



October 2020

☆ Today...and for Generations ☆

Volume XXXV, Issue 8

## Black Wedding



October is replete with Halloween superstitions such as avoiding black cats and cemeteries; or appeasing ghosts and ghouls. But Jews have always had year-round folkways they hoped might fool the Angel of Death.

One Jewish superstition was believed to avert plagues and pandemics: a *shvartse khasene* or black wedding. A black chuppah was erected in the middle of the town's cemetery. The rabbi would marry off two of the town's most marginalized, citizens such as orphans, beggars, or the physically disabled.

The *shvartse khasene* (black wedding) or *mageyfe khasene* (plague wedding) was a blend of people's most altruistic impulses and self-ish motives. On the one hand, the *mitzvah* of marrying off and supporting the town's most needy citizens was an appeal to God to lift the epidemic. The Jews hoped the wedding would fool the Angel of Death into thinking it had no power over the celebrating community. And the wedding's joy and anticipation might have had the psychological benefit of alleviating the townspeople's crippling fear of isolation, dis-

ease, and death.

On the other hand, there may have been less altruistic impulses at work as well. Yiddish folktales describe gift-giving scenes that are reminiscent of *kappores* and scapegoat rituals, casting sins upon another. Each townsperson would hand a gift to the couple, loudly proclaiming "From me to you," as if they released the plague from their home and onto the "sacrificial" couple.

While black weddings are said to have originated in Eastern Europe during the black death, they still took place in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. During the Spanish flu outbreak in 1918, Polish Jews tried every known protection, such as shaving their hair, drawing black lines around houses, sleeping with their pajamas inside-out, and nailing knives to rooftops. When all these rituals failed, the community decided to go to the tried and true practice of a black wedding. The wedding was held between Mendel and Susia, two of the town's mentally ill bachelors, hoping that it would atone for the community's sins and protect its members! Maybe this was the first



Jewish same-sex marriage?

And just this past March, in 2020, the most recent *shvartse khasene*, black wedding, was held in the city of Bnei-Brak. At this early stage of the Coronavirus outbreak in Israel, participants hoped that the ritual would stop the virus' massive spread in the ultra-Orthodox community, which was severely infected. Two orphans were married in a cemetery under a black chuppah, with no social distancing. Unfortunately, we know that it did not work, given that Israel is currently under its second lockdown due to the spread of the disease.

So, unless more single beggars are lining up for plague matches, we probably should not count on magic to save us. Instead we pray and work for the virus to recede, and for a safe and sure vaccine to arrive.

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 extends its deepest sympathies to Eve Wolf-Knight and Sarah Wolf-Knight and Arien Wolf-Knight on the passing of husband and father Randal Knight.

We also extend our deepest sympathies to Tom Skelley and Sharon Lindquist-Skelley on the passing of Tom's brother Jim Skelley.

Temple Beth Or mourns the loss of Guil Herrick, husband of Lori Herrick and father of Corinn, Jack, and Jesse Herrick. The family asks that you share your thoughts for them on the website: Guilherrick.com

We also send condolences to the family of Thelma Karp. Thelma is the mother of Esther and Jay Weiss, and Bobby and Lynnette Karp and Allan Karp. She is the grandmother of Evan Weiss, Rachel Dillon and Sarah White.

We send sympathy to Caryl and Scott Segalewitz on the passing of her uncle David Stein.

