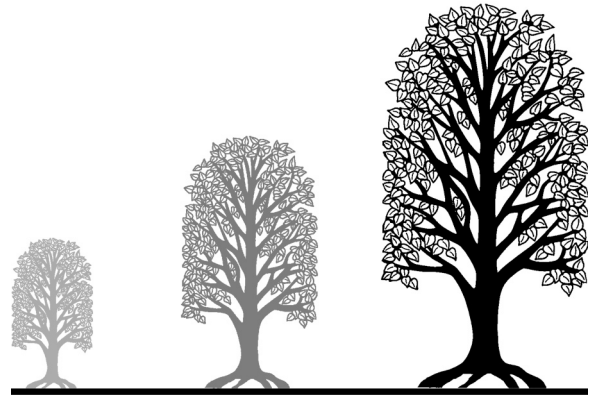


BETH ISRAEL CONGREGATION
862 Washington Street
Bath, Maine 04530



January/February 2020

Tevet / Shevat / Adar 5780

Rabbi's Message

Dear Beth Israel Friends,

As the secular year comes to a close, I am reflecting on the year that we've shared together and feeling gratitude and appreciation for so many blessings.

As a sacred community, it's been a year of new experiences coupled with our ancient traditions. We've donned Purim costumes, shared Shabbat meals and seders, and prayed together under the setting sun. We've joined our friends from Bowdoin Hillel to pray and sing together and usher in the Jewish new year of 5780. We've acted with generosity and compassion to welcome and support a family seeking refuge here in Bath. In early December our Hebrew School students led us in prayer as we officially adopted our new prayer book, Mishkan Tefillah.



As individuals, we've had diverse experiences over the past year. Some have marked milestones including starting kindergarten or middle school, graduating from college, and marriage. Others have experienced the death of loved ones. Others have managed illness and pain. My prayer is that through each of these moments we've experienced the support and warmth of the Beth Israel community.

In the year to come, may we feel safe. May we sense the wonder and miracles that surround us. May we be blessed with the ability to work for the good for our community and our world. May we be embraced with love and offer that embrace to others.

L'Shalom,
Rabbi Vinikoor



President's Message

by Marilyn Weinberg

As we head into the season of cold weather and snow we can only delight in the warmth and good cheer at Beth Israel. We have had some wonderful Shabbat services and meaningful programs and celebrations. There are children in our midst and there is a feeling of hope and promise for our future.

Of course I can't miss an opportunity to share some more about the history of our congregation during these very auspicious years.

In the process of doing our research we found an article in the Jewish Advocate that Beth Israel congregation wasn't the first Jewish center of worship in Bath, although it was our first building.

The Jewish Advocate of June, 1912 describes the following:

The Ahavath Achim Congregation of Bath, Maine has reorganized and has undergone a great change in its policies. The congregation conducts services at 5 Franklin Street and has bought a new Sefer Torah and will hold a Siyum ha'Torah [the completion and bringing of the Torah to the synagogue] in the near future.

The officers of the congregation are: Harry Brown, President, Benjamin Gediman, Vice President, Morris Pisezner, Secretary, and Morris Wisenblatt, Treasurer. The congregation has as its members the larger part of the Jewish residents of the city.

Although the other names might not be familiar to you, Harry Brown was the father of Minnie Brown, a name we all know. The name of the congregation, *Ahavath Achim*, is translated as brotherly love. Both Harry Brown and Benjamin Gediman were active in the newer 1919 Beth Israel group that pledged to build our present day synagogue. We are curious as to just what happened. By the way, 5 Franklin Street no longer exists as a through street. It is now a parking lot behind the Bath Post Office.

We have many stories about Harry Brown, including being elected to the City of Bath Board of Alderman in 1912. Harry was an active Bath businessman and dedicated to the survival of the Jewish community of Bath. We can now better understand how Minnie Brown chose to donate to our synagogue upon her death.

Thanks to all of you who volunteered this fall to do a reading, light the candles, supply an oneg or food for a potluck, and attend so many events. And thanks to all who have made generous donations to keep the lights burning bright at Beth Israel. The energy and enthusiasm at Beth Israel is inspiring and hopeful for the future of our little congregation.



Souper Shabbat

by Marilyn Weinberg

January 10
February 7
March 6

Last year we at Beth Israel tried a “small experiment” of gathering for an early Shabbat evening service followed by a warm soup and bread meal. It was so well received that we decided to make this our new winter tradition.

So from January through March, we will have one special Shabbat each month that we are calling Souper Shabbat. We will have an early service starting at 5:30 pm. The length of the service might vary depending on the age range of participants. When the service is over we will gather downstairs and share a Shabbat meal together with challah, hot soup and salad and of course dessert. It is a great way to help us through these dark winter months and give us an opportunity to share a meal and reconnect.



