



## 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

Nisan-Iyar-Sivan 5779/May-June 2019

### *From the desk of Rabbi Asch*

We are in the wilderness. At this point in the cycle of the Jewish year we have just celebrated our freedom from slavery. Passover is called *Zaman Heiruteinu*, the time of our freedom, because we were physically free from slavery in Egypt. But our Jewish calendar tells us there is more to freedom than what our ancestors experienced at Passover.



On the second night of Passover, we begin a process of counting the Omer, counting every day from Passover until the holiday of Shavuot. This counting makes us aware that we do not achieve true freedom until we enter into a covenant with God at Sinai. This might seem counterintuitive. Isn't freedom the ability to do what we want to do? How is it 'free' to have to follow all of these laws (613 to be exact!) that God has given us? An answer to these questions is found in the work of 20<sup>th</sup> century philosopher (and Jew!) Isaiah Berlin. He said there were two types of liberty, negative liberty and positive liberty. Negative liberty is freedom from external restraint on one's actions. That is exactly what happened to us after the Exodus. We were no longer slaves, and now we were free to use our time as we wanted. But that type of liberty is not enough. There is also the concept of positive liberty, or the freedom to act. This type of freedom allows us the ability to pursue the life we want. Judaism says that the pinnacle of freedom is not negative liberty but positive liberty. By entering into a covenant with God at Sinai and agreeing to a set of rules to live by, we experience positive liberty. We are able to live our best lives by following the rules that God has set out and that have been vital to our people for thousands of years. At Shavuot we again willingly enter into covenant with God. We accept the responsibilities that this covenant entails and we are reminded of God's responsibilities to us as well. We look forward to this moment of entering into the covenant once again.

Now, we now find ourselves in the wilderness. Free from slavery in Egypt but not yet in a covenant with God as a people. For our ancestors, this period of time was difficult. They fought with one another and with Moses. They felt disheartened and dispirited. They had difficulty living with uncertainty.

For us today, it can also feel like a time of wilderness. The shooting at the synagogue in Poway came just before our commemoration of the Holocaust. Many of us see these acts of hate and wonder what is happening to our society and our country. In this time of wilderness, Jewish tradition reminds us to look towards Sinai. Despite the difficulties of being Jewish, our religion is not one of tragedy. We are a people who celebrate together, who value community, who embrace learning, and who find joy in the midst of despair. If this feels like a time of wilderness to you, I encourage you to approach Sinai by engaging in the traditions and laws that have sustained our ancestors through difficult times and brought joy to their lives. Celebrate Shabbat with your community. Come and wrestle with the words of Torah. Visit someone who is sick. Help those in need. Light Shabbat candles. Come to our Annual Meeting. Opt into Jewish tradition and Jewish community even more than you do now. Looking at this newsletter, I am amazed at all we do as a community to build and sustain a vibrant Jewish life in Central Maine. This is a time for more. More community, more celebration, more joy, and even more questions. Journey towards Sinai with us.

