

120 Years • 1897 - 2017

Kayruv



קירוב

Celebrating the past, Welcoming our future!

July/August 2018

Tammuz/Av/Elul 5778

FROM THE RABBI



Dear Friends,

This month, I'd like to share with you my remarks made at the Annual Meeting.

"I could make a list of everything I've done, in the past year, but not only would we be here until 9:00

P.M., but also such a list would be missing the point. Because the point is not just the work, but how work – both my professional and individual work, AND our collective work foster the vision and mission of CBI – or hinder it.

We have spent almost a year celebrating our 120th anniversary, and that is nothing short of amazing. I have no idea what our founding fathers and mothers thought when they made B'nai Israel a reality, but I am sure they would be proud – and that, somewhere, they actually are – that our community arrived at 120.

But we need to look forward, and figure out what our purpose is – and direct our efforts and work to achieve it. Our mission cannot be just keeping B'nai Israel open and functioning. Existence for existence's sake is not enough. Existence has to be meaningful.

I want to thank our amazing group of volunteers, for an incredible year of work. But work alone is not meaningful. To work and volunteer in a Jewish institution means that we will use this opportunity as a gift to become better people. It means that we will try our hardest to open our hearts to each other, and not let our reactions take over.

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Kayruv means "Welcoming."



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To be reactive is to let our smaller, pettier sense of selves take the steering wheel. It is to talk badly and complain and point out the defects and failings of those who volunteer and work with us. It is to forget that we are here for a higher purpose.

I would like to invite all of us to respond instead of reacting.

To respond means to have a larger picture in mind when acting. In Hebrew this is called *mochin degadlut*, an expanded consciousness. We respond when we think first of the larger message we want to convey with our actions – before acting. Before criticizing or gossiping or underscoring what we may feel is wrong with those who volunteer and serve with us, we remember our Jewish core value of *shemirat halashon* – being careful with what we say, and how we say it, and for what purpose we say those words.

In a world where crass language and name calling and lies are the norm, where they invade our homes every night, do we have the courage to stand up and be aware of how we use words, and use them for positive outcomes and civil discourse? Do we have the courage to use our time volunteering and serving this community to make it even better than it is? I hope so.

In times where diminishing and excluding others is rampant, do we have the courage to uphold the core Jewish value of *tzelem elokim*, everyone is made in God's image, and make this community even more embracing of diversity than it already is? I hope so.

In times of brokenness, despair and hopelessness, do we have the courage to uphold the core Jewish value of *tikkun olam*, fixing the world, and push our community to be more socially active than it already is?

In times of judgment passed quickly, frequently and without compassion, do we have the courage to uphold the core Jewish value of *dan lekaf zechut*, judging favorably? Instead of focusing on how someone dresses, speaks or lives, do we dare to focus on how we can help, support and encourage this person in front of us to find meaning in engaging in our collective life here at B'nai Israel?

In times of simple answers, easy soundbites and thoughtless solutions, do we have the courage to uphold the Jewish core value of *limud*, learning, and embracing nuance, details and complexity, more than we at B'nai Israel already do?

Because everything we do, say, how we act and whether we react or respond affects the entire community.

So, as we contemplate the opening of the next 120 years of B'nai Israel, I invite everyone here to reach for greatness of spirit and remember that all of us are here to support each other and help each other grow, spiritually, socially and in learning. By growing ourselves we will grow this community."

Warmly,
Rabbi Nelly Altenburger

RABBI'S OFFICE HOURS

Rabbi Altenburger invites you to meet with her and will be available any day except Wednesday and Shabbat. Please feel free to call or stop by.

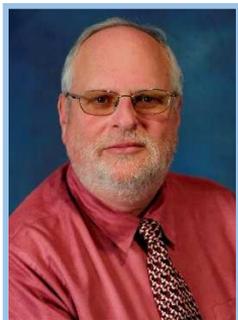
MESSAGE FROM JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES OF GREATER DANBURY/PUTNAM

At its most recent board meeting of June 19, 2018, the Board of **Jewish Family Services of Greater Danbury/Putnam** has decided to discontinue its operations effective June 30, 2018.

