

Beth El Newsletter

We Belong Together

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WE STAND WITH ISRAEL

January/February 2025 - Tevet/Shevat 5785



MILK

DAY OF SERVICE

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?"

- *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

MONDAY, JANUARY 20 | 10am - 12pm

All ages are invited to this hands-on MITZVAH DAY!

PROJECTS BENEFITING:

- Attic Youth Center • Cathedral Kitchen
- CommUNITY SJP • Eyal's Flowers
- I Support the Girls • IDF Soldiers • JFCS
- Lion's Gate • Project Linus • Project SARAH
- Unforgotten Haven • Virtua Lourdes
- Transplant Department & Dialysis
- Voorhees Animal Orphanage... & more!

Clean out your homes
and bring donations
to fill the **Goodwill**
truck and books for
BookSmiles!



Sign up to be a station captain! Scan this QR code:

Questions? Contact **Alicia Drozen**, Programs & Events Director, at adrozen@bethelsnj.org or 856.281.9983



One year ago, I arrived for my interview weekend at Beth El. The start of the weekend was the 15th of *Shevat* also known as *Tu B'Shevat*, the Jewish new year of the trees. It was on that cold January weekend that the seeds were planted for an exciting future together. As I reflect back on the last six months here at Beth El, I am thrilled to be part of this wonderful community. Like trees, relationships take time to grow. I am grateful for the relationships that have already started to take root, and if we have not had the chance to meet, let's connect. While it may be cold outside and the trees are dormant, inside Beth El, the future is blossoming. During these cold winter months, come feel the warmth of community at Beth El.

It is ironic that we celebrate *Tu B'Shevat* during the winter season when trees are barren. Wouldn't it be more joyous to celebrate *Tu B'Shevat* when it is warm outside and the trees are full of leaves? While other trees are still deep in their

winter slumber, *Tu B'Shevat* is the time when the almond tree begins blooming in Israel. These beautiful blossoms are a sign of renewal and that spring will return again.

There is something magical about being in the Land of Israel during *Tu B'Shevat* and seeing the almond blossoms firsthand. For us in the diaspora, it can be hard to connect with this sense of renewal when the trees are bare and the short days of winter are still present (regardless of what a certain groundhog will say in February). The same is true for understanding Israel. There is nothing that can compare to being present amongst the people and the land of Israel. I am proud of the participants of the recent Beth El Israel mission and all members of our community who have made the effort to stand in solidarity since October 7th. In addition to bearing witness to October 7th and engaging in important volunteer work, those who have traveled to Israel also have seen firsthand the signs of a nation that has not lost hope. Just like the cold dark days of winter, *Tu B'Shevat* and the first almond blossoms are a hopeful reminder that spring and a time of renewal will return again.

A few years ago, I was in Israel on *Tu B'Shevat* and had an opportunity to plant a tree. What better way to celebrate *Tu B'Shevat* than planting an actual tree! Yet I recognize that physically planting a tree in Israel on *Tu B'Shevat* is not something we will all have the opportunity to do. What then can we do from our homes in South Jersey to meaningfully connect to the Land of Israel?

Before planting my tree in Israel, the tour guide took out a *Tanakh*, and began explaining the deep connection between the Jewish practice and the Land of Israel. Opening up to a verse in Deuteronomy that we recite daily in the second paragraph of the *Shema*, God promises that if we follow the commandments there will be rain in the land and "you shall gather your grain, and wine, and oil" (11:14). The tour guide explained that grain, wine and oil are produced from three of the seven species of Israel: wheat, grapes and olives. It is from these same species that we welcome Shabbat each week with wheat for challah, grapes for wine and olive oil for Shabbat candles. In other words, each week when we celebrate Shabbat we connect ourselves to the Land of Israel.

As we await the buds to appear on the trees in South Jersey, I hope *Tu B'Shevat* will be a reminder that we have an opportunity to connect with the Land of Israel not just once a year, rather every Shabbat. During these cold and dark days of winter when we are in search of signs of renewal, let Shabbat bring warmth and joy into our homes. Not only is Shabbat a chance to connect with the Land of Israel, but it is a special time to connect with one another. Like a tree, may we deepen our roots as a Beth El community so that we can continue to blossom together for years to come.