## *TBE Schedule: May-June*

### Services

**Note: As of June 3<sup>rd</sup>, all services and activities will be in the Shuman Education Building**

*Friday, May 3*

6:00pm Shabbat Service

7:00pm Potluck dinner

*Saturday, May 11*

9:00am Tot Shabbat

*Friday, May 17*

7:00pm Shabbat Service with Dr. Eshagh Shaoul

7:45pm Tea & Dessert

8:15pm Persian Music

*Saturday, May 18*

10:30am Bat Mitzvah of Marina Friedman

*Saturday, June 8*

6:30pm Shavuot program

*Sunday, June 9*

10:30am Shavuot services with Yizkor

*Friday, June 14*

7:00pm Shabbat Service

*Friday, June 28*

6:00pm Shabbat Service

7:00pm Potluck dinner

### Torah Study

*Saturday, May 4*

10:30am Torah Study & Kiddush Lunch

*Saturday, May 11*

10:30am Torah Study & Kiddush Lunch

*Saturday, June 1*

10:30am Torah Study & Kiddush Lunch

*Saturday, June 15*

10:30am Torah Study & Kiddush Lunch

*Saturday, June 29*

10:30am Torah Study & Kiddush Lunch

### TBE Activities

*Thursday, May 16*

6:00pm TBE Board Meeting

*Wednesday, May 22*

5:30pm Soup & Study

*Sunday, June 2*

9:30am Annual Meeting

1:00pm Packing up the Temple for Construction

*Wednesday, June 19*

5:30pm Soup & Study

*Friday, June 21-Sunday, June 23*

Maine Conference for Jewish Life

### Interfaith Activities

*Every Tuesday*

12:30pm Volunteering at Addie's Attic

*Thursday, May 9*

11:00am Interfaith Study

*Thursday, June 13*

11:00am Interfaith Study

### Hebrew School

*9:30 am on Sunday, May 5, 12, & 19*

*No school on May 26*

### Todah Rabah

The family of Harold Shapiro wishes to express their gratitude for the support and kindness shown us by the temple community during our recent loss. Our heartfelt thanks to all.

Fondly,  
*Doretta, Jeffrey, Laksana, Linda, Mikayla, & Jakob*



## *Your Rabbi in Action!*



*Rabbi Asch can be serious – protesting for social justice, leading a Yom Hashoah service at the Holocaust and Human Rights Center, or joining her colleagues on the board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. But “Rabbi-t” Asch can also be fun and silly, especially around Purim time!*



## The New Rabbi

**By Chuck Cohen, President**

I hope the title of this article didn't scare anyone! This isn't an announcement that Rabbi Asch has left us or that we are looking to hire a replacement. Rather it's the name of a book by Stephen Fried that tells the story of a temple, Har Zion, and its struggle to replace its rabbi who is retiring after more than 30 years of service. The book was recommended to me by a friend after she learned that I had been elected president of the temple. In recommending the book, my friend said that it would give a very good picture of temple politics and what I might be in for.

Har Zion is a large, 1,000+ member, Conservative Temple located in the wealthy Philadelphia suburbs. The book goes in rather lengthy detail about the mechanics, requirements, and awkwardness of filling a rabbi position. This hiring process often resembles a junior high dance. It also describes the internal conflict and struggle at the temple as it goes through a year-long odyssey to find a replacement for their long-serving rabbi, who was generally beloved but who also was ready to move on after maybe one too many years on the bimah. I highly recommend the book which is available from our Sifriyah. I won't tell you how the book ends, in part because I hate it when people do that in book reviews, and also, in part, because I don't know yet since I haven't quite finished it. But for me, more than being a just "good read," I found the book enjoyable because it helped me realize, once again, how special the Temple Beth El community is and how much I cherish it.

So, here's my top five list of what I love about TBE (not necessarily listed in order of importance):

1. **We're egalitarian:** We don't put up financial barriers to participation and where you sit at holiday services is not a function of what you paid for a ticket or past financial contributions;
2. **We're welcoming:** We recognize that there are many paths to Judaism, our Temple, and to leading a good Jewish life;
3. **We're not political (internally):** People do things for the good of TBE and not to further their own personal agendas;
4. **We're committed to social justice both internally and in the greater community:** In other words, we walk the walk and not just talk the talk; and finally,
5. **We have the greatest rabbi on earth:** Rabbi Asch does so many things and she does them so well and so elegantly. Which takes me back to my opening sentence and disclaimer -...

Rabbi Asch is actually leaving us; but just for a three-month sabbatical which will start in December. So, in actuality, we will need many "new rabbis" as we try to fill her very big shoes during this time period. We have already begun the planning process for Rabbi's sabbatical. Stay tuned for details as we look for volunteers to lead services, Torah study, minyans, visit members of the congregation, etc. In other words, our "new rabbi" may be you!





