

## SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz recommends ways in which we can prepare ourselves for the upcoming High Holidays and wants to hear how congregants prepare themselves for the holiest days of the Jewish calendar.

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Rabbi Marion shares a sermon she recently delivered on how people deal with trauma and pain and their lasting impacts.

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Alexa Cohen mentions Kehilah's remaining needs prior to its start this fall: a couple of part-time religious school teachers and Chromebooks.

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Marjorie Freeman and Beth Lazar recount the accomplishments of the Congregation B'nai Israel Mental Health Group over the past year and invite congregants to join.

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## SUKKOT AND SIMCHAT TORAH CELEBRATIONS AT B'NAI ISRAEL



starting August 28th or RSVP to Ilene at [ifeuerberg@cbibpt.org](mailto:ifeuerberg@cbibpt.org).

### Sukkot Morning Festival Service and Pancake Breakfast – Saturday, September 30

**Sukkot/Shabbat Morning Service in the Sukkah: 8:00–9:00 a.m.**

**Pancake Breakfast on the Rabbi James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space: 9:00–9:30 a.m.**

**Torah Study: 9:30–10:30 a.m.**

Join us in the sukkah for our Sukkot morning festival service, followed by our annual Sukkot morning pancake breakfast. Adults, children, and families are welcome to join, no RSVP required.

### Havurah Shabbat Sukkah Party – Saturday, September 30, 4:00 p.m.

**\*\*Offsite – check your email for an Evite with address and location information!**

Geared towards children ages 0–5 years and their families; older siblings welcome. Please join us for snacks, Sukkah decorating, and music and prayers with the clergy. Please include what you will be bringing in your RSVP on the Evite so we don't duplicate. We look forward to celebrating together! For more information, please contact Alexa Cohen at [acohen@cbibpt.org](mailto:acohen@cbibpt.org).

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### Erev Sukkot Outdoor Service and Dinner – Friday, September 29

**Erev Sukkot Festival Service in the Sukkah: 6:00–7:15 p.m.**

**Congregational Sushi in the Sukkah Shabbat Dinner (with a pizza option for kids!): 7:15–8:30 p.m.**

Join us for the start of our Sukkot festival! We will join together in and around the sukkah for a festive Sukkot service, followed by a communal Sushi in the Sukkah Shabbat dinner, with a pizza option for kids. The cost of dinner is \$25/ adult, \$10/child. If you plan to join us for dinner, sign up for this event on Shulcloud

## 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.

**Brett Dunne & Tanya Novelli Dunne and Juliette**  
Fairfield, CT

**Julia Leonard & Brett Smith**  
New Haven, CT

**Boris & Marina Kogan**  
Fairfield, CT

**Seth Abbey & Abigail Lorge and Eliza & Caroline**  
Fairfield, CT

**Oscar & Emily Gerdner and Soren, Madeleine & Johanna**  
Trumbull, CT

**Nathaniel & Jessica Schiavo and Lexi & Max**  
Fairfield, CT

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## SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

**Helen Sacks**, mother of Gail Felberbaum

**Visselle Glazer**, mother of Cheryl Green

**Allen Heyman**, father of Phil Heyman

## MITZVAH MORNING

### Mitzvah Morning Is Back!

Help us kick off the 2023–2024 season of Mitzvah Mornings! Join us on Sunday, September 10, at 10:00 a.m. at Congregation B'nai Israel's cemetery, located at 245 Kings Highway East in Fairfield. We will meet there to wash headstones to clean them of dirt and moss.

Over the past several decades, the headstones at the cemetery have endured nature's harsh elements and are in need of some serious refreshing. We will spend some time scrubbing and cleaning these headstones in honor of those who came before us.

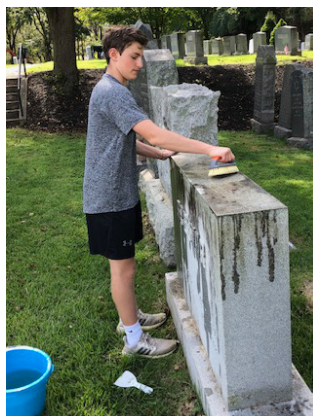
This will be a very rewarding and meaningful experience for those who attend. Our rabbis have shared with us that some of the most important mitzvot we can perform are good deeds for those who are unable to thank us. This Mitzvah Morning event certainly meets that standard. It will also be a nice opportunity to work with others in the B'nai Israel community and bond with your fellow congregants.

We will have cleaning supplies, including buckets and sponges, available. Feel free to bring your own gloves, as we will be using a bleach solution on the headstones.

