

Summer 2022/5782

KOLEINU



WE RISE!



Inside

Reflections from Rav Claudia

A Dialogue of Devotion

Breaths of Mo(u)rning with Boker Tov

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

by Carol Kamin

president@tbzbrookline.org

Why did I say “yes” when Rav Claudia urged me to accept the position of president of the TBZ Board of Directors?

First of all, have you ever tried to say no to Rav Claudia? Secondly, I thought I had the skill set for the job. Lastly, and most importantly, I wanted to help TBZ thrive so that more people could have my experience of finding joy, Jewish community, and belongingness.

This is my first “message to the community” as president and I struggled with what to write. A few years ago, I had the honor of giving the Kol Nidre appeal. At that time I said that whenever I struggle with what to say on a personal level, I go back to the advice of my seventh grade teacher – Miss Laughlin.

Miss Laughlin taught that the best antidote to a blank piece of paper is to dig deep into your person – into an experience, a moment, a place, a time, that has meaning, and then try to connect that feeling with whatever you’re trying to say. So here goes.

I grew up in Dorchester with my extended family all living within walking distance. Everyone was Jewish, with many immigrants from “the old country” – including my parents. This shtetl life was not paradise – particularly for the adults who had to overcome enormous hardships just to put food

on the table. But for me, as a little girl, the shtetl life brought feelings of safety, incredible love, total acceptance – a feeling of belonging to a Jewish community.

Then, in the early 1970s, I moved to Phoenix where my husband Alan and I worked and raised our two sons. I yearned for that feeling I had as a child. We joined a synagogue and were pretty active in the Jewish Community. But, for me, something was missing.

I found what was missing when we moved to Brookline almost 15 years ago. At TBZ, I found a Jewish community that prays joyfully, wrestles with tradition, pursues justice, and carries out deeds of loving kindness.

And now I have the honor of being president of the Board. Many people – particularly non TBZ friends – were astounded. “What? You’re going to take on shul politics? You’ll be meeting every night until midnight!”

I’m still waiting for the “politics.” And though we’ve had a few late meetings, nothing that has caused consternation. Our TBZ Board is absolutely terrific. We have a generational mix of TBZ members on the Board who are committed to the well-being of TBZ and who serve with passion and wisdom. And working with Rav Claudia, Rav Tiferet and all of the professional team has been fun and inspiring.

Continued...

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Finance & Administration/Treasurer: David Neiman

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Cover Photo Credit: Tom Kates Photography

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...from page 2

I thank the TBZ community for giving me the chance to belong to a very special Jewish community – you have done me an enormous personal service. As a young student so many years ago, I never quite understood why Abraham Maslow, in his theory of human needs,

trumpeted the need to belong to a community with shared values. I understand now. And one of my goals, with the help of Rav Claudia and TBZ's leadership team, is to work to ensure that we at TBZ satisfy the need for belongingness for each and every one of us.

We Rose Up!

by Sara Smolover

Yasher Koach to our generous TBZ Community! We All Rose Up at our May 22nd Spring Fundraiser, inspired by Batya Levine and friends' heartfelt harmonies and soul-touching tunes, including the uplifting encore of We Rise!

Thank you to all of our members who came in person or on Zoom to celebrate together and who so generously contributed to help us exceed our fundraising goal. If you couldn't make it, the youtube recording is there for you to watch and sing along!

This year, the Development Committee had an easy task deciding who to honor - it was clear that we needed to give the congregation the opportunity to show appreciation to the healers in our community. Larry Kraus, the chair of our Reentry Committee, introduced the three physicians who have advised us and shepherded us through these years of Covid, always keeping their focus on safety and sustaining the community: Drs Katherine Gergen Barnett, Asaf Bitton, and Rebecca Weintraub. They were consistently responsive, professional, and calm in the face of uncertainty and have been incredible partners for Larry and our Rabbinic and professional staff.

We also celebrated the multitude of healers, front-line, and essential workers who have worked these past two years to support and care for so many in our area. We are truly blessed to have all of you call TBZ your spiritual home, and we are truly blessed that we are ending our fiscal year in such great financial shape!



STAFFING CHANGES

Stephanie Dyer, Office & Membership Manager



Stephanie grew up in Sharon, MA, then pursued her B.S. in Business Administration with a Marketing Concentration at UNH-Durham. She has visited 10 countries, 7 by herself with just a backpack and her passport. Stephanie has worked in many industries, including collateralized loans, public relations, co-branded credit cards, senior living communities, and event planning. She brings to TBZ her knack for organization, project management and customer service finesse. When not at TBZ, Stephanie is CEO of her family. In her spare time, Stephanie enjoys the outdoors (walking/biking/hiking); time on Cape Cod; reading/puzzles/board games; and spending time with family and friends.

Josh Greenberg, Rabbinic Intern



While a familiar face to our younger members, Josh is moving on up into the role of Rabbinic Intern working with Beit Rabban, Wonder Minyan, B-Mitzvah preparation as well as teaching adult learning classes, launching programming for 20's and 30's and other rabbinic and educational functions.

