



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

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Houston, Texas 77096
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Vol. 167 | No. 3

MARCH 2021
BULLETIN

“A Gateway to Our Future”



The Jewish calendar is lunar and agricultural, perfectly reflecting nature’s cycles of the moon and the seasons. As spring comes, the Passover festival holiday tells our people’s story of freedom from bondage and the promise of the future reflected in the season. Trees become full and green and flowers reach up and blossom. There’s evidence that the pandemic is waning, the economy is recovering, and the winter will never be so cold, again. The past 12 months have been a struggle for most of us, and for all of us a time we hope will pass quickly.

As summer nears, we approach the Jewish season called “Z’man Matan Torateinu,” the season of the giving of Torah. Recalling the time when the Israelites arrived at Mount Sinai, we note this season with special observances on Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks, on the 50th day after Passover begins. In Torah we read the Ten Commandments, we eat dairy foods because the Promised Land is “the land of milk and honey,” and we recite Yizkor prayers to recall memories of loved ones. This summer, we observe Shavuot beginning on the evening of May 16, 2021, through the next day.

As it was for the Israelites, we can see Shavuot in our day as a gateway, too. When the Israelites stood at Mount Sinai, they said in a unified voice, “Na’aseh V’nishma,” we will faithfully do all that You, God, commanded. It might have been the last time in our history that an entire Jewish community held one opinion, but its lesson isn’t lost on us. As one community we can share memories about the past and what they mean to us. They can serve us as lessons learned. Then we can turn together and make our way into the future filled with necessary expectations for better health, deeper connections, and greater peace.

The Israelites did more than accept God’s teachings; they also obligated themselves to live by them and model them. For themselves and generations-to-come they pledged to uphold Torah’s teachings as our highest ideals for morality, civility, and holiness. We can do the same.

On May 16-17, 2021, let’s prepare to mark time during the season of the giving of Torah. Let it be a revelation in our time when new hope and well-being accompany us. To do anything less would be to deny the revelation-of-old that can be renewed in us even now, as we look forward to the future, together.

L’Shalom,

David Lyon

INSIDE YOU WILL FIND.....

**Get to Know Executive Director,
Pamela Kutner!**

**Online and In Person Passover
Events and Service Information!**

2021 Golf Tournament!

Update on Beth Israel Committees!

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

**Rodolfo Benitez & Teresa Siso
David & Celia Chotiner
David & Alyson Ebro
Amit & Jenifer Gill
Matthew Penny & Amanda Sanders
Richard & Tica Perwien**

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REMINDER

Many area hospitals no longer notify us when a congregant is hospitalized. If you would like our clergy or the Inclusion and Caring Committee members to visit you or a loved one in the hospital, please contact the Temple 713-771-6221

PLEASE NOTE

For all payments, the new return address for Beth Israel is:

Congregation Beth Israel
DEPT.
P.O. Box 4851
Houston, TX 77210-4851

Rabbi Lyon on the Radio

Rabbi David Lyon can be heard on Sunday mornings at 6:45 AM on KODA, Sunny 99.1 FM radio.

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Associate Rabbi.....Adrienne P. Scott, M.A.H.L.
Assistant Rabbi.....Aaron K. Sataloff, M.A.H.L.
Senior Cantor.....Star Trompeter, M.A.S.M.
Cantor Emeritus.....Robert M. Gerber, D.S.M.
Executive Director.....Pamela Kutner
Director of Lifelong Learning & Engagement.....David M. Scott, R.J.E.
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Cemetery Director.....Kathy Parven

MAZEL TOV TO OUR ADULT B'NEI MITZVAH CLASS

*Dom Berta
Tara Gasset
Krista Haywood
Bonnie Herst
Neil Little*

Please join us online for the Adult B'nei Mitzvah service on **Saturday, March 20, 2021.**

The class will also participate in Friday night services on **Friday, March 19th.**

Annual Meeting

**SAVE THE
DATE**

June 8, 2021 7:00 P.M.



SAVE THE DATE

NEW MEMBER SHABBAT

Friday, April 2, 2021

Zoom Oneg to follow



Sexuality and Intimacy in Judaism with Rabbi David Lyon

Tuesday, Tuesday,
March 30 April 6
7:00 PM 7:00 PM

Join us online for an *Adults Only* two-part conversation about sexuality and intimacy in Judaism with Rabbi Lyon. We will be guided by Jewish sources from the Song of Songs and other rabbinic texts as we explore the season of renewal and rebirth.

Register at beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar



ISRAEL AT 73: IS THIS THE CHILD WE PRAYED FOR?

May 11
7:00 P.M.
Zoom

Herb Kinion, Senior Contributing Editor and Analyst of The Jerusalem Post, will discuss recent political trends in Israel and the upcoming election

Register at beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar

DID YOU KNOW???

Welcome to Beth Israel's new feature to give you a behind-the-scenes feel for our people and our operations. This is another way to keep you up to date and informed. Today: a short update on the Congregation financial picture and interview with Beth Israel's Executive Director, Pam Kutner.

One of the most important duties of your Board of Trustees is to provide the oversight necessary to safeguard the financial security of the Congregation, which we have been doing for the past 167 years.

For the past year+ since COVID began, we have been analyzing, juggling, reviewing, reorganizing and reanalyzing our operating expenses in order to allow us to provide for the needs of our Congregants.

Your Executive Committee is pleased to report that Beth Israel's current year operating expenses have increased less than inflation over the previous year in the most challenging times. It costs approximately \$3,000 per family to operate Beth Israel, which we refer to as Sustaining Dues. So, you can imagine the cost controls, unwavering diligence, innovation and forward thinking that is required in order to keep our Temple relevant, modern, educational and spiritual. Your annual dues commitments allow us to meet the extensive needs of our Congregation with pastoral care, counseling, Torah study, holiday celebration, life cycle events, worship and social justice.

