

JUNE HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz invites congregants to take part in impactful mitzvot, either by learning how to lead a shiva minyan for families who have suffered the loss of a loved one or by signing up for "shmira," watching over the body of a newly deceased community member prior to the funeral and burial. Page 3

Rabbi Marion thanks congregants for their outpouring of love and support after the recent passing of her grandmother and shares her Yizkor reflections from this year's B'nai Israel Day 7 Passover service. Page 5

Alexa Cohen shares images from the Bonim schoolyear in her Year in Review. Page 6

View photos from our recent Women's Seder led by Rabbi Marion Page 7.

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HALF CENTURY+ TEMPLE MEMBERS WILL BE HONORED JUNE 24, 2022

Flash back to 1972. President Richard Nixon visited China. The cell phone, the floppy disc, and the video cassette recorder were all introduced. And the Dow Jones Industrial Average closed above 1,000 for the first time in history!

Meanwhile, at Congregation B'nai Israel, more than 60 families who were members then and who continue as members today, were quietly attending services, celebrating Jewish holidays, sending their kids to religious school and enjoying Bar and Bat Mitzvah and confirmation ceremony moments with family and friends.

In recognition of their ongoing support and participation in Jewish life and temple community activities over the last half century, or longer in some cases, these families will all be recognized at Shabbat Services on Friday evening, June 24 at 6:00 p.m. Depending on weather and other circumstances, the event may take place outside in B'nai Israel's Outdoor Prayer and Community Space. More details will be announced when plans are final.

"It is really a celebration for all B'nai Israel members, regardless of when you joined the temple," said Shari Nerreau, a Board of Trustees member, and the immediate past president of the congregation. "It is just that at this milestone moment we felt we wanted to call a little special attention to those members who have been a regular part of our community for five decades or longer," she added.

Actually, the idea was brought to Shari's attention by member Nancy Rosenthal almost three years ago, but the social

distancing requirements and other restrictions during the initial phase of the Covid-19 pandemic hindered event planning.

"We're having a Covid catchup moment," said Nancy Rosenthal, who added that she felt committed members of long duration at B'nai Israel should be recognized periodically in the same way that retiring temple officers and other congregation leaders are honored.

Continued on page 11

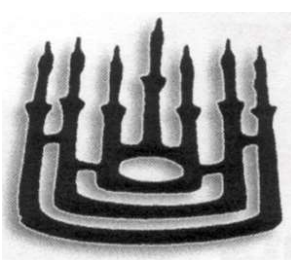


THE PARK AVENUE TEMPLE
CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL
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בני ישראל



CONGREGATION
B'NAI ISRAEL
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GENERATIONS FOR
150 YEARS



CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL
A LIGHT TO THE GENERATIONS



Congregation
B'nai Israel
קהילת בני ישראל

SHARING OUR JOY...

In Celebration of:

Lisa & Joav Burger, on the engagement of son, Jonathan Burger, to Alane Schmelkin.

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Irwin Abraham Cohen, father of Randi Cohen

Frances Furst, mother of Alicia Wettenstein

Gail Appell Nickowitz

Heather Conway Liberman Smith, sister-in-law of Rob Liberman and Lynn Blueweiss

Jeanne Schimmel, mother of Linda Koski

Ferne Meadowcroft, mother of Renee Beitman

Thank you to all our B'nai Israel volunteers who recently joined us for our March Mitzvah Morning at Homes for the Brave to meet with the residents and serve breakfast!



BULLETIN BOARD

Summer Film Series



This summer, save the dates for a Tikkun Olam Film Series under the stars! We'll show one film a month, beginning with *Miss Juneteenth* (racial justice) on Thursday, June 30 at 7:15 p.m. Future films are planned for Thursday, July 21 (reproductive justice) and Thursday, August 11 (environmental justice). Refreshments will be served on the Prosnit Patio.

Mitzvah Morning

For our June Mitzvah Morning Project, we will be working with Camp HOPE America, a program managed by The Center For Family Justice (www.centerforfamilyjustice.org).

