

The Temple Beth Torah Times

February 2026

Shevat / Adar 5786

Volume LV No. 76



Temple Beth Torah was thrilled to host a special occasion where we celebrated the dedication of an ambulance to Magen David Adom from the Gonen and Nusblat families.



Off the Bimah

What Does God's Voice Sound Like?, by Rabbi Jack Dermer



If you're from one generation of Jews, chances are, you're thinking of the booming and intimidating voice of Charlton Heston from the classic film *The Ten Commandments*. *I AM – I AM THE LORD THY GOD*.

For my generation and maybe even those a little bit younger, though, there is only one voice which really makes us think of God – and its not Charlton Heston at all – it's the comforting and sonorous voice of Morgan Freeman, the award-winning actor who is famous for playing the character of God in hit modern movies like *Bruce Almighty* and *Dogma*.

But whichever generation we are apart of, all of us should remember that long before Hollywood casting agents started seeking out famous actors to give voice to the Creator of the universe, the rabbinic sages of our tradition were asking the same question: what does the voice of God sound like?

In the Torah portion that we chanted as we began the book of *Shemot* earlier this month, God calls out to Moses from within the mysterious burning bush. What kind of voice would get his attention? What voice would best inspire Moses, a timid and unsure young leader, to stand up to Pharaoh and start fighting for the Jewish people? Would a loud intimidating voice like Charlton Heston's be best to whip Moses into shape and get him excited for the job? Or perhaps a quieter, more comforting voice like Morgan Freeman's would be best because it would help to calm Moses' nerves and reassure him that God would help him in his task?

From the perspective of our tradition, as great as Charlton Heston and Morgan Freeman are as voice-actors, neither one of their voices would make the cut in this scene.

According to the Midrash, the rabbinic commentary on our parsha, when God was planning to speak to Moses, God thought: If I should speak to Moses in a loud, intense voice, I'll frighten him, I'll scare him off and he'll run back to the palace in Egypt never to be seen again.

...But if I should speak to him in a soft, quiet voice then perhaps Moses won't take the prophecy seriously! He'll think that what I'm saying is no big deal, and he'll forget all about it.

As you can see, God had a predicament. So what did God do to solve the problem?

God spoke to Moses in the voice of Moses' father, Amram – a voice which would be both authoritative and loving, forceful but also kind.

So according to Jewish tradition, what does the voice of God sound like?

It sounds like the voice that we need to hear most. It sounds like the voice which will best help us to realize our highest potential, which will set us on the path to fulfilling our individual purpose in life.

Growing into his role as a leader and a prophet, Moses needed to hear God's message through the voice of his father, a voice which would be stern enough to encourage him, but gentle and loving enough to support him.

For each of us individually, it may not be the voice of a father figure, but the voice of a grandfather, an aunt, a sister, a mentor, or a friend. Who is the person in your life who has given you, or who is giving you, the message that you need to hear this month? Perhaps the question is not whether God is speaking to us, but whether we are listening.

Temple Beth Torah

FEBRUARY CALENDAR

Sunday, 2/1 - Tu B'Shvat Seder

Monday, 2/2 - Tu B'Shvat

Tuesday, 2/3 - Cantor's Ma'ariv Class

Wednesday, 2/4 - Rabbi's Class

Saturday, 2/7 - Superbowl Shabbat

Sunday, 2/8 - World Wide Wrap

Monday, 2/9 - Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, 2/10 - Cantor's Ma'ariv Class

Wednesday, 2/11 - Rabbi's Class

Monday, 2/16 - Wednesday, 2/18 - Rosh Chodesh Adar

Monday, 2/16 - President's Day - Office Closed

Tuesday, 2/17 - Cantor's Ma'ariv Class

Wednesday, 2/18 - Rabbi's Class

Monday, 2/23 - Board of Trustees Meeting

Tuesday, 2/24 - Cantor's Ma'ariv Class

Wednesday, 2/25 - Rabbi's Class

Thursday, 2/26 - Table Talk

Saturday, 2/28 - TBTots Shabbat



Press from Our Leaders

Press from the President
by Ken Maltz, President



I've lost count of just how many times I've been impressed by a film, discovered a great restaurant, read an outstanding book, heard a really great joke, and couldn't wait to tell a friend about it. After all, the sharing of memorable experiences is a valuable component of a good relationship. Although our tastes vary,

the positive feedback we get from friends about our recommendations enhances our enjoyment of our original experiences.

