



FALL 2015 | 5776



GETTING AN EARLY START

Our children are our living example of stewards to the earth, to the community and to our synagogue—it all starts at the beginning. Pictured are Aleph Preschool students caring for our Friendship Giving Garden. Located at the southeast corner of our building and jointly cared for with Benilde-St. Margaret's School, this project helps our students learn about Jewish social justice and the environment (science and sustainability), as well as those less fortunate, knowing that the harvest yield is donated to the St. Louis Park Emergency Program (STEP). To read about the Aleph Preschool and the importance of beginnings, turn to page 6.

DIVING INTO THE NEW YEAR

By Rabbi Alexander Davis



Throughout High School and college, I swam competitively. I swam backstroke, individual medley and relays. Admittedly, I was one of the slower swimmers on the team. Still, I enjoyed the training and the comradery.

I started swimming as a kid and have continued into adulthood. But no matter how many times I've done it, I still pause at the edge of the pool and hesitate before diving in for my morning workout. Just a little while earlier, I was tucked in a nice cozy bed. And now a pool of cold water awaits. "Ugh, do I really want to?" I ask myself. "It's cold and wet!" Of course, the minute I jump in and start to swim, I wake up, warm up and swim like Michael Phelps (ok, just a tad slower). Overcoming the desire to crawl back in bed and go back to sleep is the hard part.

Entering a new year is a bit like diving into a pool. Like cold water's shock to my system, Rosh Hashanah helps me awaken to life. But this is not just a metaphor. It is a real practice. Here is what I mean.

There are many ways I prepare for the *Yamim Nora'im*, the High Holy Days. Some things I do for work: write sermons, prepare teaching materials, schedule service leaders. And then there are the things I do in my private life: call family, bake *hallah* and immerse in a *mikvah*.

A *mikvah* is a pool of water. Warmer than the Sabes JCC pool where I regularly swim, and considerably smaller, this is not a lap pool to exercise our bodies, but "living waters" to purify our souls. One enters a *mikvah* already clean so immersion is not about physical but spiritual cleansing. When I immerse, I utter a silent prayer. I pray that the scars I acquired

and those I inflicted on others be washed away into the water. I pray to purify my heart and rejuvenate my spirit. A *mikvah* is thus not a place of recreation but an opportunity for re-creation.

Throughout the year, I use a *mikvah* for a similar yet different purpose: conversion to Judaism. I am in charge of Beth El's conversion program. This program includes classes and private study with me. Each year we convert close to a dozen people at Beth El. Some are adults planning on marrying a Jew-by-birth. Others are children being adopted by Jewish parents. Still others are what I call "spiritual seekers"— people who find Jewish theology and community so compelling that they choose to cast their lot with the Jewish people.

Going to the *mikvah* with these people is thus an exciting, and often emotional moment. It marks a culmination of study, preparation and reflection. It signifies that they have actively "immersed" themselves in Jewish traditions and Jewish community. And though they emerge from the waters with conversion officially complete, they are not "done." More often, they feel inspired to continue their learning and growing as Jews.

In Genesis, the world emerges out of water with God hovering over the surface of the deep. So too, when we emerge out of the *mikvah* in preparation for a holy day or for conversion, life spreads out before us with endless possibilities for new growth. It is the womb just before the "birthday of the world." From it, we are born anew, full of potential and hope for the future.

It takes courage to dive into the living waters of Jewish life. And it takes courage to enter the High Holy Days, to face the past and change the future. Standing on the edge of the New Year, we may hesitate wondering what it holds in store. But then we dive in and with a splash are fully surrounded by the life-giving waters of Torah that nourish every facet of our lives.

"If you are interested in learning about the many, beautiful rituals associated with the *mikvah*, I would be happy to talk with you. If you or someone you know have questions about conversion to Judaism, please contact me as well. My door is always open." – Rabbi Davis

Last Rites

By Rabbi Avi S. Olitzky



During Naval Basic Training, my unit trained with the corpsmen in a damage control setting, simulating a boiler room explosion. Two corpsmen noted that “nothing could be done” for the two casualties brought before them. As the corpsmen turned to me, my commanding officer placed her hand on my shoulder. We bowed our heads together and I recited the *Shema*—abridging the traditional *Vidui*, essentially a form of Jewish “last rites.” My commanding officer remarked to me afterwards that those corpsmen were deploying to Iraq the following week and in that moment they learned that when they, as medical personnel, have exhausted their training and skills to aid a fallen brother or sister, there is still something further that can be done. And the *Shema* becomes key to that lesson, of preparing for the next chapter.

We recite the *Shema* in the morning and in the evening, and further, in the beginning of our life and at the end. The *Shema* itself becomes a regular marker of liminal moments as we engage in the world. This is likely one of the reasons the mezuzah scroll contains the *Shema* in the space in between rooms, neither one room nor the other. Indeed, at the close of Yom Kippur, as we close the previous chapter of our life and begin the next one, stuck right in between, it is only fitting then that we recite the *Shema*.

But the *Vidui* ritual is deeper than merely spiritually marking moments of liminality. *Vidui* literally means confession (akin to the *Vidui* recited during the High Holy Days). Babylonian Talmud Shabbat 32a compelled us nearly 1500 years ago to offer such confessions (vis-à-vis the *Vidui* ritual) to ensure that nothing is left unsaid—by our loved one (or on their behalf) and certainly by our loved one’s friends and family. We gather at their bedside and ask for and offer forgiveness. We share our pain and our

love, our laughter and our tears. It is a moment that haunts, redeems, comforts, grates and soothes.

Far too often a family is not familiar with the *Vidui* simply because it is generally not raised in everyday conversation. Nevertheless, when a family calls the synagogue in earnest to share the unfortunate news that their loved one is close to breathing their final breath, our clergy visits with the family and lead them in the recitation of the *Vidui*. More than any other powerful lifecycle moment, this is when a family is at their most exposed and most raw, and this is when we as clergy help a family begin to accept the closing of the gates.

