

Shofar



Adar/Nisan 5785

March 2025

Chag Purim Sameach!

Words From Rabbi Eric



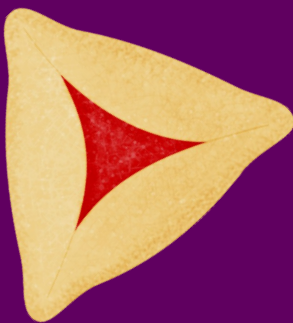
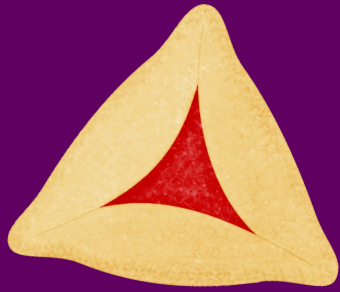
Mark Twain observed: “Humor is mankind’s greatest blessing.” A Pew Research study a decade ago showed that 4 in 10 Jews believed that having a good sense of humor was integral to their Jewish identity. I trust that congregants here help to skew that statistic up, especially as Purim is on the horizon. Retelling the ancient story in a modern context, let laughter and fun give us hope. Join Linda, our congregational talent and me for this year’s festivities.

Chag Purim Sameach, a joyous Purim.

- Rabbi Eric



Order Your Hamentashen By March 3rd!



**HEATHER'S
HOMEMADE
Hamentashen**

- Don't wait until it's too late-pre-order your **homemade** hamentashen today!
- Orders must be in full dozens, but you can mix flavors of each dozen.
- Cost is \$18.00 per dozen. Please make checks payable to B'nai Israel or Venmo to @Jacqui-Schulefand.
- Order forms with payment are due by **Monday March 3**, in the BIRS office or mail to: B'nai Israel Religious School, PO Box 350, Southbury, CT 06488.
- **Pick up your boxed order at the Purim Carnival between 10am and Noon Sunday March 16.**

Heather's Hamentashen order form

NAME _____

PHONE NUMBER: (____) _____ - _____

EMAIL: _____

TOTAL # OF DOZENS _____ X \$18.00= \$ _____

CIRCLE ONE: CASH CHECK VENMO

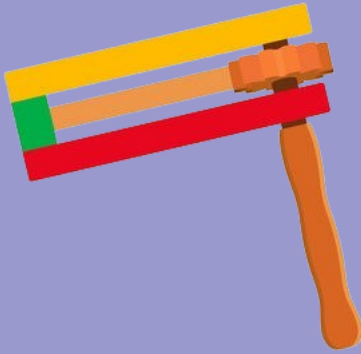
Please check your order, make payment (or include check), respond before March 3rd.
Thank you for supporting BIRS!

Proceeds to Benefit BIRS

 For more information:
Heather-203.264.8805

FLAVORS	QUANTITY
ALMOND	_____
APPLE	_____
APRICOT	_____
BLUEBERRY	_____
CHERRY	_____
CHOCOLATE	_____
POPPY SEED	_____
PRUNE	_____
RASPBERRY	_____
STRAWBERRY	_____

Purim is coming!



It's the Purim Story!

TOLD THROUGH THE MUSIC OF THE WIZARD OF OZ AND WICKED

AND ALSO

THE TRADITIONAL MEGILLAH READING

Stay for schmoozing, a glass of wine, and Heather's Heavenly Hamantaschen!

THURSDAY

MARCH 13TH

6pm

B'nai Israel
444 Main St North
Southbury, CT

All are welcome to attend!

 **b'nai israel**  SYNAGOGUE

Leadership

Rabbi

Eric Polokoff, D.D.

rabbi@bnaisraelsouthbury.org

Music Coordinator

Linda Goodman

music@bnaisraelsouthbury.org

School Director

Jacqui Schulefand

educator@bnaisraelsouthbury.org

Temple Administrator

Abby Peklo

administrator@bnaisraelsouthbury.org

Temple Coordinator

Lindsey Noble

office@bnaisraelsouthbury.org

Officers

Patti Berkowitz, President

Sheri Kipperman, 1st VP

Alexis Zimmerman, 2nd VP

Eric Linnetz, Secretary

Greg Estra, Treasurer

Steven Reps, Past President

Trustees

Marci Durnell (2025)

Lisa Segal (2025)

Peggy Klein (2025)

Iurie Schwartz (2026)

Kathryn Albee (2026)

Dana Packer (2026)

Sylvia Pena (2027)

Brittany Weiss (2027)

Margie Hertz (2027)

**Shabbat
Candle lighting times
for March**

3/7	5:30
3/14	6:38
3/21	6:46
3/28	6:54



Greeters Needed!

