

Our Mission: To foster a vibrant egalitarian Jewish community founded in the religious customs and traditions of Conservative Judaism; offering excellent Jewish education and community activities for all ages with commitment to Israel and Jewish communities throughout the world.



2020 is History

Let's Pretend it never happened.

Sunday, 3 rd	Kadima
Monday, 4 th	Board of Directors
Tuesday, 5 th	Rabbi Q&A
Wednesday, 6 th	Lunch with Rabbi
Thursday, 7 th	USY Board
Friday, 8 th	Birthday Shabbat
Saturday, 9 th	Junior Congregation Lunch & Learn
Monday, 11 th	Blood Drive
Tuesday, 12 th	Rabbi Lecture
Wednesday, 13 th	Lunch with Rabbi USY
Sunday, 17 th	KADIMA Hagalil
Thursday, 21 st	Executive Committee
Saturday, 23 th	Junior Congregation
Sunday, 24 th	USY
Monday, 25 th	Ritual Committee
Wednesday, 27 th	Tu B'Shvat Seder
Saturday, 30 th	Shabbat Shira Lunch & Sing

From Rabbi Robert L. Wolkoff

Hopeful Signs For Peace



Every time I open my email, I am caught in an avalanche of articles about anti-Semitism. It's the same old tripe that I experienced while living in Europe decades ago. The same unholy (and bizarre) alliance between the Radical Left, the Radical Right, the classic Christian anti-Semite and the Moslem fundamentalist that was all the rage then has come back now. Their noise is louder because of the Internet, although I suspect their impact is smaller for exactly the same reason.

Take, for example, the campaign on dozens of college campuses to divest from Israel. It sounds like a big deal, but consider the impact on any university that actually did it. The price that Jewish alumni would make the university pay would be prohibitive (which may explain why hundreds of university presidents have shunned these campaigns like the plague). The same email and instant messaging that can be used to rally the remaining refugees from the 1960's can be used to inform the class of 1958 what's been happening back at the old alma mater.

In any case, what we are hearing here in the West is more—much more—of the same old same old.

On the other hand, if we listen hard enough, we can sometimes hear some truly new and wonderful things from unexpected places. Think of all the Arab countries that have recently opened relations with Israel: United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Sudan, Morocco. Add to that the long established relationships with Egypt and Jordan, and you're talking about a good chunk of the Arab/Muslim world. Of course, the nay-sayers point out that none of these agreements are based on altruism. All are "deals" in one form or another. As if all other international dealings are done out of the purest of motives, and only the "Zionist entity" engages in

"dirty business and filthy lucre." Still, a tawdry peace is a darn sight better than a pure war.

Iran, of course, is the great exception to the peace trend (together with its allies Syria and Hezbollah), but even there we can find hopeful signs.

Many years ago, I read a communiqué from the Student Movement Coordination Committee for Democracy in Iran. It read in part:

"The defense of peace and calm in the Middle East is not attainable through the support for terrorists and war-mongering groups; rather, it is to be attained through the pursuit of political dialog between the two sides while simultaneously removing the roots of fundamentalism, terror, and violence... both nations of Israel and Palestine have the right and the capability to live alongside one another as two free and independent states. This committee...requests that the freedom-loving and struggling nation of Iran, especially the youth and the students, give a crushing response to the promoters of anti-Semitism and terrorism."

As disgusted as we should be at the shameful pandering of America's so-called intellectuals, so we should be inspired at the courage of those Iranian students (and let us hope they are still alive to carry on the struggle). Just think: today Rabat, Morocco; tomorrow Teheran; someday Columbia, Yale, and Harvard!

Halevay!

Rabbi Robert L. Wolkoff

From Cantor Bruce Rockman

Let Me Help You Search for Inspiration



Happy 2021, a New Year filled with the promise of a safer and hopefully healthier year for the world. We have just lived through a year like no other; our very existence has been linked to the Coronavirus. Every decision that we make is connected. Masks, birthdays and holidays, vacations and conversations, coughs and runny noses, biking and knitting, sports and singing, babies and weddings, life and death are all so different. We are different; every action that we take is filled with doubt. Between the challenges of virtual school and the policy pivots of the pandemic, life on the edge has been mostly safe, sometimes exciting and always interesting.

