

## SEPTEMBER HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz suggests some books to help us usher in the High Holy Days. Page 3

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## HIGH HOLIDAYS 2024/5785

**Rosh Hashanah begins sunset Wednesday, October 2**

**Yom Kippur begins sunset Friday, October 11**

Dear Friends,

We hope you are having a wonderful summer! It's hard to believe, but we have already begun preparations for the High Holy Days this year and are excited to welcome everyone for our incredible services, music, and programs.

As we have looked at logistics and planning, security has been front of mind, especially after the 10/7 attacks in Israel. We have made a few changes to enhance our security procedures and keep everyone in our community as safe as possible. The changes are highlighted below:

### Security and Entrance

For the protection of all our congregants, there will be only one access point to enter the building during the Holidays. Everyone will be directed to enter services through the main entrance of the synagogue. Ushers will check tickets before you enter the building.

In addition to the one access point to enter the building, this year we will have Bridgeport Police on hand at all services and increased guard patrol both at the front of the building and near the tent.

For several years, congregants have expressed their concern about the security vulnerability of the tent service being so close to Park Avenue. This year we have made the decision to move the tent to the Rabbi James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space and grassy area behind the Chapel. This area will be more secure and protected for our congregants.

*Continued on page 9*

## THE HIGH HOLY DAYS ARE APPROACHING!

Once again, we feel so fortunate to be the High Holy Days co-chairs. However, it takes a village, and we are counting on all of you to help make the holidays meaningful, safe, and special for all our members by volunteering to usher during services. Be on the lookout for the SignUp Genius link, coming later in August in Hashavua. Thank you in advance!

Debbie Viens and Evelyn Rubak

## 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.

**Noah Itman and Jessica Huff Itman, and Sabrina**  
Fairfield, CT

**Jeni Cook Mack and Benjamin Mack, Ean and Tenli**  
Easton, CT

**Mary-Megan Marshall**  
Bridgeport, CT

**Micah and Marcy Julius, Lainey**  
Fairfield, CT

**Fred and Lisa Knopf, Alexandra, Joshua and Abigail**  
Milford, CT

**Ilya and Nicole Provornov, and Micah**  
Trumbull, CT

**Michael Petshaft and Descera Daigle, Olivia, Alexander and Gabriel**  
Fairfield, CT

**Adam and Mickie Miller**  
Trumbull, CT

## SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

**Arnold Portnoy**, father of Sherry Portnoy

**Elaine Rosoff**, mother of Renee Noren

**Frances (Fran) Fried**, mother of Lisa Verchin

**Alice Siegel**, mother of Jeff Siegel, grandmother of Jaclyn Epstein

**Lewis Wein**, father of Karen Spring

## BULLETIN BOARD

### SEPT. MITZVAH MORNING

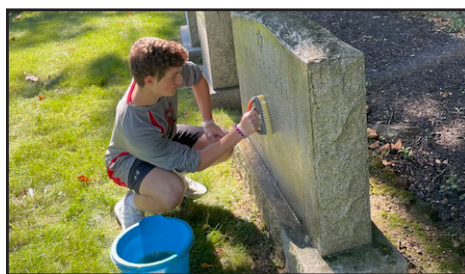


Help us kick off the 2024-2025 season of Mitzvah Mornings! Join us on Sunday, September 15 at 10:00 a.m. at B'nai Israel's cemetery, located at 245 Kings Highway East in Fairfield. We will meet there to wash headstones and clean off their dirt and moss.

Over the past several decades, the headstones at the cemetery have endured nature's harsh elements and are in need of some serious refreshing. We will spend some time scrubbing

and cleaning these headstones in honor of those who came before us.

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



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

All ages are welcome to join.

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



### AARP DRIVING CLASS

Wednesday, September 18, 9:30 a.m.–1:30 p.m.  
with Ernie Malecki

Please join our congregant Ernest "Ernie" Malecki on Wednesday, September 18, 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 the temple office at 203-336-1858 or emailing Ernie directly at [enmalecki113@gmail.com](mailto:enmalecki113@gmail.com). 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.

A course will also be offered on Wednesday, October 30.

### JUDAICA BOUTIQUE



The Judaica Boutique will be stocked with new merchandise just in time for the High Holidays. New tallitot, shofrot, and tabletop items for a festive holiday. The shop will be open on Sundays during religious school. Call the office for shopping during the week.

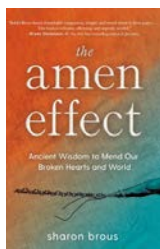


## FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

### HIGH HOLY DAY READING LIST

As the first hints of fall enter into Fairfield County, we begin our spiritual journey into the month of Elul in preparation for the High Holy Days. With the Holy Days starting in October this year, we have a few extra weeks to find space to engage

some of the incredible written wisdom published this year to enliven our spirits and souls for the Days of Awe. Below are a few of my reading recommendations for preparing for the High Holy Days, 5785.

