



# The Bulletin

A monthly newsletter of Temple Bnai Israel

*Blending Jewish Traditions*

*with Modern Life*

December 2023

Kislev - Tevet 5784

Join in the fun!

## Hanukkah Party and Games Night

December 10th at 5pm  
at  
Temple Bnai Israel

Menorah/Hanukiyah Lighting

Fresh Latkes & Potluck

Charity Poker Tournament

Board Games, Card Games and more!

Latkes will be served fresh from our kitchen; bring a potluck dish to go with them if you'd like! The spirit of the evening is to hang out and have fun, so bring along a game to play with friends both old and new. Scrabble, Boggle, Clue, cards, whatever floats your boat. Maybe you'd like to participate in our Poker Tournament benefitting WAIM, and try to take home the Hanukkah Poker Trophy (or just cheer on your favorite player)? Let's hang out and have fun.

RSVP (so we know how many latkes to make) to:  
[office@templebnaiisrael.org](mailto:office@templebnaiisrael.org) or 860-423-3743



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**Submission Deadline:**

The 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

The Rabbi and the editor reserve the right to reject submissions due to space limitations or content.

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Monday - Thursday

11:00A - 5:00P

Friday 10:00A - 2:00P

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**DECEMBER SAVE THE DATES:**

**Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> at 9:30 AM** - Bagel & Bible - "Kaddish & Counter-Kaddish" with Joscha Jelitzki- See Page 6

**Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM** - Israel and Palestine – History and Experience on Zoom - See Page 3

**Sunday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 PM** - Hanukkah Party & Games Night - See Front Cover & Page 7

**Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM** - Intro to Judaism Class - See Page 3

**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 PM** - Creating Connection: A Community Conversation - See Page 5

**Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM** - Brews, Views, Schmooze at Willimantic Brewing Company - All Welcome!

**Friday, December 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM** - Kiddush As the Main (Spiritual) Course - See Page 6

***Hinei mah tov umah na'im shevit ahim gam yahad.***

As we sat in our Shabbat circle Friday night, I felt a sense of ease and gratitude – to understand, to wonder, to sit – and just breathe in the safety of our community. To be Jews and allies, together, surrounded by a common core and unique perspectives. To take time to bring light, memories, and hope into our circle.

I always look forward to being with our community on [erev] Shabbat – for me, it's marking time between working in the world and *being* in the world. In our shelter of peace. In these difficult and confusing days, the calm and song and comradery are really a blessing.

How good and how pleasant for companions to sit together.

I hope you'll join us and find some joy and peace and connection with our Shabbat community. We need one another and we enrich one another. Including, of course, with nosh!

**ADULT EDUCATION OFFERINGS IN DECEMBER**

**Israel and Palestine – History and Experience**  
**Wednesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM**

Rav Jeremy will help us explore the history and the experiences that fuel the conflict and that might even give us hope.

**It's Not (Quite) Too Late To Join Intro to Judaism**  
**Next Class - Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 PM**  
**UConn Hillel**

If you join the class December 14<sup>th</sup>, you'll have only missed "Jewish History in One Easy Lesson" and "God: Multiple Jewish Understandings" and "A little about Hanukkah." But there's still Ethics, Shabbat and (the rest of the) Holidays, Tikkun Olam (World-Repair), Text, Food, Culture, and Lifecycle. Call or write the office if you're Interested: [office@templebnaiisrael.org](mailto:office@templebnaiisrael.org), 860-423-3743.

**YOU CAN DO IT!****Volunteer Opportunities****Fundraising and Development Committee** invites membership!

Currently looking for help with an initiative to get advertisers on our website and public Facebook page.

**Contact Sheila Amdur:**

[sheilabamdur@gmail.com](mailto:sheilabamdur@gmail.com)

**Library Committee** invites volunteers!

Have updated computer hardware, now we need people to breathe life back into the library.

**Contact Rochelle Marcus:**

[rochelle.marcus@gmail.com](mailto:rochelle.marcus@gmail.com)

**Grounds Coordinator** position open!

Looking for volunteer(s) to oversee the maintenance of the Temple grounds. Work with the Beautification Committee in coordinating the vendors who mow the lawn, prune the plants, plant flowers and shrubs, and keep the grounds tidy.

**Contact Temple Office:**

(860)423-3743,

[office@templebnaiisrael.org](mailto:office@templebnaiisrael.org)

**Caring Committee** invites volunteers!

Help in the effort to offer support to our congregation members in need.

**Contact Ellie Shane:**

[shaneellie01@gmail.com](mailto:shaneellie01@gmail.com)

**or Fran Jaffe:**

[franjaffe@earthlink.net](mailto:franjaffe@earthlink.net)

**Ritual Committee** invites

volunteers! Help enrich our shabbat and holiday gatherings.

**Contact Judy Stein:**

[jstein@medicareadvocacy.org](mailto:jstein@medicareadvocacy.org)



What does one do with such disaster? In Israel and Gaza, I mean. (One aspect of the disaster is that almost no attention is being paid to other disasters around the world, including a renewal of genocidal killing in Darfur.) I don't have "the answer," but Hillary thought it would be useful for me to share some vignettes of what I've been doing and feeling.

