### **Congregation B'nai Torah - Celebrating Over 25 Years Together**

**TORAH TIMES** 

# July 2024 25 Sivan - 25 Tammuz



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Our Torah March





My Fellow Congregants and Rabbi Kane,

As I move into my second month of the presidency with B'nai Torah, I am joyfully overwhelmed by the love, the compassion, and the willingness of so many of you to make a difference with a collaboration of new ideas and some not so new. The Mitzvah of your commitment of your time and energy will make a difference today and for years to come.

To share with all of you, we have had our first board meeting and additionally many other meetings to formulate a vibrant calendar for Congregation B'nai Torah. A few of the highlights include a social committee that is intertwined with the visiting committee, a fund-raising committee, and a membership committee. And you must be wondering "what could they all be talking about?" So, I'll give you a Schtickle (a little bit of something).

Here are the highlights: Field Trips, Lunch Buddies, Casino Night, "Eyes Wide Open" Ballroom Dance, and doing simple things like using a phone and "snail" mail to connect. Much more to come as we continue to formulate next steps.

This past Saturday at services, Rabbi Kane spoke of asking for Peace in the World, every time a server asks, "what else can I get you?" Pass it on please.

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This week's Torah portion speaks of Korach and his rebellion against Moses and Aaron with the outcome of Korach and his followers being swallowed up by the earth. For me as a Jew and a Kabbalist, there is an interesting message here, that jealousy can completely take you over until you are deprived of spiritual life and the light of life itself. However, even jealousy can have a positive aspect, when used to fuel our efforts toward earning what we desire, in a healthy and positive way. When you combine effort with patience and love, you allow the Light to be revealed in your life as it is meant to be. For example, when we volunteer together at CBT, our individual inner lights combine to make our world a bit brighter.

Again, I look forward to this year of listening, having conversations, laughing, and creating new memories with you.

With compassion, mercy, intent, and love, wishing you health and prosperity,

Howard Silverstein President **HowardHeyHeyAyin1@gmail.com** 815-980-7007

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE LUNCH BUDDY PROGRAM

Some of our older congregants would love to go out to lunch once a month. They need one-on-one time, and we need your help to make this happen.

> Please join us as a Volunteer Lunch Buddy.



AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME MAKES A HUGE DIFFERENCE.

PLEASE CALL MELANIE SHIFFMAN AT (386)506-9494 TO VOLUNTEER.

## A Message From Rabbi Kane



Rabbi Michael Gold, semi retired on the Gulf Coast of Florida since 2022, gave a version of this article (edited for space and clarity) as his Kol Nidre Sermon last year. How uncanny his thoughts are in predicting the world we have just nine months later.

### **Should Israel exist?**

There is a story about two men watching an old John Wayne movie. One turns to the other and says, "I will bet you \$5 that within the next minute John Wayne falls off his horse." The other man takes up the bet. Sure enough, within a minute John Wayne falls off his horse. The other man reaches to pay and the first man stops him. "I can't take your money. I saw this movie before." "I saw this movie before, also." "So if you saw the movie before, why did you bet that he would not fall?" "I did not think John

Wayne would make the same mistake twice."

We Jews have made the same mistake, not once, not twice, but countless times. We keep thinking that if we behave in a certain way, antisemitism will disappear. We keep thinking that the world will come to accept us as Jews. As the saying goes, "insanity is doing the same thing over and over expecting a different result." We Jews want the world to accept us, so that we can say, to paraphrase Sally Field when she won her second Academy Award, "You like us. You really like us."

There was a time when antisemitism was based on religion. If we Jews would only change our religion, the world will love us. In the nineteenth century many Jews did just that. The German poet Henrich Heine converted to Christianity so he could get a job teaching in a university. Afterwards he regretted it. He said, "I was baptized but not converted." Benjamin Disraeli converted and eventually became Prime Minister of Great Britain. Queen Victoria asked him about his religion. He famously replied, "I am the blank page between the Old and the New Testament." Karl Marx had grandfathers who were rabbis. He was baptized as a child and grew up to write The Communist Manifesto. His disparagers would blame communism on the Jews. Those who hate Jews for their religion continue to hate them even if they convert.

