



## The Bet Ha'am Weekly Email

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### Words of Torah from Rabbi Saks

With this week's double portion of *Vayak'heil-P'kudei*, we conclude the book of Exodus. The final two portions, paired together this year, detail for the ancient Israelites and for us the instructions for the construction of the *Mishkan*, the sanctuary in that would travel with the Israelites in the wilderness, providing them with a place to worship God that would become the basis for the Temple in Jerusalem. Through these two portions six chapters, there is a great deal of repetition in the text, which to our modern ears can begin to sound monotonous. How many times must we read that the yarn was blue, purple, and crimson or that the people's hearts were moved to provide the supplies for the *Mishkan*? In our *chumash*, our Torah commentary, Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut teaches that for the ancient audience, repetition was not only necessary, but a welcomed literary device. Remember, the people of the ancient Near East were likely illiterate, so they would not have pored over a repetitive text, but rather become more engaged with the story by hearing its details again and again. Think of the child who wants the same book read night after night, who is enthralled with its story and begins to internalize its message. This was the purpose of the Torah's repetition of the instructions for the *Mishkan*, that the ancient audience would internalize its message and take it to heart. Today, our task is to find what speaks to us from the Torah scroll and to pore over it again and again so that its ordinary details become extraordinary and holy for us.



### Worship Schedule

We are now using **March** Zoom links for Shabbat worship and Torah Study.

NOTE: February Zoom links will NO LONGER work.

Registrations close at noon on Fridays.

Zoom links will be sent by 4:00 PM on Fridays to all who have registered by the deadline.

*We cannot send Zoom links after 4:00 PM on Fridays.*

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

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#### Friday, March 12, 6:00 PM

Join us this Friday as we thank our kind and beloved staff member, Ivan Gonzalez, for his years of service at Bet Ha'am. Ivan has been quietly working behind the scenes, keeping us connected by managing our Zoom technology, working to make our events run smoothly, and helping to maintain our building. Ivan will be leaving Bet Ha'am to join the Coast Guard. We will miss him! Join us on Friday as the rabbi gives a blessing to send Ivan on his way.

Thank you to board member Ashley DiPietro for making announcements.

Thank you to Zephyr Conford and his family for lighting our Shabbat candles in celebration of Zephyr's Bar Mitzvah.

Register to receive the **Friday Night Shabbat Worship** Zoom link, [here](#).

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### Saturday, March 13

#### **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.

Register to receive the **Torah Study** Zoom link, [here](#).

#### **Shabbat Morning Worship 10:30 AM**

Mazal tov to Zephyr Conford, child of Glory Nightengale and Michael Conford, who will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday.

Thank you to Catherine Share for making our board presentations.

Register to receive the **Shabbat Morning Worship** Zoom link, [here](#).

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### Saturday, March 13, 7:00 PM

#### **Havdalah Together - with Rabbi Jared Saks and Rabbi Lisa Vinikoor**

The Center for Small Town Jewish Life's March Havdalah, led by Rabbi Jared Saks of

Congregation Bet Ha'am, Portland, and Rabbi Lisa Vinikoor of Beth Israel, Bath, comes at the one-year anniversary of the beginning for the pandemic. Grounded in story, reflection, and song, we'll lift our voices to bring comfort, gratitude, and hope. Join us with your candles, spices, and wine or juice.



Please register using the button below to receive the Zoom log-in information.

[Havdalah Together Registration](#)

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### Wednesday, March 17

#### **Morning Minyan 7:30 AM**

Led by congregant Daniel Oppenheim.

Register to receive the **Wednesday Morning Minyan** Zoom link, [here](#).

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### Notable Upcoming Services

**Congregational Second Night Passover Seder on Zoom, March 28 (more below)**  
**Ziza Kaback Bat Mitzvah, April 10**

## Religious School on Zoom

**Please check your junk/spam folders if you don't think you have received all of your emails from Sam or from the office. People are reporting that our emails are landing in the wrong folders within their own email programs. Please**

remember to mark Bet Ha'am staff email addresses as 'safe senders'. Thank you!

