



# CONGREGATION BETH EL SCROLL

OCTOBER 2025 • TISHREI-HESVHAN 5786

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From the Beth El Clergy

## UNTANGLING JOY FROM OY

BY RABBI DEBORAH MEGDAL



Sukkot is called *z'man simchateinu*, "the season of our joy." We wave the lulav, eat under the stars, sing, and celebrate abundance. And yet this year, as we mark the second anniversary

of October 7, my joy is not simple. It comes with the continued sorrow of remembrance and waiting for the hostages, as well as the heartbreaks of the present: surging antisemitism, chaos in Washington, and implemented or threatened changes to American democracy. Grief, memory, and heaviness sit beside me in the sukkah, no less real than the rare, yellow, fragrant fruit in my hands.

So how do we untangle our joy from our "oy"? Maybe the first step is accepting that we might not be able to, and that the two must learn to coexist like the palm branches that sway together in the chilly evening air.

Jewish tradition has always been honest about the fact that life is mixed. Kohelet (Ecclesiastes), which we read on Sukkot, reminds us: "A time to weep and a time to laugh; a time to mourn and a time to dance." On first reading, we might understand that there are always separate times to weep and to laugh, but the verse reads "A time to

weep *and* a time to laugh," not "*or*" – What if they are one in the same time?

The sukkah itself models the mixed nature of the season: fragile walls, a roof that lets the rain through, and yet it's the place where we are commanded to rejoice. Vulnerability and joy share the same shady spot in our backyards. Sukkot teaches us the spiritual practice of holding both. We decorate the sukkah with fruits and garlands, our symbols of harvest and plenty, even as we know that they'll fade before the week

is out. We invite guests, both living and mythical, into a temporary space. The joy is real. The vulnerability is also real. Neither cancels out the other.

The anniversary of October 7 will never be

an easy date. Our losses are too searing, our trauma too enduring. But the Torah recognizes that our holiday can never be pure rejoicing, for we are human and exist in a complicated, broken world.

In a commentary on the Torah, Rabbeinu Bachya (14th Century, Spain) notices that even the commandment to rejoice on Sukkot leaves space for sorrow. The verse is usually translated: "You shall rejoice on your festival ... and you shall be *only* joyful" (Deuteronomy 16:14–15). The plain meaning is that we should feel only joy..

But the Hebrew word "*ach*" that is usually translated to mean "only" can



RABBI MEGDAL IN THE BETH EL SUKKAH WITH "BEENS" (BETH EL EMPTY NESTERS) IN 2024

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## SERVICE INFORMATION

### MINYAN SCHEDULE

Sunday

9:00 am and 8:00 pm

Monday - Thursday

7:30 am and 8:00 pm

Friday

7:30 am and 6:30 pm\*

\* *Shir Yachad and Kol Haneshama services begin at 7:00 pm.*

### SHABBAT SCHEDULE FOR OCTOBER (SEE PAGE 4 FOR YOM KIPPUR AND SUKKOT SERVICE SCHEDULES)

#### Friday, October 3

6:30 pm Friday Evening Service

#### Saturday, October 4

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service

9:30 am Junior Congregation

#### Friday, October 10

6:00 pm [Families with Young Children](#) Service and Dinner

6:00 pm [Shir Yachad](#) Light Dinner

7:00 pm Shir Yachad Friday Evening Musical Service followed  
by oneg

#### Saturday, October 11

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service

9:30 am Junior Congregation

12:30 pm [Support After Loss](#)

7:30 pm [Havdalah and Kumsitz in the Sukkah](#)

#### Friday, October 17

6:30 pm [Yedid Nefesh](#) Friday Evening Service

#### Saturday, October 18

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service led by Minyan Chaverim

9:30 am Junior Congregation

#### Friday, October 24

6:00 pm [Shabbat Together](#) K-5th Family Service and Dinner

6:00 pm [Kol Haneshama](#) Light Dinner

7:00 pm Kol Haneshama Friday Night Shabbat Service  
followed by oneg and guest speaker

#### Saturday, October 25

7:30 am Early Shabbat Service

9:15 am Main Shabbat Service - Avery Taicher Bat Mitzvah

9:30 am Junior Congregation

5:45 pm Daphne and Oliver Friedman B'nai Mitzvah

#### Friday, October 31

6:30 pm Friday Evening Service

**For more information on Beth El's Shabbat services and daily  
minyanim, please visit [bethelmc.org/services](http://bethelmc.org/services).**

## FROM THE CLERGY CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

instead be understood to mean its opposite. According to Rabbeinu Bachya: "An alternative meaning alluded to by the word *ach* which is always diminutive, restrictive, may be that joy in this world is never complete joy. Even while rejoicing on the festival we must remain conscious of the limitations of this terrestrial universe."

So instead of untangling joy from *oy*, let them rather live together in the sukkah this year. Lift a glass of wine with the warmth of laughter in your voice, even if there are still tears in your eyes. This year, may we have the courage to celebrate without forgetting. *Chag sameach.* ■

## October Events at Beth El

### Connect

Oct. 2  
3:30 pm

#### Support After Loss

A brief Yom Kippur teaching and discussion with Rabbi Harris.



Oct. 9  
2:00 pm

#### Coffee with the Clergy

Come schmooze with Senior Caucus and Rabbi Harris in the Beth El Sukkah.



Oct. 9  
7:30 pm

#### Hearing Men's Voices

Martin Sieff: "Persons Historical or Current with whom I Would Like to Share Dinner."



Oct. 9  
7:30 pm

#### WBE Sukkah Social

Join Women of Beth El for schmoozing and learning from guest Paula Whyman.



Oct. 11  
7:30 pm

#### Havdalah and Kumsitz

Gather together in the sukkah for Havdalah, music, and refreshments.



Oct. 12  
4:00 pm

#### Beyond BEENs Happy Hour

Join Beyond BEENs (Beth El Empty Nesters) for schmoozing in the sukkah.



Oct. 16  
7:30 pm

#### Keshet Nashim

Women's cancer support group for cancer patients and survivors, via Zoom.



Oct. 21  
7:30 pm

#### Sara Greenbaum Celebration

Come help us celebrate the retirement of Sara Greenbaum.



Oct. 28  
7:00 pm

#### Jews & Brews

Gather around Rabbi Harris's fire pit for schmoozing and casual learning.



### Learn

Oct. 5  
1:00 pm

#### Scolnic Kick-Off Lecture

"Crisis in the Middle East" with security specialist/congregant Tom Warrick.



Oct. 16  
7:00 pm

#### Beth El Book Chat

We will discuss *Your Presence is Mandatory* by Sasha Vasilyuk.



Oct. 23  
7:00 pm

#### Meet Author Sasha Vasilyuk

Join us for a Zoom discussion with author Sasha Vasilyuk.



### Pray

Oct. 10  
6:00 pm

#### Young Families Shabbat

Shabbat songs and prayers, followed by dinner, for families with children 0-6.



Oct. 10  
6:00 pm

#### Shir Yachad Musical Shabbat

Join Hazzan Fradkin for dinner at 6:00 pm followed by a musical service at 7:00 pm.



Oct. 11  
9:15 am

#### Purple Shabbat

Beth El is participating in Purple Shabbat for Domestic Violence Awareness Month.



Oct. 14  
7:30 pm

#### Erev Simchat Torah

Come dance and sing with the Torah on one of the most joyful nights of the year!



Oct. 17  
6:30 pm

#### Yedid Nefesh Friday Night Service

Join Rabbi Megdal for a musical Erev Shabbat service.



Oct. 24  
6:00 pm

#### Shabbat Together

Join us for a joyful Shabbat experience for children grades K-5 and their families.



Oct. 24  
6:00 pm

#### Kol Haneshama Musical Shabbat

Dinner at 6:00 pm followed by an innovative musical service at 7:00 pm.



### Engage

Oct. 5  
10:00 am

#### Build the Joy

BERS families gather by grade to build and decorate sukkahs.



Oct. 5  
2:00 pm

#### "A Letter to David" Screening

This program will mark the second anniversary of October 7.



Oct. 23  
7:00 pm

#### Volunteering at Manna Food

Volunteers ages 11+ needed to help with this food-sorting tikkun olam project.



Oct. 26  
All day

#### Mitzvah Day

Come participate in a wide variety of tikkun olam projects and collections.



