

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.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CHANUKAH PARTY



12.18.2022

From Rabbi Robert L. Wolkoff

Hanukkah



One of the signs of intellectual growth is the realization that the grade school version of history just ain't so. The adult version is almost always more nuanced and uglier than the G-rated version. At the same time, it is almost always deeper, and more relevant to our lives.

Such is the case with Chanukah. There is probably no idea more common, and more oversimplified, than the notion that "Chanukah was a struggle for religious freedom—in fact the very first such struggle!" It's understandable why our leaders and teachers would want to assert that idea, particularly in America.

The very idea of a ragtag army fighting for religious freedom is quintessentially American, and nothing bolsters the notion of Jewish-Americanism than the image of (our guy) Judah Maccabee fighting with a copy of the First Amendment in his hand.

But it just ain't so (sorry to disappoint). The very first act of the Hasmonean Rebellion was a Jew killing another Jew who chose to sacrifice to a Greek god. I don't think that's what James Madison had in mind.

So what were the Maccabees fighting about? Simple. They were fighting for our right to be ourselves. To follow our traditions, our way of life. They were...wait for it...ethnonationalists.

Now, I hasten to mention that ethnonationalism is a dirty word these days. It is often associated with thuggish right-wing populists like Hungary's Viktor Orban and Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro. And they are in turn linked to the most despicable perversion of ethnonationalism—Nazi Germany. Murderous xenophobia hardly seems like a model worth emulating.

But the message of the Torah is that true ethnonationalism need not take such an ugly turn. Unlike Nazi fascism (or for that matter, Russian Communism, or Isis Caliphate aspirations, or, most important for us, Greek Hellenistic imperialists), true ethnonationalists are not interested in conquering the world, or even conquering their neighbors. They are interested in living out their own lives, and letting others do the same.

Returning to Chanukah, the challenge our ancestors faced was the Greek Hellenistic culture—a culture so powerful that it succeeded in destroying the thousands-of-years-old Egyptian and Babylonian cultures. That Hellenistic culture offered our ancestors the chance to "be like everyone else."

The Maccabees said, "No thank you. We would rather be us." Antiochus said, "I'm not giving you the option." And the Maccabees said, "Good luck with that."

Now, the Maccabees did not live in a cocoon. They were clearly impacted by the Hellenistic *zeitgeist*. But they did not abandon their Jewish culture to experience it. Instead they looked for ways in which to enrich our Jewish culture with the best of the outside world. We should learn to do the same.

Have a wonderful Chanukah!

Rabbi Wolkoff

PS: Don't forget the USY Krispy Kreme fundraiser on page 14. (just in time for the holiday!)

From the Desk of Cantor Rockman

What Can I Do For You?



It's an odd feeling, a yearning for tradition while living in a rapidly changing community. I often hear, "when my kids were young or we used to do such and such differently, you should do it the old way." Our traditions have survived more generations than we can remember. Holiday celebrations that we so desperately want/need to perpetuate challenges the recognition that our reality posits challenges to our perceptions.

I'm referring to life at B'nai Tikvah, So many of you are working so very hard to maintain our community. Sisterhood, Men's Club, Bikur Cholim, the Social Action committee have never been more engaged and dedicated as they are now. Our needy family program and Chesed for Chanukah are all well supported. I get it, you get it.

We are socially conscious. We support Israel, Federation, JNF and every important Jewish cause. Yet something is missing.

It would be unfair for me to say that the G-d part is missing, because of all of the good work that you do. Therefore, I feel that I'm missing something.

Our services are well attended when there is a special happening, a lifecycle event or the High Holy Days. Prayer is important when we have regrets, sadness or some happy events; still we're much more likely to commemorate a yahrtzeit than a birthday at shul.

So, for some reason, shul is a real downer, a place that we go to cry rather than to laugh.

Don't get me wrong. We really need a place to cry, to console one another. But it would be nice to add some more happiness to our experience.

Shul is a respite. When I have a yahrtzeit, I'm sure to say kaddish. But, if it was the only time that I came to shul, then shul would only be about saying kaddish and remembering the sorrow of my losses. Going to shul is about everything that is good and wonderful about being Jewish and a part of our Jewish family. Going to shul is about singing and laughing, talking with friends and sometimes we rest our eyes. Shul is a place where we receive the sparks of the Torah every Shabbat and we are inspired by the insights of our Rabbi. Shul is a place where we can be alone with our hopes and dreams. We thank G-d that we are so fortunate. We are able to do all of this and more with the support of our friends and our traditions.