Your commitment also enables our Clergy to provide the services we have come to love. As Judaism teaches us, we must take care of those that cannot take care of themselves. Your Sustaining Dues and above enables Beth Israel to never turn any family away because of their inability to pay.

We thank you for all of your generous contributions that allow us to meet the extensive needs of our Congregation while being good financial stewards.

May we continue to go from strength to strength.



Pamela Kutner has spent the day as Executive Director of Beth Israel since 2020, right in the middle of COVID. This may be a challenging time for members that Beth Israel's new Executive Director Pamela Kutner may be wondering who is the person signing the checks appearing in the news. And who is the person who handles their High Holy Days prayer book driveby?

Pamela Kutner is the new Executive Director of Beth Israel. She moved from New Jersey to Houston after she and her family moved here for a new life far from their family, and she knew she still needed to find herself a new home as her kids grew up in Brooklyn. She is happy to be in Houston.



INTRODUCING..... PAMELA KUTNER EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Pamela Kutner's first day as Executive Director of Congregation Beth Israel was May 18, 2020, right in the middle of COVID-19. This may be why many members do not know that Beth Israel has a new Executive Director. Members may be wondering, who is this Pam Kutner signing letters and appearing in photos? And who was that lady who handed them their High Holy Days prayer books at the driveby?

Pamela (Pam) may be the new Executive Director, but she is not new to Houston or Beth Israel. In 1989 She moved from New Jersey to Houston after she met someone and they began their life far from friends, family, and anything she knew. Even though she's been here for many years, she still considers herself a Northeast gal, as her kids all live in Brooklyn. Overall, she is happy she moved to Houston because the

life she made here for herself was an easier and better life than if she had stayed in the Northeast. Thinking back to the move, she remarked that the best thing to come out of her move was that it forced her to become independent, which helped her advance professionally.

"I never imagined I would be an Executive Director of a Synagogue as I was not raised going to Temple" Pam began our conversation with. But after a career as a business administrator and CPA she was looking to do something different and the position of the Executive Director at Emanu El fell into her lap. It was so similar to managing a business, that even though it was a different industry, the role was very similar to what she had been doing. She enjoyed the change, and it was very pivotal for her life in Houston. When she walked into Emanu El, it was the first time after 20 years that

Houston felt like home. She found her people. Working in the Jewish community just made her feel more comfortable and connected. Suddenly this huge city, without family, felt small and full of friends. After 3 years at Emanu El, she was open to other opportunities and her former employer, the Alexander Group, recruited her back as an Executive Recruiter. She had a very successful career as a recruiter for many fortune 500 companies and traveled extensively. For 6 years this was very exciting, rewarding, and exhausting. So, she decided she wanted a dog, aka a change in her pace of life. She resigned from the Alexander Group and planned to take a year off and figure out her next step. This plan lasted for two weeks when the Jewish Federation called asking if she would help them find a new CFO. When she met with the CEO to discuss what they were looking for in a CFO they both quickly realized that she was qualified, and she was offered the position. She was there for two years and then the Federation had Yom

Limmud at Beth Israel in February 2020 and she was assigned to check people in. As she checked people in, she realized that she was having a ball visiting with members and not in the back office, and this was missing in her current job.

Soon after, she heard Beth Israel was looking for a new Executive Director and she knew she had to apply. She told the Federation she was interested and they were very supportive, and in May 2020, she got the job! It was "bashert" she says, "it was the right place at the right time. Emotionally, Career and for my life. And! It's across the bayou from my house!"

"I have many memories from when we were members at Beth Israel way back when. My kids were Bat Mitzvah here. So now I am back 'home' and I am looking forward to making new memories when members are back in the building."

Pam hit the ground running when she began in May because even though COVID-19 closed the building for members, there was still a lot to do. She began managing the

Temple like a business, a business with a heart. *"Every day we have had a new project, a new success, and the biggest success that has impacted the entire community has been the onboarding of the online membership portal, ShulCloud."* This project had been needed for many years and Pam knew it had to be implemented immediately. In order for Beth Israel to continue being relevant, modern, and joyful, launching ShulCloud had to be a priority.

A new year has begun, and we can see the light at the end of the tunnel for COVID-19. Pam is excited for the new year as she has put together a fantastic team and everything is on the table. "We are back in business!"

Her next project? She laughed as she looked at her long list - hiring a development director, creating more robust programming, the Golf Tournament in April, welcoming new members, and hopefully opening the Temple soon. She is eager to see what Beth Israel 2.0 will look like after the pandemic!



CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

2021 Golf Tournament

This fun, covid-friendly competition is open to all



Monday, April 19, 2021

10:30 A.M. Registration Opens

12:30 P.M. Tournament Begins

Westwood Golf Club

8888 Country Creek Street, Houston, Texas 77036



nrl mortgage

**2021 Golf Tournament
Title Sponsor**

Title Underwriter

NRL Mortgage

Gold Underwriter

Doug Aron, Jonathan Hyman,
Philip Wise, Neil Wizel

Blue Underwriter

Adam Burke, Daniel Goodman,
Gavin Roseman, Jeffrey Wise
Bomasada Group- Julie & John Gilbert
BoyarMiller
Carnelian Energy Capital
Johnny Carrabba Family of Restaurants
Merrill Lynch- Daniel Levitt
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Nancy & Jack Dinerstein and
Carol & Jim Frankel
Ethan Allen- The Chesnick Family
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Lara & Phillip Ladin and
Jean & Ronnie Ladin
Lasher, Finger, Newar, Kaplan Team
Locke Lord LLP- Mitch Tiras
Scott & Selber INC Capital Management
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Jeri & Marc Shapiro, and
Brenda & Mansel Rubenstein
TRC Capital Partners- Steve Lerner
Uptown Wealth Advisors/ (UBS)

