



TEMPLE BETH-EL Congregation Sons of Israel and David

# THE SHOFAR

March 2026  
Adar 5786

## CHAG PESACH SAMEACH!



The Shofar is published by the HAROLD A. WINSTEAD CHARITABLE TRUST in his memory.

# INSIDE OUR COMMUNITY'S SEDER PLATES



## CONGREGANTS SHARE THE STORIES, MEMORIES AND TRADITIONS BEHIND THEIR SEDER PLATES

Congregants from across our community submitted photos of their Seder plates, each accompanied by a story of how it came to their table. Some are treasured family heirlooms that were wedding gifts from decades ago, while others are tied to meaningful moments of teaching, generosity and evolving tradition.

### PHOTOS

- 1 Paige Roberts does not have her own Seder plate but instead uses her mother-in-law's.
- 2 Hands pass *matzah* during the Community Second Seder.
- 3 Donna Kimmel's family Seder plates, including a brass plate from her parents' 1961 wedding.
- 4 Donna and Michael Kimmel's ceramic plate from their own wedding in 1987 that was made in Israel.
- 5 Elaine Sandy shared the Sandy family's blue Seder plate, which has been used for many family Passover celebrations.
- 6 Marla Romash's Seder plate was a gift from her older brother and recalls the years when she hosted Passover for her siblings and their children.
- 7 Gail Solomon submitted a brand-new Seder plate that has not yet been used.
- 8 Nancy Kirsch's Seder plate.
- 9 In our Temple Beth-El art gallery: Ceramic Seder Plate and Wine Cup by Robert Lipnik, 1986. *Gift of friends of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet Berman in honor of their 30th anniversary.*



## THE SHOFAR

Temple Beth-El  
Congregation Sons of Israel and David  
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## ON THE COVER

This Seder plate shared by congregant Alan Rosenberg has been part of his family's Passover story for more than 20 years. Identical plates are now used on both coasts, symbolizing family and tradition across distance.

Page Layout Design: Jude Weinstein

We thank the members of Beth-El Communications Committee for their story ideas and sage advice: Alan Rosenberg (Chair), Donna Kimmel (VP Liaison), Karen Borger, Scott Bromberg, Lisa Kaufman, Judi Labossiere, Paige Roberts, Marla Romash, Elaine Sandy and Seth Schulman

## NISAN AT BETH-EL



THE MONTH OF *NISAN* is the harbinger of spring and brings with it each year the promise of redemption.

As nature renews, we too are reinvigorated by the celebration of redemption from slavery in Egypt as we gather around the Passover table. Rabbi Joshua, in the Talmud, proclaims that “the whole world was created in the month of *Nisan*,” so

great is its creative power.

The first of *Nisan* falls on March 19 this year, bringing with it a new layer of expectation. *Nisan* is a gateway to the bright, warm days to come, carrying the excitement and vigor of the green shoots that will soon emerge with the first blossoms of spring.

This year, in particular, at Temple Beth-El, *Nisan* brings great expectations for new beginnings and abundant possibilities. We could not be more excited to welcome Cantor Juval Porat and Rabbi Abi Oshins to our community this summer. We will have many opportunities to connect and formally meet them both over the summer, and we embrace this new beginning with enthusiasm.

As we celebrate the advent of a new clergy team, let us say a collective *shehecheyanu* for this moment, with renewed appreciation for our dedicated lay leadership, committed professional staff and the spirit of Temple Beth-El that sustains and inspires us in a turbulent world.

~Rabbi Sarah Mack

THE *SHEHECHEYANU* is a blessing of gratitude recited at moments of joy and significance. It thanks God for sustaining us, preserving us and enabling us to reach a special moment in time.

### HEBREW:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁחַחֲנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ  
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנוּ הַזֶּה.

### TRANSLITERATION:

*Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu,  
Melech haolam, shehecheyanu,  
v'kiy'manu, v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.*

### TRANSLATION:

Blessed are You, Adonai our God,  
Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive,  
sustained us, and brought us to this season.

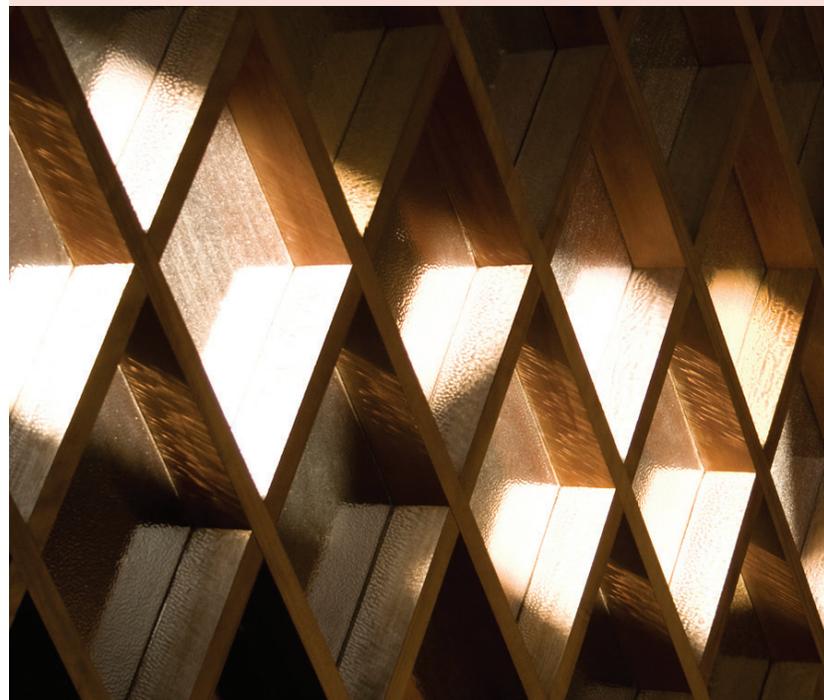
## LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR NEW CLERGY TEAM:



Discover the work  
of Cantor Juval Porat,  
by visiting his official website at  
[juval-online.com](http://juval-online.com)



Learn more about  
Erev Rav Rabbi Abi Oshins  
by exploring her online work at  
[drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bf-  
d2AplNb0SO2aX2KJr8gANN8vojeN6i](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1bf-d2AplNb0SO2aX2KJr8gANN8vojeN6i)



# BETH-EL PRESIDENT GAIL SOLOMON

## WE ALREADY FEEL LIKE FAMILY



I WRITE THIS on February 1, 2026, with the whole of January behind us. And wow — what a wild ride of a month it was (and I'm not just talking about the weather). Was it merely weeks ago, as our Search Committee continued to sift through resumé's, that our Temple Beth-El community was gripped with uncertainty, wondering

if there would be anyone who could possibly fill the shoes of our beloved Cantor Judy Seplowin and Rabbi Preston Neimeiser? Could there be — not one, but *two* — spiritual leaders out there who are exactly the right fit for this congregation? And if there are, will they be able to see themselves here?

As the cold set in and the snow piled up, something warm and communal — miraculous even — was happening here at Beth-El. At the exact moment that we drew together to determine our future, two extraordinary leaders were also seeking theirs, and arrived at our doorstep. Cantor Juval Porat and *Erev Rav* (future rabbi) Abi Oshins are all we could have hoped and dreamed for — and more. And they too saw in Beth-El a community that they want to call home. It seems *besbert*. We already feel like family.

