



THE LIGHT

Temple Beth Or

May 2020

☆ Today...and for Generations ☆

Volume XXXV, Issue 5

Growing Grey at the Temple



When we come out of quarantine, they say we will soon see everyone's "true colors." Hair salons have been deemed nonessential, although many of us with graying roots might disagree. Some brave souls have bought AND USED hair dye kits with varying results, while others have embraced the more "natural" look.

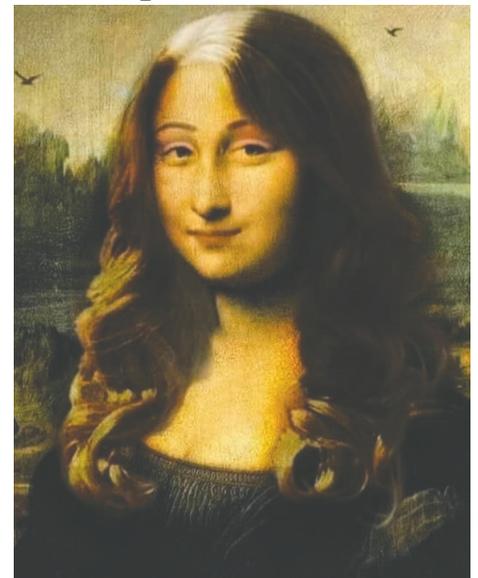
Gray hair is a sign of honor in our Jewish tradition. The Hebrew word for "elder," *seivah*, literally means gray or white hair. *Seivah* connotes a sense of wisdom, experience, and dignity, rather than something to be hidden. Our scripture is filled with compliments for those with graying hair. Leviticus 19:32 instructs: "You shall rise before the gray-haired person and respect the presence of the elderly." And Proverbs 16:31 teaches: "Gray hair is a crown of glory, it is attained by way of righteousness."

Our Rabbis teach that gray hair was actually something requested by our patriarch Abraham! "Master of the universe," Abraham prayed, "if there is no such thing as old age, there would be no difference be-

tween an immature child and the mature person who has acquired a certain level of intelligence, experience, and wisdom. That is not good. If you will be so kind, crown us with old age. Put a little white in the hair, make a person look a little bit older, more distinguished. Then others will know to whom to give greater respect." The Midrash, rabbinic legend, concludes that God agreed and gave humanity gray hair as a way to indicate who should be held in esteem and honor, for experience is considered better than youth.

This quarantine may have given us more than a few gray hairs. Being home with our children all day, searching for ways to entertain, teach, and nourish them has been challenging. Feeling disconnected from our grandchildren and friends and colleagues is daunting.

Not knowing when our next paycheck will come in, or if it will come in, has been terrifying. The news cycle makes us ache for strangers losing their jobs, health care workers without the proper protective gear, and front-line workers suffering under the burden of risking their own lives to save others. Yet we can be assured that this pandemic will end and that most of us will weather the



storm. We will be ok, maybe not as good as before, but most of us will survive and return to a new normal.

When all of this is over, some of us will wash away our gray. Others may even choose to wear our new look as a badge of honor, showing our growth, experience, and newfound perspective and wisdom. Meanwhile, I look forward to the time when we can gather face to face again, and together may we all grow gray at the temple (and Temple).

Shalom,

Rabbi Judy Chessin



THE LIGHT

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Our Lives

Do you have news or need prayers? Contact the Temple office at 937-435-3400 to share a birth, marriage or seek get-well wishes. Your congregation cares about you!

The congregation sends a hearty mazel tov to Rachel and Christopher Dillon on the birth of Riley Anne. Riley is also the granddaughter of Esther and Jay Weiss; great-granddaughter of Thelma and Stanley (z'l) Karp and the niece of Sarah and Blake White and Evan Weiss.

Congratulations also to John and Sharyn Reger on the birth of a granddaughter Bianca Henderson. Proud parents are Elise (Reger) and Michael Henderson.

The congregation sends profound sympathies to Beverly Farnbacher on the passing of Nagi Ahmed Nasr.

The congregation sends profound sympathies to Jill and Tom Conte and family on the passing of Tom's brother in law, John Uncles. Both Tom's sister, Cindi, and John were hospitalized as COVID-19 patients. Cindi recovered, but her husband John did not. May his memory be for a blessing.

