

The Bridge

June

Beth-El Congregation

Harrisonburg VA

Hello Beth-El folks,

There is a new editor for The Bridge, Benjamin Nissley. If you notice any mistakes (or something that should be mentioned), please email benyameen.nissley@gmail.com, text/call 540-292-4898, or leave a comment on this page below.

If you didn't have a chance to read the Rabbi's report for the Annual Meeting he is sharing it again in the Bridge.

A message from our Rabbi

As my first year draws to a close I can declare that it has been a joy to have begun my tenure of serving our congregation. This has perhaps been one of the most unusual rabbinical positions. Having served you exclusively from my home has been a unique experience. And despite the distance I believe that I have had the opportunity to begin to develop meaningful relationships in the congregation. We had successful high holidays, a wonderful range of regular adult education classes, several guest lectures, a guest speaker at Shabbat services and a fun Purim comedy celebration. We were able to have two virtual seders for our members,

and a few guests. There have been many opportunities to participate in the religious school. Many of the students have begun to recognize me and the best relationships I've been to develop within our religious school were among those closest to the age of Bar and Bat Mitzvah. We have our first Bat Mitzvah coming up next weekend and another one in the fall. I have also had the opportunity to build relationships with people facing medical challenges and who have experienced personal losses.

We also had our group of adult B'nai Mitzvah who led the service and read from the Torah just two weeks ago.

With never having ever stepped a foot in Harrisonburg I hope our congregation feels that we have had a successful year despite the unique circumstances. I am very excited to be able to meet so many more of our members in person and further enhance the relationship between me and our members.

While I will finally be able to lead services from our bimah, I still believe that a hybrid model is going to be an important part of what we offer. I am sure that some of the classes we offer will be exclusively by video. Other classes and discussions can be in person and with some effort we can make those hybrid opportunities as well. In addition, hybrid services will be a critical piece of our long-term success. We have members who participate now more often than before because of livestreaming and keeping

the livestreaming option as a normal part of our services will enable people to participate with us who may otherwise not be able to join us in person. I intend to continue using social media to welcome those who are livestreaming to help us all feel that we are part of one community—those in person and those participating virtually. I know that some of our lay service leaders would like to continue that opportunity and I will encourage that participation. Even though I will be here every week perhaps there may be times where I will be your rabbi from the congregation enjoying services led by our lay service leaders, enjoying the service along with everyone else. I know that our lay service leaders have expressed an interest in doing this going forward.

Finally, soon you will see me although for the time being I will always have to be masked in public. As I join you in person we will continue to develop ideas for engaging opportunities for our members and I look to become a true in person partner with our members. I believe that the most successful rabbi-congregation relationship is one of a partnership and I always welcome your ideas, thoughts and feedback on what is working, what could be better, and what can be added to what we do. Please always feel free to share those ideas with me so that together we can continue to make Beth El congregation the best community that we can be.

A message from our President

L'dor V'dor. My father served our congregation as President of the Men's Club, Trustee, and as President of the Congregation. I guess the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. I'm sure my mother has a prideful smile on her face. So, it is with humility and pride that I accept the honor of being your President.

There are several people that I want to thank:

Roni Goldberg, thank you for stepping and being part of our Temple Leadership. It takes congregants like you to help guide in all facets of Temple life. We will miss you.

Dara Hall, thank you for leading our Sunday School as Principal for the last 10 plus years. The success of the school can certainly be attributed to your leadership and your work is shown thru the number of well-done B'nai Mitzvahs as well as allowing the B'nai Mitzvah students to instruct the younger students. Thank you for all you have done as principal and Youth Group advisor.

Becky Mintzer, thank you for being a SHORTY youth group advisor for over 10 years. You were always willing to drive SHORTY members to their weekend Kallahs. You were there to drive for local trips to the water park or skiing, and trips to DC. Thank you for your time.

Michelle Ornstein, thank you, well for everything you've done on the board. You were

a rock of stability during your 2-year tenure as President. There was the concern everyone had after the shooting in Pittsburgh and the upgrade in Temple Security as a result. You had to deal with a student Rabbi and then an interim Rabbi. Your leadership will be missed, but we know where to find you.

Andy Kohen, thank you for your guidance, wisdom, and leadership during your 40 plus years of serving on the board. Your presence will certainly be missed at our monthly board meetings. I'm sure we can count on you for your counsel on needed matters.

Welcome aboard:

Liz Webb will be our new Religious School principal. Thank you for stepping up and I have NO doubt that the Religious School will be in good hands under your leadership.

Leeanne Shephard and Ben Nissley will be our two new board members. Thank you both for stepping up to be part of the leadership team. I'm looking forward to working with both of you

I want to thank the rest of the leadership team for agreeing to remain on the board. Thank you Ron Rubin, Phil Renick, Ron Ornstein, Eric Ryner, Gale Clemons, Sherri Alt, Rebekah Greenfield, Josh Shulruff, and of course Amanda Friss. I especially want to thank Amanda for her help and guidance during this transition period.

It is with immense joy and excitement that I can announce that Rabbi Jeffrey Kurtz-Lendner is NOW in the process of moving to Harrisonburg. To say that having a full time Rabbi living in our community will be wonderful is an understatement. I can't remember the last time we had a full time Rabbi just for us. I'm so looking forward to finally meeting you in person and working with you for the next two years of my term as President. I have NO doubt you will be an asset not only to our congregation but to the community at large. Rabbi KL will be available around June 7th, and he will lead us in service starting June 10th. Please plan on being there to give Rabbi KL a warm welcome.

In other news..... The good news is that roof project is finished. The unwelcome news is that the Air Conditioning unit for the Sanctuary is in bad shape. The board has made a decision not to repair the 25-year-old unit with a costly fix, but rather to replace the entire unit. We were hoping to convert from gas to electricity but found this would not be cost effective. Thus, we will be replacing the entire unit. The replacement unit will be moved back and away from our beautiful stained-glass windows in the back of the sanctuary.

SAVE the date of Sunday June 26th from 4:00 PM to 6:30sh for a picnic at the Temple. This picnic will be to officially welcome Rabbi KL as well to thank the people who served our congregation during the past year.

I'm hoping in the upcoming year, our congregation will be able return to a more normal year. I would be remiss not to say how wonderful and exciting it was for me to see our Temple filled with congregants and guests for our two recent B'nai Mitzvahs. First congratulations to Becky Mintzer, Leeanne Shepherd, Mary Handley, Valerie Stephens, and Zissel Duda on their Bat Mitzvahs. The service was great.

Last, but certainly not least, congratulations to Belle Carson Neckowitz on her Bat Mitzvah this past Friday. You were a rock star and should be immensely proud of yourself. I know your family and all those who attended were enormously proud of the job you did.

June Yahrzeits

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

09 Barbara Prudoff 2016, Sara Trantum's mom

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

June Yahrzeits (con.)

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

Recent Donations

Charles & Gale Clemons – Yahrzeit Arnold
Abriss

Ron Rubin – In honor of Becky Mintzer
Birthday

Upcoming Events

June 4 - Shavuot Eve

June 5 - Shavuot

June 26 4:00pm - Temple Picnic (see President's
message)