



Welcome to Temple Beth El of Augusta, Maine

*embracing a spirit of community, lifelong Jewish learning, commitment to
inclusiveness, and active participation in Jewish life in Central Maine*

artwork by Lenora Leibowitz

Tamuz-Av-Elul 5780/July-August 2020

From the desk of Rabbi Asch

Last Sunday night I tuned into a “Campfire on Tour” concert by Dan Nichols. Every Friday night the Union for Reform Judaism is offering concerts with amazing Jewish musicians streaming live on Facebook. Dan ended his set with his song “Chazak.” The words “chazak, chazak, v’nitchzak” are spoken when a book of Torah is finished. The words translate as “be strong, be strong, let us strengthen one another.” The lyrics include the words, “Be strong, let us strengthen one another. Be strong, let us celebrate our lives.” [You can view the concert [here](#).]

I’ve been thinking about that phrase a lot lately. We have transitioned so much in the last few months, both at Temple Beth El and in our broader communities. The last few months have required a lot of strength and sacrifice. We have had to make sacrifices to keep ourselves and those in our community safe. People have lost their jobs. We have been unable to visit our loved ones when they were in the hospital or nursing homes. We have not been able to visit our relatives in other states. We have had our children at home, trying to help them with lessons while working full-time. We have been unable to see family or friends in person, or to play sports, go to restaurants or get our hair cut. We have needed strength both personally and from others. And, as a community we have strengthened one another through calls and emails, and joining together for worship, study, and our annual meeting.

As Maine gradually reopens, we at the Temple are, in consultation with medical professionals, also taking steps toward reopening. We are now hosting some in-person gatherings and will be throughout the summer. These are wonderful ways to see Temple members in person. Look for announcements of these gatherings in your weekly emails and join us for one (or more!) I am now meeting with people in-person (outside and wearing masks) in addition to meeting via Zoom. Please set up a meeting so we can chat! Our Funtensive will run for two weeks in July. This summer kids’ program will allow our kids to see one another and build their Jewish knowledge while following all the guidelines from the Maine CDC. We are also exploring some in-person options for the High Holidays including tashlich. Stay tuned for more information.

While all of these are hopeful signs, we are also mindful that cases of Covid-19 are increasing rapidly throughout much of the country. We will need to continue to strengthen one another in the months ahead as we adapt to our changing realities. I urge all Temple members to continue to do the things our medical experts at the CDC say will reduce the spread of the virus: practice social distancing, wear a mask in public, and stay home if you are sick. As we support one another in the months to come, know that I and your Temple community are here for you. May we strengthen one another and find ways to celebrate in the months to come.

CAMPFIRE ON TOUR
AN ONLINE CONCERT SERIES BENEFITTING URJ CAMPS & NFTY

STREAMING FACEBOOK LIVE AT [FACEBOOK.COM/URJORG](https://www.facebook.com/urjorg)
LATER ON INSTAGRAM (@REFORMJUDAISM)
AND YOUTUBE (YOUTUBE.COM/USER/URJWEB/CHANNEL)

SUNDAY NIGHTS, 8PM
EASTERN

DONATE [DONATE.REFORMJUDAISM.ORG/CAMPFIRE](https://www.donate.reformjudaism.org/campfire)

Tour Dates

JUNE 19	ALAN GOODIS	JULY 26	MICHELLE CITRIN
JUNE 21	NEFESH MOUNTAIN	AUGUST 2	JOSH NELSON
JUNE 28	DAN NICHOLS	AUGUST 9	NOAM KATZ
JULY 5	SPIKE KRAUS	AUGUST 16	JULIE SILVER
JULY 12	ELANA ARIAN	AUGUST 23	RICK RECHT
JULY 19	CHAVA MIREL		#Youth

TBE Schedule: July—August

Services

Every Saturday night at 8:30pm (or earlier))
Havdallah

Friday, July 3

7:00pm Shabbat Service

Friday, July 10

7:00pm Shabbat Service

Friday, July 17

7:00pm Shabbat Service

Friday, July 31

6:30pm Statewide Shabbat Service

Friday, August 7

7:00pm Shabbat Service

Friday, August 14

5:00pm Shabbat Service

Friday, August 28

6:30pm Statewide Shabbat Service

Torah Study

Saturday, July 4, 11, 18, & 25

Saturday, August 1, 8, 15, 29

10:30am

Hebrew School

Off for the summer!

