



The Bulletin

October—December 2025

Volume 72 Issue 4

From Rabbi Michael Silbert

One of my childhood memories and associations with the Jewish High Holy Days was the field on the other side of our synagogue's parking lot. Every year around that time it started coming alive as it became covered with little yellow wildflowers, marking the arrival of spring.

While the Jewish New Year and the other Holy Days which follow soon after occur in the fall here in the northern hemisphere, in the southern hemisphere where I grew up, it is the polar(!) opposite. I don't know if this perspective I'm about to share is biased owing to the fact that it's completely normative in the bottom half of the planet or if you'll agree with it, but there's something about the confluence of nature's seasons with the celebration of *Yontov* that makes complete sense to me - our season of rebirth and renewal – of newness – happening at the exact time when the earth is waking up after the winter.

Together they offer a future with promises of growth, color and all sorts of potential wonders.

But Judaism was originally a northern hemisphere religion. As we all know, our foundational experiences and stories are set in the Middle East and thousands of years later, this corresponds well with our experience here in the US. Consistent with Israel, Pesach occurs for us in the spring. Shavuot, the festival of the Summer Harvest, follows seven weeks later and then Sukkot arrives right on cue to assume its role as the Fall Harvest Festival. Chanukah, of course, offers us some relief from the darkness of winter by adding another candle for



each of eight nights. What this also means is that Rosh HaShanah is in the early fall.

It might interest you to know that Pesach is actually the first notion we have of a "New Year"; Exodus 12:2 teaches: "*This month shall mark for you the beginning of the months; it shall be the first of the months of the year for you.*" When the Torah comes around to mentioning the celebration of the 1st of *Tishrei* (the date on which we celebrate what we now know as Rosh HaShanah), it simply says in Leviticus 23:24-25: "*In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you shall observe complete rest, a sacred occasion commemorated with loud blasts. You shall not work at your occupations, and you shall bring an offering by fire to the Lord.*"

There's nothing there about Rosh HaShanah, Day of Judgment etc.! Instead, these traditions emerge from the teachings of our earliest sages around the first century CE. At some point around this time, the idea of the autumnal new year begins to gather momentum and establish itself as a different type of new year, one with personal and spiritual overtones. Historians have searched for reasons for this development; some have theorized it was influenced by other cultures in the ancient Near East. Apparently some ancient Semitic peoples considered the year to begin around the autumn harvest and the beginning of the rainy season, which both signified the start of a new agricultural year. Theories abound.

In a famous Talmudic debate between Rabbi Yehoshua and Rabbi Eliezer about which of these two new year celebrations should henceforth be preeminent – i.e Nisan (spring) or Tishrei (fall), R.

(Continued on page 6)

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.

From the President

president@tbdrochester.org

Dear Congregants,

The high holidays are approaching quickly. Some of us think of the high holidays as a time to take stock of our past year and think about the year ahead. It is also a time when families come together both in Temple and over the dining room table. As in past years, we expect the largest number of congregants of the year to gather for services. Our ritual committee has been hard at work planning for these services.



Since this time last year, our activity committee, led by **Stan Schaffer**, has organized several events, including a Shabbat dinner, summer picnic, the Jewish Book Club, Colonial Belle canal cruise, Mount Hope Cemetery tour, and a new Pickleball Group. We even tried a Game Night!

We had our 8th annual Joint Golf Outing on Aug 10. Much of these efforts rely on active congregants who dedicate their time. There was also the opportunity to collaborate with Temple Beth El (TBE) and the Men's Club for the yearly Red Wings game at Innovative Field. And, Rabbi Silbert collaborated with TBE's Rabbi Bitran in delivering the "Dilemmas in Faith" discussion series.

Thank you to our Temple Board of Trustees, who meet each month to help me direct our course and to Rabbi Silbert for his contributions to meaningful Shabbat services, the Jewish Movie Club, Torah study on Shabbat, and his rabbinical services for our bereaved.

In the background, our administrative efforts are strained, and VP Administration **Scott Davis** has been our volunteer representative in the office. We are starting to utilize the TBE office staff for some of our administrative tasks (like the weekly email newsletter) and we are investigating further collaboration with TBE.

