

The Shofar



November 2016
Tishri-Cheshvan 5777

A Message from Rabbi Jordi Gendra



CBT-BI stands unique among South Jersey synagogues in its pluralist approach to Judaism, not bound by any one stream of Judaism, but informed by all. Pluralism means that there is more than one way to believe and practice as a Jew—a fact that has been embraced by Judaism throughout history. A cursory

reading of the Torah reveals many perspectives about God, and also reveals the human hand in its authorship.

At CBT-BI, we positively embrace our story and traditions and take seriously our duty to continue to explore and apply them in a contemporary context.

All Jews unite around the stories of the Torah and its call to be a people of faith. How we do so is varied. The variety of practices and approaches to faith is recorded in our earliest rabbinic works – Midrash, Mishnah and Talmud – all of which at times suggest the self-conscious human hand in transmission of Scripture. The following vignette featuring God and Moses is found in the Talmud:

Moses, having ascended to heaven, questioned God about the meaning of the squiggles (jots and tittles) found above certain letters in the Torah. God responded there would be a man who would teach many meanings from them. Moses requests to see this person, and is sent to the back row (the row for the least accomplished students) in the Yeshiva of Rabbi Akiva. He listens to the disciples discussing the laws of Torah, and is not able to follow any of their discourse. In distress, he grows faint, until one of the disciples asks Rabbi Akiva, “Master, where did you learn this?” and Rabbi Akiva replied, “It is a law given to Moses at Sinai.”

This story, told by rabbis about rabbis, informs the reader that they understood the development of Torah

to be based in Torah, while substantially and creatively different from it. Our approach to pluralist interpretation follows in these footsteps.

While 1,000 years ago philosophers and codifiers of the Middle Ages began a process of “hardening the tradition” by enumerating the mitzvot and declaring fixed principles of faith, the development of Judaism since then has been anything but fixed. In the wake of their efforts to firmly fix practice and belief arose the promulgation of Kabbalah and Hasidism, both of which challenged *halakhic* (legalistic) norms. Our modern day movements that arose out of the 18th century Enlightenment (Renewal, Reform, Reconstructionist, Progressive, Conservative, Open Orthodox and Modern Orthodox) further expanded this diversity in belief and practice. At CBT-BI, we positively embrace our story and traditions and take seriously our duty to continue to explore and apply them in a contemporary context. At the heart of Judaism is faith in God—understood in many different ways, but always calling us to embrace the ultimate singularity that interconnects all life. We teach that all living beings form part of that singularity and that we are called to strive toward that unity embracing diversity, not demanding uniformity.

CBT-BI teaches and practices that women have equal rights and responsibilities in Judaism. This means we sit together at services and have equal roles within the community. We have women at our highest levels of leadership. We embrace those in the LGBTQI community. We welcome blended families (where some family members are not Jewish), and other individuals who find meaning in our spiritual practice and religious community. We also advocate for equality outside the Jewish community, engaging in social justice projects around refugee advocacy, poverty alleviation, animal welfare, and environmental responsibility.

Our understanding that there is more than one path in Judaism empowers us to provide spiritual services across the spectrum of Jewish diversity. Just as an ecosystem is stronger the more diverse it is, so too a community. CBT-BI has become a vibrant community in South Jersey and we truly believe that this is a result of our inclusive, egalitarian nature, which has enabled us to create a spiritual home where Jews and other seekers are welcomed.



Greetings from Our Executive Board

It's cool, the leaves are turning, and the High Holidays are behind us. One option is to heave a big sigh of relief and relax till next year. Another is to capitalize on all of the warmth, energy, and connection of our holidays this year; to engage with the congregation and each other fully re-energized, and to become the "fearless leaders" that Rabbi Jordi spoke about. We hope you will choose "b," as we have.

The beauty of the High Holiday observations leads us to celebrate our accomplishments—and there are many! How many groups and individuals need to be thanked? We can't count, and while we do our best to thank and recognize everyone, there is always a terrible fear that we will inadvertently forget to mention someone. Please know that, in our hearts, we never forget and always appreciate you!

The sanctuary renovation is a priority, not only because of the pleasure we can take in a beautiful space, but, more importantly, so that we can be a home for everyone who wants to come.

So many wonderful things done and so many things to do! Our commitment is to work our hardest to help CBT-BI meet the myriad needs of everyone, and to engage in frank and honest discussion when we cannot. To that end, we need to understand what is most important to people.

Please help us learn what is special to you by participating in the surveys that will be coming your way.

We are trying several different approaches to collect input and commit to using that feedback to direct our plans for the coming years and decades. Please join us in our ongoing journey to be even better.

