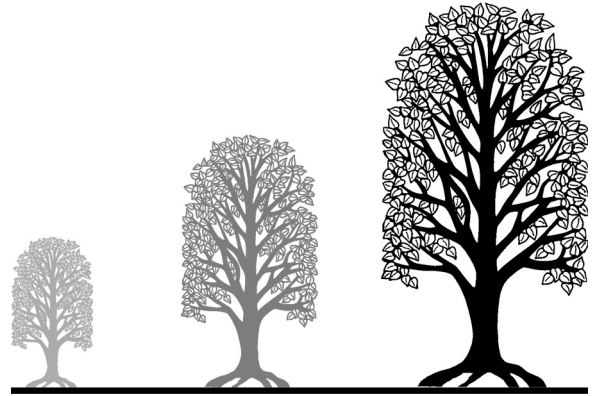


# BETH ISRAEL CONGREGATION

862 Washington Street  
Bath, Maine 04530



January/February 2018

Tevet / Shevat / Adar 5778

## Rabbi's Message

*by Rabbi Lisa Vinikoor*

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Dear Beth Israel Congregation members and friends,

As we begin the new secular year of 2018, we begin reading the book of Exodus, a wide-ranging collection of narrative and law, which tells the story of our Israelite ancestor's enslavement in Egypt and subsequent miraculous passage from slavery into freedom. In the book of Exodus, we learn of the Israelites wandering in the wilderness, and receiving God's commandments. We learn about the role of the priesthood, the ethical mandates for building and sustaining community, how to treat one another and how to care for the land. We also learn the instructions for building the mishkan, the portable sacred dwelling place for God, which the Israelite's carried throughout their journey in the wilderness. As for the instructions for building the mishkan, in Exodus 25 verse 1, we read "Adonai spoke to Moses, saying: Tell the Israelite people to bring me gifts; you shall accept gifts for me from every person whose heart is moved." This beautiful verse highlights the way in which every member of the community, whose heart was moved, was invited to participate and to contribute to building a sacred structure.

This principle of bringing one's gifts in the service of the collective is something I have seen many times during my experience with the Beth Israel community. Whether your gift is bringing homemade cookies or a salad to a potluck, organizing a meeting, calling a friend who is ill, hosting a Shabbat dinner, making a point to introduce yourself to someone you haven't met before—and so much more—each of these gifts and contributions matter and they help to make our community stronger.

I encourage you to keep bringing your gifts and offerings to our community—be them the gift of ideas, energy, financial resources, time or talents. We need you and your gifts matter! Towards that end, many of you know that in mid-January I will be going on family leave, as we, god-willing, welcome a new baby into our family. Marilyn Weinberg will be serving as the Hebrew School director in my absence and members Rachel Connelly, Robert Gersh, and Maurie Libner will lead services.

I look forward to seeing you all towards the beginning of January at Kabbalat Shabbat services on Friday January 5 and Shabbat morning services and Torah study on January 6.

L'Shalom  
Rabbi Vinikoor

## President's Message

*by Marilyn Weinberg*

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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, meaningful programs and celebrations. There are children in our midst and there is a feeling of hope and promise for our future.

During this time our board has decided to set up a number of committees to take time to explore several topics and issues that we have put on the back burner during our busy strategic planning and Rabbi search process. In November we established a cemetery by-laws committee, a Bar Mitzvah guidelines committee, a finance committee and a social action committee. Both the cemetery and Bar Mitzvah committees' efforts are to review documents that had not been updated in many years. The finance and Social Action committees will be long-term groups that will recommend the direction that our congregation will be taking in the future.

A lot of time has been put in and our board members will be voting on both our new Cemetery and Bar Mitzvah guidelines recommendations soon. We hope to have a "community dialogue" sometime in late winter or early spring to update all of you and share information on all of our recommendations.

I had the opportunity to attend the URJ Biennial in Boston in early December along with the Rabbi, Susan Horowitz, Karen Filler, Nonny Soifer and Joanne Rosenthal. There were so many amazing presenters with a wide variety of themes and topics. It made me feel that we really made the right decision to join the Reform movement. It was a bit overwhelming as I sat next to leaders of congregations whose members number in the thousands. I experienced and learned a lot, yet I came home feeling certain that our little congregation has more energy and warmth than many of those large institutions.

