

The Shofar

Temple Beth El • Bakersfield, CA
Where Judaism Lives
April 2022 • Adar-II/Nissan 5782



at an exhibit when she knew the animals were nearby and get right up to the glass so she could get a face-to-face look – often with the lions, who looked right back at her through the inch or so of glass.

Dorothy Ann Rittenberg was born on April 23, 2007, in La Jolla, California and has moved around with her family quite a bit since then. From the San Diego area to Orange County, to South Florida and to Bakersfield, Dorothy has through it all been a wonderful, sweet and caring girl.

While living in Florida, Dorothy volunteered at a small place where visitors could interact with a variety of animals. After the day of volunteering, Dorothy would come back beaming, talking about the goats, birds, lizards, and (to her mom's dismay) snakes that she handled! Dorothy was 11 years old at the time but was still teaching visitors – young and old alike – the proper ways to handle these animals.

Dorothy and her younger brother, Hunter, come from a mixed family. Her mom, Epie, is Filipino and her dad, Josh, is Jewish. Dorothy has embraced both aspects of her cultural background. She loves watching Tagalog language movies with her mom and eating Filipino delicacies. And she has also attended Jewish religious school since third grade and worked very hard to learn Hebrew and live by Jewish values.

Embodying the Jewish Value of Tzaar Ba'alei Hayim, Dorothy has always had an enduring love for animals. As young as two years old, when we took her to the zoo, she would snake her way through the crowd of people

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The President's Perspective

Dear Chevrei,

Please welcome Debra Barrath as our newest Associate Member. Debra was born and raised in Durban, South Africa. She traveled abroad and then pursued a Masters in Nursing. Her life's work was focused in the community with refugees and immigrants. She also is a lecturer and researcher in government and passionate about healthcare. She currently lives in Los Angeles and if you would love to hear more about her fascinating life, I am sure you will be able to enlighten your curiosities!

We have now welcomed back all members of our Congregation to attend in-person services. For everyone's health please continue to wear your masks. Zoom services will still be offered to those not able to return. Thank you for being patient as we go through these changes.

The first Friday Family Service held on March 4th was wonderful! Many of our children were present. The Rabbi invited them up to see the Torah and their faces were a delight. Some pictures were posted on our Facebook Mishpacah page. Yasher Koach to all that participated!

In-person Havdalah Services in the Courtyard of the Temple will change to the Second Saturday of the month following the Jewish Learning at 6:30 pm. Please bring your Havdalah sets. If you are interested in purchasing a set, take a trip through our beautiful Judaica Shop. Gail and Steve Magnus are our lovely proprietors and welcome your patronage.

Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held on May 22, 2022 this year. This will be an in-person service starting at 1:00 pm with an ice-cream social generously contributed by Andy and Ella Abrams. We will still remain on Zoom for those not able to attend. You will be receiving a packet in the mail in April. If you have had any changes in your address please contact the office as soon as possible. We are looking forward to seeing everyone there!

Dorothy Rittenberg will be celebrating her Bat Mitzvah on April 23rd at her lovely home. Please make sure you RSVP. It would be a mitzvah to donate money to the Tree of Life to purchase a leaf for Dorothy to put up on the wall in the social hall. You can donate by going to templebethelbakersfield.org.

This November will be the 75th Anniversary of Temple Beth El. It will be wonderful to celebrate this austere occasion. If anyone is interested in putting this together, please contact me.

Yasher Koach to all the Congregants of Temple Beth El for all you do to keep us thriving!

"More than the Jewish people have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jewish people!"

Temple Beth El where Judaism lives!

Shalom,
Ilene Schechter



The Splitting of the Sea, Avigail Sapir

The Rabbi's Ruminations

April Come She Will, and With Her Comes Passover, Liberation, Rebirth

This year, the Jewish month of Nisan almost completely overlaps the secular month of April. Spring is in the air: Can you feel it?

