

## FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS

Rabbi Schultz explores this week's Torah passage where we learn of the rescue of baby Moses, which can inspire us to live in a more meaningful way. Page 3

Rabbi Marion teaches us of the significance of Miriam in Moses' story, but also how she emerges as a leader along with other women of her era. Page 5

Alexa Cohen shares with us highlights of the confirmation class trip to Washington, D.C. as part of the Religious Action Center's L'Taken Seminar. Page 6

Rhea Farbman invites us to the second annual Disability Shabbat on March 28, which will feature author Mary Elizabeth Harrison as speaker. Page 15



### Also Inside

Shabbat Service Schedule.....	Page 4
Upcoming Events.....	Page 7
Donations .....	Pages 8-9
Mental Health Awareness....	Page 11
Run For Their Lives.....	Page 16

## REPRO SHABBAT ON FEBRUARY 21-22 WITH GUEST SCHOLAR & SPEAKER RABBI LEAH BERKOWITZ

Join us for Repro Shabbat, as we join with hundreds of other synagogues and Jewish communities across the country to participate in the National Council of Jewish Women's "Repro Shabbat." Repro Shabbat is an important opportunity to focus our communal attention on the issues of Reproductive Freedom and Reproductive Justice. Repro Shabbat takes place annually when we read Parshat Mishpatim, the portion of the Torah containing verses used as the foundation for Judaism's support of reproductive health, rights, and justice.

### Friday, February 21

#### 6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service with Rabbi Berkowitz

During services, Rabbi Berkowitz will discuss "Sometimes Abortion is How We Choose Life"

#### 7:15 p.m. Congregational Shabbat Dinner - \$25 pp\*

#### 8:15 p.m. Text Study & Discussion with Rabbi Berkowitz

"Before I Formed You in the Womb, I Knew You (Jeremiah 1:5):  
Jewish Perspectives on Personhood"

### Saturday, February 22

#### 9:30 a.m. Torah Study with Rabbi Berkowitz

"Be Fruitful and Multiply: Who is Obligated? Jewish Perspectives on Birth Control"



Leah Rachel Berkowitz is a rabbi, teacher, and author living in Philadelphia, PA. Leah teaches for Laasok.org, the Jewish Learning Collaborative, and the Union for Reform Judaism. Each summer, she serves on the faculty at the URJ 6 Points Creative Arts Academy. She is a Jewish Studio Project Fellow, a Rukin Rabbinic Fellow at 18 Doors (formerly Interfaith Family), and a Past President of the Women's Rabbinic Network. During her time in New York, she served on the Clergy Advisory Board for Concerned Clergy for Choice, and she is currently helping the National Council of Jewish Women develop a resource on Birth Control in the Jewish Tradition. She has contributed to *The Torah: A*

*Women's Commentary*, *The Sacred Calling: Four Decades of Women in the Rabbinate*, and several of the CCAR Press prayer books and anthologies. She is the author of three children's books and the co-author of the middle-grade midrash collection *Maybe It Happened This Way: Bible Stories Reimagined* (with Erica Wovsaniker). You can find her on social media @rabbilrb or online at leahrachelberkowitz.com

**\* Sign up for Shabbat Dinner on ShulCloud Event!**

## 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.

**Robert & Allison Sasson and Leah & Clara**

Fairfield, CT

**Michael & Marina Melnikov and Meeka & Joshua**

Fairfield, CT

## SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved family of:

**Ann Nishball**

## BULLETIN BOARD

For more information, please contact [judygblumenthal@gmail.com](mailto:judygblumenthal@gmail.com). And be on the lookout for a SignUp Genius published in Hashavua and on the CBI website. We look forward to seeing you there.

Here are some photos of our mitzvah morning volunteers at Our Woven Community (OWC) at the Burroughs Community Center on January 12. This program provides resettled women refugees an opportunity to become self-sufficient leaders. It teaches the artists to use sewing machines to make a variety of products. For more information, visit [www.burroughscenter.org](http://www.burroughscenter.org).



### FEBRUARY MITZVAH MORNING

**Sunday, February 9**

For our February Mitzvah Morning event, we will be partnering with the JFS Schoke Mobile Food Truck team. On February 9 at 10:00 a.m., we will meet at B'nai Israel, where we will learn about the various programs offered by Schoke Jewish Family Services as well as volunteer opportunities with the organization.

Together we will fill and label spice bottles for individual and family use. Many of the families served by JFS Schoke do not have access to spices and seasonings, so these bottles are highly appreciated. We will have 300+ spice jars on hand to be filled.

This is a great opportunity to provide much-needed supplies to our community members who need them most while building bonds with your fellow B'nai Israel members.

### MONTHLY BIFTY TEEN HANGOUTS WITH RABBI SARAH! Open to all teens in Grades 8-12

Join us in the BIFTY lounge once a month to hang out with friends (snacks are always included)! Whether you have been to BIFTY in the past or are new to BIFTY this year, all are welcome to join. See below for dates. All meetings will take place from 7:00 p.m – 8:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 6 and Thursday, March 6

### JUDAICA BOUTIQUE

The Judaica Boutique carries a lot of different Judaica. Need a tallit for an upcoming Mitzvah? The boutique has a nice selection. Want a shofar, candlesticks, or a new kiddush cup? You can find a good assortment at the Judaica boutique. Looking for a hostess gift? The shop has a lot to choose from. Open on Sundays during Hebrew school or call the Temple office for assistance.



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**B'NAI ISRAEL**  
**WOMEN'S SEDER**  
**Sunday, March 30, 2025**

Invite to follow. If you would like to get involved, please reach out to: [Jodi Mantell \(jimmanatell@gmail.com\)](mailto:jimmanatell@gmail.com) or [Liane May \(lianemay@gmail.com\)](mailto:lianemay@gmail.com).





FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

## EXODUS: MOSES AND A-NOMOS

What does it mean to be born into a world of unknowing and uncertainty? Such is the question answered this week as we explore the second book of the Torah, Exodus, or *Sh'mot*. Early on we are introduced to baby Moses, who is born into a world where Egyptian midwives are instructed by Pharaoh to cast every Israeli male child into the river.

Moses survives this cruel decree, as his mother hides him as long as she can, until finally she sets him among the reeds at the edge of the Nile River. Moses' sister, Miriam, keeps her gaze fixed on her baby brother after he is placed into the river, so that she can see for herself what becomes of him.

