



The Bet Ha'am Weekly Email

Words of Torah from Rabbi Saks

This Shabbat is *Shabbat Shirah*, the Shabbat of Song, which celebrates the Song at the Sea and the Israelites' crossing to freedom. It is, probably, the most important narrative in our tradition. Even as important as our having Torah is, we do not recount having received it each time we recite Kiddush on Shabbat or at a festival. We do recount God's having freed us from Egypt and with that freedom comes the obligation to remember what it was like to have been slaves to Pharaoh. Now, in reality, few if any of us have any real sense of what it means to have been a slave, to have been freed by God's mighty hand. So, how do we take that obligation to remember, to be empathetic, and make it real in our day? What does that memory of slavery mean for us today? There's a passage by Michael Walzer quoted in our prayer book: "Standing on the parted shores of history, we still believe what we were taught before ever we stood at Sinai's foot: that wherever we go, it is eternally Egypt." What does it mean for us to be in Egypt still? The truth is that the world today is far from perfection and likely more closely resembles our life in service to Pharaoh than it resembles what it will be like in the Messianic Era. That's what it means still to be in Egypt, to know the world is broken and to work to fix it.



Worship Schedule

Friday, January 29

Shabbat Worship 7:30 PM

Thank you to board member Jay Efron for making announcements.

For **Friday night worship registration**, [click here](#).

Please complete your registration by noon on Friday. Zoom links will be sent around 4:00 p.m. on Friday. We cannot send Zoom links after 4:00 p.m. on Fridays.

Read more about our service and our prayer book [here](#).

Saturday, January 30

Torah Study 9:00 AM

Torah study using *The Mussar Torah Commentary* continues--but you don't need to own a copy. Read more [here](#), under the "Torah Study" heading.

For Saturday morning **Torah Study** registration, [click here](#).

Please complete your registration by noon on Friday. Zoom links will be sent around 4:00 p.m. on Friday. We cannot send Zoom links after 4:00 p.m. on Fridays.

Shabbat Morning Worship 10:30 AM

For **Saturday morning worship** registration, [click here](#).

Please complete your registration by noon on Friday. Zoom links will be sent around 4:00 p.m. on Friday. We cannot send Zoom links after 4:00 p.m. on Fridays.

Read more about our service and our prayer book [here](#).

Wednesday, February 3

Morning Minyan 7:30 AM

Led by congregant Daniel Oppenheim.

For **Wednesday morning minyan** registration, [click here](#).

NEW! Register now to receive February Links

Register now to receive February Shabbat worship and Torah Study links.

We will start using the NEW links in February.

Note: January service links will NOT work after this weekend.

FEBRUARY registration:

- To register for **Friday night worship**, [click here](#).
- To register for **Torah Study** on Saturdays, [click here](#).
- To register for **Saturday morning worship**, [click here](#).
- To register for **Wednesday morning minyan**, [click here](#).

Religious School

Religious School on Zoom

Sunday, January 31

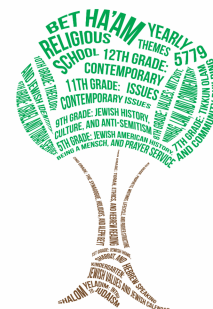
Grades 1-9

What's Happening?

Yasher Koach to Zak B. and Sam G. for leading parts of tefillah last Sunday! If your child is interested in leading a section of the morning service, please email Sam Spinrad.

Announcing Bet Ha'am Religious School's 2021 Purim Drawing Challenge! Religious school students of all ages are invited to draw a scene from the Purim story and email a copy to Sam. These will be shared at the assembly closest to Purim. Entries are due February 19.

[Register Here](#)



Tu BiSh'vat!

Thank you to the members of the Garden Committee, Rabbi Saks, Sharon Newman, and Rachel Lefkowitz for your contributions and hard work in putting together last night's wonderful Tu BiSh'vat Seder. Everyone had a wonderful time. Mazal tov!



