

NOVEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz offers ways to connect with Israel through upcoming opportunities at B'nai Israel and suggests books and websites to help understand its complexities.
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OUR HEARTS ARE WITH ISRAEL

REMARKS FROM RABBI SCHULTZ REGARDING ISRAEL

Written the Week of October 7, 2023

I can't speak for all Jews, but I can try to articulate why these attacks in Israel have hit so hard emotionally for me these past couple of days.

From the time we are young, we Jews learn a lot about two things.

The first is tragedy.

We grow up hearing the testimonies of Holocaust survivors, who watched their mothers and fathers, aunts and uncles brutally taken to their deaths, as they somehow managed to survive hiding in floorboards or enduring the horrific conditions in the camps.

We grow up watching films like *Fiddler on the Roof*, which, once you get past the catchy dance numbers (we do all love those), is a deeply tragic movie about the small Jewish town of Anatevka whose Jewish residents must flee due to the growing antisemitism in Russia.

We grow up learning about the holiest sites in Israel, like the Western Wall and Masada, both deeply connected to tragedy. The Wall is one of the only remnants left of the ancient Temple destroyed by the Romans. Masada is the site where scores of Jews took their own lives rather than die subject to the torture and swords of the Romans.

And the second is love of Israel.

My earliest memories growing up in Boston are of going to the annual Israel festival. We would taste Israeli food, sing Israeli songs, and wave Israeli flags together. We would sing "Hatikvah," the Jewish national anthem that speaks the message of hope.

And when talking about Israelis, we would always use the language of our "brothers and sisters," in Israel. Those in Israel were like our distant cousins to me, our family thousands of miles away.

And every time I visit, it just feels in some way like being at home. Yes, America is my home. I love America. I use Leonard Cohen's language of Israel as my mythic home. My Jewish home. Imperfect, challenging, beautiful. It's where I can practice my Hebrew and wear a yarmulke and feel Shabbat in the air. It's just a place I love like no other.

So, to see those I consider distant family brutally murdered this weekend in their homes and at a music festival, and the elderly and children taken hostage, and this beautiful land up in smoke, it all equals a broken, broken, heart. It was the sad, next iteration of tragedy that I as a Jew have learned of my entire life.

I pray one day my children will no longer know such tragedy and only know a world of love.

May there soon be peace in the land.

ISRAEL RESOURCES

What has transpired in Israel continues to be difficult and painful for so many of us as we watch the horrific losses, kidnappings and terror taking place.

I know many of us are struggling with what

to do and how to help. Below you'll find a list of places to donate, recommended books, resources for how to speak to children and where to seek emotional support at this time. Several of you have asked about putting together care packages

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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.

Jessica Haspel and Maeve
Trumbull, CT

**Scott & Lindsay Rosenberg
and Juda & Lila**
Fairfield, CT

**Stephanie Oscar & Bill Kelchner and
Nathan, Harry, Natalie & Hayes**
Fairfield, CT

Dario & Emily Sulzman
Bridgeport, CT

**Scott Modlin & Hilary Black
and Blyer & Samuel**
Trumbull, CT

**Melissa Straus & Danielle Orcutt
and Penelope**
Fairfield, CT

**Adam Dub & Carolyn Montrose
and Carys**
Fairfield, CT

Sigalle Feig and Lev
Fairfield, CT

Daniel Dimenstein & Marissa Mayer
Fairfield, CT

Nancy Lipin & Michael O'Brien
Easton, CT

David & Amy Cohen and Sela
Bridgeport, CT

**Anna Khemlina Samet & Ari Samet
and Ben, Ava & Sophia.**
Fairfield, CT

**Geoffrey & Erica Orenstein and
Allison, Sophia, Matthew & Emilia**
Fairfield, CT

**Keri Herzog & Jon Siegfried and
Hayley & Tyler**
Fairfield, CT

**Emanuel Greenspan & Suranthida
Wansri and Priya**
Fairfield, CT

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden

Larry Bausher, father of Benjamin Bausher

Thelma Schreiber, mother of Andrea Rudolph

Rozanne "Ronny" Kaplan Lancia

Bernard S. Baron, father of Linda Bernstein

SHARING OUR JOY

In Celebration of:

Cantor Scott and Sharon Harris on the birth of their fourth granddaughter, Abigail Wren Harris, born to parents Daniel and Blake Harris and big sister Sadie.

Joanne and Richard Krantz, on the wedding celebration of their son David and Chloe Cohn, who were married first by Rabbi Prosnit and then again at the New York Public Library, both on October 14.

BULLETIN BOARD

MITZVAH MORNING November 12, 2023, 10:00 a.m.

For our November Mitzvah Morning project, we will be partnering with nOURish BRIDGEPORT to bake pies for their upcoming Thanksgiving Feast in a Box event.

nOURish BRIDGEPORT, a regular Congregation B'nai Israel partner, will be supplying Thanksgiving meals to those in need within the Bridgeport community. Congregation B'nai Israel volunteers will have the opportunity to help complete those meals.

We will be meeting at the nOURish BRIDGEPORT headquarters, located at 2200 North Avenue in Bridgeport at 10:00 a.m. on November 12. Once there, we will get a brief tour of the kitchen and set ourselves up to start baking large quantities of holiday pies.

Volunteers are encouraged to bring some of the necessary ingredients, which

include flour, butter, sugar, salt, apples, blueberries, cinnamon, nutmeg, and cornstarch.

