

TEMPLE BETH EL

FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS



92nd Year

February 2020

Shevat/Adar 5780

No. 6

Regular Service Schedule

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



Come join us for our Purim Party!



Monday, March 9th

Reading of the Megillah: 5 pm sharp

Deli Supper: 6:30 pm

Movie: "Making Trouble: 3 Generations of Funny Jewish Women"

➔ *Please RSVP by Thursday, February 27th!!* ➔

Giving *tzedakah* is an important *mitzvah*, and a Purim tradition.
Cash donations for local charities are greatly appreciated.

If you need a ride, please call or e-mail the office as soon as possible.



*Chanukah Party
December 29, 2019*



A message from our Spiritual Leader,
Cantor Shoshana Brown

We Are all Dependent upon One Another

A conversation about God from Alice Walker's groundbreaking 1982 novel, *The Color Purple*:

"Listen, God love everything you love - and a mess of stuff you don't. But more than anything else, God love admiration.

You saying God vain? I ast.

Naw, she say. Not vain, just wanting to share a good thing... People think pleasing God is all God care about. But any fool living in the world can see it always trying to please us back. Yeah? I say.

Yeah, she say. It always making little surprises and springing them on us when us least expect.

You mean it want to be loved, just like the Bible say?

Yes, Celie, she say. Everything want to be loved. Us sing and dance, make faces and give flower bouquets, trying to be loved. You ever notice that trees do everything to git attention we do, except walk?"

This month we celebrate the Jewish holiday of *Tu Bi-Shevat* (the 15th of Shevat), also known as the Jewish "New Year of the Trees." Although the need for a date marking the new year for trees is mentioned in the Mishna (2nd-3rd century CE) – in order that farmers could know when fruit should be tithed in the Temple – it was not until the 16th century CE that the Jewish mystics of Tzfat began to celebrate this "new year" by holding an unusual type of seder on the 15th of the Hebrew month of Shevat. Why the 15th? Shouldn't a "new year" be on the first of the month? In the Mishna the opinion of Hillel (that it should be on the 15th) held sway over that of Shammai (who held with the 1st). It makes sense, since on this date the sap is said to begin to rise in the trees, which is the beginning of their bringing forth the fruits of the new year. When the moon is full, it is nearest the earth and its gravitational pull on the sap in the trees would be at its strongest – as with the waters of the ocean. (I did a search on this and discovered a conversation between maple syrup-producers who all concurred that the late-winter-early spring full moon was the best time for tapping their trees!)

The mystics of Tzfat chose to enhance this minor holiday because of their way of "mapping" the *s'firot* – the aspects of God – in a way that formed a diagram of a tree, which they referred to as the Tree of Life. But later Hasidic mystics, such as the Ba'al Shem Tov and Rabbi Nachman of Bratzlav also gave great importance to spending time alone in nature in order to be able to speak freely to God, and perhaps to also be able to "hear" God more clearly. Thus the 18th century Rabbi Nachman composed this famous *kavannah* ("intention") for himself:

"May it be my custom to go outdoors each day among

the trees (and) enter into prayer...may all the foliage of the field – all grasses, trees, and plants ...send the powers of their life into the words of my prayer so that my prayer and speech are made whole through the life and spirit of all growing things..."

In our Monday morning adult Jewish education class, we have been reading Rabbi David Wolpe's excellent book, *Why Faith Matters* (2008). We were all moved by the following story told therein:

"...of a Hasidic rabbi whose child used to wander off to spend time alone in a forest. Concerned and curious, one day the rabbi pulled his boy aside to ask him what he was doing. 'I go to the forest to find God,' said the boy. 'That's wonderful,' replied his father. 'But you need not go to the forest to find God. Don't you know that God is the same everywhere?' 'God is,' the boy answered, 'but I'm not.'"

Planet Earth, seen as a whole organism, is so marvelously made, with innumerable interlocking, interdependent elements and beings, like the cells in a body, all living in symbiosis with one another. We breathe out, the trees breathe in; what they exhale, we inhale. The predator is important to the health of both the herd (keeping down its numbers so that they don't overgraze the land and thus more of them can survive the winter) and to trees (if too many deer or elk are competing for forage they will strip the trees of bark and thus endanger the life of the forest). It is now known that the great whales act as important carbon-sequesters through their long lives; and when they die, their great carcasses sink to the ocean floor, providing a feast to some 400-odd species that are sustained by the nutrients and shelter they provide, thus supporting marine biological communities for years, even decades (according to Jessica Perelman writing for National Geographic Newsroom). All is in a delicate, fantastic balance that we human beings still do not fully understand – and disrupt at our peril.

