

Winter 2024-25/5785

KOLEINU

קולנו



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FROM THE CO-PRESIDENTS

Jen Klein and Larry Kraus

Shana Tova! Welcome to 5785 at TBZ. As your co-presidents, we feel privileged to have started this year in this community with you. The High Holidays were a spiritual and moving experience at TBZ and we are grateful to everyone who made it happen.

As is often the case around the High Holidays, we have many new members joining TBZ. Welcome! The combination of our long-term members, with their continuity, strength, and commitment, and new members, with new energy, ideas, and perspectives, maintains and improves our community. The vibrancy of the High Holidays can be our shared community experience throughout the year.

We all come to TBZ for different reasons. As members, we each connect to different aspects of the community. Some members come every Shabbat (Friday or Saturday) for prayer (or even to chant Torah), some members are here every Wednesday for Beit Rabban, some members join for Eat, Pray, & Learn, and the list goes on. Some of you are connected to multiple aspects of TBZ, and some are connected to just one. By getting involved and connected to any aspect of TBZ, you are part of the community. Every part of the community strengthens the whole.

No matter how you connect, the fullness of membership is often felt most deeply at the moments when we are giving the most of ourselves to the community. Whether we are connected to one part of TBZ or many, our contributions will strengthen our connection to TBZ. As we said in our Yom Kippur remarks, we really believe the more you put in, the more you will get out. So we invite you to make 5785 the year where you do one more thing at TBZ: take a class, go to an event, go to a service you weren't planning to attend, make another friend in the community.

As co-presidents we appreciate all the different ways you connect, the diversity of our community, and all that TBZ has to offer. We feel blessed to have a community with so many opportunities for connection and engagement. We are a community of learners, seekers and doers. May we continue to be all these things for each of us in the coming year.

Find up-to-date info
about TBZ events at
tbzbrookline.org/calendar

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Building Improvements

Benjamin Maron

You may have noticed more tradespeople coming and going in recent months.

Our synagogue building is 77 years old. Just as we might need extra physical care as we age, TBZ does as well. But instead of a hearing aid or a colonoscopy, the shul needed to see more specialized internal medicine doctors. Don't worry, the analogy stops here.

Much of the work undertaken over the last several months won't be obvious as you join us at TBZ for services, classes, and events. But behind the walls, under the floors, and in the ceilings, we have made critical changes that will improve the functionality of our synagogue for years to come. Our electrical system was updated, improving both the capability and safety of the system. Our plumbing was refurbished, successfully preventing any flooding on high-flush days (such as Rosh Hashanah). Our HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) system was upgraded, bringing air conditioning to all office spaces and improving the capabilities in the sanctuary, community room, and meeting room.

We updated the stairwells to have balusters that meet current building codes and improve safety. We weatherized all doors to prevent drafts and save on heat

bills. We added pumps and drainage to both the boiler room and the kitchen pantry to prevent flooding. We insulated the space under the big stairs to prevent pipes from freezing. And we installed a new roof on the flat section of the building to prevent leaks.

Outside, we built new stairs on the east side of the building to help with drainage and water getting into the building – and then got to build the stairs again thanks to the car crash last spring! We also installed a new storage shed to help with the lack of storage space inside, moved the bike rack to the front of the building to increase accessibility and usage, and moved our door buzzer to make it ADA compliant.

There's more to come. In the coming months and years we'll fix up the pavement around the building, including the front stairs, fix the retaining wall in the back by Lancaster Terrace, install new carpeting and a hearing loop in the sanctuary, and more.

A tremendous amount of thanks to Jack Daniels and Ken Wexler, our Building Committee, for helping move these projects forward. If you're interested in getting involved in these projects or the Building Committee in general, please let me know.

Looking for more connections within the TBZ community?



Contact the office (info@tbzbrookline.org or 617-566-8171) to receive our listing of interest-based, action-based, and affinity groups that are open to all TBZers.

Happy Hanukkah!

Join us for TBZ's Community Hanukkah Party:

Sunday, December 29
4:00 - 6:00 pm (in person)

Join us to celebrate Hanukkah together in community!

There will be games and activities for all ages including adult learning, as well as our community-wide *hanukkiah* lighting, singing, latkes and *sufganiyot*.



HESED

Barrie Wheeler and Beth Harris

As we mark our first year as co-chairs of the Hesed Committee at TBZ, we are filled with gratitude and appreciation for our community's commitment to caring for one another. Over the past year, we have seen our community step forward time and again, fulfilling the mitzvah of hesed – loving-kindness – in myriad meaningful ways.

Through your efforts, we have come together to support each other in times of need. Whether organizing shiva minyans, preparing meals for those recovering from illness, or simply being there for someone who is struggling, you have helped make TBZ a place of warmth, support, and connection.

In *The Amen Effect*, Rabbi Sharon Brous reminds us that “when your heart is broken, when you feel lost and alone and inclined to retreat, you show up. You entrust

your pain to the community.” In turbulent times, we find healing in showing up for each other, embodying the spirit of hesed in every act of kindness and presence.

As we look to the future, we hope to expand our outreach so that even more members of our community can feel this support. We rely on you to let us know when you or someone you know is in need, as well as when you are available to help. Together, we can continue to strengthen the bonds of our community and ensure that no one feels alone.

Please look out for more opportunities to get involved, and stay tuned for details about an upcoming meeting where we will discuss our plans for the coming year. Thank you for your kindness, your generosity, and your commitment to each other. We look forward to continuing this sacred work together.

My Bat Mitzvah Experience

Miriam Bennett

Ever since I was a little kid, I have been thinking about my bat mitzvah. What would I do? What would I say? What would it be like to stand on the bimah? On June 8, 2024, I sat down with my family in the front row at TBZ – and it was awesome!

The service began with a *niggun* (wordless song), and people I love began to trickle in. It was exciting that so many people were there. Once Rav Claudia and Noah began to lead the prayers, I breathed deeply and grounded myself. This was the day. I wanted to make the most of it.

Before the service, as I walked up the steps into the synagogue, my dad reminded me to take a few moments to look around and smile at each person. I saw my family, all four of my grandparents, my aunts and uncles and cousins, my school friends, my soccer teammates, my bunkmates from camp, friends from my neighborhood, some of my teachers, lots of family friends, and many members of TBZ. All of “my people.” I was smiling from ear to ear, grateful to be there, and grateful to be leading in a sanctuary filled with all the people I love around me. It was truly a sacred space.

Leading the Shabbat service alongside Rav Claudia and Noah was very special. Singing the Hebrew words that I have heard so many times – that are part of me – made me feel spiritually connected. When I carried the Torah, I felt embraced by my community. When I started reading Torah, I was happy because I love Hebrew. Also, I had practiced the Torah reading for months and I was excited to finally leyn (chant) in front of everyone.

The community *aliyah* (call up to the Torah), in particular, had a lot of meaning for me. I go to shul almost every Shabbat and feel deeply connected. I love being in shul around people who are so inclusive,



friendly, loving, and energetic. The way we sing prayers makes people get out of their seats to clap and dance. Another meaningful part of the service for me was being called to the *Maftir*, the final *aliyah* and reading. Instead of Rav Claudia calling me to the Torah, my 10-year-old brother Reuben called me. He surprised everyone by walking to the bimah and belting out “*Ta’amod, ta’amod, ta’amod Miriam bat D’vorah Leah v Meir...*” at the top of his lungs. People cheered for him! I loved how he was a fun part of the service and everyone was enjoying it together.