First, familial connections: As many of you know, my oldest sister lives in Israel, where she's lived for over sixty years. She has two sons, a daughter-in-law, and a grandson, Kfir, in Israel. Kfir is of army age and so was already serving in the Israel Defense Forces when the attack happened. He's an infantryman and we assumed he would end up in Gaza itself, which he did. Last week he was shot in the hand. As family members said, it was both happy and sad news: Being shot in the hand is bad, but it got him out of Gaza, at least for a while. We've been praying every Shabbat morning for Kfir and Avi Lessner and all their colleagues in the IDF that their efforts lead to peace and safety and that they come home to good and peaceful lives. I have another nephew who was born in Israel, moved back to the States as a child with his family, and a few years ago made aliyah, because he loves the Jewish homeland (particularly, it seems, the Jerusalem rugelach) and also wanted to fight the Occupation and stand up for Palestinian rights and peace. Those are the closest to me.

I have to admit that for much of the war, I've unconsciously resorted to a very common human strategy: build a sufficient wall around my heart so that I can keep doing my everyday work and chores and play. Sometimes I'm conscious of the wall and I feel guilty at my lack of feeling. And then, sometimes, the wall crumbles and I weep.

We're all in this together and we're all reacting in our individual ways, based on our connections to the situation, our experience as Jews or family of Jews, our various traumas and strengths. There was a T.G.I. Shabbes the second week of the war at which it just happened that I felt like the folks in the room needed affirmation that it was ok to be sympathetic to the pain of the Palestinians while the folks on Zoom needed affirmation that it was ok to be very angry. (Not that the one group weren't angry and other sympathetic.) Both of those are ok, and I'm afraid I wasn't very good at doing "hybrid emotions" that evening.

Maybe "hybrid emotion" is exactly the right response and the key to moving forward. In the first week or two of the war, a professor at ECSU, Caitlin Carenen, gave a talk about the background of the conflict that was advertised as a balanced introduction. I know that I and some others who heard of it were dubious. In this polarized environment, especially on campuses, is a balanced presentation possible? I wasn't able to attend the presentation, so I reached out to Professor Carenen. We met briefly on campus. She sometimes teaches a full semester course on Israel/Palestine. She told me that she starts with the ancient people of Israel in their land and after two weeks, the students are ardent Zionists. Then she teaches the Palestinian experience and after a couple weeks, the students are ardent supporters of the Palestinian cause. By the end of the semester, they're "wrecked," with real sympathy for the human beings involved and the understanding that solutions are not simple and will involve some real loss, even if that loss is worth it in the end. I thought "wrecked" was about the right attitude and affirmed that I felt wrecked myself. You can see her presentation, which is now a little out of date, here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L53iXIk4FhM>. I could quibble with

**continued on page 8**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2023****19 KISLEV, 5784**

Parashat Vayishlah

Genesis 32:4 - 36:43

This year: 34:1 - 35:8

Haftarah: Judges 14:1-19

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9, 2023****26 KISLEV, 5784**

Hanukkah: 3 Candles

Parashat Vayeshev

Genesis 37:1 - 40:23, Numbers 7:18-23

This year: 38:1-30, Numbers 7:18-23

Haftarah: Zechariah 2:14 - 4:7

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 2023****4 TEVET, 5784**

Parashat Miketz

Genesis 41:1 - 44:17

This year: 41:53 - 43:15

Haftarah: II Kings 8:1-6

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23, 2023****11 TEVET, 5784**

Parashat Vayigash

Genesis 44:18 - 47:27

This year: 45:28 - 46:27

Haftarah: Isaiah 31:1-5

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30, 2023****18 TEVET, 5784**

Parashat Vayehi

Genesis 47:28 - 50:26

This year: 49:1 - 49:26

Haftarah: Isaiah 2:2-17

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**CREATING CONNECTION: A COMMUNITY CONVERSATION (AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL!)**

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**December 17th at 3:00 PM**

One of the most important things the Temple can offer individuals is community and one of the most important ways the Temple can be of service in the world is by creating community, connecting people one to another in a network that can be supportive and do good. But community doesn't just happen. It develops from meeting and interaction.

At this conversation over ice cream, we'll meet and interact, and think together about what sorts of gatherings best meet our needs for community. We already know from experience that one size doesn't fit all and we need a variety of gatherings, but what that variety is and how we negotiate differences in needs and desires could apparently use a little work.

The natural time for Jewish community gatherings is Shabbat. What's working and not working in our current rotation of Shabbat gatherings and services? What might meet our community's needs better? All are invited to help create a vision of Shabbat gatherings that bring us together and build community. (And, did we mention, there will be ice cream?!) Childcare will also be provide so parents can participate in this important conversation.

## DECEMBER SHABBAT SERVICES AND CELEBRATIONS

Please note Zoom and In-Person availability for each week and watch your email for last minute changes!

<b>Friday, December 1, 2023</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>	<b>Children &amp; Family Service</b>
	<b>6:00 PM</b>	<b>Community and Family Potluck - In Person</b>
	<b>7:00 PM</b>	<b>1st Friday Shabbat Service - In Person &amp; by Zoom</b>

We're trying something new! We'll be holding a short family-friendly service at 5:30 PM (when Friday Family Shabbat usually begins) and inviting the entire community to participate in a potluck dinner at 6:00 PM! Now that your Thanksgiving leftovers are gone, it's a great time to try that new (fish or vegetarian) dish you've been wanting to make. Our more traditional Friday evening Shabbat service will follow at 7:00 PM.

<b>Saturday, December 2, 2023</b>	<b>9:30 AM</b>	<b>Bagel &amp; Bible - Kaddish and Counter-Kaddish: A Literary Tour with Joscha Jelitzki - In Person/by Zoom</b>
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Literature sometimes engages or quotes or translates or distorts the Kaddish prayer in interesting ways. Joscha Jelitzki, UConn Ph.D. student in Judaic Studies, will share some examples, based on his Masters Thesis. You're encouraged to have some bagels and coffee! Followed by abbreviated Shabbat service.