The sanctuary renovation is a priority, not only because of the pleasure we can take in a beautiful space, but, more importantly, so that we can be a home for everyone who wants to come. Help us to reach both inside and outside our congregation to strengthen our future

Thank you all for your energy and support as 5777 gets off to a spectacular start!

Fondly,

Lynn, Beth, Marcy and Leora



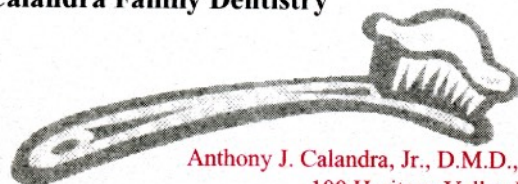
The Shofar

Editor: Lisa Parker
editor@cbtbi.org

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Congregation B'nai Tikvah-Beth Israel
 115 East Holly Avenue, Sewell, NJ 08080
 (856) 589-6550 • info@cbtbi.org • www.cbtbi.org

Jamie H. Green, D.D.S.
Calandra Family Dentistry



Anthony J. Calandra, Jr., D.M.D., LLC
 100 Heritage Valley Drive
 Suite 3
 Sewell, NJ 08080
 (856) 582-5555
www.drcalandra.com

A Message from Wendy Marder, Educational Director



You are all cordially invited to join us Saturday, November 19 at Shabbat *Kallah*, which also happens to be our first Shabbat School. Shabbat *Kallah* is the Sabbath of the Bride, the Sabbath before the wedding, when the bride—surrounded by family and friends—rests, relaxes, and celebrates Shabbat.

Kallah means bride. You may be familiar with this term from *L'cho Dodi*, the Friday night prayer we sing during Kabbalat Shabbat, the welcoming of the Sabbath. We turn and face the back doors of the sanctuary to symbolically greet the Sabbath bride. The bride is a metaphor for Shabbat, since we are supposed to look to Shabbat like a groom looks to his bride, as a gift, a joy, a blessing. The word “*kallah*” in Hebrew is spelled *kaf, lamed, hay*, not to be confused with the Sabbath “*challah*” spelled *chet, lamed, hay*. Oh, what a difference a letter makes, though both the *kallah* and the *challah* bring joy and generally bring people to their feet.

It is traditional in a non-Orthodox synagogue to have the bride and groom called up to do an *aliyah* (a blessing) on the

Torah and to be showered with candy, wishing them a sweet life. In our case, Laura’s *chatan* (groom) will be called up in his synagogue the Shabbat before, in the Orthodox tradition, in a ceremony called an *aufguf*, which means “to be called up” in Yiddish. But it is appropriate that Laura will be surrounded by our school children as she is called to the Torah on the day before her wedding. She began her teaching career at CBT as an assistant at bat mitzvah age and then later as a teacher at CBT-BI and is still surrounded by children as a teacher at the Hannah Sennesh Community Day School in Brooklyn. Laura will also give us some words of Torah from the parsha that day, *Chaya Sarah*.

Our school children have learned a wedding song and some of the customs of a Jewish wedding in order to make their first Shabbat school and Shabbat *Kallah* even more special. As the children shower the bride with sweets, please join in the singing and dancing. May we all be filled with the beauty of Shabbat and the blessings of being part of a wonderful community. Thank you ahead of time for sharing in our joy, and share in some refreshments at the oneg following services as well.

Wendy

And the Yad b'Yad Award Goes to...



Mazel tov to Allison Harris, who has been named the CBT-BI recipient of the 2016 Yad b'Yad award, an honor bestowed by the Jewish Federation’s Young Adult Division. She is being

recognized for her many contributions to our synagogue. In addition to her board position as financial secretary, Allison also co-chairs Sisterhood and the PTO while remaining active in the school, working full-time, and raising a seven-year-old daughter. Her time, effort, and dedication are greatly appreciated.

Sisterhood Holiday Bazaar
Sunday, December 11
9:30 AM to 1 PM
at CBT-BI



Unique Gifts Judaica Items
 Refreshments Gift Cards
 and Much More!

My Trip to Paradise by Dara Wax

After 10 hours of sitting still, my dream had finally become a reality. The pilot announced over the intercom, “This is your Captain speaking. Ladies and Gentlemen please do not unfasten your seat-belts. We have arrived at the Ben Gurion Airport in Tel Aviv, Israel. Local time is 9:30 AM. Thank you.” Almost automatically, a loud thunderous applause echoed through the plane corridor. A shiver shot up my spine and a familiar feeling brought a smile to my lips. “נחמ... we are home!” yelled a young child several rows behind me. I was home. Tears began rolling down my cheeks as the plane then inserted itself into the proper gate. As I stepped off of the plane, a wave of indescribable feelings washed over my body. I took my first breath of Israeli air. I was finally here.



