

TEMPLE BETH EL

FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS



93rd Year

May 2021

Iyar/Sivan 5781

No. 9

Regular Service Schedule - Via Zoom until further notice

Morning Minyan (Monday & Thursday).....8:00 am
 Friday Evening Services5:30 pm
 Shabbat Morning Services.....10:00 am



Please join us on Sunday, May 16th (on Zoom), from 8:00 - 9:30 pm
 for our Tikkun Leil Shavuot – our “late night” study session,
 in celebration of this holiday of Revelation.

Our topic this year will be:

“The Importance of Friendship in the Bible, in Rabbinic Times, and Today.”

Come study texts from the Bible, the Midrash and Talmud (in English), and join us in discussion on this especially relevant topic to us in this “socially distanced” era.



Also join us on Zoom for our two
Shavuot services:

Monday, May 17th at 10:00 am
 &
Tuesday, May 18th at 10:00 am
 with Yizkor at approximately 11:45 am

Zoom links will be emailed to you for the Tikkun Leil Shavuot study-session and for both Shavuot services during the week of May 10th.

A message from our Spiritual Leader, Rabbi Mark Elber

As you know, there are three main Jewish pilgrimage holidays, *Chagim*, in our tradition: *Pesach*, *Shavuot*, and *Sukkot*. Because our calendar is a lunar calendar adjusted to the solar year, each holiday arrives “right on time” in the Hebrew calendar (i.e., on the same day every year in the Hebrew calendar), but changes over the course of nineteen years throughout the “Gregorian” calendar in use in most of the world. This month, *Shavuot*, which occurs on the 6th and 7th days of the Hebrew month of *Sivan* every year, begins at sunset on May 16th and ends on Tuesday night, May 18th after three stars are visible. Though the holiday in ancient Israel was a harvest holiday, marked by a pilgrimage to the Temple in Jerusalem, the Rabbis of the era which experienced the destruction of the Second Temple (and exile) managed to transform *Shavuot* into a holiday commemorating the revelation at Mt. Sinai. Thus for the last 2,000 years, *Shavuot* has been celebrated as a holiday that marks our receiving Torah at Sinai.

The use of the word “Torah” in the Five Books of Moses and in the rest of the *Tanakh* (Bible) usually means “teaching.” From biblical times already, the study of Torah was considered a great mitzvah. Just before we take out the Torah scroll from the ark, we sing the words from Isaiah 3:2: *Ki mitziyon teitzei Torah* (from Zion – the mountain on which the Temple stood – Teaching shall come forth). In the biblical book of Proverbs (*Mishlei* in Hebrew) 1:8 we read: “Heed, my son, the moral lessons of your father and do not forsake the Torah (teaching) of your mother.” Study of Torah has been central to a Jewish life, but Torah has a much broader meaning than simply referring to the first five books of the *Tanakh* alone.

There is a *brakhah* (blessing) we recite before the study of Torah. The *brakhah*, like that recited before performing any mitzvah, has the same first ten words beginning with *barukh atah* (blessed are You...) and ending with *v'tzivanu* (and commanded us) before naming the mitzvah. The concluding words of the *brakhah* over Torah study are “*la'asok b'divrei Torah*” (to occupy ourselves with the words of Torah). It is interesting that it does not say, for example, to *believe* in the words of Torah, but to *occupy* ourselves with them. The Talmud, what the Sages called our “Oral Torah” (*Torah sheb'al peh*) is filled with discussions and differences of opinion. Occupying ourselves with words of Torah, with instruction and discussion regarding the moral and spiritual way to live, justice, human relations, political issues, and, in fact, virtually any subject you might imagine, is discussed there. As it says in Pirkei Avot 5:22 regarding Torah: “turn it and turn it again, for everything is in it.” At a *bris*, it is customary for those attending to offer the following words of blessing: just as (the child) has entered the covenant (*bris* means “covenant”) may he enter (the study of) Torah, *chuppah* (the marriage canopy) and good deeds (*ma'asim tovim*).