How in the world can I make this a better experience for us, especially when we cloak ourselves in sadness, remorse and obligation when we enter the doors of our shul? How, I really need to know, because I can do better.

Worship the Lord with Gladness.
Cantor Bruce Rockman

HAKOL — The Newsletter of

Congregation B'nai Tikvah, JCC of North & South Brunswick
1001 Finnegan's Lane, No. 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, Arthur Biderman, Janet Weiss, and Sandy Sharon. Advertising: Janet Weiss.

From President Charles Valan

IT ALWAYS STARTS WITH A COMMUNITY



Charlie Valan

“Imagine there's no synagogues..... It's easy if you try.....”

How's that for an opening? Well, when you're living within an area where your Jewish population is indeed shrinking, this is a real threat for any and all of us looking for a religious place to call our religious home. But it's even more than a population shift. It's the conflict being created by those who have come out from deep under rocks, believing that a social voice of hatred, antisemitism, and bigotry is now acceptable in our society. It was never more on the stage of life as recently for all of us when an individual became an FBI target by threatening synagogues in the entire State of NJ. Thankfully, he was caught quickly. But, bottom line, this was an unprovoked attack on our houses of worship. It was a direct targeting of the entire Jewish Community.

If any of us think of B'nai Tikvah as only a house of worship, you are indeed mistaken. We are first and foremost a community. When we all step back and look at the world at large, all of us find discomfort in social media and real attacks against “The Invisible Human.” What do I mean by “The Invisible Human”? I mean bucketing an entire group by a similar thing in common and generating negativity towards them without any sense of the individuality contained within the larger group. It wasn't about the B'nai Tikvah Building in the above or other buildings like B'nai Tikvah's. It was the fact that this is the place where “that community” is plentiful and together.

My personal draw to CBT has always been “the changes to community.” You see, growing up and as a member of a few different synagogues, it only meant one thing: religion. Sure, every once in a while we had a gathering. But usually those were circled around Jewish Holidays or targeted events. There was never a moment that I remember where we had a synagogue hike, bike ride, open house, picnic, golf outing, etc... Sure we had “a community,” but in too many ways from my memory, there needed to be a purpose or obligation as opposed to, “Hey, let's just do something together.” This to me has always been “The Secret Sauce” of B'nai Tikvah. The fact that I have always felt that sense of a community. Not just a synagogue to pray.

Recently, B'nai Tikvah has really been stepping up our game in options, events, gatherings, etc... I can't begin to tell you how blessed I feel every day sitting in meetings

with my fellow board members and listening to their passion and desire to ensure our calendar is full of options that any and all can enjoy. It saddens me at time to hear some say they feel, “disengaged.” While these are most certainly in the minority, it does matter to all of us who are trying to spark togetherness, especially after such a challenging time in the history of not only our country, but community, here at CBT.

As we get older, we realize the importance of belonging, participating, and living life to its fullest. It doesn't matter how young you are at the moment or whether you feel old or seasoned. Every day is a gift and enjoying life, stepping out into the world... this all must matter. If it doesn't, it should. At CBT, we recognize that everyone has circles of friends, obligations, and events outside of CBT. This is wonderful and meaningful. But we all should know that our CBT community here would love to share a moment in each of our lives as a connection as well. Many reading this might say, “What is he talking about?” That's good!!!! You're embracing wonderful things when you're connected to it at CBT. But some reading this, if you haven't attended one of the many things we're offering, I have to ask, “Why?”

We never get to know others without coming out into the world. You'll never climb a mountain in your house (stairs don't count). Food doesn't have taste if it's being served miles away (like in our building). A warm embrace (or even a fist bump or forearm connection) doesn't touch on Zoom. When I first joined CBT, I knew very few people. But attending more and more functions here allowed me to meet so many people and share in a community I recognized won't be the same without the embrace of togetherness.

I love our Jewish Community. We should all love our Jewish Community. All of us would love nothing more than living in a world where hatred and bigotry just didn't exist. While that might never happen, when you embrace a community, a haven of togetherness, and contribute towards its continued existence.... well, it's an amazing feeling. The world doesn't always reach out to any of us. Sometimes we all need to reach back. Come to a service, join a group, volunteer even a moment of your time once or often. All of this is about our community. If those attached to Judaism don't stay close as a tightly bonded group, no one will make it happen. We are all in this together.

