

May 2023
Iyar 5783

Rabbi Eric L. Abbott
Rabbi Emeritus Sunny Schnitzer

Musical Shabbat
Under the Stars &
FOOD TRUCK FRIDAY
MAY 5



DALIA'S FALAFEL — **CLAYBOYS SHAVED ICE**

FOOD TRUCKS 5:30 PM
SERVICE 6:30 PM

www.bethesdajewish.org

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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

bethesdajewish.org

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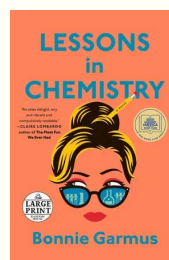
**single in
the city**
A new group for our age 50+ single members

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:

May 24- *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus is a witty, sometimes hilarious and shrewdly observed story about protagonist, Elizabeth Zott, who struggles in the male dominated fields of scientific research and the media in the early 1960's. Named Best Book of the Year by: The New York Times, Washington Post, NPR, Oprah Daily, Entertainment Weekly, and Newsweek.



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

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Rabbi Emeritus

Rabbi Sunny Schnitzer

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Sandra Walter

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Diane Horn & Joan Kaufman

Social Action

Karen Levi

Student Representative

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THE RABBI'S MESSAGE

Rabbi Eric. L Abbott

Sefirat Ha'Omer: The Eternal Journey toward Sinai

We are on a journey...

Not so long ago, we were in a place of fear and longing. For generations, our people were enslaved. Then, we experienced frightening plagues: blood, insects, hail, darkness. Armies, with their swords and their spears and their rearing horses, chased us. We scaled the rocky cliffs, traversed the roaring sea. And finally—we were free.

Now, we continue our journey as we head eastward. The desert sun beats down. The land appears foreign and unfamiliar. We are in a space of the unknown.

But looming on the horizon: a mountain. Towering above the wilderness, its peak reaching to heaven itself, Mount Sinai beckons us. It calls us to prepare: To purify ourselves, to prepare our bodies, to prepare souls. And then we stand ready. The anticipation is palpable. Soon, we will rise and receive the greatest gift God gave the Jewish people: the Torah.

...

This ancient journey echoes to us from the past as we reenact it every year. Just a few weeks ago, we left Egypt once again as we celebrated the holiday of Passover. As we sat around our family or congregational tables, we retold the words that our ancestors have said for generations: “Once we were slaves, now we are free.” We celebrate our redemption.

And, like our ancestors, we now look ahead. When they journeyed through the wilderness, they eventually arrived at Mount Sinai and experienced revelation, receiving the foundation of our lives: the Torah and all its laws and commandments. So, too, do we: In just a few weeks, we will celebrate the holiday of Shavuot, a reenactment of Sinai and a celebration of receiving the gift of Torah.

But right now, like the Israelites of old, we're in between the two moments: between redemption and revelation, between Passover and Shavuot. This period is called Sefirat Ha'Omer, “the Counting of the Omer,” in which we count each day from Passover to Shavuot. This practice started as an agricultural ritual of counting the sheaves of the first fruit harvest and has become a spiritual endeavor in which we develop on our very being, our souls.

Just as the Israelites had to prepare to receive Torah, so, too, do we prepare for Shavuot—through the Counting of the Omer. For many Jews, especially the mystics, counting the Omer is an opportunity for spiritual and inner growth. Each day, each count, is an opportunity to focus on a specific value and find a way to better ourselves. For instance, Monday, May 1, the 25th day of the Omer, keenly focuses on the idea of *netzach*, or “endurance.” Where are the instances in our lives in which we have the capacity for endurance? What do we need a little more strength to endure? How can we develop skills to address these questions?

Ultimately, we use this as a tool to prepare to stand at Sinai once again on Shavuot. What might it mean to be at the holy mountain, just as our ancestors did many years ago? How can we accept, interpret, or reinterpret Torah to fit our lives? Perhaps, as [Dr. Judith Plaskow famously taught](#), standing again at Sinai means including the voices of the those who have not traditionally been heard: women, as she originally taught, and also LGBTQ+ folks, interfaith families, and others. Perhaps it means taking our tradition, immersing ourselves in it, and making it our own—even if that means adapting or changing it. Maybe we must set out on a personal journey to find the right balance of personal morals, communal ethics, and Torah teachings to live a full Jewish life.

Whichever way we get there, may we once again embark on our journey from redemption to revelation, from freedom to Jewish living. May we once again stand at Sinai. May we make Torah our own and find the wisdom and drive to take ownership of our Jewish lives. And, whether through Counting the Omer or otherwise, may we find an opportunity for spiritual growth and inner development.



Celebrate your mother!

Make the holiday 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 a donation by mail to the BJC Office. Allow 2-3 weeks for delivery of the card.