What has kept us as Jews through all these centuries and millennia? As our diaspora spread throughout the globe from our origins in the land of Israel, several things were crucial to our identity and remained constant throughout the lands of the diaspora. One thing was our connection to the land of Israel and our daily reminders of our desire to return to our ancient homeland. Another was our connection to the Hebrew language, which our tradition called *l'shon hakodesh* (the holy tongue). Even though the origins of the Zionist movement in the late 19th century were secular, these two elements were central: the land of Israel and the Hebrew language. If we look back at the early days of the Zionist movement, we see these issues coming up. Theodore Herzl, the founder of modern Zionism as a political movement, saw the necessity of creating a homeland for the Jews; nevertheless, at the sixth Zionist Congress in 1903 in Basel, he brought up the British proposition of creating a Jewish homeland in Uganda for serious consideration. Herzl came from a very secular background and did not have the traditional education that most early Zionists had. The Uganda proposal was rejected by the vast majority of attendees at the Congress. Herzl also thought that German (his native tongue) should be the spoken language of the Jewish homeland. Can you imagine that? However, the Zionist movement as a whole believed that Hebrew, the language of Biblical Israel, should be the language of the Jewish homeland, even though none of them were native speakers and it was a hardship to revive Hebrew as a spoken language after two thousand years of its being relegated to study and prayer alone.

In addition to political Zionism i.e., the movement determined to create a Jewish state in our ancient homeland, there was also a parallel cultural Zionist movement. Probably the best-known early thinker of that movement, a contemporary of Herzl's, was a man known by his pen name, Ahad Ha'am (which means “one of the people”). His actual name was Asher Zvi Hirsch Ginsberg and he lived from 1856 – 1927. Ahad Ha'am believed that Israel should be the spiritual and cultural center of the Jewish people but didn't think it would be possible to create a state there. To a large degree, the state of Israel evolved into a combination of Herzl's and Ahad Ha'am's visions. Ahad Ha'am began visiting the land of Israel from Russia in 1891 and made numerous trips there before settling in Tel Aviv in 1922. He founded a Hebrew monthly in Warsaw in 1896. It was Ahad Ha'am who famously said: “More than the Jewish people have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jewish people.” I think it would be equally true to say: more than the Jewish people have kept the Torah, Torah has kept the Jewish people. Our language, our land, and engagement with our sacred teachings have always been pillars in maintaining Jewishness. There is an immense richness to be had in engaging in a tradition and heritage that is so many thousands of years old. We hope you will join us at our Tikkun Leil Shavuot on Sunday evening May 16th.

Rabbi Mark

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

We had a board meeting with a full agenda last week and we had much to discuss. We have lost about 20 members since the start of 2019, between deaths and resignations, and have only had a few new members to take their place, so our revenue from dues has dropped significantly. We have been fortunate to received two Payroll Protection Plan grants, but our expenses still exceed our income. While we continue to do our best to minimize our expenses, we must keep the building safe, both for our congregation and the school.

We discussed the repairs we have made in the last six months due to years of water damage. The repairs were more extensive than we first thought and also more expensive. But we could no longer take the chance of falling plaster or crumbling walls causing harm to anyone. The foyer looks great, but we still have to determine the source of the leak that has damaged the side wall of both the sanctuary and the vestry, and then repair that damage. If any of you would like to make a special donation to help pay for these much needed repairs, it would be much appreciated. Just note "Foyer Repairs" on your check, and your donation will be noted in the bulletin. Thank you in advance for your help.

The other major item on the agenda was reopening the temple for services. We realized that we need more time to figure out the state requirements, the logistics, and the policies we need to put in place to keep everyone safe. Thank you for your patience while we work everything out. We hope to have more specific information for you next month.

Steve Silverman
President

LEADERSHIP

- Mark Elber.....Rabbi
- Shoshana Brown.....Cantor
- Stephen Silverman.....President
- Libby Cohen.....Secretary
- William Chebot.....Treasurer
- Libby Cohen.....Sisterhood Pres.
- William E. Kaufman.....Rabbi Emeritus

Sisterhood President’s Message

Well, May has arrived, and hopefully we have made it through the worst of these trying times. The flowers are coming up, and I think people’s spirits are too.

As we begin to move along a little more freely, I hope everyone is a bit more comfortable in seeing old friends and acquaintances. Most people are vaccinated, or in the process of getting it done. This is someone’s choice; I’m not trying to hard sell it. You have to do what makes you comfortable. One of these days in the near future, maybe we will see each other face to face.

I would like to thank the following people for their donations made for the health of my grandson, Aaron Reynolds: Stuart Solup, Marilyn Sokoll and Sylvia Eisner. I am happy to report, he is back to his old self.

So, until next month, stay well and keep looking to the future.