We are still amidst our sadness and stresses surrounding the events in Israel and Gaza that began on Oct 7, 2023. Too many lives have been lost and trauma has occurred in most every life in the region. These events have also led to a recurrence of antisemitism in our community, in the nation and around the world and even divisions in our own community. May our world leaders find the strength and humility to broker a truce that includes release of the hostages.

This year, as last year, our High Holiday services will be in the Chapel we use for weekly Shabbat services. There were many positive comments about our high holiday services in the chapel last year, including the better acoustics in the chapel when compared to our previous location. This change resolved the heavy lifting for a small group of congregants who needed to transport *Machzorim* and Torahs. There is also a financial advantage because we don't have to pay additional rent for this space.

This is also the time to think about how we can help others in our community to fulfill the mitzvah of *Tikkun Olam*. We need your ideas and your energy to continue to further our mission to serve the greater community. Please contact me or any of the Temple Beth David board members with your ideas.

The Temple Board and I wish you and your family all the best in the New Year – *Shanah Tovah Ve Tikateivu!*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil Katzman".

Phil Katzman
President

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Through September 15, 2025

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GET WELL WISHES TO

Cindy Halpern

Beverly Zwick

October—December 2025 Yahrzeits

These dates are the dates of observance using the secular calendar, matching the Hebrew calendar for the actual date of death.

October 2 Paul Halpern	October 23 Meyer Lubitow Paul Lederer	November 13 Mark Blatt Virginia Erlichman	December 6 Ruth Lederer
October 3 Mildred Feinberg	October 25 Evalyn Stoler	November 14 Esther Conwell Rothberg Ruth Shechet	December 8 Max Roth
October 4 Norman Fleissig Anna C. Lubitow (Cohen)	October 26 Esther A. Schwartz	November 15 James Alva	December 9 Marie Goldwasser Max Rosenthal
October 5 Winnie Olmer Max Forchheimer	October 27 Sonia Lutzky	November 15 David Samuel Eckhaus	December 10 Rhoda Greenstein
October 6 Michael Wexler Oscar Skopitz	October 28 Ethel Stamler	November 17 Julius Narotsky	December 11 Sara Gorelick
October 7 Selma Eckhaus	November 1 Selma Fleissig	November 18 Philip Stark	December 12 Ira Kinel
October 8 Paul Greenstein	November 2 Irving Lubitow Louis Gertzog	November 20 Joseph Levy	December 15 Rabbi Laurence Skopitz Rosalie Bloom
October 9 Marsha Fishman	November 4 Doris Ritter	November 21 Michael Simon Helen Forchheimer	December 16 Nathan Goldwasser
October 10 Walter Kielar	November 5 Marvin Davis Irwin Halpern	November 25 Millard Schaffer	December 18 Dora Lutzky
October 11 Morton Meyers	November 6 Louis Leitman Jacob Rubin	November 26 Benjamin Markowitz	December 19 Wilma Meyers Sylvia Towber
October 12 Yetta Nathan Moidel	November 8 Marge Gould Panitch	November 27 Abraham Fishman	December 22 Harry Vine
October 16 Carole Sue (Jaffey) Furman	November 9 Estelle Kaufman Henry Toole	November 28 Pauline Markowitz	Ben Drexler Fajwel Kinel
October 17 Tillie (Toby) Rosen Scott Grube Esther Mann	November 10 Mildred Gilman Irving Roth Frances Stark	November 30 Sheila Markowitz Myrna Lutzky	December 24 Robert N. Herman
October 18 Ruth Somers	November 12 Valerie Stark	December 1 Lee Rosenthal Bany Cohen	December 27 Elsie Perlman
October 22 Stephen E. Jaffey	Larry Brandwein	December 2 Mildred Levy	December 29 Marcia M. Davis
			December 31 Harold Feinberg



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All in the Family

Birthdays

OCTOBER

Daniel Saltzman	October 3
Howard Brill	October 7
Stanley Gross	October 11
Stacey Berke	October 31

NOVEMBER

Cindy Halpern	November 22
Scott Franklin	November 26
Edward Drexler	November 29

DECEMBER

Lori Davis	December 2
Stanley Schaffer	December 4
Philip Katzman	December 11
Sharon Alva	December 12
Fay Neuberg	December 20
Susan Drexler	December 27
Neil Hyman	December 27
Scott Davis	December 29
Merrie Franklin	December 31
Daniel Shapiro	December 31



**Would you like to
sponsor a kiddush?**

Contact the Temple Office.