“Imagine a world with no synagogues..... Imagine a world with no Jewish Community.....” It isn't easy if you try, only if we all neglect the value and importance of it. As long as we as a community engage and stay strong together, you'll always find a warm home right here at CBT.



Shabbat Dinner Series: Chanukah Shabbat

Friday, December 9, 2022 at 6pm

As we prepare for Chanukah in our own homes, we come together to enjoy some classic Chanukah favorites which of course means... fried everything! Latkes & Sufganiyot included!

Special Shout Out to our USY & Kadimanicks and their families and Latka Lovers of all ages!

Special pricing for USYers & Kadimanicks
\$10/USYer or Kadimanick

Save the Date!
February 10, 2023
Classic Family Shabbat

Dinner will be served at 6pm, immediately followed by Kabbalat Shabbat Services


\$18/adult | \$10/child (3-13) | Free under 3

RSVP at bnaitikvah.org/shabbatdinner

CONGREGATION B'NAI TIKVAH

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**Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs North NJ Region
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and

Rafi Rockman



CBT Youth of the Year

Mazel Tov!

**Sunday, December 11th, 4:00 pm – 5:30 pm
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Men's Club members \$72, non-members \$90 payable to "CBT Men's Club"

**Please place an ad in the journal! www.nnjr.org/journal
Contact Steve Katz skatz56@aol.com with any questions.**



Cheryl Crick

Join Sisterhood!!! Join the fun!! Join the friendship!!! It's the place to be!! Keep your eyes open for upcoming events and activities. For information, contact Cheryl Crick: cherylerick13@gmail.com

To join the Board, contact Shelly Wistreich: wis437@optonline.net

We are always looking for new faces to help us. Bring us some great new ideas!! We would love to hear from you!!

Gift Shop

We are open on Sundays during Hebrew School hours or by appointment. We carry a wide range of items from holiday, special occasion and everyday items. For appointments, please contact Felice: lorfox@aol.com

Please don't forget to stop into the Gift Shop for all your Hannukah needs!

The gift shop is also available online at <https://bnaitikvah.org/shop>.

Torah Fund – Announcing the 2022-2023 Chazak v'Ematz Campaign – Be Strong and Courageous

Help strengthen Jewish education and ensure the vibrancy of the Jewish people for decades to come with your gift to Torah Fund. The new pins are available with a minimum pledge of \$180. For more information or to donate, contact Teresa Samtur at msamtur@comcast.net.

Mitzvah Baskets

Let us decorate the bima with nonperishable food baskets. We also deliver the baskets for use at other synagogues. Tell your local friends about this service! Contact: Teresa Samtur 732-821-8163 msamtur@comcast.net.

WHY JOIN... because without YOU, we are one Sister short.

Social	Spiritual & Community Service	Educational	For Our Congregation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paid-up Membership Event Special Interest Groups Mah Jong & Board Game Nights Special Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the work of the Social Action Committee Host Sisterhood Shabbats Torah Fund Judaica Shop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Membership & Resources of Women's League for Conservative Judaism Book Club Presentations & Discussions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Available to support our synagogue when needed Purim Baskets gifted to the whole Congregation Bimah Baskets Mazel Tosses

Mazel Tosses

Enhance the simcha of your child's special day by having Sisterhood provide bags of soft candy to sweeten the day. They are also great for an Aufruf! Visit bnaitikvah.org/mazel-tosses to order your Mazel Tosses online. Please place your order at least one month in advance. Contact Marci Abschutz at marci.abschutz@gmail.com for any questions.

Daily Schedule of Services

Sunday	9:00 am & 7:30 pm - Live
Monday	7:30 pm - Live
Tuesday	7:30 pm - Zoom
Wednesday	7:30 pm - Zoom
Thursday	8:00 am - Live
	7:30 pm - Zoom
Friday	6:30 pm - Both
Saturday	9:30 am - Both

CONGREGATION B'NAI TIKVAH

TRIVIA

NIGHT

<p>Thursday December 22nd at 8:00 PM</p>	<p>KIDDUSH ROOM</p>
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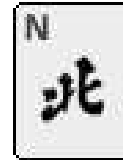
Visit us at aaronkbgallery.com

2023 Mah Jongg League Cards from Sisterhood

Order your 2023 Mah Jongg League cards for you and your friends to be ready to play by April. No orders accepted after Jan. 8. Make checks payable to B'nai Tikvah Sisterhood and send to:



