



[Bethel-Harrisonburg.org](http://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).*

**MAY 2020**

## *A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT, From the Board April 20, 2020*

- Rabbi Grumbacher joined our Zoom meeting from Delaware and led the opening prayer. His perspective on Temple events appears later in this report.
- Treasurer's Report: Bill Ney reports that expenses are high and income is low. I will add that it is crucial that anyone who has not paid his or her dues in full needs to do so at this time. Please contact Bill if you need to make an adjustment due to covid 19 impact.
- Building & Grounds Committee: Ron Ornstein reports that Mary Handley inquired if Vine and Fig could help with the clean-up in the back wooded area. The board was fine with this, as long as there would be no digging.
- Nominating Committee: Gratitude was expressed for the efforts of Cindy Baron, Roni Goldberg, and Andy Kohen for their efforts.
- Rabbi Search Committee: As we have engaged Rabbi Grumbacher for another year, the committee is temporarily on furlough. Andy expects to resume activity by filing a notice with the CCAR in late summer or early autumn.
- Social Action: We had a request for a member of Beth El to participate as Secretary for the Interfaith Association. If interested, please contact Andy Kohen or Linda Kohn. Andy reported that "the Faith in Action Campaign to promote Affordable Housing continues and it is likely to extend over a 2-year period. Obviously, publicizing it and meeting with local government officials about the Affordable Housing Trust Fund will be done differently than if face to face meetings and rallies were possible. Additional information provided by Linda regarding upcoming events will be sent out in a separate email.
- Men's Club: Les Mintzer reports that the Men's Club is scheduled to provide lunch at the Catholic church on June 11, 2020, but they are waiting to see if this will be permitted, as all of the May lunches have already been cancelled.
- Sisterhood: Gale Clemons reported that Sisterhood donated \$300 to the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, and another \$100 to First Step.
- Religious School: Closed until further notice.
- Old Business: Status of scheduled events (Excerpts from Rabbi Grumbacher):

We are beginning virtual Shabbat services this Friday (4/24). If this works, we'll Zoom every other week or so. Your comments to me would be deeply appreciated as it's difficult to know congregants' feelings about this most unusual type of worship. It's also hard to have a delicious oneg Shabbat. Adult Education may be on hold. I've been working with Troy Kramer twice a week with the assumption that the Bar Mitzvah would be postponed until September. They asked to have it on the assigned date which is ok with me. I'll take all precautions as will they. So all things being equal (and who knows what that means nowadays), we will have the Bar Mitzvah on the scheduled date of May 30th. There will be a maximum of 10 people in the sanctuary; others may Zoom from afar. The time is also up-in-the-air for a few reasons. It will probably take place around 2:00. (While there was concern voiced by some, the board deferred to Rabbi Grumbacher, coordinating with family members, in this decision). We might have Confirmation later that day. Confirmands are Grace Miller and Owen Harris.

As you know, I've sent a daily My Word! with an attached joke. I'm not sure which the congregants like more, but I know that among other reasons writing daily gives me one more thing to do at home. (Several board members stated their appreciation of Rabbi Grumbacher's daily articles. ) I've called the names on the membership list twice since this isolation began. Many times I've had to leave voice

messages but I've enjoyed speaking with folks I haven't really met before and those who are regulars. Should anyone have questions, please ask...

- New Business: We had a healthy discussion regarding voting during this time. A letter including the slate of candidates and voting options will be sent out to the congregation soon.
- Future meetings:  
Next board meeting: Monday, May 18, 2020 @6:30 PM, via Zoom  
Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, May 24, 2020 @ 4:00PM, via Zoom

Michelle Ornstein, board president

### ***MY (MONTHLY) WORD!***

**"Let's Not Have to Call 1. 8 0 0. G A M B L E R"**

The morning service in the prayerbook contains two important blessings, the first thanking God for the intricate manner in which our bodies were created, the second for giving the Torah. We read in the first, "Blessed is our Eternal God...who has made our bodies with wisdom, combining veins, arteries and vital organs into a finely balanced network. Wondrous...Source of our health...,we give You thanks and praise."It is actually more descriptive, but you get the point. In the second we read, "Blessed is the Eternal...who hallows us with mitzvot...(M)ake the words of Your Torah sweet to us...that we and our children may be...students of Your Torah. Blessed is the Eternal, the Teacher of Torah to (our) people Israel." It's not the content that I'm pointing out, it's the order. Isn't Torah supreme over everything other than God? Of course it is! However we know – or we should know – that health precedes even Torah study, Torah knowledge. Why? Because you cannot worship God and you cannot fulfill the commandments if you do not have your health. You cannot work, you cannot sustain your family, you cannot create for the good of society, you cannot manufacture, sell, buy, assist, respond when your health is compromised. That is why these calls to Get America to Work Again, or however they are verbalized, is nothing more than a gamble, and gamblers should call 1.800.GAMBLER!