My family has kept very busy. Stacey continues to work from home. I hear all kinds of interesting sounds as Bashe and Rafi engage in a very full high school, USY and who knows what from their rooms. We all hang out a lot. We've watched many wonderful movies. So that we don't become total couch potato latkes, Stacey, the kids and I have walked all over the place, finding secluded and the well known trails and paths in our New Jersey "backyard." These walks are highlighted by our Shabbat treks with Meryl & Gordon Heit through our neighborhood and Brunswick Acres.

I applaud our teachers and students for their dedication to Jewish learning and I hope that our tradition has provided strength to all of them. Barry Safeer informed me that he has had the best attendance in Junior Congregation in recent years, which is also true throughout our school. We are so blessed to have dedicated teachers like Barry, who nurture the love of Judaism and our way of life. The many inspired and generous social action initiatives led by Janice Baer and Laura Waksman demonstrated our deep commitment to G'melut Chasadim, which is doing acts of loving-kindness. These are our Jewish values.

Besides the aforementioned family time, the highlight of my week has been wonderful Shabbat meals and lively walks. I have valued leading services with Rabbi Wolkoff from our sanctuary. Losing myself in the reassuring words of the siddur inspires my understanding of life and my connection to you.

Through this very dangerous time, it is my hope that though most of our contact will continue to be remote via Zoom, StreamSpot, Facebook and Constant Contact, we will all continue and strengthen our relationships.

Like everything else this past year, Hanukkah was different. Still, we were able to gather online and as the nights progressed, more and more congregants joined our nightly candle lighting zooms. I pray that during the upcoming winter months, our Shabbat services each Friday at 6pm and Shabbat morning at 9:30am will bring us together in greater numbers than we have been able to have for the previous three seasons. May you find inspiration and joy in your Shabbat observance.

I wish you an inspired, joyful and healthy New Year,
Cantor Bruce Rockman

From President Marty Abschutz

Happy (secular) New Year!



I know all of us hope for a happier and healthier 2021 than 2020 was for some of us and more than 18 million Americans, who became infected, and more than 320,000 Americans who lost their lives to the pandemic. As I write this, the number of cases, nationally, in New Jersey, and in Middlesex County, is increasing at an alarming rate. On the very big plus side, yesterday was the day that the first inoculations were administered to front-line health workers.

The message is to maintain your diligence in staying within your “pod” of the people you are living with. Always wear a mask when you are outside your pod, especially when going anywhere indoors. Keep socially distanced, even when wearing a mask. Keep safe; be smart; better safe than very sorry. Perhaps my favorite quote of Governor Murphy is from when he was asked about some complaining that wearing a mask is uncomfortable. He replied (paraphrasing) “You know what’s uncomfortable? Dying is uncomfortable; wear a mask.”

With all of that as a background, our COVID-19 Task Force made the solemn recommendation to move all our religious services to virtual. We had been doing in-person on Friday and Sunday evenings and Saturday mornings for a few weeks. We expect virtual services will continue until, at least, the middle of January. The Task Force is meeting almost weekly now to stay on top of the latest developments.

Please contact Rabbi Wolkoff, Cantor Rockman, Gordon Heit (Ritual VP), or me with any questions or concerns.

As a further precaution, we insist that you contact the office for curbside drop off/pickup of anything that needs to come to our building or that you need to pick up from our building. If there is any reason that you need to go inside our building, please clear it with Lesley Lewkowicz, CBT Administrator. We ask that you complete your activity/reason for being in the building as quickly and safely as possible and then exit the building directly.

