

Shofar



Temple Beth El

Bakersfield, CA

*Bring Your Whole Self,
Whoever You Are*



February 2024 • Shevat / Adar I 5784

Volume 81, Issue 6



Get your Lox Box!

Super Bowl Sunday, February 11

<https://templebethelbakersfield.org/lox-box/>



Rabbi Jonathan Klein's Reflections

Are We Welcoming?

*A-DONAI appeared to [Abraham] by the terebinths of Mamre; he was sitting at the entrance of the tent as the day grew hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he **ran** from the entrance of the tent to **greet them** and **bowing** to the ground, he said, "My lords, if it please you do not go on past your servant. Let a little water be brought, bathe your feet and recline under the tree. And let me fetch you a morsel of bread that you may refresh yourselves; then, go on--seeing you have come your servant's way."... (Gen. 18, bold added for emphasis)*

*One welcomes guests because one honors the human who was created in the image of God, and this is considered to be a great thing, like rising early to go to the Beit Midrash which one does to honor the Torah.... Rising early to study Torah is the way we honor Torah, but when you welcome a guest, it is tantamount to honoring God. For when one brings a guest into their home and honors him because he was created in the image of God, then it is as if they are honoring the Divine presence Herself, which is greater than honoring the Torah. **Know that these statements only refer to welcoming guests who are new faces to one's home.** Remember, however, that Rav said that **welcoming guests is even greater than receiving the face of the Divine presence.** His statement is consistent, for none can encounter the face of God directly as it is written, "No human may see My face and live." (Exodus 32:20) So, indirect contact cannot be compared to what happens when one welcomes and honors a **guest who appears as a new face and the host attaches himself completely to this image of God.** So take these words in deeply.... (from the Maharal of Prague, Pathways of the World Ch. 4)*

Abraham running to **welcome guests** into his tent is remarkable. Not only was he nearly 100 years old at the time, he had just self-circumcised! His commitment to these unknowns is the basis for our Jewish sacred obligation—**hachnasat orchim**—to ensure that guests are treated with utmost respect, and to serve them as the guests of honor. In the morning prayers, we say:

*These are the things that are limitless, of which a person enjoys the fruit of the world, while the principal remains in the world to come: Honoring father and mother, bestowing kindness [on others], arriving early for prayer, **welcoming guests (hachnasat orchim)**, visiting the sick....*

Welcoming people into our midst is a cherished value, enshrined in our communal ethos. **We are to go to great lengths to welcome people into our community:** We are obligated to go out of our way to introduce ourselves to new faces at the synagogue; we are obligated to say hello to one another; and we are obligated to exercise great tolerance when community members are disruptive, always with an eye to protecting their dignity, even potentially compromising our wellbeing in the process. There's the story of the guest at a rabbi's Shabbat dinner table who spills wine by accident; in an effort to ease his embarrassment, the rabbi spills his own wine! Abraham must have been in extreme pain taking care of these strangers-turn-guests given his medical condition. **To the rabbi and to Abraham and Sarah, these strangers are the indirect face of the Divine presence.**

All of this begs the question: How do we, the "regulars," who know the ins and outs of the worship service, ensure that

- Those stepping foot into the sanctuary for the first time,
- Those who have never held a Jewish prayer book,
- Those who might be genuinely curious about our traditions but scared to appear out of fear of social isolation,

How do we make sure that we not only welcome them, we also treat them, as the Maharal of Prague taught, as an “image of God?” It is a tall order, for sure, but it is our sacred obligation to the Other, seeing in **newcomers an indirect manifestation of the Tzelem E-lohim, Divine Image.**

At TBE, we regularly have curious souls who enter our sanctuary. Some of us were once those newbies, and we were fortunate enough to have someone come up to us and really take a keen interest in our story, helping us to feel like we belong, ensuring that we were embraced to join this *Kehilah Kedoshah*, Sacred Community (for the regulars: Who was that in a previous generation? I would love to know, that is part of our history). Others of us might not have been so fortunate, but because of some inner sense of obligation, we joined despite our social isolation. And then there are still others who joined us once or twice or twenty times and NEVER felt supported; they never came back. How tragic!

