

Please check the online Beth El calendar or email [office@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:office@bethelhebrew.org) before leaving to attend ANY event. As we go to press, there are NO in-person events in May!



# Beth El Bulletin

Beth El Hebrew Congregation

May 2020  
Iyar/Sivan 5780

## Coronavirus Issue

**JEWISH  
RESOURCES  
PAGE 20**

**LEARN  
SOMETHING NEW  
PAGE 20**

**Community Resources  
Page 18**

**NATIONAL  
RESOURCES  
Page 19**

**HAVE SOME FUN  
AT HOME  
PAGE 20**

### Worship Services

**Friday, May 1**

Erev Shabbat Services,  
7:30 pm

**Saturday, May 2**

Shabbat Morning Services,  
10:30 am

**Friday, May 8**

Erev Shabbat Services,  
7:30 pm

**Saturday, May 9**

Shabbat Morning Services,  
10:30 am

Lag B'Omer Tot Shabbat,  
11:00 am

**Friday, May 15**

Family Services, 6:00 pm  
Fifth Grade Student-Led Erev  
Shabbat Services, 7:30 pm

**Saturday, May 16**

Shabbat Morning Services,  
10:30 am

**Friday, May 22**

Erev Shabbat Services,  
7:30 pm

**Saturday, May 23**

Shabbat Morning Services,  
10:30 am  
Shavuot Tot Shabbat, 11:00 am

**Friday, May 29**

Shavuot Festival Service with  
Yizkor, 10:30 am  
Confirmation and Erev Shabbat  
Services, 7:30 pm

**Saturday, May 30**

Shabbat Morning Services  
10:30 am



### *In this Issue*

Rabbi's Remarks .....	2	Caring Community	National Resources.....	19
Tot Shabbat .....	2	Committee.....	Jewish Resources.....	20
Cantor's Corner .....	3	ALIVE! .....	Learn Something New ...	20
President's Point of		College Communications	Have Some Fun.....	20
View .....	4	Committee.....	Navigating the Virtual	
Executive Director's		Book Sale.....	Beth El.....	21
Entry.....	4	Chapel in the Woods.....	Beth El/Pozez JCC Events	22
Religious School Report...	5	Permanent Endowment		
ECLC News .....	6	Fund.....		
Brotherhood News .....	7	Calendar .....		
WRJ News .....	7	Heller High		
Member News .....	9	Final Reports .....		
WRJ Book Club.....	9	Donations .....		
Big Save-the-Dates .....	9	Community Resources ...		18

*...and lots of tantalizing tidbits scattered throughout, so don't skip a page!*



## Rabbi's Remarks: *We do not rely on a miracle.*

ACCORDING TO the sages, while the ancient Temple still stood in Jerusalem, the Israelites made their Passover offerings in three shifts to avoid the dangers of overcrowding. As the courtyard filled to capacity, it is said that “the gates of the courtyard were closed.” Commenting 350 years after the Temple’s destruction, and from Babylon rather than the land of Israel, the great Abaye and Rava debated a Hebrew ambiguity that we encounter also in the English translation: Does the correct reading of “the gates of the courtyard were closed” mean, as Abaye contended, that the gates would close at precisely the right moment, as if by a miracle and without human intervention, ensuring the safety of those gathered within? Or, as Rava taught, does the correct reading of the verse imply that we have the responsibility to close the gates ourselves, exercising human agency to guard the collective welfare? Rava’s opinion was preferred then and is a crucial reminder now: *We do not rely on a miracle.*

As I taught on Erev Rosh Hashanah, we are each other’s angels. We are messengers of the Holy One, Blessed Be. God works through us, and our purpose is to be there for and with each other in good times and in bad. To be a Jew is to actively commit to the well-being of the Jewish people and to Beth El Hebrew Congregation, and we are meant to help and be helped by one another, not to sit back and expect a miracle to save us all. Although what we are living through is without precedent in our lives, the entirety of the Jewish history stands

as precedent for the fundamental fact that either we stand together or we fall apart.

Led by our congregational president, **Alan Cohn**, and a small group of devoted lay leaders, Beth El Hebrew Congregation recently established an Emergency Fund that is housed within my Rabbi’s Good Deed Fund. In conjunction with a similar rabbinical emergency fund established by the Jewish Federation of Greater Washington and interest-free emergency loans by the Hebrew Free Loan Association of Greater Washington, Beth El’s Emergency Fund exists to help Beth El families and individuals experiencing financial hardship during this pandemic. If you are experiencing a financial emergency, please email me today: [dspinrad@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:dspinrad@bethelhebrew.org).

The success of our Emergency Fund requires generous donors, like you, who understand that our money provides opportunities to demonstrate the difference between fundraising and philanthropy. While fundraising is financial giving, the collection of dollars, philanthropy points to a higher purpose. The meaning of philanthropy is “love of humanity,” and if ever there were a moment to demonstrate *chesed*, fierce, covenantal love, it is now. Please visit the website and give to “2020 Covid-19 Emergency Fund” (in the type field). In doing so, you will join with **Alan Cohn** and other lay leaders as well as Cantor **Jason Kaufman**, Rabbi **Bailey Romano**, Rabbi **Brett Isserow**, and myself in the understanding that we do not rely on a miracle. We rely on each other.

— *Rabbi Spinrad*

## Tot Shabbat Celebrates Spring!

WHAT FUN IT WAS to see so many families online at our April Tot Seder, services, and events. Now let’s Zoom back together to celebrate a couple of springtime holidays!

On May 9, **Miss Carol** will lead a Lag B’Omer Tot Shabbat. Lag B’Omer is traditionally celebrated with outings, bonfires, and fun events. Although we’ll be in our own living rooms rather than outside around a campfire, **Miss Carol** will be sure to add a Lag B’Omer story and song to the usual fun elements of a Tot Shabbat service.

On May 23, Shavuot will be the theme of Tot Shabbat. **Miss Carol** will include a song about the Ten Commandments and a story about what happens when there are no rules.

Check your email for links to these fun Zoom services. Let’s stay connected!

## Good News!

BETH EL RECEIVED a Federal Payroll Protection Program grant. We will be keeping all staff, including maintenance staff and Religious School teachers, on the payroll through the end of June (at least).



## Cantor's Corner

Dear Friends,

We find ourselves in unprecedented times. At this moment and always, please know that the Beth El community is here for you. Reach out to us and let us know how you are. If you are in need or you know of any of our Beth El members in need, please let us know. Even if you don't have needs that we can help with, please reach out to us to say hello. (I love getting Shabbat Shalom emails!) One of the ways that we as Americans and as Beth El members can survive this time is by doubling down on our efforts to build and sustain our community. We at Beth El have always known that community is the most important aspect of our Jewish tradition. We also have always known that Beth El is more than a building. It is us. It is you and it is me. Together, we will be Beth El whether or not we find ourselves within the walls of our synagogue.

At this moment, our community has come together in ways that our ancestors could never have imagined. For many of us, this moment has forced us, willingly and sometimes unwillingly, to try new technologies and expand the ways in which we communicate with each other.

In-person services have transformed to online experiences — and while we miss being able to greet each other face-to-face, there is something unique and sacred about being able to join each other online as well. During this time of social distancing, Shabbat has presented itself to many of us with new and strengthened importance. Shabbat punctuates our weeks, gives us a goal to look forward to and provides us with opportunities to gather (albeit, online). I personally look forward to Shabbat in a new and renewed way all week. In fact, as soon as services are over on Friday, I start brainstorming the music for services the following week and then start

practicing the melodies on guitar.

Judaism is alive and well at Beth El. This is most evident in our B'nei Mitzvah program that is now entirely on Zoom. When we were first presented with the idea of doing a Zoom Bar Mitzvah, I truly didn't know what to think. I was concerned it wouldn't feel as sacred as a service in the sanctuary and that the feeling of community that we create together would be lost in an online format. I've been delighted to learn how very wrong I was! Creating Zoom B'nei Mitzvah together has been an absolute joy. Thanks to **Rabbi Spinrad** who has safely delivered Torah scrolls to our families' houses, each student reads from the Torah as they would if they were in the sanctuary. There is something so profound about the Torah being in everyone's home, as the family cares for the Torah together in preparation for their service. The online format allows family members who may not have been able to attend an in-person ceremony to be able to join. Zoom services allow us to take advantage of online possibilities like sharing slide shows of special pictures of Bar Mitzvah families as well. This moment is difficult but together, we can make it better.

There is so much in our world right now that is beyond our capability to control. There is still so much, however, we can control. We can bring kindness into the world by reaching out to our loved ones and we can bring sacred moments into our world by being open to new ways of experiencing Judaism.

Together, let us honor all that we can control, and do our best to bring more kindness and a sense of the sacred to all those in our lives.

Until we are with each other again in person, I'll see you online!

— **Cantor Jason Kaufman**



*Beth El's first ever virtual Shabbat service, March 27*



## President's Point of View: *Scenes from a Quarantine*

**W**ELL, THAT WAS an interesting Seder. As I have heard **Rabbi Spinrad** say on just a few of the many Zoom calls

we've been participating in, do you remember second night seder 2017? Or how about first night seder 2015? Or second night seder 1994? *That* one I do remember — when my high school basketball team staged a thrilling come-from-behind overtime victory to win the all-class boys high school basketball championship, a story for another day. But I assure all of you that you will most definitely remember first night or second night of seder 2020, the seventh night and every night in between of our eight days of Passover 2020.