Thanks to all of you who have volunteered to do a reading, light the candles, supply an oneg or food for a potluck, and attend so many events. The energy and enthusiasm at Beth Israel is inspiring and hopeful for the future of our little congregation.

## Tot Shabbat Upcoming Schedule

*by Rachel Connelly*

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Calling all families with young children! Please join us for our monthly Jewish education program aimed at toddlers and preschoolers. We meet the first Saturday of the month from 10:00–11:00 a.m. downstairs at the Minnie Brown Center. There is always Challah and "wine," lots of blocks, and a read-aloud book or two. The Minnie Brown Center is a nice big space to let the kids burn up some energy during these cold winter months.

January's Tot Shabbat will be January 6, February's Tot Shabbat will be February 3 and March's will be March 3.

Toddlers, preschoolers, kindergarteners and older siblings—all are welcome.  
Call or email Rachel Connelly.

## Upcoming Services and Programs at Beth Israel

*by Marilyn Weinberg*

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### JANUARY

**Friday, Jan. 5 at 7:00 pm**

Shabbat Evening Service  
Led by Rabbi Lisa Vinikoor  
Oneg: Meyer Family  
Synagogue

**Saturday, Jan. 6 at 10:00 am**

Shabbat Morning Service and Torah Study  
Led by Rabbi Lisa Vinikoor  
Synagogue

**Saturday, Jan. 6 from 10:00-10:45 am**

Tot Shabbat  
Led by Rachel Connelly  
Minnie Brown Center

**Friday, Jan. 19 7:00 pm**

Shabbat Evening Service  
Oneg: Blatt Family  
Synagogue

**Saturday, Jan. 20 at 10:00 am**

Shabbat Morning Service and Torah Study  
Synagogue

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### FEBRUARY

**Thursday, Feb. 1 at 5:00 pm**

Tu B'Shvat Seder  
Minnie Brown Center

**Saturday, Feb. 3 from 10:00-10:45 am**

Tot Shabbat  
Led by Rachel Connelly  
Minnie Brown Center

**Friday, Feb. 9 at 7:00 pm**

Shabbat Evening Service  
Led by Rachel Connelly  
Oneg: Anna Jordan  
Synagogue

**Saturday, Feb. 10 at 10:00 am**

Shabbat Morning Service  
and Torah Study  
Synagogue

**Friday, Feb. 23 at 7:00 pm**

Shabbat Evening Service  
Led by Maurie Libner  
Oneg: Eisman Family  
Synagogue

**Saturday, Feb. 24 at 10:00 am**

Shabbat Morning Service  
and Torah Study  
Synagogue

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## Ladies' Dine Around

*by Crissy Swartz*

Date: Wednesday, January 24

Time: 6:00 p.m

Place: Kennebec Tavern  
119 Commercial Street, Bath  
(207) 442-9636

RSVP: Crissy Swartz

Please RSVP by Monday, January 22.  
Final head count needs to be phoned in.



## Come to the Beth Israel Tu B'Shvat Community Seder *by Marilyn Weinberg*

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Minnie Brown Center  
February 1, 2018  
5:00 p.m.

Let us join together for a Tu B'Shvat Seder followed by a pizza dinner. (We provide the pizza and you bring sides or dessert.) Hebrew school for all will end at 5:00.

Celebrate the New Year of the Trees. Sing songs and learn more about this Jewish environmental holiday! It's fun for all ages.

To heighten our experience, we are supposed to eat fruits and grains grown in Israel. Dishes that contain barley, dates, figs, grapes (or raisins), pomegranates, olives or wheat would be great. Almonds and carob are also good options.

Contact Marilyn Weinberg by January 3 to reserve your space.  
[info@bethisrael-maine.org](mailto:info@bethisrael-maine.org)



## Building Committee Report *by Marty Fox*

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We were faced with a number of tasks for our buildings during the last few months. Luckily our building committee members stepped up and put in many hours dealing with the details.

New doors have been installed at the synagogue with additional adjustments made to our locking system. To add to our challenges our security system was damaged during the power outage and a brand new system had to be installed. With several false alarms and calls in the middle of the night, we think this is almost complete. We are all learning how to use this new system. (Special thanks to Fred Weinberg for putting in so many hours with these projects.)