Find out more and sign up to participate at [bethelmc.org/events](https://bethelmc.org/events)

## 5786 High Holiday Schedule

### KOL NIDRE

#### Wednesday, October 1

*Beth El Office Closes at Noon*

- 6:20 pm Kol Nidre Cello\*
- 6:45 pm Festival Evening Service\*  
*Sermon by Rabbi Greg Harris*
- 6:30 pm Kol Haneshama Service\*  
*Led by Rabbi Rami Schwartz*
- 7:00 pm Teen Discussion

### YOM KIPPUR

#### Thursday, October 2

- 9:00 am Festival Morning Service\*  
Torah Service (10:00 am)  
Sermon/Yizkor/Musaf (11:00 am)  
*Sermon by Rabbi Deborah Megdal*
- 10:00 am Kol Haneshama Service\*  
(concludes with Yizkor and Musaf)  
*Led by Rabbi Rami Schwartz*
- 10:00 am Outdoor High Holidays  
*At Seneca Creek State Park*
- 10:00 am Families with Children Grades K-2  
*At Bethesda United Methodist Church*
- 10:00 am Families with Children Grades 3-5  
*At Bethesda United Methodist Church*
- 10:00 am Families with Young Children  
(ages birth to Pre-K)  
*Greenwich Neighborhood Park*  
*Led by Dan Goldman and Karen Berman*
- 10:30 am 3rd-5th Grade Student Service
- 10:30 am Jr. Congregation (Grades 6-7)
- 11:00 am Teen Discussions
- 12:00 pm Youth Lounge Hangout (4th grade+)
- 2:15 pm Nigun Circle\*  
*Led by Hazzan Asa Fradkin and Rabbi Rami Schwartz*
- 3:30 pm High Holiday Seminar\*  
*Led by Rabbi Deborah Megdal*
- 3:30 pm Support After Loss  
*Led by Rabbi Greg Harris*
- 4:30 pm Mincha\*
- 6:00 pm Neilah/Ma'ariv\*
- 7:30 pm Conclusion of Fast/Shofar\*

*\*Available via Livestream*



### SUKKOT SERVICE SCHEDULE

#### Monday, October 6 – Erev Sukkot

6:30 pm Festival Evening Service - via Zoom only

#### Tuesday, October 7 – Sukkot Day 1

*Schools and Offices Closed*

9:15 am Festival Morning Service

6:30 pm Festival Evening Service - via Zoom only

#### Wednesday, October 8 – Sukkot Day 2

*Schools and Offices Closed*

9:15 am Festival Morning Service

Noon [Annual Sukkot Deli Kiddush](#) (in person only)

#### Monday, October 13 - Hoshana Rabbah

6:30 pm Festival Evening Service - via Zoom only

#### Tuesday, October 14 - Shemini Atzeret

*Schools and Offices Closed*

7:30 am Early Festival Morning Service (Yizkor)

9:15 am Festival Morning Service (Yizkor)

7:30 pm Erev Simchat Torah Festival Service

#### Wednesday, October 15 - Simchat Torah

*Schools and Offices Closed*

9:15 am Festival Morning Service

## First Day Sukkot Hiddur Mitzvah Contest



Be sure to join us at services on the first day of Sukkot and participate in our annual *Hiddur Mitzvah* Contest. Wait, what is *hiddur mitzvah*? *Hiddur mitzvah* means taking the time to create or acquire the most beautiful ceremonial objects possible to enrich the religious observance. Our first day of Sukkot contest allows you to show off your most beautiful and creative lulav carriers and etrog holders. So, get in touch with your inner artist, involve your children, ask friends for help. This may be your year to win! ■

## Second Day Sukkot Deli Sermon and Lunch

Join us for the Second Day Sukkot Festival Morning Service on **Wednesday, October 8, at 9:15 am**. Rabbi Greg Harris will be giving the "deli sermon." A tradition for Second Day Sukkot at Beth El, the deli sermon



is a witty and humorous teaching around the readings for Sukkot that was first started by our beloved Rabbi Emeritus Bill Rudolph z"l. After the service, stay for our annual Sukkot Deli Lunch kiddush, which is generously sponsored this year by David Bachrach. ■

## Friday Night Kol Haneshama Shabbat Services and More!

BY LAURA NADEL

More Friday Night Kol Haneshama Shabbat services are coming, complete with spiritual, lay-led musical services and exciting dialogue with experts. Mark your calendars for Friday evenings, October 24 and November 14. Come enjoy services that blend tradition and creativity, drawing on contemporary and innovative Jewish music from around the globe, and listen to fascinating guest speakers. Join the light congregational dinner beforehand to get a night off from cooking and to socialize and (re)connect with friends.

### KOL HANESHAMA FALL SPEAKERS

**October 24:** Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies Senior Director for U.S. Jewish Grant-making David Rittberg will present "Trends in American Jewish Life."

**November 14:** Chief Executive Officer of Hart Research Fred Yang will discuss "Political Polling – How It Works and A Look Forward."

A light Shabbat dinner will be served at 6:00 pm each of the Friday evenings, and each of the links will bring you to the appropriate dinner registration form. Registration is not required to attend the service or the oneg and discussion.

See upcoming dates and register for dinner at [bethelmc.org/series/kol-haneshama](http://bethelmc.org/series/kol-haneshama).



### HAVDALAH AND KUMSITZ

Please join Kol Haneshama service leader Scott Glick along with Hazzan Asa Fradkin, Beth El's *shaliach* Yoel Gleizer, Debra Ben Avram, and other Beth El musicians for a special Havdalah and Kumsitz in the Sukkah, on Saturday, October 11, beginning at 7:30 pm. A kumsitz is a social gathering where people sing songs, tell stories, and enjoy each other's company. Refreshments will be served. RSVP at [bethelmc.org/kumsitz-1011](http://bethelmc.org/kumsitz-1011).

### 5786 High Holiday Seminar *Overcoming Hatred in Scripture: Teshuvah in Action* Thursday, October 2, 3:30 pm at Beth El

How can sacred texts that once fueled division become sources of healing and respect? Join Rabbi Megdal and Dr. Heather Miller Rubens of the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies for a powerful conversation on the Jewish value of teshuvah – repentance, repair, and return – as a lens for reinterpreting difficult biblical passages. Together, they'll explore how religious communities have begun the work of rereading scripture with a commitment to interfaith understanding, respect, and healing. To learn more, please go to [bethelmc.org/yom-kippur-seminar](http://bethelmc.org/yom-kippur-seminar).



### Yom Kippur Nigun Circle Thursday, October 2, 2:15 pm

In the stillness of the afternoon, between the intensity of the prayers, gather with Hazzan Asa Fradkin, Rabbi Rami Schwartz, and *Shaliach* Yoel Gleizer to enter the quiet power of melody. Through the ancient practice of *nigun* – wordless, winding song – we open the heart, settle the spirit, and draw close to something deeper. No experience needed; off-key voices most welcome.

## Simchat Torah



TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 7:30 PM  
AT CONGREGATION BETH EL

Please join us on October 14 for our annual Simchat Torah celebration, one of the most joyous and fun nights of the year. The evening includes singing and dancing with the Beth El Band. The Simchat Torah celebration is sponsored in loving memory of David H. Topol z"l, whose joyful spirit and commitment to Jewish life continue to inspire.

## Celebrating Sara Greenbaum

BY MARSHA REHNS

Although Sara Greenbaum retired this past August after eight years of working in the Beth El office and 17 years as a Beth El Preschool (BEPS) teacher before that, she promises that she's "not leaving." Sara and her late husband Darryl Sherman ז"ל have a long history with Beth El. They joined the synagogue 37 years ago because, she recalls, when she and Darryl visited Beth El for first time on a Sunday morning, Peter Novick welcomed them warmly.

Sara grew up in Ann Arbor, Michigan, the third of four children. Her family belonged to a Conservative congregation called Beth Israel, and she attended preschool there. She did not have a bat mitzvah, she notes, because her father died not long before her 13th birthday.

At the time, her older brothers were in high school and college. Her younger sister, Susie, had an intellectual disability, and that had a significant effect on Sara's life.

"My parents were trailblazers in the field of disability rights in the early 60s," she recalls. "They kept Susie home instead of institutionalizing her. They started a support group for families and children with social and learning disabilities." Sara's father, an English professor at the University of Michigan, was active in promoting disability rights through local and state governments. Her parents were also involved with civil rights. "I grew up listening to Joan Baez," Sara quips.

After returning to work and raising four children alone, Sara's mother obtained a Ph.D. in special education, documenting how schools and medical personnel could help parents of children with special needs. "I admire her strength and her activism, and I learned a lot from her about education," Sara says of her mother. From therapy for her sister, Sara learned about helping special-needs children. "Teaching was natural for me," she observes.

Sara studied early childhood education in college in Michigan. After graduation, as the mother of a young daughter, Wendy, and having difficulty finding a job, Sara moved to Washington on her brother's suggestion. "I got a job at Kemp Mill Records," she recalls. "Darryl was the president of Kemp Mill Records."

