

DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

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FAIRFIELD AND TRUMBULL HOST VIGILS IN SUPPORT OF ISRAEL



Vigils were held on Sunday, November 12 in Trumbull and Sunday, November 19 in Fairfield in support of Israel, the hostages, and peace. Thank you to all those who attended to show their support by joining together in prayer and song.

FAMILY CHANUKAH DINNER AND CELEBRATION, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

5:30 p.m: Pre-Service Oneg with snacks and crafts for children ages 0-5

6:00-7:00 p.m: Festive Family-Friendly Shabbat Service featuring the Junior Choir

7:00-8:00 p.m: Shabbat Dinner and Celebration

Our annual community-wide Chanukah celebration is back! Our Shabbat service at 6:00 p.m. will feature a festive service with the Junior Choir, followed by a catered dinner with games, crafts, and more! We hope you and your family will join us! The cost of dinner is \$20 for adults, and \$10 for children 12 and under. To RSVP for the dinner, please email Lisa Hurlbert at lhurlbert@cbibpt.org no later than Wednesday, December 6 or sign up at Family Chanukah Dinner & Celebration – Event – Congregation B'nai Israel: <https://cbibpt.shulcloud.com/event/family-CHANUKAH-dinner--celebration.html>



OUR COLLEGE STUDENTS NEED TO HEAR FROM US!

It has been a while since B'nai Israel has had an active college outreach committee. In times like these, a little bit of home is comforting. We need your help and are looking for one or two congregants to chair the college committee. What would you do? Help create an active list of college student email addresses

and send them occasional inspiration and comfort along with a couple of gift cards each school year. Help us let them know their home congregation is missing them and cheering them on! (Yes, we even have a budget for this!) If you are interested, please reach out to me at swalden@cbibpt.org.

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.

**Sharon & Marc Okun and
Jared & Evan**
Stratford, CT

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

David Sydney, father of
Laura Sydney-Pulton

SHARING OUR JOY

In Celebration of:

Cristie and Stanton Krauss, on the birth of their grandson Asa Sawyer Friedrich Krauss

Linda and Jon Orleans, on the marriage of their daughter Rebecca Orleans to Michael Chang

BULLETIN BOARD

MITZVAH MORNING December 10, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

For our December Mitzvah Morning, we will be partnering with The Center for Family Justice in Bridgeport to deliver holiday gifts to families in need. The CFJ works with many families who do not have the means to buy holiday gifts, so our Mitzvah Morning project will revolve around providing gifts for the children of these families.

Each of our volunteers will be matched with a child who has filled out a request for a specific gift. Volunteers will fulfill the gift request, and then we will all assemble as a community on December 10, at B'nai Israel to wrap our gifts together and present them to the CFJ team.

Volunteers can sign up via the SignUp Genius that will be posted on the B'nai Israel website and published in Hashavua. Volunteers will then be notified of their match and the gift request.

This will be a fun event where volunteers will gather as a community while making a meaningful impact on a child's life.

To learn more about The Center for Family Justice, please visit centerforfamilyjustice.org.

THANK YOU TO OUR NOVEMBER MITZVAH MORNING VOLUNTEERS

On Sunday, November 12, our Mitzvah Morning volunteers made 87 pies for nOURish BRIDGEPORT, to be delivered to community members for a take-home Thanksgiving feast.

nOURish BRIDGEPORT was extremely appreciative and very impressed with our turnout and our efforts.



JUDAICA BOUTIQUE

The Judaica Boutique will be having a special Chanukah event on Sunday December 3 from 9:30 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

Stock up on “everything Chanukah” plus more.



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

EIGHT SOURCES OF LIGHT RIGHT NOW

These past two months, so many of us have endured immensely difficult challenges. We collectively witnessed one of the most horrific days in Jewish history on October 7, 2023. We have watched antisemitism rise across the globe and right here in the United States.

Many of us have felt incredible loneliness from friends and colleagues as we navigate a world increasingly hostile towards Jews. And so many of us struggle to find light right now amidst a darkened world. Where might we find such light?