So Tu BiShevat is not just about trees, or fruits, the moon, or even about our relationship as Jews to God. It is a celebration of how all Creation is interwoven, a reminder that it is as important for us to be aligned with the other parts of Creation as it is with our Creator. So the next time a tree (or a flower, or even a whale!) waves at you (trying to "git your attention"), make sure to wave back, and then pause for a moment to think about what you can do to make their lives better. We are all dependent upon one another.

Wishing you all a Happy Tree New Year,

Cantor Shoshana

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

So far we have been lucky with the weather, and we hope it continues, but you know what they say in New England...if you don't like the weather, wait a minute!

While ice-free streets and lower-than-normal utility bills are good news, I am afraid we have also had some bad news. Our current tenant in the school building, People Incorporated, has finally purchased property in Fall River for the brand new preschool they plan to build.

As it will take at least two years before they are ready to open their doors, we have some time to decide what the future holds for our congregation. Without the rental income, we will not be able to stay in our beautiful home for long. While it is too soon to be alarmed, it is not too soon to look at our options so that when the time comes we are ready to take whatever steps are necessary to keep our congregation intact, even if it is in another location.

We will keep you advised as the situation develops, but for now we will continue "business as usual." I just wanted to let everyone know the situation, especially those who missed the Herald News article "People Incorporated buys land in Fall River to build preschool," published on January 10, 2020.

I also have some good news. With a great deal of help from Rick Schwartz, and with funds from the generous bequest of Barbara Kates, our cemetery is now equipped with security cameras. As we know all too well from the vandalism at the Hebrew cemetery last year, anti-Semitism exists all around us, and it behooves us to be vigilant. I sincerely hope that we never need to use the cameras, but I am also very glad that we have them.

Steve Silverman
President

Sisterhood President's Message

It is now February, the shortest month of the year. We have been pretty lucky weather wise so far this winter. We get snow one day, and then we get a few days of mild weather. This sure helps the time pass nicely.

On Friday, February 7th at 5:30 pm we will celebrate our annual Tu BiShevat Seder. This is when we pay homage to the trees. We do this with fruit, nuts and wine. It's a great time to get out and socialize with your Temple friends. Please make every effort to attend.

Coming up in the next few months, we will be celebrating Purim, and then Passover. Please watch your Bulletins and e-mails for details.

So until next month, please keep warm and stay safe. Please watch your step when you're walking.

Libby Cohen
Sisterhood President

Sisterhood Gift Shop

* SALE * 50% Off! * SALE *

As the merchandise in the gift shop sells out, I will not be reordering. This is the time to pick up a seder plate or menorah and give it as a gift possibly to your grandchildren or some other special person. Most of the merchandise is 50% off! Books are reduced by 33%.

I am available before or after the Rabbi's and Cantor's Monday morning class. If that is not convenient, please contact me to arrange another morning.

Hannah R. Evans
Phone: 508-674-2505
Email: hannahbecky@comcast.net

LEADERSHIP

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

**February 2020:
Shevat/Adar 5780**

<u>Saturday, February 1 (6 Shevat)</u> Weekly Portion: Bo	10:00 am
<u>Friday, February 7 (12 Shevat)</u> Candle Lighting Shabbat Service	4:50 pm 5:30 pm
<u>Saturday, February 8 (13 Shevat)</u> Weekly Portion: - Beshalakh	10:00 am
<u>Monday, February 10 (15 Shevat)</u> Tu BiShevat (New Year for Trees)	
<u>Friday, February 14 (19 Shevat)</u> Candle Lighting Shabbat Service	4:58 pm 5:30 pm
<u>Saturday, February 15 (20 Shevat)</u> Weekly Portion: Yitro	10:00 am
<u>Friday, February 21 (26 Shevat)</u> Candle Lighting Shabbat Service	5:07 pm 5:30 pm
<u>Saturday, February 22 (27 Shevat)</u> Weekly Portion: Mishpatim Shabbat Shekalim	10:00 am
<u>Tuesday, February 25 (30 Shevat)</u> Rosh Chodesh Adar	
<u>Wednesday, February 26 (1 Adar)</u> Rosh Chodesh Adar	
<u>Friday, February 28 (3 Adar)</u> Candle Lighting: Shabbat Service	5:16 pm 5:30 pm
<u>Saturday, February 29 (4 Adar)</u> Weekly Portion: Terumah	10:00 am

Coast to Coast Photos by Cantor Shoshana

Upper photo:

From the redwood forests in California, taken by our talented Cantor last summer.

