



**Join us for our First Annual  
"Bands for B'nai" Fundraiser at  
Park City Music Hall!**

Join us on March 21 from 6:00–10:00 p.m. for our first annual "Bands for B'nai," a fun night at Park City Music Hall to support Congregation B'nai Israel! Enjoy live music, great company, open bar, all the delicious food you can eat, and a silent auction!

The live music starts at 7 p.m. and features three bands: Fire Dragon, Evan Schultz & Friends, and Gallows Hill Three. All bands feature members of Congregation B'nai Israel.

Ticket price includes open food, bar, and support for Congregation B'nai Israel. This event is open to the public, so please bring lots of friends to come out and support our synagogue! Please share on social media as well. We'd love to pack the house!

Tickets available for purchase here:  
<https://www.parkcitymusichall.com/#/events/93420>.



**Join us in BARBIE LAND  
as we retell the story of  
Queen Esther, King Ahasuerus,  
and the Wicked Haman!**

Our community Purim schpiel, featuring the B'nai Israel Purim Players, will begin at 11:15 a.m. in the Sanctuary — all are welcome! (Note that all Kehilah classes will attend the schpiel with their classes as part of Kehilah that morning.) At noon, following the schpiel, all are invited to a community pizza lunch. If you are staying for lunch, please RSVP to Lisa Hurlbert at [LHurlbert@cbibpt.org](mailto:LHurlbert@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.

**Eric & Diana West**  
Fairfield, CT

**Jeremy & Mollie Stambovsky and Henry & Madeline**  
Fairfield, CT

**Sarah Eson & Philip Coward and Ella & Gavin**  
Fairfield, CT

**Michael Sesser & Kristin Crimaldi and Paul, Samuel & Sadie**  
Fairfield, CT

**Ryan & Marianna Erenhouse and Walter, Blake & Amory**  
Stratford, CT

### SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

**Donna Thieke**, mother of Patti Wunder

**Irvan 'Van' Alan Pearlberg**, father of Richard Pearlberg

**Richard Barrie Smith**, father of Kimberly Smith

**Ilene Silverman**, grandmother of Samantha Wiener

**Sally Blatter**, mother of Marge Krubiner

**Belle Muntner**, mother of Gail Unger

### SHARING OUR JOY

In Celebration of:

**Linda & Barry Diamond**, on their 61st wedding anniversary, and on the birth of great-granddaughter Nova Raine, daughter of Nikayla Diamond and Darius Barrett, granddaughter of Theresa and Robert Diamond.

**Beth and Jordan Posner**, on the engagement of their daughter Halley Yael Posner to John William McDonald.

## BULLETIN BOARD

### MITZVAH MORNING March 3, 2024 10:30 a.m. – noon

For our March Mitzvah Morning event, we will be partnering with Schoke Jewish Family Services. On March 3, at 10:30 a.m., we will meet in the pavilion at B'nai Israel, where we will learn about the Schoke JFS organization and the services they provide, including the Freedberg Kosher Food Pantry and their mobile food truck. The Mitzvah Morning will include a makeshift spice factory where volunteers will label and fill jars with spices and bags with laundry essentials for washing clothes.

This is a wonderful opportunity to provide needed supplies to our greater community while building bonds with your fellow B'nai Israel members. Please consider bringing a donation of

powdered laundry detergent and/or dryer sheets. The JFS mobile food truck will be on site for viewing.

For more information, please contact [judyglumenthal@gmail.com](mailto:judyglumenthal@gmail.com) or [helaine.greenbaum@gmail.com](mailto:helaine.greenbaum@gmail.com).

We look forward to seeing you.

### JUDAICA BOUTIQUE

The Judaica Boutique now carries an assortment of Jewish stars, hamsas and evil eye jewelry.



## MARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Evan shares some of the wonderful attributes of our new cantor, Scott Harris, in advance of his upcoming installation.  
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The EcoJustice Team explains B'nai Israel's new composting pilot program.  
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Rabbi Marion reminds us, with her beautiful metaphor, of the importance of showing up to support others in our community.  
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## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ CELEBRATING CANTOR SCOTT HARRIS



We are so thrilled to formally install Scott Harris as the Cantor of Congregation B'nai Israel on March 15 at 6:00 p.m. An installation ceremony is an opportunity for us as a community to celebrate Scott's appointment as cantor of our congregation. We are thrilled that singer-songwriter Dan Nichols will join us for the service, which will feature joyous music, song, and blessings for Scott and his family.

Installation ceremonies date back to Aaron the High Priest and the appointment of his sons to the position of priest in the Israelite community. As Bible scholar Robert Alter notes, the Hebrew phrase used for installation, milu'im, literally means "fillings," and is linked to the idiom "fill the hands." What this meant was that Aaron's sons' hands would be filled, and they would

now be entrusted with the priestly functions within the community.

I can think of no better person to entrust with this position of cantor here in our B'nai Israel community. As many of you know, Scott and Sharon are dear and longtime members of our synagogue. From the moment I met Scott, he spoke about how much he loves and adores the people at B'nai Israel.

I have already seen how that love and care for B'nai Israel manifests each day for Cantor Harris. Scott, for example, uplifts our bet mitzvah students (including my own son) to thrive and shine on the bimah. With each rehearsal he offers the students the confidence and encouragement to wholly lead our community at their bet mitzvah ceremony.

