

THE SHUL SHOFAR

VOL. 23, NO. 3 * Congregation Beth Israel * Bellingham, WA 98229 * bethisraelbellingham.org * (360) 733-8890



FROM THE RABBI

Back to my homeland

When this issue hits your mailbox, I will likely be trying to get comfortable in my seat en route to Bellingham from Tel Aviv. Nicole and I have not been back to Israel since we lived in Jerusalem for my



first year of rabbinical school in 2005. That was a magical year. Not only was it the fifth time I had traveled to Israel, and the first and

only time I have lived abroad, but it was our honeymoon year as well. I have been looking forward to going back ever since.

Just a few weeks ago, I flipped through our photo album with Eytan and Shoshana to show them what they might experience and to share my enthusiasm about our big trip. Not surprisingly, before noticing the camels and mounds of spices, my children pointed out my full head of hair and beard!

The reason for our recent vacation was to celebrate with my family as my niece became a Bat Mitzvah. Accompanying us on our journey was my family's baby Torah for her to chant from, the same Torah her mother and I both chanted from years earlier. It is

A new lay-led minyan

BY RABBI JOSHUA SAMUELS

As our congregation has settled into our beautiful and spacious new building, we have been able to offer classes and services that community members have been asking for. The new Conservative-style lay-led minyan is one such example. I recently interviewed two of the visionaries behind this new minyan, David Zimmerman and Ahuva Scharff.

Tell us a little about your Jewish background, Ahuva and David

DAVID: I am a first generation American on my father's side of the family. My father came to the United States from a shtetl, Zolkiewka,

Poland, in 1922. His native tongue was Yiddish and he made his living as a sportswriter for the *Seattle Times*. My grandparents were very observant. As a writer at the *Minnesota Daily*, my father met my mother. My mother wasn't Jewish, but my parents were married by a rabbi in 1949. This was unheard of back then. Growing up I observed all the Jewish cultural events. Religion wasn't pushed on us. If we ever attended a synagogue, it would be either an Orthodox or a Conservative shul. In 2004, when living in Spokane, I start-

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From the President...

Dedicated community

Dear Congregants,

As I write these words, we have just finished the festival of lights, and in the Torah we are reading about the Israelites moving down to Egypt. In these two events, we find symbols of so much of our history. The value of community, and of community service, is at the forefront of these moments in ancient time.

A few months ago, we celebrated the dedication of our new synagogue with the same word we use for the festival of lights. Hanukkah comes from Hebrew meaning "to dedicate." Each year we celebrate the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem following the Maccabean Revolt in the second century BCE. The history of that revolt is under constant discussion and review among scholars, but the larger message of its celebration reinforces two of our community's strengths: We can overcome great odds (defeating the mighty Seleucid Empire), and we often find that we can make miracles out of the resources we have at hand (one day's oil lasting for eight days).

These narratives well describe our 18-year journey to build our new campus, but that is not really my subject here (I promise). What I want to share with you today are some thoughts about how the people in our community have made it possible for all of us to continue on our Jewish journeys and to add to the rich and lengthy history of our people.

The Torah portion *Vayigash* provides the happy conclusion to the story of Joseph. Sold by his brothers into slavery, Joseph thrived in Egypt, and when his brothers came down to Egypt in a time of widespread famine, Joseph and the Pharaoh welcomed them to build their homes and enjoy the fat of the land. Both *Vayigash* and Hanukkah center on critical moments when we created or restored our homes, but what these moments really highlight is the importance of renewing community. This is never an easy project, but at CBI we are fortunate that so many in our community

give so freely of their time and energy to keep this project going.

When Joseph sent his brothers back to Canaan to fetch their father and their families, his parting words were, "Don't be anxious along the way." Our current moment is full of anxiety-inducing events, from worries about economic uncertainty to the steep rise of antisemitism. I find comfort in Joseph's words, but even more so in his actions and those of others behind the scenes. It is easy to highlight the roles of Joseph or of Judah Maccabee, but we know that they could act so decisively because of the combined efforts of others. We benefit on a daily basis from the actions of so many in our community.

The recent Hanukkah party is a great example. Our CBI staff leadership, working with our kids in Keshet, made certain that our children were ready for the fun; and that fun would not be possible without the hard work and commitment of congregants volunteering their time and energy. Our congregation has a long history of such volunteerism, and our future success will rely on the continuation of this spirit of service.

Of course, it is not always easy. We won't always agree. After all, Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery (and our welcome in Egypt did not last); and the Maccabees dealt with a very divided Jewish community in their own time. But what we remember as a community is how they surmounted these challenges, set aside their differences, handled their anxiety, and got down to the hard work of building community. Perhaps our richest accomplishment as a people is that we continue to renew ourselves in every generation. This act relies on all of us to find our place to step up and dedicate ourselves to our community. In this way, we ensure that our community will continue to be a light for the world. It is, as it has always been, a matter of survival.

— STEVEN GARFINKLE,
PRESIDENT

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL

751 San Juan Boulevard
Bellingham, WA 98229

The Shul Shofar

Volume 23, Number 3
January/February 2019
Tevet/Shevat/Adar I 5779

The *Shul Shofar* is the bulletin of Congregation Beth Israel. It is published bi-monthly and distributed to all congregation members. Nonmembers may subscribe for \$35/year. Advertising space (business card size) is available; contact the office.

Deadline for submission of all articles and calendar events for the January/February issue is FEBRUARY 11. Call the office for more information.

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Printed by Lewis Publishing Inc. in
Lynden, WA

Beth Israel is a member of:



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From the Keshet Center for Jewish Learning

Learning for every age and stage



It has not been quite one year since we moved to our new building at 751 San Juan, and we already see

the impact of our move on the learning opportunities that we now offer to the community. It is as of this year that in addition to the ongoing and growing success of our children and youth Sunday classes, and under the direction of Rabbi Samuels, Keshet now oversees, coordinates, and develops the adult education and community enrichment opportunities at CBI. Keshet Center for Jewish

Learning is now the “home” for CBI’s Congregational Learning, with its mission set to being a center for high-quality, relevant and varied educational programs and opportunities for the intellectual, cultural, and personal growth of all CBI members and non-members for every age and stage of life.

