

JANUARY 2026

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Temple Beth El

Bakersfield, California

*Bring your whole self,
whoever you are*

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What's
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LETTER FROM THE RABBI

Partners in the Dream: A Jewish–Black Covenant for Justice

Rabbi Jonathan Klein

Dear Friends,

One of the most enduring images of the American civil rights movement is a photograph from Selma in 1965: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., marching arm in arm with Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel. Heschel later wrote that during that march, “I felt my legs were praying.” This was not poetic exaggeration after the fact; it reflected a genuine, ongoing relationship between Dr. King and the Jewish community, rooted in shared texts, shared trauma, and a shared moral vision. Dr. King regularly acknowledged that connection. He celebrated the shared suffering and ultimate vision of Jews and Blacks, noting that “My people were brought to America in chains. your people were driven here to escape the chains fashioned for them in Europe. our unity is born out of our common struggle for centuries, not only to rid ourselves of bondage, but to make oppression of any people by others an impossibility” (address to the American Jewish Congress [AJC], May 14, 1958). He understood the Jewish experience of slavery, exile, and resilience as a living moral resource for the Black freedom struggle.

Lest we forget: The Black-Jewish partnership was not symbolic, it was the in-the-trench priority of our community: Jewish leaders and institutions provided critical financial, legal, and organizational support to the civil rights movement, from founding the NAACP and the Urban League together to marching together for a better world. AJC President Rabbi Joachim Prinz, a refugee from Nazi Germany, spoke immediately before Dr. King at the March on Washington in 1963, warning that “bigotry and hatred are not the most urgent problem. The most urgent problem is silence” (a full two decades before Auschwitz survivor Elie Wiesel taught us that “The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference”). Dr. King later called that moment one of the most powerful expressions of moral allyship he had ever witnessed. The relationship was real, complex, and deeply principled—even when it was tested by political disagreements—because it was anchored in the belief that dignity is indivisible.

Our tradition gives language to this idea. We learn:

“Therefore humanity was created from a single person, to teach that anyone who destroys a single life is as if they destroyed an entire world, and anyone who saves a single life is as if they saved an entire world” (Mishnah Sanhedrin 4:5).



The same passage goes on to explain diversity itself: God created all people from one human so that no one could say, “My ancestor is greater than yours,” and yet God made each face different, teaching that multiplicity is not a flaw in creation but its glory. Difference, in Jewish thought, is not a threat to unity—it is the very way unity becomes meaningful.

Dr. King echoed this idea in his own theological language, describing what he called the “beloved community,” a society in which difference is not erased but redeemed through justice and love (Stride Toward Freedom, 1958). Seen through Jewish eyes, this is not a foreign vision. It is a modern expression of klal Yisrael and tzelem Elohim—the radical claim that every human being bears God’s image, and that the world is only whole when those images stand together.

May we honor Dr. King’s legacy this month—and our own—by refusing silence, embracing diversity as sacred, and continuing the holy work of building a world that reflects the image of God in all its faces.

Rabbi Jonathan Klein

Jonas



Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rabbi Maurice Eisendrath (former President of the UAHC, our denomination), and Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (Rev. Ralph Abernathy bet. MLK & Eisendrath)

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Shalom, Temple Beth El family;

Days pass, the years vanish, and we walk sightless among the miracles. How filled with awe is this place, and we did not know it. (Chaim Stern)

As I take a moment to reflect on this past year, (years) that have vanished, I realize how truly grateful I am for all the people and experiences that have been on this past year's Journey. I want to express my gratitude and appreciation for each of you. I am grateful not only for what has been achieved but also for the lessons learned from challenges. As we look towards the new year, I hope we can carry a deep sense of being capable of achieving remarkable things with the possibilities ahead. With renewed hope and confidence.