As the gates of our year draw to a close toward the completion of *Ne’ilah* and *Ma’ariv* on Yom Kippur, we will think about all of those *Shema* moments that led up that evening. We will commit ourselves



to pausing to embrace the “in-betweenness.” And most importantly, we will remember that, should we, God forbid, find the Book of Death on our family’s proverbial bookshelf in the coming year, we will gather for the *Shema* and the *Vidui* lingering in our goodbyes.



WARM-UP TO THE BIG DAY

Preparing with Intention

By Cantor Audrey Abrams

Panting, runs up and down, stretches, deep breathing, exercise routines... No, this is not my body workout. This is my vocal workout – my very purposeful workout – in advance of the High Holy Days. Singing is very physical and singers need to follow the regime of any workout, albeit geared to the voice – warm-ups, strengthening and lengthening exercises, distance training, cool down. We need to focus on technique as we exercise in order to get the best performance out of the vocal muscles.

While there is a common saying that “just showing up is half the battle,” none of us are truly at our best if we just show up. It’s a start, but there is so much more.

Upping my “vocal workouts” is one of the ways that I prepare for the High Holy Days. I return to voice lessons, I drink more water, stay away from loud, crowded environments so as not to strain, try to sleep more, do breathing exercises and vocal gymnastics. I can’t expect that I can just show up and be able to sustain full days of singing without increasing my level of vocal fitness.

While this is part of my preparation as a cantor, the message of preparedness applies to everyone. The goal is not singing or training one’s voice. It’s really about coming to the High Holy Days ready to pray. I prepare so I don’t have to worry about my voice and can instead concentrate on the *tefillot* (prayers) I will be leading. I want to reflect on the coming year, the year that has passed, the prayers in the *Mahzor* and those that come from my heart, who I may have hurt this past year, how my family and I have changed and grown, how I can be a better person. If I prepare, I can deepen my *kavannah* (intention) in my *davening* (praying) and arrive ready to atone, ready to celebrate, ready for renewal.



There is no worse feeling than feeling unprepared. It often derails us from being able to contemplate the awesomeness of the holy day, the sense of community, and our connection with the service leaders and especially the Holy Blessed One.

This holiday season let’s not just show up. Let’s not sit back and see what we get. Let’s come prepared to be immersed. Prepared with our prayers, our atonement, our love and forgiveness, our sadness and sorrows, our joy and gladness, our generosity of support, our vulnerable souls. Let’s come ready to pray together for the health of loved ones, relief of pain and suffering, peace in the hearts of all, courage and strength for everyone as they navigate their messy lives. Let’s be prepared to do this together. And if we do, these days will truly be the Days of Awe.



Finding Personal Meaning in Prayer

By Bonnie Bongard Goldish, Beth El President

Before beginning my term as Beth El President, I tried to get myself in the best “shape” possible. I began doing Yoga, took an eight-week course in MBSR (mindfulness based stress reduction), and I even took a stab at Toastmasters (which I flunked out miserably before the end of the first meeting!) When I actually became president, however, I realized a different type of strength was evolving. This was not a physical strength, but rather, it was a personal inner strength.

At last year’s Installation of Officers, we recited a most meaningful prayer, written by Rabbi Olitzky. The words in the prayer became my personal goal and a source of strength for me throughout my first year and it continues to inspire me now, as I begin my second year. I made several copies of it – one for my purse, one for my *tallis* bag and one for my white coat pocket at work. Each time I read it, a different word or message speaks to me – that word/message varies depending on what challenges I may be facing at the time.

I soon realized that reciting this prayer grounded me and our board as well, and we now begin all our board meetings by saying this prayer together. Board members have shared with me how much they appreciate how this prayer sets the tone for our meeting and how much they too have been touched and strengthened by it.

I would like to share this prayer with you:

In the presence of our colleagues, we accept the honor and responsibility conferred upon us as leaders of this congregation.

We pledge to serve our community to the best of our ability, and to uphold its sacred values with dignity and integrity.

We pledge our time and our energy to its needs and goals, and we will attempt to serve with vigor and to lead with humility.

This is our unwavering oath and pledge.

Grant us strength when we are weary, hope when we are discouraged, patience and perseverance when we face obstacles.

Lead us on the path of blessing.

May our labors reflect honor upon our congregation, and our people, and may we thus bring glory to Your Holy Name.

Amen.

This prayer serves to reinforce for me what a true honor and privilege I have been given to help lead our congregation. I am grateful and humbled by this opportunity.

I wish you all a Shanah Tovah—a year filled with peace, blessings and personal growth.



Board members, after reciting the board prayer, gathered in the Learning Center.

Our Executive Officers and Board meet throughout the course of the year.



Always Preparing

By Karen Burton, Early Childhood Director, Aleph Preschool

Autumn, and certainly the High Holy Days season, compels us to reflect on the cycle of life—and really the idea of beginnings. We cannot reach Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur ready and prepared if we do not begin the journey the day after the holy days the previous year. It is all about a proper beginning—a proper start. Indeed, we take this concept to heart in the way we serve our synagogue and our preschool. Still, Audrey Goldfarb (who has played a key strategic consulting role for us throughout Aleph Preschool’s renaissance) has reminded us time and again that it is not enough for us to be proud of our own work, patting ourselves on the back. Phrases like “school of excellence” are actual accreditations. This is the reason we have embarked upon yet another journey, that of receiving a Parent Aware Rating from the State of Minnesota and the Minnesota Early Learning Foundation.

The Parent Aware Ratings are like a Consumer Reports or J.D. Powers rating system for helping parents find the child care providers using kindergarten readiness best practices. Almost half of Minnesota kids are not prepared for kindergarten, and too many never catch up. Parent Aware addresses that problem and our Aleph Preschool is committed to a high quality early education, and serving as a leader in the field. It is all about the beginning.

Further, we recognize that in order to produce a healthy learning environment, the food we provide our children needs to be healthy—the children need not only be well-nourished, but fed fruits and vegetables and a nutritionally wholesome diet. Perhaps this is yet another reason our New Year is associated with apples and honey!