Several of you have shared feeling practically invisible at synagogue. Especially those exploring Judaism. Let’s face it, lots of people come once or twice but don’t return (of course some are passers-through, but not all of them). This is intolerable! Our congregation, me included—must do more to practice **Hachnasat Orchim, welcoming guests**, into our metaphorical tent, following the example presented to us by Abraham and Sarah. Otherwise, we disallow others from **“bringing their whole selves, whoever they are.”** The indirect **Tzelem E-lohim, Divine Image** becomes incomplete, missing those vital souls who could enrich our community, who manifest our future.

I hope that in my role as the eighth rabbi of Temple Beth El in Bakersfield, I can work with congregational leadership to institute systems (greeters other than ushers, info cards, invitations to activities, etc.) that ensure we practice more **Hachnasat Orchim** and ensure that every person who walks, stumbles, gallops, and darts into our community feels welcomed, blessed, at home. *Ken Y’hi Ratzon*, may this be our communal will!



Rabbi Klein



A Greeting from Our President

Shalom friends who are my family,

The fantastic energy of religious school continues to inspire! We had a fun Tu- B'shvat Seder; I encourage you to join us next year. Celebrating trees and our wonderful culture is delightful at every age! After all, we are like an ancient tree, deeply rooted in the ground, yet continue reaching for the sky.

Social Justice, Tikkun Olam, is a foundational principle of Judaism and our Reform movement. Members of our congregation have been active in various capacities with various organizations. I find myself distributing food every third Wednesday of the month with AppleCore (Lyle Gartenlaub is their newly elected President). I recently participated in counting the homeless with Jill Egland and Larry Saslaw. Temple Beth El sent money to Magen David Adom and other vital organizations in Israel. Rabbi Klein and I visited the Bakersfield Recovery Services. We are exploring collaboration opportunities and needs with them. Temple Beth El will continue to support social justice efforts in our community and beyond.



The hostage crisis and the war in Israel are still top and center for me. There are developments on the horizon. We all pray for peace and that Israelis and Gazans will become whole again. We are contemplating another mission to Israel after Purim, before Passover. Are you interested in joining us? Emphasis will be on volunteering in Israel for about a week. Please let rabbi Klein or me know as we are formalizing a plan.

Looking forward to upcoming activities:

Sunday, February 4 – **Tree planting** at Hart Park 11 am; Sisterhood **book club** at 1 pm; Sisterhood **Rosh Hodesh** at 6:30 pm

Monday, February 5th - **Simcha Set lunch**. 11:30 am at Rosa's Italian Restaurant.

Sunday, February 11 - **Lox Box** by the Mench Club

Saturday, March 9 - **Havdalah and Movie night** with our temple family.

Saturday, March 23 – **Purim Megillah reading** following **Havdalah**, 7 pm

Monday, April 22 – **Community Passover Seder**. RSVP forms available soon.

Every Saturday at 4:30 pm and Tuesday at 9 am **Learning opportunities** with Rabbi Klein

There is always a reason for celebration - יש תמיד סיבה למסיבה

שלום

Avital

Moments In our Lives

Happy Birthday!

Ella Abrams	February 2
Eli Raymond Seibert	February 3
Martin Kessler	February 8
Jana Reichert	February 11
Hunter Rittenberg	February 11
Karen Briefer	February 13
Isabel Theron	February 15
Joshua Rudnick	February 21



Our Contributors: Thank You

Thanks go out to the following *Tormim*

Kol Nidre Donations

Andy and Ella Abrams
Leonard and Carla Epstein

Memorials/Yahrzeits

Tricia Berman: *in memory of Barry Berman*
Brent Eastep: *in memory of Hy Davis*
Ronald and Laura Lauria: *in memory of Rosemary Polland*
Laura and Ricardo Reyes: *in memory of Francisco Reyes*
Ilene Schechter: *in memory of Aaron "Harry" Somkin*
Elaine and Douglas White: *in memory of Stan Witer*

Tree of Life

Elaine and Douglas White: *in honor of Doug White's Birthday*

Solar Carport

Andy and Ella Abrams

Contribute Online: <https://templebethelbakersfield.org/donation>

We are grateful for all contributions!

תודה רבה
Thank You

SISTERHOOD CHAILIGHTS

February 2024

Sisterhood members continue to participate in many exciting and interesting activities! We continue to have activities Via Zoom but please note we now have some in-person events! All activities can be started at any time and no prior attendance is needed. The following is a list of activities coming up in February and the future!

**IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO BE PART OF SISTERHOOD LEADERSHIP PLEASE
CONTACT KATHLEEN CHAMBERS!!**

GENERAL MEETING- Sunday, February 18th @ 3 pm TBE Zoom

LEADERSHIP MEETING- Thursday, February 15th @ 4:30 pm via TBE Zoom

BOOK CLUB- Sunday, February 4th @ 1 pm Via TBE Zoom

Current books are *Miracles and Menorahs* and *Love and Latkes* both by Stacey Aagdern. **The author will be joining the review!**

Please consider joining some great women!! We are now on Facebook! If you would like an invite to join our group please let one of the leadership team know!!

All Sisterhood activities are via TBE Zoom and in person, as noted.

We look forward to seeing you all at future activities and meetings!

If you have any questions please feel free to email me, Helen Armistead- Secretary;
armisteadlmft@gmail.com

February 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2 6 pm First Friday Shabbat Family Services	3 4:30-5:30 pm (Zoom) Scrolls Class: Megilat Esther
4 11:00-2:30 Tu Bi'Shvat Tree Planting Hart Park 1:00 Sisterhood book club 6:30 Sisterhood Rosh Hodesh	5 11:30 Simcha Set Lunch @Rosa's Italian Restaurant 7-8:30 Hebrew Reading Class via Bakersfield College	6 9-9:30am (Zoom) Prayers of our Prayer Book 6:30-7:30 Religious Practices Committee	7 PM: Midweek Hebrew (via Zoom; time determined by class)	8	9 6pm Chardonnay Shabbat with Dinner in the Social Hall	10 10 am Torah Service with Congregation B'nai Jacob 4:30-5:30 pm (Zoom) Scrolls Class: Megilat Esther
11 9:30-12:30 Religious School Pick up Lox Box	12 7-8:30 Hebrew Reading Class via Bakersfield College	13 9-9:30am (Zoom) Prayers of our Prayer Book 7pm Board meeting	14 PM: Midweek Hebrew (via Zoom; time determined by class)	15	16 7pm Shabbat Service	17 4:30-5:30 pm (Zoom) Scrolls Class: Megilat Esther
18 NO Religious School	19 President's Day	20 9-9:30am (Zoom) Prayers of our Prayer Book	21 PM: Midweek Hebrew (via Zoom; time determined by class)	22	23 7pm Shabbat Service	24 4:30-5:30 pm (Zoom) Scrolls Class: Megilat Esther
25 9:30-12:30 Religious School	26 7-8:30 Hebrew Reading Class via Bakersfield College	27 9-9:30am (Zoom) Prayers of our Prayer Book	28 PM: Midweek Hebrew (via Zoom; time determined by class)	29		

CELEBRATION WEAR



ALWAYS A REASON TO CELEBRATE! ייש תמיד סיבה למסיבה!! Temple Beth El is always ready to celebrate! You can now show everyone that you are ready to celebrate with us and help support TBE at the same time! We have t-shirts for the hot summer weather and sweatshirts for the cooler winter weather! Please go to the TBE website to order yours today! We have both youth and adult sizing!! If you would like to order by check please call or email Helen Armistead so she can help you! She can be reached at 661.472-1758 or armisteadlmft@gmail.com

