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BETH SHIR SHALOM

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Long before the internet and Zoom, every year at this time the Jewish people virtually journey to Mt. Sinai. We do it via the counting of the Omer, which begins on Pesach and recalls the count between offerings brought to the ancient Temple in Jerusalem. The counting culminates at Shavuot, the anniversary of the giving of the Torah at Mt. Sinai. But what about the journey itself? After all, common wisdom acknowledges that the journey is more important than the destination.



There is a great parallel in the story of the journey of the Jewish people to Mt. Sinai and our own journey from the beginnings of the COVID-19 outbreak until it's eventual end. First, the Jewish people themselves did not know the duration of their desert trek and had no idea that there even was a destination, certainly when they first began. Moses and others in a leadership position seemed to know but they didn't share it with the people. The basic job of the people during that time was to learn how to survive in the Sinai Wilderness and how to operate together as a society of free individuals. That certainly had its fits and starts. Everyone, God included, because God is individualized by the Torah and plays a role in the story, had misgivings about moving forward. There is anger, frustration, disappointment and certainly a great deal of fear and trepidation. In hindsight, some of those emotional responses were justified and others were not. The other grand parallel between our ancient journey and our current one is - rules. Rules were instituted to organize the fledgling Jewish society and to keep the people safe under the trying circumstances of moving thousands of people through the ever-shifting terrain and topography of the Sinai. That sounds really familiar, doesn't it? The "terrain" we are trying to traverse may not be physical, except under a microscope, but it is ever-shifting and dangerous if we don't follow the rules. Similar rules were instituted for our ancient ancestors to accomplish the goals of organization and safety. Rules require sacrifice and the understanding that much of what we are required to do is for others, not ourselves and that is a major paradigm shift in a free society.

When I teach about Judaism to people who are learning about it for the first time, I say something that one of my teachers, Professor Zev Garber, taught me, that Judaism is a legal civilization. That is the root notion that our founding fathers used to form the foundations of this country in a frightening and foreboding time that had no clear resolution. We need to reinforce that Jewish idea now that was used during this country's initial crisis so that we can survive this one, coming out on the other side with our democracy worn and torn from the struggle but still intact.

Rabbi Neil Comess-Daniels

Mitzvah of the Month — Love Your Neighbor as (much as you love) Yourself

The commandment “Love your neighbor as (much as you love) yourself,” comes right in the middle of the sections of the Book of Leviticus we read in April and May this year. Here’s a great way to fulfill that mitzvah during the COVID-19 crisis. Nicholas Kristoff, of the New York Times, vetted several organizations that are doing the “good work” and writes the following:

“...a week ago, I listed five organizations doing wonderful work responding to Covid-19 needs and suggested that readers might want to help them out. The result has been truly gratifying: A torrent of about \$3.1 million so far from readers to those organizations through the website we set up, www.KristofC19ImpactInitiative.org.

You can find out more about the organizations on that site, and it’s not behind a paywall; anybody can visit. I picked nonprofits that do work both at home and abroad, ones that can scale up their great work if they can raise the money. And one advantage of donating through that website is that a nonprofit called Focusing Philanthropy is covering the credit card fees so that 100 cents of the dollar will go to the organization you choose. Please [do check it out](#) — and thanks so much for your generosity at this wrenching time.”

A Message from our Board of Directors—Written by Guy Zaczepinski

I hope this finds everyone safe and well, as these are not typical times. Recently, someone sent me a snippet on the internet that envisioned a teenager from the future asking his parents “what it was like” to live through the Covid-19 pandemic. The parents replied that it was very stressful: all the adults thought we might lose our livelihoods, or our lives, or our loved ones. Then, the parents asked the teenager what he remembered from that time. He said that it was one of his favorite times in childhood: everyone was together as a family, eating meals together and playing games. There seemed to be fewer external distractions. The parents realized that the child had clearly seen the world through a different lens.