Rabbi Sam Hollander

OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



We are thrilled to announce the formation of the **Sylvia G. Cohen Center for Parents and Families**, generously dedicated and funded by Harv Cohen in memory of his beloved mother. To quote Harv, "My Mom was a great Mom, and I'd like to enable others to be the best

parents they can be." The center will focus first on experiences, support, education, and peer to peer connection. How to best care for grandchildren and for aging parents will also be priorities. Whether we are parents or care for children in our lives and our community, the Cohen Center will offer valuable information and insights. More details soon!

Josh Laster



Top left: Sylvia G. Cohen (z"l) with baby Harv. Top right: Sylvia (z"l) in her kitchen. Bottom: The Cohen family celebrating Glenn's graduation from Cherry Hill East - L to R: Harv, Glenn (z"l), Sylvia (z"l), and Patrice (z"l).

A promotional poster for "Coffee and Conversation with our Clergy" at Congregation Beth El. The poster features the title in large, brown, handwritten-style font. Below it, a teal banner reads "with our Clergy". The event details are listed in a brown circle: "Sundays at 11:15am in the Bell Library" and "Dates: Jan 5, Feb 2, Mar 2, Apr 6, May 4". The poster includes portraits of three clergy members in speech bubble shapes: a man with glasses, a man with a beard, and a woman. There are also illustrations of two coffee cups, one teal and one pink. The Congregation Beth El logo, featuring a stylized menorah and the text "קהילת בית אל CONGREGATION Beth El ESTABLISHED 1921", is in the top right corner.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



It is hard to believe it is 2025 already. A few weeks ago I had the privilege to travel with Rabbi Englander and several other Beth El members on a volunteer mission to Israel. Rabbi's goals for the trip were to learn, to help and to bear witness. In just four short, but

impactful days we did just that! We learned a little about politics in Israel, the Masorti (Conservative movement) in Israel and the importance of voting in the upcoming World Zionist Organization elections in March. We also visited some incredible places to learn more about what they do, including the Israel Paralympic Sports Center, a facility where any Israeli citizen with any kind of physical challenge can come and learn to play sports, and Adi Negev, a 40-acre state-of-the-art residential facility in the south, for children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities as well as a full-service rehabilitation hospital. And we learned about lots of different ways we could support Israel financially during these difficult times.

We helped by cooking and assembling chicken subs for soldiers stationed near the Lebanon border with an organization called Citrus and Spice. Originally opened as a place to take cooking classes, after October 7th they began arranging groups to cook for the soldiers. We also went to a Moshav in the Judean Hills to help pick olives, we packed "Date-Night" boxes for soldiers returning home to help them reconnect with their spouse through an organization called Thank Israeli Soldiers, and we donated blood at Magen David Adom. And we had

the privilege of helping to host a Barbeque DJ party at an army base where we danced the night away with several hundred amazing young soldiers. A truly incredible experience, for them and for us!

Bearing witness was the most meaningful part of this trip. Words cannot possibly describe what we saw, but visiting the site of the Nova Music Festival and seeing the make-shift memorials of over 400 young adults who were either killed or kidnapped that day is overwhelming. So many beautiful young faces lost so tragically. And visiting Hostage Square in Tel Aviv, and Har Hertzl Military Cemetery, with so many new graves added since October 7th, was heartbreaking. During the trip we met with a father whose two sons are still being held hostage, a father whose daughter was killed on October 7th when Kibbutz Holit was attacked, a mother who was by her son's grave at Har Hertzl when we were there who told us his story. And they were all so grateful for us, that we took the time to come to Israel, to listen to and to support them, and show them how much American Jews care about Israel.

This was not like any previous trip to Israel I have taken. Israel needs our love and support, and us being there to listen to them, to give them a chance to tell their stories, seemed incredibly therapeutic. They are still living with the trauma of this war. I encourage anyone who has the means to go. If you'd like to learn more about our trip, please feel free to ask me about it.

