

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

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JOIN US FOR OUR MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. SHABBAT SPEAKER, REV. PHILIPPE E.C. ANDAL

FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, DURING SHABBAT SERVICES



Rev. Philippe E. C. Andal, Ph.D. serves as the senior pastor of the Community Baptist Church and as president of the Hananiah Community Foundation Corporation in New Haven, Connecticut. Under his leadership, several ministries have been developed and reorganized to meet the needs of a changing intergenerational and hybrid faith community in the heart of the Newhallville neighborhood. With a heart for the community, Pastor Andal established a partnership with Lincoln-Bassett Community School that provides for the social and learning needs of 25 students and their families, a monthly grocery

giveaway distributing over 2,000 pounds of food to 100+ families, and has raised significant funds to support disaster relief locally and abroad.

Leading beyond the church, Dr. Andal serves as the co-chair of Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut (CONNECT), an interfaith collective of 37 congregations representing over 30,000 people who work together building relational power to effect change for the common good on the local, state, and national levels. Under his leadership, CONNECT has adopted an anti-racist commitment, has doubled both membership dues and grant income, and continues to lead in advancing a grassroots policy agenda on issues of equitable education funding, reducing health care costs, affordable housing, and automatic expungement implementation. Additionally, Dr. Andal serves as a member of Agora Strategy Council of the Dr. N. Joyce Payne Center for Social Justice of the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, a nonprofit national think tank and research center rooted in the Black American community with the intent of convening scholars, public policy leaders, social advocates, and solution-makers.

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A celebration of a musical moment in Jewish history and a special moment in the Torah. It is also known as the Sabbath of Singing.

Welcome Shabbat by celebrating the richness of music at B'nai Israel.

Our congregation is blessed with many wonderful musicians, each a unique thread in a tapestry of song, woven into the fabric of our community.

Join our talented musicians as they fill our sanctuary with music and harmonies that explore the depth of music's essential place in Jewish worship.



SHARING OUR JOY

In Celebration of:

Susan and David Glucksman, on the engagement of their daughter Morgan to Brandon Lapensohn

Linda and Michael Espstein, on the engagement of their daughter Danielle to Eli Schrayner

Judy and Michael Katz, on the birth of their granddaughter Clara Francis Katz, daughter of Ailish and Peter Katz

Diana and Erik West, on the birth of their daughter Claire Aubale West

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Robert Swain, husband of Wendy Swain

Nancy Hersch, wife of Bennett Hersch

David Sklar, father of Jamie Sklar

BULLETIN BOARD

JANUARY MITZVAH

MORNING

Sunday, Jan. 12

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

**Burroughs Community Center
2470 Fairfield Ave., Bridgeport**

Our Woven Community (OWC) is a program that provides local resettled women the opportunity to become self-sufficient leaders.

The program teaches the artists to use sewing machines to make

handbags, blankets, and scarves. Items are made with donated material and fabrics from Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Guatemala, and more, which symbolizes the weaving of cultures.

We are looking for 20 volunteers to help sort and cut fabric, pull tags, fold materials, and design, if you would like. Afterwards, you will be able to see and buy objects made from the shop at the location.

100% of the proceeds go to the participants and back into the program.

Come join me and let me know if you have any questions.

Stacy Giglietti (Mitzvah Morning committee chair) stacygigs@aol.com

Sign-up Genius will be sent out in Hashavua emails and posted on the CBI website.

Monthly BIFTY Teen Hangouts with Rabbi Sarah!

Open to all teens in Grades 8-12

Join us in the BIFTY lounge once a month to hang out with friends (snacks are always included)! Whether you have been to BIFTY in the past or are new to BIFTY this year, all are welcome to join. See below for dates. All meetings will take place from 7:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, January 9

Thursday, February 6

Thursday, March 6

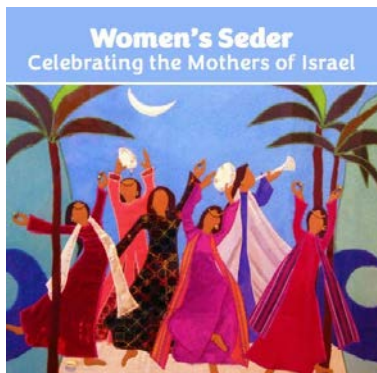
AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

**Wednesday,
January 12,**

1:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.



Schedule your appointment by calling the Red Cross at 1-800-448-3543 or visiting www.redcrossblood.org.



Save the Date!
B'nai Israel
Women's Seder
Sunday, March 30, 2025

Invite to follow.
If you would like to get involved, please reach out to:
Jodi Mantell
(jmmanatell@gmail.com)
or Liane May
(lianemay@gmail.com).