At the appointed hour, Harmony and I logged onto Zoom and there was my Dad, his wife Rikki, my sister Laina, and her boyfriend Todd gathered around their Seder table in Ojai, CA. Rikki's daughter Barbara and her boyfriend Andrew were connected electronically at their seder table in downtown DC. We were all together as a new family, my Dad and Rikki both widowers, marrying late last fall, for our first "family" seder.

You see this night had the potential to be even more strange than it naturally would have been given our collective sequestrations. Passover was always my late mother's favorite holiday. Twenty-five people both nights. Fully packed. Lots of known faces and always

some newcomers, some non-Jews, and Geoff Newman whose sole responsibility was to bring the hard-boiled eggs each night. And this would be the first time that all of us would be gathered together as both a newly organized family, albeit virtually, since my mom died in November of 2015.

Thanks to **Cantor Kaufman** we used the Virtual Haggadah compiled and designed by Ellie Flier and it was fantastic. Easy to use, easy to share the leading and the reading, and perfectly well-timed and designed for our geographically dispersed seder. Additionally, **Rabbi Spinrad** spearheaded a new YouTube-based Haggadah, *The Middle Matzah Haggadah: A Digital Telling for a Time of Brokenness*.

My mom would have loved every minute of this Seder. Even though we were all apart and limited by technology I can't remember a more fun and soulful night.

Although Thomas Paine once said, "...These are the times that try Men's souls..." I am certain he didn't have this in mind.

In an odd way, whether it's watching Shabbat Services on Facebook Live or participating via Zoom on Beth El's B'nai Mitzvah, our community is finding new and loving ways to stay in touch.

— Alan Cohn



## Executive Director's Entry

**T**HE TEST OF ANY organization is how it performs under stress. Organizational stress brings the fissures to the surface. This public health crisis has been a test not only for Beth

El, but for all organizations. The decision to close the synagogue was easy, based on our commitment to protect the safety of our congregants and staff. Shifting operations to an entirely remote, virtual environment was challenging. What I have learned is that our staff is truly a team. From our maintenance team to the front office staff and clergy, we pulled together and continue to serve our congregation in so many ways.

Our Shabbat services transitioned to live streaming from the sanctuary and then moved to Facebook Live. Our Religious School quickly pivoted to delivering lessons to students on Zoom. Instead of face-to-face meetings, our clergy calls congregants or uses video-conferencing to reach out for pastoral care. Our Caring Community and Board have made outreach calls to Beth El Members. Torah Study, a number of adult offerings

and meetings have also utilized Zoom.

Beth El is strong because we have dedicated volunteers, staff, and clergy. Beth El is strong because we support each other in times of need. Beth El is strong because we have committed leadership that is focused on leading the organization based on Jewish values.

We hope for the quickest possible end to the threat that Covid-19 presents to our families. Whenever that time comes, we look forward to seeing each of you — in person. Whether you are a regular at services, Torah study, bagel bar, mah jongg, or the Brotherhood forums, we will see each other soon. Beth El will emerge from this crisis and be there waiting for each of you.

**WE ARE BETH EL!**

**Adam Wallach**  
Executive Director

# Religious School Report:

## *Building a New Yavneh?*

### *Innovating In the Time of Coronavirus*



**M**AYBE YOU'VE HEARD the story? Rabbi Yochanan Ben Zakkai is smuggled out of Jerusalem. Late in the siege, he bargains with the Romans to save the city of Yavneh to enable scholars to continue to study Torah. This story is lauded by rabbis and Jewish leaders as a pivotal moment for Jewish innovation. In essence, the Temple is destroyed, Zakkai single-handedly creates rabbinic Judaism.

This of course is a legend. It's a story. Rabbinic Judaism was flourishing in Israel and in the Diaspora long before the destruction of the Temple. The same could be said for technology in the synagogue today. We've been streaming services at Beth El for years. We used Shalom Learning to teach Religious School in 2012 and our Hebrew tutors regularly meet with students via Facetime and Skype. But, as we all know, this is a new moment. We've gone from using technology sometimes to all the time.

When I interviewed at Beth El last May, I said I wanted to bring our Religious School into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but never in a million years would I have imagined that I would be in charge of moving Beth El's Religious School, services, and auxiliary meetings online. But here I am championing our efforts to use Zoom, Be.Live, Facebook Live and more to connect our community.

One week after services moved to streaming in the sanctuary, our Religious School classes moved to Zoom. Our teachers and parents were all in. I cannot begin to tell you how grateful I was for the eagerness our teachers exhibited in learning to use this new technology. I was brought to tears by the joy and relief parents expressed as their children finally went to bed happy for the first time in a week. They were able to see their friends, their teachers, their *madrichim*. For two hours a week, their lives were "normal."

During our first few weeks, I didn't care what our kids learned, as long as they saw their teachers and their peers, and felt a sense of normalcy. Even if secular school hadn't begun, Religious School had.

"Community and Connection over Content" was my mantra then, and it still is today. Recently, with the help of our Tech Maven, **Janet Hlatky**, our Zoom guru, **Bruce Sherman**, as well as with the support of our Executive Director, **Adam Wallach**, our clergy team, and staff, we have been able to get all of our teachers free Zoom accounts, and we have created an infrastructure that will enable our community to continue connecting with one another throughout the coronavirus crisis and beyond.

But what does this mean for the future of our Religious School and the future of worship? Well, we have an opportunity for our community to innovate and create. We are existing in a moment that will shape how we educate our children, how we connect with each other, and even shape the way we pray.

I long to be back in our building, rushing down the hallways prepping for a busy Sunday morning. I long to high five our kids, and welcome our parents whose biggest challenge in that moment is whether or not their child will eat a donut or a bagel for breakfast. I want to be telling stories on our bimah surrounded by children excited for Shabbat. I want all of these things. And, I know that we'll want to bring some of the technology we're learning how to use back into our building, back into our classrooms, and into our services. The question is simply what form that will take.

As daunting as it has been to create a Religious School online learning model and to get Beth El up and running on Facebook Live and other platforms, I know that this moment will shape us and enable us to connect beyond quarantine in new and engaging ways. I look forward to creating this new moment, this new "Yavneh" with each and every one of you. Let's look to the future of Beth El together. Let's create it together.

**Rabbi Bailey Romano**

[bromano@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:bromano@bethelhebrew.org)



# ECLC News



**A**S OF THIS WRITING, we are finishing four weeks of online learning in the ECLC. We are living in a world that none of us could have ever even imagined, let alone executed. And yet... we are doing it. With no warning or training, we were all of a sudden launched into a world of virtual everything.

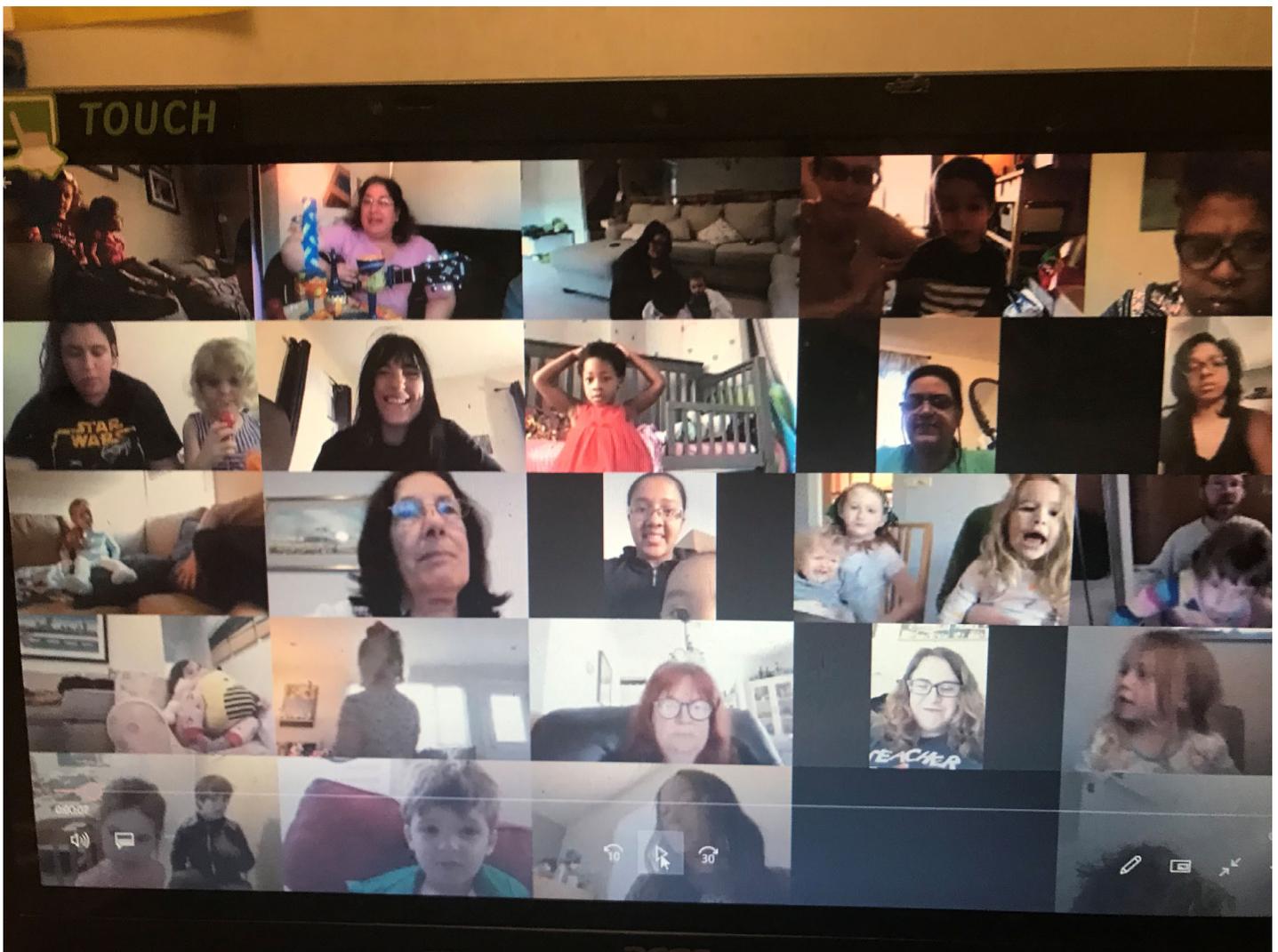
Most important was, of course, to stay connected. We missed our kids and our kids missed us and our classrooms and their friends and their routines. Everyone was thrown into a new world — with a million questions and very few answers initially. I am so grateful and proud of our educators. Driven by their love for their children, every single educator stepped up, continuing to post to our ECLC app, posting activities on our closed ECLC Facebook page and visiting with their classes via Zoom. As a school we have continued to celebrate Shabbat on Fridays and havdalah on Mondays. Morah Ali has added great song sessions on Wednesday mornings.