Thank you for all your donations and volunteering times. Thank you to all who have been part of Temple Beth El to make it a place for a "Positive Jewish Experience". A big thank you to Pastor Brandon Holthaus and the Rock Harbor Church ,that has been providing us with security guards who have been helping to protect our Jewish communities this past year. We are very grateful for this gift of providing us with a safe place to worship and practice our faith in God. With this coming secular year of 2026 may it bring to you good health and happiness. With many opportunities to be part of our Jewish family here at Temple Beth El.



Our Contributors:

thank you

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

- Ilene Schechter: birthday of Rabbi Jonathan Klein

Kol Nidre Donations

- Irvin Pike and Pamela Elisheva
- Tim Prince
- Cynthia Simonian
- Judy Strauss
- Robert and Patricia Young

Building Fund

- Joanne and Paul Gappmayer



Memorials/Yahrzeits

- Bob and Heidi Allison: in memory of Irma Adler
- Greg and Rose Broida: in memory of Alfonso Gonzalez
- Leonard and Carla Epstein: in memory of Thomas Simonian
- Ronald and Laura Lauria: in memory of Jeanette Gintzler
- Nancy and Arthur McCombs: in memory of Alexa McDowell
- Ilene Schechter: in memory of Aaron Schechter & Seymour Schechter
- Robert and Marcy Smith: in memory of Marilyn Smith & Faith Parris
- Pamela Stahl: in memory of Etta Robin

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

We are grateful for all contributions!

Sisterhood Chailights

Sisterhood members continue to participate in many exciting and interesting activities! All activities can be started at any time and no prior attendance is needed.

GENERAL/LEADERSHIP MEETING- Sunday, January 11th @ 2:30 pm via TBE Zoom

BOOK CLUB- Sunday, January 4th @ 1:00 pm via TBE Zoom. Current reads are by Jean Meltzer! *Magical Meets Cute* and *Eight Heartbreaks of Hanukkah!*

Rosh Chodesh- Sunday, January 18th @ 6:30 pm Via TBE Zoom.

COOKING CLASS- None in January.

SISTERHOOD DUES ARE NOW DUE!! \$18 FOR THE WHOLE YEAR!! You can pay online at the TBE website or send a check made out to WOTBE with sisterhood on the envelope!!

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 members know!

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

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

Sisterhood Book Club

We are reading Jean Meltzer's books: *Magical Meets Cute* and *Eight Heartbreaks of Hanukkah*. We will meet on January 4th at 1 pm to discuss.





Anniversary

Greg and Rose Broida January 17

Ahron and Linda Hakimi January 23



Lawrence Zanoff	January 02	Beth Freedman	January 14
Joshua Reichert	January 03	Josif Ristic	January 16
Miriam Stull	January 05	Adison Gartenlaub	January 17
La Zelle Broida	January 07	Paul Gappmayer	January 22
Marissa Marcus	January 08	Shane Guggenmos	January 26
Jenny Seibert	January 08	Jessica Hogan	January 26
Pamela Elisheva	January 11	Laura Wolfe	January 26
Gretchen Bloch	January 12	Douglas White	January 27
Kathleen Arnold-Chambers	January 13	Jay Greenstein	January 29
Julia Pettis	January 13	Leah Bank	January 30
Charles Rhodes	January 13		



Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
					1 <i>12 Tevet</i>	2
					6 pm First Friday Shabbat Family Services	3 <i>Vayechi</i>
				New Year's Day		
4	5	6 9-9:30 am Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom) 6:30 pm (Zoom) Religious Practices Committee	7 7 pm Learn Hebrew with Rabbi Klein (Zoom)	8	9 6:00 pm Early Evening Shabbat	10 <i>Shemot</i> 9:30 am Shabbat Morning Service w Cong B'nai Jacob
11 9:30 am - 12:30 pm Religious School! 10 am - 2 pm CPR Class 2:30 pm S.H. General & Leadership Meeting	12	13 9-9:30 am Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom) 7:00 pm Board Meeting	14 7 pm Learn Hebrew with Rabbi Klein (Zoom)	15	16 7 pm Adult Shabbat Services (child care provided)	17 <i>Va'eira</i> 5 - 6 pm Class on Ecclesiastes (by Zoom)
18 9:30 am - 12:30 pm Religious School!	19 <i>1 Shevat</i> <i>Rosh Chodesh</i>	20 9-9:30 am Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom)	21 7 pm Learn Hebrew with Rabbi Klein (Zoom)	22	23 7 pm Shabbat Unplugged (child care provided)	24 <i>Bo</i> 5 - 6 pm Class on Ecclesiastes (by Zoom)
25 9:30 am - 12:30 pm Religious School!	26	27 9-9:30 am Prayers of our Siddur (by Zoom)	28 7 pm Learn Hebrew with Rabbi Klein (Zoom)	29	30 7 pm Social Action Shabbat w/Lauren Skidmore, head of the Open Door Network (child care provided)	31 <i>Beshalach</i> 10:00 am Reform Style Shabbat Morning Service