My bat mitzvah was just the beginning of a journey. Reading my *d’var Torah* (commentary) was something I was very glad to do, because I could share my thoughts with the community. Now that I am officially a Jewish adult, I am able to participate more. So far, I have read Torah, opened the ark, and even led the call and response for the Shema prayer. My bat mitzvah at TBZ was only three hours of my life, but it was the best three hours so far.

From Nishmat Hayyim Committee ...to Nishmat Hayyim Practice

Rav Claudia

For many years, Nishmat Hayyim (Breath of Life) has been TBZ's Jewish meditation project, a vision of Reb Moshe Waldoks, TBZ's Founding and Emeritus Rabbi. Over the years, Nishmat Hayyim has offered meditation programs, contemplative Shabbat services, and an array of opportunities to practice meditation within a Jewish Context, becoming a resource for Jewish contemplative practices in the Boston area and throughout New England. Teachings and practices draw on the richness of Jewish texts, some Buddhist texts, and meditation instructions/techniques.

We would like, first and foremost, to express our gratitude to Reb Moshe, Reggie Silberberg, Sheila Yocheved Katz, and Bobbi Isberg for their incredible dedication and commitment to TBZ and Nishmat Hayyim over the past several years. Nishmat Hayyim's success can be measured by the integral part that meditation, mindfulness, and contemplative practice play in TBZ's life, beyond specific Nishmat Hayyim programs. Our services and programs are deeply interspersed with meditation and moments of mindful breathing and teachings. People outside of TBZ know that contemplative practice and meditation are core to TBZ's practices.

At this time, we want to share with you some changes on how we will be thinking about and defining Nishmat Hayyim going forward. Nishmat Hayyim will not operate as a separate committee; instead, we are broadening the scope of Nishmat Hayyim to include all of TBZ's programs and practices of meditation, mindfulness, contemplative practice, yoga, and other forms of spiritual practice as part of our Nishmat Hayyim Practice at TBZ, all under our programming umbrella.

What does this mean?

There is no longer a Nishmat Hayyim committee. We are beyond grateful to Reggie for her dedication and work chairing the Nishmat Hayyim committee. Now, any practice and program at TBZ that falls within the realm of meditation and spiritual practice (yoga, mindfulness, chanting, contemplative retreats, and more) will be called Nishmat Hayyim Practice. If you are interested in bringing or leading a program or have ideas, please reach out to Rav Tiefert.

Reggie, Sheila Yocheved, Bobbi and Reb Moshe will continue to offer Nishmat Hayyim practices as they have been doing, including the Friday morning online meditation and others. And you can find an audio archive on our website of these weekly meditations.

We will continue to offer and expand mindfulness and contemplative practice programs led by other TBZ leaders and guest teachers. This year, we are excited to offer another weekend away at Kripalu, which we see as a Nishmat Hayyim Practice.

We are excited to open and expand the ways we will use the Nishmat Hayyim Google group to be a place for any who want to share opportunities for contemplative practice. Email the TBZ office if you would like to be part of the Nishmat Hayyim Practices list.

This change is a sign of growth and expansion in our community. It means that we are a community that practices Nishmat Hayyim in an array of ways.

We remind ourselves every Shabbat of the teaching that the word *neshama* נשמה (soul) and the words *neshima* נשימה (breath) come from the same root; a reminder that by practicing mindful breathing and being aware of the breath of life in us, we can access our own soul and show up in the world in deeper and more intentional ways.

A Message from Noah

Noah Weinberg

I am filled with gratitude for the last seven years of lifting our souls together in song. TBZ has become my spiritual home. This year especially, it has been so meaningful for me to be able to gather with this committed community each week, to cry and to sing, to share in our heartbreak and affirm our values. This community, and in particular our incredible spiritual leadership team, have taught me how to hold sadness and joy together. Whether it was dancing at Nina's bat mitzvah soon after October 7th, continuing to sing and pray during Shabbat Nariya even among false fire alarms or shocking car crashes, or putting our hands up at the edge of our Zoom screens to bless each other from afar, I have witnessed this community find the courage over and over again to turn towards each other and turn towards love in times of challenge.

I am so grateful to the TBZ leadership, lay and professional, for affording me a 6-month leave in order to join my partner Aviva in Jerusalem for a part of her rabbinical school year in Israel. The frost that arrived in early

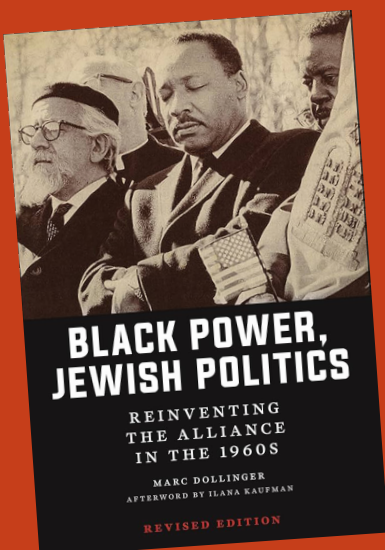
November marked the end of six full seasons of farming at Gann Academy, and I am excited to embrace this time off as a kind of *shmita*, a moment of rest and release, a wise practice from our tradition for sustainable cycles of work and rejuvenation. I am excited to spend time studying Torah, swimming, visiting farms and markets, sourdough baking, resting, *davening* (praying), collecting new music, and eating good food. My hope is to slow down, get curious, follow spontaneous opportunities, and to find some way to contribute in this time of such pain and brokenness in the holy land.

With gratitude and excitement for many more years to come of community and song together,
Noah Weinberg



MLK Weekend Guest Teacher: Marc Dollinger

Shabbat, January 17-18



Join the author of *Black Power, Jewish Politics: Reinventing The Alliance In The 1960s* for a new look at the break-up of the black-Jewish alliance, focusing on how American Jews borrowed ideas from the Black Power movement to revitalize American Jewish life. His talks will offer a new and different interpretation of the black-Jewish alliance of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. years, challenging historical memory about how and why Jews participated in the movement.

Repairing the World: Partakers at TBZ

Steve Lewis

One of the organizations associated with Tikkun Olam which TBZers get involved in is Partakers. Partakers has 2 programs which assist those who are incarcerated or have been recently released from incarceration.

The first is the College Behind Bars Program (CBB). In this program, co-mentors visit someone who is incarcerated on a monthly basis for approximately 2 hours. The incarcerated individuals are in the process of obtaining a bachelor's degree associated with one of Boston's local universities. The co-mentors provide support to help incarcerated individuals advocate for themselves to maximize their college learning, as well as provide emotional support and connection.

The second is the Partakers Empowerment Program (PEP). In this program, co-mentors provide support and

guidance via Zoom to individuals who have been recently released from prison. During a 12-week program, these recently released individuals receive Zoom instruction and guidance from Brandeis on many aspects of reintegrating themselves into society (such as computer literacy, financial literacy, steps to obtaining a job, steps to obtaining housing, etc.). Co-mentors from Partakers provide weekly support to these individuals during this 12-week period to help navigate the hurdles that arise.