The following events seemed to happen so quickly. We ate lunch with our new group, received a rent-a-phone, and headed to the bus—which I then learned was the first of many long bus rides to come. Looking out the window of the bus felt like one large dream. I was in complete shock. No text book nor picture could convey the beautiful simplicity of Israel. The program *Chetz V'Keshet* of 140 teenagers ages 15-18 were then whisked away to a kibbutz called Tzuba. When I first told my friends about my summer trip to the Middle East, they asked, “Is it safe?” I have never felt so safe in my entire life. Only in Israel can you witness multiple soldiers equipped with M16s casually dine in a public restaurant.

The month-long trip to paradise was divided into three parts. Part 1 was a week in Gadna, a program that prepares teenagers for military service in the Israeli Defense Force. We ate out of cans three times a day, slept on small cots in a shared living space, and dressed in uniform. For this part of the trip, we were spoken to in Hebrew only. The most difficult hurdle to overcome was the language barrier. Although it was intense, my friends and I still managed to have fun when the commanders were not looking. When Gadna came to a close, I won best soldier in my tzevet and received a dog tag with my name on it!

Part 2: North Week. To kickoff the North Week, I took another long bus ride up to Golan Heights. We explored Syrian war bunkers and listened to a member of the UN border patrol

speaking on foreign affairs. Next, every participant was given three options: Kibbutz life, Yam el Yam, or Tsfat. Without hesitation I chose Tsfat, which was by far my favorite part of the trip. Tsfat was a four-day paradise. I made more new friends, turned trash into treasure through *tikkun olam*, and gave myself a spiritual identity. One night, we hiked through Tsfat with only the stars to keep us company. We meditated under the stars in a 2,000-year-old synagogue and had multiple jam sessions. My friend Segev and I decided to savor our last moments in Tsfat by waking up at 4 AM to watch the sunrise. To close our North Week, the different groups re-gathered for an overnight hike followed by a trip to the Kinneret. Banana boating and bathing in the Kinneret were fun ways to reunite.

After the week in the North, participants left for a free weekend. A quick back story: In 2014, I went to a camp called NJY. There were only 70 Israelis and over 300 American participants. Over the years, I managed to keep in touch via Skype with a few friends in Israel. This was one of the moments on my trip I looked forward to the most: spending a free weekend with friends I hadn't seen in over two years. The bus ride to Tel Aviv

was long. I was so nervous to reunite with them. Lucky for me, my friend Yotam recognized me and picked me up right on time. We spent the weekend doing teenage things like going to an Israeli



music rave and surfing. From outdoor *shooks* (markets), movies, and the oh-so-delicious magnum festival—I loved getting to know the teenage culture. Sadly, at the end of my weekend, it was time to say goodbye. Tears rolled down my face when I hugged them for the last time.

Part 3: The South Week, which was jam packed with activities: snorkeling, touring, hiking, cooking in the desert, navigating the sand dunes, mountain biking, sleeping in bedouin tents, and camel riding. I got to experience major classics like hiking Masada at sunrise, visiting Yad Vashem, seeing Ben Gurion's grave, viewing the soldier burial sight, swimming in the Dead Sea, and roaming Ben Yehuda Street! At that time, my Israel experience felt complete. This was a truly inspiring trip. I will never forget my very first trip to Israel, and I know it will not be my last.

Sisterhood News by Luba Veytsman and Allison Harris



Before the High Holidays, our Sisterhood was quite busy. Our own Lori Gerstein led an informative program about emergency preparedness. We also had another successful challah sale. Thank you to all who participated and to Rose Scott, Myra Caplan, Leora

Rothschild, and Marcy Kaufman for organizing and helping with the challah sale. Also, thank you to John Mulloy for supplying the delicious challah.

After the holidays we hosted a kugel bake-off (see photos on Page 7) and a speaker from the Family Promise program. December is going to be a very busy and fun month for us. On December 8 we will have our annual paid-up membership dinner, "Vodka and Latkes."

On December 11, along with the PTO and Men's Club, we will hold our annual Chanukah Bazaar. As in the past, we will have a variety of vendors and gifts. If you need any special items from our gift shop, please contact Sharon Richman. We are also going to need some help to set up the night before the bazaar as well as during the event, so please contact us if you can help.

For January we are planning either a pottery or canvas painting event, and in February we are planning a book discussion or a movie. We are currently looking at different book ideas, so if you have suggestions, please let us know.

In March we will have our second Women's Seder! This is a really great and fun program, so please make sure to join us. Please look for our flyers and join us at all of our programs/events. It's never too late to join Sisterhood.

Shalom and we look forward to seeing you at our events.