Come to the TBE FUNtensive

July 13—17

July 27—31

TBE Activities

Sunday, July 5

10:30am Social gathering (in person!)

RSVPs required - email Chuck Cohen

Friday, July 10

5:00pm Shabbat Experience for Families

Thursday, July 16

6:00pm TBE Board Meeting

Friday, August 14

5:00pm Shabbat Experience for Families

Monday, August 24

6:00pm TBE Board Meeting

Getting onto Zoom

Until further notice, all TBE activities will take place via Zoom. The link and password for the meeting remain the same. Please contact the office for the login information of if you need help setting up Zoom.

Todah Rabbah

- Ellen Freed, Hildie Lipson and Chuck Cohen for helping to cover the office while Dawn was out.

That Was the Year that Was: A Look Back & Ahead

By Chuck Cohen, President

When I was a kid back in the mid-60s, I was in love with a current events/political satire TV show entitled "That Was the Week that Was." Each show would begin by taking the week's top events and putting them into a song called "Oh What A Week It Was." In many ways, this past year has been unlike any other for the Temple, the country, and the globe, and to borrow from that TV show, I would entitle it as "That Was the Year that Was."

For us at TBE, the year started, innocently enough, with a number of us gathering at the conclusion of our Annual Meeting, to clear out all movable objects from the Temple in preparation for the Big Building Renovation Project. Thanks to the hard work of all the volunteers, and under the guidance of our Captains Mike and Sarah Drickey, the move out of the building went quite smoothly. From there, however, things started going a little sideways.

Immediately following the move out, our construction crew began taking the facade off our current structure and found many unpleasant surprises, including: a wholly inadequate and dangerous wiring system; fire damage to the structure caused by the faulty wiring system; and damage resulting from animal infestation. These surprises, as well as increases in material costs, resulted in the project being both costlier and longer than expected, and the duration of the project resulted in our having to conduct our High Holiday Services off-site.

We were able to get back into our building in November, just in time to have a Shabbat service before Rabbi Asch began the first three months of her well-earned sabbatical. At the same time, the Board concluded that this was the right time to make a change in our front office and bring on a new Administrative Assistant.

Rabbi Asch returned to us at the end of February, and no sooner than we could say "Shalom Rabbi," the global COVID-19 pandemic really took hold in the United States and in Maine. In response to the pandemic, the Board established a COVID Task Force, which included Drs. Syd Sewall and Scott Schiff-Slater. Based on the advice of the task force, the Temple suspended all in-person events starting the weekend of March 13th. As of that date the Temple began conducting all Temple events, including services and study groups, virtually via the Zoom platform.

Then, on May 25, 2020, the whole country was rocked by the brutal killing of George Floyd while in police custody. George Floyd's death, coupled with other recent killings, including that of Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery, tore the band-aid off the wound of racial injustice and racial bias in our criminal justice system and led to protests across the country and here in Maine.

While the challenges have been great this year, as a community we have consistently demonstrated that we have been up to the task of meeting these challenges and proven how resourceful, resilient and caring the TBE community is. Specifically:

Continued on page 4

What's happening at TBE

"That Was the Year that Was," continued from page 3

- When faced with not having a home for the High Holidays, we found a temporary home at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Augusta and in the process, forged a strong bond with that community.
- In anticipation of the Rabbi's sabbatical, we formed a Sabbatical Team, and while it took seven of us to equal one Rabbi Asch, we were able to competently meet the needs of our congregants in the Rabbi's absence. In the process, we learned some new skills and also just how much Rabbi Asch does!
- Finally, through Zoom, we have been able to continue to provide meaningful services and study groups to the congregation, which have actually increased participation. As part of this process, many of us have learned that we are more technologically savvy than we ever dreamed of being.