<b>Friday, December 8, 2023</b>	<b>6:15 PM</b>	<b>T.G.I.Shabbes - In Person, Zoom opens at 6:45 PM</b>
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<b>Saturday, December 9, 2023</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Shabbat Service - In Person &amp; by Zoom</b>
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<b>Friday, December 15, 2023</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>Tikkun Olam vaNefesh Service - In Person &amp; by Zoom</b>
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<b>Saturday, December 16, 2023</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Shabbat Service - In Person &amp; by Zoom</b>
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<b>Friday, December 22, 2023</b>	<b>6:30 PM</b>	<b>Shabbes Dinner - In Person</b>
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This month's Shabbes Dinner will be hosted by Judy Stein and Ken Dardick.

<b>Saturday, December 23, 2023</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Shabbat Service -</b>
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<b>Friday, December 29, 2023</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>	<b>Kiddush As the Main (Spiritual) Course, or "Kiddush Above the Line" - In Person &amp; by Zoom</b>
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You know how in our Siddur, the commentary is below the line and the 'actual prayers' are above the line? When our Ritual Committee developed our Yom Kippur Avodah service (the one with the stones and sachets), they talked about moving the stuff below the line to above the line. Rather than a hard-to-understand service that needed commentary to connect it to our actual lives, why not make the connection to our actual lives the main thing, moving it "above the line?"

At our December 29<sup>th</sup> service, we're moving Kiddush above the line. Not only do Jews like to eat, but Judaism attaches great spiritual import to food and offers directions in how to get the most spiritual benefit from our eating. We've been occasionally incorporating bits of that wisdom into our potluck dinners and Service & Service gatherings, and even into Kiddush. But this time we'll make that the main event. We'll bring all four parts of ourselves, our bodies, hearts, minds, and holy essence, to enjoying a Kiddush together. Come enjoy! This evening will be co-led by Rav Jeremy and Marc Kronisch.

<b>Saturday, December 30, 2023</b>	<b>10:00 AM</b>	<b>Shabbat Service - In Person &amp; by Zoom</b>
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## TEMPLE FAMILY NEWS

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### New Members - Welcome!



We're happy to welcome new members  
Jonathan and Elena Schreiber and family  
Sandye and Eric Simon  
Rachel Prunier and Colin Kremer and family  
to both the congregation and the community!

## CARING COMMITTEE - Caring For Each Other In Times Of Need

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Fran Jaffe  
860-228-2390  
[franjaffe@earthlink.net](mailto:franjaffe@earthlink.net)

Ellie Shane  
860-428-5392  
[shaneellie01@gmail.com](mailto:shaneellie01@gmail.com)

The caring committee is here to offer help to anyone in our temple community. Please let us know if anything is needed. Thanks to Gerry Berkowitz for his leadership in November!

We are busy delivering Hanukkah gift bags to Jewish residents of local nursing homes and other facilities as part of the Friendly Visitor program of the Jewish Federation. We're always looking for more volunteers to help out.

We wish a Happy Hanukkah to all and we pray for Israel.  
Ellie and Fran

## HANUKKAH PARTY AND GAMES NIGHT

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**December 10th at 5:00 PM**

As we learned at a "Bagel and Bible" several years ago, dreidel is not the only traditional Hanukkah game. Hanukkah used to be considered a good time for playing all kinds of games and card games were especially popular, particularly poker. So let's have a games night! Bring your menorah/hanukiyah and we'll light together. Our crew of latke mavens – Jeff Bowling, Gerry Berkowitz, and new-member-jumping-right-in Eric Simon – will provide the latkes. If you want to bring something else to share, we won't say no!

The "Travelling Lads" will set up a poker tournament. There will be no cash winnings, but if you make a contribution to WAIM, you'll earn the right to play for the coveted Hanukkah poker trophy! If poker's not your thing and you have a game you'd like to share, bring it. It's a game potluck! (Note that you might not end up playing the game you brought – if everyone brings a game, they'll only play that game if they play by themselves, which is less fun.)

Please RSVP to our office (so we know how many latkes to make) at  
[office@templebnaiisrael.org](mailto:office@templebnaiisrael.org) or 860-423-3743.

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some of her choices, but it's pretty good all in all. I will also be taking a crack at a presentation of the big picture on December 6<sup>th</sup>, "Israel and Palestine – History and Experience."

Sometimes at night I scroll through Facebook. It's not a good way to settle at the end of the day. If I feel stuck in sorrow and worry, unable to get off until I find something hopeful, sometimes I'll go to the page of Standing Together/*Omdim B'yachad/Naqif Ma'an*, a Jewish-Arab movement of Israelis trying to build a new majority based on people's self-interested need for peace and economic justice. There's sorrow there, too, but also hope, and it usually works to let me close down my computer.

I was very grateful to be approached by a local progressive activist whose political approach about the Israel/Palestine issue is definitely more "left" than mine, but is aware that there are decent human beings on both "sides" and is more interested in saving lives than in chanting the "right" slogans. I had felt a bit stuck, not knowing how I might play a positive role for Israelis, the hostages, and Palestinian civilians. This person sensed that while we might disagree about some aspects of the conflict, we agree that two wrongs don't make a right and that the world and Israel should therefore do what they can to spare civilians in Gaza. I believe that's not only the moral thing to do, but the best strategic choice for Israel's future security. She sensed that as a rabbi, I might have a little more access to Representative Courtney's ear than she would and suggested I might arrange for a meeting with him. After some consultation with my colleague, Rabbi Marc Ekstrand of Temple Emanu-El in Waterford, it was decided that the two of us would write the sign-on letter that you've probably seen by the time this Bulletin is published, speaking in our own names (not our congregations') and in the name of whoever chose to sign with us. That's not going to change much on its own, but I think does give that small nudge that citizens in a democracy are able to give and together with other voices might contribute to a more secure and peaceful Middle East. Thank you, Alice.