Finally, baby Moses is discovered by Pharaoh's daughter, who sees this young child in the basket as she is bathing in the Nile. She is stirred to compassion, and takes in Moses, who is ultimately raised in the palace of her father, the Pharaoh.

Miriam's desire to know what happens to her brother is contrasted by living in a world of "not knowing." As Bible scholar Aviva Zornberg points out in her book chronicling the life of Moses, "the narrative of Exodus begins, 'A new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph.' The policies of genocide begin here," she writes.

*In the amnesia of a new king, the gratitude owed to Joseph, who had saved Egypt from famine, is forgotten, and with it all the ethical consciousness. Suddenly, without warning, the shadows of envy, hatred, and murder begin to gather.*

*Whether he was actually a new king or a transformed one, it is difficult to imagine that he would not know Joseph; that he would not remember him or at least his historical impact. So Samuel allows for the possibility of repression, the strategy of un-knowing what one knows. "He made himself as though he did not know." He actively refused his own knowledge. Pharaoh's mind numbs itself so as not to know.*

Our ancient rabbis, in midrash, pick up on this theme of knowing and not knowing in the early stages of Pharaoh's reign and later on in the world that Moses is born into. The climate of *Mitzrayim* (Egypt in Hebrew) is one of not knowing, not seeing, not hearing, not speaking. Conceived in mystical terms, *Mitzrayim* is the site of *meitzarim*, straits, in which possibilities of memory, communication, and understanding are narrowed.

I needn't tell you how this resonates in the world we've crafted. I'm sure all of us see firsthand, or are guilty ourselves, of selectively knowing and not knowing. By which books we read, which people we talk to, whom we follow on social media, the news programs we watch and news sources we read. We are in a world without a reliable order, similar to the world into which Moses was born.

As author Gil Rendle notes,

*What we have now is not clear. We are in a culture that is not settled. It is a world without coherence, without a reliable*

*order. It is a time a-nomos, without order. We have moved on what we know. In many ways we live in the narrow straits of the metaphorical mitzrayim. What is the solution?*

One at a time. We often think we have to singlehandedly push the narrowness apart to create a wider space. To save humanity. Or the environment. Or make sweeping changes. Think about Moses' mother. And Miriam. And Pharaoh's daughter. Just one life they saved. And look what he grew up to become.

All with their desire to know. To know this little boy. To see him through. To watch over him. How might we be like them? To widen the narrowness just a little bit? To tend a small garden? Or listen to someone we do not know? Or volunteer with a local organization? Or donate to a charity we wish to know better?

In Exodus, we read of our people's story from slavery to freedom. Of massive events like the crossing of the sea and the Ten Commandments. But how did it all begin? With one single act of knowing. Of saving one life. And passing him to another. And to another. Such begins our journey through the narrowness; as we set intentions each night, we think about how we might create a world of greater knowing, lesser narrowness, and single deeds of life-saving impact.

## 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, February 7

5:30 p.m. Oneg  
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service,  
The Sabbath of Song  
– in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Exodus 13:17–17:16  
Haftarah –  
Judges 4:4-5:31

### Saturday, February 8

NO Shabbat Service  
NO Brotherhood Breakfast  
NO Torah Study  
11:00 a.m. Adult Bet Mitzvah of  
Mary-Megan Marshall

### Friday, February 14

5:30 p.m. Oneg  
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Exodus 18:1–20:23  
Haftarah –  
Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:5-6

### Saturday, February 15

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, February 21

5:30 p.m. Oneg  
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Exodus 21:1–24:18  
Haftarah –  
Jeremiah 34:8-22; 33:25-26  
7:15 p.m. Repro Shabbat Dinner

### Saturday, February 22

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 Zachary  
Hudes, son of Harvey &  
Beth Hudes

### Friday, February 28

5:30 p.m. Oneg  
6:00 p.m. Shabbat Service –  
in person and on Zoom  
Torah Portion –  
Exodus 25:1–27:19  
Haftarah – II Kings 12:5-16

### Saturday, March 1

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

**Our synagogue Caring Committee is able to help provide rides to and from services to congregants in need of assistance. If you are in need of a ride to temple for Shabbat or another synagogue event, please reach out to Chris Rocha at [crocha@cbibpt.org](mailto:crocha@cbibpt.org) or call the temple office.**

## HIGH HOLY DAY APPEAL DONATIONS

**President's Circle**  
Michael & Judith Green  
Blumenthal

**High Holy Day Appeal Donation**  
David & Judith Pressler

## SHABBAT SHIRAH

In the American Jewish community *Shabbat Shirah* was designated as such by the Jewish National Fund in 1949.

In celebration of Jewish music, we remember — our songs define us, a song, perhaps old, perhaps new, perhaps in Hebrew or English, for us to learn and sing together.

With song we give voice to our yearnings, our joys, and our sorrows.

With song we tell our stories, recall the past, and look to the future.

We invite you to join us on Shabbat evening, **February 7**, as our Adult Choir leads us in song and prayer.



# MIRIAM'S MUSICAL LEGACY AND THE ROLE OF WOMEN AT THE SEA

BY RABBI MARION

When we first meet Miriam, she is all wrapped up in Moses' perilous birth story. As the wise and protective big sister who watches and waits for her brother to float safely down the Nile, it was perhaps Miriam who coined the phrase, "Behind every great man, there is a great woman."

But the next time Miriam encounters water, she rises as a leader in her own right, taking her place alongside her brothers at the forefront of the Israelite community.

Our tradition suggests a variety of explanations for our ancestors' successful passage from slavery to freedom via the raging Red Sea waters. Miriam, unquestionably, played a tremendous role throughout it all. While her brothers were relying on God's majesty and God's might to usher the people forward, Miriam discovered music as another way to lead and inspire.

Exodus 15 recounts the "Song of the Sea," the words of thanksgiving that the Israelites chanted after crossing the Red Sea. Though the "Song of the Sea" is often attributed to Moses, other scholars place Miriam and the Israelite women at the center of its creation.

*The Women's Torah Commentary*, a rich and important compilation of female scholarship, suggests the following:

*Many modern scholars suggest that the "Song of the Sea" was created and performed by women. Beginning in the mid-20th century, a considerable body of literary, historical, sociological and musicological evidence has been amassed to suggest that the song should be attributed to Miriam. For example, one ancient manuscript tradition even calls it the "Song of Miriam."*

By the song's concluding verses, there is no doubt that Miriam and the women were

the principal players during this pivotal moment of our story:

*Then Miriam, the Prophet, Aaron's sister, picked up a hand drum and all the women went out after her in dance with hand drums. And Miriam chanted for them: Sing to Adonai, for God has triumphed gloriously; horse and driver God has hurled into the sea. (Exodus 15:20-21)*

And not only did Miriam and the women have the foresight to lead and inspire with music, but they had the foresight to pack their hand drums in the first place! Like many of our own mothers today, these mothers also knew how to prepare for a long journey.

