



# Beth Israel Bulletin

Tevet - Sh'vat 5782/ January 2022

Issue 5782 - 5

TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL  
JANUARY EVENTS

ZOOM SERVICES



## Inside this issue:

<i>Donations</i>	6
<i>President's Desk</i>	4
<i>Rabbi's Message</i>	1
<i>Service Schedule</i>	3
<i>Yahrzeit Dates</i>	3
<i>Yenta</i>	5

## FROM THE RABBI

Exactly two years ago in this column I wrote about it being a possible midpoint of my time as your rabbi: we had just agreed to my next two year contract, and at that moment I had been here for two-and-a-half years and had contracted for an additional two-and-a-half years. Now, as you all know, I will be departing in another six months.

In that column I wrote about what we had accomplished in the previous 2.5 years, and looked ahead to where we might go. As I began to look forward, I offered this paragraph:

What will the next two-and-a-half years bring? No doubt some changes and developments will happen in response to unexpected events and opportunities. What those will be, only time will tell. Others may come about more planfully.

This column, written in December of 2019, and published in January 2020, came mere months before our lives were radically altered by COVID-19. The last two years (and the next six months, I suspect), have primarily been shaped by our responses to this global pandemic. It is fair to say that I was hoping to put my energies into other areas than figuring out how to create spiritual experiences when we could not gather in person. Nonetheless, the requirements of the moment create the needs which must be addressed.

One unintended byproduct of the pandemic has been a centering of me, as rabbi, in the community. One of my goals as a rabbi is not to center myself,

but to keep the community itself at the core of what we do. Often in the last two years, the limitations of Zoom or the pandemic have led to a more rabbi-centered experience than I might have liked. Over the next six months, I hope to work with many of you to decenter myself from the congregation, and re-establish the primacy of congregational participation in various areas.

It is my belief that a congregation is at its healthiest when the rabbi is not the sole content producer (so to speak) for the community. When there are others besides the rabbi offering classes (or even prayer experiences). When ideas for projects and programs flow up from the community rather than down from the rabbi.

It is my goal to empower you to be the center of Temple Beth Israel. Have an idea for an adult education class or session? I'd be delighted to work with you to help you bring it to life. I can offer Zoom support as necessary, or help you flesh out an idea, or even arrange the chairs.

Ideally, in six months you will be welcoming a new rabbi to Temple Beth Israel. Let's work together so that the congregation they join is as vibrant as it can be.

Mahjong

every Sunday @ 11 AM

in TBI Social Hall



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## Schedule of Shabbat Services

Jan. 7, Friday, 6:00 pm Family Service  
Bo (Ex. 10:1 - 13:16)

Jan. 14, Friday, 7:00 pm Shabbat Service  
Beshalach (Ex. 13:17 - 17:16)

Jan. 22, Saturday, 10:00 am Shabbat Morning Service  
Yitro (Ex. 18:1 - 20:23)

Jan. 28, Friday, 7:00 pm Shabbat Service  
Mishpatim (Ex. 21:1 - 24:18)



\*\*\*All Service will be on Zoom only

## YAHREZITS

### January 7, 2022

Julius Balkan  
Irving Weisman  
Rhoda Greenfield  
Hyman Simonowitz  
Samuel Bronstein  
Mel Lichtig  
Henry Mendelsohn  
Julius Mendelsohn  
Rose Rednor  
Adele Lessner  
Sarita Tisser

### January 14, 2022

Abraham Nizel  
Martin Helfgott  
Muriel Gotlieb  
Herman Bornstein  
Beatrice Moldovan  
Ida Dorothy Morris  
Furman  
Gussie Jaffe  
Samuel Ruzow  
Ben Gabor  
Sarah Miller Morris  
Robert Julian Feinberg  
William Levy

### January 22, 2022

Hanka Meldung  
Maurice Kabeli  
Rebecca Merkel Scheier  
Meyer Schwartz  
Isidore Bookman  
Marylln Rose Fine  
Samuel Sbinowitz  
Baruch Feldman  
Avrum Shainmark  
Erwin L. "Joe" Bornstein  
Annie Myerson  
Harry Schlesinger  
Roger P. Kennedy  
Doris Burde  
Rene Gluck

### January 28, 2022

Matthew Feldman  
Esther Rozel Smolar  
Sydney B. Resnick  
Sidney Gordon  
Julius M. Evans  
Samuel Rabin  
Clara Goldman  
Simi Mamane  
Rose Skloff



## NOTES FROM THE PREZ

Gentle Reader, as the saying goes Tempus Fugit. And so, it has. The initial winter holidays have marched on. We have wrapped up Halloween, Thanksgiving and Hannukah. We have decorated and passed candy, decorated and carved turkey, decorated and lit candles and fried latkes.

