



From the Clergy

B'ruchim HaBaim— **THE NEW NORMAL**

BY HAZZAN MATTHEW KLEIN

“Normal” is a hard word. It’s what we all in some ways aspire to be, and yet on some level none of us ever achieve its status. We create ideals, life-cycle events, professional achievements, even Jewish practices that we elevate, and yet God made no one of us with perfect mental, physical, or spiritual capacities to realize every ideal. Alone, how are we to ever feel “normal”?

February is Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month. Let us consider: How are we to look at the task of inclusion? Why is it even a religious value, and what should such a value call us to do?

One need look no further than the story of Moses, perhaps the Torah’s greatest leader, who himself is self-conscious

about his own disability, a speech impediment. Reluctant to answer God’s call, he asks God to make someone else a leader. God’s two responses to Moses are remarkable:

1) *“Who gives speech to mortals? Who makes them mute or deaf, seeing or blind? Is it not I, the Lord?”* (Ex. 4:11). Here, God affirms that neither are disabilities God’s mistake nor is Moses himself a mistake for having one. Disability and all, he is still important and still tasked with the spiritual leadership of God’s people. Being “normal” is not a prerequisite for leadership or God’s care.

2) *“What of your brother Aaron the Levite? I know that he can speak fluently; even now he is coming out to meet you, and when he sees you his heart will be glad. You*

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THE SCROLL IS A RECIPIENT OF THREE SOLOMON SCHECHTER GOLD AWARDS FROM THE UNITED SYNAGOGUE OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM.

Justice for All

BY MARCI RUDERMAN

He is a marathon runner and a triathlete, a former Michigianian of the Year and National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame inductee, and a renowned speaker on inclusion for all. Beyond these accomplishments, Justice Richard Bernstein is also the first-ever blind justice to be elected to the Michigan Supreme Court.

Justice Bernstein will share his personal accounts on the obstacles he faced as a person with a disability during the February 11

Shabbat service in honor of Jewish Disabilities Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM). This event is one of many the B’ruchim HaBaim Committee is organizing to promote awareness for JDAIM. The committee’s mission is to make participation and enjoyment in all congregational life a reality for families and individuals with various disabilities.



And Bernstein is bound to fulfill this mission. Traveling to synagogues and

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SCROLL

8215 OLD GEORGETOWN ROAD
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20814-1451
PHONE 301-652-2606 FAX 301-907-8559
WEB WWW.BETHELMC.ORG

AFFILIATED WITH UNITED SYNAGOGUE
OF CONSERVATIVE JUDAISM

RABBI

Gregory Harris *gharris@bethelmc.org*

ASSOCIATE RABBI

Fabián Werbin *fwerbin@bethelmc.org*

HAZZAN

Matthew Klein *mklein@bethelmc.org*

CLERGY EMERITI

Rabbi Samuel Scolnic *z"l*

Rabbi William Rudolph *wrudolph@bethelmc.org*

Hazzan Abraham Lubin *salubin1@verizon.net*

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Sheila H. Bellack *sbellack@bethelmc.org*

EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Elisha Frumkin *efrumkin@bethelmc.org*

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Geryl Baer *gbaer@bethelmc.org*

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Kim Lausin *klausin@bethelmc.org*

YOUTH DIRECTOR

Adam Zeren *azeren@bethelmc.org*

PRESIDENT

Larisa Avner Trainor *ltrainor@cig.com*

ADMINISTRATIVE VICE PRESIDENT

Carolyn Berger *cbergerl@aol.com*

COMMUNICATIONS AND TIKKUN OLAM

VICE PRESIDENT

Larry Sidman *larrysidman@live.com*

COMMUNITY BUILDING VICE PRESIDENT

Ivy Fields *ivyfields@gmail.com*

DEVELOPMENT AND FINANCE VICE PRESIDENT

Mark C. Bronfman *mark.bronfman@gmail.com*

EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

VICE PRESIDENT

Sara Gordon *saragordon18@gmail.com*

WORSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY VICE PRESIDENT

Rebecca Musher Gross *rebeccamgross@gmail.com*

TREASURER

Joseph B. Hoffman *jhoffman@kelleydrye.com*

SECRETARY

Sue Emmer *emmerconsulting@verizon.net*

SCROLL COMMITTEE *scroll@bethelmc.org*

Gale Dutcher, Davida Kales, Marci Kanstoroom,
Janet Meyers, Rachel Pomerance Berl, Helen
Popper, Donna Saady, Walter Schimmerling,
Larry Sidman, and Donna Vogel. *Graphic
designer: Tierra Joslyn*

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Scholar-in-Residence Professor Shaul Magid



Our scholar-in-residence weekend will be Friday-Sunday, February 3-5, when our guest speaker will be Shaul Magid, professor of Religious Studies and the Jay and Jeannie Schottenstein Chair of Jewish Studies in Modern Judaism at Indiana University. He received his MA from The Hebrew University and his PhD in Jewish Thought from Brandies University.

Dr. Magid will speak:

- After Friday Shabbat dinner at 8:30 pm: "Jewish Leadership in a New Political Era: Ahad Ha-am on Moses, and Solomon Schechter on Abraham Lincoln"
- Shabbat morning during the 9:30 am main service: "Fighting Truth to Power: Moses and Pharaoh"
- At 12:40 pm following Shabbat kiddush: "Living with Sovereignty: Who is Moses and Who is Pharaoh in Israel/Palestine Today - an open discussion about how to talk about Israel in America"
- Sunday morning at 10:00 am: "A Critique of Contemporary Zionism by settler Rabbi Menachem Froman: A Text Study"

Scholar-in-Residence Congregational Shabbat Dinner Friday, February 3

Join us at 6:30 pm for the Friday Evening Service, followed by Shabbat dinner at 7:15 pm. Please complete the dinner reservation form below together with your check payable to Beth El.

RSVP deadline is Wednesday, February 1. After that, please call the office at 301-652-2606 for information on space availability. Questions? Call 301-652-2606 or email info@bethelmc.org.

Adult/Teen Name(s) _____

Child Name(s) and Age(s) _____

Daytime Phone _____ Email _____

Member Adults/Teens @\$22 _____ Total \$ _____

Nonmember Adults/Teens @\$27 _____ Total \$ _____

Children 6-12 years @\$10 _____ Total \$ _____

Children 2-5 years @\$5 _____ Total \$ _____

No charge for children under 2 years of age.

Total Due: \$ _____ (Max. \$64 per member household)

Please provide ___ vegan meals. Food Allergies? _____

Please try to seat us/me with: _____

Mail to or drop off at Congregation Beth El
8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814

How Many Beth El Members Believe in God?

BY SID GROENEMAN

It is hardly necessary to make the case that God is fundamental to Judaism. Without God, there would be no Ten Commandments and no Torah. The Jewish religion would not exist in any remotely recognizable form.

Have you ever wondered how many Beth El members or American Jews “believe in God or a universal spirit,” as the question is often phrased in surveys on religion? We now have answers to both questions.

Pew Survey

Based on the 2013 Pew Research Center survey, “A Portrait of Jewish Americans,” 72% of all Jews in the United States answered affirmatively, indicating that they believe in God or a universal spirit, 23% answered that they do not believe in God, and the remaining 5% said they do not know or gave some other answer.

As we might expect, the number who believe in God depends on one’s denominational identity – highest among the Orthodox, second highest among Conservatives, third among Reform Jews, and lowest among Jews without any denominational identity.

Among Jews who identify with the Conservative movement (regardless of whether or not they belong to a synagogue, Conservative or other), 87% responded that they believe in God, 9% do not, and 4% answered don’t know or gave some other answer.

Those who answered yes were asked a follow-up question: “Are you absolutely certain, not too certain, or not at all certain about this belief?” Of all Conservative Jews, 41% responded that they were absolutely certain and 46% said they were not too certain or not at all certain. So even among believers, there is a substantial amount of doubt.

Atid II Survey

We repeated this pair of questions in the Atid II survey of Beth El members, conducted in spring, 2016. Seventy-six percent answered the first question yes, I believe in God; 17% responded no, I do not; and the remaining 6% did not answer the question.

Some of those few not answering were probably truly uncertain and did not want to answer yes or no, but some others were unhappy with the question itself. I know this because some of them objected elsewhere in the survey that belief in God is too complex an issue to be reduced to a

simple yes or no answer. Nevertheless, that is exactly the way the highly regarded Pew Research Center asked the question, and we reproduced their experts’ work to be able to

have precise comparisons between Beth El’s members and Jews across the United States.

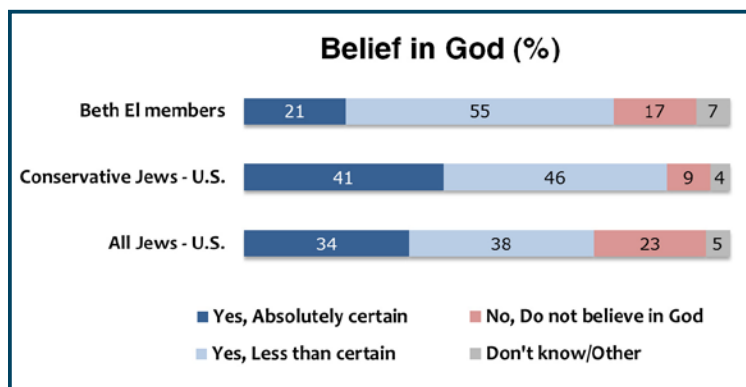
Congregants Respond

About one in every five Beth El members answered that they are absolutely certain of their belief in God, 55% replied that they are less than absolutely certain, and the

remaining few did not answer.

