

Sivan - Tammuz 5784

Vol. 30 Issue 7

Rabbi's Column on Page 10

# NEW TORAH ARK DESIGN

*Hineh mah tov u-mah na'im, shevet achim gam yachad:* Behold how good and pleasant it is when companions dwell together.

This verse from Psalm 133 expresses one of BEKI's most cherished values: that of a diverse community-a religious "chosen family"-coming together in praise and appreciation, song and study. You may recognize the Hebrew words from the familiar tune that, when sung as a round, creates poignantly beautiful harmonies.

Mah tov u-mah na'im, how good and pleasant it is, that these words will adorn BEKI's new Torah ark

Designed by Amy Reichert with input from the congregation, the ark will stand as the visual and spiritual focal point in BEKI's redesigned sanctuary.

The gold-colored Hebrew text flows down a wooden panel flanking the ark. The pattern of the ark doors, in multicolored, textured translucent panels, suggests a similar flowing movement-like water, perhaps, or fire-leading the eye upward to the ner tamid (eternal light) and beyond. The ner tamid itself will come from our current bimah.

### New Torah Ark continued on Page 4



# UPCOMING EVENT

### **Interfaith Service Day**

On Sunday, Aug. 4, BEKI is again participating in the Greater New Haven interfaith day of service.

Work projects that morning will include building a house with Habitat for Humanity, preparing food for the hungry with Chapel on the Green, stuffing personal care bags for Columbus House, restoring a cemetery with the Hebrew Burial and Free Loan Association, pounding guns into garden tools with Swords to Plowshares, cleaning our shores with Save The Sound, and hand painting a giant mural.

Outdoor lunch on the New Haven Green, socializing, and music will follow.

There is no cost to participate. Sign up at www.iwagepeace.org.

## **BEKI Bulletin**

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: 203.389.2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: bulletin@beki.org
- · Visit our web page: www.beki.org
- Follow us on social media:



- · For advertising information, call the synagogue office.
- Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the first of the month preceding publication.

Annual subscription is \$36

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Editor	Rachel Bashevkin			
Associate Editors	Donna Levine Donna Kemper			
	David Spitzer			

## **Board of Directors**

#### If you have questions or concerns please speak with a Board member.

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BEKI STAINED GLASS WINDOW DESIGN BY CYNTHIA BETH RUBIN



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### New Torah Ark Continued from Page 1

providing continuity with the sanctuary that has been BEKI's since the 1960s.

Unlike the current metal ark gates, the new ark doors will be easy to open and close. The new bimah—lower and smaller than the existing stage—will be fully accessible, with central steps and a ramp on each side.

Other notable elements of the sanctuary redesign include movable seats in place of the old pews, providing flexibility and greater accessibility; improved sound and lighting; and a new movable wall separating the sanctuary from the adjacent social hall. Thanks to repairs performed as part of the redesign project, the HVAC system is already quieter. You may have noticed that there's no *boom* when the heat or air conditioning kicks on.

The overall project goal is to make the sanctuary more congenial to the congregation we have become: participatory, non-hierarchical, inclusive, serious but informal, and committed to both tradition *and* spiritual growth. A congregation of companions dwelling together.

The Sanctuary Redesign Committee appreciates your patience during the delays and slow progress of this complex project.

Construction is expected to begin in late 2024, after the High Holy Days and the November *b'nai mitzvah*. It should be finished by June 2025. Keep an eye out for additional information! In the meantime, please don't hesitate to be in touch: sanctuaryredesign@beki.org

Maya Avery Glasgow Beller with her parents

## Prize this month is a mug

Within an article in this bulletin, there's a Prize Code.

If you are one of the first five people to find it and email it to <u>bulletin@beki.org</u>, you will win a BEKI coffee mug.

## Mazal Tov to

- Parents Daniel Gordon & Lea Winter as well as BEKI grandparents David & Meryl Gordon and Michael Winter & Ellen Mackler on the birth of Reyna Julia Gordon.
- Parents Jonathan Beller & Allison Glasgow as well as BEKI grandparents Marsha Beller and Rob Hoffnung on the birth of Maya Avery Glasgow Beller in New York.