## BULLETIN BOARD

All ages are welcome to join.

Please contact Nina Silberman at [ninahv@aol.com](mailto:ninahv@aol.com) or Mitch Weinstein at [mitchellew@yahoo.com](mailto:mitchellew@yahoo.com) for more information.



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**Save the Date – Mitzvah Morning**  
**Sunday, October 22, 2023**  
**10:00 a.m.–noon**

For our October Mitzvah morning, we will be working with the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants (CIRI). The event will take place at Congregation B'nai Israel on October 22, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. More details will follow in future emails and in the October bulletin on how volunteers can participate and help CIRI succeed in its mission.

CIRI is a statewide nonprofit organization that provides services

assisting refugees and immigrants in resolving legal, economic, linguistic and social barriers so that they become self-sufficient, integrated, and contributing members of the community. CIRI families have a significant need for health and wellness items, as well as school supplies.

To learn more about CIRI, visit <https://cirict.org/>.



### Gift Shop

The Judaica Boutique will be open again starting in September! It is stocked with beautiful tallitot, candle sticks, and much more.

Look for announcements in Hashavua.



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

## PREPARING OUR HEARTS FOR 5784

Shanah Tovah! In just a few short weeks, our Congregation B'nai Israel community will gather together to welcome in the new year 5784. It is always an exciting time around the synagogue as we prepare our space, our sermons, our music, and our hearts for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

I am especially thrilled for us to welcome Cantor Scott Harris home to the bimah as our new cantor. In his first few months here at Congregation B'nai Israel, Scott has already embraced us with his incredible energy and spirit. I have loved getting to know Scott better over the summer and look forward to welcoming the new year with his beautiful music and prayer.

As is often the case with the High Holy Days, no matter when in the calendar they fall, they seem to, all of a sudden, just appear in our midst. With the start of the school year, the end of the summer months, and the first notes of fall, for some of us, as we enter the sanctuary, it can feel like an abrupt transition for our hearts and Jewish souls.

There are some ways in which we can prepare ourselves a little bit for the High Holy Days. It's essentially akin to a warmup before an exercise class or listening to the music of a band before we go to a big concert. So how might we do this? I can share with you some of the ways in which I go about preparing for the holiest days in the Jewish calendar.

### **Read a book that speaks to the themes or emotions of the High Holy Days.**

I try each year to choose an author or book that shifts my heart towards the themes or emotions of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. This may be a Jewish book, such as *This is Real and You are Completely Unprepared* by Rabbi Alan Lew or *On Repentance and Repair* by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg, or it can be a book which speaks to the themes of renewal, creation, repentance, or forgiveness.

### **Ask Forgiveness.**

Every year I try to think about one or two people who I really want to reach out to, to say I'm sorry. I'll admit, it's sometimes really hard to pick up the phone and make that call. Somehow, for me, it

feels that much more powerful to call someone up during the High Holy Days than if I called them up in February. It is an elevated time of year, and the effort to return to center, or make t'shuvah, is a major component in our tradition of renewing our hearts and repairing our relationships during the High Holy Days.

### **Send Rosh Hashanah Greetings.**

It is also around this time of year that I think about those I haven't spoken with or been in touch with in a long time. I love to send Rosh Hashanah cards, emails, event texts (there are great apple and honey emojis) to reconnect with the important family and friends in my life. People always appreciate the note or text, and it can lead to rejuvenating friendships and relationships in the new year.

How do you prepare yourself for the High Holy Days? I would love to hear from you! Send me a note at [eschultz@cbibpt.org](mailto:eschultz@cbibpt.org). Shanah Tovah!

### DID YOU KNOW?

You can send positive feedback about your experiences at Congregation B'nai Israel to [input@cbibpt.org](mailto:input@cbibpt.org)? If you had a great experience at a program or service or with a staff member, clergy person, or teacher, we want to hear about it! Please share your feedback so that we can celebrate our successes and continue to bring you the exceptional experiences you enjoy!

**Correction: Asher Epstein and Anne Tranquilli-Bausher were accidentally left off the listing of the 2023–2024 Board of Trustees which appeared in the August 2023 bulletin.**

# HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

## CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES 5784

All sanctuary services will also be available over Zoom and advanced registration will be required to receive Zoom link.  
\*No Ticket Required.

### Friday, September 15, 2023 – Erev Rosh Hashanah

5:30 – 6:30 p.m. At Jennings Beach\*  
7:45 – 8:45 p.m. In the sanctuary and on Zoom

### Saturday September 16, 2023 – Rosh Hashanah

#### Day 1 Morning Services

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. **Rosh Hashanah Havurah Service for Families with Young Children\***, geared toward children ages 0-5 and their families. On the Rabbi James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space.