After a few weeks, we found our “sea legs” and began to face the reality that this will last longer than we initially planned. Teachers are now better versed in virtual teaching, classes are meeting regularly, we have moved our classroom explorations to our Zoom classrooms, and our learning continues.

While no one really knows (at this point) how long until we return to seeing each other in person, we know that we will. **WHEN** we do, it will be a new normal for sure. And, thankfully we have learned that we, as a community, working together, can do anything we set our minds and spirits to. **AGAIN**, our Judaism moves successfully to survival mode. Imagine the story we will have to tell when it is all over.

Till we can see each other in person...

**Dina Backer**  
[dina.backer@theJ.org](mailto:dina.backer@theJ.org)



*ECLC virtual havdalah*

## Brotherhood News

ON BEHALF OF the entire Brotherhood Board, I hope this *Bulletin* finds you in good health and high morale. The essence of Brotherhood is to offer opportunities for friendship, camaraderie, social interaction, educational experiences, and volunteer opportunities for giving back to Beth El and the wider community. Like everyone else, we are feeling quite constrained by these challenging times. Quite frankly, social distancing is anathema to the Brotherhood norm of fostering social connectedness.

Even before various government guidelines were issued, the Brotherhood Board ruefully accepted the reality that we would be unable to host our traditional Mothers Day brunch. I recently learned that the church softball season in which Brotherhood participates, not surprisingly has been cancelled. It also seems unlikely that the region will be open in time for our annual end-of-year Religious School picnic. Brotherhood's normal June annual meeting and Brotherhood Shabbat, where we also honor our Man of the Year recipient are likely to be rescheduled. These are all disappointing decisions,

but necessary ones. Health and safety are paramount.

Although I hear a lot of such talk, I personally reject the concept of a new normal. The old normal will return, and when it does your Beth El Brotherhood will be there, renewing the activities that give us so much joy and meaning. Our catering volunteers are anxious to be back in the kitchen and our public policy forums will restart anew. Brotherhood will build *sukkahs* and sponsor social events. We will host interfaith gatherings and provide support for Beth El youth and Religious School activities. Together, Brotherhood will once again do what we can do to provide the social fabric that makes Beth El a family and simply a wonderful place to belong.

Be safe and keep connected.

**John Jankowski**  
Brotherhood President  
[brotherhood@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:brotherhood@bethelhebrew.org)

## WRJ News

### *WRJ Shabbat and Spring Events:*

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to upend our plans, WRJ is trying to adapt. Our WRJ Shabbat and Spring Raffle, scheduled for May 8, have been postponed indefinitely as a result of the Covid-19 social distancing requirements. Our Woman of the Year, **Jeanette Astrow**, will be honored when it is possible. Meanwhile, continue to congratulate her as she is a stellar Woman of the Year.

The WRJ Board will have board training via Zoom with WRJ National Representative Fredi Bleeker Franks on Thursday, May 7 at 7 pm. Her schedule permitting, Fredi will visit us in person when travel is possible, to participate in our Woman of the Year celebration and Shabbat educational events.

### *WRJ Study Buddy Initiative:*

WRJ hopes to launch a Study Buddy project to help congregants with school-age kids who need a study buddy, to take some of the pressure off parents who are working from home and/or otherwise could use the help of another adult in this time of unremitting 24/7 child-care. WRJ has put together a survey to identify prospective volunteers and determine whether there are enough to make this project feasible. The survey was announced in the April 19 Beth El weekly email, and can be accessed at <https://forms.gle/M7nd3iCFCsHNSGrw5>. If there are enough volunteers, we will send a second survey to find out who would like to request Study Buddy

support. We also hope to get some volunteers who would like to do art, music or movement, or story hours, which could perhaps even be done with groups of kids, and include preschoolers with parental participation.

### *WRJ Facebook Page:*

For those looking for ways to help families affected by the Covid-19 health crisis, we have been posting suggestions on the Beth El WRJ Facebook page, and will continue to do so as we receive further suggestions. We also will continue to post inspirations and other pandemic survival tips there. If you have a suggestion for mitzvah opportunities, pandemic survival tips, or inspirational messages you would like us to share, please email us at [BEHC.WRJ.President@gmail.com](mailto:BEHC.WRJ.President@gmail.com).

The link to the WRJ Facebook page is <https://www.facebook.com/BethElWRJ>. You don't need a Facebook account to view the WRJ Facebook page.

### *Carpenter's Shelter:*

Our regular stalwart volunteers for Carpenter's Shelter continue to support this mitzvah. Our regularly scheduled dinner is on May 25. This will be prepared by individual members at their homes using disposable serving pieces.

*Continued on next page*

# WRJ News

(Continued from page 7)

However, Carpenter's Shelter still needs food donations. The staff at Carpenter's Shelter serves the food, so Jamila Smith requests the following:

The Winter Carpenter's Shelter and David's Place closed on April 13. In order to continue to serve their residents, Covid-19 Safety Shelter for those most vulnerable opened at the Charles Houston Rec Center, 901 Wythe Street, on Monday, April 13.

Covid-19 Safety Shelter needs help with meals for its clients at the rec center to help with this transition. ***If you can support the Safety Shelter by delivering a meal, utilizing the same process that is currently in place at the residential shelter, it would be greatly appreciated.***

Two additional daily volunteer opportunities have been added on the scheduling system: Safety Shelter Meal Delivery Lunch and Safety Shelter Meal Delivery Dinner. Both are currently listed daily, and there are openings every day, twice daily, from now through May 15. If you can assist, please email Jamila at [jamilasmith@carpentersshelter.org](mailto:jamilasmith@carpentersshelter.org), and let her know the date, and which lunch or dinner, you would like to cover. You can also self-schedule. They are currently scheduling one month out.

The meal delivery process, which applies both to the residential shelter (in the former Macy's location at Landmark Mall, 5701-D Duke Street) and the Covid-19 Safety Shelter, is as follows:

- If you can volunteer to provide a meal, please be sure to utilize the recommended robust hygiene guidelines:
- Frequently wash your hands with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds;
- If available, use gloves when prepping food;
- Disinfect your workspace prior to prepping food;
- And most importantly, opt out if you are sick.

### Meal Providers:

The Meal Provider process has been adjusted to a Meal Delivery process where ***groups provide the food for staff to serve.*** With this in mind, the food provided should require minimal preparation.

***\*\*\* Please opt out if you are feeling sick or ill, out of concern for your safety and that of the safety of the Shelter residents. \*\*\****

**Please provide enough food to feed between 35-40 adults.**

- Food delivery can be scheduled by contacting Jamila, and should be scheduled at least an hour in advance of the service time. Food delivered for lunch should arrive by 11 am for a noon service and food for dinner should arrive by 5:30 pm for a

6:30 pm service.

- Meal providers must not fully enter the shelter. A table will be placed in the front vestibule in advance of the food delivery. The food items will be left on the table. Please notify the front desk that the delivery has taken place. If no one is at the front desk, please call (703) 548-7500 and notify staff. Staff will then retrieve the items from the table.
- Please use disposable containers when possible, as staff cannot guarantee the return of the items the food is brought in.

### Mah Jongg

Thankfully, **Dina Katz** and **Susan Whitman** located a site to play mah jongg online at <https://realmahjongg.com/>. This site allows a two-week free membership with minimal cost per month. We have enjoyed staying in touch with our mah jongg buddies and have all opted to identify ourselves by using WRJ as a prefix to our names. This has allowed us to remain in contact with one another and continue our camaraderie. This has also allowed us to familiarize ourselves with the new card so we'll be up to speed when we can play again in person.

