

## NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz offers some Jewish readings and blessings to add to our Thanksgiving celebrations this November. page 3

President Susan Walden shares the address she made to the congregation at the Rosh Hashana Day 1 morning service, which asks us to find our "why," our story of what brought us to B'nai Israel. page 4

Rabbi Marion suggests some books from her reading list that we may enjoy in the upcoming, cold weather months. page 5

Alexa Cohen provides an overview of some of the activities and learning happening in both Bonim and Kehilah. page 6

### Also Inside

Bulletin Board.....	p.2
Donations.....	p.8-9
Shabbat Services.....	p.11
BIFTY.....	p.16

## CONECT AND THE VOTING TEAM AT B'NAI ISRAEL ENCOURAGE EVERYONE TO VOTE



B'nai Israel, along with other URJ congregations across the country, is committed to **100% voter turnout at the election on November 8**. When you go to the polls in CT, you'll see a referendum question about early voting. Please **vote YES** on amending the state constitution, so that all voters — caregivers, the elderly, essential workers, students, and others — have more access to voting and contributing their important voices. CT is only one of four states that doesn't allow early voting. On September 20, National Voter Registration Day, Ellen Tower, Barbara Edinberg, and Jeff Schwartz registered

new voters at Housatonic Community College. Ellen and Barbara also worked with students at HCC on their orientation day in August as part of a long-standing partnership between HCC in Bridgeport and B'nai Israel.

At Mitzvah Morning on Sunday, Oct 2, approximately 20 adults and 50 children wrote and decorated nonpartisan postcards supplied by URJ that were mailed to potential voters in the South. This was an exciting cross-generational social action that students participated in with adults during Kehilah.

## GIVE THE GIFT OF LIGHT FOR CHANUKAH



Please share the warmth of Chanukah this year with your fellow congregants by taking part in this year's Gift of Light fundraiser!

Participating will be a gift for yourself, the temple and our community.

The holiday begins Sunday, December 18, but now is the time to send beautiful Chanukah candles to your family and friends at B'nai Israel. This annual initiative goes well beyond providing candles and raising funds for our temple; it helps expand and strengthen our community. Orders are due by Sunday, December 3, and the candles

will be delivered on Sunday, December 18. Our online system makes placing an order fun and easy. Just click on the personalized link that is emailed to you. Each recipient will receive a single box of candles and a personalized message from every sender. Each box is hand-packaged and hand-delivered by a special team of Chanukah helpers.

Plans for wrapping and delivering candles are still underway...stay tuned for details in Hashavua. For more information, please contact Chris Rocha at [chris@cbibpt.org](mailto:chris@cbibpt.org) or call the Temple office at (203) 336-1858. Please help us make this year's Gift of Light more successful than ever!

## SHARING OUR JOY...

In Celebration of:

**Lori & Ken Berger**, on the marriage of their daughter, Darcy, to Aaron Brandt  
**Sylvia & Alan Neigher**, on the marriage of their daughter Leslie to Greg Kaplan  
**Beth & Jordan Pressler**, on the birth of their granddaughter Aurelia Posner LaMont, to parents Molly and Justin

## SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

**Linda Paris Smith**, mother of Scott Smith  
(Susan Zweibaum Smith)  
**Sylvia Smiley Rosenthal**, mother of Suzanne  
(Artie) Weissman  
**Laraine Hourihan**, mother of Stephen  
(Molli) Hourihan  
**Allen Shumofsky**, husband of Claire  
Shumofsky

## WELCOME! WELCOME!

A warm welcome to our newest members. We look forward to their participation in our many programs and hope their affiliation will not only enrich their lives, but that of our congregation.

**Seth & Aimee Stein, Beckett & Livvi**  
Fairfield, CT  
**Sarah & Agaton Strom, Lea & Isaac**  
Fairfield, CT  
**Jacqueline & Andrew Lazowski, David,  
Henry & Greta**  
Trumbull, CT  
**Stacey Stein & Scott Banta, Zoe,  
Max & Avery**  
Fairfield, CT  
**Robert & Joyce Rainish**  
Monroe, CT  
**Andrew & Marnie Zolov, Avery & Hunter**  
Easton, CT  
**Michael & Jessica Newman**  
Trumbull, CT  
**Cortney Nathanson & Kamran Khan,  
Caleb & Kieran**  
Fairfield, CT  
**Cara Erdheim Kilgallen & Bill Kilgallen,  
Jenna**  
Trumbull, CT

## BULLETIN BOARD



### Mitzvah Morning

For December's Mitzvah Morning, we will be working with Al's Angels to provide gifts and toys for children in Fairfield County in need of some extra love and care. Many in our community cannot afford holiday gifts for their children, and this Mitzvah Morning event is a great way to help bring hope and cheer to these local families.