The fifteenth of Nisan, when Pesach (Passover) begins, is on the fifteenth of April. Pesach is in some ways the most important of the Jewish holidays; with four out of five Torah books centered around the 120-year lifespan of Moses (who the rabbis expunged from the Passover Haggadah and reaffirming there that it was GOD who took us out of Egypt, no emissaries, angels, or messengers), we know that Passover's celebration of our liberation from slavery is the central narrative of the Jewish people. Thus, it competes with the line that our President Ilene Schechter quotes in every issue of the Shofar, from Ahad Ha'am: "More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews." It is basic: Passover has kept the Jewish people alive.

How so?

- Passover creates a safe space for freilich (joyous) celebration! On Pesach, over our matzah, charoset, maror, and of course the four cups of wine/grape juice, we have a party that can go late into the evening! I don't know about you, but I don't need much of an excuse for a party, and yet Pesach gives us one!
- Passover makes Jewish homes come alive: By bringing Judaism into the home, we unite our public identities with our private lives. One of the great advances in Jewish life after the destruction of the Temple was the spiritualization of our homes: We put Mezuzot on our doorposts, turn our Sabbath dinner tables into Mikdashei m'at, a mini- Sacred Spaces, ideally every week, we even traditionally say a blessing in the privacy of our own homes every time we use our bathrooms! Many hang their Ketubah over their beds, some place a Mizrach—a specially decorative painting—indicating the eastern wall of their home. And on Passover, we invite people in, remind one another of the power of Hachnasat Orchim (inviting guests in and treating them as dignitaries), and say "Mi casa es su casa," my house is your house. Judaism thrives in our homes, one of the great contributions of Jews to global spirituality. Perhaps no other religion manifests a home-centered spirituality the way our tradition does. With that in mind, please let us know by emailing tbeakersfield@gmail.com if you need a place for Passover Seder or if you would like to open your home to as many guests as you are willing.
- Passover grounds us in values: We call Pesach Z'man Cheruteinu, the "Season of our Freedom." Every year, we reiterate the value of redemption from slavery, the ideal that all people must be free, that our job is to imagine our own redemption so that we can remember the command to redeem others and our own redemption from personal enslavements--both literally and figuratively--and embrace the fullness of our existence.
- Passover brings the community together: We are obligated to scream out loud, "Let all who are hungry come and eat!" We open our doors, inviting strangers to enjoy the Pesach meal and seder alongside lifelong friends. It, like Shabbat, is a Taste of the World To Come, when all will coexist peacefully and we will celebrate the beauty and bounty of the planet with one another.



continued on page 11

Happy Anniversary!

April 6

William & Terry Skinner

April 13

**Peggie & Colleen
Soltis-McGraw**

April 26

Tom & Robin Feher



Klezmer on the Roof, Leon Zernitsky

Own Your Piece of Real Estate for Eternity

Temple Beth El maintains its own dedicated section at Greenlawn Memorial Park on River Blvd. The price of a plot is \$2,875 which can be paid in three installments over a period of two years.

For more info, contact Barry Goldner at 395-1000 (work) or at 589-4096 (home).

Support Temple Beth El

Help us sustain our robust vision for Jewish life by contributing to any of the following funds:

General Contributions:

- Tree of Life
- Prayer Book Plates
- Memorials
- Memorial Book
- Kol Nidre
- High Holy Day Seats
- Caring Committee

Specific Funds:

- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Camperships

To contribute online:

<https://templebethelbakersfield.org/donation/>

Changes?

Please notify the Temple office with your membership information — addresses (including email), phone number(s), births, marriage, yahrzeits.

Please help up keep our data base and membership directory updated.

Mea Culpa... Mike Feldman's birthday was on March 22, not March 21. Hope it was a great one, Mike!

Happy Birthday!