JUDAICA BOUTIQUE

In January, a new selection of new mezuzot as well as tallitot from Israel will be available. Check it out.





FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

LETTER TO MY DEAR FRIENDS

Dear friends,

I wanted to again share with you my plans to continue my personal and rabbinic spiritual growth. As you may know, it is standard practice for rabbis to take a sabbatical every seven years. After twelve wonderful years at Congregation B'nai Israel, I have decided to take my first-ever sabbatical in 2025, from January through March. I am grateful to the B'nai Israel leadership for supporting me in this journey.

Every Shabbat we joyously recite the V'shamru prayer together. The words of this prayer find their origins in the Torah, where it states that "The people of Israel shall keep the sabbath, throughout the ages, as a covenant for all generations. For in six days God made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day God ceased from work and was refreshed (vayinafash)."

The Hebrew word vayinafash stems from the word nefesh, meaning soul. In other words, on Shabbat, we "re-soul." We simply strive to pause, to breathe and to be, rather than to focus on doing, which occupies so much of our time and our week.

Our tradition offers us many examples of holy pause. Shabbat offers us such a pause once a week. We recently read of the shmita year, or the sabbatical year, which offers the land and the Jewish people a pause from agriculture and tilling the land.

Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the first Chief Rabbi of Israel, wrote of the shmita year that "the Jewish people, in whom the godly, creative force is planted eternally and distinctively, has a special need to periodically rest to reveal the divine light within itself."

For me, this pause — my sabbatical — will be a learning curve. I love our Congregation and for the last twelve years, I have spent much of my days and nights thinking about our synagogue community. My sabbatical — a short pause from the day-to-day life of the rabbinate — will help me to be the best rabbi that I can be for all of you and for our synagogue. During my time away, I plan to spend some of the time traveling with my family and some of the time here in Fairfield, focusing on study, writing, and reflection.

I am grateful to our past president, Susan Walden; our president, Rich Walden; and our board of trustees, who have given me their blessing to take this holy pause. I, too, share my deep gratitude to my beloved clergy team, Rabbi Marion and Cantor Harris; Alexa Cohen and the education team and faculty; our incredible office staff, Chris, Ilene, Beth, and Tammy; and our building manager, Eric Braisted. I know that they will all do an exceptional job leading the synagogue during my sabbatical.

Please be kind, patient and understanding to them during my time away. Please ask them how you can help or volunteer your time to fill in the gaps during the three months that I will be away.

While I am on sabbatical, Cantor Scott Harris will serve as senior clergy and point person for all pastoral calls and any necessary decision making in consultation with President Rich Walden and Rabbi Marion. Rabbi Marion and Cantor Harris will lead all of the Bet Mitzvah services in January, February, and March.

Our Rabbi Emeritus, Rabbi Jim Prosnit, has also offered to be more available for life cycle events and leading services while I am away. I am grateful to Rabbi Prosnit for offering to be more present during this time.

Thank you in advance to everyone for supporting our clergy team and staff while I am away. I am excited about this opportunity to take a holy pause and to rediscover the divine light within me. My hope is that this pause will enable me to return refreshed and recharged so that I can be the best rabbi I can possibly be for all of you.

With gratitude and love,

Rabbi Evan

SHABBAT SERVICE SCHEDULE

In person on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 8:00 a.m. where indicated.
All services at this time can also be viewed on Zoom. The link is sent out in our weekly email.

<p>Friday, January 3 5:30 p.m. Oneg 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom Torah Portion – Genesis 44:18–47:27 Haftarah – Ezekiel 37:15-28</p>	<p>11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Benjamin Warshaw, son of Brandon & Ariel Warshaw</p>	<p>Exodus 6:2–9:35 Haftarah – Ezekiel 28:25-29:21</p>
<p>Saturday, January 4 8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom 9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person and on Zoom</p>	<p>Friday, January 17 5:30 p.m. Oneg 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom Torah Portion – Exodus 1:1–6:1 Haftarah – Isaiah 27:6-28:13; 29:22-23 7:15 p.m. Martin Luther King Shabbat</p>	<p>Saturday, January 25 8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom 9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person and on Zoom 11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Matthew Kohanski, son of Kenneth Kohanski & Traci Ferris</p>
<p>Friday, January 10 5:30 p.m. Oneg 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom Torah Portion – Genesis 47:28–50:26 Haftarah – I Kings 2:1-12</p>	<p>Saturday, January 18 8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom 9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person and on Zoom 11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Calla Soltz, daughter of Michael Soltz & Laura Stern</p>	<p>Friday, January 31 5:30 p.m. Oneg 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom Torah Portion – Exodus 10:1–13:16 Haftarah – Jeremiah 46:13-28</p>
<p>Saturday, January 11 8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom 9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person and on Zoom</p>	<p>Friday, January 24 5:30 p.m. Oneg 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom Torah Portion –</p>	<p>Saturday, February 1 8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom 9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast 9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person and on Zoom</p>

Our synagogue Caring Committee is able to help provide rides to and from services to congregants in need of assistance. If you are in need of a ride to temple for Shabbat or another synagogue event, please reach out to Chris Rocha at crocha@cbibpt.org, or you can call the temple office.