Beverage Cart Underwriter

Beth Wolff Realtors Real Living-
Ed Wolff

Cocktail Hour Underwriter

Walker & Dunlop-
Tom Fish and Jonathan Paine

Golf Cart Underwriter

Helfman Auto

Longest Drive & Closest to Pin Underwriter

Schaffer Mechanical- Jack Schaffer

Lunch Underwriter

Roslyn & Ricky Haikin

Snack Underwriter

Attune Financial Advisors- Les Fox and
Marc Sancton

Hole Underwriter

BXS Insurance-
Ed Schreiber & Susan Weil
Greenway Capital Advisors LLC-
Lewis Linn
Susan & Jack Lee
Rabbi David & Lisa Lyon
Rosalyn & Barry Margolis
Pasadena Insurance Agency-
The Karkowsky Family
Rice Epicurean Markets &
The Epicurean Catering Company
Rabbi Aaron Sataloff
Rabbi Adrienne & David Scott, RJE
Spolane Insurance/Spolane family
Marsha Stein

Special Thanks to Daniel Levitt for
underwriting gifted golf balls

To register for tournament, contact Laura Kaplan at
LKaplan@bethoIsrael.org or visit www.beth-israel.org



Beth Israel Cooks- Passover!

March 10 and 18

Check your emails for two recordings! The first on March 10 is Passover 101 and March 18 is Passover Reimagined! Both led by Marsha Gilbert.

Passover Goodie Drive By

March 21, 2:00 P.M. - 4:00 P.M.

The Temple will be distributing special gift boxes to the entire congregation for Passover. Pick up a special gift including your own copy of the Express Haggadah, activities to liven up your family seders, and more. The Sisterhood will also be holding a pop-up shop for all your Passover needs. Come by and visit with your clergy and Temple staff!

Passover 101 Online Class

March 23, 6:30 P.M.

Rabbi Adrienne Scott and David Scott, RJE will discuss the basics of hosting a Passover Seder, some of the deeper understandings of the holiday, and we will learn about different customs and traditions related to the holiday. All are welcome and bring your favorite recipes and family customs!

To Register- visit our website



**Passover Online Festival
Service**

March 28, 10:30 A.M.

**Passover Online
Conversation
with Our Clergy**

March 28, 5:00 P.M.

**Passover Yizkor
Memorial Online
Service**

April 3, 10:30 A.M.

All services available at

www.beth-israel.org/news-events-upcoming-events/livestreaming/

LIBRARY NEWS

READERS GROUP

Our lively group continues via Zoom on the third Wednesday of the month at 1:30 pm. We are hoping to resume in-person meetings as soon as possible. All congregants and friends are welcome to join our meetings. We choose a variety of Jewish-themed and popular titles, led by our members, clergy and occasionally authors via zoom or skype. Watch the e-news for information, and RSVP to Judy Weidman at JWeidman@beth-israel.org.

Future Events!

March 17: *Suddenly, A Knock on the Door* by Etgar Keret. Rabbi Aaron Sataloff has chosen this book of short stories by the famous Israeli author. Copies available at the Beth Israel library.

April 21: *Being Heumann: an Unrepentant Memoir of a Disability Rights Activist* by Judith Heumann. Rabbi Adrienne Scott will discuss this impressive memoir of a leader in the movement to pass the American Disability Act. Copies available at Houston Public Library and the Beth Israel Library.

May 19: *Untamed* by Glennon Doyle. Cantor Star Trompeter has chosen this bestseller to discuss with us. A few copies will be available at the Beth Israel library, but reserve a copy NOW at the Houston Public library if you are planning to borrow it there.

June 16: *The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties That Helped Create Modern China* by Jonathan Kaufman. David Scott will be joining our group again. The Beth Israel Library has 1 copy but Houston Public Library owns several.

NEW BOOKS IN THE LIBRARY

The Schachtel Library continues to offer new publications of a topical, popular, or scholarly topic. Check out the Library page of the Beth Israel website under "New Books in the Library." The catalog is available 24 hours a day on the Library page too, if you are looking for a specific book. Just call or email Judy to leave the book for you at the front entrance of the Temple during opening hours.

Remember you can access the library catalog any time to browse for new titles! Go to www.beth-israel.org and click MIRIAM BROWNING JLC, then click on LIBRARY to access. The Library Catalog is available online 24 hours a day! Requests for reservations can be sent to Judy at JWeidman@beth-israel.org, or direct phone at 713-820-6410.

It's That Time Again! Passover Haggadot available for your Seder!

Whether you are having a family Seder this year, or choosing to meet via Zoom, the Schachtel Library has a lovely collection of Passover Haggadot to borrow or use to create your own Haggadah.

We have multiple copies of the traditional Baskin Haggadah, the 30 Minute Seder, several Family Haggadot, plus many interesting iterations of the service. The Gateways Haggadah provides enhancement for members with special needs, The Human Rights Haggadah offers modern additions to the seder, and many other new Haggadot are available to consider.

Call or email Judy to reserve your copies. Jweidman@beth-israel.org, 713 820 6410.



OR CREATE YOUR OWN HAGGADAH WITH THIS ONLINE SITE:



This great site www.haggadot.com has everything you need to prepare for your seder. To start, there is a Passover 101 to provide all basics. The site offers a huge variety of themed haggadots available for download, such as a Liberal seder, a Comedy seder, a Minimalist, Secular, even the 10 Minute Dayenu Virtual Seder!

To create your own haggadot, a template can be used to drop in clip art, skits, songs and other useful items.



