



Beth Israel – The West Temple
BULLETIN

February 2012, Shevat – Adar 5772

Our Mission

*To be a center of worship
and vital community life
where Jews and their
families from Cleveland's
western communities learn
Jewish traditions and values,
develop their Jewish identity,
and assure the continuity of
Jewish life.*

Features

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***Rabbi Lettofsky Announces Four
Ben/Bat Torah Celebrations***

Some time ago, I shared with the congregation my hopes that others would follow the example set by one of our long-time members and celebrate their Ben or Bat Torah. This is the term Beth Israel has given to what other congregations call an “Adult Bar/Bat Mitzvah.” When I initially spoke with our first Bat Torah, she insisted that she did not want to be celebrating a “Bat Mitzvah,” and I agreed with her. She has been a “Bat Mitzvah” since she reached the age of thirteen! Her family did not mark that occasion, but she has been “obligated” and has been observing adult mitzvot since then. I prefer the name Ben/Bat Torah, which I first heard from Rabbi Philip Horowitz, z”l, who used that term instead of Bar/Bat Mitzvah for thirteen-year-olds. For her Bat Torah, she studied a Torah and Haftorah portion, conducted a Shabbat morning service and delivered an inspiring D’var Torah.

I am anticipating that in the coming weeks and months our congregation will have the privilege of celebrating with four more of our adult members who have been studying biblical and prayerbook Hebrew (and much more) with me on Sunday mornings for several years.

They will be reading--and some will be chanting-- Hebrew. [“Reading” implies understanding, not just “decoding,” simply pronouncing the Hebrew letters.] They will be celebrating their learning and re-affirming for all of us their commitment to the Jewish people and to their own Jewish learning. Two of them converted as adults, and the other two did not celebrate a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at age thirteen.

**Rabbi Lettovsky Announces Four Ben/Bat Torah Celebrations,
*continued***

Please mark your calendars now and don't miss any of these wonderful occasions! And you, too, are invited to study toward your own Ben/Bat Torah!

February 11 Jennifer Rinehart
April 14 Roger Abady
June 2 George Thornton
June 30 Judith Weiss

Rabbi Lettovsky

Corrections from the January Bulletin

- (1) In President Luis Fernandez's message, the date for the Rabbi's Retirement celebration was incorrectly reported. The correct date is April 22, 2012.
- (2) The May Tot Shabbat date was incorrectly typed. The correct date is May 12th.
- (3) Credit should have been given to Ari Shapiro for the Hanukkah Assembly pictures.

Thank you to our eagle-eye readers! We apologize for any inconveniences these mistakes incurred.

Jan Miyake (jan.miyake@gmail.com, 440.774.1570)

Community News

The Jewish Big Brother Big Sister Association has, for many generations, been committed to improving the lives of children by creating one-to-one mentoring relationships. For more information, [here is the flyer](#) they sent to the temple. If you are interested in participating in this well-established and successful program, please contact them through their website: www.JBBBSA.org or by calling them at (216) 320-8385.



The Hebrew Free Loan Association offers interest free loans. They have increased the amount of loans they make in the community and would like to continue getting more funds into the hands of people in need. For more information, visit their website (www.hflaclev.org) or email them team@hflaclev.org.

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Director of Congregational Programming: Bela Fischer
Public Relations Coordinator: Judith Weiss
Bulletin Editors: Jan Miyake, Pat Outlaw

Deadline for March issue: February 15, 2012

Lunch with the Rabbi

view the [flyer](#)

Wednesday, February 8,
2012, 12:00 Noon
Don's Pomeroy House
13664 Pearl Road
Strongsville, Ohio 44136

RSVP to the temple office
216-941-8882 or via email
bethisrael@nls.net



Gift Shop Information

For anybody that ever wondered why there were glass cases filled with Judaica in Cafe Aroma, this is a reminder that we do have a gift shop at Beth Israel-The West Temple! We have Judaic Jewelry, Mezuzot, Shabbat candlesticks, Shabbat candles, as well as some decorative items and a few items for Passover. We can also order items for your special occasions if you need. Please see Mickey Wiesen, Tracy Grauel, or Robyn Kahn for details!