10:00 – 12:30 p.m. **Rosh Hashanah Morning Service**  
In the sanctuary and on Zoom.

10:00 – 12:00 p.m. **Rosh Hashanah Morning Service**  
In the tent.

10:00 – 12:30 p.m. **Rosh Hashanah Children's Programming & Babysitting**, ages 0-5 years – first floor education wing; ages 6-11 (grades K-5) – 2nd floor education wing.  
*Sign up required.*

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. **Rosh Hashanah Family Service\***, geared toward elementary school children, grades K-5, and their families.  
In the tent.

### Sunday, September 17, 2023 – Rosh Hashanah

#### Day 2 Morning Services

10:00 – 12:00 p.m. **Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Service**  
In the tent and on Zoom.

12:30 p.m. **Tashlich** on Brooklawn Parkway (off Stratfield Road)

### Sunday, September 24, 2023 – Cemetery Memorial Service

10:00 a.m. Monroe  
11:00 a.m. Fairfield

### Sunday, September 24, 2023 – Kol Nidre

7:45 – 9:45 p.m. In the sanctuary and on Zoom.

### Monday, September 25, 2023 – Yom Kippur Day

9:00 – 9:30 a.m. **Yom Kippur Havurah Service for Families with Young Children**, geared toward children ages 0-5 and their families. On the Rabbi James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space.

10:00 – 12:30 p.m. **Yom Kippur Morning Service**  
In the sanctuary and on Zoom.

10:00 – 12:30 p.m. **Yom Kippur Morning Service**  
In the tent.

10:00 – 12:30 p.m. **Yom Kippur Children's Programming & Babysitting**, ages 0-5 years – first floor education wing; ages 6-11 (grades K-5) – 2nd floor education wing.  
*Sign up required.*

1:30 – 2:30 p.m. **Yom Kippur Family Service\***, geared toward elementary school age children grades K-5 and their families.  
In the tent.

1:30 – 2:30 p.m. **Meditation with Al Dressler**  
In the chapel.

1:30 – 2:30 p.m. **Class led by Student Rabbi Gabby Tropp**  
In the library.

2:30 – 3:15 p.m. **Afternoon Cello Concert**  
In the sanctuary.

2:30 – 3:15 p.m. **Walk with Rabbi Schultz**

3:15 – 4:45 p.m. **Yom Kippur Afternoon Service**  
In the sanctuary and on Zoom.

4:45 – 5:45 p.m. **Yizkor Service\***  
In the sanctuary and on Zoom.

5:45 – 6:30 p.m. **Neilah**  
In the sanctuary and on Zoom.

6:30 – 6:45 p.m. **Closing Havdalah**  
In the sanctuary and on Zoom.





## CIRCUMCISE YOUR HEARTS: LESSONS IN TRAUMA AND PAIN

BY RABBI MARION

This past summer, I took a class called Trauma and Crisis Intervention for my program in Clinical Mental Health Counseling at Fairfield University. While the course certainly covered a width swath of heavy, intense, and often upsetting material, it was fascinating to learn about the ways in which trauma, pain, and loss can alter very basic cellular building blocks that determine who we are and how we function in this world. As we discussed in class, trauma is most damaging when it blocks our ability to exist in the here and now. When painful and traumatic events literally change our neurological and physiological systems, we cannot be fully present, fully open, or fully available to ourselves, to others, or to the world around us, because pain and trauma can literally paralyze the brain's ability to think clearly, meaningfully, and critically as we go about our daily lives. As a result, either knowingly or unknowingly, we might avoid exposing ourselves to people, places or experiences that might remind us of a previous trauma, heartache, or pain. In this way, our brains are actively working to protect us from the possibility of reliving some of the most difficult and challenging moments of our lives.

Several years ago, I worked as a chaplain intern at a NYC hospital, where I heard about more trauma-related fears and phobias than I ever expected to encounter. One story, in particular, still stands out. I remember a patient telling me that I was the first religious leader she had spoken to in decades. After an abusive and traumatic experience in her church, she rejected and abandoned religion entirely. "I lost faith in religious leaders, I lost faith in church, and I lost faith in God," she said to me. "I swore to myself that I would never go back there again."

Two days after my trauma class ended, I opened to the week's Torah portion and came across a line in the portion that reminded me of many of my recent trauma-related learnings: "Cut away the thickening of your hearts" (Deuteronomy 10:16). Some commentaries translate this phrase as "Circumcise your hearts." In other words: remove the outer layers of protection around your heart that prevent you from experiencing some of the most important, some of the most meaningful, and some of the most fundamental aspects of life. Dissolve the emotional blockage that prevents you from living and feeling and existing, fully and completely, within the present moment.

