

The Temple Beth Torah Times

December 2025

Kislev / Tevet 5786

Volume LV No. 74



Our Sisterhood hosted a Lunch & Learn session with Rabbi Kayley Romick, and then Temple Beth Torah worked with Chaplains locally and abroad to support troops and enhance Jewish soldiers' celebration of Hanukkah!



Off the Bimah

Dreidel - More Than Just a Spinning Top by Rabbi Jack Dermer



Dear Friends,

As we begin the month of Channukah, we feel a little closer to all of the wonderful winter traditions we know and love. We smile as we enjoy the delicious taste of Latkas, the lighting of the Menorah, and the songs and celebrations which have given strength to our people for so many generations.

We often think of the dreidel as just a fun activity for kids, but like everything in Jewish tradition, it is of course so much more. The origins of the game have to do with both children and with anti-Semitism. At a time when the public study of Torah was outlawed, the Rabbis tell us, Jewish children would play Dreidel not as a form of gambling, but on the contrary, as a way of distracting the authorities from the fact that we were secretly discussing matters of Torah.

Jewish tradition, in particular the Jewish mystical tradition, goes a step deeper. We learn that the four letters of the dreidel, (nun, gimmel, hay, dalet), are not merely instructions for playing the game, but are an acronym which allude the events of the Channukah story itself, writing out the words Nes Gadol Haya Sham, "a great miracle happened there."

Taking the study of the dreidel a step further, we can understand the entirety of the Channukah story in the image of this little spinning top. Jewish scholar and Rabbi Sidney Hoenig, who had a career at Yeshiva University as an expert on ancient Jewish scrolls, writes, "Symbolically, the top recalls the "turnover" of events when Judah the Maccabee's few forces vanquished and toppled the many in Antiochus' army. The natural sequence of events was overturned: the strong were spun into the hands of the weak, as enunciated in the Al ha-Nissim prayer of Channukah."

The spinning of the dreidel is not just about who gets to eat the most gelt, but an eternal reminder of the message of hope: Even in the face of overwhelming adversity, we as a people have turned destiny around, to create light where there was only darkness, to push back against forces of hatred and bigotry when goodness and wisdom were most threatened.

Continued on Page 4

The Most Wonderful Time of the Year by Cantor Scott Sokol



Yes, I am actually talking about Christmas. What? Why? Why would your friendly neighborhood cantor want to spend his allotted words in the newsletter to talk about the "other" winter holiday? The reason, as I'm sure some of you have already figured out, has to do with Christmas music and its relationship to

the Jewish neshama.

As a child who went to public school in a predominantly Catholic neighborhood, many of my friends of course celebrated Christmas (including some Jews of course, oy!). I love Christmas, not the religious part but the cultural, and especially the musical. As a child and teenager, I spent many years singing Christmas carols, caroling around my neighborhood with a school-based group, and even participated in a yearly competition in New York City of Christmas carols with my madrigal choir. I know them all (well, most at any rate).

I'm reminded of the hilarious Saturday Night Live skit from years ago, where there's one rabbi attending the fall athletic award ceremony of the parochial schools. As part of the meeting the group sings Christmas carols, starting several of them but stopping short in the middle, because no one knows the words beyond the first few lines. No one of course but the rabbi, who continues to sing them to the very end. Well that's this rabbi-cantor too; I know them in English (e.g., Carol of the Bells), Latin (e.g., Adeste fidelis) and German (e.g., Es ist ein Ros entsprungen), and more importantly I love them. They're great songs, with great music and lyrics.

But I'm not the only Jew who loves Christmas songs. As I'm sure many of you know, some of the best known and most beloved songs of the season were written by Jews. Here's a non-exhaustive list: the Christmas Song (i.e., Chestnuts roasting on an open fire) by Mel Torme; Let it Snow by Sammy Cahn and Jule Styne; It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year by George Wyle and Eddie Pola; Silver Bells by Ray Evans and Jay Livingston; and of course White Christmas by Irving Berlin. Johnny Marks (who inci-

Continued on Page 4

Press from Our Leaders

Press from the President
by Ken Maltz, President



Having just returned from an international vacation that included travel by both air and sea, accompanied by numerous security checks, I am reminded of the level of threats that travelers face throughout the world. Fortunately, more often than not, the professionals who are responsible for carrying out the

security inspections are well-trained and dedicated to ensuring that those who travel do so in a safe environment. We may become irritated at the intrusiveness of the body checks, the delays, the lines and so-on, but this is but a small price to pay for the protection provided.