Scott is filled with incredible energy and passion for Jewish music. With his guitar often in hand, he sings the melodies of our tradition directly from his heart each time he steps on the bimah. I love watching how Scott feels the emotion of each prayer as he seeks to reach the heart of each congregant and prayer. Cantor Harris ushers us along on the ride with him to find meaning and nourishment within the incredible sea of Jewish music.

In my short time working with Scott,

I see how deeply he cares both about Jewish music and the people here in our community. Scott always asks me, "How are you doing?" and "Is there anything I can do for you?" And he really means it! I see him wanting to support and elevate the voices of the staff and clergy, and all our musical volunteers, including our Adult Choir, our Junior Choir, and our many musicians and singers.

The installation ceremony on March 15 is an opportunity for us to celebrate Cantor Harris and to formally entrust him as a leader in our B'nai Israel community. I am beyond grateful that Scott has returned home to B'nai Israel to lead us as our cantor. I am so thankful to our Cantorial Search Chairs, Anne Kirsch and Jim Greenberg, as well as the search committee members who all helped to bring Scott here to our community.

I hope you will join us for Shabbat services and dinner on March 15 to offer Scott, Sharon, and their family incredible blessings as he formally assumes the position of cantor in our synagogue. We will sing joyously, create incredible Jewish music together, and even dance together! We will fill our hands with joy, and our hearts with great blessings and song. Mazal tov Cantor Scott Harris! We can't wait to celebrate with you on March 15!

### 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).**

## 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, March 1

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion – Exodus  
30:11-34:35  
Haftarah – I Kings 18:1-39

### Saturday, March 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

### Friday, March 8

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion – Exodus  
35:1-38:20  
Haftarah – II Kings 12:5-18

### Saturday, March 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

### Friday, March 15

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom  
Installation of Cantor  
Scott Harris with special guest Dan Nichols, followed by Shabbat Dinner (see weekly email for details)  
Torah Portion – Exodus  
38:21-40:38  
Haftarah – I Kings  
7:51-8:21

### Saturday, March 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, March 22

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom,  
Torah Portion – Leviticus  
1:1-5:26  
Haftarah – Esther 7:1-10;  
8:15-17

### Saturday, March 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, March 29

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom,  
Torah Portion – Leviticus  
6:1-8:36  
Haftarah – Ezekiel 36:22-36

### Saturday, March 30

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 help provide rides to and from services to congregants in need of assistance. If you need a ride to temple for Shabbat or another synagogue event, please reach out to Sherry Portnoy at [sherrysmeow@optonline.net](mailto:sherrysmeow@optonline.net) or you can call the temple office.

## COMPOSTING COMES TO B'NAI ISRAEL

We are very excited to announce that in January, the EcoJustice Team kicked off a compost pilot for the synagogue! Most temple events that include food will now have a compost bucket alongside recycling and trash. Be sure to scrape your food waste into the compost bin, and it will be picked up weekly by Curbside Compost to be taken to a large-scale composting facility. This pilot will help us determine how to best integrate composting into our

standard procedures at the temple and understand the amount of food waste that we can redirect in preparation for setting up a long-term program.

Connecticut is in a waste crisis and lagging behind its New England neighbors in waste management. A third of the trash in Connecticut is food waste that ends up in landfills, is burned in our incinerators, or shipped to other states. All of these outcomes are extremely harmful to

the earth, air, and well-being of our communities. Since taking care of the earth is one of the core Jewish tenets, we want to prioritize taking action to reduce our waste footprint.

We encourage you to send any comments, questions or feedback on the composting program to EcoJustice Co-Chair, Anya Mezak at [anymezak@gmail.com](mailto:anymezak@gmail.com).



# SHIVA AS A STRESS SIGNAL: SUPPORTING AND SUSTAINING ONE ANOTHER THROUGH LOSS

BY RABBI MARION

*The following is a sermon from February 2, 2024:*

I recently learned something remarkable about trees.

When we stop and consider the skyscraping-ly tall, straight and narrow trunks of Connecticut's red, white or pitch pine trees that ascend upwards of 150 feet into the sky...or when we admire the glowing red, yellow and orange leaves on our surrounding sugar maples, set ablaze by the sun's cascading rays...our eyes gaze upwards, marveling at the magnificence that will always be out of our reach.

But as we stand beneath a tree, and marvel at its ability to seemingly brush up against the heavens, I learned that there is also something equally exquisite that is happening down below, just a few inches beneath our feet.

There is something wondrous taking place beneath and amongst the trees... something that is barely discernable to the average human eye. An article in Smithsonian magazine, published in 2018, describes the intricate, underground networks that trees use to talk to one another.

Peter Wohlleben, a German forester and author, described by some as the "tree whisperer," tells us about the revolution that has recently been taking place in scientific discussions about trees. While trees were once thought to be striving, disconnected loners, competing with one another for water, nutrients and light, scientists are now increasingly recognizing trees as highly intelligent, highly communal, highly relational, highly interconnected and highly interdependent beings, who rely heavily on one another for safety, security, and survival. And it all takes place

underground, inside what scientists have termed the "wood-wide-web."

