

We gathered for a special Yom HaShoah memorial presentation as well as a beautiful Mother's Day concert titled Our Yiddishe Mames, which featured music centered around motherhood, childhood and love.



Off the Bimah

Summer Season Has Arrived by Rabbi Jack Dermer



Dear Friends,

With this June edition of our Temple Beth Torah bulletin, we have officially begun our summer season.

As we enter the summer months, we recall in our liturgical cycle that these weeks mark the beginning of the period known as Bein HaMetzarim, a time "between"

the narrow straits." During these weeks, Jews bring to mind the multitude of challenges our people have encountered throughout history, culminating with Tisha B'av, our day of collective mourning in late July. But it must be noted that these weeks are not merely weeks of sorrow and despair, they are also weeks in which we celebrate the strength and creativity of the Jewish spirit. Each and every day, I am inspired by the ways in which that spirit is alive and well at Temple Beth Torah. It has been a full spring filled with great programs and the joys of togetherness, and we have so much to look forward to as warmer weather brings us outdoors for Kabbalat Shabbat under the stars, and other new initiatives.

The summer weeks of Bein HaMetzarim point us, not only back in history, but forward toward our future potential. I am proud of the intense commitment and thoughtfulness that our community members and leadership have displayed through this year, my second as your Rabbi.

There is a story from the Talmud that comes to mind about a legendary sage named Ben Zoma. It is recorded in Tractate Berakhot 58a that Ben Zoma, seeing a multitude of Jewish travelers come together in Jerusalem, would offer the private blessing, Baruch Shebara Kol Elu, "Blessed is the One who has created us, allowing us to come together for Divine service." While many travel and go on vacation through these summer months, I hope to see those who are in town for our Minyanim, Shabbat services, and so much more more. Ben Zoma's words, blessed is the One who created us to come together for Divine service, remain close to my heart, and I look forward with excitement to sharing many meaningful moments with all of you in these warmer months to come.

B'Shalom, Rabbi Dermer

Rise and Shine and Give God Your Glory by Cantor Scott Sokol



One of my favorite parashot this month is Parshat Beha'alotcha. It was my sister's Bat Mitzvah (who is two years older than me), so was the first haftarah I ever "learned" (i.e., by osmosis as she was studying it all those months). The word beha'alotcha means to cause to rise up, and refers to light-

ing or kindling a flame: b'ha'alotcha et hanerot. It is an unusual expression to be sure. Why does it not say the more common "lehadlik ner" when you kindle the light, as we say every Shabbat or chanuka?

There are a lot of answers of course to this question. I think the most profound is that these are no normal flames alluded to in the Torah. We are talking about the ceremonial menorah in the Temple, the seven-branched golden candelabra. This menorah and the flames of its candles are candlesticks, but I believe also symbolize each of us.

As it says in the Book of Proverbs, Mishlei: *The* spirit of man is the candle of the Lord, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

The menorah represents the way of Torah, as it says in an earlier section of Proverbs: For the commandment is a lamp; and the Torah is light.

The multi-armed aspect of the Menorah represents the multiple paths through which we can find Torah and ultimately God. Each of us has our own path, and in education as in life we need to find the path we will be able to access Torah. This thought is of course conveyed in yet one more sentence from Proverbs, one of my most favorite as a special educator: *Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*

An important idea with this seven-branched candelabra, though, is that the seven branches were all forged from one piece of gold. This tells us that despite our differences, our goal to shed light on the world through God's Torah is a shared goal. Each of our individual lights creates the overall light and warmth put out by the candles.

There is one more equally important point which Rashi alludes to in his discussion of the parsha, and

Press from Our Leaders

Thanks For The Memories by Michael Cohen, Co-President



If any of you ever wished to see time fly, accept a position of leadership in your Temple.

It's very hard for me to acknowledge that I am soon approaching the end of my two year term as Co-President at Temple Beth Torah. I take great pride, and share that pride with the very de-

voted members of both the Executive Board and the Board of Trustees.