**PERSONALLY**, I cannot wait to welcome Cantor Juval Porat and Abi Oshins into our community. With Rabbi Sarah Mack leading this spirited new clergy team, together we will create a new chapter in the story of our beloved Temple Beth-El.

*In sacred partnership,  
~ gail*

## YASHER KOACH

It truly took a village — or make that a *congregation* — to create this bright new future for Temple Beth-El!

The process was seamlessly led by Search Committee Chair Debby Levine, along with Alison Block, Doug Emanuel, Tonya Glantz, Ryan Golditch, Daniel Kertzner, Adam Levine, Rachel O'Connell and Sam Zwetchkenbaum.

We thank all of our congregants and members of the Board of Trustees for sharing your voices during our initial listening sessions, attending study sessions and auditions, and providing your valuable feedback on the candidates.

We are grateful for the support of Past Presidents Ken Kirsch, Fred Franklin, Jill Tobak, Rob Stolzman and Tonya Glantz.

Thank you to our Executive Committee: Lisa Brosofsky, Saul Kaplan, Donna Kimmel, Judi Labossiere, Jane Linden and Elliott Pritikin for your unwavering support.

Rob Stolzman, we can't thank you enough for your assistance with all of the *tachlis*.

To Rabbi Les Gutterman, Rabbi Sarah Mack, Cantor Judy Seplowin, Rabbi Preston Neimeiser, Joie Magnone, Rachel Mersky Woda, Carl Shulman, Steven Dulude, Judith Gilson, Ashley Torres, Jude Weinstein, George Hetu, Toly Magidin, Ana Kimanga and Matty Durgin: we are grateful for your support and for your warm welcome to the candidates.

## ABOUT OUR NEW CLERGY

*Excerpted from announcements sent via email to the congregation.*

**CANTOR JUVAL PORAT** is a gifted and accomplished musician who brings deep sensitivity, insight, and spirituality to his sacred service. His unique gifts of voice, self, and spirit create meaningful and uplifting worship experiences, and his passion for Jewish music and community engagement is truly inspiring.

**EREV RAV ABI OSHINS** brings exuberance, enthusiasm, and deep spiritual intention to her rabbinate. She is a gifted teacher and pastoral presence whose passion for Jewish learning, worship, and community building is infectious. With particular dedication to engaging youth and young families, Abi connects with warmth, creativity and joy, inspiring the next generation to build lasting relationships with Jewish life.

# MESSAGES FROM OUR NEW CLERGY

## TWO SACRED PARTNERSHIPS BEGIN



**DEAR TEMPLE BETH-EL COMMUNITY,** It is with a full heart and great anticipation that I accept the invitation to become your next cantor. This is a profound honor.

This decision comes after a thorough and meaningful journey of getting to know one another.

Throughout my conversations with your leadership, I was struck by the

depth of our dialogue, the integrity of your process and the clear alignment of our values. I found a community that is intellectually vibrant, spiritually grounded and ready for a dynamic future.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the search committee, and specifically to Debby Levine, for their transparency, diligence and warmth throughout this process. They represented the very best of who you are as a community.

I also want to share my sincere appreciation for the warm welcome extended to me by Rabbi Sarah Mack, Rabbi Leslie Gutterman, President Gail Solomon, Executive Director Joie Magnone, Rachel Mersky Woda, Carl Shulman and the entire professional staff. It is clear that this congregation is in caring and capable hands.

I must express my respect and appreciation for Cantor Seplowin. It is a privilege to step onto a *bimah* that has been served with such dedication. I look forward to honoring that legacy as we move into the future.

I am eager to begin this sacred partnership with Rabbi Mack. I look forward to exploring how music can deepen our experience of the Jewish year and our own life-cycle moments. My hope is to cultivate a sound that uplifts, inspires and connects us, whether we are celebrating a *simcha*, marking a transition or simply welcoming *Shabbat* together.

I cannot wait to meet you, to learn your stories and, most importantly, to sing with you.

See you in June.

*With blessings and excitement,  
~Cantor Juval Porat*



**DEAR TEMPLE BETH-EL COMMUNITY,** From the very first conversation I had with Rabbi Sarah Mack, I knew that this place was special and that I wanted to be a part of it. Now, only a few months later, I am delighted to express just how deeply honored I am to serve as your newest rabbi.

In my brief conversations with your professional team, your lay leaders and your teens, I was struck by your warmth, openness and integrity of spirit. Every person I spoke to, whether they had been a member for three years or three generations, expressed their passion for this community, this sacred place.

As many of you know, we encounter Beth-El for the first time in the Book of Genesis. Jacob is running from his past, unsure of his future. With only a stone as a pillow, he falls asleep and receives a vision of angels. Waking with a start, he proclaims, "Surely G-d is in this place and I did not know," and he dedicates the place to G-d, naming it Beth-El, House of G-d.

While Jacob's story is much more dramatic than my own, there is one sentiment we share: the clear recognition of the sacred that dwells within Beth-El. Jacob departs from Beth-El soon after its dedication, but unlike our biblical ancestor, I am lucky. Over the coming weeks, months and years, I get to stay at Beth-El, to lean into the sacred with all of you and to discover the divine in moments great and small.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to the Beth-El professional team and the search committee, particularly Rabbi Sarah Mack, Joie Magnone, President Gail Solomon and Debby Levine. You and countless others put hours of work into finding the right fit for your community. You welcomed me with open arms and open hearts, and I am so grateful for that warm embrace.

I am eager to jump into our work together, to celebrate your *simchas*, to hear your stories and to be there with you even in the hardest moments.

*Shabbat Shalom and much love,  
Erev Rav Abi Oshins*

*\*An Erev Rav is someone about to become a rabbi.*

# WHATS HAPPENING AT BETH-EL

## Mah-Jongg

Tuesday Nights, 5:30 p.m.

This gathering is not instructional, but observers are welcome and players of all levels are invited. Sets and cards are not provided. Feel free to bring a friend.

To RSVP, contact Barbara Barry at [bebarry@msn.com](mailto:bebarry@msn.com)

## Off of Hope: A Gathering of Interfaith Partners

Monday, March 9, 7 p.m.

Join us for an interfaith gathering focused on building community with care and compassion, featuring guest speaker Courtney Nicolato, president and CEO of United Way. The event will be held at St. Martin's Episcopal Church, 50 Orchard Ave., Providence, R.I. 02906.

## Adult B'nei Mitzvah Service

Saturday, March 14, 10:30 a.m.

The Adult *B'nei Mitzvah* class will celebrate its service in a communal ceremony open to all. Led by Cantor Judy Seplowin, this cohort marks her final Adult *B'nei Mitzvah* class before her retirement.

## Learning and Reflection Series

Thursday, March 12, April 9 and May 14, 5:30 p.m.

A three-part Jewish learning and reflection series led by Rabbi Heather Shore of Jewish Collaborative Services (JCS). Sessions blend Jewish text study and supportive conversation as we process our shifting relationships with Israel and Palestine. Open to all political orientations. This is not a space for political debate.

New members are welcome.

## Sisterhood Sponsored Shabbat

Friday, March 13, 5:45 p.m.

Join us for the annual Sisterhood *Shabbat*.

## Men's Seder

Tuesday, April 7, 6:30 p.m.

