



# tebeam

Volume 68 / No. 6 / April 2023

## PURIM TO PASSOVER

### TBA CELEBRATES IN STYLE

#### A Word from Rabbi Blumberg



Rabbi Sam Blumberg

#### AFIKOMEN— ANCIENT AND MODERN

What's your family's afikomen tradition? Variations abound, including a "Where's Waldo?"-like picture in which the afikomen is hiding, which was perfect for sharing over Zoom during the pandemic. Growing up, my cousins, sister, and I would "steal" the afikomen from under the tablecloth where my grandfather z"l had been sitting as soon as he conveniently left the room to wash his hands.

Later, when it was sorely needed so that we could properly conclude the Seder, we kids would ransom the afikomen, my eldest cousin acting as lead negotiator for our generation. The most memorable exchange ended with our grandfather promising us "big bucks" if we returned the afikomen. We left the Seder with huge, fake dollar bills—not exactly the

*continued on page 3*

#### President's Message



Carol Hanover

#### HAPPY PASSOVER!

Passover is different from other holidays! It's an "at home" holiday where the celebration centers around our family dining tables as we retell the story of our ancestors, who were enslaved in Egypt before being freed to wander in the desert for 40 years until finding the Promised Land. That's the short version—get all the details in your haggadot!

Passover reminds me of my grandmother's incredible walnut sponge cake that was lighter than air, and our family's loud and out-of-tune rendition of "Go Down, Moses!" It reminds me of gefilte fish lunches and making extra charoseth because there is never enough. It is a time of family customs, old and new. It's my favorite holiday.

Passover is also a time when I think about the darker side of the holiday—the story of the oppression of the Jewish people. It's an old story

*continued on page 3*

# SERVICE SCHEDULE

**IN PERSON:** Masks are optional. Those feeling unwell or who have been near others who are unwell should enjoy our services from home, via Zoom.

**ZOOM / TEMPLE MEMBERS:** The link and password can be found in your TBA weekly email.

**ZOOM / TEMPLE GUESTS:** Please send an email to [shalom@tempbetham.org](mailto:shalom@tempbetham.org) to obtain the Zoom link information.

## TBA NO LONGER SHARES THE PAGES OF THE MISHKAN T'FILAH DURING SHABBAT SERVICES ON ZOOM.

We encourage all congregants to purchase a Mishkan T'filah siddur for home use so that you can continue to follow along while on Zoom. (The online flipbook will still be available but can be difficult to navigate during the service.)

To purchase a copy of the siddur, visit [www.ccarpress.org](http://www.ccarpress.org).

QUICK LINK FOR PURCHASING

Temple  
**Beth Am**  
בית עם



## FRIDAY MARCH 31, 2023 / 10 NISAN 5783

**TOT SHABBAT SERVICE** ..... 5:15 PM  
**EREV SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE** ..... 7:15 PM  
March Anniversary Blessings  
Dedication of Wall of Honor

## SATURDAY APRIL 1, 2023 / 10 NISAN 5783

**SHABBAT HAGADOL**  
Weekly Portion TZAV Leviticus 6:1-8:36  
Haftarah Malachi 3:4-24  
**SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN AND TORAH STUDY** ..... 9:00 AM

## PASSOVER

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 5, 2023 / 15 NISAN 5783

**PASSOVER BEGINS AT SUNDOWN, 1ST SEDER** ..... 7:01 PM

### THURSDAY APRIL 6, 2023 / 16 NISAN 5783

**2ND NIGHT COMMUNITY SEDER ON ZOOM ONLY** ..... 6:00 PM

### FRIDAY APRIL 7, 2023 / 17 NISAN 5783

**EREV SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE** ..... 7:15 PM

### SATURDAY APRIL 8, 2023 / 17 NISAN 5783

Weekly Portion PASSOVER Exodus 33:12-34:26  
Haftarah Ezekiel 37:1-14  
**SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN AND TORAH STUDY** ..... 9:00 AM

## 7TH DAY PASSOVER AND YIZKOR SERVICE

### WEDNESDAY APRIL 12, 2023 / 21 NISAN 5783

**7TH DAY PASSOVER AND YIZKOR SERVICE** ..... 7:30 AM

### FRIDAY APRIL 14, 2023 / 24 NISAN 5783

**EREV SHABBAT SERVICE** ..... 7:15 PM  
The pulpit flowers and Oneg Shabbat are sponsored by Josh Weiss and Mirna Rossi  
April Anniversary Blessings

### SATURDAY APRIL 15, 2023 / 24 NISAN 5783

Weekly Portion SHEMINI Leviticus 9:1-11:47  
Haftarah II Samuel 6:1-7:17  
**SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN AND TORAH STUDY** ..... 9:00 AM  
**MORNING SERVICE AND BAR MITZVAH** ..... 10:30 AM  
Alex Rossi Weiss, son of Josh Weiss and Mirna Rossi



Your temple is here for you  
whether in good times or bad.  
Please let Rabbi Blumberg know what  
is going on in your life.  
[rabbi@tempbetham.org](mailto:rabbi@tempbetham.org)

