

Bulletin

VOL. 63 Issue 4

July-August 2016

From the Rabbi's Desk

Rabbi Rachel Smookler

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This is a sermon I wrote the day after the attacks at the Sarona Market in Tel Aviv. I could have never imagined when I wrote this sermon, that a few days later, our country would experience a much larger terrorist attack in Orlando. My words, of course, apply to all of these horrific tragedies no matter where in the world they occur.

I wanted my kids to know what happened. We listened as the facts started coming in. I was online trying to make sure friends in and near Tel Aviv were okay. That they were safe. Again, we were all thinking the same thing.

How terrifying!

To be sitting down, enjoying a meal, a drink, on a warm summer night. And, just like that, your security is shattered. You find that you are in the wilderness. The wilderness. A no-man's land. For those minutes, those long minutes, where bullets rain down. And, complete chaos ensues. Even when the chaos ends, we are affected forever.

The wilderness. *Bamidbar*. Yes, the name — not only of the new book of the Torah we began on that Shabbat, but the name of that week's parsha as well.

Bamidbar. Midbar — meaning wilderness. Bamidbar — in the wilderness. There was no other choice for me to see that word in any other light. People running, people being gunned down, complete chaos.

And how do you move on from that? The lockdowns in the West Bank. The raids to find others who might have had something to do with helping the terrorists. Incredulous — but not surprised — at the victorious celebrations in the West Bank and elsewhere. Celebrating the terrorists who murder innocent civilians and celebrating the deaths of Israelis. Incredulous, but not surprised to

hear the media somehow twist the events to make it appear as though this is what Israelis had coming to them.

I had picked out a midrash earlier in the week that resonated with me. I had picked it out before I heard about the terrorists, the killings, or even saw footage of the chaos.

It goes like this, the Midrash that spoke to me: the Rabbis discussed why, in the words of Numbers 1:1, G-d spoke to Moses "in the wilderness."

Rava taught that when people open themselves to everyone like a wilderness, G-d gives them the Torah. Similarly, a midrash taught that those who do not throw themselves open to all like a wilderness cannot acquire wisdom and Torah.

The Sages inferred from Numbers 1:1 that the Torah was given to the accompaniment of fire, water, and wilderness. And the giving of the Torah was marked by these three features to show that as these are free to all people, so are the words of the Torah:

Fire, Water, Wilderness

The midrash stuck with me. So much so that when I read an article about the Tel Aviv massacre the next day I was making connections. I couldn't help but think that there was some connection. I didn't know yet how exactly the two were connected. But, I knew that it spoke to me. The article goes like this. And, it's true. From all of the Israeli new sources: This one I found in *Haaretz* reads:

A policeman who lives near the Sarona Market, the scene of Wednesday's terror attack, let one of the two terrorists into his house and gave him a glass of water without knowing he was a murderer.

(Continued on page 2)

Please remember to use our new address: 2131 Elmwood Ave., Suite 204, Rochester, NY 14618.

The mission of Temple Beth David is to provide an environment where the concepts of community prayer, education, and service to the greater Jewish community are provided within the context of Conservative Judaism. We pride ourselves on being a friendly, participatory, egalitarian community, welcoming all to be a part of our synagogue family.

The terrorist approached the policeman's house as he tried to escape the scene. He remained close to a group of people who did not know he was a terrorist, thus avoiding suspicion. The terrorist then reportedly approached a house and asked for a glass of water. The homeowner – the police officer – did not know he was the terrorist and invited him inside, let him sit down, and gave him a glass of water he had asked for and left him there with his wife and other family members. The wife said the man sat down and looked totally afraid.

"He received a cup of water," she said. We tried talking with him. He didn't speak. She said her family asked him if he understood English or Hebrew? But, he remained silent. He looked just like someone from the scene in shock. He didn't say a word. He just looked shocked.

The officer then received a call telling him there had been an attack nearby and rushed out to help. When he saw the second neutralized-terrorist lying on the ground in a suit, he realized that the man in his home was connected to the attack, since he was wearing the identical suit. The officer immediately ran back to his home where he saw the terrorist still sitting in the chair he had been offered. He rushed in and held the terrorist down until backup police arrived and arrested him.