Josh is in his last year of rabbinical school at Hebrew College. For the last two years, he has worked with Rabbi Or Rose and the Miller Center for Interreligious Learning and Leadership based out of Hebrew College. Through this position, Josh engaged with several locally based, interfaith initiatives. Josh is looking forward to learning with those in our own community while an intern and also hopes to learn with some of our spiritual neighbors in the Boston area. Josh is married to Tatiana.

Sarah Rovin, Rabbinic Intern



Sarah, a second year Rabbinical student at Hebrew College, will be joining us as a rabbinic intern focusing on pulpit and leading services. She will be part of our davening (service leaders) team, leading Boker Tov and other services during the year. Her responsibilities will include teaching at Beit Rabban, being part of our Wonder Miniyan team and teaching adult education.

Prior to beginning Rabbinical School, Sarah worked as a JOFEE (Jewish Outdoor Food Farming and Environmental Education) Educator at Pearlstone (a Jewish retreat center) for three and a half years. She also has professional experience as a case manager, community educator, and has been involved in community organizing around climate justice. In her free time Sarah enjoys singing in community with her friends and spending quality time with her bunny Rabbit Akiva. Sarah is excited to be joining and getting to know the TBZ community.

Farewell and a Heartfelt Todah Rabah to Susan Diller

**Our Executive Director since 2019, Susan is leaving TBZ at the end of June.
We thank Susan for helping shepherd us through these last three years
and wish her well in her new endeavors.**



TBZ HIRES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the TBZ Board of Directors I'm delighted to announce the hiring of Benjamin Maron to be TBZ's next Executive Director.

Benjamin hales from Canada and has an MA degree in Jewish Studies from Concordia University in Montreal. He lives in Milton with his partner, Stephanie, and two young daughters. Benjamin is very excited to become a part of our community, along with his family.

As Executive Director of Temple Israel in Sharon for four years, Director of Educational Resources for Interfaith Families in Newton, and Project Manager for BAM Consulting in Boston, Benjamin brings to us the kinds of skills and expertise we need.

Thanks so much to Renee Rudnick and Sara Smolover for chairing the Search Committee and to the members of the committee who served with patience and commitment: Sue Kahn, Steve Lewis, Idit Klein, Len Fishman, and Samuel Engel.



We are excited to welcome Benjamin to our community. I encourage members to stop by the office with your own welcome.

Carol Kamin

Women's Retreat: Radical Rest and Self Care

by Rav Tiferet



***"I loved that we were able to come together after SO long.
I hadn't quite realized how much I'd missed being together."***

***"The connections between and built up from one session to the next –
different mediums for the same goal – it was powerful."***

These are some of the reflections offered from the 10th Annual Women's Retreat. We were thrilled to be able to offer this gathering fully multi-access and to create a space for people who experience the world as women to gather, share, learn and grow. The theme this year was Radical Rest and Self Care as a part of our Shmita (year of release) observance. We were blessed to welcome Kohennet Keshira haLev Fife as our Keynote Speaker who taught us about bringing the practices of Shmita into our own lives.

During the day, women experienced davening (prayer) and song with Rav Claudia, yoga, free journaling, and a guided meditation. Those who came for the evening program enjoyed a one-woman performance of *Conflict Zone* by local artist Leahy Ish Shalom, which we hope to bring back to TBZ for a wider teen and adult audience. As a part of the retreat, we took time to ponder the meaning of a retreat for women only in an increasingly nonbinary/genderfluid world. We look forward to continuing this conversation during the year and considering how we as a community value both gendered and nongendered spaces.

COMMUNITY

"My family and I had a wonderful time at our very first TBZ retreat! Being part of a warm intergenerational community where my 7-year-old could roam freely with his friends, sing, dance, laugh, and engage with nature was such a gift. I loved meeting families who are new to TBZ and loved reconnecting with friends I had not seen in a long time. The joy, care, and sweetness of the TBZ community shined through the entire weekend." - Jordan Namerow



"The TBZ retreat is one of my favorite things with opportunities to spend time in community with members of all ages from 3 to close to 80 years old, sharing time, food, games, fun, time in quiet and sometimes noisy contemplation." - Cindy-jo Gross

"I laughed, I cried, I prayed, I ate, I slept, I studied, and I played. While many of the experiences were familiar, we also had some unexpected surprises. With Nina and four kids under 4 feet tall we braved the marsh and deep puddles to view an osprey nest. I visited the beach with teens, met Hillel and Shamaï (no really, I did!) was treated to Paris fashions and magic tricks performed at the talent show." - Cindy-jo Gross



RETREAT

2022



"I am a newbie at TBZ, having joined this year. I signed up for the retreat so I could learn more about the members and the congregation as a whole. A highlight for me was the "no talent show" which was incredibly funny and entertaining. Another was all the singing around meals. I learned with Reb Ebn, who has a wonderful way of answering questions, of which there were many. Being in the presence of Rav Claudia, Rav Tiferet, Noah Weinberg and others lifted my soul. The perfect ending was Havdalah outdoors. I got exactly what I wanted out of this retreat and will definitely go again." - Shula Reinharz