We are excited in the coming year to partner with Linden Hills Co-op to meet this goal. Linden Hills Co-op will be donating a large portion of the healthy snacks we serve in the Aleph Preschool, ensuring that there are farm fresh local fruits and vegetables served daily. The Co-op will also be participating throughout the year in educating our children and their families on what it means to continue the pattern of healthy eating and living in their homes. This new initiative, coupled with the Parent Aware Rating, helps us continue to be stewards to our charge.

Our charge at the Aleph Preschool is to foster a community that instills a passion and joy for learning and being Jewish, utilize a developmentally appropriate approach to teaching the whole child—intellectually, physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually, and integrate our school and families into synagogue life. If we accomplish these goals, then we proudly consider ourselves a center of excellence in preparing children to grow through life.



Adrienne Berman is joining our team as the Early Childhood Professional Growth Specialist--an integral supporting role for our leadership team at Beth El Synagogue’s Aleph Preschool. Adrienne’s role will include ensuring a positive trajectory for the school as a center of excellence; to serve as an educator-based system of checks and balances for the curriculum and Minnesota Early Childhood Indicators of Progress; and to provide professional coaching and growth for the school’s educational team.



Join Me in Our Drive to Save Lives

By Amy Shapiro, Beth El Board Member



Left to right: Dana, Amy, Skip, Mary Jane and Jason Shapiro

What if there were something you could do that took less than an hour, you could recline and relax while doing it, you could get some juice and a cookie after, and the end result is life-saving? Would you do it? I'll bet you wouldn't think twice. What if you could do this every eight weeks? Sounds too good to be true? Well it's not! I just described the process of donating blood. It's that simple and that important.

Beth El holds two blood drives each year and we need many donors and volunteers to help make them happen! Not everyone is able to give blood, but if you are able, please consider becoming a regular (or at least bi-annual) blood donor.

Did you know that one out of every three people will need blood in their lifetime? It's amazing to me that we can actually give life to each other through blood donation. My family experienced this first hand recently as my father had life-saving liver transplant surgery. He has suffered from liver disease of unknown cause for many years and thanks to a young man who committed to serving as an organ donor (after he passed away), my dad

was given a second chance at life! My dad needed many blood transfusions in the months leading up to surgery and required over 30 units of blood while in surgery. I have donated blood myself for years and this has certainly renewed my commitment to keep donating.



If you are squeamish or hesitant, challenge yourself to try anyway. Bring a friend or your family with you to donate – the more the merrier (and the fuller the blood banks)! Donating blood can begin at age 17, or 16 with parent consent.

Donating blood and deciding to become an organ donor are two of the biggest mitzvot you can do. Judaism teaches us the mitzvah of *Pikuah Nefesh*, the commandment to save a life, and this takes precedence over almost all other mitzvot. You can read about Conservative Judaism's response to organ donation in Rabbi Davis' June 5 *Kesher* article (besyn.org/organdonation).

Please sign up to donate on Sunday, October 25 at the next Beth El blood drive by contacting Terry Cohen tnudell@comcast.net or 612.618.0567 or Judy Radel at jandbradel@aol.com or 763.522.7202. To learn more about donating blood on a regular basis, visit www.mbc.org/Donate-Blood/. To learn more about organ donation, visit www.DonateLifeMN.org.

Donating blood is an easy thing to do and the result can be truly lifesaving—what a meaningful gift to give as we start off the new year.

GEMILAT HESED (ACTS OF KINDNESS) PROJECTS OPEN FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

The Blood Drive is only one of many initiatives in which our congregation engages to help those in our own community and the greater Twin Cities area. We welcome your involvement! To learn about other ongoing and one-time volunteer opportunities, join our mailing list by contacting Jo Ann Gruesner at jgruesner@gmail.com or 952.221.3739. If you are interested in helping to plan current or future projects, contact Barb Krupp, chair, at bkrupp12@comcast.net or 952.212.8587, or Cantor Abrams at aabrams@bethelsynagogue.org or 952.873.7300.

B'nai Mitzvah



September 26, 2015 / 13 Tishrei 5776

Ha'azinu

DANIEL EYAL

דניאל בן אפרים הכהן ושליה

Son of Ephraim Eyal & Christine Eyal

Daniel has been very diligent in preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. He has matured greatly during this process and taken ownership of the fact that he is becoming a Jewish adult.



October 10, 2015 / 27 Tishrei 5776

B'reishit

DANIELLE ALYSSA ROSEN

דבורה עליה בת ברק הכהן ורחל

Daughter of Rachel & Steve Rosen

Danielle has approached her Jewish education and her preparation for her Bat Mitzvah with passion and zest. She has never been afraid to ask the "big" questions and to sometimes challenge the answers she is given.



October 17, 2015 / 4 Heshvan 5776

Noah

ETHAN SAMUEL MEISLER

איתן בן אריאל הלוי ומיכל

Son of Michele & Seth Meisler

Ethan's family is no stranger to Beth El. They are an integral part of our community. Ethan follows in the tradition of his family by taking his studies and the preparation for his Bar Mitzvah very seriously.



October 17, 2015 / 4 Heshvan 5776

Noah

CELESTE APOLLINE ALDEN

אסתר חיה בת חיים ירמיהו ושושנה

Daughter of Jeremy Todd Alden & Stephanie Satz Alden

Celeste is excited to share her Bat Mitzvah with her cousin, Ethan Meisler. She only recently came to Beth El, but has approached her studies seriously and competently. We are delighted to have her celebrate her Bat Mitzvah with us.



October 24, 2015 / 11 Heshvan 5776

Lekh L'kha

HAYLEE EMMA KRIDER

הלה בת אשר ושושנה

Daughter of Shanna Ajsenberg & Bradley Krider

Haylee has worked hard in preparation for her Bat Mitzvah. Her sweet personality and lovely smile are always a pleasure to be around.



October 31, 2015 / 18 Heshvan 5776

Vayeira

ILANA ROSE BAUM

אילנה רייזעל בת בנימין ודבורה רודי

Daughter of Benjamin & Julie Baum

Ilana is so excited to share her Bat Mitzvah with her mom, Julie. She has worked hard to prepare for her Bat Mitzvah and sharing it with her mom makes it all the more meaningful.