Dear BI Congregants -

As our building is now always locked for everyone's safety, we are seeking volunteers to serve as **Erev Shabbat Greeters** every Friday from 6:45 to 7:15 p.m., as congregants and guests enter for services. Our armed security guard, present for every service, is stationed at the door during this time.

Please consider signing up for one or more Friday evenings. Your assistance is greatly appreciated! Use below or QR code anytime you can help. This sign up form will be active for the next several months.

Thank you for your volunteer commitment!

<https://bit.ly/ErevShabbatGreeter>



Looking for a ride to service?

Looking for a ride to services? We have congregants who have volunteered to help drive those in need of a ride. Please contact the office if you would like assistance with arrangements.

Willing to volunteer to give a ride?

Use the QR code to sign up, follow the link below or contact the office!

<https://shorturl.at/gtJW5>



B'nai Israel- Stronger Connections: Opportunities for Jewish Learning and Involvement



Make our Jewish Family even Stronger-Join a B'nai Israel Adult Education Class Today-All are Welcome!

A Monthly Column by Congregant Melissa Fleischer

Mussar Class

An important way to find more spiritual meaning and connect in a deeper way with our B'nai Israel community is to participate in the Rabbi's Mussar class. Margie Hertz of B'nai Israel was a founding member of the Mussar class, realizing how important this was for our community and recommending to the Rabbi that it be a part of our Jewish class offerings. In her article below, Margie Hertz provides the background on this important B'nai Israel class and offers special insight into what being a member of this class means to her. I urge you all, not just to read Margie's insightful overview of the Mussar class, but to join her and others in sharing this special experience together. The Mussar class is offered at 9:30am the first Sunday of each month in the library and on zoom (email Temple office for code). All are welcome!

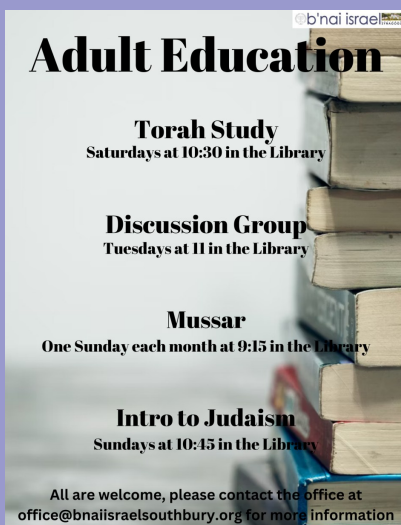
An intro to Mussar by Margie Hertz

Mussar is a Jewish ethical and educational practice that emphasizes character development. Mussar was a popular movement that developed primarily in Lithuania in the second half of the nineteenth century, under the leadership of Rabbi Yisrael Salanter. Its roots can be traced back to tenth-century Babylonia,

Originally, a solitary study, Mussar became a communal practice in the mid-19th century. Of course, we have changed in many ways throughout the centuries. Yet, the passage of time has not altered our basic human nature. The dynamics of our inner lives hold as true today.

Each month our discussion centers on one middah/character trait such as trust, loving-kindness or humility. We read chapters and discuss the teachings from two modern Mussar texts: *Everyday Holiness* by Alan Morinis or *The Spiritual Practice of Good Actions* by Greg Marcus. A typical session opens with Rabbi Polokoff explaining how the specific Mussar soul trait is rooted in Jewish teachings. His explanations and examples from ancient literature ground us in our Jewish roots.

For me, these teachings have become guidelines for living a more meaningful life that aligns with Jewish values and when necessary to make a course correction. The Mussar teachings have helped me think about how I interact with my family, my friends, and my community. And yet, the best part about our discussions is being able to interact with each other. We have become a community, a community that hopes to welcome more members to its fold in the months ahead!



Stream our Shabbat Services Online



zoom

Kabbalat Shabbat services are broadcast live through 3 different streaming services:

Zoom, [Vimeo](#) and [YouTube](#).

Zoom allows for an interactive experience where congregants can see each other and address the congregation during services when required. For reasons of security, we ask that all who would like to access Zoom to send a request to the office for the link.