Robyn Kahn
robynk31664@att.net

Rabbi Speaks on Maurice Sendak's "Uniquely Jewish Perspective" at Lakewood Public Library

An overflow crowd of about 80 people attended Rabbi Lettofsky's January 5 talk at Lakewood Public Library for the opening of the exhibit "In a Nutshell: The Worlds of Maurice Sendak." Sendak, 84, is the illustrator of more than 100 picture books, including the Caldecott Award-winning classic, *Where the Wild Things Are*. The exhibit, which includes several free-standing posters with enlarged reproductions of some of Sendak's illustrations and reflections on his works over a long and distinguished career, is on a national tour.

Rabbi Lettofsky got involved in the project when he received a call from a librarian at Lakewood Public Library asking for The West Temple's support in bringing the exhibit to Cleveland. When the library learned they would host the exhibit, they asked him to speak about Jewish influences in Sendak's life and works. At that point Rabbi Lettofsky began to research the subject and discovered a "Uniquely Jewish Perspective" in Sendak's illustrations. The artist was born in Brooklyn in 1928, and though he was raised as a typical American boy of the time, he was also haunted by photos of relatives left behind in Europe who were murdered in concentration camps. He was also "fascinated by the shtetl world of the European Jew." All these elements are woven together in the images Sendak created in his picture books.

Sendak has always maintained that he is not a writer of children's books—in fact, he doesn't even like children, as he told Terry Gross of NPR's "Fresh Air" in an interview. But his illustrations have a childlike, wide-eyed sense of delight and mystery. The Jewish perspective is summed up in Sendak's statement: "I don't want to lose hope." This, according to Rabbi Lettofsky, is the story of the Jewish people.

Following the Rabbi's lecture, a youthful ensemble led by Max Mueller, a Lakewood High School graduate who recently completed studies in film composing at California State University – Northridge, performed Mueller's music, with narration, to *Where the Wild Things Are*. It made for a perfectly fitting tribute to a great Jewish-American artist.

Judith Weiss, Public Relations Coordinator
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Circle of Friends - Women of the Wall and IRAC

Thelma Goldberg, having called up to say, “I want to volunteer,” was our hostess for Circle of Friends on Wednesday, January 11th. Our program was very timely—a discussion of Women of the Wall and the work of the Israeli Religious Action Center (IRAC). IRAC is the public and legal advocacy arm of the Reform Movement in Israel and you can find out more at their website and sign up for their newsletter at www.ira.org. This past summer Rabbi Enid Lader and Barbara Schwartz attended a lecture at Chautauqua by Anat Hoffman, the Director of IRAC. Intelligent, passionate, and with a wonderful sense of humor, Anat Hoffman spoke about the work of the Center in protecting equality, social justice, and religious tolerance in Israel for all members of Israeli society. Fran Immerman, activist and philanthropist, showed us video taken at a peaceful demonstration of Women of the Wall carrying the Torah, not reading from it, and the arrest of Anat Hoffman. Brynna Fish, a Jewish educator and activist, also came and contributed musically with Rabbi Enid for the service for Tevet.

Next meeting: February 29th at the home of Rhoda Rosen, in a program that will prepare us for our women’s seder on April 12th.

Barbara Schwartz
baschwartz@cox.net



Letter from the Membership Committee

The Membership Committee has been very busy this year: we have established protocols for making contacts with Prospective Members, established a "Welcoming Committee"—which delivers Gift Bags to new members; supported Beautification projects and generated Social events. We want to outreach those members who have not yet found their niche, and plan to contact them in coming months. We need Mentors to pair with our New members, and want to link those of you who can contribute your talents with those tasks the temple needs help with. We are working with the Communications Committee to streamline our inter- and intra-communications, increasing Beth Israel's visibility. We welcome suggestions, and hope you will invite guests to check us out. We think our Temple is definitely the most exciting thing Jewish, this side of the Cuyahoga River and 2012 will be a very productive year for us!