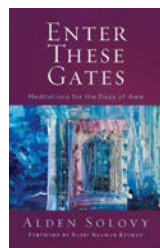


#### *The Amen Effect*

by Rabbi Sharon Brous

Rabbi Brous is the founder and rabbi of IKAR in Los Angeles. She recently published a book based on a beautiful midrash from our rabbis

about showing up and offering love to those in pain or in need. The book is spiritually nourishing, easy to read, and a call to all of us to show up for one another in our most challenging and difficult moments. The lessons from this book moved me deeply and certainly will prepare our hearts and spirits for the High Holy Days.



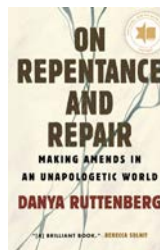
#### *Enter these Gates: Meditations for the Days of Awe*

by Alden Solovy

This book was just published. Here is the description from the publisher:

*Enter These Gates* is a High Holy Day companion for our times, with more than one hundred new poems, prayers, and meditations for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. Poet-liturgist Alden Solovy draws from his unique spirit to blend today's struggles and joys with classic themes, layering a contemporary voice into beloved motifs. *Enter These Gates* is a vital resource

for individual prayer, study, and communal worship. Themes include confession, repentance, forgiveness, and memory, as well as frailty, seeing holiness, and what Solovy calls "the ancient journey." A companion to the *machzor*, *Enter These Gates* offers a fresh yet deeply rooted approach to heightening our experience of the Days of Awe.



#### *On Repentance and Repair: Making Amends in an Unapologetic World*

by Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg  
Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg has become one of the leading voices of American Jewry, especially around the issue of Reproductive Justice. In this book, she grounds her understanding of repentance in the teachings of Rabbi Moses Maimonides. If you are looking to spiritually prepare for the High Holy Days, I highly recommend this read.



#### *Who by Fire: Leonard Cohen in the Sinai*

by Matti Friedman

If you're a fan of Leonard Cohen or interested in Israeli history (or both), you'll love this book

the Yom Kippur War in 1973. It gives you a first-hand account of his intimate concerts with soldiers during a very turbulent time in Israeli history.



#### *This is Real and You are Completely Unprepared*

by Rabbi Alan Lew  
This is a must-read for preparing for the High Holy Days! As the publisher notes:

In *This is Real and You*

*Are Completely Unprepared*, Lew has marked out a journey of seven distinct stages, one that draws on these rituals to awaken our soul and wholly transform us. Weaving together Torah readings, Buddhist parables, Jewish fables and stories from his own life, Lew lays bare the meanings of this ancient Jewish passage. He reveals the path from terror to acceptance, confusion to clarity, doubt to belief, and from complacency to awe.

Shana Tova!

### B'NAI ISRAEL'S SECURITY PROGRAM

Are you interested in learning more about our temple's security program? Peter Montagna, chairperson for the CBI Security Committee, will conduct a one-hour tour and discussion on the steps we've taken so far, plus future plans.

Two sessions will be provided: Sunday, September 15, starting at 10:00 a.m., and Sunday, September 22, starting at 10:00 a.m. Please meet at the temple main entrance. Contact Peter at [montagna.peter@att.net](mailto:montagna.peter@att.net) if you have any questions.

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## CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES 5785

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

### Wednesday, October 2

#### **Erev Rosh Hashanah Services**

\*5:30-6:30 p.m. – service at Jennings Beach

7:45-8:45 p.m. – service in Sanctuary and on Zoom

### Thursday, October 3

#### **Rosh Hashanah Day 1**

**\*\*Rosh Hashanah Havurah Service for Families with Young Children,** geared toward children ages 0-5 and their families

9:00-9:30 a.m. – in the Chapel – **Sign Up Required** – RSVP to Alexa Cohen – [acohen@cbibpt.org](mailto:acohen@cbibpt.org)

#### **Rosh Hashanah Children's**

**Programming & Babysitting,** ages 0-5 years – first floor Education Wing; ages 6-11 (grades K-5) – 2nd floor Education Wing

9:45 a.m. -12:30 p.m. – **Sign Up Required** – RSVP to Alexa Cohen – [acohen@cbibpt.org](mailto:acohen@cbibpt.org)

#### **Rosh Hashanah Morning Service**

10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

#### **Rosh Hashanah Morning Service**

10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. – in the Tent (**Rabbi James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space**)

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

### Friday, October 4

#### **Rosh Hashanah Day 2**

#### **Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Service**

10:00-12:00 p.m. – in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

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

### Sunday, October 6

#### **Cemetery Memorial Service**

1:00 p.m. – Fairfield  
2:00 p.m. – Monroe

### Friday, October 11

#### **Kol Nidre**

7:45 p.m.-9:45 p.m. – in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

### Saturday, October 12

#### **Yom Kippur Services**

**\*\*Yom Kippur Havurah Service for Families with Young Children,** geared toward children ages 0-5 and their families

9:00-9:30 a.m. – in the Chapel – **Sign Up Required** – RSVP to Alexa Cohen – [acohen@cbibpt.org](mailto:acohen@cbibpt.org)