## YOM HASHOAH

### MONDAY APRIL 17, 2023 / 27 NISAN 5783

**YOM HASHOAH COMMUNITY SERVICE** ..... 7:30 PM  
at Temple Beth Am

### FRIDAY APRIL 21, 2023 / 1 IYAR 5783

**EREV SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE** ..... 7:15 PM

### SATURDAY APRIL 22, 2023 / 1 IYAR 5783

#### ROSH CHODESH IYAR

Weekly Portion TAZRIA-METZORA Leviticus 12:1-15:33  
Haftarah Isaiah 66:1-24

**SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN AND TORAH STUDY** ..... 9:00 AM

### FRIDAY APRIL 28, 2023 / 8 IYAR 5783

**EREV SHABBAT HALL'LU SERVICE** ..... 7:15 PM  
The pulpit flowers and Oneg Shabbat are sponsored by Steven and Jennifer Murga

### SATURDAY APRIL 29, 2023 / 8 IYAR 5783

Weekly Portion ACHREI MOT-KEDOSHIM Leviticus 16:1-17:7  
Haftarah Ezekiel 22:1-16  
**SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN AND TORAH STUDY** ..... 9:00 AM  
**MORNING SERVICE AND BAT MITZVAH** ..... 10:30 AM  
Talía Brooklyn Murga, daughter of Steven and Jennifer Murga

### FRIDAY MAY 5, 2023 / 15 IYAR 5783

**TOT SHABBAT SERVICE** ..... 5:15 PM  
**EREV SHABBAT EVENING SERVICE** ..... 7:15 PM  
The pulpit flowers and Oneg Shabbat are sponsored by Jeffrey and Alisa Zaref

### SATURDAY MAY 6, 2023 / 15 IYAR 5783

Weekly Portion EMOR Leviticus 21:1-22:16  
Haftarah Ezekiel 44:15-24  
**SHABBAT MORNING MINYAN AND TORAH STUDY** ..... 9:00 AM  
**MORNING SERVICE AND BAT MITZVAH** ..... 10:30 AM  
Rachel Bella Zaref, daughter of Jeffrey and Alisa Zaref

## Minyan and Torah Study



Please join us for Shabbat morning Minyan and Torah study  
Saturday mornings at 9:00 AM in the Levine Library.

# A Word from Rabbi Blumberg

continued from front page

kind of “big bucks” we had in mind! In recent years I’ve taken on what I believe to be the more prevalent tradition of adults hiding the afikomen for the kids to find, which has the added benefit of giving the adults a few minutes of uninterrupted conversation before the kids excitedly return with the coveted half-piece of matzah.

The *afikomen* (אֶפִּיקוֹמֵן), the “dessert” piece of matzah that is broken at the beginning of the Seder and that we savor as the last food eaten on Passover evening, is an indispensable Passover tradition that I hope conjures fond memories for you as it does for me. The idea behind it is that we should close the Passover meal with the taste of matzah lingering in our mouths (as opposed to, let’s say, those ubiquitous jelly fruit slices). But the origin of the afikomen is somewhat convoluted. The first mention of it comes from the Mishnah in the volume titled Pesachim from nearly 2,000 years ago. The Mishnah reads: “One may not conclude with afikomen after the Passover meal.” If you find yourself confused by that sentence, you’re not alone! The word *afikomen* is rooted not in

Hebrew but Greek, apparently related to the word *epikomos*, which was the after-dinner revelry commonly found at Greco-Roman meals (The JPS Commentary on the Haggadah, p. 15). Though the framework of the Seder drew heavily from those other contemporary meals, the post-meal debauchery of the Greco-Romans stood in stark contrast to the important ritual nature of the Seder, and so the rabbis warned heavily against it. The Mishnah, then, was reinterpreted to be saying that “one should not eat anything after the afikomen.”

Like so much in our rich Jewish tradition, the significance of the afikomen is layered, deep, and powerful. In each generation as we gather together to celebrate our freedom, we put our own unique spin on ancient Passover customs, creating lasting memories that we can share *l’dor vador*—from generation to generation. As we sit around the Seder table in just a few days’ time, my prayer for us all is that we can feel the ecstasy our ancestors felt as they moved from slavery to freedom. May we allow that excitement to stir within us; may we make new memories and traditions that will follow us for years to come.

*Chag Sameach*—To a holiday filled with joy, freedom, and new beginnings,

— Rabbi Sam Blumberg

## President's Message

continued from front page

that unfortunately seems new again and again, as I read stories in the news almost daily about incidents of antisemitism everywhere.

How can we, in Framingham, fight antisemitism? I think one of the best ways is to support Jewish institutions like Temple Beth Am. If Judaism is kept strong in Framingham, it will in turn be made stronger everywhere.

How can you support TBA? Why not celebrate Passover by going to our website and reading through the various funds we offer, including funds that support our school, our building, summer camp tuitions, and trips to Israel? At the March meeting of the Board of Trustees, we approved a new fund, to be known as the “Technology Support Fund,” or more simply the “Tech Fund.” Contributions to this new fund are to be used “to purchase, maintain, and upgrade all forms of technology at Temple Beth Am, or for other purposes as recommended to the President and deemed necessary by the President.”