We are all dealing with real challenges during this pandemic, and adjusting to “new normals”, including seeing the world through different lenses. The BSS board has been hard at work (via Zoom of course---quite literally a different lens!) on keeping our community together and involved during these unprecedented times. We are seeing phenomenal engagement for Shabbat services, as well as from JELLI and ECC programming. Our wonderful Transition Team has even been able to find us an outstanding Interim Rabbi to help lead our congregation through this tumultuous period, and they will communicate shortly about that. Opening the aperture further, people across the country are pulling together in uplifting ways to get through this crisis. Some parts of our government have moved quickly, in bipartisan fashion, to help. In many ways, it is inspiring.

Although we are suffering in different ways, the silver lining of this horrific pandemic may be that perhaps the extended shift from our normal life will permanently impact our collective lens—allowing us to try and focus on what matters. Perhaps, we will even change our future behaviors for the better. I am so grateful for our BSS community to lean on in this challenging time. Please, remember we are all here for you, as well.

INVITATIONS FROM THE RABBI



Congratulations to
Oona Schulweis
on turning 13!
We look forward
to celebrating
your Bat Mitzvah
in the near future.



Mazel Tov to the
Schulweis Family!



Congratulations on
the upcoming 13th
birthday of
Tess Rosenfeld. We
look forward to
celebrating your Bat
Mitzvah in the near
future.



Mazel Tov to the
Rosenfeld Family!



Eli Rishe
becomes a
Bar Mitzvah on
Saturday,
June 13th
at 4:00 p.m.



Mazel Tov to the
Rishe Family!

BOOK CLUB CHAVURAH

Come join the Beth Shir Shalom Book Chavurah! It's
free and it's a lot of fun. And there's even no
requirement to have read the book being discussed.
All are welcome!

Thursday, May 21: "The Round House" by Louise
Erdrich. Moderated by Gloria Heller.

Thursday, June 18: "Geisha, a Life" by M. Iwasaki.
Moderated by Nancy Wender.

The Chavurah will take place via Zoom at:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84336264227?
pwd=aThjVzN2MWlmcFVlb3ZvVDhvZHIYUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84336264227?pwd=aThjVzN2MWlmcFVlb3ZvVDhvZHIYUT09)

Meeting ID: 843 3626 4227

Password: 652008

Discussion begins at 7:00 p.m.



Levi Title
becomes a
Bar Mitzvah on
Saturday,
June 20th at
9:30 a.m.



Mazel Tov to the
Title Family!

Zoom Gala Gala

We may not be able to get together
physically but we can get together
virtually to celebrate Beth Shir Shalom.
Happy Havdalah will begin at 6:00 p.m.
on Saturday, May 30th.

Be on the lookout for an upcoming email
with more information on the
event and how to RSVP.

Robin Masnicoff, ECC Director

Just when you think that life is going smoothly and things are beginning to move in the right direction, something, I am not sure what, who or how to define it, throws you a curve ball. This curve ball that we have been thrown is the size of the moon. Never in my 35 plus years in Early Childhood Education would I have ever anticipated a pandemic that would challenge me so. Our job as early childhood professionals is hands on. We hug children all day long. We wiped noses, tears and skinned knees. We hug parents and grandparents and each other. This is part of our job. To be sequestered at home and to interact via Zoom is unnatural and up until mid-March, it was unheard of in our world of young children. We have signs around the hallways of our school with cell phones and lines through them to remind the adults that we are a cell free zone. We do not use screens to educate our children, we educate by hands on experiential learning. We use our five senses to learn the world around us. We socialize children to learn to communicate and work together. And now we have readjusted our way of being. We speak though a screen to our children and watch them interact from their own homes. There is a meme that is going around to Dr. Seuss's "Sam I am"...

*I will teach you in a room
I will teach you on a Zoom
I will teach you in a house
I will teach you with my mouse
I will teach you here or there
I will teach you because I care.*

We miss our little faces. The hardest part of this whole pandemic is not being able to hug our children. I am hopeful that soon we will be together and our ECC will once again be filled with the sounds of children playing and exploring. Until then, Be Well and Be Safe.

