

There is a place for you at Beth El. We Belong Together.

#### Beth El Newsletter May (Iyar/Sivan) and June (Sivan/Tammuz) 5781

Join us in celebration and song as we honor our past and step into our future

## May 26, 2021 • 7:00 pm

Virtual Concert and "Walk Down Memory Lane" Presentation



Award Winning Songwriter Michael Hunter Ochs

In Performance with Hazzan Alisa Pomerantz-Boro

And Special Guest Choirs From



bethelsnj.org/togetherinharmony

## Being Jewish With the New York Mets



In celebration of his 50th birthday, Hazzan David Tilman participated in the New York Mets Dream Week, a one week of intensive of baseball activities in

Port St. Lucie, Florida. In addition to great training, painful injuries, and a million laughs, Hazzan Tilman's Jewish identity surfaced many times and added to his Mets baseball experiences. Hazzan Tilman joins us on Zoom to share stories from his experience in this program with 70 other middle-aged and older men who wanted to play baseball with their childhood heroes. His presentation is illustrated with wonderful photographs from this exciting week.

Thursday, May 13. 6:30pm Presented by KaHaL at no charge RSVP: bethelsnj.org/tilman



**Congregation Beth El** 

## **CLERGY CORNER**



#### Hazzan Alisa Pomerantz-Boro

*Zeh HaYom Asah HaShem, Nagillah V'nism'cha Vo! This is the day that Gd has made, let us exult and rejoice in it!* (Psalm 118)

This is one of my favorite passages in our liturgy. At our Shirley Mangel

Morning Minyan this morning, on my birthday, I chanted these words during *Hallel* for *Chol HaMoed Pesach*. I love to focus on these words as a reminder that every day is a gift. Not only on our birthdays, but every day, we can choose to rejoice in the blessings of that day. Whenever I am having a particularly difficult day, it helps me live each day with a feeling of gratitude. This has been a year of hardships and these are not easy times. Sometimes, it feels that nothing can fully prepare us for everything we are going to face.

We need to have the strength and courage for all of the extraordinary events which come our way. One coping mechanism is for us to fill our days with empathy and caring. Our Beth El rallying cry, "We Belong Together" guides us to build relationships and connect with others. It has been a blessing to watch friendships blossom during this unprecedented time. It is easy to spot gems all around us and notice strength in others that can inspire us. Remember that *your* strength can and will be noticed as well and serve as a source of inspiration for those around *you*!

This year, we have been celebrating 100 years of our history as a Beth El community. There is a passage in the *Zohar* which states: "There is nothing in the world that has no voice." All of us have something unique about us, something that distinguishes us from everyone else. Every person can contribute their own gifts to enrich the community. As we reflect on the past, celebrate the present and look toward the future, I wanted our shul to have a new prayer that we can share together during services. It has always been my dream that through song, prayer, music, and acts of loving kindness, we can continue to grow even closer to each other, to our shul, to our Jewish heritage, our Torah and to Gd.

The newly commissioned piece is called *Refuah Shlaymah*, A Healing Song. As we continue to pray for complete healing of our hearts, bodies and spirits, together we will sing "*Refuah Shlaymah*, knowing that *Refuah* means healing and Shlaymah means complete, whole and peaceful. You will hear the world premiere of *Refuah Shlaymah* as part of our celebratory gala concert on May 26, **Together in Harmony**, featuring composer Michael Hunter Ochs. It has been a gift to work with Michael to craft a meaningful celebration to mark this milestone where you will be treated to many voices, memories and surprises!

I would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to help plan the events surrounding our 100 year celebration, headed by our co-chairs; Lynn Goldman Paul, Abby Belafsky, and Joan Feinberg. A huge shout out to our Engagement Director extraordinaire, Melissa Leibowitz, to our Executive Director, Josh Laster, and to all of Team Beth El for pulling all of the pieces together.

Our sages teach us that we are obligated to recite 100 blessings every day.

One of the greatest blessings in my life is being a part of our Beth El family and I look forward to hearing all of your voices join together in good health and harmony for many years to come!