### Pat Collins and Linda Shapiro

WRJ Co-Presidents

[BEHC.WRJ.President@gmail.com](mailto:BEHC.WRJ.President@gmail.com)

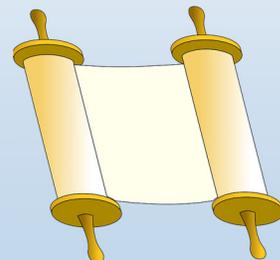
## Torah Study

**W**E HAVE BEEN meeting via Zoom and now require a password. Anyone interested in joining us should email **Lisa Sheldone** ([lisa.sheldone@verizon.net](mailto:lisa.sheldone@verizon.net)) for the password and to be added to our email list.

Every week, Lisa sends a message to the list about the portion of the week with chapter and verse citations and links to various on-line commentators. Anyone interested will need a copy of the Torah at home.

We welcome anyone who is trying Torah study out for the first time — Hebrew is not required, no one gets called on who hasn't volunteered, and questions are encouraged (although there may not be an answer). Please join us!

— Gilah Goldsmith



## Member News

### Welcome New Members:

Susan and Richard Warshaw

### Mazel Tov to:

Larry and Esther Browning, Howard Cohen and Lucy Civitello, Cecil Key and Amy Zucker, and Bruce and Susan Wartel who are having special anniversaries in May

Carol Schrier-Polak, Dorian Schramm, Diane DeMaio, Jerome Liess, Lisa Miller, Myra Wendel Roney, and Betty Goldman who are having special birthdays in May

### Condolences to:

Children Aaron (Elise) and Leah (Rob) and grandchildren Elana, Jonah, and Gabriel Margosis on the death of beloved father, grandfather, and **Beth El member** Michel Margosis

Marvin Cetron, children Adam and Kimberley and Edward and Kathy, and grandchildren Gabriel and Justin on the death of beloved wife, mother, and grandmother, and **Beth El member** Gloria Cetron

Mark and Sheila Thalhimer, and Ellen Thalhimer, and Jacob and Melanie Thalhimer, on the death of beloved father and grandfather, and **Beth El member** Jack Thalhimer

## WRJ Book Club Spring 2020 Schedule

June 9\*: *Spies of No Country* by Matti Friedman

The WRJ Book Club has been in existence for more than 20 years and is, I believe, a cultural benefit to the congregation. We try to choose and read the best in Jewish-themed literature!

— **Rita DiTrani**

\* *If current Virginia stay-at-home order end-date of June 10 changes to be sooner.*



### SAVE THE DATE! MAJYK IS COMING! Dec. 18-20

Beth El is proud to announce that we will be hosting the NFTY MAR MAJYK event for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders.

Mark your calendars now! We will need everyone's help to house and host these teens!

Watch for details!

## Save the Date: Musician In Residence Weekend

I'M VERY EXCITED to announce that next year we will be inviting singer-songwriter Elana Arian to join us as a musical scholar in residence from Jan. 29 through Jan. 31, 2021. Elana is a long time friend and colleague and is one of the most prominent Jewish musicians of our time. We are delighted she will join us for an entire weekend of music. Please mark your calendars for the following dates. More information to follow.

- Friday Jan. 29, 2021, 7:30 pm  
Soul Shabbat Services with Elana Arian, Cantor Kaufman and the Soul Shabbat Band
- Saturday Jan. 30, 2021, 7 pm  
Cantor's Concert, with Cantor Jason Kaufman, Elana Arian, and Eric Schobrick — tickets go on sale later this year
- Sunday Jan. 31, 2021, 11 am  
Religious School concert for students and their families led by Elana Arian

— **Cantor Kaufman**



# Caring Community Committee

**T**HE CARING COMMUNITY Committee is very concerned about Beth El congregants at this difficult time. Although we are not in a position to offer meals or rides, we can lend you a friendly ear and offer you some information on where to find various kinds of help. We are particularly interested in hearing from congregants who are ill or having a difficult time coping with this crisis and would like someone to talk with. If you know of a member who might like our services or if you have ideas how we might help, please call **Ruth Perlstein** at 703-978-9341.

Meanwhile, Caring Community members distributed 30 Purim holiday bags to members who are homebound. Since we were unable to deliver Passover bags during the COVID-19 crisis, we sent cards and committee members made calls.

**Julie Mueller** and **Ruth Perlstein** offer an on-line live support session to members who have experienced a loss. If you would like to be included in such a meeting, please contact Ruth.

## We are looking forward to our 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Book Sale in January 2021

Now is a great time to go through your bookshelves and put aside the books you no longer want for this very popular fund raiser.

Once Beth El is open and functioning on a normal schedule, bring your books to the building. If you need help, just let us know and we will pick them up. In the fall we will be asking for volunteers to help with this gigantic fund raiser.

Questions or need help? Contact **Rhoda Goldman** at [lennieg@cox.net](mailto:lennieg@cox.net) or 703-992-9370



**ALIVE!**

**F**OR MANY, mid-March was the beginning of dramatic changes in how we work and live. At that time, the City of Alexandria contacted ALIVE! to see what we (we, because Beth El is a member congregation — this is our work) could do to help feed Alexandria's school children who wouldn't be receiving breakfast and lunch five days a week. ALIVE! went into action, and food for students and families was distributed throughout the city.

Two weeks later, ALIVE! had to revamp its last Saturday food distribution. Rather than being a monthly event, it became a weekly truck-to-trunk distribution of a week's worth of food. At the site in Arlandria, ALIVE! usually serves 120 families. On March 28, it served close to 500 families.

At Beth El, we could not have our annual Tzedakah Tzunday — the day when ALIVE! was to receive the *tzedakah* brought in by Religious School students and congregants. ALIVE! needs our *tzedakah* now more than ever. Please consider going to [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org) to make an online donation to support the important work ALIVE! does.

For more information about ALIVE! go to [www.alive-inc.org](http://www.alive-inc.org) or contact **Deborah Schaffer** at [schaffer4@gail.com](mailto:schaffer4@gail.com).

## College Communications Committee Update

**D**UE TO THE return home of our college students, the College Committee did not send its final 2019-2020 school year Passover package. The Committee looks forward to a resumption of normal life this fall, beginning with sending Rosh Hashanah packages to our college students. As a reminder, the Beth El College Committee keeps in touch with our congregation's college students by mailing them small care packages and notes during the school year. We will have reminders over the summer to send student names and addresses to the Committee chair for the Committee mailing list.

**Sue Meisner**  
Chair, College Committee



## Chapel in the Woods While You Were Away...

**B**Y APRIL 11, the following native trees and perennials had bloomed in the Chapel in the Woods, among others. If you would like to join the congregants working to preserve Beth El's two-acre forest, please write Stuart and Nancy Davis, [nmdaviswriter@aol.com](mailto:nmdaviswriter@aol.com). They will assign time slots so you can garden while preserving social distance.



**Celandine poppy,**  
*Stylophorum diphyllum*



**Carolina jessamine,**  
*Gelsemium sempervirens*



**Green and gold,**  
*Chrysogonum virginianum*



**Eastern Redbud,**  
*Cercis canadensis*



**Golden ragwort,**  
*Packera aurea*



**Virginia bluebells,**  
*Mertensia virginica*



**Jacob's ladder,**  
*Polemonium caeruleum*



**Foamflower,**  
*Tiarella cordifolia*



**Beth El Permanent Endowment Fund**  
Beth El Hebrew Congregation

3830 Seminary Road • Alexandria, Virginia 22304 Tel: (703) 370-9400

## Come join us for the Annual Meeting of the Beth El Permanent Endowment Fund

**Sunday, June 14, 2020, 10 am to noon**  
**Seminar Room**

**T**HE TRUSTEES OF the Permanent Endowment Fund — **Dana Arnold** (Chair), **Jeremy Flachs** (Secretary), **Ernie Levy**, **Janet Garber**, **Dorrit Lowsen**, **Michael Bluestein** (Treasurer), and **Daniel Rothschild** — welcome you to the annual meeting.

Trustee terms are ending for **Daniel Rothschild** and **Michael Bluestein**, who have been nominated for additional 3-year terms.

Any voting member may petition for an alternate slate of nominees directly to the secretary, **Jeremy Flachs**, [jeremy.flachs@flachslaw.com](mailto:jeremy.flachs@flachslaw.com), 20 days prior to the meeting, and notice of the alternative nominees will be provided to the membership by the secretary at least 10 days prior to the meeting.