[Vimeo](#) and [YouTube](#) are one-way streaming services. [YouTube](#) is open to the public, while [Vimeo](#) is a higher quality broadcast than [YouTube](#).

[Vimeo Streaming](#)

<https://vimeo.com/event/1356106>

All previous services are recorded and available. Please contact the office for links to obtain them.

[YouTube streaming](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/@bnaiisraelSouthbury9620/streams>

Welcome to our new Music Staff!



Leona Schwartz
Music Director



Janessa Jameson
Religious School Music Director

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I am very pleased to share the appointments of two new music positions at B'nai Israel. Beginning July 1st, Leona Schwartz will serve as Music Director and Janessa Jameson will serve as Religious School Music Director.

Leona and Janessa, both talented musicians, have been active B'nai Israel members and have sung with Makhela throughout the year. Leona has served several times as the Erev Shabbat music leader. In her new role, Leona will direct Makhela. Janessa, in her new role, will work closely with Jacqui Schulefand, our Religious School Director. She will lead music for BIRS on Sunday mornings throughout the year and serve as Lead Musician for B'nai Mitzvot.

Leona and Janessa will work closely with Linda Goodman, outgoing Director of Sacred Music, throughout the spring, to ensure a seamless transition.

Please join me in congratulating Leona and Janessa on their new roles.

Patti

Patti Berkowitz
President - B'nai Israel Board of Trustees



Shabbat



If you are interested in enrolling your child in religious school please call Education Director Jacqui Schulefand at (203) 687-5745 or e-mail educator@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org

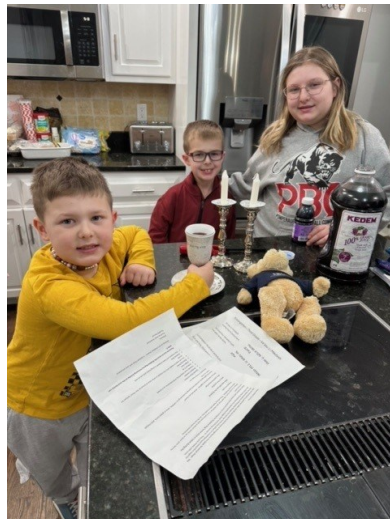


BIRS Families

Welcome Shabbat

B'nai Israel Sisterhood, under the leadership of Michelle Rosen, has created Shabbat Bags for our students. Two students are chosen each week and share their experience of how they welcomed Shabbat.

The students and faculty of BIRS thank the B'nai Israel Sisterhood for donating everything we need for our Shabbat bags and giving our students the opportunity to welcome Shabbat with their families.



Shabbat was very nice. I helped to light the candles, pour the grape juice, give out challah and recite the prayers. My pa and grandma came to visit from New York, and that was special. I celebrated Shabbat with my mommy, my brother Carter, my sister, Madeline, and my grandparents.

-Weston Miller



Shabbat



If you are interested in enrolling your child in religious school please call Education Director Jacqui Schulefand at (203) 687-5745 or e-mail educator@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org



BIRS Families

Welcome Shabbat



I had Shabbat with my mother, sister and Abba.

I lit the candles and I said the blessing. We didn't have challah so we used keto bread instead.

We all ate dinner together. My mother cooked Japanese food which means we ate takeout. I love it when she 'cooks' sushi.

-Ari Mustachi

This Shabbat was our first Shabbat at our house.

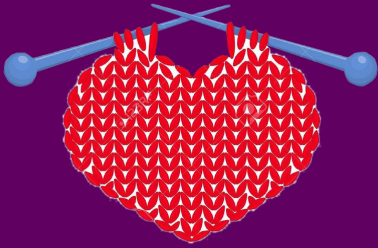
The whole family came together as one. When with out Shabbat, we would be plugged in and sadly disconnected. Mommy, Daddy, Wesley and I finally shared a Shabbat experience.

It was fascinating learning together as a family about Shabbat and our religion. I am grateful to have the chance to take home the Shabbat Bag. Not only a Shabbat Bag, but a privilege to learn.

—Brenna Rader



Knitting Group Hard at Work



Suzanne Meyers, Sandy Gold, Linda Goodman pictured with Megan Santiago, shelter director

Missing from picture, Deborah Garber

Our knitting group made a donation of 10 knitted blankets of various sizes and one sweater and hat set to the St Vincent de Paul Homeless Shelter

Good News For Jews!