Perspectives from a New TBZ family

"In the morning we walked to breakfast. The air was fresh and the bird sightings abundant. We gazed through our binoculars, transported. As the day unfolded we began to find our way. Conversations at meals deepened, spontaneous niggunim beckoned, and my kids grew in their confidence. In rapid fire we went from hiding to taking our place in the traditional talent show. By the time we reached Havdalah, we felt as though we had never not known these faces and the warmth of the collective voice. We drove back to Boston on Sunday wishing the weekend could last longer. My kids, exhausted but giddy, found comfort in envisioning next year's retreat. I squeezed my husband's hand; grateful for community, hopeful for the future." - Naomi Azar



Why do we meditate? Four perspectives:

1 SHEILA KATZ

A few weeks ago we got to see the first photo of a black hole into which our entire galaxy will eventually disappear. That ominous glowing black hole is a glimpse of a larger reality: that when we turn our simple, non-judgmental curious attention to this fleeting moment, of being alive, in a single breath, in a fragile temporary body, there is a wordless palpable experience of the vastness of Being and depth of interconnection with All That Is. To gently turn again and again to this inscrutable awesome moment of being alive in which we experience self and world through sense doors, and watch with kindness our reactivity. And the more I sit with difficult things that arise into Awareness, the more space I have after meditating to respond with some fresh insight and compassionate action for the challenges of this life, world, and universe.

2 REB MOSHE

Meditative practice is sitting silently returning always to the breath. As our minds stream stories, as our thoughts pass by, we return to our breath. I derive a great sense of relief by staying in the moment. In the moment I am free of regret about the past and anxiety for the future, a future we can hardly know. It is challenging to stay in moment as we move along the everyday activities of our lives. Staying in the present moment during all our daily activities is a simple idea, but it is difficult. Right here and now is all that there is. When we lift ourselves out of silence, we hope to keep glimmers of mindfulness that translate our appreciation for the verities of our existence on this earth plane. We look at trees and flowers with expanded consciousness. We look into the faces of other human beings with greater attention. We meet the world anew as God renews the world constantly every day.

3 BOBBI ISBERG

A number of years ago, I was listening to a recording of the quiet, gentle voice of Thich Nhat Hanh, teaching on the basic truths about human existence. "Imagine holding in your arms a loved one who is dying," he said, giving time for the listener to become aware of feelings that would arise. His calm, loving voice made it possible to stay present with these thoughts that seemed intolerable. Over the years, meditation practice has shown us how a calm, spacious quality of awareness, shared by others, and co-created with others, can make the unbearable more bearable. All spiritual traditions offer teachings to contain the unbearable, through connection to community as well as connection to a generative, unifying force that is imagined and described differently in different religions. Once I had heard these stark but gentle Buddhist teachings on impermanence, I began to discover teachings about impermanence in everyday Jewish practice and weekly Torah readings. I realized that the practice of enacting our own death, on Yom Kippur, was an embodied teaching on impermanence. The great gift of practicing meditation here at TBZ has been the growth of a community that creates, breath by breath, a shared spaciousness in which we can embrace the challenges of living life in this human form.

4 REGGIE SILBERBERG

The cultivation of awareness through our meditation practice enables us to be more in touch with the present moment, with our inner life and our bodies, with our environment whether indoors or in nature. When we live in moments of awareness, everything becomes sacred as well as enhanced through our senses. Meditation practice shatters our armor and breaks open our hearts as we embrace with loving kindness all that arises in this unique moment in time, be it negative or positive. As our hearts expand we are empowered to love others and ourselves more deeply without judgement, with more compassion and gratitude. The mere act of expressing gratitude improves our quality of life, well-being, and resilience.

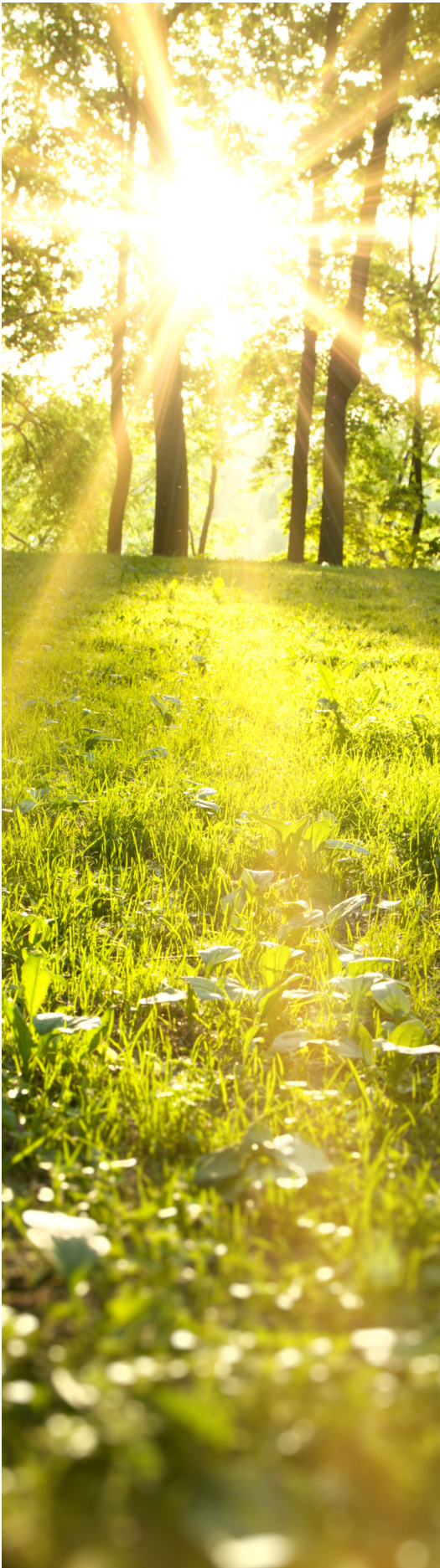
Meditation teaches us not only about impermanence but also about our profound interconnectedness to each other and the earth. Thich Nhat Hanh writes, “To be’ is to inter-be. You cannot just be by yourself alone. You have to inter-be with every other living thing.” We live in a sea of humanity. Our connections to each other and the earth are holy. I am humbled by this awesome sacred journey called life and grateful to my Friday AM meditation group with whom I share this practice.