Men ages 13 and older from the broader community are invited to Beth-El Brotherhood's award-winning annual Men's Seder, led by Rabbi Preston Neimeiser, in the Meeting Hall. Participants are encouraged to attend on their own, bring friends or meet new ones while enjoying a new Brotherhood *Haggadah* and engaging in discussion about the meaning of Passover for themselves and their families during these challenging times.

## Shabbat Honoring Cantor Judy Seplowin

Friday, April 10, 5:45 p.m.

A very special *Shabbat* featuring the Quartet followed by a festive *oneg*.

## Trivia Night

Saturday, April 25, 6 p.m.

Save the date for Trivia Night, a fun evening of food, drinks and friendly competition benefiting security for the Tuition-Free Rabbi Leslie Yale Gutterman Religious School. Come as an individual or form a team of eight to 10 people. Tickets are \$50 per person and include dinner and drinks for guests 21 and older.



For more information, please visit our calendar by scanning the QR code or visiting [temple-beth-el.org/calendar](http://temple-beth-el.org/calendar)

## COMMUNITY SECOND SEDER

TEMPLE BETH-EL  
Congregation Sons of Israel and David

### Community Second Seder

Thursday, April 2, 6 p.m.  
Meeting Hall

Led by Cantor Judy Seplowin and Rabbi Preston Neimeiser  
Adult Tickets: \$54  
Children under 10: \$18  
RSVP by March 20



To purchase tickets, please visit our website by scanning the QR code or visiting [temple-beth-el.org/event/second-Seder3.html](http://temple-beth-el.org/event/second-Seder3.html)



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## *Between Goodbye and Gratitude:* RABBI PRESTON NEIMEISER'S DEPARTURE FROM BETH-EL

“Wherever I go, there you’ll be. Set me as a seal upon your heart, like a seal upon your hand, for love is strong as death.”  
(Song of Songs 8:6)

Leaving a community you love is not the same as dying, but it is a process of grief. My mantra, repeated to myself and to anyone who has asked, has been, “Grief is not a linear process.” Over the past few months, I have moved through this experience in ways that have been both comforting and surprising. There have already been many “lasts,” each with its own sweetness or relief.

Perhaps you are reading this between my last *Purim spiel* and my last Community Second Seder. Perhaps we have already shared our tearful “goodbye for now” coffee, or perhaps we are still pretending to one another that we have all the time in the world. I wish with all my heart that we had more time together.

Herbert Kretzmer, the South African-born son of Lithuanian immigrants who became the lyricist for the English-language adaptation of “Les Misérables,” added this poignant line to Victor Hugo’s masterpiece: “To love another person is to see the face of God.” How blessed I have been to love you.

One of the most beautiful idiosyncrasies of my life here has been the opportunity to encounter the face of the Divine in places both sacred and mundane. In halls of power and at protests outside them; at a *bris*, wedding or funeral; at Seven Stars on Hope, Seven Stars on Point Street or Seven Stars in Rumford, there you are. Wherever I go, the people of Temple Beth-El are there, making us proud to belong.

There are many places where I now encounter only the memories of people I have known and loved here. Even in their absence, these memories remind me of Rabbi Judith Schindler’s teaching that “in Judaism, memory is not passive, it is active. Our memory of the past guides our future.” I know that long after I am gone from this place and this life, Temple Beth-El will remember. I pray that, with time, my virtues will be enhanced and my faults smoothed over like stones beneath the waters of a rushing stream. In my time here, I have been privileged to stand shoulder to shoulder with you in the work of repairing the world.

The Talmud (*Berakhot* 31a) teaches that a person should not take leave of another except with a word of *halacha*. As I depart with so much still left undone, I am comforted by the knowledge that our people have long defined ourselves by longing. The psalmist wrote:

*If I forget you, O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand wither;  
let my tongue stick to my palate  
if I cease to think of you,  
if I do not keep Jerusalem in memory  
even at my happiest hour.*

Our sages therefore established practices to help us embody that yearning even in moments of joy, including the custom of breaking a glass under the wedding *chuppah*.



1 2

As I look to the future for our family and for this community, I am filled with joy. It is bittersweet, because wherever I may go, you will remain a seal upon my heart.

This month, we will have many opportunities to gather and mark the closing of one chapter and the anticipation of another. I hope to see you at our holiday celebrations and *Shabbat* observances, and on March 22 for a special *tefillah* and *oneg* marking my five years of service with the students of the Rabbi Leslie Yale Gutterman Religious School, who have been so dear to my heart. Long after religious school ends in May, I know that wherever I go, there you will be.

~Rabbi Preston Neimeiser

### Farewell *Tefillah*

Sunday, March 22, 12 p.m.

Join us for a special *tefillah* and *oneg* marking Rabbi Preston Neimeiser's five years of service with the students of the Rabbi Leslie Yale Gutterman Religious School.



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Photos:

- 1 Installation of Rabbi Preston Neimeiser on Oct. 22, 2021. From left to right: Richard Litman, Victoria Litman, Preston Neimeiser, Alma Gonzalez, Grace Neimeiser and Samuel Neimeiser.
- 2 Rabbi Preston Neimeiser and Cantor Judy Seplowin celebrate *Hanukkah* on Dec. 8, 2024. Photo by Elaine Sandy.
- 3 Rabbi Sarah Mack and Rabbi Preston Neimeiser. Photo by John Tavares.

# PASSOVER 5786

APRIL 1 – 8, 2026

Passover commemorates the Israelites' liberation from slavery in Egypt, one of the central events in Jewish history. The Exodus shapes Jewish identity and reminds us that freedom is both a gift and a responsibility. Throughout the year, we are commanded to remember slavery and the journey to freedom. On Passover, we are called to relive it. As the *Haggadah* teaches, "In every generation, each person must see themselves as if they personally went out of Egypt."

Passover speaks in three tenses. It looks to the past by connecting us to the origins of our people. It speaks to the present by awakening our conscience and calling us to pursue justice and human dignity. It also looks to the future, sustaining hope that just as G-d freed our ancestors, freedom can be realized for all people.

## PEOPLE OF PASSOVER

### MOSES

Moses leads the Israelites out of slavery after being called by G-d to confront Pharaoh. His journey reflects the challenges of leadership, courage and faith.

### MIRIAM

Miriam, sister of Moses and Aaron, watches over Moses as a baby and later leads the people in song after crossing the sea. Tradition connects her with water and sustenance in the wilderness.

### AARON

Aaron supports Moses as a spokesperson and spiritual leader, showing the power of partnership and shared leadership.

### PHARAOH

Pharaoh refuses to free the Israelites, representing the dangers of hardened power and disregard for human dignity.

### SHIFRAH AND PUAH

The Hebrew midwives defy Pharaoh's orders and save Israelite children, beginning the resistance that leads to freedom.

### THE ISRAELITES

The Israelites experience slavery, fear and hope as they move from bondage to freedom, shaping Jewish memory and identity.

### ELIJAH, THE PROPHET

Elijah is symbolically welcomed at the Seder as a sign of hope for future redemption.

## THE SEDER PLATE IN ORDER

### PARSLEY AND/OR LETTUCE

The Seder begins with a green vegetable dipped in salt water. It represents spring and renewal, while the salt water recalls the tears of slavery.

### SALT WATER

Salt water symbolizes the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt and the pain that accompanies the journey to freedom.

### MAROR (BITTER HERBS)

Often horseradish is eaten to remember the bitterness of slavery and the harshness of forced labor.