Mike Palnik, Membership Committee
berylpalnik@yahoo.com



Wedding Invitation!

Please join us for a day of romance, Judaism & love! Lillian Davis-Starr and Jeremy Sanvido will be married at Beth Israel – The West Temple, Sunday March 18th, 2012, at 4pm. A reception will follow in Ratner Hall.

Rabbis Lettofsky & Lader will be co-officiating. Lillian, who was bat mitzvahed, confirmed and graduated at Beth Israel, and Jeremy, a new member of the Temple, met in the Summer of 2011. Interestingly enough, even though they did not know each other then, they went to the same high school in Berea; she was a freshman while he was a senior! Guess they were meant to meet!

All are welcome to attend.

Saragene Davis
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Tu B'Shvat

There are many holidays in the Jewish calendar. Some are “big” – Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover, for example. Others are “small.” Tu B'Shvat falls into this latter category. In case you're not familiar with Tu B'Shvat, here's a quick overview for you.

- The name Tu B'Shvat is quite unoriginal. The holiday is named for its date: the 15th of Shvat. Judaism uses the letters of the alphabet for numbers: tet is nine and vav is six. These numbers sum to 15; these sounds become “Tu.” This year, Tu B'Shvat starts at sundown on February 7th.
- The ancient Israelites needed a way to track the age of a tree during its first five years of development so that they would know if its fruit could be eaten. Tu B'Shvat is based on Leviticus 19:23-25 – “When you come to the land and you plant any tree, you shall treat its fruit as forbidden; for three years it will be forbidden and not eaten. In the fourth year, all of its fruit shall be sanctified to praise God. In the fifth year, you may eat its fruit.” Tu B'Shvat became the birthday of the trees.
- Another name for Tu B'Shvat is Rosh HaShanah la'Ilanot – the New Year of the Trees.
- Today, we celebrate Tu B'Shvat in a variety of ways, two of which are described below.
 - Some Jews will have a Tu B'Shvat seder that highlights the Seven Species, seven agricultural products that are special to Israel and listed in Deuteronomy 8:8 – wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates.
 - Other Jews have adopted Tu B'Shvat for environmental-awareness programs. A popular observance is to plant trees in honor or memory of a friend or relative.
- The Tu B'Shvat seder has a particularly meaningful origin. Early mystical thinkers used the image of a tree to represent the relationship between the spiritual world (G-d's world) and the physical world (our world); the spiritual realm contains the tree's roots that then spread and manifest themselves as branches in the material realm. In the 16th century, the kabbalistic master Isaac Luria of Safed combined this interpretation of the tree's symbolism with the idea of the Passover seder and created a Tu B'Shvat seder. This celebration permitted the kabbalists to honor the tree, enjoy the fruits native to Israel, and discuss the philosophical and mystical concepts associated with the holiday.



Josh Levy, Ph.D. Medieval Jewish History
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What is a Shabbaton? Our educators provide answers:

From Bela's Basket

Every year I feel that although we begin religious school just after Labor Day, things really start happening after the first of the year because this is when we have most of our Shabbatonim. For those who are not actively involved in these let me tell you what they are.

Shabbatonim are held once a year and once per class. The purposes of the Shabbatonim are: enrich the classroom experience, involve the parents in what their children are learning, and create community. A subject is chosen, and the shabbaton is built around the subject. There is an active learning component. For example, sometimes an art project is connected with the theme. Sometimes, students and parents work together; other times, students and parents work in parallel.

At Beth Israel -- The West Temple students start their education in a group of grades (such as 5th/6th/7th) that stay together until they graduate. We promote making connections between the classes' families while the children are young because (as you probably have heard) it takes a community to bring up a child.

This year, our first shabbaton will take place on 1/27 just as Winter University is wrapping up. The first class participating in a shabbaton is the 5-6-7 class, and they have a special one because it is part of a larger program called "Count Me In." The teachers, Robyn Kahn and Holly Neumann, have been studying with teachers from around the community and will work with our kids during the shabbaton, passing on to them what they learned. The program will culminate with a community-wide program where more than 200 youngsters will work on the "Count Me In" theme at B'nai Jeshurun, a temple on the east side. We are very excited to be part of this program. It gives our students the chance to connect with a larger group of youth. That evening, the parents of this class are invited to participate in a special program that will be held at the Maltz Museum of Jewish heritage. We hope to have a good participation from our students and our parents.