We wish a *refuah shelaimah*, a full and speedy healing to Bonnie Gewertz, Izzy Guterman, Gary Holstine, Lynda Troy, and Gerald Troy

## 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.

### October 2

Jennifer Berks 9/30  
Sarah Silverman 9/30  
Martin J. Dicker 10/1  
Lou Droz 10/2  
Morton Gross 10/2  
Mildred Sanderson 10/2  
Sarah Karp 10/3  
Aliya Rachel Lindsay 10/3  
Lester Stein 10/3  
Allen Blodgett 10/4  
Allan Schulman 10/4  
Theodore Paull 10/5  
Adam Solganik 10/5  
Roselyn Karp 10/6  
Stephen Weckstein 10/6

### October 9

Stanley Markovitz 10/7  
Harry Peskin 10/7  
Philip Holstine 10/8  
Alma Slotkin 10/9  
Eugene Weiss 10/9  
John Legner 10/10  
Mary Louise Dreety 10/11  
Daniel L. Leary 10/11  
Gladys Maharam 10/12  
David Orlins 10/12  
Elaine London 10/13  
Ruth Wise 10/13

### October 16

William Feitelberg 10/14  
William Gurian 10/14  
Rose Libby Klein 10/14  
Allen London 10/14  
Sonya Fastoff Schwartz 10/14  
Herbert M. Besser 10/15  
Bernard Johnpoll 10/15  
Helene Sureck 10/15  
Leroy Bloomberg 10/16  
Evalyne Halasz 10/16  
Frank Clair 10/17  
Louise Verson 10/17  
Sylvia Finkelstein 10/18  
Zelda Kleinman 10/18  
Sol Scott 10/18  
Larry Briskin 10/19  
Henry Nathan 10/19

### October 23

Alexander Charles Scott 10/21  
Eugene Harris 10/22  
Mary Ellen Dietz 10/23  
Mary Feitelberg 10/23  
Rabbi Janice Garfunkel 10/25  
Salha Hakim 10/25

### October 30

Carol Denmark Felman 10/29  
Thelma Ginsburg 10/29  
Yale Holt 10/30  
Eva Peskin 10/31  
Jeffrey Chiger 11/1  
Leo Goldberg 11/1  
Ida D. Jaffa 11/1  
Jean Levi 11/1  
Susan Cauper Tonra 11/2  
Esther Constantine 11/3  
Arthur Maharam 11/3



# We Couldn't Do It Without You!

Temple Beth Or could not 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

*In Honor of:*

*Gary Holstine's Birthday*  
Ginny O'Connor

*In Memory of:*

*Harry Levenson*  
Jeanne Nathan

*Janet Binstein*  
Lynda and Gerald Troy

*Hank Adler*  
Ginny O'Connor  
Karen and Jeff Swillinger

*Erika Garfunkel*  
Felix Garfunkel

*Henry (Hank) Stern*  
Felix Garfunkel  
Karen and Kevin Bressler  
Karen and Jeff Swillinger

*Thelma Karp*  
Felix Garfunkel  
Barbara and Harry Gerla  
Eva Clair

*David Jacobs*  
Marni Flagel  
Karen and Jeff Swillinger

*Reuben and Sylvia Miller*  
The Millers

*Aliya Rachel Lindsay*  
Karen and Matt Lindsay

*Guil Herrick*  
Eva Clair  
Barbara Mandelbaum

*Tina Kleinman*

Yana and Jeffrey Kleinman

*Zelda Kleinman*

Yana and Jeffrey Kleinman

*Freda Swillinger*

Karen and Jeff Swillinger, her grandchildren and great-grandchildren

*Noel Zidel*

Karen and Jeff Swillinger

*Wishing a Speedy Recovery to:*

*Gary Holstine*

Marni Flagel

Karen and Jeff Swillinger

*Maxine Halasz*

Marni Flagel

*Mary Louise Dreety*

Louisa and Philip Dreety

*Lester Stein*

Leslie Buerki

*In Appreciation of:*

*The choir and the beautiful music*

Sharon Lindquist-Skelley and Thomas Skelley

### Campership Fund

*In Memory of:*

*Larry Briskin*

Dena Briskin

*Helene Sureck*

Dena Briskin

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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.

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### CORRECTION:

We express regret to the family of Tom Skelley and Sharon Lindquist-Skelley for a misspelling of Tom's last name in the spring issue of the Light. We take the correct usage of names very seriously in our congregation, so we are doing our best to make sure that misspellings don't occur in the future.