"We were very lucky that he was so much in shock and, of course, unarmed," she added. "The biggest fortune was that my husband realized very quickly who was home and returned. That was my husband's biggest fear — that he would come home and everyone would be dead."

Can you even imagine what happened? Can you even begin to imagine the moment when you are running for your life to safety, the safety of your home, hearing the sound of automatic weapons spraying people in a crowded restaurant? And then, when you enter your home, a stranger — a man — in shock asking only for water is the terrorist? This story is so unbelievably shocking to me! I'm incredulous!

When I told my younger daughter, Mayim, about this incredible story, about how the terrorist actually went into the home of an Israeli family, asked for water and just sat there. She asked so many questions. Why wasn't he saying anything? Why was he in shock? Because he felt bad about what he did?

I tried to explain to her about the adrenaline the body has to work up in order to carry out such an incredibly horrifying act. And, I felt that it was a physical reaction to the murders. It wasn't, I said, because he felt bad. But, I really can't know. Perhaps he did. The midrash kept bubbling up within me. The Torah was given to the accompaniment of fire, water and wilderness. And, the giving of the Torah was marked by these three features to show that as these are free to all people, so are the words of the Torah.

The fire. The spraying of the bullets that killed four innocent civilians and wounded others.

The wilderness. The chaos that was created by the fire.

And, the water.. The glass of water that was received by the stranger who entered the home.

I was struck by how many times the police officer's wife mentioned that he wouldn't speak. And, it reminded me again of *Bamidbar*, meaning *in the wilderness*, which comes from the Hebrew root *daber*. *Midabber*. Meaning: to speak.

Our parsha opens up with the words: *Vayidaber Adonai el Moshe Bamidbar*. And, G-d spoke to Moses in the Wilderness.

I thought about all of the symbols in this exchange. Between an unsuspecting Israeli family who welcomed a stranger in and offered him a chair and a glass of water. I thought about how the mayor of Tel Aviv, Ron Huldai, came out with a statement saying: "The problem is that when there is no terrorism, no one talks about the occupation. Nobody has the guts to take a step towards trying to make some kind of final status arrangement."

I was struck by how the mayor of Tel Aviv voiced his opinion, saying that terrorism is a way to get people's attention. And, I thought again about our opening sentence: *Vayidaber Adonai el Moshe Bamidbar Sinai*.

Twice ... the Hebrew word for speaking *L'daber* — to speak.

Before bedtime the other night, as Mayim and I were talking about the story of the glass of water and the murders, Mayim was asking, "why do people do this?"

And, I had to tell her that a terrorist feels as though his or her actions speak louder than words. But, I told her, that in Judaism nothing speaks louder than words. G-d spoke *words* and the world came into being.

I realized at that moment that, all along, the midrashim that liken Torah to water were correct. With that glass of water, the police officer's wife was imparting Torah. The terrorist's shocked silence, that wilderness. Bamidbar, the opposite of creating dialogue. Only words have that much power, not violence.

My own midrash, then.

Who is a terrorist? One who destroys and does not create. One who creates — creates with words — *devarim* is open to receiving Torah like a wilderness...*Bamidbar*.

Rabbi Menahem Mendel of Kotzk, known as the *Kotzker Rebbe* teaches us that: "Only a person who is willing to make nothing of himself, who thinks of himself, as a desert, is worthy of having the Divine Presence rest on him, and of attaining the true light of Torah."

I keep thinking of that glass of water passing between the two people. And, I hope and pray that that water will be regenerative.

Quenching the thirst of being in the wilderness. And, that it's flowing Torah will spark words of peace.

From the President's Desk

Andrew Berger

Andrew.BBerger@rochester.edu



Recently I had my first chance to meet Howard Goldberg, the USCJ (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism) representative for the northeast region. Howie visited with Neal Eckhaus and me in Beth David's new quarters on Elmwood Avenue, and he expressed excitement about our relocation and the opportunities that lie before us.