The virus of antisemitism mutated. Judaism was not a religion but a race. The Jews were not truly white, but a separate race who threatened to pollute the pure Aryan race. In religious antisemitism, one can convert out of Judaism. But one cannot convert out of one's race. In the Holocaust, even Christians who had Jewish blood were victims of the death camps. After the Holocaust, such racial antisemitism became less acceptable, at least for a period of time. This racial antisemitism is coming back, especially on the right. Jews are not truly white, they are the enemy who are working to replace good white Christians with blacks, browns, Asians, and immigrants of all colors. That is why the white supremacist marchers in Charlottesville shouted, "Jews will not replace us."

Today there is a new change. Jews are hated not for their religion and not for their race, but for their national identity. Theodor Herzl believed that if the Jews had a state of their own, what he called "The Jewish Problem" would disappear. When the Jews returned to their homeland and built a nation of their own, they would become like every other nation. Jews would no longer be hated. So, the Jews created the state of Israel, took in Jewish immigrants from around the world, resurrected the Hebrew language, built a city named Tel Aviv on the sand dunes, fought countless wars against those who would destroy her, and became an economic powerhouse in the Middle East. But now a new hatred developed, particularly on the left – a hatred of Israel. Israel is the only country in the world whose very existence is open to debate. Let me say that again. Israel is the only country in the world whose very existence is open to debate. Alan Dershowitz has said that he fears Jew hatred on the left much more than Jew hatred on the right.

50 years ago, on Yom Kippur, Egypt and Syria attacked Israel. The tragic Yom Kippur War was perhaps the biggest threat to the survival of Israel in history. I remember the day well. I was a new rabbinical student, and I went to an Orthodox synagogue to better learn the liturgy. Although the Orthodox community did not watch tv or listen to the radio, they knew what was happening. That Yom Kippur they said special prayers for the survival of Israel. I recently saw the movie Golda, about Golda Meir's leadership during that war. The movie was excellent. What is the biggest issue being discussed today regarding that movie? The issue is not the survival of Israel nor the threat to Israel's existence. The biggest issue is, should Helen Mirren have played Golda Meir? She is a wonderful actress. But she is not Jewish. Should a non-Jew play the Jewish Prime Minister? The same issue is being raised regarding Bradley Cooper playing Leonard Bernsen in Maestro. He is not Jewish. On top of that, they made him a prosthetic nose to look more like Bernstein. Should a non-Jew play the Jewish composer? Should Lea Michele, a talented young actress, raised Christian although with a Jewish father, play Fanny Brice on Broadway in Funny Girl?

I believe it is a ridiculous question? Acting is acting, and actors play other people. This issue points to something deeply wrong with our culture. It often goes by the name "Identity Politics." It judges people not as individuals but by their group identity. The world is divided between Jews and gentiles, and only Jews can play Jewish characters. Only straights can play straights and only gays can play gays, only Hispanics can play Hispanics and only Asians can play Asians. Never mind that the biggest hit on Broadway in decades was Hamilton, where the actor who played Alexander Hamilton was Hispanic, the actor who played Aaron Burr was black, and the actor who played King George was a white, gay man.

That brings me to how the left views Israel. The world is not made up of individuals, but divided into whites and blacks, males and females, straights and gays, colonizers and indigenous peoples, Jews and gentiles. People are placed into groups. According to Critical Theory, the world is divided into oppressors and oppressed. And according to this world view, Israelis are the oppressors, and the Palestinians are the oppressed. Israel is an oppressor nation, and ,therefore, has no right to exist. Jews are colonizers and Palestinians are the indigenous people of the land. This is what our college students are being taught.

