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CONGREGATION BETH EL

November 21, 2003

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Volume 53

No. 5

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Message from the Rabbi



We have just concluded the holiday period, a time for *cheshbon hanefesh*, an accounting to our Maker. I think this is an appropriate time to account to my congregants on the use of monies entrusted to me through the Rabbi's Fund. I did so in a presentation to the Board after my first year managing the Fund, and I would like to report to the whole membership as well at this time.

The primary purpose of the Rabbi's Fund is to support individuals in need and charitable institutions. In Fiscal Year 2002, six individuals requested *tzedakah* from the Fund and each received same, requests and disbursements totaling \$1,209. In Fiscal Year 2003, four individuals requested funds and received same, with a total disbursed of \$1,101. I have made contributions to Jewish organizations and charities, a total of \$1,066 in FY 2002 and \$1,600 in FY 2003.

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Shabbat Services

Friday, November 21 4:32 pm Candles 6:30 pm Friday Evening Service – APR	Saturday, December 6 Vayetzei: Genesis 28:10-32:3 7:30 & 9:15 am Shabbat Services 9:15 am Sarah Elizabeth Plotkin Bat Mitzvah 9:15 am Zoe Pollak Bat Mitzvah 9:50 am Worship & Study Minyan 10:00 am Jr. Congregation 10:30 am Gan Shabbat – MR 11:00 am Shitufim – Rm. 209
Saturday, November 22 Hayyei Sarah: Genesis 23:1-25:18 7:30 & 9:15 am Shabbat Services 9:15 am Sarah Freishtat Bat Mitzvah 10:00 am Jr. Congregation 10:30 am Nitzanim	Friday, December 12 4:28 pm Candles 6:30 pm Friday Evening Service – APR
Friday, November 28 4:29 pm Candles 6:30 pm Friday Evening Service – BR	Saturday, December 13 Vayishlah: Genesis 32:4-36:43 7:30 & 9:15 am Shabbat Services 9:15 am Benjamin Judson Bar Mitzvah 9:15 am Corey Goldstone Bar Mitzvah 10:00 am Jr. Congregation 10:00 am Learner's Minyan – MR 10:30 am Nitzanim
Saturday, November 29 Toldot: Genesis 25:19-28:9 7:30 & 9:15 am Shabbat Services 9:15 am Jonathan Hirsch Bar Mitzvah 10:00 am Jr. Congregation 10:30 am Nitzanim	Friday, December 5 4:28 pm Candles 6:30 pm Friday Evening Service – APR 7:30 pm Shabbat Service - Salute to Israel
Friday, December 5 4:28 pm Candles 6:30 pm Friday Evening Service – APR 7:30 pm Shabbat Service - Salute to Israel	4:00 pm Mincha, Seudah Shlishit, Maariv, Havdalah – APR

To the Parents of Children Born Between January 1, 1993 and December 31, 1993

There will be a scheduling meeting of the year 2006 B'nai Mitzvah parents on Sunday, December 14, 2003, at 11:15 a.m. in the All Purpose Room. If you have not received a letter about your child's upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah, please call Carole Wellner at 301-652-2606, ext. 316.

Sisterhood News

Tallit Workshop

This year's Tallit Workshop began in mid-November and runs through February. Participants will make a tallit at work sessions to be held on Tuesdays, from 7-9 p.m., in the Social Hall. Because the workshop enrolls a limited number of participants, anyone interested should check immediately with Holly Stein at hhstein@juno.com. Once the workshop is filled, names will be put on a waiting list and accepted as space allows.

Sisterhood Community Service: Volunteer to Gift Wrap for JDRF

The Capitol Chapter of The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation's (JDRF) most popular volunteer event is the *Annual Holiday Gift Wrap* fundraiser to raise money for diabetes research. Our Sisterhood will staff the gift-wrap table at Westfield Shoppingtown (Montgomery Mall) on *Wednesday, December 10*, from 5 p.m. to 10 p.m. We are looking for volunteers who love to wrap.