Through it all, we've also managed to have some fun and put on successful community events. Specifically, we celebrated Hanukkah and Purim and we had a wonderful wine tasting at our new building before the shutdown, and we also had a virtual Community Seder via Zoom on Passover after the shutdown. And, of course, let's not forget that due to all our hard work, we have an unbelievably beautiful, fully renovated, and accessible building to house us for the years to come.

We ended the year at our Annual Meeting in early June. At the meeting, our outgoing Treasurer, Hildie Lipson, noted that the Temple's financial position going into the current fiscal year is sound. During the past year, while terumah contributions fell some, we were able to remain "in the black" by keeping operating expenses down. In addition, while our fundraising efforts to support the Building Project were strong, given the increased costs for the Project and to cover the lag between payments made in support of pledges and expenses which needed to be paid when incurred, the Temple needed to take out a loan. We will need to do additional fundraising around the Building Project.

The Annual Meeting also provided an opportunity to recognize the work of a number of congregants for their work in support of the Temple. First, consistent with the theme that it truly took a village to meet the challenges of the past year, the TBE Recognition Award this year went to the Sabbatical Committee consisting of Susan Bakaley-Marshall, Jay Collins, Nancy Kelly, Cree Krull, Hildie Lipson, Fran Rudoff and Chris Zinck. This year, the Board also created a new award to be given to congregants who have demonstrated dedicated and outstanding service to Temple Beth El over a multitude of years. The award, entitled the Rabbi Susan Bulba Carvuto Distinguished Service Award in honor of Rabbi Susan's work for the Temple, was presented to Jerry Bley, Hildie Lipson and Fran Rudoff, who have each provided countless hours of service to the Temple and have been major contributors to the Temple's success.

Looking ahead, it is clear at this time that the pandemic will be with us for most, if not all of the upcoming operating year. The Temple's COVID Task Force will continue to meet and assess how the Temple can address the new normal caused by the pandemic in a way that addresses the community's spiritual needs in an inclusive and safe manner. Plans are currently being developed on how we will apply these principles to our High Holiday celebrations. While these plans are still in the developmental stages, one thing is clear: this year's High Holiday celebrations will be unlike any other. We will keep you informed over the course of the summer as our plans become more defined.

Continued on page 5

Join Us for a Real, Live, In-Person Gathering!

Look for in person gatherings happening **this month** and **next month**. They will take place at various places around the state. Some might be hikes, some a chance to sit and chat with other TBE members. We ask that everyone attending these gatherings

- Be in good health and not at high risk for Covid-19 or in contact with someone who is high risk
- Not have any signs of illness including temperature, cough, sore throat or loss of smell
- Agree to wear a mask and abide by social-distancing guidelines at all time.

"That Was the Year that Was," continued from page 4

It is not clear at this point how the economic downturn caused by the pandemic will impact the Temple's finances. Several weeks ago, we sent our annual solicitation for terumah pledges to you asking that the pledge form with your financial commitment for the upcoming year be returned to the Temple by July 1st. If you have not done so already, I ask that you try and do so as soon as possible since having this information will greatly assist the Board as it tries to navigate through these difficult economic times and determine the correct financial path forward for the Temple.

In the coming year, the Temple will continue the social justice work started by our Beth El In Action Team. This spring, the Temple Board decided to take part in the URJ's Civic Engagement Project aimed at ensuring that every citizen that has the right to vote can exercise such right. The first steps in that Project have been to educate our congregation on the absentee ballot process in Maine and to provide access to the absentee ballot request process for those individuals who prefer to vote absentee in the upcoming July 14th election. We will also be forming a Civil Rights Team to address the issues of racial injustice raised by the recent Black Lives Matter protests as well as other populations that have been the target of discrimination and bias. This work will involve both duration and action on our part both individually and as a community. We encourage your participation as we go forward on this most important issue.