### CHAROSET

*Charoet*, a mixture of fruit, nuts, wine and spices, resembles mortar and recalls the bricks made by the Israelites. It softens the bitterness of *maror*, reflecting how hope tempers suffering.

### EGG (BEITZAH)

The egg symbolizes life and renewal. It also and recalls the ancient festival offering brought to the Temple in Jerusalem.

### ROASTED BONE (ZEROA)

The roasted bone represents the Passover sacrifice offered on the first night of the Exodus and honors the memory of the original Passover in Egypt.

## PASSOVER AT BETH-EL: VOICES FROM OUR COMMUNITY

Below are reflections from congregants about their Passover experiences at Temple Beth-El, offering a glimpse into the moments and connections that make the holiday meaningful.

“As someone who doesn’t have family close by, it’s nice to be able to celebrate Passover with my Beth-El ‘family.’”

~Elinor Nacheman

“What I love most about the Second Seder is the sense of community. Sitting at a table with people of all ages, singing together and sharing traditions, is a beautiful reminder that we don’t celebrate alone. I always walk away feeling grateful to be part of Temple Beth-El.”

~Jayne Evangelista

“I’m very appreciative that our Temple has a Second Seder, as it’s a wonderful opportunity to celebrate Passover with our clergy and Temple friends and family. I look forward to it every year!”

~Debbie Barsbay

Photos:

- 1 Hands hold parsley as it is dipped into salt water during the 2024 Second Seder.
- 2 Melissa and Rebecca Book at the 2025 Sisterhood Women’s Seder.
- 3 Danny Reagan at the 2025 Community Second Seder.
- 4 Rabbi Preston Neimeiser leads service from our 2025 Passover Seder.

Photos by Elaine Sandy

### Community Second Seder

Thursday, April 2, 6 p.m.

Join us in the Meeting Hall for our community Second Seder, led by Cantor Judy Seplowin and Rabbi Preston Neimeiser. Adult tickets are \$54, and children under 10 are \$18. Please RSVP by March 20.

### Men’s Seder

Tuesday, April 7, 6:30 p.m.

Men ages 13 and older from the broader community are invited to Beth-El Brotherhood’s award-winning annual Men’s Seder, led by Rabbi Preston Neimeiser, in the Meeting Hall.

 For more information, please visit our calendar by scanning the QR code or visiting [temple-beth-el.org/calendar](https://temple-beth-el.org/calendar)



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# SOCIAL JUSTICE INITIATIVE

## IT IS A GREAT TIME TO BE A PART OF SJI

**OUR MISSION** is to support the greater community through direct service, *Tikkun Olam*, righteous giving through *tzedakah*, advocacy and education. Together, we envision a community free from injustice and inequality, where individuals can live fulfilled and dignified lives. As a new year begins, we reflect on what our Beth-El congregation has achieved and look ahead to what we can accomplish in the months to come.

There are many ways to support Beth-El social justice efforts, and we welcome helping hands whenever possible.

Ongoing communication with Providence-area interfaith partners continues to inform our work and reminds us that the needs of the greater community are complex and growing. In November, the Racial Justice subcommittee hosted a community meeting to establish action steps focused on protecting immigrants and democracy. Advocacy efforts continue to amplify our voices with state and local legislators on issues including racial equity, childhood hunger and immigration reform. In December, congregants participated in a vigil to protect immigrant rights and highlight key state legislative bills proposed for 2026.

insecurity. This spring, students will take part in a Hunger Banquet and Empty Bowls program to deepen social justice awareness. They also enthusiastically support our food drives by helping sort dozens of donated food bags.

We have enjoyed PRIDE events and look forward to additional social gatherings that bring LGBTQ+ members together in meaningful and inclusive ways. Racial and gender equity remain central to the work of the Social Justice Initiative.

This winter has been especially cold, and in December congregants donated dozens of warm coats, hats, gloves, socks and toiletries for children and adults experiencing housing insecurity. Our partner agencies expressed deep gratitude for the generosity of the Beth-El community, and we look forward to continuing this momentum

Many new initiatives are on the horizon. Based on feedback from nonprofit partners, an additional food drive is planned for later in March. More details will be shared soon. There are many ways to support Beth-El social justice efforts, and we welcome helping hands whenever possible. Thank you for your continued generosity and commitment.

~Lisa Schubert

To get involved with the Social Justice Initiative, please contact our Co-Chairs, Celia Harms, [celiaharms@gmail.com](mailto:celiaharms@gmail.com) or Lisa Schubert, [lisaschubert@bellsouth.net](mailto:lisaschubert@bellsouth.net) with any questions.

the racial justice subcommittee at temple beth-el invites you to a

**COMMUNITY MEETING**  
**RACIAL JUSTICE on the DOCKET**

**MAR 29<sup>th</sup>**  
**6:00 pm** - **8:00 pm**

Join local politicians + community leaders to learn about 2026 legislative priorities for immigrant rights, democracy and racial justice in Rhode Island.

Come hear about the bills they're watching and how to make your voice heard!

All welcome, members + non-members  
childcare available // sweets + snacks //  
70 Orchard Ave PVD



## RACIAL JUSTICE ON THE DOCKET

Friday, March 29, 6 p.m.

The Racial Justice Subcommittee at Temple Beth-El invites you to a community meeting at the Temple to learn about key 2026 racial justice legislative priorities in Rhode Island. Hear from local politicians and community leaders about the bills they are watching and how to make your voice heard.



We'd love to see you there!

Scan the QR code or visit:

[temple-beth-el.org/event/social-justice-community-meeting.html](https://temple-beth-el.org/event/social-justice-community-meeting.html)

# SISTERHOOD

**WE INVITE YOU** to join us in the Temple Beth-El Meeting Hall for our exciting Joanne Forman Film Festival program. This year's theme is Finding Judaism in Unusual Places. Come and enjoy our films, inspiring moderators and refreshments. Admission is free.

## **I WILL BUILD THIS WORLD FROM LOVE**

**Sunday, March 15, 2 p.m.**

Moderated by Cantor Meredith Greenberg of Temple *Ner Tamid* in Bloomfield, New Jersey, this hopeful film follows young people in the country of Georgia seeking to practice Judaism as their planned *b'nai mitzvah* ceremony draws opposition from Georgia's dominant Orthodox Jewish community. They find support from a former Evangelical Baptist archbishop who built a Peace Cathedral housing a church, synagogue and mosque under one roof.

## **SWEDISHKAYT:**

### **YIDLIFE CRISIS IN STOCKHOLM**

**Sunday, March 22, 2 p.m.**

Moderated by Sebastian Schulman, director of special projects and partnerships, Yiddish Book Center, Amherst, Massachusetts. Enjoy a laugh and a nosh as comedy duo Eli Batalion and Jamie Elman from the Canadian YidLife Crisis web series explore Jewish culture in Sweden. They prepare for a big live show while researching the little-known history of Sweden's Jewish community in their hilarious and heartfelt journey.

## **BOURBON AND BROWNIES**

**Sunday, March 29, 3 p.m.**

Please join us for a tasty afternoon with Sisterhood member Tammy Spencer, a chef and blogger who will demonstrate how to make her bourbon brownies. While the brownies are baking, there will be a bourbon tasting and presentation from Spencer.