In addition to the wonderful offerings of liturgy and text study led by Rabbi Samuels, Cantorial Soloist Andrea Shupack, and Dr. Ahuva Scharff, we now offer Yoga & The Sephirot (with Michal Retter), Modern Hebrew (led by Miriam Buckman) and Korean Martial Arts (with Kevin Donner). The feedback so far has been very positive for all classes, and I look forward to their continua-

tion through the winter and early Spring.

If you are, or anyone you know, is a gifted instructor who may be able to enrich our community by offering classes, courses, or experience, please have them contact the office. We would love to explore new horizons of Jewish education and beyond that we might be able to offer to our community.

—SAGIT HALL שגית הול
DIRECTOR, KESHER CENTER
FOR JEWISH LEARNING

FUNDrive benefits Keshet!

Our storage room is getting more and more full! Our deadline on April 7 is quickly approaching, and we still need more items! On April 14, we will deliver all the items to Value Village, where they will be weighed and we will be paid by the pound. That’s it! The more we bring, the more money we will receive. For example, if we want to make \$1,000.00, we need 4,000 pounds of soft goods, or about 220 bags. No one has to dig into their pockets to support Keshet with money! Help keep landfills emptier AND support Keshet by simply cleaning out your closets, basements, storage units, and forgotten bins of “someday clothes.”

We are collecting any and all cloth items (including bedding and towels, shoes, belts, purses), CDs/DVDs, small electrical items, toys & games, small kitchen items, knickknacks, and sporting goods. Cloth items will need to be in trash bags, and household items will need to be in cardboard boxes. All items must be in good, clean, and saleable condition. Your donation is tax deductible.

Kindly leave your donations on the black cart that is placed by the Keshet entrance on Sundays from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm, or any other day by appointment with Sagit (please text her at 360-927-0701). If you have any questions, please contact Nora Mazonson (phone: 360-739-4335; email: nora.shwadsky@gmail.com)

Synagogue 411

Archives: Tim Baker, (360) 647-7031

Care: Harriet Markell, (916) 207-9381;
Else Sokol, (360) 393-9618

Membership: Rita Spitzer,
(360) 647-7065; Ann Suloway,
(360) 647-7031

Library, Scrip: Joan Wayne,
(360) 676-8939

New Synagogue Task Force:

Warren Rosenthal, (360) 961-9772

Scholarship: Emil Hecht,
(360) 733-4825

Social Action: Linda Blackwell,
(360) 647-9519



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From the Social Action Committee

Nomadland to be discussed at Feb. 3 book group

BY LINDA BLACKWELL

Social Action Committee members participated in the CBI strategic planning this fall. Social action volunteers will focus on homelessness in 2019. The biggest volunteer opportunity to help Bellingham's homeless is the Family Promise Program. Beth Israel is a supporting congregation with the Interfaith Coalition. We supply meals and volunteers at the Day Center and at a sister congregation. This program offers temporary housing and case management for families who are homeless. Please contact Andrea Shupack to learn how to volunteer.

Our upcoming book discussion is *Nomadland* by Jessica Bruder. The book centers on how the loss of affordable housing has moved populations, especially the elderly, to become nomads in RVs and campgrounds. To quote: "From the beet fields of North Dakota to the National Forest campgrounds of California to Amazon's Camper Force program in Texas, employers have discovered a new, low-cost labor pool, made up largely of transient older Americans." Please join us for

this interesting discussion at 2:30 pm, February 3, in the Social Hall.

We have knitters from CBI making hats for Project Warm-Up every Tuesday. Hats are distributed through shelters and the C.A.S.T. program.

Members of CBI clean and maintain a "little house" for a family in transition from homelessness. We hope to organize the distribution of sandwiches through the C.A.S.T. program, with our volunteers working as a group one night a week or one night a month. Please contact Linda Blackwell (360-739-1492) if interested in this opportunity.

The Social Action Committee will continue to support and mentor Bnei Mitzvah students in social action projects. Our future projects into 2020 will focus on racial injustice and antisemitism.

A thank you to the awesome donations for the Womencare Thanksgiving. We continued our tradition of providing Thanksgiving dinner for the residents of Womencare, a shelter for women and children who have

experienced domestic violence. We thank the following people: Ruth Evans, Dan & Debbie Raas, Lee Shapiro, Joan & Marv Wayne, and Patrick Crane. A total of \$825 was raised in monies with food donated as well. If you were not mentioned here, our apologies and please let Linda know.

The Interfaith Coalition Fall Coat Drive at the end of October was a great success. Thank you to all who contributed coats, and thanks especially to Arlene Feld for transporting coats to Assumption Church for distribution.

At present we would like to fill the donation baskets with sheets, pillows (new), and twin comforters for Interfaith housing. Food donations for the food bank are also accepted.

Committee The next meeting of the Social Action Committee will take place January 14 at 6:00 pm. Please contact Linda Blackwell if you wish to attend or look for future eNews announcements.

Letter from Interfaith Coalition

With deep appreciation,

Thanks to your generosity, there were plenty of coats and warm items to warm the bodies and hearts of our guests at the Interfaith Coalition coat distributions around Whatcom County this past month. It would be impossible to fully describe the grateful thanks, and the look on faces of our guests at the distributions, as more than 3,000 items were shared with families who came for help to make it through the upcoming winter. This is an effort that is made possible by so

many of you choosing to help. Our deepest gratitude to your congregation reps, the volunteers who collected and dropped off coats, or helped at the events, and all who donated. May you be blessed in knowing that there are many families who will be warmer because of you.

Thank you!