And sometimes, the wall crumbles and I weep. That happened when it was revealed more than a month into the war that an incredible woman with a local connection, Vivian Silver – may the memory of the righteous be a blessing – had been killed in the initial Hamas attack on October 7<sup>th</sup> and as I continued to read about her, the tributes to her life, and watched bits of memorial gatherings for her. See the separate article by Gideon and myself on this remarkable woman. The many Israelis, Jews, and Palestinians who insist that her murder will not stop their work for the peace she strived to bring also gives me hope.

Rav Jeremy





Happy Hanukkah, Temple Bnai Israel family! Please enjoy this festival of lights as our daylight wanes. Speaking of light, we are in the process of determining our path forward following the synagogue's Small Business Energy Advantage energy audit months ago and we expect to be getting energy efficient upgrades for our lighting throughout the building! Happy Hanukkah!

The Committee is working on a banner design with member designer, David Meslin.

**“Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk Humbly”**

We are considering designs that will build curiosity and enhance our sense of community.

By the time this goes to press, the 39<sup>th</sup> Walk for Warmth, hosted by our synagogue, will have just passed (November 19<sup>th</sup>). As of this writing, Team Temple Bnai Israel has already raised over \$1800 (lots of hai), which is an incredible feat. Thank you to this team of students, families, and older and newer members for coming together and helping our neighbors stay safe and warm this winter. Thank you also to Peggy Beckett-Rinker and our tikkun olam volunteers for all they have done to enhance the event. Final numbers on what was raised will be forthcoming!

Our Temple Bnai Israel Dayenu Circle will co-sponsor a Climate March in Hartford on February 2<sup>nd</sup>, convened by CT Sierra Club with numerous other State and local sponsors, including the Windham Branch of NAACP. The goal of this march is to bring viable solutions to the table as the 2024 Legislative Session begins. We want to make certain Connecticut keeps its promise, written as law, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which we are not on track to achieve. Our temple's Dayenu Circle, which can include you, also plans to follow-up from the march with advocacy activities targeting state and national legislators. More to come, but we are always needing support with actions such as these so if you are passionate about this topic and feel overwhelmed, here are opportunities to engage and do! Please join us...more information to come.

We are starting to plan our HIAS Refugee Shabbat for Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> and are hoping to have a HIAS speaker at our refugee-themed service. This is a consistently moving Shabbat and your participation makes it even more beautiful so please mark your calendars!

Our Tikkun Olam work requires a village to move our goals forward. Please consider joining in the significant work that this wonderful team is doing. There are always plenty of interesting and fun opportunities! Reach out to me, Merle, at 860-450-0435 or [jermerle@att.net](mailto:jermerle@att.net).



## **OBITUARY OF VIVIAN SILVER, NOT A MEMBER, BUT A GUIDING LIGHT TO ALL OF US**

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My student Chen, his wife Ori, and son Lenny arrived at UConn three years ago from Israel.

Beyond the heavy academic duties, starting from ground zero and building life in a foreign country was challenging.

But they were not exactly alone. Chen's mom, Vivian, a devoted grandma, had proven to be a socially connected Winnipeg Jew, that spent few good years in the US before making Aliyah and settling in a Kibbutz (first Gezer, and later Be'eri). Chen fondly described his mom as a JewPS: no matter where you go in North America, she could guide you safely to a lost relative or a friend she met in her long-life journey. It's hard to believe but even in Willimantic she had old friends that were immediately connected to Chen (ask Gary Berkowitz). Vivian came to spend time with her son's family, at least once a year. Everyone got very excited because Vivian had endless patience for little Lenny, they got to do little excursions, and I had a rare opportunity to interact with her. This is quite remarkable, because I never get the opportunity to interact with my graduate student parents, perhaps because graduate school typically precedes the parental life stage. Vivian was a very lively, and energetic person; she came to visit my lab (Chen's office), she helped Ori make potato latkes for Hannukah, and by passing summed her life to me plainly: I worked with Bedouin communities and was women rights activist. In my current life I continue to volunteer and promote peace, and I love riding my trail bike. Kibbutz Be'eri is situated few miles east of Gaza and was targeted by mortar and missile attacks in recent years, but also has spectacular red carpet anemone bloom in the late winter, and fantastic biking trails in open and forested hills that attracts visitors.

At the beginning of October Chen told me that his mom had already booked tickets and would arrive for a visit during the Thanksgiving break. Awesome, I exclaimed, I'm sure it comes at a perfect timing, when academic duties mount, and Ori needs a break.

On the early morning of October 7<sup>th</sup>, Shabbat of Shemini Atzeret, Hamas launched a surprise assault on Gaza border, and raided the kibbutzim, moshavim, reaching as far the town of Ofakim about 20 miles from the border. Kibbutz Be'eri was one of the most severely affected kibbutzim. Last texting between Vivian, and family, indicated that she was hiding in the bomb shelter and the terrorists are already the house. When the battle was over, Vivian's house was looted and torched. Her phone was geolocated in Gaza shortly after the last text, and she was declared missing. For five miserable weeks Chen and his family were living in a tragic uncertainty, not knowing if Vivian was taken hostage to Gaza, as mal-intentioned rumors suggested, or if she was one of many dozens of victims that were burned to a level that made identification a job for forensic teams. On Monday afternoon, November 13<sup>th</sup>, the remains of Vivian were officially identified. Her late funeral took place on November 16<sup>th</sup>. No one imagined in their worst nightmares that Thanksgiving family reunion would take such a tragic spin.