Winter U got off to a rousing success. People sat around playing poker and studying about the judges.

Others learned about baking knishes, a favorite Jewish dish, and our youngest participants learned about the number HAMESH (five) and about YAD (hand). They were involved decorating Hamsas (a colorful amulet) that can be displayed at the entrance to a home. These Hamsas will be displayed, ready to be purchased, on 1/29, which is the last day of our Winter University.

Bela Fischer, Director of Congregational Programming belafischer@gmail.com

Notes from the Educator

A Shabbaton is a special Shabbat program that provides an opportunity for our students and their families to come together with the other members of their Religious School class, learning and sharing, and making real the curriculum of the classroom. Families enjoy a study session, Shabbat dinner, Shabbat service and a concluding oneg. The children also take a special part in the service.

This February, our Middle School class (grades 5-6-7) will celebrate with their peers across the Cleveland Jewish community for a retreat titled "Count Me In." Their January Shabbaton was the first of three sessions of special learning as a preparation for coming together with students their same age from ten other Cleveland congregations! Parents had their own part to play in the Shabbaton learning, and they too will come together with the parent community for a parallel event at the Maltz Museum. The Middle School retreat and Parent get-together will both take place on Saturday, February 11.

This position is funded through the Jewish Federation of Cleveland's Fund for the Jewish Future and is supported through the educational resources of the Jewish Education Center of Cleveland and the Laura and Alvin Siegal College of Judaic Studies

Tina Keller, Director of Religious Education
tinabk803@sbcglobal.net

Winter University 2012



Temple was full of activity on the second day of Winter University, January 21. Here are a few pictures from the morning.

- *Top left: Zack Roth joins Noa Rahamim as she leads the morning stretch after Tefilah*
- *Top right: Mahjong class! Holly Neumann, Shosh Ault, Allison Winokur, Gloria Cutrona, Lisa Goldberg, Laurie Chait,*
- *Bottom left: Chocolate Class! Hannah Cutrona, Elizabeth Pearlman, Nancy Eilberg, and Gabe Levit*
- *Bottom right: Special Speakers Dalia and Samuel Alterovitz speak on their experiences as immigrants*

New* Spring Tot Shabbat Dates

10am on February 11, March 24*, April 21*, May 12

An Opportunity and a Thank You from the Social Action Committee

The Social Action Committee has been made aware of a project that would involve making a one-year commitment to take care of the [Ronald McDonald House Family Room at Fairview Park Hospital](#) during dinner on the second Monday of each month, when a local restaurant donates a meal. They need volunteers to sign up to help—two to three people (ages 12 and over) are needed for each evening. Upcoming evenings are Feb. 13th, March 12th, and April 9th, from 4-6pm. For complete information, including a year's worth of dates, click [here](#). To volunteer, please contact Laurie Levinson (lhlevinson@oh.rr.com) and provide your name, phone number, and, if you have a preference, the date(s) that you would be interested in volunteering.



The Social Action Committee thanks all those who donated winter clothing for Cleveland's Homeless Stand Down. The event was held in Cleveland on Sunday, January 22 and Saturday, January 28.

To get ready for the actual event, Barbara Feldmar took all our donations and helped sort bags and bags of clothing coming from all over. At the request of Leslye Arian from the National Council of Jewish Women, she sent a list of our donations to the [Cleveland Jewish News](#), and there may be an article about this event. So, look for it in order to find out more about this important community event that helps out homeless people in our area. Many thanks for your generosity.

Barbara Feldmar and Laurie Levinson,
Social Action Co-Chairs
barbaraf@oberlin.net
lhlevinson@oh.rr.com

Family Promise Benefit Concert: Amici Quartet

Member Linda Keller invites Beth Israel – The West Temple to a free benefit concert that raises money for [Family Promise of Lorain County](#) and the [Interfaith Hospitality Network](#). She is one of their volunteer solicitors and is impressed by them because of the way they provide a helping hand, rather than a handout.