And on the Some Good News front, Rabbi Asch has verbally committed to renewing our contract with her, which was set to expire at the end of this calendar year! We will be working out the specific terms of the contract in the upcoming months.

Finally, a couple of shout outs and thanks: to departing Board members Lila Solomon and Fran Rudoff; to new Board members Ben Gottlieb and Mike Levey; to Hildie Lipson, for her many, many years of service as Treasurer; to our exiting and new officers; to our new Administrative Director, Dawn Fecteau; and last but not least to Jerry Bley, our Building Project Leader par excellence- Jerry, I think you still have one or two more annual meeting presentations in you.

So going back to that 60s TV show, indeed, "Oh What A Year It's Been." I will leave it to Cree Krull, our new VP and resident lyricist and humorist, to put it all to verse and music.



Family Shabbat Experience with Cantor Sheila Nesis

Friday July 10th & August 14th
5.00pm-5.30pm

Join Cantor Sheila Nesis to welcome Shabbat together! Grown-ups and children are invited to gather to experience a prayer moment filled with music and joy! In community, we will usher the beauty of Shabbat and all that it can bring to our lives. Wear something comfortable — some spontaneous dancing may occur! Zoom link will be provided.

Born and raised in Buenos Aires, Cantor Nesis now lives in Portland. She served Temple Sinai (Denver) as their cantor before moving to Maine.

Cantor Nesis Leads Shira B'Yachad

Sunday, July 12th
8:00pm-9:00pm

Join Cantor Sheila Nesis for a communal Singalong and Learnalong! With the beauty of Maine's summer as our background, we invite you to relax in your favorite chair, grab a glass of your favorite beverage, and sing together! Sing to find joy, to experience a moment of meaning, and to feel connected to your community. All ages are welcome! Zoom link will be provided.

Rabbi Asch wants to talk with you!

You now have three ways to meet with Rabbi Asch:

1. Old-fashioned phone call.
2. Zoom meeting
3. In-person meeting. Rabbi Asch is happy to meet with you outside while wearing a mask.

Please contact Rabbi Asch directly or book a meeting with her here: <https://calendly.com/rabbi-asch>
She misses all the oneg discussions that we used to be able to have!



Cookbooks, Cookbooks, Get Yah TBE Cookbooks Heah!

Stacey Mondschein Katz has compiled an amazing TBE cookbook full of recipes. You'll certainly want this in your hands before your cook Rosh Hashanah dinner. Did we mention the desserts? Five Generations Blueberry Pie from Nancy Schatz (as featured in the *Portland Press Herald*). The Asch family highly recommends the Chocolate Carmel Pecan Tart submitted by Fran Rudoff (they might have gotten their hands on an advanced copy of the cookbook). And, there are so many challah recipes! Suggested donation is \$18. Contact [Dawn](#) in the Temple office (242-9792) to reserve your copy. You can stop by to pick it up or she will put it in the mail to you.