On December 11, at 10:00 a.m., we will meet at B'nai Israel to wrap and sort presents for delivery to

families in need. Volunteers are encouraged to bring new and gently used unwrapped toys and gifts, as well as wrapping paper and tape. In addition, donation boxes will be set up in the B'nai Israel lobby for those who would like to drop off unwrapped gifts in advance.

This is a great opportunity to bond with your fellow congregants, while performing a very important service for the local community. All ages are welcome.

Al's Angels is an organization that provides support to children and families battling cancer, rare blood diseases, natural disasters, and severe financial hardship. Al's Angels has been operating in Fairfield County for over 24 years. You can learn more at [www.alsangels.org](http://www.alsangels.org).

## JUDAICA BOUTIQUE



### Chanukah is in the Air

The Judaica Boutique will be stocked with everything you need to make Chanukah special and fun. The first candle lighting is Sunday, December 18.

Special Chanukkah sales events will take place at the gift shop on: Sunday 12/11 and 12/18.

**Welcome Nancy Oberman and Barbara Kauders,  
who are now part of the shop team!!!**

**Daniel & Katherine Dormont, Aligha,  
Alanah & Aarin**  
Fairfield, CT  
**Harvey & Beth Hudes, Zack &  
Emma**  
Fairfield, CT

**Dan Nadav & Nurit Kohl, Giora  
Nadav, Avigail Kohl & Itamar Nadav**  
Trumbull, CT  
**Anna Lamie & Keith Wellner &  
Miles**  
Fairfield, CT



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

## JEWISH BLESSINGS FOR THE THANKSGIVING TABLE

November may not be filled with many (or any) Jewish holidays, but it certainly is still a time for gathering, families, gratitude, and blessings. Many of us, in just a few weeks, will sit down at our tables for the holiday of Thanksgiving. While many families go around the table to share what they are thankful for, Jewish tradition offers some readings and blessings that may help to enhance or elevate your Thanksgiving celebrations. I've shared a few of my favorites below — I hope you'll share them around your tables, before or after the football games! Wishing you all a very happy Thanksgiving and month of November!

### Thanksgiving Day: A Modern Psalm

by Debbie Perlman, z"l

How easy to praise You, Beloved One,  
For abundance, for cups brim filled;  
How can we not delight in Your majesty,  
Your endless blessings to us.

How simple our thanks, Beloved One,  
For laden tables, for gathered families,  
Shoulders touching in the intimacy of the meal  
You have spread before us.  
Teach us to thank and bless Your name,  
When cups are empty and thirst is great;  
Put our hands together to replenish,  
Finding blessing in tiny sips.

Beloved One, to thank and bless You,  
We find hope in uncertainty  
And triumph in shaky steps.  
We recreate abundance for Your sake.

### A Thanksgiving Prayer for When Good Things Happen

by Trisha Arlin

Close your eyes.  
Think of all the good things and people that surround you.  
Wherever they are, have been or will be.  
Now open your eyes.  
And look around,  
Here we are!  
Right now,  
This is the moment.

Here.

We are safe

We have been found.

We are home.

God is good and good things happen.

*Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech Ha-olam, Ha-tov V'hameitiv.*

### Thanksgiving Day

Excerpt from *On the Doorposts of Your House*

Creative Source of all being, from You come our blessings from day to day and from year to year. The towering mountains and the shaded forests, the abundant streams and the fruitful earth are Your gift to us. May we preserve this gift for our children, that they, too, may give thanks for the blessings that will be theirs.

For this land so richly blessed, we raise our voice in thanks. Your children have come to these shores from many lands in quest of liberty and new life. Many have been pilgrims to this western world. Here they found a safe haven, soil on which to prosper, and the opportunity to outgrow old fears and superstitions. For our country, for its freedom promised, attained, and yet to be enlarged, for the richness of its natural blessings, and for a growing harmony that we pray will ever increase among its citizens, we give thanks.

Fill us with the spirit of kindness, generosity, and peace, that this land may be a beacon-light to many peoples.

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheinu Melech haolam, hamotzi lechem min ha-aretz.*

Our praise to You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universes, who brings forth bread from the earth.





**President of Congregation B'nai Israel Susan Walden's Rosh Hashana Address to the Congregation**

I grew up in a small town in Northeastern Connecticut and attended a tiny synagogue. We didn't have a full-time rabbi. Our rabbi came for Friday night services, the occasional b'nai mitzvah, and the High Holy Days. We hired a rent-a-cantor when we needed one and our congregation had about 50 families. Our building was one small room with a bathroom and a small kitchenette, and we used space at a local elementary school for Sunday school. It wasn't easy being Jewish in my hometown. I was met with constant antisemitism, decorated brown paper bag book covers with swastikas and the SS sign greeted me daily. Being laughed at for using a Yiddish word I heard at home and the matzah and small containers of tuna and egg salad I brought to school on Passover became fodder for ridicule. In fact, these events were so common, I didn't really think much of it. To me, it was just part of the Jewish experience. I was different; I had dark hair, dark eyes, and didn't celebrate Christmas or believe in the Easter Bunny. I was, however, part of an extended Jewish family from Queens, so I became good at hiding the "Jewish thing" until I saw my relatives.