All trees, Wohlleben explains, are connected to one another, through an elaborate system of underground fungal networks. And not only do trees share water and nutrients with one another through these networks, but they use this hidden, underground system to communicate and support one another, especially during times of crisis. In the event of an insurgence of tree-eating insects, for instance, the injured trees send warning signals through their fungal networks to other, unaffected trees, who are then able to defend themselves by releasing hormones and other chemicals to deter the predators or pathogenic bugs. And young tree saplings growing in a particularly shaded part of the forest send out stress signals when they aren't getting enough sun. When the bigger trees receive the saplings' calls for help, they pump sugar into the saplings' roots through the underground network, which literally becomes a lifeline for those smaller and more vulnerable seedlings. Wohlleben even references an old tree stump, kept alive by neighboring birches, who have been funneling sugar through the network and into the stump's roots for over five hundred years.

Trees, as it turns out, are excellent communicators. They signal when they need help, and they receive it, through an incredibly efficient and effective system that enables them to grow, survive, and thrive.

Can we say the same of human beings? These lessons about trees prompt me to contemplate the ways that humans communicate when we need something, when something is not right. What methods and systems do we use, to let others know that we need some extra love, support, and care?

Perhaps unlike trees, we are incredibly complex and complicated beings. Unlike trees, our process of asking for help – and receiving it — is not always so simple, easy, or straightforward. For a whole host of reasons, it can be challenging for us to say: "I am in pain. I am having a hard time. I need someone — I need you — to help me put one foot in front of the other." And then, for a whole host of other reasons, it can be a challenge to hear about someone's struggle, or someone's pain, and then to respond to it, effectively. Or lovingly. Or, at all. The "stress signals" that we send out into the world are not always decipherable. And even when our stress signals are loud and clear, they are not always met with the kind of response that we were hoping for.

I think that our Jewish ancestors knew that communicating what we need from others, and getting what we need from others, can be hard. They likely struggled with this too. And so I think that this is why they devised a system that could help. This is why they devised a system that we have been using for thousands and thousands of years. It is a system that helps us through one of the most difficult experiences that comes with being human. This is a system, can be summed up in one word: Shiva.

In essence, sitting shiva is the way that we express our need for community when the ground gets ripped out from under our feet...when death leaves a hole in our hearts...when it feels like time, itself, has stopped. And shiva is the way that our community responds. Shiva is the way that we show up for one another. It is the way that we show that we are here...that we are listening...and that we will hold you, until you are able to walk on your own, again.

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ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER  
**SPOTLIGHT ON SOPHIA COPPERTHITE**



Why was it so important to you to help Israel now? “I know there is the war going on. There are evil people who want to hurt Israel. I know there are hostages that are not being let out.”

Why are you donating the money to Israel? “Israel is fighting back, and I am donating the money so they can buy weapons to help fight. I really wanted to help them out, so they can be strong. I believe in them.”



I am honored to share with you a bit about 4th grade Kehilah student, Sophia Copperthite. She attends McKinley School and has been attending Kehilah since she was in kindergarten. When you first meet Sophia, you can see by her smile that she is a sweet, happy, and kind child who cares so much about others. When Sophia’s Kehilah class made bracelets to support Israel during their Keif period one Sunday morning, I think a light bulb went off in her head. Soon Sophia would begin making her own bracelets at home, to sell each Sunday morning at Kehilah pickup. Each week, Sophia and her big sister, Abigail, drag the card table from the pavilion closet and set up in the lobby of the synagogue or along the sidewalk, attach colorfully decorated signs, and sell the bracelets to both parents, and kids.

Sophia takes great care to make sure she makes bracelets in all sizes and patterns. Most of them are blue and white and many have Jewish star and Hamsa embellishments as well. They are really beautiful. I recently interviewed Sophia one Sunday morning after Kehilah pickup about her thoughts behind this amazing endeavor. Why did you start making bracelets? “I like to help others out and I like to help Israel out.”

How does it make you feel? “Every time I help, it makes my heart fill with joy.”

Can you tell me about the bracelets? “I make different patterns with the beads; some bracelets have all stars and some have a mixture with the Hamsa. I put my heart into every pattern to make Israel strong.”

“I have a big jar of money at home ready for tzedakah.”

“I want everyone to know that it is not a chore, I love to do it.”

“I love to see the smiles on peoples faces when they get the bracelets.”

Sophia has raised close to \$500 for Israel by selling her special bracelets. We are so proud of her, as are her parents, Sherry and Jeff who are both Kehilah teachers. B’nai Israel is lucky to have such a generous family as part of our community.

BONIM PRESCHOOL  
 SPRING FUNDRAISER

*Save The Date*

FOR A COCKTAIL PARTY  
 UNDER THE STARS

*Book Your Babysitters!*

SATURDAY, MAY 4TH  
 7:30PM  
 B'NAI ISRAEL

## SHIVA AS A STRESS SIGNAL (CONTINUED)..... FROM P. 5

The very first shiva in the history of the world happened in Torah, in the beginning of the book of Genesis. It happened right after Noah put the final, finishing touches on his massive ark, and right before the flood waters began to pummel and saturate the earth. As Noah stood by his completed project, God provided further instructions: "Go into the ark," God said to Noah, "and take each animal with you, two by two... because in another seven days, I will pour rain upon the Earth..."