In spite of limitations imposed by COVID, Beth Israel Committees are continuing to be creative and inclusive in their current programming while planning for the 2021-2022 fiscal year. All committees have successfully adapted to the Zoom presentation environment and in some cases, attendance at programs has even increased. As promised, in each Bulletin we are highlighting different committees to give congregants a deeper understanding of each committee's focus. We hope if you are interested in joining any of these committees you will contact Marsha Stein, marsha@sugarstein.com or Liza Hirsch, LHirsch@beth-israel.org so we can connect you with the committee chairs.

COMMITTEE SPOTLIGHTS

Beth's Israel Cemetery Committee

one of the most active committees, consists of 20 members, including its Co-Chairs, Ronnie Ladin and Richard Kaplan, along with its Cemetery Director Kathy Parven. Its primary responsibilities deal with overseeing the maintenance and care of the Congregation's two cemeteries and the surrounding grounds, handling plot sales and record keeping. The committee recognizes the importance of monitoring the appearance of our cemeteries and strives for excellence in their appearance and upkeep. Our Cemetery Director works closely with Congregants and their families in dealing with funerals and funeral planning. To ensure the future care of the cemetery, the committee closely monitors the Congregation's perpetual care fund, as well as promoting

contributions to its fund. The Committee tries to meet regularly, along with our Clergy, to discuss issues and review recent events. This past year, the committee issued the Congregation's COVID-19 funeral policy to deal with coronavirus issues. The Cemetery Committee is also currently overseeing the expansion of the Antoine cemetery, and will report soon to the Congregation the exciting news and details about the expansion, and new facilities. Any questions about our Cemeteries or the committee can be directed to Kathy Parven at the Temple office.

The Israel Advocacy Committee

under the leadership of Co-Chairs Rob Shoss, Martha Barvin, and Ruth Sherman has also been very engaged in focusing on the relationship of the Reform movement and its presence in Israel. A recent program featuring Rabbi Josh Herman and his Aliyah to Israel 3 years ago. On January 24, he updated the participants on his experiences moving to Israel, becoming a father and discussed recent trends in the Reform movement in Israel and his work at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion campus in Jerusalem. On February 23, we held a program featuring Houston Sh'lichah (Emissary) Rotem Cohen to learn more about Israelis as "Risk Takers." She discussed extraordinary innovations that Israel has given to the world and the people behind them. On March 11th, this committee has planned an interesting program, "Chametz and the Art of Letting Go" that will feature Rabbi David Barak-Gorodetsky, our former Israeli rabbinic intern. He will discuss his

experience becoming a reform Israeli rabbi and share insights into the deeper meaning of Passover. Please visit the Israel Advocacy committee's updated page on Beth Israel Website at www.beth-israel.org/lifelong-learning/adult-learning/israel-advocacy/ and save the date for our event on May 11th featuring Herb Kinion, Senior Contributing Editor at The Jerusalem Post. Our next Israel Experience will be May 8-18, 2022, and registration will be opening soon!

Membership Recruitment

under the leadership of Leslie Margolis and Sheila Horn and the Membership Engagement Committee chaired by Sabria Lewis have been busy focusing on welcoming new members and engaging existing members with tempting programs and contacts. The Membership Engagement Committee is planning another Virtual Oneg in April. They are already busy planning programs for 2021-2022 which will include a new small group program, called "BINGE" (Beth Israel New Group Engagements) to provide opportunities for congregants with similar interests to meet online and later, in person, a "Yappy hour" for pet owners to socialize, group discussions on different topics led by facilitators and resumption of "Go To Shabbat" programs. Recipe demonstrations have been popular and look for the upcoming Passover themed program. The Membership recruitment committee is eager to solicit new volunteers to help send personal condolence and birthday notes to our congregants. Please contact Liza Hirsch, LHirsch@beth-israel.org, if you are interested in helping.



Ensuring Congregation Beth Israel
for Future Generations

NER TAMID SOCIETY

Dear Valued Congregants,

The Congregation Beth Israel Endowment Fund, Inc. (CBIEF) Board of Directors trusts that each of you, and your family, are safe and well during these challenging times.

On behalf of the Endowment Board, I wanted to provide a few updates on how we are assisting the congregation, and at the same time, planning for our future.

I am pleased to report that your Endowment Board unanimously approved a record annual distribution to the Congregation in the amount of \$360,000. This amount has, and will continue, to assist Beth Israel in funding and subsidizing all areas of congregational life. This includes religious programming, Jewish education, camp scholarships, The Shlenker School programming, cemetery maintenance and enhancements and library enrichment programs amongst other key opportunities for the current Temple fiscal year.

Our deep appreciation goes out to our Investment Committee, chaired by Jonathan Finger. This dedicated and outstanding committee is extremely devoted in providing a sound and disciplined investment strategy for all 14 of the congregation's endowment funds.

Upon the reopening of our Beth Israel campus, we look forward to continuing the production of our videos for those eligible members of the Ner Tamid Society. Our current library of videos provide an important historical perspective of Beth Israel along with inspirational messages reflecting the positive impact the congregation has played in their lives.

Our Ner Tamid Society consists of 120 members and is growing. Opportunities exist for establishing both restricted and unrestricted endowment funds in honor and memory of your family and loved ones. Please feel free to reach out to Pamela Kutner, Executive Director, at 713-771-6221 or PKutner@beth-israel.org to discuss further on how you can easily make Beth Israel part of your estate planning process.

Last, I am glad to report that your Beth Israel Board of Trustees has approved a new position for our congregation, campus-wide Development Director. This person will coordinate with lay-leadership, clergy and staff in creating a strategic development plan. This would include both short-term capital needs and legacy endowment gifts for both the congregation and Shlenker School. We will commence with the interview process soon and welcome any potential candidates you wish to recommend for this important position.