Libby Cohen
Sisterhood President

Check out our website to read an article that was published in the April 2021 issue of Jewish Rhode Island magazine. It is an interview by our own Mel Yoken with Nancy Cooperstein Charney, (daughter of Dr. Harry and Grace Cooperstein) who recently produced and directed the documentary, "Who's Next?" discussing how her Fall River upbringing influenced the film.
www.frtemplebethel.org

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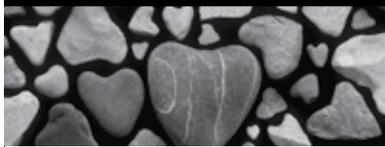



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SERVICE SCHEDULE

May 2021: Iyar/Sivan 5781*Services will continue to be on Zoom.*Saturday, May 1 (19 Iyar)

Weekly Portion: Emor 10:00 am

Friday, May 7 (25 Iyar)Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
Candle Lighting 7:32 pmSaturday, May 8 (26 Iyar)

Weekly Portion: B'har-B'khukotai 10:00 am

Monday, May 10 (28 Iyar)Yom Yerushalayim
Jerusalem Reunification DayWednesday, May 12 (1 Sivan)

Rosh Chodesh Sivan

Friday, May 14 (3 Sivan)Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
Candle Lighting 7:40 pmSaturday, May 15 (4 Sivan)

Weekly Portion: B'midbar 10:00 am

Sunday, May 16 (5 Sivan)Erev Shavuot
Candle Lighting 7:42 pmMonday, May 17 (6 Sivan)Shavuot – First Day 10:00 am
Candle Lighting after 8:50 pmTuesday, May 18 (7 Sivan)Shavuot – Second Day 10:00 am
Yizkor: Approximately 11:45 amFriday, May 21 (10 Sivan)Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
Candle Lighting 7:47 pmSaturday, May 22 (11 Sivan)

Weekly Portion: Nasso 10:00 am

Friday, May 28 (17 Sivan)Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
Candle Lighting 7:53 pmSaturday, May 29 (18 Sivan)

Weekly Portion: Beha'alotkha 10:00 am

TBE News & Notes

Please join us on **Sunday, May 16th** (on Zoom), from **8-9:30 PM**, for our **Tikkun Leil Shavuot** – our “late night” study session, in celebration of this holiday of Revelation. Our topic this year will be: **“The Importance of Friendship in the Bible, in Rabbinic Times, and Today.”**

Come study texts from the Bible, the Midrash and Talmud (in English), and join us in discussion on this especially relevant topic to us in this “socially distanced” era.

(Zoom links will be sent out to you both for this study-session and for Shavuot services in the week before May 16th.)

First Post-Vaccination TBE Hike!

By the time you get this bulletin...you may (we hope!) be fully vaccinated against the coronavirus. As of this writing, I don't know what the TBE Board of Directors will have decided about reopening the temple for on-site services, but we *can* meet *outdoors* on **Wednesday, June 17th** to resume our TBE nature walks! (Yes, I know this is the May bulletin, but I want you to circle the date in your calendars *now*.)

If you would like to join us for a not-so-strenuous hike (approximately 2 miles on mostly level terrain) at the **Swansea Village Park**, here is what you need to know:

We will meet at **10 AM** in the parking lot behind the Swansea Town Hall/Public Library. If you want to join us on that day, but are running late, you should call Shoshana's cell at 631-946-4036; you may also call if the weather looks uncertain and you don't know whether we will still be meeting that day.

It would also be helpful if you would RSVP to the temple office by June 14th so I know how many people to expect (but if you forget, come anyway!).

It's a good idea to wear/bring insect repellent with DEET (to keep away ticks), and to wear long pants and sturdy shoes with socks, and a hat...oh, and yes, your *mask*.

If you have never been on the trails of the Swansea Village Park, you will be amazed by what is back there! Fascinating pudding-rock formations, huge glacial outcroppings that look like small mountains, all varieties of mosses and ferns...a truly magical place!



