

TEMPLE BETH EL

FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS



93rd Year

December 2020

Kislev/Tevet 5781

No. 4

Regular Service Schedule - Via Zoom until further notice

Morning Minyan (Monday & Thursday).....	8:00 am
Friday Evening Services	5:30 pm
Shabbat Morning Services.....	10:00 am

Please join us on Zoom for Chanukah candle-lighting on the first and last nights of Chanukah, December 10th and December 17th at 5:30 pm. Check your email soon for a special Chanukah Zoom link!

HANUKKAH BLESSINGS

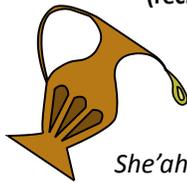
Blessing Over the Hanukkah Candles
(to be said prior to lighting the candles)



Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has made us holy through God's commandments, and commanded us to light the Hanukkah candles.

Blessing for Miracles
(recite immediately following the first blessing, prior to lighting)



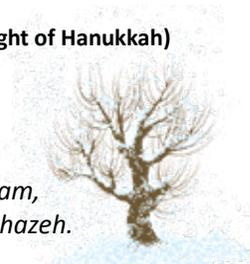
Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, She'ahsa neesim la'avotaynu bayamim haheim baz'man hazeh.

Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who performed wonders for our ancestors in history at this very time of year.

Blessing for Special Occasions
(recite following the Blessing for Miracles only on the first night of Hanukkah)



Barukh atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh ha'olam, shehekheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.



Blessed are you Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who gave us life, sustains us, and enabled us to reach this season.

A message from our Spiritual Leader,
Cantor Shoshana Brown

What is Now to Be?

As I write this column, halfway through November, I feel winter closing in – with the days getting dark so much earlier, and most of the trees' leaves on the ground, or with only the brown ones left clinging to the branches. The election is over, though this transition period until the president-elect is sworn in is fraught with tension. We hear or read in the news that the coronavirus is spiking again in Massachusetts, especially in Fall River (according to this morning's *Fall River Herald News*), and Dr. Fauci warns us that the winter months are going to be especially difficult, until the new vaccine begins to be administered widely. We are all worried about Thanksgiving – about people who don't take the danger of the virus seriously, about kids coming home from college and possibly bringing the virus along with them, however unwittingly.

And here at Temple Beth El we are all feeling sorrow over the loss of the man who was our dedicated custodian, George Haire. We had learned of George's diagnosis of cancer before the High Holy Days, but none of us expected George to be taken from us so soon. He was at work only days before he died! I confess that I did not know George well, but our son Lev spent many hours with him over the course of many Shabbat mornings. Mark and I would come in at ten to start the service, and Lev knew that he was expected to come in to the service by 10:30. Until then Lev would sit in the vestry and sometimes read, but usually George would fix Lev a bagel with cream cheese and sit with him for a while, and they would talk about what Lev was reading or discuss other topics that they both had interest in. Lev told us after George died that George had truly been one of his best friends, and that he will feel his loss deeply.

Mark and I have just recently restarted our adult ed class (on Zoom, of course), and the book we are currently reading together, *The Harlot by the Side of the Road: Forbidden Tales of the Bible* (by Jonathan Kirsch) is a fascinating and provocative read! Of course this long period of not being able to come together in person for services, meetings, classes, and communal celebrations has been trying on everyone, but there are some perks to our digital gatherings. One of our beloved Shabbat morning regulars, Florence Schlam, who lives now at an assisted living facility in New Jersey, is able to join us on Shabbat mornings again, and Susan Bender, who grew up in Fall River and is still a temple member, but now lives in Boston, has become a regular at every service.

Nevertheless, knowing that we will not be able to

gather at all this month for what has always been such a warm and cheerful community celebration of Chanukah...that really drives it home, how tough this time has been. Of course the pandemic restrictions began right around Passover, but at that time we could not have imagined that we would still be in this bind come Chanukah! As I type, I have a melancholy tune running through my head, one that I sang with the klezmer band, "Ezekiel's Wheels," two years ago. The song is a Yiddish one, "*O Ir Kleyne Likhtelekh*," which was composed around the time of the Holocaust. The speaker compares their current era to the time of the Maccabees, when there were great heroes and miracles:

*O little lights of mystery
You recall our history
And all that went before
The battles and the bravery
And our release from slavery
Miracles galore!*

