

OCTOBER HIGHLIGHTS

The Draw of Torah Study

Rabbi Prosnit writes about how he introduced the Saturday morning Torah Study class in 1990, and its continuing appeal, on Page 3.

Thinking About Covenant

Rabbi Schultz offers thoughts on the complicated topic of covenant, noting this paradox: "We have free will, but in some ways the covenant is involuntary and coerced." Page 5.

Paving the Way

The first phase of the Pave the Way campaign is over, the bricks are in place in front of the synagogue and they will be dedicated on Oct. 12. Page 16.

Getting Out the Vote

Volunteers from B'nai Israel have been registering new voters in Bridgeport and neighboring towns. Now they want to urge everyone to vote on Nov. 6. Page 4.

Science and Faith

A young person, Allison Roll, reflects on how her study of science has influenced her religious beliefs. Page 5.

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THE PRESIDENT'S ROSH HASHANAH ADDRESS

Following is an edited version of the address our president, Shari Nerreau, gave on Rosh Hashanah:

I have heard there are three ingredients to a successful Rosh Hashanah speech 1, a good beginning and ending 2. That those are as close together as possible and 3. Include a couple of stories

After my 20-year relationship with B'nai Israel, I have a few good stories but I will start with my favorite and it happens to my first:

Twenty-four years ago my husband, Brian, and I and our son Brad, moved to Fairfield.

Soon after, our second son, Jason, was born. I had decided that I was not going to host a large scale gathering for his bris.



I think that I was slightly traumatized by Brad's - the crowd and the pressure to look well-rested and be up for entertaining at our home, which was a fixer upper waiting to get fixed up. Brian had been an alter boy at St. Teresa's church in Trumbull and so did not disagree.

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Welcoming a New Student Rabbi

In early October we will be welcoming a student rabbi, Orli Moss, as part of the John and Suzanne Golden Hanassi Rabbinical Fellows Program at HUC in Jerusalem.



The fellowship is designed to build relationships between Israeli rabbinic students and stateside congregations.

Rabbi Moss has completed her second year of studies and will be ordained in 2020. Born in South Africa, she immigrated to Israel at the age of six months and grew up in a bilingual and bicultural family in Ra'anana.

She served in the Israeli Defense Force as a criminal investigator in the military police and gained a bachelor's degree in sociology and East Asian studies in 1995 from the Hebrew University of Jerusalem and a master's degree in Jewish Pluralist Education in the joint HUC-Mandel School at Hebrew University program in 2018.

She has worked for many years in Jewish education. She worked on and directed long- and short-term youth movement programs in Israel for Young Judeaea, NFTY and Netzer.

In the voluntary sector, she has been involved in a dialogue and coexistence group of Jewish-Israelis from Kfar Saba,

Continued on page 3

Sharing Our JoY

Allan and Claire Shumofsky, in celebration of grandson, Jack Meuse, becoming an Eagle Scout.

Beth and Jordan Posner, in celebration of the birth of granddaughter, Brina Maya, daughter of Bradley Posner and Devra Bergman Posner.

Anne Green and Leonard Braman, in celebration of the birth of son, Quincy Miles Braman, brother of Gwen and Spencer.

Ilana Ofgang and Jon Coffin, in celebration of the birth of daughter, Muirgheal Naima Ofgang Coffin.

Wel come, New Members

A warm welcome to our newest members. We look forward to their participation in our many programs and hope their affiliation will not only enrich their lives, but that of our congregation.

Dan Satlow and Sara Nuland, Henry & Julia

Turney Road, Fairfield

Stephen and Beth Grunschel, Wesley & Miles

Putting Green Road, Trumbull

Jamie and Karen Sanger, Noah & Benjamin

Old Hickory Road, Fairfield

Roy Minton and Marisa Love, & Greyson

Rolling Hills Drive, Fairfield

Matthew James and Lindsay Larusso, Caleb & Edison

Moritz Place, Fairfield

Zach and Becky Halpern, & Emilia

Gate Ridge Road, Easton

Aaron and Pamela Graf, Dylan & Ethan

Lakeview Drive, Fairfield

Daniel and Rachel Boxer, Evan & Hannah

Wormwood Road, Fairfield

Joshua and Jessica Goodman, Samantha, Gabriel & Benjamin

James Street, Fairfield

Howard and Allyson Schenker, Reese & Ryan

Harwich Road, Fairfield

BULLETIN BOARD

Sisters' Shmooze

The first Sisters' Schmooze of the new year is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 10 from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the home of Lisa Greenberg, 105 Stroll Rock Common in Fairfield. Our past gatherings were great fun. Bring a friend, meet up with old friends and make new friends! It's sure to be a great evening for cocktails, snacks, intergenerational mingling and conversation. There is no agenda and no need to RSVP. Please feel free to reach out to Lisa at artmom250@gmail.com or Carol Lubin @ crlubz@gmail.com if you have any questions.