As we approach Chanukah, I wanted to share where I personally have found light over these past two months, and I hope the following suggestions might be a source of strength and light for you as well. I chose the number eight, one for each candle of the menorah. May Chanukah be a time for all of us to discover light amidst a seemingly very dark world.

#1 Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook

I turned to his book recently as Rav Kook was the first Chief Rabbi of Israel and wrote extensively about the struggles of establishing the State of Israel. He wrote, "I love everybody. It is impossible for me not to love all people, all nations. With all the depth of my being, I desire to see them grow toward beauty, toward perfection. My love for the Jewish people is with more ardor, more depth. But my inner desire reaches out with a mighty love toward all."

#2 "Hatikvah"

The national anthem of Israel is a poem of hope. The first line of the original poem, written by Naftali Herz Imber, begins "Our hope is not yet lost." This line turns the bible upside down. In the book of Ezekiel, the Israelites say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost." (37:11)

#3 Sarah Tuttle-Singer

Sarah is a Jerusalem-based author and writer. If you have Facebook, I certainly recommend following her. She posts

daily about life in Jerusalem right now. Some of her writing will make you cry, and other pieces will make you smile. I love this line that she wrote in November about the Jewish people, "When it comes down to it, we truly love each other with a ferocity that is spectacular to behold, and will support one another, and stand together as a loyal family."

#4 Aviva Zornberg

Aviva Zornberg is an Israeli bible scholar and I have found immense wisdom in her commentaries on the Torah portions each week. She wrote the following about the generation of Noah and the flood and their inability to speak to one another; to me, this could have been written about our world right now, "The rebellion of the generation around the Flood can be understood as a failure to speak, to communicate with God — or, indeed, with each other... A fundamental disaster has befallen the language powers of human beings. They have become so open that they are closed to one another."

#5 Alden Solovy

Alden is a liturgist and poet, who has been sharing his poetry regularly from Jerusalem on Facebook. His writing is raw, emotional, and real. In a recent poem he wrote,

*War is my muse,
But peace is my inspiration,
For the day when hope and love,*

*Once again,
Become the heartbeat
Of my imagination.*

#6 Our college students

Our clergy has had an opportunity to speak with some of our college kids who are experiencing some of the worst antisemitism on campus. They are an inspiration and source of strength and hope to us. They are educating friends, standing proudly with Israel, and representing the Jewish people with courage, strength, and resolve.

#7 Nava Tehila

This Israeli duo has crafted and written some of the most beautiful music in recent years. I often listen to their music before Shabbat, and I have been turning to their YouTube channel frequently since October 7. There is so much incredible Israeli music out there, and Nava Tehila has been my light these past two months.

#8 All of YOU

B'nai Israel, you are an incredibly strong community. You have supported one another, learned from one another, cried with one another, sang with one another, and prayed with one another. We have remained so strong throughout this horrific crisis. May we continue to find strength and love from one another. B'nai Israel, you are my light.

Happy Chanukah.



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, December 1

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis
32:4-36:43
Haftarah – Hosea
11:7-12:12

Saturday, December 2

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person
and on Zoom
11:00 a.m. B'not Mitzvah of Claire &
Gabriel Levitt, daughter &
son of Jason & Rachael
Levitt

Friday, December 8 (1st day of Chanukah)

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis
37:1-40:23
Haftarah – Zechariah 4:1-7

Saturday, December 9

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person
and on Zoom
11:00 a.m. Bar Mitzvah of Harrison
Goldberg, son of David &
Jessica Goldberg

Friday, December 15 (8th day of Chanukah)

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis
41:1-44:17
Haftarah – I Kings 3:15-4:1

Saturday, December 16

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

Friday, December 22

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis
44:18-47:27
Haftarah – Ezekiel 37:15-28

Saturday, December 23

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

Friday, December 29

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person
and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis
47:28-50:26
Haftarah – I Kings 2:1-12