In the final verse, the speaker/singer confesses that things seem much darker in the present-time. Of course, unlike someone singing this song in the run-up to the *Shoah*, we *are* able to see a light off in the distance (a vaccine!), and yet the poignancy and the uncertainty about our future is something that we can nonetheless relate to:

*O you little lights,
Telling of our history,
Waking up my pain...
Deep in the heart something is awoken -
And through tears one asks oneself:
What is now to be?*

Though none of us can say for sure what the future will bring, certainly the Jewish people have been through darker times than this one. Our celebration of Chanukah this year, though it be low-key, and in the solitude of our individual homes, nevertheless reminds us never to give up, to keep lighting our little lights against the darkness. We have been here for many thousands of years, and we are still here now. Don't forget to spread your light by giving *tzedakah* during Chanukah – there are so many now in great need! And let us dream of a day not too far-off in the future when we will gather once again for a "welcome back" celebration for all of us at Temple Beth El – what a party we will have then!

This little light of mine – I'm gonna let it shine – let it shine, let it shine, let it shine!

May you all be blessed by the light of the Everpresent One this Chanukah, and may your spirit stay strong – we will get through this and see brighter times soon!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we get closer to putting 2020 behind us, we are hopefully closer to a vaccine and treatments for COVID-19. While I don't see much changing until at least the spring, it is a relief to finally have some good news on the horizon. Until then, however, we have to be more vigilant than ever, as the numbers are ominous right now, particularly right here in the greater Fall River area. So hunker down and stay safe for a little while longer, and please don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

For those of you who haven't yet heard, we lost our wonderful custodian, George Haire, in early November. He was diagnosed with esophageal cancer just this summer. As was his wish, he continued to come to work until the very end. I spoke to him two days before he passed and was shocked when I heard the news. He had just turned 66 years old. He was very handy, would do anything that was asked of him, and was totally reliable. Despite everything, he was here for all of our High Holidays, and on Yom Kippur he opened in the morning, left for a chemo treatment, and came back for the evening services. He loved working here, and he took his responsibilities seriously, all while trying to make us laugh with his incredibly dry wit. Rest in peace George, we will miss you.

I have met on several occasions with the FBI agent in charge of Hate Crimes for the Southeastern, MA area, along with a detective from the Fall River Hate Crimes unit. With all that is going on in the world they want to be sure they are as aware as they can be of any potential dangers. It has been my honor to work with them on behalf of the Jewish community, and it is a relief to know we have direct contacts to people who can help, in case help is ever needed. I sincerely hope that it never is.

On behalf of the congregation, I would like to extend our best wishes to Dr. Herb and Paula Rubin, who have decided to live year-round at their California home to be nearer to family. Herb and Paula have been active members of our congregation for many years, with Herb serving as Temple president. Good luck, stay safe and keep in touch!

Please join us via Zoom for the Chanukah candle-lighting on the first and last nights of Chanukah. While we will miss the fun of our annual party, we can still get together virtually to celebrate the holiday. Keep an eye out for a special Zoom link!

Steve Silverman
President

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Sisterhood President's Message

It is now December, and here we are hunkering down for a long winter, while the best we can hope for is this pandemic starting to subside. Because of these circumstances, we are unable to plan anything.

I hope everyone's Thanksgiving was as pleasant and safe as possible.

Chanukah is just around the corner. With things the way they are, I'm sure most people will be spending this time quietly. Travel is a luxury that is not on the drawing board right now.

I want to take this time to thank everyone for their prayers and kind words for my grandson, Aaron Reynolds. Things are going in the right direction. The power of prayer has brought much comfort to me and family.

Lastly, my heart goes out to the family and friends of George Haire. He will be greatly missed by all of us.

So until next month, stay safe and healthy.

Libby Cohen
Sisterhood President



LEADERSHIP

- Mark Elber.....Rabbi
Shoshana Brown.....Cantor
Stephen Silverman.....President
Daniel Schafler.....Vice President
Libby Cohen.....Secretary
William Chebot.....Treasurer
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SERVICE SCHEDULE

**December 2020
Kislev/Tevet 5781***Services will continue to be on Zoom.*Friday, December 4 (18 Kislev)Candle Lighting 3:56 pm
Shabbat Service 5:30 pmSaturday, December 5 (19 Kislev)

