



Bethel-Harrisonburg.org

The purpose of this congregation shall be to worship God in accordance with the faith of Judaism; to cultivate a love and understanding of the Jewish heritage; to strengthen the ties within the Jewish community; to strengthen the bonds of loyalty with the Jewish people everywhere; to bring nearer the Dominion of God on earth through an emphasis on the principles of righteousness and harmony in society at large, and to engage in social action projects in pursuit of social justice and Tikkun Olam (repair of both the human and nonhuman components of the world).

AUGUST 2019

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Rabbi Grumbacher visited this week and was able to stop in briefly at the board meeting.

He is looking forward to the upcoming year and plans to meet with congregants whenever possible. His first scheduled service will be on September 6 when we will dedicate our new Torah mantles (They're beautiful!) donated by the Kohen family in honor of Janet.

Summer has been a time for on-going work at Beth El. A fire inspection has been scheduled, the air conditioning has been repaired, and trimming of the shrubbery continues.

The Social Action committee is continuing to gather ideas for Faith in Action. Please contact Andy Kohen if you have not already done so. We have been contacted by Chuck Slott's family who would like to set up a memorial fund in Chuck's memory focusing on social action.

Choir practice will begin on August 18. Contact Ron Ornstein for information.

Men's Club will be donating a number of books to Cub Run. Sisterhood is taking a break for the summer, but soon will be planning upcoming events for the year. Michelle Ornstein (& Ron) & Phil Renick are donating picnic tables for Religious School (and others) in honor of their parents. These will be located near the linden tree behind the Temple.

We reviewed a letter which will be sent out to the congregation at the beginning of August outlining the actions taken or in progress in addressing security issues at the Temple this year.

We also reviewed the annual linear calendar which will be available following the board's August meeting. The first day of Religious School will be Sunday, August 25. Added to the calendar is a S'lichot dinner chaired by Judy Liss on September 21. The board approved the visit of a Kulanu speaker on the weekend of November 15 which will be co-sponsored by Hillel. Eric Kramer is chairing this event. More information to follow. Thank you both for initiating and organizing these events. We continue to have visitors stop in and noted how important it is to have services every Friday night. Thank you to every one who volunteers for this honor.

Michelle

MY (MONTHLY) WORD!

“Much Ado About Our Holy Days??”

It's hard to believe that a holiday once considered more important (or at least as important) than our Day of Atonement is barely a blip in the collective memory of our people. But if we take a look at the ancient texts regarding Tu b'Av (no, not **Tish'a** b'Av, the 9th day of the Hebrew month of Av, the day commemorating the tragedies of days gone by), rather the 15th day of Av (*T* - *tet*, the alphabetical equivalent of 9; and *vav/u*, the equivalent of 6 = 15), we find something surprising. The sages of the Second Temple period wrote, *“There were no happier days for the people of Israel than the fifteenth of Av and (perhaps even greater than) Yom Kippur”*

Why? On both days the young women would go out into the fields and matches would be made with the young men. Yes, it is considered the Jewish Valentine's Day. In Israel cards and flowers, parties and dancing take place on this day which in 2019 begins on the evening of August 15. But until a number of years after the establishment of the Jewish State, this holiday was hidden in the archives of the past. The only hint of the joyfulness of Tu b'Av was the rabbis of old deciding to eliminate the recitation of certain prayers of sadness from the traditional daily worship service, an absence to this day.

“Wait,” you say, *“on Yom Kippur, our Holiest Day, the day we're in the synagogue, the young women would go into the fields? Romantic matches were made?? You've GOT to be kidding!”* Well, I wasn't there but obviously the intensity of our holiest day wasn't as it is today.

And that makes me ponder...maybe we should reimagine the holy days in general.

We're not at the door of Rosh Hashanah yet, especially with the new year occurring “late” this year (on the secular calendar, but, as usual, right on time on the Hebrew calendar!). In the two months between now and our Days of Awe, let's take a look at those days, especially Yom Kippur.

For all my rabbinate I've said that **we pay too much attention to those days and we dismiss other important days of commemoration.**

Now listen, dear friends...can you honestly think of a more morose day?

My point is how can our young people get excited about being Jewish if their exposure is often ONL Y on the day of fasting, praying, checking off our sins, and other less-than-thrilling exercises? For certain, if they don't experience the whole

gamut of Jewish celebrations, holidays and otherwise. their perception of what it means to be Jewish, truly Jewish, is skewed. And above everything else, let me stress *the beauty, indeed, the gift of **Shabbat!***

So before the sacred season begins, I ask especially, but not exclusively, you with children still at home, to pledge yourself to a different approach to your Jewish identity. Yes, I expect you to be in your seat on our holydays but I expect you also to be in the sanctuary **on an occasional Shabbat** (I'm not asking for every Shabbat. I'm a realist, folks).

Maybe that was the intent of our ancestors...the sadness of Tish'a b'Av and its preceding three weeks had to be offset by something joyful, hence Tu b'Av, six days later. Everything in Judaism should be experienced. Commit yourself to that way of life, that way of living.