Camp HOPE America is a summer camp specifically for children from Fairfield County who are victims of domestic abuse. The camp provides a clinically proven program designed to help these children

overcome trauma in order to lead more hopeful and resilient lives. For two weeks during August, Camp HOPE America campers will spend time at Camp Hi-Rock in the Berkshires enjoying activities in the outdoors, while receiving critical counseling and therapeutic services.

On June 12, we will meet at B'nai Israel to help pack trunks for the campers. Many of the campers are lacking the essential items they will need for their time away, so we are looking for B'nai Israel volunteers



to help provide them. Some supplies we are looking for include backpacks, batteries, flashlights, fleece blankets, water bottles, laundry bags, and pillowcases.

Volunteers can bring these items to Mitzvah Morning or are welcome to drop them off in the B'nai Israel lobby the week before the event. In addition, there is an Amazon wishlist which will be published in our email communications. Any items purchased on the Amazon wishlist will be delivered directly to B'nai Israel. Gently used items are welcome as well.

For any additional questions, contact Nina Silberman at ninahv@aol.com or Mitch Weinstein at mitchellew@yahoo.com. We look forward to seeing you there.



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

OFFERING SUPPORT AROUND DEATH, LOSS, AND GRIEF

In Jewish tradition, some of the most powerful mitzvot, or commandments, that we can do surround the loss of a loved one and the process of grief. When friends, colleagues, and fellow congregants lose someone dear to them, one of the most important things we can do is show up for them in their moment of sorrow. It is that moment often when their world turns upside-down, and when we as a community can be there at their side.

There are so many ways to be there for one another, from showing up to a shiva service, to sending a condolence note in the mail, to sending food to their home. Those little gestures make such a difference to those who are mourning and grieving. This June, we want to offer several new opportunities for our congregants to fulfill these mitzvot around death and dying.

On June 21 at 7:00 p.m., I invite you to join with our clergy for a training on leading a shiva minyan. Oftentimes our clergy will lead shiva minyans at our congregants' homes, and at the same time

B'nai Israel has always had a tradition of lay people leading shiva minyans as well. It is a powerful experience to show up for a fellow congregant in this way and lead a shiva minyan in their home during their time of grief. We will give you all the tools you need to lead a shiva service. It is one of the most poignant and powerful mitzvot that you can do. We would love for you to consider joining us on June 21. All experience levels are invited to join.

One of our congregants, Nina Silberman, recently experienced the power of a communal "shmira" group upon the passing of her father. Shmira, which means to "watch over," is a group of volunteers from a synagogue or Jewish community that assumes the role of "watching the body" before the funeral and burial. Nina was so moved by the experience of her parents' synagogue in Westchester that we have been speaking about the idea of starting a shmira group at B'nai Israel.

What shmira would entail is volunteers signing up for a one-hour shift, from 5:00 p.m. to midnight at Abraham Green and

Son Funeral Home in Fairfield upon the death of one of our congregants. There is a room where volunteers sit (separated from the deceased body) and oftentimes read the Psalms or spiritual passages, as a way of "watching over" the body. It is a way of showing great care and respect for the person who has just passed away.

At this information session, we will share more about what's involved and answer any questions that potential volunteers might have. We hope that we can make a shmira group a reality here at B'nai Israel and perform this mitzvah as a way of honoring those who have passed away in our community. We hope that you'll join us to learn more.

B'nai Israel is such an incredible and caring community. We hope that you will join us for shiva leader training and to learn more about shmira. And most important, let's always show up and be present to one another and uplift each other in our most joyous moments, and in our times of loss, grief, and sorrow.

When friends, colleagues, and fellow congregants lose someone dear to them, one of the most important things we can do is show up for them in their moment of sorrow

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.