Grateful, as always,

Hazzan Alisa Pomerantz-Boro



## Welcome To the World!

Raphael Brent Appel Son of Jodi & Doug Appel Grandson of June & Steve Eisner Great-grandson of Lila Eisner

Charles Elijah Thomas Great-grandson of Selma Ellis

Jordan Harris Goldfarb grandson of Michele & Jeffrey Kahan

Jaxon Reign Lieberman grandson of Carole & Jules Lieberman

Lela Zoe Stahl great-granddaughter of Shirley Wander

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**Congregation Beth El** 

May-June 2021

## **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**



## Stuart Sauer President

Congregation Beth El is celebrating 100 years of serving the South Jersey Jewish community. I am honored and proud to help lead our synagogue into the next century as the incoming president. For

generations, our clergy, teachers, leaders, and volunteers have inspired and touched so many families. Our Jewish identity, religious observance, learning, and inclusion is the heart and soul of our great synagogue. I look forward to being a part of Congregation Beth El's leadership as it continues to grow, thrive, and evolve for many years to come. One of the many ways Congregation Beth El is moving forward is the creation of Sulam For Strategic Planners (SSP). Through a series of congregational surveys, community conversations and committee meetings, we are ready to move forward in presenting this strategy. Parts of the plan to enhance our operations include Finance, Learning, Membership, Tzedek, Volunteer Engagement, and Communications. The congregation's participation and involvement in this endeavor is key to the success of this project. Please stay tuned for future updates as we begin to implement this ambitious and workable program. One year ago, no one ever imagined we would need to lock down the building to our members. Yet, we were able to pivot from in-person connections with our families, clergy, and staff to a virtual world. A credit to the leadership in the ever-evolving challenges as we strive to overcome the pandemic. Our synagogue has done an exceptional job keeping our community connected. As we move forward, we are beginning to see a pathway out of this pandemic and a return to completely opening our doors once again.

My sincerest thanks to Karen Schlessel, our outgoing president. Karen has display tremendous strength, courage, and kindness during the last 2 years. Her role as president has inspired me to continue the vision and energy to ensure our congregation's ongoing progress and resilience. To the incoming Executive Committee and Board of Trustees, I look forward to working together as we begin our new leadership roles. Thank you to Rabbi Krupnick, Hazzan Pomerantz-Boro, Rabbi Green, Josh Laster, Rabbi Marshall, Ayelet Mittelman, Stacy Manning and the entire staff for your support and efforts. We are fortunate to have such a talented team of professionals. Most important, thank you to our members for your ongoing commitment and generosity that helps make our synagogue a warm and welcoming community. We belong together as we move forward to ensure a bright and productive future. Stay safe, healthy, and Zei Gesunt, Be Well!



#### Josh Laster Executive Director

In Karen Schlessel's first Beth El News article as President, she shared that her vision was "to make Beth El even warmer and more welcoming." At the time that article was published, there

was no way to know that during the second and final year of her presidency, we were going to get the unique opportunity to (continue to) implement her vision while figuring out how to maintain operations in the face of a global pandemic.

Typically, when a new president starts their term, they already served as an officer of our Executive Committee, and they are familiar with the ins and outs and the ups and downs of all that is Beth El. A president would never expect a global pandemic to halt operations and cause a synagogue that for all intents and purposes is sailing smoothly along with worship, education and programming to all of a sudden implement all new processes and procedures for engaging our members.

Karen, who I will unhesitatingly refer to as our fearless leader, supported our clergy, staff, and lay leaders while keeping a keen focus on her vision. With every opportunity to welcome people online on various platforms or in person when allowed, Karen kept her smile and her optimism as our stalwart president. She weathered this first year of the pandemic, side by side and step by step as part of our team, and I am appreciative of her leadership and proud of what she accomplished and maintained during her 2 year term.

In that same article, she ended by saying, "You are better because of Beth El, and Beth El is better because of you." I'll close this article by saying, not only is Beth El better because of you; Beth El is better because we had Karen Schlessel as our president during the most trying times ever experienced by our community.



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## **BETH EL EDUCATION**



## Rabbi Nogah Marshall **Educational Director**

## 'Todah Rabbah!" Thank You!

Judaism commands us to teach our children the Mitzvot of the Torah, for the Torah is the essence and foundation of Judaism. We here at Beth El realize that

just as the Torah is the foundation of Judaism, our teachers in our ECC, Religious School, and Hebrew High School are the foundation of our future. And just as we are not complete without the Torah, our schools would not be complete without our amazing teachers. The first word of the Torah is the word Bereshit that begins with the letter bet and the last letter of the Torah is Yisrael and ends with the letter lamed. If you switch these letters around, they spell the word, lev, which means heart. This is what all of our teachers do when they teach, they act from the heart.

A little over a year ago our teachers in the ECC, Religious School, and Hebrew High School transformed their classrooms overnight into remote classrooms. I could not be more proud of all of our teachers who stood up to the challenge and successfully continued to nurture and engage all of our students. Our teachers continue to amaze me every day throughout this most unpredictable and trying year by learning new techniques and strategies to engage our children in the classroom and on Zoom.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank our students and parents for putting your trust in us here at the schools of Beth El and for allowing us to be part of your child's Jewish journey especially during this past year. Thank you for your patience and support. We could not have done it without you!

