

AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz shares some of his recent poetry, largely around the idea of *ruach*, or Jewish spirit.
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Rabbi Marion introduces us to a poem that appears in the High Holiday prayer book, "The Peace of Wild Things," which inspires us to find stillness and solace in a world that may seem full of anxiety and despair.
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Alexa Cohen provides a glimpse into the Bonim summer camp and the enjoyment of its campers.
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Rhea Farbman recaps the Keshet Drama Club performance, which debuted in late June.
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SPRING CELEBRATION

On Friday, June 14, B'nai Israel held its Spring Celebration to honor our Tikkun Olam Trailblazers, Debbie Goodman, Sherry Portnoy, Jeff Schwartz, and Nina Silberman. All four of these amazing individuals have given countless hours to support B'nai Israel and the community. The well-deserved honorees were joined by Elaine Chetrit, who presented them with the very first Elaine Chetrit Tikkun Olam Award. The evening was a great success!



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.

Tamar Wexler & Bernard Szabo
Westford, MA

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Celia Z. Turetsky, aunt of Barbara Edinberg

Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry Diamond

Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern, uncle of Nancy Kern and Danielle Kern

Connie Simon

Paul Kane, father of Rebecca Solinsky

SHARING OUR JOY

In Celebration of:

Shari & Brian Nerreau, on the birth of their granddaughter Josephine Wells Nerreau, daughter of Brad and Samantha Nerreau

MITZVAH MORNING IS BACK!



Help us kick off the 2024-2025 season of Mitzvah Mornings! Join us on Sunday, September 15 at 10:00 a.m. at B'nai Israel's cemetery, located at 245 Kings Highway East in Fairfield. We will meet there to wash headstones and clean off their dirt and moss.

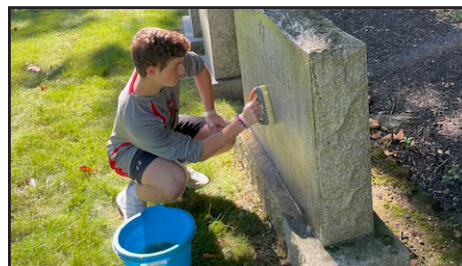
Over the past several decades, the headstones at the cemetery have endured nature's harsh elements and are in need of some serious refreshing. We will spend some time scrubbing and cleaning these headstones, in honor of those who came before us.

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

All ages are welcome to join.



Please contact Nina Silberman at ninahv@aol.com or Mitch Weinstein at mitchellev@yahoo.com for more information.

HIGH HOLIDAY TORAH CLEANING

Please join us on Saturday afternoon August 17 at 3:00 p.m. to help clean all the silver Torah ornaments in preparation for the High Holidays. The required polishing materials will be provided, and we expect to make everything bright and clean and then have a short Havdalah service with a little wine and cheese. We will be cleaning in the kitchen, and if you want to bring some items to help, consider these: rubber gloves, large pots for boiling water, and towels to dry/buff the silver. See you at B'nai Israel on the 17th and hope you will lend a hand to clean a yad, *rimonim*, or a breastplate! Please RSVP to rwalden@cbibpt.org so we can have the right amount of cleaning materials and Havdalah goodies on hand. Looking forward to seeing you there.

CARING COMMITTEE

The B'nai Israel Caring Committee makes shiva calls to our members and drops off meals and challah to those who are ill, bereaved, or overwhelmed. We also bring meals to members who are new parents. We make calls and visits to those members who may be homebound and could use some company. We drive members to services for those who are unable to drive.

The committee is always looking for volunteers. Even if you can only do one of these mitzvot a single time, or maybe just a few times a year, we welcome your help.

If you know of anyone who would like or needs any of these services, please let us know.

We are here to help the B'nai Israel community. Thank you.

Jim Grutzmacher:
jamesgrutz@gmail.com

Sara Laden:
sara.laden1988@gmail.com

Co-Chairs of the B'nai Israel Caring Committee



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

SHARING SOME OF MY RECENT POETRY

As we enter the final month of summer, I thought I would share some of my recent poetry with all of you (as we head into the High Holy Day season, I'll be sharing lots of prose). I have been especially thinking a lot about the notion of Jewish spirit, or *ruach*, in Hebrew, and much of my recent writing has been around this idea or feeling.