Should Israel continue to exist as a Jewish state? On college campuses around the country, students hold up signs saying, "Israel Practices Apartheid" and "Stop the Occupation." What occupation are they talking about? Probably most students have no idea. But the Justice for Palestine organizations on college campuses can answer exactly what occupation. They hold signs saying, "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be free." There will be a Palestinian state throughout the land, including not just the West Bank of the Jordan River, but all of Jerusalem, Haifa, and Tel Aviv. What about the more than seven million Jews who live there? They are colonialists who can go back to where they came from.

To quote the late Rodney King, whose arrest brought about riots in Los Angeles, "Why can't we just get along?" Why can't Israelis and Palestinians just be good neighbors and get along? Some people have called for the dismantling of Israel as a Jewish state and the establishment of a binational state called Israel-Palestine. One state that would be a homeland for both Jews and Palestinians. There were legitimate thinkers in the early 1900's who believed in such a binational state. Such Zionist leaders as Martin Buber and Henrietta Szold shared such a vision. Such a binational state, as appealing as it is to progressives, is not going to happen. Israel will never give up its self-identity as a Jewish state. Such a binational state, as appealing as it is to progressives, is not going to happen. Israel will never give up its self-identity as a Jewish state.

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What about the two-state solution? What about two states, Israel and Palestine, built on sovereignty, security, and regional cooperation? This was the dream of the original United Nations partition plan in 1947, two states, one Jewish and one Arab. Israel offered the Palestinians of the West Bank a sovereign state after the Six Day War. A two-state solution was part of the Oslo Accords, the famous agreement between Bill Clinton, Yitzhak Rabin, and Yasser Arafat. Numerous Israeli prime ministers until our own time have offered the Palestinians their own state. The vast majority of Israelis would agree to a two-state solution in a moment. It is the Palestinians who have always rejected this solution. Why?

No Palestinian leader can give up on their own dream, of a return of all Palestinians refugees and their descendants to the homes they fled during the Israel War of Independence. They call the day Israel gained independence Al Naqba "the catastrophe." To the Palestinian mind, the only way to undo this catastrophe is a total return of Palestinian refugees. Palestinians demand that Israel open its borders to millions of Palestinians. If Israel ever agreed to this, which they will not, Israel would cease to be a Jewish state. If Israel ever agreed to this, I fear for the safety of the Jews in Israel. And so the conflict continues.

The world once hated Jews for their religion. They then hated Jews for their race. Today the world hates Jews for its nationhood. They claim that it is not Jews they hate, it is the state of Israel. But to hate Israel and want to see Israel destroyed is to hate Jews and want to see Jews killed. The animus is not against just Israel, but against Jews. Why else would Rose Ritch, a Jewish student at the University of Southern California, where my nephew went to college, be forced to resign her position on the student government? As a Jew and a Zionist, she could not fairly represent all the students at U.S.C.

I take it as a given that Israel has the right to exist as a Jewish state. Those who seek to destroy Israel as a Jewish state are not simply enemies of Israel, they are enemies of the Jewish people. We must fight this attack on the existence of Israel with all the resources available to us.

There are over 200 sovereign nations in the world. 193 nations belong to the United Nations. Of these nations, there is only one nation whose existence is still open to debate. Only Israel still must convince the world that it has the right to exist. This is true 75 years after its founding, 50 years after the Yom Kippur War. Today there are university classes taught by tenured professors at some of the leading colleges of the country, built on the question – should Israel continue to exist? How sad that it is even open to debate?

### Continued on next page

Fortunately, Israelis do not think about such existential questions. They know their lives are at stake and they must fight to maintain a Jewish state. I attended a meeting a group of rabbis had with President Joe Biden when he was still Vice President. It was at a home in Boca Raton. Biden told us a story of a meeting he had early in his career with the late Prime Minister Golda Meir. Golda mentioned the threats to Israel from the north, from the east, and from the south. Biden asked her, "how do you manage with all those threats?" Golda smiled, "We Israelis have a secret weapon." Biden replied, "What kind of secret weapon?" Golda said, "We have nowhere else to go."