Yahrzeit Remembrances

Temple Beth Or remembers our loved ones on the Sabbath nearest the anniversary of their passing or *yahrzeit*. The following names will be read during services this month.

May 1

David Goldberg 4/29

Mirian Jacobson 4/30

Jacob Naiman 4/30

Shirley Conte 5/1

Yetta Hochman 5/1

Joseph Sachs 5/1

Martin Summers 5/2

Adam Nelson 5/4

Adam Nelson 5/4

Margaret Carsch 5/5

Lily Heuman 5/5

May 8

Anna Kuperschmidt 5/6

Sylvia Steiner 5/6

Eloisa De La Cruz 5/8

Richard M. Elhardt 5/8

Herman Dlott 5/9

Yetta Schwartz 5/9

Dr. Bob Ewing 5/10

Louis P. Landerman 5/10

Pearl Lemberg 5/10

Berta Sherman 5/11

Jill Wadleigh 5/11

Morris Sherman 5/12

May 15

Lila Kahn 5/13

David Block 5/14

Ed Colton 5/14

Gerald Jacoby 5/14

Lillian Tepper 5/14

Mimi Wolnstein 5/14

Libby Elenko 5/15

David Sterling Margolis 5/15

Melba Meister 5/16

Gertrude Rendler 5/16

Arnold Schwartzbart 5/16

Herb Solomon 5/16

Jeff Markman 5/17

Beatrice Moore 5/17

Molly Schear 5/17

Molly Schear 5/17

Ashland Crace, Jr. 5/19

Phillip Schwartz 5/19

May 22

Barbara Jane Fried 5/20

Manny Rose 5/20

Dr. Frank Villani 5/22

Edith Bookhamer 5/24

Mona Briskin 5/24

Rita Molnar 5/25

Ruth Weiss 5/26

May 29

Cyril J. Pearl 5/27

John Seidenschmidt 5/27

Stratos George Vlahos 5/27

Joey Weiner 5/27

Edith Simpkins Schneidman 5/28

S. Herbert Moss 5/29

Martin Spritzer 5/29

Sally Farnbacher 5/30

Milton Geisenfeld 6/2



We Couldn't Do It Without You!

Temple Beth Or doesn't accomplish anything without teamwork. Thanks to every contribution of prayer, time and funds, we can fulfill our mission of being a warm, welcoming place for ALL. Thank you!

Financial Donations

General Fund

By: Jeffrey Levine
Arlene Graham

In Honor of:
The marriage of Kaitlyn Bressler & Brant Appel
Caryl and Don Weckstein

In Memory of:
Jennifer Troy
Lynda and Gerald Troy
Mildred Nizny
Martin Nizny
Martin Spritzer
Marni Flagel
Doris Westcott
Jessica and Brian Simpson
Sol Abrams
Andrea and Gary Abrams
David Goldberg
Laurie and David Verson
Roy Kenneth Hammonds
Judie and Bill Kell
Zelda Segalewitz
Ira Segalewitz

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

By: Madalyn Ammons

Get Well for:
Sandy Shockman
Myrna Nelson

In Memory of:
Yetta Hecht Marks
Gary Holstine
Morton Ohlbaum
Lori and John Westerkamp
Anita Wilson
Myrna Nelson
Nagi Amed-Nasr
Myrna Nelson
Louis Landerman
Myrna Nelson
Sally Farnbacher
Myrna Nelson

In Appreciation of:
*The organizers and volunteers of the 2nd Annual
Corned Beef Lunch*
Gary Holstine

In Celebration of:
The success of the Corned Beef Lunch Event
Gary Holstine



Music Fund

By: Madalyn Ammons

Adult Education Fund

By: Madalyn Ammons

In Memory of:
Nagi Ahmed Nasr
Arlene Graham

Temple's many funds provide a meaningful way to mark the life cycle events we all experience. From a birth to a graduation, from the recovery from an illness to a promotion or marriage, we all experience joy and sadness throughout our lives. To express your caring and concern, please send your tribute card and minimum \$10 donation to the Temple office. All donations are tax deductible.