Friday, June 3

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Bemidbar, Num. 1:1-4:20
Haftarah – Hosea 2:1-22

9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in person
9:30 a.m. Torah Study - in person and on Zoom
11:00 a.m. B'not Mitzvah of Claire & Paige Morgan, daughters of Jennifer & Jason Morgan

and on Zoom
11:00 a.m. Bar Mitzvah of Alex Adwin, son of Keri Adwin and Jason Adwin

Saturday, June 4

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in person
9:30 a.m. Torah Study - in person and on Zoom
9:30 a.m. Havurah – “First Fruits” Celebration

Friday, June 17

5:00 p.m. Havurah – Shabbat Beach Party
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – at Lake Mohegan (no service at the temple)
Torah Portion – B'haalot'cha, Num. 8:1-12:15
Haftarah – Zechariah 2:14-4:7

Friday, June 24

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom – Service Honoring our Longtime Members of B'nai Israel
Torah Portion – Sh'lach L'cha, Num. 13:1-15:41
Haftarah – Joshua 2:1-24

Friday, June 10

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Naso, Num. 4:21-7:89
Haftarah – Judges 13:2-25

Saturday, June 18

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in person
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person

Saturday, June 25

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in person
9:30 a.m. Torah Study - in person and on Zoom
11:00 a.m. Bar Mitzvah of Theodore Sklar, son of Hallie Levine

Saturday, June 11

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service - in person and on Zoom

B'NAI ISRAEL GREEN TEAM (BGT) JUNE 2022

Progress Not Perfection by Anne Kirsch

For those who don't know me, I teach in the Bonim Preschool and am very active in the temple. My environmental gurus are my daughter (whose life's work is devoted to the environment), my brother (who will go down any refuse-reduce-reuse-recycle rabbit hole with me) and Brad Kerner, congregant and parent of former Bonim students. I like to focus on what many of us talk about in the B'nai Israel Green Team, “progress not perfection,” which I embrace wholeheartedly. At home, like many of us, I use cloth napkins/paper towels, stasher bags, cloth snack bags, beeswax wraps instead of plastic wrap, all kinds



of reusable containers, green cleaning projects, and try to cut down on single-serving items. I still have some paper towels/napkins and less green alternatives in the house, but I use (or rinse, reuse, repeat) them infrequently. Progress not perfection. Keeping as much out of the

landfill as possible is always on my mind (a definite challenge when dealing with both my mother's and mother-in-law's estates recently). We compost in the backyard. I don't do so much with the compost — just keep it out of the landfill. Progress not perfection. We have a shiny Toyota RAV4 Hybrid in our driveway as of a year ago, and our next car will be electric. Efficient use of water/heat/AC/electricity/gas/oil is always a goal in our house but some days, we do better than others. Progress not perfection. With the aid of our congregation's Green Team, my fellow teachers and parents, I hope to move Bonim on to “greener” pastures. Join me on the progress not perfection bandwagon.



FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY/RABBI SARAH R. MARION

PASSOVER YIZKOR REFLECTIONS

I want to offer my sincere gratitude and appreciation for the outpouring of love and care that I received from the B'nai Israel community in the days following the death of my beloved Grandma Gertrude. Your sentiments and messages were deeply comforting and tremendously touching. Finding myself in my own experience of mourning this past Passover season, I offered these Yizkor reflections at our 7th Day Passover service:

If we knew that they were listening, what would we want to tell them? If we knew that they could hear us, what would we want say?

I miss you.

I wish we had more time.

I never wanted to believe that someday, you'd be gone.

There's a hole, in my heart.

I almost set a place for you, at the Passover table.

I made your favorite recipes this year...I tried, but they didn't quite turn out the same.

I wore your favorite earrings to the Seder – remember the ones with the black pearls at the end that you wore to your birthday party?

I went to the beach and watched the sunset, just like we once did together, and it almost felt like you were there.

At the grocery store yesterday, I was walking down the aisle, and for a moment, I could have sworn I saw you, right there, in the distance.

The house feels so quiet, and so empty, now that you're gone.

Life without you feels so disorienting... there are days when I'm not sure what I should be doing with myself...or what I'm even supposed to be thinking, or feeling...

How are we supposed to go on, without you?

You would be so proud of the kids –

perfect reading scores on their report cards, getting so big, so fast.

I need you.

I miss you.

I love you.

I have a voicemail from my Grandma, saved on my phone, from November 15, 2015. Still saved after all these years, and of course, how could I possibly delete it now: "Hi sweetie, it's Grandma...I love you so much..." Just a simple, ordinary message – nothing particularly earth shattering, or revealing – just a simple, ordinary remnant, of who she was. And what she was. And how much she loved. And, now, a reminder, that there will never ever again, be another voicemail.