Gideon Hartman

## **OBITUARY OF VIVIAN SILVER, NOT A MEMBER, BUT A GUIDING LIGHT TO ALL OF US**

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Vivian's death has made my heart literally ache. I met her once, on one of her visits to Chen, Ori, and Lenny. A colleague of mine in Israel knew she was coming here and asked her to bring me a book of poetry from Israel, given my love of Israeli poetry. Vivian arranged to come to my office and brought me a book of poems by a fellow member of Kibbutz Be'eri. (The poet is alive; the mother of his four children was killed.) I don't remember the conversation well, except to remember that it was a joy speaking to her. We probably discovered our shared background in the Habonim socialist-Zionist youth movement. Maybe we spoke about Canada and Winnipeg. Chen, Ori and Lenny have played at our synagogue for Hanukkah, Purim, and PJ Library events, and so the circle of mourning extends to us. Gideon is among the mourners. I discovered that the Malinows had also met Vivian Silver. Peter's brother lives on Kibbutz Gezer, which she helped found, and lead. Peter reports that they were "an item" in the early 80s. And because of little Lenny's participation in PJ Library, when we first thought she had been taken captive, I wanted to make sure that Barbara Wolfe, who runs PJ Library programming for the Jewish Federation of Eastern Connecticut knew what was happening in their lives. And then when it was learned she had been killed, we spoke again. The mourning extends further. Look up the poem, "The Diameter of the Bomb," by Yehuda Amichai.

I learned of her death from the New York Times. It turns out that although a central role in her life was that of mother of a grad student here in Connecticut, and of his brother, mother-in-law to Ori, and savta/grandmother to Lenny, she had many other prominent roles. She had helped found two kibbutzim, Gezer and Be'eri. She helped found at least three peace and coexistence organizations: AJECC-NISPED, which works on Bedouin and Arab youth empowerment and Jewish-Arab coexistence, where Vivian served as co-executive-director; the Alliance for Middle East Peace (ALLMEP), an umbrella organization of peace organizations in Israel and Palestine; and Women Wage Peace, currently probably the largest peace organization in Israel, with a diverse membership of Jewish and Arab, religious and secular, Ashkenazi and Mizrahi women working to insist that a diplomatic solution to the conflict be on the agenda and that women have a seat at the policy table. (I first learned of her supposed capture the day after the attack from my sister in Israel, who had met her through Women Wage Peace.) In "retirement," while helping to guide several national organizations, she was also one of over a thousand devoted volunteers for Road to Recovery, which offers rides to Palestinians from Gaza and the West Bank to Israeli hospitals when they need treatment there.

In the week after her death was announced, there were tributes in all the Israeli papers and social media accounts I tend to follow, as well as the American Jewish ones. For her funeral, over a thousand people came to Kibbutz Gezer. I had noticed on the Facebook page of Omdim B'yachad, the Jewish-Arab movement I mentioned in my "Rabbinic Reflections," a notice of a WhatsApp chat to help people find carpools to the kibbutz. At the funeral, there was a wreath from the Members of Keneset; there were speakers in hijab; there was a letter of shared sorrow and condolence from a Palestinian friend and colleague in Gaza. What was particularly striking was that while there was immense sorrow in the tributes and at the funeral (which was streamed), there wasn't despair. It was clear that her light and inspiration continued to shine for the thousands who knew her and worked with her. They seem absolutely determined to find a way eventually for Jews and Arabs, Israelis and Palestinians, to live next to one another, as they must, since their lives ultimately depend on it.

Rabbi Jeremy Schwartz

Shalom chaverim!

I hope you all had a wonderful and restorative Thanksgiving weekend!

Morah Becca ran an extremely fun play session with rock painting on November 24<sup>th</sup> for our Pre-K and under crowd! They painted their rocks in shades of blue and white and learned that those colors also make up the Israeli flag. There are many budding artists among our youngest friends. Thank you, Morah Becca, for a fun morning!

Our K-2 class has met for one Shabbat Experience and joined in Friday Family Shabbat. They did some amazing Play-Doh sculpting and explored the idea of home, based on a parsha from the Torah.

In grades 3-6, we've been learning mussar, or spiritual and ethical development. We've been talking about the importance of our values and our actions, and we've also been examining prayers and even creating our own. This is a great group that loves to discuss really thought-provoking questions! We're also learning some conversational Hebrew and delving into some important core texts together.

Our bnai mitzvah class continues with their tutoring and their weekly class with Rav Jeremy. Over the last month, they took a break from exploring the meaning of "mitzvah" - what are our responsibilities as Jewish humans? - to discuss the variety of Jewish ideas about God and prayer. All of these explorations add to their toolkit as they prepare to become bnai mitzvah.

And on Wednesdays, we continue to enjoy working with our wonderful Israeli emissaries, Hila and Netanel. They've introduced fun games (we love playing 21!) and really important activities to help us understand Israeli history as well as what life is like in Israel. We always look forward to their visits.

We are also extremely excited about our upcoming Chanukah celebration with our friends at Temple Emanu-El! So thankful to everyone who has helped to coordinate the event as well as all of our families who will be participating!