Over the years I stopped practicing my Judaism publicly. I didn't wear my Jewish star, I didn't have any Jewish friends and I didn't go to synagogue after my bat mitzvah. I'm convinced that I was "accidentally" introduced to Rich because I was the only other Jewish person my college roommate knew. I thought I was fine.

When Rich and I moved to Philadelphia, things changed. I couldn't believe that there were actually four other Jewish people in my office. Including me, there were five of us. That was the entire Jewish population of my high school graduating class! It was great! I felt like I was home. I finally had some Jewish friends, we *kibbitzed* and *schmeid* around Center City on our lunch break. We had common likes and family stories, shared Yom Kippur break fasts together and ate lox, onions, and eggs at a great Jewish deli on the Main Line. For the first time in my life, I felt connected and comfortable about who I was — about being Jewish!

When we moved back to Connecticut, that feeling of dread resurfaced. Here we go again! I was the only Jewish person in my daughter's play group. Yiddish was put away along with any mention of challah, shabbat, or gefilte fish. I felt alone. So we started to look for a synagogue. I wanted to have things in common with people. I wanted my *family* to have things in common with other people. I was tired of being an outcast; I experienced what it felt like to be part of a group and I wanted that again. We found B'nai Israel when someone recommended the nursery school, and my whole life changed.

My "why" was to feel like I belonged— somewhere where people understood who I was. Where they understood my background. Where I didn't feel like I had to constantly explain myself, my culture, my celebrations, my foods. Where I didn't have to look over my shoulder because someone might be judging me or laughing at me. And even though my kids are now adults and I am not schlepping them to Hebrew School, my "why" still pushes me to walk through our temple doors and enter our building. My "why" isn't a thing. It isn't an event or a program, or even a particular service. My "why" is the feeling of belonging. A general sense of acceptance and comfort.

The permission to just BE!

So, what is your "why"? What is your B'nai Israel story? I want to hear it. Something brought you here. What was it? What was the reason you became part of this community in the first place? For some, maybe it was religious education for your kids, but is it actually something more than that? Is it so you and your kids can just "BE"? Is it so you can surround yourself with people who are like you? Is it to have one safe space in this very non-Jewish world?

Things have changed in the last few years and the pandemic has been hard on all of us. Some of us have really pondered whether coming to the temple or even remaining part of the community is still important. Why should I stay here when I can Zoom with a lot of other places? Why even walk into the building when I get what I need on the computer in my pajamas? Why stay a member here when I don't agree with some decisions that were made? Why stay when I can get the "Jewish thing" somewhere else? But do those things really fulfill your "why"? Is that all you really need? A Zoom service or a program at another organization? Who will you call when tragedy strikes — when you need a Rabbi? Who can you laugh with when you want to share a memory that only someone who had been here would understand?

Recently a Facebook memory popped up that made me think. It was an article I had posted during the height of the pandemic written by Rabbis Lisa Kingston and Stephanie Kramer about what would happen to synagogues and our sacred Jewish spaces if everyone abandoned them. What jumped out at me was this:

*Synagogues are an extension of our homes. Where Jewish life is marked and celebrated. Synagogues are the people who show up at your door with a meal, the phone calls when you have lost someone you have loved, the rabbi*

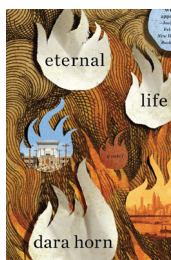
*Continued on page 15*



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

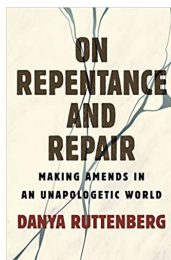
## MY FALL|WINTER READING LIST

*Now that we are well on our way into cold weather season, I am looking forward to turning to a handful of books that I've been saving and collecting for cozy days with a blanket and a warm cup of tea. Below are some titles that I plan to read in the coming months; perhaps some sound compelling to you, as well. Let me know if you pick one of these up - perhaps we can read and discuss together! Book descriptions are from Amazon.com.*



*Eternal Life: A Novel*  
By Dara Horn

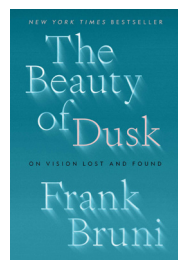
What would it really mean to live forever? Rachel's current troubles — a middle-aged son mining digital currency in her basement, a scientist granddaughter trying to peek into her genes — are only the latest in a litany spanning dozens of countries, scores of marriages, hundreds of children, and 2,000 years, going back to Roman-occupied Jerusalem. Only one person shares her immortality: an illicit lover who pursues her through the ages. But when her children develop technologies that could change her fate, Rachel must find a way out. From ancient religion to the scientific frontier, Dara Horn pits our efforts to make life last against the deeper challenge of making life worth living.