Being a co-mentor in Partakers in these 2 programs has been quite meaningful and appreciated by incarcerated and recently released individuals. It has also been very fulfilling and rewarding for TBZers and other mentor volunteers from other temples and local churches. Some examples of these strong connections and contributions to tikkun olam are as follows:

- I and another co-mentor provided ongoing support for an incarcerated individual in the CBB Program at MCI-Concord for 1 ½ years. This individual had been incarcerated for over 30 years. He is a beautiful human being who has grown so much in his maturity, accountability, and kindness towards others. At first, he was very timid with us, his co-mentors. Prior to meeting with us, he only felt comfortable talking with his daughter and grandson, who visited him regularly. Over time, he strongly sensed how much his co-mentors genuinely cared about him. After being with him for 1 ½ years, he was released from prison. I and my co-mentor were very fortunate to also have the opportunity to co-mentor him in PEP, to help him with this transition. He has been out of prison for almost 2 years now and is thriving, continuing with college and working as a role model assisting men at-risk in Roxbury who are between the ages of 15-25. My co-mentor and I continue to stay connected with him and are very close with him. I have learned so much from him regarding acceptance, forgiveness, perseverance, and resilience.
- Since this past February, I and 2 TBZ co-mentors have been mentoring an amazing incarcerated person who started in the CBB Program at MCI-Norfolk. He has been in prison for 15 years. He has grown tremendously in his accountability and sense of personal responsibility. He is an incredibly creative person who has written children's books and poetry, which focus on loving and cherishing others in our lives. He greatly appreciates the opportunity to obtain a college degree and is very engaged in his learning. We help him navigate his courses and his relationships with his professors. We also deeply and very personally share with him about various matters in our lives. We meet monthly with him for about 2 ½ hours. It has been one of the most intense and growth-oriented experiences of my life.

If you are interested in an opportunity to mentor someone incarcerated or recently released, want to potentially make a huge difference in someone else's life, and provide yourself with an opportunity for significant growth and connection, please contact Steve Lewis at steveelliotlewis3@gmail.com.

Beit Rabban

Rav Tiferet

There's a saying that goes, "The High Holidays are always early or late, never on time!" Well, this year they were right on time! Because they were so "late," Beit Rabban learners and teachers had a full month to prepare for a meaningful *Tishrei* (month that contains Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Sh'mini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah) experience together.

Our faculty is stronger than ever before with our new additions to the team. We are thrilled to welcome back Cantor Lisa Kipen Hershenson, who taught *Shorashim Bet* (2nd & 3rd Grade) for many years before leaving to serve as Education Director of Congregation Beth Shalom of the Blue Hills in Milton. We are thrilled to have her passion and skill at Beit Rabban again! She is co-teaching with Elizabeth Shulman, a Bonim Beyachad Jewish Educator fellow from Hebrew College. We are grateful to TBZ member Miriam Pieper who continues to lend her experience in education to support Morah Lisa and Morah Elizabeth during Beit Rabban! Rabbi Sara Blumenthal joins our team as our B'Mitzvah Coordinator and *Mechina* (6th Grade) teacher. She is a skilled teacher of Torah and, paired with Rabbi Josh Greenberg, they are training our 6th and 7th Graders to chant Torah and to discover meaningful Jewish living. Akiva Nelson, our rabbinic intern, joins Jewish Studio Project Fellow Carly Dreme Calbreath to teach *Ilanot* (4th & 5th Grade), using the power and creativity of *midrash* (textual interpretation) to explore the prophets, personal agency, and how we can make a difference in our world. Our gateway to Beit Rabban is *Shorashim Alef* (K-1) taught by Debbie Gardner, who brings years of experience to helping our learners begin their Jewish learning journey, accompanied by TBZ teen and JCDS grad Rachel Krause-Grosman. Dr. Miriam Diamond continues in her role as Director of Learning Enrichment and can

be found working with teachers to support their craft and consider how to accommodate our learners' needs. In addition, she, along with Morah Lisa and TBZ member Carol Kamin, is one of our tutors in Beit Rabban's inaugural *Echad L'Echad: 1:1 Hebrew Tutoring* program for our *Ilanot* learners to ensure we can advance each learner from their unique spots along the spectrum of Hebrew language skill.

TBZ is blessed to be able to offer a strong Jewish afterschool education program!



Shorashim Alef (K-1) Learners



Shorashim Bet (gr. 2-3) Learners

Holding onto Torah Through Uncertain Times

Rav Claudia

לולי תורתך שעשעתי אז אבדתני בעניי.

**Were not Your teaching (Your Torah)
my delight, I would have perished
in my affliction**

(Psalm 119:92).

I feel so blessed to be able to hold onto the Torah, onto the teachings of our tradition especially, but not only in times of crisis, doubt, and uncertainty.

Without immersing myself in Torah, without finding sweetness and inspiration in Torah, I would not be able to find my ways through brokenness. This verse from Psalms reminds me to deepen my learning and my understanding, knowing that in Torah (in the largest sense of the word) I can find comfort and insights to walk through life.

There is a text in the Babylonian Talmud, in a tractate of *Yevamot* (*Yevamot 121a*), that tells us a story (two stories to be precise) of a boat sinking, the rabbis in the boat, and how they were able to survive the turbulent waters (and come right back to teach again):

First story:

תניא, אמר רבן גמליאל:
פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בספינה, וראיתי ספינה אחת שגשברה.
והייתי מצטער על תלמיד חכם שבה, ומנו – רבי עקיבא. ו
קשעליתי ביבשה, בא וישב ודון לפני בהלכה.
אמרתי לו: בני, מי העלה?
אמר לי: דף של ספינה נזדמן לי, וכל גל וגל שבא עלי –
נענעתי כו ראשי.

Rabban Gamliel said: Once I was traveling on a boat, and from a distance I saw a boat that shattered and sank. And I was grieved over the apparent death of Rabbi Akiva who was on board. But when I disembarked onto dry land, he came, and sat, and taught Jewish law right away!



I asked Rabbi Akiva: My son, who brought you up from the water? He said to me: **A plank from the boat came to me, and I bent my head before each and every wave that came toward me.**

Second story:

תניא, אמר רבי עקיבא:
פעם אחת הייתי מהלך בספינה, וראיתי ספינה אחת
שמטרכת בים,
והייתי מצטער על תלמיד חכם שבה, ומנו – רבי מאיר.
כשעליתי למדינת קפוטקניא, בא וישב דון לפני בהלכה.
אמרתי לו: בני, מי העלה?
אמר לי: גל טרדני לחברו, וחברו לחברו, עד שהקיאני ליבשה.