HIGH HOLY DAY APPEAL DONATIONS

Pillar of Congregation

Jonathan Davis & Evelyn Rubak
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Jerry Saunders & Elaine Appellof
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Benefactor of Congregation

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OUR KLEZMER TRADITION CONTINUES

BY CANTOR SCOTT HARRIS

Although we know that the tradition of *Klei Zemer* goes back to Europe and around the 16th century, we know more about the world in which the music existed than about the music itself.

Before the 19th century, the social fabric of the Jews in Europe was being stretched simultaneously in both western and eastern directions. In the West was the enlightenment movement of Moses Mendelssohn, known as *Haskalah*. It encouraged the Jews to adopt the social and cultural traits of the non-Jewish society surrounding them while also readjusting the religious rituals to accommodate these social adaptations.

In Eastern Europe on the other hand, Hasidism, under the leadership of the Baal Shem Tov, the founder of Hasidic movement, was coming alive. It strove to encourage Jews to express their piety in a way that was acceptable up to that time: through the fervor of music, dance and ecstasy. In contrast to Hasidism, charismatic religiosity did not sit well with the more intellectual *mitnagdim* in the North. Under the leadership of the Vilna Gaon they stressed the values of scholarship and discipline and de-emphasized music and dance. The conflict between these three avenues of Jewish philosophical thought continued for many decades.

During these decades, Jews who were used to living in small, out-of-the-way towns found themselves uprooted by external developments. Changing borders and more liberal residency laws produced alterations in the cultural and economical condition of Eastern European Jews and began the dislocation of many provincial Jews into the larger cities.

In the midst of the historical turmoil was the klezmer, who was trying to adapt to these changes. The term klezmer comes from the Hebrew words *klei zemer*, meaning the musical instruments themselves. At some point, however, the identities of the

musician and his instrument had merged to be one term, klezmer. In our own time the term has been stretched even further to include the whole musical genre.

Without a doubt, the best-known vehicle for the klezmer was the *khansene* or wedding. It was here that the musician was most closely related to many, if not all, of the members of the community.

In addition to local peasant dance tunes, the klezmer played a specifically Jewish wedding repertoire. Literally every step was accompanied by the klezmer, from the *Badecken* to the *Sheva B'rachot*. Throughout the wedding, specific dances for members of the family, friends and guests were played by the *klezolim*. Guests were obliged to pay the musicians for each dance request. Some of the wedding dances included the "*Brogas Tantz*," the Dance of Anger and Reconciliation, the "*Patsh Tantz*" (Clapping Hands) Marches, *Horas*, *Shers* and *Doinas*.

A form of the Romanian "*Hora*" was commonly used as the musical accompaniment to escort older family members home after the conclusion of the wedding. Each dance had a particular purpose and place in the traditional wedding. The "*Doina*" was associated with the peak musical moment of the wedding. Because of its rhapsodic and expressive "vocal" quality, this "Shepherd's Lament," also of Romanian origin, found great favor among Jews of Eastern Europe. The "*Doina*" was the true test of the musician's oneness with his instrument.

The Jewish musician was also a familiar figure at non-Jewish weddings. It was for both Jewish and gentile weddings that the klezmer developed the necessary flexibility of repertoires vital to serving broad musical needs. For the most part, the traditional Yiddish repertoire necessary for the Jewish wedding was inappropriate for a gentile one.

But what of the non-Jewish repertoire played by the klezmer?

For the most part, it depended on the region and economic status of those who hired him. For all groups, a wide range of local peasant dances were performed. The peasantry would not usually demand more than this. It was among local landowners and nobility that a worldlier repertoire was mandatory. In addition to classical and light classical works, the klezmer was expected to play popular salon dances, such as the waltz. Other types of repertoires included local folk songs, ballads, and popular street songs.