Why might Beth El Jews be less likely to believe in God than other Conservative Jews? It is well documented that people with higher levels of education are less likely to believe in God or at least have more nuanced views. While our survey did not ask level of education, the highly professional occupational profile of Beth El’s membership means that our members have an exceptionally high level of educational achievement, probably high even for Jews.

Is it not ironic that the power of reasoning believed by many to come from God also produces doubt of God’s existence? ■



UPCOMING BETH EL PROFESSIONAL AFFINITY GROUP BREAKFASTS

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 8:30 AM All Beth El real estate professionals are invited to join the next Real Estate Breakfast at the Selzer Gurvitch offices (4416 East West Highway, 4th Floor, Bethesda). Doors open at 8:00 am for breakfast and schmoozing. Special thanks to congregant Mark Rabin for hosting.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 8:30-9:30 AM The next Mental Health Professionals Breakfast meeting will be at Beth El. Breakfast is \$5 per person. Congregant and psychiatrist Sandra Rubin will lead a discussion on “Mental Illness and the Synagogue Community.”

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 10:00 AM All women physicians are invited to our affinity group meeting at Beth El. There will be a study session led by Rona Schwartz and Hazzan Matthew Klein.

Please RSVP to Geryl Baer at gbaer@bethelmc.org if you are interested in attending any of the breakfasts.

Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month: Origins and Growth

BY TALI MOSCOWITZ



When I was a young teen, my mom recognized my passion for working with people with disabilities and introduced me to a woman named Shelly Christensen. At the time, Shelly was my mom's work colleague at Jewish Family and Children's Service of Minneapolis, an organization similar to the Jewish Social Service Agency (JSSA) here in D.C. Shelly was a local pioneer in developing programs and initiatives to welcome and include Jews with disabilities in

synagogue and Jewish social life.

Shelly's years of work on inclusion initiatives ultimately led her, along with Lenore Layman, to found Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM), observed now every February. In this month, Jewish communities around the world hold conferences, events, and community-wide programs celebrating Jewish people with disabilities. JDAIM was celebrated informally for years in the Twin Cities. It officially launched as a national effort in four different communities in 2009. Since then, JDAIM has been observed in

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JUSTICE FOR ALL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

schools around the world, the Northwestern School of Law graduate promotes greater inclusion within the Jewish community. Bernstein is able to draw from his own experiences to discuss the inequality in employment opportunities for those with disabilities. When exploring employment, none of the 65 law firms where he interviewed called him back.

During law school, faced with lecture notes, test questions, and other reading material, Bernstein arranged for people to read to him until he could memorize and internalize the information. Using Braille would have been too cumbersome, he said. "One page from a textbook could equal 70 pages of Braille."

"It was hard in law school because everything takes me longer. If it takes you an hour, everything takes me five times longer," he said. "But you know what it is? You just have to want it." So, he often put in 13 hours of study a day. And it paid off.

Fast forward to 2014, exactly 25 years post-graduation, Bernstein was elected to the Michigan Supreme Court after a hard-fought race against a challenger who outspent him ten to one. As the first elected blind justice to the Michigan Supreme Court, Bernstein admits it hasn't been easy.

"When you're different, you struggle," he said.

Despite his disability, he continues to face challenges with optimism. He has learned from experience that if you really want something, you can find a way. In an online interview with the *Orthodox Union*, Bernstein said, "People who know and appreciate struggle every day are given the greatest life. You have a resiliency to push forward and do things that people never thought possible."

He also made a sacred promise during law school. "I

made a deal with Hashem," Bernstein said in the same interview. "I said 'If you get me through this, I will dedicate my life to representing the special needs populations.'" Bernstein has since kept his promise.

He joined his father and siblings in the family law practice and started a pro bono public services division focused on disability rights litigation. Bernstein took on costly and challenging cases that nobody else wanted to litigate, including actions against airlines, airports, universities, the American Bar Association, and the Departments of Transportation in Detroit and New York City. He won several landmark cases that often set national standards protecting the rights and safety of people with and without disabilities.

Bernstein credits exercise, particularly running, with boosting his self-confidence and assertiveness on these tough legal cases. In high school, participation in sports amounted to sitting on the sideline. But since then, Bernstein joined a running club, Achilles International, that can provide directional cues to him during the run. He wakes up at 4:30 in the morning and runs an average of eight miles a day. In addition to running 18 marathons, Bernstein completed a full Ironman triathlon in 2008 and the Israman Half Ironman in Israel in 2011.

"Exercise for me is very much about finding a greater spiritual connection or awareness," Bernstein said.

Similarly, what drives him is his connection to those who need his help.

"The reason I work 15 hours a day, why I sleep in hotels every night, why I'm constantly on the move, is because I'm so blessed ... I have the possibility to make life better for other people," Bernstein said. "That's what drives me and makes life worthwhile" (*Times of Israel*, May 28, 2016). ■

B'ruchim HaBaim

B'ruchim HaBaim at Beth El

BY MARCI KANSTOROOM

For many years, Beth El has worked to more fully include individuals with disabilities in synagogue life. In fact, in 1955, the Religious School began offering a class for children with special needs. Ours was the only religious school in the area, and one of only three in the nation, with such a class. Beth El has long had large-print siddurim and an audio system in the sanctuary for those with hearing impairments.

Providing Access



SUZANNE BRONHEIM

When the sanctuary was renovated in 1993, a committee tried to provide access to the bimah for those with mobility limitations but was stymied by the bimah's design and technology limitations. Things were different years later, when the congregation was preparing to expand the building, and the B'ruchim HaBaim Committee was launched in 2005.

Suzanne Bronheim, the committee's founder and first chair, recalls that members of the fledgling inclusion committee were meeting one evening at Beth El when Hazzan Emeritus Abe Lubin stopped by. Committee members asked if he could suggest a Hebrew name for the group. He immediately proposed B'ruchim HaBaim – blessed are all who come – the first words said at a Jewish wedding. The committee loved the name because it provided such a positive message about including everyone.

While “inclusion” can sometimes mean affirmative efforts to reach out to all people who may not feel welcome in a synagogue, such as interfaith families and those who are part of the LGBTQ community, the B'ruchim HaBaim Committee at Beth El has had as its focus the inclusion of those with disabilities, both physical and mental.

Making Inclusion a Reality

The timing of the B'ruchim HaBaim Committee's founding was fortuitous. Beth El was in the midst of constructing a major addition. As a religious organization, Beth El was (and is) exempt from most of the Americans with Disabilities Act's requirements governing building construction (though not its rules about employment). But committee members supported the idea that Beth El had a moral and religious

imperative to make inclusion a reality.

As a result, a lift was installed so that a person in a wheelchair could come to the bimah. Automatic opening mechanisms were put on the front doors. There are now two rooms where a parent can take a child (with or without a disability) during services if the child is not able to sit quietly but the parent would like to be able to pray. Both the quiet room (in the back of the sanctuary) and the bride's room (across the hall) have the service piped in so a parent can still hear the service.

The committee worked to identify strategic plans, including education sessions for the professional and building staff and community-wide disability inclusion activities. The group spoke with the rabbis about teaching about inclusion through their sermons and being a focal point for congregants to bring concerns about including individuals with disabilities at Beth El. Slow but steady progress was made.

Stumbling Blocks

Jonina Duker was a Religious School teacher when she first got involved in disability issues at Beth El. Her fourth graders were learning about the commandment not to put a stumbling block before the blind. She asked the students to consider what stumbling blocks they might encounter if they had a disability and were trying to worship at Beth El. The students



JONINA DUKER

scoped out the building and reported back on what could be done to make it more welcoming. Prior to the remodeling, the students made a presentation to Sheila Bellack, executive director, about changes that could make the new building easier to navigate for people with physical disabilities, vision problems, autism and sensory challenges, or other difficulties.

Jonina was a charter member of the B'ruchim HaBaim Committee, and in 2007 she became committee chair, succeeding Suzanne. She convinced Rabbi Rudolph to sign on to the Accessible Congregations Campaign organized by the

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B'RUCHIM HABAIM AT BETH EL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

National Organization on Disability. This gave Beth El the right to use the logo showing a wheelchair inside a heart that appears in the Shabbat announcements each week.

In 2007, Beth El started a broadcast telephone line so congregants who could not come to shul in person could listen to Shabbat morning services over the phone. A video stream through the Beth El website was added a few years ago.

In 2009, Andrea Golden became committee chair. Andrea had already been involved with inclusion issues for many years. A social worker and a special educator by training, she also has a son with autism.

Break in the Quiet Rooms



Before the committee was formed, Andrea and her family had challenges accessing Beth El to the fullest. When her son would vocalize during services, people would stare at her or ask her to keep him quiet. Some of the changes made to the building during the renovation process made it much easier for her family to enjoy synagogue life, especially in the

ANDREA GOLDEN

bride's room where she could listen to the service with her son when he needed a break from the sanctuary.

Andrea had first gotten involved with the issue of inclusion at Beth El when the Religious School asked if she could lead a class for children with special needs. The five children in the class were ages 10 to 13, and all later celebrated b'nai mitzvah.

The Religious School has many students with special needs who are included in Religious School classes. Hebrew resource teachers are available to give extra help to students who need it. There is currently no special class or program for students with special needs. Andrea notes that Elisha Frumkin, education director, and Candice Goldstein, who helps lead the upper school, fully embrace the idea of inclusion.

Jewish Disability Awareness Shabbat

In 2016, with the support of Rabbi Harris, Andrea was able to organize Beth El's first weekend as part of Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM – see page 4). On a Shabbat in February 2016, Jeremy Band, a young man who grew up in this congregation, spoke about what it meant to him to have people respect him in his community and in his employment. The following day, at the Sunday morning Men's Club breakfast, Andrea presented a program

on disabilities. This year, on the weekend of February 11 and 12, there will also be a special Shabbat speaker and a Men's Club presentation. In addition, there will be a sensory friendly Havdalah service on Saturday night (see box below).