**Yom Kippur Children's Programming & Babysitting,** ages 0-5 years – first floor Education Wing; ages 6-11 (grades K-5) – 2nd floor Education Wing

9:45 a.m. -12:30 p.m. – **Sign Up Required** – RSVP to Alexa Cohen – [acohen@cbibpt.org](mailto:acohen@cbibpt.org)

#### **Yom Kippur Morning Service**

10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

#### **Yom Kippur Morning Service**

10:00-12:30 p.m. – in the Tent (**Rabbi James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space**)

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

#### **\*Meditation with Al Dressler**

1:30-2:30 p.m. - in the Chapel

#### **\*Class led by Cantor Scott Harris**

1:30-2:30 p.m. - in the Library

#### **\*Afternoon Cello Concert**

2:30-3:15 p.m. - in the Chapel

#### **\*Yom Kippur Afternoon Service**

3:15-4:45 p.m. - in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

#### **\*Yizkor Service**

4:45-5:45 p.m. – in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

#### **\*Neilah**

5:45-6:30 p.m. – in the Sanctuary and on Zoom

#### **\*Closing Havdalah**

6:30-6:45 p.m. – in Sanctuary and on Zoom

**Please Note — The Tent Service Has Been Moved to The James Prosnit Outdoor Community and Prayer Space**



## SCHEDULE THE CALL

BY CANTOR SCOTT HARRIS

Just in case you hadn't heard, the High Holy Days come "late" this year. Yes, that means that the 1<sup>st</sup> of *Tishrei*, the first day of *Rosh Hashanah* does not fall until October 2. Although we may see these High Holy Days as being late on the calendar, they come right on time.

I'm torn with these High Holy Days coming a little late. I feel it gives me a little extra time to prepare. Dates and times checked, and double/triple checked for tickets for Chris Rocha. Torah and Haftarah readers from last year to confirm and new people to engage. But the reality is that I have less time in some cases. I enjoy the summer, time with Sharon and the kids, my walks on the beach, and time to read and take slowly the heat and thunderstorm driven afternoons. I'm grateful that our calendar gives us an opportunity to take time out from the hustle of the year. Time to catch up with friends and take in a few extra summer days.

But here I am writing this article a week before *Tisha B'Av*, the 9<sup>th</sup> of Av, the day we commemorate the destruction of the two Temples in Jerusalem. This is the date I have marked on my calendar with notes from this past year and notes to remember in preparing for this coming High Holy Day season.

Notes from my Outlook calendar:

Prepare for *Leil S'lichot*: Saturday September 28 2024, Havdalah begins 7:45 PM @ TCS Westport, CT. See notes from Zoom Meeting with Rabbi Marion - July 25<sup>th</sup> w/Clergy from *Rodeph Shalom/Or Chadash / Beth El* Norwalk / TCS Westport

See notes from Zoom Meeting - August 1<sup>st</sup>/Zoom Call with Cantors: Musical Service changes for this year: Cantor's

creating a musical service to prepare and reflect: HHD and Israel.

I look forward to ushering in this season with the whole Jewish community.

Adult Choir: Our 1<sup>st</sup> Dinner/Rehearsal – Thursday August 22<sup>nd</sup> @ 5:30 PM Dinner followed by Rehearsal.

Coordinate with Alexa Cohen – *Kehilah* Teachers Orientation – Lots of people, Busy night!

See notes from meeting with Janet Rosen (Thursday July 18<sup>th</sup>) Prepare binders for choir.

Prepare binder for Barbara Rowe.

Copy Anne Kirsch's Binder of music, and email/notes from Ilana Ofgang for Mike Lantowski.

Sound Requirements: Neal Fink – Sanctuary/Tent/Beach – Have Pascom in to set the system: Doors open for testing – coordinate w/Eric Braisted.

*Erev Rosh Hashanah*: Beach Service: Wednesday October 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 5:30 PM Jennings Beach/Fairfield:

Dates for the band rehearsals: Rabbi Schultz, Rabbi Marion, Ilana Ofgang, Ben Bauscher, Scott Casher, Nathan Rosler. (3 rehearsals: Monday 9/9 – Monday 9/16 – Monday 9/23)

*Erev Rosh Hashanah*: Sanctuary Service: Wednesday October 2<sup>nd</sup> @ 7:45 PM

**MAKE SURE TO PARK NEAR EXIT AT THE BEACH**

Mark Edinberg (keyboard), Anat Shiloach (violin), and Judy Pressler (flute): Traditional *Erev Rosh Hashanah* music. (3 Rehearsals: August 22<sup>nd</sup> - September 22/23 - October 2<sup>nd</sup>)

*Kol Nidre*: **SHABBAT!!!** Friday October 11<sup>th</sup> @ 7:45 PM

Cellist: Rebecca Patterson. So grateful for the generous contribution to Temple

Fund to bring this each *Kol Nidre*.

*Simchat Torah*: Congregation/Kehillah – RADIO KLEZ, October 24<sup>th</sup> @ 4:30 PM Great *Kabbalat Shabbat* Service: August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Thank you!