B'nai Mitzvah



November 7, 2015 / 25 Heshvan 5776
Haye! Sarah
DANIEL GOLDENBERG

דוד בן דוד ושפרה

Son of David & Cheryl Goldenberg

Daniel is a dynamo. It seems that there is nothing that Daniel can't accomplish. He has shown this as he has prepared for his Bar Mitzvah. His two sisters have been wonderful role models for him.



November 14, 2015 / 2 Kislev 5776
Toldot
ALEXANDER HARRIS

אלכסנדר בן שלמה ואוריאל

Son of Andrea & Scott Harris

Alexander has dedicated himself wholeheartedly to preparing to become a Bar Mitzvah. He always has a gentle and respectful way about him.



November 21, 2015 (Beth El) / 9 Kislev 5776
Vayeitzei

An additional celebration will be held
December 24, 2015 (Israel) / 12 Tevet 5776
Vay'hi

ELLIOT MICHAEL BERMAN

אליהו מיכאל בן שלום ירחמיאל ויענטא חנה

Son of Gary Berman & Jennifer Berman

Elliot knows when to have fun and when to be serious. He is blessed to share and celebrate his bar mitzvah at Beth El and in Israel. We are certain that he will have many fond memories from both of these experiences.



November 28, 2015 / 16 Kislev 5776
Vayishlah

BENJAMIN SOLOMON CANTOR

שלמה יעקב בן יצחק ושושנה

Son of Susan & Bruce Cantor

Ben has a thirst for knowledge and he takes all of his learning, both Jewish and secular, very seriously. He has worked hard in preparing for his Bar Mitzvah and he knows the importance of this milestone in his life.



December 5, 2015 / 23 Kislev 5776
Vayeishev

ARI BEN BRAVERMAN

ארי בן חיים ושרה

Son of Jeff & Sara Braverman

Ari is a fun loving young man who has worked hard in preparing for his Bar Mitzvah. He has benefitted from the love and support of his two older sisters in this process.



December 5, 2015 (Minha) / 23 Kislev 5776
Mikeitz

JADEN LEHMAN

נחמה בת שמואל חי ושושנה

Daughter of Deborah & Todd Lehman

Jaden is a sweet and cheerful girl who has worked very hard in preparing for her Bat Mitzvah. She derived a great sense of accomplishment from mastering all the steps along the way.

B'nai Mitzvah



**December 12, 2015 / 30 Kislev 5776 /
Rosh Hodesh / 6th Day Hanukkah**
Mikeitz

ANNALEE FRIEDMAN

שיינה בת הערשעל וחורה

Daughter of Howard & Pam Friedman

Annalee loves life and undertakes all her responsibilities with a positive and can-do attitude. She has had the support of her entire extended family who are mainstays of our Beth El community.



**December 12, 2015 / 30 Kislev 5776
Rosh Hodesh / 6th Day Hanukkah**
Mikeitz

NATHANIEL SHAYE PROHOFSKY

נעמן שי בן לוי שלום

Son of Lee Prohofsky & Andrea Jensen

Nathaniel is a sweet and pleasant boy who always does what is expected of him and more. He has made good progress in the preparation for his Bar Mitzvah and has always done so with a smile.



December 19, 2015 (Israel) / 7 Tevet 5776
Vayigash

NOA ENYA GROSS

נעה אניה בת אורן ושפרה

Daughter of Fionnuala Ni Aolain &
Oren Gross

Noa comes from a family with a strong sense of tradition and love for Israel. Bright and thoughtful, Noa will celebrate in an international family gathering in Israel.



December 21, 2015 (Israel) / 9 Tevet 5776
Vayehi

NOAH LEVI ORLOFF

פינחס ליב בן שלום עקיבא ובריינא ברכה

Son of Steven & Barrie Orloff

Noah is very fortunate to be celebrating his Bar Mitzvah in Israel. Bright and passionately committed to his learning, Noah follows in the tradition of his brother and sister as he prepared diligently for his Bar Mitzvah.



December 24, 2015 (Israel) / 12 Tevet 5776
Vayehi

Jonah will celebrate with our Beth El community at the Minh'a Service on December 19, 2015.

JONAH PAUL SMITH

יונה בן אורי ושרה

Son of Wendy Lovell-Smith & Colin Smith

Jonah's family is actively involved at Beth El and in the community. His older brother and sister have been wonderful role models for him. He is excited to be celebrating his Bar Mitzvah in Israel. Jonah has exceeded everyone's expectations in preparing for his Bar Mitzvah, as he learned to lead services at Beth El and in Israel.



December 26, 2015 / 14 Tevet 5776
Vayehi

TALIA SLOVUT

חיה צביה בת ברוך ודבורה

Daughter of Brian & Debbie Slovut

Talia exudes sweetness and calm. She has applied herself wholeheartedly to preparing for her Bat Mitzvah. She has had two, wonderful role models, her sisters, to guide her.

New Members

In the spirit of welcoming families to the congregation – so everyone can put names with faces – we are now offering new families the opportunity to place their photo in the Shofar. If you have joined Beth El in the past year, please email lgoldberg@bethelsynagogue.org with a family picture. It is our goal to feature as many photos of new families as possible.

PLEASE WELCOME

Julie Swaab and Matt Bloom with Alexander, Samuel,
Emmaline, Maia, Joah, Grant and Ethan

Jordyn and Tom Bomberg with Evan

Susan and Kevin Klett

Liz and Adam Bell with Harrison and Madeline

Robyn and Erik Wetter with Jake and Danny

Chana and Phil Weber

Stephanie and Cecil Cohn with Joley and Miles



The Bell Family



The Weber Family



The Cohn Family



The Wetter Family



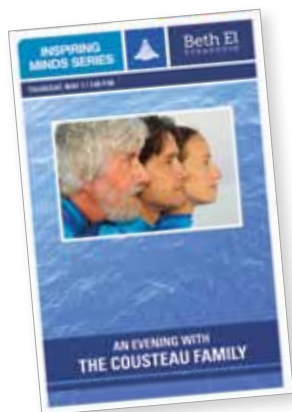
JOIN US FROM AFAR

To accommodate those who cannot attend, Beth El is proud to offer live, online streaming of select services, as well as certain lifecycle events, classes and lectures. For details contact Raquel Swanson at 952.873.7305 or rswanson@bethelsynagogue.org.