Andrea believes that there is much more awareness now among congregants and the general public about the difficulties some families face in being able to access synagogue life when a family member has a disability. But just because people are aware doesn't always mean that they know what to do, she says.

At the Sunday morning Men's Club breakfast session last year, some congregants said they were not sure how to interact with someone with a mental health issue or a developmental disability. Suzanne said she came away from that event realizing that a lot needs to be done to help congregants feel more confident about engaging with people with disabilities. Andrea agreed but noted that she is hopeful much will be done to make everyone welcome, with the clergy's and Religious School's interest in inclusion and in Men's Club and Sisterhood members saying, "Yes, we want to hear more." ■

Joyous Havdalah Service and Celebration of Tu B'Shevat

Saturday, February 11, 6:30 pm



The B'ruchim HaBaim Committee invites you to please join us for an inclusive multisensory service open to all congregants and their families and especially welcoming families who have members with special needs or challenges. Teens and children from our congregation will lead and participate in the service. Refreshments will immediately follow.

RSVPs are requested so we can prepare for all of our participants.

Please email Marci Ruderman for more information.

Please email Marci Ruderman for more information.

Come Tour BEPS!

Beth El Preschool is now enrolling students for the 2017-2018 school year. We welcome prospective families to visit our school, meet our teachers and staff, and learn more about our program. Contact Lynn Pikovsky at LPikovsky@bethelmc.org to schedule a tour.

JEWISH DISABILITY AWARENESS AND INCLUSION MONTH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

hundreds of communities worldwide.

Jewish communities celebrate JDAIM in many ways. Synagogues have established inclusion committees and clergy have delivered divrei Torah from the bimah. Book clubs have been started and religious schools and youth groups have committed to educating their students about Jewish people with disabilities. Additionally, many synagogues have invited speakers to share their own experiences of what it is like to participate in the Jewish community and have a disability.

People often ask why I became involved from such a young age with working with people in the Jewish community who have disabilities. My simple answer is that my uncle has a disability. My more complex answer is that inclusion of people with disabilities in the Jewish community has always been a top priority for my family, and empowering the Jewish community to become more inclusive of people with disabilities is an important value

Jewish
Disability
Awareness &
Inclusion
Month

February 2017



of mine. As a teenager, I began tutoring younger students with disabilities for their b'nai mitzvah. (I have been lucky to be able to continue that work at Beth El for the last 11 years.) In college, I majored in elementary education with a minor in special education. After college, I volunteered for the National Down Syndrome Society (NDSS) and was later asked to be one of 50 NDSS Ambassadors, volunteers who serve as liaisons to congressional delegations. I served on the Board of Directors for Shared Support, a Maryland-based nonprofit that provides personalized support for people with developmental disabilities. Throughout the years, I have also had the pleasure of joining Shelly Christensen for JDAIM programs at various Jewish organizations. I look forward to participating in JDAIM activities this February with other Beth El congregants. ■

Tali is the Beth El Religious School office manager.

FROM THE CLERGY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth; and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth, and will teach you what you shall do" (Ex. 4:14-15). Here, we see that God sends Moses' brother to gladly help him realize this leadership in the world. This is a beautiful charge for us, who are both literally and figuratively brothers to human beings with disabilities/challenges, to both help them realize their own leadership and to do so, as did Aaron, with a glad heart.

Evolving Views

One of Beth El's own congregants, Jewish Theological Seminary rabbinical student Lauren Tuchman, can shed further light on this last lesson. Navigating her rabbinic training as a blind person, she remarks on this notion of inclusion and gladness in the context of synagogue life.

"Too often, what I hear from individuals with disabilities who are trying to access Jewish community is that those around them felt profoundly discomfited by their presence. Folks who have sustained [the] lived experience of instinctively knowing when others are uncomfortable around them for whatever reason, folks for whom disability – perhaps amongst other things as well – has presented a barrier to social inclusion as much as spiritual inclusion, are often incredibly reluctant to approach a new synagogue for fear of rejection... As my views on how to practically do the work of inclusion have evolved, I have come to the firmly held belief that relationship is absolutely key. When an individual or family has a connection

with people in the synagogue – and not merely because those folks help facilitate access – but because they have been able to connect around a multitude of shared interests and concerns, when genuine, reciprocal relationships begin to form, that's when the work of inclusion really gets going" (Lauren Tuchman, "On Creating Communities of Welcome" 2/23/16, www.stateofformation.org).

Lauren's reflections reinforce the lessons of our Torah: God wants a robust relationship with everyone, especially those of us with disabilities, and therefore so should we. It is this desire for relationship, to reduce stigma and create opportunity for shared life, that leads to the fundamental changes required to accommodate and elevate every community member.

For Jews, our "normal" should be *B'Tzelem Elohim* – made in the image of God – a sense of dignity that applies equally to all human beings. And as Jews we should see each member of our own community as being as valuable as Moses himself – full of beauty, potential, and leadership.

This month, reach out to a person, family, or organization that supports inclusion work, especially to our own welcoming B'ruchim HaBaim Committee at Beth El. Deepen your relationship with those who need inclusion. And if you are struggling to find peace in the community with your own disability, reach out to the clergy or a friend and take a chance on sharing your story. Together, we can realize a new "normal" of love and care. ■

Sisterhood

Sisterhood Learns Financial Tools

BY SHARON ZISSMAN

On December 4, before a crowd of about 35 women, Leah Nichaman, president and founder of Everyday Money Management, provided useful tips on how to get one's financial life in order. Organized by Sisterhood's Education Committee, this seminar provided participants with practical tools for how to reduce paper and know what to throw and what to keep, how to consolidate and protect one's financial accounts, how to automate bills, how to prepare for the unexpected, and what important documents should be gathered that a family should have in one place. Participants commented that the topic was greatly needed and that the information was presented in a useful way. If you were unable to attend and would like copies of the handouts, please contact Sharon Zissman. ■



GAME NIGHT AT 2016 BETH EL WOMEN'S RETREAT.
L TO R: DEBORAH NEIPRIS HENDLER, NATALIE ROSE,
LESLIE DELLON, JOAN SIMON, SUE KANTER, NAOMI
GREENWOOD, SUSAN JERISON, JOANNE LANDESMAN AND
RABBI MINDY PORTNOY.



Knitters, prepare your needles for battle. Make small, easy items like hats, scarves, booties for residents at the Hebrew Home. Patterns are available. If you need help, call Sarah Kalser or Heather Janssen. Sponsored by the Senior Caucus and Zhava.

Attention Mah Jongg players: If you are interested in an afternoon game, please contact Doris Povich, and she will make the arrangements if there is sufficient interest.

Come To Meet, Stay To Eat: Sisterhood Winter General Meeting and a Taste of the Sisterhood/Zhava Cookbook Sunday, February 26, 9:30 am

Join us on Sunday, February 26, for the Sisterhood Winter General Meeting and stay for a taste of some of the delicious recipes that will be featured in the new Sisterhood/Zhava community cookbook. Gather around the table as we nosh, schmooze, and share the stories behind some of the recipes.

We will also announce the the winner of the cookbook name contest, so submit your entry now. Please send your cookbook title ideas to cookbook@bethelmc.org, subject heading "Cookbook Contest," by February 24. Feel free to submit as many ideas as your creativity allows. The winner of the contest gets a free cookbook, a mention in the cookbook acknowledgments, and enduring fame.

And remember to send in your favorite recipes before the February 24 deadline. The most important ingredient in the cookbook is your participation. Our goal is to collect recipes that reflect how we eat and cook now. We want the recipes your family loves, the ones you rely on for everyday meals, the special dishes you make for holidays or celebrations, the recipes you've collected on your travels and have made your own, and the ones with an interesting story behind them. Please don't submit any recipes that appeared in the Dor Va'Dor Cookbook.

Details about the cookbook, name contest, volunteer signup, and directions for submitting recipes, can be found on the Sisterhood/Zhava website, www.bethelmc.org/groups/sisterhood. If you have questions, please email cookbook@bethelmc.org or call the synagogue office at 301- 652-2606.

Don't forget to submit your recipes and suggestions for cookbook titles by February 24.

UPCOMING SISTERHOOD/ZHAVA EVENTS

TUESDAYS, FEBRUARY 7, 14, 21, 28, 6:30 PM Mah Jongg

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, NOON Mah Jongg Tournament

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 14 *Caroline, Or Change* at Round House Theatre

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 9:30 AM General Meeting and A Taste of the New Sisterhood/Zhava Cookbook

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 7:30 PM Rosh Chodesh Group

Men's Club

UPCOMING MEN'S CLUB EVENTS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 8:30 PM Hearing Men's Voices.

The discussion will be led by Martin Sieff on the topic "The Road Not Taken: The Life I Might Have Led."

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 5, 10:00 AM Dr. Shaul Magid, Beth El's Scholar-in-Residence, will discuss "A Critique of Contemporary Zionism by settler Rabbi Menachem Froman: A Text Study." Dr. Magid holds the Jay and Jeanie Schottenstein Chair of Jewish Studies at the University of Indiana.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 10:00 AM Men's Club and the B'ruchim Habaim Committee will co-sponsor a program on inclusive employment/advocacy in and out of the workplace. Michigan Justice Richard Bernstein and Ken Karbeling, a local businessman who has employed people with special needs for many years, will join us for this discussion.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 10:00 AM Eric Gartman, author of *Return to Zion: The History of Modern Israel*, recently spoke to the Men's Club about events in Europe that led to an increase in Jewish emigration to Eretz Yisrael. This time, Eric will focus on aspects of the history of modern Israel, including Zionist involvement in WWI, which, in retrospect, created tensions between the returning Jews and the people who had come to regard the land as their home.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 10:00 AM Jonathan Leshnoff, a well-known Jewish classical composer, who is visiting the area to present a concert, will speak about his new piece that recently premiered at Carnegie Hall and is paired with the Brahms Requiem at Strathmore on March 18. Leshnoff and Hazzan Klein recently worked on a commission of a new piece of cantorial music.