That's the thing about death, isn't it. The devastating finality of it all. "They live on through our memories," we say. And, yet, at the same time, no more phone calls. No more voicemails. No more "I just called to say I love you" messages. No more hugs.

No more birthday cards. No more visits. No more opportunities to sit and talk and laugh...all of it, now undeniably, in the past.

There is a tradition at Jewish funerals that happens at graveside. After the prayers, after the Mourner's Kaddish, after the burial and after the heavy clunk of the soil hitting the casket, the very last thing we do, before leaving the cemetery, is to form two parallel lines – two parallel rows of people – creating something that looks like a "parting of the sea" for the immediate family of the deceased to walk through, as they make their way out of the cemetery. Because leaving the graveside, leaving the cemetery, leaving the past behind, and walking towards a future without a mother, a father, a sister, a grandmother...this is something that is unbelievably daunting. And unfamiliar.

And painful. And this is something that we cannot do, alone.

Today is the 7th day of Passover. Today is the day, according to legend, that the Red Sea parted, and the Israelites officially stepped forward, towards next phase of their lives.

Oftentimes, we envision their trek into and out of the sea as a moment of festivity and joy – forgetting, that the Israelites had absolutely no idea what the road ahead would look like, be like, or feel like. Stepping into those divided waters, towards the uncharted territory that awaited them, this must have been unbelievably daunting. And disorienting. And, maybe, even, a little bit painful. Because even though it was arduous, Egypt, at least, was known, and predictable, and recognizable – but now, this hazy, vague, strange and unfamiliar road ahead –what was it going to be like? And so, I'll bet they stepped forward, but slowly...and I'll bet they stepped forward, but with hesitation, consternation, and maybe a bit of fear – because saying goodbye to the past and turning and facing the unknown – regardless of time or place...this is never an easy thing, to do.

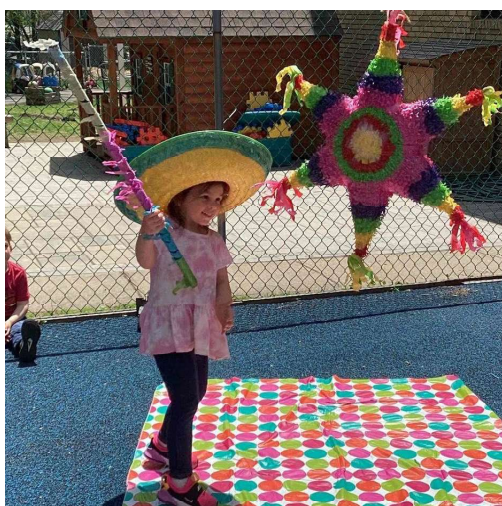
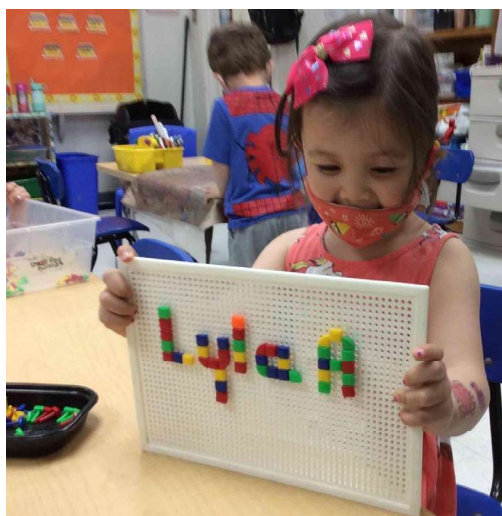
But midrash tells us, that when the waters parted, *something else* remarkable happened, which made it *a little bit easier* for the Israelites to face the future and take one step forward – and then another – and then another. Midrash tells us that when the waters parted, the waters rose straight up, turning into two straight walls on either side. And after the water-walls rose up on either side, the inside part of those walls turned into giant, shining mirrors that reflected the faces of the Israelites as they passed through. But that's not all. Not only did those mirrors reflect the faces of every

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BONIM BUZZ/ALEXA COHEN, EARLY CHILDHOOD DIRECTOR

A YEAR IN REVIEW





We had 100+ women of all generations join us in person for our Women's Seder this year. Thank you to everyone for coming, bringing your contributions for our potluck-style meal, and for sharing your Passover rituals and traditions. Thank you, too, to everyone for their help in setting up and cleaning up. Special thanks to Kelle Ruden for her beautiful centerpieces and to Kate Eisemann for the wonderful photos!