I have especially seen so many in our congregation and Jews across our country discover aspects of their Jewish spirit in the months since October 7, 2023. More and more Jews are expressing their Judaism openly and publicly, even with the rising antisemitism in our midst. I have been so moved by the incredible Jewish spirit I see each and every day here in our congregation, and the following poems have been inspired by many of you.

Wishing you a wonderful rest of summer. I hope you find these poems meaningful for your daily or Shabbat practices, and may we continue to draw deeply from our incredible Jewish spirits together.

candle meditation

tonight i light
two candles.

one
for my
heartbreak
mourning
grief
longing
brokenness.
shvarim!

and one
for my
wholeness
pride
love
joys
strength.
tkiyah!

i am broken
and i am whole.
i am shvarim
and i am
tkiyah.

i am
two candles.
still shining.
always shining.

psalm 151
im waiting for
a beautiful soul
to write the words
of psalm 151

for my lute and lyre
are long put away
and my people
are in need of
a psalmist today
to speak the words
the ancients
could not say.

tradition...tradition!
the hebrew word
for tradition,
masoret תרוסמ,
has not one,
but two,
hebrew roots.

the root
alef-samech-resch
means
to bind
to tie up
to imprison.

and the root
mem-samech-resch
means
to pass down
to transfer
to deliver.

so please understand
part of who i am was
chosen for me
and part each day
i choose to be.

i am

i am
songs of peace
late nights at summer camp
israeli dancing
and sabbath joy.

i am
knishes on delancey
sammys roumanian
the streets of jerusalem
and matzah ball soup.

i am
shma yisrael
havdalah by the lake
blasts of the shofar
and the hora.

i am
klezmer music
debbie friedman
pursuing justice
and shabbos dinners.

i am
emma lazarus
miriams cup
let my people go
and manischewitz.

i am
am yisrael chai
love your neighbor
marc chagall
and the mourners kaddish.

i am
abraham joshua heschel

chanukah candles
leonard cohen
and the sea of talmud.

i am
questions not answers
golda meir
sabbath candles
and torah queerries.

i am
sarah silverman
bet mitzvah parties
sunrise masada
and people of the book.

i am
standing at sinai
challah french toast
bubbe's kugel
and sarahs laughter.

i am
cynthia ozick
elie wiesel
fiddler on the roof
and the six million.

i am
bearer of tradition
keeper of my faith
proud of who i am
and never afraid.

this is who i am.
l'chayim
l'chayim
l'chayim.

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, August 2

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –
in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion –
Numbers 30:2-36:13
Haftarah – Jeremiah
2:4-28, 3:4

Saturday, August 3

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, August 9

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –
in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion –
Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22
Haftarah – Isaiah 1:1-27

Saturday, August 10

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, August 16

6:00 p.m. Lake Mohegan Beach
Service (honoring Marisa
Underberger)
(no service at temple)
Torah Portion –
Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11
Haftarah – Isaiah 40:1-26

Saturday, August 17

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, August 23

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –
in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion –
Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25
Haftarah –
Isaiah 49:14-51:3

Saturday, August 24

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, August 30

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –
in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion –
Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17
Haftarah –
Isaiah 54:11-55:5

Saturday, August 31

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

Our synagogue Caring Committee can provide rides to and from services to congregants in need of assistance. If you are in need of a ride for Shabbat or another synagogue event, please reach out to Chris Rocha at crocha@cbibpt.org, or call the temple office at 203-336-1858.

BEACH SERVICES – WE ARE RETURNING TO LAKE MOHEGAN THIS SUMMER!

Join us for summer services at Lake Mohegan at 6:00 p.m. on August 16.

Bring your beach chairs and enjoy Shabbat services overlooking the beautiful scenery of Lake Mohegan! (No Service at temple or on Zoom.)