The Tech Fund was initiated by the Fishman family in honor of the 80th birthday of Bill Rabkin, who continues to devote time, knowledge, and energy to the improvement of technology at Temple Beth Am. Bill was one of a group of people who helped TBA get through the pandemic months by developing our Zoom capabilities so that we could stay strong as a community, implementing creative solutions to keep Judaism strong.

We hope that our members will contribute to this fund, or to the other existing funds, to honor, remember, or congratulate friends and family while helping keep Judaism strong as we retell the story of Passover.

Next year, let us be a stronger Jewish people, in Jerusalem and everywhere.

*Chag Sameach*,

— Carol Hanover, President

## Thank you, Bill Rabkin!

TBA is blessed to have many volunteers who help every single day. Bill Rabkin was honored at Shabbat services on March 31 for working tirelessly to install, perfect, and teach our congregation to make the best use of Zoom technology. Bill’s efforts allowed us to continue to provide religious services and an array of classes, entertainments, and more to the TBA community throughout the pandemic and still to this day. Bill’s name will be added to the plaque that lists “Extraordinary Leaders” at Temple Beth Am. When you are making a donation to TBA in someone’s name, please remember the new Technology Fund.



### Considering being a literacy tutor and want to share an appreciation of poetry?

The Greater Boston Jewish Coalition for Literacy and Potter Road Elementary School are again participating in

#### Poem in Your Pocket Day on April 27.

Come hear a guest poet and then help students compose their own poems. If interested, please contact

Rebecca Shimshak, Director, GBJCL, at

rshimshak@jcrboston.org,

617-457-8678. You can learn more about GBJCL at

[www.jcrboston.org/literacy](http://www.jcrboston.org/literacy)



# What Is Jewish Experiential Education? How Does It Relate to Passover?



Cantor David Wolff,  
Lower School  
Education Director

Research in Jewish education consistently shows that meaningful Jewish experiences during childhood lead to adults who live active Jewish lives. Jewish educators today know that effective Jewish education must go beyond the classroom. Simply learning Hebrew, studying Jewish history, and studying Torah is not enough; Jewish youth must have meaningful, fun, engaging Jewish experiences. In the education world, this is often referred to as experiential education, or sometimes as informal education. Simply put, young Jewish people need opportunities to “do Jewish.”

In the Temple Beth Am religious school, we recognize the importance of both Jewish experiential education and more traditional Jewish education. Our students need a strong foundational understanding of Judaism; they need Hebrew skills and the ability to confidently navigate a Siddur (prayer book). They need to understand the arc of the Jewish people’s story in Torah, from creation to Moses’ death outside the land of Israel. They need to understand Jewish holiday observance—what do we do on Shabbat? Yom Kippur? Purim? But understanding is not enough; our students must have opportunities to *do Jewish*.

Throughout the school year, our religious school provides opportunities for our students to have meaningful Jewish experiences. For Purim this year, some of our students baked Hamantaschen, using their hands (and stomachs!) to engage with Judaism. Many of our teachers teach Jewish stories by having their students create skits and plays; our

students are actually reliving Jewish stories! Our entire lower school joined together for a Tu Bishvat Seder, eating the *Shivat HaMinim* (שבועת המינים), the seven species of Israel mentioned in Deuteronomy. For *Yom HaAtzma’ut* (Israel Independence Day) this year, our students will create fun Israeli flag crafts and engage their ears (and feet) with Israeli music.

Jewish summer camp and trips to Israel are some of the most powerful Jewish experiences a young person can have. Jewish summer camp immerses young students in Jewish life in a way that is not possible for many of us in our daily lives. A trip to Israel (through Birthright Israel or any of the many other options) exposes students to a world that operates in Hebrew; after studying Hebrew in the Siddur for so many years, it can be eye-opening to peruse a falafel-stand menu in Hebrew! **Temple Beth Am offers scholarships for our students to pursue these life-changing Jewish experiences. Elsewhere in this edition of TEBEAM, you will find details about TBA’s youth scholarships; we encourage you to apply!**

Passover is the ultimate expression of Jewish experiential education. The Mishnah teaches that “in each and every generation, a person must view themselves as though they personally left Egypt” (בְּכָל דּוֹר וָדּוֹר חָיָב לֵרְאוֹת אֶת עַצְמוֹ כְּאִלּוּ הוּא יֵצֵא מִמִּצְרַיִם—Mishnah Pesachim 10:5). And so each Seder we attend is like a trip in time, as we imagine ourselves escaping slavery, passing through a wall of water on each side. As we eat horseradish (מרור—maror), we taste the bitterness of the Jewish people’s slavery in Egypt. We reenact Jewish history, practicing Jewish experiential education, just as the ancient rabbis taught. This Passover, may we all have meaningful Jewish experiences! We hope you will join us for our TBA second-night Seder on Thursday, April 6.



## Passover @ TBA

We look forward to celebrating the Passover holiday with our Temple Beth Am community!