## **Marina Friedman Becomes a Bat Mitzvah**

**Saturday, May 18 @ 10:30am**

Marina Friedman is currently a 7<sup>th</sup> grader at Maranacook Middle School. Marina is a self-driven, enthusiastic, and motivated learner. She is comical, kind, and helpful. Marina enjoys academic rigor and is a straight A+ student. Her extra-curricular activities include playing field hockey, ice hockey, and lacrosse for her school. Marina also has a passion for singing and has a vocal coach in Portland. She is part of chorus, Chambers, and GT music at Maranacook Middle School. Hobbies and other interests include horseback riding, fishing, art, and advocating for animals. Marina has two older brothers, Jaxon (19) who graduated Kents Hill in 2018 and is playing Juniors hockey and Grady (17) who is attending Northfield Mount Hermon Prep School. Dad is a hockey coach and Mom is a Physical Education and Health teacher at Maranacook High School. Marina has worked hard and is very excited for her Bat Mitzvah. She appreciates all of the support Rabbi Asch has provided her in preparing for this special day.

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## **Maine Conference for Jewish Life**

**Friday, June 21- Sunday, June 23**

**Thomas College and downtown Waterville**

### **Register for the 2019 Maine Conference for Jewish Life!**

We're thrilled to announce that our keynote speaker at this year's conference will be Amir Tibon, Washington correspondent for *Ha'aretz*. Amir is also the author of an acclaimed biography of Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas. We look forward to welcoming Amir to Maine this June. Don't miss it—register today!

### **Questions?**

**Contact Mel Weiss**

**[maweiss@colby.edu](mailto:maweiss@colby.edu)**

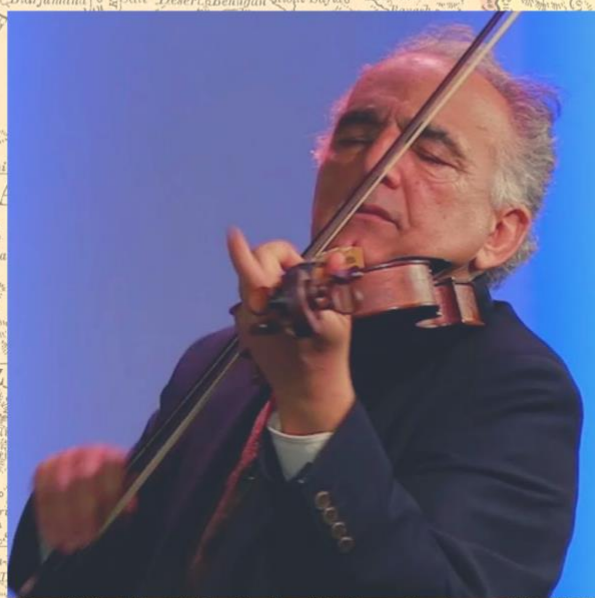




# Temple Beth El in Augusta, Maine

Presents a night of storytelling and traditional Persian music by renowned composer and violinist

## Eshagh Shaoul



Eshagh Shaoul will share stories of his life as a Jew growing up in Iran and he will perform original Persian music on his violin.

### Friday, May 17

7:00pm Kabbalat Shabbat and talk by Dr. Shaoul

7:45pm Dessert and tea

8:15pm Persian Music by Dr. Shaoul



## *What's happening at TBE*

### **TBE Annual Meeting**

**Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**9:30-11:30am**

Please bring fruit or a dessert dish to share! Following the Annual Meeting we are looking for **volunteers to help pack up the synagogue from 1-4pm**. Also needed are volunteers with trucks and cardboard boxes! Please RSVP to [bethelaugusta@gmail.com](mailto:bethelaugusta@gmail.com)

### **Soup & Study**

*Wednesday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>*

Stories from the Talmud

*Wednesday, June 19<sup>th</sup>*

Who Knew? Laws and Traditions for Jewish Holidays

# Shavuot!



### **Shavuot @ TBE**

**Saturday, June 8<sup>th</sup>**

**6:30—11:00pm**

Join with us for learning, singing and food as we celebrate receiving the Torah. You are welcome to come for part or all of the evening. We will need some people to teach in 20 minute slots and we welcome dessert contributions. More info to come!