B'Shalom,

Faye L. Shapiro



BETH EL EDUCATION



For a Jewish educator, there are two components of Jewish education - formal and informal. We already know that your children are engaged in the formal aspect of Jewish education whether they attend a Jewish Day School or our afternoon Religious School or Keshar

Hebrew High School. That is the easy part. The second component, the more challenging one, is that of informal Jewish education. Our synagogue youth program provides your children and teens with the opportunity to create, and be part of, a *Kehillah Kedosha*, a sacred community.

As parents, it is important to give our children with a Jewish education, but providing our children with opportunities to create a *hevre*, a friendship group, to surround them with a Jewish community outside of the classroom, is equally important. Learning about Judaism should not and is not confined within the four walls of the classroom.

Beth El offers wonderful informal opportunities for our children and teens outside of the Religious School and Hebrew High School programs. Our Machar Program, for 3rd-6th grade students, is led by our amazing *Kitah Hey* teacher Tali Alfassy. This program meets once a month,

usually on a Sunday, for a fun, interactive, and social Jewish experience. So far this year our students went apple picking in September at Johnson's Farm in preparation for Rosh Hashanah, Roller Skating in October, Bowling in November, and Mini Golfing at Monster Golf in December. Our next event will be at Color Me Mine in January.

Our Keshar Teen Social Program is open to all Jewish students in grades 7-12 in our community. It is led by our Keshar staff and youth advisor Jennifer Fisher. This program brings teens together from Beth El, TBS, and CBT for fun social programs outside of the classroom. In November, 39 teens took over Manhattan! Students spent the day in New York City visiting the Elridge Synagogue, exploring Times Square, enjoying a Broadway show, and a delicious Kosher dinner. In December our teens enjoyed a night out at Dave and Busters.

Our children are our future. You have taken the first step in providing your children with a Jewish education. Let us help you take the next step - providing your children with a connection to other Jewish children and teens. The friendships they will create through our youth programs will last a lifetime. Try it, I really think they will love it and thank you for it!

Rabbi Nogah Marshall
Educational Director





As we head into the 2025-26 year, it is time to reflect on all that has happened and all that is to come! First and foremost, I want to thank all of our amazing ECC families, teachers, and volunteers for all that they have done to make this past year AMAZING! We ended the year on such a high note, with a Scholastic Book Fair, Giving Tuesday, our Oil Press with Rabbi Kahan, and our fabulous ECC Chanukah Celebration! The Scholastic Book Fair is one of many ways to help support our ECC. All profits from the book fair are going towards books, toys, manipulatives and other items for the classrooms. The children LOVED visiting the book fair and there is nothing better than knowing that we are raising READERS!

Giving Tuesday was a great success. Our families, ECC staff and Beth El team came together to create a campaign to help raise funds for any ECC Families in need. The support was felt by everyone, and we could not be more grateful for the Beth El and ECC communities.

Rabbi Kahan joined our ECC children and showed them how oil is pressed from olives. He also taught them about the miracle of the oil found by the Maccabees which lasted eight days!

We ended the year with our Chanukah Celebration, which was the most special HAPB Shabbat Party of the year! Our Threes, Fours and Kindergarten classes all performed Chanukah songs for the entire ECC, we celebrated end-of-year birthdays, and feasted on Sufganiyot and Latkes (made by Beth El's own, Chef Shavit) with our loved ones!

As we head into 2025, we are thankful for our PTG chairs Samantha Gherardi and Yael Goldberg, and ECC Chairs Sara Baumgarten and Nicole Raffel. Their support and guidance have been invaluable. Our ECC community is made up of people who genuinely love our school and want to see it grow and thrive. We are grateful for our spectacular clergy, their joy and spirit at our HAPB Shabbat parties and our Holiday celebrations keep our children excited about our traditions. Finally, we are so grateful for our ECC teachers, who care for our children with their whole hearts and teach them to be excited about learning!

2025 promises to be a year full of new friends, new experiences, and adventure. Wishing everyone a wonderful New Year!

Ayelet Mittelman
ECC Director



HAVDALAH & HOT CHOCOLATE for Young Families

Saturday, January 11 at 5:30pm

Come in PJs for an engaging family Havdalah with our Clergy.

