



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).

JUNE 2020

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, From the Board May 18, 2020

- Rabbi Grumbacher via Zoom opened the meeting with a d'var Torah.
- Rabbi's Report: We have started having successful Zoom services. We have an upcoming Bar Mitzvah, as well as the Confirmation service of Owen Harris and Grace Miller, to follow, on the same day.
- President's Report: Michelle continues to correspond with Rabbi Grumbacher on a daily basis, assuring that his commentaries are distributed to members of the congregation. In the recent weeks, she has continued to gather information from a variety of folks and sources as we transition into a Covid 19 world. She is also identifying tasks that need to be done as we shift responsibilities and welcome two new board members in June.
- Vice President's Report: Josh Linder is planning to transition his duties to Amanda Friss, as he is planning to be gone for two years. Francis Flannery will be our contact as the Hillel advisor. The board is donating \$36 in honor of Josh's service, to the Tzedakah of his choice. (Josh has indicated that his choice is Beth El).
- Treasurer's Report: Bill Ney reports that income is down, as expected with the pandemic situation. He reminded us that we will have about \$2000 to spend toward Social Action, in the coming year. Ron again proposed that we donate \$72 as a thank you for the many, many years of service that Bill has provided. Ron Rubin will be our next treasurer.
- Trustees' Report: Les Mintzer reports that they are trying to address several areas of the cemetery grounds that need attention including growing grass.
- Building & Grounds Committee: Ron Ornstein reports that Mary Handley and Kent Palmer did a bunch of weeding. (As noted by several congregants, the grounds have been lovely.)
- Library/ Archives Committees: The Archives members were working on sorting and storing materials, until the pandemic interruption, and will resume when it is safe to do so.
- Rabbi Search Committee: The Board leadership is in the process of finalizing our contractual relationship with Rabbi Grumbacher for 2020-2021.
- Social Action: 1) The efforts of Faith in Action in pursuit of improvements in local affordable housing continue, albeit constrained by the rules about congregating during the pandemic 2) In light of the increased profound problem of food insecurity in our nation at this time (it is reported that children in 1/5th of all households nationwide are insufficiently nourished), Andy Kohen requested that we make donations to both Mazon and to the Blue Ridge Food Bank in the amounts of \$54 to each. The board voted in favor, and the amounts will come out of the Janet Kohen Memorial fund and the Chuck Slot Memorial fund, which both provide funding for social action. 3) With the able assistance of Linda Kohn, we will try to keep the congregation informed about local, regional, and national efforts to deal with problems of social injustice and how Beth El and its congregants can participate in such efforts—even remotely. Michelle expressed that we do not have the capabilities to participate in all of the offered topics and that we should evaluate and prioritize each, recognizing individual interest.
- Beth El Nominating Committee: As per Andy's attachment, we currently have received 47 voting responses, which is higher than the typical rate of participation.

- As an Old Business item, we discussed the dynamics of the Zoom annual meeting on May 24, acknowledging that this is an evolving design.
- Men's Club: Les reports that the Men's Club meeting at the Catholic Church has been cancelled. Les has not yet been able to hold a meeting recently, and is anticipating that it might be a possibility by either July or August.
- Sisterhood: Sherri Alt reports that they are trying to do an email train as no meetings can be held, and that the Sisterhood Shabbat was cancelled.
- Religious School: Closed until further notice. Bill has been trying to finalize the honorariums for the teachers.
- **New Business:**
- Feasibility for live streaming: We discussed changes that would add to the reliability of our existing wifi. Rabbi Grumbacher has been researching ideas to either Zoom, live-stream, or pre-record the High Holy Days. Andrew Neckowitz (JMU IT dept) has also been providing information. Josh Linder continues to provide information as well and gather resources to this regard. Michelle requests that we continue to contemplate on how to proceed, and she requests that someone take the lead on how to navigate this plan.
- Opening of Beth El: We briefly discussed this as a fluid situation.
- The topic of burial of non-Jewish spouses at the Beth El cemetery was discussed at the request of a spouse. Andy referenced the current constitution and noted that the request falls under current guidelines.
- Next meeting: Monday, June 15, 2020 @6:30 PM

Annual Congregational Meeting follow up:

As our board transitions, we would like to say thank you again to Bill Ney and Josh Linder for their continued contributions over the years to the leadership of Beth El. Ron Rubin takes over as treasurer and Amanda Friss as vice-president. We welcome Rachelle Dorne and Roni Goldberg as members-at-large. We would not thrive without those who are willing to take on additional responsibilities within our community.