This is actually a fun activity! All gift-wrap supplies, including pre-made bows, are provided. There's lots of room for creativity in designing gift-wrap schemes. The only skills required are the ability to use a scissors, fold paper and tie ribbon. And, have fun!

Contact Mimi Tygier at 301-652-8211 (Tygier@comcast.net) to volunteer or for additional information.

Sisterhood Book Club

Reminder: During construction, Sisterhood members are invited to participate in the book club held at Barnes and Noble in Rockville. Contact Jonina Duker for more information.

Sisterhood Judaica Shop

Visit our re-decorated shop and see the new merchandise, including many beautiful things from Israel.

Selected items are on sale.

Our new fall hours are
Wednesday and Thursday:

9 a.m. - Noon

Sunday:

9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Men's Club News

Men's Club is meeting on a weekly schedule with services, breakfast, and a program each Sunday morning. Services are held at 9:00 a.m., breakfast is generally around 9:30 a.m. with the speaker program starting at 10:00 a.m. and generally running about an hour.

On October 26, Beth El Men's Club came in second in the first round of the "It's Academic" competition held this year at Beth El. The Beth El team made a strong showing and is waiting to hear the results of the other initial competitions to see if the team moves on to further rounds.

Programs are scheduled for November 23 and 30 – please see the weekly announcements for the subjects and speakers. The specific room for services, breakfasts, and meetings are subject to change due to the synagogue construction.

The program for December 7 is **Moshe Fox**, Minister for Public Affairs, Embassy of Israel.

The monthly meetings of *Hearing Men's Voices* will continue during the winter. The November program started a discussion of religiously acceptable medical directives. As with many Jewish things, there are a number of different versions – depending on an individual's point of view. The December meeting will be on Thursday, December 11 at 8:15 p.m. Please check the announcements for specific room locations. These meetings are restricted to men only.

The monthly Sabbath Mincha, Seudah Shilshit, Maariv, and Havdalah Services will be held on December 13 at 4:00 p.m. This service has been very well received with a significant number of congregants attending each month.

The first *Perspectives in Dialogue* program for the 2003/2004 season will be held on December 14.

Baruch Dayan Emet

Congregation Beth El offers its sincere condolences to **Sharon Schulman** on the death of her father, **David N. Neustein**; to **Joyce Oliner** on the death of her mother, **Peggy Coleman**; to **Michlean Amir** on the death of her mother, **Gertrude Lowy**; to **Warren Leonard** on the death of his father, **Fred Leonard**; to **Michael Wald** on the death of his mother, **Ruth Wald**; to **Marlene Harte** on the death of her mother, **Adeline Schneller**; and to **Dorene Rosenthal** on the death of her father, **Joel Cadoff**.

Todah Rabbah

A special todah rabbah to the crew that erected the Beth El Sukkah this year: **Jeff Annis** (project manager), **Miriam Annis**, **Adam Hoffman**, **Howard Hoffman**, **Mitchell Solkowitz** and **Sam Swersky**. Thanks also to the Beth El Nursery School and Religious School classes that made the great decorations!

Message from the Rabbi continued

Since I inherited a Rabbi's Fund containing almost \$500,000, I have been spending down the Fund in a determined but careful manner so that there will be enough in it to meet its designated purpose and so that it will match the practice of my colleagues around the country. I gave \$27,450 for the balance on the ambulance we donated to Magen David Adom. I supported the Atid project with a total of \$8,213 over the two years of its vital work. I transferred \$2,500 to Rabbi Harris to begin his Rabbi's Fund. I disbursed \$2,000 to support the purchase of the Etz Hayim Humash. I have been able to make loans to assist two congregants having cash flow problems, a total of \$13,600 of which \$12,000 has already been repaid.

By far the largest sums were for program and professional enrichment, sometimes for projects that had not been budgeted (Purim Megillah Madness I and II and the Israel Rally are examples) and sometimes to cover budgeted program items for which there was an unanticipated shortfall. The list is very lengthy. Over the two fiscal years on which I report, over \$200,000 have gone for such items, and Beth El has continued to grow in part because of the availability of these funds.