We hope that you’ll join us for our second-night Seder on Zoom, Thursday, April 6, 2023, at 6:00pm.

Our Seder will include all of the elements before Shulkhan Orekh (the Festive Meal). The Haggadah will be shared on screen; we encourage you to prepare for your Seder with the items listed at the helpful website linked in TBA email communication (especially those found in the “Ritual Foods and Drinks” section) so that you can join us for the ritual retelling of our story as we celebrate our freedom.

### TBA SERVICE SCHEDULE DURING PASSOVER:

#### WEDNESDAY APRIL 5, 2023 / 15 NISAN 5783

Passover begins at sundown - 1st Seder (no temple programming)

#### THURSDAY APRIL 6, 2023 / 15 NISAN 5783

2nd Night Seder on Zoom..... 6:00 PM

#### FRIDAY APRIL 7, 2023 / 17 NISAN 5783

Erev Shabbat Service ..... 7:15 PM

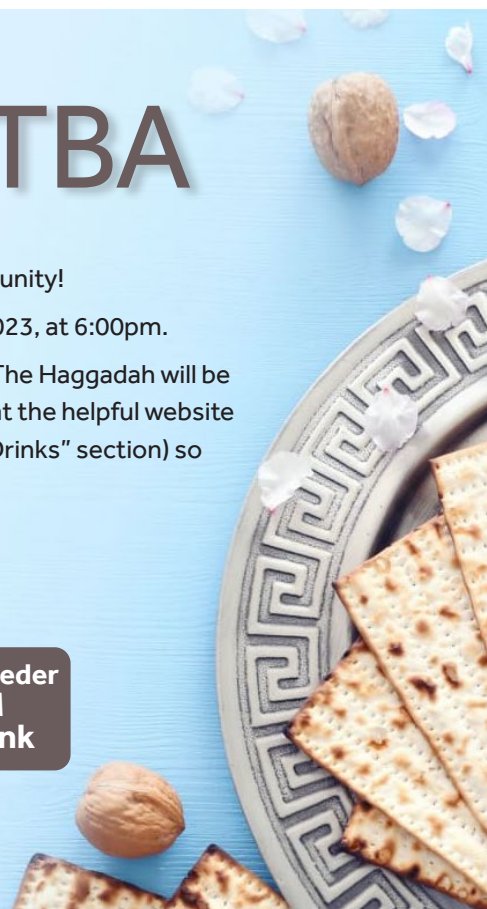
#### SATURDAY APRIL 8, 2023 / 17 NISAN 5783

Shabbat Morning Minyan & Torah Study ..... 9:00 AM

#### WEDNESDAY APRIL 12, 2023 / 21 NISAN 5783

7th Day Passover and Yizkor Service..... 7:30 AM

2nd Night Seder  
ZOOM  
Quick Link



# LEARN @ TBA

## Lifelong Learning with Rabbi Blumberg

**Sunday, April 2, 11:15am-12:30pm**

In the Levine Library and on Zoom

### The Prayers of the Friday Night Shabbat Service



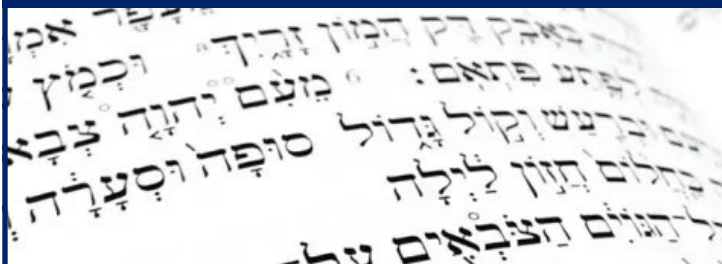
Join us for our third session of learning in-depth about the Friday night prayers. This session will focus on the prayers starting with *Chatzi Kaddish*. All learners welcome; you're sure to learn something new whether you've been participating in Shabbat services your whole life or are brand-new to the experience.

A Mishkan T'filah Shabbat siddur is required for the class which will be available for in-person participants.

*Zoom link for those unable to attend in person*

*No prior knowledge is needed to attend the class. Each class is self-contained.*

## LEARN TO READ HEBREW



TBA president Carol Hanover is teaching a beginner Hebrew class. The class is held twice each month.

Until further notice, the class will be Zoom only.

Please contact the temple office for more information: [shalom@tempbetham.org](mailto:shalom@tempbetham.org)

## Levine Library

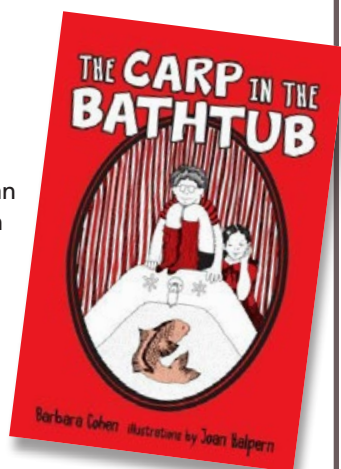
### THE CARP IN THE BATHTUB by Barbara Cohen

A delightful story about a brother and sister and their plan to save the Passover carp from going into the cooking pot.