*This event is free for Sisterhood members and \$18 for nonmembers. RSVPs are required by March 8 via [tbesisterhood70@gmail.com](mailto:tbesisterhood70@gmail.com).*

## **IT'S ALWAYS A GOOD TIME TO JOIN THE SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH-EL.**

You may pay your dues electronically on Beth-El's Sisterhood web page: [temple-beth-el.org/community-2/sisterhood/](http://temple-beth-el.org/community-2/sisterhood/)

or mail a check to Temple, payable to

"Sisterhood of Temple Beth-El."

*For questions about your membership status, you may email [tbesisterhood70@gmail.com](mailto:tbesisterhood70@gmail.com).*

# TRIVIA NIGHT



## **MEET YOUR HOSTS** Deborah Carr and Samuel

Zwetchkenbaum, who bring years of experience and a love of friendly competition to the game of Trivia.

Zwetchkenbaum first became a member as a child in the 1960s, and he and Carr rejoined the congregation in 2016 after moving back to Rhode Island from New Jersey.

Their trivia journey began in Michigan, where they played weekly at a local pub. After moving to New Jersey, they missed trivia so much that they created their own game. What started as a small gathering at a wine bar grew into one of the most popular trivia nights in central New Jersey and continued even after they moved away.

At Temple Beth-El, they write their own questions and design themed rounds with a relaxed pace that encourages conversation and teamwork. Music is played between questions, and surprise rounds and prizes add to the fun.

A sample question from a recent game offers a glimpse of their style: In a "Seinfeld" category, players were asked, "Jerry roughs up an older woman on the street to steal this food from her. What does he steal?" (Answer: marble rye.)

"Every person on a team is valuable," they said, noting that a mix of ages and interests often leads to stronger teams, especially in music and pop culture categories.



*Join us on Saturday, April 25 at 6 p.m.*

*To purchase a ticket, please scan the QR code or visit*

*[temple-beth-el.org/event/trivia-event.html](http://temple-beth-el.org/event/trivia-event.html)*

## LOOKING AHEAD



**MARCH IS FULL OF** opportunities for teens. The month starts off with a bang. The *Purim* Carnival and *Purim* celebration offer a perfect time to be joyous and spread happiness to our youngest congregants. The *Purim* Carnival features games, face painting and light *nosh* for children and young families and ends with a costume parade before the *Megillah* reading and *Purim spiel*.

During the weekend of March 13 to 16, intrepid travelers from Temple Beth-El will participate in the *L'Taken* Social Justice Seminars with the Religious Action Center, the lobbying arm of the Union for Reform Judaism. This opportunity brings together teens from across the country to learn about storytelling, discuss current events and issues and examine bills being presented to Congress. *L'Taken* gives teens the opportunity to lobby elected officials to support, co-sign or oppose legislation on the docket. Participants will travel to several monuments, Smithsonian Institution sites, the U.S. Capitol and the congressional offices of their elected officials.

This year, Temple Beth-El is hosting the North American Federation of Temple Youth's Northeast Region Spring Conclavette, known as SPRONC. After months of planning, Providence will be the center of the region's teen engagement from March 27 to 29. Moses said, "Justice, justice, you shall pursue." Action is the call. Participants of TBE Teen Night have invited their peers from across New England, upstate New York and the Eastern Townships of Canada to gather at the Temple for a weekend of service.

~ *Carl Shulman*  
*Associate Director of Youth and Family Engagement*

Photos:

*L'Taken* 2025 Trip

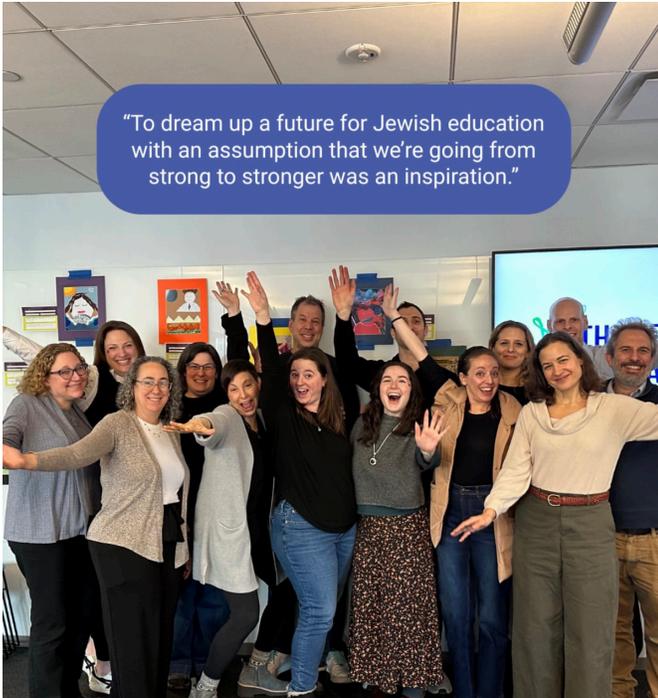
*Above Top (Left to Right):*  
Annabel Herzlinger, Janie Palan, Rabbi Preston Neimeiser, Victoria Restler Alex, Liam Isaacs, Julian Deaner

*Lower Half (Left to Right):*  
Rabbi Preston Neimeiser, Julian Deaner, Liam Isaacs, Janie Palan, Annabel Herzlinger, Victoria Restler Alex

*Opposite Page, Above Top:*

Educators from the Shamash Fellowship gather for a recent program hosted by The Jewish Education Project. Photo courtesy of @jewished





joyful  
communal  
accessible

Rabbi  
Leslie  
Yale  
Gutterman  
Religious  
School



**I RECENTLY BEGAN THE SHAMASH FELLOWSHIP** through the Jewish Education Project. Together, this inaugural cohort of veteran educators is cultivating expansive thinking about the possibilities for Jewish education now and in the future. During our first in-person seminar, we spent significant time focusing on Judeofuturism and

continuing to ask ourselves, what will Jewish education look like in 2050.

If you are asking yourself, “what is Judeofuturism,” you are not alone. Our entire cohort was curious, as it was new vocabulary to us as well. We learned that it is another word for Jewish futurism – a creative and intellectual framework that uses Jewish texts, symbols and memory to imagine and design future-oriented possibilities. It blends technology with spirituality, and acts as a counter-movement to negative or even frightening narratives, by using art, community building and ethical innovations to help us find a positive future. Judeofuturism is not a single philosophy. It is a practice that explores how we can adapt, using “long-term thinking” that views the Jewish people as closer to our beginning than our end.

In order to look forward and think long-term, we have to look back to where we come from and upon whose shoulders we stand. Our communal and personal ancestors provide us with a rich foundation. We are a people of stories and memories that inform our traditions and our values.

How we each experience our Judaism and education is unique. In *Pirkei Avot* 5:15, we learn: “There are four types among those who sit before the sages: a sponge, a funnel, a strainer and a sieve. A sponge, which soaks up everything; A funnel, which takes in at one end and lets out at the other; A strainer, which lets out the wine and retains the lees; A sieve, which lets out the coarse meal and retains the choice flour.”

This text amplifies our understanding that everyone learns differently. In addition, we all have different ideas of what it is we should be learning. With everything that is going on in the world, it would be easy to view this as a challenge or even a burden, but with the mindset of Judeofuturism, I endeavor to see the possibilities. I am grateful to have this professional development opportunity for the chance at what Jewish education can become.