We would like to share **YOUR** good news in our monthly Shofar.
Please send us simchas, happy news, newspaper photos or clippings featuring you or your family, or announcements for plays, art exhibits, shows, or other events that fellow congregants might be interested in attending or learning about.
We would love to share your Good News for Jews!

This Month's Good News

**Mazal Tov to
Janessa and Adrea
on their conversion to
Judaism!**



Mitzvah Garden Recognition



SOUTHBURY FOOD BANK

January 28, 2025

B'Nai Israel Temple
PO Box 350
Southbury, CT 06488

Dear Friends at B'Nai Israel Temple,

Thank you so much for your support of Southbury Food Bank's mission to end hunger in our community! Your generous donations of locally grown produce during the growing season of 2024, increased our fresh produce offerings tremendously! Our clients truly appreciate being able to select from your garden's healthy goods each week. Your items enrich our offerings and enhance the shopping experience, making a difference in the lives of your Southbury neighbors in need! We are also especially thankful for the donations from your annual food drive, which greatly boosts our inventory.

Throughout 2024, SFB served over 200 eligible households in Southbury, and provided nearly 11,000 bags of groceries. Your donations enable us to offer a wider variety of fresh and locally grown produce, and secure our existence, which provides a sense of stability to families in need. They know that there will always be healthy options on the table because their community has come together to support the food bank and provide for their basic needs.

The support we receive from generous donors like you has enabled the Southbury Food Bank to serve consistently for 42 years! We would not exist if it weren't for your compassion and generosity. Thank you for your donation and your continued support of our mission, as we strive to end hunger together.

With sincere gratitude,

Angela Villadolid
Southbury Food Bank Director

PO BOX 68 ■ SOUTHURY, CT 06488 ■ 203.721.0377

SOUTHBURYFOODBANK.ORG



Scholarship Opportunity

The Louis D Traurig

Scholarship Application

is Now Open

The Louis D. Traurig Scholarship Trust at B'nai Israel Is Now Accepting College/Graduate School Scholarship Applications

The Louis D. Traurig Scholarship Trust at B'nai Israel awards scholarships to students from the Greater Waterbury Area for college or graduate school. More than 200 scholarships have been awarded since its founding in 1988 by the late Rose & Edward Traurig. Criteria considered for this competitive application include academic achievement, extra-curricular activities, community involvement, character, quality of essays answered, and financial need. Awards, ranging from \$500 to \$3,500, will be announced on or around June 30th. Completed application packages must be submitted by May 1st. Scan the QR Code to access the online application portal. Official transcripts can be uploaded into the portal or mailed to:

The Traurig Scholarship, c/o Broderick Law Firm LLC, PO Box 369, Middlebury, CT 06762.

For more information, visit <http://bnaiisraelsouthbury.org/>.

For questions or technical support, contact administrator@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org.



Donor Opportunities



Yahrzeit Plaque

Purchase a plaque to memorialize your loved ones with a memorial plaque. Each plaque is \$380.

Please contact Sharon Goldman
sharon.goldman@hotmail.com

Contact Us

Phone: (203) 267-3394

office@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org

administrator@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org

rabbi@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org

Visit our website for a full list of staff email addresses



Celebrate a simcha, remember a friend, or share a milestone by sending a tribute card. Cards are hand calligraphied and still only \$5 including postage!

Contact Doris Landaeta:
dorikam1958@gmail.com

DONATIONS

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of...

Marcus Schwartz

Allen & Leona Schwartz, Douglas Schwartz, Ronald & Ellen Schwartz, and Kevin & Leslie Hotary

Israel Menaker

Susan & Coby Ben-Chitrit

Eleanor Zimmerman

Susan & Coby Ben-Chitrit

Stu Ludlow

Elliott & Joyce Nowak

Elizabeth Ival Stratford

Ron & Ival Kovner

In honor of...

Rabbi Eric for the beautiful service and help with arrangements for my father

Peter Liebeskind

General Fund

In memory of...

Donald Liebeskind

Ellen Rosmarin

Lillian Bisnov

Sharon Goldman

William Goldman

Sharon Goldman

Ira Goldman

Sharon Goldman

Irving Bisnov

Sharon Goldman

Henry Engelman

Deyanira Engelman

Herman Saperstein

Eleanor Saperstein

In Honor of...