Saturday, December 23

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

HIGH HOLY DAY APPEAL DONATIONS

Pillar of Congregation

Jim & Lisa Greenberg
Richard & Joanne Krantz
Marlene Nadeau
Bob & Helen Natt
Nancy & Charles Needle
Jane Pressman
James Prosnit & Wendy Bloch
Jerry Saunders & Elaine Appellof
Mark Schiff
Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn
Susan & Richard Walden

Benefactor of Congregation

Stacy & Rob Giglietti
Eric & Ruth Gross
Anne & Mark Kirsch
Karen & Peter Montagna
D. Robert & Francine Morris
William & Caren Schwartz
Joseph & Leslie Varon
Dan & Debbie Viens
Fredric & Ronnie Zinn

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Jeffrey & Wendy Bender
Karen & Alan Blau
Marty & Alayne Burger
Mark & Barbara Edinberg

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Paula & Robert Herzlinger
John & Sylvia Hodin
Janet Jurow
Alice & George Kelly
Samuel Miller & Family
Nancy & Jeff Oberman
Jonathan Orleans & Linda Liefland
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Michael & Debora Weisman

High Holy Day Appeal Donation

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David & Georgette Chetrit
Lilla Cooper
Dale & Jerry Demner
Barry & Linda Diamond
Randy Dorfman
Bari S. Dworken
Michael & Linda Epstein
Robert Ford
Joann Gelfand
Geoffrey Gladstein
Laurel Greenberg

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Judith Hochstadt
Jack Kadden
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Ernest Malecki
Geoffrey & Melanie Kooris
Barry & Judith Kramer
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Richard & Gail Lopatin
Carol Mack
Alice Madwed
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Laurie & Dan Schopick
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Jeffrey & Linda Silverberg
Rhea Spiegel
Eric D. Stein & Dyann Ross
Lauren & Jonathan Tropp
Suzie & Artie Weissman
Frederic & Sherry West
Susan & Arnie Zuckman



MIRACLES DO HAPPEN

BY CANTOR SCOTT HARRIS

Seen any good miracles lately? Chanukah is based on miraculous events. We light the *Chanukiah* because of the familiar story of the small cruse of oil that we are told lasted eight days. Did it really happen that way?

The rabbis offered us this story to steer us away from remembering only the battle against Hellenistic imperialism and the guerilla warfare of the Maccabees. They wanted us to shift our attention from physical power to spiritual power. The meaning of our relationship to God is not that our belief gives us power over others. Instead, it gives us power over ourselves! Chanukah is about Jewish pride. It's about Jewish strength. It's about feeling so confident about your heritage and faith that you are willing to go up against the odds to defend it and sustain it.

It is easy to understand the miraculous nature of a little bit of oil lasting eight days. It might be more difficult to imagine how the Jews had the imagination to light the menorah against the uncertainty of how long the oil might last. Maybe it's not difficult to appreciate the tangible

miracle of divine assistance in the Maccabees' victory over Antiochus' army. It's perhaps more difficult to imagine where the Maccabees found the faith and courage to resist the might of the Greek Empire.

We know stories of Jews in Nazi concentration camps who risked their lives to light simple candles during Chanukah, even though they had no expectation of living past a few more days. Chanukah is about the power of a small candle that represents the Jewish soul and the Jewish people to bring light and warmth to a home, a community, and, yes, the world.

I believe it is no coincidence that we celebrate Chanukah right after reading in the Torah about the reconciliation of Esau and Jacob. Two brothers, at one time rivals and enemies, fall into each other's arms in tearful reconciliation. I believe there is no greater miracle than when anger and misunderstanding between two people turns into reconciliation and hope. Haven't we all experienced this in our own lives? And don't we wish this

for those we love who live with such conflicts? Finally, if such reconciliation is possible between individuals, isn't that the model for how nations will settle their conflicts, by discovering what unites them in common purpose and hope?