In addition to the various kinds of weddings, the klezmer could be found at a wide variety of other occasions. In the Jewish community, there were those jobs playing for a *Brit Milah* or the dedication of a new *Torah* scroll or *shul*. There are also accounts of instrumental music being played in *shul* before services began for Shabbat. For the community in general, there were also impromptu entertainments on market days, at fairs, and in wine cellars. If a musician was highly skilled, it was possible to seek employment in a symphony or orchestra. In every case, the Jewish musician had to modify his abilities, his repertoire and his expectations to fit the situation at hand.

In some ways this could be said to be the birth of "club date" musicians. Regardless of the type of entertainment, the klezmer was challenged both to develop a wide repertoire and to make it sound as if the composition he was playing on any given occasion was the one he played best.

It was not only the repertoire the klezmer played that was constantly being changed, but also the instruments on which it was played. The *klezolim* in Prague in the 1640s would have played on members of the violin family, fiddles, violas, and portable cellos as well as flutes, drums and *tsimbl* (a portable, hammered dulcimer). The fiddle

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ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER
KEHILAH CHANUKAH PJ DAY AND CHUGIM



Celebrating Chanukah in the Education Center

By the time you read this, Chanukah will be almost over. First we had Thanksgivikkah and now Chanuyear! Since the kids won't be in school during Chanukah this year, we decided to celebrate early. We began the month with three special chug workshops on Thursdays, December 5, 12, and 19. Each

4th, 5th and 6th grader had the opportunity to participate in an art class (make your own loose parts menorah), music class (singing and instruments), and cooking class (latke making) for a truly hands-on Chanukah experience. The latkes left the kitchen oily and the menorahs left the tables sticky with wood glue but the halls were filled with beautiful music from chapel directed by Michele Farbman. On Sunday, December 8,

we all donned our Chanukah pajamas and enjoyed some yummy sufganiyot (jelly donuts). December 15 brought the all-school Chanukah celebration with latkes, games, and dreidel spinning. The finale was the synagogue-wide Chanukah dinner and celebration, where the homemade menorahs were displayed and Chanukah music was shared. Wishing everyone a very happy holiday season filled with peace.

Alef PJ Day



Homemade Menorahs



Latkes on the stove



Tefillah



Music Chug



Loose Parts Menorahs



All-School PJ Sanctuary



UPCOMING EVENTS

Puzzled by Prayer with Cantor Harris



Have you felt unsure or lost due to a lack of understanding of the meaning of the prayers we say? Would you like to know more about the structure of our prayers and why they were included in the prayer book? Would you like to find meaning in what your children/grandchildren are learning during services? Do you have limited time to give to a course about Jewish prayer?

If the answer to any of these questions is “yes,” or if you are simply curious, join me for a three-part mini course on Jewish prayer, using our *Mishkan T'filah* Shabbat evening service as the text. Each session will stand on its own, and in any given week — you can choose whether to attend the morning or evening session.

Tuesday, January 21
noon. or 7:00 p.m.

Tuesday, February 11
noon or 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, February 27
noon or 7:00 p.m.

Check Hashavua or contact the temple office to confirm dates and times.

Bam, Crack, Dot and Socialize at our NextGen and Women of B'nai Israel Mah Jong Game Night!*



Thursday, January 23
7:00 – 9:30 p.m.

Join with women from across the B'nai Israel community for an evening of Mah Jong and socializing. It's a night for everyone, whether you know how to play Mah Jong or not. There will be tables for players with experience, and tables for those who want to learn how to play...and if you just want to come and socialize, that's ok too! Snacks and beverages will be provided.

To participate in Game Night, all players must pre-register. Watch your email and Hashavua for a registration link. Please note that game tables will be arranged in advance by event organizers in order to facilitate congregational community building and a smooth flow to the evening.

For questions, please contact Game Night co-chairs:
Carol Lubin at crlubz@gmail.com or
Amy Moorin at amoorin@optonline.net.

**This event is co-sponsored by NextGen and Women of B'nai Israel (formerly the Sisterhood). NextGen is a new initiative*

within our B'nai Israel community that aims to bring the next generation of Jewish individuals, couples and families together. The mission of Women of B'nai Israel is to bring together women of all ages to serve our temple, support our community, and enrich our lives through social events, educational and spiritual programs, fundraising and community service.

Holocaust Exhibit Open at Yale

In the First Person, an exhibit at the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library at Yale, includes dozens of testimonies and eyewitness accounts of pogroms and the Holocaust on paper and in audiovisual format. These materials are part of the Fortunoff Video Archive for Holocaust Testimonies, supplemented by materials from the Yale archives.

The catalog states:

These testimonies remind us of the millions of murdered Jews and non-Jews whose voices will never be heard. Their silence surrounds this exhibition.