Janie Pemble
Outreach Director for Interfaith Coalition



Cantor's corner

What are we really saying? Exploring the Shema

BY ANDREA SHUPACK

Our *siddur* (prayer book) can be a window into our soul and a connecting point to the divine. But there are many stumbling blocks to using our liturgy in a meaningful way. One big challenge is that our texts are in Hebrew. We often don't completely understand what we're saying, and the translations are limited. The language can be archaic and may not reflect our own concepts of the Divine.

Our journey with liturgy, and the practice of learning how to pray, is never-ending. There is much to discover within each word. Each time we enter the prayer book, we approach the words as a different person, and we can learn new things. By going inward, we learn about ourselves, and by going outward, we learn about others. We bring our new experiences, current moods, and whatever is going on in our lives with us into prayer. We can use the poetry as an entry point for gaining new insights, finding comfort, slowing down, or gaining resolve to take action.

Let us take the Shema, the most well-known line in our prayerbook, as an example. *Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad*. Hear O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One. On the surface, it is a statement affirming monotheism. It is considered the most important line for every Jew to declare. But how

meaningful is that concept to us, in a world mostly dominated by monotheism? At Judaism's infancy, this was an incredibly significant declaration, but is that the case in the 21st century? One way we can renew our prayers is by deepening our understanding of the Hebrew words:

1. **Shema / Listen** - Hear, understand. Notice that it says "hear" instead of "see." What does it mean to truly listen? We cover our eyes to eliminate our strongest sense so we can focus on listening. How can this help us bring a deeper awareness and gratitude to the experiences all around us? In the context of this phrase from Deuteronomy, God is addressing us in the opening words, calling for our attention. As we say these words, we might dwell on ways we can bring attention to the Divine in our lives.
2. **Yisrael / Israel** - Israel, our name for the Jewish people. God-Wrestlers. We are a people who struggles with our concept of, and relationship to God. For me, that's already juicy enough, but there is more hidden in the legacy of our name. In Hebrew, the letter *yud* is somewhat flexible, getting dropped or moved. If we move the *yud* in *Yisrael*, we get *Shir El* - The one who sings to God. If we change one vowel, we get *Yasher El* - the righteous path of God.

How can our concentration on this prayer help us metaphorically "sing to God," or carry out justice, acting as partners with God in the world?

3. **Adonai / My God** יהוה - The Existing One, the

Eternal, to be, to breathe, the breath of living creatures, to live. We acknowledge and pray to the one who gives breath to all living things. We can be reminded of our breath in this moment and focus on gratitude for the life we have been given. We can talk to this personal God. She exists in all beings.

4. **Eloheinu / Our God** - Our Mighty One, our strength. What does it mean to have these two words together? We say the individual, My God, and then immediately after, the communal Our God. Our Jewish path is our own. Judaism, and our relationship with the Divine, is very personal, but "*Eloheinu*" reminds us that our experiences are enhanced by community.
5. **Echad / One** - Unique, first, alone. Also related to the root *achad*, meaning to unite. Perhaps we are not just saying that there is only one God. We are choosing God as our only God. We are acknowledging that everything, the whole universe, is connected, united. All is one, all is a part of the Divine.

There are many other directions we can go with these five words. As we continue to explore Jewish liturgy, what are you thinking about or struggling with around prayer, liturgy, or spirituality? Please email any questions you have and would like to explore to me at cantor@bethisraelbellingham.org. Each *Shul Shofar*, I will respond to these questions. My hope is that we can enter a dialogue together about this amazing body of work that is intended to help us transform our lives. I look forward to hearing from you, and engaging in these beautiful texts together.



Warren Rosenthal

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REAL ESTATE

A NEW LAY-LED MINYAN

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ed attending Temple Beth Shalom, a Conservative synagogue. In 2010, I moved back to Seattle. I was a member of both an Orthodox synagogue, Emmanuel Congregation, and a Conservative synagogue, Congregation Beth Shalom in North Seattle. In 2012, I moved to Bellingham and became a member at Congregation Beth Israel.

AHUVA: I grew up in a small Jewish community in Salem, Oregon. Although at the time this community identified as Conservative, it was not unlike the community here in Bellingham – one shul that needed to meet the needs of all members across the Jewish spectrum. Being the “only shul in town,” our community was eclectic. There might not have been musical instrumentation on Shabbat or High Holy Days, but there was a great deal of experimentation and room for people to develop services and havurat that put forward a number of different expressions of Jewish traditions.

We pushed the envelope of what it meant to be Conservative at that time. There was appreciation for tradition, particularly the old melodies from our Ashkenazi ancestors, but we were egalitarian, with women taking active roles in all parts of the community. We were socially active. We were outdoors people who brought that part of our lives into our services. At my bat mitzvah recep-

tion, we had a rodeo where all the people in attendance tried their hand at barrel racing! This was decades ago when these were new concepts. The point is that no matter how we affiliated, that community wanted to welcome all Jews in a “big tent” style.

What led you to become active in the Beth Israel community, David as a board member and Ahuva as a teacher?

DAVID: Jeff Jaffe and Mitch Press asked me to be on the board and I said yes. I had never had an inclination towards doing something like this, but I accepted and I’ve been active ever since.

AHUVA: I never considered doing anything else. One of my passions is the study of Jewish texts. I teach a class because I enjoy the discourse and learning. It’s more of a discussion and deep dive into the material than anything else. I am fascinated by why we do the things we do. What is important to the living of a Jewish life? Why do some actions matter a great deal to me and others do not? In my teaching, I like to create space for those discussions, to look at what the traditions are and why we do them, but also to think about whether or not they work for us in the day and space we live in.

When did you begin to think about creating a worship experience for our Conservative and more traditional members?

DAVID: Ahuva and I had talked about what a good idea it would be to have a more traditional service

because of how diverse our congregation is. Ahuva deserves the credit for getting this started by approaching the synagogue leaders. I helped Ahuva out by emailing and speaking with members and getting them to help lead the services. I am very pleased by the reception we have had. The first service I was hoping that we would just get a Minyan. but we had over 30 people attend!