*"45 years in print, acclaimed as a modern classic"*

A juvenile book to be enjoyed by all ages!

HAPPY PASSOVER to the TBA community!



Marsha Massey, TBA Librarian

**Please contact the temple office for specific library requests.**

## TEMPLE BETH AM RELIGIOUS SCHOOL LEARN. GROW. HAVE FUN!

**ZERO**  
Registration Fee

**Always bustling with activity...**  
our religious school is an exciting mix of Jewish activities & experiences.



**Experienced and caring faculty • Inclusiveness • Family education  
Parent engagement events • Diversity • Family Shabbat experiences  
Community building • Music • Library**

**JOIN US.** Contact our Lower School Education Director, Cantor David Wolff  
508.872.8312 or [cantor@tempbetham.org](mailto:cantor@tempbetham.org)

Temple Beth Am // A Warm and Vibrant Reform Jewish Community





# EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

**METROWEST COMMUNITY COMMEMORATION**

*For the dead and the living, we must bear witness.*  
— Elie Wiesel

**APRIL 17, 2023**  
**YOM HASHOAH**  
**7:30 PM**

**Yom HaShoah, or Holocaust Remembrance Day,** is an annual observance to commemorate the victims of the Holocaust, the genocide of six million Jews and millions of other Holocaust victims by Nazi Germany and its collaborators.

**SPEAKER**  
**KURT LINDEN**  
"FROM BERLIN TO SHANGHAI:  
MY FAMILY'S ESCAPE FROM  
NAZI GERMANY"

We hope you will be able to join us in person.  
Livestream link is available by contacting  
the Temple Beth Am office.  
508-872-8300  
shalom@tempbetham.org

**JOIN US.**  
300 Pleasant Street  
Framingham, MA 01701  
tempbetham.org

Temple Beth Am  
בית אמ

Temple Beth Shalom

TEMPLE ISRAEL  
OF NATICK

**Fun & Free**  
**JEWISH EVENTS**  
FOR YOUNG CHILDREN & FAMILIES

**בראשית**  
**Bereishit: Beginnings**  
Fun preschool learning on Sunday mornings for children ages 3-5 and their families.  
Group assembly, followed by learning for children, with bagels and coffee for parents  
**Sunday**  
**9:00 AM - 10:30 AM**  
**April 2**

**Tot Shabbat**  
Come and welcome Shabbat with blessings, music, and a story.  
For children ages 0-7 and their families.  
Pizza for all.  
**Fridays**  
**5:15 PM - 6:15 PM**  
**May 5**  
**June 9**

Temple Beth Am of Framingham continues its commitment to  
**Jewish Learning for Young Children**  
with these fun FREE events!

**JOIN US.** RSVP to [shalom@tempbetham.org](mailto:shalom@tempbetham.org) or 508-872-8300

Temple Beth Am, 300 Pleasant Street, Framingham, MA 01701  
tempbetham.org 508-872-8300

Temple Beth Am  
בית אמ  
Religious School

Temple Beth Am // A Warm and Vibrant Reform Jewish Community

**PURIM 5783**

**PURIM CARNIVAL**

**MIDDLE EAST SIDE STORY**

# CALENDAR | April 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Mar 26	27	28	29	30	31	Apr 1 9:00am Shabbat Morning Minyan & Torah Study
2 9:00am Sunday Religious School 9:00am Preschool Open 11:15am LLL Class with	3 6:00pm Upper School Classes	4	5 Erev Pesach-1st Seder NO Wednesday Religious School 6:58pm Candle lighting	6 Pesach I 6:00pm 2nd Night Community Seder on Zoom	7 Pesach II 7:15pm Erev Shabbat Service	8 Pesach III (CH"M) 9:00am Shabbat Morning Minyan & 8:10pm Havdalah (50
9 NO Sunday Religious School Classes Pesach IV (CH"M)	10 Pesach V (CH"M)	11 Pesach VI (CH"M)	12 Pesach VII NO Wednesday 7:30am 7th Day 8:14pm Candle lighting	13 Pesach VIII 6:00pm TBA Executive 7:30pm TBA Board of 8:15pm Havdalah (50	14 12:00am Candle lighting (Framingham) 7:15pm Erev Shabbat Service; April	15 9:00am Shabbat Morning Minyan & 10:30am Morning Service & Bar Mitzvah
16 NO Sunday Religious School Classes	17 TBA Office closed-Patriot's Day 7:30pm Yom Hashoah Community Service;	18	19 NO Wednesday Religious School Classes	20	21 7:16pm Candle lighting (Framingham) 7:15pm Erev Shabbat Service	22 9:00am Shabbat Morning Minyan & 8:25pm Havdalah (50 min) (Framingham)
23 NO Sunday Religious School Classes 9:00am Brotherhood Breakfast	24 6:00pm Upper School Classes	25	26 4:00pm Wednesday Religious School Classes; Israel Day	27	28 7:24pm Candle lighting (Framingham) 7:15pm Erev Shabbat Hall'lu Service	29 9:00am Shabbat Morning Minyan & 10:30am Morning Service & Bat Mitzvah
30 9:00am Grade 6 Family Education Program 9:00am Sunday Religious School	May 1	2	3	4	5	6



# Update on NSGP Grant

*By Dan Bendell*

As I hope everyone knows, Temple Beth Am was awarded a federal grant of \$150,000 under the DHS/FEMA Non-profit Security Grant Program (NSGP) to make improvements to the security of our building. We have assembled a committee to oversee the project, and I am grateful to committee members Simms Pearl, Vivo Moshe, Mark Stetson, and Howard Schwartz for offering their time to help with this complex project.