I appreciate having this opportunity to report to you about the fund and look forward to doing so on a regular basis.

Rabbi Bill Rudolph

Thank You

The Kaminsky Family wishes to express their heartfelt appreciation to all their friends at Beth El for their generosity and caring.

Election Of Trustees

The Nominations and Recruitment Committee is seeking individuals to recommend to the Congregation to fill six positions as Trustee on the Board of Directors of Congregation Beth El. The two-year terms for these

positions start just after the annual meeting of the Congregation in May 2004. Trustees play an increasingly important leadership role at Beth El as integral parts of our new governance process. They are expected to provide input to the Board, take active leadership in one of the six Beth El Centers (Community Building; Worship and Spirituality; Education and Lifelong Learning; Strategic Planning; Finance and Development; and Administration), and fulfill other duties as needed. Trustees attend one Board meeting each month and may attend additional meetings of the Center and/or committees that are part of their Center.

As a Trustee, you will take a leadership role in a dynamic organization undergoing transformation as Beth El moves to its future. Although Beth El leadership experience is not a prerequisite, you should have a strong interest in leadership and a willingness to serve the synagogue. Expertise and demonstrated leadership in one or more of the areas covered by the Beth El Centers will be of great value to the Beth El.

If you wish to be considered for a Trustee position, please send your name, email address, and a short paragraph about yourself and your experience and interests to the Chair of the Committee, Arthur Popper, at apopper@umd.edu. Or you can send the information to the synagogue marked to the attention of Arthur Popper.

We also invite congregants to recommend others for a Trustee position. If you wish do so, please send the nominee's name and email address (if you have it) along with a statement indicating why you are nominating the individual to Arthur Popper.

All names must be submitted by January 1, 2004. The Committee will meet shortly thereafter. It will then select the final candidates for the Trustee positions to be voted upon by the Congregation.

If you have any questions, please contact Arthur Popper or any member of the Committee. Committee members are **Arthur Popper (Chair), Cary Feldman, Leslie Dellon, Bucky Jacobson, Sharon Fischman, Debbie Feinstein, Tamar Fishman, Sid Getz, Susan Jerison, Jack Minker, and Jose Sokol.**

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AFFILIATED WITH UNITED SYNAGOGUE
OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

Simchat Torah

Each year on Simchat Torah morning, as we honor the Torah, we also honor those who have given service to Beth El. Two individuals receive the two key aliyot, the last one in Deuteronomy and the first one in Genesis.

This year's honorees were **Esther Wilner** and **Sid Getz**. Esther, currently a synagogue Trustee, is a past President of Sisterhood, also has chaired our College Committee, has been active in support of Israel, leads the davening for Pesukei D'Zimrah and Shacharit, and most recently was Chair of the highly successful program and fundraiser "From Bimah to Broadway."



Sid is a co-founder of the Worship and Study Minyan, co-leader of the High Holiday Kol Haneshama service, and creator of the Kol Haneshama (formerly Carlebach) Friday evening services. He is a Trustee of Beth El. Over the last year, he has been the key facilitator for the implementation of our new governance structures.



Rabbi Harris Assists Washington Jewish Historical Society

Rabbi Harris recently assisted the Washington Jewish Historical Society to identify some documents from its archives of Washington area Jewish life. The Society is located in the oldest synagogue building in Washington. It was the original home of Adas Israel Congregation and was built in 1876. Tours of the synagogue are available by contacting the Society.



All in the Family

Mazal Tov to **Allen and Barbara Lerman** on the engagement of their daughter **Melissa Ann Lerman** to **Eric David Berger**, the son of **Martin and Robyn Berger** of Atlanta, GA. The wedding is planned for December, 2003 in Philadelphia, PA.