Together with our clergy, we have reopened the Temple post-pandemic and created fabulous events that will remain as traditions long into the future. Latkes, Vodkas and Laughs during Chanukah, our Community-wide Second Night Seder during Passover, Yom HaShoah, and other themed events were very well attended and enjoyed. I'll bet that very few of you had attended Purim services in tie-dyed shirts and sung seasonal songs using The Beatles' melodies before this year.

Leadership entails much planning and requires much dedication and cooperation. I came up with a plan I call **The Four A's**, after one particularly long lasting meeting.

Let me try to explain:

- Aware: In order to solve a problem, I had to first be aware of it. It was a large learning curve for me. With the help of Rabbi Dermer and many others – too many to mention – I took a deep dive to learn as much as I could about the history of Temple Beth Torah and our long-standing traditions.
- Accept: Once I accepted the position and realized how much help surrounded me, and that I didn't need to fix everything myself, I was able to seek opinions from many of the members of both boards. The exchange of thoughts and solutions were most helpful, even if they were opposite of mine. I have a great deal of respect for the acumen, as well as the unified approach of determining what was in the best interest of the Temple at

Religious School Update by Adele Lalo, Educator

After a nice and long Passover break, our Temple Beth Torah Vav class students returned to class brighteyed and ready to learn more, albeit during only two sessions this month. Despite the shorter time frame, we managed to squeeze in quite a few topics.

Firstly, with regard to Hebrew reading, I am glad to report our Vav students remain at a good level, thanks to some practice in class, the one-on-one reading tutorials, as well as regular reading homework throughout the year. Also, this past month, our students were able to master the reading of another prayer goal, namely, the well-known and important Oseh Shalom prayer, which is a prayer for peace and is recited three times a day after the Amidah prayer. Looking back over the year, I am proud to state that our class has successfully mastered the reading of many important prayer goals.

We have also discussed a couple of weekly Torah portions this past month; specifically, Tazria-Metzora and Acharei-Kedoshim. Tazria-Metzora teaches about ritual impurity and purity, as well as some of the procedures involved in attaining purity. One of these is the important ritual of the mikvah, which is the immersion in a ritual pool of water. Commonly, married women who have menstruated or have given birth will immerse in this ritual bath for purification purposes. We are also reminded of the important ritual rite of male circumcision on the eighth day of life. In Acharei-Kedoshim, the Torah teaches about prohibitions related to korbanot - animal sacrifices - and while we do not have the holy Temple or animal sacrifices today, we learn that we must do precisely what is commanded of us; nothing more and nothing less, regardless of the mitzvah. Also, this portion mentions the prohibition against idolatry, the mitzvah of charity, Shabbat, sexual morality, honesty in business, the honoring of one's parents, and the sacredness of life. Finally, we are also introduced to the crucial and famous saving by Rabbi Akiva – "Love your fellow as yourself" – which hopefully needs no explanation.

In addition to Hebrew reading and Torah portion review, we also reviewed the somber and important day known as Yom HaShoah, which falls on the 27th of the Hebrew month of Nisan, and is otherwise known as Holocaust Remembrance Day. Our class appreciated the importance of setting a day aside to remember the

Around the Congregation

Cantor (Continued from Page 2)

the unusual verb b'ha'alotcha that opens it.

Rashi says the reason we use words of raising up is that the priest had to apply flame to the wick until the flame rose up on its own, shining independenly. Interpreting this idea further, Rabbi Eliyahu Touger states the following:

Rising up is so a person doesn't remain content with his current level, no matter how refined. Instead, he should seek to proceed further, searching for a higher and more complete degree of Divine service. 'On its own' reminds us that a person must internalize the influence of his teachers until their light becomes his own. The knowledge he learns should endow him with the power to 'shine' independently. Moreover, he should 'rise on his own,' i.e., the desire to proceed should become one's own nature. Even without the encouragement of others, he should continually seek to advance.