Stay tuned for how to sign up to help with food and logistics for Souper Shabbat. And let us know what you think.

Dinner Club

by Peggy Brown

Our Dinner Club continues to thrive and grow. In the last few months we've been to Urban Element in Topsham, Pepper's Landing in Brunswick, Bruno's Wood-Fired Pizzeria and Best Thai II in Bath. What can you expect if you decide to join us? Lively conversation, good food and maybe a chance to meet and get to know someone new to you. All are welcome!

You can be added to the Dinner Club mailing list by writing to me.

See you at dinner!



Come Together with Yahad: Beth Israel's Monthly Preschool Story and Craft Hour

by Rachel Connelly

Sunday mornings in mid-winter can be difficult with the little ones stuck inside. Coming to Minnie Brown at 10:00 am on Sunday provides a destination: a warm and safe place for them to play and for you to be able to visit with other parents of young children. The children love the big open spaces and the change in scenery.

Sundays from 10:00–11:00 am
January 12, February 9, March 8, April 5, May 3

There are always blocks and books, songs and crafts. No RSVP is needed, come when you can. Toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners and older siblings—all are welcome.

The Hebrew word “Yahad” means “together.” Once a month, we spend Sunday mornings b’yahad (together), learning, playing, and hanging out with other Jewish families. Yahad programs are designed to engage toddlers and preschoolers and their parents (or grandparents) in activities related to the annual cycle of Jewish holidays and core Jewish values such as kindness to others and careful stewardship of the planet.



YAHAD

For more information contact Rachel Connelly.

Efforts to Make Beth Israel Earth Friendly

by Peggy Brown

The Beth Israel Board of Directors supports efforts to make our community "greener." Some of these efforts have included:

- Adding insulation to the roof at Minnie Brown
- Installing "heat pumps" (also at Minnie Brown) to cool and heat more efficiently
- Replacing old light bulbs with LEDs
- Composting organic materials at both buildings
- Reducing our use of single use plastics

What can you do to help?

- For pot-luck or other food events, bring food in dishes that can be washed and used again
- Help wash dishes at events
- Be aware of where you throw things away - organic material in the composting bins, numbered plastic, paper and metal in the recycling bins, etc.
- Use a reusable water bottle or beverage cup instead of "use and toss"
- Avoid using plastic bags whenever possible

Send us your ideas for other ways Beth Israel can be better stewards of the environment!

It's Cold Outside

by Deb Smyth

Imagine living your entire life near the equator where the annual average temperatures ranges from the high 60s to the low 80s F and the average daily humidity is about 80 percent. Now imagine adjusting to Maine's frigid temperatures, blustery winds, and months of snow and ice. This is just one of the many challenges now faced by the asylum-seeking family sponsored by Beth Israel. A group of knitters, including Beth Israel members and non-members alike, decided that hand-knitted woolen garments might help in the adjustment process. The beautiful end result was four sweaters, one for each member of the family, three hats and two scarves, some of which are pictured below with their creators.



Social Action Committee Year-End Reflection

By Joanne Rosenthal

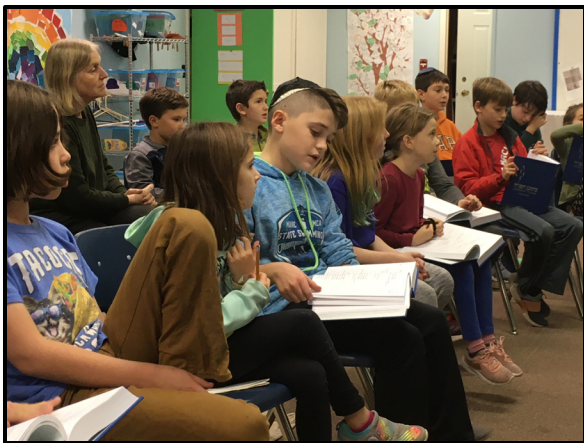
Call it a miracle, divine intervention or the randomness of the universe, in 2019 over 500 African asylum seekers arrived and are now living in Maine. I find it heartening and energizing that so many individuals, faith communities, organizations, healthcare providers, lawyers and state government have responded to meet the basic needs of these vulnerable individuals and families for the foreseeable future.