Shabbat About Town

Our second annual "Shabbat About Town" will be Friday, November 2. Please join us as we gather as neighbors and friends in small groups to enjoy Friday night dinner in the comfort of congregants' homes. Everyone is welcome to take part as a guest or a host!

"Shabbat About Town was a truly special way to build community and a very fun night too!" Shari Greenblatt said.

To sign up, please go on to the temple website or in the weekly Hashavua email. Contact Kristen Carley with any questions at kgcarley@yahoo.com.

Gift of Light

Chanukah arrives early this year! It begins on Monday, Dec. 3. Help to light up the holiday for our temple community! Please consider supporting the temple by sending beautiful Chanukah candles and personalized greetings to your friends and family at B'nai Israel! It's a fun and easy way to get into the holiday spirit. Be on the lookout for information and details arriving in your email boxes soon and on the temple website and weekly Hashavua!



Mitzvah Morning

Join us for our October Mitzvah Morning on Sunday, Oct. 21, from 9:30 to noon. We are collecting backpacks and supplies for families served by the Connecticut Institute for Refugees and Immigrants (CIRI). We will have collection boxes in the synagogue lobby as well as an Amazon link, which can be found in Hashavua and the temple website, to purchase items.

On Oct. 21, we will assemble the packages and welcome a speaker from CIRI, who will tell us more about the mission of the organization and the services they offer. For questions, please contact Nina Silberman at nsilberman@cbibpt.org or Danielle Forma at formadanielle@gmail.com.

Sincere Sympathy

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Terry Moloney, brother of Rita Weinstein

Patricia Pearlberg, stepmother of Richard Pearlberg

Norman Cox, father of Kelle Ruden

Joan Jones, sister of Louise Linsky

Mary Ellen Zuccerella, mother of Mark Zuccerella



From the Rabbi's Desk/Rabbi James Prosnit

Fulfill a Resolution! Last chance to Study Torah (with me)

The Holy Days just ending brought forth some poignant moments as I resonate to now doing certain things in the congregation for the last time. While I'll be working hard not to slip into nostalgia too soon, the recent days did provide some time to reflect on both accomplishments and things left undone. Fortunately, as I think about the special community and communities that we've created over the past 29 years, the former outweighs the latter.

On the top of the prideful list is the Torah Study group that began in October of 1990. I sent out a postcard (it was pre-email) "Fulfill a New Year's resolution and become a Holy Scroller!" Join me each Saturday morning at 9:30 for a lively hour of Torah Study. We begin in the Beginning with Genesis and continue each week investigating a new biblical portion. Hebrew knowledge – not necessary! Open to those with some background in Bible and novices as well! Regulars and drop ins – all are welcome!"

Thirty or so people attended the first class and a few of those loyalists are still around the table today. Certainly over the years the cast of characters has changed, and the numbers have waxed and waned,



A recent Torah Study session, led by Rabbi Schultz.

conversation continues to be one of the most enriching and meaningful parts of the week.

So on Oct. 6 -- Shabbat Beresheet -- the Sabbath of Beginnings, we start the cycle once again with Genesis, Chapter 1 Verse 1. If you've never been around the table – here's your chance. Join a diverse group of believers and non-believers; academics and laity; faithful and skeptics – all eager to probe all aspects of this ancient text.

sacred words, when refracted through the wisdom and interpretations of the ages, have immeasurable relevance for our lives today.

The group has also become one of those uniquely supportive communities that make up the congregation. A sizeable congregation like ours finds strength in the smaller groups that comprise it. And a group devoted to Torah study ennobles us all.

“For me and the participants, the Shabbat conversation continues to be one of the most enriching and meaningful parts of the week”

but only a bit. Some devoted members passed away, others moved away and in a few cases folks drifted away – but they've been replaced by others. For me and the participants, the Shabbat

The Torah came together some 2500 years ago and tells a story that is even more ancient than that. But I promise that once engaged, all who attend will quickly come to understand that these

A classic teaching when considering the array of mitzvot and possibilities for connection reminds us that “The study of Torah exceeds them all (the mitzvot) because it leads to them all.” An invitation and reminder that you too can be part of this very special group of learners.

Welcoming a New Student Rabbi..... From Page 1

her hometown, and Palestinian-Arab-Israelis from neighboring Taybeh.

Between 2012 and 2015, Orli and her family lived in New York, where she

was Shlichah (emissary) for the Jewish agency. As the first Shlichah to be placed in a synagogue with Congregation B'nai Jeshurun in Manhattan she established the department of Israel Engagement

where she built a rich, nuanced program that still continues.

She will be with us for a couple of weeks this fall and then again in the winter.