Since the funds are designated for improving the security of our building, we have identified the exterior doors and windows for replacement with upgraded components. The doors will be replaced with improved materials and stronger frames and hardware. The windows will be replaced with shatter-resistant double-pane glass. We also hope to be able to establish internal "Safe Spaces" within the building. These enhancements will not only meet the security needs of the facility but will also improve our energy efficiency.

We have engaged an engineer to help us understand the structural aspects of the building and have begun gathering the names of potential vendors to submit proposals. We are also working with a representative from Mass Save with the hopes of getting additional assistance from that program.

In addition, the temple received a generous \$3,000 grant from CJP that will support additional security improvements, such as upgrades to our video surveillance system and new signage around the property. We are grateful to CJP for their support.

I invite members of the congregation to reach out to me if they have any questions or are interested in offering their expertise on either of these grant projects.



## IN JOY

### WE WELCOME NEW CONGREGANTS

**Julian and Meryl Rich**  
20 Hawk Lane  
Framingham, MA 01701

### THE TEMPLE REJOICES WITH

**Stephen Bonder** on the birth of a new grandson and **Susan Bonder** on the birth of her 2nd great-grandson.  
**Owen Daniel Bonder** was welcomed by his parents, Tara and Alex Bonder, and his big brother, Caleb.

### SPECIAL ANNIVERSARIES

All couples celebrating an April wedding anniversary will be blessed at a service on April 14 at 7:15pm.  
Please call the temple office if you are planning to attend.

DATE	NAME	YEARS
4/13/2008	Steve and Lorily Forman	15

## IN MEMORY

*We record with deep sorrow the names of those who have died since our last bulletin.*

### THE CONGREGATION MOURNS WITH

**Michael Sudikoff**, on the loss of his father, **Barry Sudikoff**

We mourn the loss of our friend and temple member

**RUTH ROSENTHAL**

Condolences to her daughter and son-in-law, Joan and Nelson Zide,  
and her grandchildren and great-grandchildren

*May their memory be for a blessing.*



# SISTERHOOD

*This sermonette was prepared in celebration of Women's History Month and in anticipation of Purim for the Sisterhood-led service held on March 3.*

**By Merle Kushner**

What do a parashah, a parsec, and Purim have in common? In this week's parashah Tetzaveh, meaning "command," Aaron and his line are installed as the priests of the tabernacle while very detailed instructions are provided for the vestments and ceremonies, including keeping lit the menorah, the eternal light. Throughout our history is the interplay of darkness and light. Just a couple of days after saying that I would like to compose a d'var for this service, I was working on a crossword puzzle: the clue, *3.26 light years*; the answer, *parsec*, a unit of length used to measure distances to astronomical objects outside the solar system—*19 trillion miles*. At our Brotherhood breakfast that same day, Dr. Kathryn Flanagan, mission head for the James Webb Telescope, explained the evidence for previously unknown galaxies: There are variations in patterns of light from known galaxies as their light bends around the mass of the unseen galaxies.

In other words, you know the thing exists because of what you do not see, by its absence.

Dr. Lisa Grant, in *The Torah: A Women's Commentary*, explores notable absences in the Bible. Tetzaveh is the only parashah from the beginning of Exodus to the end of Deuteronomy that does not mention Moses by name, and the Book of Esther is one of only two books in the Bible in which G-d is not mentioned. She notes that the word *asthar* (*samech tet resh*)—"I will hide"—is a play on Esther's name, while the word *Megillah* shares the root *gimel lamed hay* with the word meaning "to reveal," so the Book of Esther could be read as "revealing the hidden." Maybe some things go without saying, are givens. Sometimes more is said with silence. Maybe Moses and G-d had greater things to attend to, saw the need to share the spotlight, or wanted to let others rise to their occasions. Maybe G-d is present, behind the scenes, controlling events, with the actions of Aaron and Esther ultimately being of divine providence. The Purim message, writes Dr. Grant, is that the sense that G-d is in the world, even if hidden, gives us strength and purpose to cope.

Reading *The Heroine with 1001 Faces* by Maria Tatar and participating in Rabbi Blumberg's Lifelong Learning series on selections from *Dirshuni: Contemporary Women's Midrash* prompted me to think about Purim from Esther's perspective, to seek the voice of Esther. Here is my imagining:

*Purim*: Why is it that the holiday with me, a young woman, at the center has become the most revelrous of holidays, with drinking, costumes, farce, a literal carnival atmosphere? And my book, in modern times, is sometimes synonymous with a story burdensome in length. These do not diminish me. Listen.