Enjoy a hot chocolate bar, milk & cookies, and kids' craft!

FREE OF CHARGE.

Mazal Tov

TO OUR B'NAI MITZVAH



Emily Andoian – January 11

Parents: Amanda Lipsman and Alex Andoian

Siblings: Hayley Andoian

Grandparents: Randee Boory Lipsman (z"l), Varsen Bairamian and Andranik Andoian (z"l)

Mitzvah Project: Bracelets for Breast Cancer - Emily is selling handmade bracelets to raise money for Sharsheret to purchase activity kits to keep kids entertained while a parent is going through treatment or recovery. The project is in honor of her Mom-Mom Randee.



Benjamin Rovner – January 18

Parents: Ivy & Eric Rovner

Siblings: Alexis Rovner

Grandparents: Rhona & Lenard Brown and Dina & Hal Rovner

Mitzvah Project: Ben is collecting books for BookSmiles

Braden Lambert – January 18 (not pictured)

Parents: Beth & Adam Lambert

Siblings: Micaela and Zachary Lambert

Brooks Brown – January 20 (not pictured)

Parents: Alana & Michael Brown

Siblings: Frankie Brown



Adam Rinehart – January 25

Parents: Jodi & Jason Rinehart

Siblings: Lauren and Carly Rinehart

Grandparents: Alan & Rita (z"l) Kagan, Christopher & Denise Rinehart

Mitzvah Project: Adam is collecting new goggles, caps, and monetary donations for an organization in Philadelphia called "We Can Swim."



Levi Hartman – February 1

Parents: Jamie & Michael Hartman

Siblings: Zoe Hartman

Grandparents: Randy & Sam Herring and Ellen & Brad Hartman

Mitzvah Project: Levi and his family are sponsoring a Chanukah party for Holocaust survivors through the Raab Goodwin Institute.

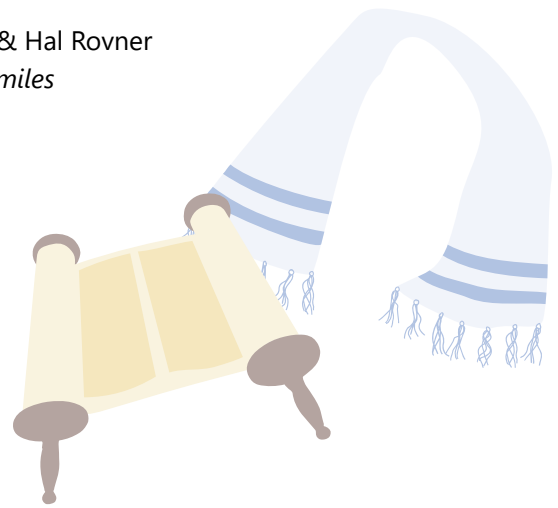


Max Baeuerle – February 22

Parents: Lauren Bell and Holger Baeuerle

Grandparents: Donna & Richard Bell, Juergen (z"l) and Dorothea Baeuerle

Mitzvah Project: Max is fundraising for the Homeless World Cup Foundation, an organization that engages homeless and marginalized people in over 70 countries, using soccer as a tool. They also provide support services, including housing, documentation, mental health, and vocational training.





A strong Jewish Tomorrow is in YOUR hands

By leaving a gift to Congregation Beth El in your will or estate plans, your legacy commitment can ensure that our synagogue will remain part of South Jersey's vibrant and colorful Jewish community for generations to come.



To create your Jewish Legacy, contact Josh Laster, Executive Director | jlaster@bethelsnj.org | 856.675.1166



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.