Reaching Out To Encourage Voting

In a true grassroots effort, more than 25 members of B'nai Israel have been conducting voter registration drives throughout the Bridgeport area. So far, they have registered more than 80 new voters.

The effort, which was inspired by CONECT (Congregations Organized for a New Connecticut) has been led by Judy Blumenthal, Barbara Edinberg and Jeff Schwartz.

“It struck me that this was an opportunity for civic engagement,” Barbara said in a talk she delivered on Yom Kippur. “Not only something that we could do as a congregation; it was something we should do. It was something I could do. It checked off three boxes on my internal checklist: it involves B'nai Israel congregants and others; it engages the community; it provides a beneficial service.”

Judy, Barbara and Jeff have organized training sessions for congregants, obtained the proper paperwork from local officials, and arranged to set up tables at various sites in Bridgeport, Trumbull, Shelton, Fairfield and elsewhere.

More than 40 people have taken part in the training to date. “We were blown away by the number of people who came out,” Jeff said.



Judy Blumenthal helps Henry Jacobs, a Hamden resident and a freshman at Tufts, register to vote outside St. James Roman Catholic Church in Stratford as part of the registration drive by B'nai Israel members.

In addition to B'nai Israel, volunteers have come from several churches, as well as the Bridgeport Islamic Community Center.

“We were blown away by the number of people who came out.”

Although several stores turned volunteers away, Jeff said, “The Trumbull mall was really welcoming, giving us a table and even suggesting the best location to reach people, outside the Target store.”

While the group is planning several more voter registration sessions, and has discussed offering rides to the polls, it is also now focused on encouraging people to vote in the Nov. 6 election. The goal is to get 100 percent of B'nai Israel members to vote.

As part of this voter registration effort, the group has prepared the reminder below for you to cut out and post in a conspicuous place.

A Guest From Israel

On Friday, Oct. 26, after services and dinner, we will welcome Father Josh Thomas, executive director of Kids4Peace International, a Jerusalem-based interfaith youth movement. Father Thomas is an Episcopal priest with more than a decade of experience in youth education, interfaith dialogue and peace-building. Thanks to Jon and Cleo Sonneborn for bringing Father Thomas to our community.

VOTE on NOVEMBER 6, 2018

Voting is a cornerstone of our democracy.
B'nai Israel is committed to 100% voting.

EVERY VOTE MATTERS

“A ruler is not to be appointed until the community is first consulted” (Rabbi Yitzhak, Talmud).

- Check if you are registered and where to vote at myvote.ct.gov/lookup
- Register or change address online by October 30 at voterregistration.ct.gov



From the Rabbi's Study/Rabbi Evan Schultz Why Covenant is So Complicated

Recently during Saturday morning Torah Study, our B'nai Israel scholars engaged in a surprisingly animated conversation on the topic of covenant. The context was a passage from the prophet Isaiah, who tells the Israelites, who are in exile, that God will protect them as long as they follow the commandments.

Sure, we've heard this notion time and time again throughout the Bible, but the Isaiah piece struck a chord. The notion of covenant with God is in many ways extremely complicated. Why is that? The answer harkens back to the creation of human beings.

God intentionally gave human beings free will, the ability to choose, act, and speak freely. Jews do not believe that anything is predestined, that our actions have already been determined by some divine plan or schedule.

God also ordained us as partners in bringing about redemption of the world. God intentionally created the world

as incomplete, as imperfect. Just look around us at the poverty and suffering across the earth. If our fractured world is ever going to be fixed, it's on us to fix it. Where things get complicated is that God doesn't fully trust us to get the job done. With free will, we can easily wander astray, or turn to evil. Just look at the Noah story and the flood. So God

“If our fractured world is ever going to be fixed, it's on us to fix it.”

creates this mechanism with us humans known as a covenant. God will bless us and protect us, IF we choose to abide by the terms of the covenant and follow the mitzvot. God, however, ordained certain aspects of the covenant as involuntary. Take circumcision for example. An eight-day old baby does not possess the free will to choose on that aspect of the covenant (although I know that circumcision has become a more complicated issue these days, that's another conversation).

Additionally, if God will only protect us if we follow the outline of the covenant, then how much free will do we actually have? Sure, we can choose not to follow it, but then will we fall to curses and suffering? So there's a paradox: we have free will, but in some ways the covenant is involuntary and coerced.

There is no easy resolution to this question, certainly not in the small space on this page. Even the greatest of Jewish scholars have struggled to make sense of these questions. I do, however, think these are important questions to wrestle with as Jews.

When you and I act in the world, what motivates our actions? How would you define your own notion of covenant - voluntary or involuntary? How does that play out in your everyday lives? Would love to hear your thoughts! Email me eschultz@cbibpt.org with your responses and/or further questions and thoughts!