Elana Mabashov, Religious Education Director

What a crazy couple months this has been! Our schools and families have needed to adapt in ways we never thought possible, and JELLI is no exception! We have transitioned to an eLearning platform, and our kids have really risen to the challenge. I think my favorite session so far was when Aron from JCraft came for a visit to teach us how to make Matzah as well as a little Passover history. I hadn't laughed that hard in a while! I can still envision the little faces powdered with flour as we mixed, measured, and kneaded our matzah to perfection. We are fortunate to continue our tradition of beginning each JELLI session with Rabbi Neil leading a song-filled T'fila. A special thank you also goes out to our teachers for making this change quickly and seamlessly. They are working hard to provide rich instruction for our enthusiastic learners. In addition, teachers Sarah and Bailee are working with our students on Tuesdays for Hebrew Enrichment. All 3rd-6th graders are welcome to sign up. We also enjoyed a special "Ice Cream Shabbat" service that was led by our 4th, 5th, and 6th graders on May 1st. While we all hope to reconnect physically sooner rather than later, I am so proud to be a part of this community as we adapt, learn, and grow through eLearning. Please continue to create Tikkun Olam within your own homes and greater communities, as we look forward to a bright future ahead. Shalom for now!

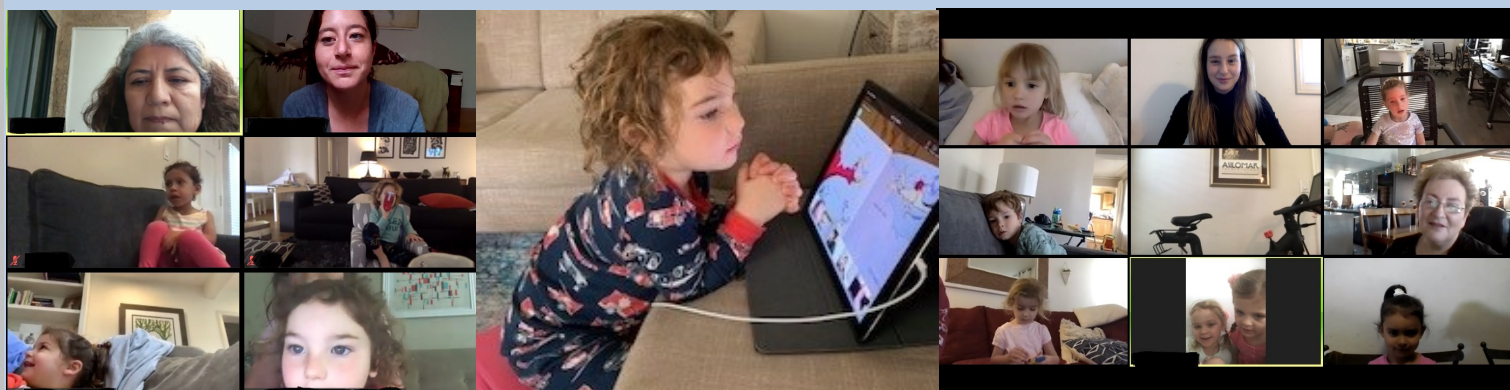
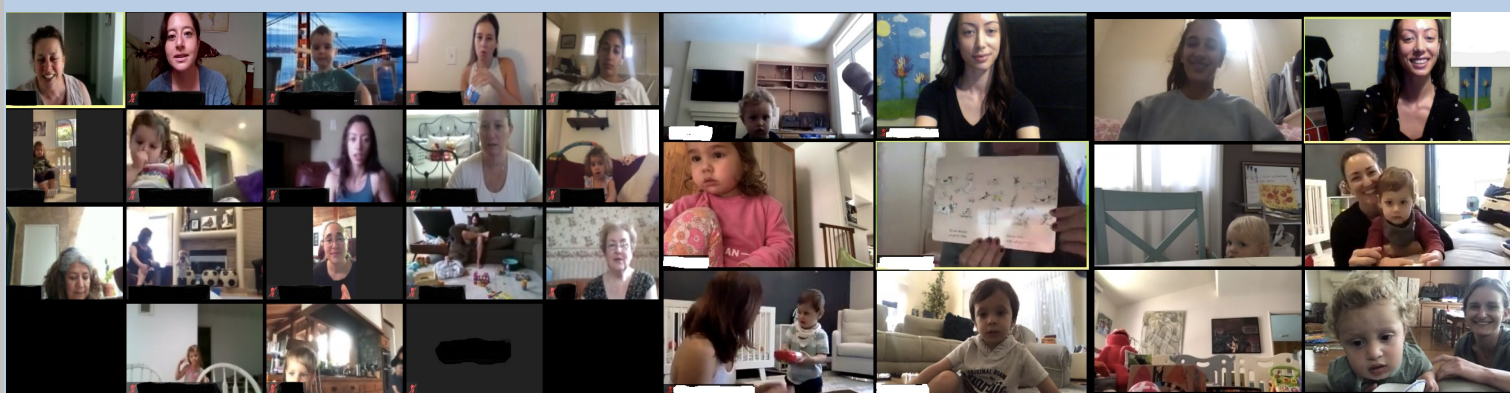
Bailee Goodman, Youth Group Director