Rabbi Akiva said: Once I was traveling on a boat, and I saw a certain boat sinking at sea, and I was grieved over the apparent death of Rabbi Meir who was on board. But when I disembarked at the province of Cappadocia, he came, and sat, and taught Jewish law right away! I asked Rabbi Meir: My son, who brought you up from the water? He said to me: **One wave carried me to another, and that other wave to another, until I reached the shore, and a wave cast me up onto dry land.**

I learned from my colleague Rabbi Lauren Berkun, that we can read these stories as two paradigms of survival. Rabbis Akiva and Meir survive turbulent waters in slightly different ways. I want to invite us to think about how these two models can be meaningful to you and guide you during these times:

In the first story, Rabbi Akiva holds on to the *daf* (literally a plank of wood), something that helps us keep going through the turbulent waters. We can read it as holding onto Torah, holding onto our vision of purpose, holding onto values that are central to us. Akiva is letting his head go underwater as the waves crash over and holds onto the plank to keep going.

In the second story, Rabbi Meir's survival tactic is to ride the water from wave to wave, like a surfer. As Jon Kabat-Zinn, professor of medicine and mindfulness practitioner, said, "You can't stop the waves, but you

can learn to surf." But the words used in the text for waves are "*havero l'havero*" (friend to friend). Perhaps understanding this as the primacy of relationships, building coalitions of trust to collectively address crises. In a crisis, it is time to double down on the power of relationships and that will help us stay above water.

Rabbi Akiva's tactic is "holding onto our core priorities," while Rabbi Meir's can be read as "holding on to the network of relationships." They both manage to survive the turbulence.

And here is where TBZ comes in... and here is the invitation to all of us:

When times feel turbulent and chaotic, uncertain and scary, we are reminded that we are not alone. We, as a community, are here for each other; to support one another; to recommit ourselves to the work that is needed and will be needed in the years to come; to protect those most vulnerable in our society, including those from marginalized communities – our siblings who are immigrants or undocumented people, who are queer and/or trans, who are women, who have physical or developmental disabilities, who are people of color, and all who are considered minorities in our midst.

TBZ can be the plank to hold onto. TBZ reminds us to hold onto our core priorities, to hold onto Torah. And TBZ is the place to build relationships that are intentional and meaningful (*havero l'havero*). So that, together, we can not only ride the turbulent waters, but we can build a world of love, justice, and dignity for all human beings.

In Torah, in community, in the core values of our tradition, and in coming together – we hold on. I pray and hope that TBZ can be that place for you. We are here. Come as you are. Let's ride the waves together.



Recovery Through a Jewish Lens

Peter Golbus

My name is Pesach ben Baruch v'Elishayva and I am "in recovery," which is to say that I am a member of a 12-step program. Like many Jews, I have struggled with the implicit Christianity of the 12-step program, but I have come to understand that we, the Jewish people, are, collectively, "in recovery." We, the Jewish people, took the first step well over 2000 years ago in the early 2nd Temple Era. We take the second and third step, and the fourth through ninth steps, annually. We take the tenth through twelfth steps daily. Let me explain:

Step 1: We admitted that we were powerless over *yetzer hara* and that our lives had become unmanageable.

The Men of the Great Assembly, sages during the Second Temple era, once captured the *yetzer hara* for three days (*Bavli Yoma 69b*). In all that time, not a single egg could be found in all Israel. So they gouged out its eyes and released it.

Step 2: We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

During Passover, we celebrate the time when we were in bondage in Egypt, the place of narrowness, and God delivered us to Jerusalem, the state of completeness.

Step 3: We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

The core of the 12-step program is to seek a better life through a personal relationship with a "Higher Power." All 12-step programs begin by admitting we are powerless over something. The only difference from program to program is what it is that we are powerless over.

We, the Jewish People, are powerless over the "*yetzer hara*," the evil inclination. Through this lens, we can understand a different approach to the 12 steps that works for the Jewish people.

On Shavuot we commemorate how, when we were lost in the wilderness, overcome by fear and worshiping mere objects, Moses brought us the Torah so we could walk the path of *halakha* (Jewish law) by performing *mitzvot* (commandments).

Steps 4 - 10: We are provided with a method for *t'shuvah* (return, repentance), which we practice daily and especially during the Days of Awe from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur.

Step 11: We are commanded to improve our conscious contact with God, which we do through *tefillah* (prayer) and *berachot* (blessings).

Step 12: We are commanded to practice *tikkun olam* (healing the world) and perform acts of *tzedakah* (charity) and *chesed* (loving kindness) towards those who suffer.

If you are interested in discussing 12-step programs through the lens of Jewish theology, Jewish texts, and Jewish traditions, I encourage you to join me Sunday mornings at 10:30am, here at TBZ, to read and discuss *Twelve Jewish Steps to Recovery: A Personal Guide to Turning From Alcoholism and Other Addictions – Drugs, Food, Gambling, Sex...* by Dr. Stuart A. Copans and Rabbi Kerry M. Olitzky.

TBZ Community Retreat

Preston Neal

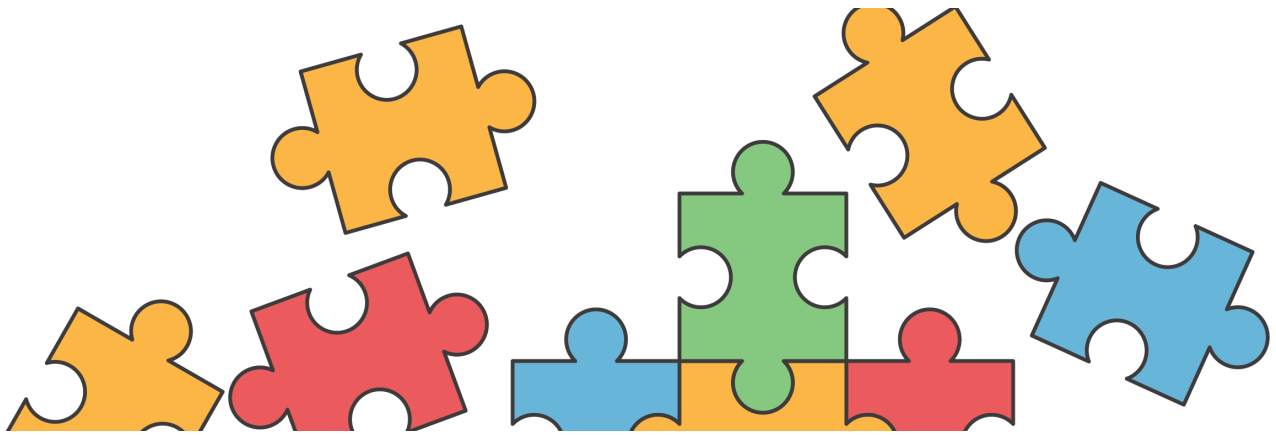
This past spring, my wife Anna and I, along with our 2-year-old son Jonah, had an amazing experience at our first ever TBZ community retreat at the Craigville Retreat Center on Cape Cod. We stayed in a big house with other families who also had young kids, and it didn't take long for us to make some new friends! The communal "campfire" song sessions in the evenings were such a highlight. It was like a mini concert each night, with so many talented musicians from the TBZ community coming together. Singing for hours with others outside of services was such a refreshing and joyful experience.

The retreat had a relaxed, communal vibe, like a blend between an Israeli kibbutz and an American Jewish summer camp. Kids were biking freely, everyone was helping each other out with the little ones, and we shared meals together while swapping stories and connecting. The setting at the Craigville Retreat Center made it all the more special. It's an idyllic place. We loved showing Jonah the osprey nests and taking walks on the nature trail to the ocean. It was the perfect balance of comfort and nature.