As we approach our 170th anniversary in a few years, the primary responsibility of our Endowment Fund is for continued growth of our endowment to assure our beloved Beth Israel perpetuates our Jewish identity for future generations. Thank you for all you have done, and will do going forward, to participate in this mission.

With best personal regards,

Joseph Chesnick, Jr.
Chairman, Congregation Beth Israel Endowment Fund, Inc.

**Thank you to our New
Ner Tamid Donors**
Barry and Judith Kaufman

YOUR CONGREGATION STANDS FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE!

We work for social justice defined as “fair treatment of all people, so we all have equal access to basic rights like health care, education, jobs, housing, respect.”



Thanks to Jessica Chasin for taking the lead on a new project to provide mentoring for high school students. Ellen & Steve Leventhal and Beth Schneider have already said they want to help; please join them in mentoring or helping organize mentoring groups.



Thanks to Linda Davis for taking the lead on another new project to support previously homeless people who've recently received housing. Dena Marks, Cindy Perlman and Beth Schneider have already signed up to help folks practice life skills (like preparing resumes)—please join them.



Warren Rich continues to represent us with both The Metropolitan Organization (TMO), which does community organizing around social justice issues, and The Religious Action Center of the Union for Reform Judaism RAC-TX (RAC-TX). A dozen congregants joined him in considering which issues RAC-TX should advocate for in the current session of the Texas legislature. We then were trained to better lobby for a variety of bills to “defend democracy” by protecting voting rights and preserving election standards. Let us know if you want to participate in this work.

We recently co-sponsored two workshops with the Adult Education committee:

“Becoming an Ally against Prejudice and Hate” and “Words to Action: Standing Up against Antisemitism.” These were for small groups to learn how to better recognize and respond constructively to all kinds of hate. These workshops can be offered again upon request.

We really appreciate the support of Nicole Nathan Gibson, our Board liaison, and Rabbi Sataloff and Rabbi Lyon, our staff liaisons.

Our committee is growing, and we welcome new members!

Contact committee co-chairs Dena Marks denasokolow@gmail.com or Lisa Stone lestone@aya.yale.edu for more information or to offer to work with us.

We make more progress when more of us stand up for
SOCIAL JUSTICE.



MBJLC Mishpacha will soon be coming to a close for the year, and we look forward to welcoming everyone back **IN PERSON on August 29th**. What a thrilling year it has been to celebrate together and learn about Judaism online!

Mark your calendar for our special online Passover program on March 21st. If you have not yet picked up a box for the March 21st event, please contact Stephanie Robertson at SRobertson@beth-israel.org.

After the Passover holidays, we look forward to participating in the Temple-wide Mitzvah Day event on April 11th and a virtual MBJLC Trip to Israel to celebrate Israel's Independence Day on April 18th. MBJLC Mishpacha will conclude on Sunday, May 2nd with a farewell ceremony and a final look back at our year together.

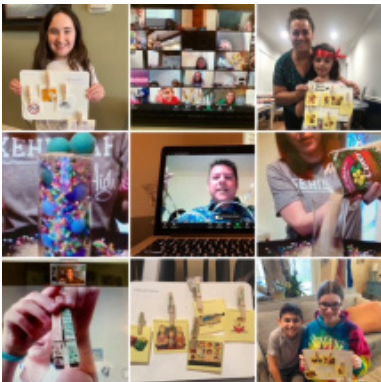
Registration for next year will launch on May 2nd. We are excited to welcome back returning and new faculty in the fall. New family programming, meaningful Jewish content, and special surprises await us next year. Registration will be available online through ShulCloud, and we look forward to welcoming you back to the MBJLC, including our 8th-12th grade Madrichim.

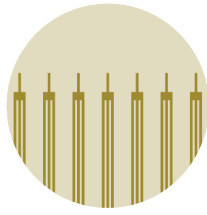
For more information and to learn more about the Miriam Browning Jewish Learning Center, please contact David Scott at DScott@beth-israel.org.

If you are interested in being part of the MBJLC faculty or included in the sub-list for next year, please contact Stephanie Robertson at SRobertson@beth-israel.org.

KEHILLAH High

All Madrichim will need to register for Kehillah High so they can be included in our programming for next year. Kehillah High sessions will take place on Wednesday nights and on Sundays. For more information about Kehillah High, please visit www.kehillahouston.org or contact Danielle Alexander, Director, at dalexander@kehillahouston.org.





MIRIAM BROWNING

JEWISH LEARNING CENTER

of Congregation Beth Israel



Sexuality and Intimacy in Judaism

with
Rabbi David Lyon

**Tuesday, Tuesday,
March 30 April 6
7:00 PM 7:00 PM**

Join us online for an "Adults Only" two-part conversation about sexuality and intimacy in Judaism with Rabbi Lyon. We will be guided by Jewish sources from the Song of Songs and other rabbinic texts as we explore the season of renewal and rebirth.

Register at beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar



Monthly Online Midrash:
What's with the Hat?

The Unusual Journey of
Head Coverings
(kipot/yarmulkas)
In Judaism

Thursday, April 8,
12 p.m. to 1 p.m.

.....
Designer Philip Treacy says, "how a hat makes you feel is what a hat is all about." The same is true in the Jewish tradition regarding head coverings. While wearing a head covering is a public display, the decision to wear one is deeply personal. So, join Rabbi Sataloff as he explores this tradition's history and the array of meanings and modern approaches in the Reform Jewish world.

To Register Visit:
beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar



*Wolff-Toomin Distinguished
Lecture Series Presents:*

**Tuesday, April 13, 7:00PM
ZOOM**

Anne Applebaum,
columnist for The Atlantic and
Author of "Twilight of Democracy: The Seductive Lure of
Authoritarianism."