We are working to keep everyone safe, including members/volunteers, staff and visitors. PLEASE, if you have any doubt about whether you’re feeling well and/or have a fever, DO NOT come to our building. If necessary, we will arrange for a safe delivery of what you need from the building or drop off of what needs to be brought to our building. The preferred protocol is to call ahead (732-297-0696) to be sure someone can help you once you arrive. When you arrive, please phone again to finalize the curbside drop off/pickup.

I would be remiss if I didn’t take this opportunity to thank everyone who made and paid their High Holy Day pledge. For those of you who misplaced your pledge card or otherwise haven’t made it yet, you can safely and securely donate at our website using: bnaitikvah.org/hhpledge. Of course, you can mail a check to the office, too.

Stay safe and healthy. I know that we each look forward to the day when we can meet in our building, together, without restrictions.

HAKOL

The Newsletter of **Congregation B'nai Tikvah, JCC of North & South Brunswick** 1001 Finnegan's Lane, North Brunswick, NJ 08902

Published monthly, except July and August. Submissions are encouraged about events, group activities, and anything relevant to the Jewish Community. All articles emailed to Hakol@bnaitikvah.org are due by the 15th of the preceding month and are subject to available space and editorial constraints. We discourage the use of PDF files. All issues are archived at bnaitikvah.org/hakol and emailed via the CBT Newsletter. Editors: Gary Bergman, Ann Gold, Arthur Biderman, Janet Weiss, and Sandy Sharon. Advertising: Meryl Harris and Janet Weiss.

At B'nai Tikvah You Can! Presented by WAM

Amanda Uniman, Bobbi Binder, Renee Juro

Getting our members involved in events while not leaving home has been quite the challenge since Covid arrived on the scene. We have had many Zoom planning meetings, brainstorming ideas so that our members can do something a little different.

How different can it be? After all, so many of us spend the day in front of our computer screens. It is almost a chore to sign on again after work to yet another Zoom event. However, "At B'nai Tikvah You Can!" You can and you should take advantage of our events. Here's what you enjoyed (or missed)!

In August we held our first Trivia night. Members logged on and were divided into random teams by the hosting trivia company - NYC Trivia League. We spent an hour and a half playing trivia. The event was such a success that it was repeated at the beginning of December. Stay tuned – we will be hosting this fan favorite once again in February with a twist... members can sign up and create their own teams. Anyone not on a team will randomly be put on a team, as well. And this time, prizes!!!

In November, we gathered virtually for an hour and a half of hilarious comedy. Attendees signed onto Zoom to watch three comedians perform their best jokes, live, on the Zoom! There was no drink cover, no food minimum, but LOTS of laughs.

On the 5th night of Chanukah, we joined with the JCC of LBI for a live debate between our own Rabbi Wolkoff and Rabbi Michael Jay. The topic was Latkes vs. Hamantaschen. The Rabbis did a great job arguing their points over which is the better food. B'nai Tikvah won the debate (naturally!), prize to be determined.

What can you look forward to?

In January, we will be joining with JNF for a Jewish Scavenger Hunt. Details to be sent out soon!

Later in the winter, we will be offering Virtual BINGO and an incredible Virtual Tour of Israel. The tour will be given daily for one week, beginning at 4pm and will last 1 to 1.5 hours. We will have a live Israeli tour guide for this event. There will be a \$50 charge per screen and space is limited. Once the information is sent out, be sure to sign up right away!

Have an idea that you would like to share? Have an event that you would like to bring to our members? We are here to help. Please send an email to WAM@bnaitikvah.org

Hindsight Is 2020 Let's Keep It That Way



Gary Bergman

As a member of the Bikur Cholim committee, I made a concerted effort to help those congregants in need by providing lifts to doctor visits, doing light shopping, and performing other small tasks, while making every effort to keep myself and others safe.

I always required my passengers to wear a mask, which wasn't too hard, since they nearly all insisted on it to begin with. In cases where I was required to accompany them to their appointments, I too was subjected to screening temperature checks, and questionnaires. In many cases, I was sent to wait in a designated area for their return.