Working to Paint a Brighter Future



In one of my favorite Talmudic stories, the great Rabbi Eliezer, one of the most learned sages and revered teachers of

his generation, is excommunicated from rabbinic society for obstinance. Save for a few minor exceptions, he spends the rest of his life distanced from his former peers, unable to learn from them—or teach. The Talmud (Sanhedrin 68a) recounts how, on his deathbed, he laments all the missed opportunities of the foregoing years. He calls out:

“Woe to you, my two arms, which are like two Torah scrolls that are rolled up, [never to be opened again.] Much Torah have I learned, and much have I taught: Much Torah have I learned, yet have I but skimmed from the knowledge of my teachers as much as a dog lapping from the sea! Much Torah have I taught, yet my disciples have only drawn from me as much as a paintbrush from the tip of a tube of paint!”

Rabbi Eliezer’s pain feels so **real**. His two arms—like two Torah scrolls—have been rolled up for so long, never opened up for anyone to “read.” His learning has been stunted, and he has only acquired the most superficial—almost meaningless!—amount of wisdom from an ocean of Torah that *could* have been at his fingertips. And as for his ability to teach, to reach his students? It has only accomplished as much as a paintbrush, scraping at the tiny opening of a tube of paint. His wisdom—the paint deep in the tube—remains hidden away; his impact as a teacher, he feels, has been virtually

nonexistent.

Especially right now, Rabbi Eliezer’s pain *should* be palpable. No, we have not been excommunicated; but, since mid-March, we have been unable to spend time together, to study, in-person. Services have all moved to Facebook Live and Zoom. *Tanakh* study has been online. Our Torah scrolls sit, literally, rolled up in our ark, which we cannot access. And *Makor*, of course...

Of course, *Makor* will not be reopening until the fall. With all Ohio schools remaining closed through the end of the school year, this might seem obvious, the least of anyone’s concerns. But it brings me great pain. Pain similar, I can only imagine, to what Rabbi Eliezer would have felt.

In a time like this, despair can come easily. Nevertheless, maybe hope is more appropriate. In these horrendously difficult times, our community is finding brand new ways to come together. Who would have ever thought that Rabbi Cheskin would be teaching *Tanakh* and Hebrew online to large classes, weekly? Who could have anticipated that we would have been able to transition a large part of our community engagement to take place by phone, video chat, and Facebook?

I am undoubtedly biased, but I’m especially proud of the students and teachers of *Makor*. We haven’t missed **a single day** of classes on account of the Coronavirus. Our school’s brilliant teachers quickly transitioned to our new Zoom format, rethinking their lesson plans and learning strategies. Our families, too, deserve bountiful credit: from day one, they have supported us as we’ve navigated a brand new way of bringing education to our children.

I’ve long felt that it was import-



ant that Judaism not be bounded by the walls of any synagogue. What could be more important than meeting people “where they are,” helping them to bring Judaism into their homes? Well, we’ve certainly found new ways to do that! No—this wasn’t plan A (or B...or C), but there’s something beautiful about the way that all of you have invited us into your homes and helped to demonstrate the radiant brilliance of our community. There’s nothing like opening up my laptop on Sunday mornings, sitting at home in my office, and seeing all of our kids’ and teachers’ smiling faces pop up on my computer screen. We might be living through a pandemic, but that doesn’t mean we’re not ready to learn.

All things considered, on second thought, perhaps we don’t have so much in common with Rabbi Eliezer. Now that I think about it, I’m starting to feel like we’re painting, if anything, an even more colorful Jewish future than ever before.

With wishes for health, healing, and learning,

Rabbi Ari Ballaban

Makor School News

Impacts of COVID-19 on Temple Beth Or Family Programming

We're doing our best at Temple Beth Or to maintain as much of a sense of normalcy as possible right now; but, of course, things inevitably will be different as a result of the precautions necessitated by the COVID-19 outbreak. We wanted to update you on a few important notes that will affect you and your families directly:

- In-person *Makor* will not resume for the remainder of this spring.
- *Makor* and Hebrew School are hosting virtual sessions on Zoom. For those who have not used this technology before, all you need to do is download Zoom on the phone(s) or computer(s) you intend to use for the day, then click the link that we provide (forthcoming) at 9:30 a.m. We'll provide you with more details about this soon, so stay tuned.
- We will have our student appreciation Family *Shabbat*, as scheduled, on May 8th. Details forthcoming shortly. Please, please, please, if there is anything we can do at the Temple to help you, let us know. This is a serious and scary time, but our community can be a source of strength to us all.
- We will recognize our graduates on June 26th, at our annual picnic (whether virtual or in-person), so please send in details about kids who will be graduating/marketing major life transitions at this time.
- Our last day of *Makor* this year will be May 17th, so make a big push to come and join us on these last few days!