Midway through the conversation, Howie said, "So, you've moved. What

is your congregation's vision, now that you're here?" That's the kind of thing a regional representative wants to know, I suppose. I tensed up, and then wondered why. After a beat, I offered, "Honestly, that feels like too much of a commitment right now. There continue to be so many logistical issues to solve as we occupy our new space. Moreover, we might gain many new members here, but we might not. How that goes in the next few years is going to have a huge impact upon what kind of paths Congregation Beth David can follow. I feel that if we gave you a vision statement right now, you might come back in half a year and find that it didn't apply anymore."

To my gratitude, Howie seemed to recognize my reaction. He told me that if it was not the right time to talk about capital-V Vision, then perhaps taking it down a level would be productive. Even when there are a lot of details to address, Howie said, it is important to step back and ask, "What makes our congregation thrive?"

I was comfortable with that verb, "thrive" – which probably made Howie happy, because he had two USCJ fliers on the subject to offer me and Neal. The conversation flowed again, and by its end I was glad Howie had pushed us in this direction.

This issue of "thriving" has stayed in my head. At the most recent Board of Trustees meeting, I decided to make it the first item on the agenda (that is, after introducing ourselves to Rebecca Weber, our new Office Manager, who graciously showed up outside of her normal hours and participated in a lively discussion). It was the first board meeting I'd run where the lead item wasn't something immediate and concrete.

The ensuing conversation among the trustees revealed a dualism. On the one hand, it's important to figure out what we should do to reach out to new people who might want to join our congregation. What's our target audience? How should we advertise? What special offers should we make? On the other hand, it's equally important to articulate what our current members value Be well. Andrew

most about being part of the Beth David community. When the conversation went in that direction, it produced a much more distinctive list than I had expected.

"Participatory." "Egalitarian." "Being Jewish in the modern world." "Having a spiritual experience at services." And perhaps most resonantly, "People know who you are." (Yes, we started making references to the theme song to the TV show "Cheers".)

This conversation about thriving of course goes beyond the board of trustees. The two components of thriving, the wish to attract others balanced with the need to stay true to oneself, are familiar to us all from the paths we've traveled as individuals. I hope all of you - congregants and friends of Beth David - will feel comfortable sharing ideas that address either aspect of our synagogue's future. Let me know. We are at a very flexible point in Congregation Beth David's history, one where we're particularly wellpositioned to act on helpful suggestions.

I'll close with a few practical details. We believe we are very close to having full clearance to start our renovation process for our sanctuary space within the Temple B'rith Kodesh campus. With only a reasonable amount of good luck, we should be talking to contractors extremely soon. Hats off to Helen Kashtan for her huge role in moving this process along, and a big thankyou to the executive leaders of Temple B'rith Kodesh as well.

As noted parenthetically earlier, Rebecca Weber has joined our staff as the new Office Manager. We are excited to have her on board, and I hope many of you will get a chance to meet her or talk with her on the phone soon.

With the High Holidays approaching in the fall, I'm pleased to announce yet another fruitful collaboration between Rochester synagogues. In a remarkable gesture, Temple Sinai's leadership has graciously agreed to rent us their sanctuary for Day 1 of Rosh Hashana and for Yom Kippur. (Our lease with TBK requires us not to hold services there on those days. We will spend Day 2 of Rosh Hashana at TBK, however.) You will get many reminders about High Holidays logistics as the date moves closer. For now, just know that Temple Sinai made a nontrivial decision and we are very grateful for this opportunity.

Lastly: in this time of change for Beth David, it's good to know that one tradition remains intact. The Golf Outing and Dinner will take place on August 21; this mailing includes a flier with all of the information. This is the largest fundraiser on Beth David's calendar at the moment, and it's a good time for all, whether you golf or not. We hope to see you there!