I can't recall any situation in the past few months where I felt I put myself at risk. However, it didn't work out that way. Although I tested negative last month, somehow a few weeks later I suddenly came down with nearly all the symptoms of COVID.

Even though I am technically at the age of high-risk, my genes tell a different story. My mom is living a productive life at 98 with her 100 year-old boyfriend. As with me, she is keeping herself as physically well as practical. More importantly, we are engaged in mentally stimulating activities and keep a positive outlook in all of our activities. To quote Yogi Berra, "90% of the game is half mental."

Meanwhile, I am self-isolating until such time it is determined safe for me to return to helping others in need.

A Part Of Our History



Bill Greenberg

Sixty years ago, Temple Beth Shalom, one of three area congregations that merged to become Congregation B'nai Tikvah was in the process of completing a building at 9 Stanworth Road in the Kendall Park section of South Brunswick. "We have grown from four to forty-four families, from holding services in private homes and the firehouse to our own building." By the end of the year there were sixty families. The out-going president was Jerry Fagen, who was succeeded by Sidney Smith. Around that time, the name of the organization was changed from Kendall Park Jewish Community Center to Temple Beth Shalom.

KOSHER KITCHEN—TO GO

Four-meal Minimum Order

Order Form on next page.

QTY	Item	Price	Total
	Shabbat Dinner <i>Whole Roasted Chicken With Kasha Varnishkes, Grilled Vegetables and 1 QT Chicken Noodle Soup</i>	36.00	
	Shabbat Dinner #2 3-6 ounce pieces of Braised ShortRib with Mushroom Gravy served with 1 Qt Chicken Soup, Mashed Potato and Coleslaw	48.00	
ENTREES			
	Short Rib Entrée served with Mashed Potato and Grilled Vegetables	18.95	
	Hibachi Chicken served over Vegetable Lo-mein	14.95	
	<i>Baked Ziti (Dairy)</i>	14.95	
	<i>Chicken Fingers (8 pieces)</i>	12.00	
	<i>Dark Meat Chicken Kebab over Herb Rice With Israeli Salad and Tahina</i>	14.95	
	<i>Eggplant Rollatini over Penne Marinara (Dairy)</i>	14.95	
	<i>Filet of Branzino with Lemon Wine Sauce With Rice and Sautéed Spinach</i>	17.95	
	French-cut Chicken w Lemon Garlic Sauce with Mashed Potatoes and Grilled Vegetables	14.95	
	Fresh-cut Chicken with Marsala Sauce with Herb Rice and Sautéed Spinach	14.95	
	Grilled Herb Salmon with Dijon Dill Sauce with Mashed Potatoes and Grilled Vegetables	14.95	
	Homemade Meatloaf with Mushroom Gravy Mashed Potatoes and Grilled Vegetables	14.95	
	Macaroni & Cheese (Dairy)	11.00	
	Pasta Primavera	11.00	
	<i>Penne Marinara</i>	8.00	
	Ponzu Seabass served over Fried Rice	18.95	
	Pulled BBQ Brisket over Mashed Potatoes and Grilled Vegetables	17.95	
	Spaghetti and Meatballs	14.95	
	Stuffed Cabbage with Kasha Varnishkes	14.95	
	<i>Sweet and Sour Meatballs Over Penne Pasta</i>	14.00	
	<i>Teriyaki Glazed Salmon Over Vegetable Fried Rice</i>	14.95	
	<i>Vegetable Fried Rice</i>	11.00	
SOUPS, SALADS, & SIDES			
	<i>Homestyle Chicken Noodle Soup (1 QT)</i>	11.00	
	Homemade Potato Knish (2 per order)	7.00	
	<i>Kasha Varnishkes (1 QT)</i>	11.00	
	<i>Mushroom Barley Soup (1 QT)</i>	11.00	
	<i>Tomato and Cucumber Salad (2 servings)</i>	11.00	
DESSERTS			
	<i>David's Brownies (6 Large)</i>	12.00	
	<i>David's Blondies (6 Large)</i>	12.00	
	Rice Pudding (1 Pint)	5.99	
FRESH MEATS (Uncooked)			
	2 LB Trimmed Chicken Cutlets	18.00	
	2 LB Ground Beef	18.00	
	Whole Chicken	11.00	
	1 LB Trimmed Skirt Steak	26.00	
	<i>Local Delivery</i>	20.00	

Meals are freshly prepared and may be frozen for later use.