The ancient Israelites who imagined our biblical stories drew upon their own lived experiences and realities. And so, the image of Miriam and the women leading with song and dance can be read as a paradigm for all the Miriams and all the women in ancient Israel who used music to impact and influence their society. As *The Women's Torah Commentary* continues,

*It was apparently customary in ancient Israel for women to welcome victorious armies with victory songs. Accomplished female musicians would have earned the esteem of their community. Also, groups of female performers likely would have met together to practice their instruments and compose songs for specific occasions, which would have provided occasions for female bonding and for women to exert organizational skills and mentor younger performers.*

Miriam's legacy continues to relate to our own lives, especially during our own moments of transitions and "sea

crossings." As Rabbi Patricia Karlin-Newman so poignantly writes in *The Women's Torah Commentary*:

*Miriam's strong voice had been heard previously only as a sister and daughter. Yet, at her sea crossing, emerging from the waters, she does not wait for someone else to change the world. She does not demur that she was not bred for greatness. She does not blend into the crowd. Instead, Miriam's voice rings out for all to hear. In the waters of transition, Miriam sparks innovation, creativity and hope, rooted in the past yet focused on the future, just like contemporary women leaders. Today's women face our own sea crossings. We too can choose to enter the water with quiet certitude, brash impulsiveness, or terror at what lies ahead. Or, we may decide to hang back, looking around for someone else to go in front. Eventually, when we enter, however we enter, we, and our world, are transformed.*

Cantor Harris and I hope to see you on Friday, February 7, for Shabbat Shira: the Shabbat on which we reach the "Song of the Sea" in our Torah and celebrate with a beautiful and inspiring musical Shabbat service led by our B'nai Israel Choir. On Shabbat Shira, the Sabbath of Song, we will once again celebrate the richness of music at B'nai Israel and the many talented musicians and singers within our community who continuously inspire us to "enter the waters" of our lives.

In so many ways, the "sea waters" at this moment in time feel stronger, more complicated, and more perilous than ever before. But rather than holding back or looking around for someone else to take the lead, may we, like Miriam, believe in our own potential and never delay our efforts to help change the world.





ALEXA COHEN/DIRECTOR OF THE EDUCATION CENTER

# THE 10TH GRADE B'NAI ISRAEL MERKAZ CONFIRMATION CLASS TAKES ON WASHINGTON D.C.



As you walk through the hall outside the library at B'nai Israel you may notice all the framed pictures of teenagers dating back to 1915. Those beloved photographs are of all the confirmation classes from years past. Although I am sure it has evolved over the years, the one thing that holds true is that it is a special time for kids as they navigate the world as Jewish teens.

Personally, I have never had the opportunity to spend a lot of time with our confirmation students. Sure, I have been a substitute teacher in their 10th grade class and know many of them from their preschool years as well as holidays and events around the synagogue, but this year I was invited to join the group for their annual trip to Washington, D.C., to participate in the Religious Action Center's L'Taken Seminar.

On the windy and cold morning of December 13, Lilah, Kylie, Julia, and I (Lucy joined us on Saturday) boarded the train to our nation's capital to join 300 teenagers from across the country to learn about public policy issues and explore Jewish values that inform the Reform Movement's advocacy around these issues.

L'Taken means "to repair" in Hebrew, and each attendee of the seminar has the opportunity to impact and begin to repair our country as they share their views on social justice topics with decision makers on Capitol Hill. The Religious Action Center (RAC) explains it as follows:

*The weekend will give you the knowledge and tools to write an effective, persuasive and passionate speech on a topic of your choice to present to your Senators and Representatives. This unique experience can have a significant impact on the course of legislation, as members of Congress have chosen to co-sponsor, offer amendments to, and vote for pieces of legislation that participants discussed.*

The weekend is not all about all work and no play (although they do keep you busy). Some of the most important moments of the weekend happen as the kids get to know each other while participating in workshops around economic justice, climate change, antisemitism, and mental health. In these workshops, the teens get the chance to role-play to see how these issues impact our country and its people. One particularly

eye-opening workshop had the teens follow the path of a marginalized group of low income (or no income) people who try to get food and housing through the social service system. Even though they seem to follow all the rules, they cannot get what they need. There are obstacles everywhere they turn. During the discussion afterwards, many teens expressed their frustration and could not understand how this was fair. They bonded over how they could help change policies that could change the course of others' lives. The teens also joined the group chatting at meals, shopping in Georgetown, and visiting the Air and Space and Holocaust museums.

We learned new songs and chants and were all lifted up by the meaningful Shabbat services. On Saturday night, we all boarded busses for the Lincoln Memorial, and although the wind was strong and kept

*Continued on page 11*



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Puzzled by Prayer with Cantor Harris



Have you felt unsure or lost due to a lack of understanding of the meaning of the prayers we say? Would you like to know more about the structure of our prayers and why they were included in the prayer

book? Would you like to find meaning in what your children/grandchildren are learning during services? Do you have limited time to give to a course about Jewish prayer?

If the answer to any of these questions is “yes,” or if you are simply curious, join me for a three-part mini course on Jewish prayer, using our *Mishkan T’filah* Shabbat evening service as the text. Each session will stand on its own, and in any given week — you can choose whether to attend the morning or evening session.

**Tuesday, February 11**  
noon or 7:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, February 25**  
noon or 7:00 p.m.

Check Hashavua or contact the temple office to confirm dates and times.

### Lunch with Amit

**February 18 and March 11**  
1:00–2:00 p.m.  
Pavilion

*Please RSVP to amit@shalomct.org*

Join for an informal monthly lunch session with our Israeli Emissary, Amit Swisa. Bring your lunch and your questions about Israel. This is a great opportunity to connect with Israel and ask about current events, life in Israel, and everything in between!

### NextGen Family Day

NextGen is so excited to announce that we will be hosting our first offsite family day of the year! Please join us **February 23 at 2:00 p.m.** at Elicit Brewing Company — all family members welcome. Rachel Whitmore and I will be at a table starting at 2:00 p.m.