The *dreidle* reminds us: *nes gadol hayah sham* — a great miracle happened there. At this very dark season, we need to open our eyes and minds a little more to allow in the bright light of the miraculous. Though we are surrounded by the cold and harshness of this world, we can be warmed by the people around us who can do the impossible. Those who visit the sick, offer transportation for those in need, volunteer to serve a Christmas meal; you don't have to look very far to find wonderful miracles all around us!

Chanukah is about dedicating and rededicating ourselves to God, our faith, our community, and each other.

From Sharon, myself, and our family to you and yours, *Chanukah Sameach*.

LOOKING FOR A WAY TO TAKE ACTION TO HELP THE ENVIRONMENT IN 5784?

JOIN THE CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL GREEN TEAM AND MEET OTHERS IN OUR COMMUNITY WHO SHARE YOUR PASSION!

Ongoing Green Team Projects:

- Waste reduction and recycling efforts, including planning for curbside composting
- Planning environmentally-themed educational/community events
- Local and national advocacy
- Maintaining and expanding our new pollinator garden
- Clothing swaps
- Efforts to reduce energy at CBI and among congregants

Join our B'nai Israel and Bonim Shares Facebook group (similar to a "buy nothing" group) to connect with others in our community by gifting or requesting unused household items.



Please join us at our upcoming meeting:

December 18 at 7:00 p.m. (in-person at CBI).

Please contact co-chair Michelle Serlin (mserlin@mac.com) or Anya Mezak (anyamezak@gmail.com) for more information.



ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER A NEW CLUB AT BONIM PRESCHOOL



On a bright and sunny Friday morning, Bonim Preschool hosted the first of many Grandparents Club events to take place this school year. The morning started off with an exuberant music session with Cantor Scott. The kids all love Cantor Scott so much! As soon as Cantor Scott started singing, the dancing began. Soon the *bimah* was filled with children enjoying the Shabbat music while the grandparents were poised with their iPhones in hand recording it all. As a special treat, Cantor Scott was joined by his own granddaughter, who seemed to wonder why all these kids were dancing with her “Papa.” It was beautiful to see a full sanctuary of special guests celebrating Shabbat with their grandchildren.

Once we got the crowd settled down, it was time to visit the classrooms to light candles and eat challah and drink a bit of grape juice as we all recited the motzi for our special guests. Some of the classrooms even prepared special gifts for their grandparents. For example, the one-year-olds painted their hands and strung them together to make a “hug” for their special guests. We kept the grandparents busy with a challah making project — each child got a hunk of challah dough and, along with their grandparent, they rolled and braided to make a tiny loaf.

It was a wonderful morning! Keep an eye out for future Grandparents Club activities. Not every child has a local grandparent. If you are interested in being a surrogate grandparent/special person to one of our preschoolers, please let us know.



URJ JEWISH SUMMER CAMPS

BY ALEXA COHEN

URJ Jewish Summer Camps are such an important part of B'nai Israel kids' lives. Each year our kids embark on a summer experience like no other where they make friends for life. Through generous donations from congregants to the Bob and Marsha Gillette Judaic Enrichment Fund, B'nai Israel has always been able to offer scholarships to our congregants so every kid who wants to attend URJ summer camp has the opportunity, regardless of the family's financial status. **This is where you all come in — the Marsha and Bob Gillette Fund is dwindling and needs donations to keep it well funded so we can continue to offer scholarships to our students.** Below you can read a bit about some of the local URJ summer camps:

Crane Lake Camp is a camp where everyone feels at home. We strive to make every camper's experience nurturing and fulfilling, and we do so by making sure that every child feels welcomed and supported.

At Crane Lake Camp, we build a Culture of Kindness through our actions every day. This Culture of Kindness can be seen all around us as we go about our daily activities, from the smallest of actions to the grandest of gestures. Our culture creates an environment that is filled with people who want to actively create a more compassionate and accepting community.

The Eisner Camp Community (sometimes referred to as "The Bubble") offers a fun, supportive environment where campers can explore, challenge themselves, and develop their passions. At camp, kids of all abilities and backgrounds strengthen their Jewish identities, all while surrounded by expert staff and beautiful facilities.