Long before our founding fathers and mothers of psychology began to understand the physiological effects of trauma, it seems that our ancestors already knew about the extensive lengths that our bodies might go in order to protect ourselves from the pain that comes with being human. Today, we understand the brain as the locus from which all of our thoughts, emotions, and behaviors derive. And today, thanks to so many advances in psychology and neurobiology, we understand how our lived experiences can impact the brain's ability to survive and thrive.

And so, today, we know that if we cannot live or function fully in the present moment, we need to investigate why our brains are holding us back. We need to investigate why avoiding or closing ourselves off to certain people, places, or experiences might be the brain's way of protecting us from reliving previous moments of trauma, heartache, or pain.

In ancient times, our ancestors also suspected that our environment can impact who we are and the kinds of

choices we make. But they believed that it was the heart, and not the brain, that was the driving force behind all of our thoughts, choices, feelings, and behaviors. This is why our biblical and rabbinic tradition depicts the heart as the seat of all emotions. There is a midrash that lists over 60 emotions of the human heart. In so many places and in so many ways, our tradition describes the heart as the container of our wisdom and our feeling. While modern investigations into trauma delve into the inner workings of the brain, our ancestors upheld the heart as the key for understanding why someone might think, act, or feel a certain way. Today, we try to understand the causes and the consequences of an altered or a wounded brain; back then, our ancestors tried to understand the causes and the consequences of a closed off or an "uncircumcised heart." And both, I think, are one and the same.

Although some of our hearts may be more closed off than others — although some of us may shelter bigger, deeper, more profound trauma memories than some of us can even begin to imagine — I think that we all build up defensive mechanisms that prevent us from living our lives to the fullest. Because in one way or another, we all have experienced trauma and pain. We all have encountered experiences that have shaken us to our very core. We all have been pushed to the brink of heartache and despair. We all have experienced — either directly, or indirectly — the true lengths of human cruelty. In light of the pain and the trauma that is simply part and parcel of being human, it would be impossible not to live with some kind of protective covering within our brains and around our hearts.

And yet, even despite the painful memories that we each hold within, our

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ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER

## WE WANT YOU!!!

KEHILAH IS GETTING READY FOR AN AMAZING SCHOOL YEAR. WE ARE MISSING JUST A FEW ITEMS:



Kehilah is a vibrant religious school with a dedicated staff. Through hands-on activities, discussions of holidays and stories from the Torah, and Hebrew and prayer study, the teachers at Kehilah are dedicated to helping the students feel connected to Judaism in a fun and engaging manner. **We are seeking part-time religious school teachers for 1st and 6th grades.**

Classes meet most Sunday mornings and Thursday afternoons from mid-September until mid-May with days off for Jewish holidays and school vacations. Responsibilities include teaching the

children Jewish stories, holidays, prayers, and values. Candidates should have an ability to convey Jewish literacy, history, and values.

The ideal candidates will have a true passion for Judaism and Jewish education and excellent communication and people skills. Classroom experience in a religious school setting is desirable but not required.

**Chromebooks needed:** Kehilah is happy to announce that we have partnered with Shalom Learning to provide a rich new curriculum based on Jewish values and Hebrew learning. Some of the lesson plans

in Shalom Learning require a device to use them to their fullest. The iPads Kehilah has used in the past few years are showing their age and no longer support many apps the teachers use (Kahoot, Quizlet, etc.). In addition they will not support the media embedded in the Shalom Learning lesson plans. Although we plan to buy a few Chromebooks, we would be thrilled if we could get some donated as well. If you are interested in donating a gently used Chromebook or would like to make a contribution towards a new one, please reach out to Alexa Cohen.

## THE KEHILAH COMMITTEE

Are you interested in your child's Jewish Education?

Your voice is needed to be sure we are meeting the needs of all students.

The Kehilah Committee works with Director of Education Alexa Cohen to oversee the curriculum, pedagogy, and policies of Kehilah.

Please join us for our first Kehilah Committee meeting of the year on October 19 at 7:30 p.m.

RSVP to Kehillah Committee Chair Karen Montagna at [kamontagna@att.net](mailto:kamontagna@att.net).

## ROSH CHODESH RETURNS! WOMEN'S ROSH CHODESH (NEW MOON) GATHERINGS

Join with women from across the B'nai Israel community each month for conversation, laughter and learning as we celebrate the start of each new moon and soak in the wisdom of our female ancestors. Women participants of all ages are welcome to participate, current members and prospective members are all welcome.