A bit closer to home, we at Temple Beth Torah have been working towards providing increased security for the congregation. We are initiating both structural and technological additions and upgrades to stand guard over us as we pray, learn and engage in a variety of activities. You will soon see construction begin as we install physical barriers to our premises. You may also see video surveillance equipment set up in various locations and you will also **not** see some of the measures that stand guard over us. With that in mind, a few words on this subject are most appropriate.

During the past few years, as political and criminal threats have become more common, the phrase “if you see something, say something” has appeared in many public places. It’s not only a good idea to keep one’s eyes open to threats that may appear any place at all where people gather; but just as importantly, to let someone in a position of authority know about them. If you see a package, a suitcase, backpack lying around unaccompanied by its likely owner... tell someone.

Yet, there are times when the opposite, keeping quiet, may be the better choice.

There may come a time when we all will need a special code to gain access to the shul, or perhaps security personnel may be monitoring us unseen, or...who knows? The knowledge of these things is not grist for the gossip mill; it is not to be shared, lest it fall into the hands of someone out to do us harm. We

Continued on Page 4

Temple Beth Torah

December Calendar

Wednesday, 12/3 - Pizza & Parsha w/Rabbi Stanger @ TBT
Friday, 12/5 - Shabbat Dinner
Monday, 12/8 - Executive Board Meeting
Wednesday, 12/10 - Rabbi's Class
Thursday, 12/11 - Table Talk
Saturday, 12/13 - TBTot Shabbat
Sunday, 12/14-Monday, 12/22 - Chanukah
Sunday, 12/14 - Chanukah Concert
Monday, 12/15 - Spread Chanukah Cheer @ White Oaks Nursing Home
Wednesday, 12/17 - Rabbi's Class
Friday, 12/19-Sunday, 12/21 - Rosh Chodesh Tevet
Wednesday, 12/24 - Rabbi's Class
Thursday, 12/25 - Office Closed - Christmas
Friday, 12/26 - Kwanza
Monday, 12/29 - Board of Trustees Meeting
Tuesday, 12/30 - Fast of Tevet
Wednesday, 12/31 - Office Closed - New Years Eve

Happy Chanukah!



Temple Beth Torah Presents

Chanukah in Song and Celebration



Featuring a Concert of

The Jewish American Songbook

with Cantors Scott and Benjamin Sokol, Ken Maltz
and other world class musicians!

Sunday December 14,
3:00 pm

Join us for music, candle lighting,
latkes, sufganiyot and holiday fun!



TICKETS:

\$36

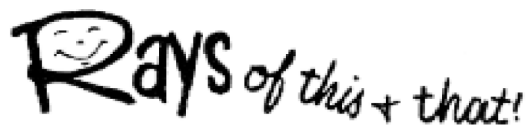
per person



RSVP by 12/8 by scanning the QR Code or sending a check to TBT or contact Lauren: 516-334-7979 or admin@templebethtorahli.org



Around the Congregation



Our condolences to the **Sacklow** family on the passing of **Stanley Rottell**, son-in-law of **Marilyn Sacklow**, husband of **Jean Sacklow**.

Our condolences to the **Ackerman** family on the passing of **Judith Ackerman**, wife of **Marty**, mother of **Marc** and **Dara** and mother-in-law of **Lauren Ackerman**, grandmother of **Alex** and **Brianna**.

Rabbi (Continued from Page 2)

Like the Maccabees before us, we live in a world which sometimes overwhelms us with its darkness. As we watch the little dreidel spin, and spin again, we are reminded of our mission, to turn a world which too often feels upside down, rightside up again, through our pride, our strength, and our commitment to acts of goodness. The dreidel's message, a great miracle happened there, doesn't just describe a one time event long ago. When we understand and live the message of the dreidel, when we don't lose hope in the triumph of light over darkness, and of good over evil, on the contrary, we can be the agents of miracles in our own world, right here, and right now.

Channukah Sameach,
Rabbi Dermer

President (Continued from Page 4)

don't have to tell our friends about the specifics of our security practices as we play Mah Jongg or golf, or attend kiddush and other social activities.

During World War II, it became popular to say "Loose Lips, Sink Ships." That phrase appeared on posters throughout the Allied nations, in radio broadcasts and in newspapers all over. The Yiddish phrase is "Makh nisht shvissen dikh" (Make like you don't know anything) while Woody Allen's mother would have said "What's it your business?"

Nu, if you are in or near Temple Beth Torah and you see something that looks like it shouldn't be there, if it looks treyf, tell one of our staff immediately so we can take the appropriate action. But...if you are tempted to share a bit of information about what we've done to keep ourselves safe, hold on to it. Better that the secret stays a secret, and we stay safe.