FROM OUR PRESIDENTS

Harri j. Kramer and Wynne Busman

We'd like to start this month with a moment of reflection on the Amazing April we had at BJC. First, we were together for the second seder, which was inspirational and joyous, not to mention delicious! And then how to describe the ruach of the service when Rabbi Eric was installed as our Rabbi. Covenant Hall was filled with members old and new, as well as the Rabbi's beautiful family and his delightful mentor, Rabbi Jeffrey Sirkman. On behalf of all of you, we presented Rabbi Eric a custom-made, beautiful Gary Rosenthal piece of artwork with Rabbi Eric's favorite psalm inscribed on it. Please stop by the office to see the installation gift. We came together for Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, and saw an outstanding documentary. And then there was the Interfaith Family Fun Day – a joyous romp that once again showed how, regardless of our personal beliefs, we are all the same!

And a special thank you to those who participated in BJC's campaign as part of Good Deeds Week: the collection of personal care items to be donated to the Kosher Food Pantry, run by Yad Yehuda of Greater Washington. It was great to see the box outside of the office brimming with donations.

May promises to be no less exciting. We are looking forward to the Outdoor Musical Shabbat and Food Truck Friday on May 5. This is a great opportunity to worship outdoors, with the band leading us in song. Keep an eye out in BJC Now for more details

As your co-presidents, we are very focused on our BJC Annual Meeting on Thursday, May 11 at 7:30 PM. This will be our first live meeting since the pandemic, but we will have a zoom option for members who cannot be there in person. On April 26, we sent members a package of materials via our email system. The annual meeting gives a moment to reflect on all we have accomplished in this year of transition and gives us the opportunity to thank **Rabbi Eric, Amy, and Geryl**. We will provide an update on BJC's growth and changes, and there will also be reports from Rabbi Eric, Amy, and Geryl. We'll ask members to vote to approve (1) the minutes from last year; (2) the budget for the new fiscal year; and (3) the slate of officers for our new year. This is an important occasion for the congregation, and provides our current board members and our future board members with an opportunity to interact with each of you!

We hope to see you in person at BJC for services and events, and we look forward to seeing our members at the Congregational Meeting on May 11 in person and via Zoom.

B'Shalom,

Wynne and Harri



BJC Youth Education

Shoshanah Drake & Amy Rubinstein
Education Committee Co-Chairs

It was so wonderful to see so many families at our latest Family Education event, our Interfaith picnic. Students got to learn about our value of Shalom, peace, from different aspects of faith. Families enjoyed face painting, sidewalk chalk art, rock painting, corn hole games, playing on the playground, and the wonderful food truck and ice cream treats! We were also so very proud of the students for their part in Rabbi Eric's installation service. The students really focused and worked hard to learn an original song in a short period of time. They were even able to perform in harmony!

We are coming to the end of the Religious School Year and are so thankful for everyone who has helped to support its success. We would like to thank our wonderful teachers, Marina and Malka, and our Synagogue/Religious School director Geryl Baer for all they have done this year! We also would like to thank the members of our education committee for all their dedication and hard work. We look forward to continuing to grow and learn together!

Our final family education event will be on May 20th from 5:30 PM – 7:30 PM at BJC. Students will participate in Capture the Flag, enjoy Havdalah services, have a bonfire, and make s'mores! It will be a fantastic way to end the school year.

It is NOT too early to start thinking about registering for next year! Information and links will be available soon. There is a \$25 early bird discount for those who register before August 1, 2023.

Please consider getting involved. We always love having new members of our education committee. 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.



We need volunteers 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.](#)

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



Second Night Passover Seder

What a wonderful and meaningful community seder we had at BJC for Passover second night, led by Rabbi Abbott. Dinner was catered by Attman's Deli. Seder attendees enjoyed a classic seder meal of soup, chopped liver, chicken, brisket, or salmon, roasted vegetables and potato kugel, plus a wide variety of sides and desserts provided by our potluck volunteers. Everything was delicious! Thank you to everyone who chose to join us for the holiday.

Over 80 people gathered together to celebrate. Some of the BJC kids led the four questions and all had a blast hunting for the afikomen. We were thrilled to have you all! If you missed it, please consider joining us next year.

A special thank you to all the volunteers who helped set up and break down. The magic doesn't happen without you!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



The Installation of Rabbi Eric L. Abbott

What a memorable occasion at BJC on April 14 as we celebrated with joy the installation of Rabbi Eric L. Abbott as our Spiritual Leader! Covenant Hall was a full house with over 120 of our community coming together to welcome Rabbi Abbott officially. Congregants and guest enjoyed a delicious Shabbat dinner catered by Signature. Thank you to everyone who attended or volunteered. It was a night to remember!

If you missed the installation, the entire service is on our [Facebook page](#) and on our [YouTube channel](#)
Mazel Tov to Rabbi Abbott and to BJC!