This year, our monthly Rosh Chodesh gatherings will take place on Monday evenings from 7:30–9:00 p.m., unless otherwise notified. For more information or to be added to the Rosh Chodesh email list, please contact Rabbi Marion at [smarion@cbibpt.org](mailto:smarion@cbibpt.org)

Following is the 2023/24 Rosh Chodesh schedule for the year (subject to change as needed):

October 16  
November 13  
December 11  
January 22  
February 12  
March 11  
Women's Passover Seder: Sunday, April 7  
Monday, May 13

task is to find our way back to the here and now as much as we can, and as often as we can. But how? How do we remove the protective layers that our brains and our bodies have acquired in response to our most sensitive and vulnerable moments? How do we shed the defensive coverings that have sheltered us for as long as we can remember? How do we take chances and embrace healthy risks, knowing that pain and heartache might, once again, be lurking just around the corner? How do we go back to that church or back into that religious setting? How do we learn to trust again? How do we learn to have faith again? How do we learn to love again? How do we learn to live — fully and wholly and completely — again?

Perhaps the simplest answer is through an immense amount of patience, kindness, and compassion for ourselves. This can be such personal and individual work, which looks so different for each of us.

And while the work is often so personal, it is also so deeply communal. If healing occurs from an immense amount of patience, kindness, and compassion for ourselves, it also occurs through an immense amount of patience, kindness,

and compassion for one another. This is perhaps one of the most important and most profound teachings that I learned in my trauma class this summer. Our course readings and discussions reinforced the notion that some of the most important moments of healing and wholeness can occur throughout our day-to-day encounters with one another. We need not be therapists in order to help foster wholeness and healing for somebody else. All we need to know how to do is to be kind.

I often return back to this poem by Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer. It is a poem that, I think, was written in tribute to all of our broken, vulnerable, and overly-protected hearts:

*On Earth, just a teaspoon of  
neutron star  
Would weigh six billion tons.  
Six billion tons  
Equals the collective weight  
of every animal  
on earth. Including the  
insects. Times three.  
Six billion tons sounds  
impossible  
Until I consider how it is to*

*swallow grief.  
Just a teaspoon and one  
might as well have consumed  
a neutron star.  
How dense it is.  
How it carries inside it  
the memory of collapse.  
How difficult it is to move  
then.  
How impossible to believe  
that anything could lift that  
weight.*

*There are so many reasons to  
treat each other  
With great tenderness. One is  
The sheer miracle that we are  
here together on a planet  
Surrounded by dying stars.  
Another, is that we cannot  
ever see  
what someone else  
has swallowed.*

As we all continue to reckon with trauma, with pain, and with difficult memories that no one else can see, may our hearts slowly become open to loving, to living, and to fully existing, once again.

### Help us usher in the High Holy Days together!!

We are looking for volunteers to ensure that our services run smoothly and are memorable and meaningful for all congregants. So, if you have an hour to give, the High Holidays are a perfect opportunity to get involved, meet and greet fellow members, and perform a mitzvah. Please consider signing up for one or more shifts. Scan the QR code to the right, click on the SignUp Genius link in Hashavua, or go to <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10c0e4ca8a62ba4fb6-high#/> to choose your dates and times. Thank you so much. We can't do this without you!! Please contact High Holy Days Co-Chairs Debbie Viens at [dvsquared@optonline.net](mailto:dvsquared@optonline.net) or Evelyn Rubak at [erubak@gmail.com](mailto:erubak@gmail.com) with questions.



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# SEPTEMBER DONATIONS

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

## **Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund**

**David & Georgette Chetrit**, in loving memory of parents Rachel & Aaron Melloul, and brother Robert Melloul.

**Dennis & Andrea Feinberg**, in memory of our loving mother Arlene Kay.

**Dean & Laurie Gaugler**, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for his support in the loss of Gracie and for his open mind.

**Bernice Giblin**, in memory of my husband James Giblin.

**William Greenspan**, in appreciation to Rabbi Evan Schultz.

**Peter & Karen Montagna**, in memory of the yahrzeit of James Giblin, father of Karen Montagna.

**Martin & Elaine Schwartz**, in celebration of the birth of Stella Maeve Mark to Sarah, Michael, sister Remi, and grandparents Sharon and Cantor Scott Harris.

**Lawrence & Linda Walker**, in memory of the yahrzeits of Goldie Levine, mother of Linda Walker and Arnold Walker, father of Lawrence Walker.