Rabbi Eric for his care and support in officiating our father's funeral
Gary & Shauna Pokras

Thanks to...

L. Lee

Dan Goodman

Linda Goodman

Music Fund

In memory of...

Harold Holland Noble

The Noble Family

Thanks to...

Jewish Federation of Western CT

Mitzvah Garden

In memory of...

Susan Farrell

The Noble Family

Lifecycle Fund

In honor of...

Rabbi Eric performing a funeral service

Noreen Pokras

Tribute Cards

From: Rudy Zeidler and Nancy Brown

To: Jennifer Zeidler In memory of her beloved uncle, Mandy.

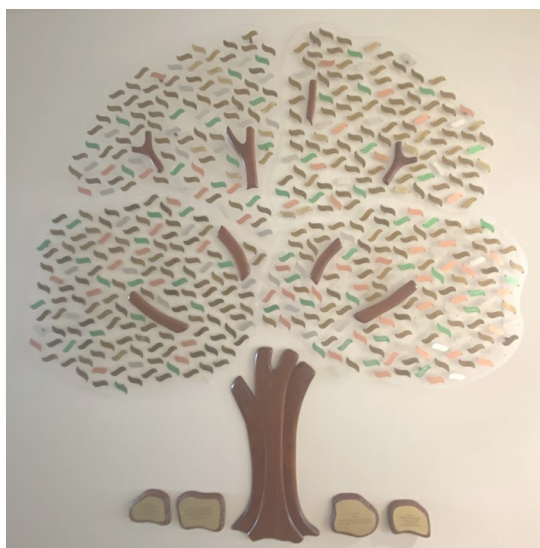
From: Celia and Lionel Schwartz

To: Mrs. Terry Petruzzelli and family In memory of Terry Petruzzelli, beloved husband, father, grandfather.



B'NAI ISRAEL JUDAICA SHOP

Stop in and check out the beautiful Judaica on offer!



Thank you to these individuals for purchasing leaves on our newly re-designed "Tree of Life"!

Margi and Michael Sermer

Joel Kleinman

Please consider purchasing a leaf for our new tree.

Contact Sharon Goldman at sharon.goldman@hotmail.com for more information.

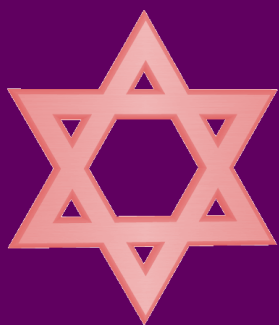


To our B'nai Israel Family -

Caring for others is an important Jewish value. Our congregation's caring committee is called *Chesed v'Shalom*. *Chesed*, in Hebrew, means compassion and *Shalom* translates to peace and love. Our Chicken Soup for the Soul program delivers homemade chicken soup to those in need. Volunteers can provide a ride to worship services, prepare a meal for those who are ill, or lend a friendly ear when you are experiencing a challenge. Please let us know how we can help you.

Sheri Kipperman
 Sherrie Bitterman
 Evan Cooper
 Patti Berkowitz

Stigs12@gmail.com
sbitterman5@yahoo.com
evanco1128@hotmail.com
president@bnaiisraelouthbury.org



*each name in
bold has a plaque
in the B'nai Israel
sanctuary

*May their memories be a
blessing*



Yahrzeits

May their memories be for blessing

3/7

Harry D. Barr
Nettie Behrend
Leo Bitterman
Louise Brandvein
Herman H. Buzin
Samuel A. Chase
Bertha Erlanger
Joseph Fetbroth
Jacqueline Frank
Doris Garber
Sol Goldberg
Ira Bernard Goldman
Samson Holczer
Louis Kaplan
Joseph Komitor
Selma Liebeskind
Tillie Merson
Rachel Niv
Edward Oberman
Lillian Rose
Dr. Haskell Rosenbaum
Morris Sacks
Jane Salomon
Virginia Seddon
Elizabeth Swirsky

3/14

Toby Berkowitz
Irving Bisnov
Raymond Chisarik
Fanny Crystal
Charles Dolberg
Sadelle Don
Alan Elias
Rose Epstein
Gloria Novak Forsten
Esther Gaber
Sandra H. Goldfarb
Harry Harnick
Jacob K. Jennes
Anne Kaplan
Alvy Martin
Shirley Schein
Jack Wilson