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT



ICPC Family Fun Day

By Geryl Baer

On Sunday, April 23rd, over 85 congregants and guests from Bethesda Jewish Congregation, Bradley Hills Presbyterian Church and Maqaame Ibrahim Islamic Center came together for our first (of what we hope will be annual) Interfaith Family Fun Day. Rabbi Eric Abbott and Matt Nabinger, Director of Christian Education for BHPC, introduced the value of Shalom, peace and our Religious School teachers led “get to know you” activities to promote friendship and peace between our congregations. Families spent the rest of the evening painting rocks to beautify our shared space, getting dinner and ice cream, schmoozing and playing. A big thank you to ICPC, specifically Marty and Evelyn Ganzglass, and the Education Committee for coming together to plan such a fun program.



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

May 5-Musical Shabbat & Food Truck Friday at 5:30 PM

Dalia's Falafel will be in the lot to purchase dinner. Clayboys Shaved Ice is on us! Come for the food, stay for the spirit as the BJC band leads us in prayer.



Annual Members Meeting

May 11
Covenant Hall and Zoom
7:30 PM

May 11- Annual Members Meeting at 7:30 PM

The Annual Congregation meeting will be in Covenant Hall and Zoom. Come vote on the budget and incoming board.

May 20- BJC Youth Ed Celebration at 5:30 PM

it's the end of the school year! BJC Youth Education closes out their learning with capture the flag and s'mores.



May 21- Glenstone Museum Tour at 12 PM

Come wander the Glenstone Museum with BJC! Space is limited so please register to secure your spot.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS



PROJECT ROZANA FRIEND-RAISER: SAVING LIVES AND BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE HOLY LAND

Please join members of over 25 churches, mosques and synagogues coming together for an inspiring “Friend-Raiser for Project Rozana” at St. John’s Norwood Episcopal Church in Bethesda-Chevy Chase.

Tuesday, May 9, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
6701 Wisconsin Ave, Chevy Chase, MD

Hear a presentation from Project Rozana USA Chair Kenneth Bob about the work of Project Rozana, an international non-profit dedicated to STRENGTHENING PEOPLE-TO-PEOPLE TIES BETWEEN ISRAELIS AND PALESTINIANS through healthcare.

An interfaith panel including the Reverend Sari Ateek, Rector, St. John’s Norwood, Imam Faizul Khan, Islamic Society of the Washington Area, and Rabbi Greg Harris, Congregation Beth El of Bethesda, Maryland, will discuss from the perspective of their faith traditions how the imperative to care for the Other transcends divisions and binds us in our common humanity.

Participation in the event is free but space is limited in person.
To register as an in-person / online attendee please click on the link below:
<https://forms.gle/qvTbYPp4A2384vg78>

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:



PERSPECTIVES



Friends Club

THE FRIENDS CLUB

by Marty Ganzglass

Did you know that our shared sacred space is also the home to The Friends Club? I have volunteered at The Club for about twelve years, and it has and continues to be a spiritual and rewarding experience.

The Club is designed for men diagnosed with dementia. It provides them with a warm, non-institutional setting and the opportunity to socialize with their peers and enhance their overall quality of life. Established in 1990, it is a non-profit, non-sectarian program, supervised by two experienced professionals and assisted by volunteers. Every Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, twelve men meet in the lounge from 9:30 to 1:30. A typical day's program would be about an hour of discussion of current events or reminiscing about movies, sports or travel, and a short video on some interesting topic followed by a physical activity such as cornhole or golf toss, then a musical performance, then lunch. We usually end with a modified word game like Idiom or our version of jeopardy.

In addition to serving as a bridge between the social isolation of early-stage Alzheimers and the more traditional care services, The Friends Club offers support and respite for the men's caregivers, generally their spouses, through the Caregiver Support Group which meets twice a month in the Library. We hope to expand the program to four days a week which means we would have forty-eight slots available, as compared to the current thirty-six positions. The Friends Club thrives on referrals and we always need more volunteers.

I'm proud that I am part of a community that is both spiritual and is engaged in a social program that enhances the lives of people in need. If you have any questions about The Friends Club feel free to [contact me](#) or the Executive Director, Ken Silverstein at Ken@Friendsclubbethesda.org.

SOCIAL ACTION



Here are some resources to help you add native plants to your garden at home and consider replacing your lawn with conservation landscaping and rain gardens. This small action will make a BIG difference for both people and wildlife! Please join us to help our beloved Chesapeake Bay. Follow these links for more information.