B'nai Israel's Security Program

Are you interested in learning more about our temple's security program? Peter Montagna, chairperson for the CBI Security Committee, will conduct a one-hour tour and discussion on the steps we've taken so far, plus future plans. Two sessions will be provided: Sunday, September 15, starting at 10:00 a.m., and Sunday, September 22, starting at 10:00 a.m. Please meet at the temple main entrance. Contact Peter at montagna.peter@att.net if you have any questions.



SUMMERS WITH “THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS”

BY RABBI MARION

Buried in the pages of our High Holiday prayer book is a poetic gem that I often think about, all year long. The poem is by Wendell Berry, and it is called “The Peace of Wild Things”:

*When despair for the world grows
in me,
and I wake in the night at the least
sound,
in fear of what my life and my
children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood
drake
rests in his beauty on the water; and
the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things,
who do not tax their lives with
forethought
of grief. I come into the presence of
still water.
And I feel above me, the day-blind
stars
waiting with their light. For a time
I rest in the grace of the world, and
I am free.*

I admire the author of this poem and his ability to find stillness and solace, amidst growing anxiety and despair. Because when despair for the world grows within me, I often want to retreat, I often want to withdraw, and I often want to shut the door and close my eyes and tune it all out for days, for weeks, for months...

So much pain. So much anguish. So much heartache. In the pages of our sacred text, and in the pages of our daily news.

When despair for the world grows in me...can I, too, find peace, among the wild things?

Many of you know that my family retreats to Martha's Vineyard for a week or so every summer. For us, Martha's Vineyard is a slice of heaven, a home away from home, and I write this piece on the heels of our most recent Vineyard voyage. It often feels incongruous, and bizarre, to escape such a beautiful, serene and picturesque paradise, while the rest of the world continues to fall apart.

Among this past summer's Vineyard vacation memories are the following:

I sit on the beach, watching my kids sprint and splash one another in the water. “Look mommy, look at me!” Michaela calls out triumphantly, as she slides onto her boogie board and waits for another wave to glide her onto shore. And then I look down at the news on my phone and see the faces of the remaining hostages who are drowning in the kind of darkness that we can't even begin to imagine. And I look down at the news on my phone, and I see faces of Gazan children orphaned, injured, scarred from a war that they are still too young to even understand.

And then we flip the radio on, hearing warnings about the hottest summer on record, the devastating effects of Climate Change already well underway.

Vacation, in these awfully trying times. Such a strange synthesis of sweetness and sorrow. Heaven and heartache. Delight and despair. But what about peace? And hope? And faith?

Two years ago, on the first day of our Martha's Vineyard vacation, we noticed a bird's nest right outside the back door of our house. A carefully crafted nest, nestled in the wooden, crisscross lattice that adorns the house's exterior. The nest was positioned just low enough for us to peer in, and just high enough to be out of reach of the eager hands of my small children.

On the first day, we spotted four tiny babies in the nest, visible only by their beaks, which shot straight up with every rustle of the surrounding leaves. For them, the soft whisper of the wind was the most hopeful sound in the world, because it resembled the sound of their mother, arriving home to plop food into their hungry, gaping mouths.

Each day of vacation we carefully studied the nest, watching as the baby birds got bigger and bigger and bigger. By the eighth day, when we were packing up to

**“This is the peace of wild things. The steady, relentless, inner urge towards living.
Towards being alive. No matter what.”**

just like the way in which the Israelites withdrew for thirty days after the death of their beloved leader, Aaron, in *Parshat Chukat* — the Torah portion that we read just a few weeks ago. For thirty days, as *Parshat Chukat* tells us, our ancestors paused, and they retreated, and they wept...

A few hours later, I rest in the front passenger seat of our car, putting my feet up on the dashboard, as we drive down the island's main highway. To my left are the sparkling, blue-green waters of the Atlantic Ocean, peppered with sailboats of all sizes and shapes, and to my right are the marshy swamps of Edgartown Pond.

go home, their whole bodies were visible, and the nest was a heap of fuzz upon fuzz upon fuzz, the birds piled on top of one another, completely intermingled and intertwined, impossible to tell anymore where one baby ended and the other one began.