A few years later, Sara and Darryl married, and in 1988 they started shul shopping. They had both come from "non-observant households that strongly identified as Jewish." They visited two synagogues, and "nobody spoke to us." At Beth El, Peter Novick greeted them, introduced himself as the president of Men's Club, and invited them to help build the sukkah and meet some Sisterhood members. They joined Beth El and became "Friday night regulars." Wendy attended Religious School, became a bat mitzvah, and was married

at Beth El. Sara and Darryl's other daughters, Shoshana and Hannah, attended Beth El Preschool and had their b'not mitzvah at the shul. Over time, all five members of the family ultimately worked at Beth El in the Religious School, the Preschool, and the main office.

Sara served on the Sisterhood Board, co-chaired the Preschool Board, served as a trustee on the Beth El Board, taught at the Preschool, ran the Preschool summer program for several years, was the Bonim advisor for five years, volunteered as gift shop treasurer, and held several positions in the office, including assistant to the hazzan and executive assistant to the rabbis. While serving on the Beth El Board in 2001 after 9/11, she was tasked with directing security at Beth El, including

evacuations, parking-lot lighting, and water safety. Temporary evacuation maps were made and posted.

Sara also worked with Darryl on Beth El's Chevra Kadisha – performing *tahara* for congregants who have passed away – a committee that Darryl chaired. "Taking care of people was an incredible spiritual experience," she recalls. (The Chevra Kadisha no longer exists at Beth El.) In a moving twist, while reading a book about the Polish town where her mother's grandparents had

lived, Sara discovered that her great-great-grandfather had been head of the Chevra Kadisha there.

While still teaching in the Preschool, Sara spent a few summers helping in the Beth El office and had mentioned to then-executive director Sheila Bellack that she would like her last job at Beth El to be in the office. When the office had an opening for an administrative assistant, Sara got the position. She notes how well her skills in organization and writing complemented the technological skills of former director of operations, Pam Kocher.

Sheila recalls, "As a Preschool teacher, Sara had always had her eyes and ears open; the same was true once she moved to an administrative position. Whether it was for security purposes, general knowledge, or anything else, she knew that the more she was aware of what was going on around her, the more productive and helpful she could be.

"When Sara says she will do something, she means it, jumping in with both feet. I still remember the Megillah reading just a day or two prior to Governor Hogan's declaring the Covid lockdown; it was the last major pre-pandemic event at Beth El. Sara helped give out the Megillah booklets and groggers and made sure to keep them separate when they were returned. It was during those first few months of the pandemic that I promoted Sara to office manager."



CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## Tallit Workshop Registration Opens November 3

Every winter, for one night a week, Bender Social Hall is transformed into a workshop with sewing machines, ironing boards, and craft equipment, as several congregants create beautiful heirloom tallitot. Sewing experience is not needed, as experienced volunteers work with tallit-makers to fulfill their creative vision.

The Tallit Workshop is open to adult congregants and youth who are, or are close to, 12 years old. The young participants, making a tallit to wear for the first time at their bar/bat mitzvah, must attend with an adult partner (such as a parent or grandparent).

Adult congregants are invited to make a tallit for themselves or for a loved one. In order to make this op-



portunity available to as many participants as possible, adults who wish to make their own tallit at the same workshop with their child may do so only if space is available.

All sessions take place at Beth El, except for the group shopping trip. Our opening session will be on Thursday, December 4, at 7:00 pm. After the shopping trip to G Street Fabrics to purchase fabric and sewing supplies on Sunday, December 7, work sessions will take place on Thursdays, 7:00-9:00 pm, from December 11 through February 5.

Space is limited. To sign up, go to [bethelmc.org/tallitworkshop](http://bethelmc.org/tallitworkshop) starting November 3. For more information, contact Holly Stein at [hstein628@gmail.com](mailto:hstein628@gmail.com). ■

## CELEBRATING SARA GREENBAUM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Sara recalls that once Beth El was closed because of Covid, she, Sheila, and Pam returned to the office. Working in separate spaces a good six feet apart, they learned how to navigate Zoom, upgrade the livestream cameras, support the work of the Covid taskforce, and keep the building functioning. After Covid, Sara's prior work on security led to her becoming the office liaison to the Beth El security committee, which created a security and evacuation plan for the building. "Every room has a unique evacuation route, and creating the permanent signage was a major task. And the security plan has to be revised every year. It's something I'm really proud of," she notes. Additionally, Sara was tasked with creating and writing the Abuse Prevention Plan and ensuring it was implemented. She oversaw abuse prevention training for the entire staff at Beth El.

Sara was considering moving to part-time in the office, but in June her mother and sister passed away. Retirement then seemed the better path. She still worked at the Rosh Hashanah outdoor service last month.

Executive Director Heather Garrett summarized Sara's Beth El career as: "Sara (known fondly as Sara G) had many roles at Beth El, but no matter what role she held, she always made it a point to connect with people on a personal level. Whether it was reassuring a Preschool mom that her son would not cry at drop off by the time he was going off to college, or comforting someone who recently lost a loved one and needed to meet with the clergy, Sara did it with love and service. Beth El is a better place because Sara G is in our community."

As for what's next, Sara says she plans to deliver food for Bethesda Cares, exercise at the Y, and learn Spanish, particularly because her daughter Shoshana lives in Guatemala, where she teaches English and is a health and wellness coach. Wendy lives in Gaithersburg and teaches at Temple Beth Ami preschool; Hannah

lives in Frederick and is a musician. "I'll still be a congregant," she insists. She intends to be part of the Dor l'Dor program with the Preschool and seniors. "I'll come to programs, but I don't want to work," she notes, adding, "I don't want to be gone. Beth El is family all the way." ■

Please join us for a  
**CELEBRATION**  
 honoring  
*Sara Greenbaum*  
 as she begins her next life adventure!  
**Tuesday, October 21, 2025**  
**7:30 - 9:00 pm**  
 at Congregation Beth El  
 8215 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda, MD  
**RSVPS REQUESTED BY THURSDAY,**  
**OCTOBER 16, AT 5:00 PM**  
**BETHELMC.ORG/SARA-CELEBRATION**  
*Donations celebrating Sara's retirement may  
 be made to the Annual Campaign*

## The Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute is being Refreshed!

Looking for both new and familiar ways to connect and learn at Beth El? Join the Scolnic Institute for an exciting and varied selection of classes offered by talented instructors from the Beth El clergy, well-known local educators, and scholars from Israel and elsewhere. Explore topics such as Jewish Buddhists with Hazzan Fradkin, the War in Gaza with Amir Tibon, a Jewish Food class with Naomi Daremblum and (Re)defining Jewish Identity with Rabbi Harris. We will be collaborating with well-known Jewish educational organizations to bring new content and innovation to our program, including Boston's Hebrew College and the Hadar Institute. Instructors from these programs will be teaching for us, and students who participate in their programs will be joining the classes. We are offering some new and different class formats; more in-person learning opportunities; a discussion-based model; Zoom offerings; and "watch party" zoom classes at Beth El. The brochure with full descriptions of the courses and schedules have been mailed and is available online at: [bethelmc.org/scolnic](http://bethelmc.org/scolnic). You are sure to find classes to pique your interest and delight your intellect. Classes begin Tuesday and Wednesday, October 21 and 22. Check out the brochure and register ASAP. The early bird registration deadline is October 7.

**What's the same:** An exciting and thought-provoking array of classes taught by talented instructors from Beth El, the local community and beyond.

**What's new:** We have changed up how we will be offering several classes this session. Select the model that will work best for you.

### IN PERSON ONLY CLASSES – NO RECORDINGS

To align with the Beth El's goal to promote "back to shul," several classes this session will be in person only. The instructors will be live at Beth El and so will the classes. Interact face to face with a community of fellow learners. Have a chance to schmooze before or after class and attend minyan or catch a bite during break from 8:20-8:40 pm. These classes will not be recorded.

### ZOOM FROM HOME

We are very fortunate to once again have two of our popular instructors from Israel. These classes will be via Zoom that you will view from home. Please note, given the time difference, these courses are offered at different times than most of the other classes. These courses will be recorded and you can view them at an alternate time.