We have instituted new proofreading measures and other steps to prevent such an error in the future. We express our deepest regrets.

# Electing A Precedent



Earlier this month, I was hired by the state of Ohio to be a Voting Location Deputy manager (a type of precinct election official). In just a few weeks, it will be election day. Before you know it, we will all be casting our votes, glued to the screen to see who is declared the winner. Voter registrations are coming in, and I have been busy ensuring everyone can receive a ballot. Wait, you do know that I am talking about the election between Justice and Mercy that is occurring during our online Sunday morning *Makor* sessions, right? Candidates Justice (played by Rabbi Chessin) and

Mercy (played by Rabbi Azriel) will be squaring off in an election style battle when our online education starts up on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Justice and Mercy have been getting ready to show off their debate skills, their commercial editing capabilities, and their stump speeches. Students will have the opportunity to learn about these two concepts, the differences between them, and what Judaism and the sages have to say about both topics. Over the semester, Justice and Mercy will attempt to convince students that one is more important than the other. At the end of the semester, students will have the opportunity to crown a winner by casting their votes in our *Makor* Precedent election.

For years, *Makor* has been about bringing tangible Jewish learning to

our students, from their pre-school years until they graduate. While we would all love to be doing this in-person, we have realized the need to keep students and teachers safe and move to online education for at least this semester. Despite this change, our mission remains the same, "Creating a vibrant, relevant Judaism for today's and tomorrow's generation of Jews." I hope that by playing off of the themes of our society today while infusing Jewish education topics and curriculum, our students will not only enjoy their online sessions but learn and grow together as one community.

Wishing everyone brightness as our days grow shorter.

*B'shalom,*

Rabbi Benjamin G. Azriel

[rabbiazriel@templebethor.com](mailto:rabbiazriel@templebethor.com)

Cast Your Vote:

*Makor*

Precedential Election!



2020 ELECTION  
VOTE

*The following message is a paid advertisement from Mercy:*  
You may not have heard of me, my name may not be spread in the news as much as I would like, but I am Mercy. Ever had to say sorry to someone that might have hurt you? Ever had to ask for forgiveness? An apology is a form of mercy. Sure, saying sorry might not be the most glamorous, but this is the truth: mercy is needed; mercy is crucial; mercy is how we make sure we make more friends than we lose. Mercy is about love, and we all enjoy feeling loved. Maybe you have not heard of me yet, but do not worry, soon enough, my name will be everywhere. So cast your ballots early by voting for Mercy.

*I am Mercy, and I approve this message.*

CHESED  
חסד

# LIFE & LEGACY

## What is Life & Legacy?

LIFE & LEGACY is a 4-year partnership program of the Harold Grinspoon Foundation (HGF) that assists communities across North America, through partnership with Jewish federations and foundations, to promote after-lifetime giving to benefit local Jewish day schools, synagogues, social-service organizations, and other Jewish entities. Through training, support, and monetary incentives, LIFE & LEGACY motivates Jewish organizations to secure legacy gifts, steward donors, and integrate legacy giving into the philanthropic culture of the Jewish community in order to ensure vibrant Jewish life for future generations.

## Ways to Give to Temple Beth Or through Life & Legacy:

There are many different ways to leave your own legacy. Your legacy gift can be designed to match your personal circumstances. The following are some of the ways to create your LIFE & LEGACY commitment to Temple Beth Or.

- **Will or Trust Beneficiary**

The simplest way to support Temple Beth Or is by naming Temple Beth Or in your will or trust. You can designate either a specific dollar amount or a percentage of your estate after other disbursements. A bequest is a meaningful way to support Temple Beth Or without affecting your cash flow during your lifetime. Your attorney can include it when you prepare or revise your will or trust, or you can add a codicil to your will at any time.

- **Retirement Funds**

Name Temple Beth Or as a beneficiary of your IRA, 401K, 403B or other retirement plan. Upon your death, Temple Beth Or will receive the money left to it in your retirement plan.