3/21

Molly Bieber
Kate Cooperman
Charles Edlin
Roza Gelfand
Rose Gianat
Nathan Hamar
Clara Koweeck
Jules Krakoff
Herman Levin
Theodore Linton
Gussie Menus
Malke Metz
Frances P. Miller
Jonathan Nowak
Rebecca Rearson
Esther Rechtman
Anna Sacks
Abraham Schiff
Casper Spearo
Sylvia Tendler
Rose K. Weil
Herman J. Weisman



3/28

Paul Feinman
William N. Green
Murray Haber
Florence Hamar
Naomi Leaf Halpern
Stanley L. Levin
Eva L. Littman
Phillip Mahler
Irving Rosen
Francis Arthur Stratford
Abraham M. Weil
Inge Yaffe
Lois E. Zetzer

MARCH

Happy Anniversary

Sandra Slater & Joseph Hochheiser	03/04
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Scheinberg	03/12
Dr. & Mrs. Scott Segal	03/27
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Schmidt	03/29

Happy
Anniversary

Happy Birthday

Eric Wisniefsky	03/03	Rebecca Beilinson	03/18
Ari Schwartz	03/05	Valentina Rose Deshpande	03/19
Keith Mahler	03/05	Charles Fleischman	03/20
Boris Reichlin	03/05	Alan Schwartz	03/22
Laura Augenbraun	03/06	Frederick Rubenstein	03/24
Livia Rose Feingold-Mustachi	03/07	Jodi Wasserstein	03/24
Zach Kubin	03/09	Elena Pacileo	03/24
Isadora Kubin	03/09	Rita Frenkel	03/26
Zeke Peklo	03/09	Nicole Kovac	03/26
Nerice Gerena	03/10	Ina Borenzweig	03/29
Iurie Schwartz	03/10	Lawrence Linnetz	03/30
Emily Trangredi	03/11	Joel Sherman	03/31
David Augenbraun	03/12	Ryan Rubel	03/31
Dahlia Greenberg	03/14		
Joel Abramson	03/15		
Joel Zackin	03/16		

“Please God, please heal them.”

Mindful of how our *Misheberach* prayers are to be timely, as we begin the New Year 5783 we seek to check on the status of those for whom we pray publicly. Beginning December 1st, to maintain, add or remove a name from the list, the office *must be notified on a monthly basis*. Call the office at 203.267.3394 or email: office@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org to maintain, add, or remove a name.

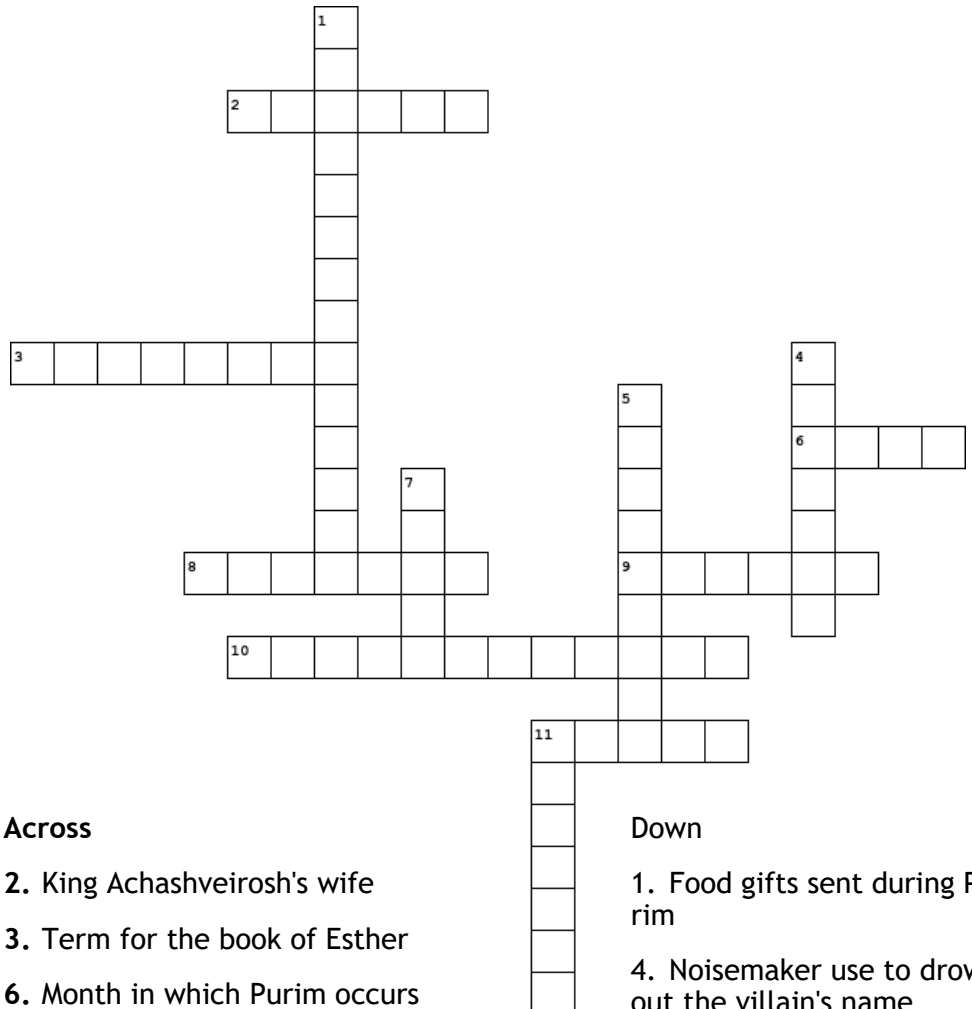
CELEBRATE!