SAVE THE DATE! TRIBUTE TO HAZZAN KLEIN

Friday, June 2

6:30 pm: Tribute Program

7:15 pm: Friday Evening Service

8:00 pm: Congregational Shabbat Dinner

Watch the listserv and website for details.



Men's Club of Congregation Beth El

presents the

45th Annual Kavod Awards

Sunday, March 5, 9:45 am
7 Adar 5777

Honoring



David Mills
for Service to Beth El



Joseph Hoffman
for Service to the
Jewish Community



Max Levitt
for Service to the Community at Large

All are welcome. Cost is \$18 per adult. RSVP by February 28.

Name _____

Email _____ Phone _____

____ # Attendees @ \$18 Total Enclosed \$ _____

Mail checks payable to Men's Club, to Congregation Beth El,
8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD 20814

Kol HaOlam - National Collegiate Jewish A Cappella Competition

Saturday, February 25, 8:00 pm

Adas Israel Congregation

2850 Quebec Street NW, Washington, D.C.

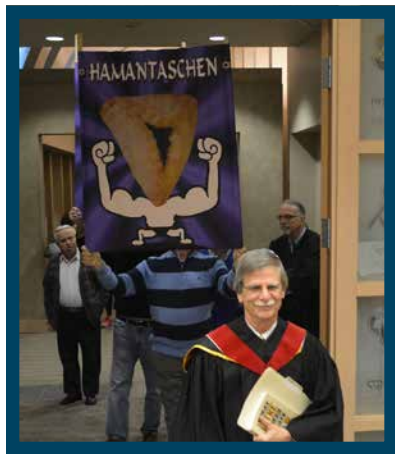
Come hear Hazzan Klein and Marak HaYom as they make a special appearance at Kol HaOlam (www.kolhaolam.org) at Adas Israel Congregation. Jewish collegiate performance groups from around the country battle it out to be crowned #1 in American Jewish A Cappella. Tickets are available online or at the door.

This year will also feature the exciting launch of Ilu Finu (www.ilufinu.org), a nationwide contest by the Cantors Assembly for new arrangements of Jewish a cappella music for the synagogue.

The Latke-Hamantasch Debate (a/k/a The Battle of the Bulge)

BY DAN BENDER

The Scene: December 18, 2016, Swoff Chapel



RABBI EMERITUS BILL RUDOLPH LEADS THE PROCESSION

But, what we do know is that many people have just come to experience this historic (maybe?) and funny (hopefully!) event.

The Entrance

With the trumpet's fanfare, the noble gladiators enter the arena robed in their full-on academic regalia, led by Rabbi Emeritus Bill Rudolph, followed by the mighty warriors. Ricardo Munster and Rabbi Elyssa Austerklein represent the Latke League while attorney Michael Kieval and psychiatrist Bob Litman are Team Hamantasch's proponents. With steely resolve visible in their eyes, all take their places for this, Beth El's ninth Latke-Hamantasch Debate. A standing ovation accompanies their entrance, and then a hush comes over the crowd. There is a palpable tension in the room punctured only by stirring renditions of the national anthems. One could only imagine this is what it was like to be a spectator at the Roman Colosseum – but with cushioned seats, climate control, and an A-V system.

The Master of Ceremonies: Rabbi Bill Rudolph

Rabbi Rudolph opens the debate with witty and whimsical observations, although perhaps tipping his hand as to his preferred delicacy. Why else would he mention that a Google search for latkes generated 1,400,000 hits, whereas hamantaschen had only 215,000 and that latkes (but not hamantaschen) were referenced by the U.S. Supreme Court (Justice Blackmun)? But, maybe that means hamantaschen are more refined, more exclusive, like a nightclub with a red velvet rope. (Hey, I can only work with what's been said.

Let's set the stage, shall we. A packed house, bristling with anticipation. Are those in attendance coming with an open mind to be persuaded about which traditional Jewish delicacy should reign supreme? Are they there to support their favorite? Maybe they have come for the post-debate delicacies? Who knows?



RABBI ELYSSA AUSTERKLEIN

Cut me some slack here, would ya?)

The Mystic: Rabbi Elyssa Austerklein for Latke League

First up to the podium is Rabbi Austerklein in support of latkes. As both a rabbi and a yogini, it's no surprise that she takes the spiritual and mystical approach. Much of the latke's superiority, she argues, stems from its circular shape. The kip-pah is round. So is the latke... and both are similar size! The *shtreimel* is round. So is the latke. But, the latter two have a deeper connection. The *shtreimel's* original purpose was for easy latke stacking and transportation, all while keeping the latkes warm. Rabbi Austerklein then enters the mystic world of *gematria* (finding meaning in Hebrew words based on each letter's numerical value) – discerning “longing and objects of delight” and “potato man” – further support for the mysticism and potatoes and their inherent righteousness.

Opening her comparative treatise, she argues that the hamantasch, on the other hand, represents an anti-Semite. The

circle, Rabbi Austerklein notes, appears throughout the Torah – the sun, moon stars, and grains of sand. On the other hand, she notes that hamantaschen have three corners, just like the holy trinity. Definitely not Jewish. These shapes, she argues, even relate to our dreams. Dreams with circles foretell success, friendship, happiness, and prosperity, whereas triangles equate discord (see Rav Google). The ultimate circle is the shape of one's mouth when one says shalom. Hold the “m” and it becomes a nifty latke-based yoga mantra.

Signing off with a “*S'latke Shalom*,” Rabbi Austerklein yields the podium.

The Mischief Maker: Kieval for Team Hamantasch

Michael Kieval made it clear that he was moving the debate from the mystical to the mischievous starting with his opening line. “Friends, Yidden, countrymen. I come to eat the hamantaschen, not to praise them.” From there Michael takes issue with Rabbi Austerklein's claim of hamantaschen anti-Semitism and instead extolls their virtues. They are sweet, but not too sweet, infinitely customizable. Kids can help make them, they keep for days, and they can even be mailed. Delving into partisan pastries, he continues, “If this debate were fair, the hamantasch would win in a landslide. It would win by so much you would get tired of winning.” Just

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

LATKE-HAMANTASCH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

when the world thought this was all over, he notes, reporting by Latkeleaks that the Hanukkah National Committee and its chair, Debbie Wasserman Schmaltz, were planning on stealing the debate and casting aspersions on the hamantasch's kashrut. If the hamantasch loses, Michael claims that the vote was rigged by the HNC and illegal votes from other shuls.

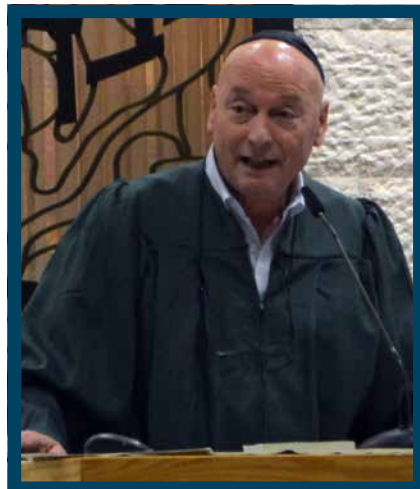
With no intention of being outdone on issues of Jewish study, Michael also delves into the world of Gematria and even notes that the hamantasch, not the latke, is the subject of a mitzvah, *mishloach manot*.

Michael closes by asking, "Why do we have a cookie named after a villain who sought our destruction?" His answer?

"Revenge." And to tie it all up with a ribbon on top, he unequivocally states, "We are going to bake great hamantaschen. No one makes hamantaschen better than me, believe me. And we will make Hanukkah pay for them!"

The Magician: Ricardo Munster for Latke League

Ricardo Munster has been a tremendous asset to Beth El for years. He makes it seem like things magically happen. It all started eight years and 364 days ago, when Rabbi Rudolph arrived in the Beth El office the morning following the synagogue's first Latke-Hamantasch debate. Rabbi Rudolph lamented to Ricardo that he didn't think he'd be able to get a panel as good as the one from the prior day. Ricardo – like magic – knew what to do. He gave a warm smile and as-



RICARDO MUNSTER

Ricardo addressed the rabbi by his first name! There were other complications. Ricardo isn't comfortable speaking in public, plus Irene, his wife, was concerned that Ricardo having joined the Latke Movement could interfere with their U.S. citizenship applications. (Perhaps they would be consid-



MICHAEL KIEVAL

ered members of a terrorist organization?) But, alas, Rabbi Rudolph didn't take up Ricardo's offer. Years passed with the same pattern, until last year Rabbi Rudolph was the one who smiled and accepted. Anxiety settled in. Ricardo didn't smile for nearly a year until he figured out a two-part plan. First, he bought a ticket to Argentina, leaving right after the debate in case things got so crazy that he could skip town until the resulting ruckus settled down. Second, Torah study (Lev. 19:32 in particular) led him to ask elders for their sage counsel. Appearing by video, Marianne, 92, his mother-in-law z"l in Argentina, and Beth El congregants Lucy Ozarin, 102, and Esther Isralow, 101, all credit latkes as a key factor contributing to their longevity. Now who can argue with that?

contributing to their longevity. Now who can argue with that?