Continued on page 7



ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER
FUN AT BONIM IN THE SUN



Hammering Nails



Waterplay Bucket Fall



Red, White, and Blue Art



Whee Summer Slides



Roman and the Bubbles



Storytime



Ruby and Sophie's Car



More Planting



Pre-K Water Tables



Zoe B



SUMMERS WITH “THE PEACE OF WILD THINGS”

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

On the eleventh day, after we had arrived home, my mom, who was still on the island, sent us a picture of the empty nest, with just one baby bird left, waiting for its turn to launch and take flight.

And so now we know that a bird's young life can be measured in vacation time. One vacation is all the time that it takes for a bird to be born and then fly forward, onwards and outwards, towards the rest of its life.

This is the peace of wild things. The steady, relentless, inner urge towards living. Towards being alive. No matter what. For these wild things do not tax their lives with the forethought of grief. They do not remain immobilized, paralyzed, anesthetized beneath the utter weight of the world. They do not even know what this means.

But, rather, their unwavering, unending forward motion and forward devotion towards life, towards survival, towards what comes next, towards what must come next...this is the peace of wild things.

Can this be our peace, too? Can we take the weight of this world...can we take our grief, our pain, our heartache, our despair... and can we fly forward anyway...towards life, towards love, towards purpose, towards survival, towards what comes next, towards what must come next... just as the wild things know how to do? And just as our ancestors knew how to do. Because even though their grief and their weeping, for a time, stopped them in their tracks...the Israelites eventually got up, and they found their way forward. Even though they were less whole without Aaron leading the way, and even though they were less certain of their safety and their security in their surrounding desert world, they got up and they went forward anyway.

They went forward because it was the only way. They went forward, because they had internalized God's call: “Choose life...with all of its stunning splendor, and its soul-crushing sorrow. Choose life, and you shall live.”

In a sermon a few years ago, my colleague Rabbi Nicole Auerbach spoke about a lesson that she learned from her teacher, Rabbi Dr. Joe Skloot. “Rabbi Skloot is a historian,” Rabbi Auerbach wrote. “And he says, that when he looks back at history, there have been so many times when people thought the world was ending. But then it didn't. And he finds hope in that...he finds hope in the possibility that there is always a path that can lead us forward...”

Despite all of the awfulness that humanity has endured, despite the repeated pain and suffering and sorrow that comes with being human, we have always found it within ourselves to keep living, to keep loving, to keep hoping, to keep dreaming, and to keep going. We have always found it within ourselves to pick ourselves up and continue forward, doing our very best to make things better, as much as we can, and as best we can, in the short and precious time that we have. And that reminder, at least for now, brings me some small measure of peace.

ECOJUSTICE TEAM UPDATE

The Pollinator Garden, located behind B'nai Israel, was expanded at the May Mitzvah Morning, co-sponsored by the Ecojustice team. We added many new kinds of native pollinator plants, donated by Oliver Nursery, which are labeled so that you can learn about the types of plants that feed the delicate ecosystem of pollinator

insects in our area. Please stop by and visit! If you would like to join us working in the garden, please contact Michelle Serlin at mserlin@mac.com.

SPECIAL THANKS TO OLIVER NURSERY FOR THE GENEROUS PLANT DONATION



Enrollment for Kehilah is underway. If you have a child in kindergarten through 7th grade, come join our Kehilah community. Call the Education Office 203-335-5058 or email acohen@cbibpt.org for more information.

Help Wanted

As we say goodbye to Marisa Underberger and thank her for her 10 years of dedicated work with our BIFTY teens, B'nai Israel is in need of an Interim BIFTY Advisor. The Youth Committee will be discussing what the future looks like for teens at B'nai Israel. In the meantime, our BIFTY teens need an adult leader to help them continue planning programs and having fun each Thursday night.

If you are interested, please contact the Education Center at 203-335-5058.

JULY & AUGUST DONATIONS

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

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund

David Abbey & Debbie Goodman, with gratitude to Rabbi Schultz; in memory of Harriet Abbey.