**Reyna Julia Gordon** 

# Can You Provide a Meal?

BEKI has a long tradition of providing meals to families who have welcomed a child. You can prepare and deliver the dinner or arrange delivery from a restaurant. Anything you need to know about preferences or address is provided at the platform called Lotsa Helping Hands. Just log in and choose your password. This month, we need help with meal deliveries to a family in Westville. Please register so that you can assist with this project. Questions? Consult rachel.d.greenberg@gmail.com.



# **Making Libraries Bird-Safe**

Earlier this year, BEKI and Ezra Academy youth affiliated with <u>Jewish Youth Climate Movement</u> (JYCM) "A win for the kids and a win for the environment," advisor Rebecca Weiner said.

lobbied Westville's Mitchell Library to make it safe from window collisions. A 2023 report from Yale Law School estimates that up to 1 billion birds are killed by window collisions each year in the United States.

The kids, who wrote passionate letters and stopped by to speak with the librarians, found that their voices made a difference. As a result, all New Haven public libraries made the commitment to be bird-safe. Experts from the local Audubon Society and the Yale Bird-Friendly Building Initiative are advising the library facilities superintendent on exactly which bird-safe decals to buy for the windows.



Anna Oppenheimer, representing BEKI and Ezra Academy, donated several children's books on bird safety to Mitchell Library. From left, NHFPL facilities superintendent Jim O'Hair, Anna, Children's Librarian Sarah Quigley, and Chief Mitchell librarian Marian Huggins.

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# **Free Street Trees for New Haven Residents**

BEKI's teen chapter of JYCM is working with New Haven Urban Resources Initiative (URI) as tree ambassadors to promote a program to plant free trees at BEKI community members' houses (rental or homeowner) in New Haven.

URI plants the free trees within the city treebelt, the grassy area between the sidewalk and the street, or in a front yard if there is no treebelt. The trees are substantial (~12-ft tall, ~7 years old) and can be chosen from up to 60 species of varying size, spread, and look.

Also, those who request a tree from URI will be prioritized by the City for stump grinding. It usually takes years to reach the top of the city stump grinding list. Homes with new URI trees planted can expect tree stumps to be ground the same season.

To get started with the process of learning more about getting a tree, email <u>esther.m.schonberger@gmail.com</u>. A JYCM member will forward your contacts to URI, which will send an arborist to your house to survey your site to make recommendations on location(s) and species. If you agree to a free tree or trees, a group of URI workers will come and plant your tree(s) this fall. Your only commitment is to water the tree(s) for the next three years, spring through fall, once a week with 25 gallons of water.

#### Rabbi's Tzedakah Fund

- To Hyla Greenberg on the yahrzeit of Abraham Goldstein by Louis Petrillo
- In memory of Polina (Perl) Naiman by Alexandre (Sasha) Vaxman
- In memory of Linda & Harold Saslow by Randi & Wendy Saslow

#### **BEKI Heat Heroes** To help fund a new boiler

#### Gloria Cohen

• Eve & Josh Zelinsky

#### **Heat Pump Water Heater**

- Rachel Bashevkin
- Eric Dunsker
- Eden Gerson & Chanan Zupnick
- Becky & C.J. May
- Sascha van Creveld
- Rebecca Weiner & Mike Rastelli

#### **Kiddush Fund**

- Margie Wiener
- Rebecca Weiner
- The following BINA families: Bildner & Goldman-Israelow, Doft & Wareck, Eyzaguirre & Coffee, Farhardian & Chiorazzi, Jacobson and Saltiel & Shetler
- Ada Fenick & Yair Minsky

# Chai/Synagogue Fund to support synagogue operations

#### To Michael Stern and family with sympathy on the passing of Kathy Rosenbluh by

• Rena Cheskis-Gold & Marty Gold (to the Barzillai Cheskis BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund)

# To Paige & Andy Weinstein on the birth of their grandson Jackson by

• Yaron Lew

#### To Joanne & David Goldblum in honor of the birth of their granddaughter Alice Ann by

- · Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- Steve & Rachel Wizner
- Yaron Lew