This then is my prayer for all of us this month, to raise up the flame of our inner selves in service to God and community.

Have a great summer!

President (Continued from Page 3)

all times.

- Adjust: I needed, and tried hard, to adjust to the many needs of the Temple and the individual congregants. Flexibility in approaching the many diverse needs was critical.
- Action: Once I mastered the three A's above, I
 had to have a plan of action. Together with a
 most creative group, we were able to map out
 a plan to attack problems and come up with a
 strategy to move into the future.

After two years of migraines and medication, I go on to future membership on the Executive Board, as the immediate Past President. I do so with the knowledge and great feelings about the ability of both boards to sustain and improve Temple Beth Torah under the leadership of Nancy Marshall. Together with our Rabbi and Cantor, the coming years look great.

Whatever small part I had in getting to this moment gives me much nachas. To think that I was entrusted in this role is very humbling. I appreciate your confidence in me. The events of the past two years will linger a long time in my book of memories.

School (Continued from Page 3)

attempted destruction of the Jewish people by Adolf Hitler and Nazi Germany. Indeed the word Holocaust essentially refers to "a complete or thorough sacrifice or destruction, especially by fire, of large numbers of human beings." In Israel, a two-minute siren is sounded and places of entertainment are closed. Our students understood that the failure to remember the atrocities sets us up for a repeat of history. Therefore, we vow to remember those who were murdered as well as listen to those who survived to tell their unique and haunting stories.

We also reviewed the special day known as Yom Hazikaron - Israel's Memorial Day - which is commemorated on the fourth day of the Hebrew month of Iyar. Israel remembers all of its fallen soldiers, including those who fought for Israel's independence as well as those who were killed while on active duty. Two sirens are sounded – one the evening before and the second on the following morning - and the somber mood is carried throughout the day with memorial candles and prayers recited. Our students appreciated the importance of remembering those who sacrificed their lives to create and protect the Jewish homeland. We also reviewed the joyful day known as Yom Ha'atzmaut – translated to Day of Independence - which falls on the day after Yom Hazikaron, and whose Hebrew date is the fifth of Ivar. We celebrate Israel's Independence Day, which occurred on May 14,1948, just as Jews in Israel and all over the world do as well. We also reviewed the design of the Israeli flag, the emblem of the State of Israel, the national anthem known as Hatikvah, and the capital of Israel -Jerusalem. Our students even saw and read through a copy of the Declaration of Israel's Independence.

Relatedly, our students wrote a short essay, sharing their thoughts on the importance of both Yom Hazikaron, and Yom Ha'atzmaut, and why they believe they are commemorated so close together. Their reflections were hung on our hall bulletin board. Moreover, our class reviewed the vital Jewish value of Ahavat Tziyon – love of Israel – and the importance for Jews all over the world to support Israel, since it is the homeland of every Jew. Finally, our students got the chance to decorate beautiful dog tag necklaces in remembrance of all the many wonderful and brave Israeli soldiers.

We look forward to learning a bit more before the year ends, and looking back on everything we have covered throughout the year!

Recent Events

On Monday, April 17, we hosted a special Yom HaShaoh memorial presentation and service. We were joined by a special presenter and longtime Temple Beth Torah member: Harry Rapaport. Harry shared the story of the two Holocaust Sifrei Torah which are held safely in our ark for use throughout the year as well as the families that made certain these precious Torahs could survive to horrors of the Shoah.

Later in April, Temple Beth Torah celebrated Israel with an Israeli-themed Shabbat dinner. Then, on Saturday, April 22, congregants came dressed in blue and white as Rabbi Dermer and Cantor Sokol featured special melodies and prayers for Israel as well as a sermon on the future of the United States and Israel relations. On Sunday, April 23, participants took a trip to the Irving Roth Holocaust Resource Center at Temple Judea in Manhasset for a guided tour of the Irv Roth Holocaust Resource Center and discussion with Dr. Richard Quinlan.