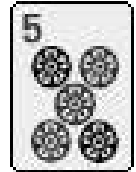
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Donations: October 14 — November 14, 2022

Please Note: It is never the intention of the office to leave out someone's donation from the Hakol listings. If your donation was inadvertently left out, please contact the office and we will submit for the next Hakol. Thank you.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Gail Levine-Reinholtz & William Reinholtz, in loving memory of our Rebbetzin, Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Julius Davidson, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
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 Helene & Gary Tinkel, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Rose & Jeffrey Berger, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
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 Caren & Barry Dworkin, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
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 Elaine Brackup, in loving memory of Isidore Rubin
 Elaine Brackup, in loving memory of Ann Rubin
 Vicki & Burt Bauman, in honor of Cantor Bruce Rockman's performing High Holiday Services
 Ellie & Bill Greenberg, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz
 The Grodman Family, for the wonderful Yom Kippur services led by Cantor Rockman and Jeff Schwartz
 Betty & Marvin Stark, honoring Men's Club Youth of the Year, Rafi Rockman

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 Leonard & Joyce Mandelblatt, in loving memory of David I. Mandelblatt
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 Arline & Alan Kane
 Colleen Snow & Hadas Elami, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Colleen Snow & Hadas Elami, in appreciation to Bikur Cholim for the first aid kit
 Jill Stone, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz

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Ina Apolito, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
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 Joyce & Joel Gerbman, in loving memory of George Weinstein
 Herb Mars & Family, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz
 Joe Plotnick, in loving memory of Carl Plotnick
 Joe Plotnick, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz
 Joe Plotnick, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Rebecca & Alan Denlow, in loving memory of Sol Denlow
 Roberta Bilker, in loving memory of Jean Rubin
 Stacey & Ian Imber, in appreciation for organizing and leading services when my father passed away

Social Action Fund

Gail & William Reinholtz, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Cindy & Neal Gittleman, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Beverly Heller, in honor of Caryl and Dave Distel's becoming great grandparents
 Janice & Art Baer, in loving memory of Beatrice Baer
 Janice & Art Baer, in loving memory of Alvin Baer
 Janice & Art Baer, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler
 Andrea & Steven Katz, in loving memory of Vera Levine
 Janet Weiss, wishing Jessica and Ono Prinziavalli, much happiness
 Joyce & Gerald Fishelberg, in loving memory of Linda Lakin
 Jessica & Ono Prinziavalli, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz
 Amy & Cliff Smith, in loving memory of Linda Lakin
 Lisa & Jeff Tannenbaum, in loving memory of Linda Lakin

Donations Continued

Trees for Israel Fund

Catherine Seber, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

Torah Restoration Fund

Arlene & Arthur Cederbaum, in loving memory of Lily Cederbaum

Arlene & Arthur Cederbaum, in loving memory of Allen Golub

Arlene & Arthur Cederbaum, in loving memory of Janet K. Volat

General Fund

Cindy & Neal Gittleman, in loving memory of Michael Solomon

Marci, Steven, Sam & Phil Kfare, in loving memory of Marilyn Kfare

Marci, Steven, Sam & Phil Kfare, in loving memory of Jack Tarr

Jason Randall, in appreciation for High Holidays services and for being so welcoming

Michael Greenfield, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

Michael Greenfield, in loving memory of Linda Lakin

Michael Greenfield, in loving memory of Janet K. Volat

Michael Greenfield, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz

Betty & Marvin Stark, honoring Men's Club Man of the Year, Larry Cohen

Shiva Fund

Tammy & Keith Zimmerman, in loving memory of Linda Lakin

Tammy & Keith Zimmerman, in loving memory of Janet K. Volat

Tammy & Keith Zimmerman, in loving memory of Barry Levine

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Arnie Miller Youth Activity Fund

Elisa & Brian Berness & Family, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

Caryl & Dave Distel, in honor of their first great grandchild,

Alec Steven Distel

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Susan Miller, in honor of the B'nai Mitzvah of Tyler and Reese Weintraub

Linda Fellen & Ben Gottesman, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz

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Ilene Karp & Marvin Krakower, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

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Adrienne & Andy Ross, in loving memory of Janet K. Volat

Adrienne & Andy Ross, in loving memory of Linda Lakin

Les & Dave Offenber, in loving memory of Sofia Lewkowicz

Brenda & Mark Sherman, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

Marcia & Barry Nathanson, in loving memory of Vera Levine

Marcia & Barry Nathanson, in loving memory of Janet K. Volat

Marcy & Marty Abschutz, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

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Michele & Irwin Millinger, in loving memory of Linda Lakin

Les & Dave Offenber, in loving memory of Janet K. Volat

Mark Kasdin Memorial Fund

Maxine Kasdin, wishing Jessica and Ono Prinzivalli much happiness

Passport to Israel Fund

Shelly & Ken Wistreich, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

Michele & Dave Greenfield, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

Cheryl & Moshe Attas, in loving memory of Ruth-Ann Breitler

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Happy Hanukkah

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IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR...