We use books to expand consciousness; we must use these video tapes for the same purpose.

The exhibit's curator stated that we should not call the horrible pogrom of November 9, Kristallnacht, or the Night of Broken Glass, because that ignores the millions of murders committed on that night, placing the emphasis instead on destroyed shops.

The exhibition will continue through January 28.

The Beinecke is at 121 Wall St. in New Haven and is open to the public from:
Saturday to Sunday: noon – 5:00 p.m.
Monday to Thursday: 9:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Friday: 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE

BANDS FOR B'NAI

2025

04.03.2025

5:30 - 9:30 PM

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BRIDGEPORT, CT

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JANUARY DONATIONS

(We greatly appreciate all donations to our special purpose funds.)

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund

Ken & Lori Berger, in memory of Lori's father, Lester Davis.

Barry & Linda Diamond, in celebration of the birth of Barry & Linda Diamond's great granddaughter Scarlett Jane Diamond, daughter of Michael & Megan Diamond, granddaughter of Robert & Theresa Diamond.

Aleksey & Raisa Ledvich, in memory of grandmothers, Sara Goldenfarb & Feiga Vengerovskaya; grandfather Eli Goldshteyn.

Sondra Lublin, with gratitude and appreciation from the family of Philip Lublin for your support & kindness and the beautiful funeral & shiva services.

Adam & Stephanie Schechter, in celebration of the bar mitzvah of Ben Schechter.

Jeff & Mindy Siegel, with gratitude.

Mark & Deena Spector, in memory of our son Josh who would have turned 30.

Michael & Donna Tauss, in memory of Jim Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden.

Jon & Lauren Tropp and family, in appreciation to Rabbi Evan Schultz for the kindness, care & guidance you provided when my father passed and for the lovely funeral & shiva services.

Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund

Donations made in memory of Ken Marion father of Seth (Sarah) Marion were made by; Michael & Judy Blumenthal, Sherry Fogel, Luise Mann & Dudley & Laura Orr.

Dudley & Laura Orr, in memory of Ken Marion, father of Seth Marion & Jim Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden.

Jordan & Beth Posner, in appreciation to Rabbi Marion for the wonderful wedding ceremony for our daughter Halley & her husband, John.

Adam & Stephanie Schechter, in celebration of the bar mitzvah of Ben Schechter.

Mark & Deena Spector, in memory of our son Josh who would have turned 30.

Jon & Lauren Tropp & family, with gratitude to Rabbi Sarah Marion for her support and the lovely shiva service when my father passed.

Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund

Adam & Stephanie Schechter, in celebration of the bar mitzvah of Ben Schechter.

Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund

Beth Lazar, in appreciation for the Rosh Hashanah sermon by Rabbi James Prosnit.

Samuel & Patti Rosenberg, in appreciation of Rabbi Prosnit and in memory of Donald Dworken.

Music Fund

Jon & Lauren Tropp and family, with thanks to Cantor Harris for your support and the beautiful music at my father's funeral service.

Enhancement Fund

Barbara Berkowitz, in loving memory of my husband Barry Berkowitz.

Vernon & Meredith Domm, in honor of the yahrzeits of Meredith's parents, Harvey & Anne Nyden Stark.

Luise Mann, in loving memory of mother Muriel Mann & grandmother Mary Plotkin.

Adam & Mickie Miller, in memory of Susan L. Weiss, mother of Mickie Miller.

Jeffrey & Jackie Madwed, in memory of Nancy Wettenstein, mother of Bruce Wettenstein; in honor of Mindy Siegel's leadership & Federation award.

Steve & Julie Pressman, in memory of Irving Hochhauser, father of Ken Hochhauser.

Mark & Deena Spector, in memory of our son Josh who would have turned 30.

Bonim Preschool Scholarship Fund

Bonnie Alterman, in loving memory of my parents Miriam & Ed Payess.

Philip & Sarah Gillespie-Heyman, in memory of Steven Emmerman, brother-in-law of Howard & Julie Rosenbaum.

Serena Sher, in honor of Rich & Susan Walden's daughter Elizabeth on her engagement to Albert Cortina.

Religious School Scholarship Fund

Martin & Elaine Schwartz, with congratulations to Alan & Sylvia Neigher on the engagement of their son Jeremy to Anne Moriarty.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund

Michael & Judy Blumenthal, in memory of Philip Lublin, father of Lauren Tropp.

Howard & Eden Diamond, with gratitude.

Mark & Barbara Edinberg, in celebration of the marriage Halley Posner, daughter of Jordan & Beth Posner, to John McDonald.