### **Shavuot Morning Service with Yizkor**

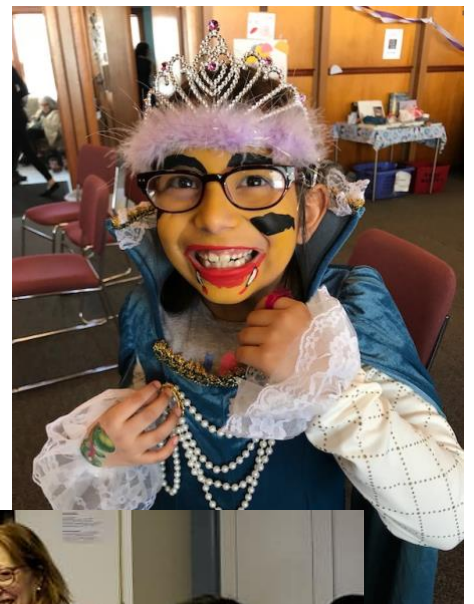
**Sunday, June 9<sup>th</sup>**

**10:30am**

Join us for a morning service, reading from the 10 Commandments, and discussion as we celebrate Shavuot. We will also have a yizkor service to remember those in our families and our friends who have died.



## *What's happening at TBE*





# Summer Funtensive: July 8-12, 2019

Sign up now for Jewish fun in Maine!

Plans are underway for a week of learning, playing, and adventure at our Summer Funtensive. Scheduled for July 8-12, the Funtensive provides a camping experience for Jewish kids right here in Maine. Based at Temple Beth El in Augusta, the Funtensive attracts campers from Waterville, Augusta, Bath, Lewiston, Portland, and beyond. Jewish teens and college students will work with Rabbi Asch and Mel Weiss to provide a fun and educational Jewish camp experience. Campers leave Funtensive with a sizable modern Hebrew vocabulary and other skills imparted through this immersive program. We can work with your community to provide transportation.



## Hebrew School End-of-Year Picnic

Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>  
9:30—11:30am

## Hebrew School Schedule

9:30 am on Sunday  
May 5, 12, & 19  
No school on May 26



## Donations

### **Building Fund Capital Campaign 2019**

- Rabbi Erica and Chris Myers Asch
- Cynthia and Gregg Bernstein
- Peter Bickerman
- Emily and Jerry Bley
- Li'el Boudreau
- Vicky and Jonathan Cohen
- Anya and Allen Goldey
- Linda and Peter Kallin
- Hildie Lipson
- Sumner Lipman
- Louis Metzger
- Suzanne and Peter Rosenberg
- Rabbi Peter Rubinstein



### **Rabbi Discretionary Fund**

- Kate McLinn

### **Yahrzeit/Memorials**

- Cynthia and Gregg Bernstein in memory of Jack Gustafson
- Li'el Boudreau in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Charlene and John Bridge in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Chuck Cohen and Mary Beth Paquette in memory of Milton Prager
- Chuck Cohen and Mary Beth Paquette in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Sarah and Mike Drickey in memory of Shawn Walker
- Ellen Freed and Carol Barlow in memory of Walter Barlow
- Ellen Freed and Carol Barlow in memory of Rose Golden
- Ellen Freed and Carol Barlow in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Joan and Lowell Freiman in memory of Lillian Freiman
- Anya and Allen Goldey in memory of Lillian Freiman
- Carol Graham in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Ellen Bader Kandel and Laurance Bader in memory of Charles Bader
- Janice and Carroll Moreshead in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Teresa Nichols in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Sue and David Offer in memory of Samuel L. Gershon
- Sue and David Offer in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Joan Price and Joe O'Donnell in memory of Ann C. O'Donnell
- Joan Price and Joe O'Donnell in memory of Henry S. Price
- Joan Price and Joe O'Donnell in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Nan Salvino and Jon Mittelman in memory of Frank Salvino
- Deborah Sandler in memory of Robert Sandler
- Beth and Steven Shapiro in memory of Rose Golden
- Beth and Steven Shapiro in memory of Harold Shapiro
- Beth and Steven Shapiro in memory of Shirley Siegel