PESACH GATHERING

by Leah Abrahams

Passover and Seders have been important to me since childhood. The last few years were frustrating because inviting guests or going in person to friends and relatives was not an option. Zoom was manageable, but not perfect. Therefore, I want to share with the TBZ community the magic of being invited to a TBZ-member family this year—arranged by the wonderful Rachel Goodman for all who sought to share the holiday with others. Along with two other TBZ members, I was invited to join a family with four generations present at the Seder table! What a *mechayah* (life-saver)! From the 9 month old baby to his 4 year old brother to their parents, grandparents, and a great-grandmother, not to mention aunts, etc., we were welcomed with warmth and familiar ritual. Thank you, TBZ for sponsoring this program, and Rachel for carrying it out. Thank you to our hosts who helped us to feel part of their family for the night. I hope it won't be long before I can reciprocate.





Reflections

by Rav Claudia

As I write this, it is the end of May and I feel the heaviness of the past school year, of these past 10 months since Rosh Hashanah and the joy of a new year. We have endured ongoing waves of Covid throughout another not-normal year, leaving us questioning if things will get better any time soon. We are witness to a 21st century European war in Ukraine that is destroying cities, homes and people. We are confronted with laws and law-makers that openly discriminate against women and people of color. And now, as the school year closes, we face two more mass shootings in Buffalo and Uvalde, and our hearts break for our country that can not seem to find a way to put life before power.

I feel the weight of these injustices, and I remind myself to take a deep breath. I know to count my blessings. I know that my daily practice of gratitude, recognizing that which is good in my life is what keeps me going and inspires me to do my part in bringing some good and healing to this world.

When I officiate a wedding, before the breaking of the glass, I often say that the act of smashing a glass reminds us of the brokenness of the world – that even in the happiest of moments we should be mindful of this imperfect world, so that we can gather our strength and our will to bring change and make this world a better place.

I wish there was some sort of opposite ritual, similar to the breaking of a glass, for when hopelessness overtakes us. Something that, in a snap, reminds us that not all is broken.

And I know that actually there is. It is the practice of daily gratitude, the practice of saying blessings, and the beauty of belonging to a community that is intentional and that helps us frame our lives with intention and meaning. I know that TBZ is this reminder for me. I hope that you, too, feel this community is a place of support – a place that has walked beside you through the ups and downs of this past year, and that it has been a place that inspires you to live intentionally and do good in the world.

This Jewish practice of remembering brokenness at a time of pure joy is an incredibly bold ritual, as bold as choosing to remember the beauty, the joy and the blessings in a time of darkness and struggle. It is bold to allow ourselves to recognize that even in the moments where it feels hopeless there is hope, when we are exhausted, and not sure we can get out of the darkness, we can find blessing, joy and inspiration.

TBZ has had a good year. A year of growth – we grew our membership and programming, even during the pandemic. As a community we have supported each other through these challenging times. We have been there for each other in our joys and in our struggles. We have connected and celebrated. We have responded to the needs that have arisen with thoughtfulness and intentionality. We have continued to be a vibrant place, committed to building a just world, a better world for all.

Over the past two years a group of TBZ leaders have engaged in the process of strategic planning: looking at where we are and where we want to go; honoring what TBZ is and what TBZ can be.

You will be hearing more in the months to come about the steps we will take to achieve our strategic goals, but in the meantime I want to share this vision with you and, with excitement, imagine together what TBZ can be for us in the many years to come.

Our community aspires to be:

Bold in our philanthropy and financial sustainability

Visionary in our cultivation and support for professional and lay leadership

Innovative in our pathways to youth leadership and Jewish education

Grounded in tradition and radical in our prayer and practice

Creative in our experience and expression of spirituality and joy

Groundbreaking in fostering a diverse community

Boundary pushing in our social justice, activism and service

I am excited about the path ahead, where we strengthen our community and fulfill its potential so we can continue being the place where our Jewish values are embodied. If I have learned one thing during the two and a half years of this pandemic it's that community matters. Being part of an intentional, meaningful, and vibrant community is what has sustained me and many of us. I am so grateful for TBZ, for its leadership and members, for people of all ages that see in TBZ their spiritual home. I am so grateful to each and everyone of us for being part of the hope and the light and the trust that there is good in the world, that even when there is so much brokenness there is hope, there is possibility, there is healing, there is joy. You, and TBZ, are the opposite of the broken glass: you are the reminder in times of darkness, that there is light.

