



Welcome to
Temple Beth El of Augusta, Maine

embracing a spirit of community, lifelong Jewish learning, commitment to inclusiveness, and active participation in Jewish life in Central Maine

artwork by Lenora Leibowitz

Iyar-Sivan-Tamuz 5778/May-June 2018

From the desk of Rabbi Asch

*"Do not say, when I have leisure I will study for perhaps you will never have leisure."
Pirkei Avot 2:4*

When I was in college, I spent much of my time studying, but each Friday night, when I came to that quotation in the prayer book, I would pause and think. While I busied myself with my studies in math, history, and literature, I did not make time for Jewish study. Each week it kept falling further down my priority list. In fact, I graduated from college not having taken a single Jewish studies course (although I did manage to do some studying with the Hillel rabbi).

When we do not consciously make time for Jewish study, it is easy to let it fall through the cracks. As our robust Torah study group shows, this is a congregation that values Jewish study and tries to make time for it. I am excited that we are adding a new option for adult study this month, Soup and Study. (I know, catchy title.) After feasting on soup, salad, and bread from Bagel Mainea we'll gather to study texts from our tradition. Each month we'll focus on a different topic. This month, we will study texts relating to *bikkur holim*, visiting the sick. We'll study Talmud stories and modern day texts and engage in discussion. Next month we'll look at Reform Responsa, what Reform rabbis have to say about modern day dilemmas. Please be sure you RSVP for these discussions so we have enough food. [If you don't remember to RSVP, come anyway; the rest of us will eat less!]

When we do not set aside time for something, it often does not happen. As we know, leisure moments can be few and far between. If you are looking for more opportunities for Jewish study, mark your calendar and make a commitment. Not only will it be engaging and interesting, it will be delicious!



SOUP AND STUDY

Bikkur Holim: Visiting the Sick

JOIN FOR A DELICIOUS DINNER AND STUDY AND
DISCUSSION OF JEWISH TEXTS

WEDNESDAY, MAY 2ND * 5:30-7:00PM * TEMPLE BETH EL
PLEASE RSVP TO THE OFFICE SO WE HAVE ENOUGH FOOD!

TBE Schedule: May—June

Services

Saturday, May 5

10:30am Shabbat Services

12:00pm Potluck Kiddush Lunch

Friday, May 11

6:00pm Shabbat Services

7:00pm Potluck Dinner

Saturday, May 19

6:30pm Shavuot Program

Sunday, May 20

10:30am Shavuot Service

Friday, June 1

6:00pm Shabbat Services

7:00pm Potluck Dinner

Saturday, June 23

10:00am Bar Mitzvah of Cole Bazakis

Friday, June 29

6:00pm Shabbat Services

Saturday, June 30

10:00am B'nai Mitzvah of Noah & Ava Katz

Torah Study

Saturday, May 12

10:30am Torah Study

Saturday, June 2

10:30am Torah Study

Hebrew School

Sunday, May 6, 9:30am

Sunday, May 13, 9:30am

Sunday, May 20, 9:30am

Last Day of Hebrew School is on May 20!

TBE Activities

Wednesday, May 2

5:30pm Soup & Study

Saturday, May 26

5:30pm Teen Program

Wednesday, May 30

6:30pm TBE Book Club

Thursday, May 31

6:30pm Beth El in Action Meeting with School Boards

Sunday, June 3

9:30am Annual Meeting & Brunch

June 8—10

Maine Conference for Jewish Life
@ Thomas College

Wednesday, June 20

5:30pm Soup & Study

Monday, June 25—Friday, June 29

FUNtensive!

Interfaith Activities

Every Tuesday

12:30pm Volunteering at Addie's Attic

Thursday, May 10

11:00am Interfaith Study

Thursday, June 14

11:00am Interfaith Study

Your Rabbi in Action!



*Rabbi Asch spends a fair bit of time traveling around the state and the country representing Temple Beth El and small-town congregations. She serves on the Board of Trustees for the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the main organization of Reform rabbis, and is an active member of its Committee on Social Action. She also conducts workshops at other temples, speaks at conferences and panel discussions, and even wrote a chapter in a new book, *Trumping Ethical Norms: Teachers, Preachers, Pollsters, and the Media Respond to Donal Trump*. But she always has time for fun at Temple Beth El, as well vacationing with her family.*



What's Happening at TBE

Be Heard at TBE's Annual Meeting

Sunday, June 3, 9:30—11:30am

Please join us for TBE's Annual Meeting. We will honor the Congregant of the Year and vote on Officers for the next year. This is your time to hear from TBE leadership about where we have been this past year and where we are going for the next. It is your time to have your ideas and opinions heard. We will have brunch at 11:30am. The Temple will provide bagels and coffee. Please bring a coffee cake, muffins, fruit salad, side dish, kugel, or dessert to share. Come, have a cup of coffee (or tea), a bagel and be heard!