### ZOOM WATCH PARTY

Join us at Beth El OR via Zoom from home – these will be recorded and can be viewed at an alternate time. We hope you will join us in our grand experiment of the Watch Party at Beth El. For these classes, the instructor will be up on a big screen at Beth El (not in person) and you will have the opportunity to be in a classroom with fellow learners. Since you are at Beth El, you will have

a chance to schmooze before or after class and attend minyan or catch a bite during break from 8:20-8:40 pm. If Zoom from home is your preference, you have the option of doing that for these classes. These classes will be recorded and can be viewed at another time. You do not have to choose one or the other of these options for the whole of the fall session but can change where you Zoom from one week to the next. ■

### TUESDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

IN PERSON AT BETH EL (NO RECORDING)

11:00-11:50 am *Pirkei Avot with Rabbi Lyle Fishman*

### WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON SCHEDULE

VIA ZOOM FROM HOME (RECORDING AVAILABLE)

1:00-1:50 pm Extremism in the West Bank with *Dr. Steven J. Klein*

### WEDNESDAY EVENING SCHEDULE

IN PERSON AT BETH EL (NO RECORDING)

7:30 - 8:20 pm Joy in Jewish Thought *in collaboration with the Hadar Institute, with Discussion Leader Judy Subar*

7:30 - 8:20 pm JUBUS, HINJUS and the Search for Jewish Meaning with *Hazzan Asa Fradkin*

ZOOM WATCH PARTY (AT BETH EL OR FROM HOME; RECORDING AVAILABLE)

7:30 - 8:20 pm Biblical Leaders and Their Challenges *in partnership with the Hebrew College, with Dr. David Jacobson*

7:30 - 8:20 pm Is Anti-Zionism Antisemitism? with *Dr. Jerome Copulsky*

IN PERSON AT BETH EL (NO RECORDING)

8:40 - 9:30 pm (Re)defining Jewish Identity in the 21st Century with *Rabbi Greg Harris*

8:40 - 9:30 pm AI and Jewish Ethics with *Rabbi David Abramson*

8:40 - 9:30 pm Difficult Biblical Texts with *Gideon Amir*

ZOOM WATCH PARTY (AT BETH EL OR FROM HOME; RECORDING AVAILABLE)

8:40 - 9:30 pm A Taste of Jewish History: Global Jewish Foodways with *Dr. Naomi Daremblum*

ZOOM FROM HOME (RECORDING AVAILABLE)

9:00 - 10:00 pm The 700 Days War: Israel's Fight in Gaza with *Amir Tibon*

## Israel in Focus

## Building Connection with Israel, Together

BY KAREN BENEZRA

Some may think the above headline would apply to the physical rebuilding of battered communities across Israel – from kibbutzim near the southern edge of Gaza, to small towns bordering Syria and Lebanon. Others may want to encourage young people to take part in thoughtful engagement about Israel and gain wider perspectives on a region wracked by over two years of war and displacement. A third view might be of immersive learning programs that strengthen personal ties with Israeli society that might encourage eventual visits and deeper understanding.

In fact, all three are essential pieces of the programmatic work underway since the fateful attacks of October 7, 2023 that is being fostered among area synagogues in the greater Washington, D.C. area, moving communities from emergency campaign response to partnerships that can have lasting impact. As anti-Israel rhetoric is being normalized on college campuses, at music venues and awards stages, such initiatives couldn't have come at a better time.

At Beth El, we are engaged in multiple efforts to think and learn, celebrate, debate and share our views about Israel, its citizens, and future. We are talking in small groups, mobilizing community voices on legislative matters relating to Israel and antisemitism, participating in clergy-led missions, advocating and hosting family members and raising awareness about the hostages still held in Gaza.

Over the past year, we have:

- Joined with neighboring synagogues B'nai Israel and Ohr Kodesh to form Keshet Nir Oz, to help support the kibbutz community as it looks to recover and rebuild, with [donations](#) collected through the American Friends of Nir Oz project, a 501(c)(3) entity.
- Built upon our Israel Distinguished Speakers series with featured guests addressing an array of topics, including Ben-Gurion University's Professor Amit Schejter on the state of press freedom in Israel, veteran journalist Ron Kampeas contextualizing seismic political changes in the Middle East, and influencer Yuval David on confronting anti-Zionism, antisemitism, and fallout on social media.
- Hosted cultural events, Israeli artists and authors, including National Jewish Book award winner Dr. Maya Arad ([Happy New Years](#)), that will continue with the upcoming October 5 screening of *A Letter to David*, a documentary by filmmaker Tom Shoval about David Cunio, who has been held hostage in Gaza with his younger brother, Ariel. David and his twin brother, Eitan, played the leading roles in Shoval's award-winning 2013 debut, *Youth*, a story that in a tragic and unimaginable twist of fate, centered on a kidnapping. The screening and a follow-up discussion will be part of Beth El's commemoration of the second anniversary of the October 7 Hamas attacks.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

### Three Questions for Shaliach Yoel Gleizer

**What has been the most impactful, memorable part of the past year for you as a shaliach at Beth El?**

**Gleizer:** The traditional and spiritual connections – like making my own tallit, participating in the Selichot service and writing a letter in a new Torah scroll – the kinds of things I never expected to do because it's not a thing I'd do in Israel. If you like Judaism here, it's more accessible than in Israel!

**What are some of the programs you're looking forward to creating over the next few months?**

**Gleizer:** I've been doing a series of events in Elul and will be leading a program on the Sunday morning before Yom Kippur (after the Men's Club breakfast), then a "Sins and S'mores" Havdalah program with young professionals, and another program for *tashlich*. After Sukkot, I'll be speaking at a Beth El event on October 30 with guests from Kibbutz Re'im in a collaboration with Israel-IS, where people can use VR technology to watch testimonies from Nova survivors and a police officer, and to experience the kibbutz

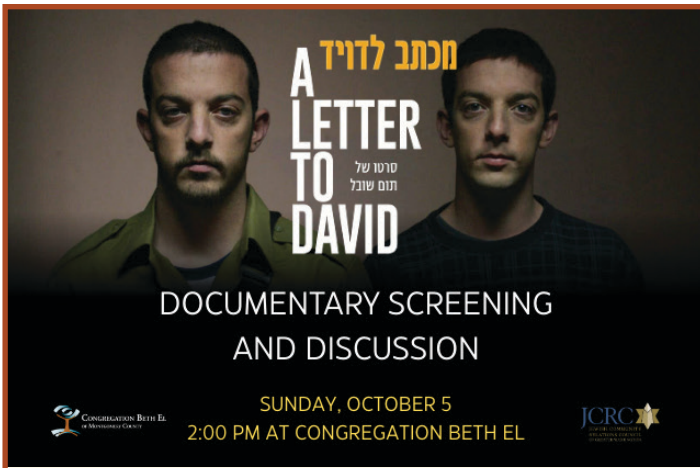
landscape before and after the attack.

Finally, I'm excited about expanding my *Mazal Talk* podcast by interviewing the clergy here at Beth El and recording an album of songs with Hazzan Fradkin and the two choirs, Geshet and Shir Atid.

**What is one thing you hope the community will be able to appreciate about Israel within the next year?**

**Gleizer:** For me, Israel is not only a country, it's my home, my music, my language, and my story. This past year, I've seen how powerful it is when kids here sing in Hebrew for the first time, or when someone tells me that an Israeli song or holiday we shared touched their heart. My hope for the coming year is that the community will appreciate Israel through these kinds of personal experiences: moments that show its resilience, creativity, and warmth, and moments that make Israel feel like part of their own family story, too.





Join Congregation Beth El for a ceremony to mark the second anniversary of October 7th and a screening of the documentary *A Letter to David*. Filmmaker Tom Shoval crafts a cinematic letter to David Cunio, held in Gaza since his abduction from Kibbutz Nir Oz on October 7, 2023. A decade after David and his twin brother Eitan starred in Shoval's first film, the director blends past and present footage resulting in a compelling visual journey. *A Letter to David* recently won the Best Full-Length Documentary at the Ophirs, the Israeli Academy Awards. Co-sponsored by the JCRC. Register at [bethelmc.org/letter-to-david](http://bethelmc.org/letter-to-david).

**The Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute  
Fall Kick-off Lecture**

## The Crisis in the Middle East

with Thomas S. Warrick



Sunday, October 5  
1:00 pm at Beth El



Join Congregation Beth El and the Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute as we kick off the Fall semester with special guest lecturer, congregant Thomas S. Warrick. Tom Warrick, a nonresident senior fellow with The Atlantic Council's Middle East Programs and director of the Council's Future of the Department of Homeland Security Project, will be discussing "The Crisis in the Middle East." Attendees of the lecture will also have the opportunity to register for Scolnic Institute courses if they have not done so already. Find out more and RSVP at [bethelmc.org/scolnic-1005](http://bethelmc.org/scolnic-1005).

## BUILDING CONNECTION WITH ISRAEL, TOGETHER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

One of the more hopeful, connected community efforts is our participation with the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington's Shlichim ('emissary') initiative that has matched young Israeli leaders with communities across the region, 10 in Maryland and two in Northern Virginia. With financial support from Federation, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and from host communities, these emissaries recently shared that they have collectively created 1,000 programs the past year, reaching 78,814 people of all ages and life stages – bringing a diversity of perspectives and building deep and personal connections to Israel.