ANOTHER YEAR OF Relevant & Meaningful Voices at Beth El

AN EVENING WITH THE COUSTEAU FAMILY

Jean-Michel Cousteau, and his children Céline and Fabien, helped open up attendees' minds to a world of sustainability, conservation, stewardship and innovation. By living and teaching the legacy of their father and grandfather Jacques-Yves Cousteau, the three shared with us the beauty and diversity of the oceans—the source of all life on our planet. It is often said that the world below the ocean's surface is a world otherwise unrealized and unknown to those who walk on dry land. The night left us with even stronger desire to take pause and consider the future of our existence on earth—the blessings and the challenges.



AN EVENING WITH TAYA KYLE AND SPECIAL GUEST JIM DEFELICE

The sold-out crowd – including many military family members – was truly inspired by Taya Kyle as she offered her take on the spirit of service and the challenges facing veterans, first responders and their families. Her late husband was “American Sniper”,

Chris Kyle. Chris was a Navy SEAL, New York Times Best Selling author and perhaps the deadliest man to ever peer through the scope of a military rifle. Since his tragic death in February of 2013, even with all she's been through, Taya continues to demonstrate her enduring gratefulness and strong faith. The raw reflections Taya shared helped us to peer into the world of what it means to remember the heroes and heroines left at home while their loved ones deploy overseas.



AN EVENING WITH TONY BLAIR

With deep appreciation to Elliott and Marlys Badzin, an intimate audience of 250 was treated to beautifully appointed tea and dessert with Tony Blair, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (1997-2007). As leader of the Labour Party, Blair led



extensive public service reform, introduced a national minimum wage, oversaw constitutional reform, led the London 2012 Games bid, and was instrumental in the



Northern Ireland peace process. While in office, Blair made a number of important international interventions and took action to remove brutal regimes. When he appeared here in May, Blair compellingly shared his work to secure peace and prosperity in the Middle East, improve governance in Africa and encourage understanding of world faiths.



ALEPH PRESCHOOL
PRESENTS

The Okee
Dokee Brothers
LIVE IN CONCERT

Sunday, October 25
11:00 am
www.besyn.org/odb

All proceeds benefit early
childhood tuition assistance.



Pictured above are students from Rabbi Olitzky's 10th Grade Class (formerly known as "Confirmation.") This is the largest participating group Beth El has had dating back to the 1950's.



The Annual USY Banquet included an induction ceremony for the newly elected Board (listed below).

BETH EL RISHON USY BOARD

President

Julia Birnberg

Israel Affairs

Jacob Smith

Programming

Ilana Weinstein

Religious Education

Jenna Simon

Social Action/Tikkun Olam

Elliot Schochet

Membership

Noah Smith

Kadima

Adam Friedman

Communications Secretary

Lily Smith

9th Grade Representative

Yonah Davis

Ex Officio

Jamie Halper (International
Social Action/Tikkun Olam VP)

Polly Lehman (Regional Membership/
Kadima VP)

Calling & Outreach Committee

Jocelyn Rosen, Andy Weisman, Abe
Passman, Elana Warren

Social Action/Tikkun Olam Committee

Maya Smith, Jacob Ratner, Jake
Birnberg, Dotan Applebaum, Haley
Warren, Zach Geller, Abigail Yousha



Heschel Honor Society students in action, living the Torah they learn by cleaning up a native garden in North Minneapolis' Triangle Park through Metro Blooms. Also pictured is Haley Carneol, to whom we are grateful for her leadership this past year in the Youth Department. We look forward to our chapter being taken to the next level with Jessica Koolick, our new Youth Director.

MAZAL TOV TO MEMBERS WITH UPCOMING MILESTONE ANNIVERSARIES

NAME	DATE	YEARS
Wes & Michelle Bertch	October 9	10
Alex & Chad Locke	October 10	5
Seth Ozer & Jessica Grodin	October 10	5
Joseph & Frances Moses	October 16	60
William & Judy Sigal	October 20	30
Arnold & Helen Seltzer	October 21	20
Cindy & Jaime Katz	October 22	20
Shmuel & Zohara Cohen-Lissek	October 24	5
Leo & Maureen Fine	November 1	60
Diana & Gary Rosen	November 2	40
Mark Gittleman & Debra Oberman	November 4	20
Bruce & Susan Cantor	November 5	15
Andrea & Michael Ruby	November 6	5
Felix & Muriel Zwiebel	November 7	45
Louis & Shirley Jurisz	November 12	15
Arthur & Sandra Lavintman	November 16	30
Amy & Michael Stern	November 17	30
Michael & Karla Rosenman	November 19	10
Eli & Sharon Kaplan	November 24	55
Barbara Chase-Proosow & Sanford Proosow	November 27	15
Gayle & Robert Alch	November 27	60
Livia & Peter Fahndrich	November 30	40
Jacki & William Broze	December 1	30
Bryan & Nina Badzin	December 3	15
Michael & Viktoria Resig	December 10	15
Charles & Melanie Barry	December 18	55
Leonard & Bonnie Zeff	December 19	45
Perry & Loreen Silverman	December 26	50
Marvin & Judie Liszt	December 28	40
Michael & Revital Furman	December 29	10
Yury Trafimov & Zina Trafimova	December 29	55

If you would like to ensure your (or your loved one's) milestone is acknowledged in future publications, please contact the Beth El Office at 952.873.7300 or info@bethelsynagogue.org.

Condolences to...