SCIENCE IS MY SPIRIT ANIMAL



Following are excerpts of an address Allison Roll gave at confirmation and, at Rabbi Prosnit's request, on Yom Kippur.

I would like to tell you the story of how science became a part of my religion. For my entire life, I have struggled immensely with my concept of God. Looking back through my childhood memories, I recall that my conception of God had been manifested as the figure of a man, not unlike the Genie in Aladdin, sitting cross-legged in the clouds, a pile of letters at his side, each containing the prayers of the wishful people down below. It was simple, and by no means abstract, but it was enough to satisfy me.

However as years passed and my mind filled with questions of what if, how could this be, and the epiphany that one cannot reach heaven via airplane, my faith was beginning to weaken. And one very important part of me strongly craved fulfillment: my love and appreciation of science. I have had a long-running fascination with the beauty and allure of nature and how every little thing works together in a perfectly harmonious equilibrium. I was the kid who would marvel in awe at a giant daddy long legs, the one who watched the “Into the Wormhole” documentaries on National Geographic and wrote her fourth-grade research project on genetic mutations (yeah, I'm still proud of it).

You see, for me, the world was like a big, elaborate jigsaw puzzle, and each puzzle

piece was a new piece of information which I delighted in connecting to the whole. Yet the more pieces I put together in the elaborate jigsaw puzzle of life, the more difficult it became for me to find a place where the “God” piece could fit in. But still I persisted; I managed to suppress the questions.

I feel like every Jewish person, at some point in their life, is faced with something that makes them question their faith. In my case, I remember one day in Hebrew School being asked if I believed in God, and raising my hand like it was holding a trophy. After all, I grew up with the belief that you should believe in God — it was good to believe in God because I was a Jew, and that was what good Jews do. I looked around the classroom and saw some hands shoot up, while others

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Bonim Buzz/Alexa Cohen, Early Childhood Director

Bonim Preschool Welcomes a New Year

On Friday, Aug. 31, the school wing was abuzz with friends, new and old.

Traditionally on the last Friday before school begins, Bonim hosts a Welcome Play Date for all of the school's students and their families. After much parent feedback and involvement (this year



Jordan gets a ride from her mom

we even had a committee assigned to the event) we determined that having a "seasoned" parent be the Class Captain for their child's class would help all new families get an individual welcome to the class. The Class Captain's job was to answer any questions and introduce the newbies to other families, to make the first day less scary.

The teachers led their groups in a sample circle time, read a story and showed the kids around their classroom. Later, we all joined together – THE WHOLE SCHOOL! -- on the playground for snacks, juice and fun.

The parents got a chance to mingle while the kids had a tour of all the playground equipment and our new garden. Everyone left excited to begin a new year at Bonim Preschool.



Evan shows his sister, Hannah, how to build a sandcastle

BIFTY

Todah Rabah for helping us with the Yom Kippur food drive! We donated food to Operation Hope and the Connecticut Food Bank.

BIFTY meets every Thursday from 7:15 to 8:45 in the BIFTY Lounge! We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

October 11: Lost in Time

October 18: Join us and CONECT for their local event!

October 25: Join our new emissaries Yuval and Rotem as they teach us about Israel!

Questions? Email advisor Marisa Underberger munderberger@cibpt.org
Best way to keep up to date with BIFTY: Follow us on Facebook "BIFTY 2018-2019"

Follow us on Instagram @ cbi.bifty



BIFTY teens having a great time at our first program.



From the Education Center/Ira J. Wise
Words Matter. Actions Matter MORE.

Language is a funny thing. Since we also teach (and pray in) Hebrew here, it can be twice as challenging for us.

For 23 years, we have put two teenagers in most of our Sunday classrooms that serve younger students. Originally just Gan – Kitah Gimel (K – 3), since 2010 we have also done so through Kitah Vav (6th grade).

Our goal for them is threefold: 1) they serve as role models to younger students, both in terms of classroom behaviors and as something to which they might aspire; 2) the teens provide a teacher with additional eyes, ears, hands and legs. As the teenager develops skills, the possibilities for creative learning expands exponentially for the class; and 3) the teens develop into pretty well-trained teachers themselves. I have helped them find jobs near their colleges and two of them have returned to teach for us here!

For all of that time, we called them *madrikhim*. It literally means “those who show the way,” deriving from the route *derekh*, which means road or path. *Madrikhim* describes a group of them, with at least one member of the group being male. A single male would be a *madrikh*, a single female a *madrikhah*, and an all-female group would be *madrikhot*. A nice word, very descriptive. But language is a funny thing. Hebrew is a gendered language. And we have two veterans of that group who each prefer to be called they/them instead of he/him or she/her. Hebrew gives us no help.