AHUVA: I want to be clear that it wasn’t that we wanted to create a “Conservative” service. I don’t like that label, because I think it’s divisive. I’m not in a particular camp. The truth is that I simply like a service that is more like what I had growing up, a service almost all in Hebrew, the singing of *Mussaf*, and the Ashkenazi melodies. There are others who share these preferences. Saturday morning is when people of that mindset show up – so it seemed like a no-brainer to offer that style of service to the congregation.

Now that we’ve had two services, what has been some feedback that you’ve received? Are you pleased with how they’ve been going?

DAVID: After the first two services, the feedback has been incredible! One of our members said, after the second service, that they had tears in their eyes from being happy because we now have a worship style they are more used to from when they were growing up!

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The Yenta speaks...

Welcome to our new members:

- Elaine Beck-Bruns & John Bruns — La Conner
- Maria Koplowitz-Fleming & Colleen Koplowitz — Bellingham
- Mark & Nancy Luster — Coupeville
- Bruce & Debra Parelskin — Bellingham
- Ruth Philipp — Bellingham

- John Sternlicht & James Finley — Anacortes
- Mel Velsher and Adam Regan; son Jonah Velsher; daughter Elianna Regan — Sedro Woolley

Geraldine and Christoph Reitz welcome their new granddaughter! **Zariah Wright** was born on Tuesday, December 18, 2018 to Leah (daughter) and Davis (son-in-law) Wright. *Mazel Tov!*

Building our Jewish community

BY KATIE EDELSTEIN

On November 4, members of Congregation Beth Israel's committees were recognized for their ongoing service to our synagogue at a catered luncheon in their honor. From the myriad of activities our volunteers are involved in, it is apparent that these volunteers have certainly stepped up and answered the call *Hineni* – I am here and ready to do my part. According to Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook founder and CEO, "In our generation, the struggle of whether we connect more, whether we achieve our biggest opportunities, comes down to this – your ability to build communities and create a world where every single person has a sense of purpose." It is clear that our committee members have demonstrated a sense of purpose by their commitment to the committees they serve on.

After many years of focusing our time and efforts on building our beautiful new synagogue, it's time to refocus our efforts on Building Our Jewish Community and explore what this means. Using committee members' own experiences as a starting point, we spent time during the afternoon discussing how community-building mindsets could create opportunities for members to find belonging and purpose at Congregation Beth Israel. We addressed such topics as how we might use Jewish rituals, traditions and holidays to better connect members, what role our connection to Israel plays, what types of programs could attract and engage members at different stages and ages of life, etc.

Stay tuned! Committees will share opportunities for members to connect and realize a sense of belonging to Congregation Beth Israel.

Birthdays

JANUARY 2019

1/1 Elias Anderson (13th)
 1/1 Jeaninne Kahan
 1/1 Binnie Perper
 1/1 Alison Zak
 1/3 Tahlia Somers (12th)
 1/4 Julia Bakken
 1/4 Linda Blackwell
 1/4 Wolf Pomerantz (7th)
 1/4 Asher Stoane (16th)
 1/5 Jewels Ramras (3rd)
 1/5 David Sager
 1/5 Jack Schneider
 1/6 Isaac Konikoff
 1/6 Tom Maxim
 1/8 Candace Kiersky
 1/8 Victoria Mayers
 1/9 Helen Feiger
 1/9 Lexi Zantkovsky
 1/10 Lou Lippman
 1/11 John Schapiro
 1/12 Talia Clarke (15th)
 1/15 Diana Dixon (5th)
 1/15 Nora Mazonson
 1/15 Kathi Paluch
 1/16 Maya Cornwall (16th)
 1/17 Julian Booker (17th)
 1/17 David Elkayam
 1/17 Jodi Litt

1/19 Lauren James (13th)
 1/20 Gayle Kay
 1/21 Alyson Kassen
 1/22 Stuart Berman
 1/23 Joshua Greenberg
 1/25 Marc Weinstein
 1/26 Mitch Press
 1/26 Geraldine Reitz
 1/28 Adam Goldstein
 1/28 Angie Lee
 1/30 Wendy Blum
 1/30 Gib Morrow
 1/31 John Bruns

FEBRUARY 2019

2/1 Bill Freeman
 2/2 Andrea Evans
 2/4 Bonnie Zell
 2/5 Elizabeth Weinstein
 2/6 Laura Wolfson
 2/7 Elan Maxim (19th)
 2/8 Samantha Schwartz (14th)
 2/9 Ruth Evans
 2/10 Jacob Bishop (17th)
 2/11 Leo Banks Strich (1st)
 2/11 Ella Barney
 2/11 Shalem Blum (14th)
 2/14 Bob Goldman

2/14 Ted Schuman
 2/15 Gloria Lebowitz
 2/16 Aniko Folk (18th)
 2/17 Dan Ohms
 2/18 Tom Oliver
 2/20 Don Fenbert
 2/20 Sagit Hall
 2/20 Susan Schneider
 2/20 Elijah Wolfson (10th)
 2/21 Gregg Orlik
 2/21 Ben Sokol (19th)
 2/21 Kristin Sykes-David
 2/22 Frank Corey
 2/22 Teva Corey-DuBow (12th)
 2/22 Arthur Ingberman
 2/22 Karen Sloss
 2/22 Jeannette Stephens
 2/22 Alan Stone
 2/23 Harriet Emanuel
 2/24 Todd Haskell
 2/24 Robert Meltzer
 2/25 Nancy Auerbach
 2/25 Avi Brennan (12th)
 2/25 Genny Cohn
 2/25 Lenore Shankman
 2/26 Orly Ziv-Maxim
 2/27 Ken Levinson
 2/27 Teresa Sommers

Faces in our community

From people to pooches; the caring life of Harriet Markell

BY LINDA HIRSH

A dog sitter, yes. A dog owner, not until 2005 when the company Harriet Markell worked for permitted her to bring a pooch to work. She wasted no time searching for a miniature poodle.