Moderated by
Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat

Register At: beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar





CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL



BINGE

Beth Israel New Group Engagements is designed for YOU!

CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

These fun affinity groups are a way for you to meet new people and interact with congregants with similar personal interests. We encourage you to be involved and to BINGE on Beth Israel!

Interested? Questions?
Email Liza Hirsch, Membership & Executive Office Manager, LHirsch@beth-israel.org

BINGE is the Membership Engagement Committee's new small groups initiative

Given that everyone is binge-watching their favorite shows on Netflix, we want you to "BINGE" on Beth Israel! BINGE stands for "Beth Israel New Group Engagements," and we already have small groups forming this year on a variety of topics. From multiple book groups that now exist, discussion groups on Mussar (Jewish ethical living), learning about Talmud, and discussing the weekly Torah portion, we want to expand to include even more! If you are interested in forming or joining a group like Joyful Grandparenting, Culinary Delights, Grape Expectations (wine group), Tours Around the World, Museum Exhibits, Movie Nights, or any other interest or affinity group you can imagine, contact David Scott, DScott@beth-israel.org. We are excited to BINGE on Beth Israel!



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

presents



*Summary of COVID-19 -
Where we are Now
with Dr. Ed Septimus*

.....

May 13, 12:00 P.M.
Zoom

Register at beth-israel.shulcloud.com

Any questions, please contact David Scott at DScott@beth-israel.org

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ADULT EDUCATION COMMITTEE

As Co-Chairs for Adult Education Committee, Ed Septimus and Miriam Friedman share the highlights for their December 2020 and January and February events along with future plans. They have kept a busy agenda in spite of Covid limitations, but relying on Zoom to stay in touch and provide educational materials for our Congregation.

On Thursday, December 10, they welcomed the Monthly Midrash Chanukah Special with Bob Gomel, Photographer on the Lights of Chanukah and Phil Grosman, highlighting his "Chanukah House" in Meyerland.

On January 12th, they hosted the Friedlander Forum with Eric Ward, a leading Civil Rights Advocate. Over 300 members and friends joined online to hear Eric speak about the past year of social rights movement and what we can do to continue the movement.

On January 14th, via Zoom, Ed Septimus discussed current issues involving Covid 19 and understanding the various vaccines available or coming soon. Members were able to ask questions and we hope everyone walked away learning more about the vaccine.

The 2021 Monthly Midrash Sessions on Thursdays at Noon

March 11 - Rabbi David Barak-Gorodetsky
April 8th - Rabbi Aaron Sataloff
May 13th - Ed Septimus, summary of COVID_19: where we are now
To register for these sessions, please visit beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar

2021 Clergy-Led Spring Classes

Sunday, March 7 at 11 am- Helping our Children During the Pandemic with Rabbi Adrienne Scott and Karen Miller (co-sponsored with Inclusion Committee)

Tuesday, March 30 & April 6 at 7 pm- Sexuality and Intimacy in Judaism with Rabbi David Lyon

April 13th, 7 pm- Wolff-Toomim Distinguished Lecture Series featuring author Anne Applebaum, which will be moderated by Ambassador Stuart Eizenstat

To register for these events, please visit our calendar at beth-israel.shulcloud.com/calendar

Hebrew Order of David

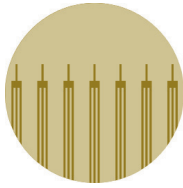
Our Antoine location was once again fortunate to receive, from the local Lodge Galil of the Hebrew Order of David (HOD), markers for eight additional unmarked graves.

The unveiling service for these markers, was held Sunday, February 7, 2021 with Rabbi Aaron Sataloff officiating. The effort by Lodge Galil to place a total of 160 markers through out the Houston Jewish cemeteries is the ultimate mitzvah. We have received 20 markers to date.

For further information on this project or how you can help donate funds, please visit www.hodgalil.org

For any questions about the Gravestone Project, or any other cemetery matters, please contact our Cemetery Director, Kathy Parven KParven@beth-israel.org





SISTERHOOD

of Congregation Beth Israel



Mah Jongg 2021 cards are in! We have both large and small sizes. Purchase on our website www.shopsisterhood.org or call to make an appointment with Anita to pick up in the gift shop 713-777-315.



VIRTUAL JUKEBOX BINGO

Sunday, April 18, 2021

11:00 AM

Zoom

Make brunch, pour yourself a mimosa, and join the Beth Israel Sisterhood for a virtual bingo tournament benefiting



Register by Tuesday, April 15 at beth-israel.shulcloud.com



Sisterhood is on Instagram!
Follow us @beth_israel_sisterhood

SAVE THE date

Passover Pop-Up

SISTERHOOD IS OFFERING ONE FINAL OPPORTUNITY TO GET ALL OF YOUR PESACH NEEDS IN A COVID-SAFE WAY. DRIVE UP OR DRIVE THRU UNDER THE NORTHSIDE AWNING.

SUNDAY, MARCH 21ST
2:00PM - 4:00PM

As always, you can purchase from our website at www.shopsisterhood.org

713.777.4315
sisterhood@beth-israel.org

**Pop-up will be held during the temple Passover Drive by Event!*

SISTERHOOD IS STAMPING YOUR PASSPORT FOR OUR SECOND TOUR OF ISRAEL!



JUST IN TIME FOR PASSOVER, GATHER THE FAMILY AROUND THE COMPUTER AS WE JOIN OUR WONDERFUL TOUR GUIDE, PATRICK AMAR, FOR A LIVE WALKING TOUR OF THE OLD CITY OF JERUSALEM.

