

# The TBI Bulletin

August 2018

Temple B'nai Israel, the Reform Jewish Congregation of Kalamazoo



As we draw closer to the end of summer vacation, as we draw near to the end of the Book of Deuteronomy, and therefore the Torah, we recognize that we also draw closer to the month of Elul and all it stands for in our tradition.

Elul is the month that proceeds Rosh Hashanah and is a time to seek forgiveness from others as well as from one's self for the times we have misstepped, for the times we have missed the mark, in our actions and behaviors of the last year. There are many traditions associated with celebrating the month of Elul as well as its place in preparing us for the celebration of the High Holy Days, including the blowing of the shofar every weekday morning throughout the month. The call of the shofar is a call to attention for one's spiritual wellbeing.



Another tradition is to read Psalm 27 every day throughout Elul (and to continue reading it every day through the end of Sukkot):

*Adonai is my Light and my Help;  
whom will I fear?  
Adonai is the Strength of my life;  
who can make me afraid? ...*

The words of Psalm 27 speak to the searcher within each of us and becomes a meditative practice when said every day during this season of introspection. Just as we will celebrate the changing seasons, Elul is also the time to visit the graves of loved ones and remember them. To think about the ways those we have lost have shaped us, and how we carry them with us in our daily lives.

One of the most beautiful ideas evolving out of this period, is the teaching that Elul (spelled *aleph, lamed, vav, lamed* in Hebrew) is

*(continued on page 2)*

**Rabbi Simone Schicker**

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## Rabbi's Column (cont'd.)

an acronym for “*Ani l’dodi v’dodi li*,” a verse from Song of Songs that means “I am my beloved’s and my beloved is mine.” Song of Songs has been interpreted as a love poem between God and the Jewish People throughout our history, and this meaning is especially powerful in these weeks leading up to the opening of the Book of Life. The weeks we have to seek forgiveness from one another, and also to seek forgiveness from God.

The Rosh Hodesh group led by Terra Eash will celebrate the beginning of Elul on Saturday, August 11, starting at 7:00 p.m., at TBI with a discussion followed by Havdalah. Hope to see you there!

### For further study:

- “How Can We Forgive the Unforgivable?”  
<https://reformjudaism.org/blog/2017/08/29/how-can-we-forgive-unforgivable>
- “Preparing for the Days of Awe”  
<https://reformjudaism.org/blog/2012/07/24/preparing-days-awe>
- “Elul is Judaism’s New Year for Animals.”  
<https://www.tabletmag.com/scroll/244275/elul-is-judaisms-new-year-for-animals-heres-what-tradition-teaches-about-our-relationship-to-them>
- “Psalm 27” (Velveteen Rabbi)  
<http://velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/blog/2009/08/psalm-27.html>
- “The eScapegoat”  
<http://www.escgoat.com/#home>  
YouTube: <https://youtu.be/wFqRW-GrKgk>
- 60 Days: A Spiritual Guide to the High Holidays (Book)

L’shalom,  
Rabbi Schicker

## *Upcoming Temple and Worship Events*

### **Friday, August 3**

7 PM: Shabbat services

### **Saturday, August 4**

10 AM: Minyan Milamed

### **Friday, August 10**

6 PM: Blessings on the Beach  
Shabbat services & potluck at Markin Glen Park

### **Saturday, August 11**

10 AM: Minyan Milamed  
7 PM: Rosh Chodesh Group

### **Sunday, August 12**

12:30 PM: Serve meal at Ministry with Community

### **Thursday, August 16**

7 PM: TBI Bookclub

### **Friday, August 17**

7 PM: Musical Shabbat Services

### **Saturday, August 18**

10 AM: Minyan Milamed

### **Wednesday, August 22**

7 PM: TBI Monthly Board meeting

### **Friday, August 24**

7 PM: Shabbat Services

### **Saturday, August 25**

10 AM: Minyan Milamed

### **Sunday, August 26**

12 Noon—5 PM: Welcome Back Picnic

### **Friday, August 31**

Fifth Friday: No Shabbat services;  
Shabbat celebrations at home

Marvin & Rosalie Okun  
KALAMAZOO COMMUNITY

# Jewish School



## From the Director:

I have been teaching religious school for the past four years. At the end of each year the students always ask me, "Miss Nora, are you going to teach us next year?" Each time I am asked that question I try to imagine what my life would be like without teaching the children of our wonderful Jewish community. My connection with our school and our children has become a very important part of my life, so much so that I can't imagine my life without it. This year, I am coming back in a new role and I am so excited!

Our Joint Religious School Committee has done such an amazing job of bringing the two religious schools together. This summer I have been in awe of the foundation that has been built by the joint committee, Tova Schreiber, and all of the many leaders that came before her in both congregations. I have been listening to many of the you (parents, students, teachers, rabbis, board members and other congregational leaders). So far, everyone I have asked to share their knowledge with me has made me confident that I have the support of many wise and caring people. I have asked three questions: What is good about our school? What could we improve? Where would you like your child(ren) to be at the end of their education at OKCJS? Everyone I have talked with feels that bringing our children together to learn is a good thing. Everyone also had very good ideas for ways to improve, and I am in the process of planning those improvements. Do you have answers to those three questions that you would like to share with me? I would love to listen. Please contact me at [okcjsdirector@gmail.com](mailto:okcjsdirector@gmail.com) to set up a time.