[Native Plants by Ecoregion](#)
[DMV Nurseries PDF](#)
[DMV Rebate Program](#)

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

Loy Wesley Kirkpatrick, father of Ralph Kirkpatrick, father-in-law of Elizabeth Kirkpatrick, grandfather of Rachel and Aaron

Yahrzeits May 2023

Arthur Barios, father of Rochelle Banta
Edith Baum, mother of Bruce Baum
Max Cassell, grandfather of Wynne Busman
Samuel Dash, father of Judi Dash
Sylvia Davis, aunt of Wynne Busman
Tony Distefano, husband of Helen DiStefano
Meyer Dubrow, father of Davi Walders
Pearl Dubrow, mother of Davi Walders
William Dwork, uncle of Barry Dwork
Blaine Eig, father of Jonathan Eig
Michael Glassman, husband of Nancy Glassman
Sonia Gold, mother of Judith Scott
Abraham Kraus, father of Mitchell Kraus
Mortimer Leister, grandfather of Joy Gold
Max Levi, father of Karen Levi
Rose Levine, grandmother of Bruce Baum
Dorothy Moyer, mother of Barbara Faigin
Frances Oppenheim, sister of Herbert Bixhorn
Vera Poogach, grandmother of Robert Poogach
Harvey Rabin, husband of Dr. Evelyn Rabin
Irving Roger, grandfather of Robert Poogach
Rose Scott, mother of David Scott
Simeon Shapiro, uncle of Wynne Busman
Rose Sherman, grandmother of Harri Kramer
Goldie Slifman, mother of Larry Slifman
Dorothy Stein, mother of Helen DiStefano
Leo Stern, father of Edward Stern
Donald Tarker, brother of Lisa Tarker
Julia Ullmann, grandmother of Ted Posner
Barbara Wilansky, mother of Robin Sorkin

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

THANK YOU TO OUR APRIL ONEG VOLUNTEERS

Rochelle and Bill Banta

NACHAS NOTES

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

- Mazel Tov to Rabbi Abbott on his official installation!

THANK YOU

DONATION GENERAL

Jim Korelitz and Liz Sloss in Memory of Michael Dalton

Bruce and Linda Baum in Memory of Edith Baum, Rose Kline Levine and Rebecca Schwartz

Carie Schaffer

AS GOOD AS WE GIVE

Helen Dalton in honor of Harri Kramer and Russ Hogya, Robin Sorkin, Sandra Walter, Shoshanah Drake, Diane Blumenthal, Issie Resti, Lorrie Van Akkeren, Lauren Kline, Judith Scott, Joan Kaufman, Burt and Peg Bachrach, and Wynne Busman

RABBI ERIC ABBOTT'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Bruce and Wynne Busman in Memory of Lewis Chabot

Bruce and Wynne Busman Wishing Donna Goldberg a speedy recovery

RABBI ERIC ABBOTT'S INSTALLATION WISH LIST

Peg and Burt Bachrach

Alan Dubin

Jonathan Eig and Karen Jerome

Michael Goldstein and Linda Engel

Elizabeth Short and Michael Friedman

Donna and Daniel Goldberg

Joseph Gootenberg and Susan Leibenhaut

Dennis and Diane Horn

Mitchell and Julie Kraus

Benjamin and Kelley Landy

Ruth Salinger

Gary Sampliner and Ling Chin

Paul Segel

Francine Stein in Honor of Rabbi Eric Abbott

Edward and Norma Stern

Howard Teitelbaum

Lorrie Van Akkeren

Sandra Walter

Alyson Scherer-White and Sean White

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

CALENDAR for MAY 2023

Day	Date	Starting Time	EVENT
Wednesday	5/3	7:00 PM	Torah Today- Online
Thursday	5/4	11:00 AM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online
Friday	5/5	5:30 PM 6:30 PM	Food Truck Friday- Outside Musical Shabbat- Outside
Saturday	5/6	9:00 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Youth Education Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Tuesday	5/9	7:00 PM	Project Rozana Friendraiser- St. Johns Episcopal Church
Wednesday	5/10	7:00 PM	Torah Today- Online
Thursday	5/11	11:00 AM 7:30 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Annual Congregational Meeting- Covenant Hall and Online
Friday	5/12	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	5/13	9:00 AM 9:30 AM 10:30 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Youth Education Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Wednesday	5/17	7:00 PM	Torah Today- Online
Thursday	5/18	11:00 AM 7:00 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Mahjongg-Lounge
Friday	5/19	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	5/20	9:00 AM 10:30 AM 5:30 PM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online Youth Education End of Year Celebration
Sunday	5/21	12:00 PM	Glenstone Museum Outing
Wednesday	5/24	7:00 PM 8:00 PM	Torah Today- Online Book Club- Online
Thursday	5/25	11:00 AM 7:00 PM	Programming Committee Meeting- Online Rosh Chodesh Women's Circle- Lounge
Friday	5/26	7:30 PM	Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Saturday	5/27	9:00 AM 10:30 AM	Adult Hebrew Class- Lounge Shabbat Services- Covenant Hall and Online
Wednesday	5/31	7:00 PM	Torah Today-Online