~ Rachel Mersky Woda  
*Director of Youth and Family Engagement*

# WORSHIP CALENDAR



## ROSH HODESH

is the start of each Hebrew month when the new crescent moon appears in the sky. It is a time for celebration and reflection, bringing with it hope, light and promise, growth and fulfillment, for the moon and for us.

## ROSH HODESH ADAR

begins at sundown February 16 and ends at nightfall on February 18. It marks the start of a month rooted in joy, courage and transformation. As *Adar* arrives, we are invited to lean into celebration, embrace resilience and open our hearts to possibility. It is a time to seek light even in uncertainty, to choose hope over fear, and to remember that joy itself can be a powerful act of faith.

## ROSH HODESH NISAN

begins on sundown March 18 and ends at nightfall on March 19. It marks the beginning of a month rooted in renewal, freedom and new beginnings. As spring arrives, *Nisan* invites us to step into growth and possibility, to honor the journey from constriction to liberation, and to welcome the unfolding promise of change.

## ויקהל - פקודי

### VAYAK'HEIL - P'KUDEI

Torah: Exodus 35:1-40:38

Haftarah: Ezekiel 45:16-25

#### Friday, March 13

5:45 p.m. Sisterhood *Shabbat* Service

#### Saturday, March 14

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. Adult *B'nei Mitzvah* Service

## ויקרא

### VAYIKRA

Torah: Leviticus 1:1-5:26

Haftarah: Isaiah 43:21-44:23

#### Friday, March 20

5:45 p.m. Joint Reform *Shabbat* Service at Temple *Habonim* (No Service at Beth-El)

#### Saturday, March 21

9 a.m. Torah Study

## צו

### TZAV

Torah: Leviticus 6:1-8:36

Haftarah: Malachi 3:4-24

#### Friday, March 27

5:45 p.m. *Shabbat* Service

#### Saturday, March 28

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *Bar Mitzvah* of Joseph Brainsky, son of Tonya Brainsky and Mario Zocchi and Brittany and Joseph Brainsky

## חול המועד פסח

### CHOL HAMO-EID PESACH

Torah: Exodus 33:12-34:26

Haftarah: Ezekiel 37:1-14;

Song of Songs is read

#### Friday, April 3

5:45 p.m. *Shabbat* Service

#### Saturday, April 4

9 a.m. Torah Study

## שמיני

### SH'MINI

Torah: Leviticus 9:1-11:47

Haftarah: II Samuel 6:1-7:17

#### Friday, April 10

5:45 p.m. Quartet *Shabbat* Celebrating Judy

#### Saturday, April 11

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *Bar Mitzvah* of

Noah Bromberg, son of Rebecca and Scott Bromberg

## תזריע מצרע

### TAZRIA - M'TZORA

Torah: Leviticus 12:1-15:33

Haftarah: II Kings 7:3-20

[historic: Isaiah 66:1-24]

#### Friday, April 17

5:45 p.m. *Shabbat Hallelu*

#### Saturday, April 18

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *Bar Mitzvah* of

Sol Restler-Alex, son of Victoria Restler and Byron Alex



# IN OUR FAMILY

## אחרי מות קדשים

### ACHAREI MOT - K'DOSHIM

Torah: Leviticus 16:1-20:27

Haftarah: Amos 9:7-15

Friday, April 24

5:45 p.m. *Shabbat* Service

Saturday, April 25

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *Bar Mitzvah* of Ari Polikoff,  
son of Dana and Lee Polikoff

## אמר

### EMOR

Torah: Leviticus 21:1-24:23

Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:15-31

Friday, May 1

5:45 p.m. *Shabbat B'Yachad* Service  
led by Religious School Students

Saturday, May 2

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *Bar Mitzvah* of  
Judah Shepherd, son of  
Kristina and Toby Shepherd

## בהר בחקתי

### B'HAR - B'CHUKOTAI

Torah: Leviticus 25:1-27:34

Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14

Friday, May 8

5:45 p.m. *Kabbalat Shabbat*

Saturday, May 9

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *Bar Mitzvah* of Thomas  
Himelfarb, son of  
Dina and Michael Himelfarb

## במדבר

### B'MIDBAR

Torah: Numbers 1:1-4:20

Haftarah: Hosea 2:1-22

[historic: I Samuel 20:18-42]

Friday, May 15

5:45 p.m. *Kabbalat Shabbat*

Saturday, May 16

9 a.m. Torah Study

10:30 a.m. *B'nei Mitzvah* of Ari and  
Jacqueline Sugarman, children  
of Lauren and Jason Sugarman

## B MITZVAH



## JOSEPH BRAINSKY

March 28 2026

Parents: TONYA and ERIC BRAINSKY

Stepparents: BRITTANY BRAINSKY  
and MARIO ZOCCHI

### BOY-MAN:

When I used to be a boy, I used to beg for toys.

When I was a boy, school was a nightmare but now that I am older, it feels more fair. Now that I am a becoming man, I have changed and become a fan. My *Bar Mitzvah* will be the day that really changes me from boy into the beginnings of a man....a Boy-Man.

## MAZEL TOV!

### NEWS

*Mazel Tov* to ANDREW BRAMSON, who was recently sworn in to the East Side seat of the Providence School Board by MAYOR BRETT SMILEY.

## MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

LIDIA and BOB OSTER 30 YEARS

SUSAN and MICHAEL EIDES 35 YEARS

PAMELA and KEVIN MATSON 40 YEARS

## MILESTONE BIRTHDAYS

MARJORIE JAFFE, 107 on MARCH 5

ROSE LEVIN, 103 on MARCH 14

## NEW MEMBERS

EMMA BARTLETT and ADAM ZERMAN of PROVIDENCE

LEAH and BENJAMIN HALUNEN of NORTH ATTLEBORO

PETRA LEHMAN, BILLY, LEAH and ASHA BRAUER of RUMFORD

ELIZABETH, ELLY, EMMELINE and ELOISE PEIMER of EXETER

AYNI STRANG of EXETER

ZHUQUING LI and EDWARD STEINFELD of PROVIDENCE

## BIRTHS

*Mazel Tov* to TAYLOR SANTOS JONES and WILLIAM JACOBS  
on the birth of their son, MARCEL RUIVO JACOBS, born Jan. 6, 2026.

# DONORS: DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026

## BETH R. BRIER MEMORIAL FUND

*In memory of*

CHARLES DLUGOS from Jessica and Jeffrey Brier

## CANTOR DISCRETIONARY FUND

*In appreciation of*

CANTOR SEPLOWIN from Gail Solomon

CANTOR SEPLOWIN for helping Ari prepare for and leading him through his *bar mitzvah* from Emily Eisenstein and Matthew Rutz

*In memory of*

MARK KALISH from Diane and Robert Ducoff

BERNARD LEVINE from Shari Levine

BEATRICE RUSS from Sondra Price

KITTY GOTTFRIED from Jeanne Gottfried and William Kirtley

## CHARLOTTE SIMON KENNER FUND

*In memory of*

My mother, MURIEL S. FLANZBAUM, upon her *yahrzeit* on 26 *Kislev* from Lynn Flanzbaum

My grandmother, ETTA M. SIMON, upon her *yahrzeit* on 7 *Tevet* from Lynn Flanzbaum