My wishes are for a summer that can bring us some quiet, some blessings. Some walks in nature, and conversations with friends, some singing in community and some new friendships.

I am looking forward to having time off this summer and as well, to taking time to plan the year ahead. A year where we welcome new professional leadership and new rabbinic interns to our team, while looking ahead to ongoing growth, programming and commitment to acting and living Jewishly.

With blessings for a joyful summer,



Rav Claudia

Breaths of Mo(u)rning with Boker Tov

by Deborah Kalin

On May 18, 2020, when Rav Claudia saw my *kriah* (torn) ribbon and pulled me through the Boker Tov virtual portal, to say through clenched breath my husband's name "Mordechi Moshe ben Fanny v' David", I was an experienced Kaddish reciter. By then, Rav Claudia, two months into Covid-19 pastoral care, thoughtfully and wearily walked her practice. And on that particular May day, as this world lost over 3580 lives, some US governors urged "Reopen!"

Who knew then that for the next two and a half years my family's loss would be amplified and intersecting with so much asked of all?

While our family's loss began a decade earlier with Parkinson's advance, the pandemic's betrayals drained our souls. From March 12th goodbyes, we waited breathless. Covid barricaded us from our beloved's Hebrew Senior Life long-term-care community and his promised 'good ending'. Dear staff kept our vigil. Still, his was the fourth death on May 7th. We waited separately but together for burial and a Zoom shiva. Thereafter, the only promise I could keep was Kaddish; that needed connection.

With TBZ's courage, to observe Pikuach Nefesh, among two weeks of early virtual programming, leadership initiated Boker Tov on March 16th, 2020, as a weekday morning "opportunity to check in with Rav Claudia and each other, niggun, tefillot, Kaddish (if minyan of 10)". Not until June 25 would TBZ have a week without a shiva, and Rav Claudia a family respite.

Seven weeks into daily Boker Tov, welcoming and intentional connections budded but I struggled with the orphan's Kaddish. The familiar text now marginalized my complicated grief. The print scattered about. Where is our beloved and where am I? My soul sought the words beneath the words, but I could barely breathe a sound. Something shifted as Boker Tov became on June 30th,

2020 community-led three days a week. Under gifted leadership, the group both coalesced and widened as seekers of meaning. There was cause for prayer, global and immediate: John Lewis' death; a second Covid wave threat; the election; and two Boker Tov regulars faced critical surgeries. By year's end, generosity reciprocated a strong whole; more prayer leaders, new voices, new varieties of spiritual expression, a team of Zoom gabbaim, gratitudes and the schmooze-time investment in each other.

Together with our clergy, this collective enrichment reframed my Kaddish. Gradually, the practice of these public, repetitive, performative utterances released a life-force breath of connection. Both within to a fragmented self and without to the whole of Beyond. Affirming, in Reb Zalam's words, "sacred trust". Where grief is no longer possessive. When the mourner's brief privilege is to carry the world's tears and where in the responsa, community breathe through burdens.

At the First Anniversary of the Community-Led Boker Tov, many mourners cited Boker Tov, clergy and community-led, as the blessed landing after shiva.

Without TBZ and Boker Tov, it is very possible that I and my family, would be among the estimated 9 million bearing Covid's 'disenfranchised' grief. Mourners who never got to practice rituals.

Iyar 13, 5782, I marked *yahrzeit* #2 as the US marked one million Covid deaths. KN95 masked, I stepped forward in the TBZ tradition for a third *aliyah*, "for those commemorating the anniversary of death." Rav Claudia offered a blessing and in doing so, honored our family's particular pain

A recognition that filled a heart-sourced breath, within and without a wealth of reconnections.

A SAFER TBZ FOR ALL

by Sarah Fendrick

Two years ago, TBZ received a \$100,000 grant from the US Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The grant's purpose was to make TBZ into a "hard target" by installing extra security such as videos at our entrance ways, better window, doors, and lighting, and updated fob key systems. (TBZ security was further enhanced with an additional \$5,000 grant from CJP for an updated fob key system.)

The first round of upgraded security work was completed recently but more work is necessary to bring TBZ to the

highest level of security that we can while still maintaining our welcoming atmosphere. In April, Susan Diller took on the heroic task of applying to the Massachusetts Office of Grants and Research (OGR) within the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) which manages the grant process and awards funds through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) run by FEMA. This grant, if awarded, will reimburse TBZ for the security work we do in this next, and final phase, of the security updates for our shul.

For this next round, TBZ requested funding to do the following security upgrades:

- Install security window film on all accessible ground floor windows
- Lighting upgrades on exterior of building using motion activated lights,
- Install glass break detectors as part of existing intrusion alarm system for complete ground floor coverage
- Install necessary speakers, amplifiers, and other audio components to tie into existing phone system, creating a public address system.
- Additional exterior doors on side of building
- Install electronic access control at exterior and interior doors
- Install (1) defibrillator and provide training on usage

Congress authorized DHS/FEMA to implement this grant program after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The grant's general purpose is to "support DHS/FEMA's focus on enhancing the ability of state, local, tribal, and territorial governments, as well as nonprofits, to prevent, protect against, prepare for, and respond to terrorist attacks."