On behalf of all Board members, and myself, thank you so much for your support over the past three years in helping us to serve the members of our Jewish community.

With gratitude and appreciation,
Donna Prywes

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

Some words just go together; summer and ice cream; hot and humid; baseball and cracker jacks; Red Sox vs. Yankees; campfire and s'mores; and synagogue and YOU. Ok, the last one might not roll off the tongue as easily as the others; but it is as important as the

other pairs.

As we begin our fiscal year with new officers and board members, we all look forward to moving Congregation B'nai Israel into the next 120 years. As president, I would plan to initiate some new initiatives.

First is **Communication**. Beginning with this issue of the Kayruv, we will publish the minutes of our Board meetings. Attached to this issue, are the minutes of the June 24th congregation meeting and supporting attachments. Remember that all Board meetings are open to all CBI members and interested parties. At these meetings we set policy and direction for our shul.

As part of communication, I want you to hear from other members of your leadership team. The President's column will be written by others. I am pleased that our new Vice President David J. Levine has written his first article which appears in this issue. I will be asking others to write as well.

Second is **Updating Policies and Their Codification**. This process was begun with the cemetery rules and regulations last year. We will begin the updating of our Bylaws that have not been modified since 1999. We need to review and perhaps update our membership and school policies. If you are interested in assisting with any of these, please let me know. Our goal is to have all policies on our website so our members and potential members know who we are.

Third is **Member Forums**. Once a month I plan to lead member forums. I will rotate when they are held, starting with Tuesday evening, July 24th at 7:00pm. Future dates will be announced. The purpose of these forums is simply to provide members an informal relaxed atmosphere to talk, share ideas and get to know each other. I have no set agenda or time limit. Those who attend will set them.

Finally, and most important is **Community**. Anyone who knows me and anyone who has read my articles knows that nothing is more important to me than community. After all, what is a congregation but a community and a major tenet of Judaism. Each of the three initiatives lead to Community. I am happy that the Ritual Committee has maintained a schedule of Friday night services. I would like to restart Friday night Shabbat dinners hosted by members, inviting other members to their homes. Shabbat is a special time for us, and what better way to bring Shabbat into our homes than with a meal. If you are willing to host, please let me know. [By the way, thank you for reading this far.] The meals do not have to be elaborate; I am not looking for culinary experts. What I am looking for are people who will share the joy of Shabbat with others.

Joel Levitt has done an excellent job with community outreach and there is so much more we can do. My first position with CBI was co-chairing Outreach and one of our projects was "*Passover in the Aisle*." We set up at Stop and Shop on Lake Avenue and spoke to people about Passover and provided samples. It was a great opportunity to explain the meaning of the festival with people who only knew about the "dry cracker." Our target audience was everyone. It wasn't about finding members, although that was nice. It was about sharing. We also set up at Blue Jay Orchards around *Sukkot*. I would like to find someone who would like to bring those outreach programs back and/or start some new ones.

So, I hope you will agree that this is a very ambitious plan for the year. Will we succeed, of course. How will we succeed? With your help. There is a list of all the officers and board members along with the committee chairs in every issue of the Kayruv. Please feel free to contact any of us. Just remember that some of us go to bed early.

Building CBI

Paul M Simon

Editor's Note: Please use the following form or email address to let Paul know how you can help CBI achieve the goals that both he and Rabbi Altenburger have discussed.

I want to do MY part to help MY *shul* meet the needs of OUR congregation in one (or more) of the following ways:

- Join the Board of Directors
- Serve on a committee

- Education Endowment
- Ritual House
- Cemetery *Bikur Cholim* (Caring)

- Help with hospitality
- Plan a social event
- Be a greeter on Shabbat
- _____
- _____

Please return to Congregation B'nai Israel or email president@danburyskul.org

FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

Note: David Levine's election to the first vice presidency of CBI's Board of Directors brings a youthful vitality along with a rich legacy of devoted leadership to our synagogue. In this letter to the membership, David describes his family's commitment to CBI and the impact that it has had on his life.