This will no doubt be a rewarding event as we do our part to feed hungry families in our own backyard.

About nOURish BRIDGEPORT: nOURish BRIDGEPORT (capitalization intentional) is a food-centered, volunteer-powered, community-anchored 501(c)(3) bringing hope to Bridgeport through direct service programs. Bridgeport is defined as a food desert, with 1 in 4 residents facing daily food insecurity and inaccessibility to nutritious produce. nOURish provides thousands of neighbors weekly with groceries from its food pantry, formula and diapers from the baby center, hot meals from the soup kitchen, education through English classes and hope from their hearts. Learn more at www.nourishbpt.org.

Please contact Nina Silberman at

ninahv@aol.com or Mitch Weinstein at mitchellev@yahoo.com for more information. We look forward to seeing you.

AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

**November 15,
1:00–6:00 p.m.**



Schedule your appointment by calling the Red Cross at 1-800-448-3543 or visiting www.redcrossblood.org. Walk in appointments are also welcome.

GIFT SHOP



Looking for a new Kiddush cup or candlesticks? Check out the Judaica Boutique, open on Sundays during Kehilah.



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

FINDING YOUR ISRAEL SONG

(THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS WRITTEN PRIOR TO OCTOBER 7, 2023)

On Rosh Hashanah I delivered a sermon about each of us “finding our Israel song.” In the sermon, I shared a bit about my own connections to the land of Israel, many of them fostered through the medium of music and song. My hope in delivering this sermon was to reignite a conversation here in our B’nai Israel community about Israel and to encourage each of us to find a pathway or song to connect — or re-connect — with the land of Israel.

We live in a time when many American Jews are feeling a disconnect or fracture with their relationship to the State of Israel. Public trust in Israeli’s leadership and institutions sits at an incredible low. For months now, Israelis have taken to the streets nightly to protest Netanyahu’s proposed legislation that bars the Supreme Court from striking down decisions by the government or by ministers that it deems “unreasonable.” Matters of religion and religious extremism continue to be a source of tension in Israel as well.

However, where there is fracture, there are also songs of love to heal the wounds. Like the thousands upon thousands of Israelis chanting and singing in the streets of Tel Aviv not only to protest, but because they love their country so, so dearly. It is the love song that the Women of the Wall sing each week as they are met with angry, hateful shouts from ultra-Orthodox men and boys, and even women. Arm in arm they read from the Torah and sing the ancient prayers in the shadow of the Kotel, because they love their country and believe its sacred spaces should be open to all to pray and sing.

It is the love song that I still sing to this land, this people, this country. Yes, conflict endures, and I continue to sing and hear the song of hope. I pray each of us will find the song that connects us to the land, the people, and the country of Israel.

This year at B’nai Israel we plan to focus on more opportunities and spaces to learn, discuss, and connect with Israel. We formed an Israel team here at the synagogue, who are planning to offer group online Hebrew classes, opportunities to watch Israeli films and read Israeli books, and we hope, in 2024 to organize a synagogue trip to Israel. Let me know if you’d like to join the Israel team! And if you haven’t yet, I encourage you to meet our community Israeli emissary, Ofek, who will run programs through the Federation and here at the synagogue.

Below you’ll find practical resources and ideas about how you can connect more with Israel and speak your voice more about Israel throughout the year:

Books:

***Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor* by Yossi Klein Halevi.**

One Israeli’s powerful attempt to reach beyond the wall that separates Israelis and Palestinians.

***Impossible Takes Longer* by Daniel Gordis.**

An examination of Israel’s Declaration of Independence 75 years after the founding of the State of Israel. Where have we lived up to the dreams of Israel’s founders and where have we fallen short?

***Let there Be Water* by Seth Siegel.**

Israel has dreamed up some incredible solutions to the earth’s increasing demand for water — from drip irrigation to desalination. This book gives an incredible history of Israel and water.

***Who by Fire: Leonard Cohen in the Sinai* by Matti Friedman.**

I referenced this book in my sermon. It is about Leonard Cohen’s visits with Israeli soldiers during the Yom Kippur War.

***Israel: A Simple Guide to the Most Misunderstood Country on Earth* by Noa Tishby.**

A great primer for anyone who wants to learn more or better understand the modern State of Israel.

***Like Dreamers* by Yossi Klein Halevi.**

An incredible story of the Six Day War and the Israeli paratroopers who reunited Jerusalem.

Websites:

<https://www.timesofisrael.com> — Excellent Israeli news outlet.

<https://arza.org> —

The Association of Reform Zionists of America is the Israel arm of the Reform Movement

<https://www.irac.org> —

The Israel Religious Action Center works for civil rights and equality in Israel

<https://www.aipac.org> —

The homepage of AIPAC, working to build bipartisan support for the U.S.-Israel relationship.

<https://womenofthewall.org.il> —

Women of the Wall, working for equality and equity at the Kotel.

AARP DRIVING CLASS

November 8, 9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.

Please join our congregant Ernest “Ernie” Malecki on Wednesday, November 8 from 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m, for this one-day class designed by AARP for senior

drivers. Please pre-register by calling Ernie directly at 203-913-6742, emailing enmalecki113@gmail.com, or calling the temple office at 203-336-1858. The cost is \$20 for AARP members and

\$25 for non-members (checks payable to AARP). Passing this course can save you money on your car insurance.