# To Linda Schultz with sympathy on the passing of Howard Gralla by

• David Wright & Debbie Craig (to the sanctuary renovation fund)

# In honor of Rabbi Carl & Sharon Astor by

• David Wright & Debbie Craig

#### To Linda Bell & family with sympathy on the passing of her mother by

• Seth Pauker & Tina Rose

To Susan & Thomas Koltun with sympathy on the passing of Sandy Koltun by

Tina Rose & Seth Pauker

To Leslie Brisman in honor of his birthday by

• Adam Davis, Alexandra Schimmer & family

With appreciation to John Weiser & Shoshana Zax and Steven Fraade & Ellen Cohen by

Lois Dubin

**To Grace Jenq & family with sympathy on the passing of Daniel Goldstein by** • Lisa Stanger & Greg Colodner

# To Lea Winter & Daniel Gordon in honor of the birth of their daughter by

- Dan & Sharon Prober
- Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- Yaron Lew

#### To Michael Winter & Ellen Mackler in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by

- Dan & Sharon Prober
- Yaron Lew

#### Charles & Violet Ludwig Fund for BEKI

• In memory of her aunt Mildred Kantrowitz Rieser by Sherry Kent

# Yahrzeit Fund to support synagogue operations

#### In Memory of:

- John Arovas by Louis Arovas
- Dr. Chaim Dardik by the Dardik familyHer father Irving Bashevkin by Rachel
- BashevkinHer grandmother Ida Brunswick by
- Her grandmother Ida Brunswick by Barbara Cushen
- Lionel Brody by Joel Brody & Debra Canner
- Their friend Anita Henowitz by Rhoda & Bruce Small
- His mother Pearl Yaffe by Cliff Yaffe
- Sylvia Hoberman by Judith Hoberman & Dominic Kinsley
- · Pearl Yaffe by the Yaffe family
- Marvin Voloshin by Cindy Voloshin Smernoff
- Stephen Alderman by Judith Alderman
- Kitty Greenberg by Kim Tefft
- Sol Leviter by Coleman & Tema Leviter
- Walter Greenwald by Robert F. Vine
- Harold Roberts by Gary Roberts
- · Ethel Brody-Goldberg by Fran Goldberg-

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Cohen

- · Jack Mendlestein by Rissa Mendlestein
- · Katie Press by Joyce Popowski
- Rose Hodes by Joyce Popowski
- Eli & Goldie Kasimer by Joseph Kasimer
- Jane Marshall by Shoshana Lash
- Malka Blank by Fania Levine
- Mendel Rosner by Sara-Ann & Hillel Auerbach
- Morris Maltin by Ted Maltin

# המקום ינחם

### HaMakom Yinachem

# with sorrow we note the passing of

**Daniel Goldstein**, former member, husband of Grace Jenq

### May the Almighty comfort those who mourn



**Tree of Life Awaits Your Leaf** 

The Tree of Life at the entrance to BEKI is a collection of golden leaves that honor people and moments in our lives. For \$118 you can add a leaf.

Contact Marjorie Wiener at <u>marjoriewiener@yahoo.com</u> or 203.387.6278.

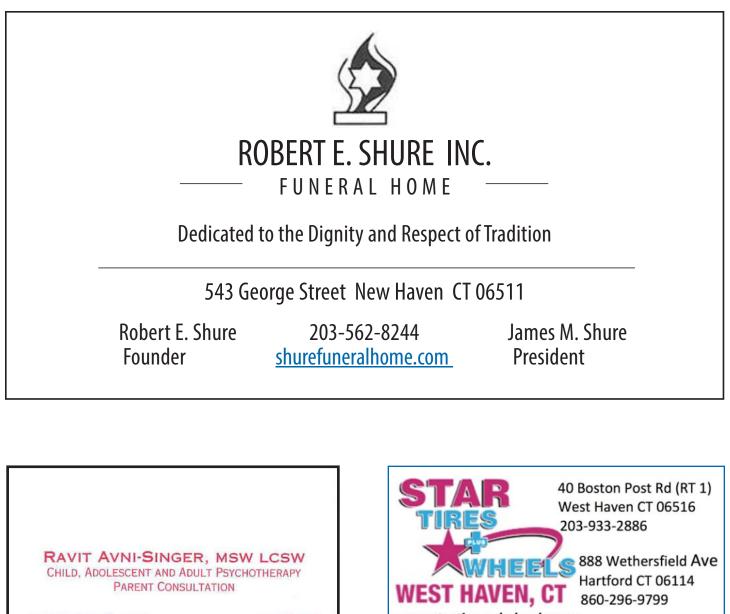
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It's not too late to make a pledge or donation to the Sanctuary Redesign, or to increase the amount that you have already given. Contact Peggy in our office, or speak to a member of the Fundraising Committee: John Weiser, Murray Akresh Jessey Palumbo, or John Wareck.