All in the Family

Birthdays

July

Barbara Gertzog	July 1
Linda Horowitz	July 4
Aubey Dankner	July 5
Sharon Parkman	July 5
Barbara Goldman	July 14
Ira Goldman	July 14
Hannah Hersch	July 15
Brennan Hyman	July 17
Douglas Sternberg	July 17
Mary Kielar	July 25
Riana Hersch	July 31

August

Sara Kashtan	August 1
Michael Berke	August 2
Sheira Dery	August 2
Howard Kashtan	August 2
Marcia Davis	August 4
Micah Goldin	August 4
Andrew Berger	August 8
Julie Langmann	August 8
Scott Bauman	August 9
Galen Rich	August 9
Rabbi Rachel Smookler	August 9
Ronald Brandwein	August 18
Leon Zoghlin	August 18
Tammy Hersch	August 19
Linda Phillips	August 19
Bernard Roth	August 19
Vanessa Van Aernum	August 20
William Gertzog	August 21
Neal Eckhaus	August 22
Sarah Eckhaus	August 22
Dolly Fishman	August 22
Sherry M. Goldman	August 23
Daniel Nussbaum	August 23
Rachel Zoghlin	August 23
Jonathan Feldman	August 24
Sidney Markus	August 24
Laura Rich	August 25
Benson Zoghlin	August 26
Alison Jane Helms	August 28
Jay Molis	August 28
Brandon Davis	August 29
Julian Lederer	August 29

Anniversaries

July

Carl & Judith Levy	July 1
Andrew & Karen Berger	July 6
Bruce & Anne Goldin	July 6
Lauren & Martin Yesowitch	July 7
Harry & Adele Gan	July 29

August

Marvin & Linda Raphael	August 9
William & Ellen Gertzog	August 14
Neil & Kellie Hyman	August 15
Scott & Merrie Franklin	August 20
Philip & Joanne Katzman	August 20
Louis & Shirley Grossman	August 22
Leon & Sarisa Zoghlin	August 24

Congratulations to Our Graduates!

High School

Talia Smookler Zachariah Smookler Jacob Eckhaus Eliana Lande Noah Meyers

University

Alex Cohen BS, Business

Lee Lande BS, Nursing

Sam Kashtan MS, Biomedical Engineering



We extend our condolences to

Bernie Roth and family upon the passing of Sylvia Roth.

Thank you for your kindness following the passing of my sister,
Jaqueline Corbett.

— Pam Rosen

Kiddish Sponsors

Thank you to those who have recently sponsored kiddish lunch:

Syd Markus and Family Neal and Sue Eckhaus Hadassah Gavin

If you would like to sponsor a kiddish, please contact Karen Berger, via the Temple Office.

Thank you to our many volunteers who help prepare our Shabbat Kiddish lunches, including:

Karen Berger, Helen Kashtan, Gary Cohen, Scott Davis, Alison Helms, Andrew Berger, Sue Eckhaus, Maxine Manjos, Ellen Gertzog, Linda Phillips, Sue Lederer, Richard and Joyce Towber, Dan and Alice Nussbaum, and the many others who lend a hand.

Thank you!

Thank you to Rabbi Rachel Smookler and her mother, Jan Rubinstein, for the beautiful gift in celebration of my service as president of the Temple Beth David Board of Trustees. Thank you to the Board of Trustees for the kiddish luncheon in my honor.

The art created by Jan includes special papers from Japan and gold paints in several shades and recreates our beloved ark doors from our Irondequoit building. This labor of love includes handcut lettering that replicates the 10 Commandments on the doors. Jan worked with her art group and teachers in creating the concept for this and for this amazing piece of art.

L'shalom,

Helen



SEND A CARD TO A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE! Checks payable to: Temple Beth David, 2131 Elmwood Ave., Suite 204, Rochester, NY 14618 Date _____ Amount enclosed \$_____ (minimum donation \$7, or three for \$18.) **Donor Information: Recipient Information:** Address: Address: Phone: _____ Phone: Card Message: Get Well Wishes □ In Memory of _____ □ Congratulations on ____ □ In Honor ■ In Appreciation Note: Fund: If no fund is specified, donation will be made to the David Solomon Fund. ■ David Solomon Fund ☐ Rabbi Skopitz Fund ☐ Shiva Chevra Fund ■ Marsha Fishman Fund ☐ Gilbert Rosenbaum Fund ☐ Rabbi's Discretionary Fund ☐ Mitzvah Kiddish Fund ☐ Soldier's Project Fund ☐ Herb Kraus Adult Education Fund ☐ Torah Repair Fund



Build a Sanctuary for me, and I will dwell amongst them.