Mark Edinberg, Anat Shiloach, Rebecca Blondin, Janet Rosen, George Sanders, Ben Bauscher, Scott Casher. We need to do that again!!! Next Radio Klez Shabbat: September 20<sup>th</sup>



Sukkot: Musician in Residence:  
**CANTOR**  
**BECKY MANN**  
October 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>  
**MARK YOUR**  
**CALENDAR**  
**Check out her**  
**Website...Loaded**

**with great music and videos**

<https://www.beckymannmusic.com/>

Sukkot Shabbat October 18<sup>th</sup> @ 7:00 PM Shabbat Morning Torah Study October 19<sup>th</sup>

Sunday Morning October 20<sup>th</sup>: Music with Kehilah followed by a Concert @ 11:15 AM

A composer, guitarist, and cantor, Becky Mann has been called "one of the brightest voices of a new generation of Jewish songwriters carrying our tradition forward in new and exciting ways." She is passionate about creating community through music and meaningful worship, and inspiring communities through her heartfelt interpretations of prayer. Becky serves as the Assistant Cantor at Temple Israel of Westport, CT, in addition to visiting Jewish communities across the country as an artist in residence.

Now I know that it just looks like any other list of tasks off a calendar, or parts

*Continued on page 9*



## ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER

# WELCOME BACK FROM THE EDUCATION CENTER!



It has been a steamy summer here at the Education Center and we are all looking forward to a fall filled with crisp, fresh air and fun for all the kids of Bonim and Kehilah.

By the time you read this article, Bonim will be in full swing. After a week of maintenance shutdown where the floors were waxed and the classrooms were scrubbed, the teachers participated in a week of staff development workshops to feed their minds and spirits (also their tummies as many lunches and breakfasts were provided). Earlier in the summer, through the generosity of a grant, the hallways, stairwells, and two classrooms were painted. On August 26, a fresh, clean Education Center opened for the first day of Bonim Preschool. In order to keep up with increasing demands of Infant Toddler Care, we decided to run two Infant Rooms for the 2024-2025 school year. One will be for our youngest

members (3 months to 10 months old) and the other will be geared to older infants (10 months to 16 months old). We are very excited to be able to be flexible with our classroom usage to meet the needs of our community. After all, our Infant Room is typically filled with siblings of current students and doesn't leave a lot of spaces open to new families. Stop by to check out our new classroom arrangements.

On September 8, Kehilah will kick off the 2024-2025 school year with our first day, followed by an all school family picnic. The Kehilah staff and B'nai Israel Choir joined together in late August for a combined dinner and short presentation by Peter Montagna on security at B'nai Israel. After the presentation, the choir began rehearsing for the High Holidays, and the Kehilah staff participated in our yearly staff orientation. We are thrilled to welcome new teachers in 2nd and

3rd grade as we say goodbye to Bonnie Alterman, who we thank for her many years of educating our Kehilah students. Thankfully, she is still willing to stay on as a substitute teacher. We are so grateful to her for her dedication and care. We worked this summer on the curriculum for all grades and continue to reimagine 7th grade, adding in field trips with the rabbis and leadership training with Bonnie Appel. Our hope is that after students have their Bet Mitzvah, they begin to work in the younger grades as junior hadrahaniks as part of their Sunday complement. Another fun new endeavor with the Kehilah students and families is "Shabbat"cuterie (like charcuterie with a Jewish flair), a special dinner for the upper grades in conjunction with grade level Kabbalat Shabbat services.

Looking forward to a great year in both schools!



Help Wanted – as we say goodbye to Marisa Underberger and thank her for her 10 years of dedicated work with our BIFTY teens, B'nai Israel is in need of an Interim BIFTY Advisor. The Youth Committee will be discussing what the future looks like for teens at B'nai Israel. In

the meantime, our BIFTY teens need an adult leader to help them continue planning programs and having fun each Thursday night.

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

### **Book of Remembrance**

The High Holy Days will be here before we know it! You should have received the Yizkor Book of Remembrance letter/form in August in the mail.

The Yizkor Book of Remembrance is created every year for the High Holy Days to honor our loved ones who have passed away. The booklets are given out at the Yom Kippur Yizkor Service and this year we will be mailing hard copies of the memorial booklet to anyone who requests one.

Yizkor Book of Remembrance forms were sent out in August and the deadline to return them is Wednesday, September 13. Please send in your form as soon as possible or visit our website [www.cbibpt.org](http://www.cbibpt.org) to complete the form online once it is available.

## HELP SPREAD DEMOCRACY: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT VOTING IN CT

### Congregation B'nai Israel Voting Team

Since 2018, the Voting Team has been advocating for 100% voter turnout among eligible voters from Congregation B'nai Israel. We continue to support statewide and national efforts to ensure that everyone eligible is registered and has access to voting.