Beth El's *shaliach*, Yoel Gleizer, came to our community from Tel Aviv in August 2024 after an epiphany of sorts. Having lost friends at the Nova festival attacks and realizing what was happening to the country in the early days of the war, he felt it was important to act. "Not everyone can go to reserve duty. My unit wasn't calling people back," he said recently. And so Gleizer, a rising musician, applied to serve in the Shaliach program. Gleizer created [memorable programs](#) at Beth El during the spring holidays and part of the summer at Camp Ramah. In between those duties he launched the [Mazal Talk](#)

podcast, with episodes on Israeli hip hop and cinema.

One of the biggest changes of being in America, he says, is that "life is calm here. It is easier and I have more opportunities for bringing new things – more music, more socializing and self-growth to my life. Israel is very fast, intense and a lot of people are struggling. I was taking on three different jobs to pay rent. I'm very grateful for all the things I get to do and experience here." Gleizer will turn 30 on October 8 and says it may be the first time he celebrates his birthday since the attack.



IN EARLY SEPTEMBER AT THE BENDER JCC, BETH EL MEMBERS JOINED THE COMMUNITY TO WELCOME RETURNED HOSTAGE GADI MOSES (81) AND NIR OZ SURVIVOR NIR METZGER (49). SPONSORED BY AMERICAN FRIENDS OF NIR OZ (AFNO), THE GATHERING HIGHLIGHTED THEIR POWERFUL STORIES AND COMMITMENT TO REBUILDING KIBBUTZ NIR OZ.

For more Israel-related activities see our "Israel Update" emails and upcoming classes in the Rabbi Samuel Scolnic Adult Institute Fall education series (see page 8), which will kick off with "The Crisis in the Middle East" lecture by Beth El member Thomas S. Warrick on October 5. The series will also mark the October 22 return of noted *Ha'aretz* journalist Amir Tibon, teaching on "The 700 Days War," and whose family's harrowing story on October 7 at kibbutz Nahal Oz is depicted in the film, *The Road Between Us: The Ultimate Rescue*, just crowned with the People's Choice award for Best Documentary at the Toronto Film Festival. ■

# Tikkun Olam in Action: Your Volunteer Shift with Bethesda Help

BY MITCHELL SOLKOWITZ

Bethesda Help (BH) is an all-volunteer nonprofit organization that provides emergency food support to residents in our own neighborhoods. In 2024, we delivered over 8,000 bags of food to more than 5,000 adults and 2,500 children. BH is also a conduit to other support resources for our neighbors in need. The deliveries typically include snack bags for children and menstrual products for women. Some of you may already recognize Bethesda Help. Women of Beth El has twice organized, assembled, and donated our kids' snack bags as part of tikkun olam projects. Beth El women have created and donated kids snack packs several times.

Bethesda Help has become a family volunteer activity for many Beth El members. Kay Richman was a driver for 10 years and now serves on the board. Her husband, Dan Kaplan, has been driving for five years. According to Kay, "Serving BH in any capacity is incredibly rewarding. As a driver, I was frequently blown away by the heartfelt appreciation expressed by many of our clients. Now, more than ever, we are an important piece of the safety net for folks who've fallen on hard times."

As a volunteer with Bethesda Help, I can tell you firsthand: there is no organization quite like this one. Since 1968, Bethesda Help has been a neighbor-to-neighbor lifeline, providing critical emergency food right here in our community. Bethesda Help does not have a physi-

cal office (other than the food pantry); our vital work is done by dedicated people like you, often from our own homes.

Our ability to meet the growing demand depends entirely on people like us. We need to boost our ranks, especially in these high-impact, flexible roles:

- Officer of the Day (OD): (8 hours/month) Work from your own home, answering helpline messages and connecting clients with the resources they need. This is a critical role that acts as the nerve center of our operation.
- Drivers: (4 to 8 hours/month) Pick up pre-packed food bags from our pantry and deliver them directly to our neighbors. It's a chance to feel the immediate gratitude of a recipient.
- Executive Director: (8 to 10 hours/week) represent BH at MoCo food security events/meetings; meet with faith partners/community organizations/businesses to promote awareness; research funding sources/ grants/foundation opportunities; provide leadership and support to the organization's volunteers
- Fundraising Manager: Support the Executive Director and Treasurer in identifying and developing new financial partnerships and maximizing donations from existing partners while maintaining consis-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

## KOL NIDRE FOOD DRIVE



●●● CONGREGATION BETH EL ●●●

Wednesday, October 1  
from 5:00-7:00 pm

8215 OLD GEORGETOWN ROAD, BETHESDA

DROP OFF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD DONATIONS AT BETH EL BEFORE KOL NIDRE SERVICES BEGIN. THE MANNA FOOD TRUCK WILL BE ON SITE FROM 5:00-7:00 PM.



YOU CAN ALSO DONATE FUNDS TO MANNA'S HARVEST AGAINST HUNGER CAMPAIGN BY SCANNING THE QR CODE HERE:





Mitzvah Day

## Mitzvah Day

at Congregation Beth El

## MITZVAH DAY PROJECTS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26



ON MITZVAH DAY  
WE ARE CARING,  
GROWING, CLEANING,  
BRINGING JOY,  
FEEDING, HONORING,  
HELPING,  
COLLECTING...

JOIN US!



Dozens of activities and collections, many open to the community. Find out more and download the entire list of projects on our website at [www.bethelmc.org/mitzvah-day](http://www.bethelmc.org/mitzvah-day)

Beth El's Mitzvah Day is underwritten by our Sondra Bender Community Service Fund.

8215 Old Georgetown Rd • Bethesda, MD 20815  
301-652-2606 • info@bethelmc.org

## TIKKUN OLAM IN ACTION CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

tency with the overall organization in purpose and messaging.

- **Pantry Manager:** (10 to 15 hours/week) Work with Capital Area Food Bank and other food providers and donors to stock and maintain pantry; organize and schedule food drives; accept food donations from churches and individuals.
- **Treasurer:** (6 to 8 hours/week) Prepare and present financial statements; prepare annual budget; assist with grant applications; perform general accounting duties.

Sandy Cohen began volunteering when her son went off to college and she was looking for a volunteer activity. She started as an Officer of the Day and is now the driver scheduler with Bethesda Help.

The need is growing. With rising costs and continuing economic pressures, more of our neighbors in Bethesda, Chevy Chase, Kensington, Potomac, and Silver Spring are calling our helpline for assistance. We need more hands to ensure that no call for help goes unanswered. Please consider joining me and the dozen other Beth El congregants who already volunteer by supporting our community in need. I am proud that over 10% of Bethesda Help volunteers are also Beth El members.

Bethesda Help provides an incredible opportunity for individual action with collective impact. It allows you to schedule shifts that work for your life, while contributing to a crucial community safety net that aligns perfectly with our Jewish commitment to justice and charity.

Jon Simon appreciates how he is able to volunteer

according to his schedule. "Aside from knowing how appreciative these individuals and families are to receive groceries and Giant gift cards, I find the flexibility of being able to drive twice a month on whatever days and times work best for me to be a big plus. I don't have to worry about making a fixed, specific-day commitment every month that might conflict with my own plans. Volunteering as a driver with Bethesda Help is a mitzvah that provides great satisfaction with minimum time demand. I highly recommend volunteering with Bethesda Help!"

For members of Beth El, this is a great way to put our shared values into direct action. Every time we answer a call or drive a route, we are fulfilling the central mitzvah of caring for those in need in our immediate vicinity. Are you ready to make your personal tzedakah a regular part of your routine?

Congregants Sharon Pohoryles and Jim Gelb have been a driving

team for Bethesda Help for several years. They see the work of Bethesda Help as one way to help give people the ability to live, work and raise children. "It is humbling seeing the breadth of need in our broad community," said Sharon. "Bethesda Help fills a gap for people who are not eligible for other programs," added Jim.

Visit [BethesdaHelp.org/volunteer](http://BethesdaHelp.org/volunteer) to learn more. You can also donate directly to BH on the website. Contact me or any of the congregants listed in the article to hear about their experiences at [Mitchell.solkowitz@verizon.net](mailto:Mitchell.solkowitz@verizon.net).

Let's continue to be a light in our neighborhood. ■



A VOLUNTEER PREPARES TO DELIVER BAGS OF FOOD TO THOSE IN NEED. PHOTO COURTESY OF BETHESDA HELP



**Nechama:  
Grief Support Group**

CONGREGATION BETH EL

JSSA is partnering with Congregation Beth El in Bethesda to offer meaningful group support for those mourning the death of a parent or guardian in the last year. Drawing on Jewish wisdom, broader mindfulness tools and best clinical approaches, participants will have an opportunity to: explore their memories, discover new insights about their family relationships, reflect on possibilities for healing and forgiveness, and share mutual support with others.

To register to attend, go to [jssa.jotform.com/252255511130039](http://jssa.jotform.com/252255511130039).