*On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*  
By Danya Ruttenberg

A crucial new lens on repentance, atonement, forgiveness, and repair from harm — from personal transgressions to our culture's most painful and unresolved

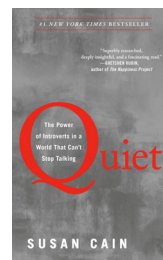
issues. American culture focuses on letting go of grudges and redemption narratives instead of the perpetrator's obligations or recompense for harmed parties. As survivor communities have pointed out, these emphases have too often only caused more harm. But Danya Ruttenberg knew there was a better model, rooted in the work of the medieval philosopher Maimonides. Rooted in traditional Jewish concepts while doggedly accessible and available to people from any, or no, religious background, *On Repentance and Repair* is a book for anyone who cares about creating a country and culture that is more whole than the one in which we live, and for anyone who has been hurt or who is struggling to take responsibility for their mistakes.



*The Beauty of Dusk: On Vision Lost and Found*  
By Frank Bruni

Recommended to me by Wendy Bloch! From New York Times columnist and bestselling author Frank Bruni comes a wise and moving memoir about aging, affliction, and optimism after partially losing his eyesight. In *The Beauty of Dusk*, Bruni hauntingly recounts his adjustment to this daunting reality, a medical and spiritual odyssey that involved not only reappraising his own priorities but also reaching out to, and gathering wisdom from, longtime friends and new acquaintances who had navigated their own traumas and afflictions. The result is a poignant, probing, and ultimately uplifting examination of the limits that all of us inevitably encounter, the lenses through which we choose to evaluate them and the tools we have for perseverance. Bruni's world blurred in one sense, as he experienced his first real inklings that the day isn't forever and that light inexorably fades, but sharpened in another. Confronting unexpected hardship,

he felt more blessed than ever before. There was vision lost. There was also vision found.



*Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World that Can't Stop Talking*  
By Susan Cain

At least one-third of the people we know are introverts. They are the ones who prefer listening to speaking, reading to partying; who innovate and create but dislike self-promotion; who favor working on their own over brainstorming in teams. Although they are often labeled "quiet," it is to introverts that we owe many of the great contributions to society — from Van Gogh's *Sunflowers* to the invention of the personal computer. Passionately argued, impressively researched, and filled with indelible stories of real people, *Quiet* shows how dramatically we undervalue introverts, and how much we lose in doing so. Taking the reader on a journey from Dale Carnegie's birthplace to Harvard Business School, from a Tony Robbins seminar to an evangelical megachurch, Susan Cain charts the rise of the Extrovert Ideal in the 20th century and explores its far-reaching effects. She talks to Asian-American students who feel alienated from the brash, backslapping atmosphere of American schools. She questions the dominant values of American business culture, where forced collaboration can stand in the way of innovation, and where the leadership potential of introverts is often overlooked. And she draws on cutting-edge research in psychology and neuroscience to reveal the surprising differences between extroverts and introverts. This extraordinary book has the power to permanently change how we see introverts and, equally important, how introverts see themselves.



BONIM BUZZ/ALEXA COHEN, EARLY CHILDHOOD DIRECTOR

## BONIM AND KEHILAH UPDATES



The Education Center has been full of fun fall Jewish holiday activities the past couple of months. We brought back the High Holiday Express Children's programming for Kehilah-aged children for both Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur mornings. The second floor of the education wing was filled with the children arranging flowers for the residents of Jewish Senior Services (JSS) for Rosh Hashanah. In addition to the amazing BIFTY teens who helped, a few 7th and 8th graders took a pause from services to lend a helping hand. We are very thankful for the great helpers.

On Yom Kippur, it was time to string wooden beads, make paper chains, and decorate plastic reusable plates and CDs for the sukkah at the JSS as well. Our friends at the JSS told us that their sukkah decorations had been destroyed and they would love to have some reusable items that could be saved from year-to-year. The children of B'nai Israel were on the job and produced beautiful etrog and other fruit-themed items.