For many Jews, it is almost reflexive to welcome the stranger and I am proud of the ways in which congregants at Beth Israel have taken the lead in welcoming our new neighbors to Bath and Brunswick. At the same time, increasing numbers of Midcoast residents are experiencing hunger, homelessness, opiate addiction, violence and other types of human suffering. My hope for next year is that as a congregation we will continue to exercise our strength and resiliency to overcome prejudice and injustice wherever it exists. This excerpt from the poem, "Still I Rise" by Maya Angelou, comes to mind as we make our way through the darkness towards the light.

*...You may shoot me with your words,
You may cut me with your eyes,
You may kill me with your hatefulness,
But still, like air, I'll rise...*

Hebrew School by Marilyn Weinberg

Our Hebrew School students continue to thrive under the guidance of Rabbi Vinikoor and our wonderful teachers. You can see from their faces that they not only are learning but also having a good time. On Saturday, December 7, the students led a lovely Shabbat morning service followed by a delicious potluck. They helped introduce us to our new prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*, donated by the Greenwald family. We are grateful for all who made this a lovely experience including Andrew Lardie for his lively musical accompaniment.



Hanukkah Party

by Marilyn Weinberg

A good time was had by all at the Beth Israel Hanukkah Celebration on December 28. Games, story telling, dreidel spinning, delicious food and our first Hanukkah karaoke completed a most wonderful evening. Special thanks to our organizing committee of Rabbi Vinikoor, Peggy Brown, Susan Horowitz, Gila Cohen-Shaw, Marilyn Weinberg, Marina Singer and Norma Dreyfus. We give special thanks to our amazing latke cooks of Donnie Spiegelman and Susan Horowitz.



National Take a Hike Day

by Marilyn Weinberg

On a crisp cool morning on November 17, Beth Israel Members and friends joined Rabbi Vinikoor and student Rabbi Rachel Putterman on a lovely hike to the top of Higgins Mountain in Georgetown. Higgins Mountain, with an elevation of 259 feet above sea level, is the highest point on Georgetown Island. The preserve offers views from the summit east and south to Monhegan Island, Seguin Island and the Gulf of Maine.

Everyone is ready to gather next year for National Take a Hike Day.



Remembrances for January–February 2020

May their memories be for a blessing.

WE REMEMBER	HEBREW DATE	CALENDAR DATE FOR 2020
Myrtle Leavy	5 Tevet	January 2
Benjamin Kaplan	5 Tevet	January 2
Morris Torow	6 Tevet	January 3
Irving Weisman	10 Tevet	January 7
Solomon Wernick	13 Tevet	January 10
Fanny Panish Mutterperl	13 Tevet	January 10
Morris Petlock	13 Tevet	January 10
Jacob Fishkind	14 Tevet	January 11
Ann Lempert	16 Tevet	January 13
Jacob Rosen	16 Tevet	January 13
Ruth Shapiro	17 Tevet	January 14
Goldie Waxman	18 Tevet	January 15
Mildred Perlstein	19 Tevet	January 16
Abraham E. Greenblatt	22 Tevet	January 19
Fred Lenox	24 Tevet	January 21

Frank Welt	24 Tevet	January 21
Sterling Shapiro	25 Tevet	January 22
Daniel Ensel	25 Tevet	January 22
Howard Kaplan	27 Tevet	January 24
Sheila Vinikoor	27 Tevet	January 24
Janet Lane	29 Tevet	January 26
David Lichter	29 Tevet	January 26
Milton Millstein	1 Shevat	January 27
Alan Meyer	1 Shevat	January 27
Alex Mutterperl	1 Shevat	January 27
Anne Alvare	2 Shevat	January 28
Sylvia LaPerriere	2 Shevat	January 28
Deborah Cohen	5 Shevat	January 31
Sonia Wernick	6 Shevat	February 1
Freda Selig	10 Shevat	February 5
Susan Spiegelman	11 Shevat	February 6
Robert Weinberg	11 Shevat	February 6
Max Fox	16 Shevat	February 11
Dean Milkes	16 Shevat	February 11
Else Chaim	16 Shevat	February 11
Ann Isacoff	16 Shevat	February 11
Francis Rosner	17 Shevat	February 12
Julian Cohen	18 Shevat	February 13
Ed Benedikt	19 Shevat	February 14
Benjamin Gersh	19 Shevat	February 14
Harold Lempert	21 Shevat	February 16
Jerry Spiegelman	21 Shevat	February 16
Shirly Welt	21 Shevat	February 16
David Fields	22 Shevat	February 17
Leon Berman	23 Shevat	February 18
James LaPerriere	24 Shevat	February 19
Bernice Samijan	24 Shevat	February 19
Susan M Furnberg	24 Shevat	February 19
Chenka Rosenmann	25 Shevat	February 20
Harry Raker	27 Shevat	February 22
Frances Feldman	29 Shevat	February 24
Marvin Weinberg	29 Shevat	February 24
Michael Hagler	1 Adar	February 26



Welcome New Members

New Members

- Elinor Rosenberg
- Jerryanne Laperriere
- Martin and Lois Samelson

Birthdays and Anniversaries

Listing the birthdays and anniversaries of those in our immediate family creates a wonderful opportunity for our community/*shul* family to have an excuse to celebrate with each other.