More specifically, the objective of the grant is to provide funding for "physical and cyber security enhancements

and other security-related activities to nonprofit organizations" and "to integrate the preparedness activities of nonprofit organizations with broader state and local preparedness efforts."

We expect to know whether we are approved for this grant in the fall and will update the community.

Celebrating the New Bimah Cover and the Chai (18th) Anniversary of our Faith Quilts

by Susan Schnur



On Wednesday night, June 1, a substantial gathering of TBZ members – live and on Zoom – gathered to unveil the new bimah coverlet that a group of stitchers, led by the indomitable Bev Sky, have been busy sewing and embroidering for the last six months. The “bimers,” as Bev called the “workers” were Meryl Finkel, Lauren Garlick, Beth Harris, Naomi Ribner, and Susan Schnur.

Called the “B’reishit Bimah,” the project features sumptuous fabrics sewn with the Hebrew alphabet and bracketed by two huge letters that are the first and last letters of the Torah. The B’reishit Bimah complements the Faith Quilts, which have been hanging in our sanctuary for 18 years. Bev called up “testifiers” – Gary Cohen, Judith Klau representing Meredith Joy, Kim Meyers, Linda Rosen and Enid Shulman – who

spoke about the gargantuan job of creating the Faith Quilts (Rebecca Zagorsky, who was 8 years old when she worked on the project, zoomed in from New York City), and she also memorialized those workers – TBZ members – who are no longer living. It was moving to hear the project’s emeriti speak about how meaningful their participation had been, enhancing their connections to both Judaism and the shul community.

Bev then mc’d, with humor and humility, a showing of the film, *The Art of the Spirit: Stitching Together, A Community*, that documented the making of the Faith Quilts 18 years ago. Who knew the actual scope of this gargantuan project?! We got to see familiar faces (looking younger!) and to be awed by the mountains of fabrics and humming sewing machines and standing-on-tables required to “get at” stitching this behemoth. The film also showed footage of a larger “faith quilt” exhibition at the Cyclorama in which our TBZ quilts dwarfed all the other entries: in size, in intricacy, and in thematic complexity.

The original film, *The Art of the Spirit: Stitching Together, A Community* can be viewed on our YouTube channel, <https://youtu.be/7DCU7EgmrZo>. It is sure to enhance and deepen your appreciation of our sanctuary’s physical and spiritual space.



REFLECTIONS on *A Dialogue of Devotion*

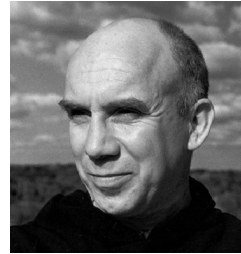
By Sarah Fendrick

40 years ago when I was a college student in New York City, I had a date with a guy who was a philosophy and religion major who spoke with passion, reverence, and awe about the writings of a monk named Thomas Merton. “Read him” he said, “and his ideas will change your life!” Although I had no idea who Thomas Merton was, I was intrigued, so I listened and asked a few polite questions. But I didn’t get him (or the date) at all.

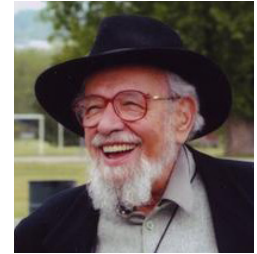
Several years later, I joined B’nai Jeshurun synagogue in New York City. BJ was led by a charismatic rabbi, Marshall Meyer, who spoke frequently with passion, reverence, and awe about one of his spiritual mentors, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi. These teachings called my spirit to action, and I embraced this form of Judaism that we call “renewal”.

Now I am grateful to be a member of TBZ and to be able, on any given day, to bathe myself in the spiritual language and practices of the Judaism that I love with all my heart. Recently I was persuaded by my friend Beth Harris to take a Me’ah course with Rabbi Or Rose of Hebrew College, called, “A Dialogue of Devotion: Thomas Merton and Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi.” The course is a deep dive into the writings of both Thomas Merton and Reb Zalman with a focus on the interchange of ideas between these two profoundly influential thinkers. I was excited to sign up, so I could revisit some of the ideas of my formative years in New York and find inspiration in the teachings for life in these stressful, and sometimes despondent, days.

Although quite different, the trajectory of lives of Thomas Merton and Reb Zalman intersected briefly through letters to each other. Merton became a monk (after graduating from Columbia University in 1937) and he wrote his first letter to Reb Zalman in 1960. In it, he refers to Rabbi Nachman of Breslav’s idea of hope as a kind of “pious optimism” that “everything



Thomas Merton



Rabbi Zalman
Schachter-Shalomi

will be alright”, although Merton’s initial response is that this is not a possibility since human beings are (in the Christian lexicon) sinful. I connected with his response because often the reality of human behavior erodes my ability to live with hope. I worry deeply about the world and the seemingly insurmountable problems that we have created for our children. Is there a place for “pious optimism” in our world?

“And so the question for me has shifted to how can we harness the power of prayer to make the world a better place?”