New Wine Policy

The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards issued *teshuvot* (responsum) in 1964 and 1985 indicating that any wine produced through the use of automatic machinery in plants operated by large, well-known wine companies is permitted in homes and synagogues, but for ritual purposes, only certified wines should be used. This has been Beth El's policy for some time. Kosher wine was required whenever Kiddush was made; all other wines were acceptable for receptions and parties. It has become clear to me that this distinction is easily blurred. For example, families holding catered Shabbat dinners on the eve of their child being called to the Torah as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah sometimes ordered non-kosher wine for the meal and used it (or weren't sure if they should use it or not) for Kiddush at the meal's beginning.

Beginning December 1, all wine served in our synagogue must be certified kosher. Not only will this avoid the kind of dilemma just noted, but it will serve as an incentive for supporting the kosher wine industry, whether in Israel (a double mitzvah) or elsewhere. The days of mediocre kosher wine are over; there are many excellent choices. And I have no financial interests in that industry.

If there are any questions about this new policy or questions about specific brands of wine or wine certifications, please contact me directly.

Rabbi Bill Rudolph

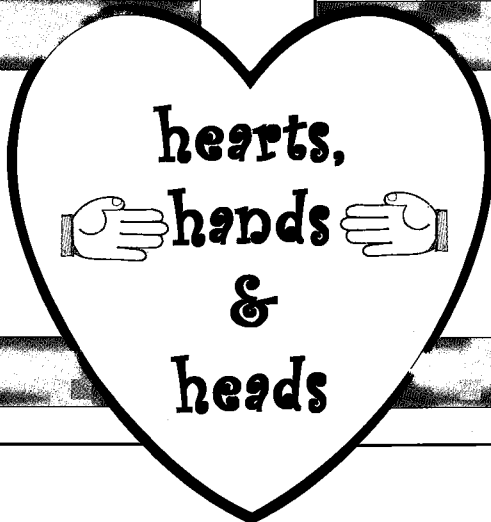
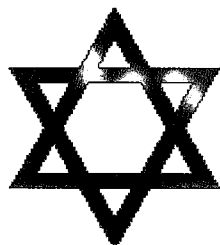
Volunteers Needed for Beth El's Week at Community Based Shelter

Congregation Beth El is scheduled to volunteer at the Community Based Shelter (CBS) beginning with dinner on Sunday, December 21 and ending with breakfast and brown bag lunches on Sunday, December 28. This is an especially busy week for everyone due to winter break, but it can also be a meaningful time to volunteer either as a family or individually. Our responsibilities include preparation of three precooked meals (breakfast, brown bag lunches and a hot dinner) for each shelter day and setting up, serving, and cleaning up after dinner. We also are responsible for providing paper goods for the week. The shelter is located on Wilkins Avenue in Rockville (near Twinbrook Parkway). If you are interested in participating in this most rewarding mitzvah, please call Janice Liebowitz at 301-654-7377. Also look for the sign up sheet in the Rotunda beginning on November 23.

CBS also has a wish list which includes laundry detergent, dishwasher soap, toilet paper, personal hygiene items, towels, washcloths and linens. If you can donate any of these items, please call Janice Liebowitz at 301-654-7377.

Beth El Salutes Israel*

with our



Join us for a joyous weekend celebrating Israel!

Fri., December 5

7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service
8:00 p.m. Stimulating discussion
with Israeli Shlichah
8:45 p.m. Israeli dessert Oneg

Sat., December 6

Hearts, Hands & Heads Event
6:30 - 7:00 p.m. Spirited Havdalah
7:15 - 8:15 p.m. Major Program &
Projects
8:30 - 9:30 p.m. Kumsitz
(Sing-along)

Israeli style dinner

Sun., December 7

9:00 a.m. "Buy, Visit &
Invest in Israel" booths
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.
Moshe Fox, Minister
of Public Affairs,
Embassy of Israel
All Day - Federation
Super Sunday

***This is not a fundraiser - it's a spirit raising weekend for the whole family!!!**

Saturday Night Dinner Reservations.....\$18.00 per person or \$36.00 per family

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Please specify the number attending: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

Respond by December 1, 2003

Congregation Beth El, 8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814, phone: (301) 652-2606

...Lively discussion...spirited Havdalah...social action projects...Israeli food...energetic Israeli dancing...and more"

Set the Table with Torah

by: Hazzan Abraham Lubin

November 22: Hayyei Sarah

The Torah portion Hayyei Sarah ("the life of Sarah") actually begins with Sarah's death and burial. Sarah, "mother of the Jewish people," is gone. However, by the end of the portion, a new matriarch, Rebecca, has married into the family. While Rebecca never met or knew Sarah, Rebecca is her spiritual descendent. In many ways, this Torah portion is about the passing of the monotheistic tradition from one matriarch to another.