- Friends and family on the loss of our member, **Libby Rothman**
- Raquel Swanson on the loss of her mother, Blanche Birkeland Swanson
- **Art Glassman, Sara Glassman, Devra (Jonathan) Edin and Jeremy (Kara) Frank** on the loss of their wife and mother, **Penny Glassman**
- **Perry (Loreen) Silverman** on the loss of his mother, Vera Silverman Udell
- **Ruth Schloff** on the loss of her husband, **Irvin Schloff**
- **Gil (Debbie) Mann** on the loss of his father, **Arie Mann**
- **Janice Karpel** on the loss of her mother, **Molly Karpel**
- **Ruth Kasdan** on the loss of her daughter, Janice Meyers
- **Neil (Micki Herman Kay) Kay** on the loss of his mother, Sima Kay
- **Diane (Neil) Hoffman** on the loss of her mother, **Edith Lava**
- **Joyce Lasser** on the loss of her mother, Miriam Wexler
- **Darlene Schwartz, Linda (Ronald) Mash, and Tammy Schwartz** on the loss of their husband and father, Nathan Schwartz
- Friends and family on the loss of our member, **Sylvia Sorkin**
- **Gary (Stacey) Bush and Helen (Dennis) Konn** the loss of their brother, Mel Burton Bush
- **Nancy Greenstein** on the loss of her brother, Joel Brazeman

With heavy hearts we mourn the loss of these loved ones within our community.

Mazal Tov to...

Ruth Usem on receiving the Jackie Stevenson Award, the 3rd Congressional District DFL's recognition for being a consummate volunteer.

Allie & Brian Hage on the birth of their daughter, Solie Jay Hage, on June 5. The proud grandparents are Penny & Alan Bank and Sandy & Tris Hage and Steven Stillman²¹. Mazal tov also to great-grandparents Estelle & Bob Stillman.

Danny Goldish & Samantha Sosman on their May 30 marriage. Mazal tov also to newlywed's parents, Gary & Bonnie Bongard Goldish and Jim & Missy Sosman, and grandparents, Lou Ann Bongard, Annalee Sosman and Joan & Dick Siegel.

Michelle Gendlin & Bill Heyman on their June 21 marriage. Mazal tov also to their children, Robby and Ashley Gendlin and Cassie and Blake Heyman. The newlywed's parents and grandparents are Bobbi & Larry Friedman, Helen & Joseph Abrahamson and Kitty Heyman.

Joshua & Robyn Awend on the birth of their son, Simon Awend, on June 27. Mazal tov also to grandparents Joy Gordon, Stuart & Terri Stoller and Sue & Sol Awend.

Layne Shapiro & Dan Zagorin on their June 28 marriage. Mazal tov also to newlywed's parents, Marilyn & Ralph Shapiro and Susan & Irving Zagorin, and grandparents, Rhesa Shapiro and Victoria Zagorin.

Benjamin Sanders & Saagit Scher on their June 28 marriage. Mazal tov to their parents Sheva & Tom Sanders and Leah & Natan Scher as well as Ben's grandmother, Mimi Sanders.

Adam Fink & Galina Guterman on the birth of their son, Elijah Abraham Fink, on July 8. Mazal tov also to grandparents Sue & Martin Ring, Edmar & Claire Fink, Polina Gurevich, and Susanna Guterman, and great-grandparents Mitch & Margie Fink and Mark & Marina Guterman.

Derek Engler & Gabrielle Slow on their June 27 marriage. Mazal tov also to their parents Edward & Bonnie Engler and Dr. Constance Stewart Slow & Jan Slow, and their grandparents Don Rosen and Roberta Rafkin.

Samuel Nolley & Maureen O'Brien on the birth of their daughter, Cecelia O'Brien Nolley. Mazal tov also to grandparents Riva & Ellis Nolley.

Rabbi Avi & Dr. Sarah Olitzky on the birth of their son, Yonatan Shimon. Mazal tov also to grandparents Rabbi Kerry & Sheryl Olitzky and Lawrence & Joan Littman.

Mazal tov to Josh Amberger for becoming Chief Petty Officer (E-7).

Mazal tov to Eugene and Michael Gittelsohn for having August 7 declared by the City of Minneapolis as "Gittelsohn Jewelers Day"

Beth El Synagogue Foundation

Ensuring the vitality of our congregation now and in the future

Can we talk?

By Gary Krupp,
Beth El Foundation President



During the coming weeks, months and years this is the question you will be asked by a board member of our Beth El Foundation. I can't resist answering that question, "Can we talk?" with a few other questions for you to ask

yourself as the High Holy Days approach:

- Do I value Jewish culture, values, wisdom, community and sacred traditions available at Beth El? Do I want my children, grandchildren, relatives and friends to have the same opportunity that I had to enjoy what I value?
- Beth El has been there for my family and me for joyous occasions and during difficult times, should I give back?
- How can I support our mission to remain a dynamic spiritual community where our young and old embrace Torah (Learning) *Avodah* (Spirituality) and *Gemilat Hesed* (Acts of Kindness)?
- Can I honor or memorialize an individual in our Beth El community in a way that will matter now and into the future?
- How much good can I do? After taking care of my children and grandchildren, do I want a portion of my legacy to include meaningful support for Beth El synagogue's impact on Jewish lives into the foreseeable future?

Together we have nurtured a caring community, committed to the continuation of a traditional, progressive Judaism that provides opportunities for learning, celebrating, comforting, contributing and enjoying.

Beth El's continued vitality and vibrancy depends on a solid Foundation – please consider supporting it by agreeing to talk with a Foundation Board Member about how you can write your legacy.

And feel free to initiate the conversation by calling or emailing me.

L'shanah tovah!

ENDOWMENT FUND SPOTLIGHTS

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR THE GENEROUS SUPPORT OF OUR ENDOWMENT FUND DONORS.

> Women's League Congregational Lunch Fund

The Beth El Foundation is proud to accept a generous gift from the Women's League to establish the Women's League Congregational Lunch Fund. This fund is to help support unsponsored congregational lunches after Saturday morning services. Our congregation will greatly benefit from this gift as a number of the lunches are not underwritten during the year.

Congregational Shabbat lunches help create a sense of community and a warm and welcoming atmosphere for those who attend. "The Women's League plays an important role in enriching the experience of all who enter our synagogue. Their support of the Beth El Foundation through the establishment and growth of this fund will ensure a vital future for our synagogue," Beth El Foundation President, Gary Krupp.

We hope the fund will continue to grow and benefit Beth El for many years to come," Deb Deutsch, Women's League President.