By week two of our course we discovered that as he lived a monastic life while exploring other religious traditions through conversation and letters, Merton became more hopeful. He embraced the idea that prayer is part of social change, that it can be a source of energy and power and collective change. Both he and Reb Zalman write about how prayer connects us with the essence of other human beings, and in connecting, we can enter a space of creating positive change in the world. To each of these thinkers, prayer is deeply rooted in our experience of humanity. I love this idea that prayer has a spiritual vitality that we can

Continued on page 16...

use to energize us to make positive good in the world. (In college I was ignited by the writings of Abraham Joshua Heschel who advocated for “praying with our feet”.) And so the question for me has shifted to how can we harness the power of prayer to make the world a better place?

I used to think the goal of prayer was to connect with God. This goal was problematic for me; I was never sure what God was, whether God really “was” at all and

how to connect with God. For me, the act of praying often felt like a struggle between my rational mind and my spiritual yearnings and for many years I grappled with how to pray, when to pray, and what I was praying to. I still often struggle in times of prayer and feel fortunate that the words of thinkers like Thomas Merton and Reb Zalman steady and soothe me and impart meaning in my moments of confusion. I may never become a “pious optimist” but I am enjoying learning about what it means to truly pray.

Celebrating Purim!



THANK YOU!

- To Bobbi Isberg, Kathy Kates, Jordan Namerow for leading sessions at the Women's Retreat.
- To Jean Weinberg, Rebecca Blouwoff, Sharon Morgenbesser, Naomi Azar, Sharon Kivenko and Emma Zbarsky for organizing our Beit Rabban Shabbat Dinner.
- To Rachel Goodman for organizing the seder matching and to all the hosts for opening their homes.
- To "the Bimers" Beverly Sky, Meryl Finkel, Lauren Garlick, Beth Harris, Naomi Ribner and Susan Schnur for their beautiful and creative addition to our sanctuary.
- To Rabbi Natan Margalit, Steve Hassan and Leah Hagar Cohen for enlightening us with their Kiddush talks.
- To Dr. Judith Rosenbaum CEO of JWA for speaking at TBZ in honor of the 100 years of the first Bat Mitzvah in the US.

To everyone who contributed to our Purim celebration!

- To Rabbi Judy Kummer, Becca Plaut Mautner, Beth Silverberg Marx and Diane Balser for the program on Facing the Megillah.
- To Emma Zbarsky, Sharon Morganbesser, Sharon Kivenko, and Jarrett Byrnes for helping to make the Hamantaschen dough.
- To Jen Klein, Assaf Bitton, and the many, many volunteers of all ages for baking the Hamantaschen.
- To Eddie and Sandy Taub for organizing the deliveries of Mishloach Manot and to all the drivers who made deliveries: Liz Aeschlimann,

Jonah Blouwoff, Ellen Brodsky, Susan Diller, Samuel & Anne Engel, Fiona Epstein & Jon Pollack, Suzanne Gelber, Sue Kahn & Daniel Kirschner, Barrie Keller, Daniel Langenthal, Steve Lewis, Arnold Malts & Aileen Louik, Nancy Mazonson, Jordan Namerow, Louisa Ould Ouali, Enid Shulman, Eva Silverman, Sara Smolover, Elana Steinberg, Jessie Stickgold-Sarah, Jill Stopfer, Eddie & Sandy Taub, Tali Walters, Dave & Judith Woodruff

To everyone who contributed to and participated in our Community Retreat!

- To Cindy-jo Gross, Ariadne Valsamis and Patricia Lotterman who helped plan our Community Retreat.
- To the volunteers: Ebn Leader, Eddie Taub, Adam Korn, Jane Daniels, Barrie Keller, Naomi Azar and Jack Daniels who led or helped with programs at our Community Retreat.
- To the teens who helped with child-care: Adam Korn, Amira Barnett, Roger Taub, Nathan Taub and Nina Segal led by Tatiana Becker.
- To the professional team, who planned, organized, and led the weekend: Noah Weinberg, Josh Greenberg, Tatiana Becker, Rav Tiferet and Rav Claudia. Special thanks to Rochelle Kelman who managed every detail of this very successful weekend.

To everyone who contributed to and participated in our Spring Fundraiser!

- To Sarah Fendrick, Beth Harris, Sue Kahn, Carol Kamin, and Sara Smolover for organizing our Spring Fundraiser: The Healing Power of Music.
- To our wonderful Honorees Katherine Gergen Barnett, Asaf Bitton, Rebecca Weintraub and Larry Kraus for their time, energy and expertise these past two and half years.

L'Chaim

- To Ezra Eichler on becoming Bar Mitzvah.
- To Beit Rabban teacher Zach Mayer on his wedding.
- To Lilah Zarwan on becoming Bat Mitzvah.
- To Sardoine Kapanga-Ndjibu on becoming Bat Mitzvah.
- To Eitan Segal on becoming Bar Mitzvah.
- To Alma Kreiman-Leader on becoming Bat Mitzvah.
- To Gary Cohen on celebrating the 50th anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah.
- To Moshe (Mookie) Lahav on becoming Bar Mitzvah.
- To Osvaldo Golijov on the birth of his grandson.
- To Beit Rabban teacher Debbie Gardner and Rabbi Sam Seicol on being honored at the Synagogue Council of Massachusetts Annual Gala.
- To Laurie Stein on her engagement to Michael Rogers.
- To Raphael Klauber on becoming Bar Mitzvah.
- To Sofia Knobel on becoming Bat Mitzvah.
- To Marianna Mapes and Rebecca Harris on their engagement.
- To Marilyn and Steve Lipman on the birth of their granddaughter.
- To Ezra Korn-Meyer and the Brookline Boy's Soccer team on winning the State Championship in the fall.
- To Pnina Lahav on receiving the Prime Minister Golda Meir Prize for 2021.
- To Ila and Leslie Schonberg on the birth of their ninth grandchild.
- To Amira Sky Barnett on becoming Bat Mitzvah.
- To Anna Spier and Neal Preston on the birth of their son.
- To Idit Klein on being honored by Keshet for 20 years of bold leadership.
- To Michael Schwartz on becoming Bar Mitzvah.
- To Rav Tiferet on receiving the 2021 Pomegranate Prize for emerging Jewish Educators.