The Ethno-Musicologist: Bob Litman for Team Hamantasch
Bob Litman, psychiatrist and noted blues guitarist – it all fits, just wait for it – argues that as a cultural icon, the hamantasch reigns supreme. Bob starts his defense by playing guitar and singing the early 1900s blue classic "Hamantaschen Baby" by Blind Boy Yarmulke (a/k/a der Blinder Bluers



BOB LITMAN

Rebbe, author of *Guide to the Perplexed Bluesman*):

*Let me tell you 'bout my baby
Hamantaschen baby of mine
Hamantaschen babe
Hamantaschen baby of mine
She can bake those hamantaschen
Hamantaschen taste so fine*

And as with any self-respecting blues tune, it ends with heartbreak:

*She bakes them pareve or milchik
Makes them kosher for Pesach too
She bakes them pareve or milchik
Kosher for Passover too
But now there're no more hamantaschen
Cause my baby left me for a more religious Jew!*

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

LATKE-HAMANTASCH CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

But the hamantasch, Bob argues, was a cultural icon before hitting the Mississippi Delta music scene last century. His thesis is that the hamantasch has been a cultural icon throughout the history of Western music and art. Noting that blues is full of double entendres, perhaps the hamantasch is more than a pastry. The three-cornered, triangle-shaped cookie, he argues, is a sign of human fertility.

With a sharp eye for detail, Bob “exposes” the hamantasch’s cultural presence as far back as the Renaissance. Titian, Raphael, and others painted nudes with hamantaschen strategically placed. (Who can forget Goya’s “Poppy-Seed Period?”) So as to leave no doubt, Bob displays paintings by these masters on the large screen, zooming in on the key anatomically baked sections. This thorough cultural study could leave the viewer with no other conclusion than this seemingly simple triangular pastry is, in fact, a potent cultural fertility force.

The Result

After a scientific, verifiable, and auditable showing of hands, Rabbi Rudolph calls the vote a tie. The crowd immediately adjourned to tables groaning under the two dueling, delectable confections. ■



Get excited about today's music scene in Israel! Join us for...

ISRAELI MUSIC LIVE!

ISRAELI MUSIC LIVE is a fun, interactive music-filled audio-visual introduction to popular music in Israel today. You'll learn about the hottest singers and music styles and the different ways that popular music is woven into Israel's culture.

This 90 minute program is presented by Mairov Dubrovsky & Josh Shron, hosts of “The Israel Hour” on Rutgers University's WRSU Radio for more than 20 years. They want to make YOU a fan whether or not you know Hebrew!

WHERE
Cong. Beth El
8215 Old Georgetown Rd. Bethesda, MD 20814

WHEN
Feb. 26, 2017
5:00 – 6:30pm

TICKETS
\$5 for 17 and under
\$10 for 18 and over
\$40 max per family



שעה ישראלית: אל תפסיקו לשיר!



Israel Hour Hosts
Josh Shron & Mairov Dubrovsky

Save 20% by purchasing tickets in advance at bethelmc.org/Cr5GE
For questions, email: danieljbender@gmail.com or call 202-486-0126

TOBE: TIKKUN OLAM AT BETH EL

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11

At Shabbat morning services Michigan Supreme Court Justice Richard Bernstein will give the d’var Torah. Justice Bernstein became the first blind justice elected by voters statewide in November 2014. He is a frequent speaker on removing barriers to inclusion within the Jewish community.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 6:30 PM Inclusive, multi-sensory Havdalah service. We welcome all congregants and especially families with members with special needs or challenges. We will also be celebrating Tu B’shevat! Beth El teens and children will lead and participate in the service. Refreshments will immediately follow. RSVP to Marci Ruderman.

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 12, 10:00 AM Men’s Club and the Bruchim Habaim Committee will co-sponsor a program on inclusive employment/advocacy in and out of the workplace. Justice Richard Bernstein and Ken Karbeling, a local businessman who has employed people with special needs for many years, will join us for this discussion. For more info, contact Andrea Golden.

Check the Beth El announcements for the next Refugee Outreach meeting. To get involved, email Linda Segal.

See www.bethelmc.org/qoX3h for the most updated info on new social action projects and collections. Contact Sheryl R. Miller, ToBE Chair, to add your project to our growing list of ToBE projects.



TIKKUN OLAM TAKEAWAY

Tu B’Shtvat is celebrated this month on February 11. This “New Year of the Trees” is ripe for tzedakah dedicated to environmental preservation in the United States and Israel - and to economic justice for farmworkers and others in food industries.

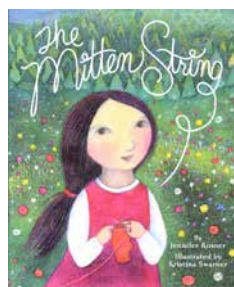
(From Rabbi Shawn Zevit, *Offerings of the Heart*)

Stories to Advance Inclusion for All

BY LISA HANDELMAN

Inclusion, at its core, is about understanding that each of us, created in the image of God, has unique worth. Each year, books are selected for JDAIM Reads (Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month) that use a Jewish lens to help us become more aware of the strength and value of individuals with disabilities. These books encourage us to be more inclusive through heightening our awareness.

The Mitten String



For our youngest learners, *The Mitten String* by Jennifer Rosner highlights these values. This picture book is about Ruthie, a young girl who shares with and learns from Bayla, a mother who is deaf. Ruthie admires Bayla's creative problem solving and learns from her how to find the plants needed to make

bright blue yarn. And Ruthie sews for Bayla a matching set of mittens to connect Bayla to her infant son. (This book is part of the PJ Library program for young readers.)

The Storyteller's Beads

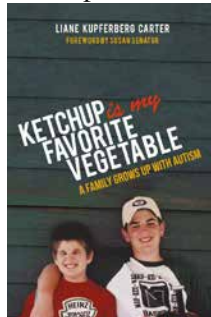
The Storyteller's Beads by Jane Kurtz, likewise involves two main characters, Sahay and Rachel, who learn from each other. While this story is primarily about the difficult refugee journey from Ethiopia through Sudan, Rachel's blindness along with her strength give the story added depth. The girls' mutual distrust is the result of their different backgrounds and has nothing

to do with Rachel being blind. The fact that Rachel is blind is just part of this Jewish story, an important part, but this story does not focus on the disability. (This book is part of the PJ Our Way program.)

Both of these children's books were inspired by real people; Bayla was the name of Jennifer Rosner's great-great-aunt who was deaf and lived in an Austrian village in the 1800s. Rachel's story was inspired by the account of a "blind girl in the group that walked all the way to the Sudan with her hand on her brother's shoulder." It has been more of a challenge to find an adult book that has a Jewish narrative and is also written by or from the perspective of an individual with a disability. This year's JDAIM Reads' choice, like previous picks, is a moving memoir written by Jewish parents about raising an autistic child.

Ketchup is My Favorite Vegetable

A self-proclaimed "non-recovery autism book," *Ketchup is*



My Favorite Vegetable: A Family Grows Up with Autism by Liane Kupferberg Carter exposes real fears and exhausting challenges including early denial, insurance companies that refuse to cover seizure medication, and peers whose interactions are limited to earning community service hours. Similar to other JDAIM memoirs, the acceptance that shines

through during the bar mitzvah of Carter's autistic son, Mickey, provides a glimmer of hope for the future.

While disability inclusion is not specifically a Jewish cause, our traditions, stories, and values provide reinforcement and teachable moments. As we continue on our journey as a Jewish community to advance disability inclusion, I hope to meet the real-life Baylas and Rachels, and I hope to be able to listen in a way that allows young adults like Mickey to tell their own story. From understanding their strength and contributions, we can grow more aware and learn to genuinely include.

More information about JDAIM Reads can be found on Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's JDAIM website tinyurl.com/jutfmr9. A guide for *The Mitten String* can be found at tinyurl.com/jjurrxt, and a guide for *The Storyteller's Beads* can be found at tinyurl.com/hkty73a. ■

Lisa Handelman is the Community Disability Inclusion Specialist at the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington.

Come Tour BEPS!

Beth El Preschool is now enrolling students for the 2017-2018 school year. We welcome prospective families to visit our school, meet our teachers and staff, and learn more about our program. Contact Lynn Pikovsky at LPikovsky@bethelmc.org to schedule a tour.

February B'nai Mitzvah

February 4: Halle Burns and Sydney Janssen

Jonah Watson (Havdalah)

February 11: Lily Lev

February 18: Samuel Polott

February 25: Emma Landy

Youth Activities

Engaging Teens With Israel

BY ADAM ZEREN



ADAM ZEREN

It was devastating to hear former Beth El high schoolers coming home on breaks telling us they're encountering anti-Israel rhetoric and protests and not knowing what to say or do.

In response, the Youth Department and our Center for Education and Lifelong Learning, along with the Am Yisrael Chai Committee and the clergy,

sprang into action. We all decided it was time to ensure that Beth El teens can speak smartly and coherently when they face groups of students or even roommates on campus who disparage Israel.

We launched the program in September 2016 with an event run by the Jewish Federation of Washington. We had about 20 teens and their parents. The focus of the discussion was to simply explain to the families the kind of groups their kids will face once on campus, such as the BDS movement and Students for Justice in Palestine. Many do not know who these organizations are or what they really do.

In October, dozens of Beth El high schoolers joined the High Holiday conversations during Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur where we spoke more in depth about the issues Jewish students face on campus.

This month, Beth El will host the AIPAC Student Spotlight. Leaders from AIPAC will have the opportunity to address our teens and parents to explain what they are doing to further Israel education.