## **Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund.**

**David & Georgette Chetrit**, in loving memory of parents Rahamin & Zohar Chetrit.

**Dean & Laurie Gaugler**, in appreciation to Rabbi Marion for her support in the loss of Gracie and for her open mind.

**William Greenspan**, in appreciation to Rabbi Sarah Marion.

**Stephanie Schacher**, in honor of Charlotte & Jonathan Klein's B'nai Mitzvah.

**Martin & Elaine Schwartz**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

**Artie & Suzie Weissman**, in memory of Gail Felberbaum's mother, Helen Sacks.

## **Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund**

**James & Lisa Greenberg**, in celebration of Cantor Scott Harris and Sharon Harris on the birth of their granddaughter Stella Maeve Mark.

**Lawrence Levine & Alison Bonds**, in appreciation to Cantor Scott Harris joining our congregation and mazel tov to you and your family on your new granddaughter.

## **Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund**

**Robert & Stacy Giglietti**, in memory of Patricia Giglietti's yahrzeit.

## **Music Fund**

**Randy Dorfman**, in celebration of the engagement of Rachele & Brett, son of Marcia Tubin.

**Arnold & Serena Sher**, in honor of the birth of Stella Maeve Mark, granddaughter of Sharon & Cantor Scott Harris.

**Ellen Sheiman**, in celebration of the welcoming back of Cantor Scott Harris!

**Michael & Debbie Weisman**, with thanks from Fiddler on the Roof to our cantor. Congratulations!

## **Enhancement Fund**

**Mark & Ann Block**, in memory of Visselle Glazer, mother of Cheryl Green.

**Cub Scout Pack 197 Fairfield**, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for generously hosting our Blue & Gold Banquet in March.

**Jerry & Dale Demner**, in memory of Jean Slive, aunt of Dale Demner.

**Dean & Laurie Gaugler**, in memory of Ron Hazelton, husband of Lynn Drasin.

**Robert & Paula Herzlinger**, with thanks; a donation.

**Louise Linsky**, with thanks; a donation.

**Jeff & Jackie Madwed**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

**William & Caryn Schwartz**, in memory of Gail Felberbaum's mother, Helen Sacks.

**Kenneth & Rita Weinstein**, in memory of Helen B. Weinstein on the occasion of her yahrzeit.

## **Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund**

**Eric & Ruth Gross**, mazel tov on the birth of Stew & Dale Barcham's granddaughter, Isabel.

**Mark & Anne Kirsch**, in memory of Irving Oberweis, stepfather of David Cohen.

**Luise Mann**, in celebration of Renee and Rick Beitmans's special anniversary.

**Randy & Beth Reich**, wishing a speedy recovery to Gail Weinstein, with wishes for a smooth and comfortable recuperation.

**Arnold & Serena Sher**, in memory of Irving Oberweis, father of David Cohen.

## **Religious School Enrichment Fund**

**Dean & Laurie Gaugler**, in honor of the birth of Jade Mae Epstein to parents Jaclyn and Asher Epstein; in memory of Helen Sacks, Gail Felberbaum's mother; in memory of Irving Oberweis, stepfather-in-law of Alexa Cohen and stepfather of David Cohen.

**Peter & Karen Montagna**, in celebration of the wedding of Lauren Montagna & Kevin Pierce.

**Stephanie Schacher**, in honor of Charlotte & Jonathan Klein's B'nai Mitzvah.

## **Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund**

**Susan Bauchner**, in memory of my father, Arnold Kaplan.

**Eric & Ruth Gross**, in celebration of the engagement of Glenn & Amy Rich's daughter, Molly.

**Mark & Anne Kirsch**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

**Daniel & Laurie Schopick**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

**Arnold & Serena Sher**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum; in memory of Visselle Glazer, mother of Cheryl Green.

## **Kesher Project**

**Probus Club of Great Bridgeport Bike the Beach**, with thanks to the Kesher Project.



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## SEPTEMBER DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

### **The George Markley Chesed Fund**

**Jacob Bogner**, in memory of George Markley — friend and advisor of many years.

**Barry & Linda Diamond**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

**Mark & Anne Kirsch**, in memory of George Markley.

**Rozanne Lancia**, a donation in memory of George Markley.

**Luise Mann**, in memory of Gail Felberbaum's mother, Helen Sacks.

### **Daniel Smith Cemetery Fund**

**Dennis & Janet Magid**, in memory of Bobby Miller, brother of Sammy Miller, sending our very deepest sympathy and love; in memory of the yahrzeit of Daniel Smith, late husband of Serena Sher. We will always remember how special Danny was.