In my September column, I'll look at the other pre-season consideration: the *chesbon ha-nefesh*, the inventory of the soul.

'Til next month!

Leadership

Rabbi: Peter H. Grumbacher

President: Michelle Ornstein

Vice President: Joshua Linder

Treasurer: Bill Ney

Secretary: Phil Renick

Corresponding Secretary: Gale Clemons

Trustee: Lester Mintzer

Trustee: Bill Ney

Trustee: Ron Ornstein

Past President: Andy Kohen

At large member: Amanda Friss

At large member: Ron Rubin

At large member: Linda Kohn

Sisterhood Presidents: Sherri Alt + Rebekah Greenfield

Men's Club President: Lester Mintzer

Religious School Principals: Dara Hall + Liz Webb

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YAHREZEITS

01 Jord Poster	2012	
04 Eugene Berney	1976	
Robert W Rudd		
09 W.C. Ward	1997	Michelle Ornstein's father
11 Velerie Ney	1981 Member	
Chuck Slott	2018 Member	
12 Blanche Goldman		
Betty O'Callaghan		Maureen Goldberger's Mother
13 David Aaron Kraus		
Lena Raff	1982	Irma Nemoytin's Mother
14 Jessie Frankel		Dave Frankel's Mother
15 Moses Rosenbloom		Sarah Loewner's Father
Alexander Auerbach	1975	Suzi Trubitz' Grandfather
16 Robert Hirsch		
Ali David Good		Estelle Robinson's Father
17 Carrie Ney Scheuer	1954 Member	
18 Albert Ash		Eddie Ney's Grandfather
Adele Bilsker Moses	1968	
Louis Slott		Chuck Slott's Father
19 Suzanne Glazer		John Stewart's Sister
20 Arlette Lewin	1999	
21 Irving Ney	1966	Eddie Ney's Father
23 Rubin Peck		Beverly Zindler's Father
24 David Robinson	1968 Member	Josh Robinson's Brother
26 Raymond Hoffman		Rabbi Dan Fink's Grandfather
27 John Stewart	2010 Member	
29 Rose Poster Carr	2005	Allan Poster's Mother
30 Joseph Mintzer	1967 Member	Erwin Helbraun's & Anne Mintzer's Uncle
Marvin Poster	1976 Member	
Abraham Goodman	1976	Suzi Trubitz' Father

DONATIONS

To the General Fund

Penny Williams

To the Beth El Library

Bob Bersson

To the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in honor of Rabbi Grumbacher

Eliot Robinson & Liane Schleifer

To the Yahrzeit Memorial Fund

Esther Minskoff in memory of her husband (Jerry Minskoff).

Alan & Kate Neckowitz in memory of Alan's father (Jack Neckowitz).

Arnie Kahn in memory of his wife (Ronnie Kahn).

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Religious School information for 2019-20 will be emailed to families in early August! If you have any new children registering who will be starting Religious School for the first time this fall, please contact Liz Webb at liz.matusow@gmail.com or Dara Hall at halldm@jmu.edu.

Do you have any preschoolers interested in a parent/preschooler program on Sunday mornings? If so, please contact Dara or Liz as above with the name(s) and age(s) of your child(ren) so we can determine if we have enough children to have a preschool program this year.

Mark your calendars for the first day of Religious School with a parent meeting on Sunday, August 25th. We look forward to seeing you then!

L'shalom,

Dara & Liz

S'lichot

DINNER AND SERVICE



In Hebrew, S'lichot translates to forgiveness. S'lichot is an evening service held prior to Rosh Hashanah. This once in the year, as a *kehillah k'doshah*, as a holy congregation, we follow in the Psalmist's way. "I arise to give thanks unto You."

Saturday, September 21, 2019

- 6:00 PM** Meet & greet over hors d'oeuvres at Beth El.
7:00 PM Dinner guests arrive at the home of one of several congregation member hosts. (Adults only dinner with the opportunity for conversation.)
9:00 PM S'lichot service led by Rabbi Grumbacher @ Beth El. As with all services, everyone is encouraged to attend.
9:30 PM Oneg

RETURN BY
9/14/19
to:

Beth El Congregation
C/O Bill Ney
P.O. Box 845
Harrisonburg, VA 22803

SEPTEMBER 21st



NAME: _____

NUMBER of Adults: _____ AMOUNT Enclosed (\$25.00/person): _____

FOOD RESTRICTIONS: _____

This fundraiser supports programs and activities at Beth El Congregation.
Beth El Congregation - 540.434.2744 <http://bethel-harrisonburg.org>

AUGUST 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
28	29	30	31	1	2	3
					Summer Shabbat Potluck @ 6:30PM. Lay services @ 7:30 PM.	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
SHORTY Meeting					Summer Shabbat Potluck @ 6:30PM. Lay services @ 7:30 PM.	Erev Tisha B'Av
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
Tisha B'Av					Summer Shabbat Potluck @ 6:30PM. Lay services @ 7:30 PM.	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	6:30pm Board Meeting				Summer Shabbat Potluck @ 6:30PM. Lay services @ 7:30 PM.	
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
First day of Religious School						