Joseph & Louise Bobrow, in appreciation of spring celebration honorees: Debbie, Sherry, Jeff & Nina.

Aaron & Darcy Brandt, in celebration of our daughter, Cecilia Marks Brandt.

Jed & Marlyse Duguid, in appreciation for officiating Waylon's bar mitzvah.

Alan & Susan Rona Kasson, in appreciation for conducting my dad, Edgar Rona's funeral service.

George & Alice Kelly, in loving memory of father, Sol Zimroth; in memory of father, Thomas Kelly; in memory of Michael Miller, brother of Andi Kern.

Albert & Alida Kleban, in loving memory of our mother, Beatrice Kleban.

Hallie Levine & Jamie Sklar, in honor of Geoffrey Sklar's bar mitzvah.

Andrew & Carol Lubin, with thanks to Rabbi Schultz for officiating the wedding of Alex Lubin & Kelsey MacKinnon.

Alice Madwed, in memory of father, Joseph Ente.

Matt Monn, with thanks, a donation.

Richard & Carol Offenbach, in loving memory of our parents, Vivienne Zimmer Goldstein & Robert Offenbach.

Scott & Shari Pearlman, in honor of our daughter Lilly's bat mitzvah.

Jane Pressman, with gratitude on behalf of the Pressman & Ferleger families to Rabbi Schultz for officiating at Jerry's unveiling.

Glen & Kelly Reznikoff, in celebration of Sherry Portnoy for being honored as a Tikkun Olam Trailblazer.

Arnie & Serena Sher, in memory of Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry Diamond.

Jon & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of Celia Turetsky, aunt of Barbara Edinberg.

Bob, Sue & Carleigh Sussman, in loving memory of grandmother Gussie Sussman.

Judith Waldman, in loving memory of Scott G. Waldman & Dr. Martin G. Waldman.

Fredric & Ronni Zinn, in memory of mother Ruth Zinn.

Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund

Abbey Alkon, in honor of the wedding of Julia Leonard & Brett Smith.

Joseph & Louise Bobrow, in appreciation of spring celebration honorees: Debbie, Sherry, Jeff & Nina.

Laurel S. Greenberg, in loving memory of my parents, Ruth C. Silverman & Sol H. Silverman.

Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund

Jed & Marlyse Duguid, in appreciation for working with Waylon on his bar mitzvah.

Robert & Elaine Friedman, in celebration of the return of Cantor Harris and the kindness he's shown us.

Eric & Ruth Gross, in memory of Michael Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Scott & Shari Pearlman, in honor of our daughter Lilly's bat mitzvah.

Hallie Levine & Jamie Sklar, in honor of Geoffrey Sklar's bar mitzvah.

Naomi Schaffer & Roger Jackson, in memory of Connie Simon.

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

Marcia Tubin & Martin Shmagin, in loving memory of Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry (Linda) Diamond.

Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund

Dennis & Jan Magid, mazel tov on the birth of Wendy & Jim's grandson, Sasha Aviv.

Martin & Elaine Schwartz, in honor of the birth of Sasha Aviv Weinberg, grandson of Jim Prosnit & Wendy Bloch, son of Jake & Jenna; in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Rabbi James Prosnit Discretionary Fund

Rob & Stacy Giglietti, in celebration of the birth of grandson Sasha to Rabbi Jim Prosnit & Wendy Bloch.

Daniel & Laurie Schopick, in honor of the birth of grandson Sasha to Rabbi Jim Prosnit & Wendy Bloch.

William Smith, in loving memory of Lorraine R. Smith.

Music Fund

David Abbey & Debbie Goodman, with gratitude for Cantor Harris.

Michael & Joni Greenspan, in honor of Benjamin Schechter's bar mitzvah.

Jordan & Beth Posner, in honor of the birth of Ezra Jesse Edinberg, grandson of Mark & Barbara Edinberg; in memory of Celia Turetsky, aunt of Barbara Edinberg.

Arnie & Serena Sher, in honor of the birth of Barbara & Mark Edinberg's grandson Ezra Jesse.