Our caring and committed staff members (many of whom were campers themselves) strive to enrich the campers' experiences by helping them build lasting friendships. These relationships provide encouragement and support and offer the opportunity for every camper to realize their full potential.

From the youngest of our campers to the oldest of our Machon (counselors-in-training), every child who spends a summer at Eisner Camp returns home wiser, more self-confident, more connected and a bigger part of the Jewish community.

Eisner Camp is more than a summer of fun, it is an experience that lasts a lifetime.

6 Points Sci-Tech Academy is the Jewish camp that curious minds have been waiting for! At 6 Points Sci-Tech Academy, scientific inquiry meets fun. Campers entering grades 4-10 spend two weeks exploring robotics, video game design, science, digital media, and a host of other fun activities in a friendly setting with campers who share similar interests.

Throughout their experience, campers explore what Judaism means to them — and how this complements their interests in science and technology. Campers gain an understanding of their place in the long history of the Jewish people's contributions to science and technology.

Camp means being active, both mentally and physically. Our science and technology programs are designed specifically for the camp environment, with active, outdoor learning experiences. The educational portions of our program are complemented by recreation time each day. The activities change daily, so campers will get to experiment with lots of different ways to be active throughout the summer!

All three camps are proud of their affirming and inclusive environments. They strive for their camps to be safe havens where campers and staff feel affirmed and celebrated for being their most authentic and best selves each summer, and all year long. The hope is that the campers and staff strengthen their self-esteem, Jewish identity, and connection to the Jewish community through the supportive nature of staff and programs.

They are committed to building vibrant communities rooted in Jewish values and bringing the transformative power of Jewish summer camp to every child and family who come through their gates.

Letter from a B'nai Israel camper about her experience at URJ Crane Lake Camp:

I have a special place for me, Crane Lake Camp. With the help of our Temple, this is my sleepaway camp.

I get goosebumps when my parents first drive me to camp and I hug and say goodbye to them.

The hit-or-miss meals, the people and the activities are something that I look forward to every summer. I feel different at camp. When I'm at camp I don't think about the outside world — it's like you are truly in a bubble.

When we are at camp, we sing and say many Jewish prayers together. This is part of what makes camp feel like a more sacred and holy place for me.

Camp: I have a special place that I love very much and especially the many friends I have made — it's a magical, bonding place — we even see each other outside of camp, especially in the past year, with so many of us gathering to celebrate B'not, B'nai, B, Bar and Bat Mitzvahs.

DECEMBER DONATIONS

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

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund
Phyliss, Benjamin, Anne, Lilah & Hallie Bausher, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz.

Mark & Annie Block, in memory of Frank Sales, father of Annie Block.

David Cohen & Kendra Falkenstein, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz, thank you for your help in preparing Nathaniel for his Bar Mitzvah!

Sigalle Feig, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz, thanks for having my son and I at temple this year.

Robert & Stacy Giglietti, in memory of the yahrzeit of Bernard Lipin.

George & Alice Kelly, in memory of brother Peter Zimroth.

David & Judith Koch, in memory of Sara Brozgal on her 10/29/23 yahrzeit, from her loving family.

Beth Lazar, to Rabbi Schultz & Jenny Goldstein on the Bar Mitzvah of their son Koby. Mazel Tov to Koby Schultz on a meaningful d'var Torah and an inspiring Bar Mitzvah.

Andrew & Carol Lubin, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Alice Madwed, in memory of my mother, Frieda Ente.

Alan & Joan Newman, in honor of Koby's Bar Mitzvah.

Michael & Andrea Rudolph, in memory of my mother, Thelma Schreiber, who lived and loved big. Special thanks to Rabbi Schultz for helping us to honor her memory.

William & Caren Schwartz, in celebration of Koby's Bar Mitzvah.

Irving & Nancy Silverman, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for leading an evening vigil for peace in Easton and mazel tov on Koby becoming a Bar Mitzvah.

Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn, in honor of Koby's Bar Mitzvah.

Arthur & Suzanne Weissman, in memory of my mother Sylvia Smiley Rosenthal & my father Leonard Smiley.

David & Eleanor Zolov, in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Avery Zolov, thank you for all of your efforts, friendships

& educational guidance to our granddaughter.

Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund
Phyliss, Benjamin, Anne, Lilah & Hallie Bausher, in appreciation to Rabbi Marion.

David Cohen & Kendra Falkenstein, with thanks to Rabbi Marion for her help in preparing Nathaniel for his Bar Mitzvah!

George & Alice Kelly, in appreciation to Rabbi Marion; and in memory of brother Peter Zimroth.

Andrew & Carol Lubin, in memory of Bernard S. Baron, father of Linda Bernstein.

Estelle Parson, in appreciation to Rabbi Marion; and in memory of Peter Zimroth.

Mark & Deena Spector, in memory of Josh Spector, on what would have been his 29th birthday.

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

Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund

Mark & Barbara Edinberg, in celebration of the birth of Scott & Sharon Harris's granddaughter.

David Cohen & Kendra Falkenstein, with thanks to Cantor Harris for your help in preparing Nathaniel for his Bar Mitzvah!

Luise Mann, in celebration of the birth of Sharon and Scott Harris' granddaughter Abigail.

Rabbi James Prosnit Discretionary Fund

Richard & Joanne Krantz, with thanks to Rabbi Prosnit for officiating at our son's wedding.

Music Fund

Michael & Linda Epstein, in memory of Thelma Schreiber, mother of Andrea Rudolph.

Enhancement Fund

Mark & Annie Block, in memory of Andrea Rudolph's mother, Thelma Schreiber.

Bobby & Elsie Bonds, in honor of Larry Levine, for his deep concern for the children & other refugees of Israel.

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

Sandra Effren, in appreciation to B'nai Israel for all that you do.

Steven & Jill Elbaum, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Luise Mann, in memory of Susan Walden's father, Melvyn Rosenzweig; in memory of Muriel Mann.

Howard & Eileen Tolk, in loving memory of father Maurice Velenchik.

Jody Webber, in memory of my parents Lois & Ben Feld on their yahrzeit.

Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund

Mark & Anne Kirsch, in memory of Bernard Bernstein, father of Linda Bernstein.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund
Bari Dworken, in memory of Andrea Rudolph's mother, Thelma Schreiber.

David Abbey & Deborah Goodman, in honor of the birth of Asa Sawyer Friedrich Krauss, grandson of Stan & Cristie Krauss.

Stewart & Dale Barcham, in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane Pressman, Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden, and Bernard Bernstein, father of Linda Bernstein.

Stanton & Cristie Krauss, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Thelma Schreiber, mother of Andrea Rudolph. Dennis & Jan Magid, in honor of Koby Schultz's Bar Mitzvah.

Mark & Deena Spector, in memory of Josh Spector, on what would have been his 29th birthday.

DECEMBER DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

CONECT thru Social Action Fund
Michael & Linda Epstein, in memory
of my grandmother, Lilyan Ullman.
Rabbi Jennifer Mager, with thanks, a
donation.

Etz Chaim Living Torah Fund
Kenny & Joy Lewis, in memory of
Thelma Schreibman, mother of Andrea
(Michael).

Jim and Barbara Abraham Education
Fund

Friends of Janet Jurow, in celebration
of Janet's birthday.

Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn, in honor
of the Bat Mitzvah of Sylvie Herzlinger,
granddaughter of Bob & Paula
Herzlinger.

The George Markley Chesed Fund

Friends of Janet Jurow, in celebration
of Janet's birthday.

Robert & Paula Herzlinger, in memory
of the yahrzeit of George Markley.

Arnold & Doris Tower Fund

Stephen & Ellen Tower, in memory of
Arnold Tower.

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

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Amy Pressman and Lauren Tropp	Bulletin Co-Editors
Scott Smith	Deputy Bulletin Editor

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.