- **Charitable Trusts**

There are many types of charitable trusts. A Charitable Remainder Trust enables you to receive income during your lifetime and leave an endowment gift as your lasting legacy to the charities of your choice.

- **Life Insurance**

Gifts of new life insurance policies enable donors to build a substantial future endowment gift through reasonable, tax-deductible premium payments. Donation of an existing policy may also offer tax benefits.

- **Cash or Securities**

You may gift money or other assets now and establish an endowment. The endowment funds will be invested, and the income generated each year will go to Temple Beth Or for its benefit or for the purposes that you designate in perpetuity.

## What steps do I need to take?

1. Complete a Letter of Intent
2. Formalize your commitment, consulting with your financial or legal advisor, if necessary.
3. Complete a Legacy Gift Confirmation Form



# Adult Education

## Chai Mitzvah Continues Monthly on Zoom

Temple Beth Or is pleased to offer and help underwrite a third *Chai Mitzvah* course. *Chai Mitzvah* is a Jewish engagement program designed to help people grow their Judaism through text study and social action. This year's course explores "how each commandment provides us with beliefs, principles, and standards of behavior which can guide and challenge our identity and behavior." *Chai Mitzvah* class meetings are facilitated by enrollees on a rotating basis. Learning materials are provided via source books designed to develop a framework for meaningful discussion and personal growth.



Dates: First Thursday of each month, 7:00 p.m. on Zoom

Cost: \$40 (printed materials) or \$18 (PDF materials)

Questions: Contact Jan Maharam at 937-361-8157

## Expert Presentation on US-Israel Relations, October 27

Join us for an Interactive Presentation by Dr. Donna Schlagheck, Ph.D., Board Member, WSURA, "US-Israel Relations" on Zoom. Please register by October 23rd to receive the Zoom link. This interesting and informative presentation is brought to you by the Adult Education Committee (AEC). The Zoom conversation will begin with an overview of US-Israel relations, starting with the unique legal and political challenges facing leaders in both states. As the circle widens, developments in Lebanon, Syria, Iran, and the Palestinian community will be assessed, with discussion on opportunities and threats. Participant questions are welcome and encouraged!

To learn more about Dr. Donna Schlagheck and to register for this event, please visit:

<https://templebethor.com/upcoming-adult-education-events/>

Cast Your Vote :

*Makor*

Precedential Election!

VOTE  
TZEDEK  
צֶדֶק

★ ★ ★  
2020  
ELECTION



### VOTE TZEDEK - VOTE JUSTICE!

I am Justice, and I seek your vote in this upcoming coming Temple Beth Or election season. Justice is the concept of fairness for all people. Would it be fair if rich criminals got lighter punishments than poorer defendants? Would it be right if men earned more money than women for the same job? Would it be just if a teacher favored their Jewish students over their non-Jewish students? These are issues of *tzedeq*, justice, fairness, which is a Jewish religious obligation. Our days are full of opportunities to treat people ethically and fairly, give the benefit of the doubt, stand up against injustice, and work hard to do the right thing.

Come to my safe, socially distanced campaign rally and hear about how to bring more *tzedeq* into the world.

# October Chai-Lights

## Friday, October 16, 6:30 p.m.

Join Mary 'Mahira' Rogers and the Temple Beth Or Choir in worship. Sing your way through the Service. Just bring candles, challah and wine for blessing.

## Saturday, October 17, 10:00 a.m.

The Bar Mitzvah of Asher Pachman

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85388295147>

Asher and his family will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah at Temple Beth Or. He asks that you join along in worship with him as he is called to the Torah for the first time.

## Friday, October 23, 6:30 p.m.

Join Rabbi Chessin as she reviews the notable deaths of 5780. This review usually takes place as a part of our Yizkor Service on Yom Kippur. Instead we will remember them this *Shabbat*.