April 1

Mary Speare

April 3

Pearl Davis

April 4

Laura Reyes

Eytan Wallace

April 5

Ferdinand Aggenbach

Matthew Kay

April 6

Leora Freedman

April 7

Adam Rodriguez

Chelsea Zent

April 10

John Beam

April 11

Rachel Goldner

April 12

Madeline Ann Aguilar

April 15

Catharina Rose Preciado

April 16

Beth Spiegel

April 18

Ira Peshkin

Gabriel Theron

April 21

Timothy Fromm

April 23

Dorothy Rittenberg

April 24

Alpha Anders

Sidney Freedman

April 26

Abigail Martinez

April 29

Hendrix Mawhirter

Marcy Smith

Welcome to Bright Beginnings Learning Center

2906 Loma Linda Drive, Bakersfield, CA 93305

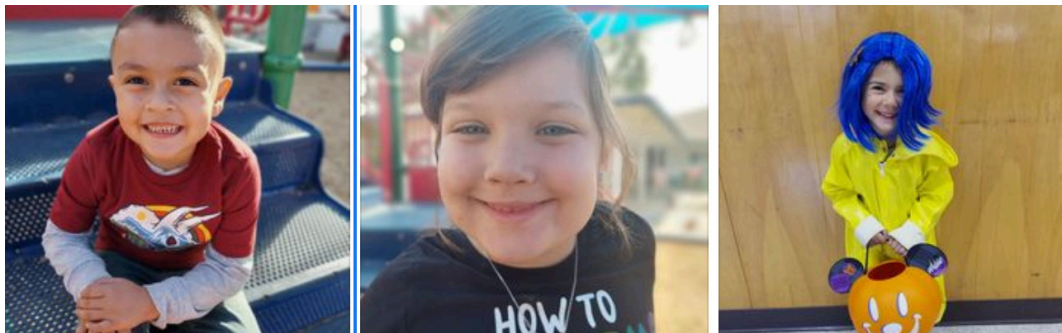
Hours: 6:30a.m. to 6:00p.m.

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- Online distance learning for school age children

For more detailed information, contact Bright Beginnings at (661) 324-1253

or email: tonibblcdirector@gmail.com



Reminder!
This month's Book Club selection is *The Gallery of Vanished Husbands* by Natasha Solomons!

SISTERHOOD CHAI•LIGHTS

March 2022

Sisterhood members continue to participate in many exciting and interesting activities! We continue to have activities Via Zoom but are also planning in person events for the near future!! All activities can be started at any time and no prior attendance is needed. The following is a list of activities coming up in April and the future!

Please Note there is No Meeting in April!!

Our next meeting will be **Sunday, May 15th at 3pm.**

Book Club meeting is **March 27th at 1pm** to discuss *The Gallery of Vanished Husbands* by Natasha Solomons! Next book selection is *The Middlesteins* by Jami Attenberg and will meet to discuss on **June 5th.**

Cooking class is Sunday **April 3rd at 1pm** and will feature Passover foods!! Including Brisket cooking 101, Passover Vegetable Kugel, and Crunchy Chocolate Passover Pie Crust. Both are from the current cookbook.

Legacy Writing Class is next scheduled for **May 15th at 1pm.**

Please Note we are looking for Committee Members for the following New Committees!! If you would like to participate in any of them please contact Helen Armistead by email or text or phone calls at 661-472-1758.

Meal of Condolence

Rosh Hodesh

Kitchen Shower

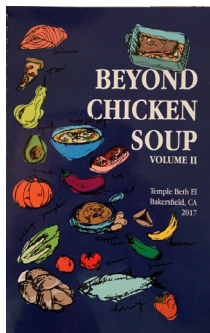
Annual Sisterhood Tea

Babysitting for Sisterhood Events

Please consider joining some great women!!
All Sisterhood activities are via TBE Zoom and in person as noted!!
We hope to see you all at future activities and meetings!
If you have any questions please feel free to email me!!