**Arnold & Serena Sher**, in memory of my husband, Daniel Smith; in memory of Robert Miller, brother of Samuel Miller.

### **Yakhani Caring Fund**

**Robert & Paula Herzlinger**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

**Janet Jurow**, in memory of Helen Sacks, mother of Gail Felberbaum.

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## SUKKOT AND SIMCHAT TORAH CELEBRATIONS ..... FROM P. 1

### **Outdoor Erev Simchat Torah Service and Celebration – Friday, October 6**

**Pre-Shabbat Meditation: 5:00–5:30 p.m.** (see separate description for details)

**Pizza and Crafts: 5:00–6:00 p.m.**

**Family-Friendly Simchat Torah Service: 6:00–7:00 p.m.**

Join us for pizza dinner and kid-friendly Torah themed crafts outside in the parking lot at B'nai Israel. All are welcome to stay for our outdoor family friendly Erev Simchat Torah service, starting at 6:00 p.m., which will feature the joyful sounds of Radio Klez as we unroll and dance with the Torah! If you plan to join us for pizza dinner, RSVP to Lisa Hurlbert at [lhurlbert@cbibpt.org](mailto:lhurlbert@cbibpt.org) so we can be sure to order enough food.

### ***\*New This Year:***

**Pre-Shabbat Meditation with the Clergy – Select Fridays, from 5:00–5:30 p.m. in the Chapel**

We all arrive at Shabbat each week with many different emotions and needs. Some of us are celebrating simchas, others are mourning loved ones or navigating illness and sorrow. This pre-Shabbat meditation will provide a quieter space for prayer and contemplation, specifically designed for community members who are mourning loved ones, experiencing illness, praying for the health of a loved one, or who have had a particularly difficult or challenging week. Each pre-Shabbat meditation will always include recitation of Mi Sheberach for healing, Mourner's Kaddish, as well as an opportunity to reflect and find comfort in the presence of one another. Following our time together, participants are welcome and encouraged to join for Shabbat oneg at 5:30 p.m., followed by

our congregational Shabbat service at 6:00 p.m. For more information, please contact Rabbi Marionat [smarion@cbibpt.org](mailto:smarion@cbibpt.org).

Our Pre-Shabbat Meditations will be offered on the following Fridays from 5:00–5:30 p.m.:

October 6  
November 3  
December 8  
January 19  
February 16  
March 15  
April 19  
May 3

**Simchat Torah Morning/Yizkor Service – Saturday, October 7, 10:00 a.m.**

*\*Note: There will be no 8:00 a.m. service, Brotherhood breakfast or Torah study that morning.*

Simchat Torah morning/Yizkor services will begin at 10:00 a.m.

## SAVE THE DATE!

We are planning a visit to Washington, D.C., on the weekend of November 10–12. This trip, intended for adults, will provide a chance to be together and experience our nation's capital. More information will be coming in the next month.

## CEMETERY PLOTS AVAILABLE

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Bernie Jacobs at [bjacobs@cbibpt.org](mailto:bjacobs@cbibpt.org)  
or call the temple office at (203) 336-1858.

As of April 1, there was a price increase. We are raising plot and care fees which will keep our pricing in line with other cemeteries in the area.



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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](mailto:apressman@cbibpt.org) or Lauren Tropp at [ltropp@cbibpt.org](mailto: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.

## 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, September 1

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service Chapel  
– in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion – Ki Tavo,  
Deut. 26:1-29:8  
Haftarah – Isaiah 60:1-22

Dizney, daughter of  
Jonathan and Jennifer  
Dizney  
8:00 p.m. Community Slichot  
Service, Or Hadash,  
Fairfield

### Sukkot

#### Friday, September 29

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service Sukkah  
(weather permitting) – in  
person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion – Lev. 22:26-  
23:44  
Haftarah – Zec. 14:1-21

### Saturday, September 2

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

### Rosh Hashanah

#### Friday, September 15

Shanah Tovah!