CEMETERY PLOTS AVAILABLE

B'nai Israel Cemetery
472 Moose Hill Road
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For information, please contact
Bernie Jacobs at 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.



Upcoming Rosh Chodesh programs and events — save the date!



Rosh Chodesh Tevet/December Gathering: Chanukah Potluck Dinner and Candle Making Workshop
Tuesday, December 12, 6:00–9:00 p.m.
(*NOTE DATE CHANGE!*)

Celebrate the 6th night of Chanukah with our Rosh Chodesh community! Join us for a festive potluck dinner and a candle making workshop led by the local woman-owned business, Healings by Nature. Each participant will have the opportunity to design and create their very own unique candle, using 100% soy wax, semi-precious gemstones, dried flowers and/or glitter coloring, and fragrance.

The cost of the candle making workshop is \$20/person. Please RSVP by December 8 to Ilene at ifeuerberg@cibipt.org. Checks can be made out to Congregation B'nai Israel, or you can RSVP via ShulCloud. In addition, watch your email for a link to a SignUpGenius to indicate what you will be bringing for our potluck dinner.

Upcoming 5784 Rosh Chodesh programs and events, save the date!

Monday, January 22: Tu B'shvat Tasting
Monday, February 12: Game Night, co-sponsored by Women of B'nai Israel
Sunday, April 7: Women's Passover Seder, co-sponsored by Women of B'nai Israel

B'NAI EVENTS



"What's Jewish about *The Twilight Zone*" with Rabbi Marion on Zoom
Sunday, December 17, 8:00-9:00 p.m.

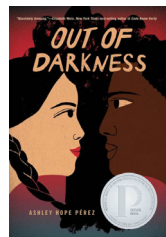
Our Jewish *Twilight Zone* experience returns! In honor of the Syfy channel's annual New Year's Eve *Twilight Zone* marathon, we will gather for our own *Twilight Zone* watch party on Sunday, December 17. We'll watch an episode over zoom together and then discuss the rich Jewish themes and values that we can glean from it. So plop down on your couch, grab your computer and BYOP (bring your own popcorn!)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83938528422?pwd=a01OYVBkYTJ2UW1yTHNmWE4rM3d3Zz09>

Meeting ID: 839 3852 8422

Passcode: 2p3VPi

CBI Banned and Challenged Book Group Meetings

Join us for as many sessions as you can! All meetings will take place at B'nai Israel. We will be discussing each book together; participants are encouraged to read each book in advance.



Out of Darkness
by Ashley Hope Perez
Thursday,
January 18, 7:00 p.m.

Discussion led by Susan Walden

The 9th most challenged book of 2022 according to the ALA

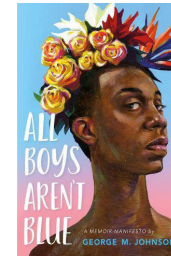


Lawn Boy
by Jonathan Evison
Thursday,
March 28, 7:00 p.m.

Discussion led by Alexa Cohen and Cadence

Pentheny from the Triangle Community Center

The 7th most challenged book of 2022 according to the ALA



All Boys Aren't Blue
by George M. Johnson
Thursday,
May 16, 7:00 p.m.

Discussion led by Rabbi Marion and Cadence Pentheny from the Triangle Community Center

Center

The 2nd most challenged book of 2022 according to the ALA

Caregiving Support Group Select Sundays at B'nai Israel With Rabbi Marion and Rachel Yurdin, LCSW

Caregiving can feel like an overwhelming and isolating task. Our caregiving support group is designed for those who are:

- Directly caring for an aging parent or always "on call" for an aging parent
- Caring for a loved one — of any age — with a chronic illness

This group will provide space for caregivers to come together for friendship, community, and mutual support. We will share the challenges and joys of our individual caregiving journeys, be witness to one another's experiences, and turn to sources from our tradition for comfort and guidance. Coffee and a light nosh will be provided. Participants are welcome to "drop in" when they are able to attend or join for all of the sessions. To join, RSVP to Rabbi Marion at smarion@cibipt.org.