January Birthdays

2 Liza Greenwald
6 Jonah Kaplan
7 Julia Pols
7 Shira Dorit Vinikoor Finn
8 Shana Starobin
9 Sylvie Rose Bouttenot
9 Mark Ireland
12 Beatrice Boyle-Lardie
14 Phyllis Lisi
14 Harry Reissmann
15 Isaac Daniel Ensel
17 Stacey Giuliani
17 Ben Crystal
20 Eric Arthur Ensel
22 George Krassner
23 Matthew Kanwit
24 Ellen Hagler
24 Elliot Lerner
25 Robert Gersh
26 Marc Swartz
31 Ralph Jacobs

January Anniversaries

13 Howard Waxman & Lisa Schinhofen
21 Diane Gilman & Arthur Davis
21 Gary Torow & Denise Linet
29 Harry & Kathy Reissmann

February Birthdays

2 Carolyn Friedel
4 William Dunham
9 Lisa Schinhofen
12 Rachel Bouttenot
13 Glen Eisman
21 Bud Samiljan
21 Sharon Bouchard
27 Samantha Gersh
28 Christina Schoenberg
28 Richard Jablow
29 Samuel Dunham

February Anniversaries

7 Marc & Crissy Swartz



Donations

Memorial Gifts

- Richard W. Smith in loving memory of his mother, Sara Smith
- Evelyn and Morton Panish in loving memory of her father, Henry Chaim
- Shelia Cohen in loving memory of her father, Henry Cohen
- Doris Weinberg in loving memory of her husband, Miles Weinberg
- Lenore and Jay Friedland in loving memory of her parents, Israel and Esther Itzkowitz
- George Krassner in loving memory of his wife, Judith Krasner
- Joan and Jeremy Fields in loving memory of her mother Selma Shapiro Blatt
- Chris and Andrew Schoenberg in loving memory of her father, Ralph Leonard
- Jay and Lenore Friedland in loving memory of his mother, Nettie Friedland
- Stephen and Marina Singer in loving memory of his father, Isadore Singer
- Marji Greenhut in loving memory of her father, Herman Greenhut
- Donna Rubin in loving memory of her parents, Morris and Mary Petlock
- Andrew and Chris Schoenberg in loving memory of his father, George Schoenberg

In loving memory of Rea Turet

- Lenore and Jay Friedland
- Audrey and Michael Morgan
- Judy Kohn Brown
- Marilyn and Fred Weinberg
- Larry Loeb and Linda Silberstein
- Joan Greenspan
- Chris and Andy Schoenberg
- The Polster/Hansen Family
- Stan Lane and Norma Dreyfus
- Norman and Roberta Sanders

100th Anniversary Fund

- Howard Shaw and Gila Cohen-Shaw
- Reginald and Pauline Hannaford
- David Michelson and Yeonmi Ahn
- Joanne Rosenthal and Josh Katz
- Peggy Brown and John Martell
- Marilyn and Fred Weinberg
- Deborah and Kermit Smyth
- Thyle Shartar and Marty Fox
- Sharon Drake
- Donald and Mara Giuliani
- Norma Dreyfus and Stan Lane
- Jerryanne Laperriere
- Rabbi and Mrs. Simeon Maslin
- Susan Horowitz and Gail Kass
- Rachel and Michael Connelly
- Diane Moyer

- Robert and Barbara Lenox
- Herb and Harriet Paris
- Nils and Karen Tcheyan
- Matthew and Karen Filler
- Lenore and Jay Friedland
- Deborah Silverman

For the Benefit of the Synagogue

- Judith O'Keefe
- Louis and Janet Gross
- Peter Jon and Brenda Fides
- The Harold Alford Foundation in honor of Barry Mills
- Roberta Lipsman in honor of Joanne Rosenthal
- Mark Schonender
- Elizabeth and Gary Louzides
- Deborah and Kermit Smyth
- Lynn Frank
- Margaret Curley and Gary Ballerini in honor of Dr. Alyssa Finn
- Diane Moyer
- Jim Raker and Virginia Van Slyck
- Irl and Gail Rosner in honor Maya Paul Rosner

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

- Jesse Green
- Diane Moyer

Education Fund

- Michelle Lisi-D'Alauro