We will be selling wristbands for \$10. This money will go to the charity of our choosing! With your bracelet you will receive: \$2 off all Elicit drafts and \$2 off boneless wings and pizza. There is no requirement to purchase a bracelet, you are more than welcome to just come in and join the fun!

**No need to RSVP!** If you have any friends who have been considering joining the synagogue, sending their kids to Bonim or Kehilah, or you think would be a perfect fit for our community, please let them know about this event! You are also welcome to connect them with me beforehand.

Stay tuned for upcoming events for the rest of the year! If you are interested in getting involved as a chair or in a leadership role, please reach out to Rebekah Rosler at rrosler.cbibpt@gmail.com.

### Rosh Chodesh February/Adar Gathering: “L’chaim and Laughter”

With Cara Erdheim Kilgallen,  
Professor at Sacred Heart University

**Thursday, February 27**  
7:15–9:00 p.m.

*Please RSVP on ShulCloud event*  
<https://tinyurl.com/yutdywa2> or to **Ilene Feuerberg** at [ifeuerberg@cbibpt.org](mailto:ifeuerberg@cbibpt.org) and, if you are able, please bring a light dessert or snack to share.



The Hebrew month of Adar, the month in which we celebrate Purim, is known as a time of merriment, laughter, and joy. The Holocaust survivor and psychologist Victor Frankl once wrote that “the ability to laugh stands as a vital protection of sanity and a mighty form of resistance.” Join us for a special evening with Cara Erdheim Kilgallen, Jewish professor at Sacred Heart University and B’nai Israel congregant, who will explore the centrality of humor, and Jewish comedy in particular, to human survival and dignity. As a teacher and scholar of literature, Cara will speak about how humor studies — an ever-growing field — can enhance us personally and professionally. As a Jewish professor at a Catholic university, she will also focus on

Jewish comedy as a strong source of interfaith education, noting the ways in which humor is one of the most vibrant vehicles for bridging divides, unifying communities, and securing interfaith or intercultural bonds. As we will discuss and explore, humor can help us through dark and divisive times, and laughter is central to lifelong learning!

### Lunch and Learn at B’nai Israel

**Friday, April 4**  
12:30–1:30 p.m.

*Please check Hashavua to confirm logistics as the event approaches.*

Join visiting professor, Joseph Angel, as he discusses the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and how they have shaped our understanding of biblical studies.

The spectacular discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in the middle of the 20th century brought to light dozens of the oldest biblical manuscripts in the world. In conversation with an assortment of specific textual examples, this talk will examine how these discoveries have revolutionized our understanding of a number of key areas in biblical studies, including the transmission history of the scriptural text, the development of individual books, and the formation of the scriptural canon as we know it.



Joseph Angel is Professor of Bible and Jewish History at Yeshiva University, where he has taught courses related to ancient Judaism and biblical studies since 2008. His research focuses on Jewish literature and history in the Greco-Roman world, with a special interest in the religious milieu and themes of the Dead Sea Scrolls. He is the author of a number of publications exploring topics related to ancient Judaism, including prayer, messianism, demonology and magic, the Second Temple of Jerusalem, and the Jewish context of nascent Christianity. His most recent book, *The Songs of the Sage (4Q510-511)* (Brill, 2023), provides a material reconstruction,

*Continued on page 9*



# FEBRUARY DONATIONS

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

## **Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Kehilah class**, with gratitude as we are so lucky to have you helping us with our Bet Mitzvah study this year. Happy Hanukkah!

**Ariel & Wendy David**, in memory of Raye David.

**Henry & Jennifer Delangelo**, with gratitude to Rabbi Schultz for your words of wisdom, hope & comfort.

**Laurel Greenberg**, with thanks for my beautiful Hanukkah candles.

**Bennett Hersch & family**, in memory of my wife, Nancy Hersch with gratitude to Rabbi Schultz who was a source of spiritual caring and comfort to me and my family after her passing.

**Kehilah Family**, with thanks for everything you do for our school all year. Happy Hanukkah!

**Larry & Norci Kochman**, in appreciation to Rabbi Evan Schultz for the naming of Harlyn Emilia Mossa.

**Robert & Helen Natt**, in honor of Max Borofsky's bar mitzvah.

**Irv & Nancy Silverman**, in fond memory of Irv's sisters Dorothy Weiss & Janet Silverman.

**Bob & Michael Sussman, Maris**

**Cappello & Shelly Fierman**, in fond memory of Sharon Petrower.

**Howard & Eileen Tolk**, in memory of Hubert Vines.

**Stephen & Grace Weitzer**, in appreciation of Rabbi Evan Schultz.

**Kenneth West**, in memory of Cindy West.

## **Rabbi Marion Discretionary Fund**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Kehilah Class**, with thanks as we are so lucky to have you helping us with our Bet Mitzvah study this year. Happy Hanukkah!

**Bennett Hersch & family**, in memory of my wife, Nancy Hersch with gratitude to Rabbi Marion who was a source of spiritual caring and comfort to me and my family after her passing.

**Kehilah Family**, with gratitude for everything you do for our school all year. Happy Hanukkah!

**Geoffrey & Melanie Kooris**, in memory of our fathers, Domonic Correnti and Joseph Kooris.

**Beth Lazar**, in loving memory of my kind, generous Aunt Janet Greenberg, who had a great sense of humor; in loving memory of dearest Uncle Robert Lazar.

**Irv & Nancy Silverman**, in memory of Ken Marion, father of Seth (Sarah) Marion.

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

**Stephen & Grace Weitzer**, in appreciation of Rabbi Sarah Marion.

## **Cantor Scott Harris Discretionary Fund**

**7<sup>th</sup> Grade Kehilah class**, with gratitude as we are so lucky to have you helping us with our Bet Mitzvah study this year. Happy Hanukkah!

**Bennett Hersch & family**, in memory of my wife, Nancy Hersch with gratitude to Cantor Harris who was a source of spiritual caring and comfort to me and my family after her passing.

**Kehilah Family**, with gratitude for everything you do for our school all year. Happy Hanukkah!

**Robert & Helen Natt**, in honor of Max Borofsky's bar mitzvah.

**Nancy Nishball, Scott & Judy Israel**, with gratitude, in memory of Ann Nishball.

**Wendy Swain**, with thanks to the board members of the CBI community for their sympathies on the passing of my husband, Bob.

## **Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund**

**Robert & Stacy Giglietti**, in loving memory of Michael Giglietti's yearzeit.

**Howard & Laura Twersky**, with gratitude, so honored to have you officiate at Carolyn and Dan's wedding on February 1, 2025.