SUNDAY, MARCH 21ST AT NOON

Free to Sisterhood members
\$10 for non-members
RSVP to sisterhood@beth-israel.org or purchase your ticket at www.shopsisterhood.org




Don't forget the gift shop has all your wedding, graduation and confirmation gift giving needs. Call Anita to make an appointment to shop at 713.777.4315 or head to our website www.shopsisterhood.org

The Ronald McDonald House and Beth Israel Christmas Day Mitzvah

To every fabulous Beth Israel Volunteers, thank you for making the Christmas Day Mitzvah event for Ronald McDonald House (RMH) beyond exceptional. For almost 25 years, many of us have been so fortunate to give back on Christmas Day gathering together as we enjoyed preparing and serving meals, entertaining and interacting with the residents at all of the RMH houses in Houston. These have been very cherished times.

Then 2020 happened! With lots of creativity together with RMH to offer you options, you all went beyond all expectations for this year. **We collected almost 500 personalized bags** of art supplies and/or grab and go snack bags. Most of which you decorated each bag to really brighten the day for a patient. **Collectively, you all contributed nearly \$3500 in dining gift cards.** These giftcards went towards purchasing a wonderful lunch and festive holiday dinners for each resident and their families. How special you each should feel in “paying it forward.”

What a wonderful mitzvah!



Ellen and Steve Robinson delivering 100 holiday dinners



Landon and Hayley Selzer creating 50 snack bags for Ronald-McDonald House



Ryan, Lucy and Max Burke making snack and art bags.



Lauren Sorkin, Brandon, Jordan and Drew Sorkin, Jenny Selzer, Landon, Hayley and Austin Selzer, Fredda Friedlander and Millie Feldman, Laurie Selzer and Teri Straus

Congregation Beth Israel Geographical Questionnaire

We cannot believe it has been a year since we were all together in the Temple. We have new members, new staff, and members who haven't seen each other since 2020.

So, help us get to know you!

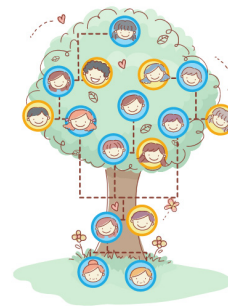
Answer the questions below, and email them to Laura Kaplan,
Marketing & Communications Manager, at
LKaplan@beth-israel.org and we will share all results in the June Bulletin and online!

1. Where are you from?



2. When travel resumes safely, where is the first place you'd like to go?

3. What generation Beth Israel are you?



4. Favorite Memory of Beth Israel?

In uncertain times, one thing is certain,
The Shlenker School is here for you!



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2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR

Contact Tara Gassett, Director of Admissions, at
tgassett@shlenker.org or 713.270.6127 for more information



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חג שמח

Chag Sameach!

Wishing you and your
family a Happy Passover!



The Congregation gratefully acknowledges the following contributions through FEBRUARY 15, 2021:

For a full list of our funds, please visit our website: www.beth-israel.org/giving/tribute-donations

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**Rabbi Lyon joining the
"Three Amigos".**

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Nate Tudzin

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Sandy, Tim and

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**Her guidance and support
in connection with Eliya
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support for Eliya Gibson's
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Franklin Harberg Jr &
Karen Harberg

IN MEMORY OF
Ralph and Betty Rae Cohen
Steven Epstein

**THE SHERYL ROSE TORAH
SCROLL FUND**

IN HONOR OF
**Birth of Austin Silverman
Bach**
Janice and Rick Silverman

IN MEMORY OF
**Ettienne Leibman
Loved Ones**
Janice and Rick Silverman

THE TECHNOLOGY FUND

IN MEMORY OF
Dr. Louis Pink
Evelyn Wisenberg

**CYVIA & MELVYN WOLFF
EDUCATION FUND**

IN MEMORY OF
Lucille Gidseg
S. Conrad Weil
Irving Berk
Kathy Hecht Turcott
Marc Grossberg

**THE PAULA & ALFRED
FRIEDLANDER FORUM
FUND**

IN MEMORY OF
Doyle Perry
Joe Zuber
Lynn Segal
Betty Rae and Ralph Cohen
Gary & Fredda Friedlander
Bruce & Joanne Levy
Joe Zuber
Gary & Fredda Friedlander

**THE SAMUEL E KARFF
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

IN HONOR OF
**the 40th Wedding
Anniversary of Mira and
Bobby Wizig**
Douglas Cowey

IN MEMORY OF
Conrad Weil
Robert S. Totz
Milton Dunn
Jon & Eleanor Totz

FROM GENERATION

DEATHS

Irving Berk

Father of Sam Berk, and Rafael (Ray) & Dorothy Berk

Mel Bishop

Father of Eric & Rachel Bishop, David Bishop, and Scott & Geri Bishop; brother of Madelyn Liss

Doris Blumenthal

Mother of Ann & Jerry Maltz, and Laurence & Jennifer Maltz

Elfriede Borisewitz

Mother of Jacques Borisewitz, and Viviane & Naftali Klein

Betty Rae Cohen

Mother of Cathy & Robert Wise, Joni & Ben Webb, and Melanie Chotiner

Ralph Cohen

Father of Cathy & Robert Wise, Joni & Ben Webb, and Melanie Chotiner

Calvin Cooper

Husband of Harriett Cooper; mother of Sherrie & Richard Kaplan; sister of Toby Kahn

Kenneth Croft

Husband of Charlotte Ann Croft; father of Rodney & Shari Croft, Marla & Craig Berkowitz, and Fara & Marc Koren; brother of Barbara & Art Squires, and Evelyn Laviage; brother-in-law of Marlene & Eldred Sinkoe

Annette Dover

Mother of Joan & Howard Katz, Janet & Rob Holliday, and Carolyn & Ron Bernell

Justina Goldstein

Mother of Mila Goldstein & Michael Milo

Joel Hamberger

Husband of Shelley Hamberger; father of Robyn & Dave McMasters, and Evan & Stephanie Hamberger