Kristallnacht: Finding Strength and Inspiration through Reflection and Learning

**Don't Miss this Exclusive Virtual Event for Members of
Congregations Participating in ADL's Kulanu Program**

Join Kulanu congregations from across North America for a virtual learning session and text study marking Kristallnacht, featuring Rabbi David Wolpe, ADL's Rabbinic Fellow. This session will reflect on the events of Kristallnacht through the lens of Jewish thought leaders and foundational texts, offering hope in the face of rising antisemitism and hate today.

Kristallnacht, the night of the broken glass, occurred November 9-10, 1938, when mobs took to the streets of Germany and Austria, committing a wave of violent attacks against the Jewish community including the burning of synagogues, Torah scrolls and holy books, the desecration of Jewish cemeteries and schools and the murder of almost 100 Jews.

As ADL's Rabbinic Fellow, Rabbi David Wolpe serves as a thought leader within the organization, advising on interfaith and intergroup affairs, and sharing his thoughts and reflections with the community at large. Rabbi Wolpe, who has authored eight books, is the Max Webb Emeritus Rabbi of Sinai Temple in Los Angeles and was named the most influential Rabbi in America by Newsweek.



Rabbi David Wolpe
ADL Rabbinic Fellow

**Thursday,
November 16, 2023
7 pm ET/4 pm PT**



TO REGISTER USE THE WEBSITE BELOW OR SCAN THE QR CODE
https://adl.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_FmuX3VFDQSGh4hO3micQTW#/registration

ISRAEL RESOURCES CONTINUED..... FROM P. 1

— the best thing right now is to donate money if you can, and we will certainly look for opportunities in the coming weeks, should they arise, to send supplies and care packages directly to Israel.

Please know our clergy is always available to speak, you can email us at eschultz@cbibpt.org, smarion@cbibpt.org, and sharris@cbibpt.org. Additionally, we are paying close attention to any potential local security threats and are in constant contact with ADL, Bridgeport Police, Federation, and Homeland Security.

Praying for Israel and for peace in the days and weeks to come.

Where to Donate:

- Jewish Federations of Greater

Fairfield County's Swords of Iron 2023

Fund: <https://shalomct.salsalabs.org/SwordsofIronFundraisingForm/index.html>

- **Magen David Adom:** www.mdais.org
- **Jewish National Fund — North America:** www.jnf.org/supportisrael
- **IDF Widows and Orphans:** www.idfwo.org
- **NATAL (Trauma Support):** www.natal.org.il/
- **Purchase army equipment for combat troops:** www.charidy.com/vests

Resources:

- **Times of Israel: Up to date news on what's going on in Israel:** www.timesofisrael.com
- **ADL:** www.adl.org/stand-with-israel
- **Talking to Kids about Israel:**

www.kveller.com/how-to-talk-to-kids-about-whats-happening-in-israel-right-now/

Books:

See Page 3 for Rabbi Schultz's Israel book recommendations

For grieving Israeli families:

טרטס רורחשל תימצע הרועל טובטא'צ! ייפהל אנ טור (MFCC), סור הנ'ג פוטישבת חתופ. המוארטו (ITI) המוארטו הדרח, חתמב לופיטל זכרמה תאיטנ טסופב לופיטל ילארשי פאטרטס, ילוס י"ע (לארשי סייתנש רחאל אטבה בלשב אצמנ טובה. המוארט שומישל המחלמה לצב חותפו, חותיפו רקחמ לש ותוא וציפהו ושמתשה אנא. מיאליגה לכל ישפוח המוארטת תתחפהו וסוחה תרבגהל רתויש המכ דיתעב.

<https://wa.link/oh70id>



YOM KIPPUR AFTERNOON SPEAKERS

EACH YEAR, MEMBERS OF OUR CONGREGATION SHARE BEAUTIFUL AND POIGNANT PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON YOM KIPPUR AFTERNOON, BASED AROUND THE JEWISH VALUES FEATURED IN OUR AFTERNOON SERVICE. BELOW ARE TWO OF THE WONDERFUL REFLECTIONS THAT WERE OFFERED THIS PAST YOM KIPPUR:

On the Value of Chesed (Loving Kindness) by Emily Lehrman

I'm here to talk about the Jewish value of *chesed*, often translated as loving-kindness or maybe compassion, but I prefer the definition of scholar Aviva Zornberg, that it's more than loving kindness; it's also courage and imagination.

Rabbi Schultz asked me to talk about *chesed* in relationship to Cuba, a place I visited alone in May and June of this year for over two weeks. And here is where I pause to beg your patience and forgiveness. Those who know me well know that it's hard for me to say "no" when someone asks for help. But it's equally hard for me to put myself in the spotlight. To be honest, I tried to write myself out of this speech but I found it didn't make much sense that way. So, thank you for bearing with my awkwardness and my self-indulgence.

Over a year ago, I met a Cuban language partner online and we struck up a friendship. He is a young computer scientist teaching and studying for his master's on the outskirts of Havana. His dad left when he was maybe three years old and he has been trying to support his mom, who has a serious heart condition, ever since. Starting last fall, I have been sending small care packages of food, batteries, toothbrushes, detergent, and other essentials that have been nearly impossible for them to get. It's a complicated process and sometimes it doesn't seem worthwhile for such a small impact.