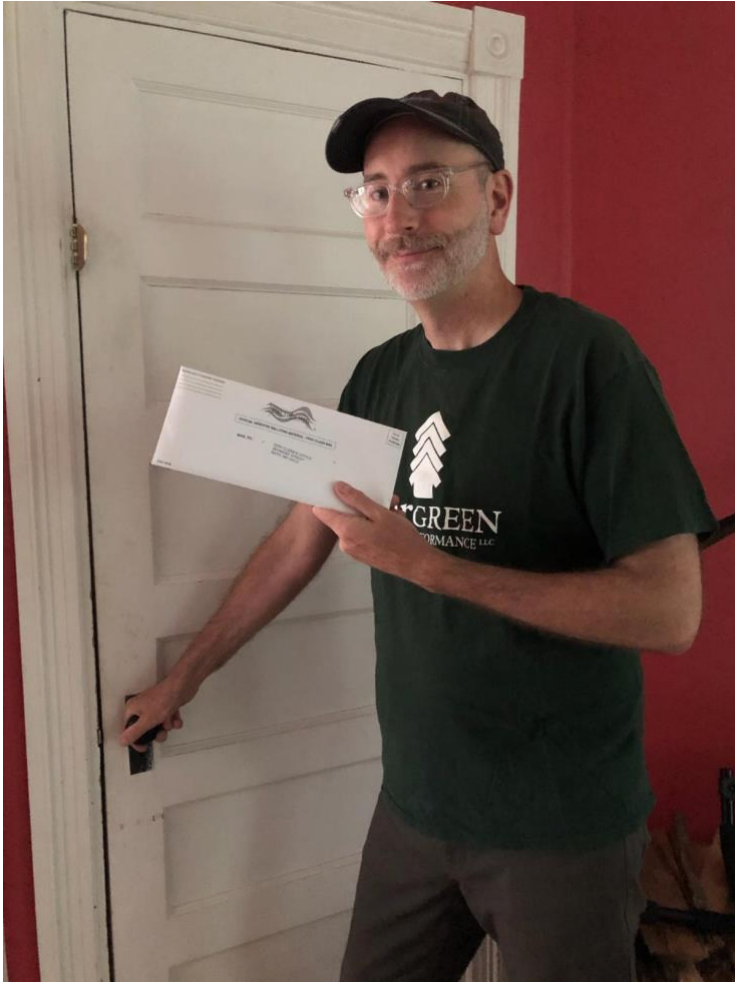
Beautiful Art, New Parking Lot, & Stained Glass @ TBE

There is lots of exciting movement happening in the building at TBE, even if we aren't there as often.

- Landscaping work will be done this summer, including redoing the parking lot areas.
- The stained glass window will be installed in early July.
- An art show is now up in the lobby. Watercolor paintings of Maine landscapes by Julian Sacks, a beloved former TBE member, are available for viewing and purchase. A portion of each purchase will be a donation to TBE. More information is here: <https://bethelaugusta.org/julian-sacks-watercolors/>

Contact Ellen Freed 485-0325 to arrange a time to see the exhibit or to view online.





Get that Ballot in the Mail Before July 14!

With the Coronavirus pandemic an unfortunate fact of life right now, TBE wants you to be safe as Maine approaches the primaries in July, to say nothing of Election Day in November. Absentee ballots are available — get them in the mail before primary day on July 14!

*Got your absentee ballot yet?
It takes less than two minutes!!!*

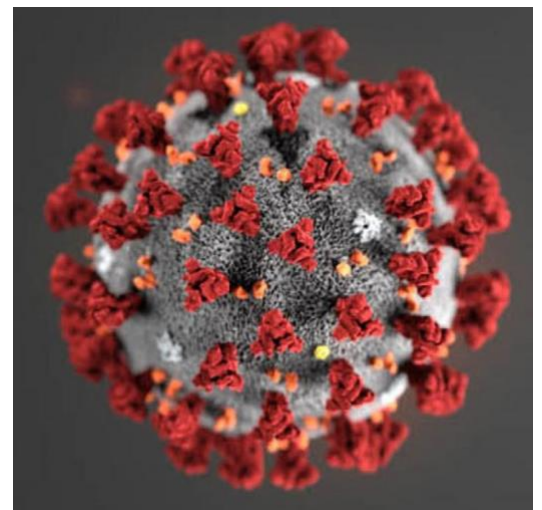
[Get your absentee ballot here:](#)

[Absentee Ballot Registration!](#)