We are still accepting new students into our K-7 Jewish Explorations program, and our PreK and younger friends are welcome to join Morah Becca for our K'tanim (Littles) activities throughout the year that will be announced in the Bulletin, via email, and on our social media.

If you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to reach out to me at [morahdarabowling@gmail.com](mailto:morahdarabowling@gmail.com).

I wish you all a Chag Chanukah Sameach, and a wonderful secular New Year. I'm wishing all of you a beautiful, safe, and happy 2024.

B'shalom,  
Morah Dara



Our congregation has many talented people, and among them, many who have published or contributed to publications. I thought it would be fun and interesting to highlight some of these contributions, and perhaps occasionally have a live program as we did with Martha Cutter and her recent book, *The Many Resurrections of Henry Box Brown*, about a man who escaped slavery and became an abolitionist speaker, actor, magician, hypnotist, and even faith healer.

Some of us may have been able to attend Joan Seliger Sidney's book launch event with Mireille Gansel, a bilingual book launch reading of *Maison d'Âme*, which Joan translated as *Soul House*. But did you know that Joan is an accomplished poet, with many published books, and highly regarded for her moving poetry about the Holocaust and her own challenges with multiple sclerosis. If you would like to explore some of her books, go to:

<http://joanseligersidney.org/books.html>.

A year ago, we lost one of the most extraordinary and lovely members of our congregation, Joe Petrowsky. How does one deal with a loss of a man of such vigor and goodness and how does a beloved wife do this? Gail, who is a Life Coach, has had to become her own Coach, and part of her healing was contributing a chapter to the book, *Live Your Optimal Life*, edited by Elizabeth B. Hill & Mary Ann Pack. Gail's chapter, "Facing Loss, Embracing Courage," was a touching journey through grief; grief that never quite leaves us, but in our healing leads us to once again to hope. Joe and Gail's home on Hall's Pond in Eastford mirrors the seasons with the slide into winter darkness. The last line of the chapter reads: "On the reservoir, spring is here, and with it, hope and renewal." The book, which I highly recommend, can be purchased on Amazon.

I hope to occasionally feature other authors in our congregation in the future.

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH TEMPLE BNAI ISRAEL

### Religious School Educator (part time) – Grades 3-7

Salary Range: 18.00 – 24.00 commensurate with experience

Part Time – 1-5 hrs weekly, Wednesday After School and 1-3 Weekends/month

We are seeking, energetic, creative teachers to lead young Jewish students and their families in spiritual learning. This includes learning through stories, music, movement and art. This position will work with children in the Grade 3 through Grade 7 age bracket.

The ideal candidate will be:

- An effective collaborator with all stakeholders, including rabbi, program director, and parents/guardians;
  - Able to maintain an educational environment that is fair, equitable, and positive for all students up to grade 2;
  - Able to read basic Hebrew (decoding);
  - Confident in teaching experientially, using music, hands-on materials, and movement
  - Able to embed key concepts into learning activities;
  - An effective communicator, both written and verbal;
  - Reliable and punctual, with dependable transportation;
- Knowledge of spoken/written Hebrew is a plus.

Please Apply to this position through our listing on Indeed: <https://indeedhi.re/48EN2zi>

## 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR DONATIONS (JULY 1, 2023 TO JUNE 30, 2024)

Donations received through November 20, 2023.

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### HABONIM

Lester E. and Phyllis M. Foster Family Foundation,  
Directors: David & Marilyn Foster

### SUSTAINER

Judy Stein & Ken Dardick

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Sheila Amdur  
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### General Fund

Anat & Aaron Becker, in honor of Ze'ev Herscovici  
Harry & Honey Birkenruth  
Mona & Todd Friedland  
Gloria Gerald  
Joscha Jelitzki  
Jill & Jim Marocchini  
Susan Meisler  
Sharen & Tom Peters  
Ilene Reiner, in memory of Hyman and Sonny Reiner  
Ruth Rosensweig  
Beverly Sims  
Steve & Nora Stein, in memory of Joe Petrowsky  
David & Debbie Stoloff, in honor of the wedding of Fay Stoloff and Matthew Istrin  
Eugenia Winokur, in honor of her sister Grazia Di Veroli

### 5784 Chai Appeal

Sheila Amdur  
Peggy Beckett-Rinker  
Randee & Martin Berliner  
Harry & Honey Birkenruth  
Sharon & Bruce Brettschneider  
Ellen Cushing  
Mark & Marla Hauslaib  
Shoshana Levinson  
Moshe & Sima Lessner

## 2023-2024 FISCAL YEAR DONATIONS (JULY 1, 2023 TO JUNE 30, 2024)

Donations received through November 20, 2023.

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### 5784 Chai Appeal (cont.)

Susan Meisler  
Faye Ringel  
Doreen Simonsen  
Judy Stein & Ken Dardick  
Fran Storch

### 5784 Yizkor Memorial Booklet

Sheila Amdur  
Martin & Randee Berliner  
Harry & Honey Birkenruth  
Ken Dardick & Judy Stein  
Carl & Elaine David  
Mona and Todd Friedland  
Gloria Gerald  
Carol & Yves Kraus  
Peter & Stephanie Malinow  
Susan Meisler  
Jane & Robert Moskowitz  
Marjorie Golden-Mossberg  
Alex & Ramona Nishball  
Sharen & Tom Peters  
Jerome and Nina Rosen  
Sandra K. Roth  
Rav Jeremy Schwartz & Merle Potchinsky  
Ellie Shane  
Doreen Simonsen  
David & Debbie Stoloff  
Fran Storch  
Michael & Anne Willenborg

## DECEMBER YAHRZEITS

Remember to light your Yahrzeit candle on the night before the date shown. It is also appropriate to join our Shabbat celebration to say Kaddish on the Shabbat when your loved one's name is read, and to give tzedakah in your loved one's memory. May their memory be a blessing.

