on Monday, June 19, 2023, at a tent located at the Interfaith and Social Action Pavilion from 9 AM to 4 PM. This event is part of a larger celebration for the historical Black community of Scotland in Potomac, MD.

From the Festival website: "When the Scotland Community was at risk of being eliminated by socioeconomic forces in the 1960s, it was the surrounding faith community who stepped in with a “Save Our Scotland” campaign. In 2023, a similar campaign, “The Second Century Project,” was formed by the Scotland AME Zion Church to bring together leaders in faith, business, and the broader community. This area of the festival will be filled with fun and games under the theme of “What it Means to be a Neighbor!”"

Come out and support the community! Use the links below for more information.

<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/stories/historical-legacy-juneteenth>

<https://www.juneteenthscotland.org/schedule>

<https://bethesdaafricancemeterycoalition.net>

OUR MEMBERS

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.

Shloshim

Sara Kippelman, sister of Barry Dwork

Yahrzeits June 2023

Lillian Austin, mother of Laurie Mabile
Beatrice Barsky, mother of Lisa Strauss
George Borden, father of Victoria Bailer
Martin Borden, brother of Victoria Bailer
Pauline Borden, mother of Victoria Bailer
Donald Julius Bordy, father of Hal Bordy
Alan Brenits, father of Don Brenits
Fanny Cassell, grandmother of Wynne Busman
Betty Castleman, mother of Mark Greenstein
Bernice Dubin, mother of Alan Dubin
Hilde Hirsch, mother of Evelyn Ganzglass
Harry Jerome, grandfather of Karen Jerome
Ida Kornfield, mother of Judy Folsom
Joseph Laufer, father of David Laufer
Barbara Levy, mother of Karen Levy
Ronald Rathmann, father of Lauren Rathmann
Linda Ratner, wife of Richard Ratner
Mozart Ratner, father of Gary Ratner
Doris Rauch, aunt of Craig Winslow and Diane Blumenthal
Sally Reicher, mother of Terri Reicher
Herman Rosensweig, grandfather of Teri Brenits
Marvin Schnitzer, father of Sunny Schnitzer
Beatrice Schwartz, mother of Linda Baum
Tom Tarker, brother of Lisa Tarker
Bessie Teitelbaum, grandmother of Howard Teitelbaum
Bill van Berg, heartmate of Lorrie Van Akkeren
Goldie Walter, grandmother of Sandra Walter

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. When I am away, please contact Geryl Baer in the BJC office at (301) 469-8636, admin@bethesdajewish.org. She will know how to contact me or my substitute.

OUR MEMBERS

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Diane Blagman & Michael Botelho

NACHAS NOTES

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

- Mazel Tov to the Kertesz Family on Michael's graduation from Wootton High School and Eli's confirmation
- Mazel Tov to Stephen Turow and Linda Blumberg on the marriage of their daughter Samantha Turow Blumberg
- Mazel Tov to Hal & Cheryl Bordy on their 50th wedding anniversary
- Mazel Tov to Judy Folsom on attaining a "big" birthday!

THANK YOU

Through May 25

DONATION GENERAL

Diane Blagman and Michael Botelho in Memory of Claire Blagman

Shoshanah and Brian Drake and Issie and Justin Resti in Honor of the health of Donna Goldberg

Shoshanah and Brian Drake in Honor of the wedding of Samantha Turow Blumberg, daughter of Linda Blumberg and Steve Turow

Laurie Dubrow in Memory of Sara Kippelman, sister of Barry Dwork

Nancy Glassman in Memory of James E. Lemert

Daniel and Donna Goldberg in appreciation of the Chesed Society and with thankfulness to the entire BJC community for the care and support provided during Donna's surgery and recovery.

AS GOOD AS WE GIVE

Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya in Memory of Bernice S. Kramer and Rose Sherman
Lorrie Van Akkeren

RABBI ERIC ABBOTT'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Marty Ganzglass in Memory of Susan Berkowitz

Judy and David Scott in Memory of Sona Gold and Rose Scott

Lorrie Van Akkeren in Memory of Gordon D. Goldstein

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

CALENDAR for JUNE 2023

Day	Date	Starting Time	EVENT
Friday	6/2	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	6/3	10:30 AM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Wednesday	6/7	7:00 PM	Torah Today- Online
Thursday	6/8	11:00 AM 7:00 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Board Meeting
Friday	6/9	7:30 PM	Pride Shabbat- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	6/10	10:30 AM 3:00 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online Capital Pride Parade
Wednesday	6/14	7:00 PM	Torah Today- Online
Thursday	6/15	11:00 AM 7:00 PM 7:00 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Mahjongg-Lounge Social Action Committee Meeting- Online
Friday	6/16	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	6/17	10:30 AM 5:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online Bethesda Big Train Picnic
Wednesday	6/21	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online
Thursday	6/22	11:00 AM 7:00 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Rosh Chodesh Women's Circle- Lounge
Friday	6/23	5:30 PM 7:30 PM	Shabbat Shabang- Bender JCC Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	6/24	10:30 AM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online Josh Resti Bar Mitzvah
Sunday	6/25	2:00 PM	Chant Circle- Covenant Hall
Wednesday	6/28	7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Torah Today-Online Book Club- Online
Thursday	6/8	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
Friday	6/30	6:00 PM 7:30 PM	Shabbat Services-Covenant Hall and Online Board Installation/ Volunteer Shabbat Dinner