Women's League Executive Committee (L-R) Rachel Parnes, Recording Secretary; Rosa Stein, Corresponding Secretary; Rita Cook, V.P. of Programming; Deb Deutsch, President; Arlene Kase; Torah Fund, Barb Gottlieb; Treasurer, Dalia Katz; Financial Secretary; Joyce Prohovsky, Immediate Past President

> Noah Marell Endowment Fund



Noah Marell

Noah Marell has established the Noah Marell Endowment Fund to support Beth El where most needed. Noah is a fourth generation, and lifetime member of Beth El. He was the Master Teacher of our *Rimonim* program for six years, a counselor at Aleph Preschool's summer camp for five summers and a member of *Hanhalat Beit El* (Beth El's Leadership Development Program). Noah has been involved with various aspects of Beth El throughout his life and has experienced all the great ways the congregation helps its community. This is what drove his decision

to make his endowment unrestricted and allow Beth El to direct the dollars each year to the area in most need. "We are grateful that Noah is sharing his talents and resources to benefit the future vitality of the synagogue. Noah is paving the way for future young leaders," said Gary Krupp. Noah's parents are Michael and Eilyn Marell.

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TZEDAKAH

Tributes and direct donations to Beth El funds honor friends and family, commemorate significant events, memorialize loved ones and provide essential support to the congregation. For more information on specific funds or to establish a new fund through our Foundation, please contact Susan Lieberman, Foundation Director, at 952.873.7309 or sliberman@bethelsynagogue.org.

TODAH RABBAH (THANK YOU)

Beth El gratefully acknowledges the following contributions:

Abe Kozlen Aleph Preschool Endowment Fund

In Appreciation of Mary Baumgarten
In Appreciation of Marilyn Sussman
Andrea Polisky

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Women's League Kitchen Fund

In Memory of Vera Silverman Udell

Karen & Irving Katz

This list reflects donations made from

April 28 - July 12, 2015.



Drive Away Hunger—STEP Food Drive

Bring your filled grocery bags on Yom Kippur and then help to unload the truck and sort the food at STEP on Thursday, September 24 at 3:00 pm. Contact: Leonard Zeff at lzeff@comcast.net or 952.544.2005 or Robin Estrin at 952.500.9200 or rjestrin@gmail.com.



A strong US-Israel relationship is mission critical to the Beth El community. This is why we annually send the largest Minnesota delegation to the AIPAC Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. Join us in March 2016!

Register as part of the Beth El block here:
www.besyn.org/aipac-pc

YAHREIT TZEDAKAH CONTRIBUTIONS

We honor our loved ones through donations that support their values and continue their lives.

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As we begin another year of the Beth El Mitzvah Dues program, we thank the families listed below for their unwavering commitment to the synagogue. Their leadership and generosity is greatly appreciated.

Pillars – Amudim (\$10,000 and above)

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Melanie & Chuck Barry
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Michael & Nancy Schoenberger

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Jerry & Louise Ribnick & Family
Martin & Sue Ring
Karen & Russ Rubin
Tom & Sheva Sanders
Morris & Judith Sherman
Artice & Morton Silverman
Stuart & Cindy Tapper
Dr. Steven & Michelle Waller

If you would like to become a Mitzvah Dues member or would like additional information, please contact Linda Goldberg at 952.873.7302.

thank you

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Youth Department

Jessica Koolick, Director

Young Adults

Carly Spencer

We offer a special thanks to our valued neighbor Benilde-St. Margaret's School for graciously helping us accommodate our programming and overflow parking by utilizing their facilities.

FALL ADULT EDUCATION SERIES

FALL LECTURE

Gaza, the IDF Code of Ethics, and the Morality of War

Professor Moshe Halbertal
NYU Law School, Hebrew University

Sunday Night
November 1, 2015
7:30 pm

Badzin Family Learn Center



What moral and legal principles should guide an army facing the tragic loss of civilian life? What values has the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) committed itself to uphold in times of war? In the wake of the Gaza war, what lessons can Israel learn?

Halbertal, one of Israel's foremost philosopher and expert in Jewish ethics and who wrote the IDF guide on the subject, will help us delve into these critical questions.

A community lecture presented by Center for Jewish studies, University of Minnesota

KRISTALLNACHT MOVIE & LECTURE

Tak for Alt: Survival of the Human Spirit

A Documentary and Q&A with
educator and Holocaust survivor
Judy Meisel

Sunday Night
November 8, 2015
7:00 pm

Badzin Family Learn Center



This is the remarkable story of educator Judy Meisel, a Holocaust survivor whose experiences during and after World War II inspired a life-long campaign against bigotry, intolerance, and racism. The film and talk follow her from concentration camp to liberation, from flight to fight.

Judy is a nationally recognized speaker dedicated to safeguarding the liberty of all peoples.



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UPCOMING AT BETH EL

Below is a sampling of only some of the upcoming events at the synagogue. Please mark your calendar and plan to attend. Look for more details in future *Hakol* and *Kesher* publications, and as always, feel free to call the Welcome Desk at 952.873.7300 for additional information.

High Holy Days

- 9.27 **Erev Sukkot**, 5:45 pm
- 9.28 **Sukkot Day 1**, 9:00 am and 5:45 pm
- 9.29 **Sukkot Day 2**, 9:00 am and 5:45 pm
- 10.3 **Shabbat Hol Hamoed Sukkot**, 9:00 am
- 10.3 **Young Families Sukkah Hop**, following services
- 10.4 **Hoshana Rabbah** (Beat Your Willows), 9:00 am
- 10.4 **Erev Shemini Atzeret**, 5:45 pm
- 10.5 **Shemini Atzeret** (includes *Yizkor*) 9:00 am
- 10.5 **Erev Simhat Torah**
Free Young Family Pizza Dinner & Celebration (Dancing), 7:00 pm
Services & *Hakafot* (Dancing), 7:00 pm
- 10.6 **Simhat Torah Services & *Hakafot*** (Dancing), 9:00 am

ONGOING SERVICES

EREV SHABBAT

Kabbalat Shabbat 5:45 pm

YOM SHABBAT

Shaharit 9:00 am*

Minha 5:45 pm

SUNDAY

Shaharit 9:00 am

(Hevra Breakfast)

Minha 5:45 pm

(4:30 starting Nov. 7)

DAILY MINYAN

Shaharit 7:00 am

Minha 5:45 pm

*Apples & Honey Young Family Service and Grown Up Learning – the first Shabbat of each month starting at 10:00 am.