Contact Josh Laster at jlaster@bethelsnj.org

**Names in bold have formalized a commitment to Beth El*

Mira & Aaron Aumiller
 Susan & David Backal
 Cathy & Marc Backal
 Marcia Baruch Bowen
 Donna & Richard Bell
 Robert & Pamela Benedon
 Jodi Berman
 Helene & Alan Blumenfeld
 Jocelyn Borowsky
 Ronit & Chris Boyd
 Beth & Josh Brodtkin
 Amy & Eric Clayman
 Herbert (z"l) & Thalia Cohen
 Arlene & Harris (z"l) Colton
 Fran & Neal Cupersmith
 Leila & Adam Cupersmith
 Marsha Dollinger
 Alan Dias & Heidi Handler
 June & Steven Eisner & Family
 Alan Finkelstein

Nicole & Michael Gray
 Myra & David Gutin
 Phyllis Hecsh
 Deborah & Edward Hochberg
 Beth & Harvey Jacob
 Adam Kaminer
 Arnold & Sandra Kaminer
 Sharla & Mort (z"l) Kanovsky
 Amy & Barnard Kaplan
 Jerome Katz
 Alison & Andrew Keim
 Debra Kelberg
 Deborah Shore & Jonathan Korn
 Helene & Rabbi Aaron Krupnick
 Fran & Leon L. Levy
 Suzanne & Victor Levy
 Judy & Donald (z"l) Love
 Diane & Benjamin Mashioff
 Rachel & Stephen Miller
 Burt & Diane Nussbaum
 Lynn Goldman Paul
 Sheri & Jason Pecarsky

Arlene & Ed Plasky
 Hilary & Harry Platt
 Ilene Rosen & P. Todd Rowan
 Sharon & Adam Sackstein
 Stuart & Sherry Sauer
 Karen & David Schlessel & Family
 Harriet Schulman
 Robin & Joshua Schwartz
 Faye & Gary Shapiro
 Stacy & Marc Shenker
 Jennifer Sholder
 Michael Silver
 Juli Mandel Sloves & Glenn Sloves
 Lauren & Jonathan Soll
 Tami Bogutz Steinberg
 Judith & Stuart Wasserlauf
 Jennifer & Jim Weiss
 Jennifer Jagust & Yoel Weiss
 Julie & Jason Whitney
 Leah & Jason Wolf
 Jeffrey Zeiger
 Anonymous (2)

UPCOMING EVENTS at a glance!

JANUARY:

- 3:** Prayers & Pajamas
- 5:** KaHaL Spiritual Drumming Circle
- 9:** KaHaL Melton Israel Class begins
- 11:** Havdalah & Hot Chocolate for Young Families
- 12:** Tallis & T'fillin
- 12:** Youth Department Event at 'Color Me Mine'
- 15:** KaHaL & Habonim Movie Matinee
- 15:** Mental Health Matters with Dr. Michael Gotlib
- 18:** Tot Shabbat
- 20:** MLK Day of Service
- 25:** Sisterhood & Men's Club 90s Party
- 26:** Tallis & T'fillin
- 29:** Healing Service with Hazzan
- 30:** Sisterhood Rosh Chodesh
- 31:** Achim Sheli Shabbat



FEBRUARY:

- 2:** Service from the Heart
- 2:** Abraham Joshua Heschel Brunch & Learn
- 2:** Volunteer Night at Home Cook Heroes - Gift of Life Howie's House
- 7:** Prayers & Pajamas
- 8:** Shabbat Shirah
- 8:** Tot Shabbat
- 9:** Phil Podell Memorial World Wide Wrap
- 9:** Parent & Me Volunteer Morning at Emmanuel Cancer Foundation Food Pantry*
- 9:** Chanter with the Cantor
- 12:** Sisterhood Tu B'Shevat Plant Party
- 13:** Tu B'Shevat
- 22:** Sisterhood Shabbat
- 23:** Day of Impact for Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month
- 23:** Chanter with the Cantor
- 26:** I Didn't Know They Are LGBTQ+: How To Be An Ally - A Panel discussion presented by Kavod
- 27:** Red Cross Blood Drive

** denotes Social Action Volunteer Opportunities*



Dear Parents & College Students,

We at the College Connection hope that your students are being safe and had a great Fall Semester in College!

On December 6, we sent out over 60 packages for Chanukah to those undergraduate students registered in our program. We hope they enjoyed the chocolates and other goodies in the package and did well on their finals.

Our Purim package will be sent out early March of 2025. If you would like to sign up your student or there is a change in your student's address, please email Audrey Snyderman at audreysnyderman@gmail.com or Jackie Bernard at 4bernards@comcast.net to let us know.

