



The Bulletin

Volume 67 Issue 6

November - December 2020

From the Rabbi Michael Silbert

rabbi@tbdrochester.org



Temple Beth David's Jewish Movie Club has been one of the most successful online programs we've launched since the Coronavirus lockdown began in March. Attendance continues to grow with participants joining us from as far away as Delaware,

Massachusetts and Toronto, Canada. At the time of writing, the most recent show that we watched was the Netflix series, "Away", about NASA's first human mission to Mars. Mel Brooks' joke about "Jews in space" notwithstanding, what drew us to this show was the inclusion of a prominently Jewish character on the crew, who brings a Torah with him to Mars and recites "*Tefilat haDerech*" – the prayer for travel – among others.

Slight spoiler alert: at a point in their journey when the water supply becomes endangered, the plants in the onboard botany experiments are starved of water and all but one die. What, then, could the reason be for the survival of a single plant without sufficient water? Could there be a scientific explanation or might the cause of this peculiar phenomenon be – wait for it – a MIRACLE?!

I'm not going to give the answer; you'll have to watch the series for yourselves. However, while this incident did not feature in the Chanukah episode – and yes, there IS a Chanukah episode – the theme is certainly reminiscent of the Chanukah story that most of us grew up with: that upon the Maccabees' recapture, re-purification and rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem, they could only find a single remaining container of kosher oil, which unexpectedly lasted eight days instead of one. What was the cause of this peculiar phenomenon? You got it – a MIRACLE!

Would it surprise you to know that there is no factual basis for this story of the single container of oil? Much like many other tales which have been handed down to us as part of our Jewish heritage (e.g. Abraham's father owning an idol store, Moses' stutter being attributed to him putting his fingers in his mouth after burning them by touching hot coals), the story of the oil is *midrash*, a parable composed by our sages to help us attach meaning and greater understanding to aspects of our past for which the Torah or later texts offer very few details.

Upon discovering that what we understood to be historical fact is sometimes no more than rabbinical fiction, Jews sometimes feel disillusioned and even question what the point is in holding onto a tradition which is based in part on parables. While indeed there are those who are comfortable taking all Jewish legends literally, I am not in the least bit troubled that our tradition comprises lore and details from numerous different sources that have been handed down for thousands of years.

What remains thoroughly meaningful for me is that together, they all form the composite story of the Jewish people, giving us a sense of who we are, where we've come from and the values and ideals that have always been important to us. Together, they are OUR story. Together, they comprise our truth.

And so, to return to the story of the miracle of Chanukah: whether or not the episode of the container of oil *actually* happened or not, doesn't really change anything for me. What the story conveys to me, even in this day and age thousands of years later, is that Chanukah is to be appreciated as a time of miracles, as a time of rededicating ourselves to Jewish rituals despite the odds, and of experiencing these rituals not as some sort of mechanical performance of prescribed routines, but as a way of experiencing connection both to our people and of course, to God.

In 2020, Chanukah will be celebrated in the dark of winter, as it always is for us in the northern hemisphere. But this year, Chanukah will also occur in the age of Coronavirus. It is my sincere hope that the light which we bring into our homes and into our lives during this season will be especially energizing and invigorating this year, reminding us not only that in this season all those years ago, tremendous relief and breakthroughs did happen for our people, but that we continue to seek relief and breakthroughs even in the current age. Furthermore, that we too have the capacity to create light – for ourselves and for others - even in the darkest of times.

That is what I take away from the combination of recorded and authored accounts of what (might have) happened on Chanukah. Fact or fiction, this story belongs to me and I'm sticking with it.

Michael

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 take pride in being a friendly, participatory, egalitarian community, welcoming all to be a part of our synagogue family.



As I write my last bulletin message, I want to thank you for having selected me for the honor of being temple president for the past two years. I hope that you feel that I have put whatever strengths I have at the service of the temple, for that has been my intent. My many limitations have been shored up by being part of a team that has included Barbara Grosh, Lewis Rothberg, Rabbi Silbert, Rebecca Weber, our Board of Trustees and Executive Board, as well as the very many congregants who have felt inspired to offer their special gifts to Temple Beth David. I have learned that when people share their special abilities, the results of their work enrich our temple life sometimes in the dependable ways that we rely on to maintain our institutions and sometimes in unexpected ways that surprise and delight us. My heartfelt thanks to all those who have contributed so greatly

and I hope that you and others will continue so that we can reach our potential as an inspirational Jewish community.