USY DINNER THEATER

November 14-15
besyn.org/dinner-theater

OCTOBER

2	<i>Musical Shabbat/Babies & Bagels</i> —open to all parents and grandparents with young children (occurs the 1st Friday morning of each month)
6	Sacred Chanting with Cantor Abrams—a prayerful, meditative and heart-opening experience open to all (occurs the 1st Tuesday night of each month)
11	Bethelers trip to Saint Croix Casino, Turtle Lake, WI, contact Jerry at 952.544.4908
19	Nosh and Drash—Adult Learning with Rabbi Olitzky (also occurring 11/2, 11/23, 12/7 and 12/21)
25	Beth El Blood Drive (see page 7 for details)
25	Okee Dokee Brothers Concert, presented by Aleph Preschool
27	Women’s League Book Group (occurs 4th Tuesday of each month)
30	Cantor Abrams and the Beth El Choir conduct services at Knollwood Place (also 11/20 and 12/18.)

NOVEMBER

1	Gaza, the IDF Code of Ethics, and the Morality of War, with Prof. Moshe Halbertal, in conjunction with the University of Minnesota’s Center for Jewish Studies
6-7	Beth El AIPAC Israel Shabbaton
8	<i>TAK FOR ALT – Survival of the Human Spirit</i> , a documentary and Q&A with educator and Holocaust survivor Judy Meisel in commemoration of Kristallnacht
14	USY Dinner Theater presents song selections from Disney’s <i>Frozen</i> , with dinner
15	USY Dinner Theater presents song selections from Disney’s <i>Frozen</i> , with character meet & greet and lunch
22	<i>Bethelers: Buddy—The Buddy Holly Story</i> at History Theater, call Freada at 952.922.6667
22	Women’s League Maven Marketplace—a great Hanukkah shopping opportunity!
24	Kar-Ben Book Fair—stock up on gifts and help the Aleph Preschool!

DECEMBER

3	Heroes Among Us Speaker Series: An Evening with Donovan and Powers
6	Erev Hanukkah
7-14	Hanukkah

LOOKING AHEAD

1.16	Young Families Havdalah Family Fun Night
1.22-23	New York Performer Basya Shechter, Artist in Residence, for services and BEMA Coffee House, in conjunction with Shabbat Shira
1.25	Tu B’Shtav Seder: Fine food, wine and mysticism with local celebrity chefs and delightful community.
1.31	International Jewish High School Choir Gala Concert, presented by HaZamir Minneapolis/St. Paul chapter

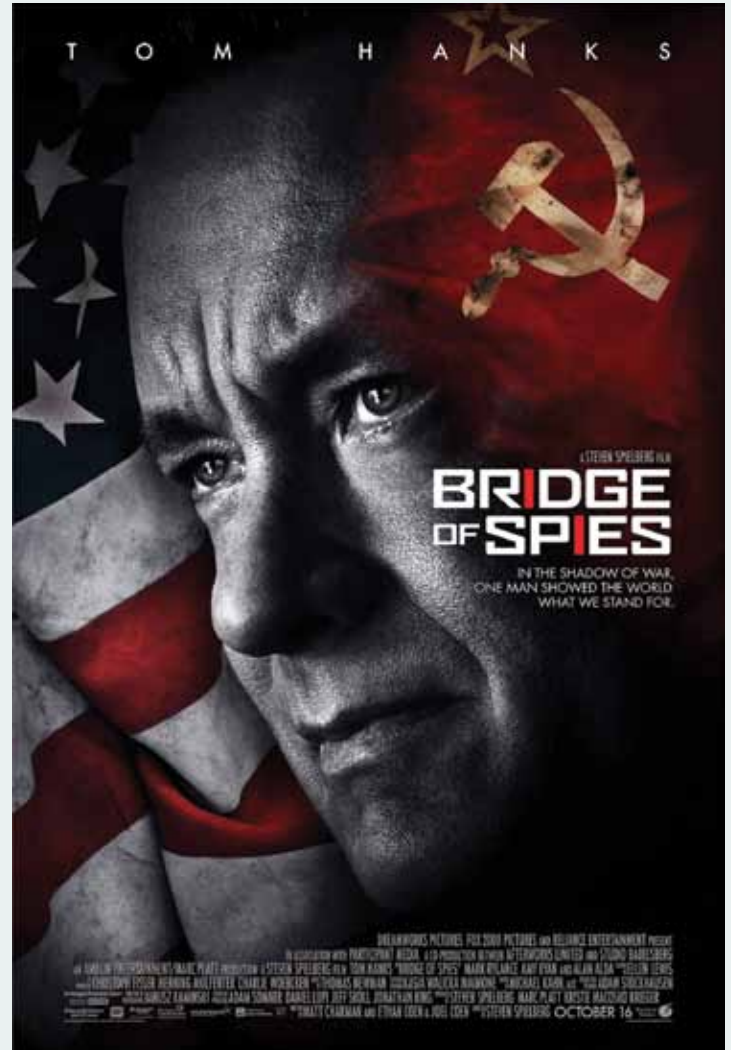
Coming Soon

AN EVENING WITH DONOVAN AND POWERS

December 3, 2015



During the Cold War, the Soviet Union captured U.S. pilot Francis Gary Powers after shooting down his U-2 spy plane. Sentenced to 10 years in prison, Powers only hope was New York lawyer James Donovan, recruited by a CIA operative to negotiate his release. Donovan boarded a plane to Berlin, hoping to win the young man's freedom through a prisoner exchange. If all went well, the Russians would get convicted spy Rudolf Abel, who Donovan defended in court years earlier. Join us for this incredible evening, supporting our Minnesota National Guard, as we hear from John Donovan and Francis Gary Powers, Jr., and their take on the journey.



TICKETS

www.besyn.org/bridgeofspies



5225 BARRY STREET WEST | ST. LOUIS PARK, MN 55416-1901