Anniversaries

Davis, Scott and Lori Davis	October 16
Stanley and Michelle Gross	November 3
Daniel and Risa Saltzman	November 3
Ira and Sherry Goldman	November 4
Howard and Helen Kashtan	November 29

Mazal Tov!

Congratulation to Stan Schaffer for receiving the 2025 Edward Mott Moore Award from the Monroe County Medical Society. Our September 20th kiddush is sponsored by Elaine Schaffer in honor of Stan!

Mazal Tov to Marc Lande and Linda Servetnick:

- Marc and Linda sponsored a kiddush in honor of the naming of their granddaughter, Lily Zita, who received the Hebrew name Natalia. She is the daughter of Lee Lande and Eliany Socha.
- Their daughter Juliet was recently engaged to Phoenix Lindell.



Temple Beth David was well represented at JFest, held at the Jewish Community Center. We had many volunteers at our tent throughout the afternoon, ready to speak with visitors who wanted to learn about our congregation.

If you know anyone interested in learning more about Temple Beth David, please contact the Temple Office!

Rabbi's Message (Continued from Page 1)

Eliezer points out that Tishrei is the anniversary of the creation of Adam and hence of all humanity. According to Michelle Alperin, "Within the universalist compass of Tishrei, issues of sin and renewal applicable to all human beings were emphasized. The majority of rabbis following this debate back in the day in real time supported this argument, thus awarding the title of New Year (Rosh HaShanah) to Tishrei and so it remains our tradition to this day."

But here's an idea for you: instead of approaching the High Holy Days forlorn about reaching summer's end, get in your car and follow Clover Road (Rt.65) to just south of Calkins Road and behold the

glorious field of sunflowers. It's fascinating how they arrive at *this time of year, establishing a bold and audacious bookend to summer!*

And pay attention to this: the sunflowers don't look backwards; rather, they follow the sun and look ahead at what still could be.

Shanah Tovah – I look forward to looking ahead together with you!



Michael

Please call the Temple Office if you or a family member is in the hospital. We want to offer comfort to congregants who are ill. Hospitals are not permitted to contact us.

Rabbi Silbert has prepared a booklet of reflections on healing and connection.
Contact Rabbi Silbert or Temple Office for a copy.

SEND A CARD TO A FRIEND OR LOVED ONE!

Checks payable to: Temple Beth David

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 Rabbi Skopitz Fund

With the assistance of **Scott Davis, Stan Schaffer and Martin Yeskowich**, High Holiday honors have been assigned and *emailed* to congregants. If you haven't already done so, please confirm by email directly to me.

- If you received an honor and are unable to accept it, please send me an email and indicate if there is a better day and/or time when you would be able to accept an honor. I will do my best to accommodate your schedule.
- If you did not receive an honor and wish to have one, I apologize! If you send me an email I will make every effort to correct my oversight. Please indicate which day is best for you and if you have a preference for the type of honor: open ark, English reading, lift or tie the Torah, or one of the limited number of aliyot we will have this year. Also, please let me know if you are either a Cohen or a Levi if you wish an Aliyah.

Thank you. L'Shana Tovah

Activity Committee

The Activity Committee has been busy planning and organizing activities. In the last several months, we:

- started the Book Club where we have enjoyed discussions about several interesting books,
- implemented the Pickleball Club where members have enjoyed the opportunity to play the game with friends on a regular basis,
- had a lovely Shabbat dinner,
- went on a delightful canal cruise on the Colonial Belle, and
- enjoyed the picnic which was attended by over 40 people who enjoyed the camaraderie and the food.



More activities are in store for autumn and winter, so stay tuned!

JEWISH MOVIE CLUB



Wednesday, September 17, 2025

THE AUSCHWITZ REPORT

Two young Slovak Jews escape from Auschwitz and make their way back to Slovakia to report the systematic genocide at the camp to the authorities.

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BOARD MEETING

Board of Trustees

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Board of Trustees Meeting

October 21, 2025

November 18, 2025

December 16, 2025

Temple Activity Chairs

Archives Alison Helms

Media Sue Eckhaus

Membership Linda Servetnick

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www.tbdrochester.org

Contact the Temple Office
for login information