To volunteer or become involved in the committee, please contact Jackie Bernard at 856-630-0585 or at 4bernards@comcast.net.

Hoping all of our students are enjoying their winter break and wishing them a successful spring semester.

Sponsored by: **The David Back College Connection Fund.**

To donate to the fund, please call 856.675.1166

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROUS SHOMRIM MEMBERS:

PILLAR

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

VISIONARY

Marvin Samson Foundation

SUSTAINER

Marcia & Arnold Cohen
Jerome M. Katz
The Keim Family Foundation
Anonymous

BUILDER

Iris & Steven (z"l) Auerbach
Susan & David Backal
Donna & Richard Bell
Elaine (z"l) & Bart Greenspan

Deborah & Ed Hochberg
Judy & Donald (z"l) Love
Ellen & Michael Lowenberger
Carol & Donald Meltzer

Miriam & Stan Meltzer
Rachel & Stephen Miller
Sharon & Adam Sackstein

BENEFACTOR

Elissa & Eric Boory
Beth & Josh Brodtkin
Sharla & Morton (z"l) Kanovsky

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

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

GUARDIAN

Gerry & Howard Abramsohn
Sharon & Elliot Atkins
Cathy & Marc Backal
Steven Beilowitz
The Bell Baeuerle Family
Jennifer & Andrew Bender
Helene & Alan Blumenfeld
Jocelyn Borowsky
Leslie & David Breslau
Staci & Jeffrey Cedar
Amy & Eric Clayman
Leslie & Steven Cohen
Myrna & Larry Cohen
Arlene & Harris (z"l) Colton
Fran & Neal Cupersmith
Marsha Dollinger
Brenda & Chuck Driben
Karen & Ian Driben
Christine & William Feinberg

Leonard Feldman
Nicole & Michael Gray
Jennifer & Alex Greenwald
Ilene & Harry Grossman
Myra & David Gutin
Sandra & Arnold Kaminer
Ziva & Haim Kantor
Stacy & Andrew Levin
Renee & David Lieberman
Eileen Mangel
Andrea & Marc Millstein
Jamie & Darin Morgan
Linda & Richard Moskowitz
Hilary & Harry Platt
Ellen Podell
Erica & Jerry Rothkoff
Ilene Rosen & Todd Rowan
Sharon & Jay Ruder
Joyce & Mel Ruthen

Zena & Fred Sacks
Sherry & Stuart Sauer
Karen & David Schlessel
Betsy & Robert Schwartz
Brandi & Gregory Seltzer
Faye & Gary Shapiro
Shari & Jeffrey Shapiro
Carol & Joel Silbert
Judy & Len Simkin
Tami Bogutz Steinberg
Alison & Neil Tarnopol
Diane & Stuart Traster
Lynne & Diego Warszawski
Norma & Allan Weinberg
Ilene & Michael Weinberg
Jennifer & James Weiss
Jennifer Jagust & Yoel Weiss
Eileen & Bernard Yaffa
Anonymous

MAZAL TOV TO

B'NAI MITZVAH:

Bella Richter and to her parents **Sharon & Alan Richter**, and grandparents **Sharla & Morton z"l Kanovsky**
Drew Ritigstein and to his parents **Stephanie & Michael Ritigstein** and grandmother, **Carol Rosof**
Saige Falk and to her parents **Drs. Marni & Scott Falk**
Max Silverman and to his parents **Drs. Dina & Benjamin Silverman**
Bob & Abby Belafsky on the Bat Mitzvah of their granddaughter, **Ivy Swartz**
Sophia Passkoff and to her parents **Lauren & Daniel Passkoff**
Sophie Shapiro and to her parents **Shari & Dr. Jeffrey Shapiro**
Judy & Len Wizmur on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, **Charlie Glezer**
Anne Isenberg and to her parents **Raluca & Dr. Derek Isenberg**
Ariel Cupersmith and to her parents **Leila & Adam Cupersmith**,
and grandparents **Neal & Fran Cupersmith**



BIRTHS & NAMINGS:

Drew & Tal Lessa on the birth of their son, **David Ezra Lessa**
Michal Alboher on the birth of her granddaughter **Lanny**, in Israel
Bryan & Michelle Balaban on the naming of their daughter, **Sonia Paige**

ENGAGEMENTS & WEDDINGS:

Beth & Craig Wynne on the marriage of their son, **Josh Wynne and Lauren Warshaw**, and to grandmother, **Edith Green**
Jennifer & Ari Brooks on the marriage of their daughter, **Juliet Brooks and Jonah Baskin**

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS AND OTHER GOOD NEWS:

Glenn Sloves was named FOX Rehabilitation Colleague of the Month for October!

