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Tekiah

The Monthly Newsletter of



CONGREGATION
BETH TORAH

January 2023 • Issue 347 • Kislev/Tevet

BEIT T'FILAH: SONGS OF JUSTICE

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13TH

SHABBAT SHIRA: WE SING WITH JOY

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3RD



Remarks

Rabbi Javier Cattapan, Senior Rabbi

The Importance of *Azkarat Neshamot*

Judaism is a tradition that values memory as a living testament to those who came before us. Time and again, we are called to *zachor*, "remember." Memory is powerful, but it is also imperfect. Sometimes, it is difficult to recall the voice or the touch of a loved one who died many years ago. For instance, my mother passed away on Purim in 1990, before we had easy access to video recordings. I'm sorry that I cannot quite remember how her voice sounded. I remember her face and things she used to say, but never quite the sound of her voice. They say that time heals everything, but time also makes things seem blurry; we are often left with the lessons we've learned from those who are now gone.

Sooner or later, death touches us all. Every family, every person, regardless of age, faces the loss of a loved one. Practicing remembrance is essential, and the Jewish tradition provides some of the most sensible and beautiful ways of remembering them. *Azkarat neshamot*, the remembering and honoring of the dead.

We have incorporated the *azkara*, a moment of remembrance, into *Erev Shabbat* services. Just before the Mourner's *Kaddish*, instead of reading the same meditations every week, twice a month, I invite one of you to share a story about your loved one whose *yahrzeit* is this week. You could also share one lesson you learned from your loved one or something you learned about yourself as you mourn your loss. Some congregants indicated in their response to the High Holy Days survey that they were interested in offering an *azkara*, and I am contacting them first. We are planning to offer it for at least three years. If you would like to participate, please, send me the name of the loved one, and we will follow up with instructions.

So far, our feedback has been positive. The *azakara*-givers felt honored to be asked, more connected to the congregation, and considered remembering their loved one a profoundly spiritual experience. And, for us who listened to these remembrances, we sensed a deeper understanding of our fellow congregants and shared their moments of grief and joy.

In *Kol Haneshamah: Yamim Noraim*, the Reconstructionist *machzor*, we find this touching meditation,

"Jewish tradition, in its wisdom, teaches us that between the world of the living and the world of the dead, there is a window and not a wall, [...] the rituals [of remembrance] open windows to the unseen worlds of the dead. They create a sacred space and time wherein we can open our hearts and minds to the possibility of a genuine interconnection with beloved family members and friends who have left behind the world of the living. [...] Prepare to open that window ..."

I invite you to open that window and find that renewed connection with loved ones you cared for in life and now you want to remember. *Zachor!*

Interested in Joining the CBT Board?

As we enter the new year, you may be looking for unique opportunities to fill your heart. What about joining the Beth Torah Board? It's not as arduous or time-consuming as climbing Mt. Everest and it can be just as satisfying.

The Board meets on the second Tuesday of the month. Meetings usually begin at 7:00 p.m. and end at, or before, 9:00 p.m. We encourage members to attend meetings personally, but there is also the option of joining your colleagues by Zoom. There are no financial responsibilities to become a Board member. Many members choose to get involved with a personal area of concern.

If you want to steer Beth Torah in a new direction, or enhance some aspect of the organization, Board service is your opportunity. Please feel free to attend any Board meeting to get a better sense of the inner workings of this policy-making body. Board turnover due to expired terms or personal reasons allow for several openings this year. If you have an interest in serving or questions, please call or text the Nominating Chair Scott Franklin (913) 645-1036.

President's Corner

Happy new year and welcome to 2023.

Truth be told, I was never one to celebrate on New Year's Eve and never really understood the frivolity of the evening. When it turns midnight do all our problems and worries just disappear? Are we really starting with a clean slate? Do we now realize all the possibilities and opportunities of the brand-new year that were not available just a day earlier? The sad cold answer is no.

In 2022 I worried about my children. Nothing has changed now that it is 2023. They are both doing well and thriving but will that last? I worry about my real estate businesses. Both are doing well but they both have new and different problems that I need to figure out and contend with. Nothing has changed in 2023.

I worry about Beth Torah. As President, am I doing the best I can. Am I providing the guidance and leadership needed to solve the never-ending problems we are tasked to deal with. I worry about our finances. I worry about the growing anti-Semitic world we are living in and not IF the unspeakable will happen again but WHEN and will it be us? Sleepless nights in 2022 and now in 2023.