Celebrate Shavuot!

Study & Treats:

Saturday, May 19th @ 6:30pm

In honor of the giving of the Torah, come engage in Jewish study and enjoy dairy treats. Bring a dairy dessert to share (cheesecakes welcome!)

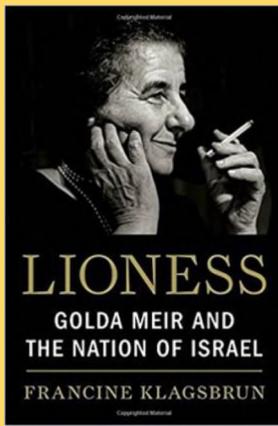
Student-Led Service

Sunday, May 20th 10:30am-12pm

Celebrate Shavuot with TBE Hebrew School with a student-led service, reading of the Ten Commandments, and Yizkor to remember people who have died in our families and community.

TBE Book Club

Wednesday, May 30
6:30pm @ TBE



The Book Club is reading *Lioness: Golda Meir and the Nation of Israel*, by Francine Klagsbrun and will discuss it at their next meeting on **May 30 at 6:30pm**. All are welcome to join in this lively discussion at TBE. Email Nan to RSVP: bethelaugusta@gmail.com.

Beth El in Action Celebration

Thursday, May 31st, 6:30pm @ TBE

Come celebrate local school boards that have adopted policies about religious diversity and hear how they will move forward to ensure that all students feel respected at their schools. Members of our congregation and the local interfaith community have been working on this for the past nine months. This is an important chance to celebrate all the work we've done and to ensure that these policies are carried out. All are welcome and will get a chance to hear from school board members and local elected officials.

Study the Prophets

Thursday, May 10th, 11:00am @ TBE

Thursday, June 14th, 11:00am @ TBE

Come study the prophets with Rabbi Asch and friends from Emmanuel Lutheran Episcopal Church Thursday, No experience is necessary – all are welcome!



SOUP AND STUDY

Responsa: Modern Answers to Ancient Questions

JOIN FOR A DELICIOUS DINNER AND STUDY AND
DISCUSSION OF JEWISH TEXTS

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 20TH * 5:30-7:00PM * TEMPLE BETH EL
PLEASE RSVP TO THE OFFICE SO WE HAVE ENOUGH FOOD!

What's Happening at TBE



THE MAINE CONFERENCE FOR JEWISH LIFE

A CELEBRATION OF JEWISH LIFE IN MAINE

AT THOMAS COLLEGE AND IN DOWNTOWN WATERVERILLE JUNE 8-10, 2018 25-27 SIVAN 5778



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Student Musings on Adam and Eve

By Rich Goldman

This winter I have had the pleasure of teaching in the Hebrew School. The days were dark, my mood somewhat grim given the state of the world, but the joy of youth abounds. And so, it is a pleasure and privilege to teach, especially in the winter. It is even more of a pleasure to think and to learn with our students.

I decided that this was the year to discuss Adam and Eve and Cain and Abel, having been inspired by Bruce Feller's book *The First Love Story, Adam and Eve and Us*. As the title so clearly expresses, Mr. Feller sees our first views of the human drama as ultimately being about love: romantic, familial, and societal. I wondered what my students would think as they spent a few months discussing Genesis Chapters 2 through 4.

And so, we were off. The minds of young people are a terrible thing to waste and the exposure to some of the most profound ideas the world knows, I believe, should not be missed.

Always being more interested in the questions than the answers, this is what is struck these students. What is the big deal with Eve eating the fruit? But, really, would not God want people to have as much knowledge as possible? And, by the way, as people, why should knowledge be hidden, or controlled? Don't we really want to have as much knowledge as possible? Isn't that why we are here at Hebrew School? I think that's right; that is one of the reasons we come to Hebrew School on dark and cold Sunday mornings.

But God punished Adam and Eve. For Eve and all women child birth would be painful. And for Adam, he shall toil in the ground all of his days. Is there blame? Not much; we are not in the mood to be too judgmental and isn't youth about testing and rebellion and finding out who you are? Are not Adam and Eve the embodiment of youth? Aren't they the first kids? Isn't that punishment too severe for doing a prohibited act even if it is God who prohibited it? Or, is it a worthwhile price to pay for knowledge? Isn't there a sacrifice that comes with learning and with experimentation? And, was this simply God's way of letting us know that?