Time for a small break before we decorate and cook again for yet another holiday season. So, let's all take a few seconds to just stop. Take some long, slow, deep breaths. Repeat this a few times. (*Go ahead, I'll wait*). Feel better now? A little calmer? I thought you might.

Seeing as you are calmer now, I'd like to ask your assistance with something that has been bothering me for years. But before I begin, please accept my sincere pre-emptory apology for any offense taken by my point of view or frankness.

Gentle Reader, allow me to share with you a concern/problem I believe to be of a most serious nature. I'm referring to Temple Beth Israel's revolving Rabbi door.

The North Country has been my home for 14 years, 6 months and 6 days and Temple Beth Israel has been my spiritual home for almost as long. In these 14 plus years, I have said hello and goodbye to 5 rabbis. That averages out to 1 rabbi every 2-3 years.

Some of our past rabbis, I've liked a lot. Others not so much, but whoever is in the pulpit has never influenced my belief in the need to support and connect with my temple family and actively practice my Judaism. I have actually heard people say, "I won't attend synagogue until she or he is gone". This type of behavior reminds me of squabbling families where someone has not talked another family member for years. Some even carry these feuds to the grave. I honestly don't understand this behavior. Life is too short to waste energy carrying grudges. And as far as letting someone else control your presence in your synagogue and your contact with your temple family...well, I'm at a total loss to understand this!

Rabbi David's leaving this June is a loss to our temple. Gone will be his in-depth knowledge of Torah and empathetic interaction he has with many members of our temple family. He has been a comfort to many and bravely took risks to teach and reach out to those who are ill, despite his personal fear of getting COVID long term effects. I personally will miss him and Eva and the talents they brought to us.

So, Temple Beth Israel adds another picture to "the wall

of shame" as my beloved Tommy calls it. Is having a new rabbi every few years a positive or negative thing? True, it offers new and different insights with the arrival of each new rabbi; but it also denies the congregation a sense of permanency and acceptance with the leaving of each rabbi. It takes years to gain full acceptance into a new community. We will never have that if we can't keep a rabbi for longer than 3-5 years.

As your president, it is my job to get the ball rolling for the rabbi search and I been thinking long and hard about what is the next step in finding another rabbi. I've also been asking myself some questions about what this congregation wants from our spiritual leader. This issue is way too much for any one person or even a few persons to tackle alone, so I am reaching out to you, my temple family, to help define and resolve this issue.

Survey findings from Rabbi David's recent evaluation found a major disconnect between how the board of trustees perceived the Rabbi and how the congregation perceived the rabbi. This in itself is something to be addressed. (*later*)

By the time you read this, I will have recruited some of you to sit on the Rabbi search committee.

I will be also have sent every member in good standing some very pointed questions about what you want in a rabbi both personally and as a community leader. In what areas should a rabbi be proficient? What duties should be specifically be spelled out in the rabbi's job description, etc.

When you receive this questionnaire, please answer the areas you believe are important to you as a congregant and important for a rabbi within the larger community.

There will be a **temple meeting January 6<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 6:30 PM** to discuss your answers. It will be a **Zoom** meeting for all members in good standing and all board members. Everyone will have time to express their ideas and a timekeeper will be there to keep us all focused.

Here's hoping your holidays were everything you needed them to be.

Baruch Ha'Shem

ElizaBeth

# Yenta



With the steady rise in COVID 19 cases in the North Country, our Shabbat services have returned to Zoom through the end of January. Influenza A is also rearing its' nasty head locally. Let's hope that things will settle down soon. Please mask up and stay safe...

MAZEL TOV to Cheryl Kabeli who recently defended her doctoral project at Syracuse University to become a DNP! She's now a Doctor of Nursing Practice. Very exciting. We're proud of you!!

The Oberman/Soroka duo have returned home after spending a few months with Tova & Zack in North Bend, WA. A WARM WELCOME HOME!