During Kehilah, the kindergarten through 6th grade students got a chance to shake the real lulav and etrog with the rabbis on the Sunday morning of Erev Sukkot. A big thank you goes out to our parent volunteers, Lake Serrins and Laura Stern who worked the arts and crafts tables where, after their sukkah visits, all the students got a chance to make their own popsicle stick sukkahs complete with visitors (ushpitzin). It was great to see the planning that went into each original creation. Some were 3D, some were abstract, all were unique.



### Looking Forward to More Fall Fun with Bonim Preschool and Havurah

We have enjoyed some sunny and cool fall days with lots of outdoor fun for the youngest B'nai Israel participants this fall, and the fun doesn't stop.

Please join us on Friday, November 4 at 5:00 p.m., for Shabbat Play and Pray on the Prosnit Patio. After some great Shabbat singing and dancing with Cantor Michelle, Rabbi Evan, and Rabbi Sarah, we will enjoy yummy chicken nuggets (or veggie nuggets), tater tots, and, of course, a healthy vegetable with some delicious challah. Once our bellies are full and our feet are tired from dancing, we will cozy up for a story and a craft with Miss Alexa. All are welcome and no RSVP is required.

We are so excited for a new program just in time for the reading of the Torah portion of Noah. On Saturday morning, November 19, meet us at the Beardsley Zoo for a Havurah Shabbat Social! We will gather at 9:30 a.m. for a quick animal blessing and then take an adventure through the animal habitats.

The ADL logo, consisting of the letters "ADL" in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, with a registered trademark symbol (®) to the upper right.The Kulanu logo, featuring the word "kulanu" in a large, bold, blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the text "SYNAGOGUES IN ACTION AGAINST ANTISEMITISM" is written in a smaller, bold, blue, sans-serif font, all contained within a blue speech bubble shape.

## This year, our congregation is joining the fight against antisemitism and hate.

Assault, harassment and incidents of hate targeting Jews are at historic levels in the U.S. In 2021, ADL recorded 2,717 antisemitic incidents throughout the United States — a 34% increase over from the 2,026 incidents tabulated in 2020.

That's why we signed up to join over 100 synagogues across the country in ADL's new program, **Kulanu: Synagogues in Action Against Antisemitism** — a self-directed program that empowers synagogue communities to fight against antisemitism and hate.

**Kulanu** supports synagogues in organizing and activating through education, advocacy, and community engagement. Over the next year, we will:

- Form a Working Group.
- Promote Incident Reporting.
- Implement Two Programs.
- Participate in Exclusive Programming.
- Engage in a Community of Practice.
- Share Impact.

Stay tuned to learn how *you* can participate.

Together—we can  
fight hate for good.

#KulanuADL

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## NOVEMBER DONATIONS

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

### **Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund**

**Andrea & Dennis Feinberg**, in loving memory of father, Harold Kay.

**Steven & Lauren Field**, with thanks to Rabbi Schultz for being such a huge part of Lucy's Bat Mitzvah and conducting such a beautiful service.

**Steven & Barbara Gersen**, in appreciation to Rabbi Evan for the wonderful and meaningful baby naming ceremony for our granddaughter Gwen Hazel Simmons Gersen, daughter of Eric Gersen and Audrey Simmons.

**Ronit Glantz & Bryan Robik and Family**, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz, for his guidance and leadership throughout my father's funeral and Shiva.

**Rabbi Arnold & Serena Sher**, in honor of the marriages of Laurie & Ken Berger's daughter Arielle to Justin Gmoser and daughter Darcy to Aaron Brandt.

**Marcia Slepian**, in memory of beloved mother, Betty Johnson.

**Norman Solomon**, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for reciting the Yahrzeit for my father, Louis Solomon.

**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz.

**Eileen & Howard Tolk**, in memory of our dear friend Phyllis Feinberg.

**Ellen & Steve Tower**, in memory of Helen Weinstein, mother of Ken Weinstein.

**Gail & Peter Weinstein**, in memory of family members Molly & Jacob Sher, Edith & Stanley Weinstein, Susan Shapiro Weinstein & Jerome Sherman.

### **Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund**

**Susan Blumenfeld**, Mazel Tov, in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Lucy Field.

**Steven & Lauren Field**, with thanks to Rabbi Sarah for being such a huge part of Lucy's Bat Mitzvah.

**Patricia Stepanovic and Lori & Dan Underberger**, in appreciation to Rabbi

Marion for Marisa & Thomas' caring and eloquent wedding ceremony.

**Beth Lazar**, in loving memory of my Aunt Lea Lazar.

**Martha & Peter Small**, in appreciation to Rabbi Sarah Marion for leading us in prayer during our granddaughter Sadie Luz's naming. The whole family was moved by this memorable event!