- Parshat T'rumah

We celebrate the generations of the past and the future as we move to our new home. We hope that you will become a part of making our vision for the future a reality through your support of our Building Campaign by sponsoring an item from the list below or through a general gift.

- Build Our Bimah (all gifts to be used towards bimah construction): \$1,800
- Sanctuary Seating (per chair): \$180
- Set the Table (per set: a table & 8 chairs for our Social Hall): \$540
- General Donation: Any amount greatly appreciated

Address:			
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2131 Elmwood Aven Build Our Bimah	ue, Rochester, NY 1 \$1,800	4620	available for sanctuary seating only, if requested.
2131 Elmwood Aven Build Our Bimah Sanctuary Seating	ue, Rochester, NY 1- \$1,800 \$180	4620	available for sanctuary seating only, if requested. Please provide the following information:
2131 Elmwood Aven Build Our Bimah	ue, Rochester, NY 1 \$1,800	4620	available for sanctuary seating only, if requested. Please provide the following information:

Upcoming

July 2

Torah Study 9:00 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.

July 6

Keeping it Current with Rabbi Smookler 11:00 a.m. with nosh at St. John's Meadows Chestnut Court Club Room

July 9

Torah Study 9:00 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.

July 16

Torah Study, 9:00 a.m.
Shabbat Services, 10:00 a.m.
Family Torah Study with Howard Brill
RSVP to hrbrill@gmail.com

July 23

Torah Study, 9:00 a.m. Shabbat Services, 10:00 a.m.

Please note: There is no Keeping It Current in August

August 6

Torah Study 9:00 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.

August 13

Torah Study 9:00 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.

August 20

Torah Study 9:00 a.m.
Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.
Family Torah Study with Howard Brill
RSVP to hrbrill@gmail.com

August 27

Torah Study 9:00 a.m. Shabbat Service 10:00 a.m.

BINGO Volunteers Enjoy Appreciation Dinner



Donations

Received April 15 - June 9

DAVID SOLOMON FUND

IN MEMORY OF

Solomon Berke

Michael & Toby Berke

Jacqueline Corbett

Helen & Howard Kashtan Louis & Shirley Grossman Cynthia Halpern

Daniel & Risa Saltzman

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Bonnie Abrams, Jonathan Rich and

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George Ritz

Bruce Cohen

Gladys Garey

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Hyman Freedman

Philip Lurie

Celia Lurie

Burt Lewis

Burton & Eunice Freedman

Sharon (Passer) Pulvino

Lew Pulvino

Lewis & Sharon Pulvino

Hyman and Doris Cherkasky

Theodore & Shirley C. Levy

Tillie Gross

Stanley & Michelle Gross

David D Gordon

Elaine Gallant

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Ron Bolton

Marvin & Marcia Davis

Milt Smith

Annette Applebaum

Meyer Levy

Marvin & Sora Sachs

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO

Mike & Toby Berke

Marvin & Marcia Davis

Paul & Judy Eissenstat

Marvin & Marcia Davis

CONGRATULATIONS TO

Jacob Eckhaus Eliana Lande **Noah Meyers** Talia Smookler

Zachariah Smookler

Samuel Kashtan

Lee Lande

Gary Cohen & Pam & Rosen

OUR NEW SANCTUARY

Michael & Toby Berke Lisa Klein

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

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Bruce Newman Blanche Diamond Newman, Maxine

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Ronald & Jean Brandwein

Donations

Received April 15 - June 9

Sylvia Roth

Barbara Gertzog Myron & Rheva Kleinberg Harry and Adele Gan Louis & Shirley Grossman

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Rheva Kleinberg

Pam Rosen & Gary, Alex and Jordan Cohen

Sale of Hametz

Berke, Michael & Toby

IN APPRECIATION OF

Rabbi Smookler

Neal & Sue Eckhaus Shelby Nelson & Lewis Rothberg Bernie Roth Syd Markus and Family