The 2020-2021 year officially begins on June 1. Please know that we have a number of committees that welcome participation beyond members of the board: Adult Education, Archives, Building & Grounds, Fundraising, Library, Membership, Pulpit Search, Religious Services including Ritual, Social Action, and our newest committee, Technology.

Thank you to everyone who helps make sure Beth El continues to be the active and engaged place it is! If you are interested in joining one of the committees, please let us know ☺ . We could use your help.

Michelle Ornstein, Beth El board president

Whatever Happened to Jewish Humor?

When I'm in the car, especially while driving to Virginia, I listen to two genres of programs on satellite radio. One of them is called Classic Radio, SiriusXM channel 148, the shows of the 1940s, 50s and 60s. Those include Dragnet, Gunsmoke, Fibber Magee and Molly, Tales of Texas Rangers and the Jack Benny Program, among many others.

The other is the channels that offer humor, Sirius XM channels in the upper 90's. There are about five of them stretching from old-time comedians, many of whom made their debut on the Ed Sullivan Show, to modern comedians, pristine and less-than-pristine. I notice that while there are Jewish comics there are far fewer than there were in the mid- to late-twentieth century.

I wondered why that was so. I came across an explanation of "Jewish" humor. This is what was written: "Jews, whether from the small towns of Russia or the big cities of the United States, listen to a story with a third ear or read it with a third eye. Even if only subconsciously, they experience an awareness of fraternity, a sharing of latent emotion, a recognition of oneness evolved over a span of 3500 years, and perhaps most important, an innate need for such identity," (Henry D. Spalding, Encyclopedia of Jewish Humor, 1969)

We don't seem to need that identity today, and maybe it's because we don't have an "awareness of fraternity," etc. It's no secret that over the past century we've become very integrated into American society. The traditional simile compared this country to a mixed salad. All the ethnicities, religions, nationalities and cultures existed side-by-side, for better or worse. Today it is better defined as a "smoothie," all the above turned into a mush especially the "ingredient" of the liberal Jew. Just note the disappearance of delis in, of all places, New York City, and the popularity of blueberry bagels with strawberry flavored cream cheese (Double "UGH!").

Some of the "material" I've used in my daily word and in my conversations with you have had interesting reactions depending on age. Those closer to my seven+ decades "get it," while those younger look at me as if I'm speaking Assyrian (I know a few good Assyrian jokes, but I can't translate them). The ethnicity in Jewish humor is a thing of the past; in fact, Jewish humor is, I believe, a thing of the past. That's too bad because just as our liturgy is far more than what we think prayer is, so our humor has been, over the centuries, more than the "joke," integrating our history and theology, our achievements and our tragedies.

I emphasize that we need humor at a time like this. Maybe my daily jokes, or my "Jokes for the Folks" on Shabbat will sensitize you younger members to the beauty of Jewish humor. On the other hand, it might alienate everybody.

LEADERSHIP

Rabbi: Peter H. Grumbacher

President: Michelle Ornstein

Vice President: Amanda Friss

Treasurer: Ron Rubin

Secretary: Phil Renick

Corresponding Secretary: Gale Clemons

Trustee: Lester Mintzer

Trustee: Eric Rynar

Trustee: Ron Ornstein

Past President: Andy Kohen

At large member: Rachelle Dorne

At large member: Roni Goldberg

Sisterhood Presidents: Sherri Alt + Rebekah Greenfield

Men's Club President: Lester Mintzer

Religious School Principals: Dara Hall + Liz Webb

Bridge Editor
Elliott Golub
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540-289-5336