### Register to Vote

If you aren't already registered — maybe you've recently moved from out of state or another town or you will be turning 18 by Election Day — please do it! To check if you are registered and where you vote on November 5, go to [myvote.ct.gov/lookup](http://myvote.ct.gov/lookup). To register to vote and change your address online by October 18, go to [voterregistration.ct.gov](http://voterregistration.ct.gov). You'll need a valid CT driver's license or state ID. You can also register in person every day of early voting and on Election Day.

### Vote in Person on Election Day, Tuesday, November 5

Polls are open from 6:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.

### Vote Early in Person

This year, you can **vote early in person from October 21–31 and November 1–3 from 10:00 a.m.–6:00 p.m.; and on October 29 and 31, 8:00 a.m.–8:00 p.m.** Each city/town will have at least one polling place open for early voting search for Early Voting – CT.gov

### Referendum on the November Ballot

In Connecticut, no excuse absentee voting requires a constitutional change. Currently, if you cannot make it to the polls in person, you must have a specific reason to receive an absentee ballot. As of this year, 36 states and the District of Columbia allow absentee voting without an excuse. In November, you will be able to vote on the question: *Shall the Constitution of the State be amended to permit the General Assembly to allow each voter to vote by absentee ballot?*

### Join a Postcard Writing Party at B'nai Israel

Help us write postcards as part of the Religious Action Center (RAC) Every Voice Every Vote Campaign. We will supply postcards, pens, mailing labels, and refreshments. We need you to help us write nonpartisan messages (provided by the RAC) to voters in other states. Plan to attend either or both of these postcard parties in the Pavilion on Monday, September 9 from 7:00–8:30 p.m. and Monday, September 23 from 7:00–8:30 p.m.

If you have questions or would like to join B'nai Israel's Voting Team, contact Barbara Edinberg ([bedinberg@gmail.com](mailto:bedinberg@gmail.com)) or Jeff Schwartz ([jeff.schwartz2991@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.schwartz2991@gmail.com)).

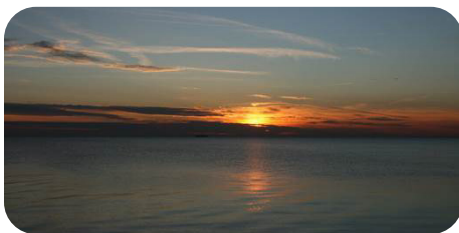


**Rosh Chodesh/ Women of B'nai Israel Present:**

**End of Summer Sisters' Schmooze and Sunset Qigong Workshop led by Sharon Okun**

**Tuesday, September 3, 6:15-8:15 p.m.**

(\*note change in start time from previous advertisements, and note change in date from what is listed in August bulletin\*\*)



**Location: Jennings Beach Fairfield Section J5** Join us on the beach for a sunset Sisters' Schmooze with our Rosh Chodesh/ Women of B'nai Israel community!

After some noshing and schmoozing, those who are interested are invited to participate in a special qigong workshop on the beach led by our congregant, Sharon Okun, Licensed Massage Therapist, Certified Life Coach, Qigong Teacher, and Certified Practice Teacher for Spring Forest Qigong (a type of Tai Chi).

Sharon will guide us in breathwork, mindful meditation, grounding techniques, and other simple activities designed relax our minds and bodies and prepare us for the start of the new Hebrew month of Elul (the month of self-reflection and introspection in preparation for the upcoming High Holidays), which begins at sunset that evening. 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 or Tai Chi.

*Light snacks and refreshments will be provided for all. Please bring your own beach chairs, and feel free to bring your own dinner to enjoy on the beach with our community. No RSVP required. Beach stickers not required for parking after Labor Day. For questions, please contact Rabbi Sarah at [smarion@cbibpt.org](mailto:smarion@cbibpt.org)*

### Save the Date!

**Mark Your Calendars for our Fall 2024**

**Rosh Chodesh Gatherings:**

**Thursday, November 14**

**Thursday, December 12**

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

*The mission of Women of B'nai Israel is to bring together women of all ages to serve our temple, support our community, and enrich our lives through social events, educational and spiritual programs, fundraising and community service.*

# SEPTEMBER DONATIONS

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

## **Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund**

**Barbara Flom**, in honor of the aliyahs at Andrew Nathanson's bar mitzvah, a very special day and a wonderful accomplishment.

**Robert & Stacy Giglietti**, in loving memory of Patricia Giglietti.

**Aleksey & Raisa Ledvich**, in memory of our family members, grandfathers Rahmiel Ledvich & Max Dovolsky and aunt Noemi Dovolskaya.

**Ilya & Nicole Provornov**, in appreciation to Rabbi Schultz for officiating Judy Rosen's funeral.

**Randy & Beth Reich**, in memory of our mother and grandmother, Vivienne Zimmer Goldstein.

**Marshall & Myra Watnick**, in memory of Michael Miller, brother of Andi Kern, so sorry for your loss.

**Kenneth & Rita Weinstein**, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

## **Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund**

**Judith Stern**, in memory of beloved husband and father, Bruce Stern.

## **Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund**

**Randy & Beth Reich**, in memory of our mother and grandmother, Beatrice Reich Burchman.

## **Rabbi James Prosnit Discretionary Fund**

**Arnie & Serena Sher**, in honor of Wendy Bloch & Jim Prosnit's 50th anniversary.

## **Music Fund**

**Eric & Ruth Gross**, mazel tov to Melanie & Geoff Kooris on the appointment of their son David to head the state municipal redevelopment fund.