The Trustees look forward to meeting with you to discuss the Endowment Fund's progress and to elect the new trustees. We have a lot of exciting things to discuss with you.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed
<p><b>May is National Older Americans Month. Use this time to reach out to relatives, friends, and neighbors.</b></p> <p><b>Connect and reconnect.</b></p>			
<p><b>3</b> World Press Freedom Day/National Wear Different Colored Shoes Day 10a Religious School ONLINE 10a B'nai Mitzvah Meeting ONLINE 10a Leadership Development Group ONLINE 10a and 11a Adult Hebrew Classes ONLINE Noon Club 67 Maccabiah ???</p>	<p><b>4</b> Star Wars Day/National Orange Juice Day</p>	<p><b>5</b> Cinco De Mayo/National Teacher's Day 7p Genius of the Rabbis ONLINE</p>	<p><b>6</b> National Nurses Day/International No Diet Day 6:15 Religious School ONLINE</p>
<p><b>10</b> Mother's Day 10a Religious School ONLINE 10a and 11a Adult Hebrew Classes ONLINE</p>	<p><b>11</b> National Twilight Zone Day</p>	<p><b>12</b> Lag B'Omer</p>	<p><b>13</b> National Apple Pie Day/National Frog Jumping Day 10:30a /Beth EL/JCC Event: An Interfaith Program with Rabbi Brett Isserow ONLINE 6:15 Religious School ONLINE</p>
<p><b>17</b> National Cherry Cobbler Day/National Idaho Day 10a Religious School ONLINE 10a and 11a Adult Hebrew Classes ONLINE</p>	<p><b>18</b> International Museum Day/National Cheese Soufflé Day</p>	<p><b>19</b> World Plant a Vegetable Garden Day/ National Devil's Food Cake Day Noon Beth EL/JCC Event: The Genius Beat: How Can a Single Soul Redefine the Way We Think About Science, Art, Literature, and Music? ONLINE</p>	<p><b>20</b> National Rescue a Dog Day/National Quiche Lorraine Day 6:15 Religious School ONLINE</p>
<p><b>24</b> National Escargot Day/Brother's day NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL</p>	<p><b>25</b> Memorial Day BUILDING CLOSED</p>	<p><b>26</b> Sally Ride Day/National Blueberry Cheesecake Day 7p Genius of the Rabbis ONLINE 7p RSY Team ONLINE</p>	<p><b>27</b> National Senior Health &amp; Fitness Day/ National Cellophane Tape Day 6:15 Religious School ONLINE</p>
<p><b>31</b> National Smile Day/National Macaroon Day 10a Religious School ONLINE</p>	<p><b>Please check the online Beth El calendar or email <a href="mailto:office@bethel.org">office@bethel.org</a> person events</b></p> <p><b>See the Beth El website home page</b></p>		

2020 ~

Thu	Fri	Sat	Torah Portions
	<b>1</b> International Tuba Day/Batman Da OFFICE CLOSED 7p Shabbat Social Hour ONLINE 7:30p Erev Shabbat Services ONLINE 8:30p Shabbat Table Talk ONLINE  Candle lighting 7:44p	<b>2</b> Brothers and Sisters Day/World Naked Gardening Day 9a Torah Study ONLINE 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services ONLINE  Havdalah 8:52p	<b>ACHAREI MOT/KEDOSHIM</b>  Leviticus 16:1-20:27 Ezekiel 22:1-19
<b>7</b> National Tourist Appreciation Day 5:30p WRJ Board Training ONLINE 7p Caring Community Committee ONLINE	<b>8</b> VE Day/National Coconut Cream Pie Day 7p Shabbat Social Hour ONLINE 7:30p Erev Shabbat Services ONLINE 8:30p Shabbat Table Talk ONLINE  Candle lighting 7:50p	<b>9</b> International Migratory Bird Day/National Miniature Golf Day 9a Torah Study ONLINE 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services ONLINE 11a Lag B'Omer Tot Shabbat ONLINE  Havdalah 8:59p	<b>EMOR</b>  Leviticus 21:1-24:23 Ezekiel 44:15-31
<b>14</b> National Dance Like a Chicken Day/ National Buttermilk Biscuit Day 7:30p Interfaith Learning ONLINE	<b>15</b> National Chocolate Chip Day/National Pizza Party Day 6p Family Service ONLINE 6:30p Shabbat Social Hour ONLINE 7:30p Fifth-Grade Student-Led Erev Shabbat Services ONLINE 8:30p Shabbat Table Talk ONLINE  Candle lighting 7:57p	<b>16</b> Armed Forces Day 9a Torah Study ONLINE 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services ONLINE  Havdalah 9:05p	<b>BEHAR/BECHUKOTAI</b>  Leviticus 25:1-27:34 Jeremiah 16:19-17:14
<b>21</b> World Day for Cultural Diversity/National Wait Staff Day	<b>22</b> Buy a Musical Instrument Day/National Vanilla Pudding Day 7p Shabbat Social Hour ONLINE 7:30p Erev Shabbat Services ONLINE 8:30p Shabbat Table Talk ONLINE  Candle lighting 8:03p	<b>23</b> International Jazz Day/World Turtle Day 9a Torah Study ONLINE 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services ONLINE 11a Shavuot Tot Shabbat ONLINE  Havdalah 9:11p	<b>BAMIDBAR</b>  Numbers 1:1-4:20 Hosea 2:1-22
<b>28</b> Amnesty International Day/National Hamburger Day	<b>29</b> Shavuot (Start) 10:30a Shavuot Festival Service with Yizkor ONLINE 6p Shabbat Social Hour ONLINE 6:30p Erev Shabbat Services and Confirmation Program ONLINE 7:30p Shabbat Table Talk ONLINE  Candle lighting 8:08p	<b>30</b> Shavuot (End) 9a Torah Study ONLINE 10:30a Shabbat Morning Services ONLINE  Havdalah 9:17p	<b>SHENI SHEL SHAVU'OT</b>  Deuteronomy 14:22-16:17 Habakkuk 2:20-3:19

[bethelhebrew.org](http://bethelhebrew.org) before leaving to attend ANY event. As we go to press, there are NO in-person services in May! (And early June is iffy too!)

For more information, visit [www.bethelhebrew.org](http://www.bethelhebrew.org) for online meeting information.

# Heller High Final Report

**H**ELLO BETH EL! I'm **Kate Schneider** of the Heller High Five. I've been home for a little while now, unfortunately, and so I've really had time to think about the last few weeks at Heller High.

A few days after we went to Masada and the Dead Sea, which were both really cool, we went on a *tiyul* (field trip) that ended up being one of my favorites, purely because of the fact that my class had really interesting discussions: the Christianity *tiyul*. We went to this Christian touristy town right below us where John the Baptist was supposedly baptized. It was an absolutely beautiful day to sit outside in the garden and just learn and ask questions. The next Sunday, we went a little further north to learn about the Bar Kochva revolt and to climb through some caves that the Jewish people hid in for years to hide from the Romans. At times like these, when we went into caves, my Jewish history teacher, Talia, made us turn off all of our flashlights for a minute and we would sing a song in the total darkness of the cave. And the next day, the families started arriving for the parents' trip.

A couple of days after they arrived, we left early in the morning to drive a few hours north to learn about oral law. We visited the burial caves of a couple of famous rabbis and saw the beautiful red flowers that grow all over Israel during the spring. Then at lunchtime, we drove to this gorgeous hot spring where they had pizza ovens set up for us to make our lunch and we got to go swimming. After that we went to a synagogue with a beautiful mosaic floor from hundreds of years ago, and at the end of that we all got in a circle, students and parents, and had a short service. It was really nice to just stop for a few moments and sing together as a group.

One of the things I loved most about my time at Heller High was the people. Most of the people there were amazing, and even if I didn't get along with everyone individually, I loved the unity of the group when we all came together. I made some of my best friends there and it is an experience I will never forget.

**H**ELLO BETH EL! My name is **Samara Tanner**, and I'm the last of the Heller High Five to write to you all about our semester in Israel. As you probably have heard, we have unfortunately returned home due to the impending threat of the coronavirus and its effect worldwide. It's so hard to write and express what I and my friends from Israel are feeling as our departure was so sudden. In early to mid-February, before the rest of the world truly understood how serious the virus was, everything for us was normal. We had *tiyulim* (field trips) approximately three times a week, and had typical in-person classes, services, and meals, as usual. Although the virus was slowly spreading to other countries, it seemed as if we were going to be okay.

Our principal, Rabbi Loren Sykes, would talk to us almost daily during *Zman Kvutza*, our evening program, about how we needed to practice personal hygiene, wash our hands, etc. We took it as seriously as we could, but our daily "Corona Updates" were never too serious, and we would end up laughing as usual by the end of our program. It wasn't until the end of February when the Heller High administration brought us all together to tell us that our trip to Poland had been cancelled that things started to get serious. When they broke the news, it was received with a multitude of reactions, ranging from tears to disappointment, distress, and anxiety. At that moment, I think some of us understood the very real possibility of us needing to go home. Of course, people asked questions about the possibility of us having to leave, but there were really no answers at that point. It seemed to me (and many of the parents who had emailed Rabbi Loren and the rest of the staff) that we were safer on Kibbutz Tzuba than we would be if we would have to travel back to the US on a plane, especially since the virus was picking up speed in the States.

The following days are kind of fuzzy. As the virus spread and answers became less clear, it's hard to remember the exact timeline of events. I remember that the next

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# Heller High Final Report

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week was the Parent Pilgrimage, and even though my family was not able to come, one of my best friends, Ilana, and I were graciously “adopted” by our close friend, Hannah, and her family. We had a few nights out where we got to explore Jerusalem and the German Quarter — we had a lovely dinner there, followed by dessert at the Waffle Cafe. Hannah’s family also came with us to Ben Yehuda Street the following evening, which is a popular street for tourists and locals alike to eat and shop; we had another wonderful dinner there. A few days after the parents left, Israel closed its borders to foreigners and any Israeli who came back to the country was required to self-quarantine for 14 days. The parents were very lucky to leave when they did, because things became very hectic in both the US and Israel as soon as they left us.

That weekend, Ilana invited me to spend the weekend with her grandmother, who lives 30 minutes away from Tzuba, so we left on a Thursday night and stayed with Granny Rose through Shabbat on Saturday evening. That whole weekend was an adventure, as Ilana’s grandmother is Orthodox and *shomer shabbat* (meaning she keeps Shabbat — i.e., no driving, using a hot plate to heat things up, no cooking, etc.). Neither of us had any idea what to expect and ended up going to three different Orthodox synagogues. (I could write a whole other essay on that experience, so feel free to ask me questions about that!) It was a very unusual weekend and Ilana and I were so happy to be back at Tzuba on Saturday evening.