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Super Bowl Sunday

Sunday February 11 2024

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February 2024 Yahrzeits

+ Memorialized on the Yahrzeit plaques on the wall in the foyer



2/2 Shabbat Services Yahrzeits	
Barnett Larks ; uncle of Anita Singer	2/2
Francisco Reyes ; remembered by Michael & Karlyn Farber, father of Ricardo Reyes	2/2
Ira Schenkman ; father of Richard Schenkman	2/2
+ Dr. Barry Berman ; husband of Tricia Berman	2/3
Bessie Jenkins ; grandmother of Terry Skinner	2/3
Frances Bregman ; step-mother of Irene Christenson	2/4
Milton Rudnick ; husband of Diane Rudnick z'l, brother of Miriam Stull, father of Melanie Rudnick, brother of Philip Rudnick, brother of Miriam Stull, uncle of Joshua Rudnick and Libbie Mahan	2/4
Sylvia Rudnick ; sister of Phil, Marcus z'l and Milton z'l Rudnick and Miriam Stull, aunt of Joshua Rudnick and Libbie Mahan	2/4
Warren Gold ; Friend of Leonard and Carla Epstein	2/5
Marty McNeill ; friend of Karen Briefer	2/5
Jake Beeber ; stepfather of Stan Schwartz z'l	2/6, Shevat 27
Selma Meyer ; sister of Ella Abrams	2/6
Saralee Rudnick ; mother of Joshua Rudnick	2/7
Clarence Dorris ; father of Gail Magnus, grandfather of Elliott Magnus	2/8
Louis Krute ; grandfather of Jackie Rudnick z'l	2/8
David Pike ; uncle of Irvin Pike, brother-in-law of Arline Pike z'l	2/8
2/9 Shabbat Services Yahrzeits	
Jennie Bregor ; grandmother of Jackie Rudnick z'l	2/9
Mary Egland ; mother of Jill Egland	2/9
Thomas G. Lauria Jr. ; brother of Ronald Lauria, uncle of Amanda Garza	2/9
Yehudit Sheriki ; mother of Haya Klein	2/10, Adar-1 1
Sally Yagan ; aunt of Irene Christenson z'l	2/10
Ellen Abrams ; sister of Andy Abrams, daughter of Al z'l & Charlotte Abrams z'l	2/12
Harold Berman ; Uncle of Lisa Levine	2/12
Edward Bishop ; father of Linda Hakimi	2/12
Esther Fenig ; grandmother of Barry Goldner	2/13
Zina Lekht ; niece of Etel Lewis	2/13
+ Dorothy Levey ; mother of Arline Pike z'l and Muriel Vekas z'l, grandmother of Irvin Pike	2/13

+ Sophie Rudnick ; grandmother of Joshua Rudnick, step-mother of Phil, Marcus z'l, and Milton z'l Rudnick and Miriam Stull, grandmother of Libbie Mahan	2/14
Valerie Segil ; sister of Selwyn Kay	2/14
2/16 Shabbat Services Yahrzeits	
Yvonne Bitton ; mother of Dorise Bitton	2/16, Adar-1 7
Elbert (Bert) Kantor ; brother of Bob Allison	2/16
Harvey W. Goodman ; father of Marsha Greenstein	2/18
Sherman Klein ; father of Jonathan Klein	2/18, Adar-1 9
Joseph Levey ; uncle of Arline z'l and Muriel Pike z'l, great-uncle of Irvin Pike	2/18
Anita Balzac ; aunt of Irene Christenson z'l	2/19
Rabbi Israel Neuman ; brother-in-law of Shirley Newman z'l, uncle of Heidi Allison	2/19, Adar-1 10
Harold Redding ; father of Jeanne Moore	2/19
Irwin Lewis Sacks ; brother-in-law of Dan & Mary	2/19
Suzanne Shelton ; friend of Irvin Pike	2/19
Herbert Blatt ; husband of Rose Blatt z'l, father of Barbara Kessler, grandfather of David Kessler	2/20, Adar-1 11
Jessie Grosher ; aunt of Sonia Simrin z'l, great-aunt of Marty Weinberg	2/20
Daniel Speare ; Husband of Mary Speare	2/20
Frank Russinsky ; father of Jeff Russinsky	2/21
2/23 Shabbat Services Yahrzeits	
+ Libbie Berman-Rudnick ; mother of Phil Rudnick and Miriam Stull, grandmother of Joshua Rudnick and Libbie Mahan	2/23
+ Irving Weisman ; father of William Weisman	2/23
+ Herbert Baron ; remembered by TBE	2/24, Adar-1 15
+ Stan Simrin ; husband of Sonia Simrin z'l, father of Susie Simrin and Amy Knight z'l, uncle of Marty Weinberg, great-uncle of Adam Rodriguez	2/24
Christopher Chavez ; son of Rudie & Maria Chavez	2/25
+ David Pike ; uncle of Irvin Pike, brother-in-law of Arline Pike z'l	2/25
Pearl Davis ; remembered by TBE	2/27
Ralph Farbman ; great-uncle of Debi Hazel	2/27
Helen Goldberg ; sister of Risha Grosberg z'l	2/29, Adar-1 20

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