Enter Louie Armstrong, “Super Poodle, able to leap off tall furniture in a single bound,” she announced.

An Olympia dog trainer and boarder noted that the athletic Louie was an agility candidate. She was right. For 10 years now, Louie has competed in shows, seven under Harriet’s guidance. The trainer also mentored her in positive dog training, a program using clickers to guide dogs toward proper behavior. Immersed, Harriet then attended several expositions attracting “the best gurus in dog training.” Now she calls herself an amateur dog trainer.

Harriet has devoted herself to emotions — not only of the canine variety, but of humans as well. She has worked with troubled teens and their families, and with couples, as she traveled in a triangle from Ohio to California to Oregon. Born and raised in Cleveland, Harriet loved learning at public school and at Jewish school, as well as at Case Western Reserve University, graduating with a social work degree. Like many women then, she became engaged. Unlike those women, twice she shied away from marrying the same fiancé. Why? She’d had a taste of California one summer and wanted to return to develop a career as a single woman. Social work was a wide open, innovative field in the late 1960s.

At Camarillo, California, State Hospital, she worked with children and adolescents. She was offered a stipend at the University of California at Berkeley. It was 1969. She discovered that everyone was too busy with politics to go to classes, so she dropped out to ski. At California State University, Sonoma, she enrolled in a nontraditional master’s degree in family therapy. Students worked on projects in groups. That degree, Harriet said, “was the ticket to wherever I wanted to go.” One student in her group, member Esther Faber, mentioned one word in relation to Harriet: “Interface,” noting Harriet’s ability to



Harriet Markell in Austria, at the Belvedere Palace.

connect organizations and government institutions to solve problems for individuals.

Harriet’s first stop after earning her master’s degree was working with drug and alcohol prevention in Marin County schools, while taking on post-master’s family therapy training. Soon she escaped the county’s terrible traffic and headed to Portland, Oregon, in 1980, taking a job directed at preventing teens from being placed out of their homes. At the former Holladay Park Medical Center in Portland, she worked with a psychiatrist on an in-patient program for the same demographic for four years. It was during this time that Harriet met and married a social work colleague, for three years. While the marriage did not last, Harriet’s work life thrived in Oregon and beyond.

“I believe in treating people in the least restrictive environment possible, whether they have insurance or not,” she said. In the new program, education, social services and public health departments “put money into a pot to ensure each child a place in the community” rather than in a specialized residence.

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END OF YEAR AT CBI



1. Singer Chava Mirel with Andrea Shupack and Rabbi Samuels after her concert; 2. 7th graders above Seattle at the Space Needle; 3. 5th-7th graders' group picture in Seattle; 4. Lighting candles during 4th Night for Others; 5. CBI community watching the Chanukah performances; 6. Richard Widekher and Jay Braunstein singing Light One Candle at the Hanukkah party; 7. Craft table at the Hanukkah party; 8. Emma Konikoff spinning a dreidel; 9. The 2018 Dreidel Spinning champions; 10. David Bertrand, Rabbi Samuels, L.K. Langley, and Todd Witte at the Hanukkah party.



Experience a flash-mob Shabbat dinner

BY MELISSA SCHAPIRO

It's Friday afternoon, and you'd love to share a Shabbat meal with family and friends, but you don't know what to make for dinner, let alone who to invite.

That's where the Shabbat Dinner Crowd comes in.

Bellingham's Shabbat Dinner Crowd is a listserv—basically, a group email—open to anyone in the Jewish community to participate in a “flash mob” dinner experience. The Bellingham group was organized through Congregation Beth Israel, but is open to nonmembers as well.

The idea is this: Have an opportunity for a no-pressure, casual get-together on Friday evenings when Beth Israel either has an early service (third Fridays), or no service (fifth Fridays). Participants bring a dish to share, and the host provides the place, the utensils, challah and wine for Kiddush.

The Sunday before, an automated e-mail is sent to the group asking for a volunteer to host. When someone replies that they will host, they provide details about location, food issues (dairy/*parve*, allergies, etc.), and what time to show up. Participants reply to say they will attend. That's it!

We have had many successful gatherings—large and small, with all



ages of attendees. If it looks like too many people are signing up to fit into the host's space, they can close their RSVP, and a second host can jump in. We have members in areas outside Bellingham, and this is also a great opportunity to have hosts in areas such as Blaine or Mount Vernon, for example. It's a great way to meet new people, visit with old friends, and get to know one another in a fun environment.

If you're not on the email list, you can sign up at bethisraelbellingham.org/shabbat-dinner-crowd/

When the listserv was first set up, it included every Beth Israel member at the time. If you have unsubscribed

and want to sign up again, you need to use a different email address. It is designed that way to protect people's rights to unsubscribe.

Also, please be aware that by replying to any Shabbat Dinner Crowd email, you are sending it to everyone on the list—no personal emails, no need to send regrets. The listserv is only for offering to host, rsvp'ing, or asking a question about the dinner that would be relevant to everyone.

Questions? Please email me at webmaster@bethisraelbellingham.org



Happy New Year!

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Anniversaries

Jan. 1	Ella & Alan Barney	(# 6)
Jan. 4	Jack & Ruth Schneider	(# 50)
Jan. 4	Alan & Bonnie Stone	(# 66)
Jan. 6	David Goldman and Linda Blackwell	(# 35)
Jan. 8	Lindsey & Jordan Genut	(# 10)
Feb. 17	Rob & Kathy Grossman	(# 13)
Feb. 17	David & Carol Robinson	(# 39)

Did we miss your anniversary? Call the office at (360) 733-8890 or email office@bethisraelbellingham.org with the month, day & year of your special day.

To the women of CBI... it's never too late to support the Sisterhood!

Our annual dues are \$25. Please consider helping the Sisterhood continue to support our congregation and

youth with your membership. You can send a check written out to: Beth Israel Sisterhood c/o Miriam Davids, 2740 E. 56th Vista, Bellingham, WA. or pay through the CBI website.