**UPCOMING MEN'S CLUB PROGRAMS**

**SUNDAYS, OCTOBER 5, 12, 19, AND 26, 9:30 AM Men's Club Breakfast.** Join us after morning minyan every Sunday for a breakfast sponsored by Men's Club.

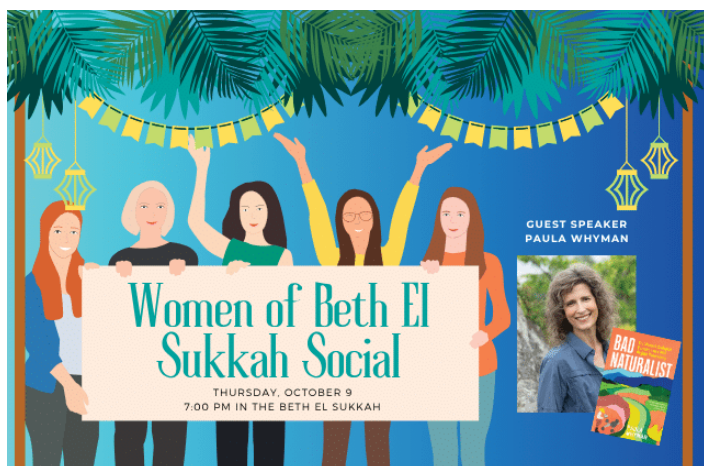
**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 7:30 PM Hearing Men's Voices.** Beth El men are invited to join us in person or via Zoom as Martin Sieff leads a discussion of "Persons Historical or Current With Whom I Would Like to Share Dinner." RSVP at [bethelmc.org/hmv-1009](http://bethelmc.org/hmv-1009).

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 28, 7:00 PM Jews & Brews.** Jews & Brews is sponsored by Men's Club, but all Beth El members are welcome to attend. Please RSVP at [bethelmc.org/jews-brews-1028](http://bethelmc.org/jews-brews-1028) to receive the address.



**WOMEN OF BETH EL**

**WBE Sukkah Social**



Please join us for Women of Beth El's annual Sukkah Social on Thursday, October 9, at 7:00 pm. We'll gather in the sukkah and then move inside for some schmoozing, noshing, and a little Sukkot-related learning from special guest speaker Paula Whyman. Whyman will share her story and answer questions.

*Bad Naturalist: One Woman's Ecological Education on a Wild Virginia Mountaintop* is Paula Whyman's first book of nonfiction. Her earlier book, *You May See a Stranger*, is an award-winning linked short story collection. Her writing has appeared in *The Washington Post* and *The American Scholar*, and in journals including *McSweeney's Quarterly*, *Virginia Quarterly Review*, *Ploughshares*, and *The Hudson Review*. She was awarded residencies by MacDowell, Yaddo, VCCA, The Studios of Key West, and Oak Spring Garden Foundation. Her work on this book was supported in part by the Maryland State Arts Council. She spends her time on a mountain in Virginia with her husband and a mercurial standard poodle.

RSVP to attend at [bethelmc.org/sukkah-social-1009](http://bethelmc.org/sukkah-social-1009). ■

**UPCOMING WOMEN OF BETH EL PROGRAMS**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 9, 7:00 PM WBE Sukkah Social.** Join us in the sukkah for refreshments and learning with special guest speaker Paula Whyman. See article on this page for more details.

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1:00 PM AND WEDNESDAYS, OCTOBER 22 AND 29, 7:00 PM WBE Crafters.** WBE Crafters is open to anyone who does any kind of crafting. We meet to have a social interaction, get help with our projects, learn something new, and to work on the service project opportunities.

**TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 21 AND 28, 7:00 PM Mah Jongg.** Sign up at [bethelmc.org/tuesdaymahj](http://bethelmc.org/tuesdaymahj).

**THURSDAYS, OCTOBER 9, 16, 23 AND NOVEMBER 6, 13, 20 AT 2:00 PM Drop-In Canasta.** Join us for a relaxed and friendly game of Canasta at Beth El. Beginners and up are welcome – whether you're brand new or just a little rusty, come play and have fun! Please sign up at [bethelmc.org/canasta](http://bethelmc.org/canasta) for the weeks you plan to play, so we can be sure to have enough players.

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 7:30 PM VIA ZOOM Keshet Nashim: Women's Cancer Connection.** Keshet Nashim supports female cancer survivors and those with a new cancer diagnosis. Join Beth El women for confidential, lively discussions, friendship, and support at our monthly meetings. For more information, please contact Judy Spector at [judithspector@verizon.net](mailto:judithspector@verizon.net).

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25 AT 12:30 PM Shabbat Mahj.** Calling all Mahj Players...Get your Mahj fix on Shabbat! Please join us for once a month Shabbat Mahj at Beth El from 12:30 to 2:30 pm. RSVP at [bethelmc.org/shabbat-mahj-1025](http://bethelmc.org/shabbat-mahj-1025).

# Build the Joy

BY EDUCATION DIRECTOR ELISHA FRUMKIN



## BUILD THE JOY 2024

Last year, we relaunched one of my favorite programs – Build the Joy – and, after an amazing success last year, it's back!

**What is Build the Joy?** It is a special pre-Sukkot family holiday program. Held on Sunday, October 5, each grade in the school has been assigned a special location for their Build the Joy program.

**Build the Joy is social.** Parents will join their children to socialize with other Beth El Religious School (BERS) families, growing your Beth El and BERS community.

**Build the Joy helps us get ready for the holiday of Sukkot.** We will prepare for the Sukkot holiday, which begins Monday evening, October 6, by learning about Sukkot with BERS teachers and making decorations for the Beth El sukkah.

If you have more than one child at BERS, you have a couple of options. Your family can select one sukkah to attend all together, or you can split up and attend the programs for each grade. There is no wrong way to celebrate Build the Joy, since it is a fun, family program. All BERS students will participate in Build the Joy, as there will be no classes held at Beth El, including our Club Enrichment afterschool program. If you're interested in learning more about Build the Joy, please contact me at [efrumkin@bethelmc.org](mailto:efrumkin@bethelmc.org). ■

Tuesday, October 14

7:00 PM  
SPECIAL GIFTS  
FOR KIDS & TEENS

14  
O.C.T

# Simchat Torah PARTY

DANCE ALL NIGHT WITH A LIVE BAND

KICKOFF PARTY @ 7:00 PM  
SERVICE @ 7:30 • PARTY @ 7:45 PM  
WEAR YOUR NEON TO SHINE LIKE THE TORAH

CLICK TO RSVP

# Shabbat Together

A Family Shabbat Service  
Friday, October 24, 6:00 pm

BETH EL RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Join us on Friday, October 24, at 6:00 pm for a joyful and engaging Shabbat experience designed especially for children in grades K-5 and the adults who love them. Through music, stories, and age-appropriate prayer, we welcome Shabbat together, followed by a warm, kid-friendly dinner and community gathering. Go to [bethelmc.org/shabbat-together-1024](http://bethelmc.org/shabbat-together-1024) for more information and to register.

## BETH EL PRESCHOOL

**BEPS**  
Beth El Preschool

**Beth El Preschool checks all the boxes!**

- ✓ new full-day option
- ✓ play-based curriculum
- ✓ parent co-operative model
- ✓ focus on Jewish values and traditions
- ✓ classes for children ages 15 months to 5 years
- ✓ weekly Tot Shabbat for babies and toddlers
- ✓ special programming for parents and families
- ✓ small class sizes
- ✓ six-week summer camp

Contact us today to set up a personalized tour!  
(301) 652-2606 ext. 107 ~ [preschoolinfo@bethelmc.org](mailto:preschoolinfo@bethelmc.org)  
[www.bethelpreschool.org](http://www.bethelpreschool.org)

**BEPS**  
Beth El Preschool

**Toddler Programs at Beth El**

Tot Shabbat	Mazel Tots	Young Family Shabbat
every Friday at 9:30 am	one day/week at 9:30 am	one Friday/month at 6:00 pm
Celebrate Shabbat at our weekly musical baby and toddler program. This program is free of charge and open to all!	This weekly playgroup, led by a preschool teacher, is for children ages 15+ months. Children explore art, music, stories, playtime and more!	Welcome Shabbat with other families with young children. Our preschooler-friendly service is followed by a family-friendly dinner.
No need to register	Register online	Register online
Starts Friday, September 5	Starts Wednesday, September 3	Starts Friday, October 10

For more information or to register:  
[preschoolinfo@bethelmc.org](mailto:preschoolinfo@bethelmc.org) ~ (301) 652-8569 ext. 107  
[www.bethelpreschool.org](http://www.bethelpreschool.org)

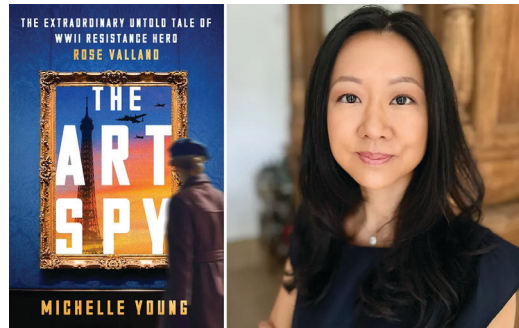
## Books &amp; Beyond

## Risking Life for Art

BY ROBIN JACOBSON

The iconic World War II film, *The Train*, asks whether it is moral to risk human lives to save art. In an early scene, a French Resistance leader initially refuses to send his men on a dangerous mission to prevent a train of looted art from reaching Germany. "I won't waste lives on paintings," he tells the art curator who seeks the Resistance's help.