Our Jewish values can give us a clue. Genesis says that the first human was created in God’s image (*B’tzelem Elohim*). It does not tell us that the image in question is about physical attributes, even though many through history have thought so. The *Gevurot* prayer, which



Jessica, a member of Team Hadrakhah, with Ari

we chant at every service praises God for all of the things God is described as doing in the Torah – redeeming the captives, freeing the slaves, visiting the sick (to name three). It suggests that this *B’tzelem Elohim* business is about how we have been created with the ability to do the stuff God does.

If Torah and my parents have taught me anything, they have taught me to make my home – and our synagogue – a place where ALL will feel welcome. That includes people whose understanding of themselves is different from what others might choose to think. So the Religious School Vision Team and the faculty have agreed that we should no longer use the various forms of the word *madrikh* to describe our teen educational leaders. Instead we will refer to the *program* in which they participate as *Team Hadrakhah*. Same root, but the translation is “Leadership,” which is

perfectly descriptive. While the word may be in the feminine form, we are not using it to label the gender of those in it. We will refer to them as Hadrakhahniks (like Kibbutzniks!) if we need a descriptor like that.

The hadrakhahniks, parents and teachers now understand all of this. The younger kids likely won’t notice. They tend to be more interested in knowing the teen in their classroom by name and relating to them, rather than what name we adults use. And hopefully, if one of our pre-teens is struggling with issues of personal gender identity, they will hear the message and know this is always a safe space for them. And that here we have people with whom they can talk. Language is powerful.

L’shalom,
 Ira J. Wise, D.J.R.E.
 Director of Education



Adult Jewish Learning at Congregation B'nai Israel



Jewish learning is not just for kids! As we rush from one essential activity to another, taking some time to exercise our minds and souls can enrich everything else we do! Our offerings vary by topic, frequency, time of day and day of the week. Be a learner!

Adult Round Table Returns!

Thursday, October 4, November 1 at Noon

Gloria Katz facilitates a discussion about current events for anyone who wants to go beyond the headlines. Join us the first Thursday of every month, and bring a sandwich, your opinion and an open mind.



The Torah of Civic and Civil Engagement Lifelong Learning: Fridays, October 5, 12, 19, 26 and November 2 at noon

In this election season – as in most – there are many opinions about many issues and candidates. The same Jewish book – Pirkei Avot – tells us to both avoid the notice of the government AND to not stand idly by. Join Ira Wise for an exploration



of both Jewish texts and current events. We will not be arguing the merits of one candidate over another. We will

be discussing how we should conduct such conversations and remember the idea that we are all created in God's image and that we are all Americans. Bring your lunch!

A Letter to My Child

Sunday, October 14, 9:45 – 11:45 a.m.

Parents, join with Rabbi Schultz for this one day workshop where we will (hope to!) give you the tools, the resources, and the space to talk to one another and to craft a letter to your child(ren) about why Judaism matters to you and why it is important to you to pass this tradition



session for parents of older children will be held on December 9.

to your child(ren). This session is geared for parents of children in Gan – Kitah Gimel (grades K – 3). A

Monday Mishneh Torah Mondays, October 15 – December 17, at noon

Back by popular demand, we will study Maimonides Mishneh Torah and his book of “De’ot,” meaning laws of character, or self. All are welcome, no previous knowledge or Hebrew needed! Bring your lunch and join the conversation! This class will be team taught by Rabbi Prosnit, Rabbi Schultz, and Ira Wise.



Adult Jewish Learning in the Community

We encourage you to learn wherever you are. The Bennett Center for Judaic Studies at Fairfield University and the Fairfield Museum both have interesting offerings open to the public!

From the Bennett Center for Judaic Studies at Fairfield University: Daniel Pearl World Music Days Concert Tuesday, October 2 7:30 p.m.

“Hazzan: A Jazz Creation of Jewish Liturgical Chants and Improvisational Rhythms” Jacques Schwarz-Bart, jazz saxophonist and his quartet. Wien Experimental Theatre Quick Center for the Arts. Limited seating. Complimentary admission but reservations are required. Bennettcenter@fairfield.edu or 203-254-4000, ext. 2066.



Looking for Bubbe: The Remembered and Forgotten Jewish World in Heritage Tourism, The Joan and Henry Katz

Lecture in Judaic Studies Monday October 29, 7:30 p.m.

Daniel J. Walkowitz, Ph.D., emeritus professor of history and of social & cultural analysis at New York University, author of a dozen books, including “The Remembered and Forgotten Jewish World.” Dolan School of Business Dining Room. Complimentary admission, but reservations are required. Bennettcenter@fairfield.edu or 203-254-4000, ext. 2066.