TONIGHT! "Sing Unto God" Event from HUC

Long before Rabbi Saks was a rabbi, he loved singing with his classmates and cantor in religious school and family services. Growing up, Jewish melodies inspired him and helped him to fall in love with Judaism and Jewish life. As a teenager, through his involvement in NFTY (the North American Federation of Temple Youth), he learned that much of the music that stirred his soul was written or inspired by Debbie Friedman, of blessed memory. In fact, much of our contemporary Jewish music, both in Reform Jewish life and in Jewish life around the world. On **Thursday, January 28, at 8:00 p.m. eastern**, join Rabbi Saks by tuning in to *Sing Unto God*, an evening of song and memory celebrating the legacy of Debbie Friedman.



Commemorate Debbie Friedman's legacy on the occasion of her 10th yahrzeit

[Read More & Register Here](#)

Havdalah Together

February 13, 6:00 PM
Havdalah Together

Winter is here, which means Statewide Havdalah. This month we will be led by Rabbi Rachel Isaacs from Beth Israel, Waterville and Rabbi Lily Solochek from Adas Yeshurun, Rockland. Join Jews from across the state as we say goodbye to Shabbat and welcome a new week. This gathering is sure to be spirited and thought-provoking.

Please register to receive the Zoom details. You'll receive a confirmation email that contains the link, and a reminder email the Friday before the service.



Havdalah, Together
Saturday, January 16, 6 p.m.

[Havdalah Registration](#)

Ongoing Programs

Shabbat Candle Lighting

Please consider signing up to be a candle lighter at an upcoming Zoom Friday night service. You may choose to do this in memory of a loved one for whom you're observing yahrzeit, in honor of a celebration in your life, or just because you want to engage in this ritual. You can read more from Rabbi Saks [here](#); learn the candle lighting blessing [here](#) (on track 420); and find the words [here](#).

Sign Up Here

Stone Soup

Stone Soup is a Shabbat gift to our congregants. Read all about it [here](#) (on the Stone Soup tab). Many thanks to those who have donated to support Stone Soup.

B'Yachad | Together

Come relax and talk virtually with your Bet Ha'am community before Friday Shabbat services! We will not meet this week. [Read more here](#). [Register here](#). Please contact congregant [Wendy Hayes](#) with questions.



TV Discussion Group

Please join congregants Melissa Montefel and Wendy Hayes, co-facilitators, for a discussion group about Jewish-themed shows. The group meets at 7:00 p.m. for fun, talk, and insights. Please email [Wendy](#) for the login or with questions or suggestions for future movies.

February 3: Our next meeting will be discussing the two movies presented by the Maine Jewish Film Festival this weekend.



Curbside Library Borrowing

Although the building remains closed, you may borrow a book from our wonderful library using curbside pick up. Read more on our [library page](#).

Notable Upcoming Services

Purim Together

February 25 at 6:30 PM

We could all use a little celebration! Get your costumes ready, grab a festive drink, and join us for Purim. There will be a *spiel* presented by Temple Beth El (the one in Augusta), a chance to share some unusual hamantaschen combinations, and a special challenge for our local clergy (shhh....it's a surprise). As part of the fun we'll invite you to send in a picture of yourself modeling your Purim costumes; we'll string the images together into a video. Serious prizes will be awarded. More details to come!

But wait, there's more. We'll also have a traditional reading of the *megillah*, so get out your groggers and make some noise!

Half of all donations for this program will go to support Maine's Good Shepherd Food Bank, feeding the hungry in our state. It's an easy opportunity to fulfill the Purim mitzvah of providing gifts for the needy.

To receive Zoom details, please register below. After you sign up, you'll receive a confirmation email with the program link.

Register Here

Saturday, March 6
Julia Young Bat Mitzvah

Saturday, March 13
Zephyr Conford Bar Mitzvah

Donate to Bet Ha'am

Please consider donating in any amount to Congregation Bet Ha'am--with your help, we can close the budget gap! We are grateful for your support.

[Donate Now](#)

Congregation Bet Ha'am | 81 Westbrook Street, South Portland, ME 04106

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