Summer Camp Scholarships

The Camp Scholarship Fund will be able to award 15 scholarships of \$250 for members of our congregation to attend a URJ Summer Camp

in 2019. Please email Miriam Davids (runmjz@gmail.com) with your child(ren)'s names and which camp they will be attending. We trust only families in need of a little help will apply. These are awarded on a first come, first serve basis. The deadline for applying is February 15, 2019.

FROM THE RABBI

Continued from Page 1

incredible to think of the three hundred-year lifespan of this Torah. It has lived in Russia, Lithuania, California, Bellingham and now I can say it has also been to Israel. How remarkable that this sacred scroll which was once smuggled out of Lithuania during a pogrom, in my great-grandmother's coat, was chanted from by a *Bat Mitzvah* in the Jewish homeland!

Israel has always been a special place for me. It is there that I began to fall in love with my Jewish heritage. It is also there that I realized how Jews are a diverse group. We don't all look alike or practice our faith similarly. In fact, I remember walking through Mea Shearim and thinking how different I am than my ultra-Orthodox siblings. But despite these major differences in the way we live, and in our lives and how we see the world, I understood that we are all connected in a profound way.

I hope that my children will realize that they, too, are part of *Klal Yisrael*, the global Jewish community, and that no matter where they go, there will likely be a group of Jews eager to feed them on Shabbat or include them in celebrating our festivals.

I look forward to sharing more about my experience in Israel with you on Friday, January 11 at our 7:30 pm Shabbat service.

— RABBI JOSHUA SAMUELS

Cantor's announcements

Intermediate Torah Trope

Sundays, 7:00–8:00 pm

Starting January 6 for 6 sessions (No class Jan. 20th). Learn how to chant from the Torah. Andrea Shupack teaches in a simple and clear way, demystifying the art of chanting, and making it achievable for everyone.

This class is for those who have taken any trope class before, or have some previous knowledge of the trope melodies and rules. If you would like to continue practicing, refresh, or deepen your skills, this class is for you.

Singing group Kol B'yachad: Voices Together

2nd Saturday of the month, 1:15–2:30 pm

January 12; February 9; April 13; May 11; June 8 (No group in March). Come learn melodies for Shabbat services and other beautiful and fun Jewish music in an informal setting. No knowledge of Hebrew, liturgy, or music necessary. Open to all. Come have fun singing together and learning new music.

Prayer Book Hebrew

Tuesdays, 7:00–8:00 pm

10 sessions, starting March 12. In this class students will learn how to understand the Hebrew in the prayer book. Students will learn the vocabulary most common to the prayers, and Hebrew grammar. After

this class, students will become comfortable reciting and understanding the prayers. The textbook used will be *Prayer Book Hebrew the Easy Way*. Reading Hebrew is required. Fee: \$45 (\$20 for the class, \$25 for the textbook). Registration is required by March 6 to order textbooks.

Interfaith Music Festival

February 24, 2:45–5:00 pm

At First Congregational Church, 2401 Cornwall Ave. Beth Israel will be represented at this musical celebration, which brings diverse music from member congregations of the Interfaith Coalition. This is also a fundraiser to support the important work we are a part of with Interfaith Coalition, providing emergency transitional housing for homeless and supporting our marginalized neighbors in Whatcom County.

Special Fund Donations

CARE COMMITTEE

IN APPRECIATION TO:

The Committee – Thank you for all your support

From: *Nancy Lloyd*

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY

IN APPRECIATION TO:

Rabbi Samuels – Thank you for all your support

From: *Nancy Lloyd*

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Jason Goldberg (Beverly Hills, CA) – in memory of his father, Jim Goldberg

From: *Marilyn Marker & Bud Shapiro (Rancho Mirage, CA)*

COMMEMORATING YAHREZIT OF:

Esther Mazur

From: *Phyllis & Shelly Mazur*

THE GENERAL FUND

IN MEMORY OF:

The Pittsburgh victims and their families

From: *Kathleen Kershner*

IN APPRECIATION TO:

The Beth Israel congregation

From: *Nancy Lloyd*

THE MAX GLASS LIBRARY FUND

IN MEMORY OF:

Our slain brethren at the Tree of Life Synagogue – for the Children's Library

From: *Dick & Bonnie Cavell (Camano Island)*

NEW SYNAGOGUE FUND

IN APPRECIATION TO:

Ahuva Scharff, David Zimmerman and Rabbi Samuels, for establishing the monthly conservative-style service

From: *Ruth Evans*

Dan Raas – Thank you for all your support

From: *Nancy Lloyd*

IN HONOR OF:

Dan Raas, for his years of service to the URJ

From: *Steve & Janis Ban*

Ruth Evans

Sylvia Williams

Michael Sommers, on becoming a Bar Mitzvah

From: *Paul Blum & Alison Zak*

Gayle Gordon-Martin & Steve Martin

Karen Sloss, for her many years of hard work and selfless devotion to the Jewish community of Bellingham

From: *David & Jill Elkayam*

Karen Sloss, on her retirement

From: *David Goldman & Linda Blackwell*

Sylvia Williams

The CBI Board and Committees, who keep the future of Judaism in our community alive and vibrant

From: *Gayle Gordon-Martin & Steve Martin*

The marriage of our son Avram Eisner to his wonderful wife Monali Patel on August 5, 2018

From: *Jerry & Marilyn Eisner*

The wedding of Amanda Robins & Daniel Zagnoli

From: *Paul Blum & Alison Zak*

Kayla, Jonah & Noah Swartzberg (San Diego, CA) – Happy Chanukah!