Jon & Cleo Sonneborn, in celebration of the birth of Mark & Barbara Edinberg's new grandson, Ezra; in appreciation to Mark Edinberg for his musical contributions to our services.

Enhancement Fund

David Abbey & Debbie Goodman, in appreciation to Susan Walden.

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

Mark & Annie Block, in loving memory of my mom, Jeanne Sales.

Michael Jacobson, in memory of Florence Dorfman's yahrzeit.

Jeffrey & Diane Law, mazel tov to Marlene Nadeau on her bat mitzvah on January 27.

Naomi Schaffer & Roger Jackson, in memory of Sherman London, father of Michael London, grandfather of Jordan Spitzer-London.

William & Caren Schwartz, in memory of Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry Diamond.

Matthew & Patricia Wunder, in loving memory of Malek Mansour's mother's passing; our hearts go out to Malek, Nina, Isaiah & Gabriel.

Sylvia Prosnit Adult Education Fund

Jon & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of Peg Rawdon, Cleo's mother.

Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund

Anne Heine, to honor the wonderful work & friendship of Sherry Portnoy, on behalf of Miriam Caston & her lovely caregivers.

Robert & Twody Schless, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof; in memory of Michael Miller, brother of Andrea Kern; in loving memory of Bob's parents Bernie Schless & Ruth Schless.

Marc & Maggie Walowitz, mazel tov to Ken & Lori Berger on the birth of their granddaughter Cecilia.

JULY & AUGUST DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

Prayer Book Fund

Judith Lessler, in memory of Mike Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Religious School Scholarship Fund

Jerry Saunders & Elaine Appellof, in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Religious School Enrichment Fund

David Abbey & Debbie Goodman, in memory of David Goodman.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund

David Abbey & Debbie Goodman, with gratitude for Rabbi Marion.

Mark Abrams, with thanks to Debbie Goodman for volunteering over the years to feed the hungry in our community.

Jeff Ackerman & Andrea Goodman, in memory of David Goodman.

Fredric & Renee Beitman, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, grandmother & dear mother of Elaine Appellof.

Mark & Annie Block, in honor of our Tikkun Olam Trailblazers — Debbie Goodman, Sherry Portnoy, Jeff Schwartz & Nina Silberman.

Bari Dworken, in memory of Celia Turetsky, Connie Simon, Andi Kern's brother, Elaine Appellof's mother & Jake Bogner's father.

Robert & Paula Herzlinger, in celebration of the birth of Ezra Jesse Edinberg, son of Rachel Blumenthal & Joel Edinberg, grandson of Barbara & Mark Edinberg.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern, uncle of Danielle & Nancy Kern.

Dennis & Jan Magid, Cheri & Jill, in memory of the yahrzeit of Hyman Magid, father of Dennis, on June 4; the yahrzeit of Shirley Berkman, mother of Jan, on June 14.

Samuel Miller & family, in memory of Harry Miller; in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Daniel & Laurie Schopick, in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Arnie & Serena Sher, in memory of Kathryn Brown's father, John Selig; in memory of Elaine Appellof's mother, Shirley Shapiro.

Jon & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of Michael Miller, brother of Andrea Kern, uncle of Nancy & Danielle.

CONECT thru Social Action Fund

Susan Blumenfeld, in honor of the bat mitzvah of Lilyan Avery Pearlman.

Vision Loan Reduction Fund

Jim & Lisa Greenberg, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof; in memory of Andrea Kern's brother, Michael Miller.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry Diamond; in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof.

Sam & Patti Rosenberg, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof.

Ellen Sheiman, in memory of Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry Diamond; may his memories be a blessing for you.

Jim and Barbara Abraham Education Fund

Jeffrey Ackerman & Andrea Goodman, in memory of Michael Miller, beloved brother of Andrea Kern.

Mark & Barbara Edinberg, in memory of Michael Miller, brother of Andrea Kern, uncle of Danielle & Nancy.

Robert & Paula Herzlinger, in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Jack Kadden, in memory of Michael Arthur Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

Beth Lazar, remembering the kind and gentle soul, Barbara Abraham.