BUDDY KENNER from Martin Kenner

## DAVID A. COHEN RELIGIOUS SCHOOL EDUCATION FUND

*In memory of*

PATRICIA R. COHEN from David Cohen

SOL WHITE from David Cohen

## FAY AND ROBERT STEINBERG INTERFAITH FUND

*In honor of*

GENIE SHAO's 70th birthday from Lilliane and Frank Birch

## FELDMAN GENERATIONS FUND

*In honor of*

CARL FELDMAN'S 88TH BIRTHDAY from Diane and Robert Ducoff

## FINE ARTS FUND

*In loving memory of*

FANNIE M. SHORE from Jane and Alan Jacober and Family

## FRANCES AND DAVID FRIEDMAN FUND

*In honor of*

LYNN DUCOFF BELKIN's birthday from Diane and Robert Ducoff

*In memory of*

NANCY KAUFMAN's mother from Diane and Robert Ducoff

## GENERAL ENDOWMENT

*In memory of*

CHARLES HAHN, beloved husband, father and grandfather from Judith and Arthur Bergel

JUDITH and LAWRENCE KOFFLER from Lisa Koffler

FREIDA and ABRAHAM ABRAMSON from Lisa Koffler

JESSIE and IRVING KOFFLER from Lisa Koffler

STEPHEN KOFFLER from Lisa Koffler

JILL FORMAN STARR from Adam Chase

## GENERAL OPERATING DONATION

*In memory of*

CHARLES HAHN from Sandra and Alan Samdperil

CHARLES BOLOTOW from Norman Bolotow

BETTY WEINSTEIN BOLOTOW from Norman Bolotow

HAROLD WINSTEAD from Norman Bolotow

ARLINE GOODMAN ALPERT from Sandra Alpert Pankiw

## HELEN AND AARON CASLOWITZ FUND

*In memory of*

RICHARD KUH from Ellen and Mark Silverman

## HELEN N. AND MEYER TENENBAUM FUND

*In loving memory of*

My mother, MARION JAGOLINZER GOLDSMITH from Barbara Goldsmith

## JUDITH SMITH MEMORIAL FUND

*In memory of*

DOROTHY SAMDPERIL from Sandra and Alan Samdperil

## K'TANTAN DONATION

*In memory of*

MARIAN GOLDITCH from Anonymous

### LARRY H. FRIEDMAN FAMILY FUND

*In honor of*

LYNN BELKIN's 45th birthday from Diane and Robert Ducoff

MICHAEL FRIEDMAN's 49th birthday  
from Diane and Robert Ducoff

*In memory of*

JANE THOMAS, sister of Marjorie Blake  
from Diane and Robert Ducoff

### LEONARD C. MANDELL MUSIC FUND

*In honor of*

ARLENE BERROL's daughter getting married from Rose Levin

### LOUIS AND FREDA KAUFMAN MEMORIAL FUND

*In memory of*

TINA KAUFMAN from Sara Sheiber and Frank Shatz

### LYG SCHOOL ENDOWMENT FUND

*In memory of*

CHARLES HAHN from Diana Glashow  
My beloved husband, MARTIN FEIBISH, from Gloria Feibish

### MARSHALL G. WOLFE FUND

*In memory of*

RENA MILLS from Nancy and David Mills

### NATHANIEL SUGERMAN MEMORIAL FUND

*In memory of*

JOSEPH and LILLIAN FOGEL, beloved parents  
and grandparents, from Judith Fogel and Family

### RABBI GUTTERMAN DISCRETIONARY FUND

*In appreciation of*

RABBI LESLIE GUTTERMAN from Max Dittelman

*In honor of*

The birth of ELAINE and HOWARD WEISS'S  
great-granddaughter from Linda and Richard Silverman  
SANDRA HAMOLSKY's unveiling from the Hamolsky Family

*In memory of*

LILLIAN ALBERT, mother, GERTRUDE ALBERT,  
grandmother RICHARD ALBERT, father, from Debbie Albert  
CHARLES W. HAHN from Robin and Marc Hahn  
ABRAHAM HORVITZ from Leslie Horvitz

### RABBI MACK DISCRETIONARY FUND

*In appreciation of*

RABBI SARAH MACK from Barbara Goldsmith; Fain Family  
Foundation; Nancy and Howard Safran; Isaac M. Wise Temple; and  
Gail Solomon

*In honor of*

The *brit milah* of MARCEL JACOBS, welcome to the world!  
From Janet Lefkowitz

BENJAMIN ZIAS, beloved father from Gloria Feibish

RABBI SARAH MACK from Shandelle Kenler

*In memory of*

MARILYN NAPPEN from Betsy Shimberg

LINDA (ROBERTS) FORMAN from Gail and Jim Galkin

LYNN SERPER from Layne Mayer

SADYE SANDITEN from C. Megan Brenner

MICHAEL EDWARD KIMMEL from Donna Kimmel

KITTY GOTTFRIED from Jeanne Gottfried and William Kirtley

*With deep gratitude for*

RABBI SARAH MACK from Kane Barrengos Foundation

## IN MEMORIAM YIZKOR ELOHIM

*The congregation notes with  
sorrow the passing of*

CAROL E. MANN  
27 Tevet 5786 / January 16, 2026

MARGOT B. MENCOFF  
15 Shevat 5786 / February 2, 2026



# DONORS: DECEMBER 2025 AND JANUARY 2026, CONT'D.

## RABBI NEIMEISER DISCRETIONARY FUND

*In appreciation of*

RABBI NEIMEISER from Gail Solomon

RABBI NEIMEISER for helping Ari prepare for his *bar mitzvah* from Emily Eisenstein and Matthew Rutz

*In memory of*

KITTY GOTTFRIED from Jeanne Gottfried and William Kirtley

## REMEMBRANCE FUND

*In memory of*

SAUL SPITZ from Elaine and Howard Weiss

JONATHAN WEISS from Elaine and Howard Weiss

NATHAN WEISS from Elaine and Howard Weiss

ANN BAZAR from Barbara Greenberg

CHARLES HAHN from Barbara Greenberg

## ROBERT HOCHBERG MINYAN FUND

*In memory of*

MORTON SILVERMAN from Ellen and Mark Silverman

FLORENCE HORN from Linda and Richard Silverman

## SAMUEL HAMIN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

*In memory of*

EDITH and HARRY STILLER from Micki Beth Stiller

## SECURING THE FUTURE CAMPAIGN

*In appreciation of*

FRED J. FRANKLIN from Alex Tate and Ruben Rodriguez

*In memory of*

MARILYN NAPPEN from Judith Labossiere; Gail Solomon; Shari Levine; and Sturdy Memorial Hospital

MARILYN NAPPEN from Karen Borger, may the memory of this extraordinary woman be a blessing

MARILYN NAPPEN, Donna Kimmel's beloved mother from Celia and Terry Harms

JUDITH ANN PRITIKIN from Elliott Pritikin

## SECURITY DONATION

*In honor of*

MAYOR BRETT SMILEY's steadfast leadership from Karen Borger

## SISTERHOOD DONATION

*In memory of*

ROSALYN and MAX FACTOR from Ellen Kasle

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*In memory of*

HANNAH FEIBELMAN from Barbara Feibelman and Ken Orenstein

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*In loving memory of*

My father, JAMES GOLDSMITH, from Barbara Goldsmith

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*In memory of*

BEVERLY GOMBERG SUGERMAN, NATHANIEL HOWARD SUGERMAN, and AMY L SUGERMAN from Ruth Ann Sugerma, Claudia Akerstein, Betty Sugerma Weintraub, and Richard Sugerma