Now as I look ahead to the future of our synagogue as we pass to new leadership, it is my deepest wish for our entire congregation to maintain our sense of community. I feel a concern for our temple that is influenced in no small measure by the difficulties we face in this unprecedented time as we are separated from each other by concerns about the spread of the coronavirus —becoming ill ourselves or causing another's serious illness. We are told that we must be separated yet we have a natural human need to be together.

To maintain our community at a time when we must be distant from each other may require a special effort by each of us and an adjustment to unaccustomed ways of relating. Our rabbi and our leadership team have tried to promote many ways for us to be together while apart. Please read over the following list and consider using one or more of these suggestions as a way to connect to others or to help others to connect to you. My hope is that you will reach out and by doing so, you will strengthen your bond to TBD and that this bond will grow and grow. We will all be stronger because of a small or even a large act on your part.

Volunteer to be a part of our temple telephone connection. Call the temple office and volunteer to make a weekly call to other congregants. I am personally a member of this group and can honestly say that I am the richer for my participation. Or let us know if you would like to be one of the people who receives a call.

Send a photo to be a part of the Mazel Tov and Good News section of the weekly email newsletter. Nobody cares if it's just a photo of you living your ordinary life, no special event needed. Lots of people miss seeing your face and would be happy to see a photo when they can't see you in person.

Keep in touch via the rabbi's online Havdalah, Sunday Slippers and Jewish Movie Club sessions. I recently heard a congregant say that when he participates in the Movie Club, the rabbi guides the conversation so skillfully that he ends up with a much greater appreciation of the film under discussion than if he only saw it on his own. See the temple newsletter for information.

Study Torah. We are incredibly lucky to have in Howard Brill a gifted teacher and discussion leader. His weekly Torah Study sessions help participants relate personally to each parasha. As a participant in Howard's past sessions, I have learned so much about how to find meaning in the Torah that I would have had difficulty discovering on my own. Your weekly newsletter contains information about participation.

Discover the three TBD connections at Fall/Winter Kolloid classes: Howard Brill and Barbara Grosh, Bonnie Abrams, and Rabbi Silbert. Howard and Barbara's ongoing class, "Mussar: Becoming More Menschlike, One Step at a Time", has been a regular Kolloid offering and is regularly attended by TBD members. Bonnie's class, "Jews, Social Action,

All in the Family

November Birthdays

Nadav Silbert	November 11
Maureen Rosenbaum	November 21
Cindy Halpern	November 22
Scott Franklin	November 26
Tali Phillips	November 27
Harry Gan	November 28

November Anniversaries

Stanley & Michelle Gross	November 3
Dan & Risa Saltzman	November 3
Ira & Sherry Goldman	November 4
Ron & Carol Schott	November 6
Howard & Helen Kashtan	November 29

December Birthdays

Lori Davis	December 2
Adele Gan	December 4
Stanley Schaffer	December 4
Gary Cohen	December 9
Phil Katzman	December 11
Sharon Alva	December 12
Shirley Grossman	December 22
Sue Drexler	December 27
Neil Hyman	December 27
Alex Cohen	December 29
Scott Davis	December 29
Rabbi Aviva Berg	December 30
Merrie Franklin	December 31
Daniel Shapiro	December 31

Martin and Lauren Yesowitch proudly announce the birth of their granddaughter, Arielle Mae. Arielle's parents, Rebecca Erlichman Todd and Ross Todd, gave her middle name in honor of Rebecca's recently departed father, Marvin Erlichman.



and Song” explores the connection between songs of the 1960s and the challenges we face today. Rabbi Silbert’s class, “Lessons in Leining: Learn to Chant Torah” promises a stress-free environment for learning an ancient Jewish skill. Classes will be offered in person or via ZOOM. Contact Kollel@tbk.org for further information.

I hope that this list can be helpful to you in maintaining your connection to our temple community—and that as you strengthen your bond to our community, you reach within yourself to find ways that you can contribute to TBD. We are only part of what we can be without your special spark. We want our community to express ALL of us—working, learning, worshipping, developing friendships and finding our way to be a creative spiritual community together. Thank you again for your past and future contributions to our communal life.