Making a donation to Temple Beth El is a special way to honor family and friends.

### **Terumah**

This fund includes the former General Fund and Dues and covers all temple operating expenses.

### **Building Fund**

This fund is for major repair and rebuilding of our facilities.

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

This fund helps Rabbi Asch meet special needs in the community.

### **Yahrzeit/Memorials/Honoraria**

These contributions are made in memory or honor of family and friends.

### **Memorial Plaques**

Remember a loved one with a memorial plaque in the synagogue. Donation: \$250

*Payment due at time of order.*

### **Tree of Life**

Acknowledge a life milestone in a special way by adding a personalized, inscribed leaf to the Tree. Donation: \$36.

*Payment due at time of order.*

Please make checks payable to Temple Beth El. Indicate the fund to which you want to contribute and mail to TBE, Box 871, Augusta, ME 04332. Undesignated checks will go to the General Fund. *Temple Beth El accepts Visa & Mastercard. Please contact the office with any questions.*



## Temple Beth El

Phone 207-622-7450  
 Rabbi Erica Asch 207-242-9792  
 Email: [bethelaugusta@gmail.com](mailto:bethelaugusta@gmail.com)

### President

Chuck Cohen

### Vice President

Emily Bessey

### Immediate Past President

Anya Goldey

### Treasurer

Hildie Lipson

### Secretary

Judith Plano

### Board of Directors

Jerry Bley, J. Richardson  
 Collins, Mike Drickey, Richard  
 Fein, Richard Goldman, Nancy  
 Kelly, Fran Rudoff, Lila  
 Solomon, Chris Zinck

### Honorary Directors

Peter Bickerman  
 Julius Goos  
 Sumner Lipman

### Committee Chairs:

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

## May Yahrzeits

May 1	Rebecca Slosberg
May 3	Max Slosberg
	Irving Weiss
May 4	Abraham Slosberg
May 5	Sidney Goldstein
May 7	Edith Sclar
May 8	Anthony Imondi
May 10	Samuel Weiss
May 11	Sylvia Parker
	Benjamin Slosberg
May 13	Jean Dietz
May 14	Tyler Lessard
May 15	Leigh Ann Lee
May 16	Edwin Eckert
May 18	Dr. Julian Sacks
	Emily Winkeller
	Elizabeth Lipman
Winter	
May 21	Meyer Schwartz
May 24	Robert Bien
May 29	Carol Bernstein Hecht
	Matthew Peter McLinn

## June Yahrzeits

June 2	Erika Ellen Briggs
	Marion Fusco
	Irwin H. Mittelman
June 4	Fred Slater
June 5	Gertrude Rudoff
June 6	Jack Drickey
	Albert Freiman
	Fred Sewall
June 7	Jean Bakalet
	Joseph Schatz
	Joseph Leroy Shed
June 8	Samuel Lerman
June 10	Stuart Boughton
June 12	Paul Adler
	Beverly Gass
June 15	Howard S. Slosberg
June 21	Albert Abraham Rosenberg
June 28	Dora R. Slosberg
June 29	Marilyn Molner
	David Pollack
	Phyllis Weisberger

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



*Refuah Sh'lemah*  
*(Get Well) to:*

Julius Goos  
 Michael Libby  
 Judy Plano