Jewish education does not end for summer vacation. There are countless of ways you can engage your children in experiential Jewish education. I encourage you to spend some time together choosing activities from the summer Reading Rainbow activities that will be sent to you at the end of the school year. In the fall have your child bring back the filled out sheet for a special prize! As it says in the Book of Proverbs, "Educate a child in the way he should go and as he grows he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6). May we all continue to share in the teachings of our teachers. Have a safe and wonderful summer! See you in

September!

## BERS & HEBREW HIGH

May 2—Religious School at JCC Camps at Medford May 6—Last Night of Hebrew High School May 9—No School (Mother's Day) May 11—Teen Summit May 16—Confirmation May 19—Bet Concert May 20—Vav Graduation May 23—End of the year Socially Distant Carnival

Ayelet Mittelman ECC Principal

We started this year off with so many unknowns and so much uncertainty, and yet I consider what we accomplished this year to be an unimaginable triumph! The fears

surrounding the school opening, the fears of possible exposures, the inordinate amount of protocols we needed to follow, the changes to the classroom all seemed like insurmountable challenges. The fears and anxiety from all of the horrible stories we were hearing on the news about the increasing numbers, the daily toll, the variant strains, etc., were all too much to bear. This year was full of so much loss and so much darkness; but here at our ECC, all we saw was hope and light.

Day after day, the children come in with smiles on their faces, excited to see their friends, and for the adventure that the day would bring. So many of them were so blissfully unaware that the world was changing around them, and were just ready to be "SUPERHEROES" and wear their masks. We sang "Bim Bam" and celebrated Shabbat and Shabbat birthdays, even though it was through Zoom. I loved listening to them sing holiday songs through our hallways and having them excitedly run up to me at drop off to show off their newest mask, their brand new shoes, or their new haircut. These are just a fraction of the joys that I personally experienced this year at our ECC. In addition, watching our AMAZING teachers come into the school day after day, regardless of their fears, and envelop the children in love and care; adapt their lessons and their approach to accommodate new protocols as well as remote students; do everything in their power to create a sense of norm and familiarity for our students; and push their personal concerns aside to ensure an incredible experience for our students. Inspiring is too small a word to describe our teachers this year.

This year has exceeded every single one of my expectations. This year we put our "kehillah", community, to the test and we came out of it with extraordinarily high marks. Our parents, teachers, students and staff came together and created something beautiful. From driveway dance parties, to *tzedakah* fueled food pantry and animal orphanage donations; from school-wide Zoom experiences to individual classroom achievements, this year at our ECC was definitely something to celebrate. I look forward to our Summer Camp and to what our next amazing school year brings! Thank you to all of our amazing teachers, students, and parents for making this a year to remember!!



## ZICHRONAM LIV'RACHAH

May Their Memories Be A Blessing

#### We Mourn The Passing Of Our Beloved Members

## Linda Chase

#### Wife of Paul Chase

Mother of Jodi (Tim) Heilizer, Jeff (Cathy) Chase, Mark Chase (Alyssa Reiter) Grandmother of Alec, Jake, Nick, Ellie, Matthew Heilizer; Travis, Maya, Jada Chase; Ilana and Ethan Chase; David, Samantha, Jason Reiter

#### Arthur "Art" Lemberg Husband of Harriet Lemberg

Father of Ken (Rachel) Lemberg, Paul Lemberg, MD (Diane) Lemberg, Marc (Jamie) Lemberg Grandfather of Eliana, Joshua, Jasper, Sofia, Tia, Cory, Leah

#### Arthur Steinfeld

#### Husband of Nancy Steinfeld

Father of Bill Steinfeld, Glen (Donna) Steinfeld, Shari Steinfeld Grandfather of Scott and Justin Daniels, Leo Steinfeld Brother of Philip Steinfeld

#### WE SEND CONDOLENCES TO

#### Alicia Drozen

#### loss of her grandmother, Rosalind Green

Wife of Louis Green z"l. Mother of Barbara (Mark) Barrish, Phillip Green, and Michael Green z"l (Andrea Hirshman). Grandmother of Robert and Max Green and Amanda Barrish. Great-Grandmother of Landon and Hayden.