Adam and Eve have two children, Cain and Abel. Cain is older and a farmer like his father. Do we want to be like our fathers? How do we become different than our parents if that is all we know? Abel is younger and a keeper of the sheep. Ahh, sibling rivalry. We can relate to this for sure. How come the younger child is always favored? Is that really true? He received the easier job, right? But doesn't Cain get to do the same thing as his father? Why is Cain so angry? And why is God so dismissive of Cain's offering, his gift, and so accepting of the offering of the younger child, Abel? How is this fair? Is it really justified?

See Adam & Eve, cont. on page 8



Update on first year of Terumah

By Hildie Lipson

Three quarters of the way through our fiscal year, the Temple is doing very well in this first year raising funds using Terumah, free will offering, to meet our annual operating expenses. As of March 31, 2018, we have raised 88% of the amount we budgeted to raise from Terumah, or nearly \$10,000 more than compared to last year at this time. More importantly, we welcomed six new and three rejoining members.

Thank you for responding so generously during the first year! We'll talk more about Terumah and review Temple finances at the annual meeting on **Sunday, June 3rd at 9:30**. We also will welcome our newest members, and hear your thoughts about how this system is working for you. And please look for your renewal letter in the mail in early June. Let me know if you have any questions on the Temple budget and finances, planned giving, or contributing to the building fund.



Jewish Night with the Sea Dogs

Thursday, July 19

7:00pm

Join Jews from across the state for Jewish Community Night at Hadlock Field to see the Portland Sea Dogs take on the Hartford Yard Goats. Tickets are available at a discounted rate of \$8 and may be purchased by phone (207 879-9500 – ask for tickets in the section reserved for Jewish Community Night) or online: <https://groupmatics.events/event/Jewishcommunity4>

Adam & Eve (cont. from page 7)

But God offers Cain some of the best advice a teenager could receive: "Why are you so distressed? And why is your face fallen? Surely if you do right, there is uplift. But if you do not do right, sin crouches at the door; its urge is toward you, yet you can be its master." Okay, okay, easy enough, but isn't this too simple? Is it that easy to know right from wrong? Is it that easy to lift your spirits? Are we really in that much control of ourselves? It doesn't feel so good to be directly confronted.

My big brother was visiting for this class. I enjoyed our knowing stares; the ebbs and flows of our relationship over our sixty plus years together provide such a rich backdrop.

But wait. Cain doesn't heed God's sage wisdom. He kills his younger brother. And then proclaims, "am I my brother's keeper." Yes, you are we agree. But, how far does that go? Are we responsible for our parents, for other relations, for our school, for our town, for our country? And, hey, how did Cain know it was wrong to kill Abel? What is the source of our morality, for our knowing right from wrong?

I don't know how Bruce Feller would feel about these musings. Perhaps children do not really want to talk about love, and that's fine. That they can struggle with complexity, however, is something to appreciate.

Our students give me hope.

Heading Down the Home Stretch in Hebrew School

Amy's Judaica class: We took a brief break from learning about notable Jewish people in history and instead, learned about *Shomrei Adamah* (protecting the Earth) in light of Earth Day. Together, we discussed many different ways in which we can become protectors of the Earth including: recycling, protecting animals and their habitat, reducing pollution, and caring for our fellow humans.

Amy's Hebrew class: We are starting a new class format where students will rotate through three teacher/madrachim-supervised stations. In 10-minute rotations, students will practice Hebrew decoding, short word and phrase recognition, and writing.

Bria's class: Gabe (and our wonderful new *madricha* Madi) did a stellar job guest teaching a few weeks ago! The class learned about *tzedakah* through storytelling and a drama activity. The kids got really into it! In the picture below, they are spelling תְּצַדַּק -- with vowels!

Emily's class: The Hebrew School added learning about world religions to the B'nai Mitzvah class after a parent survey showed that they wanted their children to learn about world religions before becoming a Jewish adult. We started with a discussion about why the students think religion became a concept for humans. Then we talked about atheism and agnosticism and what the difference is between them.

We got started with the major religions from the earliest ones to the most recent in chronological order. We covered when and where each religion started, how many followers there are today, basic belief systems, what the major texts are, who the leaders/clergy are, and what the visual symbols are. The religions we learned about are Paganism, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, Christianity, and Islam.