I had a lot of homework that I needed to do for class the next day but I needed to get out and spend a fun evening with my friends so I skipped my homework and went for an evening out to Ben Yehuda Street with a group of students. It was much needed but I ended up not sleeping that night as I wanted to watch my home high school’s girls basketball state semifinals game. My dad and sister were there in person, so I Facetimed them at three in the morning on Sunday and sat on our porch to watch so I wouldn’t wake up my roommates. I’m super happy I did that, because little did I know that the time for experiences like that was running out.

That week, we had a *tiyul* to Tzfat to learn about Jewish mysticism. I really wanted to enjoy that *tiyul* (looking back, especially since it was our last one, although I didn’t know it at the time), because my dad had told me that it was one of his favorite places that he visited when he studied abroad in Israel in high school. Although it was fun to learn and be off Tzuba, it started raining really hard right when we got to Tzfat, so we had to make a last minute adjustment and have Jewish history in cave classrooms that could be rented out. It was really cool, albeit tight, but I didn’t have the eye-opening experience that I wanted to have while in Tzfat.

Later that week, the Israeli government declared that no more than 100 people could be gathered in a space for any reason. Though for the time being our program was ok, this definitely changed the experience on the kibbutz. Instead of having meals with all of the kibbutz members in the *chadar ochel* (dining hall), we now had divided lunch times. The

staff in the chadar took out chairs so that there were fewer than 100 available to be used as seats and we had to sit far apart from each other. It was unusual, but from what my parents and friends back home were telling me, it was nowhere near as bad as things were in the US, especially since Israel had a very low number of cases of corona and its borders had already been closed for quite some time. Our field trip on Sunday to the Israel Museum was cancelled. It was disappointing but we had already been there once for another *tiyul*, so I was willing to sacrifice it. We had two or three meals while the 100-person minimum was in place, but then everything changed. Heller High students who had friends on other semester abroad programs in Israel were being sent home. Alexander Muss High School in Israel, a similarly-styled program to ours, chartered a flight so their students could be sent home the next day. Rabbi Loren had a meeting with us and explained that for the time being we were okay, as HSI’s situation varied greatly from ours; they were in Tel Aviv, a big city, whereas we were in the suburbs of Jerusalem. They were also on an open campus with Israelis and other programs, whereas we were on a kibbutz with just us and the kibbutz members. It seemed like we might have been able to carry on, especially considering how bad things were getting in the States and the risks that would need to be taken in order to send us home.

I remember when everything started to collapse. On Saturday, March 14, there were 11 girls in the back of one of our rooms, all gathered around a computer, entranced, while watching Little Women. I had never seen it before, and I was especially engrossed. No Heller High students were on their phones, until, at one point, everyone’s phone started buzzing. Our group chat with all of the students on our semester was blowing up. Israel had just released a new regulation declaring that no more than 10 people could be in a group or room together — the minimum required to create a *minyan*. All of a sudden, we literally started screaming. The 11 of us were jumping up and down, on our phones, reading the news, and calling our families, seeing if there was any new information released. At one point, someone called our *madricha*, Barr, who picked up and told us the staff were in a meeting. Then instant chaos ensued. Nothing was official yet, but we all pretty much knew that we would have to go home. We ran outside and all of the students were running around, screaming, crying, and hugging each other. Eventually, after an hour of screaming and panic among the students, DSol (David Solomon, our Director of Academics), ran out and scolded us for being so loud at 10 pm and then proceeded to tell us as much as he knew. I don’t remember exactly what he said as all I could feel was numbness, but I remember holding onto two people’s hands and wanting to cry. He told us that he wasn’t sure what was going to happen, but the likelihood is that we were going to have to leave, although they were going to spend the whole night figuring it out. It felt like a blow to everything I’ve been working towards for the past

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# Heller High Final Report

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two years. Our *madrichim* made us have early rooms that night, so we were all sent to our rooms for the remainder of the evening and left to sit in our feelings amongst our roommates. It was awful. My roommates sat on my bed and we spent the whole night talking, spilling tea, and crying and consoling each other. I told them about how I was feeling and my experience thus far, and they told me theirs. It was the nicest way to bond, albeit among the worst of circumstances. Later that night, I remembered that my NFTY region was having a Zoom havdalah service and decided to join on my computer. The havdalah service was the first way I really connected to Judaism and to NFTY and Israel as whole, so to sit on my bed with my roommates and sing and listen and cry together was such a blessing in disguise. Our *madricha*, Barr, was an advisor for my region, so when she came in for lights out, she actually ended up staying and watching and talking everything out with us until one in the morning, which made me feel a little bit better, even though it was hard to smile.

On Sunday, they told us that our classes were cancelled for the day. It felt like everything was coming to an end, though we had no confirmation of it yet. We spent the morning watching the boys play a five vs. five basketball game that they had been planning since the beginning of the semester. I kept score and was so happy the entire time; I loved watching my friends make fools out of themselves (none of them could play basketball!) and felt so in my element — basketball back home was one of the things I missed the most. It felt like a normal weekend at Tzuba, which seemed impossible given the circumstances. We had lunch in time slots by groups of 10, because we couldn't all be in the chadar at once. While that was happening, we got a message in our group chat: we would be having a meeting with the staff at 2:15 that afternoon. We all knew that they were going to tell us that we were leaving and it was heartbreaking. What was even worse is that it was confirmed before they even told us. One of my closest friends on the trip, Guy, spoke Hebrew, and overheard a conversation between the kibbutz staff about how we were leaving. They told him that we were leaving Monday night and I felt helpless. When Rabbi Loren told us outside the *zula* at 2:15, we all expected it, but it didn't hurt any less. We all started crying and hugging. It was the saddest thing I've ever experienced. We had to pack up our things that afternoon. I didn't want to move; all I wanted to do was cry, but I couldn't make any tears come. The *madrichim* worked really hard to make that last night special for us. We had our last *Zman Kvutza* with our bus group which was really emotional. I walked into the *zula* and heard the soft Israeli music playing and immediately started bawling. Finally. There were chairs set up in a circle and posters around the room with heart-wrenching questions to answer: "What did you never get to experience? What is one thing you wish you had said to someone, but didn't?" I could not stop sobbing. I was so sad, yet so fulfilled at the same time. Everyone knew how much I needed to cry, and to finally do so with everyone around me was freeing. I was surrounded by the people on my bus, the 49 people who made up one-half

of my family, and in that moment I was sad, but I was also so grateful. We ended that night with a hastily thrown together banquet/dance party where we all dressed up in whatever nice clothes weren't packed and danced everything out. Everyone was so emotional but somehow we made it a night full of good memories. After our dance party, we had 30 minutes to change into comfy clothes and our *madrichim* led us to somewhere on the kibbutz we had never been before. Past the entrance to Tzuba, past the amusement park and the chocolate factory, there was a little path right by where I would run after class most days. Our *madrichim* had lined it with candles, leading to a fire pit. We sat around and sang with a guitar until close to two in the morning.

I went to bed that night at four in the morning and woke up around five to go watch the sunrise atop Tel Tzuba, an ancient Crusader fortress about a 15 minute walk along a path from Tzuba. I woke up a few of my friends and we climbed early in the morning to the top. Though my friends were fearful, I was full of adrenaline, yet calm and peaceful. The day prior, when everything happened, two of our *madrichim* took us to Tel Tzuba as a makeshift *yam l'yam* - they told us that although we never got to do our sea-to-sea hike, we could still hike across Tzuba. They took us to Tel Tzuba and we meditated on the ancient grounds, looking out across the land of Israel. Although both times I went, I wasn't really supposed to be there (technically, climbing all the way up Tel Tzuba is not allowed), it was a little memory that I made in Israel that I treasure dearly.

We spent our last day with services, a Bat Mitzvah, saying goodbye to our Jewish history teachers, packing, and crying. I felt numb leaving Tzuba, my home for the past one and half months, and even emptier as we made our way to the airport and left the Land of Israel. After waiting through the longest line to drop off our baggage (it was a line of only Jewish American teenagers returning from yeshiva, seminary, or programs similar to ours - they had chartered a flight for us), we gathered in a group for the last time and sang Hatikvah, a tradition at Heller High banquets, although this time, we did it in the middle of Ben Gurion Airport. We said goodbye to the staff and our beloved *madrichim* who were the most incredible people, and made our way to the terminal.

Being home feels surreal. The first few days felt impossible. I didn't want to do anything, and definitely did not want to talk to my friends from home. The only people I wanted to be with were my friends from Israel. The hardest part of being home is not being able to visit them. If we were to have stayed the full semester, I would've come home, and then immediately taken a train up to New Jersey where a large number of my Heller High friends live. Quarantine simply does not allow that to happen and I don't know when, or even if, I will see my best friends again.

Thankfully, we have started Zoom classes which gives

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# Heller High Final Report

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a little structure to my day. I have all my general studies classes on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday, and then Jewish history Thursday and Friday. Because our general studies classes must be completed for next year, we don't get half as much Jewish history as we would have back in Israel. For me, that's one of the hardest parts. I was the resident Jewish history nerd on our program; it was my favorite class, and I had the greatest teacher in the world. That class provided me with the most interesting outlook on life, and it's so hard that I can't experience that again.