#### Marla (Jeffrey) Glauser loss of her father, Barry Glauser

Husband of: Elaine Glauser. Father of: Holly Glauser (Kimmel Cameron), Michael Glauser (Ana Alzamora) Grandfather of Zachary Abel, Victoria Abel, Madison Glauser, Alex Glauser

## Nadene (David) Harris

loss of her father, Morton L. Sirisky Husband of: Carole Sirisky. Father of: Nadene (David) Harris and Aimee Sirisky (Roy Newsome). Grandfather of: Jennifer and Jonathan Harris. Brother of: Joan Wechter and Barbara Markley

#### Sheryl Hirsch (Hon. Charles Rand) loss of her father, Saul Hirsch

Husband of: Florence Hirsch, z"l. Father of: Barry (Ellen) Hirsch. Grandfather of: Jordan (Melissa) Rand, Cory Rand (Nicole Josko), Michael (Jackie) Hirsch, Seth (Carly) Hirsch, Matthew (Natalie) Hirsch, Amy (Roger) Corbman. Great-Grandfather of: Juliet, Riley, Malena, Remi, Madison, Austin, Zach, Alexi, Drew

# John (Cheryl) Kirby

*loss of his mother, Thelma Kirby* Wife of: Robert "Bob" Kirby. Mother of: James Kirby (Jeannie Lee). Grandmother of: Benjamin (Stephanie) Kirby, Richard Kirby, Kendrick Kirby-Lee

#### Brett (Jennifer) Sholder loss of his mother, Henda "Bunny" Kerr

Wife of: Tom Kerr. Mother of: Rory (David) Lazear. Stepmother of: Amy (David) Parker, Brian (Angela) Kerr, Sarah Ruth (Scott) Rigsby . Grandmother "BB" of: Toby and Casey Lazear, Skyler and Blake Sholder. Sister of: Candy (Iké) Brown, Stephen (Zola) Munter

#### The Family of Ray Volusher

Wife of William Volusher, z"l. Mother of: Sandy Kellerman (Mark) Levy. Grandmother of: Jonathan (Ellyn) Kellerman, Adam (Robyn) Cohen, Aaron (Mira) Aumiller, Rachel (Stephen) Miller, Josh (Carolyn) Kellerman, Sara (Rob) Valli, Marcy (David) Goldman. Great Grandmother of: Logan, Leah and Julia Kellerman; Billy, Danny, Noah and Hannah Cohen; Eli, Charli, Zev and Max Aumiller; Jared, Talia, Ben and Ari Miller; Jordyn, Zach and Jesse Kellerman; Sophie and Alex Valli; Grey, Joey and Ava Goldman

#### Leora Waiche and Family loss of her grandmother, Levana Waiche

## LIFE & LEGACY

Please remember Beth El when you do your Estate Planning. Leaving a legacy is simple: Bequest in a Will, Gift of Life Insurance, Gift of IRA or Pension Funds, Gift of Cash or Assets, Charitable Remainder Trust

\*Names in bold have formalized a commitment to Beth El Contact Jocelyn Borowsky at jdmborowsky@comcast.net or Melissa Leibowitz at mleibowitz@bethelsnj.org for details.

> Mira & Aaron Aumiller Susan & David Backal Cathy & Marc Backal Marcia Baruch Donna & Richard Bell Pam & Bob Benedon Jodi Berman Helene & Alan Blumenfeld Jocelyn Borowsky Marcia Baruch Bowen Ronit & Chris Boyd Beth & Josh Brodkin Amy & Eric Clayman Herbert & Thalia Cohen Arlene & Harris Colton Fran & Neal Cupersmith Leila & Adam Cupersmith Marsha Dollinger Alan Dias & Heidi Handler June & Steven Eisner & Family Myra & David Gutin Phyllis Hecsh Deborah & Edward Hochberg Beth & Harvey Jacob Adam Kaminer Sharla & Mort Kanovsky Amy & Barnard Kaplan Jerome Katz Alison & Andrew Keim Debra Kelberg Deborah Shore & Jonathan Korn Helene & Rabbi Aaron Krupnick Michael Landsburg Fran & Leon L. Levy Suzanne & Victor Levy Judy & Donald (z"l) Love Diane & Benjamin Mashioff Rachel & Stephen Miller Burt & Diane Nussbaum Sheri & Jason Pecarsky Lynn Goldman Paul Árlene & Ed Plasky Hilary & Harry Platt Ilene Rosen & P. Todd Rowan Sharon & Adam Sackstein Stuart & Sherry Sauer Karen & David Schlessel & Family Harriet Schulman Faye & Gary Shapiro Jennifer Sholder Michael Silver Juli Mandel Sloves & Glenn Sloves Lauren & Jonathan Soll Tami Bogutz Steinberg Judith & Stuart Wasserlauf Jennifer & Jim Weiss Leah & Jason Wolf Jeffrey Zeiger Anonymous (2)