Best wishes to my temple family,

Maxine

Donations

Received August 16, 2020 - October 15, 2020

DAVID SOLOMON FUND

IN MEMORY

Florence Phillips

Lilly Sherman
Scott & Merrie Franklin
Howard & Helen Kashtan
Myron & Rheva Kleinberg
Daniel & Risa Saltzman

Anna C. Lubitow

Bernard Roth
Howard & Helen Kashtan
Richard & Joyce Towber
Stanley & Charlene Caplan
Harry & Marcia Rosenfeld

Douglas Sternberg

Bernard Roth
Howard & Helen Kashtan

Esther Mann

Joseph Klein

Saul Klein

Bernard Roth

Scott Grube

Selma Eckhaus

Neal & Sue Eckhaus

Pearl Gallant

Rose L. Gordon

Elaine Gallant

Ida Priceman

David Bauman

Marcia Davis

Jay Levine

Howard & Helen Kashtan

Lauri Grossman Berns

Myron & Rheva Kleinberg

Morton Meyers

Steven Meyers &
Barbara Weber

Inge Schaffer

Stanley & Elaine Schaffer

Rabbi Chaya Kilimnick

Daniel & Risa Saltzman

Stephen E. Jaffey

Burton & Marilyn Segelin

Sumner Schechet

Martin & Lauren Yesowitch

HAPPY 96TH BIRTHDAY

Bernie Roth

Karen Schaffer

MTZVAH KIDDUSH FUND

IN MEMORY

Eli Schwartz

Roberta Kinel

Isadore Gertzog

Winnie Oler

Barbara Gertzog

Jonathan Rich

Karen Schaffer

Pearl Gallant

Rose Applebaum

Annette Applebaum

Tillie (Toby) Rosen

Ron & Jean Brandwein

IN THANKS TO TBD

For High Holy Day Gift

Richard & Joyce Towber

TORAH REPAIR FUND

IN MEMORY

Ruth Brandwein

Ron & Jean Brandwein

SOLDIERS PROJECT

IN MEMORY

Chana Neuberg

Meyer Neuberg

Fay Neuberg

MARSHA FISHMAN FUND

IN MEMORY

Florence Phillips

Ethel Stamler

Dolly Fishman

Rachel Ojalvo

Milt & Dorothy Smith

RABBI SKOPITZ FUND

IN MEMORY

Chana Neuberg

Meyer Neuberg

Fay Neuberg

Lottie Colucci

Harry Levy

Pauline Levy

Meyer & Sandra Levy

RABBI DISCRETIONARY FUND

IN MEMORY

Arthur Goldman

Beatrice Goldman

Ira & Sherry Goldman

Linda-Sue Edwards

Lisa Klein

Rhea Markus

Michael Wexler

Sidney Markus

Mildred Feinberg

Rhea Feinberg

Reva Kerker

David & Susan Langmann

Sumner Shechet

Kevin & Judy Fleissig

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Donate online at
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Find us on Facebook at Temple Beth David - Rochester, NY.

You will find photos and videos, event information, articles, and more. If you are interested in certain types of content, please send suggestions to office@tbdrochester.com.



CHANUKAH DAY OF GIVING

Sunday, November 15

10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

2131 Elmwood Avenue Door I

No Contact Drop Off

Brighton Food Cupboard Holiday Baskets

Please contribute these essential no-perishable items as part of the Brighton Food Cupboard's effort to bring Thanksgiving Meals and Chanukah Baskets to those in need this holiday season.

Canned cranberry sauce
Boxed desserts (brownie/cake mix)
Canned mixed vegetables
Boxed or canned gravy
Small box of cornbread mix
Matzah ball soup mix
Matzah meal
Flour

Shabbat hal-Bashal Clothing Drive

Shabbat hal-Bashal was a custom practiced in the Ottoman Empire, Spain and Portugal in ancient times. Three or four times a year clothing was collected for those in need. One of these times was the Shabbat prior to Chanukah.

Temple Beth David is preparing for our second annual collection of clean, gently used and new clothing to benefit Brighton your Wardrobe.

Please do your part this year to help those in need of warm clothing. Thank you.

To help on collection day or to make arrangements for pick up of donations, contact the temple office at 585-266-3223



Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Yita Ruchel bat Tzirel Leah

March 15, 1933 – September 18, 2020

May her memory be a blessing.