Hollywood studios spend millions of dollars to promote their films. Celebrities part with sizeable chunks of their incomes to hire press agents to ensure that they are visible to their fans and we all have seen the proliferation of reviews online, even when we look to order the most mundane of products. Let's face it, for many items on sale during the last decade or so, the days when you could see, feel, taste, hear them before making your purchase... are gone. We have come to rely on the opinions of others to inform our decisions. "Influencers" have arguably pushed "Madison Avenue" aside when it comes to telling us what we need to buy. They, not the Ad Men, supply the motivation and so many willingly follow the crowd.

We can take a cue from this when it comes to growing our Temple membership. Let's become influencers for Temple Beth Torah! Surely, we can tell our friends and colleagues about the place where we can worship, attend activities and learn as part of a warm, welcoming community. We can invite them to come along with us to partake of the inspiring time which we call Shabbat; bring them to a party (hint: Purim is coming soon) or drop in to visit a class. I would wager that if we would only display some of the enthusiasm we have for Temple Beth Torah towards those with whom we share our lives, we may begin to see new faces among our congregation.

We are examining a variety of strategies for the purpose of increasing our membership. All are being actively discussed by the Long Range Planning Committee among others in leadership and will, in due course, be brought before the Board of Trustees. How-

Temple Beth Torah
CANTOR'S CLASS

Blessed are you God who brings on the evening
ברוך אתה ה' המעריב ערבים

Join Cantor Sokol for an exploration of the themes, structure and melodies of the weekday evening service. Become more knowledgeable and maybe even learn to lead the Ma'ariv service.

Tuesdays, February 3, 10, 17 & 24 @ 7:15pm

Ability to read Hebrew is of course required to lead the service, but anyone interested in the subject is welcome to take part in the class.

SAVE THE DATE
PURIM 2026
MEGILLAH READING & PARTY
MONDAY, MARCH 2ND

Continued on Page 4

Around the Congregation

Smiley Rays of this + that!

Our condolences to the Sokol family on the passing of Carol Sokol, beloved mother of Cantor Scott Sokol and Su Sokol, mother-in-law of Francene Sokol and Glenn Rubenstein, grandmother of Benjamin, Samuel, Mara and Joshua Sokol-Rubenstein.

President (Continued from Page 3)

ever, nothing will convey the feelings we have towards our shul more than the one-on-one contacts, the very human, personal touch that we can put forward. We are all ambassadors, envoys, in Hebrew shlachim, for Temple Beth Torah. We have a lot to be proud of; let's not keep it to ourselves.

Recipe from Our Sisterhood: A Delicious Chili

Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
 - 2 large onions, diced
 - 4 cloves garlic, peeled, minced
 - 2 pounds ground beef
 - 2 red bell peppers, seeded, veins removed, chopped
 - 1 (20-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained, reserve liquid
 - 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
 - 4 tablespoons chili powder
 - 2 teaspoons crushed cumin seeds
 - 2 teaspoons salt
 - 3/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
 - 2 (15-ounce) cans kidney beans, drained and rinsed
1. Heat oil in a 6-quart stockpot over medium heat. Add onions and garlic and sauté for 2 minutes.
 2. Add beef. Stir and cook until beef has lost all its pinkness. Pour off fat.
 3. Add bell peppers and tomatoes. Stir to mix.
 4. Add enough water to reserved tomato liquid to equal 2-1/2 cups. Stir into beef mixture.
 5. Add tomato paste, chili powder, cumin, salt and cayenne pepper.
 6. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat and simmer, covered, for 3 hours.
 7. Stir in beans just before serving. Heat through. Serve hot.

A Note from Marilyn Reich by Marilyn Reich



Miracle of miracle, I just followed the YELLOW Brick Road to Kansas. I can't remember the last time I saw the movie *The Wizard of Oz* but there I was watching it with my fifteen-year-old granddaughter. Watching this time, I realized that I have become all of the characters. I am the Scarecrow. At times I feel my insides are being pulled in many directions. Why can't I just say no and do what I want

to do. I can think. I can make decisions. I have a brain. Yes, I have a brain.

I do not let the Tin Man keep my heart locked inside of me like he does. I feel the pain of those that are having hard times. I feel the kindness and love inside of me that struggles to come out. I have people and surroundings that want to feel my heart. They add sweetness to me. I feel their friendship and caring. Oh yes! I have a heart.