### Friday, March 12

6:00 PM Family Services: This month's theme is Passover! Join us for an interactive service that includes quizzes, a story, and music. Mazal tov to Zephyr Conford, who is celebrating his Bar Mitzvah this weekend, and to Julia Young, who celebrated last weekend.

### Sunday, March 14

Don't forget to skip an hour ahead for Daylight Savings Time! Zoom classes today: K'tanim, Shalom Yeladim, Kindergarten, & Grades 1-9

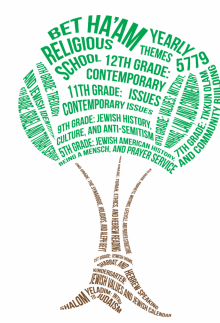
### Monday, March 15 - Youth Group Event for Grades 8-12

Our next youth group event will be March 15 at 7:00 PM. We will be playing online Pictionary! Please contact [Andrea Levinsky](mailto:Andrea.Levinsky@bethaam.org) for the Zoom log in.

### What's Happening?

If your child wants to lead a section of morning tefillah on Zoom, call or email Sam by Friday. If you are interested in teaching at the religious school in the fall, please reach out to Sam soon.

**If you are interested in enrolling in religious school, email Sam at [sam@bethaam.org](mailto:sam@bethaam.org)**



## Musical Passover Seder Experience

Sunday, March 21, 3:00 PM

### JKids Radio MUSICAL PASSOVER SEDER EXPERIENCE

*A FREE online event sponsored by PJ Library in Southern Maine, the JCA, Temple Beth El, and Congregations Bet Ha'am and Shaarey Tphiloh*

Advanced registration is required by Sunday, March 21 at 12:00 noon to receive the Zoom link. Register using the button below.

Join us for a singalong seder experience with the very top artists in Jewish kids music including Nefesh Mountain, Rabbi Josh Warshawsky, Eliana Light, Shira Kline, Ellen Allard, Rick Recht, Joanie Leeds, and Elana Jagoda! We'll sing traditional and contemporary songs, tell the Passover story, and explore the foods on the seder plate, the blessings, the questions, and the highlights of the Exodus - from slavery to freedom. Registered participants will receive downloadable resources for families to use at home. Geared towards families with children ages 0-10 years old.

Click [here](#) for a downloadable family activity kit from JKids Radio.

**Concert Registration**

## Passover is Coming!

Rabbi Saks invites you to participate in our Second Night Congregational Seder on Zoom, scheduled for **Sunday, March 28, at 5:30 PM**. If you would like to have a reading (in English



or in Hebrew), a singing part alone, or a singing part with your family, please sign up by using the button below. Rabbi Saks will assign your reading or singing role by Friday, March 19.

**Save the date!**

Watch your inboxes for all the registration details!



**Sign Up for a Speaking or Singing Role in the Seder**

## Bet Ha'am is Hiring!

Congregation Bet Ha'am is hiring a new Executive Director. Anyone interested in applying for this position can read more [here](#).

## Is This On Your Calendar?

**A DRAMATIC AFFAIR**

*A Virtual Evening with Maine Dramatists*

*Saturday Evening, May 1, 2021*

For more information, contact Toby Rosenberg at [story@bethaam.org](mailto:story@bethaam.org)



## 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](#).

**Candle Lighting Sign-Up**

**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 meet every Friday except the second Friday of the month when there is a 6:00 PM Family Shabbat service. [Read more here](#). [Register here](#). Please contact congregant [Alan Davis](#) 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 PM for fun, talk, and insights. Please email [Wendy](#) for the login or with questions or suggestions for future movies.