We were a little nervous about bringing Jonah – new place, new people, and none of his usual home comforts – but he was totally at ease from the moment we arrived. He was running around, high-fiving people, splashing in puddles, and loving all the toys the childcare team provided. There really was something for everyone, not just families with kids. One of the highlights for me was a fascinating *shiur* (talk) by Rabbi Ebn Leader on Shabbat morning. And the TBZ talent show? So much fun! Watching our community members perform, be silly, and just have a great time together was a real treat.

We hope to be back next year (and probably for many years to come). It's easy to feel connected at services, but there's something about the retreat that deepens those connections in a unique way. If you've been thinking about coming, I highly recommend it – it's the perfect way to really bond with the TBZ community.





Finding the Missing Piece

Rowan T. Mattox

I think at times many take for granted how well they know themselves. I knew myself as an engineer and as someone who was a do-er, constantly on the go from one thing to the next. It's easy to slip into a habit of not paying attention to oneself when busy. However, in quiet moments, I began to recognize that something wasn't right. Something was missing from my world, and I sought to give that emptiness a name and work toward repairing it in some way. As I started my introspective journey, I didn't know what I would find. At that time, I knew I was losing engagement with the world around me and I felt adrift and aimless despite having largely everything material that I needed or wanted at any given time. What was missing was a spiritual connection.

I began to seek out spiritual practices that spoke to me, and for a few years, nothing felt quite right. I didn't grow up with much religious influence, and what I did have was very disjointed and inconsistent with what I valued and believed. Slowly, I worked my way through practices and tried to engage but nothing felt right and would feel disingenuous at best. I kept looking, hoping to find something that I could embrace. I was invited to celebrate Purim with a friend by baking hamantaschen and I distinctly recall feeling absolutely enamored of the storytelling and the varying practices and celebrations of the attendees who were born Jewish. I knew very little about Judaism at that

point and was drawn to learn and understand more, as at that point I felt something click into place.

As time went on, I reached a point where I wasn't sure where to go next. I talked to friends and ended up looking for a synagogue at which to attend services to see how they felt. Almost immediately, I was overwhelmed with emotion at how beautiful the services were and how meaningful it felt to me to participate, even as I knew neither the Hebrew nor the melodies. It was at that moment that I had found what I was looking for.

As I navigated the conversion process, I learned so much. The more I learned, the more I loved the rich history, tradition, and space in which I could trade being a do-er for just being. Holidays became distinct markers in time, instead of days blurring into weeks into months. Observing Shabbat became a natural part of my week, and being in community for all of it was truly a blessing in an incredibly isolating time.

I know myself now to be an engineer and a do-er, but also a human being who takes time to acknowledge and celebrate the Divine. These aspects weave a beautiful tapestry of experiences that define and shape me, and I feel whole now as a part of the fabric of the Jewish people.

From Wandering Jew to TBZ Member

Guy Sapirstein

I am a wandering Jew. My parents and their parents were as well. So far we've covered four continents. From Europe to Southern Africa, then to Israel where I was born, and now the US where I have lived since 1992. As I have lived my life, I realize that my wandering, and probably that of my progenitors, was not aimless, but rather aimed at seeking. Each generation with their own needs and priorities.

For some reason, spirituality has been a central theme in my life. As a teen in Israel, I found it in the *halachah*-observant (Jewish law) world of text study, rituals, and prayer. Those activities felt important yet insufficient and unfulfilling on their own. One Friday evening during Kabbalat Shabbat services, when I was 15 or 16, I felt it, albeit fleetingly – the elusive, ephemeral sense of losing oneself in the moment. A moment when well-rehearsed words printed in a *siddur* (prayer book) jump out, align with the heart, and blend with the spiritual intention deep inside.

That experience stayed with me for several years and then began to fade. After a few more years, I questioned the value of reciting words, observing rituals, and learning ancient texts. Without that experience it all seemed performative and hollow. I eventually stopped altogether, though I could never shake the yearning for spiritual experience like the one I'd had.

Time passed and I moved to the US, settling in the Boston area. For many years I actively participated in services at a local egalitarian minyan. Its cerebral and precise services were comfortably reminiscent of the synagogue world I had grown up in, but without being overtly patriarchal.

Eventually I heard about Shabbat Nariya at TBZ and ventured to experience it myself. The first few times I was moved simply by being in the midst of hundreds of fellow worshippers of all ages, moving from silent contemplation to ecstatic dancing around the sanctuary. I continued attending the minyan; still, experiencing the



possibility of prayer opening a different space inside me left me wanting.

My partner Sarah and I joined TBZ at the beginning of 2024. In early September, while walking in the Arboretum, I was reflecting on the upcoming High Holidays, and the (paradoxical) phrase recited during morning services: קול דממה דקה ("kol d'mama daka") – the sound of a thin silence. In the texts this phrase indicates the presence of the *Shechina*, the feminine aspect of the divine that interconnects with the world we live in.

Services at TBZ are different than what I had become accustomed to, and the High Holidays were no different. Loud and joyful devotion is followed by quiet contemplation, where the sound of "thin silence" (קול דממה דקה) creates for me an opening for sincere reflection unbound by words, and grounded in connection to the mystery of the divine.

The services were emotionally laden, as this year has been. I gave myself permission to include prayers that were not said and to omit some that were. Yet once the emotional/spiritual journey that is High Holiday services concluded, I left the Ne'ilah service with the echo of Rav Claudia quoting one of my favorite Jewish thinkers, Hannah Arendt: "I belong."

HIGH HOLIDAY PREP



The Israel Palestine Affinity Group at TBZ (IPAG)

Rosalind Joffe

In the winter of 2024, a small group of TBZers came together wanting to share their confusion, anger and deep loss over the situation in Israel and Gaza. The TBZ Israel Palestine Affinity Group (IPAG) emerged from these conversations. From the outset, we have committed ourselves to holding a safe-enough, brave-enough space for those wishing to share their complexity of feelings around Israel, while foregrounding the need to address both the current violence and the ongoing structural oppression of Palestinians. Format, time frames, and participants change. But our purpose stays constant.

Will Schwartz, a TBZ member, wrote:

The October 7th attack and all that has followed have challenged me spiritually and forced me to reinvent my relationship to Israel as an ideal, as a refuge, and as a political entity. After many months of feeling adrift, finally joining the IPAG at TBZ provided solid ground and a

place to tend to these spiritual wounds. While we all come from different perspectives, the space we hold serves to connect us across the mutual need to make sense and seek support in these challenging times. Each time we have come together to talk, to pray, to write, to sing, and to reflect, I have felt a little closer to being whole.

We typically meet twice a month – once on Zoom and once in person at TBZ – when schedules allow. Meetings are facilitated by a member of our workgroup and include opportunities for personal reflection, sharing (in pairs and with the group) and brainstorming possible individual led, community-wide actions and activities. We also have a TBZ IPAG Listserv where we share relevant information, articles, podcasts. To join our Google Group, email ipag+subscribe@tbzbrookline.org.

The IPAG Workgroup is Liz Aeschlimann, Hasia Diner, Rosalind Joffe, and Deborah Korn.