I am the Lion. I climb mountains. I find ways to get around problems that cause me pain. The Lion held on to his tail. It gave him the power to fight off all the fears that lived inside of him. I have friends and family I can hold on to. Their love and help keep me strong. I don't fear the future. Both the Lion and Marilyn are not cowards.

Toto, the dog is the true me. He runs with and around people looking for love. He needs to feel the warmth that they can give to him. He needs to feel the love that will always be remembered. We need to find the love that will remain in the hearts of those we love.

I realize I am not Dorothy. I am just me. I have a brain. I have a heart. I am not coward. I love people and all the caring people in my life.

Take the time to think and realize who you really are. Find love in yourself and in those that help to fill your life with love.

I think that it was meant for me to see the movie at this time in my life. Getting older doesn't mean we can't make decisions. It does mean we need to feel the warmth of love. We need to feel the courage to keep on going. Follow your road to see who you really are.

Happy New Year!

Recent Events

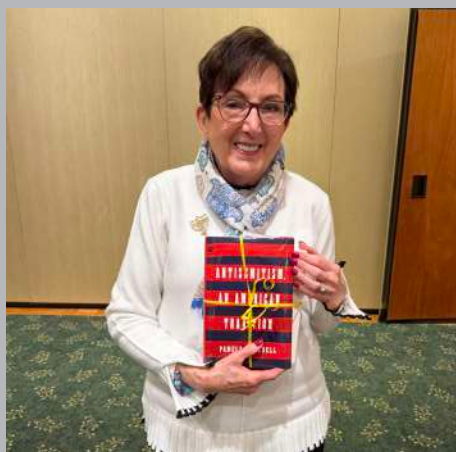
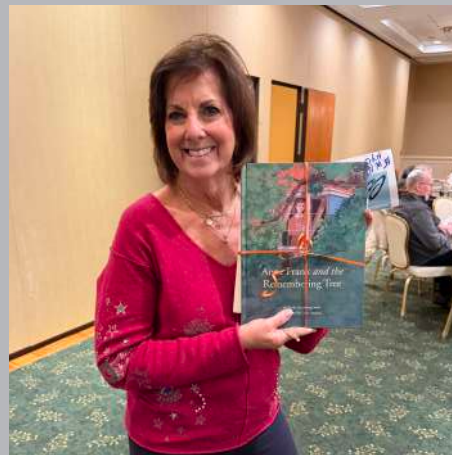
More Pictures from Temple Beth Torah's Chanukah Celebrations: We had to share more of the great pictures that were taken at our various Chanukah celebrations! On Sunday, December 14, Temple Beth Torah was thrilled to present *The Jewish American Songbook: An Afternoon of Song and Celebration for Chanukah*. This concert presented some of the most well known and toe tapping tunes, led by Cantors Scott and Benjamin Sokol, Ken Maltz, and other world class musicians – Steve Belfer (piano), Elyssa Sunshine (bass), Tommy Rendano (drums), Zoey Rabinowitz (flute), and special musical guests Francene Sokol and Jill and Larry Sandberg. Following the concert, we went into the social hall for a special performance from Jerry Berg, latkas, sufganiyot, and a joyous celebration of the Festival of Lights.

On Monday, December 15, Rabbi Dermer, his guitar, and volunteers from Temple Beth Torah went to White Oaks Nursing Home for a celebration where they had a great time singing, schmoozing, and dancing with the residents. Also, back in December, Temple Beth Torah worked with Chaplains locally and abroad to support troops and enhance Jewish soldiers' celebration of Hanukkah. We were lucky enough to receive pictures from Rabbi Manis Kogan at a Coast Guard base in Jamaica, NY.

Join us for Pizza and Parsha: Our latest session of Pizza and Parsha took place on January 7th at Old Westbury Hebrew Congregation. Rabbi David Bockman of Temple Beth Shalom of Roslyn lead the discussion. The next sessions will take place on February 11th at Plainview Jewish Center and then February 25th at Temple Beth Torah.

A Special Occasion with Magen David Adom: Temple Beth Torah was thrilled to host a special occasion on Sunday, January 11, where we celebrated the dedication of an ambulance to Magen David Adom from the Gonen and Nusblat families.

Follow Temple Beth Torah on Facebook to see additional pictures.