At the Fairfield Museum, 370 Beach Road: Discovering the Jewish History of Bridgeport and Fairfield Wednesday, October 17, 12:30 – 1:30

Learn about the history of Jewish communities in Fairfield County from colonial times to the present with a presentation from the Jewish Historical Society of Fairfield County and Fairfield Museum staff. Bring along any information about local businesses, family photographs, immigration documents, notable individuals, and community organizations in the Bridgeport-Fairfield area that you would like to share – and help us document the community's history. Admission is free to Fairfield Museum members, for non-members a \$5.00 donation is suggested. Please bring a bagged lunch. Beverages and dessert will be provided.



OCTOBER DONATIONS

(Please note that only contributions of \$10.00 or more will be acknowledged with a card and *Bulletin* listing.)

Rabbi Prosnit Discretionary Fund

Eloise Epstein, in honor of Rabbi Prosnit.

Andrea and Dennis Feinberg, Mazel tov to Susan Brody and Geoffrey Gladstein on their recent marriage.

Jack Kadden, in honor of the birthdays of Ilse Levi and Harvey Levine.

Sue and Jay Kotlen, Mazel tov to Susan Brody and Geoffrey Gladstein on their marriage.

Beth Lazar, in appreciation of Rabbi Prosnit, and hoping that he will be blessed with a Sweet New Year.

Beth and Randy Reich & Family, in memory of mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Vivienne Goldstein.

Ellen and Robert Sheiman, best wishes to Linda Diamond on a speedy recovery.

William and Lorraine Smith, in memory of Seymour Rubak, father of Evelyn Rubak.

Debbie, Dan, Matthew, Jaime and Brooke Viens, Mazel tov to Rabbi Prosnit and Wendy Bloch, on the marriage of Jake Prosnit to Jenna Weinberg.

Dan, Lori, Evan and Ryan Warner, in honor of Rabbi Prosnit making Ryan's Bar Mitzvah so memorable.

Judy K. Weinstein, in memory of Terry Moloney, brother of Rita Weinstein.

Marilyn S. Weinstein, in memory of Terry Moloney, brother of Rita Weinstein.

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund

Stacey and Duane Berlin, Mazel tov on your appointment as the next Senior Rabbi.

Alan and Karen Blau, in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz for performing the Hebrew naming ceremony for our 3 great-nephews, Ben Jenkins, Ethan & Levi Nuhn.

Beth Lazar, in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz, and hoping that he will be blessed with a Sweet New Year.

Beth and Randy Reich & Family, in memory of mother and grandmother, Beatrice Burchman.

Ellen and Robert Sheiman, best wishes to Joe Varon on a speedy recovery.

Music Fund

Wendy & Jeffrey Bender, a donation sponsoring the cello player for Yom Kippur.

Randy Dorfman, in honor of Naomi Schaffer, on the marriage of William Schaffer and Lindsay Kovacic.

John and Ronnie Dubrowin, in honor of Naomi Schaffer, on the marriage of William Schaffer and Lindsay Kovacic.

The Giglietti Family, in memory of Seymour Rubak, father of Evelyn Rubak.

Lynette Helman, in memory of Henry Helman.

Beth Lazar, Happy Birthday Wishes to Cantor Blum, and wishes for a Sweet New Year.

Lori and Dan Warner, in honor of Ryan's Bar Mitzvah; in appreciation to Cantor Blum.

Enhancement Fund

Steve and Lauren Field, a donation.

Debby and Arthur Hiller, in celebration, and in honor of, Geoff Gladstein and Sue Brody, on their wedding.

Myrna Kaufman, in memory of father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Robert Newman.

Beth Lazar, Happy Birthday to Ellen Sheiman, and best wishes for a Sweet New Year for you, Bob and family.

Rick and Carol Offenbach, in memory of parents, Vivienne Zimmer Goldstein and Robert Offenbach.

Paul and Bernice Rosch, in memory of father, Meyer Rosch.

Julie and Steve Pressman, in memory of Seymour Rubak, father of Evelyn Rubak.

Estelle and Sam Sylvetsky, in honor of Harvey Levine's 95th Birthday.

Debbie, Dan, Matthew, Jaime and Brooke Viens, Mazel tov to Shari Nerreau on becoming president; a thank you to Michael Blumenthal for all of his hard work on our behalf.

Frederic West, in memory of Dorothy West.

Sylvia Prosnit Adult Education Fund

Judi and David Beier, in honor of Rabbi Prosnit and Wendy Bloch, on the marriage of Jake Prosnit to Jenna Weinberg.

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of Rueben Weisbein.

Naomi Schaffer, in memory of sister, Pearl Simmons.

Nursery School Enrichment Fund

Ruth and Eric Gross, in honor of Terri and Dan Green, on the birth of grandson, Quincy Miles.

Scott and Shari Pearlman, a donation for the playground.

Nursery School Scholarship Fund

Gail and Peter Weinstein, in honor of Helaine and Allan Alper on their special birthdays; in memory of Phyllis Plotkin, sister of Marsha Gillette.