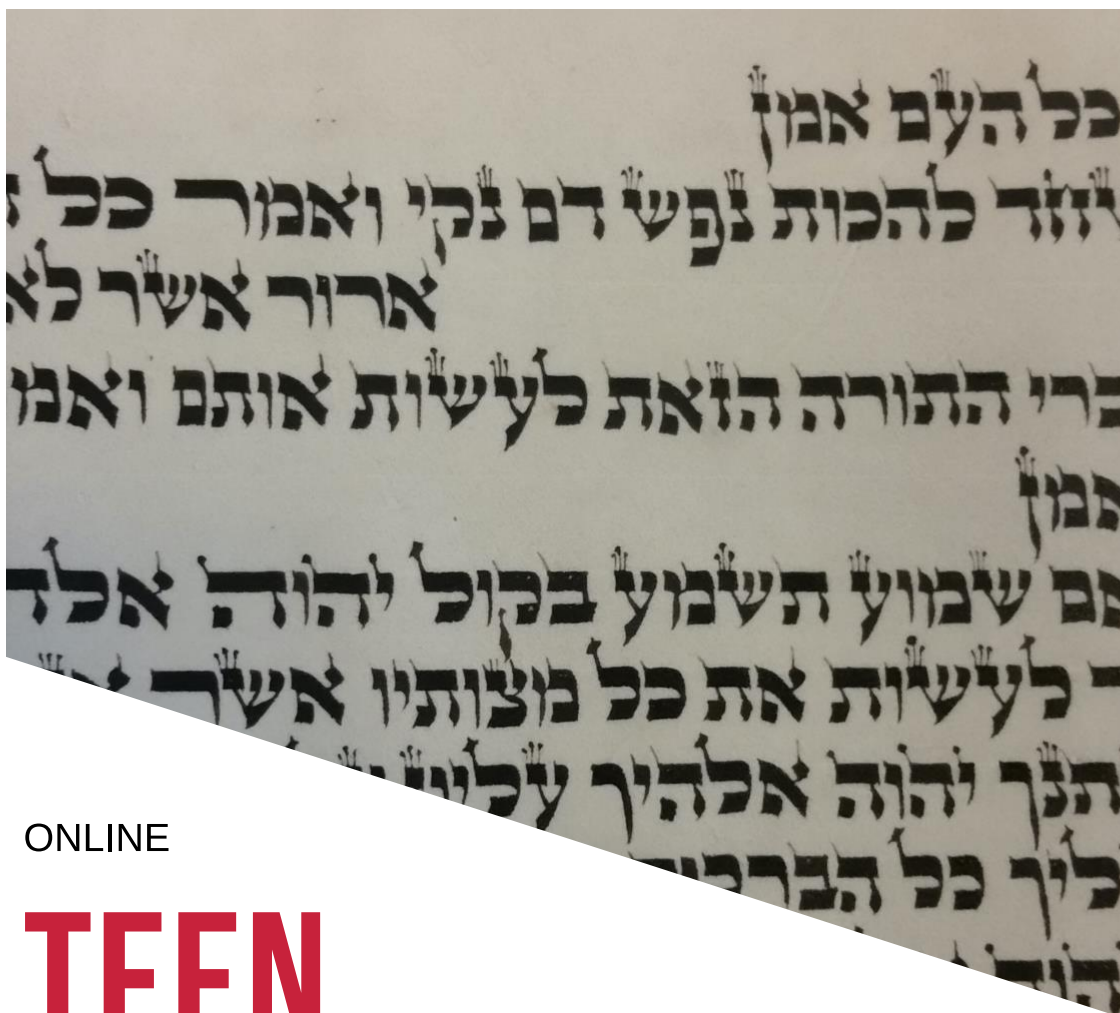
As you can plainly see, everybody's doing it. Don't be like that poor kid in middle school who always feels left out. Send us a selfie of you and your

High Holiday Task Force Tackles COVID Challenge

The Temple has recently appointed a High Holiday Task Force to discuss options for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. The task force has met a number of times. We started by discussing our goals for the holidays as well as parts that we felt were particularly important to the community. We have continued with brainstorming ideas for the services. We are committing to working with our Covid Task Force to make sure everyone is safe and to provide a meaningful and community-filled experience for everyone. Look for more information in August. If you have comments about the holidays, you are welcome to email [Liz Sizler](#).



Chuck Cohen, Linda Kallin, Cree Krull, Fran Rudoff, Liz Sizler



ONLINE

TEEN PROGRAMS

Wednesday, July 15th 7-8pm SOCIAL JUSTICE

Wednesday, August 12th 7-8:30pm COOKING



EMAIL RABBI ASCH TO RSVP!