Gloria Katz, in memory of Rabbi Arnold Sher, husband of Serena Sher.

Alan & Sylvia Neigher, in loving memory of Rabbi Arnie Sher, husband of Serena Sher.

David & Judith Pressler, in memory of Rabbi Arnold Sher, husband of Serena Sher, a friend and advisor to us.

Jane Pressman, in memory of Anya Klee.

Daniel & Laurie Schopick, in memory of Mary Brandt, sister of Judy Chessin.

Keshet Project

Carol Barsky, in memory of Jim Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden.

Gail Bushell, in loving memory of Bob Swain, husband of Wendy Swain.

Claudia Wolen, in honor of my friend Marj Freeman's birthday.

The George Markley Chesed Fund

Donations made in memory of James Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden were made by; Brotherhood of B'nai Israel, Randy Dorfman & Richard Post, Naomi Schaffer & Roger Jackson, William & Caren Schwartz, Howard Weisman & Nina Silberman, John & Anne Watkins.

Continued on page 9

JANUARY DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

Jerry & Dale Demner, in memory of Jerry Demner's sister, Lorraine Hirsch, & mother, Jessie Demner.

Rhea Farbman, with thanks to Sherry Portnoy for recommending Jerry Demner (thank you for your help!).

Jim & Lisa Greenberg, in loving memory of my mother, Doba Mazo.

Serena Sher, in honor of Sylvia & Alan Neigher's son Jeremy on his engagement to Ann Moriarty.

Ken & Rita Weinstein, in loving memory of Albert Weinstein M.D. on his yahrzeit.

Gillette Judaic Enrichment Fund

Alan & Sylvia Neigher, in honor of Mindy Siegel and all you do for the Jewish community.

Jane Pressman, in memory of Irving Hochhauser, father of Ken (Debbie) Hochhauser.

Yakhani Caring Fund

Johanna Rayman, in honor of Jim (James) Grutzmacher.

Lunch with Amit

January 14th, February 11th, and March 11th
noon – 1:00 p.m.
Natt Family Library

Join for an informal monthly lunch session with our Israeli Emissary, Amit Swisa. Bring your lunch and your questions about Israel. This is a great opportunity to connect with Israel and ask about current events, life in Israel, and everything in between!

MLK, JR. SHABBAT SPEAKER.....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Dr. Andal earned a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from Fisk University, a Master of Divinity from Yale University, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Public Policy from Southern University and A & M College. Additionally, he is a

2017 Fellow of Fellowships at Auschwitz for the Study of Professional Ethics and completed a Certificate in Executive Church Leadership from the Howard University School of Business. Dr. Andal holds appointments at Yale Divinity School as

lecturer in Pastoral Leadership and Church Administration, founding member of the Black Church Study Certificate Program Faculty Committee, and as a member of the Alumni Board.



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The Bulletin of Congregation B'nai Israel is published every month except July.

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Congregation B'nai Israel, founded in 1858, seeks to be a vibrant Reform synagogue dedicated to the perpetuation of Jewish life and values within the framework of contemporary American Judaism. We are a gateway to Judaism for all. The Congregation B'nai Israel Bulletin publishes monthly 11 times a year (except July). To submit an article, announcement or ad to the Bulletin, please contact

Co-Editors, Amy Pressman at apressman@cbibpt.org or Lauren Tropp at ltropp@cbibpt.org.

Submissions are due by the first day of the month preceding the publication month. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length or style.

OUR KLEZMER TRADITION CONTINUES.....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

was the primary lead instrument while the others played counterpoints, harmonies, or occasionally took the melodic lead.

The predominance in the violin in the klezmer ensemble remained unchallenged until the relatively late introduction of the clarinet early in the 19th century. Both the violin and clarinet were evocative and mesmerizing instruments that sought out and found that most compelling aspect to the music, its closeness to the human voice. The music of the synagogue had a profound affect, both musically and emotionally on the music of the klezmer. The *hazzan*, as a representative of the community, spoke for and to its members, bringing out their deepest sense of identity. Ultimately, what reached the community most effectively were both the *hazzan's* command of the prayers and voice, so poignantly characterized by the use of the "krechtz moan"; it was with the klezmer musicians playing that it reached that deepest part of the listener, the part that couldn't hide its feelings. The laugh or cry of the music was really that of the community coming back to it through the playing of the *klezmer*.

By the end of the 19th century, brass instruments had been gradually introduced into klezmer bands. It is thought that the rise of brass as a Yiddish instrument was due primarily to the presence of Jews in various European armies. With the increased Jewish population in the army, more and more klezmer players were assigned to military bands. The musicians who came home with their instruments returned with musical knowledge. The increase in brass instruments may also have had something to do with the continued technological improvements of the instruments themselves. As newer, more modern instruments were introduced, the older instruments became available to East European folk musicians who could then afford them.