**Jeffrey & Barbara Orell**, in loving memory of Michael A. Miller, brother of Andrea Kern.

**Arnie & Serena Sher**, in memory of Michael Miller, beloved brother & uncle.

## **Enhancement Fund**

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

**Michael & Joni Greenspan**, in remembrance of the yahrzeit of Sylvia Greenspan.

## **Bonim Preschool Enrichment Fund**

**Carl & Naomi Erwich**, in memory of Paul Kane, father of Rebecca Solinsky, grandfather of Miriam and James.

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

**Fredric & Renee Beitman**, in memory of Susan Kasson's father, Edgar.

**Samuel Miller & family**, in memory of the yahrzeit of Joseph Kot.

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**Jennifer Mager**, with thanks.

## **Vision Loan Reduction Fund**

**Ellen Sheiman**, in memory of Robert Sheiman, beloved husband & father.

## **Kesher Project**

**Pertrinea Renee Cash**, in honor of Daniel Freeman.

**Mark & Barbara Edinberg**, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

**William Greenspan**, in honor of Danny Freeman's birthday.

**Carol Krim**, in loving memory of Michael Krim.

**Arlene Kyler**, in honor of Dan Freeman's 37th & one to grow on!

**Amy, Jeff, Hannah, and Jacob Pressman**, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

## **The George Markley Chesed Fund**

**David Abbey & Debbie Goodman**, in memory of Sherry Portnoy's father, Arnold Portnoy.

**Carl & Naomi Erwich**, in loving memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

**Robert & Paula Herzlinger**, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

**Sheila Kaminsky**, in memory of Sherry Portnoy's father, Arnold.

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

## **Charles Fried Keshet Fund**

**Jeff & Jackie Madwed**, in memory of Arnold Portnoy, father of Sherry Portnoy.

**Glenn & Amy Rich**, in memory of Myron Schlesinger on his yahrzeit.

## **Yozma Fund**

**Jack & Sandy Germaine**, in memory of Marianne Silverman.

September 20, 2024

6:00 p.m.

Join us as we honor Marisa Underberger for 10 years as our BIFTY Advisor and Youth Engagement Professional. Marisa has been an incredible mentor, role model, and guide for so many of our teens. Join us as we offer Marisa a special blessing at Shabbat services!

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## SCHEDULE THE CALL ..... CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

for the bulletin, but there is something that I don't have written down, and not because I don't need to be reminded of this.

I need to prepare myself. Every day from *Tisha B'Av* until *Selichot*, I'll be thinking about who I am, and what I've done. Yes, I know that I told you I did that during the Counting of the *Omer*; from *Pesach* to *Shavuot*, but that was me looking inward. This is now about me looking out into the world around me. To the people and those of my community I've interacted with. To truly prepare, I need to do this now. For me to stand on the Bima *Erev Rosh Hashanah* and say, "*Hineini*" – "here I am", to pray and lead this congregation as a *Shliach Tzibbur* is not an entry on my Outlook calendar to be entered as a task. It is about who I am, a responsibility that I've never taken lightly, and to be sure, Sharon would say that I'm much too hard on myself. But if I'm not my harshest critic, who knows me deeper...that would be the *One* I'll be standing before.

Abraham answers God's call eagerly with the words "*Hineni*" – "I am here."

Abraham was prepared for that call. His relationship with *Adonai* was not a date and time listed on his Palm Pilot. (I put this in just to see if you're still here.)

We blow the *shofar* every day during the month of *Elul*. This is the call, in case we get distracted from the spiritual preparation we should be doing, the sound of the *shofar* reminds us of the tasks of *Elul*. Many may not hear the shofar every day of this month of *Elul*, but we can take the time to make ourselves ready to at least hear the call on *Rosh Hashanah*.

(Side Note: Want to learn to blow the Shofar? Call or stop by...more than happy to get you started.)

There's really so much to do between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, and not nearly enough time to ask every person in my world to forgive me and to say that I forgive them. There are not nearly enough opportunities to acknowledge to them that I've fallen short in my personal and professional life; that I've not lived up to expectations that I've set for myself, and that others have expected of me. The Gates are open, but only for a short time now. You should know I've tried, and

that I'm trying now; and with everything happening in the world around us, I'll keep trying; I have faith and hope. Rabbi Schultz's writings help, and I hope that you've checked out Barefoot Rabbi.

I'm thankful for many things, and I hope you understand that I make it through the High Holy Days and Festivals with the help and contributions from so many people. I'll have the opportunity to tell them leading up to this season.

The only good thing about the High Holy Days coming later, is that the *Kehilah* teachers and students are back, and I'll have the opportunity to see them all.

Will I make the time and create an opportunity to tell you? This is the task that I'm adding in my Outlook calendar.