The group will meet on the following Sundays, from 10:30 a.m.–noon at Congregation B'nai Israel:

Sunday, December 10
Sunday, January 28

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**The following members of the medical community join
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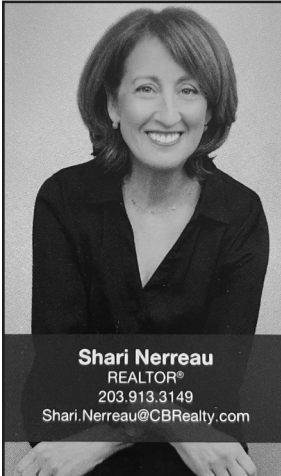
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HAPPY CHANUKAH TO EVERYONE FROM THE KESHER PROJECT

The Keshet Project participants are looking forward to volunteering for the B'nai Israel Gift of Light fundraiser. We are excited to help bring light into your homes.

In addition, the Keshet Project has received a lovely gift. I believe volunteering is a very special way of giving. It's not like writing a check or sending Venmo or Zelle. It's giving of oneself fully without asking for anything in return, AND it's a matter of the time one takes from their busy schedule to help someone else.

The Keshet Project has a new volunteer who gives from her heart and has made our members feel so good. She is interested in drama and sings in several choirs.

We are so grateful that Hannah Pressman has volunteered. She's already attended several in person events and has gotten to know everyone. Hannah has the gift of knowing where to place herself in the best way to benefit the group. Thank you, Hannah, for your smile and kind efforts. You are making everyone feel very special.

This spring, keep an eye out for information on The Keshet Project's first play. It will be performed in or around May. We hope you can come to the show, entitled *Our Beautiful World*.

kesherdramaclub@gmail.com
rheasmusic@icloud.com
sherrysmeow@optonline.net

Hannah Pressman, volunteer, with members of the Keshet Project.



TIKKUN OLAM COMMITTEE

TIPS TO BOOST MENTAL HEALTH.....BY MARJORIE FREEMAN

The Mental Health Group is one of the Tikkun Olam Committees

Chanukah reminds us that a small group of dedicated individuals can achieve miracles. Likewise, purposeful interaction with others can buoy mental health. Working toward goals and engaging with others are both keys to good mental health.

Here are some other ways to maintain or increase mental health from "Taking Care of Yourself," National Alliance on Mental Health, 2019. Some of these tips may seem obvious, but how many of them are you following?

- Stay positive: Thinking positively helps with managing stress and can improve your health.

- Practice mindfulness: Focus on what's happening in the present moment to help you feel calm and peaceful.

- Get enough sleep: Sleep problems and mental health conditions can become a vicious cycle. Be sure to get an average of 8 hours of sleep per night.

- Eat healthfully: A good diet has the right portions of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, dairy, and protein. From: "Nutritional Psychiatry: Your brain on food." Harvard Medical School, 2018.

- Keep moving: Exercise can improve your mood, sleep, and energy. Check with your doctor for ways to get active.

- Limit alcohol use: If alcohol affects your

mood or your ability to interact with friends or to get things done, talk to your doctor.

- Connect with others: If you feel isolated or overwhelmed, talking to a loved one, close friend, or support group can help.
- Focus on gratitude: If you're having a day when nothing seems to be going right, take a minute. Breathe. Think of things for which you are grateful.

In this Season of Light, the B'nai Israel Mental Health Group wishes you a Happy Chanukah and good mental health.



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BIFTY



BIFTY had fun carving pumpkins!

BIFTY is excited for our December event! We meet on Thursdays, from 7:00–8:30 p.m., upstairs in the BIFTY Lounge. For more information, follow us on Instagram @cbi.bifty and ask to join our text group. Reach out to advisor Marisa at munderberger@gmail.com with any questions.

We will be meeting on December 14 to celebrate Chanukah!
We hope to see you then!