Puzzle Page

A new monthly feature where you can complete a themed wordsearch, crossword, or other word puzzle either online through the link below or print out this page and complete it on paper!

This month's theme is Purim!



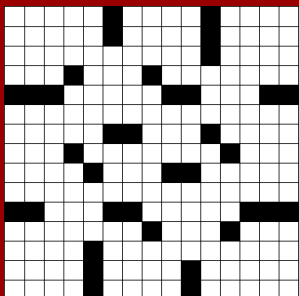
Across

2. King Achashveirosh's wife
3. Term for the book of Esther
6. Month in which Purim occurs
8. How one dresses for Purim
9. Heroine of the story
10. Festive cookies for Purim
11. The name for the Purim play

Down

1. Food gifts sent during Purim
4. Noisemaker use to drown out the villain's name
5. Esther's cousin
7. The villain of the story
11. City in which the story takes place


<https://crosswordlabs.com/view/march-shofar>



Interested in studying to become an Adult B' Mitzvah?

We are thinking of starting an adult B' Mitzvah Class!

Contact Rabbi Polokoff for more information



@b'nai israel

Adult Education

Torah Study
Saturdays at 10:30 in the Library

Discussion Group
Tuesdays at 11 in the Library

Mussar
One Sunday each month at 9:15 in the Library

Intro to Judaism
Sundays at 10:45 in the Library

All are welcome, please contact the office at
office@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org for more information

Dates of upcoming Mussar Classes:

March 9
April 6
May 18



2,000 YEARS OF EXILE: THE JEWISH CONNECTION TO THE LAND OF ISRAEL

**SUNDAY
MARCH 30 2025
1:00-2:00 PM
ZOOM**

Journey through two millennia of Jewish history, tracing the enduring connection to the land of Israel from the Roman era to the dawn of the modern Zionist movement. This lecture explores the Jewish presence in the land under Roman and subsequent rulers, alongside the dispersion of Jewish communities across the globe. Discover how traditions, prayers, and cultural memory preserved the bond with the land through centuries of exile and hardship. We'll examine the historical events, challenges, and resilience that defined the Jewish connection to their homeland up until the beginnings of the modern era.

**Open to the Community
RSVP required for Zoom Code
Email: office@bnaiisraelsouthbury.org**

Sponsored by the Israel Advocacy Committee



Join Yuval Zelinkovsky, an Israeli tour guide and educator, for the third event in this special educational series.





DO YOU SHOP AT LABONNE'S?

BIRS runs an ongoing fundraiser where
LaBonne's donates a
percentage of all sales to us.

Please help us raise
money by turning in
your
receipts to the office.

Thank you for
your
support!



Ice Cream for Breakfast with Rabbi Eric



We had so much fun last year, we decided to do it again!!
Any student who has attended 5 or more Shabbat services,
at B'nai or elsewhere, is
qualified to join us. We just need an adult to verify
attendance. Holidays and class
Shabbatot count!!