SUMMER FUN FOR KIDS @ TBE

Funtensive! 7/13-17, 7/27-31

- Join us for a week of Funtensive--games, stories, hikes and art--at TBE. We have space for two more families!

Shabbat with Cantor Nesis

Friday 7/10 and 8/14; 5-5:30pm

- Songs and dancing to welcome in Shabbat.

Shabbat with Rabbi Asch

Saturday 7/18 and 8/8; 9:15-9:45am

- Songs and a Torah story for Shabbat

Havdallah, 8/29 at 7pm

- We say goodbye to Shabbat together

More information will be in the weekly emails. Contact Rabbi Asch with questions.





RJ on the GO

URJ FAMILY PROGRAMS

*Sign up for weekday programs [here](#)
Look at Camp offerings [here](#).
Sign up for Shabbat programming [here](#).
All programs are FREE!*

Shabbat
morning
songs 11am

Weekday
activities for
grades K-7

All ages
camp
programs

SIGN UP TODAY!
CONTACT RABBI ASCH WITH QUESTIONS.

FUNtensive is Back for Two Great Weeks!

Kids ages 7—12 get to enjoy two weeks of awesome (socially distanced) activities at TBE with Rabbi Asch. Games, hikes, art, music, stories, and more!

FUNtensive will be held at TBE from 9am-4pm on July 13-17 and July 27-31. If you have not already reserved a spot, be in touch with Rabbi Asch for more information.



Donations

General Fund

- Kay and Robert Gold
- Jerryanne LaPerriere
- Joe O'Donnell
- Sue and David Offer
- Muriel Schleider & Robert Hayes

Building Fund Capital Campaign

- Rabbi Asch and Chris Myers Asch
- Gail Fels
- Seth Greene
- Cree Krull
- Dawn Lieb and Sumner Lipman
- Sue and David Offer
- David Rand
- Peter Rosenberg
- Thea and Chris Zink

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

- Cynthia and Gregg Bernstein in memory of Jack Gustafson
- Cynthia and Gregg Bernstein in honor of Gage Bernstein's graduation
- Chuck Cohen and Mary Beth Paquette in memory of Louise Macy, Todd • Greene and Allen Davis
- Seth Greene
- Suzanne Harrigan
- Judy and Mark Lurie in gratitude for the care of Rabbi Susan

Yahrzeit/Memorials

- Li'el Boudreau & Rebecca Stevens in memory of Allen Davis and David Boughton
- Richard Dana in memory of Elizabeth Dana
- Caroline Davis in memory of Allen Davis
- Barbara Douglass in memory of Allen Davis
- Sarah and Mike Drickey in memory of Shawn Walker and Jack Drickey
- Gail Fels in memory of David Pollack
- Ellen Freed in memory of Allen Davis and Jet Price
- Joan and Lowell Freiman in memory of Albert Freiman
- Alan and Sandy Goldstein in memory of Allen Davis
- Seth Greene in memory of Ann O'Donnell and SM Patenaude
- Elaine Katz and Martin Hanish in memory of Allen Davis
- Margy and Steve Knight in memory of Allen Davis
- Naomi Knoll in memory of Allen Davis
- Roberta de Araujo and Ronald Kreisman in memory of Allen Davis
- Kirsten and Callan Langmeyer in memory of Allen Davis
- Jerryanne LaPerriere in memory of David Boughton
- Yale Marienhoff in memory of Meyer Schwartz
- Kate McLinn in memory of Matthew McLinn and Gene McLinn
- Stacey Mondschein Katz and Robert Katz in memory of Sy and Gloria Mondschein
- Joe O'Donnell in memory of Joan G. Price
- Sue and David Offer in memory of Allen Davis
- Betsy Offerman in memory of Allen Davis
- Marcia and Michael Parker in memory of Sylvia Parker
- Peter Rosenberg in memory of Allen Davis
- Nancy Ross and George Viles in memory of Allen Davis
- Marie Sacks in memory of Julian Sacks
- Deborah and Sydney Sewall in memory of Allen Davis
- Doretta Shapiro in memory of Allen Davis
- Nancy and Charles Shuman in memory of Samuel Lerman
- Alan Steinberg in memory of Allen Davis
- Anna Stumpf in memory of Allen Davis
- Dace and Jon Weiss in memory of Clara Miller Weiss
- Marty Weiss in memory of Allen Davis and Miriam Weiss