ADULT JEWISH LEARNING AT CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL

Women of the Tanach Fridays, June 3, 10, and 17 from noon – 1:30 p.m.



While there are hundreds of female figures in the Tanach, only a small handful are well known. In this class, we will expand our understanding of biblical women, both in terms of breadth and depth. We will read the stories of several specific characters in order to see more broadly how women are portrayed in our most sacred text. Some fit gender stereotypes, others defy them; some are defined by their piety, others by their villainous deeds. Join Rabbinic Intern Chelsea Feuchs as she lays out her theory of the roles women play in the Tanach, developed through several years of research and teaching.

The Jewish American Labor Movement Mondays, June 6, 13, and 20 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

In the late 1800s, many Jews boarded ships for America and eagerly anticipated life in the “goldene medina” the golden land of opportunity. What they encountered were



abysmal living and working conditions. In response, they organized and became part of the labor movement! In the first class we will consider what our tradition has to say about workers' rights; second, we will trace the rise of fiery labor leaders; finally, we will seek to understand why radical ideologies fell out of favor in much of the Jewish community. Join Rabbinic Intern Chelsea Feuchs as she teaches classes informed by both Judaic studies and her experience working as an organizer with the AFL-CIO.

ONGOING CLASSES

Torah Study Saturdays, May 7, 14, 21, and 28 from 9:30 – 10:30 a.m.

The Torah is so many things to so many people: Law book, guidebook, moral compass, history, mythology, genealogy, and so much more. Each week we read from the Torah. Each year at Simchat Torah we start over from the beginning. Each time we revisit a portion, we learn something new. Some of us have been learning together for decades. Some of us



joined recently. All of us are teaching and learning from one another! Join us as we slowly make our way through the entire Torah! Please see Hashavua to confirm if we are meeting at temple in addition to Zoom as well as for the link.

Take the Hot Air Zoom Balloon and Explore the Balkans and Sunny Jewish Islands!

Thursdays in June and July
at 4:00 p.m. on Zoom



In June we explore the Balkans; we head to the Islands in July! Come join any or all nine of these amazing online tour guides organized by our friend Dani Rotstein from JewishMajorca.com. They will show you how our people's story has gone to places we might not have imagined! Come visit Bulgaria (6/2), Bosnia & Herzegovina (6/9), Serbia (6/16), Slovenia (6/23), Romania (6/30), Dominican Republic (7/7), Curaçao (7/14), Cuba (7/21) and Haiti (7/28). There is a fee for participating. Go to

<https://www.jewishmajorca.com/travel-groups/>.

Learn to Read Hebrew for Adults

Get started with the aleph-bet!

Familiarity with Hebrew can be a key to feeling at home in the Jewish community. Learn the shapes and sounds of the Hebrew alphabet, with a warm and supportive educator to guide you and a group of classmates for practicing together. Recognize and understand common Hebrew words and phrases that are often heard in Reform congregations and in Jewish prayer. Perfect for Introduction to Judaism alumni and other adults, this course assumes no prior Hebrew experience. This course has been developed specifically by the URJ for online learning, and is taught by experienced educators. Live sessions meet weekly over video conferencing. Participants are given access to online course materials and a link to purchase workbook.

Go to <https://reformjudaism.org/learning/judaism-classes/Learn-to-read-hebrew> to register. Tuition: \$180 Choose your class time:

Sundays, July 10, 2022 – September 18, 2022, 11 a.m. – noon ET.

Number of sessions: 10.

Sundays, July 10, 2022 – September 18, 2022, 8 – 9 p.m. ET. Number of sessions: 10.