Anytime a seemingly arbitrary number appears in Torah, the rabbis weigh in. Why another seven days, for the flood to officially begin? They wondered. Why not 8? Or ten? Or 20?

In Hebrew, shiva means seven. The rabbis concluded that it was exactly seven days before the start of the flood, because those seven days leading up to the flood represented a period of mourning. Or, as today's psychologists might call it, those seven days represented a period of "anticipatory grief" in advance of the colossal levels of death and destruction that were about to unfold. In essence, those seven days were a period of shiva. They were the first "shiva" to ever exist.

But according to the rabbis, it wasn't God who was sitting shiva over the course of those seven days. Or Noah. Or the rest of the people, who were still going about their everyday lives. The rabbis imagine that it was just one man who sat for those seven days and wept. It was a man named Methusaleh, who, the rabbis say, was the oldest person on earth at that time. According to legend, when Methusaleh heard the news of the flood, when he understood that the flood was imminent, he sat shiva, for everything that was about to be destroyed. Interestingly, rather than trying to articulate his sadness to others in the community, Methusaleh demonstrated his grief through his actions. As life went on around him, seemingly oblivious to what was about to unfold, Methusaleh stopped. And he sat. And he cried. For

seven whole days. As if to say: I know that I cannot go on with my normal, everyday life. And I know that I do not have the words to even begin to express how this feels. And so, I will stop. And I will sit. And I will be. And when the others saw that Methusaleh had stopped, I like to believe that they stopped and sat with him, as well. The very first shiva.

Several chapters later, Torah recounts the second instance of shiva within our history. The book of Genesis closes with the death of Jacob, father of twelve, beloved grandfather to many. Here, following Methusaleh's paradigm, Jacob's youngest son, Joseph, mourns his father for seven days. And, thus, the practice of mourning a loved one for seven days officially became a tradition.

Today, the practice of shiva remains. Orthodox and more traditional Jews continue the original custom of sitting shiva for seven days. In our Reform community, the practice of sitting for all seven days has waned a bit. Many families choose one, two, or three days of shiva, while others sometimes choose to complete the full course of seven. Interestingly, the practice has come to be known as "sitting shiva" because over the course of the seven days, it is customary for the mourner to sit low to the ground, as a way of showing that grief is something that literally weighs us down. Others explain that we sit low to ground in order to be closer to our loved one, now buried among the nourishing roots that replenish and revitalize the trees. One shiva tradition that I find especially poignant is the notion that the shiva visitor should not speak until the mourner speaks. Oftentimes, as the well-intentioned people that we are, we want to say something to help soften the loss: She is in a better place. He is no longer in pain. When author Blu Greenberg lost her son, she wrote about the time that someone said to her, "He was so good that God needed him by his side!" To which Blu responded, "But we on Earth needed him more!" As humans, is often our nature to want to say something in the

face of tragedy. But our tradition helps us, and guides us, towards the responses that are often the most helpful, of all. "At shiva, when comforting a mourner, the deeper human religious response is to be silent," Blu Greenberg writes. "It is to live with contradiction, and to not force meaning into tragedy. Sometimes, the deepest response of love, is silence."

Shiva, in essence, is a stress signal. When we decide to pause our normal, everyday routines for seven days — or two, or three — we are conveying to the outside world: My entire world has been shaken. And I may not have the words to tell you what I need, or how I feel...I may not even have the words to tell myself what I need, or how I feel...but I know that something is amiss. I know that something is not right. I know that life will never be the same. And so I need to pause my normal, everyday routine for a while, to try to make sense of this loss. And I need others to remind me that I am not alone. I need you to remind me that I do not have to go through this, alone.

And, then, as our tradition teaches us, we respond by showing up...we respond by stopping and interrupting our own normal routines, just for an hour, or so... we respond by sitting down, as well, and simply being present...

Two years ago, during our Rosh Hashanah sermons, Rabbi Schultz and I spoke about the importance of attending shiva gatherings within our community and supporting our fellow community members through loss. We spoke about painful moments in which temple members advertised their shiva gatherings to the community, and then looked around, with disappointment, at a near empty shiva house. In response, we encouraged more shiva attendance. And we created congregational condolence cards, making it easier for community members to send a note to those who are in mourning. I know that many in our community have been using those cards, which is wonderful. But sadly,

*Continued on Page 15*

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# MARCH DONATIONS

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

## **Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund**

**Jake Bogner**, in appreciation for the beautiful services at the funeral and shiva for my mother, Arlene Bogner.

**Barry & Linda Diamond**, in celebration of the birth of great granddaughter, Nova Reine, born to Nikayla Diamond & Darius Barrett.

**Samuel & Cheryl Green**, in memory of Irving Glazer.

**Bernie & Janice Jacobs**, in memory of Arlene Bogner, mother of Jake Bogner. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

**Beth Lazar**, in memory of Louise P. Widdows, mother of Karen (Michele) Widdows; in memory of Arlene Bogner, mother of Jake Bogner.