It's definitely hit me that I am home again. As of writing this, it's been around three and a half weeks since we left Israel. Zoom classes keep me busy, and I feel as if I'm still learning which is a good thing. Our wonderful *madrichim* planned a calendar with daily activities for us all to do together; we have virtual *Zman Kvutza* twice a week, plus Zumba on Zoom, cooking, games, and a whole host of other Zoom activities planned through May. All 92 of us are still together, even though we are not in person. Though our semester got cut short, I am so grateful for the

experiences I had, and continue to have, even though some of them may be virtual. There are no words to describe how much I miss my friends, but thanks to technology, we are all in this together. I have their backs and I know they have mine.

As for going back, it's a possibility. At this point, nobody knows if there will be a fall 2020 semester, or even a spring 2021 semester. I am 100 percent interested in going back — so are a majority of our semester's participants; the question is when — and at this point, we don't know. Personally, I connected to Judaism and Israel in a way that I'd never have imagined, but a part of it feels incomplete. Going back to the Heller High program would allow me to fill that gap and meet even more incredible people who would change my life. Regardless of whether or not I decide to return to the Heller High program, I know for a fact that I'll be back in Israel someday, be it on Birthright, a gap year, March of the Living, or if I even decide to live there or join the army, Israel will always be there to welcome me home.

## The Congregation Gratefully Acknowledges the Following Donations

### ARNOLD G. FINK LEARNING CENTER

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Celebration of</b>
Arlene & Jack Rephan and Family	Marvin Burstein's 95th Birthday
<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Memory of</b>
Arlene, Jack, Amy, & Clark Rephan	Lois Gordon
Janice & Steven Schlesinger	Robet Walitsky

### BETH EL GENERAL FUND

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Honor of</b>
Sara & Seymour Sohmer	Rabbi Spinrad
<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Memory of</b>
Judy Stark	Hannah Stark
Carolyn Miller & Henry Brooks	Eunice Miller
William Kramer	Shirley Fishbach

### CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

<b>Donor</b>	
Adam Berger & Stephen Frank	
<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Honor of</b>
Tovah Ravitz-Meehan & Michael Meehan	Cantor Kaufman

### CHAPEL IN THE WOODS

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Celebration of</b>
Annette Kilian	The marriage of Cantor Jason Kaufman and Kirk McPike

### MARC ROSS SCHOLARSHIP FUND

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Celebration of</b>
Lynne & Allan Somoroff	The Bar Mitzvah of Karen Abramson's grandson

### RABBI ISSEROW PLAYGROUND FUND

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Memory of</b>
Charlotte Strauss	Reva & Arthur Strauss

### PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND

<b>Donor</b>	<b>For the Recovery of</b>
Barbara Mintz	Harold Mintz
<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Memory of</b>
Annette Kilian	Joseph & Rebecca Love, Lillian Lindenberg, And Reva Rack
Ken Berger	Lynn Gessaman
Lucy Civitello & Howard Cohen	Theresa Civitello
Dawn Marie's Visage LLC	Lois Gordon

### RABBI'S GOOD DEED FUND

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Appreciation of</b>
Caring Community Committee	Caring Community On-Call Group
<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Celebration of</b>
Brian Goldstein	Rabbi Bailey Romano's installation
<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Memory of</b>
Rosalie & Monroe Lesser	Jack Lesser, Rachel Fried, Israel Fried, and Asher Fried
Leona & Doug Johnson	Joseph Keil
Candace Goldblatt	Seymour Goldblatt
Myra Wendel Roney	Lois Gordon
Barbara Mintz	Martin Mintz

### RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

<b>Donor</b>	<b>In Memory of</b>
Stacy, Mark, Samantha and Alexa Weiner	Charlotte Goldsmith

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# Community Resources

	Organization Name	Resource(s)	How to Access
<b>NOVA Resources</b>			
	INOVA, including INOVA Cares Clinics	Latest COVID-19 information. The INOVA Cares Clinics provide care for the uninsured, underinsured, and Medicaid patients, including assistance with applying for Medicaid and charity care. The INOVA Cares clinics also schedule patients, regardless of ability to pay, for a telephonic COVID-19 screening with a healthcare provider where clinically appropriate.	<a href="https://www.inova.org/patient-and-visitor-information/covid-19-advisory">https://www.inova.org/patient-and-visitor-information/covid-19-advisory</a>
	INOVA Urgent Care Locations	Respiratory Illness Clinics and COVID-19 testing	<a href="https://www.inova.org/locations/inova-urgent-care/respiratory-clinics">https://www.inova.org/locations/inova-urgent-care/respiratory-clinics</a>
	Fairfax County Schools	Food pick up for families in need	<a href="https://www.fcps.edu/news/coronavirus-update-food-resources">https://www.fcps.edu/news/coronavirus-update-food-resources</a>
	Fairfax County Health Dept.	Fairfax County Health Dept. coronavirus page	<a href="https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus">https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/health/novel-coronavirus</a>
	Fairfax County	Health care options for the uninsured	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/tper2tw">https://tinyurl.com/tper2tw</a>
	Financial Empowerment Center at South County (Fairfax County)	Financial counseling	<a href="https://soco.financialempowermentcenters.org/">https://soco.financialempowermentcenters.org/</a> Call 703-704-6101 or email info@fecsoco.org
	Alexandria Dept. of Health	Resources for the uninsured: identifies which providers are accepting new patients, provide COVID-19 screening, or provide COVID-19 testing.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/s52ou9s">https://tinyurl.com/s52ou9s</a>
	Senior Services of Alexandria	Senior Services' programs continuing during the COVID-19 outbreak, including Meals on Wheels, Groceries to Go, and DOT Paratransit. Includes phone numbers for each program.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/st93wg9">https://tinyurl.com/st93wg9</a>
<b>DMV Resources</b>			
	Jewish Social Services Agency	Provides professional non-sectarian mental health, home health and social services, including individual and family therapy for children, adolescents, adults and elders; ADHD clinic for adults and children; vocational services; educational and psychological testing; services for individuals with disabilities and their families; in-home support services for frail elders; hospice care for adults and children; adoption services. Web page has COVID-19-specific resources.	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/s52ou9s">https://tinyurl.com/s52ou9s</a>
	United Way of the National Capitol Area	United Way is leading the Coronavirus Response Hotline (757-858-7777) to provide non-medical assistance; connecting clients to available resources using the Unite Us care coordination platform; administering the Coronavirus Recovery Fund to raise funds to support recovery efforts.	<a href="https://unitedwaynca.org">https://unitedwaynca.org</a>
	D. C. Safe	24/7 crisis intervention for domestic abuse; includes a shelter	<a href="https://dcsafe.org">https://dcsafe.org</a>
	D. C. Central Kitchen	Takeaway meals, especially for students	<a href="https://dccentralkitchen.org">https://dccentralkitchen.org</a>
	Martha's Table	Delivers digital educational content to families, along with access to diapers, formula, wipes, and grocery gift cards. Partnering with local schools and the Capital Area Food Bank to provide students groceries	<a href="https://marthastable.org">https://marthastable.org</a>

*Community resources continued on next page*

# Community Resources

	Organization Name	Resource(s)	How to Access
<b>Virginia Resources</b>			
	Virginia Dept. of Health	Most recent COVID-19 information from the Virginia Dept. of Health	<a href="http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/">http://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/</a>
	Virginia Dept. of Social Services	Virginia DSS benefits page	<a href="https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/">https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/</a>
	Virginia Dept. of Social Services	Medical assistance programs, including Medicaid and Medicare	<a href="https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/medical_assistance/">https://www.dss.virginia.gov/benefit/medical_assistance/</a>
	Virginia Employment Commission	Information and filing for unemployment insurance benefits	<a href="http://www.vec.virginia.gov/">http://www.vec.virginia.gov/</a>

# National Resources

	Organization Name	Resource(s)	How to Access
<b>National Resources</b>			
	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	Comprehensive medical information and resources	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html</a>
	CDC	Info on keeping kids safe while at home from school	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/r48vh7x">https://tinyurl.com/r48vh7x</a>
	CDC	Managing stress and coping	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/tcjcv4">https://tinyurl.com/tcjcv4</a>
	Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration	Behavioral health resources, including a treatment locator, and the Disaster Distress Helpline, 1-800-985-5990	<a href="https://www.samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness">https://www.samhsa.gov/disaster-preparedness</a>
	National Domestic Violence Hotline	1-800-799-7233 Information on staying safe from domestic abuse during the COVID-19 outbreak	<a href="https://www.thehotline.org/">https://www.thehotline.org/</a>
	Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA)	Coronavirus Resources for Feds (federal employees)	<a href="https://feea.org/coronavirus/">https://feea.org/coronavirus/</a>
	U.S. Small Business Administration	Virginia businesses and nonprofits impacted by COVID-19 are now eligible to make online applications to the SBA for the Economic Injury Disaster Loan program (EIDL)	<a href="https://disasterloan.sba.gov">https://disasterloan.sba.gov</a>
<b>Other Resources</b>			
	Psychology Tools Limited	Living with worry and anxiety amidst global uncertainty	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/t3jx7y3">https://tinyurl.com/t3jx7y3</a>
	Consumer Reports	Coronavirus Resource Hub	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/sq228za">https://tinyurl.com/sq228za</a>



*Left: Rabbi Spinrad picks up the Torah from one week's B'nai Mitzvah to get it ready for the next week's family. Above: Quinn Coughlin, Beth El's first online Bar Mitzvah*