Pam Rosen & Gary Cohen

Harold & Rhea Feinberg

IN HONOR OF

Hannah Eckhaus on becoming a Bat Mitzvah

Hank & Sheila Markowitz

In honor of their children's baby namings

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Milt & Dorothy Smith Richard & Ann Howell

Svlvia Roth

Milt & Dorothy Smith

David Phillips Bess Whittaker Gladys Garey Irving Brontman Sylvia Roth

Our beloved Marsha on her birthday

Harold & Dolly Fishman

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Pam Rosen & Gary Cohen

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Fronie Hoffman

Sylvia Roth

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Miss Sylvia Stiller

GET WELL WISHES TO

Irv Mindlin

Fronie Hoffman

IN APPRECIATION OF

Lisa Klein

Fronie Hoffman

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY

Rheva and Myron Kleinberg

Pam Rosen & Gary Cohen

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Eliana Lande Nicole Meynadesy Jacob Eckhaus

Pam Rosen & Gary Cohen

RABBI SKOPITZ FUND

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Gladys Gary

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7/1/2016

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7/2/2016

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Celia Lurie

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Aaron Kinel Abe Rothstein

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7/29/2016

Sarah Apple Benjamin Cohen David D. Gordon Michael Greenberg Nata Lee Cohen Hendler

7/30/2016

Zohar Harary Al Newman

7/31/2016

Pauline Donsky



We've changed the format for publishing yahrzeit dates. The date that appears above is the date of observance using the secular calendar. These dates match those of the Hebrew calendar for the actual date of death.



8/1/2016

Ethel Black Isadore Braiman

8/2/2016

Hyman Abrams Nathaniel Alent Lila Busch Stephan Salzberg

8/3/2016

Faye Gilberg Jerome Rothstein

8/4/2016

Morton Brodsky Dora Kaufman Anna Kreag Sidney Shaub

8/5/2016

Paul Cherkasky Phillip Haymoff Jarvis Kalin Harold Moldawsky Marlowe Karen Phillips

8/6/2016

Rose Cohen Ida Priceman Kalman Zohar

8/7/2016

Ann Selby Dorothy Wiesner

8/9/2016

Martha Barufkin Driss Hena Gewertz Bromberg

8/13/2016

Samuel Frank Anna Gold David Millstone

8/14/2016

Ida Conwell

8/15/2016

Sam Kinel

8/16/2016

Norman Steinberg

8/17/2016

Nuftule Feinberg Joe Priceman

8/18/2016

David Black Albert Farash Virginia Moss

8/19/2016

Sadie Greenberg Max Kessler

8/20/2016

Wallace Midda Larrry Wolfson

8/21/2016

Isadore Babin

8/22/2016

Rachel Bazar Morris Silver Isaac Zack

8/23/2016

Belle Kessler Gilbert Rosenbaum Morton Strassman

8/24/2016

Sarah Harris Mary Rubin Sadie Garey Steinberg

8/25/2016

Manuel Lipshutz Dorothy Marcusfield Jennie Ostroff Doris Testa

8/26/2016

Seymour Black Irene Friedman Samuel Messinger

8/27/2016

Albert Lieberman

8/28/2016

Ira Lurie

8/29/2016

Jacob Etingoff

8/30/2016

Lee Irwin Schwartz Rose Zoghlin

8/31/2016

Mark A. Coleman Jacob Levinson



If you are in need of transportation to Shabbat or holiday services or Temple Beth David events, the Shabbat and More Shuttle can be easily arranged by calling the office. Just make certain to call a few days in advance!







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- David Solomon Memorial Building Fund Supports general synagogue operations
- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Marsha Fishman Memorial Education Fund Supports youth educational activities
- Herb Kraus Adult Education Fund
 Supports adult learning and community events
- Mitzvah Kiddish Fund Supports Shabbat Kiddish
- Rabbi Skopitz Fund Supports cultural events
- Shiva Chevra Fund

 Funds meals of consolation, Shiva support
- Gilbert Rosenbaum Fund
 Supports cultural and ritual activities
- Torah Repair Fund
 Supports maintenance and repair of Torah scrolls
- Soldier's Project
 Supports holiday care packages to Jewish soldiers