Jon & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of Jonathan's father, Walter Sonneborn.

Lee & David Lester Keshet Fund

William & Caren Schwartz, in loving memory of Steven Alan Starr & Rudolph Starr.

Keshet Project

Rod Brown, in celebration of Danny Freeman's birthday.

Sheila Kaminsky, in honor of Sherry Portnoy.

The George Markley Chesed Fund

Marty & Alayne Burger, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof.

Mark & Barbara Edinberg, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof.

Carl & Naomi Erwich, in celebration of Debbie Goodman, Sherry Portnoy, Jeff Schwartz & Nina Silberman for being honored as Congregation B'nai Israel Tikkun Olam Trailblazers.

Gwendolyn Johnson & Gloria Haynes, in honor of Beth Lazar & Rabbi James Prosnit.

Howard Weisman & Nina Silberman, in memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof.

Ira & Audrey Wise, in celebration of Debbie Goodman & Sherry Portnoy on your honoring at the spring celebration.

Charles Fried Keshet Fund

Ken West, in honor of our spring celebration recipients.

Arnold & Doris Tower Fund

Stephen & Ellen Tower, in memory of Bobbi Tower.

Brian Mendell Memorial Fund

Michael London & Allison Spitzer, with thanks and gratitude to our clergy, Chris Rocha & the caring committee in recent days following the passing of Sherman London.

Yakhani Caring Fund

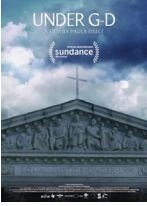
Jeffrey Ackerman & Andrea Goodman, in appreciation to Chris Rocha for her many acts of kindness for so many.

Janet Jurow, in memory of Elaine Appellof's mother, Shirley Shapiro.

Jack Kadden, in loving memory of Sherman D. London.

Naomi Schaffer & Roger Jackson, in loving memory of Shirley Shapiro, mother of Elaine Appellof; in memory of Jordan Diamond, brother of Barry Diamond.

UPCOMING EVENTS



2024 Tikkun Olam Summer Film Series — Under G-D, Sponsored by the Reproductive Justice Team
Tuesday August 13th at 7:00 p.m.

Under G-D will be screened in the B'nai Israel Social Hall and will include snacks.



**Rosh Chodesh
 Elul/September
 Gathering
 Tuesday,
 September 3,
 7:00–9:00 p.m.**

Join with our Rosh Chodesh community for the start of Elul, the Hebrew month traditionally designated for personal reflection and introspection as we prepare for the upcoming High Holy Days. More information about this gathering coming soon. Check your email and Hashavua for updates. For questions, please reach out to Rabbi Sarah at smarion@cbibpt.org.

**Save the Date! Mark Your Calendars
 for our Fall 2024 Rosh Chodesh
 Gatherings:**

Tuesday, September 3

Thursday, November 14

Thursday, December 12

Hebrew for “head of the month,” Rosh Chodesh refers to the start of the new Hebrew month. In Jewish circles and communities worldwide, Rosh Chodesh has long been considered a special holiday for women. Here at B’nai Israel, Rosh Chodesh is an opportunity for women from across the B’nai Israel community to join together for learning, laughter, community building, and conversation. New and prospective members are welcome and encouraged to join. Whether you are a Rosh Chodesh “veteran” or have never attended a Rosh Chodesh gathering, we hope to see you at one of our upcoming events. All Rosh Chodesh gatherings take place at Congregation B’nai Israel, unless otherwise noted. Watch your email and Hashavua throughout the year for more information about each gathering!

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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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.

WE ARE ALL MENTAL

BY PURIM KING, MSW

The human psyche is both fragile and resilient. There are some organic pathologies that cause mental illness such as schizophrenia or bipolar disorders, but most mental and indeed many physical disorders arise due to trauma, whether real or perceived. More than the occurrence, it's the inability of the person to process the traumatic event that manifests as difficulty. It often takes outside input to process a traumatic event. The facilitator need not be a trained professional, but a healing response requires nonjudgmental attention and an attitude of loving kindness. Nonjudgment is another way to say acceptance of the situation, the person and the difficulty without needing to understand, explain or justify.