Mazel Tov to the following graduates:



- Gabriel Oren Gergen Barnett from Brookline High School.
- Amira Skye Gergen Barnett from 8th grade at the Winsor School.
- Noah Berz from Cambridge School of Weston.
- Hannah Cole from Harvard University.
- Joita Siegel Diecidue from Clark University.
- Yelena Dwortzan from High School.
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- Peninah Markus Hodin from UVM.
- Saul Eber Hodin from Boston Latin School.
- Zachary Handelsman from Newton North High School.
- Ilana Kagan from Newton South High School.
- Naomi Kapanga from Bunker Hill Community College.
- Aurora Kesner from Countryside Elementary School.
- Adam Korn from Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School.
- Ezra Korn-Meyer from Brookline High School.
- Zoe Levitt from MIT.
- Akiva Lind from Newton South High School.
- Gideon Lind from JCDS.
- Maddy Marx from Gann Academy.
- Danielle Morgenbesser from Countryside Elementary School.
- Dina Pfeffer from Commonwealth High School.
- Nomi and Ruti Pfeffer from JCDS.
- Netanel Paz Moshe Schwartz from Brookline High School.
- Michael Shabtai Schwartz from Florida Ruffin Ridley School.
- Zachary Solomon from Brookline High School.
- Nathan Taub from Pollard Middle School.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

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Karen and Michael Lange

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Rachel Lewis & Liz Aeschlimann

Amy and Marc Loustau

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Mark McElroy

Louisa Ould Ouali

Shulamit Reinhartz

Eva Silver & Jonathan Cook

Laura Steinberg

CONDOLENCES

- To Mike Zalis and Barbora Hoskova on the death of Mike's father, Orestes Sanbrand Zalis.
- To Cantor Becky Khitrik and her family on the death of her father, Yuli Wexler.
- To Ellen and Michael Krause-Grosman and their family on the death of Ellen's father Alan Marc Grosman.
- To Meers Oppenheim and Jessica Lang on the death of Meers' father, Joost (Joe) Oppenheim.
- To Julie Reuben and her family on the death of her uncle Selim Eliahoo Menashi Reuben Karady.
- To Heva Valentine and her family on the death of her brother, Eric Alejandro.
- To Rabbi Suzanne Offit and Andy Offit and their family on the death of Rabbi Suzanne Offit's father, Dr. Arthur Altman.
- To Sherry Grossman and Allen Spivack and their family on the death of her brother, Scott Alan Grossman.
- To Mary Gendler and her family on the death of her husband, Rabbi Gendler.
- To Debbie Lipton on the death of her mother, Pearl Lipton.
- To Rabbi Art Green and Hannah Green and their family on the death of Rabbi Art Green's sister, Paula Green.
- To Lou Gippetti and his family on the death of his brother, Jerry Gippetti.
- To Barrie Wheeler and Amit Segal and their family on the death of Barrie's mother, Sandy Wheeler.
- To Josh Lambert and Sarah Kippur and their family on the death of Josh's father, Robert Michael Stanley Lambert.
- To Jon Pollack and Fiona Epstein and their family on the death of Jon's mother, Ann Shaper Pollack.
- To Saul Schapiro, Bella Rosner and their family on the death of Saul's sister, Malka Goodman.
- To Jay Zagorsky and Kim Meyers and their family on the death of Jay's father, Norman Zagorsky.
- To James Cohen on the death of his grandmother, Judith Cohen.
- To James Cohen and Andres Nieto-Cohen and their family on the death of James's mother, Frani Cohen Wolfe.
- To Daniel and Galit Schwartz and their family on the death of Daniel's brother Louis Abraham Schwartz.
- To Idit Klein, Jordan Namerow and Lior Namerow-Klein on the death of Idit's grandmother, Margo Klein.
- To Lisa Lovett and Julie Reuben and their family on the death of Lisa's sister, Tricia Lovett.
- To Mark Housman and Rabbi Mona Strick and their family on the death of Mark's sister, Jeanne Housman.

May their souls be bound up in the Bonds of Eternal life. המקום ינחם אתם עם שאר אבלי ציון וירושלים.



Join us for a Multiple Narrative Trip to Israel & the West Bank

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 David & Judith Woodruff
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HIGH HOLY DAYS 2022

Erev Rosh Hashanah is September 25

Be on the lookout for membership renewal information,
service schedules and ticket information
in your mail box this summer.

Please return your forms to the office promptly!

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