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# What will your Jewish legacy be?

Carole and Paul Bass Created a Legacy for Their Synagogue, Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

"BEKI is where our family became Jewish: where our daughters and I converted, where we learned to read Torah, where our lives began to revolve around the rhythms and melodies of Jewish life. Although our kids have chosen to live elsewhere, we made a legacy commitment for all the BEKI families to come." –Carole

> For more information, contact the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven Lisa Stanger, Executive Director I (203) 387-2424, ext. 382 | Istanger@jewishnewhaven.org Tamara Schechter, Create a Jewish Legacy Manager I (203) 387-2424, ext. 325 | tschechter@jewishnewhaven.org





# Hamden Hall Country Day School

Educating students in PreSchool through Grade 12.

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www.hamdenhall.org 203.752.2610 1108Whitney Ave., Hamden, CT 06517





# A PRAYER FOR OUR COUNTRY

ith the Fourth of July and election approaching, I want to talk about the prayer for our country that we read on Shabbat morning.

The Tanakh in Jeremiah 29:7 tells us to "pray for the wel-

fare of the city to which you have been exiled, for in its prosperity you shall prosper." Rabbi Hananiah in Pirke Avot (3:3) tells us to pray for the welfare of the government, because without government, people would swallow each other alive.

These are not ringing endorsements of political authority. They are, rather, skeptical approaches.

In the Middle Ages, a prayer that

expressed this skepticism was written and eventually became popular in the 1600s. This prayer, called Noten Teshua, praises the monarch, but does so in a backhanded and subversive way, according to an exhaustive <u>work</u> by Jonathan D. Sarna.

For example, the prayer quotes Psalm 144:10: "You who give victory to kings, who rescues His servant David from the deadly sword." If you read this out of context, it seems to describe government's saving power. But the following line in the Psalm is, "Rescue me, save me from the hands of foreigners, whose mouths speak lies, and whose oaths are false." Although this line is excluded from the liturgy, a textually inclined reader knows that the seeming good will toward the government is hardly that.

However, as Jews became citizens of the United States, a representative liberal democracy, it began to become clear that this prayer would no longer fit. See George Washing-



**Eric Woodward** 

ton's <u>letter</u> to the Jewish community of Newport, Rhode Island, where he wrote, "It is now no more that toleration is spoken of, as if it were the indulgence of one class of people that another enjoyed the exercise of their inherent natural rights. For, happily, the Government of the United States, which gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens, in giving it on all occasions their effectual support." This is a different political order from medieval Europe!

Thus the prayer for the country in our siddurim was edited and amended in many ways, eventually being broadly replaced over the 19th century. The "A Prayer for Our Country" that we read in Siddur Lev Shalem, by Rabbi Louis Ginzberg (with some changes), was written in 1927.

I'm thinking about this because right now we are in the midst of a disorienting and destabilizing election season. And I think it is important, even in the face of whatever vicissitudes come our way, to orient ourselves and stabilize ourselves.

Writing this a month before it's published — in early June — has an advantage of preventing me from responding to whatever might be going on politically in July.