When she gave the eulogy for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in the Capitol rotunda, Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt spoke about the piece of Jewish art that hung on the wall of the justice's chambers. It is the framed message you see reproduced here: "Tzedek, tzedek tirdof. Justice, justice you shall pursue."

The rabbinic tradition assigns meaning to every single word in the Torah, so there must be a reason why *tzedek*, 'justice,' is written twice," Holtzblatt said. "The repetition here teaches Ibn Ezra, a medieval rabbi, that time and time again, all of the days of your life you must pursue justice."

For more news and information, visit our website at

www.tbdrochester.org



Yahrzeits

			Date Observed
November 1 Marvin Davis Irwin Halpern Louis Leitman Jacob Rubin	November 14 Philip Stark	December 2 Louis H. Grossman Ruth Lederer	December 19 Robert N. Herman
	November 15 Peter Manjos	December 4 Max Roth Harry Stein	December 20 Lillian Mountain
November 2 Marge Gould Panitch	November 16 Joseph Levy	December 5 Marie Goldwasser Max Rosenthal	December 21 Fanny Rosen Michal (bat Moshe) Tal
November 3 Philip Weinstein	November 17 Helen Forchheimer Michael Simon	December 7 Sara Gorelick	December 22 Mac Gan Elsie Perlman
November 4 Estelle Kaufman Henry Toole	November 19 Isadore Neurock	December 8 Ira Kinel	December 26 Harold Feinberg
November 5 Mildred Gilman Irving Roth Frances Stark	November 21 Millard Schaffer Ray Schatz	December 9 Leonard Gordon	December 28 Adele Katzman Morris Schnidman
November 6 William Isaacson	November 22 Benjamin Markowitz	December 11 Rosalie Bloom Rabbi Laurence Skopitz	December 29 Bella Nussbaum Nissim Ojalvo
November 7 Harold Neurock	November 23 Abraham Fishman	December 12 Nathan Goldwasser	December 30 Bessie Braiman Jean Levy Gan Ben Passer
November 8 Larry Brandwein	November 24 Pauline Markowitz	December 14 Dora Lutzsky	December 31 Sam Cohen
November 9 Virginia Erlichman	November 26 Belle Fogelman	December 15 Sylvia Towber	
November 10 Esther Conwell Rothberg Ruth Shechet	November 27 Bany Cohen	December 16 Sheldon Harris	
November 11 James Alva	November 28 Abe Aroesty Mildred Levy	December 17 Bernard Bernberg Ben Drexler Fajwel Kinel Harry Vine	
November 13 Donald Gallant Joseph Klein Belle Kleinberg	November 29 Eli Rothstein Shirley T. Schnidman		

The yahrzeit 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.

SEND A CARD TO A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE!

Checks payable to: **Temple Beth David, 2131 Elmwood Avenue, Suite 204, Rochester, NY 14618**

Date _____ Amount enclosed \$ _____ Minimum donation \$10, or two for \$18

Donor:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Recipient:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Card Message:

- ☐ Get Well Wishes _____
☐ Happy Birthday _____
☐ Congratulations on _____

- ☐ In Memory of _____
☐ In Honor of _____
☐ In Appreciation of _____

Note: _____

Fund: If no fund is specified, your donation will be made to the David Solomon Operating Fund. Thank you.

- ☐ David Solomon Operating Fund
☐ Marsha Fishman Youth Education Fund
☐ Rabbi Discretionary Fund
☐ Mitzvah Kiddush Donation

- ☐ Herb Kraus Adult Education Fund
☐ Rabbi Skopitz Fund
☐ Torah Repair Fund
☐ Soldiers Project



Donations and dues payments may now be accepted online! Visit our donate page at www.tbdrochester.org/donate Online donation minimum \$10.



Do you receive our Weekly News email?

If not, you are missing out on the latest news about Temple Beth David services and events, as well as community information. Call or email the Temple Office to add your name to the mailing list!

HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996) is United States legislation that provides data privacy and security provisions for safeguarding medical information. Hospitals are no longer permitted to contact the temple office to notify us of admitted congregants.

Please contact the office with family news.



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Supports Cultural Events

- **Torah Repair Fund**

Supports Maintenance and Repair of Torah Scrolls

- **Mitzvah Kiddush Donation**

- **Soldiers Project**