So, when I decided this spring to go to a language school in Havana, I told my friend and his mom to send me a wish list because I was going to take some extra suitcases. They were hesitant to ask for much: a pair of used jeans, maybe some shoes, and any food I could manage.

In the meantime, the language school told me in greater detail just how dire the situation is there, and they asked all students to bring toiletries and over-the-counter medicines to donate. I asked my friend's mom to send a more specific list of what was needed in her community, one of the poorest in the capital. And then I asked some folks here at B'nai Israel to help me fill my third suitcase so I could reach even more people. You were so generous, and the Cubans were so grateful. Thank you.

When I told my friend what I was doing, he didn't understand. I explained that I had been helped by many people throughout my life and I felt a responsibility to give back when I could. I myself have been the beneficiary of *chesed*. When he worried I was spending too much money, I said, "I asked my synagogue members to help." He was incredulous and asked why I would do that. I repeated what an orthodox colleague once told me when we worked together in fundraising for a Jewish charity. "*It is not only a mitzvah to give, it is a mitzvah to ask others with the capacity to give, essentially to provide more people with the opportunity to do good.*"

The point is, you do not have to travel alone to Cuba with three suitcases of humanitarian aid to practice the Jewish value of *chesed*. Be courageous. Be imaginative. There are so many opportunities just in our neighborhood. From tutoring or filling the pantry at Mercy Learning Center, (shameless plug for the place where I teach); to donating or helping serve meals through Nourish Bridgeport; to making deliveries for the kosher food pantry. Even closer to home, there may be a relative or friend who needs to be checked on and cheered up. A neighbor may need a ride to the grocery store. So many people could benefit from your love and understanding. So

many people could use your *chesed*. And sometimes, the person who needs that most could be you.

On the Value of Ahavat Tzion (Love of Israel) by Alex Renzulli

Growing up going to a Jewish Sunday school and attending a Jewish sleepaway camp, Israel has always been a prevalent concept in my upbringing and education. It has always been this Narnia of sorts. This far away holy place is filled with old cities, blazing deserts, and apparently USB and Waze. So to speak, this mass of land the size of New Jersey has played a large role in my life, and I am extremely fortunate to have been able to visit on two very different occasions. The first was when I was 13 years old, a year in which I was both bar mitzvah-ed on this very bema but also on the mountain top of Masada, the legendary site in which many Jews took their lives in order to prove they would not be held captive under the oppressive tyranny of Romans who were trying to capture them (an unfortunate recurring theme in our history, it seems). This trip was incredible, but I was a lot younger, and I do not think I appreciated it as much as I should have. That is why, when I returned to Israel with my camp this last summer, I made sure to analyze it, enjoy it, and discover it as much as possible. Understand that it is much more than Tel Aviv, the Western Wall, and the Dead Sea. It is a land of nature, love, and patriotism. Jews have never had it easy. Never. Tell me what part of history I am explaining here: a group of Jews attempts to settle down in an area only to be evicted by the local authority landlords a few decades later. If you guessed literally every one, you're right! Coming from a country where patriotism is around 90% of our personality, I think one of the most admirable things Israelis have is their love for their country. It is a country born out of the wake of the Holocaust and one

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ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER

EXCITING NEW PROGRAMS IN THE EDUCATION CENTER



It has been a great start to the year for both Kehilah and Bonim Preschool. There are so many new and fun programs in both schools. In Bonim, we have opened a new materials room. This room is modeled after a similar program at a school in New York. Elisabeth Levine, Bonim teacher, is spearheading this endeavor. Elisabeth shared some thoughts about the new space:

Through an online workshop, I was introduced to the organization Teaching Beyond the Square (TBS), a nonprofit based in NYC that aims to improve early childhood education quality. I really liked their mission and made an appointment to visit "The Materials Center," which is located on the upper floor of a preschool in NYC. The Materials Center is a community resource open to the public that houses a large collection of "found" materials, gathered and donated by New York City residents and businesses. These materials are objects from our everyday lives that are often discarded but could be repurposed or transformed into something new, encouraging creativity, problem-solving in action. These materials can enhance and enrich children's learning, creative expression, and symbolic development. I was

impressed by the abundance of well-organized materials I saw. This inspired me to create a Materials Room at Bonim. The Materials Space at Bonim is filled with a variety of materials that allow the children to explore, investigate, and engage with different textures and explore new ways they can be used to build, arrange, and design. Rotating sample activities are set up for teachers to explore and use in the classroom. As we further develop the Materials Room, we hope to get the children and the Bonim community more actively involved in adding materials so that we can provide opportunities to explore different ways to repurpose materials and transform objects into something different and new.

These classroom photos exhibit how the goal of the classroom is to focus on the whole child. Elisabeth sets up weekly appointments for teachers to go in to get all the materials for activities based on the Jewish holidays and different themes such as children's connection to their names.

In Kehilah, we've brought in some new and exciting enrichment classes or *chugim*: for example, a newsletter, and are teaching the students about Israel,

led by Ofek, our Israeli emissary, as well as other community members. Our new Shalom Learning curriculum provides materials for and is helping to assist the teachers in organizing their lessons. Shalom Learning also has a Hebrew component that keeps each child on their own Hebrew path for learning.



BIFTY

BIFTY is well underway and excited for our upcoming programs! BIFTY meets on Thursdays from 7:00–8:30 p.m. in the BIFTY Lounge. To stay up to date on upcoming events, follow us on Instagram @CBI.bifty and ask to join our text group.