Sharon; our children, Danny, Michael, Sarah Blake; and our grand-daughters, Sadie, Remi, Stella, and Abigail join me in wishing each of you a happy, healthy, and peaceful New Year.

---

## HIGH HOLIDAYS 2024/5785 ..... CONTINUED FROM COVER

### Tent Services

This new location for the tent will hold about 150 congregants, nearly half as many as could be accommodated on the Park Avenue side. Seating will be first come, first served as always, but everyone should note that it may be harder to secure a seat. If the tent reaches capacity, congregants will be directed to join the service in the sanctuary. Additionally, congregants will be directed to enter the tent through the front entrance of the building rather than walking along Park Avenue.

### Tickets

Tickets will be delivered to congregants in good financial standing as they have been in the past, and we expect to send tickets out on or around September 2. For congregants making last-minute payments or resolving issues, we are

establishing a cutoff date of September 25 for Rosh Hashanah and September 30 for Yom Kippur to allow office staff sufficient time to process payments. We will not be able to accommodate payment processing or ticketing after the cutoff dates. If you have satisfied payment requirements before September 25 and have not received your tickets by then, contact the temple office at (203)336-1858 immediately. Your tickets will be available at the will call table if there was not enough time to mail them to you. Anyone in arrears will not receive tickets — for questions regarding this issue, or to request contribution assistance, contact our Financial Secretary at [mnigrosh@cbibpt.org](mailto:mnigrosh@cbibpt.org).

Please note that NO TICKETS will be available on the day of services for purchase in the office. The Temple

office will be closed on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

### Havurah Services

This year attendance at Havurah (ages 0-5) requires a sign up. RSVP to Alexa Cohen at [acohen@cbibpt.org](mailto:acohen@cbibpt.org).

Thank you for helping us out as we do our best to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone in our community at High Holy Days this year.

Shanah Tovah!

Evelyn Rubak and Debbie Viens,  
High Holy Day Chairs  
Richard Walden, President  
Rabbi Evan Schultz  
Rabbi Sarah Marion  
Cantor Scott Harris  
Alexa Cohen, Director of Education

# SHABBAT SERVICE SCHEDULE

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

## Friday, September 6

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Deuteronomy 16:18–21:9  
Haftarah – Isaiah  
51:12–52:12

## Saturday, September 7

8:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah Retreat  
(until 12:15 p.m.)  
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, September 13

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service w/  
ReConnect - in person and  
on Zoom, followed by a  
Shabbat Congregational  
Dinner (see weekly email  
for details)  
Torah Portion –  
Deuteronomy 21:10–25:19  
Haftarah – Isaiah 54:1–10

## Saturday, September 14

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast  
9:30 a.m. Torah Study –  
in person and on Zoom  
11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Blake  
Sweedler, son of David &  
Elora Sweedler

## Friday, September 20

6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service – in  
person and on Zoom,  
honoring Marisa  
Underberger for 10  
years as our BIFTY  
Advisor and Youth  
Engagement Professional  
Torah Portion –  
Deuteronomy 26:1–29:8  
Haftarah – Isaiah 60:1–22

## Saturday, September 21

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

9:30 a.m. Torah Study –  
in person and on Zoom  
11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Alexandra  
Ortiz, daughter of David  
& Hillary Ortiz

## Friday, September 27

5:00 p.m. Consecration  
(until 6:00 p.m.)  
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Deuteronomy  
29:9–30:20, 31:1–30  
Haftarah –  
Isaiah 61:10–63:9

## Saturday, September 28

8:00 a.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast  
9:30 a.m. Torah Study –  
in person and on Zoom  
11:00 a.m. Bet Mitzvah of Annabelle  
Agosta, daughter of Mike  
& Alexandra Agosta

The B'nai Israel Caring Committee makes shiva calls to our members and drops off meals and challah to those who are ill, bereaved, or overwhelmed. We also bring meals to members who are new parents. We make calls and visits to those members who may be homebound and could use some company. We drive members to services for those who are unable to drive. The committee is always looking for volunteers. Even if you can only do one of these mitzvot a single time, or maybe just a few times a year, we welcome your help.

If you know of anyone who would like or need any of these services, please let us know. We are here to help the B'nai Israel community.  
If you are interested in volunteering with our Caring Committee, please reach out to Rabbi Sarah Marion at [smarion@cbibpt.org](mailto:smarion@cbibpt.org).