Upcoming Events:

- Mon. Feb 16th Tu B'Shvat Observance
- Sat. Feb 28th Adult Purimspiel (Contact Peggy if you want to be in it)
- Sun. Mar 1st Purim Party and reading of the Megillah after Religious School
- Wed. April 1st-1st Night of Passover



CELEBRATION WEAR



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

ALWAYS A REASON TO CELEBRATE

יש תמיד
סיבה
למסיבה!!

YAHRZEITS

January 2026

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

DECEMBER 26 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Ethel K. Bregor: mother of Jackie Rudnick z'l	December 26
Carolyn Larks: aunt of Anita Singer	December 26
Ebba Jensen: grandmother of Laura Wolfe	December 26
+Samuel Messerman: remembered by TBE	December 26; Tevet 14
Jack Vogel: grandfather of Leah Bank	December 26
+Mark Morris: remembered by TBE	December 27
+Margot Zadik Zellner: remembered by TBE	December 27
Ruth Schneider: aunt of Jeff Schwartz and Helen Armistead	December 28; Tevet 8
Alfonso Gonzalez: brother of Rose Broida	December 28
Milton Gintzler: great-uncle of Laura Lauria, great-great-uncle of Amanda Garza	December 28; Tevet 8
Burton Epstein: father of Leonard Epstein	December 29
+Betty Younger Cohn: remembered by TBE	December 29
+Marjorie Joan Atencio: mother of Susie Simrin	December 31
+Alter Shrier: remembered by TBE	December 31
Gerald Lewis: husband of Etel Lewis	January 1
Morris Gintzler: great-uncle of Laura Lauria, great-great-uncle of Amanda Garza	January 1; Tevet 12
Thomas Lauria: father of Ronald Lauria, grandfather of Amanda Garza	January 1
+Helen Magnus Markson: remembered by TBE	January 1

JANUARY 2 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Bernice Black: mother of Diane Andrews	January 2
+Judy Pike Garvin: cousin of Irvin Pike	January 2
+David A. Davis: remembered by TBE	January 3
+Sybil O. Landson: remembered by TBE	January 3
Herman Schneider: uncle of Jeff Schwartz & Helen Armistead	January 4; Tevet 15
Esther Siegel: grandmother of Sharon Rhodes	January 5
Ruth Morales: mother of Linda Morales	January 5
+William I. Goldberg: remembered by TBE	January 5; 4 Tevet
Celia Fingeroff Aronson: grandmother of Kathleen Arnold-Chambers	January 8; Tevet 19
Ezatollah Anav: grandfather of Rod Delijani	January 8; Tevet 19
Danny Benjamin Lipco: brother of Lisa Levine	January 8; Tevet 19
+Moe S. Nestle: remembered by TBE	January 8