Allison Harris and Luba Veytsman

Synagogue Happenings

Sofer (scribe) Neil Yurman, along with members of the congregation, helped restore a Torah at a family program last month, while religious school students celebrated Sukkot in the CBT-BI sukkah.



Bob's Garage



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**Door
Prizes!**

Sunday, December, 4, 2016

Glassboro VFW Post 679

275 Wilmer St, corner of Sewell Street, Glassboro, NJ

Doors Open: 5:00 pm • Bingo Starts 6:30 pm

Tickets: \$35

Reserve a Table of 8 at the Reduced Price of \$260!

Donation includes 1 set of Bingo sheets for 10 Games, 4 faces per game
Extra Game sheet sets sold at door; 1 for \$10 or 3 for \$25

Complimentary Soda Bar & Dessert Buffet
Bring Your Own Dinner and/or Snacks

To Purchase Tickets:

Send check(s) payable to "CBT-BI"
with names of attendees to:

Steve Blocher, 260 Night Hawk Circle, Thorofare, NJ 08086

For more info: email Donna - dib4ed@gmail.com
or Diane - ashapdee@msn.com

**Silent
Auction!**

**50/50 &
Basket
Raffles**



No alcohol permitted by state law
Must be 18 or older to enter facility.

All Proceeds Benefit Children & Youth Education

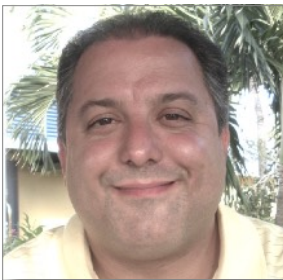


Sweet? Savory? Kugel Bake-Off Showcases Cooking Skills and Creativity

A friendly competition among Sisterhood members resulted in a wide variety of tasty kugel dishes at CBT-BI last month. Mazel tov to the winners!



Men's Club News by Jordan Harris



With fall here and cooler weather on the horizon, the Men's Club has been playing a strong role in many of CBT-BI's most well-regarded events.

The fall season has been active, with strong attendance for our monthly breakfast meetings (held on the first Sunday of the month) and for our card/game nights (sponsored on the fourth Thursday of each month). The Men's Club continues to try many of our area's terrific diners in search of the perfect spot to find great food along with terrific conversation for our meetings. With Sunday school back in session, we will be returning to meeting at diners for our breakfast gatherings after holding our meetings at the synagogue during the summer months.

The fall began the busy season with preparation for the High Holidays beginning in September. Many veteran Men's Club members spent a lot of time sprucing up the outside of

the synagogue as well as doing service book exchanges in preparation for the holidays. We also were able to gather ahead of schedule to construct our beautiful Sukkah in early October, a great fall tradition. The Tot Shabbat committee was able to hold their Pizza in the Hut event as a result of the teamwork and spirit of the Men's Club.

One of the best ways for members to have an input on event ideas and planning is to attend our monthly breakfast meetings. It is a great forum to present ideas for future events or offer suggestions on how the Men's Club can be improved. The meetings are also a terrific avenue for socialization; very often, our discussions can go from synagogue matters to sports to politics in a very short period (especially in this unique Presidential election year).

If you have not had the opportunity to attend a Men's Club event or have not been in a while, please attend one of our breakfast meetings, bring your game skills to our card/game nights or check the calendar for some of our upcoming activities. There are plenty of laughs and fun to be had at our events.

Samost Jewish Family & Children's Service and the Cherry Hill Police Department
are proud to present...

This Life Counts *tlc*

A Suicide Awareness and Prevention Program
for Tweens, Teens, and Parents



Thank you to our
community partners:

Adath Emanu-El
Berlin-Gibbsboro-Voorhees
Municipal Alliance
Chabad
Cherry Hill Alliance on
Alcohol & Drug Abuse
Cherry Hill Public Schools
Cherry Hill Religious Leaders
Coalition
Congregation Beth El
Congregation Beth Tikvah
Congregation B'nai
Tikvah-Beth Israel
Congregation M'kor Shalom
Girl Scouts of Central &
Southern New Jersey
Politz Hebrew Academy
South Jersey Region BBYO
Sons of Israel
St. Andrew the Apostle Parish
Temple Beth Sholom
Temple Emanuel

● Your story
, isn't over yet.

*Reach Out
Speak Up*

A panel will discuss:

- The Role of Depression
- Warning Signs, Risks and Stressors
- Protective Factors that Help Prevent Youth Suicide
- Resources and Tools for Communication

**Wednesday,
December 7, 2016
7 PM
Katz JCC Social Hall**

Attendance is free but registration is required.
Please register at: www.jfcssnj.org/tlcreg or by calling 856-424-1333.

Pizza and dessert will be served.

Sponsored by:



Gesher Philanthropy/
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