## **Music Fund**

**Alan & Karen Blau**, in appreciation of Anat Shiloach for the beautiful music she performed on one of the violins of hope.

## **Enhancement Fund**

**Jerry & Dale Demner**, in memory of Dr. Herbert McCoy, cousin of Jerry.

**Abe & Jayne Hoffmann**, in memory of James Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden.

**Judith Stern**, in loving memory of mother, grandmother & great-grandmother Sylvia Edelson.

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

**Michael & Debora Weisman**, in remembrance of the yearzeits of Debora's family members, Mary Frauwirth, Max Frauwirth & Nancy Frauwirth.

**Stephen & Grace Weitzer**, in remembrance of the yearzeit of Sylvia Weitzer.

## **Bonim Preschool Scholarship Fund**

**Serena Sher**, in honor of Joav & Lisa Burger's son Joshua on his engagement to Olivia.

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

**Michael & Joni Greenspan**, in loving memory of Rabbi Arnold Sher, husband of Serena Sher; congratulations to Sammy Miller on the engagement of his granddaughter Abby Miller, daughter of Eric & Meryl Miller, and on the selection of his son Eric Miller of Tufts University to serve as director for the National Foundation Association Division of Engineering Education and Centers.

**Dennis & Jan Magid**, in remembrance of the yearzeit of Lee Siegel, father of Dennis; in honor of Artie & Suzie Weissman's 50th wedding anniversary.

**David & Judith Pressler**, in loving memory of Beatrice Pressler, mother of David; Cynthia Farber Stern, aunt of Judith.

**Walter & Lynn Rosenfeld**, in celebration of Maxwell Borofsky's bar mitzvah.

**Art & Sharon Schloss**, in memory of Jerry Pressman, beloved husband & father.

**Serena Sher**, in memory of Irving Kern, beloved husband and father.

**Michael & Debora Weisman**, in memory of Arnold Sher, husband of Serena Sher; in memory of Bob Swain, husband of Wendy Swain.

*Continued on page 9*



# FEBRUARY DONATIONS

(CONTINUED)

**CONNECT thru Social Action Fund Mark & Michelle Greengarden**, in loving memory of Jim Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden.

**Jeff Schwartz**, in appreciation of everyone who worked for Tikkun Olam in 2024.

**Kesher Project**

**Daniel & Andrea Gottschall**, in appreciation of Rhea Farbman for her incredible commitment, creativity and care.

**The George Markley Chesed Fund**

**Jacob Bogner**, in celebration of the engagement of Morgan Glucksman to Brandon Lapensohn.

**Mark & Barbara Edinberg**, in memory of Nancy Hersch, wife of Bennett Hersch, mother of Joanne Derwallis.

**Michael & Linda Epstein**, in memory of Jim Grutzmacher, husband of Sara Laden.

**Geoffrey & Melanie Kooris**, in memory of George Markley.

**David & Judith Pressler**, in loving memory of Theresa "Midge" Vas Nunes, aunt of Judith; Donald Unger, cousin of Judith.

**Irv & Nancy Silverman**, in memory of Mary Brandt, sister of Judy Chessin.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

critical edition, and commentary on two ancient Hebrew prayer manuscripts discovered at Qumran. He has held research fellowships at the University of Göttingen, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and, most recently, the University of Michigan and currently serves on the editorial boards of the Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha and Brill's Online Encyclopedia of the Dead Sea Scrolls.



(203) 336-1858 • www.cbibpt.org

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

Officers

Evan Schultz .....	Rabbi	Richard Walden .....	President
Sarah R. Marion .....	Rabbi	Scott Smith .....	1st Vice President
James Prosnit, D.D. ....	Rabbi Emeritus	Rebecca Gordon Blondin .....	Vice President
Arnold I. Sher, D.D. z"l .....	Rabbi Emeritus	Scott Casher .....	Vice President
Scott Harris .....	Cantor	Caren Schwartz .....	Vice President
Sheri E. Blum, D.M. ....	Cantor Emeritus	Jerry Saunders .....	Treasurer
Ramon Gilbert, D.M. ....	Cantor Emeritus	Jonathan Dizney.....	Assistant Treasurer
Alexa Cohen .....	Education Director	Sarah Tropp-Pacelli .....	Recording Secretary
Ira J. Wise, D.J.R.E. ....	Educator Emeritus	Mark Nigrosh .....	Financial Secretary
Robert H. Gillette, R.J.E ....	Educator Emeritus	Susan Walden .....	Immediate Past President

Affiliates

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

Congregation B'nai Israel, founded in 1858, seeks to be a vibrant Reform synagogue dedicated to the perpetuation of Jewish life and values within the framework of contemporary American Judaism. We are a gateway to Judaism for all. The Congregation B'nai Israel Bulletin publishes monthly 11 times a year (except July). To submit an article, announcement or ad to the Bulletin, please contact Co-Editors, Amy Pressman at [apressman@cbibpt.org](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.

---

# SPREADING DEMOCRACY AT B'NAI ISRAEL AND BEYOND

BY BARBARA EDINBERG AND JEFF SCHWARTZ, CO-CHAIRS OF THE VOTING TEAM

## Background

Civic engagement and voting are Jewish values. As the story goes, “A man once came before the Orthodox rabbi Chazon Ish [1878-1953] and explained that he didn’t have enough money to pay his taxes and, therefore, would not be allowed to vote in an upcoming election. The rabbi responded, “You should sell your tefillin and pay the taxes... tefillin, you can borrow from another, but the right to vote you cannot get from someone else.” Reaching out to others to make it possible for them to participate in the democratic process, to vote, is very much in line with our moral and Jewish values of inclusion and our obligation as Jews to repair the world — *tikkun olam*.

Almost seven years ago, the Voting Team was launched at B’nai Israel, largely to register voters. Nearly 50 volunteers gathered in a mall, outside food markets and Walmart, and at Housatonic Community College, to name just a few sites. We found that not only were we expanding democracy to new voters, but that we were also building community among members of B’nai Israel. That has been one of the most satisfying outcomes of our work, which has also included working outside the walls of the synagogue in the greater Bridgeport community.