Seven million Jews live in Israel. It is open to any other Jew, anywhere in the world, who needs a place to call home. Yes, Israel has been torn this year by a severe domestic crisis. There have been massive demonstrations against the decisions of the Israeli government to restructure the Israeli Supreme Court. The issues are painful for anyone who loves Israel. But on both sides of the issue, Israelis love their country. They are not going anywhere. Israel's right to exist as a Jewish nation is not open to debate. It is a given – a brute fact. The sooner the world realizes that Israel will not go away, the sooner there will be peace in the Mideast.

May God give strength to his people, and may God bless His people with peace, and let us say, Amen.

### Rabbi S. David Kane



Port Orange, Daytona Beach, and Ormond Beach Congregants....

DO YOU NEED A RIDE TO SYNAGOGUE ON FRIDAY NIGHT OR SATURDAY MORNING? WE CAN PICK YOU UP!

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, PLEASE CALL MELANIE SHIFFMAN AT (386)506-9494

### **Congregation B'nai Torah Religious School Report** By Helen Farb



We had a small but congenial group at our June Kid and Tot Shabbat. We were glad that Beverly Maxwell, her family and Jerry Epstein could join us that night. We had several students lead some of the service. The congregation was so proud of them! Ana Chuven is our only high school graduate and was given some presents to

take with her to Southern College in Lakeland, Florida. She also did much of the service. Her singing of VAY'HULU always takes my breath away. She does it so beautifully.

On Friday, June 28, the religious school presented Morah Virginia with a thank you gift for her service to our religious school. Morah has done an outstanding job teaching the Religious School students.

We will not be having a Kid and Tot Shabbat in July but will resume Friday, August 2nd.

Rabbi Kane and Dr. Jonathan Frankel are working on getting the Shalom School up and running.

Hope to see you participate in services this summer! Stay cool!!

**Miss Helen** 









# Sisterhood in the News

I would like to start off thanking the Sisterhood Board and all our members for helping me get through my first term as Sisterhood President. I would never have made it through without all of you.

Thank you to Mark Givarz and Men's Club for cohosting Shabbat on June 14<sup>th</sup>, it was a huge success. Members of the Sisterhood and Men's Club did a beautiful service and a wonderful Oneg. 

As we look forward to our upcoming year, we hope that all our members will join and support our Sisterhood. We extend a special welcome to Temple Israel's Sisterhood to be a part of B'nai Torah's Sisterhood. Our annual dues are \$36.00, applications and payment may be made online at mybnaitorah.org website, mailed in, or dropped off at the temple office from 9:00am-1:00pm Monday-Friday.

We will kick off our new year with the following events:

- **Tuesday July 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:30pm**, join Sisterhood at Rose Villa's Restaurant in Ormond Beach for a "Summer Super Special" Special Menu for \$20 complete dinners, RSVP no later than July 23rd, Limited Seating. Call Barbara Kusnick 985-705-1236 or Netta Weiner 386-672-1707
- Thursday August 15<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Board and Planning Meeting (time and place TBA)
- Tuesday September 17<sup>th</sup>, Hold the Date: Sisterhood Opening Luncheon TBA

Any members interested in being on our Board or the planning committee, please contact Barbara Kusnick 985-705-1236.

I invite you to take that step, to embrace the bonds of sisterhood, and to join us on this meaningful journey. Together, we can create a stronger, more vibrant community, where every voice is heard, every heart is valued, and every soul is uplifted.

Be a part of something extraordinary. Join Sisterhood. Have a great Summer and STAY COOL, It's hot out there! **Barbara Kusnick, Sisterhood President** 

### **Come join the fun**

Download the CBT Sisterhood Membership Application HERE

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## **Men's Club Upcoming events:**

We recently celebrated the holiday of Shavuot, the revelation of the Torah. The revelation at Mount Sinai symbolizes the moment of the Covenant by receiving the Torah, God's divine wisdom and guidance. This Covenant comes with commitment, responsibilities, family & community relationships, learning, and personal development.