*Mia Escandarini receives the Torah for her Bat Mitzvah*

***Beth El is still going strong, because Beth El is more than a building: Beth El is people!***

# Jewish Resources

	Organization Name	Resource(s)	How to Access
<b>Union for Reform Judaism</b>			
	Union for Reform Judaism	Virtual Gatherings and Programs	<a href="https://reformjudaism.org/virtual-seders-gatherings-and-programs">https://reformjudaism.org/virtual-seders-gatherings-and-programs</a>
	Union for Reform Judaism	25 Jewish Things to Do Under Quarantine	<a href="https://tinyurl.com/t822l9n">https://tinyurl.com/t822l9n</a>
	Union for Reform Judaism	COVID-19: Judaism Under Quarantine	<a href="https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-life/covid-19-judaism-under-quarantine">https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-life/covid-19-judaism-under-quarantine</a>

## Learn Something New

	TED Talks on many different topics; highlight: <i>What if a single human right could change the world?</i> <a href="http://ted.com">ted.com</a>
	TED Educational Videos for all ages; highlight: <i>The Art Forger Who Tricked the Nazis</i> <a href="http://ed.ted.com">ed.ted.com</a>
	Free Management Library to upgrade your business skills; highlight: <i>Volunteer Management</i> <a href="http://managementhelp.org">managementhelp.org</a>
	Live up to your potential and live life to the fullest with these life tips; highlight: <i>8 Characteristics of Entrepreneurship That Will Lead to Success</i> <a href="http://lifehack.org">lifehack.org</a>
	Access 2500+ Online Courses from 140 Top Institutions; highlight: <i>Introduction to Animal Ethics</i> <a href="http://edx.org">edx.org</a>
	Learn a language for free; highlight: <i>834,000 people are studying Hebrew</i> <a href="http://duolingo.com">duolingo.com</a>
	Find what fascinates you at SkillShare; highlight: <i>Learn PhotoShop</i> <a href="http://skillshare.com">skillshare.com</a>
	Learn to play the guitar at Justin Guitar; highlight: <i>1,000 free lessons</i> <a href="http://justinguitar.com">justinguitar.com</a>
	Learn about investing with Investopedia; highlight: <i>Compete risk-free with \$100,000 in virtual cash</i> <a href="http://investopedia.com">investopedia.com</a>

## Have Some Fun

	Yome has hundreds of free yoga videos for people who already know the basic poses; highlight: <i>Gentle Yoga for Hips and Back</i> <a href="http://yogameditationhome.com">yogameditationhome.com</a>
	Tour Space Center Houston; highlight: <i>astronaut selfie filters</i> <a href="http://spacecenter.org/app/">spacecenter.org/app/</a>
	Watch Broadway performances with a free trial; highlight: <i>Sir Patrick Stewart in Macbeth</i> <a href="http://broadwayhd.com">broadwayhd.com</a>
	Every Sunday beginning at 11 a.m., Rockefeller Center offers live performances on its social media channels, and lots of other classes and events too. <a href="https://www.rockefellercenter.com/whats-happening/upcoming/">https://www.rockefellercenter.com/whats-happening/upcoming/</a>
	Learn magic tricks, apparently including levitation! <a href="http://goodtricks.net">goodtricks.net</a>
	Spend hours ranking the things that you love; highlight: <i>The Funniest People of All Time</i> <a href="http://Ranker.com">Ranker.com</a>
	Read funny Amazon product reviews. Google “funny Amazon product reviews.” <a href="http://Google.com">Google.com</a>
	Use free service Family search to learn about your genealogy. <a href="http://familysearch.org/en/">familysearch.org/en/</a>
	Play some new games. Highlight: challenge the Bulletin editor to Words with Friends! <a href="http://pogo.com">pogo.com</a> <a href="http://king.com">king.com</a>

# Navigating the Virtual Beth El

## Facebook Live

You do NOT need a Facebook account to attend these sessions. If you get to a screen where Facebook insists you log in or create an account, you went awry somewhere. Only the host needs an account.

You get to Beth El Facebook Live events by going to the Beth El Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BethElHebrew/>

and clicking on  to the left of the page.

You **cannot** dial in on a telephone. You must listen to the meeting on your device. Make sure the sound on your device is on, and that it's loud enough. If you see a

symbol like this , it means the sound is turned off in the software/Facebook. Click the symbol to turn it on.

Nobody can see you. It doesn't matter if you have a camera or not. Facebook pushes the stream out to you, it does not pull anything from your computer. Your personal data is not at risk.

Sometimes, such as during Shabbat services, you can see who else has joined in and communicate with them through a chat window. How this works varies depending on your computer set-up, but on mine it only works

if I go into full screen mode by clicking on  at the bottom right of the video window. If the chat symbol is

blocked like this , I cannot see who is on with me and I cannot post messages. If the chat symbol is open

like this , I can click on it and type in short messages that any host or participant can see.

Because so many people are using Facebook Live these days, and because services often have multiple hosts and lots of viewers, sometimes Facebook will get hung up/stuck. Just close either Facebook or your browser and come back in to rejoin the session.

These are sessions where only the host(s) may speak and be heard. They are not open, participative fora. Therefore, there is no risk of external disruption by people shouting or showing inappropriate images.

## Zoom

You do NOT need a Zoom account to attend these sessions. If you get to a screen where Zoom insists you log in or create an account, you went awry somewhere. Only the host needs an account.

You get to Zoom events by a link Beth El must provide you. Every Zoom event has a unique link. Some Zoom events have a password. The host must provide the password to you for each session, either by embedding it in the link, as with the Wednesday Beth El noon chat sessions, or by providing it on request, as with Torah Study.

Some events allow telephone dial-in as an option rather than computer sound. This was true, for example, for the Adult Ed offering Israel's Milestones and Meanings.

The host has to provide you with the dial-in information; it will change from meeting to meeting just like the link will. For most events, however, you must listen to the meeting on your device. Make sure the sound on your device is on, and that it's loud enough. If you see a sym-

bol like this , it means the sound is turned off in the software. Click the symbol to turn it on.

Unless the host changes this, most Zoom meetings show all the participants (who have cameras) on the screen for everybody to see. Usually the person talking is center-screen and large and everybody else is teeny and around the edges. The host can mute everybody, however, and then the host stays center-screen. You can still join any Zoom session without a camera and people will not see you. (The Bulletin editor often unplugs her camera, which is not built in to her PC, if she is not ready for public consumption.) Even though your image is going out to the Zoom event, your personal data is not at risk.

Because so many people are using Zoom these days, and because services often have multiple hosts and lots of viewers, sometimes Zoom will get hung up/stuck. Just close either Zoom or your browser and come back in to rejoin the session.

When the host sets up the session to be an open, participative forum, there is risk of external disruption by people shouting or saying inappropriate/offensive things or replacing the image from their camera with inappropriate images. This is now known as zoom-bombing. Zoom is working on tools to help us prevent this.

*Really bored? Love word games? The Bulletin editor will play Words with Friends, Ruzzle, Scrabble, or Scrabble Go with anyone who challenges her! She cannot challenge anyone to Words with Friends, however, as it keeps telling her she has too many games going already! If you have other word games online that you like, challenge her! Maybe our new normal (hopefully soon) will include playing Scrabble IRL!*

## Beth El/Pozez JCC

**L**IKE SO MANY other organizations, Pozez JCC has moved all events to the virtual world. Find these events by going to:

[www.theJ.org](http://www.theJ.org)

and clicking Virtual J in the top menu bar. Then click the + next to Adults in the middle of the page.



Stay safe, stay healthy, call or email the office or lay leaders if Beth El can assist you in any way.

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## POZEZ JCC-BETH EL ECLC Registration is open for the 2020-2021 School Year

Our Early Childhood Learning Center offers a 12-month program with part-time and full-time options for children who will be two, three, or four years old by September 30. Our full-time toddler program accepts students from 16 to 23 months old.

The 2020-2021 school year starts in August 2020.

The ECLC, offering a Reggio Emilia-inspired educational philosophy, is licensed by the State of Virginia and is open to all members of the community.

For more information or to set up a tour, please contact Director Dina Backer at 703-537-3084 or [dina.backer@theJ.org](mailto:dina.backer@theJ.org).



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May 2020  
Volume 75 – No. 8  
School: 703-370-6644

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Bulletin Editor

# Hold the Date

Pozez JCC: ECLC Annual Exhibition,  
May 18 – June 12

Pozez JCC: AARP Smart Driver Course, June 2 and 3

Ross Scholarship Award, June 5

Edlavitch JCC: *Compulsion or the House Behind*,  
June 5-28

Last Day of Religious School, June 7

Pozez JCC: Israel Fest @ the J, June 7

Permanent Endowment Fund Annual Meeting, June 14

Edlavitch JCC: *Getting Started in Jewish Genealogy*,  
June 11

First Day of Religious School, Aug 30



Erev Rosh Hashanah, Sept. 12

Pozez JCC: Simcha Showcase, Sept. 13

Federation Main Event, Postponed to Oct. 27

NFTY MAR MAJYK at Beth El, Dec. 18 – 20

Cantor's Concert, Jan. 30, 2021

URJ Biennial in DC, Dec. 8 – 11, 2021

Please check the online Beth El calendar or email [office@bethelhebrew.org](mailto:office@bethelhebrew.org) before leaving to attend ANY event. As we go to press, there are NO in-person events in May!