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**Congregation Beth El** 

# MAZEL TOV!

## B'NAI MITZVAH FAMILIES

Sheryl & Mark Schuster Bar Mitzvah of son, Landon

Mindy & Roey Sorasky Bar Mitzvah of son, Guy

Tami Bogutz Steinberg Bat Mitzvah of daughter, Ariel

Marcelle Tompakov Bar Mitzvah of grandson, Landon Schuster

## ENGAGEMENTS & MARRIAGES

Sherri & Alan Breslow engagement of son, Brandon, to Rachel Lomita

Randi & Richard Gerstein engagement of son, Ben, to Perri Jacobs

Delores Gerstein engagement of grandson, Ben Gerstein, to Perri Jacobs

Karen & David Schlessel engagement of daughter, Zoe, to Judah Levy

Shirley Yaffa marriage of grandson, Reuvein Yaffa to Narkis Rechavia

## SPECIAL HONORS



Joan Feinberg honored at the Kellman Brown Academy Tribute Gala

Samantha Hassman daughter of Tracy Ann Bancroft and Michael Hassman was inducted into the National Elementary Honor Society

#### Melanie Raush

daughter of **Helene & David Raush**, granddaughter of **Ellen Podell**, received the Rutgers University School of Arts and Sciences Senior Leader Award Class of 2021 in Journalism & Media Studies; Creative Writing & Theater Arts

Rebecca Raush

daughter of Helene & David Raush, granddaughter of Ellen Podell, won the My Spoken Mark poetry slam competition.

#### Sydney Rowan

daughter of **Ilene Rosen & Ťodd Rowan**, received the 2021 JCRC Teen Israel Advocacy Leadership Award at the JCRC Middle East Institute

#### Allen Wilen

named the Turnaround Consultant of the Year by the Global M&A Network

#### Jared Wilen

son of **Barbra & Allen Wilen**, was elected Grand Aleph Godol of Aleph Zadik Aleph for BBYO International

## MAZEL TOV GRADUATES!

#### ECC Kindergarten

Micah Adelman Jared Alcoff Cameron Brady Lainee Callahan Matthew Cedar Jaxson Cygler Mila Cygler Ryder Ettinger Eliza Furman Zachary Gelrod Joseph Goddard Landon Goldstein Micah Hulnick Jack Kaplan Danielle Marga Talya Nasagi Chloe Passkoff Hayden Petkun Lea Roth Ezra Sacks Lainey Semanoff Mila Silberman Blake Zafran

#### Vav Class Graduates

Jessica Atlas Elisha Behrend Shane Broad Frankie Brown Dylan Gerstein James Gordon Madison Greenwald Samantha Hassman Samuel Koenig Dylan Kratchman Isabella Laster Talia Miller Mason Petkov

Kaila Rabenou Aaron Reichenberg Noah Ritigstein Spencer Ritigstein Sophia Rosof Hara Seltzer Abigail Shapiro Mikayla Shenker Jacob Silver Rebecca Simpson Brenna Spector Andrew Steiner Lilah Swarbirck

#### **Confirmation Class**

Noah Bender Ilana Chase Sophie Neuwirth Benjamin Packman Miranda Rosenbaum Jenna Serotta Raquel Sloves

#### High School Graduates (\*BEJC)

Rachel Bliss Mackenzie Bralow\* Phoebe Cohen Dana Cohen Macy Desmond Mélody Dias Joshua Dorfner Jordan Kantor Caleb Eigen Colby Eigen Aidan Epstein Sloane Gerstein\* Jordan Grossman Joseph Hochberg\* Jeffrey Kaminer Matisse Laufgraben\* Morgan Laufgraben Grayson Leslie Léwis Levy Tobias Maidenberg Joshua Manders\*

Matthew Miron Jamie Neff Lyle Rosenthal Sydney Rowan\* Braden Schwartz Dylan Schwartz William Schwartz Melissa Shapiro\* Madelyn Silver\* Jacob Sinrich\* Macy Sinrich Benjamin Sloves\* Noah Stofman Jordyn Swarbrick Daniel Weinstock Rebecca Weisman David Wertheimer\* Justin Whitney Jared Wilen\* Alec Zaller Noah Zaller

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Wishing a wonderful future to our members who graduated college or with an advanced degree!

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Congregation Beth El May-June 2021





## NOAH SZTEJMAN

Son of Lisa & Eric Sztejman

May 1, 2021

Brother of: Jordan and Alixandra Grandson of: Ilene & Barry Liner, Paula & Jake Sztejman Mitzvah Project: Participated in Virtua's Turkeypalooza and raised money to provide 1500 Thanksgiving dinners to those in need in our community.



## **CAMRYN OSTROFF**

Daughter of Jennifer & Brett Ostroff

May 22, 2021

Sister of: Elliana Granddaughter of: Len Ostroff, Lenny Rankin, Christin Rankin Mitzvah Project: Collected gently used soccer equipment to donate to schools/ clubs in need along with donations to offset the fee for the children to participate.