*The Train* is loosely based on a memoir by Rose Valland, a French art curator who valued art so highly that she risked her life throughout World War II to protect it. Beyond pressing the Resistance to sabotage the art train, she embedded herself within a German art headquarters to secretly track the artworks the Germans looted from Jewish art dealers and other collectors. Her heroic story is thrillingly recounted in a new work of nonfiction, *The Art Spy: The Extraordinary Untold Tale of WWII Resistance Hero Rose Valland* by Michelle Young.

**HUMBLE BEGINNINGS**

Born in a small town near Lyon, the daughter of a blacksmith, Rose Valland (1898-1980) loved art from an early age. Despite her humble background, she earned multiple degrees and diplomas in art and art history from the prestigious École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, the Sorbonne, and the École du Louvre, a training ground for future curators, museum administrators, and art historians.

Notwithstanding these impressive academic credentials, the only job Rose could obtain, as a woman in the French art world in 1932, was as an unpaid secretary at the Jeu de Paume, a new museum of international modern art in Paris. She supported herself with side gigs teaching art history, writing newspaper articles about art, and brokering art sales. After seven long years, she finally received a museum salary.

**WARTIME AT THE JEU DE PAUME**

When the Germans occupied Paris in 1940, they made the Jeu de Paume their clearing house for processing the art they plundered in France, mostly from Jews. Since she was already working in the museum, Rose was able to present herself to the Germans as a lowly but useful functionary who could continue to oversee the building's maintenance. They didn't know that she understood German, had a photographic memory, and was one of France's most knowledgeable art experts.

A small woman with round spectacles, Rose was often underestimated. Her ability to appear unimportant, together with fierce intelligence and determination, enabled her to be a highly successful spy. She eavesdropped, smuggled photographic negatives and German documents out of the museum, and kept copious notes.

Hermann Göring, second-in-command to Hitler, vis-

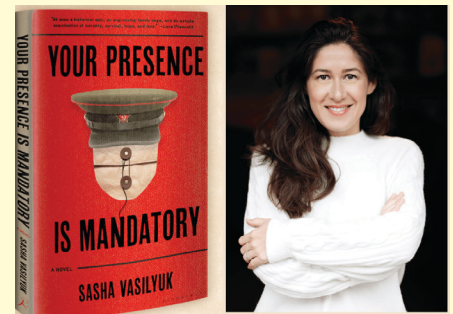
ited the Jeu de Paume many times to choose artwork for his personal collection, utterly unaware that Rose recorded his thefts. Other Germans, however, did become suspicious of Rose, accusing her of aiding the Resistance. Remarkably, on each occasion, she was able to allay her accusers' suspicions and return to work.

As the Allies approached Paris in August 1944, a German officer sought to send a final trainload of 1000 plundered paintings out of France. Thanks to Rose's spy work and the skillful sabotage of French railway workers, dramatized in *The Train*, the train remained within France until the Free French Forces were able to liberate it. Rose later wrote that one of her "greatest joys" was to "see all these paintings freed at last, found again by my country."

Rose's meticulous records enabled Allied forces to locate hundreds of thousands of stolen artworks Germans had stashed in an Austrian salt mine, German castles, and elsewhere. She personally led a team credited with the restitution of more than 61,000 works of art. *Art Spy* presents a rich portrait of this valiant defender of cultural heritage. ■

**UPCOMING LITERARY AND ARTS PROGRAMS**

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16, 7:00 PM Book Chat.** Join us for an in-person book discussion at Beth El of Sasha Vasilyuk's *Your Presence is Mandatory*, winner of the 2025 Sami Rohr Prize for Jewish Literature and a California Book Award Gold Medal.



This gripping novel follows a Ukrainian Jewish man and his family over seven decades beginning in the 1940s, illuminating both the Soviet past and the present-day Russia-Ukraine war. Register at [bethelmc.org/book-chat-1016](https://bethelmc.org/book-chat-1016).

**THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 7:00 PM VIA ZOOM Meet Author Sasha Vasilyuk.** Complementing our in-person book chat, join us via Zoom for a talk with author Sasha Vasilyuk. Register at [bethelmc.org/sasha-vasilyuk-1023](https://bethelmc.org/sasha-vasilyuk-1023).

**Chug Kriah**

Chug Kriah meets bi-weekly to read and discuss modern Israeli literature in Hebrew. Our next meeting will be on Zoom on October 5 at 2:00 pm. We are currently reading *HaBayta (Home)* by Assaf Inbari. For more information, please contact Bill Kanter at kanterdsw@aol.com.

**Support After Loss**

With a special invitation to those who have had a recent loss, we will gather for a brief teaching and discussion led by a member of the Beth El Clergy. All are welcome to join this six-session series as often as they wish. Registration for each individual session is recommended in case there are updates. Sponsored by the Clergy and the Nichum Aveilim (Comforting Mourners) Committee. The first session, led by Rabbi Harris, will take place on Yom Kippur, Thursday, October 2, at 3:30 pm. Visit [bethelmc.org/series/support-after-loss](http://bethelmc.org/series/support-after-loss) to see all upcoming dates and register.

**Seeking Kiddush Sponsors**

Celebrate a special day, remember a loved one, or just because – sponsor a kiddush on a Shabbat/Festival morning when there is no b-mitzvah. Various menus available. For information, visit [bethelmc.org/kiddush](http://bethelmc.org/kiddush), email [info@bethelmc.org](mailto:info@bethelmc.org), or call 301-652-2606. At least two full weeks' advance notice of sponsorship is required. Available dates: October 4, 7, 11, 14, 15, and 18.

**Shabbat Kiddush Servers Needed**

30 minutes and a smile! That's all it takes for one of the happiest mitzvot at Beth El. Serve the kiddush luncheon after b-mitzvah services on Shabbat and make sure everyone gets a warm "Shabbat Shalom" with their delicious food. Everyone 11 and older is welcome to serve. No food prep or clean up involved. For more information and to sign up visit [www.bethelmc.org/kiddush](http://www.bethelmc.org/kiddush) or contact Sue Kanter at kanterdsw@aol.com.

**Sunflower Bakery**

Celebrate Sukkot with Sunflower Bakery! Place your order by noon on Friday, October 3, and you can pick it up at Beth El on Monday, October 6, 10:00 am to 2:30 pm; Sukkot begins Monday evening October 6. Sunflower is featuring holiday favorites, delicious new desserts, and a variety of round challahs to celebrate this favorite fall festival. And Sunflower is now offering a delicious culinary menu with an assortment of main dishes, sides, etc. Visit their website at [sunflowerbakery.org](http://sunflowerbakery.org) to see their array of holiday items as well as year-round treats. Sunflower donates a percentage of these holiday sales to Beth El. Questions? Contact Sunflower at [info@sunflowerbakery.org](mailto:info@sunflowerbakery.org) or 240-361-3698.



Bid farewell to the Sabbath Queen with Havdalah, dinner, singing, dancing, and celebration  
 Saturday, November 15, 6:30 pm at Beth El

**Melaveh Malkah - Escorting the Queen  
 Saturday, November 15, 6:30 pm**

Spark some joy in the dreary month of Heshvan – short days and no Jewish holidays to celebrate! Join the Beth El community for a lively Melaveh Malkah, a traditional way to extend the sweetness of Shabbat by escorting the Sabbath Queen out with style and celebration, while looking forward to her return next week. Come! Bring your family and friends for Havdalah, a dairy meal, musical entertainment, singing and dancing, accompanied by our own Beth El Simcha Band.

Registration deadline is Monday, November 10 at noon. Register at [bethelmc.org/melaveh-malkah-1115](http://bethelmc.org/melaveh-malkah-1115).

**SAVE THE DATE**

**BETH EL  
 GALA**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 24**

**DINNER, MUSIC, DANCING, ENTERTAINMENT,  
 SILENT AUCTION, AND MORE!**

The Beth El Gala is sure to be an unforgettable event.