Speaking of travel, Ronnie Marx and his dog/sidekick, Peggy, have made their second sojourn to San Diego by car. He was warmly hosted overnight at the Weisburgh's 2nd home in Charlotte, NC. He needed to get to CA by the 14th, Alice's birthday, and he made it!

Just as Ronnie arrived in CA, our area experienced a windstorm and a large portion of Cedar Knoll's tin roof was blown off! I guess that's why he has insurance...

Carol and Jeanot finally arrived in AZ for the winter. Jeanot's sister Yvette and son Amir came from Israel and joined them for the month of December. What a treat for all of the four siblings to be together!

Our Hanukkah celebration for the Rabin Religious School was a successful evening. Fortunately, the weather was cooperative for us as well. Between 35-40 adults and children were in attendance. A number of college students joined us too. There was plenty of schmoozing, singing and imbibing of hot chocolate and treats. The gold Tiki torch menorah was a hit with all present. A special thanks to the congregants and families who contributed to and served us for this

special evening.

Check outside your door! Beth Nolland has been caught delivering containers of her delicious homemade chicken soup to a few homes!

David Freedman surprised his mom Phyllis by coming to NYC for her birthday in November. A good time was had by all! He had recently been there on his way back from a trip to Alaska with his son Nathan. He just couldn't let her celebrate without him.

Mona & Henry Goldenburg are settling in their temporary digs in Providence, RI until they are able to find a place they like. They already have gotten library cards and joined the JCC. We wish them success and our community will miss them.

Mazel tov to Bri Holland and her family on the birth of her son Henry. Brother Rowan is in love with him already. Just wait until he starts snatching his toys.

Condolences to Jack Helfgott and family on the loss of his mother Judith. May her memory be a blessing.

Wishing you strength and ruach for 2022!

Yenta



**Seeking volunteer(s) to manage the Judaica Shop and Hanukkah 2022 Bazaar. This can be a fun job for someone with a sense of organization, a taste for sales, good social skills and some marketing talents. Call ElizaBeth (518) 944-0610 if you want a little excitement in your day and a sense of accomplishment.**

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- In Memory of Judith Helfgott.

Janet and Jerry Davis and Family:

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- In loving Memory of Florence Kaufman.

Jeff and Irene Gretz:

- In Memory of Mary Adler.

Cerise Oberman and Laurence Soroka:

- In loving Memory of Audrey Soroka and Sydney Oberman.

Mark Judge and Peter Judge:

- In Memory of our Grandparents Anna Bohlen Davis and Alex J. Davis.

#### Special Thank You:

I would like to thank the Rabbi, Board and Congregation for being supportive of me during this past year. Special thanks to Andy, Jeff and Doug. It takes a village to raise Temple Office help. Everyone's advice and hard work and patience has been overwhelming. I am grateful to know so many wonderful people of Temple Beth Israel. Hoping 2022 will bring faith and love and health to all. - Maria Foster

### **Interfaith Food Pantry**

Mona Goldenberg for many years has been our liaison between Temple Beth Israel and our Interfaith Food Pantry, located at the United Methodist Church, 127 Beekman St. Plattsburgh, NY 1901. She had gathered volunteers from our synagogue for the first Monday of each month, now that is going to be my job.

I am asking for Volunteers to represent TBI and serve at the Interfaith Food Pantry the 1st Monday each month. Hours are 9AM - 12 PM It really is satisfying and fun. Some days we are very busy, some days not so much. I will share the days and hours we are open, so you have this information to share with others. (Never know who is in need) if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, call Carol Staves 352-584-2827 or 518-310-3911, or mail [cjstaves@gmail.com](mailto:cjstaves@gmail.com)

#### Schedule:

Monday - 9-12

Tuesday - 9-12

Wednesday - 9-12

Thursday - 9-12

Friday 9-12 and 4-6PM

Closed Saturdays & Sundays

Donations are still and always welcomed. Non perishable food items may be dropped off any day opened at the United Methodist Church.

Donations may also be made with a check, credit card or gift card or directly to: (or): [info@regionalfoodbank.net](mailto:info@regionalfoodbank.net).

(Regional Food Bank Latham NY, is the main distribution center and on the app one may select a specific food bank location.) Thank you for your consideration, Carol.

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Bulletin Articles

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