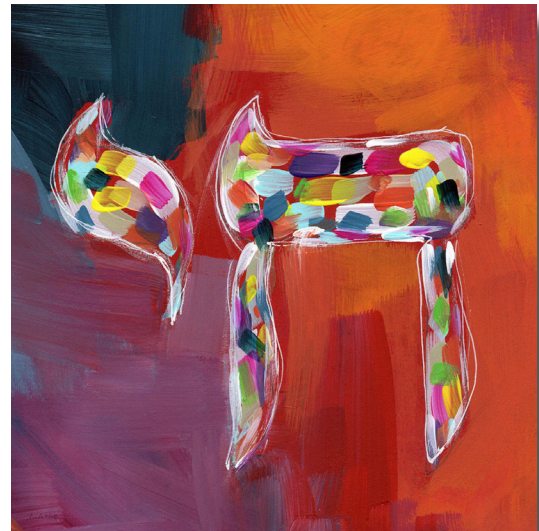
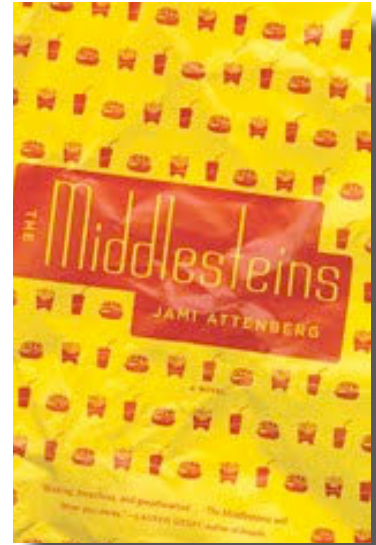
Helen Armistead

Secretary
armisteadlmft@gmail.com



Sisterhood BOOKCLUB

Book Club's next read is *The Middlesteins* by Jami Attenberg. We will meet on **Sunday, June 5th at 1pm** via TBE Zoom to discuss this book. Please visit Jewish Book Council for further information on this title and to purchase from a JBC affiliate. You can also purchase this title from ThriftBooks in a variety of formats for under \$5.00. The Kern County Library has several copies available at a variety of locations throughout the county (Beale, Southwest, Wasco). You can also find this title on audio either on demand or on CD as well from several vendors. *The Middlesteins* is available for Kindle for \$1.99. Please join us in this next, highly recommended read. We look forward to your participation.



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Dorothy Rittenberg, continued from page 1

And of course, Dorothy always wanted a puppy. For years, she (and sometimes her brother Hunter) would beg her mom for one, and finally between Dorothy's years of pleading and the pandemic, Epie broke down and allowed our family to adopt.

Of course, Dorothy also builds lasting bonds with people based on empathy and her easy-going nature. Soon after moving to Florida, one of Dorothy's classmates had a sleepover birthday party. We were running late to the party and when we got there, the birthday girl and the rest of the attendees were so happy. "We were afraid Dorothy wasn't going to make it", the girl's mother said, "My daughter really wanted Dorothy to come." And even though she has moved around quite a bit, Dorothy still has lifelong friends from each of the places we have lived.

Generosity has never been in short supply for Dorothy. She regularly donates to people in need, especially in the Philippines. She always reminded us that she needed tzedakah for Sunday school. In honor of her Bat Mitzvah, Dorothy has organized donations and raised over \$500 for victims of a devastating Typhoon in the Philippines. Additionally, in honor of Dorothy's Bat Mitzvah, we welcome donations to the Tree of Life found on Temple Beth El's website.

Finally, Dorothy is an excellent student (she was one of the few students in Florida who received a perfect score on a standardized test) who has a blackbelt in Tae Kwon Do, can figure skate, and was on a highly ranked math team. She is a wonderful daughter and gift to us all.