Shalom! I hope everyone is trying everything they can to stay happy, healthy and keep somewhat of a normal schedule. Every morning when I wake up, I try and write down one good thing that happened to me from the day before. I thought I would share some of those good things with all of you:

- 3/29/2020, I taught my cat how to play fetch yesterday!*
- 4/3/2020, My mom surprised me and dropped off a banana bread loaf!*
- 4/8/2020, My roommate qualified for unemployment! I'm so happy for him, he really needs it.*
- 4/26/2020, I had the best time teaching my kiddos about Israel during JELLI today. I can't wait to go back to Israel and show them even more!*
- 4/28/2020, BeSHTY had a hang out and we presented silly power-points to each other! I love seeing them all still!*

I know these moments of good and happiness seem silly but it's my way of staying positive. There is so much we as people could be angry about and scared of. It's our jobs as humans and as Jewish people to bring the positives to the forefront and allow hope in rather than the opposite. I miss you all and I miss our temple. For now, try and find the light each day gives even if it's pitch black out.

THANK YOU to Everyone who HAS and CONTINUES to Support OUR BSS Community
BSS Virtual Education and Connection Via Zoom



MAY

YAHRZEITS

May 1st

Richard Gabrich
Shirley Moskowitz Gruber
Eric Guttmann
Barbara Lynn Hoffman
Louis Newman
Tam Spiva
Stanley Weiss

May 8th

Eva Cole
Ilia Finkel
Lynn Fremont
Lara Kay
Eva Menkin
Lisa Olshanksy
Don White

May 15th

Judith Anger
Benjamin Beil
Yacov Ben-Yehuda
Phillip Blecher
Arnoldo Cesare Cassuto
Andrew Ollstein
Harold Sackman
Jonathan Avidon Safier

May 22nd

Michelle Alonge
Janet Chase
Judith Harte
Malvin Gerald Hoffman
Louise Katz
Raya Kleiman
Khai Phu Quach Kwok
Lillian Minkoff
Stephen Pindak
Lisa Resnick
Milton Safier
David Slater
Beatrice Steelman

May 29th

Ben Cardozo
Sam Neidorf
Helene Pine
Harry Resnick
Leonard Sands
Harry Taylor
User Volovshin

BIRTHDAYS

Leonard Alkov	Lucas Julian Gottschalk	Claire Oliva
Zoe Almassizadeh	Sara Kaner	Susan Pindak
Charles Axilbund	Laura Kanofsky	Eli Rishe
Evan Bacon	David Katz	Tess Rosenfeld
Dr. Bradley Baum	Grayson Land	Josetta Sbeglia
Matt Benson	Herbert Laskin	Isabelle Segal
Eron Ben-Yehuda	Jeff Lepes	Mallory Siegel-Elliott
Emily Blustajn	Irwin Levin	Malaika Stambler
Eden Comess-Daniels	Brayden Miller	Marina Stavchanskiy
Ethan Courey	Michael Miller	Debbie Wolf
Blanche Davidson	Merle Minkoff-Singer	Isla Yaghoubzodeh
Ella Diamond	Diane Nathan	Alyse Zaczepinski
Seth Ellis	Mark Netter	Guy Zaczepinski

ANNIVERSARIES

15th Andrew Mollner & Rebecca Dudovitz
24th Mark Netter & Stacy Salzman
28th Patti Oblath & Michael Miller
35th Harris & Carla Tulchin
39th Bob & Roselee Packham