#### How can the themes of revelation and learning inspire us to seek personal growth and deeper understanding of our roles and responsibilities?

Are we good mentors and role models for those we impact in our lives? Are we generous with our time in addition to our money? Do we seek out volunteer opportunities that encourage us to give back? Do we seek out personal development in areas such as communication skills, emotional intelligence, and self-care?

# Do we purposely make quiet time in our busy lives to reflect on prayer, meditation, and mindfulness?

By embracing the connections between the themes of Shavuot, your Men's Club has created meaningful and supportive opportunities for our men and their families. Your Men's Club helps answer all the questions I just posed, by fostering personal growth, responsibility, leadership opportunities, community engagement, and so much more; helping each of us navigate our roles as Jews in a modern context.

We have a Men's Club Planning Meeting on Zoom on Wednesday, July 10 at 7:30 PM

Take advantage of the opportunities your Men's Club personally brings to you. Let us seize this opportunity to enrich our communities and support each other by joining, and becoming an active member in your Men's Club. You'll

be glad you did!

#### Mark Givarz, CBT Men's Club President 314-604-5618 <u>cbtobmensclub@gmail.com</u>

Here's the link to submit: https://mybnaitorah.org/ mens-club-donation/

Let me know if you have any ideas for the Men's Club.



# WE NEED YOUR HELP!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO HELP MAKE PHONE CALLS AND MAIL OUT WELCOME CARDS.

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AN HOUR MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

PLEASE CALL MELANIE SHIFFMAN AT (386)506-9494 TO VOLUNTEER.



## Come Enjoy JPGT Great company, conversation, food and friendships! All Welcome — Bring a Friend!

# THIS MONTH'S BREAKFASTS Thursday, July 11th and 25th at 9 AM



**New Cocation Peach Valley Café** 3813 South Nova Road Port Orange, FL 32129



## Yahrzeit Donations

Beverly Weitzberg by Laurie Davis Mildred Hozman by Ira Freedman Manuel Serkin by Steven Serkin Ida Benson by Norman Feldman Sim Ashkenazi by Laura Ashkenazi Robin Siegel Baldanza by Melanie & Jay Dolan Rose Abramson by Norman Feldman Sonny Freedman by Ira Freedman May Nebrasky by Rita Pender May Nebrasky by Melvin Nebrasky Robert Fox by Gary Fox Ilene Rotstein by Jonathan Rotstein Jennie Beck by Charles Beck

Thank You for Your Donations to The Rabbi Fund

Howard Silverstein

Irma Sue Stofsky

In Memory of Barbara (Bobbie) Gordon

Judy & Gery Harbinson Cherie, Lyle, Raquel & Devin Trachtman Marcy & Dr. Alan Spertus Sandra & Arthur Graham Helen Farb

In Memory of Robin Baldanza

Laurie Fittala

Lynn & Mark Siegel



Happy Birthday from Lea & Charles Moskowitz to Steve Serkin, Jacob Aaronson, Andy Dattel, Roberta Feldman, Jessica Sznapstajler, Alan Kisseloff, Sheryl Lipowitz, Ric Pasi, Valerie Kane, Mary Beggelman, Debra Rodensky, Lorna Beck, Bonnie Berns & Deena Stein



2 Lisa & Dr. Richard Rhodes

3 Nancy & Kenneth Nusbaum

10 Robin & Ray Weiss

### **EXPRESSIONS OF APPRECIATION**

A special thank you to Morah Virginia for her tireless dedication and commitment to our Religious School. We will miss her when she leaves for France.

Much appreciation to our volunteers who work to keep our synagogue thriving. We have a select few people behind the scenes who are always ready to assist with whatever we are hosting, etc. and we can always use more volunteers to help out!