The stories of Sarah illustrate her hospitality to strangers, her strength of character in having to endure many trials, and her nobility, as manifest in her name, which means "princess." The biblical stories of Rebecca speak of similar qualities. Rebecca shows her sensitivity to the suffering of others, her generosity and kindness in helping a stranger, as well as her intelligence, especially in the way that she orchestrates the continuation of Judaism to the next generation.

The naming of our matriarchs was recently included in our liturgy, namely, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah. In doing so, we also hope to emulate their qualities.

November 29: Toldot

This week's Torah portion tells the story of Abraham's grandchildren and is thus appropriately called "Generations." Abraham's son is Isaac, and Isaac marries a very bright and beautiful woman named Rebecca. When Rebecca becomes pregnant, she discovers that she is going to have twins. However, these two boys seem to fight with each other, even in the womb. The firstborn is named Esau and the second is named Jacob who becomes the next patriarch of the Jewish people.

In this story and in many others, even though the firstborn is supposed to be entitled to become the next leader of the Jewish people, it does not work out this way. Jacob, the secondborn, becomes the next patriarch. Joseph and Judah, Jacob's fourth and twelfth children, then become key figures in leading the Jewish people. And this continues even to King David, who was the youngest of his father's children. It is as if the Torah is telling us that the old method of selecting leaders by lineage is not correct, but rather it is by merit that people earn their positions.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What criteria do we use to choose leaders today?
2. What other stories can you think of where the oldest child becomes usurped by the younger?

December 6: Vayetzei

The *Sidrah* tells of Jacob's escape from the anger of his brother, Esau. Jacob had taken the birthright blessing from Esau, and now he must flee from his home in Canaan and find refuge in distant Mesopotamia, the land in which his mother Rebecca was born.

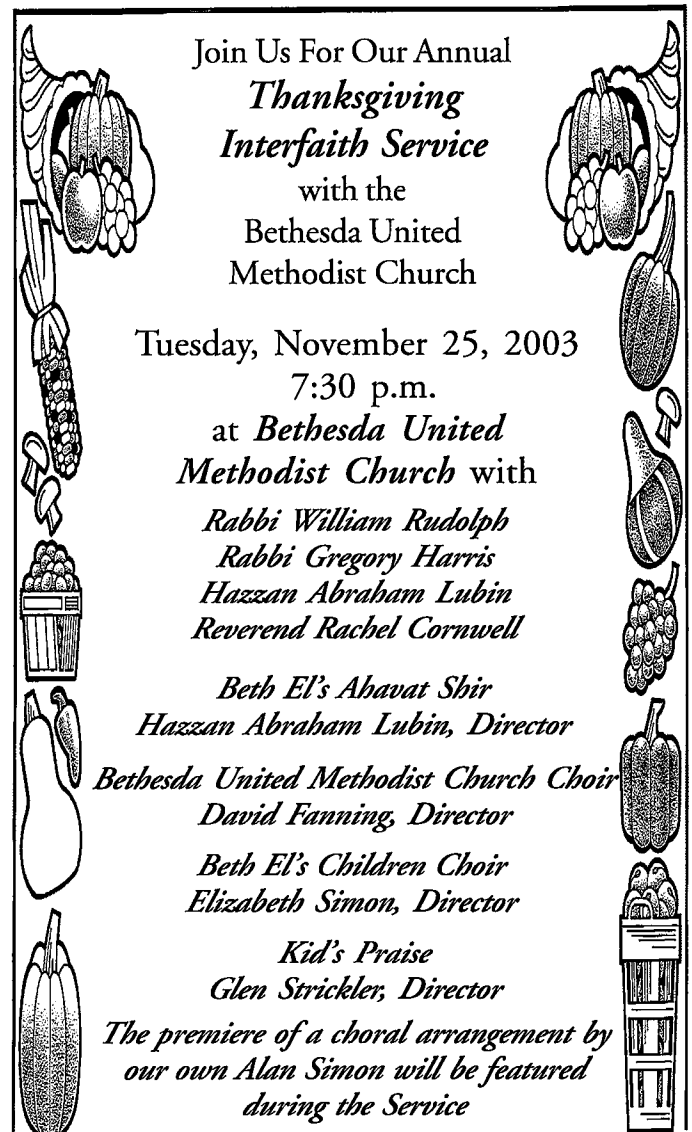
On the second night of his escape from Beer-sheba, Jacob lies down, tired, under the open sky, to sleep. He dreams a remarkable dream. It was a dream that gave Jacob the faith that God is everywhere and cares for the well-being of humanity. It gave him new hope for his life ahead.