## ERIN and ZACHARY SMITH

Children of Rachel & Kevin Smith

May 8, 2021

Grandchildren of: Rande Dubrow, Ellen & Ron Dubrow z"l, Louise Smith, James Smith Mitzvah Project: Raised money to create and deliver 150 care packages for seniors isolated during Covid-19. Donated excess items to animal shelter, pediatric care facility, and food bank.



## **OLIVIA JACOBS**

Daughter of Rebecca & William Jacobs

June 12, 2021

Sister of: Madeline and Dylan Granddaughter of: Diane & Stuart Traster and Barbara Jacobs Mitzvah Project: Donating a portion of Bat Mitzvah gifts to Susan G. Komen in honor of her grandmother Diane Traster and her aunt Cathrina Lindsey, both breast cancer survivors.



## ETHAN COHEN

*Son of Annie Gordon & Stephen Cohen May 15, 2021* 

Brother of: Alexa Grandson of: Carol Cohen, Saul Cohen, Darlene Gordon, Gerald Gordon Mitzvah Project: Donated legos to Lego Replay which sends them to kids in need.



## MAX CUTLER

Son of Caryn & Jason Cutler

June 19, 2021

Brother of: Jacob Grandson of: Naomi & Fred Butter, Myra Cutler, Joel & Ann Cutler Mitzvah Project: Collected snacks to deliver to frontline healthcare workers to eat while working at the hospitals.

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# שומרים SHOMRIM

GUARDIANS OF CONGREGATION BETH EL

Shomrim is an inclusive giving program designed to allow benefactors to commit one time during the year to support the annual activities and operational needs of Beth El.

#### JOIN OUR GROWING LIST OF SHOMRIM MEMBERS

#### PILLAR

The Brown Families – Sidney & Sandy and Jeff & Tracy Donna & Richard Forman – Forman Foundation Eva & Marvin Schlanger

#### VISIONARY

Marvin Samson Foundation

**SUSTAINER** Jerome M. Katz Alison & Andrew Keim

BUILDER

Iris & Steven Auerbach Gloria & Ira Back Susan & David Backal Cathy & Marc Backal Donna & Richard Bell Jocelyn Borowsky Marcia & Arnold Cohen Betsy & Peter Fischer

Delores Gerstein Jennifer & Michael Gerstein Deborah & Ed Hochberg Sharla & Morton Kanovsky Rachel & Stephen Miller

Gerry & Howard Abramsohn Sharon & Elliot Atkins Barbara & Marvin Backal The Bell Baeuerle Family Steven Beilowitz **Jennifer & Andrew Bender** Helene & Alan Blumenfeld Beth & Josh Brodkin Jennifer & Ari Brooks Staci & Jeffrey Cedar Amy & Eric Clayman Leslie & Steven Cohen Arlene & Harris Colton Fran & Neal Cupersmith Marsha Dollinger Brenda & Chuck Driben Anita Farber **Christine & William Feinberg** Peggy & Louis Gold Jennifer & Alex Greenwald Ilene & Harry Grossman

Elaine (z"l) & Bart Greenspan Rabbi Aaron & Helene Krupnick Judy & Donald (z"l) Love Ellen & Michael Lowenberger Miriam & Stan Meltzer Carol & Donald Meltzer Sharon & Adam Sackstein Anonymous (1)

#### **BENEFACTOR**

M. Zev Rose Karen & David Schlessel Lauren & Jon Soll Linda & David Wander Elaine L. Waxman

#### **GUARDIAN**

Myra & David Gutin Barbara & Mark Jacobs Sandra & Arnold Kaminer Ziva & Haim Kantor Gladvs & Steve Krulik Melissa & Lee Leibowitz Suzanne & Victor Levy Renee & David Lieberman Valerie & Robert Linden Eileen Mangel Andrea & Marc Millstein Jamie & Darin Morgan Linda & Richard Moskowitz Jane & Ralph Noah Lynn Goldman Paul & Stephen Paul Salvatore & Eileen Perice Hilary & Harry Platt Ellen Podell Julia & Adam Roberts Erica & Jerry Rothkoff Ilene Rosen & Todd Rowan

Julie & Jason Whitney Barb & Allen Wilen Judith & Leonard Wizmur

**Jovce & Mel Ruthen** Sherry & Stuart Sauer Betsy & Robert Schwartz Brandi & Gregory Seltzer Faye & Gary Shapiro Shari & Jeffrey Shapiro Carol & Joel Silbert Judy & Len Simkin Juli & Glenn Sloves Barbara & Norman Some Tami Bogutz Steinberg Alison & Neil Tarnopol **Diane & Stuart Traster** Lynne & Diego Warszawski Cookie & Allan Weinberg Ilene & Michael Weinberg Karin Elkis & Steven Weinstein Jennifer & James Weiss Anonymous (1)



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We asked our past presidents to share some memories with us. In our second Past Presidents Roundtable, we share excerpts from interviews with Ed Hochberg (2009-2011), Harvey Jacob (1987-1989), Lauren Appel Soll (2015-2017)



When/Why did you join Beth El?