**Aleksey & Raisa Ledvich**, in memory of grandmother, Sarah Ledvich; in memory of grandfather, Manashe Goldenfarb.

**Jessica Notis**, in celebration of Ava Belle Notis & Ahava Bayla.

**Richard & Carol Offenbach**, in memory of our parents, Sidney Loewith Goldstein & Helene Cohn Offenbach.

**Richard & Marci Pearlberg**, in appreciation for leading the shiva service for my father, Van Pearlberg.

**Randy & Beth Reich**, in memory of our father and grandfather, Sidney Loewith Goldstein.

**Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn**, in memory of Arlene Bogner, mother of Jake Bogner.

**Larry & Linda Walker**, in memory of William Isanberg, father of Samantha Walker. Thank you so much for your guidance and support during this very difficult time as well.

**Fredric & Ronni Zinn**, in loving memory of father, David Zinn; mother, Donna Silverman.

## **Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund**

**Barry & Linda Diamond**, in celebration of our 61st anniversary.

**Jim & Lisa Greenberg**, in appreciation to Rabbi Sarah Marion.

**Bernie & Janice Jacobs**, in loving memory of Benjamin Jacobs.

**Sheila Kaminsky**, in celebration of William Greenspan's 80th birthday, best wishes.

**Beth Lazar**, in loving memory of my aunt Janet Greenberg; my uncle Robert Lazar; and my kind cousin Lisa Greenberg, whose young life was cut short by COVID; and mazel tov to Marlene Nadeau & Anne Tranquilli-Bausher on becoming B'Mitzvah and leading a beautiful, inspiring service.

**Richard & Marci Pearlberg**, in appreciation for leading the shiva service for my father, Van Pearlberg.

**Glen & Kelly Reznikoff**, in memory of Donna Thieke, mother of Patti (Matthew) Wunder, grandmother of June and Ben.

**Howard & Eileen Tolk**, in loving memory of my mother Tess Velenchik.

## **Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund**

**Stephen & Molli Hourihan**, in appreciation and welcoming of Cantor Scott Harris.

**Beth Lazar**, in appreciation for the beautiful Shabbat Shira service and musical talents of Cantor Scott Harris, Mark Edinberg, Janet Rosen, Cantor Richard Silverman & Michael Lantowski.

**Randy & Beth Reich**, in memory of our father and grandfather, Harry Burchman.

## **Music Fund**

**Jeffrey & Kelle Ruden**, in memory of Karin Gaugler, sister of Dean Gaugler.

**Ellen Sheiman**, in appreciation to Mark Edinberg for all the enjoyment you have brought to the synagogue over the years.

**Michael & Debora Weisman**, in memory of mother, Mary Frauwirth; father, Max Frauwirth; sister, Nancy Frauwirth.

## **Enhancement Fund**

**Barbara Berkowitz**, in loving memory of my sister, Carole Toss.

**Jerry & Dale Demner**, in memory of Bertha Greenfield, mother of Dale Demner; Lillian Slive, aunt of Dale Demner & Phyllis Goldstein, friend of Jerry & Dale Demner.

**Samuel & Cheryl Green**, in memory of Irving Glazer.

**Joanna Keylock**, in loving memory of Judith Bart.

**Purim King**, in appreciation for Torah Study.

**Judith Lessler**, in memory of father, Nathan Bretholtz & sister-in-law, Ronnie Bretholtz.

**Neil & Joanne Lippman**, mazel tov to Lori & Ken Berger and Darcy & Aaron Brandt on the birth of granddaughter & daughter Cecilia.

**Steven & Julie Pressman**, in memory of Donna Thieke, mother of Patti Wunder.

**Howard & Eileen Tolk**, in loving memory of my dear brother Henry Velenchik.

**Steven Tuchband**, in memory of Judith Bart.

**Daniel & Debra Viens**, in memory of Arlene Bogner, mother of Jake Bogner.

## **Endowment Fund**

**Robert & Helen Natt**, in memory of Arlene Bogner, mother of Jake Bogner.

## **Sylvia Prosnit Adult Education Fund**

**Phyllis Bausher**, in honor of Anne Tranquilli-Bausher becoming a Bat Mitzvah.

## **Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund**

**Mark & Anne Kirsch**, in memory of Van Pearlberg, father of Richard (Marci) Pearlberg.

## **Bonim Preschool Scholarship Fund**

**Samuel & Cheryl Green**, in loving memory of my parents and Ethan & Felix's great grandparents, Irving & Visselle Glazer.

**Daniel & Debra Viens**, in memory of Bernard Baron, father of Linda Bernstein.

## **Religious School Scholarship Fund**

**Robert & Adele Josovitz**, in memory of Van Pearlberg, father of Richard Pearlberg.

## **Rabbi Martin Library Fund**

**Samuel Miller & family**, in loving memory of Harriet Miller.

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# MARCH DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

**Barbara Rifkin**, in memory of my brother Daniel Postol.

**Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund Bari Dworken**, in celebration of Annie Tranquilli-Bausher becoming a Bat Mitzvah.

**Mark & Barbara Edinberg**, in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Anne Tranquilli-Bausher.

**Stephen & Molli Hourihan**, in memory of Susan Walden's father, Melvyn Rosenzweig.

**Dennis & Jan Magid**, in memory of the yahrzeit of Harriet Miller.

**Samuel Miller**, in memory of Zelda Miller.

**Randy & Beth Reich**, in memory of our father and grandfather, Stanley Reich.

**CONECT thru Social Action Fund Mitch Goldblatt**, in memory of Judith Bart.

**Vision Loan Reduction Fund**

**Nicholas & Rebecca Blondin**, in loving memory of Van Pearlberg, father of Richard Pearlberg; in loving memory of Arlene Bogner, Jake Bogner's mother.