Loving kindness is knowing that this difficulty is by design created for that person and it has benevolent intent. Loving kindness is also knowing that the person is not a victim, but a brave soul, a creator fully equipped to overcome whatever it is put in front of them. The facilitator's main job is to be present, curious and to witness what unfolds. To point out discrepancies, question and listen.

We can not avoid trauma, but we can learn to recognize, attend to, and incorporate those events.

Some of the symptoms of trauma are:

1. Beliefs that make us feel small or sad or fearful.
2. Repetitive thoughts that tell us how inadequate, or bad we are.

3. Lack of energy, difficulty with sleeping and eating, and boredom.
4. Desire for and indulging in use of substances that relieve the pressure momentarily, but leave us even more vulnerable, confused, and exhausted. A downward spiral.
5. Separation from intimate relationships and social interaction.

We are all mentally challenged to a degree. Some can be very well adapted in one area of life and not in another. Here are the things we can do to get better:

1. The first step to mental health is awareness.
2. The second step is willingness to do something about it.

(Those two are where outside input is most needed.)

The following we can do on our own and are good medicine any time:

3. Walk outside in daylight for 30 minutes.
4. Talk to at least one person for 3-5 minutes each day. It can be a stranger. The more positive human connections we have, the happier we are.
5. Replace all negative thoughts with the mantra "I trust." Say "I trust" over and over again in your mind.
6. Do a mitzvah. Make someone's day. Give a smile, a kind word, or send a message to someone that will make them feel better about themselves. Volunteer at a soup kitchen or do something where you

have direct contact and can see the outcome of your contribution.

7. Sit quietly and listen to your breath and body for 5-15 minutes each day.
8. Practice loving kindness and nonjudgment towards yourself.

It is my belief that being healthy and happy, having inner peace, and practicing loving kindness brings *TIKKUN OLAM*. We can't be kind to others if we judge ourselves any more than we can feed the poor if we don't have any food. Just as anger incites more anger, peace brings more peace.

In these days of war in Israel and around the world, I pay attention to the little things that pull me away from my inner serenity. Like people that let their dog poop in front of others' doors and leave it there, or those that blast the neighborhood with their car music or exhaust. I can choose anger, but I can choose to take action, too. Like filing a police complaint, going to places cars have no access to, or enjoying the noisy music and cleaning the poop and wondering what's the benefit in this abundance of poop?

Thank you for reading and contributing to a better world. May peace fill you and guide you!
Amen.

LOL (lots of love),

Purim King

SCAM ALERT

If you receive a request from any member of our clergy or board to "do an errand" or "purchase gift cards," this is a scam. Please disregard the request and report it to the Cybersecurity Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA) at [CISA.gov](https://www.cisa.gov).

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Daniel Schopick

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KESHER CORNER

The Lee and David Lester Keshet Drama Club for All Abilities is grateful for being part of the community of Congregation B'nai Israel. We have had much support from you in so many ways.

This year we've learned a lot about acting and reading, improv and beats of silence, how to make props and sing new songs. We learned how to present to an audience.

We had our debut on June 27 at the Hollander House. We gave out song sheets so the audience could sing with us if they wanted to ... and they did! Our reception featured a delicious cupcake sheet cake that everyone loved.

Thank you to our dear friends who attended the show...

Rabbi Prosnit and Wendy Bloch, Beth Lazar, Anneli Oberman, Sandy Dressler, Judy Blumenthal, and Hannah Pressman.

And a big thank you goes out to Carson and Robert Berkowitz for sponsoring our t-shirts. Our troupe is now called the Keshet Players.

We are growing and have several openings for new members. Please contact us with any questions or suggestions.

Donations are always welcome.

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Join us to support the innocent civilians and families being held in Gaza. We meet each week at the Fairfield Theater Company, (FTC), located on the northbound side of the Fairfield Train Station at 70 Sanford Street. Kids and dogs welcome.

If you have signs, feel free to bring them too!