*Individual Tickets and Sponsorship Opportunities soon to be announced, benefiting Beth El's Annual Campaign.*

**SILENT AUCTION DONATIONS WANTED!**  
 Have something special to share? We're looking for exciting items like event tickets, vacation stays, gift cards, dining experiences, and more. To donate, contact Development Manager Lisa Zimmerman at [lzimmerman@bethelmc.org](mailto:lzimmerman@bethelmc.org).

We look forward to celebrating together with you!

*Thank you to our co-chairs,  
 Rebecca and Aaron Schilleci*

## CONTRIBUTIONS

Please remember that contributions can be made easily, quickly, and securely via our webpage –  
[www.bethelmc.org/give](http://www.bethelmc.org/give)

*Donations made from August 12 - September 8, 2025.*

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Tim Johnston  
Reuben and Laura Silberman  
Nicholas Coleman  
Alexander Powell

### IN HONOR OF:

Art Popper's marvelously insightful  
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and Ellen Dubin  
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for all their support and comfort  
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Olchyk  
Hazzan Asa Fradkin, by Mark and  
Marjorie Kramer and family  
Lior Izen by Aegean Properties LLC  
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wedding anniversary, by Tiarra  
and Daniel Joslyn  
Michele Herman by Beverly Berman  
My aliyah by Pierre Attia  
Pat Danoff and her 40 years of sho-  
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ard and Gabriela Bebchick, Marta  
Wassertzug, Sue and Bill Kanter,  
Elliot and Esther Wilner, Hattie  
Goodman and family  
Rabbi Harris by Joshua Starr  
The birth of Levi Hen Margulies,  
grandson of Donna Vogel and Da-  
vid Margulies, by Sheila Bellack

### IN MEMORY OF:

Dora Horowitz, my beloved mother,

by Rita Liebowitz  
Benjamin Cantor, my father, by Ju-  
dith Goldman  
Carol Arlan by Mark and Marjorie  
Kramer and family  
David N. Greenwood, my beloved  
father, by Naomi Greenwood  
Dorothy Feinberg, our mother and  
mother-in-law, by Kenneth and  
Dede Feinberg  
Edith Arnheim, my mother, by Wal-  
ter Arnheim and Marsha Rehns  
Esther Isralow by Sharon Isralow  
Harrison J. Goldin, my father, by  
Matt and Alicia Goldin  
Garda Westerfeld by Sid Stahl and  
Dorothy Wolf  
Greta Robin by Paul and Lauren  
Robin  
Henry M. Schwartz, my beloved fa-  
ther, by Ina E. Wernick  
Burt Emmer by David Goodfriend  
and Susan Emmer  
Jack Silverstein by Don Silverstein  
Joseph Almyk Lieberman by Richard  
Lieberman and Helene Weisz  
Judith Greenbaum and Susannah  
Greenbaum by Margery London  
Kenneth Feigenbaum by Carolyn Fei-  
genbaum  
Lorraine Leavitt, my sister, by Steph-  
anie and Jack Ventura  
Louis Cohen by Susan Cohen  
Madelyn Rubinstein Shapiro, mother  
of Margie Hoffman, by Sheila Bel-  
lack, Barbara and Barry Friedman  
Marvin E. Birnbach, my father, by  
Sarah Birnbach and Jake Gutt-  
mann  
Nathaniel DeGutz by Judith and Bert  
Spector  
Nathan Weinstein by Ina and Joe  
Young  
Norma Kramer by Benjamin and  
Stephanie Bunin, Paul Sullivan,  
Linda and Ace Lipson, Alan and  
Debra Birnkrant, Carol and Stuart  
Kramer, Lynn Goldin and Henry  
Birnkrant, Danielle and Joe Wag-  
ner  
Norman Eule, beloved husband of  
Ellen Eule, by Margery London,  
Ellen Tillman, Linda and Ace Lip-  
son, Sandra Cohen and Daniel  
Geselowitz, Lynn Goldin and Hen-  
ry Birnkrant

Robin Miller, sister of Debbie Olchyk,  
by Sheryl and Ira Fishman  
Rosamond Leavitt, my mother, by  
Stephanie and Jack Ventura  
Rose Schwartz, my beloved mother,  
by Ina Wernick  
Samuel Datz by Dora Weinstein  
Samuel Spector by Bert and Judith  
Spector  
Sara Milgram Guller, my mother, by  
Lois Jacobs  
Sari Roizman, mother of Robin Gra-  
ham, by Ellen and David Epstein  
Sheila and Henry Roth by Miriam  
Roth and Jonathan Lebow  
Stefan A. Schwartz by Michael and  
Faith Schwartz  
Walter Loeb by Elisa Deener-Agus  
Sidney Sklar on his yahrzeit, by  
Kathy Sklar and Paul Love  
Yitzchak Gendelman by Rita Gendel-  
man and James Altman

### Did You Know?

In every digital issue of the *Scroll*, there are several ways you can interact with the content. Click on any item in the Table of Contents to be taken directly to that page. You can click on a page number wherever you see "continued on page..." or "continued from page..." to go directly to the page that is referenced. This will help you more easily read articles that are spread over multiple pages. Click on any blue link (example: [bethelmc.org](http://bethelmc.org)) or any event-related graphic to be taken to the corresponding page on the Beth El website. *Please note that these features only work in the digital version, not the PDF version.*

**MAZAL TOV TO**

**Nava Blitstein** on her bat mitzvah on September 13.

Proud parents are **Adam** and **Rebecca Blitstein**.

**Jonathan Gross** and **Rebecca Musher Gross** on the marriage of their son, **Jacob Gross**, to **Abby Wolfe** on September 7.

**Calia Movit** on her bat mitzvah on August 23. Proud parents are **Marcela** and **Steven Movit**.

**Max Spiegel** on his bar mitzvah on September 13. Proud parents are **Adam** and **Ellen Spiegel**.

**Ella Tasman** on her bat mitzvah on September 6. Proud parents are **Jamie** and **Emily Tasman**.

October milestone birthdays: **Larry Bard**, **Bea Berger**, **Herbert Chubin**, **Julia Copperman**, **Kenneth Feinberg**, **Todd Gillman**, **Jeremy Gold**, **Marvin Griff**, **Jake Guttmann**, **Dora Leopold**, **Reina Lerner**, **Gregg Rothschild**, **Jorge Sapoznikow**, **Seth Stern**, **Herb Tanenbaum**, **Harriet Weinstein**, and **Lois Zuckerman**.

October milestone anniversaries: **Roberta** and **Don Steiner** (60 years), **Howard Lesser** and **Hanna Gutmann** (45 years), **Cynthia Rosenberg** and **Felipe Jaramillo** (35 years), **Michael** and **Michelle Gips** (30 years), **Megan** and **David Don** (20 years), **Evan** and **Kimberly Weisman** (15 years), **David** and **Michelle Kauffman** (15 years), **Michelle** and **Alex Bronzo** (10 years), **Ben Strauss** and **Diane Cheng** (10 years), **Nicole** and **Joshua Bowden** (5 years).

**CONDOLENCES TO**

**Edward** and **Galia Greenberg**, on the death of Edward's father, **Moshe Greenberg**. Moshe was the grandfather of **Ariel**, **Noam**, and **Idan Greenberg**.

**Stephen** and **Kim Redlich**, on the death of Stephen's mother, **Faye Redlich**. Faye was the grandmother of **Samantha**, **Rebecca**, and **Melissa Redlich**.

**Bobbi** and **Jeff Spector**, on the death of Bobbi's father, **Robert Rosen**. Robert was the grandfather of **Ellen** and **Avi Spector**.

**SENIOR CONNECTIONS**



**Senior Caucus Coffee with the Clergy: Thursday, October 9, 2:00 - 3:00 pm in the sukkah.** This every-other-month gathering is an informal time to catch up with fellow congregants, hear updates about what is happening at Beth El and in the news, enjoy light refreshments,

and do some Jewish learning together. Rabbi Harris will join us in the sukkah for a discussion of the holidays that occur over the 13 days after Yom Kippur, including the biblical sources and traditional observance. Please visit [bethelmc.org/coffee-1009](http://bethelmc.org/coffee-1009) to register or contact Ricardo at [rmunster@bethelmc.org](mailto:rmunster@bethelmc.org) or 301-652-2606.



**Dor L'Dor From Generation to Generation on Thursday, November 6, 11:45 am - 1:00 pm.** Calling all members, especially seniors, to join Beth El Preschool (BEPS) for a program that provides an opportunity to make connections across generations. Adults and kids will enjoy lunch, have a chance to talk and share, then join together for fun table activities, such as bingo, coloring, and other games, planned by the BEPS staff. We need plenty of seniors to match up with the kids, so please join us. There is no cost, but please register at [bethelmc.org/dor-ldor-1106](http://bethelmc.org/dor-ldor-1106) or contact Katie at [kfriedman@bethelmc.org](mailto:kfriedman@bethelmc.org) or 301-652-2606.