**Jim & Lisa Greenberg**, in memory of Arlene Bogner, mother of Jake Bogner.

**Ellen Sheiman**, in memory of Debbie Schlein, a remarkable woman who left the world a better place; in memory of Jake Bogner's mother, Arlene Bogner; may her memories bring you joy.

**Keshet Project**

**Marjorie Freeman**, in appreciation for the wonderful Keshet programs.

**The George Markley Chesed Fund**

**Mark & Barbara Edinberg**, in memory of Arlene Bogner.

**Howard Weisman & Nina Silberman**, in memory of Irvan Pearlberg, father of Richard Pearlberg.

**Marilyn & Judy Weinstein**, in memory of our beloved husband and father, Dr. Norman Weinstein.

**Yakhani Caring Fund**

**Naomi Schaffer & Roger Jackson**, in celebration of the birth of grandson Liam Joseph Schaffer.

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## MARCH EVENTS

**Women's Rosh Chodesh March/Adar II Gathering: Jewish Mysticism and Tai Chi**

**Led by Sharon Okun and Rabbi Sarah Marion**  
**Monday, March 11, 7:00–8:30 p.m.**

Join Rabbi Marion and our congregant, Sharon Okun, for a special evening of learning, relaxation, and self-care. Sharon is a Licensed Massage Therapist, Certified Life Coach, Qigong Teacher, and Certified Practice Teacher for Spring Forest Qigong (a type of tai chi). After an exploration into Jewish mysticism for the healing of mind, body and spirit, Sharon will guide us in breathwork, mindful meditation, grounding and rooting techniques, and other simple activities to help relax our minds and bodies and calm and soothe our spirits. All are welcome — this is a beginner's level experience that will be accessible to all, regardless of physical ability or previous experience with meditation, Jewish mysticism or tai chi. Please RSVP to Ilene at ifeuerberg@cbibpt.org by Friday, March 8 to let us know if you will be joining us.

**Bagels and Burning Questions: Choosing Hope**  
**March 17, 2024, 11 a.m.–noon**

What are the origins of Jewish hope? We have — for so much of our history — responded to our trials and challenges with hope. This course with Rabbi Evan will explore the sources of hope in the Jewish tradition. Bagels and delicious Sound Coffee will be served!

**Community Open Space Conversation with Rabbi Evan**

**March 27, 2024, 7:00–8:30 p.m.**

Join with Rabbi Evan for an open space conversation in the library. This is an opportunity to check in with one another, and to bring your questions, ideas, and thoughts about B'nai Israel. Open to all B'nai Israel members! Please RSVP to Beth Prybylek, bprybylek@cbibpt.org.

**Screening: *How Saba Kept Singing***  
**April 6, 2024, 4:00–6:00 p.m.**  
**B'nai Israel Social Hall**

Join us for a special screening of: *How Saba Kept Singing*, a film that tells the story... of David Wisnia, a cantor who survived the Auschwitz-Birkenau

concentration camp for nearly three years, helped in part by his operatic singing voice, which entertained the Nazi guards. Q&A with David's grandson, Avi Wisnia, following the screening of the film.

**An Evening with Schoke JFS**

Schoke Jewish Family Service invites you to its annual gala, An Evening with Schoke JFS, on Sunday, April 7, 2024, at 5:30 p.m., at Temple Beth El, 350 Roxbury Road, Stamford, CT. Honorees include: Nan and Paul Gordon and Betsy and Michael Stone, The 44th Annual Mitzvah Award; Sally Kleinman, Volunteer of the Year Award; and Ronnie Sichel, Community Service Award. The evening will begin with appetizers and cocktails, followed by dinner, presentation of awards to the honorees, a paddle raise, and dessert. There will also be an online auction. The event is chaired by Connie Freeman, Meryl Japha, Jillian Klaff, and Esther Rein with Jeri Appel as auction chair. General tickets include dinner and dessert for \$250. Purchase your ticket at [www.ctjfs.org](http://www.ctjfs.org). Contact Janet Wainright at 203-921-4161 or [jwainright@ctjfs.org](mailto:jwainright@ctjfs.org) to place a journal ad.

*Continued on Page 10*

## MARCH EVENTS (CONTINUED)

### Support Israel by Adopting a Tree!

Are you looking for a meaningful way to support Israel right now? Congregation B'nai Israel has partnered with My Tree in Israel, an Israeli organization that works to directly support Israeli farmers. When you adopt a tree with My Tree in Israel, you will receive back a portion of their harvest. You can choose either private label olive oil, whiskey, or wine, which will be shipped directly to you from Israel. Additionally, a portion of your donation is donated back to B'nai Israel, as well as to lone soldiers. You can learn more about My Tree in Israel here: <https://www.mytree.org.il/partnership-1/congregation-b'nai-israel-ct>.



### B'nai Israel and the ADL Kulanu Collaboration

*Kulanu* is Hebrew for "all of us."