Weekly Portion: Vayishlakh 10:00 am

Thursday, December 10 (24 Kislev)Erev Chanukah
Light first Chanukah candleFriday, December 11 (25 Kislev)Chanukah – First Day
Light second Chanukah candle
(before Shabbat candles)
Candle Lighting 3:56 pm
Shabbat Service 5:30 pmSaturday, December 12 (26 Kislev)Chanukah – Second Day
Weekly Portion: Vayeshev 10:00 am
Light third Chanukah candle
(after Shabbat ends 5:02 pm)Sunday, December 13 (27 Kislev)Chanukah – Third Day
Light fourth Chanukah candleMonday, December 14 (28 Kislev)Chanukah – Fourth Day
Light fifth Chanukah candleTuesday, December 15 (29 Kislev)Chanukah – Fifth Day
Light sixth Chanukah candleWednesday, December 16 (1 Tevet)Rosh Chodesh Tevet
Chanukah - Sixth Day
Light seventh Chanukah candleThursday, December 17 (2 Tevet)Chanukah - Seventh Day
Light eighth Chanukah candleFriday, December 18 (3 Tevet)Chanukah – Eighth Day
Candle Lighting 3:58 pm
Shabbat Service 5:30 pm*continued in next column*Saturday, December 19 (4 Tevet)

Weekly Portion: Miketz 10:00 am

Friday, December 25 (10 Tevet)Fast of Tevet
Candle Lighting 4:02 pm
Shabbat Service 5:30 pmSaturday, December 26 (11 Tevet)

Weekly Portion: Vayigash 10:00 am

TEMPLE OFFICE385 High St, Fall River, MA 02720
Tel: (508) 674-3529 Fax: (508) 678-6735
E-Mail: templebethel@comcast.net
Website: frtemplebethel.org**OFFICE HOURS:**

Monday, Wednesday & Friday, 9 am to Noon

OFFICE CLOSED:

Friday, December 25th - Bank Holiday

SNOWBIRD ADDRESSES:

Just a reminder to please update your mailing address with the office whenever you plan to be away for a significant period of time. And remember, Zoom works just as well from Florida or Arizona as it does from just around the corner, so don't be a stranger!

An Invitation from Bill Chebot

On December 26, 2020, I am going to celebrate the 79th anniversary of my Bar Mitzvah by chanting the Haftorah for Vayigash, which was the Haftorah I chanted at my Bar Mitzvah. When I was president of Temple Beth El, I made a pledge to observe this anniversary every year (which I have done) and hoped that it would be an incentive for others to follow suit. Unfortunately, there was only one other person (Gil Nerenberg, of Blessed Memory, also a past president of the Temple) who did this. Also, unfortunately, we rarely have a Minyan at Shabbat morning services, and I would deem it a personal favor to me to attend that service (via Zoom) so that we have an "official" Minyan. Please try to reserve Saturday morning, December 26 to attend Shabbat services at 10:00 AM. It will be a mitzvah for you, and a personal favor to me. I hope to see you there that morning.

Sincerely
Bill Chebot

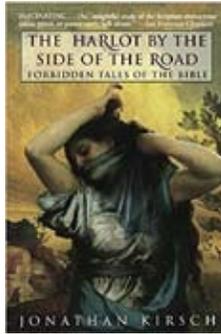
Note: Please use the regular Zoom link for the Shabbat morning service. If you need the link please call or email the office.

TBE News & Notes

We hope you all had a **safe and satisfying Thanksgiving** (under the circumstances); we have been blessed in our community that most of our members have kept in good health so far, and so we are immensely thankful for that! **Please keep up all the recommended practices** (mask-wearing, handwashing, etc.), and keep in mind that **you can always join us for temple services** (Monday and Thursday morning; Friday evening and Shabbat morning) **via Zoom**. If you need a new link sent to your phone, tablet, or computer, just contact the TBE office, and leave your email address.

Please join us on Zoom for Chanukah candle-lighting for the first and/or last nights of Chanukah. We will start at 5:30 pm with lighting and songs. (See notice on this bulletin cover.)

Monday morning Adult Education, 10:30 to 12 noon (via Zoom): We are up and running! Thus far, we have read and discussed several chapters of the thought-provoking book, *The Harlot by the Side of the Road*, by Jonathan Kirsch. If you don't have a copy of the book, you can easily purchase one online. (If you are just joining, please contact the rabbi or cantor to see how many chapters we have read thus far, in case you want to catch up.) This book delves into the "forbidden books of the Bible," drawing on Rabbinic interpretations and others' insights. Later in the season, we will shift to other subjects, depending on the interests of our class participants. You can join at any time!