Harvey: My wife, Beth, and I joined Beth El sometime in the Spring of 1969. The first six months of our marriage we had been living in Philadelphia. When we learned we were expecting our first child, we decided to move to New Jersey. As soon as we purchased

Harvey Jacob our house in Cherry Hill, and months before moving in, we began looking for a Synagogue to join. We narrowed the search to Beth Shalom, then in Haddon Heights, and Beth El, then in Cherry Hill. We moved into our house in Barclay Farms in September of 1968 and our first child, Gaye, was born on January 2 of 1969. We had not chosen between the two Synagogues yet, and Gaye was named at Beth Shalom. I guess we ended up joining Beth El because I liked Cantor Herman's davening more than Cantor Goldhirsh's at Beth Shalom (though he eventually coached my davening in later years) and it was closer to our house. We also liked that there was a Young Associates level membership that was free to those under thirty and we were only twenty four.

Lauren: Our family originally belonged to Congregation Beth Jacob in Merchantville, but circumstances arose and my parents decided it was time for a change. It was important to my parents to belong to a conservative synagogue where they would feel comfortable and be part of a welcoming community. When they met Rabbi Kahn z''l, they were very impressed by him and how he spoke about his wonderful congregation which resulted in us joining Beth El. My parents, sister and I became official members of Beth El in 1974. When my husband and I got married, we started our own membership in 1991. Therefore, I have been a Beth El member for over 45 years. Ed: Debbie and I joined Beth El in 1993, shortly after we moved to South Jersey. At the time, we didn't know a lot of people in the area, and we wanted to belong somewhere. We tried out Beth El, and obviously, it stuck.

#### What do you think makes Beth El so special?

Lauren: Beth El is special because of the people who make up our congregation starting with our superstar clergy team who guide, inspire and support us. Our congregants are about love and warmth which makes us not just a shul but a family.

Ed: It's a cliché, but it's all about the people. I've said this before, but the friends we've made at Beth El are unlike friendships we've made anywhere else in our lives. Our friendships are deeper, as they come from a place of shared values, a love of Judaism, and clearly common interest. I've been to many other synagogues through the years, and they are all nice, but Beth El has a certain "warm feeling" that is just that much greater than any other place I've been.

**Harvey:** The answer to that question has changed over the years. I will just share why I thought it was special in the ten years or so before we moved from Cherry Hill in 2012. And it is the simplest answer: Rabbi Krupnick and Hazzan Pomerantz-Boro. The union of these two individuals in the leadership of Beth El was a match made in heaven. Their teaching, their living what they preach, their caring, and Hazzan's incredibly inspiring davening.

# What are some of your proudest moments of your time as President?

Ed: I was fortunate enough to became President just as we moved to Main Street. During my first year, my daughter, Amanda, was bat mitzvahed. To be the President of Beth El and celebrating our simcha in front of our family and friends (with Rabbi Krupnick and Hazzan kvelling over our family) in our new building was an incredible experience that I will never forget.

Harvey: I was just proud of all of the volunteers who worked so hard to make the Synagogue they loved a place that welcomed all, a place that helped those in need, a place where people could worship, a place where people could find community, a place where people could be educated, entertained, and a place where people could find peace and comfort. I could not have done anything without the support of hundreds of volunteers.



Lauren: My proudest moment as president at Beth El was becoming president at Beth El. I was so honored to represent our synagogue in this capacity. My favorite memory as president was speaking at all the various religious school graduation ceremonies and sitting on the bima during multiple B'nai Mitzvah. Seeing the semilar laughter, and team of pride and joy on

Lauren Soll

smiles, laughter, and tears of pride and joy on a family's face from this perspective was heart-

warming, inspiring, and often very emotional.