However...I believe we are on the right path and that 2023 will see Beth Torah take off and be the shining star we all thought it could be. In 2022 we turned over three major full-time director positions. We solved some of those issues in 2022 and continue to work hard getting back to full strength in 2023. We are welcoming Morgan Fasbinder as the new WRS principal. She brings fresh enthusiasm and ideas that we have not seen in years.

We had our first annual CBT BBQ bash which was a huge success and is already on the calendar for next year. The Chili Cook Off is back in February and should be just as good or better than in past years.

We have a rebirth of the Beth Torah Women's Group that spent 2022 planning and organizing and will be up and running in 2023 with new and exciting programs and opportunities to connect or reconnect. The Talmud Torah committee, started in 2022, brings together that deep pool of educational knowledge and experience we are so lucky to have at CBT. They will provide oversight and good council to all things education and will work hand in hand with Morgan and her teachers to get the WRS back to being the premier Jewish education facility we were several years ago.

Beth Torah is in a better financial position than we have been in some time, and our building is getting much needed deferred maintenance issues addressed. More improvements on the way in 2023.

Through all the turmoil of 2022, Rabbi Cattapan, CBT staff and our Board of Trustees kept us moving forward despite all the challenges we were facing. I know we are all looking forward to 2023 being a little less chaotic.

An old dog can learn new tricks and have new attitudes. With the turn of the calendar, I really believe 2023 will be a better year for the things I care about most. Beth Torah will thrive and grow. My children will continue to do well and will cope with whatever challenges they will face. Owning and managing urban core real estate has been an adventure for almost 40 years and will continue that way as long as I remain in this business. Best of all, 2023 will see me getting married and starting a new life with my best friend Jennifer Savner Levinson.

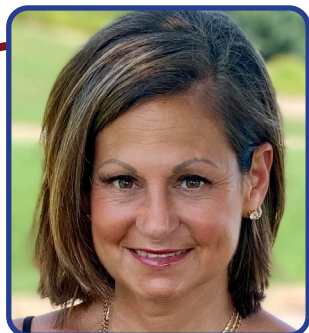
It's a new year with a fresh start and all things are possible. Let's all have a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2023.

Larry Myer

President, Board of Trustees



Good Faith Network



This past fall we collected hundreds of stories in our community conversations and built a coalition of over 500 interfaith community members who are seeking justice together.

This year, the Good Faith Network's work on ending chronic homelessness and seeking mental health crisis stabilization services will continue.

Then, on October 25th, the Good Faith Network held its first in-person Community Problems Assembly at Congregation Beth Torah! Each reflection and testimonial was incredibly powerful and moving. Ultimately, the network voted to select **lack of affordable housing** as our next problem area to address.

In the world as it ought to be, Johnson County should already have a best-in-class crisis stabilization center. In the world as it ought to be, Johnson County should have already solved homelessness. But in the world as it is, we will only get what we organize for.

To learn more and get involved in the CBT Good Faith Network team please contact Jennifer Savner Levinson at jenlevinson0203@gmail.com



Music & More



Happy Gregorian New Year!

At this time of year, I find myself looking both backward and forward. Lately I've been contemplating music and melodies. As a musician, and even more as a writer and composer, and then even more again as a woman, I am excited by the bounty of new music we have for our liturgical songs and prayers. I love sharing new melodies with you all. New melodies can bring renewed excitement for and fresh understanding of prayers that have become old hat. But I also know that there is power and comfort in familiarity and tradition. I am so grateful that you let me share my melodies with you and that you continue to sing with me through old songs and new. I also want to hear what melodies you miss. Which songs do you wish we sang from time to time? Your input is important as we continue to nurture and grow the music here at Beth Torah. Email me any time with your musical thoughts: Izucker@beth-torah.org

And now... Look what we have for you in January!

- ✧ **Friday Night Torah Service (Jan 6)**
- ✧ **Beit T'filah: Songs Of Justice (Jan 13)**
Join us for a short worship service followed by Shabbat dinner and our next beit. CBT Music Coordinator Lezlie Zucker shares songs of justice by Jewish composers in honor of Tzedek Shabbat and Martin Luther King Jr. Day. RSVPs will be required for Shabbat dinner.
- ✧ **Song Session (Jan 17)**
Join Lezlie & Friends for (about) half an hour of Jewish song and prayer. (Then stick around for some Lezlie Revelle Zucker originals!)
- ✧ **New Member Shabbat (Jan 20)**
Help us welcome our newest CBT members during Erev Shabbat Services!
- ✧ **Family Service: PreK-K (Jan 27)**
Please support our young learners as they help lead us during Friday night services! We are so excited to be bringing Family Services to our worship table once a month through April.