5:30 p.m. Service at Jennings Beach  
7:45 p.m. Erev Rosh Hashanah  
services in Sanctuary – in  
person and on Zoom

### Saturday, September 30

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Sukkah  
(weather permitting) –  
in person and on Zoom  
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in  
person  
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person  
11:00 a.m. Bar Mitzvah of Nathaniel  
Cohen, son of David Cohen  
and Kendra Falkenstein

### Friday, September 8

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service Chapel  
– in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion – Nitzavim-  
Vayelech, Deut. 29:9-31:30  
Haftarah – Isaiah 61:10-  
63:9

### Friday, September 22

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service  
Sanctuary – in person  
and on Zoom  
Torah Portion – Ha'azinu,  
Deut. 32:1-52  
Haftarah – Mic. 7:18-20;  
JL. 2:15-27

### Saturday, September 9

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Chapel  
– in person and on Zoom  
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in  
person  
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person  
11:00 a.m. Bar Mitzvah of Hannah

### Saturday, September 23

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

## 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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## A LOOK BACK, A LOOK FORWARD, FROM THE MENTAL HEALTH GROUP

Congregation B'nai Israel's Mental Health Group (MHG) wishes all members, clergy, and staff a sweet new year, filled with good mental, physical, and spiritual health. A person first needs good mental health to obtain or maintain good physical health. There is no way you can plan meals, shop for food, cook, or take care of your personal hygiene if you are too depressed to get out of bed, are having a psychotic episode, or are catatonic. Because good mental health is so vital for everyday living, the Mental Health Group was formed at Congregation B'nai Israel. The group is open to all Congregation B'nai Israel members who want to build awareness of mental health issues, advocate for better access to mental health services, and end stigma. We're also a support group

for each other. All types of people have attended past meetings: psychiatrists, counselors, social workers, nurses, and people who have a mental illness or who have a family member who does. There are also those who are NOT involved in the mental health system but care deeply about mental health issues.

In the past year, we visited the Connecticut Historical Society's exhibit *Common Struggle, Individual Experience*, on the history of the treatment of mental illness in Connecticut 1700s–2021. We shared what we learned from the exhibit with Congregation B'nai Israel in a bulletin article. In fact, every month, we have had an article in the bulletin about some aspect of mental health. The group supported the Tikkun Olam/Social Justice

Summer Film Series by organizing the first film and speaker: *Crip Camp, Documentary of the Disability Rights Movement*, followed by a speaker from the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Please consider becoming a member of B'nai Israel's Mental Health Group in Jewish Year 5784. The Mental Health Group meets the 3rd Wednesday of every month, 7:30 p.m., via Zoom. Look for the Zoom link in the Hashavua email. Hope to see you at a future meeting.

Mental Health Group Chair:  
Beth Lazar

Mental Health Group Secretary:  
Marj Freeman

---

## KESHER CORNER

### August 1, 2023

I'd like to introduce you to The Keshet Project. I've been the executive director of this jewel for more than 25 years. We are an inclusive program, serving challenged and mainstream adults who share a love of Judaic principles and tradition thru music, art, dance, mainstream theatre and, of course, food. All nationalities are welcome.

Before COVID, Sherry Portnoy joined me, bringing her wonderful creative ideas to our in-person events. Then COVID forced us to go online with The Keshet Songfest. I invited my daughter, Michele Farbman, to sing with me on alternating Sunday afternoons. The Songfest on

Zoom reaches group homes and private residences across the U.S., uplifting viewers as they sing along with us using the song sheets we provide or move to the music.

Now we are developing the Lee and David Lester Keshet Drama Club for All Abilities. We meet to practice drama games, improvisation, how to enunciate and converse and learn how to walk onstage and really listen.

We are creating props and sharing creative ideas for the play we are currently working on, to be performed in 2024.

We invite you to stop by in person or online or to volunteer. It's a great way for students to learn while doing community service for a Bet Mitzvah or public school. Please like us on Facebook at The Keshet Project and The Keshet Project Songfest. You can contact us at [rheasmusic@icloud.com](mailto:rheasmusic@icloud.com) (Rhea Farbman), [sherrysmeow@optonline.net](mailto:sherrysmeow@optonline.net), (Sherry Portnoy) or [keshetdramaclub@gmail.com](mailto:keshetdramaclub@gmail.com).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Rhea Farbman and Sherry Portnoy





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## BIFTY

BIFTY is excited for a new year! BIFTY is Congregation B'nai Israel's high school youth group. We meet on Thursdays from 7:00–8:30 p.m. in the BIFTY Lounge, which is upstairs at the end of the hallway. Teens are welcome to come weekly or as it works for their schedule. There is no need to RSVP; teens can just show up! Some of our favorite events include Cupcake Wars, Chopped, Scavenger Hunts, Wacky Hat Night, and Bob Ross Paint Night! Membership forms are available at our programs.

The best way to stay up-to-date on BIFTY's upcoming events is to follow us on Instagram @cbi.bifty and join our text group. Feel free to reach out to advisor Marisa with any questions at [munderberger@gmail.com](mailto:munderberger@gmail.com).

We will be meeting from 7:00–8:30 p.m. in September on:  
September 14  
September 21  
September 28

We look forward to seeing you at BIFTY!