## Saturday, October 24, 10:00 a.m.

*Tanach* Study. We begin the last book of the Bible, II Chronicles.

## Tuesday, October 27, 7:00 p.m.

Join us for an Interactive Presentation by Dr. Donna Schlagheck, Ph.D., Board Member, WSURA, "US-Israel Relations" on Zoom. See page 6 for registration link and for more details.

## Friday, October 30, 6:30 p.m.

Join Rabbi Chessin for a special Spooky *Shabbat* as we focus on Jewish prayers, amulets and spells to ward off plagues!

## Saturday, October 31, 10:00 a.m.

Para-Rabbi Lorraine Fortner and Mary "Mahira" Rogers lead *Shabbat* morning worship.

## Save the Date

## Wednesday, November 11 from 7:00-8:30 p.m.

Temple Beth Or wants to recognize and show its appreciation for the military service of its members. The Adult Education Committee is hosting a Veterans Day Recognition program on Wednesday, November 11 from 7:00-8:30 p.m. The format will be a Zoom meeting. This event will be in two parts. From 7:00-8:00 p.m., there will be a panel of Temple Beth Or veterans who will share their service experiences. Then from 8:00-8:30 p.m., the veterans will answer questions about how Temple Beth Or and the general community can support veterans of the U.S.



## Sunday, November 1, 10:00 a.m.

### Outdoor *Makor*!

Join us for family-friendly  
**Outdoor *Makor*** events.

Sure to be a great time for the entire family.

**Social distancing and safe activities  
from 10:00 a.m. to noon.**

Masks required for anyone of an  
appropriate age.



## *Tanach* Study

We will continue to hold our *Tanach* Study Sessions on Zoom on Saturday, October 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. Currently, we are studying the books of Chronicles, the final books of the Hebrew Scriptures. This will wrap up our decades long verse by verse study of the Hebrew Bible. If you were there at the beginning, you may want to call into Zoom to hear the exciting conclusion of our holiest of books. Look for links in the weekly Plan-It Beth Or.



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## High Holy Days: Thank You

Now that the Days of Awe are complete, Rabbis Azriel and Chessin thank our awesome volunteers and participants. Whether you sang, read, sounded the shofar, watched our parking lot, or offered technological support, we could not have done this without you! We are also thankful for the many who tuned in and participated in our worship.

*Todah Rabbah* to: Helene Adler, Alexis Becker, Brianna Becker, Caitlyn Becker, Scott Beckerman, Joe Bettman, Ehud Borovoy, Zoe Borovoy, Ava Bressler, Jane Briskin, Donna Brodnick, Diann Bromberg, Dr. Richard Bromberg, David Char, Eva Clair, Miriam DeLaCruz, Scot Denmark, Jake Elder, Kate Elder, Lena Elder, Cole Elder, Wes Elder, Marni Flagel, Para-Rabbi Lorraine Fortner, Bill Fried, Claudia Fried, Avi Gilbert, Dr. Heath Gilbert, Livy Gilbert, Dr. Marc Gilbert, Rachel Gilbert, Zeke Gilbert, Scott Goldberg, Steve Goldberg, John Granby, Marc Gruenberg, Dr. Marty Jacobs, Gayle Jenkins, Stephanie Kirtland, Sharon Lindquist-Skelley, Karen Lindsay, Matt Lindsay, Marilyn Marx, Dr. Annette Nathan, Alex Pearl, Renee Peery, Wendy Rachlin, Lynn Rogers, Music director Mary 'Mahira' Rogers, Caryl Segalewitz, Ira Segalewitz, Carrie Siegel, Marc Siegel, Olivia Siegel, Jessica Simpson, Dan Sweeny, Janese Sweeny, Jeff Swillinger, Dave Verson, Dave Williams, Sarah White. And thanks to Kol Nidre cellist: Jane Katsuyama, Kol Nidre pianist: Tiraje Ruckman; Videos by Paul Mason Miller at Promedia; and sound equipment support by Sound Force.