The students have been great, participating enthusiastically and we're having fun! They're excited about our final class, when we'll play world religions "Jewpardy." Thanks for sending your curious and kind hearted kids.



Donations

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

- Kate McLinn

Terumah

- Linda & Peter Kallin

Yahrzeit/Memorials

- Emily & Jerry Bley in memory of Lauraine Goodrich
- Sarah & Michael Drickey in memory of Shawn Walker
- Joan & Lowell Freiman in memory of Lillian Freiman
- Joan & Lowell Freiman in memory of Sidney Goldstein
- Anya & Allen Goldey in memory of Lillian Freiman
- Anya & Allen Goldey in memory of Sidney Goldstein
- Pauline & Reginald Hannaford in memory of Helen Hannaford
- Betty Jespersen in memory of Sten Jespersen

Yahrzeit/Memorials (cont.)

- Linda & Peter Kallin in memory of Martin Evenchik
- Judith & Mark Lurie in memory of Jean P. Dietz, mother of Rabbi Susan
- Kate McLinn in memory of Nick Scott
- Sue & David Offer in memory of Samuel L. Gershon
- Beth & Steven Shapiro in memory of Shirley Siegel
- Dace & Jon Weiss in memory of Dr. Irving Weiss
- Marty Weiss in memory of Samuel Weiss

Honoraria

- Brigid Chapin in honor of Peter Chapin on his birthday
- Kate McLinn in honor of Doretta & Harold Shapiro return to Torah Study
- Kate McLinn in honor of Susan Montell

Making a donation to Temple Beth El is a special way to honor family and friends.

Terumah

This fund includes the former General Fund and Dues and covers all temple operating expenses.

Building Fund

This fund is for major repair and rebuilding of our facilities.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

This fund helps Rabbi Asch meet special needs in the community.

Yahrzeit/Memorials/Honoraria

These contributions are made in memory or honor of family and friends.

Memorial Plaques

Remember a loved one with a memorial plaque in the synagogue. Donation: \$250
Payment due at time of order.

Tree of Life

Acknowledge a life milestone in a special way by adding a personalized, inscribed leaf to the Tree. Donation: \$36.
Payment due at time of order.

Please make checks payable to Temple Beth El. Indicate the fund to which you want to contribute and mail to TBE, Box 871, Augusta, ME 04332. Undesignated checks will go to the General Fund. *Temple Beth El accepts Visa & Mastercard. Please contact the office with any questions.*



Temple Beth El

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May Yahrzeits

May 1	Ann O'Donnell Meyer Schwartz Sylvia Shaffer Rebecca Slosberg
May 3	Mae Leibowitz Max Slosberg
May 4	Robert Bien
May 9	Carol Bernstein Hecht
May 11	Benjamin R. Slosberg Clara Miller Weiss
May 12	Samuel Fingerman
May 13	Henry Bacon Erika Ellen Briggs Marion Fusco
May 14	Tyler Lessard
May 15	Leigh Ann Lee Fred Slater
May 16	Edwin Eckert Gertrude Rudoff
May 17	Albert Freiman Fred Sewall
May 18	Jean Bakaley Dr. Julian Sacks
May 19	Jack Kaduson Harold Leibowitz Samuel Lerman
May 21	Stuart Boughton Phillip Moser
May 22	Tillie Withall
May 24	Robert Powell
May 25	Julius Sussman
May 26	Howard S. Slosberg
May 27	Cynthia Clarkson
May 29	Matthew Peter McLinn

June Yahrzeits

June 1	Albert Abraham Rosenberg
June 2	Irwin H. Mittelman
June 4	Sarah Perlberg
June 6	Jack Drickey
June 7	Joseph Schatz Joseph Leroy Shed
June 9	David Pollack Phyllis Weisberger
June 12	Paul Adler Beverly Gass Brigetta Smith Clinton Wells
June 13	Beatrice Director
June 14	Ruth Gross Miriam Weiss
June 15	Esther Gotts Reich
June 16	Sol Moser
June 18	Gloria Mondschein
June 19	Alexander Levitt
June 21	Seymour Monschein Barbara Rosen
June 22	Goldie Davis Passman
June 23	Celia Cash Ava Honigman
June 24	Linda Weiss Manson Benjamin Rubinstein
June 26	Fred Hannaford
June 28	Anthony A. Imondi Dora R. Slosberg
June 29	Marilyn Molner
June 30	Norman Mogk

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*Refuah Sh'lemah
 (Get Well) to:*

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 Julius Goos
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 Judy Plano