Dear Friends,



When I read *Our History* on our Congregation's website it reminds me of the stories that my grandparents would tell me when I was a child. According to *Our History* "We purchased the Universalist Unitarian Church at 347 Main Street in 1967 and the congregation became known as Congregation B'nai Israel. This building was sold in November of 1972. Torahs were stored at the city's United Jewish Center until two acres of land on Clapboard Ridge Road was purchased in 1974." My grandmother, Jackie Levine, would explain to me how she would attend synagogue on Main Street.

Meanwhile, conveniently right down the street, the first Levine Automotive store was established on Keeler Street. Therefore, my grandparents were involved in the community, especially in the congregation.

When the synagogue was under construction, my grandparents held shabbat services at their house. The stories of joy and camaraderie resonate today, and only provide the hope to see it come alive again. There is evidence of this in photos taken at the time, however, they are safely stored in Boca Raton, Florida at this moment.

In 1967, my grandfather, Melvin Levine, was president of Congregation B'nai Israel. Yes, president during a monumental transition for B'nai Israel and the first president in the new building. My parents, Carol and Richard Levine, lived next to the synagogue for several years while my mother underwent her conversion in the mid-1980s. Moreover, my parents were wed in our humble, quaint synagogue. My brother, Joel Levine, my father, and I became *b'nai mitzvah* in our sanctuary. My grandmother's parents' names, the Femans, appear on a memorial plaque in the sanctuary as well. Torahs have been dedicated to my uncle. Gifts were donated and were created for B'nai Israel by my great grandfather, such as the "B'nai Israel" sign on the office door.

All in all, my roots run deep in our synagogue and in our congregation. It was crucial to my family for generations, and it is as significant to me today. Of course, it matters that I have a strong foundation in work ethic; although, I think it matters more where my heart is in this opportunity with which I am honored. There is an alleged quote from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, "If you want to build a ship, don't drum up the men and women to gather wood, divide the work, and give orders. Instead, teach them to yearn for the vast and endless sea." I want the congregation and others to feel the same connection, and the same love I have for our synagogue. I admire what past generations and previous boards have done to lead our congregation towards prosperity and continuance. There are reminiscences of my family all over the synagogue and these make me feel whole when I am there with you all.

B'shalom,
David J. Levine

JULY/AUGUST EVENTS

Summer Adult Ed Class

Tuesday mornings at 10:00 and Thursday evenings at 7:00 P.M.

Join us for our summer adult ed class. The topic is: The Power of Midrash. Come and learn why and how Judaism today is not the religion of the Torah. Why is "an eye for an eye" not true in Judaism? The class takes place on Tuesday mornings from 10:00 to 11:30 AM and Thursday evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 PM. Everyone is welcome!

HIGH HOLIDAY SCHEDULE 2018



ROSH HASHANAH 5779

Sunday September 9th
Erev Rosh Hashanah
Candle lighting 6:55 PM
Evening services begin at 7:30 PM

Monday September 10th
Rosh Hashanah Day 1
Morning Services begin at 8:30 AM
Shofar sounding around 11:30 AM
Tashlich at 5:00 P.M.
Candle lighting after 7:53 PM

Tuesday September 11th
Rosh Hashanah Day 2
Morning Services begin at 8:30 AM
Shofar sounding around 11:30
Holiday ends 7:52 PM

September 15th – *Shabbat Shuva*
Morning Services begin at 9:30 AM
Havdalah 7:44 PM



YOM KIPPUR

Tuesday September 19th
Erev Yom Kippur
Candle lighting and fast begins - 6:40 PM
Kol Nidrei Services begin at 6:30 PM

Wednesday September 20th
Yom Kippur services begin at 8:45 AM
Yizkor at around 11:00 AM
Study Session begins at 4:00 PM
Mincha and *Neilah* services
begin at 4:45 PM
Shofar sounding 7:37 PM