Kulanu is a synagogue partnership program with the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) dedicated to empowering congregations to address antisemitism and hate in their communities through education, community engagement, and advocacy. Congregation B'nai Israel's Kulanu committee has been active for two years.

Through the Kulanu committee, members have access to in-person and virtual ADL programs covering multiple topics, including the current Israeli conflict; the state of antisemitism in Connecticut, the U.S., and beyond; and ways to be an advocate.

Our group also has an active book club, which has discussed such books as *It Could Happen Here* by Jonathan Greenblatt, and *Antisemitism Here and Now* by Deborah Lipstadt. Our book club is currently reading *Israel* by Noa Tishby. The book club is scheduled to meet at B'nai Israel on 3/14 at 7:00 p.m. All congregants are welcome to join.

Please email [aruskin04@gmail.com](mailto:aruskin04@gmail.com) or

[jeff.madwed@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.madwed@gmail.com) to learn about joining the book club or the committee.

Report acts of antisemitism, bias, or discrimination to [www.ADL.org](http://www.ADL.org).

### 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.

#### *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.

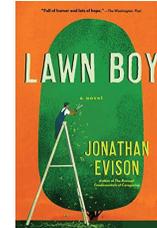
*\*The 7th most challenged book of 2022 according to the ALA\**

*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.

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



## Congregation B'nai Israel Women's Passover Seder

**Sunday, April 7, 2024**

**Check-in & Schmooze**

**3:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.**

**Seder**

**3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.**

Join with women from across the B'nai Israel community as we empower one another, tell stories, ask questions, and listen. Just as each Jewish community worldwide has a specific story, so do we have a different story to tell, a different life journey. During our seder, we will also explore how each of us celebrates our Festival of Freedom.

Bring your mothers, daughters, sisters, and friends as we welcome spring, celebrate our freedom, and share Passover ritual food and drink.

We are happy to have Abby Levis speak about the work of the Jewish National Fund.

Please see Hashavua for the links to register and to see how you can help with this special community event.

Light refreshments will be served.

For questions please reach out to  
Judy Blumenthal at [judygblumenthal@gmail.com](mailto:judygblumenthal@gmail.com) and/or  
Liane May at [lianemay@gmail.com](mailto:lianemay@gmail.com)

## KESHER CORNER

The beautiful song “Ani V’Atah” describes what the Keshet Project is about. The translation of the song is:

“You and I will change the world.  
Then everyone will join us. It’s been  
said before, but it doesn’t matter. You  
and I will change the world. You and  
I will start from the beginning. It’ll be  
tough but so what. It doesn’t matter.  
You and I will change the world.”

There’s a wonderful energy when we meet. You can feel the excited bond between all the people. If you arrive sad, you leave happy. It happens every time. On the day of our last event, one of our longtime members called to say he would not attend that evening. I asked why, and he told me he was completely exhausted from the day’s work. I suggested that if he changed his mind, I was sure he would feel much better after singing with us and socializing during art and snack.

Shortly after he hung up, he called again to say he would come. When he arrived, he looked sad. Little by little he began to smile, and the smile became laughter. At the end of the evening, I thanked him for coming and laughing with us, and he thanked Keshet because he was going home with a smile.

Sharing music, art, and tasty food that you may not have at home all contribute to our sensitive and strong relationships. Please join us one evening to experience the joy. Our group is inclusive, and everyone is welcome.



Please like us on Facebook at the Keshet Project and the Keshet Project Songfest... and while you are there, enjoy the videos that truly share the beauty of our times together.

Please contact us with any questions or ideas you’d like to share. Donations are always welcome.

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



## THE MENTAL HEALTH TEAM INVITES YOU

### April 13 Field Trip to Yale Art Gallery Exhibit, Munch and Kirchner: Anxiety and Expression

**Important: RSVP by April 1 to [marjorie.freeman.ms@gmail.com](mailto:marjorie.freeman.ms@gmail.com) because exhibit tour guide/docent needs head count.**

**There are 3 reasons we are going on this field trip:**

**1. The exhibit is of artwork that explores and expresses the mood and emotion of anxiety and other inner turmoil.**

Both Munch (Norwegian 1863–1944) and Kirchner (German 1880–1938) lived and created their artwork in an age of trauma and high anxiety. There were the horrors of World War I (1914–1918) with its mustard gas and millions of deaths and then the rise of fascism and Naziism in Germany. They both tried to portray the feelings of anxiety and horror they felt because of these international events. They also lived at the same time that society began taking an interest in treating mental illness, using the then new methods of psychoanalysis created by Austrian neurologist Sigmund Freud. Both Munch and Kirchner suffered from depression and substance abuse and received psychiatric care.

In 2024, we too are living in an age of trauma and high anxiety. The whole world went through a deadly COVID-19 pandemic. In the USA there is a rise of white supremacy,

antisemitism, and homophobia. The January 6th riot at the nation’s Capitol laid bare the raw, ugly divisions and tensions present in modern American society. And there is war. Everywhere is war. Israel, Africa, and Ukraine. Also, as in Munch and Kirchner’s times, contemporary thinkers are becoming very interested in treating mental illness, due to the rising anxiety, trauma, depression, and PTSD in society.