April 2022 Yahrzeits

4/01 Shabbat Service Yahrzeits	
Ione Lollar, mother of Laura Wolfe	4/1
Marvin David Teplitz, brother-in-law of Mary and Dan z"l Speare	4/1
Esther Bernstein, mother of Stacy Davis	4/2
Abraham Levey, great-grandfather of Irvin Pike	4/2
Sam Rudnick, uncle of Joshua Rudnick	4/2
Milton Shilkroun, uncle of Judy Strauss	4/2, Nissan 1, 5782
Tommy Uhacz, remembered by Irvin Pike	4/2
Susan Ferguson, remembered by TBE	4/3
Phil Levey, grandfather of Irvin Pike	4/4
Arthur Singer, step-father of Sylvia Neal, z"l	4/5
Matilde Lewis, remembered by Ana Genel, z"l	4/6
Emily Lepp, great aunt of Laura Lauria	4/7, Nissan 6, 5782
4/08 Shabbat Service Yahrzeits	
Freda Singer, mother of Sylvia Neal, z"l	4/8
Abraham Popel, grandfather of Suzie Simrin	4/9
Ron Deem, son-in-law of Stan and Norma Schwartz, z"l	4/11
Sarah Rosenfeld, grandmother of Andrew Levine	4/11
Fred Sherwyn, grandfather of Liz Sherwyn	4/12
Phyllis Swinney, mother of Nancy McCombs	4/12
Mary Louise Benner, mother of Patricia Young	4/13
Eva Blumer, mother of Vivian Gonzalez	4/13
Sheldon Freedman, father of Michael Freedman	4/13
Ric Hugo, father of Mark Hugo	4/14
4/15 Shabbat Service Yahrzeits	
Louis Caplan, father of Diane Rogers	4/15
Patrick Falkner, friend of Gail Lipton	4/17
Doug Halpern, grandfather of Sarah Mawhitter	4/17
Keith Richard Daufel, father of Amy Snyner	4/18
Kenneth Harman, cousin of Joshua Rudnick	4/18
Diane Polland Carrete, aunt of Amanda Garza	4/19

Rose Schechter, grandmother of Ilene Schechter	4/19
Greta Oppenheimer, mother of Judy Feldman	4/20, Nissan 19, 5782
4/22 Shabbat Service Yahrzeits	
Sharon Lipco, sister of Lisa Levine	4/22
Marie Schulman, grandmother of Mark Schulman	4/22, Nissan 21, 5782
Mollie Schwalbendorf, grandmother of Larry Fish	4/22
Lillian Soren, remembered by Jeff and Donna Schwartz	4/22
Alvin Polland, uncle of Laura Lauria	4/23, Nissan 22, 5782
Haya Sura Shnaiderman, sister of Etel Lewis	4/23
Christy Therese Trunec, daughter of Colleen Soltis-McGraw	4/23
Andrew Davis, son of Andy and Diane Andrews	4/24
Norma Schwartz, mother of Jeff Schwartz	4/25
4/29 Shabbat Service Yahrzeits	
Simon Lewi, brother of Ana Genel, z"l	4/28
Martha Ann Ohe, mother of Marianne Gartenlaub	4/28
Jewish Community of Sambor, Poland, remembered by TBE	4/28, Nissan 27, 5782
Mark Burgess, brother-in-law of Peggie and Colleen Soltis-McGraw	4/30
Ethel Gintzler, great-aunt of Laura Lauria	4/30, Nissan 29, 5782
Albert Abram Kaplan, father of Marsha Parr	4/30

Judaism requires those comforting mourners to provide meals following their loved one's funeral. Temple Beth El's Caring Committee provides these Meals of Condolence, Se'udot Havra'ah. Please donate, <https://templebethelbakersfield.org/donation/> to the Caring Committee so that we may continue to support our mourners in their time of need.



Passover begins on Friday night, April 15

Prayer Book Bookplates In Honor or In Memory of...

Bookplates are available for only \$18 each.

To order, make check payable to Temple Beth El,
“attention: Bookplates.”

Please include any special wording and the manner
in which you wish your name to appear.

Questions? Contact the office at (661) 322-7607 or
tbebakersfield@gmail.com.

Memorial Plaques

Temple Beth El provides a sanctuary for your sacred prayers, a social hall for special celebrations, a library to study our heritage, a school to teach our eternal values and ways to remember ones who are no longer with us.

One way we honor those who helped shape our lives is by adding a made-to-order bronze Memorial Plaque to the walls of the Temple foyer.