Special insulating window inserts have been installed downstairs at Minnie Brown. Lynn Frank and Bill Kohut cleaned the windows inside and out as well as the window sills (probably not cleaned for a long time); Chico Swartz, and Marty Fox measured the windows; Window Dressers made the frame, the Wiscasset Build made the inserts (shrinkable film around both sides of the frame, and foam around the outside of the frame); and Marty Fox installed the inserts. In addition Marty installed missing ceiling tiles in the Hebrew School storage supply room. The First Congregational Church, UCC Wiscasset, donated the ceiling tiles.

Our final project to be completed soon is staining and varnishing the interior molding around the new synagogue door.

## News from the Hebrew School

by Rabbi Vinikoor, Susan Horowitz and Alina Shumsky

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We have had a terrific fall and beginning of winter in the Hebrew school. Our students are smart, enthusiastic and inquisitive and it is a pleasure to teach them each week. We want to share some of what the students have been learning and give you some updates about staffing changes.

### *Our Learning:*

Grades 3-6 students have been exploring the Torah from several angles. They learned about the scroll as a physical object, including the work of a scribe and Hebrew calligraphy. They also learned about oral Torah, which refers to the chain of tradition that extends from Sinai to today. Each student continues to progress in their Hebrew studies as well.

Grades K-2 students have enjoyed learning about several of our Biblical ancestors from the book of Genesis including Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob and Joseph. They created beautiful art to accompany each ancestor's story. Students also learned to identify the following Hebrew letters: ש shin, ב bet, ת tav (which spells שבת Shabbat) א aleph (one of Hebrew's silent letters), and all of the letters on the dreidel (ה, ג, ש, נ).

### *Staffing Changes:*

As many of you know, beginning in January 2018, Abby Halpern, our beloved Hebrew school director, will be increasing her director responsibilities at Beth El in Portland and no longer working here at Beth Israel. Abby has been a tremendous asset to our Hebrew school, adding her deep knowledge of Judaism and tremendous teaching skills to bring Judaism to life for our students. She will be missed.

Beginning in January, Rabbi Vinikoor will serve as our Hebrew school director and 3-6 Judaics teacher. In addition, we are pleased to announce that in mid-January, Hannah Pucker, a junior at Bowdoin College, will be joining our Hebrew school teaching team. Originally from Newton, MA, Hannah is an education major and excited to be working with our K-2 learners.





## Community Hanukkah Celebration

*by Camille Kauffunger and Marina Singer*

Over fifty party-minded congregants joined together on the 6th night of Hanukkah for the Celebration of Light. The happy crowd full of babies, children, young, and not so young members, played, lit candles, listened to beautiful Hanukkah music, sang, ate and mingled happily to help celebrate the holiday.

Camille Kauffunger set up areas of art and game activities that all age groups could enjoy, and we got to participate in the first ever “Dreidel Spin-Off” organized by Marilyn and Fred Weinberg. Sixteen dreidel spinners, young and old, gave it their best spin with plenty of crowd support. In the end, we crowned Zach Rothschild the first ever “King of the Spinning Dreidels.”

Donnie and Morgan Spiegelman-Boyd fried up piles of delicious latkes that disappeared quickly, along with lots of potluck goodies and many donuts. Nobody left hungry.

Blessings were said and candles were lit overlooking our fun and games. But mostly, people just enjoyed being together; talking with friends and making new acquaintances, basking in the glow of those beautiful candle filled Hanukkiot.

Our event organizers, Marina Singer and Camille Kauffunger, give special thanks to the Weinbergs for their creative Spin-Off arena, the Haller family for set-up support, Ren Kauffunger for executing the Lego dreidel design station, and the Patten Free Library for lending their Legos.



## Six Beth Israel Leaders Attend URJ's 2017 Biennial Conference in Boston

by Rabbi Lisa Vinikoor

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From December 6–8, Marilyn Weinberg, Nonny Soifer, Karen Filler, Joanne Rosenthal, Susan Horowitz and Rabbi Vinikoor attended the Union for Reform Judaism's Biennial Conference, which this year was held at the Hynes Convention Center in Boston. Alongside 5,000 other Jews from Reform congregations from throughout the United States and Canada, Beth Israel's delegates participated in learning sessions covering a range of topics such as: congregational finances, Israel, Torah study, transgender, justice issues, creating a more inclusive congregation, immigrant's rights and integrating baby boomers into congregational life. These are just a small handful of the interesting and relevant session offerings that our leaders participated in.