The AIPAC program follows a January presentation by J Street. Two leaders from J Street explained the Green Line and the 1967 borders to the high schoolers in attendance. These topics were of specific interest since a United Nations Resolution had recently called out Israel for building settle-

ments in what could one day be part of a Palestinian state. A speech by then-Secretary of State John Kerry tried to explain the lack of a veto by the United States. The structure of the event allowed our teens to gain an insight into a very current Israeli topic.

And that's the point of all of the new curriculum we've developed. Our kids learn so much about Israel's biblical history, but too many get lost when asked about what's going on in our ancestral homeland today.

Our conversation with the students continues in March as some current Beth El teens who have been to Israel for weeks-long trips will discuss their own experiences and explain what it's like living in a country filled with controversy.

Before the end of the school year, we'll also be showing films presenting views of Israel from college campuses and military members. We'll hear directly from former members of the IDF who will share their experiences trying to police West Bank towns where tensions flare between Israelis and Palestinians.

Finally, thanks to a very generous donation from a congregant family, 20 Beth El teens will be attending the AIPAC Policy Conference, March 26-28, at a significantly discounted price.

If your teen has not yet attended any of these programs, it's not too late. If we truly want our kids to not feel intimidated when talking about Israel, it's vital to get them involved. For more information, please do not hesitate to contact me at azeren@bethelmc.org ■

The IDF Comes to Beth El

Beth El will host Lt. Colonel Liav Zilberman, Head of Training Staff for the entire Israeli Navy, during the February 3-5 weekend. Liav will attend Shabbat services and mingle with congregants at the Kiddush. On Sunday morning, he will engage with Religious School students and Beth El teens. Make sure to meet him. He is inspirational.

Age & Stage Series Presents:

Recognizing early stages of Alzheimer's and Dementia in your Loved Ones

Thursday, March 23, 7:30 pm



Session is led by Elinor Ginzler, Director of the Cahnmann Center for Supportive Services at the Jewish Council for the Aging (JCA).

RSVP to gbaer@bethelmc.org.

Creating a Jewish Legacy at Beth El – Not Just for Seniors

BY SUZANNE BRONHEIM

Beth El has been part of the community-wide Create a Jewish Legacy effort to increase the long-term sustainability of our Jewish institutions in the community through commitments to future gifts. We have been successful so far, with 52 members committing to making a bequest to Beth El through wills, designated gifts from retirement accounts, life insurance policies (either those previously owned or newly purchased in Beth El's name), or charitable annuity trusts. In speaking to members, our committee has noticed that many younger congregants think that a CJL commitment is just for older people. Not so! Of course, families with dependent children will focus their estate planning on the needs of their children. It is important, however, to think about not only their financial needs but what community institutions you hope will be in place to support their Jewish lives in the future. Rebecca and Jonathan Gross wondered how making a CJL commitment at this point in their lives made sense.

Rebecca notes, "We can only commit to a small designation at this point in our lives as a bequest to Beth El. How is that helpful?" At the same time, she adds, "Of course, in the future, as our lives change and our children's needs change, we hope we can make a more substantial commitment." It is in that aspiration that the importance of making a CJL commitment sooner rather than later lies. Including a legacy gift now in your estate planning will make that gift an ongoing focus as your plans change over the years. Legacy giving to Beth El and other Jewish organizations makes a statement about what you value – a statement to yourself, to your children, and to your community. Rebecca and Jonathan are now members of the Beth El Legacy Society, and they hope other families will join them in that commitment. To discuss making a CJL commitment, contact Andrea Glazer at aglazer@bethelmc.org or 301-652-8569, ext. 318. ■

ISRAEL NEEDS US WE NEED ISRAEL

UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

On December 23, 2016, President Obama instructed his UN Ambassador Samantha Power to abstain from UN Security Council Resolution 2334 that reaffirmed Israel's establishment of "settlements in Palestinian territory occupied since 1967, including East Jerusalem, had no legal validity and constituted a flagrant violation of international law." The resolution passed by a vote of 14 to 0 with one abstention, the United States. Shortly after the vote then-Secretary of State John Kerry delivered a 70-minute speech explaining the Obama administration's rationale for its abstention at the UN.

Many articles have been written about the Obama administration's actions. For those interested in this issue, and we should all be, attached are some articles that attempt to explain what happened and what this action may mean for Israel's future.

From UN Watch: bit.ly/2iizL6O

From The Forward: bit.ly/2iUnDsR

From The Forward: bit.ly/2iQ3J14

From the Daily Beast: bit.ly/2i5MgG2

From the Jewish Policy Center: bit.ly/2iUHAzQ

There are many more articles on the U.S. abstention and the Kerry explanation, but the ones cited above are among the most interesting and illuminating.

ISRAELI MUSIC LIVE!

On February 26, at 5:00 pm, Beth El will host Israeli Music Live, a fun music-filled audio-visual introduction to popular music in Israel. See ad on page 12.

J STREET NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The 2017 J Street National Conference convenes in Washington February 25-28 and is entitled "Defending Our Values, Fighting for Our Future." The conference features pro-Israel, pro-peace leaders and advocates who wish to make their voices heard. For more information, please contact Tali DeGroot at talidegroot@jstreet.org or 202-448-1617. Information on the national conference can also be found at jstreet.org/conference.

IMAGINE ISRAEL

The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington hosts an evening with Dr. Dalia Fadila, an Arab-Israel educational pioneer, on Wednesday, February 8, at 7:30 pm, at AMP by Strathmore. Dr. Fadila will lead a thought-provoking discussion on her mission to empower Arab-Israeli citizens and advance societal standards for women through education. This is part of a series of Federation events focusing on changemakers in Israel. For more information, please contact Pnina AGENCYAHU at pnina@shalomdc.org or 301-230-7259.

Scolnic Institute Spring 2017

The Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute, founded in 1977 in memory of Saul Bendit, is one of the leading synagogue-based adult education programs in the Washington, D.C. area. Now in its 39th year, the Institute has received national and international recognition. The Spring program, running for six weeks, comprises 10 courses offered Wednesday evenings beginning March 1 and four classes offered Tuesday mornings beginning February 28. We are confident that you will find the courses interesting and informative.

TUESDAY MORNING SCHEDULE WITH REFRESHMENT BREAK FROM 10:50-11:10 AM

10:00 - 10:50 AM

Talking to God on Shabbat: Themes in Familiar Prayers
Rabbi Avis Miller

Sacred Schmutz: How the Cairo Genizah Has Revolutionized Jewish Studies
Rabbi Steven Glazer

11:10 AM - NOON

After the Expulsion: How Sephardim Shaped the New World and Survived
Jeffrey Kaplan

From Our Mothers to Our Daughters: Revolutionary Changes in the Status of Jewish Women in the Past 50 Years
Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy

**Register NOW for the Early Bird Discount.
Deadline: February 17**

WEDNESDAY NIGHT SCHEDULE WITH MINYAN/REFRESHMENT BREAK

7:30 - 8:20 PM

Rabbinic Fables from the Talmud and Midrash
Rabbi Fabián Werbin

Does the Soul Survive?
Rabbi Emeritus William D. Rudolph

After the Expulsion: How Sephardim Shaped the New World and Survived
Jeffrey Kaplan

How It All Began: First Person Accounts of the Origins of Modern Israel
Eric Gartman

Jewish Values and Traditions in Estate Planning
Rabbi Evan Krame

8:40 - 9:30 PM

Innovative Jewish Thinkers: David Ben Gurion
Rabbi Gregory Harris

Jews and Classical Music
Hazzan Matthew Klein

From Our Mothers to Our Daughters: Revolutionary Changes in the Status of Jewish Women in the Past 50 Years
Rabbi Mindy Avra Portnoy

Sacred Schmutz: How the Cairo Genizah Has Revolutionized Jewish Studies
Rabbi Steven Glazer

Talking to God on Shabbat: Themes in Familiar Prayers
Rabbi Avis Miller

Contributions

Donations made from November 30, 2016 to December 27, 2016

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IN MEMORY OF:

Jerry Sorkin by Paul Bran and Nina Levine

Beth El Forest

IN HONOR OF:

Whitney Tredwell's birthday by Julia Copperman

IN MEMORY OF:

Burt Rose, father of Nancy Rose, by Michael Polis and Rhoda Barish

Nathan Bregman, father of Doug Bregman, by Joel and Joan Simon

Beth El Israel Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Stephen Rudolph, brother of Rabbi Bill Rudolph, by Michael Polis and Rhoda Barish

David and Harriet Brooks Senior Adult Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Thelma Rita Fishman Barlin, my beloved mother, by Amy Prywes

Please remember that contributions can be made easily, quickly, and securely via our webpage – www.bethelmc.org

Building Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

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Ava Hammerman's bat mitzvah by Sherri and Ted Hammerman
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Hazzan Klein for officiating at Jeremy Robin's bar mitzvah by Paul and Lauren Robin

Hazzan Klein for officiating at Kate Stiglitz's bat mitzvah by Matthew and Susan Stiglitz

Hazzan Klein for officiating at Zach's bar mitzvah by Gavin and Monica Abrams

Hazzan Klein, with thanks and gratitude, by David and Barbara Appelbaum

Marilyn Hammerman for reading Torah by Irwin and Rita Kopin

IN MEMORY OF:

Anna Dickler by Elliott and Phyllis Dickler

Benjamin Miller by Elliott and Phyllis Dickler

Bertha Goldberg Kirsch by Laurence and Celia Kirsch

Contributions Continued

Diana Sander, my beloved mother, by Ellen Tillman
Elie Hazan by Evan and Danielle Sultan
Minnie Levine Kahn, beloved mother, by Henry Kahn and Laura Primakoff
Rosalyn Fisher, mother of Donna Shimshi, by Ellen Chubin Epstein and David Epstein
Rose Muenzer, sister of David Jacobowitz, by Stanley and Judith Baldinger