Here in this country, klezmer music began with the Yiddish Theatre in the 1880s. Klezmer musicians played the same type of music as they did in Europe and at

the same places. In the transitions from Europe to the U.S., immigrant musicians now played more fox trots than *Freylachs* and used contemporary instruments such as the saxophone and the tenor banjo. It was still possible to hear the older ritual dances. Klezmer music began to lose its popularity among the younger Jews and assimilation began.

Looking back, I think it was Alex Haley and his book *Roots* that had the biggest impact on the re-interest in klezmer music. Alex Haley began looking towards his roots and his past. Jews, too, began to look back toward their musical past. Klezmer music was mysterious. It was something from the past, from the shtetl. Klezmer music embodies 200 years of history and life in Russia and Poland. It is something from the past in a day and age when we are looking back to where we came from. It is natural that we would rekindle an interest in a musical form that is uniquely Jewish.

There are klezmer bands all over the country today. The one person who has done the most to further the interest in klezmer music is Giora Feidman, one of the greatest clarinetists in the world.

Giora Feidman (Hebrew: ג'ורא פיידמאן; born March 25, 1936) is an Argentine-born Israeli clarinetist who specializes in klezmer music. Giora Feidman was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina, where his Bessarabian Jewish parents immigrated to escape persecution. Feidman comes from a family of klezmer musicians. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather made music for weddings, bar mitzvahs, and holiday celebrations in the shtetls of Eastern Europe. Feidman married Ora Bat-Chaim, his personal manager, in 1975.

Feidman began his career in Buenos Aires as a member of the Teatro Colón Symphony Orchestra. Two years later he immigrated to Israel to become the youngest clarinetist ever to play with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra. He was a member of the orchestra for over 20 years. In the early 1970s, he began his solo career. He has performed with the Berliner Symphoniker, the Kronos

Quartet, the Polish Chamber Philharmonic, the Munich Chamber Philharmonic Orchestra, and the Munich Radio Orchestra. In 1974 the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra commissioned composer Misha Segal to write a concerto for clarinet and orchestra for Giora Feidman. The one-movement piece, which was based on an original nigun, premiered that same year. Movie director Steven Spielberg invited him to play the clarinet solos for the soundtrack of *Schindler's List*, which won seven Academy Awards. Feidman founded the "Clarinet and Klezmer in the Galilee" seminar and master class program, which takes place every year in Safed, Israel.

Here at Congregation B'nai Israel, we are fortunate to have many talented musicians, and it seems most appropriate that a klezmer band be a part of this community.

As Mark Edinberg relayed to me, "It was Scott Casher, our bassist, who happened to have the original idea to form a congregational klezmer group and came up with the name for the band (Radio Klez)... at one of our recent performances, Radio KLEZ members talked about there not being anything in the klezmer repertoire that features the bass as a lead instrument. I took it upon myself to create a klezmer song that featured Scott Casher called the "Heimische Bass Nigun."

We've been fortunate to create many different musical Shabbat experiences. For me, and I'm sure many that remember back many years ago, the Jose Bowen Klezmer service for Shabbat Shira in 2005, which Cantor Blum and I put together during my years in Westport. Or it could be the many occasions on which Radio KLEZ has lifted our prayers and spirits. It is the klezmer service that resonates deeply.

My deepest thanks to Radio KLEZ: Mark Edinberg, Janet Rosen, George Sander, Rebecca Blondin, Ben Bauscher, Anat Shiloach, and Scott Casher.

I hope that you'll join us for Shabbat on January 10, for what I'm sure will be another joyous musical experience.

KESHER CORNER

This is the 26th year that I've been the executive director of the Keshet Project. It seems like the new year arrived faster than ever before. There's always so much to do!

We have a very busy schedule with in-person events that celebrate Jewish holidays and rituals, drama games and rehearsals for our performances, and an online Songfest that joins together our extended family across the United States.

In 2025, we are scheduled to lead the Disability Awareness Shabbat on March 28. We're preparing by expanding our repertoire with new songs.

It's very different learning through the eyes and ears of a challenged adult. The desire is there, but his/her ability may not be advanced enough to allow the new information in.

About 15 years ago, I was teaching piano to a wonderful young man who had Asperger's. He has always been a fine artist and earns an income by selling his designs. His mother had a byline in the Wall Street Journal and decided to write an article about the difference in cost in raising a child with challenging issues compared to a child without. She researched and discovered that over the course of a lifetime the cost of raising a challenged child is one million dollars more.