Questions for Discussion:

1. What thoughts and feelings does Jacob have as he runs for safety to another country?
2. Do our dreams at night, when we are asleep, have any connection with our waking hours of the day?

Attention All Empty Nesters

Do you suddenly (or not so suddenly) find yourself with extra and quiet space in your house? Are you looking for a new way to connect to the Beth El community? The Inreach Committee would like to talk with "empty nesters" as we attempt to meet everybody's needs in their various ages and stages. We need your help to get it right. Please contact Barbara Cohen at 301-365-3849 or barbara.cohen5@verizon.net with your interest to help make this happen.



Join Us For Our Annual
Thanksgiving
Interfaith Service
with the
Bethesda United
Methodist Church

Tuesday, November 25, 2003
7:30 p.m.
at *Bethesda United*
Methodist Church with
Rabbi William Rudolph
Rabbi Gregory Harris
Hazzan Abraham Lubin
Reverend Rachel Cornwell

Beth El's Ahavat Shir
Hazzan Abraham Lubin, Director

Bethesda United Methodist Church Choir
David Fanning, Director

Beth El's Children Choir
Elizabeth Simon, Director

Kid's Praise
Glen Strickler, Director

The premiere of a choral arrangement by
our own Alan Simon will be featured
during the Service

Yom Hadash Musical Weekend

Congregation Beth El of Montgomery County
8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814

December 12-14, 2003

Yom Hadash is the Nelson brothers' three piece contemporary band that fuses world music, pop, rock, and r & b influences with traditional Jewish melodies and ideals

Friday, December 12

Yom Hadash will lead an upbeat Friday Night Service combining traditional and contemporary melodies (without instruments) Service time 7:00-7:45 p.m. in the Sanctuary.
(This service will be in place of the Family Friendly Friday Night Service.)
Followed by dessert oneg.
The service will be preceded by a buffet dinner from 6:00-7:00 p.m. RSVP required for dinner.

ALL AGES



Saturday, December 13 (morning)

Yom Hadash will lead a Shabbat morning combined *Nitzanim* and *Gan Shabbat* service 10:30-11:30 a.m. in the All Purpose Room.

This service is for families with children in second grade and younger.

Sunday, December 14

Nelsongs, the Nelson brothers' rockin' kids' revue will have two shows at 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. at the Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington 6125 Montrose Road, Rockville, MD 20852.

\$5.00 tickets available at the door.

These performances will be for young children and their families.

They will coincide with the JCC Chanukah Festival.



FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Saturday, December 13 (evening)

Teen Concert Splash! 7:30-10:30 p.m.
Concert Performance by Yom Hadash
Followed by free time in the pool and/or teen center
\$10.00 tickets available at the door.
at Jewish Community Center of Greater Washington

This regional event is open to Beth El students in grades 8-12.