Lower photo:

Winter walk along a promontory in Little Compton (Rabbi Mark is on the cliff in the background).

TEMPLE OFFICE

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E-Mail: templebethel@comcast.net
Website: frtemplebethel.org

OFFICE HOURS:

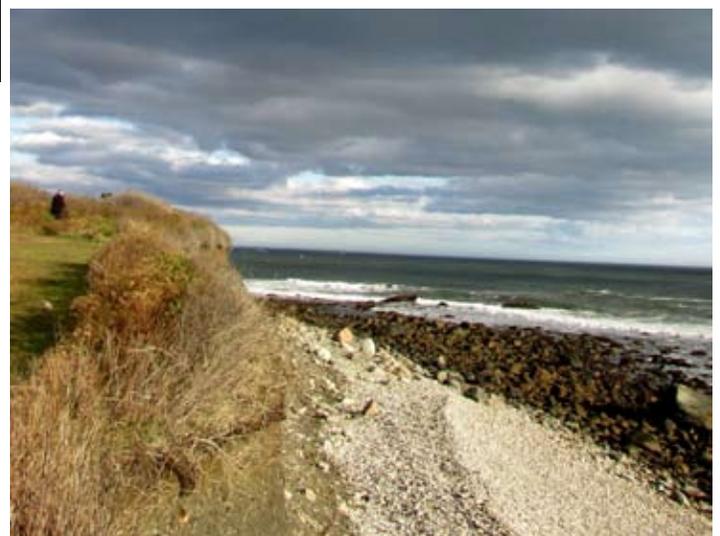
Monday - Friday, 9 am to Noon

OFFICE CLOSED:

Monday, February 17th - Presidents' Day

WISH LIST UPDATE

Just a reminder that we are still happily accepting donations for our current Wish List item, a new set of prayer books for the High Holidays. So far we are up to 60 books, and we are hoping to collect enough to purchase 200. Any donations of \$50 or greater will have a book plate honoring or memorializing a loved one. Thank you for your support!



TBE News & Notes

Being the shortest month, this will be one of my shortest "News and Notes."

We will be celebrating **Tu BiShevat on Friday, Feb. 7th at 5:30** (in lieu of the regular Kabbalat Shabbat service). Hope you can join us!

And staying with the theme of *Tu BiShevat*, please join us as well for February's **TBE film** – it is not exactly "Jewish," but it is in keeping with the themes of nature and spirituality (and is one of my favorites in this genre): "**Avatar**." (See next column for details.)

Looking for something to do indoors during the lingering winter months? Try our **adult Jewish education class** on Monday mornings from 10:30 – 12:00 (no prior experience necessary). We are currently reading a most excellent book, "Why Faith Matters" by Rabbi David Wolpe – there is so much to get out of it, even if you missed the first few chapters! (Please note: no class on Monday Feb. 17th – Presidents' Day).

And mark your calendars for our TBE celebration of **Purim on Monday March 9th** (see bulletin cover). Please remember to make your reservations by February 27th, and to bring a little spare cash to fulfill the *mitzvah* of giving *tzedakah* to meet local needs on this holiday.

As I said, it's a short month, and that's all the news I have for now – hope to see you at one or more of our events soon!