Lori Sookerman



Shelly Wistreich

Please visit <http://bnaitikvah.org/sismember> to discover the joy of getting involved in our circle. Sisterhood would love to welcome you.
 Contact: Jessica Zink - JessicaZink@optonline.net

Mitzvah Baskets

Help us decorate the bima with nonperishable food baskets. We also deliver baskets to other synagogues. Tell your friends about this service. Contact: Teresa Samtur 732-821-8163 or msamtur@comcast.net

Mazel Tosses

Enhance the simcha of your child's special day by having Sisterhood provide these bags of soft candy which will sweeten the day. Also great for an aufruf. Order your Mitzvah Baskets and Mazel Tosses at bnaitikvah.org at least one month before your mitzvah.
 Contact: Marci Abschutz, 732-735-1946.

Torah Fund

The new pins are available with a \$180-or-above pledge. We would love to welcome you as a Torah Fund benefactor, helping the Women's League for Conservative Judaism to support the Jewish Theological Seminary, its teachers, Cantors, and Rabbis.

Contact: Gale Dillman - DillmanGale@gmail.com

Gift Shop

The gift shop is available online or by appointment during regular office hours.

<https://bnaitikvah.org/shop>

Contact: Serena Blackin 732-390-9515.

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Orders must be received by 4pm Friday for curbside-pickup on the following Wednesday between 12:00 and 2pm.

← Scan here or visit classical.catertogo.com to place an order online.



Join Sisterhood and see what we're all about... We need your support!

We welcome your ideas, participation and enthusiasm!

We hope everyone has been safe and healthy during these times! They certainly are like no other and we have been thinking of ways to keep our Jewish community together!

Please join us and we can still enjoy a creative year that's fun through ZOOM or in a mask and 6 feet apart! We all need to stay in contact and connect with each other!

Upcoming events will be announced and shared!

Fill in this form and mail it to our Financial Secretary, Elisa Berness, at the address provided below.

We are offering different membership levels. Please choose below:

\$40 Leah Level - open **only** to our Senior Synagogue members : ___

\$45 Rachel Level - open **only** to Synagogue members: ___

\$54 Rebecca Level - open to all (including non-synagogue members) : ___

\$72 Sarah Level - open to all: ___

Questions? Call Jessica Zink 732-715-4765 or email jessiczink@optonline.net

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Include a check for \$ _____, payable to: Congregation B'nai Tikvah Sisterhood

Volunteer Opportunities (check all in which you are interested):

- Serving on the Board Organizing a program Shopping for Snacks
- Packing Purim Baskets Calling Members Setting up for a Program
- Clean-up after program Shopping for Purim Other (please specify):

Please mail to: Elisa Berness, 12 Donald Avenue, Kendall Park, NJ 08824.



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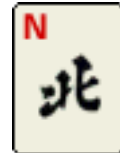
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* Please send separate checks for these funds.

You can make your contributions online by
Clicking the "Giving" link at bnaitikvah.org

Bikur Cholim

The committee wants everyone to know that, while we are unable to fulfill our mission of visiting the sick, we'll pick up prescriptions, do light shopping, and provide transportation. Send an email to bikur@bnaitikvah.org if you are willing and able to assist our members. If you are affected by COVID-19, please let the office know.

Social Action



Laura Waksman

Our gently used adult coat drive for Elijah's Promise in New Brunswick was very successful. Thank you for all your generous donations and thank you to Shelly and Steve Talmud for doing the no contact delivery to this wonderful organization. Learn more about Elijah's Promise here: Elijahspromise.org. They are so much more than a soup kitchen.