**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in memory of Gertrude Lorraine Merle.

**Eileen & Howard Tolk**, in loving memory of stepmother, grandmother, great grandmother Beulah Tolk.

### **Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund**

**Mark & Barbara Edinberg**, in memory of Martha Salmon, sister of Judith Pressler.

**Marilyn Weinstein**, in memory of Martha Salmon, sister of Judith Pressler.

### **Rabbi James Prosnit Discretionary Fund**

**Lori & Ken Berger**, with gratitude and appreciation to Rabbi Prosnit for officiating at Darcy and Aaron's wedding.

### **Cantor Rubel Discretionary Fund**

**The Feinberg Family**, in appreciation to Cantor Rubel for her compassion, support and for presiding over the funeral of our mother, Phyllis Feinberg.

**Steven & Lauren Field**, with thanks to Cantor Rubel for helping Lucy prepare for her Bat Mitzvah.

**Helen Natt**, in appreciation of the beautiful music that Cantor Rubel brings to B'nai Israel.

### **Music Fund**

**Rabbi Arnold & Serena Sher**, in memory of Martha Salmon, sister of Judy Pressler.

**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in honor of daughter Dr. Danielle Pulton's marriage to Dr. Dave Grenda; in honor of Eliza Orleans' engagement to Ethan.

**Carolyn & Perry Wasserlauf**, in honor of Steve and Barbara Gersen on the birth of their granddaughter.

### **Enhancement Fund**

**Wendy & Jeffrey Bender**, in memory of Mort Aaron, father of Wendy.

**Dale & Jerry Demner**, in memory of Sidney Slive, uncle of Dale Demner; in memory of Anne Weinstein, aunt of Dale Demner; in memory of Steve Slive, cousin of Dale Demner.

**Joan Balogh Erdheim**, a donation.

**Dennis & Andrea Feinberg**, in memory of Phyllis Feinberg, mother of Dennis.

**Jeffrey & Jacqueline Madwed**, in memory of Scott Smith's mom, Linda Paris Smith.

**Anthony Mann**, in memory of Claire Katz.

**Sharon & Brian Miles**, in memory of Phyllis Feinberg.

**Mark & Elizabeth Nigrosh**, a donation.

**Sandra Rosenberg**, a donation.

**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in memory of Maggie Walowitz's father, Ramon Veras.

**Carolyn & Perry Wasserlauf**, in memory of father of Ronit Glantz; in memory of mother of Rob Giglietti.

**Jody Feld Webber**, in memory of my parents Lois and Benjamin Feld's Yahrzeits.

**Burton & Sheila Yaffie and Family**, in memory of Barbara S. Grossbard, who was a significant member of the temple community.

### **Sylvia Prosnit Adult Education Fund**

**Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn**, in loving memory of Jon's mom, Babette Hofheimer Sonneborn.

### **Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund**

**Rabbi Arnold & Serena Sher**, in honor of Patti & Sam Rosenberg's daughter Rachel's marriage to Kevin Lustig and daughter Sarah's engagement to Elliot Kaufman; in honor of Judy & Peter Panthauer's daughter Arielle's marriage

to Jordan Alter; in honor of Laura & Ted Pulton's daughter Danielle's marriage to Dane Grenda.

**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in memory of my mother, Lois Elaine Merdinger Hedges.

**Gail & Peter Weinstein**, in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Jacqueline, granddaughter of Dr. & Mrs. Lawrence Kahn.

**Bonim Preschool Scholarship Fund**  
**Bill & Cara Kilgallen**, in memory of our dearest loved ones.

**Religious School Enrichment Fund**  
**Scott & Laurie Renzulli**, in memory of Scott Smith's mom and Susan's mother-in-law, Linda Paris Smith

**Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund**  
**Eric & Ruth Gross**, in memory of Phyllis Feinberg.

**Beth Lazar**, in loving memory of my uncle Fred Greenberg; in loving memory of my father, Leonard M. Lazar.

**Neil & Joanne Lippman**, Mazel Tov to Beth and Jordan Posner on the birth of granddaughter, Aurelia.

**Laurie & Dan Schopick**, in celebration of Bat Mitzvah of granddaughter Jaden; in memory of mother of Susan Brody.

**Rabbi Arnold & Serena Sher**, in loving memory of Barbara Grossbard, wife, mother & grandmother.

**Howard Weisman & Nina Silberman**, in memory of Linda Paris Smith.

**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in honor of the engagement of Sylvia & Alan Neigher's daughter Leslie Neigher to Greg Kaplan.

**Lee & David Lester Keshet Fund**  
**Joan Frankel**, in memory of Edward, Betty, and Glenn Liebensohn.  
**Marjorie Freeman**, in memory of Martha Salmon, sister of Judy Pressler.

Mark Kaplan, on behalf of Lee Lester's Estate, a donation.