Kaddish will be said for the following yahrzeits on December 1st and 2nd			
Samuel M. Moskowitz		19 Kislev	December 2
Louis Jacob Cohen		19 Kislev	December 2
Abraham Potchinsky	Grandfather of Merle Potchinsky	19 Kislev	December 2
Louis Rosen	Grandfather of Debra Sarazin	19 Kislev	December 2
Daniel Schwartz	Brother of Rav Jeremy Schwartz	19 Kislev	December 2
Minnie Chasen		20 Kislev	December 3
Gary Cantor	Brother of Gail Petrowsky	20 Kislev	December 3
Denise Polivy		21 Kislev	December 4
Nathan Plotkin		21 Kislev	December 4
Samuel Solotaroff		21 Kislev	December 4
Shelly (Sheldon) Mossberg	Husband of Marjorie Golden-Mossberg	25 Kislev	December 8
Kaddish will be said for the following yahrzeits on December 8th and 9th			
Abraham Borodach		26 Kislev	December 9
Celia Mandel		26 Kislev	December 9
Myer Russian		26 Kislev	December 9
Philip Rosen		26 Kislev	December 9
Janet Miller	Mother of Debra Sarazin	26 Kislev	December 9
Frank Kenton	Father of Steve Kenton	27 Kislev	December 10
Morris Paster	Grandfather of Sharen Peters	27 Kislev	December 10
James Zweighaft	Grandfather of David Meslin	27 Kislev	December 10
Sharon Mussen	First Cousin of Joan Seliger Sidney	28 Kislev	December 11
Josephine Greer		29 Kislev	December 12
Benjamin Prague		29 Kislev	December 12
Max Schupack		29 Kislev	December 12
George Hauslaib	Father of Mark Hauslaib	29 Kislev	December 12
Irving Israel Seliger	Father of Joan Seliger Sidney	1 Tevet	December 13
Israel Russian		1 Tevet	December 13
Morris Sandler		1 Tevet	December 13
Ida Rosen	Great-grandmother of Debra Sarazin	1 Tevet	December 13
Melvin Miller	Father of Debra Sarazin	1 Tevet	December 13
Harry Seplowitz		1 Tevet	December 13
Minnette Drazen	Mother of Karen Drazen	1 Tevet	December 13
Isaac Paster	Father of Sharen Peters	2 Tevet	December 14
Etta Beckerman	Aunt of Mona Friedland	2 Tevet	December 14
Joseph Oguschewitz		2 Tevet	December 14
David Morris Roth	Husband of Sandra Roth	2 Tevet	December 14
Harriet Gochros	Mother of Stephen Gochros	2 Tevet	December 14
Nathan Berliner	Father of Martin Berliner	2 Tevet	December 14
Samuel Eisenberg		3 Tevet	December 15
Helen Gutstein	Mother of Rita Pollack	3 Tevet	December 15



## DECEMBER YAHRZEITS (continued)

Remember to light your Yahrzeit candle on the night before the date shown. It is also appropriate to join our Shabbat celebration to say Kaddish on the Shabbat when your loved one's name is read, and to give tzedakah in your loved one's memory. May their memory be a blessing.

Kaddish will be said for the following yahrzeits on December 15th and 16th			
Abraham Sussman		4 Tevet	December 16
Miriam Moskowitz		4 Tevet	December 16
Yetta Schretter		5 Tevet	December 17
Peshe Gordon		7 Tevet	December 18
Lesley Kirschenbaum	Wife of Arthur Kirschenbaum	7 Tevet	December 19
Florence Rosenstein		8 Tevet	December 20
Martin Wollner	Father of David Wollner	8 Tevet	December 20
Hyman Chasen		9 Tevet	December 21
Virginia Goldberg		9 Tevet	December 21
Abraham Lessner	Father of Moshe Lessner	9 Tevet	December 21
Celia Chasen		10 Tevet	December 22
Benjamin Eisenberg		10 Tevet	December 22
Kaddish will be said for the following yahrzeits on December 22nd and 23rd			
Hannah Hochberg Missan		11 Tevet	December 23
Bernie Cantor	Father of Gail Petrowsky	11 Tevet	December 23
Sol Coleman	Father of Mona Friedland	11 Tevet	December 23
Ruth Hillman		12 Tevet	December 24
Edith Prague	Dear Friend to many	12 Tevet	December 24
Herman Birkenruth	Father of Harry Birkenruth	12 Tevet	December 24
Robert M. Stein	Father of Judith Stein	13 Tevet	December 25
Laura Kaplan		13 Tevet	December 25
Rose Lillian Rosen		13 Tevet	December 25
John Kraus	Father of Yves Kraus	14 Tevet	December 26
Maxwell Foster		14 Tevet	December 26
Judith Lee Klein	Mother of Hillary Stern	15 Tevet	December 27
Arthur Wilinski	Father of Honore (Honey) Birkenruth	15 Tevet	December 27
Reggie Schretter		15 Tevet	December 27
Minerva Greenfield	Mother-in-Law of Art Kirschenbaum	17 Tevet	December 29



May their memories be a  
source of strength  
and a blessing.