It's important to know that there are many programs available to children 18 years old and younger and that after 18 there are very few opportunities.

The Keshet Project offers these older adults many new and exciting experiences that increase their attention span, joy, and sense of self-worth.

This year the cost to attend all Keshet programs is \$165. It is reimbursable through Social Services. If someone prefers to drop in occasionally, the cost is \$20 for each visit. Our program is inclusive and offers crafts, music, drama, delicious snacks and, most important, an opportunity to socialize.

Please reach out to friends and family who might be interested and email me with any thoughts or suggestions.

We would be grateful if you subscribed and followed us on Facebook and Instagram.

On Facebook we are: the Keshet Project and the Keshet Project Songfest and on Instagram we are at: Rhea Farbman.

Donations are always welcome.

Happy New Year. May it bring peace around the world and may it bring the Hostages home.

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BANNED BOOKS AND MENTAL HEALTH

BY MARJ FREEMAN, MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TEAM

The Mental Health Awareness Team will be leading one of B'nai Israel's Banned Book Discussions at **7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 13, 2025. We'll be talking about "The Yellow Wallpaper," a short story** by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, originally published in 1892. Please join us! The story is only 17 pages long. You can read it online or borrow the book *The Yellow Wallpaper*, which also contains other stories by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, from the temple or public library or a member of the Mental Health Team. If you get the book, please read the introduction as well as the short story. Unfortunately, you'll note that some attitudes have not changed since 1892.

Research consistently underscores the therapeutic power of storytelling.

Bibliotherapy, a practice that uses literature to support mental health, highlights how reading books that delve into sensitive topics can help individuals gain insight, develop coping mechanisms, and foster resilience. When books that address mental health issues are banned, this potential for healing is stripped away. Without access to these narratives, young readers in particular may feel even more alienated, believing that their struggles are too taboo to be acknowledged openly.

Stories allow readers to process their emotions and feel less alone in their struggles. Books can be a mirror and a window: they reflect personal experiences and offer a glimpse into the lives of others.

Books can be a lifeline, providing solace, understanding, and a safe space to confront complex emotions. Restricting access to literature about marginalized people or uncomfortable situations often results in ignorance about the restricted subject and can increase shame and prejudice, stifle empathy, hinder support, and limit research. Taboos on the discussion of specific subjects often harm people affected by those topics as well as the people who care about them. All these consequences can have an impact on potential readers' mental health. These are some of the reasons we should all fight book banning.

We hope to see you at 7:00 p.m. on Monday, January 13, in the temple library.

BANNED BOOK MEETINGS

Join us for our Banned and Challenged Book Group Discussions this Year!

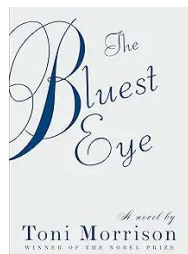
This year, two of our Banned and Challenged Book Group discussions will be hosted and facilitated by two of our tikkun olam committees, who have chosen banned and challenged books that reflect the important work of their committees. All are welcome to join these discussions; you do not need to be a member of these committees in order to participate in the book discussions. Participants are encouraged to read each book in advance of the meeting. Save the dates and happy reading!



"The Yellow Wallpaper", a short story by Charlotte Perkins Gilman Monday, January 13, 7:00–8:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Marj Freeman, co-chair of the Mental Health Committee

A woman is diagnosed with a "temporary nervous depression — a slight hysterical tendency" in the 1880s. She is confined to rest, alone in a nursery with peeling yellow wallpaper. She records her growing obsession with the "horrid" wallpaper in a journal, but her quest to unlock the wallpaper's mystery leads not to the truth, but into the darkest depths of madness.



The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison

***#6 on the American Library Association's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List Monday, March 3, 7:00–8:30 p.m.**

Facilitated by Jeff Schwartz and Laura Stern, co-chairs of the CONECT committee

At the root of our interfaith work in CONECT is deepening our understanding of sexism and racism, along with working toward legal reforms and equality. *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison is one of the most frequently banned books and a perfect one for us to debate. Should it be banned for its depiction of violence and incest? Or should it be read as a classic as are other novels by Toni Morrison, who later earned the Nobel Prize?



Sold by Patricia McCormick

***#10 on the ALA's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List Monday, April 28, 7:00–8:30 p.m.**

Facilitated by Susan Walden

Thirteen-year-old Lakshmi leaves her poor mountain home in Nepal thinking that she is to work in the city as a maid only to find that she has been sold into the sex slave trade in India and that there is no hope of escape. Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives, but triumphs.



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