Many thanks to our **TBE Sisterhood** (with a little help from the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund): we have been able to **help out a local family** (via United Neighbors of Fall River) to have enough funds for a festive holiday meal and gifts for four children for the winter holidays. These are difficult times for so many families in our area! If you want to donate to United Neighbors' "Adopt a Family" fund, contact Wendy Garf-Lipp at <https://unfr.org/> or write her at wendy@unfr.org.

Temple Family

- Our deepest condolences to the family of our beloved custodian, George Haire.
- Best of luck to Dr. Herb and Paula Rubin as they take up year-round residence in their California home. Keep in touch!

For those of you who miss the changing of the seasons...Cantor Shoshana took all of these in the Watuppa Pond area, all in fewer than 30 days, including the surprise snow day in October. You know what they say about New England... "if you don't like the weather, wait a minute!"



Thank you for your donations received through November 20, 2020

Yahrzeits

For the yahrzeit of my beloved... Donated by:

Mother & Grandmother Doris "Borbie" Becker	The Winokoors
Mother, Helene Bender	Susan Bender
Mother, Bessie Bolski	Milton Bolski
Mother, Bessie Bolski	Norm Bolski
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Grandfather, Isadore Juda	Joyce Juda
Mother, Bessie Kessler	Hannah Evans
Husband, Seymour Kevelson	Carol Kevelson
Friend, Stewart Kusnitz	Barry Helfanbein
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Grandmother, Jennie Robinson	Edith K. Getchell
Grandmother, Jennie Robinson	Enid K. Lomax
Mother, Yetta Sludsky	Paula Sultan
Husband, Dr. Barry Steinberg	Edythe Steinberg <i>"To life!"</i>
Father, Donald Wiener	Sharon Waxenbaum
Husband, Myron Wilner	Marion Wilner

MAURICE ALPERT MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND

For the yahrzeit of my beloved grandfather, Bennett Alpert
Sumner Alpert

CAPITAL FUND

In memory of my dear mother, Elissa Ruth (Ellsas) Chansky,
who passed away on September 24, 2020.

Tamar Chansky

In memory of George Haire

Norm & Anita Bolski

Hannah Evans

For the recovery of Aaron Reynolds

Bernice & Stuart Solup

In appreciation of Marie Twomey

Enid Lomax

RABBI SAMUEL & TILLIE RUDERMAN MEMORIAL LECTURE FUND

In memory of my beloved parents, Rabbi Samuel Ruderman
and Tillie Ruderman

Proud daughter, Ora Beth Levine

WISH LIST - PRAYER BOOKS

In memory of my beloved parents, Dr. Hammond and Helene
Bender

Susan Bender

In memory of George Haire

Thanks to dear friend Tom Gregory for his quiet and modest
assistance, always ready to help, the perfect gentleman

Thanks to Elaine and Harvey Reback for delivering
Machzorim to residents for the High Holidays

Thanks to Elaine Weiss Reback for arranging for the beauti-
ful floral arrangements for the Bimah for the Holidays

Thanks to Rabbi Mark and Cantor Shoshana for bringing
dignity to unfortunately abbreviated services

Thanks to Rabbi Mark for his excellent pitching in as Ba'al
Tekia

Thanks to Marie Twomey-always helpful and efficient,
shouldering the tremendous tasks of all the details of the
High Holidays with a great personality and doing it single-
handedly!

Bill Chebot

In memory of George Haire

Judy & Mike Morgenstern

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Celebrating Over 60 Years of Dedication to Excellence



George Haire, taking care of one of his many duties at Temple Beth El, lost his short battle with cancer in early November.

The following is an excerpt from Cantor Shoshana's Corona Chronicles, Week 35:

Here in our own community at Temple Beth El, we have lost our faithful custodian, Mr. George Haire, who had also served Fall River's last remaining Orthodox congregation, Adas Israel, until they finally closed just last year. George was a man of the driest humor of anyone I ever met; he was always joking, but you often did not know it! But he served the temple and its community with great loyalty and humility. He was not one to look for honors; his life was quite different from that of a soldier; nonetheless, he was dedicated to serving others. Now George did not die of the coronavirus; he had cancer, only diagnosed in the past few months. His passing so quickly was not expected. In fact he was still at work in the temple just a few days before he died. Like a soldier, George died "with his boots on." He will be missed by us all, but perhaps most of all by our son Lev, who considered George one of his best friends.