Terumah Pledges

Arwen Agee
Susan Bakaley Marshall and
Christopher Marshall
Louisa Barnhart and Michael Klein
Cindy and Gregg Bernstein
Li'el Boudreau
Leon Bresloff and Mary Bayer
Chuck Cohen and Mary Beth
Paquette
Danielle Dickey Heifets and
Solomon Heifets
Mike and Sarah Drickey
Richard Fein
Judith Feinstein
Gail Fels
Carole Fitzgerald
Jeff Frankel
Ellen Freed
Joan Freiman
Ilana Gilg
Anya Goldey
Ben Gottlieb
Carol Graham
Pauline and Reg Hannaford
Elaine Hanish Katz and Martin
Hanish
Linda and Peter Kallin
Nancy Kelly
Abbot Kominers
Beth Koopman
Cree Krull
Mike Levey
Carol Linker
Hildie Lipson
Eileen Ringel
Peter Rosenberg
Deborah Sandler
William & Jean Seager
Liz Sizeler
Marty Weiss
Chris and Thea Zinck

Temple Beth El

Phone 207-622-7450
 Rabbi Erica Asch 207-242-9792
 Email: bethelaugusta@gmail.com

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Vice President

Cree Krull

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Emily Bessey

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 Sumner Lipman
 Deb Sewall

Committee Chairs:

Emily Bley (Hebrew School)
 Judith Plano (Yad B'Yad)
 Fran Rudoff (Fundraising)

July Yahrzeits

July 1: Goldie Davis Passman
 July 3: Linda Weiss Manson
 July 3: Benjamin Rubinstein
 July 5: Fred Hannaford
 July 7: Anthony A. Imondi
 July 10: Marcia Allen
 July 10: David James Macy
 July 13: Rose Aransky LaPenna
 July 14: Harry Lait
 July 16: Gertrude Lerman
 July 17: Bernigolde Macy
 July 18: Naomi Shore
 July 23: Thelma Alpert Price
 July 24: Blanche Marienhoff
 July 25: Kent R. Katz
 July 25: Lydia Liechty Thielman
 July 27: Sylvia K. Fain
 July 27: Rose Schwartz
 Finkelstein
 July 28: William "Bill"
 Weisberger
 July 29: Nonie Barber
 July 29: Rebecca Schneider
 Cohen
 July 31: Julia Weiss



August Yahrzeits

August 1: Pearl Bien
 August 2: Robert Bley
 August 5: Ed Jones
 August 5: Joel Douglas Wells
 August 9: Harold Franzel
 August 9: Lynn Slosberg
 August 10: Dora Cohen
 August 12: Dick Faucher
 August 14: Janice Leavitt
 August 14: Rae Weiss
 August 16: Stephen Fusco
 August 18: Gerald Golden
 August 20: Esther Shuman
 August 23: Adelle Rubin
 August 23: Charles Zinck
 August 28: Leonard Brittain

Condolences

- To **Pat Davis** on the death of her husband, Allen Davis, on May 3rd.
- To **Thea Zinck and Chris Zinck** on the death of Thea's brother, David Boughton on May 21st.
- To **Tinker Hannaford** on the death of her husband, Reg Hanniford, on June 13th.

**Portland Chevra Kadisha
 Jewish Funeral Home**
 471 Deering Ave.
 Portland, ME 04103
 207.774.3733

*Refuah Sh'leimah
 (Get Well) to:*
 Carol Fitzgerald
 Charlotte Goos
 Suzanne Rosenberg