*We want to celebrate everyone's simchas, accomplishments, and achievements.
Email Claudia Sternberg at cs Sternberg@bethelsnj.org to share your special news!*

All life events as of December 9, 2024

ZICHRONAM LIV'RACHAH

WE MOURN THE PASSING OF:

Morton Kanovsky - Husband of Sharla Kanovsky; Father of Sharon (Alan) Richter, Stephen (Polly) Kanovsky; Grandfather of Alexandra and Jeremy Kanovsky, Bella Richter

Doris Bell - Wife of Jerry Bell z"l, Mother of Judy (Arthur) Kratchman and Steven (Robin) Bell, Grandmother of Michael (Jodi) Kratchman, Dana (Neil) Hoffman, Justin (Lauren) Bell, Taryn (CJ) Scatena

Robert Weiss - Husband of Terri Weiss; Father of Donna (Leon) Rose, Hank (Janine) Weiss; Grandfather of Sam, Brooke, Molly, Daniel and Emma

Arthur Gilbert - Brother of Sarah Schiff, Adam Gilbert; Uncle of Brielle Gilbert, Andrew Gilbert, Debra Schiff, Katie Schiff

Simmy Krassan - Wife of Joseph Krassan z"l; Mother of Marc (Katharine) Krassan and Mitchell (Susan) Krassan; Grandmother of Michael, Sam and Ellie; Sister of Delores Gerstein

Jacob Manders - Son of Ronda & Steve Manders; Brother of Hannah Manders and Joshua Manders

Congregation Beth El's Life Trustee, **Dr. Harris N. Colton** - Husband of Arlene Colton; Father of Dr. Janice (Dr. Bennett) Ojserkis, Gary (fiancée Crystal) Colton, Jerrold Colton, and Laurence (Susan) Colton

Merle Koerner - Sister of Cookie (Allan) Weinberg

BELL LIBRARY NEWS



Amy Kaplan
Congregation Librarian

What are your favorite types of novels? Do you enjoy mysteries? How about romance (it's the fastest-growing genre in publishing)? Or maybe thrillers? One genre I generally avoid is fantasy. I just don't generally care for stories that rely on magic or unreal elements.

Well, live and learn. I recently read "The Familiar" by Leigh Verdugo, and really enjoyed it. This is the story of a Luiza, a scullion in the perilous time of the Spanish Inquisition. She has learned incantations from her aunt, and uses them to perform some minor feats of magic for her cruel mistress. Word of her strange ability spreads, and Luiza, who must hide her Jewish background, finds herself involved in palace intrigue as men close to the king vie for power in a country whose armada has just been defeated. Luiza's reputation spreads as she performs ever greater feats of magic, but she's not the only one in the kingdom claiming special powers, and the privilege her little miracles afford her comes at a great price as rivals threaten her. While the fantasy element is important to the story, what really makes this book stand out for me is the author's use of carefully researched historical detail and the richly descriptive writing bringing the sights, sounds, and smells of Renaissance Spain to readers. So I recommend this one to those who enjoy historical fiction and might like a taste of fantasy, too.

Joan Nathan is the doyenne of Jewish cooking, and her newest cookbook is a must-read for foodies and those who just enjoy reading about the word of Jewish cooking. In Nathan's book, "My Life in Recipes," she showcases some of her favorite recipes and shares stories from her decades of culinary exploration and innovation. Nathan has met and, in some cases, worked with many of the most famous chefs worldwide. The vast richness of Jewish cooking around the world was largely unknown until she opened her readers' eyes to the possibilities of cooking beyond traditional Ashkenazic dishes. This is a cookbook you can cook from, or just enjoy as a memoir of one of the true superstars of Jewish cooking.