HELP A NEEDY FAMILY PROGRAM



Janice Baer

It's difficult to believe that it is already time to plan and organize our 2022 Needy Family Program. This will be our 21st year helping families in need with clothing, household items and basic necessities. Last year, we had record breaking participation. We were able to help 23 families!

As we are trying to live in a “new normal,” we have given much thought as to how to proceed this year. We have decided to continue running a hybrid program. For those of you who are comfortable in shopping, you can do so; for those who are not comfortable, financial donations will be greatly appreciated and used to purchase gift cards or needed items.

To participate, please email jbbd11@verizon.net to let me know how you would like to help:

- Monetary donation- Go to bnaitikvah.org and click “Connect” then click “Social Action” and then click “Needy Family.” A donation page is set up for this program **OR**
- send a check made out to B'nai Tikvah-indicate Needy Family Program in memo.
- Sponsoring a family @ 5 gifts per family member
- Sponsoring an adult and child
- Sponsoring one person
- Purchasing one or more gifts for a family.

We know that the unpredictability of Covid has been difficult for all. Any form of participation will be greatly appreciated.

For additional information, please email me at jbbd11@verizon.net

Thanks so much!
Janice Baer

Alan Woller

Financial Advisor
alan.woller@opco.com



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USY Fundraiser

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It's time to support USY and celebrate Hannukah too by buying

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Order online by December 9th and pick up donuts at the synagogue on December 18 from noon to 2:00pm.

Glazed donuts are \$15 for a dozen. The others are \$17 for a dozen. Buy extra and freeze them for later!

Visit: <http://bit.ly/usydonuts>

Questions? Contact Sydney Sookerman nsbrunswickusy@gmail.com.

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CBT Book Club

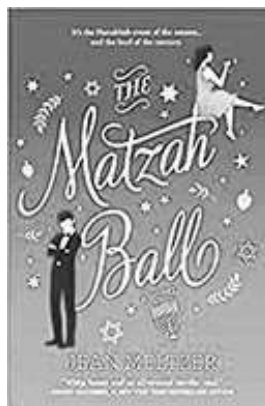
Back in September at B'nai Tikvah's Membership Appreciation Day, the CBT Book Club was there with a table exhibiting several books we have recently read and seven people signed up to join our reading group!



Lynn Biderman

We are thrilled to welcome you!

At our October book discussion, which was held via zoom, we talked about returning to in-person gatherings.



We are hoping December will be the first of the back-to-in-person meetings for the CBT Book Club

What's next?

Our selection for the December 13th discussion is **The Matzah Ball** by Jean Meltzer.

DIRECTORY OF STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

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B'NAI TIKVAH'S DECEMBER CALENDAR

4 - JWLT (Jewish Women Learning Together)

4 - USY Board Meeting

5 - CBT Board Meeting

7 - Lunch & Learn, 12pm

9 - CBT Shabbat Dinner - 6pm

9 - USY Joins Shabbat services

10 - Shabbat Lunch & Learn

11 - Congregational Meeting

11 - Religious School Mitzvah Corps

11 - Men's Club Man & Youth of Year

11 - Rabbi Wolkoff's Hot Topics from a Jewish Perspective

12 - Sisterhood Board Meeting

12 - Rabbi Wolkoff Joins USY for book discussion "Jews Don't Count"

14 - Lunch & Learn, 12pm

15 - CBT EC Meeting

17 - CBT Progressive Dinner

18 - CBT/PJ Library Chanukah Event

18 - USY Krispy Kreme Pickup

18 - Rabbi Wolkoff's "Everything You Wanted To Know...but were afraid to ask"...Chanukah Edition

19 - Ritual Committee Meeting

21 - USY-Religious School Chanukah Event

21 - Religious School IN PERSON

21 - Chesed for Chanukah Project

22 - Trivia Night

23 - Chesed for Chanukah delivery

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