**March 17:**

**Midnight in Paris** - A Woody Allen film - "This is a romantic comedy set in Paris about a family that goes there because of business, and two young people who are engaged to be married in the fall have experiences there that change their lives. It's about a young man's great love for a city, Paris, and the illusion people have that a life different from theirs would be much better." Available on Amazon Prime

\* We understand Woody Allen is controversial. It is not the group's intent to offend. We chose to separate the art from the artist and watch a sweet movie, not to necessarily show support for Woody Allen.

**March 31:**

### **Maine Jewish Film Festival Movies**

"In anticipation of Spring, we're [MFJJ] delighted to offer two movies in a lighter vein: a delightful comedy about complicated relationships and a delicious documentary about a celebrity chef who visits the past to recreate over the top pastries. Both screenings are free."

### **Ottolenghi and the Cakes of Versailles**

Via London, Versailles, and Instagram, Ottolenghi and the Cakes of Versailles follows celebrity chef Yotam Ottolenghi on his quest to bring the sumptuous art and decadence of Versailles to life in cake form at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

*Program:* Director Laura Gabbert joins MJFF for a live discussion about the film on Tuesday, March 23 at 7PM.

### **Shiva Baby**

A disaffected young Jewish woman anxiously juggles an accumulation of mishaps and potentially disastrous encounters, each threatening to expose her messy multitude of secrets, all at the same family gathering. A sharp-witted satire. Contains Sexual Content



### **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](#).

## **So Much Going on in Our Community!**

We are fortunate to be in a community where there is so much going on Jewishly that we cannot possibly list all of the happenings here. Please check out the websites listed below for all kinds of activities – movement, art, spirituality, books, movies, Jewish education, and more. Bet Ha'am often co-sponsors programs with these community leaders.

**March 14, 1:00 PM**

### **Stories of Hope Featuring Combatants for Peace Activists**

On the 2018 congregational trip to Israel, Rabbi Saks and members of our congregation had the opportunity to meet with members of Kehilat Shir Chadash in Tzur Hadassah and residents of Husan, a Palestinian community just across the Green Line from Tzur Hadassah. Our dialogue included Ziyad Sabbatean, a Palestinian leader and founder of Combatants for Peace, a grassroots organization formed by former Israeli soldiers and former Palestinian prisoners who have come together to speak their truths, listen to one another, and work towards peace. *Disturbing the Peace* is a powerful documentary about this group of people who are on the front lines of peace work among Israelis and Palestinians today.



Congregation Beth El in Bangor has invited the Maine Jewish community to participate in a conversation with two Combatants for Peace activists on Sunday, March 14, 1:00-2:30 PM. The activists will share their personal stories of transformation and the work they are doing to bring peace, equality, and freedom. You will have the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the activists. It is recommended that you watch the film first, which you can access [here](#). The conversation is free and open to everyone, though registration is required. Please click on the button below to learn more about this program and to register.

## Stories of Hope Info and Registration

### National Council of Jewish Women, Southern Maine Section Scholarship Program



The Southern Maine section of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW) awards college scholarships to young Jewish men and women from Maine. Scholarships are awarded to high school seniors and undergraduate college students primarily on the basis of financial need with consideration for academic achievement and Jewish as well as general community involvement. In addition to need-based awards the Selma Gleit Memorial Scholarship for Women in STEM is presented to a Jewish female high school senior or college student who has demonstrated excellence and commitment in science, technology, engineering and/or math, without consideration of need.

Visit [www.ncjwmaine.org](http://www.ncjwmaine.org) to complete applications online or to download copies. Look under the "what we do" "local" "community service" tabs. High school guidance offices and synagogues have NCJW scholarship applications available as well. Complete applications and supporting documents must be received by **Friday, April 16, 2021**. Please contact Susan Gladstein, Scholarship Chair, at 954-559-0221 or [sgladstein23@gmail.com](mailto:sgladstein23@gmail.com) if you have any questions or need an application.

[Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine](#)

[Center for Small Town Jewish Life](#)

[Southern Maine Jewish Cemetery Association](#)

[Maine Jewish Museum](#)

[Levey Day School](#)

[Maine Jewish Film Festival](#)

## 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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