Of course everyone wants our economy to bounce back ("bounce" it's not going to do); and we want our schools, universities, small and large businesses, factories and everything else for that matter, functioning. But what good will that be if the numbers of sick and dying will rise as a result? What good will it be if social distancing and the other precautions we've taken to ease this pandemic will have to begin again with even greater intensity because it was too early to return to normal? Will those who call for the liberation of Virginia and the other states see the light only when they or their loved ones (let's just say relatives) come down with the disease?

The Beth El community wants life to get back to normal as do all of our neighbors regardless of faith. We've got rites-of-passage; regular Shabbat worship; adult education - for heaven's sake, the education of our youth! - and the holydays to consider, but we cannot assume normalcy under these current conditions. We will have to be very creative as we move forward, praying that we'll be able to

congregate in short order, using our brains to do our share to make that happen. Don't gamble on COVID-19; don't gamble with your health!

### *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: Eric Rynar**

**Trustee: Ron Ornstein**

**Past President: Andy Kohen**

**At large member: Amanda Friss**

**At large member: Ron Rubin**

**Sisterhood Presidents: Sherri Alt + Rebekah Greenfield**

**Men's Club President: Lester Mintzer**

**Religious School Principals: Dara Hall + Liz Webb**

**Bridge Editor**  
**Elliott Golub**  
**[Elgolubret@comcast.net](mailto:Elgolubret@comcast.net)**  
**540-289-5336**

### *YAHREZEITS*

03	Max M Joseph	1924	Member
04	Bruno Hirsch	1888	
05	Ella P Blatt	1979	
06	Rose Gelman		

07	Julia S Ney	1944		
	Maurice Scheuer	1935		
08	Theresa Hirsch	1903	Member	
09	Henry Myerberg			Dave Myerberg's Father
	Lillian Tassle			
	Greg H. Kahn	2013		Arnie Kahn's Son
10	Bob Nemoytin	1984	Member	
	Joyce Helbraun	2018	Member	
11	Janet Kohen	2008	Member	
12	Lillian Coxe			
13	Paula Kaiser	1997	Member	
14	Edna Ash	1979	Member	Eddie Ney's Grandmother
	Violet Handley			Mary Handley's Mother
16	Sophie Blatt	1969	Member	Frank Blatt's Grandmother
	Lynn Miller	2001	Member	
	Louis Scheuer	1927		
	Sylvia Minskoff	2006		Jerry Minskoff's Sister-in-law
19	Minnie Wender	1962		Simon Wender's Mother
20	David Frankel	1988	Member	
	Augusta Loewner	1893		
21	Arnold Abriss	1984		Gale Clemons' Father
23	Rabbi Sheldon ben Zvi Fleming			Grandfather of former JMU Hillel's President, Frank Fleming

26	Heinz Wallach	1937	Member	
	Mildred Greenfield			Margee Greenfield's Mother
27	Barbara (Bobbie) Bloom	2018		Alan Neckowitz' sister
	Charles A Hammer	1938	Member	
	Abe M Loewner	1932	Member	
28	Ludwig Hirsch	1929	Member	
	David Kohen			Florine Ney's Father
	Richard Kohn			Peter Kohn's Brother
29	Robert Minskoff	2016		Jerry & Esther Minskoff's Son
30	Jay Nusbaum			
	Molly Huffman			
31	Erwin Helbraun	2010	Member	

## ***DONATIONS***

In Memory of Bettye Neuwelt (Ron Rubin's mother)

Bill & Leslie Ney

Eddie & Margee Greenfield Ney

**To the Yahrzeit Memorial Fund**

Eric & Jayne Rynar in memory of Sam Schneider (Jayne's father)

Elliot Robinson & Liane Schleifer in memory of Josh Robinson (Elliot's father)

## ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

### **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.)

# MAY 2020

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
26	27	28	29	30	1	2
9:30amCANCELLED - Religious school		Yom HaZikaron	Yom HaAtzmaut		7:30pmRabbi Grumbacher	7pmHavdalah and Adult Ed with Rabbi Grumbacher
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
SHORTY Meeting 9:30amCANCELLED - Religious school		Cinco de Mayo			7:30pmSisterhood shabbat	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
Mother's Day					7:30pmRabbi Grumbacher, Confirmation	7pmHavdalah and Adult Ed with Rabbi Grumbacher
No religious school						
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
9:30amReligious school 10amLag Be'Omer and Potluck 2pmLuLaRoe Sisterhood fundraiser	6:30pmBoard Meeting				Jerusalem Day 7:30pmLay service	
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Annual Congregational Meeting 4:00PM, via Zoom	Memorial Day			Shavuot Eve	Shavuot 7:30pmBar Mitzvah - Troy Kramer (w/ Rabbi Grumbacher)	10amBar Mitzvah - Troy Kramer
31	1	2	3	4	5	6
					7:30pmLay service	