JANUARY 9 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Nathan J. Goldman : uncle of Marsha Parr	January 9
Ruth Satzman : grandmother of Brad McConnell	January 9
+Nathan Strauss : remembered by TBE	January 9
+Betty Brucke : remembered by TBE	January 10
Bernard Levy : brother-in-law of William Wolfe	January 11
Debbie Friedman : friend of Lisa Levine	January 11
Claude Denis Neuman : step-brother of Heidi Allison	January 12
+Allen Harris : uncle of Irvin Pike	January 12
Fishel Lekht : father of Etel Lewis	January 13
William Adler : uncle of Heidi Allison	January 13; Tevet 24
Richard Allen Rudnick : brother of Libbie Mahan	January 13
Arthur Rich : uncle of Andy Abrams	January 13
+Louis M. Lewis : remembered by TBE	January 13
+Sherman W. Schwartz : remembered by TBE	January 13
Ilene Levy : sister of William Wolfe	January 14
Rebecca Noble : aunt of Lisa Levine	January 14
+Daniel Benjamin Lipco : brother of Lisa Levine	January 14
Mildred Solomon : aunt of Jackie Rudnick z'l	January 15
Esther Halpren : grandmother of Sarah Mawhirter	January 15
Richard Schulman : father of Marc Schulman	January 15

JANUARY 16 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Harriett Wolfe : mother of William Wolfe	January 16
Raymond Zanoff : father of Larry Zanoff	January 16
+Nathan Stern : remembered by TBE	January 16; 15 Shevat
Nathan Strauss : grandfather of Judy Strauss	January 17; Tevet 28
George Carl Shattenburg : uncle of Pamela Elisheva	January 17
+Lillian Teplitz : remembered by TBE	January 18
Mary Jewel Yates : mother of Alpha Anders	January 19
Lois Hale : grandmother of Jeanette Delijani	January 19; Shevat 1
Craig Rich : cousin of Andy Abrams	January 19
+Mary Moss : remembered by TBE	January 19
+Donald Y. Broida : father of Greg Broida	January 20
+Dennis David Shapiro : remembered by TBE	January 20
John Gruber : husband of Drina Fried	January 21
Louis Schwalbendorf : grandfather of Larry Fish	January 21
+Hanna Sheffel : remembered by TBE	January 21
Jay J. Arnold : father of Kathleen Arnold-Chambers	January 22
Henry Black : uncle of Diane Andrews	January 22
+Nathan M. Krevitz : remembered by TBE	January 22

JANUARY 23 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

+Hulda Magnus: mother of Steven Magnus, grandmother of Elliott Magnus	January 23
Bonnie K. Johnson: sister of Marsha Parr	January 23
+Bonnie Kaplan Johnson: remembered by TBE	January 23
Saul David Larks: father of Anita Singer	January 24
Lois Schulman: mother of Marc Schulman	January 24; Shevat 6
+Lena Pearlmutter: remembered by TBE	January 24
Patricia Thorley: sister of Ann Peterson-Saslaw	January 25
+Phillip Rubin Jacobson: remembered by TBE	January 25
Irving Steelman: uncle of Terry Skinner	January 26
Debbie Singer Brown: sister of Glenn Singer	January 27
Stanley Witer: step-father of Elaine White	January 27

JANUARY 30 SHABBAT SERVICES YAHRZEITS

Lillian Bridges: aunt of Karen Briefer	February 1
Harvey Abarbanell: father of Ross Abarbanell	February 1
Francisco Reyes: father of Ricardo Reyes	February 2
Barnett Larks: uncle of Anita Singer	February 2
Ira Schenkman: father of Richard Schenkman	February 2
+Stacia Hoffman: remembered by TBE	February 2; 5 Shevat
Bessie Jenkins: grandmother of Terry Skinner	February 3
John Obermeyer: grandfather of Leah Bank	February 3
Milton Rudnick: father of Melanie Rudnick, brother of Phil Rudnick & Miriam Stull, uncle of Libbie Mahan	February 4
Sylvia Rudnick: sister of Phil Rudnick & Miriam Stull, aunt of Libbie Mahan & Joshua Rudnick	February 4
+Shel Cohn: remembered by TBE	February 4
+Celia Sarah Younger: remembered by TBE	February 4
Marty McNeill: friend of Karen Briefer	February 5
Warren Gold: friend of Leonard and Carla Epstein	February 5
+David H. Pike: uncle of Irvin Pike	February 5

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