Capital Campaign Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Jerry Sorkin by Jonathan and Debbie Lerner

Chevra Kadisha Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Rabbi Rudolph and Gail Fribush for their friendship and support by Doug and Brenda Bregman

IN MEMORY OF:

Clara Eisenstein by Shiur Class
Eve Tishkoff by Julian and Iris Tishkoff
Herbert Golden, beloved father, by Alan Golden and Nancy Grunley

Fine Arts Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Marion Ladell, mother of Brenda Bregman, by Bob and Evyan Koenig
Nathan Bregman, father of Doug Bregman, by Bob and Evyan Koenig

General Fund

BY: Charles and Krayna Feinberg, Joseph and Leslie Kessler, Michael and Miriam Cramer, and Traci Reisner and Dan Merenstein

IN HONOR OF:

Brandon Portnoy on becoming a bar mitzvah by Lawrence Eisen
Congregation Beth El - Happy Hanukkah by Craig Yokum
Esther Wilner's birthday by Jose and Tutti Sokol
Jason Smolen's birthday by Alan and Debra Birnkrant
Joan Levy's birthday by Sabina Shalom
Jon and Eileen Kay and family by Burt Liebowitz
Lynn Goldin, Kallat Torah, by Allen Eisenberg and Connie Stromberg
Mark Green by Martin and Sharon Green
Marriage of Eliot Lesser, son of Howard Lesser and Hanna Gutmann, by Jose and Tutti Sokol
Mitchell Solkowitz's kindness by Jose and Tutti Sokol
Sandy Lubin's birthday by Elliot and Esther Wilner
Sharon and Jeremy Zissman's daughter's engagement by Samuel Boxerman and Debra Vodenos
Sheldon Bolasny, with best wishes for his speedy return to good health, by Jack and Stephanie Ventura
Steve Rudolph, brother of Rabbi William Rudolph, by Joe and Margie Hoffman
Worship and Study Minyan's 21st anniversary by Dan Hirsch and Brenda Gruss

IN MEMORY OF:

Alan Swoff by Corinne Swoff
Alberto Feldman by Reina Lerner
Anna Abel by Amy Abel and Aaron Temin
Anna Berger, beloved mother-in-law, by Bea Berger
Anna Boman by Julian and Iris Tishkoff

Annie Sherman by Esther Sherman
Barney Krosnick by Jeff and Phyllis Lavine
Benjamin Lerner by Reina Lerner
Bernardo Kotelanski by Rosa R. Kotelanski
Bernie Resnick by David and Sonja Schultz and Bernard and Miriam Shulman
Bob Ginsburg, father of Mindy Ginsburg, by Danielle and Joe Wagner
Joe Getz, Mike Getz's brother, by Joe and Margie Hoffman
Charles Rosen by Arthur and Marianne Rosen
Cindi Hoffman Hankin, sister of Joe Hoffman, by Kay Klass and Mark Levitt, Howard and Tricia Sachs, Linda and Jerry Herman, William and Hilary Kapner, Jack and Stephanie Ventura, Mark Levitt and Kay Klass, and Marcia Jeffries
Dorothy Press and Jennifer Press by Theodore Press
Edward Fohrman by Richard Zorowitz and Elizabeth Fohrman Zorowitz
Eleanor Boxerman, mother of Sam Boxerman, by Linda and Jerry Herman and Howard Hoffman
Enta Feldman by Reina Lerner
Eugene Eisenberg by Allen Eisenberg and Connie Stromberg
Fred Schulman by Richard and Sharon Schulman
Gladys Eisler, beloved sister, by Howard and Anita Ratain
Harry Niedermayer by Roy Niedermayer and Gail Ross
Hedy Weinberger by Paul Weinberger
Hilda Scharf Stern by Tom Warrick and Rochelle Stern
Hilda Teitel by Richard Lieberman and Helene Weisz
Jerry Smolensky, father of Nancy Lapidus, by Joseph Wagner and Danielle Miller Wagner
Jerry Sorkin, husband of Lisa Sorkin, by David and Sonja Schultz, Ellen Tillman, and Joe and Margie Hoffman
Joan Leopold by Larry Kaplan
Joe Getz, uncle of Sid Getz, by Joe and Margie Hoffman
Jordan Walerstein by Faith Walerstein
Julius Gottlieb by Jonathan and Deborah Gottlieb
Klare Heinemann, aunt of Howie Stein, by Howie and Holly Stein
Lou Bronfman, father of Mark Bronfman, by Joe and Margie Hoffman
Manuel Parris, father of Selma Chubin and grandfather of Ellen Chubin, by David and Ellen Epstein
Margaret Guthart, mother of Jen Powers, by Darryl Sherman and Sara Greenbaum
Marion Ladell, Brenda Bregman's mother, by Steve and Phyllis Solomon, Jose and Tutti Sokol, Joe and Margie Hoffman, and Darryl Sherman and Sara Greenbaum
Martin Abel by Amy Abel and Aaron Temin
Helen Fried by Jerry Herman
Minnie Derkey, mother of Lee Derkey, by Lee and Gloria Derkey
Moe Altschuler, my grandfather, by David and Natalie Rose
Nathan Bregman, father of Doug Bregman, by Steve and Phyllis Solomon, Darryl Sherman and Sara Greenbaum, Jose and Tutti Sokol, Linda and Jerry Herman, and Howard and Tricia Sachs
Nathan Bregman, father of Doug Bregman, and Marion Ladell, mother of Brenda Bregman, by Joe and Margie Hoffman
Nathan Zhgoria, beloved father, by Etta Kline
Ralph Futterman by Craig and Judy Futterman
Robert Schumer by Lee and Gloria Derkey
Rosalyn Fisher, mother of Donna Shimshi, by Darryl Sherman and Sara Greenbaum

Contributions Continued

Rose Bleshman by Natalie Adams

Sidney Hoffman, my father, by Howard Hoffman

Sophie Liss by Esther Liss

Stella Cernea by Andrei and Lauren Cernea

Steve Rudolph by Ron and Wynne Sitrin

Steven Fefferman by Michael and Adeen Postar

Sydney Ratcliffe by Arthur and Mimi Blitz

Thelma Tesler Solomon by Steve and Phyllis Solomon

Theodore J. Schatz by Stuart and Linda Schatz

Thomas Gold by Harvey and Dale Gold

William Davis by Libby Gordon

Elaine Silverman Gessow College Connection Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Elaine Silverman Gessow, beloved mother and grandmother, by Marc and Lisa Michelson

Emma Gessow, beloved grandmother, by Marc and Lisa Michelson

Steve Rudolph, Rabbi Rudolph's beloved brother, by Jonathan and Judith Levin

Green Tikkun Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Judith Kaplan by Donald Kaplan

Groner Camp Ramah Scholarship Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Cindy Hoffman, Joe Hoffman's sister, by Erwin and Leena Groner

Fridl Schlesinger, my dear mother, by Eric and Sharyn Schlesinger

Nathan Bregman, a very good friend, by Erwin and Leena Groner

Israel Experience Teen Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Ava Hammerman, granddaughter of Marilyn and Murray Hammerman, by Irwin and Rita Kopin

Kimball Nursery School Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Kim Lausin for helping with the Sisterhood retreat by Beth El Sisterhood

Marilyn and Murray Hammerman's granddaughter, Ava, on her bat mitzvah by David and Ilene Jacobowitz

IN MEMORY OF:

Civia and Evelyn Berman by Stuart and Ellen Berman

Bernardo Kotelanski, M.D., Marriage Education Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Evelyn Ginsberg by Phillip and Vivian Gorden

Library Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Sanford Altschul by Kenneth and Carolyn Feigenbaum

Mazon

IN MEMORY OF:

Harold Feigenbaum by Kenneth and Carolyn Feigenbaum

Lawrence Debrau by James and Leslie Dellon

Milton Goldstein by Steven and Susan Goldstein

Mintz Landscaping Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Bernie Resnick by Kenneth and Carolyn Feigenbaum

Morning Minyan Fund

IN HONOR OF:

In appreciation of the early morning Shabbat service by Joseph and Evalyn Basloe

Esther Isralow for a speedy recovery by Irwin and Rita Kopin

Michael Harrison and Rabbi Peter Novick for leading shiva minyanim in memory of Bernard Resnick by Susan Resnick

Peter Novick by Mark and Blanche Wine

Peter Novick, with affectionate and grateful thanks for his care and concern, by Sabina Shalom

Suzanne Strauss, with affectionate and grateful thanks of her many kindnesses to me, by Sabina Shalom

IN MEMORY OF:

Anne L. Margulies by David Margulies

Eleanor Koblenz, mother of Andy Koblenz, by Andrew and Katherine Koblenz

Elsie Strauss, most beloved mother, by Sabina Shalom

Ericka Kaplan, beloved mother, by Rosalie Sporn

Harry Minker, father of Jack Minker, by Jack and Johanna Minker

Herbert Levinson by Karen Levinson

Melvin Wine by Mark and Blanche Wine

Nathan Bregman, father of Doug Bregman, by Rosine and Robert Nussenblatt

Reuven and Zeev Gendelman, Borys Gendelman's beloved brothers, by Borys and Dora Gendelman

Prayer Book Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Irving Troffkin by Howard and Rhea Troffkin

Rabbi's Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Rabbi Harris by Anthony Millin and Rebecca Landau-Millin, Peter and Debra Friedmann, Lisa Sorkin, and David and Barbara Appelbaum