Cantor (Continued from Page 2)

dentally grew up in the town of my first synagogue, Mt. Vernon, NY) actually wrote four Christmas hits: Rudolph the Red-Nose Reindeer, Rockin Around the Christmas Tree, A Holly Jolly Christmas and Silver and Gold.

It's crazy, isn't it? But maybe not. Most of these songs were written at a time in the early 20th century when Jewish composers flocked to the music industry, one of the few professions of the time not plagued by antisemitism. Moreover, Jews know how to write from the heart, and also how to have a good time while doing it. Our own song cycles demonstrate those features all the time.

Furthermore, Jewish composers of the early to mid-20th century did not restrict their writings to Christmas songs. The vast majority of the songs that we all know and love from that era were composed by teams of Jewish songwriters. Names like Irving Berlin, the Gershwin brothers, Rogers and Hart (and Hammerstein), Jerome Kern, Loewe and Lerner and Harold Arlen to name just a few.

As fortune would have it (perhaps not that smooth a transition), the Temple Beth Torah community will have a great opportunity this month to sample a lot of this music at our Chanukah concert and holiday celebration on Sunday, December 14 at 3:00 p.m. I will be joined by my son Benjamin, Francene, Ken Maltz and a group of phenomenal musicians to share some of our favorite tunes with you. And you just might hear a Christmas song in the bunch for good measure. Be there or be a latke!

Chag urim sameach!



Around the Congregation

Recipe from Our Sisterhood: Thumbprint Chanukah Gelt Cookies

Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. finely grated orange zest (about 1 orange)
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted vegan butter
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 24 large or 36 small chocolate gelt coins, plus 2
- Tbsp. finely chopped coins
- Cooking spray
- 1 cup blue and white nonpareils



1. In the large bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, rub sugar and zest together with your fingertips for a few minutes to release the orange's essential oils. Add butter and beat on medium-high speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes. Add vanilla and salt and beat until combined.
2. Reduce mixer speed to low. Add flour and beat until just combined. Add chopped chocolate coins and continue to beat until just combined. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate until cold, at least 1 hour and up to overnight.
3. Let dough come to room temperature. Arrange a rack in center of oven; preheat to 350°. Depending on size of gelt coins, spray a small (1-Tbsp.) or medium (2-Tbsp.) scoop with cooking spray.
4. Place nonpareils on a plate. Scoop and roll dough into balls, then roll each in nonpareils until coated. Arrange between 2 parchment-lined baking sheets, spacing 2" apart. Using a flat-bottomed glass, gently press dough down to flatten, smoothing the edges if desired. Using a spice lid or cork about the same size as gelt coins, gently indent center of rounds.
5. Bake cookies until slightly firm, 11 to 13 minutes. Remove from oven and immediately press a gelt coin into center of each cookie. Continue to bake until gelt is shiny, about 10 seconds more. Let cool.

PIZZA & PARSHA

Learn Torah with four local Rabbis, enjoy Kosher Pizza, and strengthen the Long Island Jewish community.

**The first Session in this Series will be held on
Wednesday, December 3rd, 6:30pm
Facilitator: Rabbi Stanger with participation
from the Rabbis of each Congregation**

**@
Temple Beth Torah
243 Cantiague Road, Westbury**

**To register please email:
admin@templebethtorahli.org**

*These events are open to all and free of charge,
but an RSVP is required to attend.*



Sponsored by:



TEMPLE BETH TORAH

JOIN US TO SPREAD CHANUKAH CHEER

@ WHITE OAKS NURSING HOME

MONDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2:15PM

**Do a Mitzvah & Volunteer
to bring holiday joy!**

**Please let Lauren know if you can
attend: 516-334-7979 or
admin@templebethtorahli.org**



Recent Events



Recent Events



Upcoming Events: December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	1 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	2 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	3 Pizza & Parsha at Temple Beth Torah, 6:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
7 Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	8 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	9 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	10 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
Erev Hanukkah First Candle 14 Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Hanukkah Concert 3:00 p.m. Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Hanukkah First Day Second Candle 15 Chanukah Cheer at White Oaks Nursing Home, 2:15 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Hanukkah Second Day Third Candle 16 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Hanukkah Third Day Fourth Candle 17 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
Hanukkah Seventh Day Eighth Candle 21 Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Hanukkah Eighth Day 22 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	23 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	24 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
28 Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	29 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Fast of Tevet 30 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	31 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events: December 2025

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
4 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	5 Candle Lighting, 4:10 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m. Shabbat Dinner	6 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 4:10 p.m.
11 Table Talk, 7:00 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	12 Candle Lighting, 4:10 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	13 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Tot Shabbat Minha Services, 4:10 p.m.
Hanukkah Fourth Day Fifth Candle 18 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	Hanukkah Fifth Day Sixth Candle 19 Candle Lighting, 4:12 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	Hanukkah Sixth Day Seventh Candle 20 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 4:10 p.m.
25 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	26 Candle Lighting, 4:16 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	27 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 4:15 p.m.