## This Year’s Successes — Action and Education

In conjunction with the URJ/RAC (Religious Action Center) Every Voice Every Vote Campaign to encourage and protect voter participation, we organized four nonpartisan postcarding parties in summer and fall. Each event brought 35-50 people to B’nai Israel. We provided the postcards, stamps, and message. And, of course, snacks. At each event, the room buzzed with activity and conversation. We partnered with B’nai Israel’s Reproductive Justice Committee for two of the postcard

parties, one of which was held after the Tikkun Olam movie, *Under G-d*, about the national Jewish response to the overturning of Roe v. Wade. The 550 postcards we wrote were sent to Florida in support of the abortion rights amendment on the ballot in that state. In addition, we sent 1,150 postcards to voters in North Carolina, Georgia, and Pennsylvania urging voters to cast their ballot. We could not have had this success without the help of our dedicated and committed Core Voting Team leaders: Judy Blumenthal, Debbie Goodman, Arlene Murphy, and Ellen Tower.

CT State Community College, Housatonic Campus, continues to be a prime location for voter registration, thanks to a partnership initiated by Ellen Tower. This year, congregants volunteered at four campus events and helped 96 students register to vote. The college provided us with plenty of giveaways, including snacks, always a draw. We also registered voters and spoke to future citizens at nOURish BRIDGEPORT. Through CONECT, we shared voting information in their monthly mailings to over 35 congregations and to voters at the Burroughs Community Center.

In addition to post carding and in-person voter registration, some on the Voting Team did phone and text banking for the first time, including nonpartisan campaigns to support abortion rights in Florida, to register voters in Pennsylvania, and to end gerrymandering in Ohio. We learned about other groups doing important work toward democracy and stayed closely in touch with the URJ/RAC’s Every Voice, Every Vote campaign (EVEV). Collaborating with RAC included nationwide Zoom meetings that began in March and continued through November. Jeff served on the leadership team of EVEV along with others from Reform synagogues across the country.

In Connecticut for the first time, Barbara, Jeff, and Michelle Rosen, our co-chair from B’nai Israel in Southbury, launched a

coalition dedicated to sharing voting actions and getting out the vote. For nine months in 2024, we met on Zoom with representatives from Reform synagogues across the state. We met once in person for a postcard party and drew inspiration from others committed to Jewish values and democracy. Like the Voting Team at our synagogue, this state-wide coalition became an effective way to create a community network that has plans to continue in 2025.

Connecticut made history this year with Early Voting, too. This was the first major election featuring early in-person voting, which was supported by B’nai Israel and approved by Connecticut voters in 2022. In October and November, 30% of Connecticut voters cast their ballot early. In addition, Connecticut voters passed a ballot initiative for No Excuse Absentee Voting (NEAV) by 57%. As NEAV becomes part of the state Constitution, we will urge our legislators to make sure that it is implemented in the fairest way possible, as we did Early Voting.

## Future Plans

We recognize that all of our work has depended on the active participation of many members of the B’nai Israel community and on the support of our rabbis and board chairpersons. We are grateful to belong to a synagogue with such a commitment to *tikkun olam* and justice. In 2025, we will continue to advocate for voting rights and bills that reflect Jewish values, as well as register new voters at Housatonic. While you may have missed our two post-election meetings in November 2024 and January 2025, please write to Barbara ([bedinberg@gmail.com](mailto:bedinberg@gmail.com)) or Jeff ([jeff.schwartz2991@gmail.com](mailto:jeff.schwartz2991@gmail.com)) if you would like to be added to our email list and to join future actions.



# LOVE, JUDAISM, AND MENTAL HEALTH

BY BETH LAZAR, CO-CHAIR MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS TEAM

In the USA, the month of February is known as Black History Month. It is also known as the month of Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day, February 14, the day of love, began as a Christian holiday but today is widely celebrated as a non-religious, American holiday; as such, it is not necessarily celebrated by the Jewish community, yet love is commanded and mentioned in multiple places in the Torah. We are commanded "to love your God with all your heart and all your soul and all your might." And to love the stranger and your neighbor. There was a spark of love at the initial meeting of Isaac and Rebecca. The Torah's greatest love story is the story of lovers Rachel and Jacob. So, love is an important part of Judaism and the Jewish community.

When people lack love in their lives, they become lonely. The U.S. Surgeon General has issued a warning that loneliness is detrimental to both mental and physical health and that the prevalence of loneliness in the U.S. is at crisis level. Lack of love stifles one's ability to thrive.

In the 1940s, Rene Spitz did observational studies of children raised in an orphanage. He observed them from infancy to young childhood. The orphanage and staff met the infants and young children's physical needs of food, shelter, clothing, and bathing, but didn't give them any positive affectionate social interaction, such as holding, talking, singing, and playing with them. Spitz found that the infants raised in the orphanage in this manner suffered psychosomatic damage and declined in intelligence when they were older. Affectionate social interaction with other humans is essential

for children's mental health and intellectual development. As the Torah says, "Man does not live by bread alone...."

Many people, when they hear the word "love," think of romance, but there are all kinds of love — love of God, love of the planet Earth and nature, love of parents and elders, love of siblings, cousins, children, love of friends, neighbors, community, country. How these different kinds of love are manifested depends in large part on the society/community in which one lives. How a Hindu in India expresses love of God looks different than how we at B'nai Israel pray to God. Before the 1960s, interracial marriage was not legal in the U.S. Until recently, gay marriage was also not legal. There are some countries in the world today where having a gay

relationship is punishable by imprisonment or even the death penalty.

There are different ways to demonstrate one's love. Dr. Jerry Chapman, in his 1992 book, *The Five Languages of Love*, advocates that gift-giving, touch, giving affirmation, helping out, and sharing quality time are the basic ways to communicate your love.

Love is a necessity for good mental health and, may I dare say, for our very survival as human beings. You don't have to wait until Valentine's Day to shower your family, friends, neighbors, or community with love. It will improve your and their physical and mental health. As the jazz song lyrics say, "Every day is Valentine's Day."

Shalom,  
Beth

## Tea and Sympathy by Beth Lazar, 2024

My friend, my neighbor  
How can I lift this crushing  
Weight of grief and sorrow  
That has fallen on your  
Head, shoulders, and heart  
A child should grow to one day  
Bury their mother  
It's not the natural order  
For a mother to bury son or daughter  
I'm not a psychiatrist who can ease your mind  
Nor a spiritual leader who can offer you solace  
I am your friend, your neighbor  
I open my door  
Welcome you to my home  
Offer you a listening ear  
And tea and sympathy

## 10TH GRADE B'NAI ISRAEL MERKAZ.....CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

blowing out our Havdalah candles, the teens brought the light with their *ruach* as they swayed and sang "Shavua Tov" to end Shabbat together as one.

I can honestly say I was a bit nervous to take a group of kids on this journey that none of us had ever taken before, where none of us knew anyone, but by the end of the first

evening, I could see how special L'Taken is and how truly AMAZING our B'nai Israel teens are.