Looking forward to sharing ice cream for breakfast with all
who will attend

March 30 during BIRS hours

If you have any questions please contact Jacqui
at educator@bnaisraelsofthbury.org



Plant a tree in Israel

**Grow Hope
Save Nature**



PLANTING TREES IN ISRAEL THROUGH JEWISH NATIONAL FUND (JNF) AND SISTERHOOD IS AN APPROPRIATE AND TIME HONORED TRADITION TO HONOR THE MEMORY OF A LOVED ONE OR CELEBRATE A SIMCHA. PLEASE CONTACT BNAISISTERS@GMAIL.COM FOR MORE INFORMATION

Celebrate Women's History Month

Live from Israel:
Former Israeli Knesset Member and Author
Aliza Lavie
discussing 'Iconic Jewish Women' and their impact



A limited number of books will be available for purchase at the event

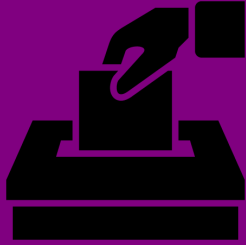
BIRS students in attendance grades 5, 6, 7 and confirmation will receive a signed book as a gift from sisterhood

Sunday, March 2, 2025, 1:00 PM
B'nai Israel 444 Main Street North, Southbury

A pizza luncheon will be offered to the BIRS students (and parents), 12:00 PM - 12:45 PM attending at a cost of \$10.00 per person.
RSVP - educator@bnaiisraelssouthbury.org



For more information email bnaisisters@gmail.com



World Zionist Congress Elections

VOTE REFORM *WZC Platform – 2025*

A vote for the Reform Movement in the World Zionist Congress elections is a vote for our values: equality, democracy, pluralism, justice, and peace in Israel, rooted in our love and support for the people and the state of Israel.

Our “Vote Reform” slate is deeply committed to a strong and secure Israel and strengthening the Israel-Diaspora relationship, working in close partnership with our Israeli Reform Movement.

WHO WE ARE:

We represent the U.S. Reform Movement, including 2 million people across congregations, affiliates, and institutions, making us the largest Zionist Movement in the U.S. Our love for Israel reflects millennia of shared history and the intertwined destinies of Jews worldwide.

WHAT WE BELIEVE:

- A strong, secure, democratic, and Jewish Israel, as envisioned in its Declaration of Independence.
- Israel's right to exist as a Jewish State and defend its people from terror. We oppose efforts to delegitimize this right.
- Religious equality where all Jewish traditions and forms of observance are respected, with full recognition of liberal Movements and an end to the ultra-Orthodox monopoly as the recognized religious authority.
- Regional security through peace and stability for Israel, Palestinians, and neighbors.
- Full equality under the law for all Israelis, including minorities, women, and LGBTQ+ people.
- A secure Israel alongside a peaceful Palestinian state is vital for stability.

As Reform Zionists, we seek a democratic, pluralistic, and vibrant Israeli society. We believe deeply in Jewish peoplehood and that all Jews are responsible for one another. We support the work and mission of our Israeli Reform Movement in creating vibrant, authentic, new expressions and models of Jewish life in the Jewish State and working to provide for those who are powerless and on the margins of Israeli society. We continue to work tirelessly for the release of the hostages and an end to the war. We are alarmed by and are committed to combating the rising threat of antisemitism and anti-Zionism in the U.S. and in Diaspora communities around the world.

IN SUPPORT OF THESE BELIEFS, IN THE UPCOMING WORLD ZIONIST CONGRESS ELECTIONS, THE “VOTE REFORM” SLATE PLEDGES:

- To advocate that the government of Israel does everything in its power to maintain the ceasefire and return all hostages.
- To fight for government recognition and societal acceptance of the many diverse expressions of Jewish religious identity so that all such expressions are recognized as legitimate and equal under the law and to lend its support for Reform Judaism and other liberal streams.
- To assure that liberal streams of Judaism are provided equal financial support and resources in the Jewish State, ensuring that our Movements in Israel and all Jewish denominations in Israel remain strong, vibrant, and growing.
- To support government policy and societal initiatives that pursue a lasting peace between Israelis and Palestinians through a Two-State outcome.
- To influence the National Institutions (WZO, KKL, JAFI) to support a strong shared society and democratic civil society in Israel.
- To curb funding for and prevent de facto/de jure annexation of the West Bank or the resettlement of Gaza.