From: *Joy Gardner*

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO:

*Jackie Van Vliet Carmell (Rancho Mirage, CA)

*Elizabeth Schuessler (Del Mar, CA)

*Sally Kaminski (Elyria, OH)

*Barbara Bindler (Visalia, CA)

*Christine Self (Kirkland, WA)

*Marilyn Phillips (La Conner, WA)

From: *Joy Gardner*

DEEPEST SYMPATHY TO:

Debbie Aylott and family, to the blessed memory of Anne Brown

From: *Jerry & Marilyn Eisner*

IN MEMORY OF:

The eleven souls who died in Pittsburgh

From: *Gayle Gordon-Martin & Steve Martin*

CONTRIBUTION FROM:

The Paul & Rebekah Bonde Charitable Fund

HARRIET MARKELL

Continued from Page 8

Concerned for uninsured youngsters, she got involved in managed care insurance. This led to eight years with United Behavioral Health from 1992 - 2000, "running different departments, doing everything but paying claims." She was asked to travel to Seattle to run the King County mental health system, then returned to Cleveland after that gig to work for the Jewish Family Service Association.

On returning to her hometown, Harriet said, "You can go home again. I met up with family and

friends from high school, and I was back in the environment where I grew up including my conservative synagogue, which I loved."

From 2005 until 2016, a sequence of jobs ensued that gave her additional directorial and business development experience. After an Eastern European tour in Fall 2016, retirement led her to Bellingham, attracting her with its beauty, hiking trails, and art scenes, "all the big city amenities on a smaller scale," she said. She also saw folks she had met before, among them, Esther Faber, Sara Geballe, and Steve James whom she had met on a trip to eastern Europe.

Between reminiscing, the subject of Louis, Super Poodle, came up. Blotting tears, Harriet said she had to give him up because of extensive commuting. Louis now lives at a Sacramento trainer's two-dog, two-cat home and continues to do agility twice a month. In 2016 and not commuting anymore, Harriet ached for a dog like Louie. She notified a rescue organization specializing in poodles... but wait a minute!... on her computer, she found a mixed breed from Yuma City. She raced to the rescue. On first seeing the black and silver pooch Lily, "I melted," she said.

Jewish spiritual direction: It's a "thing" now!

BY ROBY BLECKER

"God was in this place, and I did not know it."
— *Genesis 28:16*

Ever since Jacob said those words, we Jews have had a long tradition of missing the presence of the Divine in our individual lives and ordinary experiences. At least in part because of this, some Jews moved to Buddhism or Christianity or other religions to seek something they were convinced they could not find in Judaism. As recently as 25 years ago, they might have had a point. They might have sensed that, while we were trying to make the world a better place, we were starving our souls without realizing it.

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz wrote that the soul on earth has two purposes: The first is to help perfect the outer world; the second is to raise itself. We have been terrific at the first purpose—we are masters at *zedakah*; we often vote against our own economic interests; we stand up for the rights of others; we are generous with the physical needs of our own community. While it can be argued that our souls go along for the ride, we are not so good at taking ourselves upward or inward, even though we pray at services for our souls to soar.

Some people believe there may be a dimension in our lives which can open us more fully to an encounter with an infinite unknowable which our ancestors called God. Spiritual direction is one way to become more easily aware of that dimension.

As Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel wrote, we can find the extraordinary within the ordinary. Some of us notice—and others may suspect—there's something going on at the periphery of consciousness, but the map to find it is still a mystery.

This can be true of rabbis, as well. Some years ago, when I served as one of the facilitators of the Conservative Movement's Conference on Spirituality, we discovered that seminaries had not been training students on spiritual issues. That's been changing recently, though it's only really in the last several years that there are Jewish spiritual directors who have been trained by other Jews. Many spiritual directors with years of experience—including me—were taught in Christian programs, since those were the only ones available.

Jewish spiritual direction as a legitimate part of Jewish practice is about 15 years old now, and it is a good choice for those who seek to explore the possibilities which might be open to someone seeking increased awareness of that other dimension.

Sometimes people ask, "What happens in spiritual direction?" One answer is very Jewish, because it's also a question: "What are you hoping will happen?" Each person's path is different, because each person is different. A first meeting with a potential director is an exploration of the fit between director and directee. Later meetings move in any number of ways, depending on the directee's wishes and needs.

In the preface to his book on Jewish spiritual direction, Rabbi Howard Avruhm Addison sums it up very well: "More than ever before, contemporary Jews are seeking spiritual fulfillment. They recognize sparks of holiness in their lives and want to connect them with Jewish tradition, but don't necessarily know how." Rabbi Addison goes on to say that spiritual direction can have a profound impact on the life of both the seeker and the guide. As someone who has been guiding seekers for more than a dozen years, I can testify to the accuracy of that statement.

Vermeda M. Fred, MFT, MFA



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A NEW LAY-LED MINYAN

Continued from Page 6

AHUVA: I think the fact that we've had so much support for the service indicates there is a need for a variety of types of services in this community. On the whole, those who attend are active and happy with the services. We would like to offer a full Torah service, but to do that, we will need more Torah readers.

What will our congregants experience when they attend this lay-led minyan on the 4th Saturday of the month? Will our less traditional members feel out of place?

AHUVA: There are no musical instruments. The service is longer than the Reform service. It is almost all in

Hebrew. The prayers are the same, but the music is different, older melodies mostly from Europe. That's what's different. But it's a "regular" Jewish Shabbat morning service, so any member of the congregation is going to recognize what's happening. For those who are not well-versed in Hebrew, I say come anyway. The way we learn Hebrew is to use it.

Do either of you have any other visions for the future of CBI?

DAVID: I love that we are heading in a direction of more diversity in our services. Andrea Shupack's contemplative service is similar to a Renewal service. We have a lot of members who love this. The Conservative services reach out to the more traditional style of worship. The Reform ser-

vice reaches the core of our shul. We are unique. Being diverse is a beautiful thing. It will help our synagogue grow and that is what I want.

AHUVA: CBI is a welcoming community, but I'd like to see it develop so that there is less friction between "more" and "less" traditional members. There need not be division between groups. I might prefer a "more traditional" Shabbat service, but I also applaud that this community is actively involved in social justice issues and offers a variety of classes from Shulchan Aruch to martial arts. It isn't about being one thing or another, but creating space for all Jews to interact with Torah and our traditions in the ways that are most meaningful to each of us.