**Gillette Judaic Enrichment Fund**  
**Jen & Abbie Fennell**, in memory of Patricia Giglietti.

**Dianne & Richard Goldman**, in memory of Phyllis Feinberg.  
**Alan & Joan Newman**, in memory of Robert Waldman.

**Yakhani Caring Fund**  
**Janet Jurow**, in memory of Martha Salmon, sister of Judith Pressler.  
**Laura Sydney-Pulton**, in memory of Meg Murray's mother, Nancy Sullivan Murray.

## HIGH HOLY DAY APPEAL DONATIONS

### Pillar of Congregation

Wendy & Jeffrey Bender  
Jim & Lisa Greenberg  
Molli & Stephen Hourihan  
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## A BETTER WAY TO RECYCLE GLASS IN FAIRFIELD AND TRUMBULL

BY MICHELLE SERLIN

Did you know that the glass you place in your single-stream recycling bin at home is not actually recycled but ends up being crushed and used to cover landfills? The reason for this is that by the time it makes it through the sorting process, it is often broken and contaminated with other bits of plastic and waste. The good news is that several local towns, including Fairfield and Trumbull, now provide dedicated glass recycling at their transfer stations. The glass from these bins is sent to a glass recycling facility where it is recycled and made into new glass products.

When I discovered this option, I began to squirrel my glass jars away in a box in the garage. Recently, my 14-year-old daughter and I finally ventured to the transfer station with the two boxes of glass that had accumulated over the past few months. My daughter was shocked that in the middle of Fairfield

there's an other-worldly area with huge piles of branches, mulch, recycling bins, and lots of big trucks hauling things. We eventually found the dedicated glass dumpster in the transfer station where we each triumphantly tossed the bottles one by one into the receptacle. To my amazement, my daughter, who I thought would be turned off by the experience of being surrounded by trash and strange odors, said she found it very satisfying to hear each bottle drop into the bin and felt good that we were truly recycling

our glass. This unconventional mother-daughter bonding experience helped us both learn a little more about how to protect our environment.

*Glass should be rinsed and tops removed. The Trumbull Transfer station webpage has an in-depth discussion of the benefits of dedicated glass recycling.*

*If you'd like to learn more about recycling in CT in general, visit the B'nai Israel Green Team webpage in the Tikkun Olam section of the synagogue's website.*



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

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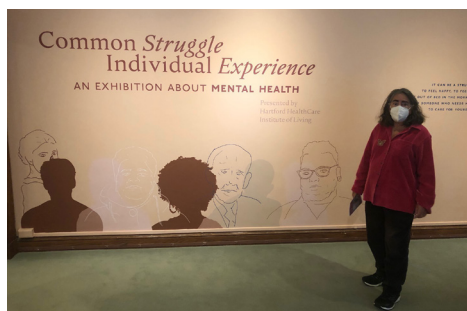
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Congregation B'nai Israel, founded in 1858, seeks to be a vibrant Reform synagogue dedicated to the perpetuation of Jewish life and values within the framework of contemporary American Judaism. We are a gateway to Judaism for all. The Congregation 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@cbibt.org](mailto:apressman@cbibt.org) or Lauren Tropp at [ltropp@cbibt.org](mailto:ltropp@cbibt.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.

## SUPPORT B'NAI'S MENTAL HEALTH SMALL GROUP!



**Common Struggle, Individual Experience**

An exhibit about mental health at the Connecticut Historical Society in Hartford was the destination for members of the B'nai Israel Mental Health Small Group on Saturday, October 1. The exhibit explained the history of mental health treatment in Connecticut and highlighted stories of individuals struggling with mental illness in Connecticut from the 1700s through today. Their letters and artwork were displayed along with video

interviews of current residents, produced in 2021. Newspaper articles dated back to the late 1860s discussed the mental illness of former Civil War soldiers, POWs, and nurses. Today we would call their illness PTSD, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Treatments for mental illness until the 1900s included bloodletting using leeches, bed rest, isolation by putting people in cages in the attic or cellar, and sending them to the poorhouse. From the

*Continued on page 15*

## 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, November 4

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Lech Lecha, Genesis.  
12:1-17:27  
Haftarah – Isaiah  
40:27-41:16

2 Kings 4:1-37

### Saturday, November 12

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. Bat Mitzvah of Julia Nuland, daughter of Dan Satlow & Sara Nuland

– in person  
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person and on Zoom  
11:00 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Abigail Copperthite, daughter of Jeffrey & Sherry Copperthite

### Saturday, November 5

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 Adam Plager, son of Charles & Kate Plager

### Friday, November 18

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –Chayei Sarah, Genesis, 23:1-25:18  
Haftarah – 1 Kings 1:1-31

### Friday, November 25

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –Toldot, Genesis, 25:19-28:9  
Haftarah – Malachi 1:1-2:7

### Friday, November 11

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Vayera, Genesis,  
18:1-22:24  
Haftarah –

### Saturday, November 19

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

### Saturday, November 26

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 Jonah Kerner, son of Bradley & Tara Kerner

## CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL CORE PRINCIPLES AND VALUES

At B'nai Israel we...