Please remember that long winter evenings are a perfect time to settle in with books from your synagogue library. Stop by or call for recommendations and to borrow books!

The library has received a very generous gift from congregant Harv Cohen. This donation will enable us to add dozens of new books to our children's and adults' collections. We are most grateful to Harv for this incredible act of support for our library. *Today rabah*, Harv!

Bell Library hours:

Mon: 9am – 1pm, **Tues:** 9:30am – 12pm, **Wed:** 9am – 1pm



I Didn't Know They Are LGBTQ+: How To Be An Ally

A Panel Discussion

Wednesday, February 26 at 7:00pm

A look into the coming out journey from a variety of perspectives and how to show our support for our LGBTQ+ family member or friend.

Free and open to the community. RSVP not required, but kindly preferred: bethelsnj.shulcloud.com/form/ally

Presented by **Kavod** Beth El's LGBTQI+ Friends, Families & Allies

Questions? Please email Kavod@bethelsnj.org



Looking back at...

Recent Beth El Happenings



Congregation Beth El's Israel Mission trip with Rabbi Englander was a truly meaningful and powerful experience. Participants learned, volunteered, bore witness and experienced life in Israel.



ECC Parents Axe Throwing Night Out was... a bullseye!

Two and four-legged friends enjoying Prayers, Pajamas & Pets!



Machar Youth Group had a blast at Monster Golf!



Tackling anti-semitism on the college campus with Professor Shai Davidai.



The smiles on our ECC students as they learn, play and grow together, fill our hearts with joy and pride every day!



Our B'nai Mitzvah students and their parents at Tallis & T'fillin class with Hazzan Pomerantz-Boro.



Achim Sheli Friendsgiving brunch. We are thankful for all of our amazing volunteers, members, and committees!

Beth El Social Action presents:

Mental Health Matters

Confronting the Stigma and What Gets in the Way



With Dr. Michael Gotlib, PsyD
*Clinical Psychologist at
The Center for Emotional Health*

Wednesday, January 15
7:00pm (following evening minyan)
at Congregation Beth El

Dr. Michael Gotlib is a staff psychologist at The Center for Emotional Health. He specializes in anxiety disorders, men's mental health, and psychological flexibility training. He works with individuals, schools, and organizations to develop and execute programming to help foster mental well-being in the workplace.

Dr. Gotlib will introduce Acceptance and Commitment Training (ACT), an empirically-based form of psychology that uses acceptance and mindfulness strategies to help people move towards meaningful relationships, self-care, and well-being. Through mental flexibility training, we can respond better to challenge, stress, and the stigma of mental health.

FREE and open to the community

RSVP not required, but kindly preferred:
bethelsnj.shulcloud.com/form/mentalhealth



Questions? Please contact Alicia Drozen at adrozen@bethelsnj.org

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SOCIAL ACTION Spotlight!

We had a very impactful couple of months with Beth El Social Action! At our Red Cross Blood Drive, 23 donors collected 18 good units of blood which has the potential to save the lives of up to 54 people! Adult volunteers prepared and served a chicken dinner to families residing at the Ronald McDonald House in Camden. Our ECC "parent and me" volunteers packaged care packs with socks, toiletries and snacks for CommUNITY SJP which distributed them to the Mobile Food Pantry in Willingboro and Josephs House in Camden. We also sponsored more than 100 turkeys for the families served by the Boys & Girls Club in Camden in memory and honor of beloved Beth El member, Susan K. Asbell z"l. We thank everyone for their support of our social action efforts and putting our values into action!

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities:

January 20: MLK Day of Service (open to all ages!)

February 2: Volunteer Night at Gift of Life Howie's House

February 9: Parent & Me Volunteer Morning at Emmanuel Cancer Foundation Food Pantry

February 23: Day of Impact celebrating Jewish Disability Awareness & Inclusion Month

February 27: Red Cross Blood Drive

Scan this QR code to sign up!



Contact Alicia Drozen at adrozen@bethelsnj.org with questions.



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