Thank you for your donations received through April 21st

YAHARZEITS

| | |
|--|---|
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| Father, Carlton Dubitsky | Stanley Dubitsky |
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| Father, Dr. David Prial | Paula Prial Folkman |
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| Father, Jason Sigal | Jeff Sigal |
| Brother, Steven B. Singer | Pamela Pierce |
| Janet, Everett, Irving, Alexander and Peter David Smith | Sheryl Eilberg, Marci Rosenthal, Brenda Smith |
| Husband, Ed Solup | Beverly Solup |
| Father, Seymour Sugarman | Nancy Wolk |
| Father-in-law, Israel Woloshen | Charles Stampler |
| Father & Grandfather, Israel Zukroff | Zukroff & Koppel Families |

CAPITAL FUND

In memory of Jeffrey Schenker
Barry Helfanbein

IDA AND DAVID CHAVENSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

For the yahrzeit of our beloved father, Hyman Udovin
Judith & Frank Kosofsky
Barbara Udovin

FLOWER FUND

In joyous celebration of Sheila Lash's 90th birthday. With love from her daughters,
Gillian & Alison

BERNARD HOROWITZ BUILDING MAINTENANCE FUND

In honor of Bill Chebot's 79th anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah
In honor of Charlie Stampler's 106th birthday
For the yahrzeit of my beloved mother, Emma Loeff Dondis
For the yahrzeit of my beloved sister, Annette Horowitz
For the yahrzeit of my dear friend, Irene Stern
Arlyne Dondis
For the yahrzeit of my beloved mother, Annette Horowitz
Philip Horowitz
Stephen Horowitz

RABBI'S & CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In memory of all our loved ones
Joan & David Feldman

WISH LIST - PRAYER BOOKS

For the yahrzeit of my beloved father, Norman Chebot
In gratitude for the recovery of my beloved son-in-law Patrick Gibson.
Bill Chebot

SYLVIA S. & ALBERT B. YOKEN MEMORIAL FUND

In honor of Marion Wilner
In memory of Abraham Ehrenhaus
In memory of David Glickman
In memory of Mary Swidey
In memory of Rabbi Moshe Ulmer
In memory of Robert Salt
Mel & Cindy Yoken

Temple Family

- A very happy 90th birthday to Sheila Lash! Sheila has been staying with her daughter (and her horses) in Virginia, but she will soon be returning to Newport. Mazel tov!
- Best of luck to Jerry Hahn, who has relocated to Mamaroneck, NY to be near his daughter. He asked that we relay this message: "Time to move on. Best to all the Temple family. Jerry Hahn."
- Our sincere condolences to the family of Jeffrey Schenker.

TEMPLE OFFICE

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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:

Monday, May 31st - Memorial Day

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www.fallriverjewishhome.org



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

5/1/2021 19 Iyar 5781
Shirley Stamper

5/2/2021 20 Iyar 5781
Lilly Grozen
Phyllis Mechaber
Isaac Soorkis

5/4/2021 22 Iyar 5781
Elaine Burt
Melba Meister
Hyman Pollock

5/5/2021 23 Iyar 5781
Patricia Brown
Samuel Entin

5/6/2021 24 Iyar 5781
Joseph Bolski
Paul Woltman

5/7/2021 25 Iyar 5781
Bennett Alpert
Neil Roiter

5/8/2021 26 Iyar 5781
Allan Evans
Samuel Gerstenzang

5/9/2021 27 Iyar 5781
Neil A. Hoffman
Shirley Rosenthal

5/10/2021 28 Iyar 5781
Mollie Morganstein

5/13/2021 2 Sivan 5781
Steven Gary Litchman

5/18/2021 7 Sivan 5781
Isidore Horvitz
Libbye Rabinovitz

5/19/2021 8 Sivan 5781
Jennie Winokoor

5/20/2021 9 Sivan 5781
Florence Herman
Claire Korber

5/21/2021 10 Sivan 5781
Beatrice Horvitz
Hilda Reiser
Sarah Schwartz

5/22/2021 11 Sivan 5781
David Feldman
Samuel Mednick
Henry N. Packer
Louis Yamins

5/23/2021 12 Sivan 5781
George Goldberg
Bernard Kaufman

5/24/2021 13 Sivan 5781
Paul Chebot
Dov Ben Moshe Dvir
Sarah Feldman
Esther Shuman

5/25/2021 14 Sivan 5781
Marvin Smith

5/26/2021 15 Sivan 5781
Maurice Granovsky
John Allen Polin
Louis Sevin

5/27/2021 16 Sivan 5781
Bella Freedman
Sheila Freedman

5/28/2021 17 Sivan 5781
Jacob Kline
Joseph L. Schwartz

5/30/2021 19 Sivan 5781
Morris Glickman
Dorene Hoffman
Rose Horowitz
Blossom Monchik
Lena Silverman

5/31/2021 20 Sivan 5781
Rose Ostroff
Allen Taradash

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