IN MEMORIAM

SYLVIA ZALKIND

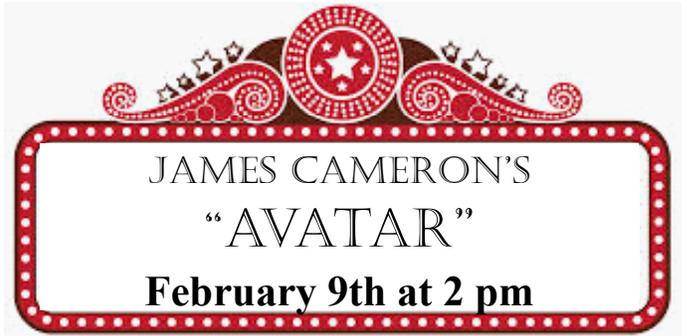
JANUARY 19, 2020 - 22 TEVET 5780

VICTOR FIELD

JANUARY 25, 2020 - 29 TEVET 5780

MAY THEIR MEMORY BE FOR A BLESSING

The bulletin of Temple Beth El (USPS-075-340) is published monthly from September to June for \$1.00 per year by Temple Beth El, 385 High St., Fall River, MA. Periodicals postage paid at Fall River, MA. POSTMASTERS, send address changes to Temple Beth El, 385 High St., Fall River, MA 02720-3348.



SUNDAY AT THE JEWISH MOVIES

James Cameron's "Avatar"

Okay, so *Avatar* is not exactly a Jewish movie, but the "good guys" in this film are called "Na'vi," and the Hebrew word for a prophet is *navi* (*n'vi'im* in the plural), and the film also includes a "Tree of Souls," which might as well be called the "Tree of Life." That's close enough!

Here is the synopsis: "On the lush alien world of Pandora live the Na'vi, beings who appear primitive but are highly evolved. Because the planet's environment is poisonous, human/Na'vi hybrids, called Avatars, must link to human minds to allow for free movement on Pandora. Jake Sully, a paralyzed former Marine, becomes mobile again through one such Avatar and falls in love with a Na'vi woman. As a bond with her grows, he is drawn into a battle for the survival of her world."

Avatar is a 2009 American epic science fiction film directed, written, produced, and co-edited by James Cameron and stars Sam Worthington, Zoe Saldana, Stephen Lang, Michelle Rodriguez, and Sigourney Weaver.

Avatar was nominated for nine Academy Awards, including Best Picture and Best Director, and won three, for Best Art Direction, Best Cinematography and Best Visual Effects. (Please note that this is a 2 hour and 40-minute long film!)

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Yahrzeits

For the yahrzeit of my beloved...	Donated by:
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Father, Willy Gittelman	Finbar Gittelman
Brother, Sidney Goldman	Sylvia Zalkind
Mother, Sheila Holtzman	Michael, Charron & Ben Holtzman
Brother, Howard Krasnow	Carol Schwartz
Mother, Dorothy Levin	Ruth Levin
Husband, Bernard Miller	June Miller
Mother, Rose Moss	Shirley Taradash
Mother, Anna Ellison Schaffer	Donna Walters
Father, Isaac Schwartz	Virginia Lepow
Parents, Gladys & Mannis Shapiro	Norm Shapiro
Mother, Paula Shuman	David Shuman
Mother, Paula Shuman	Peter Shuman
Father, Maurice Sludsky	Paula Sultan
Parents, Cilla & Myer Sobiloff	Ellen Sobiloff Mark
Husband, Robert Sokoll	Marilyn Sokoll
Mother, Rose Tallman	Elayne Lowenthal
Father, Murray Taradash	Allen Taradash
Father, Simon "Zaide" Winokoor	Sidney Winokoor
Mother, Lillian Woltman	Joanne Tuck

MAURICE ALPERT MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND

For the yahrzeits of my beloved wife, Arline, and my beloved brother, Stanley Alpert
Sumner Alpert

CAPITAL FUND

In memory of dear fraternity brother, David Gerstenblatt
Richard Trieff

In memory of Janet Smith
Marilyn Sokoll

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of Rabbi Mark Elber
Irwin Terach

In honor of Marty & Suzanne Finkel's daughter Lauren's engagement to Drew Levy
Anne Griffin

WISH LIST - HIGH HOLIDAY PRAYER BOOKS

In honor of Marie Twomey – best wishes for all good things in the New Year
Iris Katzman

In memory of Janet Smith
Bill Chebot

In memory of Frank "Fishy" Sokoll
Barbara Kaplan

Martin Luther King Breakfast at Bristol Community College, January 20th



Winter morning at Warren's Point Beach, Little Compton

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Respectfully honoring the customs and traditions of the Jewish community, funerals are in strict accordance with Jewish Law.

508-673-0781

William "BT" Hathaway
Mike Roberts

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Fall River United Jewish Appeal, Inc.