Please enjoy this opportunity to hear the Amici String Quartet on Sunday, February 19th, 2012, 3:00 pm, at First Church in Oberlin (corner of Main and Lorain Streets). After the concert a **Meet-the-Artists reception** will follow in the First Church Fellowship Hall.

The highly accomplished Amici Quartet, all of whom perform with the Cleveland Orchestra, will present a one-hour program of Schubert, Mendelssohn, and Shostakovich. This concert is free and open to the public with donations being gratefully accepted.

All contributions will go to Family Promise.

If you would like to help publicize this event, here is the [flyer](#).

Linda Keller
joelsk@oh.rr.com; 440.748.4704



Celebrations

Birthdays

Claire Rosen	February 8	12 th
Philip Goldberg	February 13	8 th
Arielle Shapiro	February 15	16 th
Lilly Anna Skory	February 15	7 th
Gabriel Levit	February 19	14 th
Joshua Mattes	February 25	8 th
Lillian Romond	February 26	14 th

New Baby! A note from the proud Grandma, Bela Fischer

It is the middle of January, and, to be 100% honest, when it comes to the weather we have not had it too bad. Since the last newsletter my family—thank God—has grown by 1. My daughter Ruth had a baby boy on 12/24. His name is Asher and he is really deliciously cute. The only sad part is that they live in Toronto. So, for us to see him we have to travel five hours. Now you can understand why I am so happy about the weather; our drives have been good.



Calendar of Events

(When available, more information can be found by clicking on the event)

February

Sunday, February 5
5-6-7 Shabbaton

Wednesday, February 8, 12 noon
[Lunch with the Rabbi](#)

Saturday, February 11
Adult Bat Torah of Jennifer Rinehart
Tot Shabbat, 10am

Monday, February 13, 4-6pm
[Opportunity to help at the Ronald McDonald Room at Fairview Park Hospital](#)

Wednesday, February 29
[Circle of Friends meeting](#)

Coming in March...

Friday, March 2, dinner and service
Shabbat Across America and
Shared Family Shabbat

Saturday, March 10, 9:45am
K-1-2 Shabbaton

Sunday, March 11
Purim Carnival

(March Events, continued)

Tuesday, March 13, 7:30pm-9:30pm
Feast of Judaism Class 1

Tuesday, March 13, 4-6pm
[Opportunity to help at the Ronald McDonald Room at Fairview Park Hospital](#)

Wednesday, March 14, 12 noon
Lunch with the Rabbi

Sunday, March 18, 4pm
[Wedding](#) of Lillian Davis-Starr and Jeremy Sanvido

Tuesday, March 20, 7:30pm-9:30pm
Feast of Judaism Class 2

Saturday, March 24
Celebrate Shabbat, 9:45am
Tot Shabbat, 10am

Tuesday, March 27, 7:30pm-9:30pm
Feast of Judaism Class 3

Saturday, March 31, 10am
Bat Mitzvah – Hannah Cutrona

Perpetual Yahrzeits

Week Ending February 4

Mary Brehm
Eunice Levit
Mildred Sherrick
Evelyn Ungar

Week Ending February 11

Rose Kantor
Sarah Schwarzenfeld
Marty Chinskey
Linda Smilgoff
Richard Smilgoff
Louis Hertz Albert
Ed Heller
Harry Miller
Hyman Miller
Gertrude Sackett
Jack Ackerman
Marc F. Greenbaum

Week Ending February 18

Robert Pearlman
Abraham Clymer
Janet Feigenbaum
Frances Feldmar
Arie Isaac
Fannie Mesiboff
Gustavo Schliserman
Christine Spear
Ilene Snider
Harold Friedman
Elias Schochet
Nita Zisser

Week Ending February 25

Herman Provder
William Winokur
Jeana Mandel
Alfred Zisser
Sidney Berns
Rita Heinbach
Charlotte Ryan
Sara Brecher
Morris Schwarzenfeld
Shepsel Grinberg
Carol Schwartz
Carol Adams