Rabbi Harris for officiating at Eva's Bat Mitzvah by Larry and Lori Bard

Rabbi Harris for officiating at Zach's bar mitzvah by Gavin and Monica Abrams

Rabbi Werbin for officiating at Eva's Kabbalat Shabbat service by Lori and Larry Bard

Rabbi Werbin for officiating at Jeremy Robin's bar mitzvah by Paul and Lauren Robin

Rabbi Werbin for officiating at Kate Stiglitz's bat mitzvah by Matthew and Susan Stiglitz

Rabbi Werbin for officiating at Zach's bar mitzvah by Gavin and Monica Abrams

Rabbi Werbin for officiating at the aufruf for our daughter, Dara, and her husband, Marshall Cohen, by Michael and Adeen Postar

Rabbi Rudolph for his support and leading minyan at the death of Clara Eisenstein by Harry and Rhonda Eisenstein

Rabbi Rudolph's officiating at our daughter Dara's wedding by Michael and Adeen Postar

Rabbi Rudolph's Tribute mural by Lisa and Murry Gunty

Jacob Kopin, beloved father, by Irwin and Rita Kopin

Ava Hammerman's bat mitzvah by Sherri and Ted Hammerman

IN MEMORY OF:

Anna Dickler by Elliott and Phyllis Dickler

Annie Sherman by Libby Gordon

Arthur Block by Cheryl and Herbert Baraf

Audrey Githa Goldberg, most beloved sister of Adam Gower, by Sabina Shalom

Beatrice Stern Feldman by Elliot and Lily Feldman

Bernard Resnick by Susan Resnick

Contributions Continued

Carola Shapiro, my beloved mother, by Yael Greenberg
Cindy Hoffman Hankin, Joe Hoffman's sister, by Samuel and Debra Olchyk
Diane Kay by Michael Kay
Edward Ian Henry, dear father, by Howard and Tricia Sachs
Henry Millin by Anthony Millin and Rebecca Landau-Millin
Hyman Jacob Rifkin by Morton and Lillian Davis
Irene Golden, beloved aunt of Jerome Wernick, by Jerome and Ina Wernick
Irvin Goldstein by Dennis Askwith and Sherlyn Goldstein-Askwith
Jacques Perez by Paul and Yvonne Mirengoff
Jerry Sorkin by Lisa Sorkin
Liba Goldberg by Frank and Harriet Weinstein
Marilyn Cadel by Elliott and Phyllis Dickler
Marion Ladell, mother of Brenda Bregman, by Cary and Nancy Feldman
Mendel Goldberg by Frank and Harriet Weinstein
Mervyn Jeffries, beloved husband, by Marcia Jeffries
Pearl Segal, Debbie Olchyk's mother, by Samuel and Debra Olchyk
Phillip Florin by David Florin and Robin Thomashauer
Robert Einzig by Bertram and Judith Spector
Semeon Nusinovich by Gregory and Yelena Nusinovich
Thomas Gardner by Elliot and Lily Feldman
Steve Rudolph, brother of Rabbi Bill Rudolph, by Murry and Lisa Gunty and Ellen Tillman

Scolnic Adult Institute Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Judy Scolnic for a speedy recovery by Irwin and Rita Kopin

IN MEMORY OF:

Bernie Resnick by John and Susan Rosenthal
Goldie H. Press, beloved mother, by Ann Barcome
Nathan Bregman, Doug Bregman's father, by Jack and Stephanie Ventura
Sidney Metzger by David and Carole Metzger

Dr. Elaine L. Shalowitz Education Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Loved ones by Helen Rib

Siddur Dedication

IN MEMORY OF:

Albert S. Povich, beloved husband, father, and grandfather, by Doris Povich

Simos Music Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Henrietta Bruckheim by Arthur and Susan Bruckheim

Sisterhood Kiddush Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Holly Stein receiving Golda Meir Award by Shoshannah and Michael Freilich

Larry Sidman by Barbara Prada

Welcoming Shabbat Early Minyan by Lisa Snyder

IN MEMORY OF:

Henrietta Dewald by Michele Herman
Malcolm Friedman by Barry and Barbara Friedman
Robert Schumer, past president of Beth El, by Bea Berger

Sisterhood Shiva Meal Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Holly Stein for receiving the Golda Meir Award by Rosa R. Kotelanski

IN MEMORY OF:

Bernard Resnick by Jonathan and Judith Levin
Lillian Cohen, loving mother and grandmother, by Barbara Spitzer
Lillian Kaplan by Arthur and Sandra Becker

Sisterhood Torah Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Steve Rudolph, Rabbi Rudolph's brother, by Samuel Boxerman and Debra Vodenos

Social Action Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Holly Stein for leading the Sisterhood retreat by Joel and Joan Simon

Pat Danoff for leading the Sisterhood retreat by Joel and Joan Simon

Suzanne Bronheim for leading the Sisterhood retreat by Joel and Joan Simon

Elaine Tanenbaum Religious School Enrichment Fund

IN MEMORY OF:

Bertha Schwartz, mother of Harryette Deckelbaum, by Robert Deckelbaum

Ernestine Goldstein, beloved mother of Judith Levin, by Jonathan and Judith Levin

Torah Scroll Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Doris Povich's birthday by Barbara Eller and Poa Amy Beth Beer
Linda Fassberg by Irwin and Rita Kopin

IN MEMORY OF:

Jack Bodner, father of Jonathan Bodner and grandfather of Jack and Liam Bodner, by Jonathan and Laura Bodner

Transportation Fund

IN HONOR OF:

Susan Cohen for a speedy recovery by Irwin and Rita Kopin

IN MEMORY OF:

Freda Rosenthal by John and Susan Rosenthal
Irving Goldberg, my beloved husband, by Annette Goldberg
Sadie Goldberg, my mother-in-law, by Annette Goldberg
Sybil Masters by Arlene Cherwin

Wolf Israel Quest

IN HONOR OF:

Faye Wolf's birthday by Ruthjoy Leventhal

IN MEMORY OF:

Jacob Shapiro by Bernard and Annabelle Band
Juhus Boman by Julian and Iris Tishkoff

Condolences to

Barry Boden and Rachel Gafni on the death of Barry's father,

Jerry Boden

Sam Boxerman and Debra Vodenos on the death of Sam's mother, **Eleanor Boxerman**

Richard and Elizabeth Drachman on the death of Richard's brother, **David Drachman**

Barry Boden and Rachel Gafni on the death of Barry's father, **Jerry Boden**

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

While we know you'll want to read every word in this issue of the *Scroll*, when you're finished, please recycle it.

Bulletin Board

Mazal Tov to

Leesa Fine and Mike Kubic on the engagement of their son,
Benjamin Kubic, to **Liz Hoffman**

Brenda Gruss and Dan Hirsch on the engagement of their son,
Oren Hirsch, to **Allison Redisch**

Erwin Shalowitz on being awarded an Honorary Doctorate of
Letters by the International Biographical Centre, Cambridge,
England, and becoming an Honorary Professor of Engineering

Lois Zuckerman and Steve Levy on the birth of their
granddaughter, **Sofia Rebecca Gorenstein**. Parents are **Nora
Levy Gorenstein and Eric Gorenstein**.

Condolences to (continued from page 19)

Sam Boxerman and Debra Vodenos on the death of Sam's
mother, **Eleanor Boxerman**

Richard and Elizabeth Drachman on the death of Richard's
brother, **David Drachman**

Barbara and Lola Epstein on the death of their husband and
father, **Henry Epstein**

Jerome and Mona Gabry on the death of Jerome's mother,
Masha Gabry

Joe and Margie Hoffman on the death of Joe's sister, **Cindy
Hoffman Hankin**

Bob Janney and Susan Levine and **Naomi Janney** on the
sudden death of their son and brother, **Sam Janney**

Houtan and Shari Khalili Esfahani on the death of Houtan's
father, **Mansour Khalili Esfahani**

Richard and Diane Klein on the death of Richard's mother,
Renee Klein

David and Nina Schwartz on the death of David's mother,
Frances Shirley Schwartz

Send submissions to the *Scroll* to scroll@bethelmc.org

Donna and Jason Shimshi on the death of Donna's mother,
Rosalyn Fisher

Noteworthy

**Hebrew Conversation Group, Tuesdays, February 7 and 21,
1:30 p.m.** This drop-in group allows participants to hone their
Hebrew conversation skills. Meetings will be held at Beth El. For
more information, please contact Art Salwin.

Senior Caucus Meeting, Wednesday, February 1, 1:00 p.m.
These vibrant retirees join together to discuss ongoing programs,
and to plan new activities. Be one of them.

**Roundtable with the Rabbi, Wednesday, February 1, 2:00
p.m.** Join us to celebrate February birthdays (yours and those of
others) with desserts, coffee, and a discussion led by Rabbi Harris.
Birthday celebrants receive a special invitation, but all are welcome.

Dor L'Dor, Thursday, February 2, noon. The Beth El Pre-
school (BEPS) 4s Class and a group of Beth El seniors blend to-
gether to form Dor L'Dor. To participate and share pizza with the
preschoolers, RSVP to Ricardo Munster at 301-652-8569, ext.
316, or rmunster@bethelmc.org.

**Senior Caucus – Brown Bag lunch, Thursdays, February 9
and 23, noon.** Come and socialize with your friends and enjoy
refreshments and dessert.

**Senior Caucus – Luncheon Program, Thursday, February
16.** Lunch starts at noon. Following lunch, Donna Saady
introduces the film *From Toledo to Jerusalem*. Join premier Israeli
singer, actor, director, and producer Yehoram Gaon as he takes you
on a musical journey through Sephardic history visiting many of
the most important cities of the Sephardim. Cost of lunch is \$10.
To RSVP for lunch, contact Ricardo Munster.