Mazon

Andrea and Dennis Feinberg, in loving memory of Sylvia Goldman, mother of Richard Goldman.

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of uncle, Fred Greenberg.

Religious School Scholarship Fund

Martin and Alayne Burger, a donation.

Religious School Enrichment Fund

Martin and Alayne Burger, a donation.

Lori, Dan, Evan and Reilly Warner, in appreciation to Claire Baker.

Carolyn and Perry Wasserlauf, in memory of Alice Hochhauser, mother of Ken Hochhauser.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund

Chris and George Markley, in honor of Ilana Ofgang and Jon Coffin, on the birth of daughter, Muirghéal Naima.

Vision Loan Reduction Fund

Beth Lazar, a Sweet New Year to all Members, Clergy and Staff of Congregation B'nai Israel.

Jim Abraham Education Fund for Jewish Leadership

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of father, Leonard M. Lazar.

Janet, David and Spencer Thorpe, in memory of Seymour Rubak, beloved father of Evelyn Rubak, grandfather of Jack Rubak.

Gillette Judaic Enrichment Fund

The Spitzer-London Family, in memory of Patricia Pearlberg, stepmother of Richard (Marci) Pearlberg, grandmother of Joey & Drew.

Yakhani Caring Fund

The Blondins, in memory of Patti Pearlberg, stepmother of Richard Pearlberg.

Karen Kennan, in memory of Seymour Rubak, father of Evelyn Rubak.

Chris and George Markley, in loving memory of Mary Nahabedian.

THE PRESIDENT'S ROSH HASHANAH ADDRESS From Page 1

My idea was that was that I could arrange to bring Jason on his eighth day of life to a pediatrician's office and find someone to be there to perform the Jewish rituals. So, I pulled out the Yellow Pages (anyone under 25 can ask someone what those were) and started calling local synagogues. After a couple of Rabbis flatly refused to help, I called B'nai Israel and spoke to a Rabbi James Prosnit. I introduced myself and shared my idea and what I was trying to accomplish, he said, "YES," and told me to let him know where he should be, and when. So, the first time we met, was in the doctor's waiting room. When all was over, and we asked what we owed him for his time, he said, "nothing, I just hope that I see you again".

Now, after 17 years of making meatloaf for St. John's and Operation Hope in the B'nai Israel kitchen, 5 years as the BIFTY advisor, 11 years on the board and having the privilege to serve as Rabbi Prosnit's last President, I am thankful for the many relationships that have developed here and I am honored for sure, but if I'm going to be completely honest, sometimes when I think back, I wish he had just sent us a bill. B'nai Israel is more than a congregation, it is a community and it's a diverse one: More than 2,500 individuals of varying ages, backgrounds, political leanings, and even religions. Some of us were born Jewish, some chose to be Jewish, some of us love someone Jewish and some simply respect the Jewish faith. Some of us walk through these doors twice a week, and others twice a year, but however many times we come, we are all equally valuable and important to the vitality of our congregation. We are all looking for the same sense of community: the sense of belonging, engaged in something larger than ourselves, to ideas that can help us lead a better life, challenge us to do more. Whether you desire deep conversations, moments of divine spirituality or engaging social connections, your temple community is here for you sometimes in unexpected ways.

Not long ago, Jack Kadden shared this story with me. When he was spending so much time at the hospital in New York when his late wife, Ellen, was very ill,

he asked a congregant if she knew any landscapers who could rake the leaves at his house. She didn't call a clean up service to rake the leaves, instead she arranged for 25 temple members, including some children, to rake his leaves and haul them away.


I also had the chance to speak with Lisa Hurlbert, who shared her experience of forming a bond with a group of Moms sitting outside the main office. Every Tuesday and Thursday they would wait together, while their kids were in religious school. They started helping one another with tasks for one of their kids' upcoming Bar/Bat Mitzvahs - like folding the giveaway T-shirts, assembling gift bags. They refer to themselves as the "Jew Crew" and continue their friendship and to support each other still.

This is why being a member of a temple community like ours is so valuable. We are not a fee for service. We are a network of relationships that not only support each other but also support something bigger,

the Jewish legacy itself. We care about the future of Judaism in our community. With this comes a responsibility to ensure the future of our synagogue. The financial security of our temple community is vital and it is our collective obligation and, might I suggest, privilege to sustain it. So I hope that during this year's High Holy Day Appeal, as well as other opportunities in the year to come, B'nai Israel will be generously considered as part of your philanthropic giving.

My hope for all of us is that in the year ahead, we will seize opportunities to do just that here at B'nai Israel -- to sustain our relationships with God, with our rich Jewish traditions and with one another, so that our community will continue to go from strength to strength.

Video of this address is available in the Live Streaming section of the temple website.