On Monday, April 24, Temple Beth Torah went to the Tilles Center for the UJA Witness Project. There was an incredibly moving presentation which bridged the gap between our Jewish history and our Jewish future. This deeply impactful program keeps the memory of the Holocaust alive in the hearts and minds of the next generation, and helps the survivors who are involved come to terms with their troubling past.

Then, we hosted a very special concert program this Mother's Day, on Sunday, May 14, titled *Our Yiddishe Mames*, which featured some superb vocalists and musicians in a program of opera, classical, Yiddish, Hebrew and popular music, all centered around motherhood, childhood and love. The concert featured Cantor Scott Sokol, Cantor Benjamin Warschawski, Heather Johnson, Benjamin Sokol and Francene Sokol, with pianist Elliot Roman and special guest Ken Maltz.

Yasher koach to our Men's Club for hosting a wonderful Night Out at Cho-Sen Village in Great Neck!

Follow Temple Beth Torah on Facebook to see additional pictures.







Recent Events











Recent Events











Upcoming Events for June 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
A Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Sounds of Music with Ned Dorman, 7:00 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	6 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	7 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
11 Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	12 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	13 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	14 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Rosh 19 Chodesh Tammuz Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Rosh 20 Chodesh Tammuz Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	21 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	26 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	27 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	28 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events for June 2023

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3
Table Talk, 7:00 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Candle Lighting, 8:03 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	Shabbat Services, 9:45 a.m. Minha Services, 8:00 p.m.
8	9	10
Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Candle Lighting, 8:08 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	Shabbat Services, 9:45 a.m. Minha Services, 8:05 p.m.
15	16	17
Sisterhood Game Night, 7:00 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Candle Lighting, 8:11 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	Shabbat Services, 9:45 a.m. Minha Services, 8:10 p.m.
22	23	24
Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Candle Lighting, 8:13 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	Shabbat Services, 9:45 a.m. Minha Services, 8:15 p.m.
29	30	
Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Candle Lighting, 8:13 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	

Upcoming Event Spotlight

Our leadership and clergy work tirelessly to craft experiences which will be inspirational, meaningful and safe for all involved.

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Torah is still
active and
thriving. If you
haven't come by
lately, please do!
There's always
something going
on here at
Temple Beth
Torah!

We value our members and your opinions.

If you have ideas
for future
programs or
events, or if you
have any
questions or
concerns, please
don't hesitate to
reach out to our
office, our
co-presidents
and/or our
clergy.

Upcoming Events

Join us for Temple Beth Torah's Monthly Table Talk Sessions

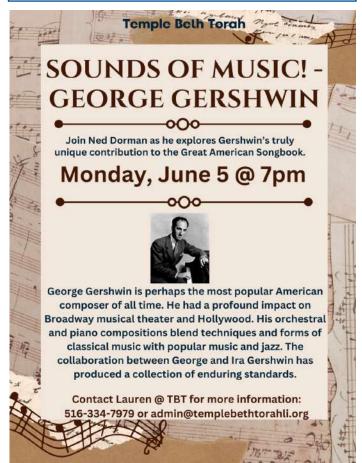
Family, friends, frustrations, worries, stress, joys – let's talk about it during Temple Beth Torah's monthly Table Talk sessions. Carolyn Newman is our facilitator during this monthly meeting, where congregants can share some of life's ongoing challenges in a safe, confidential, and supportive space. Meetings are held in the Temple library at 7 p.m. Keep an eye on the Temple emails for the date of the next session.

New Adult Ed Class Began in May

The questions which surround medical ethics are among the most complex, personal, and hotly debated in our society today. What Jewish values and texts can help inform the decisions Jews make about end of life care, organ donation, abortion, pandemic responses, gender affirming surgeries, and all of the many other difficult ethical questions which come up in personal and societal life? Join Rabbi Dermer for a deep dive into the history and future of all things Jewish medical ethics every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m. in our social hall.







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FRIDAY EVENING, 6:30 P.M.

SATURDAY MORNING, 9:45 A.M.

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