YAHREZEITS

01 Dora Brill

Molly Katzen's Mother

02 Setta Scheuer 1894

Marie A Good 1980

Estelle Robinson's Mother

William Piper

Sandi Rose's Father

Samuel Horn 1924 Member

Marvin V Mondres 2006 Member

Lila Hyman 2006

Joyce Helbraun's Sister

05 Bernard Ney 1961 Member

F Rita Kaslow 2001 Member

| | | | | |
|----|-------------------|------|--------|---|
| 06 | Pauline Zindler | 2002 | Member | Leo Zindler's Mother |
| | Leopold Wise | 1885 | Member | |
| 07 | Baby Samuel | 1912 | | |
| 08 | Manuel Levine | 1987 | | Janet Kohen's Father |
| 10 | Leo Zindler Sr. | 1968 | Member | Leo Zindler's Father |
| | Margene Ward | 2008 | | Michelle Ornstein's Mother |
| 11 | Anna Meyers | | | |
| | Estelle Handler | | | Lenny Handler's Mother |
| 12 | Joseph Funston | | | Jay Funston's Father |
| | Gertrude Davidson | | | |
| 14 | Fred Bersson | 2005 | | Bob Bersson's Brother |
| | Dave Merlin | 2007 | Member | |
| 15 | Miriam Hirsch | | Member | |
| 17 | Elon Brand | | | Rafael & Shirley Brand's Son (THOI) |
| 19 | Herbert Kaslow | 1986 | Member | |
| 21 | Emma Ney | 1876 | | First Person Buried in Beth El Cemetery |
| | David Blatt | 1980 | | Franklin Blatt's Uncle |
| 22 | Hyman Golub | | | Elliott Golub's Father |
| 23 | Anna Klingstein | 1922 | Member | |
| 24 | Albert F Miller | 2000 | | Mona Wolf's Father |
| 25 | Joseph Fox | | | |
| | Elisa Tomaszewski | 2004 | | Anne Mintzer's Granddaughter |
| 26 | Steven Nemoytin | | | Gene & Irma Nemoytin's Son |
| 27 | Lawrence Meyers | | | |
| 28 | Herbert Gould | | | Alan Gould's Father |
| | Stanley Figgatt | 1943 | Member | |
| | Morris Spiro | 1940 | Member | |
| 29 | William Obersig | 1913 | | |

DONATIONS

To the Yahrzeit Memorial Fund

Arnie Kahn & Elly Swecker in memory of Greg Kahn (Arnie's son).

Eddie Ney & Margee Greenfield- Ney in memory of Mildred Greenfield (Margie's Mother).

Esther Minskoff in memory of Robert Minskoff (Esther's son).

Charles & Gale Clemons in memory of Arnold Abriss (Gale's father).

In memory of Ron Ornstein's Father

Bill & Leslie Ney

Esther Minskoff

Joan Funston

Eddie & Margee-Greenfield Ney

Beth El donated to the charities of their choice to Josh Linder and Bill Ney for their service to the board.

Beth El made donations to both Mazon and the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank

In memory of Ron Ornstein's Father

Elliott & Thea Golub

Judy Freudenthal

Alan & Kate Neckowitz in memory of Bobbie Bloom (Alan's Sister)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Faith in Action

The forthcoming campaign of Faith in Action, of which Beth El Congregation is a member, will focus on the social justice issue of affordable housing. The covenant assembly approved the following as the “asks” to form the core of the campaign. We will try to arrange an information session to describe and discuss this campaign which is likely to continue for more than a year.

Andy Kohen & Arnie Kahn (Beth El representatives to Faith in Action)

- 1) **The City of Harrisonburg and Rockingham County jointly fund and administer an Affordable Housing Trust Fund.** The purpose of this Fund would be to encourage the preservation of existing affordable housing and creation of new affordable housing for households at 80% of area median income and below.
- 2) **An appropriation of at least \$750,000 annually each from City and County to fund the Affordable Housing Trust Fund.**
- 3) **A Housing Advisory Committee be established** comprised of both City and County staff as well as several community members from the population served, builders, realtors, service providers, and other members at-large, insuring racial and economic equity to advise on both the inflow and outflow of Affordable Housing Trust funds.

FIRST STEP: A RESPONSE TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

First Step Top Needs

SURVIVORS NEED... YOU.