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Congregation B'nai Israel, founded in 1858, seeks to be a vibrant Reform synagogue dedicated to the perpetuation of Jewish life and values within the framework of contemporary American Judaism. We are a gateway to Judaism for all. The Congregation B'nai Israel Bulletin publishes monthly 11 times a year (except July). To submit an article, announcement or ad to the Bulletin, please contact Editor contact Editor Jack Kadden at jkadden@cbibpt.org. Submissions are due by the first day of the month preceding the publication month. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length or style.

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hovered tentatively, and others still were anchored to their side. Then the teacher asked, “Why do you believe in God?” Suddenly no hands were up, everyone sort of blinked at each other and didn’t answer. ... For the first time, it made me question myself, and suddenly it hit me that I had no idea what God is. That day I raised my hand, but I realized that it was as empty as the mere physiological impulse that had brought it there. What I thought I knew about God began to crumble.

I walked out of the classroom feeling lost and confused. I felt like I had been defeated, like I had lost my faith. Worst of all, I felt that believing in God was making a rigid choice between religion and science; that they were mutually exclusive. So I set it to the side in my mind, hoping that someday there would come an answer. It didn’t come for a long time.

“God can be seen in between the lines where things connect.”

Finally, there came something that brought me a little closer to what I was looking for. I went to a Jewish science camp called Six Points, and there was one person who helped me bring my mess of conflicting questions together for me for the first time. She was the teacher of the biology course, and one day she explained to us how the science and the religious parts of her life played a critical role in each other. She told us about how many scientists are religious, and believe there is a higher intelligence and order that is inexplicable yet can be observed with science and math; even about the scientific explanations for events from the bible (perhaps Moses split the Red Sea by waiting for the tide

to go out). That lit a spark in my mind that would not go out. I discovered one of my favorite quotes, spoken by Albert Einstein: “A knowledge of the existence of something we cannot penetrate, of the manifestations of this profoundest reason and the most radiant beauty—it is this knowledge and this emotion that constitute the truly religious attitude; in this alone, I am a deeply religious man.” I realized that the puzzle which I was perpetually piecing together does not have one singular space for God, because God is the whole puzzle. God can be seen in between the lines where things connect, and so it became my mission as a scientist to read between those lines.

Shabbat Service Schedule

(Fridays at 6:00 p.m. where indicated, preceded by an Oneg Shabbat at 5:30 p.m.)

Friday, October 5

6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion –
Bereshit, Gen. 1:1-6:8
Haftarah – Isaiah 42:5-43:10

Saturday, October 6

8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
9:30 a.m. Havurah for Families with Young Children – Miss Alexa Visits!
11:00 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Madeleine Greenberg, daughter of Mitchell and Stephanie Greenberg

Friday, October 12

6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion – Noah, Gen. 6:9-11:32
Haftarah – Isaiah 54:1-55:5

Saturday, October 13

8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
9:30 a.m. Havurah for Families with Young Children – Parashat Noah – bring your favorite stuffed animal
11:00 a.m. B’not Mitzvah of Maya and Sydney Zubrinsky, daughters of Todd and Mary Zubrinsky

Friday, October 19

6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion – Lech L’cha, Gen. 12:1-17:27
Haftarah – Isaiah 40:27-41:16

Saturday, October 20

8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study

Friday, October 26

6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion – Vayera, Gen. 18:1-22:24
Haftarah – II Kings 4:1-37

Saturday, October 27

8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
11:00 a.m. B’nai Mitzvah of Matthew Perman, son of Michael and Lainie Perman, and Cooper Zuccerella, son of Mark and Jodie Zuccerella



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There is an open enrollment period from Oct. 15 to Dec. 7 that permits you to change your Medicare plans and possibly save money. Contact Jerry at medicarehelper@optimum.net or speak to him any Friday evening or Saturday morning at services. It takes between 45 minutes to a little over an hour to help each person. He will be happy to arrange a mutually convenient appointment.

Join Us for a Dedication

On Friday, Oct. 12, please join us at 5:30 p.m. before Shabbat Services for a brief dedication ceremony for Phase One of our Pave the Way Campaign. More than 150 congregants bought a brick to leave a lasting legacy in front of the synagogue, and they were installed before the High Holidays. The campaign helped raise needed funds and also enabled us to beautify the front of the synagogue.

We will formally dedicate the commemorative bricks at the ceremony and also take the opportunity to thank the volunteers who helped us Pave the Way.

Kristen Carley came up with the idea and led the initial campaign. Mark Schnitzler played a major role by coordinating much of the work with our brick vendor and contractor.

Other volunteers who helped with the design, layout, and ordering of the bricks include Bernie Jacobs, Amy Rich, Ellen Hyde Phillips and Bonnie Appel.



The new Pave the Way bricks have been installed in front of the synagogue