SUKKOT

Sunday September 23rd
Candle lighting 6:31 PM

Monday September 24th
Sukkot Day 1 services begin at 9:30 AM
Candle lighting after 7:29 PM

Tuesday September 25th
Sukkot Day 2 services begin at 9:30 AM
Holiday ends at 7:27 PM

SHEMINI ATZERET SIMCHAT TORAH



Sunday September 30th
Candle lighting at 6:19 PM

Monday October 1st
Shemini Atzeret services begin at 9:30 AM
Yizkor at around 11:00 AM
Candle lighting for *Simchat Torah* after 7:17 PM
Simchat Torah evening services begin at 7:00 PM

Tuesday October 2nd
Simchat Torah services begin at 9:30 AM
Holiday ends at 7:15 PM

Children's Services and Babysitting



Services for children 5 years old and up will be from 10:15 -11:45 AM in the big room downstairs. Story time will be from 10:15-10:45 in the nursery. Babysitting from 9:30 AM through end of services.

Children's services, story time and babysitting are available on Day 1 and 2 of *Rosh Hashanah* and on *Yom Kippur*.

GOOD TIMES WE SHARE

Tag Sale

Thank you to all the members who donated clothing/household items and some of their worldly possessions for our Savers/Tag Sale event. We raised a total of \$1,300.00!! I especially want to thank the numerous people who schlepped bags of clothing to load the truck, unpacked, priced, and helped sell the tag sale items, as well as those who helped clean up after the event. I would like to thank the kitchen crew of Paul Simon, Susan Tritter and Fran Kass for making breakfast and lunch for the workers on the day of the tag sale.

Barbie Steinberg

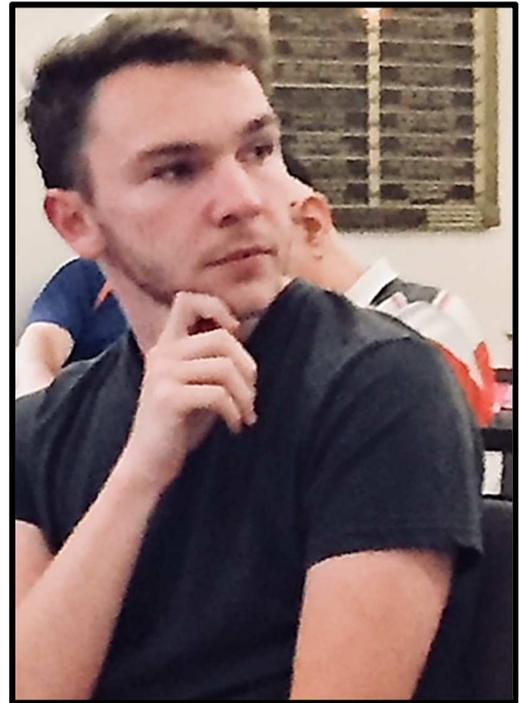


ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Our Annual Congregational Meeting was held the evening of June 24th. Below are some photos of attendees.



From left to right David J. Levine, First Vice President, Lois Stein, Treasurer, Nadja Raver, Trustee



Victor Namer, Corresponding Secretary



Joe Namer, Trustee

**Watch for details of a
B'nai Israel summer event
as part of our
120th Anniversary celebration!**



Member Lorie Mael and President Paul M Simon



Member Jeff Kass



Todd Takken, Endowment Committee



Joe and Sarah Namer (Sarah, Ritual Committee)

SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

☆ **Shabbat, 2 Av, July 14, Mattot-Mas'ei:** The final portions of Bamidbar, the route of our wandering is recounted. *Haftarah:* Jeremiah 2:4-28; 3:4

☆ **Shabbat, 9 Av, July 21, Devarim:** Ready to enter the land of Milk and Honey, Moshe addresses the Israelites and reviews their history with them as warning. *Haftarah:* Isa. 1:1-27