Makor Registration 2020-2021

Even with our new “normal” feeling so unusual, it's time for us to start planning for the future! *Makor* registration for the 2020-2021 academic year will open on May 17th, our last day of school. Of course, we understand that in these uncertain times, it may be necessary for some families to hold off on registering their children until their financial positions are more secure. Nevertheless, please know that we have multiple avenues for helping those in need to afford a Jewish education for their kids.

Remember: You do not need to pay for *Makor* at the time of your registration. What is most important to us is that your children get set into our system as soon as possible, so we can ensure we are set to offer them a top-notch program next year.

Even when you are ready to pay your *Makor* tuition, you need not do so all at once. Donna Brodnick, our office administrator, is able to work out manageable payment plan options with any who are interested in exploring that possibility.

If you anticipate needing help paying for *Makor* into next year, also keep in mind that we can offer tuition scholarships through our Saba fund. For more details, please contact the Temple office.

Send in Your Grads

This year's graduating class has faced challenges and uncertainties that we hadn't even imagined possible just a few short months ago. We are so proud of our graduates and what they have accomplished!

Temple Beth Or would like to congratulate members who are graduating this year in the June issue of *The Light*.

Please send information and a photo of your graduate to thelight@templebethor.com by May 18. Include the next step they plan. College graduates and non-traditional students are welcome too!

Adult Education

Tanakh Study

While we are in our homes, we will hold our *Tanakh* Studies each *Shabbat* morning at 10:00 a.m. Grab a cup of coffee, a bagel, and a Bible and join us online as we discuss the books of Ezra and Nehemiah. A zoom link will be provided in our weekly Plan-It email. Get ready for lively discussion and camaraderie.



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Fresh Food for First Responders



Let's thank our first responders who are working tirelessly to help us stay safe and get through the COVID-19 pandemic. Temple Beth Or is partnering with Bernstein's Fine Catering to provide healthy snack boxes to the staff of hospitals, nursing care facilities, firefighters, and local police houses. These fine workers are often on the run and don't have time for sit-down meals. Now, they can grab a healthy snack, including fruits and cheeses, crudites, hummus, grilled pita, and dessert.

Each nourishing box will cost \$10.

We can deliver as many boxes as you order.

Our first delivery will be to Kettering Hospital's respite lounge the week of May 4th, 2020.

The more we raise, the more people we can serve, and the more that goes back into our community.

**Call the Temple office and commit to as many boxes as you'd like to donate.
We will continue this program for as long as we get commitments from you.**

A portion of the proceeds from this program will also go to Centerville Backpack Program.

May Events Listings for Temple Beth Or

Because of numerous cancellations and postponements in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the uncertainty of the planned events for the month of May as of press time, we are not publishing an events list or calendar this month. We are adding live, video, and interactive content on Facebook and will continue to build connection with our congregation online during this time.

For the latest information, please read our Plan-It emails and visit us online:
www.facebook.com/TBOdayton (You don't need a Facebook account to see our posts)
www.TempleBethOr.com



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Temple Beth Or

- ✧ offers thanks for the medical professionals—doctors, nurses, and health care workers on the front lines of the pandemic;
 - ✧ pays tribute to those caring for the disabled, infirm, chronically-ill and elder population;
 - ✧ honors those putting their lives on the front lines—police, fire, ambulance, and sanitation workers; and those providing for our basic needs, grocery workers, pharmacists, delivery people, and other essential services.
- May we find ways to support and comfort one another, continue to pray for healing, and work to mend the world!



Blessed are You, O Eternal our God, Ruler of the universe, who has given us the opportunity to mend the world!
Visit Templebethor.com to view a variety of virtual and in person events (when possible).

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