FROM HUC CONNECT

(Re)Defining Allyship: Women in The Rabbinate Tuesday, June 7, 2022 at 2:00 p.m. on Zoom

Rabbi Sally Priesand and Rabbi Denise L. Eger, *Congregation Kol-Ami*

50 years after HUC-JIR ordained the first woman rabbi in America, it's time to assess progress. What have we achieved and what remains for us to accomplish? <https://huc.edu/huc-connect/huc-connect-webinar-theme-view>.

JUNE DONATIONS

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

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund

Lori Berger, in memory of mother, Cecelia Davis.

Marilyn Bissell, in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz.

The Broder Family, in honor of Julia's Bat Mitzvah; in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz.

Carmela D'Aquila, in honor of Rabbi Schultz's 10th anniversary at B'nai Israel.

Marjorie Freeman, in memory of sister, Suzanne Cane; in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for his social action support.

Terri & Daniel Green, in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

Barbara Kauders, with thanks and appreciation to Rabbi Schultz.

George & Alice Kelly, in memory of mother, Annette Kelly.

The Lessler Family, in memory of Stanley Lessler; in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz.

Larry Levine & Alison Bonds, in memory of Dorothy Blaustein.

Monica & Michael Lightman, in memory of Bernie Lightman, father of Michael Lightman; in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz for leading shiva for Bernie Lightman.

The Markley Family, in loving memory of Aram Nahabedian; in loving memory of Dr. Ludwig Markley.

The Perlman Family, in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

Nina Silberman, in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz for all of the support he so graciously gave to me & my family.

Sue, Bob & Carleigh Sussman, in loving memory of grandmother, Adele Mathog Bibro; in loving memory of grandmother, Gussie Sussman.

Rita & Ken Weinstein, in honor of Rabbi Schultz's 10-year tribute gala; sorry we can't make it.

The Yurdin Family, in honor of Passover chametz.

Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund

Donations made in memory of Gertrude Lorraine Merle, mother of Carol Merle-Fishman, grandmother of Rabbi Sarah Marion, were made by:

Carol Barsky

Lori & Ken Berger

Michael & Judy Green Blumenthal

Linda & Barry Diamond

John & Ronnie Dubrowin

Barbara & Mark Edinberg

Rhea Farbman

Deborah Goodman & David Abbey

Jim & Lisa Greenberg

Eric & Ruth Gross

Jack Kadden

Sheila Kaminsky

Barbara Kauders

Jan Kulick

Beth Lazar

Larry Levine & Alison Bonds

Monica & Mike Lightman

Jackie & Jeff Madwed

Laura & Dudley Orr

Beth Posner

Kelly & Glen Reznikoff

Jamie & Karen Sanger

Elaine & Marty Schwartz

Serena & Arnie Sher

The Silberman-Weisman Family

Marcie & David Slepian

Allison Spitzer

Lauren & Jonathan Tropp

Lori & Dan Underberger

Suzie & Artie Weissman

The Yurdin Family

Marilyn Bissell, in appreciation of Rabbi Marion.

Bruce & Laura Braverman, in appreciation of Chris Rocha.

The Broder Family, in honor of Julia's Bat Mitzvah; in appreciation of Rabbi Marion.

Rhea Farbman, with thanks for the Women's Seder.

Marjorie Freeman, in memory of sister, Suzanne Cane; in appreciation to Rabbi Marion for her insightful and moving sermons.

Barbara Kauders, with thanks and appreciation to Rabbi Marion.

Rozanne Lancia, in honor of Rabbi Marion.

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of cousin, Lisa Greenberg, whose life was cut short by Covid.

Jackie & Jeff Madwed, in memory of Rudy Stepanovic, father-in-law of Marisa Underberger, father of Tom Stepanovic.

Nancy & Charles Needle, in honor of Barbara Kauders' Bat Mitzvah.

Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund

The Cooper Family, in loving memory of Milton Cooper.

Carmela D'Aquila, in appreciation of Rabbi Prosnit.

Cantor Rubel Discretionary Fund

Marilyn Bissell, in appreciation of Cantor Rubel.