Our gently used babies' and children's coat collection to benefit the Central Jersey Diaper Bank and NEW adult underwear collection to benefit Elijah's Promise has had less of a response and will continue until January 15th.

This month I am sharing with you the non-profit Loveforourelthers.org, started by Jacob Cramer, a 20 year old Jewish young man from Cleveland, who started it in his teens. It is based on the simple concept of writing good old fashioned letters to elders in senior homes who are isolated, just to let them know they are cared for. It is not a pen pal project and all ages can participate in this mitzvah with a pen and paper. Nothing is expected in return. It is a beautiful organization started by a very inspiring young man. Jacob was a recipient of the Diller Tikkun Olam \$36,000 Award. Read more about the award here: Dillerteenawards.org.

Our next Zoom meeting will be on January 20th at 8 PM. All are welcome. If you have ideas about how CBT can make a difference in our small part of the world beyond collections and direct monetary donations, don't wait for the meeting. I'd love to hear from you. Call me at 908-812-2274 or email Laurawaksman@gmail.com.

Donations: November 16 - December 14, 2020

We gratefully acknowledge and thank the following contributors for their generous gifts.
Your special donations make up a part of our synagogue's total income. We rely on you.

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The Uniman Family, in loving memory of Joseph Uniman
Edward Rosen

Cantor's Special Fund

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Irina Irgon, in honor of Cantor Rockman

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Howard Kalish, in loving memory of Albert Kalish
Joel & Joyce Gerbman, in loving memory of Solomon Gerbman
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Kevin Krane, Shea Krane, and Maya Blackin

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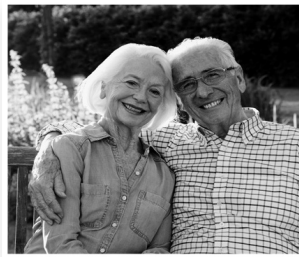
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Thanks to Phyllis Pinsky for doing the beautiful calligraphy on the B'nai Mitzvah and Baby Naming certificates.

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¼ page	3¾" x 5"	\$400	\$65
Business card	2" x 3½"	\$300	\$50

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Candle Lighting 1 st 4:24 8 th 4:31 15 th 4:38 22 nd 4:47 29 th 4:55	Shabbat Ends 2 nd 5:32 9 th 5:39 16 th 5:47 23 rd 5:55 30 th 6:03				1 17 Tevet Office Closed NEW YEAR'S DAY	2 18 Tevet
3 19 Tevet Kadima	4 20 Tevet Board of Directors	5 21 Tevet Rabbi Q&A	6 22 Tevet Lunch with Rabbi Religious School	7 23 Tevet USY Board	8 24 Tevet Shabbat Together Birthday Shabbat	9 25 Tevet Jr. Congregation Lunch & Learn Hagalil USY Prom
10 26 Tevet Religious School	11 27 Tevet Blood Drive Sisterhood Board	12 28 Tevet Rabbi Lecture Open Basketball	13 29 Tevet Lunch with Rabbi Religious School USY	14 1 Sh'vat ROSH CHODESH	15 2 Sh'vat	16 3 Sh'vat Bar Mitzvah Scott Cohen
17 4 Sh'vat Kadima Hagalil Rutgers Promenaders No Religious School	18 5 Sh'vat Office Closed MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY	19 6 Sh'vat	20 7 Sh'vat Religious School	21 8 Sh'vat Executive Committee	22 9 Sh'vat School Service	23 10 Sh'vat Jr. Congregation
24 11 Sh'vat Rel School USY	25 12 Sh'vat Ritual Committee	26 13 Sh'vat	27 14 Sh'vat Religious School Tu B'Shvat Seder	28 15 Sh'vat TU B'SHVAT	29 16 Sh'vat	30 17 Sh'vat Lunch & Sing Shabbat Shira
31 18 Sh'vat						