Here is some of what our leaders said about their experience:

Marilyn: *"My overall take home is that although we are a small part of this huge amazing movement, what we do matters and every member is precious."*

Joanne: *"I discovered that my interests in social action are front and center in the Reform Movement."*

Karen: *"The biennial reinforced my belief that affiliation with the Reform Movement was the right move for Beth Israel Congregation. I saw Jewish values and ideals in action."*

Rabbi Vinikoor: *"One highlight for me was a learning session focused on B'nai Mitzvah innovations. It was inspiring to see how congregations throughout the country share common challenges and are innovating around these challenges in creative ways."*

Finally, please stay tuned to hear more from our Biennial team as we make plans to share our learnings with the congregation.



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## Maine Jewish Film Festival 2018

by Marilyn Weinberg

This year Beth Israel will again be a proud sponsor of the Maine Jewish Film Festival. So mark your calendars for the week of March 10–18. On March 10 and 11 there will be movies at the Eveningstar in Brunswick. It's a great time to go out when winter still seems to be holding on and share some great movies together. They have not yet published the final schedule but it will be posted at <http://mjff.org>.

## Hanukkah Storytime with Rabbi Vinikoor and Susan Horowitz

by Camille Kauffunger

Thank you to the Patten Free Library for inviting Rabbi Vinikoor and Susan Horowitz to the Storytime Room on December 13 to read a Hanukkah tale and teach about the holiday.

As expected, Susan captivated over twenty children with a reading of Hershel and the Hanukkah Goblins by Eric Kimmel and the Rabbi endeared the children with her present and gentle manner during a Q&A about Hanukkah symbols. A round of small group dreidel playing with Starburst candy as ante sealed this after school activity for the children and Librarian Carol McFadden surprised the Rabbi and Susan with a Hanukkah gift of flowers. Hebrew School and Tot Shabbat students Jacob and Max Lichman-Paul and Ren and Stella Kauffunger attended in support of their teachers and were proud to be referred to as “the ringers” by the Rabbi.

This is only one of a number of requests we received this year to visit classrooms over the Hanukkah holiday. Word of our new and dear Rabbi continues to spread!



## Remembrances for January–February 2018

We know we are missing many names from this list. Please send them to us at [bethisrael.maine@gmail.com](mailto:bethisrael.maine@gmail.com) so that we can add your loved ones to this list.

*May their memories be for a blessing.*

| We Remember       | Hebrew Date | Calendar Date this year |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| Jacob Fishkind    | 14 Tevet    | January 1               |
| Ann Lempert       | 16 Tevet    | January 3               |
| Jacob Rosen       | 16 Tevet    | January 3               |
| Ruth Shapiro      | 17 Tevet    | January 4               |
| Mildred Perlstein | 19 Tevet    | January 6               |



|                       |            |             |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Abraham E. Greenblatt | 22 Tevet   | January 9   |
| Fred Lenox            | 24 Tevet   | January 11  |
| Frank Welt            | 24 Tevet   | January 11  |
| Sterling Shapiro      | 25 Tevet   | January 12  |
| Jennie Ensel          | 25 Tevet   | January 12  |
| Howard Kaplan         | 27 Tevet   | January 14  |
| Sheila Vinikoor       | 27 Tevet   | January 14  |
| Janet Lane            | 29 Tevet   | January 16  |
| David Lichter         | 29 Tevet   | January 16  |
| Milton Millstein      | 1 Shevat   | January 17  |
| Alan Meyer            | 1 Shevat   | January 17  |
| Alex Mutterperl       | 1 Shevat   | January 17  |
| Anne Alvare           | 2 Shevat   | January 18  |
| Deborah Cohen         | 5 Shevat   | January 21  |
| Sonia Wernick         | 6 Shevat   | January 22  |
| Freda Selig           | 10 Shevat  | January 26  |
| Susan Spiegelman      | 11 Shevat  | January 27  |
| Max Fox               | 16 Shevat  | February 1  |
| Dean Milkes           | 16 Shevat  | February 1  |
| Else Chaim            | 16 Shevat  | February 1  |
| Ann Isacoff           | 16 Shevat  | February 1  |
| Francis Rosner        | 17 Shevat  | February 2  |
| Julian Cohen          | 18 Shevat  | February 3  |
| Ed Benedikt           | 19 Shevat  | February 4  |
| Benjamin Gersh        | 19 Shevat  | February 4  |
| Harold Lempert        | 21 Shevat  | February 6  |
| Jerry Spiegelman      | 21 Shevat  | February 6  |
| Shirly Welt           | 21 Shevat  | February 6  |
| David Fields          | 22 Shevat  | February 7  |
| Leon Berman           | 23 Shevat  | February 8  |
| Susan M Furnberg      | 24 Shevat  | February 9  |
| Chenka Rosenmann      | 25 Shevat  | February 10 |
| Harry Raker           | 27 Shevat  | February 12 |
| Frances Feldman       | 29 Shevat  | February 14 |
| Marvin Weinberg       | 29 Shevat  | February 14 |
| Selma E Gilman        | 5 Adar     | February 20 |
| Rose Hurwitz Silver   | 5 Adar     | February 20 |
| Ann Torow             | 8 Adar     | February 23 |
| Frances Weinberg      | 8 Adar     | February 23 |
| Helen Ruth Charney    | 10 Adar II | February 25 |
| Carol Jablow          | 12 Adar    | February 27 |
| Edward L Selig        | 12 Adar II | February 27 |