October 7th: One Year Later

Rachel Goodman

To mark one year since the massacre of October 7th, committed by the Hamas terrorists against Israeli citizens and the beginning of the war that has continued in the area, TBZ hosted four Zoom conversations with Israeli leaders and activists who shared both their experiences from that day and the year that followed as well as their vision for the future. Hearing from people on the ground in Israel was both heart-breaking and inspiring. Each of them shared their experience of that horrible day (in Hebrew they call it *Shabbat Ha-Shchora*, the Black Shabbat) and the challenges, but each and every one of them showed up with resilience and commitment to continue the work that is needed. Hearing from these speakers provided a means for us to try to understand what Israelis are experiencing and hearing about things you don't necessarily hear in the news.

For me, each speaker provided both a personal perspective and a deeper and more real understanding of what our Israeli siblings are going through. The speakers were: Rabbi Haviva Ner-David, Rabbi Avi Dabush, Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy, and Adv. Hanan Alsanah.

Let me tell you a little bit about each of them:

First, **Rabbi Haviva Ner-David** is a rabbi, author, spiritual companion, and activist. She is the founding director of Shmaya: A Mikveh for Mind, Body, and Soul (on Kibbutz Hannaton), the only mikveh in Israel open to all to immerse as they choose. The main focus of her activism since moving to the Galilee over fifteen years ago (aside from her mikveh work) has been building partnership among Jewish and Palestinian Israelis to affect social and political change in Israel. Haviva is an activist with Standing

Together, a progressive grassroots movement mobilizing Jewish and Palestinian citizens of Israel against the occupation and for peace, equality, and social justice.

And for those of us who had the privilege of meeting with Sally Abed and Alon Lee-Green in the past year, Rabbi Ner-David's conversation added more depth and context to the work of Standing Together.

Second, **Rabbi Avi Dabush** was ordained by the Beit Midrash for the Israeli Rabbinate of the Shalom Hartman Institute and HaMidrasha in Oranim. He is one of the founders of the Negev Council and the Movement of the Periphery. Avi is the Executive Director of Rabbis for Human Rights. On October 7, 2023, Avi survived Hamas' terror attack at his home in Kibbutz Nirim; he and his family are currently displaced persons in temporary accommodation. Avi has become a leading voice in advocating for the return of the hostages, and he continues his call for human rights and peace across the region. I was particularly moved hearing the story of his background, growing up in a traditional Mizrachi and ultra-Orthodox family and community. As he spoke I tried to imagine the challenges he, his family, and his community have experienced as he moved away from the right-leaning positions to a more broadminded and expansive view of the role of Jewish Israelis (and religiously observant Jews especially) play in trying to find a better way for Israelis (regardless of their religious affiliations) and Palestinians to live together. One quote that resonated with me is when he said, "Fear is in the atmosphere in Israel.... but it is important not to give up our Jewish values."

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For the third conversation, we met **Dr. Cochav Elkayam-Levy**, professor of law, who is the founder and chair of Israel's Civil Commission on October 7th Crimes by Hamas against Women and Children and the Founding Head of Dvora Institute for Gender and Sustainability Studies. Known for her impactful work on gender equality and human rights, she has spearheaded national and global efforts addressing the sexual abuse and gender-based atrocities of that occurred on October 7, 2023. Her significant contributions include leading a global campaign to amplify victims' voices and establishing an archive documenting these war crimes. She spoke about the isolation that she and many Israelis (women and men) felt as former partners in the struggle to fight against sexual abuse were unresponsive – the deafening silence from the UN Commission that works to fight for the protection of all women regardless of where they live. And the sense of betrayal and abandonment. Dr. Elkayam-Levy referenced Sheryl Sandberg's film that many of us have seen, "Screams Before Silence." Hearing her speak made the stories in the film (in which she appeared) come through to me even more powerfully. One other important point for me was how hard the work she and her colleagues are doing. I must confess that I don't think I could fully understand the impact that their work has on their ability to keep on going. And yet that is exactly what they are doing and thus, how important it is for us to support them.

Our fourth conversation was with **Advocate Hanan Alsanah**, the Director of Itach-Ma'aki's Center for Bedouin Women's Rights, a human rights lawyer, and social activist from Be'er Sheva. Immediately after the October 7th attack, Hanan co-founded the Jewish-Arab Emergency Relief Centers in the Negev-Naqab, providing humanitarian aid to thousands of Jewish and Arab families affected by the violence. Hanan is a feminist with over 20 years of experience advocating for women's rights, particularly in the empowerment of Bedouin women. Her efforts have led to significant reports and policy changes regarding Bedouin women's rights. Adv. Alsanah impressed me so much as she laid out the scope of the work she has been doing for decades. But also, and similarly to Rabbi Avi Dabush's experiences, she described the many hurdles she had to overcome from within her own community to do

the work she felt compelled to do. Convincing her family to let her go to university, to study to become a lawyer, and to work to improve the lives of Bedouin women and their larger community was humbling to me! She provided much needed context for me to understand the hardships that the Bedouin community has been experiencing and also the magnitude of their struggles. They are a major segment of the population in Southern Israel – approximately 210,000 Bedouin live in the Negev Region, but as a transient community, they often aren't included in civil planning, human rights conversations, or recognized as a population that needs support. We also learned about the pressures that the Israeli government has placed on them to conform to a more urban lifestyle in order to be able to receive basic services such as access to water, electricity, health care and the like. And these hardships fall most heavily on the Bedouin women. She also described for us the work that her organization is doing to try to solve problems in partnership with Israeli women, and the support that they are getting from the New Israel Fund, among others. They have recently completed a documentary about their work, which is in the process of being translated. The hope is that when it's ready, TBZ will sponsor a screening so that many will be able to see the work and help to support its continuation.

I was lucky enough to be able to attend all four of the conversations and I am deeply appreciative of Rav Claudia and the TBZ leadership for providing us with this opportunity to honor the various and deep experiences of what happened on October 7, 2023 and what has been taking place since then. For me, this was a more impactful way to honor the anniversary than with a single stand alone event. That said, I hope that our TBZ community will remain engaged in the ongoing tragedy of the Hamas-Israel War and find ways to remain hopeful and not give in to despair.



TBZ continues to pray and join the call to
bring the remaining 101 hostages back.
The families of the hostages continue to
count on us to put pressure on our elected representatives.
You can make a difference by making a call!

<https://oneminaday.com> #bringthemhomenow

Taking Small Steps Each and Every Day

Akiva Nelson

Many of you know me by now as a Hebrew College rabbinical student, teacher in Beit Rabban, and a member of the davening team. But I'd like to introduce you to a different side of me: the sporty side.

I am a huge basketball fan and grew up in North Carolina, a place where the sport rivals barbeque as the official state religion. I've played basketball since the age of 5 and am a huge fan of the NBA (don't ask me about my favorite team, it's a sad story). I learn more life lessons from the sport than I'd like to admit; when reflecting on my first few months as TBZ's rabbinic intern, of course a basketball metaphor comes to mind.