**2. The field trip is a bonding experience.**

Whenever two or more people go to an art exhibit together and share their thoughts and feelings about the artwork, it becomes a bonding experience. We plan to have lunch together. Sharing a meal is also a bonding experience. This field trip is an opportunity for B’nai Israel members who are interested in mental health and/or art to bond together.

**3. We hope you join the Mental Health Awareness Team.**

After spending a day with us, we hope you join our team. Anyone interested in fighting stigma by increasing awareness of mental

health issues and access to mental health services is invited to join our team.

**April 13th Field Trip Itinerary**

**MEET:** Saturday April 13, 10:45 a.m. at the B’nai Israel parking lot to carpool to New Haven. Each passenger should pay the driver \$5 for parking and gas.

**PARKING:** York St. Garage, 150 York St., New Haven, \$2/hour before 6 p.m. 203-777-3210. We will walk to Claire’s, a vegetarian restaurant, for lunch.

**LEISURELY LUNCH:** noon–1:45 p.m. Buy your own lunch at Clare’s Corner Copia, 1000 Chapel Street, New Haven, corner of College and Chapel Streets. Walk to Yale Art Gallery.

**ART EXHIBIT GUIDED TOUR:** 2:30 p.m., Yale Art Gallery, 1111 Chapel Street, New Haven. Exhibit: Munch and Kirchner: Anxiety and Expression.

**Hope to see you April 13!**

Chair of the Mental Health Awareness Team,  
Beth Lazar

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the legal community join  
together in their support of  
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- Douglas R. Brown
- Marcia Cohen
- Mark A. Kirsch
- Andrew R. Lubin
- Daniel Schopick

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together in their support of the B'nai Israel *Bulletin*:

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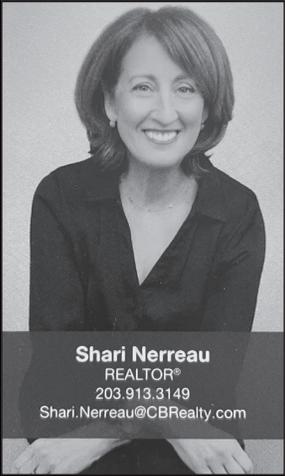
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**SHIVA AS A STRESS SIGNAL (CONTINUED)..... FROM P. 7**

Rabbi Schultz and I have still been to congregational shiva gatherings in recent days at which hardly anyone from our community has been present.

To be sure, I know that not everyone always wants their shiva to be open to the entire community. I know that some prefer to mourn in private, among close family and friends. And that is perfectly ok. Grief is such a personal and individual experience, and everyone mourns in their own way.

But when someone chooses to have shiva, and when someone chooses to advertise the date and time of the shiva to our congregational community, this, to me, is a signal. This, to me, is a stress signal, deliberately and intentionally sent out to our congregational network. This, I think, is a message, that says, in essence: Please come. Please come and be with me. Please come, so I can tell you about the person I loved and lost. Please come, because my world is no longer the same. Please come, so that I am able to feel less alone. So that I don't have to go through this, alone.

And I also want to recognize, and affirm, that going to shiva is not always easy, or comfortable. It isn't easy going into someone else's home, especially when it is someone we do not really know. It can feel awkward. And uncomfortable. And so perhaps getting a friend — or two — to go along with you, can help. And, indeed, shiva can be inconvenient. We have so many roles and responsibilities that we are constantly juggling in our lives. And we can't always go. And that is ok. But I will say, that when I am able to go to a shiva, I never regret going. And the more that I do it, the easier it gets. Because the only way to get good at showing up for others, is simply to do it. Again, and again, and again. And if you can't go to shiva, simply making a condolence call or sending out a card, these things, too, go such a long way. These things also help us feel like we are part of an extraordinary network of love and support and care.

**I know that many are familiar with the incredible and important work of our Caring Committee — the team of volunteers who provide meals and rides and other services to congregants when they are going through tough times. To add to its list of important responsibilities, our Caring Committee will now also be mobilizing temple volunteers to ensure that there is a congregational presence at all shiva gatherings that are advertised to the community. If you would like to be added to the list of volunteers that our Caring Committee can call upon when a shiva is publicly announced, please let me know — we would love for you to participate.**

Trees, for centuries, have had their own magnificent system of caring for one another during times of need. And so too, have we.

At the very end of shiva, it is customary for the mourner to take a walk around the block, accompanied by family and friends. Just one simple walk around the block, to assist a mourner's gradual re-entrance into the outside world. In this way, shiva helps guide us from death, back to life, one small step, at a time.

One step at a time...surrounded by our networks of love and support and care...we will lift ourselves up from the ground...and, once again, we will gaze towards the tallest tree trunks towering overhead... towards the radiant dabs of red, gold and orange that pepper the bright autumn sky...towards the blessings and wonders that will last and endure...forever.



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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.



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## BIFTY



BIFTY is looking forward to our March events! All CBI teens in grades 8-12 are invited to attend BIFTY. We meet on Thursdays in the BIFTY lounge from 7:00–8:30 p.m. To stay up to date on events, follow us on Instagram @cbi.bifty and ask to join our text group. We look forward to seeing you at our next event!

Our March events will take place on:

March 14  
March 21  
March 28