The Broder Family, in honor of Julia's Bat Mitzvah; in appreciation of Cantor Rubel.

Marjorie Freeman, in memory of sister, Suzanne Cane; in appreciation of Cantor Rubel for her beautiful music.

Barbara Kauders, with thanks and appreciation to Cantor Rubel.

Larry Levine & Alison Bonds, in memory of Dorothy Blaustein.

Music Fund

Debbie Farber & Milt Jacoby, in honor of Barbara Kauders' Bat Mitzvah.

Joni & Michael Greenspan, in memory of Suzanne Cane, sister of Marjorie Freeman.

Barbara Kauders, with thanks and appreciation to the Klezmer Orchestra.

Judith & David Pressler, in memory of Phyllis Kooris, mother of Geoffrey Kooris.

Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn, in appreciation of Mark Edinberg, our Klezmer Group, and Cantor Rubel, for providing beautiful in-house music. We needed that.

Enhancement Fund

Barbara Berkowitz, in loving memory of father, Irving Toss.

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JUNE DONATIONS

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

Theresa & James Berman, in memory of Dorothy Blaustein.

The Blondin Family, in honor of Larry Levine's Presidency.

Dale & Jerry Demner, in memory of Joseph Greenfield, father of Dale Demner.

Laurie & Dean Gaugler, in memory of Lois Ferris, mother of Traci Ferris; in memory of Sharon Wilson, mother of Patti Rosenberg; in memory of Carmen Jo Barwikowski, mother of Joy Herbst; in memory of Dr. Robert Sheiman, husband of Ellen Sheiman; in memory of John Murray, father of Meg Murray; in honor of Sarah Tropp-Pacelli & Eric Pacelli, on the birth of new daughter, Maggie; in memory of Bernard Lightman, father of Michael Lightman; in memory of Marvin Strow, father of Lisa Mallon; in memory of Judy Sappern, mother of Laurie Gaugler.

Milt Jacoby, in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

Barbara Kauders, with thanks and appreciation to Richard Walden.

Angela McKelvey, in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

The Newman & Cohen Families, in memory of Dorothy Blaustein.

Bob Scharmett, in memory of childhood friend, Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

Marianne Spillane, in honor of Barbara Kauders' Bat Mitzvah.

Arleen Winters, in honor of Barbara Kauders achievement to become a Bat Mitzvah.

Sylvia Prosnit Adult Education Fund Carmela D'Aquila, with thanks for all of the lifelong learning classes.

Ronald Dranetz, in memory of Dorothy Blaustein.

Anne & Mark Kirsch, in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of Jon's grandmother and our beloved mentor, Hannah Hofheimer.

Joycee Vartoukian, in memory of Dorothy Blaustein.

Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund

Joan & Marc Levy, in honor of the birth of Luise Mann's grandson, Lucas; in honor of the birth of Maggie & Marc Walowitz's granddaughter, Charli Noa.

Rabbi Martin Library Fund

Barbara Rifkin, in memory of grandfather, Nathan H. Schine.

Prayer Book Fund

Ellen Sheiman, in loving memory of Robert A. Sheiman, MD.

Slepian Floral Fund

Susan Rosenblitt, in loving memory of beloved mother, Sylvia Weintraub, we will love you forever.

Mazon

Myrna Kaufman, in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler.

Religious School Enrichment Fund

Paula & Bob Herzlinger, in honor of the birth of Gefen Adi Sufian Krubiner, granddaughter of Marge & Paul Krubiner.

Judith & David Pressler, in memory of Minnie Unger, grandmother of Judith Pressler; in memory of Martha & Harry Unger, aunt and uncle of Judith Pressler.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund

Donations made in memory of Marvin Strow, father of Lisa Mallon, were made by:

Michael & Judy Green Blumenthal

Ruth & Eric Gross

Anne & Mark Kirsch

Larry Levine & Alison Bonds

Donations made in memory of Stanley Lessler, husband of Judith Lessler, were made by:

Bari Dworken

Dorian Friedman & Sander Lurie

Elaine & Bob Friedman

Serena & Arnie Sher

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Judy Green Blumenthal, Mazel tov to Barbara Kauders on her Bat Mitzvah.