George, who lost his father at the age of 10, walked two of his sisters down the aisle.

The following is from an email from Marie to the congregation. It is reprinted here for those not on our email list.

It is with a heavy heart that I must let you all know that our beloved custodian, George Haire, has passed away as a result of esophageal cancer. He was 66 years old.

George came to us when Adas Israel closed in 2013, and then took over after Tom Gregory retired. George came highly recommended by Jackie Gedacht, who said he was the best maintenance man she ever worked with. Although our boiler was his baby and he could fix just about anything, he wasn't just a maintenance man. He also understood the workings of a kosher kitchen, and put together beautiful platters of tuna and egg salad, tossed salad, and best of all, French toast. He was incredibly reliable, right up until the end, and would do anything asked of him without complaint...except work during a Patriots game. We all have to draw the line somewhere!

George had a dry wit, which he always delivered with a very straight face. Just a week ago he told me he was able to eat small bites of solid food, like steak and kosher pork. While I was wondering why he would require kosher pork when he is a catholic, he looked at me and rolled his eyes. He loved catching people out when they weren't paying attention!

He also enjoyed interacting with the kids in the preschool (and the ladies in the preschool office), and particularly loved the daughter of his best friends, Sue & Bill Franco. Sue was often one of our servers at events, as was his sister, Elaine. And Bill helped him out with several projects here. It seems people had trouble saying no to George!

The funeral is going to be private, but if you would like to send a card to his family please send it to his sister, Elaine Quental, 397 Shove St, Fall River, MA 02724.

May his memory be for a blessing.

A note of thanks from George's sister, Elaine Quental

My family and I would like to extend our appreciation for the condolences.

George touched our lives in so many ways. He will truly be missed by family and friends.

*Sincerely,
Elaine*

High Holy Days Flower Fund

Thank you to the following people who generously donated to this year's special Flower Fund:

Carole & Jerry Waksler & Family



Website

Our website is constantly changing, so be sure to check it out regularly. There are links to articles written by Rabbi Mark and Cantor Shoshana, updated service schedules and upcoming events. You can also see the bulletin there first, especially if you live outside the greater Fall River area! Go to www.frtemplebethel.org

YAHARZEITS

12/2/2020 16 Kislev 5781
Gary Reitzas

12/3/2020 17 Kislev 5781
Sylvia T. Reback

12/7/2020 21 Kislev 5781
Edith Gold

12/8/2020 22 Kislev 5781
Hummy Chebot
Barry Novek

12/9/2020 23 Kislev 5781
Alice Helfanbein
Elizabeth Beryl Waksler
Donna Ann Wolfson

12/12/2020 26 Kislev 5781
Henry William Juda
Phyllis Nerenberg
Samuel Rotenberg
Julius Simpson

12/13/2020 27 Kislev 5781
Herbert Fleisher
Shirley Resnick

12/14/2020 28 Kislev 5781
David Kotlen
Dr. Henry Lustig
Bernard Miller

12/15/2020 29 Kislev 5781
Ada Haims
Robert Lipson

12/16/2020 1 Tevet 5781
Abraham D. Becker
Sanford Litchman
Rose Tallman

12/18/2020 3 Tevet 5781
William Gittelman
Milton Elis Raffel

12/19/2020 4 Tevet 5781
Isaac Schwartz
Jacob Yamins

12/21/2020 6 Tevet 5781
Sarah Jacobson

12/22/2020 7 Tevet 5781
Frances Fradkin
Dr. Myron Rubinstein
Selma Sokoll

12/23/2020 8 Tevet 5781
Stanley Alpert
Howard Krasnow
Leon Nathan Malin

12/25/2020 10 Tevet 5781
Arthur Granovsky
Mathilda H. Raffel

12/26/2020 11 Tevet 5781
Arline Alpert
Frederick Belford
Robert Sokoll

12/27/2020 12 Tevet 5781
Sylvia Schneider

12/28/2020 13 Tevet 5781
Paula E. Shuman
Maurice Sludsky

12/29/2020 14 Tevet 5781
Nathan Silk

12/31/2020 16 Tevet 5781
Herman Gitlin
Bessie Gladstone
David Thaler



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