When a high-level player is growing up, they get to do pretty much whatever they want on the court. As they get closer to the professional leagues though, at each successive stage, their role gets smaller and they have to learn how to adapt and refine particular skills in order to thrive. Being the rabbinic intern at TBZ has been reminiscent of such a transition. Everywhere you look, there's someone at the top of their game. Being in an environment like this requires an adjustment, a *tzimtzum* (Hebrew for "contraction"), in order to thrive in the role. Working at TBZ has been humbling in the best possible way. It has meant a commitment to



refining skills, and taking small steps each and every day to learn and grow. Rav Claudia has supported me to develop skills like improvisation while davening, cultivating bimah presence, and doing effective sermon-writing. In Beit Rabban, Rav Tiferet and my co-teacher Carly Calbreath have taught me the subtle art of incorporating shtick, interactive games, storytelling, and engaging visual materials into youth education. I would only be so lucky to have such learning continue! With Rav Leah out on maternity leave and Noah on sabbatical, there's no doubt that there is much more in store.

I'd like to extend a hearty thank you to all of you for your kindness, encouragement, and grace. As I continue to grow into the role of TBZ rabbinic intern, I look forward to spending more time together with you, and better getting to know the ins and outs of this ever-so-vibrant community.

Top Ten Reasons to Become an Usher

Craig Sumberg

- 1** You get to meet LOTS of TBZ members, and if you work at it you can even start to remember some of their names!
- 2** If you have any OCD tendencies (as I do, apparently), you can organize the *siddurim* (prayer books) and *humashim* however you want (I like the blue *siddurim* on top, and the larger red machzorim on the next shelf down!).
- 3** When you usher you know exactly where you're going to sit during services.
- 4** You get to chat with past TBZ president David Charensen during the Torah processional (he's almost always standing in the back, ready to tackle any emergencies that might arise).
- 5** It's a really easy way to contribute to the TBZ community, particularly if you're a bit of an extrovert (or even an introvert who likes meeting new people).
- 6** It forces you to get to TBZ a few minutes early, so you can help "make the minyan" (be counted in the quorum of 10) when services start. (And the first 30-40 minutes of the service are my favorite part, very musical...)
- 7** You're doing a *mitzvah*, and an important one at that. For new guests in particular, you're often the first interaction they have with the synagogue and a friendly hello and smile can go a long way to making someone feel like maybe, just maybe, this synagogue is different from other synagogues they may have attended in the past.
- 8** If you really want to "go crazy" once the service starts, you can flip the *siddur* to the pages as Rav Claudia or Rav Leah call them out, which I think adds a nice, thoughtful touch when someone comes in late (but this is definitely NOT a requirement of the job!).

**I had a word limit to adhere to, so ask me at kiddush
what my top two reasons are!**

CONDOLENCES

- Moshe Cohen & Barbra Batshalom following the death of Moshe's father, Hanania Cohen
- Celia Moses & Ben Stanger following the death of Celia's mother, Barbara Moses
- Elana Steinberg following the death of her mother, Shirley Steinberg
- Nancy Lipman following the death of her mother, Sylvia Greenberg Lipman
- Jonathan Frankel following the death of his father, Hershie Frankel
- Judy Schechtman & Ed De Vos following the death of Judy's brother, Michael David Schechtman
- Joel & Laura Segel following the death of Joel's mother, Ruth Segel
- Belle Linda Halpern following the death of her father, Merrill Mark Halpern
- Barbara & Ken Wexler following the death of Barbara's brother, Stephen Howard Kaye
- Lorraine Norwich following the death of her mother, Rose Norwich
- Ahitza González & David Barry following the death of Ahitza's father, Antonio González
- Amberly Polidor & Rabbi David Curiel following the death of Amberly's father, Joseph Polidor
- Sara Romano Toppelberg & Claudio Toppelberg following the death of Sara's mother, Nelly Alsiva Suaya
- Robert (Bob) Katz following the death of his wife, Barbara Rubin Katz
- Susan Alport following the death of her brother, Stephen Alport

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

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Elizabeth Asmus
Noa Baron & Silas Kotnour
Céline Debourse
Miriam & Robert Dorfman
Ruth Ducret
Shane Fischbach
Nayeli Gonzalez
Lyra Johnson
Cheryl & Roger Kirschner
Summer Lewis
Saphira Linden

Debbie Lipsett
Gabe & Emily McDonnell-Maayan
Sarah Mishkin
Phil & Carolyn Perelmutter
Amberly Polidor & Rabbi David Curiel
Donna Tarutz
Howard & Rhonda Sacks
Harvey & Ellen Silverberg
Rachel Spekman & Robin Smith
Merle Wolofsky
Alisa Zomer & Michael Goldstein

Mazel Tov!

- All graduates, young, old, & everywhere in between
- Izzie DiBiasio, Felix Reid, Matthew Albaum, & Sarah Leonard who completed their conversion to Judaism & were celebrated with their first *aliyah* to the Torah!
- Rav Leah Carnow & Yoni Battat, on the birth of their son, Noor Maayan Battat.
- Noah Weinberg & Aviva Herr-Welber, who got engaged!
- Sara Smolover & Larry Kraus, who celebrated their 32nd wedding anniversary.
- Allen Taylor & Kim Kronenberg, founders of Science Training Encouraging Peace (STEP), on the success of their program pairing Israeli & Palestinian university students, even as the Israel-Hamas war continues.
- Jonathan Klein & Amy Schottenfels' son, Nathan Klein, who was published in *The Washington Times*, sharing the story & memory of their beloved Uncle Oscar z"l.
- Shira Khaykovich & her family, on becoming bat mitzvah.
- Rabbi Daniel Klein, who was appointed as the new Dean of the Hebrew College Rabbinical School.
- Naomi Gurt Lind, on her appointment as sole clergy at Temple Ahavat Achim in Gloucester.
- Jen Klein, who was selected to be the new Director of the CPCS Immigration Impact Unit.
- Lisa Lovett & Julie Reuben, who celebrated 20 years of legal marriage! But more importantly, celebrated the 20th anniversary of a door opening for all the queer marriages in the TBZ community. Mazel tov to all of you!
- Carole Greenfield, who had a poem featured in the inaugural edition of *Macrame Literary Journal*.
- Gail Twersky Reimer, who received an honorary doctorate from the Jewish Theological Seminary.
- Heva Valentine, who passed her last test to achieve a new professional designation of Retirement Income Certified Professional (RICP).
- Penny Roberts, whose daughter, Liz Cohen, is writing a book, *Tutor: Lessons from 10,000 School District Tutoring Initiatives*, that will be published by Harvard Education Press next year.
- All of the members of our beloved Afghan family, who have all been approved for asylum!
- Ronnie Levin, who is honored to be included in *TIME's* list of the 100 Most Influential People in global health.
- Danielle Morgenbesser & her entire family, on becoming bat mitzvah.
- Louisa Ould Ouali, who recently became an American citizen.
- Leah Hager Cohen, whose book, *To & Fro*, was published in May.
- Ella Lindauer-Cohen & her entire family, on becoming bat mitzvah.
- Leah Abrahams, whose video, "The Telephone Game Art Exhibition," debuted in an exhibit of Boston & Haifa artists.
- Mickey Salins, who earned tenure & a promotion as a math professor at Boston University.
- Karen Lange, who recently became a Full Professor at Wellesley College.
- Micah Kraus, son of Larry Kraus & Sara Smolover, on his acceptance to the Teach Next Year Program at UMass Boston, towards a Masters of Education degree & licensure.
- Debbie Korn, who was the #1 Walk for Hunger fundraiser (\$16,467) this year & also had the most donors (173!). A portion of the funds Debbie raised were earmarked for the Greater Boston Jewish Family & Children's Service (JF&CS), which includes Family Table. Debbie, Adam, & Bob have been delivering food for Family Table since Adam was a student at Beit Rabban.
- Stephanie Carey Maron, who, after 11 years with the Unitarian Universalist Association, has started a new role as their Governance Manager.
- Ben Lewis, son of Steve Lewis, who has been appointed Clinical Manager for Black Flag Rescue, which provides wilderness rescue services for wildfires & other natural disasters in the western part of the U.S. Ben lives in Salt Lake City, Utah.
- Idit Klein, who received a special honor from Congregation Rodeph Sholom, Central Synagogue, & Tzedek Box in New York City on Yom HaTzedek (Day of Justice) for her work to advance LGBTQ equality in Jewish life.
- Jordan Namerow, who won a 2024 Nautilus Book Award for her children's book, *Like the Sea & the Sky: A Mysterious Mollusk & Its Magical Blue Ink*.
- Tamar & Philip Warburg, who are now grandparents to Isla Warburg Goldstein.
- Ava Zarwan & her entire family, on becoming bat mitzvah.
- Emre Zisfain-Shea & his entire family, on becoming bar mitzvah.
- Marjorie Sokoll, the founder & director of the Betty Ann Greenbaum Miller Center for Jewish Healing, who retired after 30 years at Jewish Family & Children's Service.
- Miriam Bennett & her entire family, on becoming bat mitzvah.
- Jonah Blouwolf, who was accepted into the Diller Youth Fellows, a yearlong fellowship for high school students interested in exploring topics in leadership, Jewish identity, social justice, & Israel.
- Rose Freedman-Riles, who was accepted into the Diller Youth Fellows, a yearlong fellowship for high school students interested in exploring topics in leadership,