## DECEMBER YAHRZEITS (continued)

Remember to light your Yahrzeit candle on the night before the date shown. It is also appropriate to join our Shabbat celebration to say Kaddish on the Shabbat when your loved one's name is read, and to give tzedakah in your loved one's memory. May their memory be a blessing.

Kaddish will be said for the following yahrzeits on December 29th and 30th			
Bennie Bassok		18 Tevet	December 30
Hattie Tufel		18 Tevet	December 30
Tobias Gerson Gerald	Father-in-law of Gloria Gerald	18 Tevet	December 30
Howard Kirschenbaum	Son of Arthur Kirschenbaum	18 Tevet	December 30
Sylvia Brettschneider		19 Tevet	December 31
Bernard Brody	Father of Paul Brody	20 Tevet	January 1
Chris Flammang	Father of Anne Flammang	21 Tevet	January 2
Sarah Mislin		23 Tevet	January 4
Hyman Israel		24 Tevet	January 5
Isaac Cooperman		24 Tevet	January 5
Eva B. Rothblat		24 Tevet	January 5
Franklin Prague		24 Tevet	January 5



May their memories be a  
source of strength  
and a blessing.



### CHEVRA KADISHA

After a Jew dies, a burial society, the *Chevra Kadisha* (literally, "holy society") prepares the body for interment. This process, called *Taharah* (purification), involves the ritual cleansing and subsequent dressing of the body, by men for males and by women for females, in preparation for burial. This requires training in the traditions and prescribed methods involved in traditional Jewish burials. This is a very personal and meaningful mitzvah we perform to support our fellow members.

We welcome anyone interested in joining us in this sacred work. Please contact Fran Jaffe ([franjaffe@earthlink.net](mailto:franjaffe@earthlink.net)) or Ken Dardick ([kdardick@gmail.com](mailto:kdardick@gmail.com)), Co-Chairs, or Rav Jeremy ([ravjeremy@templebnaiisrael.org](mailto:ravjeremy@templebnaiisrael.org)).

# December 2023 18 Kislev 5784 - 19 Tevet 5784

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 18 KISLEV  4:01 5:30pm JE Family Shabbat 6:00pm Temple Potluck 7:00pm Shabbat Service	2 19 KISLEV 9:30am Bagel & Bible - Kaddish & Counter-Kaddish w/ Joscha Jelitzki
3 20 KISLEV 10:30am Mussar Va'ad	4 21 KISLEV	5 22 KISLEV 7:00pm Ritual Committee	6 23 KISLEV 4:30pm Jewish Explorations 7:00pm Israel & Palestine: History & Experience On Zoom	7 24 KISLEV ★First Night Hanukkah: 1 Candle	8 25 KISLEV  4:00 6:15pm T.G.I. Shabbes	9 26 KISLEV ★Hanukkah: 3 Candles 10:00am Shabbat Service
10 27 KISLEV ★Hanukkah: 4 Candles 9:30am - Tikkun Olam Comm. Mtg 10:00am JE Hanukkah at Emanu-El 5:00pm Hanukkah Party & Games Night	11 28 KISLEV ★Hanukkah: 5 Candles	12 29 KISLEV ★Hanukkah - 6 Candles	13 1 TEVET ★Hanukkah - 7 Candles ★Rosh Chodesh Tevet 4:30pm Jewish Explorations	14 2 TEVET ★Hanukkah: 8 Candles 7:00pm Intro to Judaism: UConn Hillel	15 3 TEVET ★Hanukkah: 8th Day  4:01 <b>BULLETIN DEADLINE</b> 7:30pm Tikkun Olam vaNefesh Service	16 4 TEVET 10:00am Shabbat Service & Jewish Explorations Shabbat Experience
17 5 TEVET 3:00pm Creating Connection: A Community Conversation & Ice Cream Social	18 6 TEVET	19 7 TEVET 6:00pm Brews, Views, Schmooze at WilliBrew All Welcome!	20 8 TEVET 4:30pm Jewish Explorations 7:00pm Board Meeting	21 9 TEVET	22 10 TEVET  4:03 6:30pm Shabbes Dinner	23 11 TEVET 10:00am Shabbat Service
24 12 TEVET 10:00am Sandwich-making at Soup Kitchen	25 13 TEVET	26 14 TEVET	27 15 TEVET	28 16 TEVET	29 17 TEVET  4:08 7:30pm Kiddush As the Main (Spiritual) Course	30 18 TEVET 10:00am Shabbat Service
31 19 TEVET						



## Windham Area Interfaith Ministry

Dear WAIM Delegates and Clergy,

On behalf of Windham Area Interfaith Ministry (WAIM), I'm pleased to announce that we have selected Susan Amy Hunter as our new executive director. Susan will succeed Victoria Nimirowski who is retiring this month.

WAIM has been fortunate to have benefited for almost twenty years from Victoria's leadership and outreach in the community. Victoria helped to build WAIM's services by tapping into the power of the local interfaith community, providing basic needs, and enabling families to stay in their homes. We are also fortunate to welcome our new executive director who begins her tenure at WAIM in December.

Susan, a resident of Willimantic, has a history of service to the Windham community and previous senior leadership experience at several local nonprofits including the No Freeze Shelter and Generations Family Health Center. Susan told us that she is honored and thrilled to be the next executive director of WAIM. As WAIM approaches its 40 anniversary, Susan is looking forward to carrying on Victoria's work and position in the organization for success over the next 40 years.



Brian Grosjean, Chair

WAIM Board of Directors