Survivors need to know that the community cares for them. Survivors need support. Survivors need YOU. Their time at First Step is temporary, but they still need the basic necessities to make their stay as comfortable and safe as possible. Survivors are able to access basic necessities at First Step because of community support. Could you imagine not having something as simple as a pillow or toilet paper? You make an impact on survivors when you donate the most requested items!

SURVIVORS' TOP NEEDS ARE:

New underwear, socks, & bras

New pillows

Paper towels & toilet paper

Clorox or Lysol brand disinfecting wipes

Coffee, tea, sugar, & creamer

Cleaning supplies (Bona solution, shower cleaner, etc.)

Laundry detergent pods (Tide Pods)

Sensitive skin detergent pods (All Free Clear Pods)

Snacks for children's groups (crackers, chips, fruit cups, etc.)

Valley Open Doors

Supplies Needed

We will now be accepting donations at Godwin Hall from 7-9pm each evening. There will be a tote placed outside of the southern door for donations, you will not enter the shelter facility. We will update this list periodically, and always list items in order of greatest need. At this time, we are completely out of underwear for our guests and we have a guest in need of depends. Thank you for your continued support.



OPEN DOORS

ACCEPTED DONATION ITEMS

DURING COVID-19 EMERGENCY SHELTER

UPDATED: 5/17/20

WE WILL UPDATE AS OUR NEEDS CHANGE AND LIST ITEMS IN ORDER OF GREATEST NEED. ITEMS IN RED ARE URGENT.

Donations can be dropped off daily from 7-9pm in a tote outside of Godwin Hall at JMU (location starred below)
261 Bluestone Drive
Harrisonburg, VA 22807



Serving Supplies & Food

(new/unopened)

- Disposable take out boxes
- Disposable plates (8 7/8")
- Individually packaged snacks
- Soft fruit (no apples)
- 16 oz. plastic cups
- Regular ground coffee
- Pre-filled Salt & Pepper Shakers



Socks

- Men's (all sizes)

Cleaning/Health Items

- Non-latex Gloves (size large)
- Bath Towels
- Disinfectant Wipes

Summer Items

(travel size or small bottles)

- Sunscreen
- Bug Repellent
- Lipbalm
- Foot Powder



Travel Size Toiletries

- Q-Tips
- Tissues
- Deodorant
- Toothpaste



Community Care Relief Fund

In response to the expanding reality of the **COVID-19 crisis**, the local **Valley Area Network for Immigrant Transportation Assistance (VANITA)** and **New Bridges Immigrant Resource Center** have established a fund to support individuals who will not receive individual or family federal stimulus checks. Bilingual volunteers will talk with families to determine their current need for assistance.

Donations continue to be accepted at NEWBRIDGESIRC.ORG

If you would like to donate to this fund, go to the website, Donations, Select “other” and type the amount that you would like to give, and be sure to type *Relief Fund* in the box for “name or occasion.” This will designate your gift to the Relief Fund. Checks may be sent to New Bridges IRC, 64 West Water St. Harrisonburg 22801

About New Bridges Immigrant Resource Center

Engaging Immigrants Connecting Cultures Building Community

New Bridges IRC started in 2000 when a group of Mennonite churches in Harrisonburg, VA, decided to address the needs of international newcomers. Since then they have served thousands of clients, helping them to become a vital part of our local community and economy. Services include Immigration Legal Aid, a health navigation program to include medical billing, connecting clients to resources, dealing with housing, transportation, and employment issues, as well as Community Building groups, Diversity Workshops, and translation services.

New Bridges relies on volunteer support to help meet community needs. Volunteers make a difference by building relationships with clients and helping them overcome challenging situations in their lives.

New Bridges is locally funded. All tax deductible donations help to provide a safe and welcoming space to displaced and persecuted people in search of hope in the Shenandoah Valley.

JUNE 2020

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|----------------|----------------------|-----|-----|-----|---------------------------|------------------|
| 31 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| | | | | | 7:30pm Lay service | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
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| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| SHORTY Meeting | | | | | 7:30pm Rabbi Grumbacher | |
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| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| | 6:30pm Board Meeting | | | | | |
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| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| Father's Day | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| | | | | | Independence Day observed | Independence Day |
| | | | | | | |
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