This is my story, not overly long, not to be excerpted or hurried. I didn't know what my prospects would be for marriage, but I no longer had my parents, and with antisemitism and being separated from my homeland, it was hard at times to think too far ahead. And who marries for love? What woman has a say? I might live in comfort, at court, but perhaps always looking over my shoulder and resented by the other women.

Lots were cast to decide the date to take the lives of my people. For me it was also a lottery with terrible odds to dare appear before the king. I could have a chance to save my people; I could end up dead either way. The women, having seen the fate of the previous

queen, banished for refusing to debase herself, actually wish me well. They help prepare the banquets—some dishes unusual to them from my own culture; some known to them to be the king's favorites; and, some, to spare me, likely to leave him relaxed rather than aroused. I am not the youngest or most naïve, but they have compassion for my situation.

I am Esther, hidden, this name taken to conceal that I am a Jewess; the name of my birth, Hadas, the myrtle, the eyes of the lulav, in the wandering, seeking, in the Sukkot, seeing, illuminating. So I enlighten you.

Do not think of me as a victim, orphaned, imperiled by my cousin's actions, taken as a concubine. No, I am a survivor—one of your first survivors lighting the way for our people's survival. I was literate, and I had agency. In the end, it was my orders that established these holy days of Purim for feasting *and* fasting.

Please do not think that my success was seduction. I gambled that the king, accustomed to being coddled and cajoled, had tired of this, of the underlying message that he was a person lacking maturity and judgment. I reminded him of how my cousin, stationed at the palace gate, discovered and had him alerted to a plot against him. I did not ask for my life alone, my family's, my town's, but for Jews' lives throughout Persia. My courageous, reasoned, and heartfelt appeal spoke to the man, to the leader he wanted to be.

G-d is never mentioned in my book. Has G-d deserted me, my people? No, I am Esther, a star, rising to meet the challenge, a piece of this ever-expanding universe of light, of love. Hila Unna in *Dirshuni*, "Daughters of the Place," states: "the activism that Esther displays is identified as a religious act that not only saved the nation but also brought the Jewish people closer to G-d."

When you read my Book, and you hear Haman's name, you shout, boo, rattle, and stomp. As with this Shabbat Zachor, this Sabbath of Remembrance that precedes Purim, you are commanded to blot out the memory of Amalek and his descendants, but you do not, should not forget the brutality. How could you, for we, we human beings, have not wholly escaped it. We must never forget, never again. My regret is so much bloodshed in the aftermath, but many were spared and no spoils taken, and now on Purim it is customary to give to those in need.

When you read my book, and you hear my name, I wonder why you do not clap, cheer, and shake with joy to embrace my memory and that of my ascendants. But I trust you as G-d trusted me—needing no miracle, no plague—and as G-d entrusted Aaron to place blood from the sacrifice on the right ears, hands, and feet as reminders that G-d's word, the work of your hands, and how you act in your lives matter (Exodus 29:19). Again from Hila Unna, "Who will bring us? ... Every single one of you ... just for a time like this."

Know that you are my legacy. You are here because I existed, and my hope is that the light from my star will shine, will direct you as a moral compass radiating from your heart, rays of compassion, truth, and courage. Embrace these as you hear my name.

So what do a parashah, a parsec, and Purim have in common? The ineffable, guiding, and loving light, in and around you, bending toward you and you toward it, everlasting.

# BROTHERHOOD

## Temple Beth Am Brotherhood Buffet Breakfast and Speaker

April 23, 2023

8:45 AM-10:30 AM (Note early start time)

RSVP by April 19 to [brotherhood@tempbetham.org](mailto:brotherhood@tempbetham.org)



Tom Caron, NESN broadcaster, will be our speaker. Join us for his talk on Boston sports in 2023 - where do our teams stand?



Annual dues which include 9 breakfasts are \$90/senior rate \$65.  
Nonmember / Guest fee for breakfast is \$15.  
Breakfasts and Brotherhood membership are open to the public.  
Next scheduled breakfast is May 21.

## YOUTH

**We are heading into the homestretch  
of the year! Here are some fun events  
we have coming up!**

**April 30: Cooking Chicken Soup for Congregants (Grades 6-12), 11:00am-1:30pm**

We will meet after Sunday morning Hebrew school to make soup to freeze and keep at the temple for any congregants who are sick. We will be making chicken soup, of course! We will also offer cheese pizza for lunch around 11:30. You can either email to RSVP or respond yes on the Google Calendar invitation.

**May 12: Ice Cream Sundae Party (Grades K-12), 7:45pm**

Following Education Shabbat, we will have an ice cream party for both upper and lower school students during the Oneg after the service! You can either email to RSVP or respond yes on the Google Calendar invitation.