BIFTY will be meeting on:

November 9
November 16
November 30

We look forward to seeing you!



BIFTY enjoyed making ice cream during our science experiment program!

B'NAI EVENTS

**Lunch & Learn - Prof. Charles Dellheim:
How Jews Made the Art World Modern
November 3, noon in the Library.**

Author of *Belonging and Betrayal: How Jews Made the Art World Modern*, Professor of History and Director of the Arvind, and Chandan Nandlal Kilachand Honors College at Boston University

**Bagels and Burning Questions:
What Exactly is Judaism?
November 5, 11:00 a.m.**

People often ask the question — what exactly is Judaism? A religion? A people? An ethnicity? A culture? Something entirely different? Join with Rabbi Schultz for an engaging talk around this important question. Bagels and coffee will be served.

**Scott Verchin Jewish Artist Series
JEWISH PARIS
November 6, 7:00 p.m.**

For a couple of decades leading up to World War II, a group of Jewish painters and sculptors, including Amedeo Modigliani, Marc Chagall, Chaïm Soutine and Jules Pascin, dominated the new art scene of Montparnasse in Paris. Art critics gave them the name "the School of Paris" to set them apart from the French-born (and less talented) young artists of the period.

BIO:

Scott Verchin is an independent business consultant whose services include consulting for the visual arts and museum sectors. Throughout his career, he has served in such notable roles as publisher of *Museum* and *Archaeology* magazines. Scott has also been a contributor to *Art Market* magazine, covering U.S. exhibitions. A lifelong patron of the arts, Scott has frequented art museums and galleries on five different continents. He hosted his first exhibition, *Black & White Paintings*, on Long Island in 1989.

**Lunch & Learn with Lisa Grant
November 17, noon.**

Honoring Our Dead and Comforting Our Mourners — Ancient Sources and Contemporary Practices

**Shabbat Dinner with Lisa Grant
November 17, 7:00 p.m.**

Dinner, 8:00 p.m. Talk

Mourning's Winding Road — Resources for the Journey



**Upcoming Rosh
Chodesh programs
and events — save
the date!**

**Rosh Chodesh
November/ Kislev
Gathering:
Pumpkin Workshop
with Kelle Ruden
Monday, November 13,
from 7:15 – 9:00 p.m.**

Celebrate the harvest season! Create a perfect mini seasonal arrangement using real pumpkins embellished with succulents and other natural materials. Led by congregant and UConn Master Gardener Kelle Ruden. The cost of this workshop is \$10/person, participants can bring payment that evening or pay in advance. Please make checks out to Congregation B'nai Israel. RSVP/submit payment via shulcloud or to Ilene at ifeuerberg@cibipt.org by November 8 in order to allow Kelle enough time to collect supplies.

Monday, December 11: Chanukah potluck dinner and candle making workshop with Healings by Nature

Monday, January 22: Tu B'shevat Tasting

Monday, February 12: Game Night

Sunday, April 7: Women's Passover Seder

**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.

**Gender Queer: A Memoir
by Maia Kobabe**

Thursday, November 16, 7:00 p.m.

Discussion led by Rabbi Schultz, Cantor Harris, and Cadence Pentheny from the Triangle Community Center

The #1 most challenged book of 2022 according to the American Library Association

**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

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.

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

November 19
December 10
January 28

NOVEMBER DONATIONS

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

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund

Marcy Braun, in memory of Jerry Pressman, in honor of a life well lived and loved.

Ariel & Wendy David, in memory of my parents, Raye and David David, and my grandmother, Luba Szlosberg.

Brian & Robin Diamond, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for the baby naming ceremony celebrating our grandson David Andrew, son of Nicole & Ryan Lestrangle.

Dennis & Andrea Feinberg, in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane Pressman.

Mordechai & Esther Fintz, in honor of our granddaughter Mindy who is having a baby boy.

Robert & Elaine Friedman, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for his sensitive and caring gesture in memory of my sister Anita M. Pearlman.

Ruth Gastel, in appreciation to Rabbi Evan Schultz for the wonderful community that you have that allowed me to share the High Holidays.

Bernie & Janice Jacobs, in memory of Jerry Pressman, a dear man.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Larry Bausher, father of Benjamin (Annie) Bausher.

Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Robert & Susan Sussman, in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane; father of Karen (Ken) Ferleger, Steve (Julie) Pressman & Jeff (Amy) Pressman & their families.

The Walden Family, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for your support & love during our recent loss.

Judy Waldman, in memory of Dr. Martin Gerald Waldman & Scott Waldman.

Craig Zuckerman, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for the thoughtful & caring funeral service for my mother.

Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund

Mel & Karyn Berks, in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane Pressman.

Barry & Linda Diamond, in memory of Tom Post, brother of Richard Post, brother-in-law of Randy Dorfman.

Randy Dorfman, in memory of the yahrzeits of my mother Helen Weiner & mother-in-law Virginia Post.

Ruth Gastel, in appreciation to Rabbi Sarah Marion; you have a wonderful community that allowed me to share the High Holidays with you.

Laurel Greenberg, in memory of my husband Hank Greenberg; with special thanks to Chris Rocha for her ongoing help and support.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Reuben "Ruby" Weisbien, husband of Lucille Weisbien.