TEENS



R.S.V.P. by Monday, December 1 for the Friday night dinner. RETURN TO B.E.N.S BULLETIN BOARD OR SCHOOL OFFICE
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: Beth El Nursery School

Family Name(s) _____ Phone _____ Teacher's Name _____
Number of Adults _____ @14.00 /person Amount \$ _____
Number of children _____ @6.50 / person Amount \$ _____ (Children under 18 months are free, but have no seat set)
Total Amount \$ _____

Evening Minyan

The following people are asked to help us with our daily Evening Minyan for the next three weeks. On Sunday through Thursday, the Minyan begins at 8 p.m. and concludes at 8:15 p.m. During the week of your assignment, we would appreciate your attending as many evenings as possible so that those who are saying Kaddish will have a Minyan they can attend at Beth El.

November 23 – November 27

Bruce Marks and Andrea Kessler
David and Linda Marshall
Claire Marwick
Marc and Laura Masurovsky
Michael Mates and Lona Feldman
Robert and Kathy Matty
James and Jan Maxwell
Laura Mayer
Betty McDonald
Eileen Meier
Theodore Meltzer
Allan and Shereen Mendelowitz
Rina Mendelowitz
Paul and Marcia Merlin
David and Carole Metzger
Howard and Rena Milchberg
Daniel and Julie Miller
Jay and Lillian Miller
Laura Miller
Lee and Sheryl Miller
Michael and Janet Miller

November 30 – December 4

Philip Miller
Roy Millenson
Betty Milner
Mark Milner and Hattie Ulan
Harvey and Susan Mininberg
Jack and Johanna Minker
Paul and Yvonne Mirengoff
Andrew Mitz and Carol Fried
Jeffrey Moak and Karyl Barron
Greta Moffatt
Jonathan Morris
Jack and Annette Moshman
Daniel and Carol Moskowitz
Michael and Judith Muntner
Barry Myers and Robin Gross
Louis and Faina Nagel
Cathy Najar
Ken and Helene Nankin
Edith Nash

December 7 – December 11

Twila Nattel
Eli and Ruth Neipris
Gary and Annick Nemirovsky
Irwin and Hellaine Nepo
Robert and Beatrice Newell
Judith Newman
Milton and Rhoda Nichaman
Roy Niedermayer and Gail Ross
Sheldon and Liat Novek
Peter and Diane Novick
Richard and Varda Nowitz
Irving and Margy Nurik
Gregory and Yelena Nusinovich
Bette Nussbaum
Robert and Rosine Nussenblatt
Phillip Ochs and Sheila Cohen
Joshua and Jennifer Odintz
Samuel and Debra Olchyk
Gertrude Oliner

New Members

The Beth El community extends its warm welcome to the following members who have recently joined or rejoined the synagogue. If one or more of these families live in your neighborhood, please reach out and personally welcome them. We encourage the new members to take advantage of the wonderful activities Beth El has to offer and hope you will let us know if you have questions or concerns that we can help to address.

Isabel Einzig, 8724 Eggert Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817

301-365-8727

isabel@dynsys.com

Stefanie Gilbert, 10932 Wickshire Way, Rockville, MD 20852

301-984-5878

Marek Anshel Haar

gilbert459@aol.com

Shabbat Morning Family and Youth Services at Congregation Beth El

Service Name	Applicable Ages	Room	Times	Leaders
Nitzanim	birth to kindergarten	BR	10:30-11:30 am 2nd,4th,5th Shabbat	Rachelle Solkowitz, Glenda Koby, Rodger Jacobson - Pres.
Gan Shabbat	kindergarten-2nd grade	Meeting Room	10:30-11:30 am 1st, 3rd Shabbat	Rachelle Solkowitz, Sarah Roark
Shitufim	3rd & 4th grades	Room 209	11:00 am-Noon 1st, 3rd Shabbat	Anita Lieb, Nora Levy
Jr. Congregation	5th grade and up	APR	10:00-11:15 am Every Shabbat	Cheryl Kreiser

Please feel free to speak with the individual leaders or coordinators about any one of the services, or contact Sarah Roark, 301-652-8573, ext. 319