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

Temple Beth Torah is 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 Executive Board and/or our clergy.

Upcoming Events

TEMPLE BETH TORAH

Shabbat Dinner

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 5TH @ 7:30PM

FOLLOWING OUR REGULAR 6:30PM
FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES

\$36 per person

Please join us for a dinner catered by Ben's!
If you would like to celebrate a simcha with
us, a special cake can be ordered.

Please let us know.

RSVP by 12/1 by
scanning the QR
code or sending
a check to TBT.



CONTACT LAUREN FOR MORE
INFORMATION: 516-334-7979 OR
ADMIN@TEMPLEBETHTORAHLI.ORG



THE MEN'S CLUB PRESENTS

TEMPLE BETH TORAH CELEBRATES JEWISH HERITAGE NIGHT AT THE ISLANDERS GAME

NY Islanders vs. Anaheim Ducks

Thursday, Dec. 11th | 7:00pm

Ticket price will be between \$70-97.

Seats will be in the 200s Section

Each ticket includes a Islanders Jewish Heritage Night Beanie.
Parking is not included but can be purchased on the Ticketmaster website.

We need a minimum of 10 tickets to
make this official. Please call or email
Lauren today if you want to purchase
tickets.



TEMPLE BETH TORAH

TBTOT SHABBAT

Saturday, 12/13

- ✓ Ages 6 months to 6 years
- ✓ Parent of Caregiver Must be Present
- ✓ Older Siblings Welcome

For more information, please contact:
admin@templebethtorahli.org

Temple Beth Torah
243 Cantiague Rd., Westbury



A Guide to Temple Beth Torah

CONTACT US

TEMPLE OFFICE: (516) 334-7979

WWW.TEMPLEBETHTORAHLI.ORG

Lauren Ackerman, Executive Director
admin@templebethtorahli.org

Rabbi Jack Dermer
rabbi@templebethtorahli.org

Cantor Scott Sokol
cantorsokole@templebethtorahli.org

President
Ken Maltz
president@templebethtorahli.org

Executive Board
fundraising@templebethtorahli.org
membership@templebethtorahli.org
buildings@templebethtorahli.org
security@templebethtorahli.org
ritual@templebethtorahli.org
treasurer@templebethtorahli.org
secretary@templebethtorahli.org
pastpresident@templebethtorahli.org
prescouncil@templebethtorahli.org
finsec@templebethtorahli.org
sisterhood@templebethtorahli.org
mensclub@templebethtorahli.org

PURCHASE TORAH CARDS

Contact Linda Pochtar, Betty Weiss or the
Temple office for additional information



TEMPLE FRIENDS INITIATIVE IN NEED OF ASSISTANCE?

TEMPLE BETH TORAH IS MORE THAN JUST A TEMPLE; WE ARE A RELIGIOUS FAMILY WHO CARES ABOUT EACH OTHER. WE HAVE A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS, IN ADDITION TO OUR CLERGY, WHO TAKE TIME TO ASSIST TEMPLE MEMBERS IN NEED. WHETHER IT'S A FRIENDLY PHONE CALL, VISITS FROM FULLY VACCINATED VOLUNTEERS, PRESCRIPTION PICK UP, KOSHER SNACKS AND HOMEMADE TREATS DELIVERED, POST-SHIVA AND BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT – AT TEMPLE BETH TORAH, WE ARE THERE FOR EACH OTHER.

IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. ALL INFORMATION SHARED IS CONFIDENTIAL. CONTACT MICHELE LIPPMAN OR RABBI DERMER.



SCHEDULE OF RELIGIOUS SERVICES

DAILY SERVICES

EVENING MINYANS (SUN - THURS), 8:30 P.M.

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES, 9:00 A.M.

SHABBAT SERVICES

FRIDAY EVENING, 6:30 P.M.

SATURDAY MORNING, 9:30 A.M.