I'll be honest: the prayer for the country is not the most exciting part of the service for me. It's so stable, so consistent, that I don't feel that moved. But this summer, I want to try to experiment, to lean into that emotional valence, as a hope to find stability and equanimity in myself. Maybe it can be a chance to pray for and model stability and consistency — and to try to generate in ourselves serenity in a world where we lack some control.

May this summer bring us a sense of peace.

# Ritual

### Weekly Classes

Join Rabbi Woodward for a discussion of the week's Torah portion on Thursdays 9-9:45 am in the library, following 8:15 am Shacharit.

Sunday Talmud class resumes in the fall.

### Sign up for Torah Reading

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If you are able to read an aliyah of Torah or a Haftorah, make your selection via our online <u>spreadsheet.</u>

Just scroll down to the proper date to see details about each aliyah. 756782024

# July 2024 25 Sivan 5784 - 25 Tammuz 5784

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	2 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	3 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	4 Office Closed 9am In-person/Zoom Service (Federal Holiday Service Time) 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	5 Office Closed 7am In-person/Zoom Service 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat 8:10pm Candle Lighting	6 Rosh Hodesh I 9:15am Shabbat Service (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
	25 Sivan	26 Sivan	27 Sivan	28 Sivan	29 Sivan	30 Sivan
7 Rosh Hodesh II 9am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	8 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	9 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	10 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	11 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	12 7am In-person/Zoom Service 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat 8:07pm Candle Lighting	13 9:15am Shabbat Service (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
1 Tammuz	2 Tammuz	3 Tammuz	4 Tammuz	5 Tammuz	6 Tammuz	7 Tammuz
14 9am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	15 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	16 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	17 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	18 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	19 7am In-person/Zoom Service 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat 8:02pm Candle Lighting	20 9:15am Shabbat Service (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
8 Tammuz	9 Tammuz	10 Tammuz	11 Tammuz	12 Tammuz	13 Tammuz	14 Tammuz
21 9am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	22 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	23 Fast of Tammuz 17 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	24 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	25 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	26 7am In-person/Zoom Service 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat 7:56pm Candle Lighting	27 9:15am Shabbat Service (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
15 Tammuz	16 Tammuz	17 Tammuz	18 Tammuz	19 Tammuz	20 Tammuz	21 Tammuz
28 9am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	29 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	30 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	31 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	Mark Your Calendar Aug 4 Interfaith Day of Service Aug 12 Tisha Be-Av evening service Aug 13 Tisha Be-Av morning service		
22 Tammuz	23 Tammuz	24 Tammuz	25 Tammuz			

Sundays 9am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv Mondays 7am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv **Tuesdays** 7am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv Service Times Wednesdays 7 am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv

**Thursdays** 8:15am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv **Fridays** 7 am Shaharit 6 pm Kabbalat Shabbat Saturdays 9:15am Shaharit



DATED MATERIAL

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### **Join BEKI on Facebook**

Everyone is encouraged to join the <u>BEKI Facebook group</u>. You'll enjoy the humor, community information, and links to cultural opportunities. You'll want to choose the private group with the stained-glass window image. Just ask to join. (The BEKI page with the hamsa is the public-facing page, which has few postings).

### **E-Statements**

Due to rising costs and BEKI's efforts to be more Earthfriendly, we have transitioned to e-statements and e-yahrzeits. If you prefer to receive them by paper, please contact the BEKI office at <u>office@beki.org</u> or 203-389-2108 x114. The BEKI Green Team supports BEKI's movement toward paperless communications and hopes the community will also.

### **Easy Fundraiser**

The Stop & Shop gift cards sold by the BEKI office are debit cards for groceries or gasoline. This is an ongoing fundraiser that costs you nothing. Contact Peggy office@beki.org to arrange pickup.

### Services

All services are also available on Zoom except Friday night and Saturday morning.

Sunday 9 am Sunday 5:45 pm Monday 7 am Monday 5:45 pm Tuesday 7 am Tuesday 5:45 pm Wednesday 7 am Wednesday 5:45 pm Thursday 8:15 am Thursday 5:45 pm Friday 7 am Friday 6 pm Saturday 9:15 am

For the latest information on services, check <u>Happenings</u> or email <u>bekitefilla@gmail.com</u>