Care Committee news

BY ELSE SOKOL

Winter is here, and the days are at their shortest and coldest, which means many of us are spending more time indoors and in close contact with friends, family, and co-workers. It is no wonder that the incidence of flu typically reaches its highest peaks between late December and February! What can we do to stay as healthy as possible? 1) Take the time to get your flu shot; 2) Try to avoid contact with sick people; 3) Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer; 4) Avoid touching your face, eyes and nose—that's how germs are spread; 5) Cover your coughs and sneezes and dispose of tissues right away, followed by a good hand-washing; and 6) Stay at home, if you are feeling unwell. If you have a fever, do not venture back to school, work, synagogue, or other public places for a full 24 hours after the fever has subsided. For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/flu.

It is time to get soapy! We will be conducting a hand-washing clinic for our Keshet Sunday School students on January 27, 2019. Students will be able to lather up and get real-time feedback about just how effective their technique is.



Take good care!
The Care Committee



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Yahrzeits

Observances follow the Hebrew calendar, unless the secular date is requested, and are read on the Shabbat prior to the observance date.

Friday, January 4

William Aron Dorfman	1/5
Nathaniel Jacob Hirsh	1/5
Sherwood Jacobson	1/5
Dorothea Zimmerman	1/5
Martin Katz	1/6
Celia Morton	1/6
Maurice (Maury) Schwartz	1/6
Daniel Weinstein	1/6
Florence Weintraub	1/6
Marion Glassman	1/7
Shirley Spiegel Jacobson	1/7
Henry Jantzen	1/7
Louis Lebowitz	1/7
Philip Studen	1/7
Morris Kalman Patinkin	1/9
Brian House	1/10
Joyce Landau	1/10
Harry Suslow	1/10
Victorie Haislip	1/11

Friday, January 11 and Saturday, January 12

Sylvia Goldman	1/12
Leo Damski	1/13
Mary Bayer Koplowitz	1/13
Earl Krauzer	1/13
Jerome Selznick	1/13
Reisa Thal	1/13
Rachel Adirim	1/14
Magda Dorman	1/14
Eleanor Scharff	1/14
(Arabelle) Chaya Schlanger	1/14
Anna Schwartz	1/14
Libby Hildes	1/15
Harold Earl Perper	1/16
Joel K. Rubenstein	1/16
Morris Faber	1/17
Fred Graff	1/17
Lillian Mauer Pravda	1/17
George Markell	1/18
Florence D. Shain	1/18

Friday, January 18 and Saturday, January 19

Florence Kleinfeld	1/19
Sylvan Rosenthal	1/19
Jerry Kleinfeld	1/20
Lawrence Weintraub	1/20

Sally Evans	1/21
Samuel (Rabbi) Gartner	1/21
Irving Lackowitz	1/21
Peter Bayliss	1/22
Sarah Mendelsohn	1/22
Celia Zak	1/22
Leona Chorney Sondik	1/23
Sandor Garfinkle	1/25
Claire P. Mayer	1/25

Friday, January 25

Frank Kraus	1/26
Norma Schwartz	1/26
Meyer Wolpov	1/27
Derrek Jeremy Adelstein	1/29
Helen Pecarsky	1/29
David Shain	1/29
Helen Stone	1/29
Simcha Hayim Miller	1/30
Daniel Weis	1/30
Laura Ann Bourne	1/31
Morris Leibo	1/31
Rhoda "Ronnie" Stahlberg	1/31
Paul Sondik	2/1

Friday, February 1

Leonard Berman	2/2
Rita Gordon	2/2
William Freeman	2/3
Burton Sklar	2/3
Sarah Baron	2/4
Gloria Perper	2/4
Elinor Pravda	2/4
Hally Vernon	2/4
Rochelle Blum	2/5
Isadore Graff	2/5
Hannah Jacobson	2/5
Michel Oksenberg	2/5
Ruth "Bubbles" Berman	2/6
David Fine	2/6
(George) Gabriel Krauzer	2/6
Steven R. Rivkin	2/6
Judith T. Sklar	2/6
Clarence Weiner	2/6
Lillian Heller	2/7
Linda Kaplowitz	2/7
Benjamin Solomon	2/7
Sonia Kohl Krauzer	2/8

Friday, February 8 and Saturday, February 9

Jean Beverly Blank	2/9
Richard Evans	2/9
Betty Goldberger	2/9
Clara Lazarus	2/11
Mitchel J. Lazarus	2/11
Sadie Gordon Schiller	2/11
William Schwartz	2/12
Frieda Blank	2/13
Albert Lebovich	2/13
David Shure	2/14
Lou Fine	2/15
Ruth Lippman	2/15

Friday, February 15 and Saturday, February 16

Ken Biggin	2/16
Dorothy Ramras	2/16
Cassandra Champagne	2/17
Alice Duckworth	2/17
Jack Eigen	2/17
Joseph Sonneman	2/17
William E. Whiting	2/18
Robert Baker	2/19
David Boman	2/19
Phyllis Goldin	2/19
Jack Kahn	2/19
Gilbert Orlik	2/19
George Schwartz	2/19
Harold Shepard	2/19
Jerry Glass	2/20
Max J. Schwartz	2/20
BJ Elder	2/21
Nelson Beller	2/22
Phil H. Miller	2/22
Walter von Hollander	2/22

Friday, February 22

Charles Baron	2/24
Emma Gartner	2/25
Benjamin Goldberg	2/26
Shirley Boman	2/28
Gene Adelstein	3/1
Muriel Anzman	3/1

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This event has been popular for all ages—from babies to *bubbes*. The Seder will include vegetarian, gluten-free, and dairy-free options. Beginning in January, you can register online at www.bethisraelbellingham.org or complete the registration form by printing it and sending it to the CBI office.

*We welcome donations to help cover
increased catering costs.*