SATURDAY MINHAH/HAVDALAH, SUNDOWN

(SAME TIME AS CANDLE LIGHTING)



TEMPLE BETH TORAH GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

Honor or Memorialize your loved ones while giving back to TBT



BRICKS

4x8 brick including 3 lines & mini souvenir replica - \$175
8x8 brick including 6 lines & mini souvenir replica - \$380

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Plaque - \$400
Reserve a plaque location - \$100

PRAYER BOOKS

Etz Hayim Torah & Commentary - \$144
Siddur Lev Shalem for Shabbat & Festivals OR
Siddur Sim Shalom for Weekday Siddur Sim
Shalom for Weekdays - \$118

TREE OF LIFE

Rock - \$700 Acorn - \$500 Leaf - \$250

KIDDUSH SPONSOR

Friday Night Oneg - \$75 Shabbat Kiddush - \$215

KIDDUSH OR HOLIDAY FLOWER SPONSOR

\$90

TBT PROGRAMMING FUND

Any \$ Amount

RABBI'S CHARITY FUND

Any \$ Amount



For more information, contact Lauren @ 516-334-7979 or
admin@templebethtorahli.org

Advertisements and Classifieds



Mike Silvestri
(516) 931-3598
Licensed/Insured

M & S PLUMBING & HEATING

Kohler / Moen / Delta

Baseboard Heat	Hot Water Heaters
Boilers	Kitchens & Baths Renovated
Drains Electrically Cleaned	Radiant Heat Repairs
Faucets & Sinks	Repairs & Service
Gas Conversions	Violations Removed
Separate Heat Zones	Legalize Bathroom

Discount for members of
Temple Beth Torah



GIG-A-BYTE
631-223-8231

Aron Newman
8 Locust Ave
E Farmingdale, NY 11735

Serving all your technology needs

Computer and Network Services



Computer Upgrade • Repair
Virus Removal • PC Cleanup
Optimization • Installation
At Home Service • & More

Digital and Internet Services

Digital Strategy • Hosting
Web Development • SEO
Social Media • eCommerce
Email Marketing • Analytics



www.gigabyteny.com



*The Expert Security Service
You Expect.*

Leave the Job to the Professionals

Our Services

Protective Services

*Armed and Unarmed
Houses of Worship
School Security
Public Library
Executive Protection
Estate Security*

Investigative Services

*Private Investigation Services
- Criminal & Civil
Pre-Employment Background Checks
Business Vetting
Surveillance Photos - Video
Company ID Cards*

Upfront Security Associates, LLC

Ph. 347-988-0199

Info@upfrontsecurityassociates.com

www.upfrontsecurityassociates.com

535 Broadhollow Road Ste. B40 Melville, NY 11747

Advertisements and Classifieds

Proudly Assisting the Families of Temple Beth Torah



**MAKE THE DIFFICULT DECISIONS NOW,
SO YOUR FAMILY WON'T HAVE TO LATER.**



JUST STEPS AWAY FROM

- NEW MONTEFIORE
- BETH MOSES
- WELLWOOD
- MT. ARARAT
- PINELAWN MEMORIAL PARK

BECAUSE IN THE END, EVERYTHING MATTERS...



KEVIN GRAY & ANDREW NOVAK
1236 WELLWOOD AVENUE · WEST BABYLON, NY 11704
631-454-9600 | STAROFDAVIDCHAPELS.COM



Gutterman's

FUNERAL DIRECTORS SINCE 1892 INC

One of The Largest Family Owned & Operated Jewish Funeral Homes Serving Long Island, New York & Florida

Directors:

*** STEWART GUTTERMAN • PHILIP GUTTERMAN
STEVEN KANOWITZ • *HOWARD C. KOTKIN
* ROBERT SHERMAN • * ELLIOTT H. WOLFE**

Chapels In:

ROCKVILLE CENTRE, L.I.: 175 N. Long Beach Rd. • **516-764-9400**
WOODBURY, L.I.: 8000 Jericho Turnpike • **516-921-5757**
BROOKLYN: 1283 Coney Island Avenue • **718-284-1500**

In Florida:

GUTTERMAN-WARHEIT MEMORIAL CHAPEL
1-800-992-9262
SERVING MIAMI-DADE, BROWARD, PALM BEACH & MARTIN COUNTIES

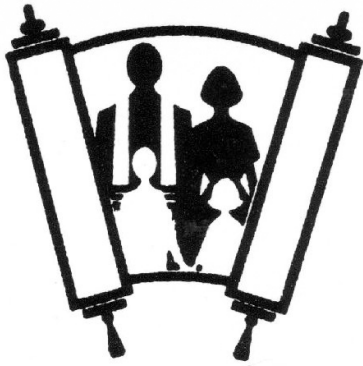
Arrangements for Out-of-State Burials

** Of Blessed Memory*

MONUMENTS BY GUTTERMAN'S

www.guttermansinc.com

1021257



Temple Beth Torah

243 Cantiague Rock Road
Jericho Gardens, Westbury, NY 11590

www.templebethtorahli.org
(516) 334-7979

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Hicksville, N.Y.
Permit No. 427

ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