## WILLIAM G. BRAUDE LIBRARY FUND

*In memory of*

My mother, LENA GINSBERG, from Helen Salzberg

SLOAN JAFFA from Lesley and Robert Nan Haberman

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DONALD JAFFA FARREL from Lesley and Robert Nan Haberman

MILDRED ZELMAN MOVERMAN from Lesley and Robert Nan Haberman

CELE MILLMAN from Nancy Lovett and Family

RAUL LOVETT from Nancy Lovett and Family

MARILYN NAPPEN from Anonymous

## YOUTH ENGAGEMENT/PROVTV DONATION

*In memory of*

ANN BAZAR from Jan and Harris Weiner

MILDRED YANOFF from Joanne and Sheldon Summer

REBECCA SAMAS from Joanne and Sheldon Summer

## PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER: MATTY DURGIN



Matty grew up on the North Shore of Massachusetts and learned the value of hard work early. His first job was as a paperboy at age 9. By 14 he was working in restaurants and by 16 he was cooking. He later spent time in Denver studying journalism and public relations but ultimately found himself drawn to the fast-paced and collaborative nature

of the hospitality industry.

Over the years, Matty worked as both a chef and bartender, often directly alongside restaurant owners. Wearing many hats gave him the opportunity to help create systems and guidelines that kept operations running smoothly.

Those experiences also sharpened his practical skills, including carpentry, which he credits to strong mentors in his life. His

grandfather was a carpenter and his father worked as an ironworker and manager of large-scale facilities.

Matty brings a deep sense of curiosity to his work and says he is always open to learning more. In his new role, his goal is to create stronger synergy between departments while continuing to problem solve and troubleshoot as needs arise. He shared that he is mindful of the big shoes he is stepping into as George Hetu prepares to retire after nearly 19 years at Temple Beth-El.

Before joining the Temple, Matty was a manager at Tiny Bar, in Providence, where he met several members of our community including Joie Magnone, Zach Magnone, Carl Shulman and Steven Dulude. He emphasizes the importance of listening closely to leadership and making sure the unseen details are handled so everything functions as it should.

We are thrilled to have Matty join the Temple Beth-El facilities team and look forward to the care and thoughtfulness he brings to his work.

## P.J. HAVDALAH FEATURING ROCK-A-BABY, JANUARY 10, 2026



Marc Trachtenberg, Founder/Director of Rock-a-Baby performs a magical children's *Havdalah* in the Meeting Hall on Saturday, January 10. Photos courtesy of Elaine Sandy



Temple member Rachel O'Connell is Rock-a-Baby's Melody.

## HOW A CONNECTION AT TEMPLE BETH-EL HELPED CHANGE A LIFE



MY WIFE, NANCI WEINBERGER, AND I, joined Temple Beth-El this past June. We had considered joining for some time, we had attended a few *Shabbat* services and we have friends who are members; but what ultimately made the difference for us was attending the Racial Justice subcommittee immigration meeting in February 2025. We'd been on the Temple

mailing list for a few years, but seeing firsthand the depth of commitment this community brings to issues of equity, dignity, and human rights resonated deeply. We felt immediately welcomed, and it became clear that this was the right community for us.

I grew up in the New York City area and was a *Bar Mitzvah* at a conservative Temple on Long Island. I came to the Boston area to attend law school and moved to Providence in 2015. When we went to the Racial Justice subcommittee meeting, we expected there would be many people horrified at what was going on with ICE/DHS, and there would be people wanting to help. And that is exactly what we found.

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Seeing firsthand the depth of commitment this community brings to issues of equity, dignity and human rights resonated deeply.

---

I'm a volunteer attorney with the immigration detention program of the PAIR Project — the Political Asylum/Immigration Representation Project — a nonprofit based in Boston that provides free legal assistance to immigrants detained in Massachusetts and Rhode Island. We provide free support to vulnerable people navigating a complex and often unforgiving immigration system.

All four of my grandparents were immigrants from Eastern Europe in the early 20th century and loved this country. I am grateful my grandparents were able to escape persecution from pogroms. I believe asylum for people being persecuted is a fundamental human right. My decision to represent immigration detainees pro bono is grounded in the Jewish values I learned as a child — especially the commitment to *tikkun olam*.

At the Racial Justice subcommittee meeting last February, I shared how critical Spanish-language volunteers are to this work. The response was immediate. Multiple attendees volunteered to serve as interpreters, two of whom ultimately became deeply involved in a particularly challenging bond and asylum case that began in April. Anna Cable was one of them; although not a Temple member, she is Jewish, grew up in Providence and works as a social worker there. The other, a work colleague of a Temple member, prefers to remain anonymous.

Our client is a 25-year-old man originally from Venezuela — bright, soft-spoken, and hard-working — who became entangled with overzealous immigration enforcement. He was working as a barber in Pawtucket when he was arrested by ICE. His tattoos, rather than anything he had done, drew the attention of ICE. Based only on them, he was accused of being a gang member and a foreign terrorist.

He is thoughtful and caring, completely different from a gang member. He's also a singer and an artist and gives artistic haircuts with patterns. He was tortured as a young teenager after attending a school protest while in high school, and later detained many times because of his political opinions and his unwillingness to cooperate with Venezuela's authoritarian government and become a police informant.

Immigration court procedures for detainees at the Wyatt Detention Center in Central Falls, where he was held, take place via Zoom. Conducting detailed legal proceedings by video is difficult under any circumstances; doing so with language barriers and with the client inside a detention center makes it substantially more complicated. Our volunteer interpreters played a crucial role in bridging that gap, visiting the client with me multiple times. They helped me prepare his declaration telling his story, ensured he understood each step of the process, and enabled the legal team to communicate effectively. The asylum hearings — one in August and one in October — were complex and demanding. Once again, the volunteer interpreters were indispensable.

On Oct. 7, 2025, the immigration judge granted asylum.

Today, our client is living safely as an asylee, reconnecting with loved ones, and beginning the long path of rebuilding a life interrupted by over six months in federal detention. He will qualify for a green card in a year and now has a path to citizenship.

This case demonstrates how we can repair the world when people show up — lawyers, advocates, community partners, and interpreters. Without the interpreters who stepped forward at our February meeting, it is difficult to imagine this case reaching such a positive conclusion.

~ Michael Fuchs



## TEMPLE BETH-EL

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#### Facilities

TOLY MAGIDIN

#### Facilities

ANA KIMANGA

#### Facilities

MATTY DURGIN

Charlotte (aka Beth-El's vice president of audacious hospitality) with Rabbi Preston Neimeiser in Rabbi Sarah Mack's office.





**TEMPLE BETH-EL**  
*Congregation Sons of Israel and David*  
70 Orchard Avenue  
Providence, RI 02906-5402

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## Community Second Seder

Thursday, April 2, 6 p.m.  
Meeting Hall



## COMMUNITY SECOND SEDER

Thursday, April 2, 6 p.m.

Join us for a Seder led by Cantor Judy Seplowin and Rabbi Preston Neimeiser. Tickets are \$54 per adult and \$18 for children under 18. All are welcome, and we look forward to celebrating with you.



To purchase tickets, please visit our website by scanning the QR code or visiting [temple-beth-el.org/event/second-Seder3.html](http://temple-beth-el.org/event/second-Seder3.html)