**May 20: Dinner and Fun at Legacy Place (Grades 6-12), 5:30pm**

Join us to eat dinner and walk around Legacy Place! We will meet at Temple Beth Am at 5:30pm to carpool there. I will be one of the drivers and am looking for a few more parents to drive, too! Once we arrive, we'll have dinner at the Yard House. Please send your teen with enough money for dinner. We will have some time to walk around Legacy Place and will plan to be back at TBA by 8:45. Chaperones needed! You can either email to RSVP or respond yes on the Google Calendar invitation.

**June 11: Shillman House Visit (Grades 6-12), 1:30pm**

We will be visiting Shillman House in Framingham to spend some time talking with the residents there and getting to know them! Be on the lookout for more information regarding this visit. You can either email to RSVP or respond yes on the Google Calendar invitation.

**TO SIGN UP OR WITH QUESTIONS**

**Sarah Rosenthal, Youth Advisor /**  
**[youthadvisor@tempbetham.org](mailto:youthadvisor@tempbetham.org)**

**Fifteen of our  
3rd-8th grade students  
had a BLAST together  
at Launch on March 26!**





## 2023 SCHOLARSHIP ASSISTANCE OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE TEMPLE BETH AM YOUTH



**Application  
Quick Link  
DEADLINE  
MAY 5**

Spring in the air. It's time for our Temple Beth Am youth to consider scholarship assistance opportunities if they will be attending Jewish overnight camp, traveling to Israel, doing Tikkun Olam (social justice), or beginning their college/university journey. Temple Beth Am's scholarships were established by members of our congregation to assist our temple youth to enrich their Jewish foundation and experiences.

Find our updated scholarships assistance application on TBA's website, <https://www.templebetham.org/community/youth-programs-baty/youth-scholarships/>. After your child(ren) complete their application, email application(s) to [shalom@templebetham.org](mailto:shalom@templebetham.org), and enter the words "2023 Youth Scholarship Assistance Application" in the subject line no later than May 5.

**Lloyd Martin Youth:** supports scholarships to college, trips to Israel, leadership opportunities for Junior BATY and BATY

**Morris Chapman Scholarship:** supports partial and full assistance for Junior BATY and BATY youth attending NFTY institutes or other Jewish youth groups, including Jewish camps and Israel programs.

**Leslie Brenner Camp Scholarship Fund:** assists Temple Beth Am youth attending Jewish youth enrichment programs. **Must send application directly to Sisterhood,** [sisterhoodtba300@gmail.com](mailto:sisterhoodtba300@gmail.com).

**Mindy Steinberg Memorial Fund:** helps finance a Confirmation class graduate's first time traveling to Israel, and whose families are temple members in good standing. This includes the URJ High School semester in Israel.

**David Mindess Scholarship Fund:** supports high school graduating seniors, whose families are temple members in good standing. This is a one-year assistance opportunity.

**Gail H. Constant Memorial Fund:** provides a \$500 scholarship annually to a Temple Beth Am graduating senior planning a career path in art/design or fashion marketing. Under the conditions of this fund, graduating seniors must apply at least 60 days prior to the deadline.

**Mickey Moffie Scholarship Fund:** assists Temple Beth Am graduating seniors, whose families are in good standing and will be pursuing careers in business. This is a one-year assistance opportunity.



## WEBSITE DONATIONS JUST A CLICK AWAY!

*The TBA website can now accept credit card donations.*

Please take advantage of this new capability on our website to acknowledge the memory of or to honor an accomplishment of a friend or a loved one.

Go to [www.templebetham.org](http://www.templebetham.org) — Click on DONATE

## TREE OF LIFE

The TREE OF LIFE mounted on the wall of the temple lobby is a favorite way for members to commemorate "simchas" and honor family members and friends. Your gift of leaves (\$300) and stones (\$1000) will support continuing growth projects in the future. Pledge cards are available in the temple office.

## SPONSOR FUTURE ONEGS

This is a great opportunity for your family to honor any type of special occasion or Kiddush.

Sponsorship is a \$100 donation.

For more information contact Patty Frankel via the TBA Office.

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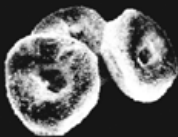
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**Temple Beth Am gratefully acknowledges the following thoughtful donations received from  
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#### **DONOR**

Josh Weiss and Mirna Rossi

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#### **IN APPRECIATION OF RABBI BLUMBERG**

for a beautiful service and the Hebrew naming of our son,  
Lucca

and with much gratitude for the beautiful service for our beloved  
mother, grandmother and Gigi, Ruth Rosenthal

#### **IN MEMORY OF**

Dr. David Emanuel, beloved husband of Shelly and devoted  
father of Emily and Jessica

Vladimir and Pavlik, sons of Ester and Shalom Bloch

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for a beautiful service and the Hebrew naming of our son,  
Lucca

and with much gratitude for the beautiful service for our beloved  
mother, grandmother and Gigi, Ruth Rosenthal

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Dr. David Emanuel, beloved husband of Shelly and devoted  
father of Emily and Jessica

Judith "Judie" Malamud, dear mother of Lisa Apostol and  
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Milt Rosenthal, a dear friend

the yahrzeit of Eliot Beren, beloved father

### **DAVID MINDESS SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

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