Recent Events



Recent Events



Upcoming Events: February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
1 Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Tu B'Shevat Seder, 7:30 p.m. Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	2 Tu B'Shevat Jewish Arbor Day Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	3 Cantor Sokol's Ma'ariv Class, 7:15 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	4 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
8 World Wide Wrap, 10:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	9 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	10 Cantor Sokol's Ma'ariv Class, 7:15 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	11 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
15 Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	16 Presidents' Day Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	17 Rosh Chodesh Adar Cantor Sokol's Ma'ariv Class, 7:15 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	18 Rosh Chodesh Adar Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.
22 Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	23 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	24 Cantor Sokol's Ma'ariv Class, 7:15 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	25 Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events: February 2026

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	6 Candle Lighting, 5:01 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	7 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Superbowl Shabbat Minha Services, 5:00 p.m.
12 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	13 Candle Lighting, 5:10 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	14 <i>Shabbat Shekalim</i> Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 5:10 p.m.
19 Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	20 Candle Lighting, 5:18 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	21 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 5:15 p.m.
26 Table Talk, 7:00 p.m. Evening Minyan, 8:30 p.m.	27 Candle Lighting, 5:26 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	28 <i>Shabbat Zachor</i> Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Tot Shabbat Minha Services, 5:25 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

TU B'SHEVAT SEDER

Sunday, February 1st @ 7:30pm

It is customary to eat at least 15 different fruits & vegetables in a specific order on this day. Please join us as we celebrate the New Year of Trees and partake in this custom.



TU BISHVAT שנה ט"ו בשבט

Contact Lauren @ TBT to RSVP or for more information: 516-334-7979 or admin@templebethtorahli.org

TEMPLE BETH TORAH

SUPERBOWL SHABBAT & WORLD WIDE WRAP WEEKEND

Superbowl Shabbat - Saturday, 2/7 @ 9:30am

WEAR YOUR FAVORITE TEAM JERSEY OR COLORS! THEMED KIDDUSH LUNCH! SUPER BOWL THEMED SERMON! JOIN THE SUPER BOWL BOXES! FUN SURPRISES!

World Wide Wrap - Sunday, 2/8 @ 9:00am

JOIN US FOR A WORKSHOP ON ALL THINGS TEFILLIN FOLLOWED BY BREAKFAST. WORLD WIDE WRAP IS AN INTERNATIONAL, COORDINATED MINYAN ENCOURAGING JEWS TO PARTICIPATE IN ONE OF THE BASIC MITZVOT, OR COMMANDMENTS, IN THE TORAH: THE WRAPPING OF TEFILLIN. WE'LL HAVE PLENTY OF EXTRA SETS OF TEFILLIN FOR THOSE WHO NEED TO BORROW.



Contact Lauren to RSVP: 516-334-7979 or admin@templebethtorahli.org

TEMPLE BETH TORAH

Join Us For TBTot Shabbat

FEBRUARY 28 - MARCH 21 - APRIL 11 - MAY 9 - JUNE 13



Tot Shabbat is for ages 6 months to 6 years although older siblings are welcome. A parent of caregiver must be present.

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

Temple Beth Torah

TABLE TALK

TABLE TALK IS BACK!
THURSDAY'S @ 7PM - TBT LIBRARY

February 26 - March 26 - April 23 -
May 14 - June 25

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Contact Lauren @ TBT for more information: 516-334-7979 or admin@templebethtorahli.org

A Guide to Temple Beth Torah

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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.



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SUNDAY MORNING SERVICES, 9:00 A.M.

SHABBAT SERVICES

FRIDAY EVENING, 6:30 P.M.

SATURDAY MORNING, 9:30 A.M.

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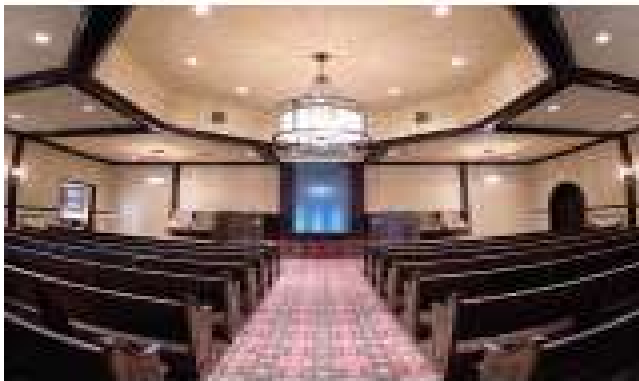
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