Contact Andy Abrams:
aabrams@bak.rr.com

Temple Contributions

Tree of Life

Joshua & Epie Rittenberg, in honor of the Bat Mitvah of Dorothy Rittenberg

William & Laura Wolfe, in honor of the Bnai Mitzvah of Kyle Malicdem and Dorothy Rittenberg

Rabbi Discretionary

Andy & Ella Abrams

Leonard & Carla Epstein

William & Laura Wolfe, in honor of Laura's
Birthday, from Bill

Kol Nidre

Greg & Rose Broida, for painting work

Memorials/Yahrzeit

Brent Eastep

A special thanks to Tom Armistead for purchasing— and then REPLACING— the new exhaust fan in the kitchen!



Song of Songs, Elena Kotliarker

Have a seat? Need a seat?

If... you are **having a seder** this year and **can accommodate one or more people**, please let me know which night and how many seats are available.

If... you **need a seder to attend**, please reach out immediately. Let me know if either night is OK and how many seats you need.

For both, use the Temple phone number **661-322-7607** or email tbeakersfield@gmail.com. You can also leave questions for me.

Laura Wolfe
Your Seder Concierge

Rabbi continued from page 3

- Passover puts God front and center: In stark contrast to our cultural obsession with demagogues--movie celebrities, political leaders, pop stars-- Pesach teaches us to set aside the chameitz (I'll translate it as "shmutz," the yucky bloating of our existence) of our lives in the form of materialism and to replace it with our relationship with The Transcendent One, Hakadosh Baruch Hu, and any time we put God in front of people, we diminish our sometimes haughtiness and replace it with humility, a core value of Judaism.

With this in mind, I say, Let all who are hungry, come and eat! Let us make Seders for all!

Rabbi Klein

Join me via Zoom for Passover Seder on **Friday, April 15th at 6pm**; if you don't have a place for Seder but will be in LA, I'll include you, alongside a few Temple Beth El folks!

May each and every one of us experience our own Y'tziyat Mitzrayim, our own exodus from whatever enslaves us spiritually.

May all the Chameitz of your life be removed!

May this April bring you a Spring Cleaning from all the Shmutz in your lives!

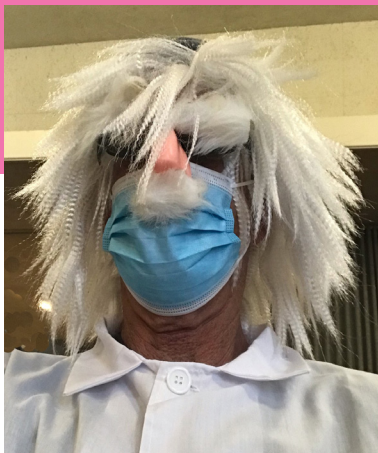
Let's make some beautiful Judaica art of our own! All contributions will be included in next month's Shofar. Please take a photo and email the jpg to jegland@gmail.com.

Color Me for the May Shofar!





Purim 2022







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April 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>PLEASE NOTE: This month, all temple activities will be conducted using an on-site/ ZOOM hybrid model, unless otherwise stated.</p>					1 6:00pm Family Service	2 5:30pm Pirkei Avot
		3 10:00am Religious School 1:00pm Sisterhood Cooking Class	7:00pm Rabbi's Holiday Class at BC	5 9:00am Prayer Class 6:00pm Religious Practices	6 Midweek Hebrew via ZOOM	7
10 10:00am Religious School	11 7:00pm Rabbi's Holiday Class at BC	12 9:00am Prayer Class 7:00pm Board Meeting	13 Midweek Hebrew via ZOOM	14 4:00pm Sisterhood Leadership Meeting	15 6:00pm Community Seder via Zoom First Night of Passover	16
17 No Religious School	18 7:00pm Rabbi's Holiday Class at BC	19 9:00am Prayer Class	20 Midweek Hebrew via ZOOM	21	22 6:00pm Shabbat ShaZoom 7:00pm Shabbat Services	23 9:00am Dorothy Rittenberg Bat Mitzvah at the Rittenberg home
24 10:00am Religious School	25 7:00pm Rabbi's Holiday Class at BC	26 9:00am Prayer Class	27 Midweek Hebrew via ZOOM	28	29 6:00pm Shabbat ShaZoom 7:00pm Shabbat Services	30 5:30pm Pirkei Avot

Shalom Y'all!