Jean Marion, with thanks, a donation.

Ken Marion, in honor of her rabbinate, Sarah Marion.

Jane Pressman, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Jonathan & Cleo Sonneborn, in memory of my mom on her yahrzeit.

The Walden Family, in appreciation to Rabbi Marion for your support and love during our recent loss.

Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund

Alan & Reuven Baruch, in memory of Aunt Harriet.

Mark & Barbara Edinberg, in memory of Scott's uncle.

Robert & Elaine Friedman, welcoming Cantor Harris to B'nai Israel and congratulations to you & Sharon on the naming of your granddaughter.

The Walden Family, in appreciation to Cantor Harris for his support and love during our recent loss.

Debbie Weisman, in celebration of Cantor Scott Harris, from being the constable in our Temple's musical production of *Fiddler on the Roof* to being our Cantor ... congratulations!

Music Fund

Jeffrey Ackerman & Andrea

Goodman, in honor of Liz Nigrosh & Anne Kirsch; you touch our souls with your beautiful voices.

David Abbey & Deborah Goodman, in honor of Mark Edinberg & Janet Rosen for their beautiful music, much appreciated.

Nicholas & Rebecca Gordon Blondin, in memory of Larry Bausher, father of Ben Bausher.

Janet Jurow, in memory of Larry Bausher, father of Ben Bausher.

Beth Lazar, in appreciation to Mark Edinberg, Anne Kirsch & Liz Nigrosh for sharing their musical talents at High Holy Day services; and to George & Sherrie Glass for sharing their musical talents at Shabbat services.

David & Judith Pressler, in memory of Judith Pressler's sister, Martha Salmon; mother, Esther Unger Farber & grandfather, Abraham Unger.

Enhancement Fund

Donations made in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden were made by:

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Robert & Carson Berkowitz, in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane, father of Karen Ferleger, Steven & Jeffrey Pressman.

David & Alexa Cohen, with thanks to B'nai Israel staff for letting us use the pavilion for Jake & Emily's Engagement Party.

Ilene Feuerberg, to Susan Walden, in appreciation for your generosity during the high holidays.

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NOVEMBER DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

Prayer Book Fund

Judith Lessler, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Religious School Scholarship Fund

Robert & Carson Berkowitz, in honor of Nathaniel Cohen's Bar Mitzvah on 9/30/23.

Brotherhood, with thanks, a donation from the Temple Brotherhood.

Arnold & Erica Cohen, with thanks to Rabbi Schultz, Rabbi Marion & Cantor Harris for their help in preparing Nathaniel M. Cohen for his Bar Mitzvah; mazel tov to Robert & Carson Berkowitz on the marriage of their son Ben to Leah.

David & Alexa Cohen, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Mark & Elizabeth Nigrosh, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Religious School Enrichment Fund

Karen Kassap, in memory of Mel Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund

Robert & Carson Berkowitz, in honor of our son Ben's marriage to Leah Chaise on 9/3/23.

Michael & Judy Blumenthal, in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane; father of Karen (Ken) Ferleger, Steve (Julie) Pressman & Jeff (Amy) Pressman; in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan (Rich) Walden.

Mark & Barbara Edinberg, in memory of Melvyn Rosenzweig, father of Susan Walden.

Sherry Fogel, in memory of Susan Walden's beloved father, Melvyn Rosenzweig; may his memory serve as a blessing.

Michael & Joni Greenspan, in memory of Bobby Miller, brother of Samuel Miller; in memory of Jerry Pressman, husband of Jane Pressman.

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Michael & Linda Epstein, in memory of Susan Walden's father, Melvyn Rosenzweig.

Gary & Gail Felberbaum, in memory of Susan Walden's father.

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William & Caren Schwartz, in memory of Susan Walden's father, Melvyn Rosenzweig.

Ellen Sheiman, in honor of Rod Brown for all he does for this congregation & the community; a personal thank you as well!

Jim and Barbara Abraham Education Fund

Jerry Saunders & Elaine Appellof, in memory of Harris Shapiro & Beth Steele.

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Joan, Steven & Benjamin Frankel, in memory of Alan Frankel; in memory of Betty, Edward & Glenn Liebensohn.

The George Markley Chesed Fund
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Yakhani Caring Fund

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Janet Jurow, in memory of Susan Walden's father, Melvyn Rosenzweig.

Jeffrey & Jackie Madwed, in memory of Thelma Schreiber, mother of Andrea Rudolph.

Jeff & Amy Pressman, in memory of Amy's grandmother, Pauline Teckler, on the 10th Anniversary of her passing.

YOM KIPPUR AFTERNOON SPEAKERS..... FROM P. 5

still riddled with hate and violence today. It is a country that gets bombed, quite literally, on a daily basis. The Iron Dome is a mechanism that keeps rockets from flying into Israel, but while it is strong in major cities and inland Israel, closer to Arab territory, a saying proclaims, "If you hear the alarms, you know you're

alive." This is frightening, to say the least. The fact that people can baselessly hate on a religion for existing is brazen and demonstrates the blatant antisemitism that occurs today; however, the people of Israel still fight for a country that is no more than 75 years old. Coming from a country that loves to show off its

birthday, I do not think we realize how rare it is for a country to know the exact year and day it was founded. Israel is not an old country built upon hundreds of monarchies, lineage, and bloodlines. No, it is a new country that is a symbol to the world that a people's love for justice, and one another, can triumph.