Shalom, Lezlie

Help CBT & JFS tackle food insecurity in Kansas City!

Our SOUP-er Bowl Soup Collection Drive starts January 3!
Bring your soup donations to Beth Torah January 3—February 12.

Beth Torah Women's Council & B'nai Jehudah Sisterhood invite you to celebrate

ROSH CHODESH: THE NEW MOON

Our IN PERSON gatherings will explore the spiritual and historical aspects of the upcoming month, inspired by ancient and contemporary texts.

In addition, we'll focus on a different Biblical heroine, relating her challenges and triumphs to the new month and our own lives.

While Hebrew months don't follow the solar calendar, for your sanity and convenience, we'll meet at the same time each month:

7 PM | Third Thursday of the month
Jan-Jun 2023: IN PERSON @ Beth Torah
Jul - Dec 2023: IN PERSON @ B'nai Jehudah

This is a FREE program!
Kindly register by Jan 12,
but walk-ins are ALWAYS welcome!
Email jill.maidhof@gmail.com



**Hello...?
Is anyone there...?**

We have been working through some technical challenges recently that affected our phones. Over the past month our system reset itself a number of times, which lost some voicemail messages. If you have been trying to reach us, thank you for your patience and please try again!

Looking Ahead to Purim!

Make sure you have our Congregational Purim Event on your calendars! Monday, March 6, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. We'll have a Megillah reading, Costume Contest (Youth and Adult), Hamantaschen, and more!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Jan 1, 23	2	3 1:00pm Melissa's Second Chances Volunteer Squad - 5783 Small Group 6:30pm Jewish Living; The Sader & Shimkin Chapel / Library	4 7:00pm Shabbat Shirah Choir Rehearsal
8 9:30am Weiner Religious School 10:30am Sunday Morning Mussar; Classroom 7 1:00pm Movers + Schmoozers - 5783 Small Group 2:00pm Let's go Roller Skating! Pick-a-Party!	9 11:30am CBT Arts + Crafts - 5783 Small Group	10	11 12:00pm Exploring and Sharing Good Eats - 5783 Small Group 6:30pm TAG 7:00pm Shabbat Shirah Choir Rehearsal
15 9:30am Weiner Religious School 10:00am Soul Stirring - 5783 Small Group	16	17 5:30pm Game Night - 5783 Small Group 6:30pm Jewish Living; The Sader & Shimkin Chapel / Library 7:00pm Song Session	18 6:30pm TAG 7:00pm Shabbat Shirah Choir Rehearsal
22 9:30am Weiner Religious School 2:00pm Wait! I Thought The Second Commandment Prohibits Jewish Art: Pick-a-Party! 2:00pm Book Club: That Book I Meant to Read - 5783 Small Group	23	24	25 1:30pm Smiles with Tiles - 5783 Mahjong Small Group 6:30pm TAG 7:00pm Shabbat Shirah Choir Rehearsal
29 9:30am Weiner Religious School	30	31 6:30pm Jewish Living; The Sader & Shimkin Chapel / Library	Feb 1 6:30pm TAG 7:00pm Shabbat Shirah Choir Rehearsal

Save the Date!!!

- ☆ Beit T'filah: Songs of Justice is Friday, January 13.
- ☆ Shabbat Shirah is February 3. Join us to hear part of Shirat Hayam and our next Sermon in Song.
- ☆ Potluck Productions will be back February 5 with play readings about hunger as we collect soup for the Soup-er Bowl Food Drive for JFS.
- ☆ Our February Family Service is February 10.



**Shabbat Shirah Choir
rehearsals begin January 4!**

Email Lezlie to join the choir or band!



THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>5</p> <p>7:00pm The 10 Commandments: A Deep, Deep Dive - 5783 Small Group</p>	<p>6</p> <p>12:30pm The Ray Davidson (Z"L) Yiddish Group</p> <p>6:30pm Erev Shabbat Worship w/Torah Service</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00am Sichat Shabbat</p> <p>10:30am Shabbat Morning Worship</p>
<p>12</p> <p>12:00pm Rabbi Lunch N' Learn (in person); library</p> <p>7:30pm The Movie Group - 5783 Small Group</p>	<p>13</p> <p>1:00pm Beth Torah Bakers - 5783 Small Group</p> <p>6:30pm Erev Shabbat Worship w/Beit T'filah: Songs of Justice</p>	<p>14</p> <p>9:00am Sichat Shabbat</p> <p>10:30am Shabbat Morning Worship</p> <p>7:30pm Game Show Battle Night: Pick-a-Party!</p>
<p>19</p> <p>7:00pm Celebrate the New Moon! (@CBT); Congregation Beth Torah, 6100 W 127th St, Overland Park, KS 66209, USA</p>	<p>20</p> <p>6:30pm New Member Shabbat Erev Shabbat Worship</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:00am Sichat Shabbat</p> <p>10:30am Shabbat Morning Worship</p>
<p>26</p> <p>6:30pm KC BBQ - 5783 Small Group</p>	<p>27</p> <p>6:30pm Family Shabbat Erev Shabbat Worship</p>	<p>28</p> <p>9:00am Sichat Shabbat</p> <p>9:00am Coffee Across KC - 5783 Small Group</p> <p>10:30am Shabbat Morning Worship</p>
<p>2</p> <p>7:00pm The 10 Commandments: A Deep, Deep Dive - 5783 Small Group</p>	<p>3</p> <p>6:30pm Erev Shabbat Worship w/Torah Service</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9:00am Sichat Shabbat</p> <p>10:30am Shabbat Morning Worship</p>

Weiner Religious School



I have really enjoyed serving as the Interim Principal of the Weiner Religious School for the past 5 months. It has been wonderful to see the energy and enthusiasm grow throughout the year. Both our WRS and TAG learners have engaged in mitzvah activities and we ended the calendar year with a fantastic Hanukkah celebration.

When I volunteered to be the interim principal I agreed to serve through the first semester. I appreciate the WRS families for entrusting me with your learners' religious education these past five months.

Our search for my replacement involved the WRS teachers, Talmud Torah Committee, the Executive Committee, the CBT Board, and Rabbi Cattapan.

I am very pleased to announce that Morgan Fasbinder has been hired to serve as the WRS Principal beginning on January 1st. Many of you know Morgan. She grew up at CBT and attended religious school and youth group. She was then a madricha (teacher aide) and after that, a teacher. Morgan was honored as the Kansas City Jewish Educator of the year just a few years ago. She is also currently teaching in the Turner school district. Without a doubt, in my mind, we have the right person to take the WRS to new heights. I know you will join me in welcoming Morgan as the leader of the WRS.



Sincerely,
Howard Pitler
Interim Weiner Religious School Principal

B.O.W. Committee

Hello Everyone!

This year's confirmation class, in cooperation with the BOW committee and Julie Myer as adult coordinator, have an exciting announcement. Our confirmands will be conducting interviews with congregants who have been members for 18 years or longer. We want to know what brought you to Congregation Beth Torah, what keeps you here, and why you want to continue your Jewish journey at CBT. The BOW committee will be publishing these videos on the Beth Torah web page so that everyone can get to know our long-time members better. You inspire us all!

This year's confirmation class members who are helping to document our history are:

- Emma Bowen
- Evie Latman
- Alice Lenz

We will be reaching out to our members soon. If you would like to volunteer and help get this awesome project started, please contact Julie Myer at jam719@att.net.

We will be starting in January. Most interviews will take place at CBT, but if you are unable to travel, we will come to you. Please let us know and we will be there, camera in hand, ready to go. We are excited for our multiple generations to connect with the roots of our Beth Torah community!

Keep watching the CBT App, the Tekiah, and the update emails for more information.

Thank you all so much!!!!!!

Sincerely,
Dave Zucker
B.O.W. Committee Chair



Women's Council of Beth Torah

It is the mission of the Women's Council of Beth Torah to engage and empower the women of our temple through Tikkun Olam, Mitzvot and Acts of Loving Kindness.

Many fun, worthwhile and interesting programs are planned for the community to enjoy.

Let us band together in friendship, for the benefit of our CBT family. The cost for CBT membership is \$50, non CBT membership is \$100 and lifetime membership is \$500. Our membership drive will begin soon.

Gloria Pitler, Membership Chair

Our Pillars

*We are a vibrant, modern
Reform Jewish congregation
where everyone matters.*

Congregation Beth Torah:

Embraces	Energizes
Illuminates	Inspires
Responds	Connects

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CONGREGATION BETH TORAH

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



ADULT EDUCATION

SUNDAY MORNING MUSSAR

**Mussar is a tradition, a movement and a set of practices related
to Jewish ethics.**

**Explore one middah/character trait each month in an informal small group
setting. No Jewish knowledge or level of observance is assumed!**

Free and open to all congregants

2nd Sunday of the month beginning January 8

10:30 – 11:10 AM in Classroom 7

Questions? Please contact Jill Maidhof jill.maidhof@gmail.com

WALK-INS WELCOME!