385 High Street, Fall River, MA 02720
Tel: (508) 673-7791 Fax: (508) 678-6735
e-mail: fruja@comcast.net

Office Hours: Monday & Thursday, 9 am to Noon

Friendly Visitor: Arleen Bor is our "Friendly Visitor" and is ready, willing and able to visit the sick or shut-ins. Call the UJA office at (508) 673-7791 to schedule a visit.

Senior Center: (at the Fall River Jewish Home)
Open 5 days a week for lunch...Kosher and delicious. For reservations/cancellations call the Nutrition Office at (508) 324-4619, or (800) 293-8943 before 1:30 pm on the previous business day before you want to reserve or cancel.

The **NEW** Sisterhood Book Club

It may be **cold** outside, but the
Sisterhood Book Club is **HOT!**

Come enjoy the discussion and discovery!

February 19th:
"Olive Again" by Elizabeth Strout

March 18th:
"The Great Alone" by Kristin Hannah

Temple Family

- Our sincere condolences to the family and dear friends of Janet Smith, Sylvia Zalkind, Victor Field and Harriet Grunberg.

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Upcoming Events:

Friday, February 7th at 5:30 pm

Tu BiShevat

(in lieu of the regular
Kabbalat
Shabbat service).



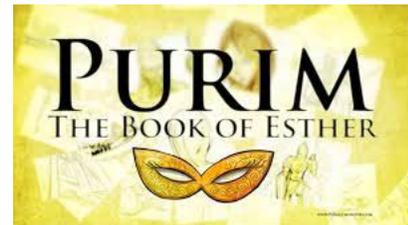
Sunday, February 9th at 2 pm:

February Movie: "Avatar"

Monday, March 9th starting at 5 pm:

Purim Party, with Megillah Reading,
Deli Dinner and a Movie.

Please RSVP by February 27th!



Trees waiting for spring: North Watuppa Pond
after a recent snowfall



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

Yahrzeits

2/1/2020 6 Shevat 5780
Max Horvitz
Charles Rosenberg
Philip Shapiro

2/3/2020 8 Shevat 5780
Dr. Leonard Lechan

2/4/2020 9 Shevat 5780
Augusta Kaufmann

2/5/2020 10 Shevat 5780
Normand Futoransky
Joseph Horowitz

2/7/2020 12 Shevat 5780
Tylda Schwartz
Arnold Wolfson

2/9/2020 14 Shevat 5780
Louis Freedman
Esther Mickelson
William Shriberg
Morris Wilner

2/10/2020 15 Shevat 5780
Margot Bogus
Adolph Feder
Fannie Woloshen

2/11/2020 16 Shevat 5780
Abner Kravitz

2/12/2020 17 Shevat 5780
Jack Mickelson
Charles Novek

2/13/2020 18 Shevat 5780
Ada Wolfson

2/14/2020 19 Shevat 5780
Mildred Trieff

2/15/2020 20 Shevat 5780
Lottie Bloom Sandler
Eugene Joseph Silverman

2/16/2020 21 Shevat 5780
Atty. Lloyd Belford

2/17/2020 22 Shevat 5780
Seymour Filler
Martin Schlam

2/18/2020 23 Shevat 5780
Herman Bernstein
Bernice Hoffman
Charles Kane

2/19/2020 24 Shevat 5780
Morris Lepes
Dorothy Schwartz

2/20/2020 25 Shevat 5780
Simon Goldberg

2/21/2020 26 Shevat 5780
Dr. Jacob Helfanbein

2/22/2020 27 Shevat 5780
Samuel M. Schwartz

2/23/2020 28 Shevat 5780
Sylvia Lechan
Madeline Leonard

2/24/2020 29 Shevat 5780
Samuel Ehrenhaus
Blossom Granovsky
Sidney Lechan
Hyman Lipshitz
Ida Woltman
Hilda Zaslow

2/25/2020 30 Shevat 5780
Dr. Harry Cooperstein
Nathaniel Dashoff
Max Fleisher

2/26/2020 1 Adar 5780
Sarah Aber
Regina Elber
Richard Shore
William Wolfson

2/27/2020 2 Adar 5780
Isaac Bolski
Joy Field
Hyman Karp
Rose Presser

2/28/2020 3 Adar 5780
Max Jacob Packer

2/29/2020 4 Adar 5780
Bernard Chebot
Sadie Lovit
Nathan Bernard Silverman

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