## Donations

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### **Memorial Gifts**

- Barbara and Barrett Silver in loving memory of her father, Samuel Becker
- Joan and Jeremy Fields in loving memory of her mother, Selma Shapiro Blatt
- Shelia Cohen in loving memory of her father, Henry Cohen
- Jay and Lenore Friedland in loving memory of his mother, Nettie Friedland
- George Krasner in loving memory of his wife, Judith Krassner and his mother, Ida Krassner
- Lenore and Jay Friedland in loving memory of her mother, Esther Itzkowitz
- Lynn Frank in loving memory of her cousin, Esther Friedman
- Donna Rubin in loving memory of her parents, Morris and Mary Petlock
- Gary Torow in loving memory of his father, Morris Torow
- Nonny Soifer in loving memory of her father, Samuel Soifer
- Marilyn and Fred Weinberg in loving memory of Goldie Singer
- Stephen and Marina Singer in loving memory of his father, Isadore Singer
- Micki Gersh in loving memory of her mother, Myrtle Leavy
- Morton and Evelyn Panish in loving memory of his mother, Fannie Pannish Mutterperl

### **Rabbi Fund**

- Deborah Silverman and Pat Harris
- Kaplan Family Charitable Trust, Michael Kaplan and Stephen Kaplan
- Shelia Lucente
- Nils and Karen Tcheyan
- Reginald and Pauline Hannaford
- Michael and Rachel Connelly
- Howard and Stephanie Pruzansky

### **Rabbi Discretionary Fund**

- Louis Ensel and Jennifer Dechant
- Marji Greenhut

### **In Support of the Synagogue**

- Suzanne Shiff
- Jamie Kaplan and Suzanne Meeker in honor of Marilyn Weinberg – "whose time, efforts and commitment have sustained Beth Israel for decades"
- Marilyn and Fred Weinberg
- Susan Horowitz and Gail Kass
- Barbara and Robert Lenox
- Karen and Matt Filler
- Sheldon and Denise Tepler
- John and Marilyn Darack in honor of Fred and Marilyn Weinberg – "for their tireless commitment to Beth Israel Congregation"
- David and Shira Toister
- Irwin and Lori Brodsky

### **In Support of the Hebrew School**

- Sharon Drake

## Welcome New Members

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Camille Kauffunger  
Rachel and Katherine Bouttenot  
Tony Perry and Nina Lichtenstein

## Birthdays and Anniversaries

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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 Laura Katz  
9 Mark Ireland  
14 Harry Reissmann  
15 Isaac Daniel Ensel  
17 Stacey Giuliani  
20 Eric Arthur Ensel  
22 George Krassner  
24 Ellen Hagler  
25 Robert Gersh  
26 Marc Swartz

### January Anniversaries

21 Diane Gilman and Arthur Davis  
21 Gary Torow and Denise Linet  
22 Ellen and Michael Hagler  
29 Harry and Kathy Reissmann

### February Birthdays

13 Glenn Eisman  
17 Julian Ireland  
21 Sharon Bouchard  
27 Samantha Gersh  
28 Christina Schoenberg

### February Anniversaries

7 Marc and Crissy Swartz