Can you believe it is already April? Time is flying by.

The religious school teachers had a great time putting on a Purim Spiel for our students last month. Jill Egland was our playwright and a beautiful Vashti, Christopher Jacobson made a fabulous King Ahashueras, Tim Fromm was a convincing Mordecai (must be his theater background), Stacy Davis was a lovely Esther, Laura Wolfe and her puppets were terrifying assassins and I was Haman (boooo). It was a fun change of pace from our normal class routine and I am hopeful that the students enjoyed themselves nearly as much as we did.



I am so appreciative of the teachers and families who have shown up each week in pursuit of Jewish knowledge. This has been a “go with the flow year,” transitioning leadership, exploring new curriculum, and navigating virtual learning together.

You're URJ!

URJ Vision & Priorities

The URJ builds community at every level, collaborating and connecting with congregations, organizations, and individuals across North America to advance contemporary and inclusive Jewish life.

As Russia's vicious attack on Ukraine continues, we feel anger, pain, and a desire to act. Here are some steps you can take to support the Ukrainian people, including the Progressive Jewish community:

Donate: The World Union for Progressive Judaism has opened a Ukraine Crisis Relief Fund. Money will be spent on individuals and communities to ensure their safety and well-being. [Donate to the WUPJ fund now.](#)

Pray: Religious Action Center Director Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner joined an interfaith prayer service led by members of Congress. "We pray for and embrace in our hearts all God's children who are dying and suffering...Let not the world stand idly by while our Ukrainian family bleeds." [Watch the prayer service.](#)

Learn: The [World Union for Progressive Judaism](#) has been sharing powerful videos and testimony from Kiev's Rabbi Alexander Dukhovny and Rabbi Julia Gris of Shirat ha-Yam / Progressive Jewish Congregation of Odessa.

Act: The crisis in Ukraine has already created half a million refugees and counting. Now is the time to welcome these refugees with open arms. [Tell your members of Congress to pass the GRACE Act, ensuring the U.S. remains committed to robust refugee resettlement regardless of who is in the White House.](#)

Our schedule for April is the 3rd, 10th and 24th. We will have one Sunday off for Spring Break, April 17th.

Learning and Growing with you,

Sage Russinsky
TBE Religious School Principal
and Alumni

A scene from the Religious School's Purim play, put on by the teachers. Pictured here is Haman (Sage Russinsky), King Ahashueres (Christopher Jacobson), Mordechai (Tim Fromm), and behind the Applause sign is Ester (Stacy Davis).



The Tent

“Looking up, Abraham saw three men standing near him. As soon as he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them and, bowing to the group, he said “My lords, if it please you, do not go past your servant.” Genesis 18:2-3



The **Brit Olam** is a guidepost and a framework, helping congregations move social justice closer to the center of their communities. It is a tool to help leadership strengthen congregational social justice endeavors, engage more members in this important work, and connect congregations more deeply to the URJ Movement's social justice priorities.

The Brit Olam can support leadership in facilitating a conversation among key stakeholders about the community's social justice efforts. Going through the process of signing the Brit Olam, which Temple Beth El did in 2019, can help to advance our social justice goals and inspire moral leadership and congregational action. To date, nearly 250 congregations across North America have signed the Brit Olam. To learn more and to engage in a conversation about the significance of signing the Brit Olam, please visit the Brit Olam Communities Group in the Tent.



For more information about various URJ programs, including the Religious Action Center (RAC), contact Larry Saslaw or Jill Eglund, co-chairs, Social Justice Committee.

E-mail Shofar submissions to tbebakersfield@gmail.com

Deadline for the May Shofar is April 15, 2021

Our monthly Shofar is published by:

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