#### What are some of your favorite memories?

Harvey: There are so many memories, but I would be lying if I didn't say my favorite memories are of the times I led services on the High Holidays or Shabbat and could hear the congregation behind me joining in or responding to my singing and knowing that I inspired them. Having said that, other favorite memories include: The many friends we made as members of the Young Associates; Building the booths for The Young Associate Chanukah Bazaar and operating the one that gave goldfish as prizes; The Young Associate Lecture Series; Elie Wiesel's appearance when I was President of the congregation; Having dinner with Sam Levinson, the comedian, before his performance; Dinners in the Sukkah; Cooking meals with other volunteers in order to help feed those in need; Arguing to the Board as Young Associate President, that we needed a

## BETH EL 100 PAST PRESIDENT ROUNDTABLE CONTINUED

third, equal service on the High Holidays in place of the overcrowded two we had just experienced, and getting nowhere until Myer Adleman rose from his seat and said "The young man is right!" I was so proud of that service that I oversaw across the street at the public school's gym for many years, and then in our gym when Beth El expanded; and how could I forget how proud I was at the community rally/fund raiser that Beth El hosted at the time of the Yom Kippur war that raised an incredible amount of money in support of Israel; being installed as the youngest (at the time) President in the Synagogue's history; and, I would be remiss if I didn't say some of my fondest memories are of those who served with me when I was first as it has for the last 100 years. the President of the Young Associates and later the President of the Synagogue.



Ed: It's hard to know where to start to answer that question. The retreats we had as Young Associates were amazing; they cemented our relationship to Beth El, and they were so much fun. Our scotch tasting evening with Rabbi Arnowitz was also unforgettable (next morning's headache was also pretty Ed Hochberg unforgettable). Lastly, while I don't

remember the specific day, the point at which Eric Boory and I realized that the stars were finally going to align, and we could feasibly move the shul to Main Street was just a very special memory.

**Lauren:** I have so many memories of the Cherry Hill building since that was where I attended Hebrew School. However, my favorite and most meaningful memory is getting married to my husband Jon. My marriage at Beth El was my first step to starting my amazing family and beginning my dedication and commitment to my synagogue.

#### What is your wish for the next 100 years?

Ed: The best wish that I could have for Beth El is that it enriches people's lives the same way for the next 100 years

Harvey: I wish that Beth El will always be strong and will always inspire generations to come to keep Judaism and what it stands for alive.

Lauren: My wish for the next 100 years is that Beth El remains a wonderful and inclusive spiritual home for all. Our leadership and our congregants need to embrace change when necessary so that Beth El continues to thrive, be prosperous and enrich our lives for generations to come.

## **BETH EL 100 MEMORIES**

#### Excerpts from a speech given by Zev Rose in 1981 celebrating Beth El's 60th Anniversary



"In the old chapel [in Camden], we attended Junior Congregational Services each and every Saturday, which services we conducted; we were guided and taught by the likes of a Phil Redelheim; the highlight of each Saturday morning service was the appearance of our Rabbi, Rabbi

Kellman z"l, who, for an hour, would explain to us the story and teach us of the significance and meaning of that Saturday morning Torah portion; he would quiz us as to the past weekly portions, constantly challenging and jogging our minds; we learned. Also in that old chapel, the boys approaching Bar Mitzvah age would congregate to learn the Trup in preparation for their Haftarah and Maftir; our teacher was Cantor Zeitz, who was stern but kindly; we all were required to learn the Haftarah for the portion *Bereshit*, as well as our own Haftarah."

"Many of us would gather each Friday night for the late service to enjoy an abbreviated service, a stimulating and dynamic sermon by Rabbi Kellman, and the camaraderie and socializing that followed at the Oneg Shabat, at which we sat around round tables, had tea and cake, and socialized."



Memories from Harris Colton In 1969, Arlene and I began thinking about moving to Cherry Hill from Woodbury where I had

established my dental practice. Woodbury had a very small Jewish community with very few young children so we knew that it was time for our family to move on. In Cherry Hill, Beth El was a conservative congregation with a young rabbi and a

beautiful new synagogue. We already had friends there as well as my uncle who was on the Board. There were 42 students in our daughter's confirmation class including a current Beth El officer. Our oldest son's 5th grade class in the BERS was over 70 students. All of our children were confirmed and graduated Midrasha. When I became chairman of the Religious School, there were over 900 students. Rabbi Furman z"l hired the teachers, developed the curriculum, and created a system to provide bus transportation to and from Beth El. He even took into account that siblings should be on the same schedule. He knew all of the students. He was a wonderful and amazing man. The Friday night Oneg Shabbat service brings back wonderful memories. There was always ample time to socialize and we would hear the beautiful harmony singing of (Rabbi) Eli Kahn and his brother Sammy as teenagers. Beth El has been our spiritual home for over 50 years. During those years, both Arlene and I were privileged to chair committees as I moved up through the chairs in leadership. I have watched as our spiritual home was remodeled and enlarged to include B'not Mitzvah, female Torah readers, and women in leadership. Beth El's growth knows no boundaries.

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BETH EL NEWS EDITOR Alicia Drozen—adrozen@bethelsnj.org







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11:00AM - GOLF REGISTRATION & BRUNCH 12:30PM - SHOTGUN START 4 PERSON SCRAMBLE \$250 PER PERSON

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