☆ **Shabbat, 16 Av, July 28, Va'et hannan:** Still addressing the Israelites, Moshe regrets that he will not be entering the land with them. In this *parsha* Moshe repeats the Ten Commandments, as well as addressing us with the words of the *Sh'ma*. *Haftarah:* Isa. 40:1-26

☆ **Shabbat, 23 Av, August 4, Ekev:** Moshe enjoins the Israelites to remember that their future depends on their actions. *Haftarah:* Isa.49:14-51:3

☆ **Shabbat, 30 Av, August 11, Re'eh:** Moshe teaches us the economics of *tzedakah* (charity and welfare) which are the responsibilities of the people of Israel as they create a society in their own land. *Haftarah:* Isa. 66:1-24,23

☆ **Shabbat, 7 Elul, August 18, Shofetim:** Moshe instructs us to set up just courts to rule our society. "Justice justice shall you pursue." *Haftarah:* Isa. 51:12-52:12

☆ **Shabbat, 14 Elul, August 25, Ki tetse:** An array of civil and domestic laws for the Israelites to follow upon coming into their land. *Haftarah:* Isa. 54:1-10 + 54:11-55:5

☆ **Shabbat, 21 Elul, September 1, Ki tavo:** Come and discuss blessings and curses in Jewish thought. *Haftarah:* Isa. 60:1-22

☆ **Shabbat, 28 Elul, September 8, Nitsavim:** Choose life! How do we do that? *Haftarah:* Isa. 61:10-63:9

CANDLE LIGHTING

July 13, 2018:	8:08 PM
July 20, 2018:	8:04 PM
July 27, 2018:	7:57 PM
August 3, 2018:	7:50 PM
August 10, 2018:	7:41PM
August 17, 2018:	7:31 PM
August 24, 2018:	7:21 PM
August 31, 2018:	7:09 PM
September 7, 2018:	6:58 PM

YAHARZEITS

8 Av, July 20, 2018

Bernard Breeman (Barbie Steinberg)

14 Av, July 26, 2018

Shalom Lampell (Pam Lampell)

21 Av, August 2, 2018

Bessie Bank (Alex Bank)

Alfred P. Poll (Susan Osnoss)

23 Av, August 4, 2018

Aryeh Leib Kerstein (Michael Kerstein)

26 Av, August 7, 2018

Elliot Maya (Alan Maya)

28 Av, August 9, 2018

Harry Robinson (Barbara Levitt)

Dr. Ralph Alpher (Harriet Lebetkin)

Sol Harry Kaplan (Donna Goodstein)

30 Av, August 11, 2018

A. Paul Tritter (Henry Tritter)

4 Elul, August 15, 2018

Robert Salm (Joyce Shenker)

21 Elul, September 1, 2018

Abraham Manber (Judy Maya)

1 Tishrei, September 10, 2018

Howard Sanford (Lois Stein)

THANKS! THANKS!

For the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

☆Nada Adler in memory of Sarah Namer's mother; in honor of Laura Takken's *bat mitzvah*; in honor of Isaac Graber's *bar mitzvah*; in honor of Joe Namer's help on shabbat mornings

For the General Fund

☆Patricia and Jay Weiner in memory of Beatrice Herman and David Weiner

☆Susan and Henry Tritter in honor of Laura Takken's becoming a *bat mitzvah* and Isaac Graber's becoming a *bar mitzvah*; *refuah shlema* to Caryn Golden

☆Pat and Alvin Goldman *refuah shlema* to Caryn Golden; in honor of Laura Takken's becoming a *bat mitzvah* and Isaac Graber's becoming a *bar mitzvah*

☆Joyce and Martin Shenker in honor of Laura Takken's becoming a *bat mitzvah* and Isaac Graber's becoming a *bar mitzvah*

☆Barbara Weisblatt in memory of David and Julius Weisblatt

For Their Generous Kiddush

☆The Takkens in honor of Laura's *bat mitzvah*

☆The Grabers in honor of Isaac's *bar mitzvah*