Joni & Michael Greenspan and Family, in memory of Anna Levowich, mother of Joni Greenspan.

Anne & Mark Kirsch, in memory of Gertrude Lorraine Merle, mother of Carol Merle-Fishman, grandmother of Rabbi Sarah Marion.

Beth Lazar, in appreciation of Mark Edinberg, Radio Klez and Emily Lehrman, for sharing their musical & photographic talents; in memory of Suzanne Cane, beloved sister of Marjorie Freeman, aunt of Danny Freeman.

Suzanne Philip & Steven Soberman, in memory of Ruth Goodman, mother of Debbie Goodman.

Judith & David Pressler, in memory of Emanuel Vas Nunes, uncle of Judith & David Pressler.

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Continued on page 11

JUNE DONATIONS

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

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Sheila Kaminsky, in memory of Suzanne Cane, sister of Marjorie Freeman.

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Joni & Michael Greenspan, in honor of Debbie Weinstein. Thank you for finding the afikomen.

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Suzanne Philip & Steven Soberman, in memory of Ruth Goodman, mother of Andrea Goodman.

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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.

HALF CENTURY FROM P 1

joining the congregation,” said Nancy. She said Rabbi Evan Schultz quickly agreed with the concept and has been actively involved in the recognition event planning.

One of the families being recognized June 24 includes Steve and Ellen Tower of Fairfield.

“Actually, I am not a 50-year member. I am an 80-year member as my family have been members for several generations,” said Steve.

Why does he think he and his peers have stayed members for as long as they have?

“I think our rabbis in the past have personally connected to many of us. It was and very much still is a welcoming place to be with our current clergy, both on Friday night and Saturday mornings and on High Holidays. There’s always been an informality to this place that was pleasant,” said Steve, whose father, Arnold, was a past president and whose mother, Doris, was a past sisterhood president.

What is his hope for the future of Congregation B'nai Israel?

“My hope is that the religious school and preschool continue to thrive so that young families will come to our temple and be part of it,” Steve added.

See page 15 for the list of 50+ year members.

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man, woman and child of the *present*, but also, reflected in those mirrors were the faces of every man, woman and child – every person, *of the past*. And so as the Israelites walked forward, their loved ones were right there, right along with them. Their mothers, fathers, grandparents, sisters, brothers, all those they left behind. Their loved ones, all looking down at them and saying to them: Go forward. You can do this. I am here. I will always be here, right along with you. Now go. Go forward, towards your future. You're going to be alright.

Today, as we walk forward, through the red sea-rows at the cemetery, and out, into our own unfamiliar and uncharted territory of grief and loss, the past is in the past, but the mirrors, abound. Our beloved friends and family, supporting us and walking with us on either side; the sweet smell and taste of beloved holiday traditions; the extraordinary evening sky; the springtime daffodils; all of these, and more — these are our sacred mirrors, holding and reflecting the faces and the memories of our loved ones, who are no

longer here.

And if we listen closely, I'll bet we can even hear their voices.

If they knew that we were listening, what would they want to tell us? If they knew that we could hear them, what would they want to say?

Hi darling...

Hi sweetie...

Hello my love...

I'm here.

In the air you breathe, and in the love you feel.

I'm here.

And I miss you too.

And I wish we had more time.

And I never wanted to believe that someday, I'd be gone.

But you can do this.

You *have* to do this.

Because life is too short.

And life is too precious.

So please, please, treasure every moment.

Oh and by the way...while I have you on the line...you should wear those earrings

that I gave you, to the Seder – you know, the ones with the black pearls at the end? Oh and one more thing - remember, when you put the Passover sponge cake in the oven,

it needs go in the oven *by itself!*

And please, please hug those children for me.

Because life doesn't last, forever.

So go.

Go forward, towards your future.

Go, and do the things that you love.

And go, and be with the ones that you love.

And let go of the things that don't matter, And hold on tight, to the things and the people that do.

And I love you too.

And I miss you too.

And I'll always be with you.

Just look for the mirrors.

You're going to be alright.

I promise you...you're going to be alright.

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