## SCAM ALERT

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



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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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# A LOOK BACK, A LOOK FORWARD

BY BETH LAZAR, CO-CHAIR, MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TEAM

September is the last month of summer and of the Jewish year 5784. As this year ends and the Jewish New Year 5785 approaches, the Mental Health Awareness Team takes a look back and a look forward. Our Team's mission is to fight stigma and to advocate for more services and resources for people dealing with mental illness. Though we support legislative bills and actions such as the federal funding of the 988 Emergency Mental Health Phonenumber, our main focus is fighting stigma. Fighting stigma requires love and understanding, and that cannot be legislated. A spiritual community is needed to cultivate such attributes. That is why the Mental Health Awareness Team focus is within Congregation B'nai Israel, and not about membership in a national advocacy organization. We want to change hearts and minds to create an environment where all feel safe, secure, and comfortable discussing mental health issues without stigma or fear of repercussion. We do this through education, such as bulletin articles, speakers, and films. We also provide opportunities for people to learn about and discuss mental health together at events, such as field trips and an annual Mental Health Awareness Shabbat with a service, dinner, and speaker. **Save the date: next year's Mental Health Awareness Shabbat is Friday, May 9, 2025.**

Other exciting events to look out for in the Jewish New Year include:

1. **A mental health, banned book discussion.** We'll read and discuss the short story "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, a harrowing tale of a woman's descent into madness, led by Marj Freeman.

2. **Film: *Orchestrating Change*,** a documentary about a professional orchestra where the conductor and the majority of the musicians are people who have a mental illness. There is a hefty fee to download this film, but due to a generous donation by Mental Health

Awareness Team member Purim King, we will be able to present it. We will continue to hold monthly Zoom meetings to "check in" and have a speaker on mental health. The Zoom link can be found in the weekly Hashavua. If you would like to give a mental health presentation at a monthly Zoom meeting or write a mental health article for the CBI bulletin, please attend our monthly Zoom meeting to pitch your idea.

In the new year, take good care of your mental health. Please attend B'nai Israel's Mental Health Awareness Team events and consider becoming a member.

Wishing you GOOD physical, mental, and spiritual health. A sweet new year, love and shalom,

Beth

## Highlights 5784

(September 2023–September 2024)

### This year's accomplishments:

- **Monthly Zoom Meetings:** Originally to cover business and "check-ins" reporting our feelings. We recently added guest speaker presentations, suggested by Louise Bobrow. Al Dressler presented on "Yoga and Mental Health." Rabbi Sarah Marion presented what she's learning in the Fairfield University Mental Health Counseling Program. On June 4, Purim King presented "Reduce Your Stress and Up Your Energy." New member Marci Perlberg shared "My Mental Health Journey" about how working out at the gym not only improved her physical health but also gave her peace of mind.

- **Monthly Bulletin Articles:** about mental health in general or specifically about an upcoming Mental Health Awareness Team event.

- **A Field Trip to Yale Art Gallery's exhibit *Munch and Kirchner: Anxiety and Expression*:** Seventeen congregants carpooled to New Haven to enjoy lunch together at Claire's restaurant and attend

a docent-led tour of Yale Art Gallery with a focus on mental health and the art of Munch and Kirchner.

- **Mental Health Shabbat/Dinner/Speaker:** Congregant Dr. Tara Kerner spoke about "Behavioral Change to Manage Depression" and mental health in general during Friday night Shabbat services and an after-dinner discussion. Fifty-five people attended the dinner and discussion. Others attended on Zoom.

- **Mental Health Awareness Team Group Art Exhibit:** in CBI lobby for May Mental Health Awareness Month.

- **B'nai Film Fest, Summer 2023:** We presented the documentary film *Crip Camp* about the disability rights movement. Kimberly Jacobsen of the CT Commission on Human Rights spoke after the film. Sixty people attended.

- **B'nai Film Fest, Summer 2024:** Forty people attended the showing of the documentary *My Name is Pauli Murray*. Murray was a Black feminist, civil rights lawyer, activist, poet, teacher, reverend, and author of two books, who checked herself into a psych ward/mental health hospital on multiple occasions. CBI Congregant Attorney Rod Brown spoke after the film.

- **Team Picnic/Social gathering/Planning Meeting:** We met in August 2024 for a potluck lunch and planning meeting at Marj Freeman's lakeside house.

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FOOD  
GOOD  
MOOD



## KESHER CORNER

July has been the most magical month of the year for the Lee and David Lester Drama Club for All Abilities. On July 25, we were invited to perform *Our Beautiful World* for three group homes and family and friends. We were outdoors under a canopy wearing our new KESHER

PLAYERS t-shirts, donated by Carson and Robert Berkowitz.

Everyone knew their parts well and sang together. The cast knew to look at me for direction and the JOY was evident. We've been invited to perform for our

synagogue, and we hope to expand the play to include the older children in Kehilah and Chug.

Here are some photos from the day:



On a sad note we want to share that Sherry Portnoy will be moving forward in her career and will no longer be sharing her expertise with us. We wish her success in everything she does and will miss her.

6:45-8:30 p.m. at B'nai Israel and hope you can find one or two dates that work for you. Upcoming dates: September 19, November 21, December 19, January 16, February 20, March 20, April 17, May 15, and June 5.

Please contact me with any questions or suggestions.

Thank you.

Rhea Farbman  
rheasmusic@icloud.com

We are looking for volunteers for the 2024-2025 in-person events. We meet once a month on Thursday evenings from

Donations are always welcome and can be made online or in the synagogue office.

## TIKKUN OLAM COMMITTEE

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

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

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

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

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