



Ben Lewis

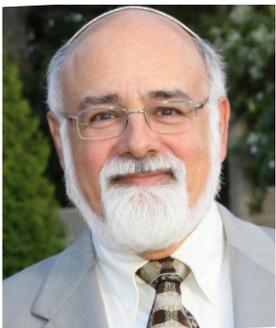
Invitation to the Hatan Torah

I was born in Charlottesville, VA and grew up there and in Plainview, NY. My parents were active in the synagogues in both towns, so I became a regular at Friday night services. All these years later, I continue to enjoy the peaceful yet upbeat nature of Friday night

services, though I miss greeting congregants as they enter the sanctuary (and going out to dinner with a crowd after services).

My introduction to Temple Beth-El was in 1986 when I married Laura Borton. (Laura's family was among the founding members of the synagogue.) My first roles at TBE were working on the Free Soviet Jewry committee, singing in and conducting the High Holy Day choir, and chairing the Richmond Symphony fundraisers. Once our children, Rachel and Michael, started religious school, I became active in Men's Club, initially as VP, then as President for three years. I similarly moved from the TBE Board of Governors VP to President for three years. (My term as President coincided with Rabbi Knopf's arrival.) As President, I am most proud of instituting strategic planning initiatives that ultimately led to (1) restructuring the TBE Board of Governors, (2) revamping the religious school, and (3) renovating the Grove Avenue campus. Of course, I'm also delighted with the result from chairing the Cantor search committee! Currently, I am leading a team of mentors working with a recently resettled family in conjunction with the International Rescue Committee.

I'd like to thank Laura, Rachel and Michael for all their support over the years. I'd also like to thank the TBE clergy and staff for all their efforts, and the lay leaders who helped usher the strategic planning process through to its successful execution. A special thank you goes to those TBE members who continue to provide the leadership and workforce that the congregation needs to thrive as a religious community. Finally, I look forward to the completion of the sanctuary renovations (and the easing of COVID restrictions) so we can all attend services together in a comfortable, safe space.



Rabbi Gary S. Creditor

Invitation to the Hatan B'reishit

Rabbi Creditor has been a Jewish leader for over 50 years, teaching all ages, envisioning and creating a community mikvah and participat-

ing on countless boards and communal agencies – Jewish, interfaith, and civic. He has been an active board member of the Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy for many years, and a member of the Richmond Kiwanis Club.

A member of the international Rabbinical Assembly of America, the Washington Board of Rabbis, and New York Board of Rabbis, Rabbi Creditor was ordained by the Jewish

Theological Seminary of America, the world-wide center for Conservative Judaism.

In 2003, he received his Doctorate from Jewish Theological Seminary, recognizing more than 25 years of Rabbinic service. Rabbi Creditor also was tapped by former Governor Tim Kaine to participate in the memorial program for the students and faculty who died at Virginia Tech in 2007. He is a passionate and engaging Jewish leader, a teacher of great wisdom and warm pastoral friend to many.

After 21 years of service at Temple Beth-El, Rabbi Creditor retired in 2014. Following his retirement he served for six years as a hospice Chaplain at Heartland Hospice, and continues teaching his Talmud class in its 26th year. Recently he and his beloved wife, Ruby, celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. He continues to be a contributing member of this congregation as well as the greater community.



Gail Grandis

Invitation to the Kallah Mafteret

My journey with Temple Beth-El began in 1960. I was a freshman at RPI (Richmond Professional Institute, now VCU) when I met Stuart Grandis, a University of Richmond student and son of Helen

and Reuben Grandis, active members of Temple Beth-El. At that time, Beth-El was a base for Hillel, of which I was president. After graduating in 1964, I became a special education teacher and was involved with Hadassah. Our chapter was made up of young professionals, and I eventually served as their president.

1970 was an exciting year. I was awarded *Teacher of the Year* for Special Education in Washington, DC, married Stuart, and we moved to Norfolk for his military obligation. In 1972 we returned to Richmond and promptly joined Temple Beth-El. We welcomed our daughter Roxanne, who later became a bat-mitzvah and was confirmed at Beth-El. My parents, Gladys and Chester Nusenko, retired and moved to Richmond, becoming active members as well.

I was honored to become president of Sisterhood, especially during Temple Beth-El's 50th anniversary. We spearheaded variety shows, family dinners, speakers, basement sales, sponsoring events, and more. I fondly remember all of the past sisterhood programs, especially the renovation of the kitchen, social hall, adding the dairy kitchen and bringing the much needed elevator. And who could forget our Bingo Nights!

I was recognized with the Binswanger Award by the Jewish Federation, Congregation Or-Atid and Keneseth Beth Isreal. I spent 33 years with my business partner, Lynn Simonoff Lichtenstein with Pick-Ups Plus Catering, where we shared so many life cycles with our community.

As I look at all past presidents and Sisterhood presidents of Beth-El, I am so fortunate to have known so many who have contributed to its history and success. Thank you to Stuart who has shared this ride with me, and thank you Beth-El for the honor. Whenever anyone asks me for assistance, I only reply, "I'm only a set of extra hands."