I am so proud of the work Lucy, Julia, Lilah, and Kylie did to write their speeches and even prouder that I got to witness them present to the staff at Jim Himes and Chris Murphy's office. They were confident, proud, and passionate about their

causes, and I know they will all do great things in their lives.

Although we will miss Rabbi Schultz during his sabbatical (he teaches these amazing young women each Tuesday at Merkaz), I am so honored to be able to cover for him (along with Cantor Harris) so that I can continue to learn from them, teach them, and see them.

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

**ORTHOPAEDIC SPECIALTY GROUP, PC**  
EXCEPTIONAL PEOPLE. EXCEPTIONAL CARE.



75 Kings Highway Cutoff  
Fairfield, CT 06824

2909 Main Street  
Stamford, CT 06614

(203) 337-2600  
www.osgpc.com

2 Enterprise Drive  
Shelton, CT 06484

Murray A. Morrison, MD  
Herbert I. Hermele, MD  
Robert V. Dawe, MD  
Robert A. Stanton, MD  
David F. Bindelglass, MD  
Dante A. Brittis, MD  
Henry A. Backe, Jr., MD  
Rolf H. Langeland, MD  
Patrick W. Kwok, MD  
Michael F. Saffir, MD  
Lawrence P. Kirschenbaum, MD  
Joel W. Malin, MD  
Perry A. Shear, MD  
John A. Awad, MD  
Jerold M. Perlman, MD

*Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah  
Begins at the Courtyard Shelton*

- ✓ EVENTS UP TO 200 GUESTS
- ✓ CREATIVE CUISINE
- ✓ SPECIAL ROOM RATES

Contact Event Planner Nicole Knapik  
at [nknapik@waterfordhotelgroup.com](mailto:nknapik@waterfordhotelgroup.com)  
or by calling (203) 929-1500.



780 Bridgeport Ave., Shelton, CT 06484  
[sheltoncourtyard.com](http://sheltoncourtyard.com)

*Steven M. Soberman, M.D.*  
(203) 414-5564

*Daniel S. Gottschall, M.D.*  
(203) 374-0404

**Certified Mohalim**

Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Board Certified



5000 Main Street  
Trumbull, CT  
06611



**ECO EVOLUTION**  
MARKETPLACE MEETING SPACE

Shop Online or in Norwalk:  
135 Washington Street

[www.EcoEvolution.Co](http://www.EcoEvolution.Co)



Protecting the Planet with  
Every Purchase



If you had an extended need for care, how would it  
impact your loved ones and your financial plan?  
Make an educated decision. Talk with us.  
**KEEP YOUR FAMILY'S FUTURE IN SIGHT.**

**LAURIE SAPPERN GAUGLER, CLTC**  
Independent Long-Term Care Insurance Specialist

CELL  
203.257.7921

OFFICE  
203.255.6530

EMAIL  
[LGAUGLER@insightLTC.com](mailto:LGAUGLER@insightLTC.com)

The following members of  
the legal community join  
together in their support of  
the B'nai Israel *Bulletin*:

Eric Broder  
Douglas R. Brown  
Marcia Cohen  
Mark A. Kirsch  
Andrew R. Lubin  
Daniel Schopick

The following members of the medical community join  
together in their support of the B'nai Israel *Bulletin*:

Dr. Andrea Hagani  
Dr. Robert D. Chessin  
Dr. David F. Bindelglass  
Dr. Alan M. Nelson  
Dr. Glenn M. Rich  
Dr. Kenneth Rabine  
Dr. George P. Kelly  
Dr. Howard B. Twersky  
Dr. Jeffrey Small  
Dr. Edward Portnay  
Dr. Michael Connolly

Dr. Kenneth Kingsly  
Dr. Mark J. Hotchkiss  
Dr. Jared Selter  
Dr. Geoffrey Gladstein  
Dr. Rachel E. Sheiman  
Dr. Brian King  
Dr. Abraham Fridman  
Dr. Katherine J. Pesce  
Dr. Nicholas Blondin  
Dr. Aaron Dommu  
Dr. Perry A. Wasserlauf



PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS




**Shari Nerreau**  
REALTOR®  
203.913.3149  
Shari.Nerreau@CBRealty.com

**DANIEL F. SCHOPICK**  
ATTORNEY AT LAW

572 WHITE PLAINS ROAD  
TRUMBULL, CT 06611  
(203) 261-6565  
FAX (203) 261-8420  
DANIEL@SCHOPICKLAW.COM

STEIBER & SCHOPICK

Andrea Beiser Hagani, M.D., F.A.A.P.  
Pediatrics / Pediatric Hematology



**Pediatric Healthcare Associates**  
www.pha4kids.com

99 Hawley Lane  
Stratford, CT 06614  
Phone: (203) 452-8322  
Fax: (203) 375-9293



Business 367-8711  
Fax 255-7644

**DEITZ INC.**  
110 Sigwin Drive  
Fairfield, Conn. 06824  
Landscaping - Excavating - Snowplowing

William Pitt | Sotheby's  
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

*A Higher Standard of Excellence*



**Laura Sydney-Pulton**  
Realtor®, ABR®, ASP®  
Platinum Producer  
(203) 610-3949  
lsydney@williampitt.com  
laurasydney.williampitt.com

SOUTHPORT BROKERAGE  
251 MAIN STREET, SOUTHPORT CT 06890  
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated. ®



**CHEF JASON BELLABY**  
private parties & dinners

chefjasonbellaby@gmail.com  
914-562-4824  
Fairfield, CT

**COHEN and WOLF** Not Just a Law Firm.  
Your Law Firm.

- Appellate
- Bankruptcy
- Commercial Finance
- Common Interest Communities
- Corporate
- Elder Law & Long Term Care Planning
- Employment & Labor
- Land Use & Zoning
- Litigation
- Matrimonial & Family
- Municipal
- Personal Injury
- Physicians Practices
- Real Estate
- Securities
- Securities Arbitration
- Tax and Trusts & Estates
- Telecommunications & Utilities

BRIDGEPORT 203-368-0211    DANBURY 203-792-2771    WESIPORT 203-222-1034    ORANGE 203-298-4066  
www.cohenandwolf.com



**Standard Security Systems**  
**Standard Insurance Agency**  
**Standard Oil of Connecticut**  
**Standard Petroleum (Gasoline)**

**Roy Friedman**  
Standard Companies President  
**David Cohen** Executive Vice-President

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR ADVERTISERS

**BRODER ORLAND MURRAY  
& DEMATTIE LLC**  
MATRIMONIAL & FAMILY LAW

55 Greens Farms Road  
Westport, CT 06880  
(203) 222-4949

[www.ctfamilylaw.com](http://www.ctfamilylaw.com)

Eric J. Broder: [ebroder@broderorland.com](mailto:ebroder@broderorland.com)  
Carole Topol Orland: [corland@broderorland.com](mailto:corland@broderorland.com)



THREE GENERATIONS of the Green family have honored the customs and traditions of our diverse Jewish and Interfaith community since 1948.