TRIBUTES

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Pindak, Susan in Honor of Rabbi Neil -Thank you for so many Torah Studies & Shabbats
Richards, Denise in Memory of Mary Prager
Roth, Ted & Lillian in Memory of Margot Guttmann
Stegall, Benjamin in Memory of Doris Stegall

Tributes/Yahrzeits

Lepes, Layne & Jeff in Memory of Morris Lepes

Rainy Day Fund

Li, Eric & Dong, Lu
Rothenberg, Natalie & Jules

Purim Carnival Sponsor

Lepes, Layne & Jeff
Safier, Joe & Avidon Safier, Fern



JUNE

YAHREZEITS

<u>June 5th</u>	<u>June 12th</u>	<u>June 19th</u>	<u>June 26th</u>	<u>June 26th - Cont'd</u>	<u>July 3rd</u>
Dale Alkov	Robert Cutler	Georges Kass	Stanley Abramson	Eleanore Mayer	Lillian Ansell
Sylvia Elaine Alpern	Ernest Franklin	Abe Kofman	Nelda Gentilli Cassuto	Milton Neuman	Terese Franklin
Alan Norman Dubin	Jack Gartner	Florence Neuman	Stanley Cavell	Kathy Sackman	Anna Gonzalez
Sylvia Gartner	Paul Gundel	Beatrice S. Taratoot	Mark Fefferman	Murray Sender	John Eric Johnson
Lillian Katz	Robert Kennedy	Richard Topel	Charlotte Grodberg	Ilene Shaphran	Esther Pindak
Harry Levitan	Elizabeth Martin		Benjamin Hill	Nathan Shaphran	Irwin Reznick
Barbara Marmer	Beatrice Miller		Salina Jacobs	Dean Stern	Rachel Singer
May Michaels	Harold Miller		Sam Loeb		Rose Singer
Chrystell Oshman	Sarah Silverstein		Alvin Mayer		

BIRTHDAYS

Marjan Aframian	Ari Kleiman	Leonard Schlessinger
Jesse Brooks	Cynthia Laskin	Steven Schneider
Simon Brooks	Mathilde Lombard	Eryca Sender
Jeremy Diamond	Florin Mezza	Sol Singer
Rebecca Dudovitz	Oona Morovich	Adele Shteynberg
Jason Grey	Larry Nathan	Rena Sonshine
Matt Grey	Benjamin Oliva	Melissa Susser
Joshua Hochberg	Hayley Quentin	Madeline Taylor
Richard Kaner	Lewis Roth	Harris Tulchin
Jasmine Kassabian	Elliott Roy	Charlene Solomon
Elizabeth Keegan		

ANNIVERSARIES

14th	John Godfrey & Sheri Stegall
17th	Jason Buchalter & Michele Findler-Buchalter
23rd	David & Marjan Aframian
32nd	Alan & Kimra Pick
33rd	Laurie & John Brumfield
42nd	Rabbi Neil & Toby Comess-Daniels
45th	Andy & Ellen Friedmann
56th	Sara and Ken Machida
56th	Juliet & Leonard Rothman

TRIBUTES

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Altschuler, Joanne & Jacobs, Jeff in Memory of Leo Altschuler
 Bacon, Michael & Schuster Bacon, Susan in Memory of Sidney Bacon
 Gauley, Marjorie Loring to help a BSS family in need
 Ghilotti Sloop, Holly & Sloop, David in Memory of Rose Schwartz and Anne Sloop
 Hoffman, Linda & Lauren in Memory of Johnny Johnson
 Lombard, Mathilde in Memory of Meyer Price Stern
 Landecker, Anita in Honor of Fred Landecker and David Menkin

Tributes/Yahrzeits

Hakim D. M. D., Alex & Hakim, Niaz in Memory of Bakhshian
 Sonshine, Rena in Memory of Minna Sonshine

Project PB & J

Hahtyar, Ari & Blanco, Ruth

Rainy Day Fund

Diamond, Paul & Susan
 Haselton, Jessica & Ryan
 Kornblum, Candyce & Rosenstein, Adam
 Pozez, Melanie & Blumberg, Jay



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