5784 HIGH HOLY DAY SPEECH

BY CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL PRESIDENT SUSAN WALDEN

What brings you joy? Real joy, the joy that makes your heart sing and your eyes tear. The joy that makes you pause and take a breath.

Recently, I sat in a packed Shabbat service with tears in my eyes as I looked around the room and saw faces I hadn't seen in several years while Cantor Harris led us in a particularly moving song — and I felt true joy. It was in that moment that I understood that I was part of something greater than myself, that serving this congregation has indeed made a difference and that the hard work of so many of you brought us to this moment; that all of the people who stepped up in so many ways to support our clergy team, staff and our community made a difference. It is no secret that we have faced many challenges over the last few years. We have feared for our safety as antisemitism and hate have frightened us; we were sent home as a worldwide pandemic consumed us; and we held each other up as we overcame some difficult personnel changes. But, through all of it, the thing that moved us forward was you, our B'nai Israel family. And I hope that everyone who stepped up during these difficult times can look within and feel some joy — the joy of knowing that you have made a difference. You looked ahead, remained connected, and stepped up, and you brought joy.

According to the late Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, “Unlike happiness, joy is not something you pursue. It discovers you. It has to do with a sense of connection to others. It comes from a different realm of happiness. It is a social emotion. It is the exhilaration we feel when we merge with others.”

Recent studies have also shown that when we work together to help and support others and give of our time, we create a little spark of light inside ourselves that in turn brings us tremendous joy. But finding joy is not so easy in a busy and sometimes hectic world. Sometimes we don't make time for it. “I'm too busy,” “I can't possibly take on one more thing” are some of the things we tell ourselves. But are we selling ourselves short? Don't we always find time for the things we really want to do? Are we missing out on the possibility of feeling, or creating that little spark of joy that could

make all the difference for ourselves and others?

I have found joy in teaching and in leading at B'nai Israel. I have found joy in sharing a bagel on a Saturday morning and talking with another congregant. Joy can be found in every small thing available to us in this community. Even if we only do it once. Small acts of tikkun olam, tzedakah and connection may make all the difference for someone who is struggling or having a bad day. A kind word, a smile, your gift of time is sometimes all it takes to be the light in someone else's darkest moment. And the beauty is, when you give of yourself, even just a little bit, you may not even know the power of your impact. Giving back, paying it forward, volunteering, making a donation, charity or tzedakah, whatever you call it, changes lives. Not just for those in our community, but for each of you as well.

Dr. Nasreen Lalani and Ali Hann Lalani of Purdue University share in a recent study that “attending to the needs of other people and interacting with them brings new ideas and creativity, gives us a sense of meaning and purpose, boosts our self-esteem and brings personal growth and transformation. Serving others can improve our support networks, encourage us to lead a more active and meaningful life, distract us from our own problems, cultivate optimism and increase personal satisfaction.” Certainly, sounds like joy to me!

So why wouldn't you want to do this? Maybe you don't know what to do or where to start. You can start right here at home, at B'nai Israel. It doesn't take much, come to a Shabbat morning service and hand someone a book, once; shop for the oneg, once; join a mitzvah morning or tikkun olam program, once; volunteer in Bonim or Kehilah, once; if you have a skill, offer to share it, once. You don't have to become a “regular,” you don't have to do it every week or every time, but I challenge you to try something new this year, once, and I know that you will find joy. You may meet someone new; your smile or simple hello may help lift someone's spirit; volunteering or sharing a skill may ease someone's load. You will impact our community just by showing up. And the benefits for you will

be worth every ounce of effort and every step outside of your comfort zone. You may even find something new that you enjoy.

My mantra has always been that if I make a difference for just one person, I have succeeded — and that brings me joy. I live by these words when I teach and when I speak to all of you. Just try it this year. Be the light in someone's darkness and help create a little spark of joy.

I leave you with this story written by Elizabeth Gilbert that I often refer back to for inspiration.

Some years ago, I was stuck on a crosstown bus in New York City during rush hour; it was winter, and it was cold and rainy. Traffic was barely moving. The bus was filled with tired people who were deeply irritated with one another, with the world itself. Two men barked at each other about a shove that might or might not have been intentional. A pregnant woman got on, and nobody offered her a seat. Rage was in the air; no mercy would be found here.

But, as the bus approached Seventh Avenue, the driver got on the intercom. “Folks,” he said “I know you have all had a rough day and you are frustrated. I can't do anything about the weather or traffic, but here is what I can do. As each one of you gets off this bus, I will reach out my hand to you. As you walk by, drop your troubles into the palm of my hand, okay? Don't take your problems home tonight, just leave them with me. My route goes right by the Hudson River, and when I drive by there later, I will open the window and throw your troubles in the water.”

It was as if a spell had been lifted. Everyone burst out laughing. Faces gleamed with surprised delight. People who had been pretending for the past hour not to notice each other's existence were suddenly grinning at each other like, “is this guy serious?” Oh, he was serious!

At the next stop, just as promised, the driver reached out his hand, palm up and waited. One by one, all the

Continued on page 15

SHABBAT SERVICE SCHEDULE

In person on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. and Saturdays at 8:00 a.m. where indicated.
All services at this time can also be viewed on Zoom. The link is sent out in our weekly email.