- ...TREAT each person in our community as created b'tzelem Elohim, in the image of the divine,
- ...DEVELOP, foster and nurture vibrant and meaningful Jewish lives in accordance with the values of our Torah and sacred texts,
- ...BUILD and deepen sacred relationships both within the synagogue community and the broader Greater Bridgeport community,
- ...ACT justly with a sacred obligation to tikkun olam (repair the world),
- ...FOSTER and deepen a love, commitment and connection to the land and people of Israel.

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## SUSAN WALDEN..... FROM P 4

*who is there to listen. For our children, synagogues are a place where they are nurtured and loved without the pressures of the secular school. Synagogues are where we grapple with big ideas. They are a place for identity experimentation and self-expression. A place where ethics are upheld, and love and kindness prevail. Through our synagogues the world is healed. Synagogues bring families together to honor sacred time. During hard times, they are where we learn to handle challenges and where resilience is built. ...Ideally what one gets out of belonging to a synagogue can't be measured by any standard metric. It*

*can only be measured in feelings of love, community, and connection to each other and something greater than ourselves.*

In other words, it is impossible to put value on the benefit of the love, comfort, support and Jewish connection we receive from our synagogues. And if we all left, if we all decided that we didn't "use" the synagogue any more or we had "aged out" as I often hear, what would happen to Jewish life as we know it? Would it be reduced to some Zoom box or podcast or one-off program somewhere? Would that really give us that sense of belonging that we are all yearning for? The feeling of safety, of having a group of other people

who understand our history, who have our backs if the unthinkable were to happen?

When you are pondering your next year at the temple and start to think that maybe you are no longer "getting anything out of it," I challenge you to remember your "why" — your B'nai Israel story — What actually brought you here in the first place? And then call me. Let's chat. Let me help you reconnect in this new complicated, unsettling world. And if you can't figure out or remember your "why," contact me anyway, (swalden@cbibpt.org). I just might be able to help you find it.

---

## COMMON STRUGGLE, INDIVIDUAL EXPERIENCE..... FROM P 10

late 1800s until the 1960s, some were sent to a "hospital" for the insane.

The members of the B'nai Israel Mental Health Small Group were all very impressed with the exhibit and with Connecticut's role in improving mental health treatment. A Connecticut doctor who himself had experienced mental health issues was the first person in the country to treat people on an outpatient basis. The Institute of Living in Hartford was the first mental hospital to advocate for and implement treating mentally ill patients with kindness.

Near the end of the exhibit, there was a wall listing all the Connecticut and Federal laws regarding mental health reform enacted between 1948 and 2021. Of the approximately one dozen laws, four have

been enacted in just the last four years, which is a good sign. Recently, more people have been willing to discuss mental illness and work to reform the mental healthcare system. In the 1960s under President Kennedy, deinstitutionalizing laws were passed, closing state mental hospitals without funding alternative services like affordable housing and community clinics. The result is that today a lot of mentally ill people are homeless and comprise a high proportion of Connecticut's prison population. Eighty percent of incarcerated females and twenty-five percent of incarcerated males have mental health issues. Today there are ten times as many people with mental illness in prisons as there are in mental hospitals. In the 1700s, society put people with mental illness in cages

in attics. Today we put them in cages by warehousing them in prisons.

CONNECT (Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut), of which B'nai Israel is a member, is currently in discussion with the Connecticut Department of Correction (DOC) to ensure that the DOC be accountable and transparent in providing mental health services to incarcerated people. CONNECT is also involved in many other social justice issues. The B'nai Israel Mental Health Small Group urges congregants to support both CONNECT and our group.

For more information, please call Beth Lazar at 203-336-9781.

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### Women's November/Kislev Rosh Chodesh Gathering

Monday, November 21 from 7:30-9:00 p.m. at B'nai Israel



Join with women from across the B'nai Israel community for conversation, laughter, and learning as we celebrate the new Hebrew month of Kislev. Women of all ages are welcome to participate. More information about this gathering will be sent out by email and Hashavua; stay tuned! For more information or to be added to the email list, please contact Rabbi Marion at [smarion@cbibpt.org](mailto:smarion@cbibpt.org).



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## BIFTY NOVEMBER 2022



BIFTY is B'nai Israel's high school youth group.  
We meet on Thursdays from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. in the BIFTY lounge at the back of the religious school wing.  
To stay up to date on programs, follow us on Instagram @cbi.bifty.

Our November program dates are:

November 10  
November 17

We hope to see you there!