Luisa Hernandez

Mother of Daniel & Kathy Hernandez, Mary Lou & Richard Ketland, and David & Juana Hernandez; sister of Elizabeth Guerrero

Evelyn Hyman

Mother of Linda & Mitchell Buchman, Donna & Charles Freedman, and Robert Hyman

Estelle Jucker

Mother of Maurine & Marc Rothschild, Renee & Alan Helfman, and Marsha & Keith Rubenstein; sister of Marion Lewis; sister-in-law of Edith Jucker

Eileen Lipsich

Mother of Hannah Calechman; sister of Richard & Carlene Ginsburg, Larry Ginsburg, Bob Ginsburg, and Jane Ginsburg Fredman

Raymond Levin

Husband of Sylvia Levin; father of Cheryl & John Susman, Michelle & Larry Alexander, and Cynthia & David Portugal

Raymond Doyle (RD) Perry

Husband of Nancy Perry; father of Kathy Perry & Diana Phipps, Paula & Dan Karp, Tommy & Debra Perry, and Debbi & Gregg Jenkins; son-in-law of Joe & Eleanor Zuber; brother-in-law of Alan Zuber

Lavina Petersen

Mother of Craig & Cathy Petersen; sister of John Freeland

Harris Rotman

Husband of Rosalind Rotman; father of Beth Rotman & Micki Eisenman, and Adine Rotman & Steven Evatt; brother of Marty Rosenberg & Ellen Fennick, and Rina Rosenberg & Bill Witherspoon

Noonie Schmidt

Wife of Howard Schmidt; mother of Caren Schmidt, Ellen Schmidt, and Ashley Schmidt; sister of Harry & Erla Zuber, and Bert & Rebecca Zuber

Judith Stander

Mother of Seth & Margot Stander, and Sara & Robert Mahony

Naomi Starr

Mother of Andy & Wendy Starr, Alex & Lynn Starr, and Jonathan & Liz Starr; sister of Joe & Chana Simckes, Sima & Karl Schapiro, and Seymour Simckes

Marcy Taub-Wessel

Wife of Thomas F. Wessel; mother of Henry Taub Wessel, Maxwell E. Wessel, and Lauren E. Wessel; sister of Henry J.N. Taub II

Kathryn Hecht Turcott

Wife of Joseph Troy Turcott; mother of Natalie, Micah & Matthew Turcott; daughter of Shirley Hecht; daughter-in-law of Brenda Turcott; sister-in-law of Sean & Claudia Turcott

Sylvan Conrad Weil, Jr.

Husband of Diana (Dede) Weil; father of Steven & Deborah Weil, Ronald & Lenora Weil, and Lauren & Jeffrey Friedman; brother-in-law of Suzanne (Suzy) Miller

Joseph Zuber

Husband of Eleanor Zuber; father of Nancy Perry, and Alan Zuber

ON TO GENERATION

MAZEL TOV

WEDDINGS

February 13, 2021

Adam McCauley
and Kate Beeler

B'NEI MITZVAH

APRIL 9-10

Dylan Fishman

Daughter of Jamie
& Brad Fishman;
granddaughter of
Ricki & David Komiss,
Cindy & Ron Moore,
Barbara Hurst &
Richard Schatz

APRIL 16-17

**Samuel Besmehn-
Ettelson**

Son of Jennifer
Ettelson & Gregory
Besmehn; grandson
of Meryl Ettelson,
John Sare^{z"l} and
Marion & Chuck
Besmehn, Carmel, CA

David Weinstein

Son of Karolyn
Skalany and Daniel
Weinstein; grandson
of Marcia & Bernard
"Bud" Weinstein

APRIL 23-24

Hayley Selzer

Landon Selzer

Children of Jennifer
& Daryl Selzer;
grandchildren of
Laurie & Alan Selzer,
Roslyn & Bob Pittsford

APRIL 30-MAY 1

Max Stuart Burke

Son of Sylvia & Adam
Burke; grandson of
Sandy & Lucky Burke,
Anne & Scott Bayme;
great-grandson of
Shirley & Sonny
Landsberg, Connie &
Leonard^{z"l} Burke.

Laine Marie Wise

Daughter of Allison
& Philip Wise;
granddaughter of
Sandy & Lucky Burke,
Cathy & Robert Wise;
great-granddaughter
of Shirley & Sonny
Landsberg, Connie &
Leonard^{z"l} Burke

MAY 8

**Jonathan Robert
Sweetland**

Son of Caren
Schmulen Sweetland
& Robert L. "Rob"
Sweetland, Jr.;
grandson of Lyn F.
& Carl Schmulen,
Anita & Robert "Bob"
Sweetland, Yukon,
OK.; great-grandson
of Carrolyn Fleishman

MAY 15

Blake Weiss

Son of Corey & Scott
Weiss; grandson
of Sandy & Dan
Courson, Stuart
Weiss, Carlsbad, CA,
and Karen^{z"l} & Henry
Weilbacher, Baton
Rouge, LA

MAY 21-22

Jacob Aaron Hirsh

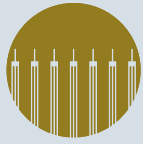
Son of Dorothy &
Steve Hirsh; grandson
of Roslyn & Jack
Hirsh, Montreal, and
Christine & Antoni
Grynczuk, Montreal

MAY 28-29

**Ryan Callahan
Sara Callahan**

Children of Jennifer
& Kevin Callahan;
grandchildren of
Andrea & Mark
Epstein, New York, NY

Please Note:
The abbreviation, **z"l**,
stands for the Hebrew
words, **zichron/a**
livracha, may his or
her memory be for a
blessing.



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

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Houston, Texas 77096
713-771-6221

beth-israel.org

DATED MATERIAL

relevant. modern. joyful.

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