Friday, November 3

6:00 p.m. Kehilah Kabbalat Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis 18:1-22:24
Haftarah – II Kings 4:1-37

Saturday, November 4

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service Chapel – in person and on Zoom
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast – in person
9:30 a.m. Torah Study – in person
11:00 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Avery Zolov, daughter of Andrew & Marnie Zolov

Friday, November 10

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

Saturday, November 11

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

Friday, November 17

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service w/Lisa Grant speaking – in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis 25:19-28:9
Haftarah – Malachi 1:1-2:7

Saturday, November 18

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

Friday, November 24

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in person and on Zoom
Torah Portion – Genesis 28:10-32:3
Haftarah – Hosea 12:13-14:10

Saturday, November 25

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

KESHER CORNER

We're very excited about the Kabbalat Shabbat service on October 20. We were offered the gift of Tamara Schriffert and Danny Freeman to lead our congregation in the Shema. This is a "first" for the Lee and David Lester Keshet Drama Club and it means so much to us. We're learning how to create our stage presence and look forward to several "stage" opportunities that are forthcoming.

The Lee and David Lester Drama Club is ALL inclusive, for ALL abilities. We invite you to join in our fun at an in-person event. Please contact us if you'd like more information or have any ideas that would help us grow.

We're looking for volunteers and donations are always welcome.

keshetdramaclub@gmail.com
rheasmusic@icloud.com
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CHESED COMMITTEE

Join us in helping members of B'nai Israel. Drop off a meal, make a call, drive to an appointment; the list goes on.

Come join our group of dedicated volunteers at the Chesed Committee, and if you know of someone in need, let us know.

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5784 HIGH HOLY DAY SPEECH

BY CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL PRESIDENT SUSAN WALDEN.....FROM P. 10

exiting commuters placed their hand just above his and mimed the gesture of dropping something into his palm. Some teared up but everyone did it. The driver repeated the same lovely ritual at the next stop and the next and the next. All the way to the river.

We live in a hard world, and sometimes it is extra difficult to be a human being. Sometimes we have bad days and sometimes they last for years. We struggle and fail, we lose jobs, money, and friends. We lack love and faith, and we witness horrible events

every day. We ask ourselves where is the joy? Especially when everything feels like it is cloaked in darkness. We long for the light and don't know where to find it.

But what if you are that light? Like the bus driver, what if by doing one small thing, one time, you can bring someone joy and create a spark. What if you are the very agent of illumination that we need? You can be the light, any day, any time, all it takes is one small step, just once.

As we enter 5784, let's all make a commitment to ourselves and to each other to try one new thing at B'nai Israel. Just one, just once. You could find true joy and fulfillment in the pride you will feel through connecting. Each one of you makes a difference, you are all one part of our whole, and by participating, by giving of yourself, you will spark joy. If we all do our part, if we all do just one small thing — imagine the light we could create?

I wish you all, a year of light, a year of joy.
Shana Tova

LONELINESS OR DEPRESSION? DETECTING POSSIBLE MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.....BY MARJORIE FREEMAN

“Is it possible to become physically sick from depression?” a publication called *Healthline* asked in 2019. The answer is yes. The *Healthline* article continued:

Your mental health affects how you think, feel and act. It also helps determine how you relate to others, make choices and enjoy daily activities. You're more likely to get sick at times when you are having mental health problems. It could be because poor mental health can weaken your body's immune system. Or, you may find that you have a harder time being active or social when you're feeling down, anxious or stressed.

The B'nai Israel Mental Health Small Group wishes everyone a healthy, happy Thanksgiving and holiday season. Counterintuitively, there is a spike in depression at this time of year. We hope you will pay attention to subtle signs of potential mental health issues in yourselves and your loved ones and ask for help if any last for more than two weeks.

Here are some common signs of poor mental health emailed to me on August 17, in a United Healthcare newsletter and credited to www.uhc.com/health-and-wellness/mental-health:

- Eating or sleeping too much or not enough
- Losing interest in people and activities
- Feeling hopeless, downhearted, or blue
- Drinking too much alcohol or using drugs

- Having thoughts of harming oneself or others
- Not doing work or other activities as carefully as usual
- Getting less done than usual

When you're feeling down, you may find yourself avoiding things that can help you feel better. Take extra care to eat well, exercise, be social, and take medications as prescribed. You belong to a wonderful B'nai Israel community. Participate!



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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.



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GIVE THE GIFT OF LIGHT FOR CHANUKAH!



Please share the warmth of Chanukah this year with your fellow congregants by participating in this year's Gift of Light fundraiser! Gift your family and friends at B'nai Israel with beautiful Chanukah candles! By participating, you will make someone's day, spread some happiness, and continue to make our temple community the warm and welcoming place we all know it to be.

The holiday begins Thursday, December 7, but now is the time to order beautiful Chanukah candles for your family and friends at B'nai Israel.

Our online system makes placing an order fun and easy! Just click on the personalized link you receive via email. Each of your candle recipients will receive a single box of candles with personalized greetings from every sender. Each box is hand-packaged by a special team of Chanukah helpers. This year, your recipients will be able to pick up their candles at the temple the week before Chanukah.

Plans for wrapping candles are still underway! We hope you will join in the fun! Stay tuned for more information in Hashavua. For more information, please contact Chris Rocha at chris@cbibpt.org or call the Temple office at (203) 336-1858. With your help, we can make this year's Gift of Light more successful than ever!