Rosh Chodesh Tamuz for Hebrew Year 5784 begins at sundown on Friday, 5 July 2024 and ends at nightfall on Sunday, 7 July 2024

### **BE A CBT MITZVAH MAVEN!**

Have an extra hour (or two)? Volunteer!!! We have several homebound congregants who have found a visit from a CBT Family Member is one of the best ways to bring a smile to their faces. Interested in spreading some sunshine? <u>Contact Melanie Shiffman, our new Chair of the Visiting</u> <u>Committee at 386-506-9494.</u> The committee is very important for the elderly members of our congregational family. So please consider helping us with this important committee!

### **AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

Sharing a link to AJC's website: Resource for reporting Antisemitism to Federal Agencies, Law Enforcement, and Social Media Guidance (https://www.ajc.org/ReportingAntisemitism)

### SPREAD THE NEWS

Sema's grandson, wife & baby are coming back from Korea and will relocate to Arizona.

Steven & Mary Ann Serkin will be spending three weeks in North Carolina watching their grandchildren while the parents are away.

Doug is thankful Richard Rhodes is a member of the congregation and is treating his broken knee cap.

Melanie's son at Stetson University was awarded a summer research grant to study biophysics.

Helen announced her third great granddaughter Riley Mae Farb.

## Save the Date!

Rabbi Kane's 65th Birthday, Saturday, August 10th, services at 10:00 AM followed by a festive luncheon.

# WE NEED YOUR HELP!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR THE VISITING COMMITTEE

THE VISITING COMMITTEE IS LOOKING FOR:

**VOLUNTEERS TO WRITE GET WELL CARDS** 

VOLUNTEERS TO VISIT CONGREGANTS WHO ARE IN NURSING HOMES, ASSISTED LIVINGS, THE HOSPITAL, REHABILITATION CENTERS, AND/OR AT HOME

VOLUNTEERS TO MAKE CALLS TO CHECK UP ON CONGREGANTS, IF NOT ABLE TO PHYSICALLY VISIT THEM



AN HOUR MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

PLEASE CALL MELANIE SHIFFMAN AT (386)506-9494 TO VOLUNTEER.



### **MEMORIAL BOARD**

The Sanctuary of Congregation B'nai Torah houses impressive memorial boards. Memorial plaques with the names of our dearly departed loved ones adorn the boards. A brass memorial plaque with the name of your departed loved one inscribed thereon can be added to the Memorial Board for a donation of \$300.

of \$500.

other appropriate information.

A leaf can be added for a donation of \$118. For ex-

tra special occasions, a limited number of "Foundation Stones" are available for a donation

Please call the office at (386) 672-1174 if you

would like more information about either the

Memorial Board or the Tree of Life.





# Upcoming Events

#### Shabbat services start at 7:00 PM each Friday and at 10:00 AM each Saturday unless otherwise noted

RESERVE THESE DATES				
Thu	July 4		CBT Office Closed for Independence Day	
Sun	July 7		International Chocolate Day—Delicious!	
Wed	July 10	7:30 PM	Men's Club Planning Meeting on Zoom	
Thu	July 11 & 25	9:00 AM	JPGT Breakfast-Peach Valley, Port Orange	
Mon	July 15	7:00 PM	Next CBT Board Meeting	
Sun	July 21		National Ice Cream Day—Yummy!	
Tue	July 30	4:30 PM	Sisterhood Dinner, Rose Villa Restaurant "Summer Super Special"	
Sat	Aug 3		Lunch & Learn after Services	
Sat	Aug 10		<u>SAVE THE DATE,</u> Rabbi's Birthday Luncheon After Services	

#### **Officers and Trustees**

President: Howard Silverstein Vice President: Mark Givarz Treasurer: Barbara Singer Secretary: Doug McEwen Trustees: Charlie Moskowitz, Sue Abel, Bonnie Berns, Debra Rodensky, Semareva Friedman, Harriet Fritts, Ken Haberman, Ron Horowitz, Eneida Kwetkus and MaryAnn Serkin Religious School Chair: Helen Farb Sisterhood: President, Barbara Kusnick Men's Club: President, Mark Givarz Past Co-Presidents: Adrienne Cooperman & Robin Freedman

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#### www.MyBnaiTorah.org