- Pre-Need Arrangements
- Pre-Paid Funeral Trusts
- Manage out-of-town loss & burial
- Directors with Connecticut, New York, and Florida licensure

Contact us today to learn more



203-255-8993  
88 Beach Rd  
Fairfield, CT 06824  
[www.greensfuneralhome.com](http://www.greensfuneralhome.com)

FAMILY OWNED & OPERATED  
**Abraham L. Green & Son**  
Funeral Home  
— SINCE 1948 —



**Garelick & Herbs**  
Southport | Greenwich  
[www.garelickandherbs.com](http://www.garelickandherbs.com)



GOOD  
FOOD  
GOOD  
MOOD

G&H offers full-service catering (Kosher Dairy certified)  
Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, Weddings, Kiddushes, and Showers.

Breakfast, lunch, dinner, celebrations- big or small, we do it all! Visit our website [www.garelickandherbs.com](http://www.garelickandherbs.com) for sample catering menus and work with one of our highly skilled Catering Specialists to plan your ideal event!

[corporate@garelickandherbs.com](mailto:corporate@garelickandherbs.com)





## KESHER CORNER

We're a very happy group and we've got a lot to be grateful for. We're already learning new songs and rehearsing for March 28, when we'll lead our second Disability Awareness Shabbat. Mary Elizabeth Harrison will be our speaker. She's written a wonderful book, called *Autism Grows Up...Then What? 7 Keys to Preparing Your Child's Transition from Childhood to Adulthood (Without Losing Your Mind)*. It's written from her personal experience as the mother of Jewels Harrison. Mary talks about the many programs available until an autistic child is 18...then what? We hope you'll join us on March 28 and meet Mary Elizabeth Harrison at the dinner following the service.

There are very few programs for adults with special needs. Our Keshet Project has been creating programs for this population for more than 25 years. We've been meeting in person and online and have created the Lee and David Lester Keshet Drama Club as another unique opportunity for our members. On January 16, we will begin auditions for our second play, *Love is Everywhere*. It's a musical that offers the audience the opportunity to sing along with us. We will begin designing props now for our performances in June and July. We hope you will attend one.

We're always looking for volunteers of all ages. We presently have two volunteers who come from Westport. Dylan and Elsie join us to share their love of drama with our Keshet friends. Most recently they were teaching improv, and we had so much fun creating conversations and actions to express our theme. It was amazing to see our members becoming successful at learning something they've never done before. It's not easy.

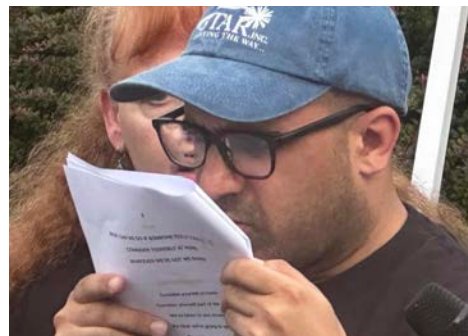
We're asking for donations to for costumes for our new play. We especially want to make the Divine Miss M and Einstein come alive.

Please like us on Facebook at The Keshet Project and contact me with any questions or thoughts you have about our program

rheasmusic@icloud.com

keshetdramaclub@gmail

The Keshet Project on Facebook



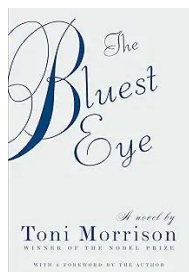
## BANNED BOOK MEETINGS

### Join us for our Banned and Challenged Book Group Discussions this Year!

This year, two of our Banned and Challenged Book Group discussions will be hosted and facilitated by two of our tikkun olam committees, who have chosen banned and challenged books that reflect the important work of their committees. All are welcome to join these discussions; you do not need to be a member of these committees in order to participate in the book discussions. Participants are encouraged to read each book in advance of the meeting. Save the dates and happy reading!

### *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison

\*#6 on the American Library Association's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List



Monday, March 3,  
7:00–8:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Jeff Schwartz and Laura Stern, co-chairs of the CONECT committee

At the root of our interfaith work in

CONECT is deepening our understanding of sexism and racism, along with working toward legal reforms and equality. *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison is one of the most frequently banned books and a perfect one for us to debate. Should it be banned for its depiction of violence and incest? Or should it be read as a classic as are other novels by Toni Morrison, who later earned the Nobel Prize?



Sold by Patricia McCormick

\*#10 on the ALA's 2023 Most Banned and Challenged Book List

Monday, April 28,  
7:00–8:30 p.m.

Facilitated by Susan Walden

*Thirteen-year-old Lakshmi leaves her poor mountain home in Nepal thinking that she is to work in the city as a maid only to find that she has been sold into the sex slave trade in India and that there is no hope of escape. Written in spare and evocative vignettes, this powerful novel renders a world that is as unimaginable as it is real, and a girl who not only survives, but triumphs.*



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
Permit No. 171  
Fairfield, Conn.

Congregation B'nai Israel  
2710 Park Avenue  
Bridgeport, CT 06604  
(203) 336-1858  
[www.cbibpt.org](http://www.cbibpt.org)

**JOIN US SUNDAYS AT 11:00AM**

as Fairfield calls for the immediate  
release of the hostages held by Hamas

**RUN  
FOR THEIR  
LIVES**



18 MINUTE WALK  
WEAR RED  
BRING SIGNS  
FAMILY AND DOG FRIENDLY



**#BringThemHomeNow**

**USE QR CODE FOR MORE DETAILS OR VISIT [HTTPS://RUN4LIVES.ORG/](https://run4lives.org/)**

Join us to support the innocent civilians and families being held in Gaza. We meet each week at the Fairfield Theater Company, (FTC), located on the northbound side of the Fairfield Train Station at 70 Sanford Street. Kids and dogs welcome.  
If you have signs, feel free to bring them too!