Week Ending March 3

David Finkelstein
Blanche Levit
Benjamin Rimm
Naomi Sharman Ault
William J. Kahn
Rose Morgenstern
Alex Kimmelman
Michael Kornhauser
Estelle Edman Grey
Shirley Katz
Jerome Metzel
Louis Schwarzenfeld
Rodgers Gerhardt
Rachel Diane Landy
Catherine Diamond
Marvin M. Goldberg

The congregation
extends its sympathy
to the Family of Philip
Mason, who passed
away on January 9,
2012.

Honors Schedule

Friday Evenings

Saturday Morning

Torah Study 10:00 a.m.; Service 11:00 a.m.,
except where noted.

February 3 – 8:00 p.m.

Service Leader: Harry Lader

Candles:

Usher: Shane Strongosky

Oneg: David & Holly Neumann

February 4

Service Leader: David Bamberger

Aliyah: Robert Brehm

Hagbah:

Galilah: Aimee Greenfield

Usher: Joseph Greenfield

Kiddush: Pat Outlaw

February 10 – 7:30 p.m.

Family Shared Shabbat

Service Leader: Rabbi Lettofsky

Candles: Lynn Atzenhoffer

Usher: Haylee Mattes

Oneg: Myrna & John Pendery

February 11

Jennifer Rinehart Bat Torah

(Time of Service to be determined.)

Service Leader: Rabbi Lettofsky

(Honors to be determined.)

Kiddush: Friends of Jennifer Rinehart

February 17 – 8:00 p.m.

Service Leader: Rabbi Lader

Candles: Judy Friedman

Usher: Macey Helbig

Oneg: Michael & Tamara Rand

February 18

Service Leader: Rabbi Lader

Aliyah: Barbara Feldmar

Hagbah: Jeff Janofsky

Galilah: Charlotte Feldman

Usher: Jason Morgenstern

Kiddush: Janelle Romond

February 24 – 8:00 p.m.

Service Leader: Scott Machol

Candles: Robyn Kahn

Usher: Morgan Kahn

Oneg: Don & Lauren Roth

February 25

Service Leader: Luis Fernandez

Aliyah: Allison Winokur

Hagbah: Peter Sackett

Galilah: Lila Robinson

Usher: Hanna Cutrona

Kiddush: Peter & Jessica Sackett

Contributions – February 2012

In Loving Memory of Philip Mason

Barbara R. Hawkins
Rene Bennett & Ed Carlson
Diane R. Goulis
Pete & Laurie Scriven
George & Debbie Viebranz
Dave Tressel
Debbie & Phil Weiss
Rick & Maria Bloom
Rhoda Rosen
Beryl & Mike Palnik
Susan & Tom Wagner
Judy, Roger, Matt & Shaina Friedman
Matthew Weinbaum
Erica Fischer
Lindsey Goldstein
Sue Caldwell
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Gromen
Mr. & Mrs. Gregory Tripi & Family
Tanya Sabolik
Jane Patterson

General Fund

Ellen Miller
Neil H. Spike

*In Honor of
Rachel Pankiw's College Graduation
Sandra Pankiw*

*In Loving Memory of
Arline G. Alpert
Alex Pankiw
Sandra Pankiw*

*Melvin Schochet
Minnie Kimmelman
Ruth Schochet*

*Eleanor Neumann
David & Holly Neumann*

Rabbi Enid C. Lader Music Fund

In Honor of Rabbi Enid Lader
Susan Hutner
George Gilby & Joann Mraz

*In Loving Memory of
Donald Bogart
Dina Bogart
Kenneth Bogart
Marilyn Bogart*

Harold & Ruth Friedman Camp Fund

*In Loving Memory of
Harold Friedman
Penny Friedman*

Tree of Life Fund

*In Honor of
The birth of Asher Reeves, Grandson of
George & Bela Fischer
Shosh Ault*

Center for Jewish Life

*In Loving Memory of
Elizabeth Rimm
Sylvia & Alfred Rimm*