Mazel Tov!

Jewish identity, social justice, & Israel.

- JJ Kapanga-Ndjibu & his entire family, on becoming bar mitzvah.
- Danielle Smith, who finished her 2-year Montessori teacher training, & is officially certified to teach 6-9 year olds in Montessori environments.
- Randi Cohen Coblenz, who had a recent article published in the *Times of Israel*.
- Beth and Mitch Harris, on the marriage of their daughter Rachel Harris to Ari Karchmer.
- Michelle Oberman & Noah Braiterman, on their marriage.
- Karen Brody, who, at age 80, became bat mitzvah at Temple Beth Or in Raleigh on June 14th.
- Rochelle Kelman, who published her first children's book, *Stella. The Travels of a Steller's Sea Eagle*.
- Noah Berz for his first article in the *Brookline News* about the farmers market (with a quote from TBZ member, Judith Kates!).
- Simcha Barkai & Lucy, on the birth of their son.
- Rabbi Sam & Jenni Seicol, who welcomed their 6th granddaughter into the world on August 2nd.
- The TBZ community & especially to Jenny Berz & Fiona Epstein, chairs of TBZ's Immigration/Refugee Resettlement Action Group, as HIAS has bestowed to TBZ the highest congregational honor – the Pathways Trailblazer Award – for TBZ's extraordinary work helping refugees, asylum seekers & other forcibly displaced people.
- Carole Greenfield, who recently had a poem published on *Autumn Sky Poetry Daily*.
- Shula Reinharz, who recently published a book, *Hiding in Holland: A Resistance Memoir* (Amsterdam Publishers). & for her 2024 Institute Medal, awarded by the Leo Baeck Institute for the Study of Germany Jewry, for her contributions as a scholar & community leader.
- Mathew Album & Emerson Getzen, on their marriage.
- Akiva Nelson & Carly Margolis, on their marriage.
- Marina Rothberg, who immersed in the mikveh & affirmed her Jewish identity.
- Mariana Rothberg & Jared Videlefsky, on their marriage.
- Joel Schwartz & Ronnie Levin, who welcomed their first grandchild, Rose Victoria.
- Fern Fisher & Jack Eiferman, who welcomed a grandchild, Isabella Eiferman Andrade, born on August 30 to Julia Eiferman & Chris Andrade.
- Reb Moshe, on his play & performance of "You Can Live If They Let You," which was a sell-out.
- Alyssa Hertz Thomas & Max Friedman, on their marriage.
- Lauren Garlick & Jonny Garlick, whose son Jesse married Josephine Elwood.
- Jonathan Golden, who started a new education consulting business.
- Hadara Ancowitz & her family, on becoming bat mitzvah.
- Bridgette Lappe & Jake Shapiro, on their marriage.
- Andy Halpert & Rabbi Jane Kanarek whose son, Lev Kanarek Halpert, became bar mitzvah.
- Louisa Ould Ouali, on the engagement of her daughter, Dr. Tassadit Langlois to Dr. Thomas Lediffon.
- Jon Frankel & Merle Wolofsky, whose daughter & granddaughter respectively, Amanda, married Matt Steadman.
- Julia Spiefelman, who successfully defended her dissertation on non-binary high school students' language learning experiences.
- Noah Katz-Appel, son of Sheila Katz & Michael Appel, & step-son of Eduardo Stern, on his engagement to Nidhi Sunil.
- Daniel Myers & his entire family, on becoming bar mitzvah.
- Nina Moliver's granddaughter, Rivkah Hornbacher, doctoral candidate in neuroscience at Brown University, on the publication of an article presenting the results of a clinical trial for a repurposed drug used to treat alcohol use disorder.
- Reb Moshe and Anne Waldoks, on the birth of their grandson on November 4th.
- Risa Waldoks and Ira Blum, on the birth of their son on November 4th.
- Marjie and Mark Sokoll, on the birth of their grandson on November 6th, to parents David Sokoll and Dani Weiss of Cleveland Heights, OH.
- David Ofsevit and Nancy Mazonson, on the birth of their grandson, Leon Glassman Ofsevit, on November 3rd to parents Elena Glassman and Ari Ofsevit.
- Eduardo Stern, on the birth of his grandchildren (twins: Sasha and Irina), to parents Aliosha and Jennifer.
- Fran Adams, whose daughter Joanna was married to Mathew Shea on October 28.
- Robert (Bob) Stickgold, on receiving the 2024 Harvard Medical School Prize in Sleep Medicine. And, on winning a Moth StorySLAM competition in Minnesota, qualifying him for a Moth GrandSLAM competition.
- Craig Sumberg, who recently started his new job with the Firehouse Center for the Arts in Newburyport.
- Rabbi Suzanne and Andy Offit, on the marriage of their son David Offit to Sarah Baron in Washington, DC.

DONATIONS

Leah Abrahams
Diane Abrams
Leah Abrams
Stephane & Mara Acel-Green
Fran Adams
Simonre Albeck
Seth Alper & Bobbi Isberg
Laurie Alpert & Barry Weiss
Anonymous
Joyce Antler
Naomi Azar & Aaron Wolfe
Elaine & Yitzhak Bakal
Michele Baker & Rabbi Jim Morgan
Diane Balser
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