I have been asked to introduce myself to the congregations. Most of you reading this newsletter know me. I have been a member of both the Congregation of Moses and Temple B'nai Israel, and since coming to Kalamazoo in 2002 have always felt myself a part of both congregations, even though my most recent membership has been with TBI. I studied for conversion with Rabbi Spivak, and I also spent several years in his adult Hebrew class. I studied service leading with Rabbi Matt and I cochair the Member Connections Committee at TBI. I have been retired for a few years after a career in healthcare and live in Parkview Hills with my cat, Dave. My daughter, Rachel, is about to graduate from the culinary arts program at KVCC. My son, John Mark, is an ESL teacher who lives in Washington, DC with his wife and my grandson, Jacob (the light of my life!) who enjoys Camp Keshet every summer. My hobby is sewing and yes, I made most all of the clothes you see me wear and no, I won't sew for you! As an offshoot of that hobby, I collect vintage sewing machines and fabric. I am a nurse, but most of my jobs have involved teaching (doctors, nurses, patients), management, quality, safety, and process improvement. In retirement I have volunteered with families who came to Kalamazoo as refugees from Syria. I learned to teach them English and then taught English online to people all around the world prior to becoming the OKCJS director. When I learned Tova was leaving, I doodled a list of the skills I thought our school director needed and then said, "Oh, no!" realizing I had those skills. I am honored that the Joint Religious School Committee placed their confidence in me. I will do my very best to see that your children experience the best possible Jewish education in a vibrant, inclusive, warm, and caring environment.

Shalom,  
Nora Chaus, Director  
The Marvin and Rosalie Okun Kalamazoo Community Jewish School

## OKCJS News

### Here's what's happening at OKCJS:

- Open house for new students in PreK-2nd grades in late August, date TBD. If your child will be enrolling for the first time, please email [okcjsdirector@gmail.com](mailto:okcjsdirector@gmail.com). PreK begins at age 4.
- Early registration for the 5779 (2018-9) school year at the Welcome Back Picnic on Sunday, August 26, beginning at 12:00 noon.
- First day of religious school for grades PreK-7 is Sunday, September 9, 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. at the Congregation of Moses.
- First Wednesday of religious school for grades 3-7 is September 12, 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at Temple B'nai Israel.
- High School (grades 8+) will begin a week later than the younger grades.

If you would like more information about enrolling in our combined school, please email [okcjsdirector@gmail.com](mailto:okcjsdirector@gmail.com).

### TBI Bookclub

For August, the TBI Bookclub is reading "The Chosen", by Chaim Potok. We will meet at This is a Bookstore on Thursday, August 16, 7:00 p.m., to discuss. The bookstore has copies for us on reserve and they are available at a discount.

The Chosen is the now-classic story of two fathers and two sons and the pressures on all of them to pursue Judaism in the way that is best suited to each. As the boys grow into young men, they discover in each other a lost spiritual brother, and a link to an unexplored world that neither had considered before. In effect, they exchange places, and find the peace that neither will ever retreat from again.

Contact Cary Mannaberg, [cmannaberg@gmail.com](mailto:cmannaberg@gmail.com), with questions.

### Rosh Chodesh Feminine Spirituality Group

#### Rosh Chodesh feminine spirituality group

Open and welcoming to all who seek to deepen their connection to the divine, indwelling presence of God (*Shekinah*).

We will meet at the temple to celebrate the month of Elul on **Saturday, August 11, from 7:00-8:30 p.m.**

We will enjoy a light nosh of plums and pears before discussing self-transformation. In Yiddish, these two fruits have additional meanings: "*flaumen*" means flames and "*beren*" means to burn. Elul is a time to search our hearts and to seek God with fiery, burning intensity in preparation for the High Holidays. Rabbi Schicker will conclude our meeting with a *havdalah* ceremony.

For more information about Rosh Chodesh traditions for Elul, go to:

<https://ritualwell.org/ritual/essence-elul>

Please email Terra at [tmeash@gmail.com](mailto:tmeash@gmail.com) with questions or to RSVP.

## August 2018 Donations

### Donation (in Memory of Sid Tanoff)

Naomi and Rick Morse

### Rabbi Salary Fund

Anita and Steve Klein  
Sue and Dave Goldenberg  
Kate and Aaron Whitsett  
Eunice Levy

### General Donation

Janet and Scott Nykasa

### Endowment

Cary Mannaberg  
Rachel Kalmowitz (in Honor of Kate Whitsett's Birthday)

### Bimah Flowers Donation (in Honor of Jackie Odza's Bat Mitzvah)

Jennifer and Ken Odza

## August Oneg Hosts

<i>August 3</i>	Shina Family
<i>August 10</i>	Open
<i>August 17</i>	Goldenberg
<i>August 24</i>	Leinwand Family
<i>August 31</i>	Fifth Friday (no services)

Contact Sue at  
dsgoldenberg@comcast.net if you can help as an oneg host. Thank you.

## August Perpetual Memorials (Yahrzeits)

EVA AMDURSKY	TILLIE MADISON
BARBARA ARNTZEN	LUCILLE MCDONALD
MICHAEL K BACH	PAULINE ORWIN
ROSALIE BERMAN	LOUIS POLLENS
LILLIAN BERNARD	FRIEDA REINHEIMER
ROSE HELEN BLANK	ANNA RITMAN
RUTH FRANK	JULIUS SCHWAN
JEAN GAL	BESSIE SCHWIDKAY
RUTH GALPERIN	HERB SCHWIDKAY
JEAN TANOFF GLASSER	MAX SHAPIRO
SADIE GOLDEN	LOUIS SKOLNIK
LINDA POLL HAFFT	LOIS SUCHOMSKI
NATHAN KAPLAN	MORRIS WEINTRAUB

## August 2018 Birthdays

Steve Bertman	Jess Pike
Scott Davidson	Steve Pollens
Rachel Hurwitz	Shane Sarah Riley
Emily Leinwand	Magnus Riley
Katie Leinwand	Ben Tanoff
Randy Lubratich	Kyle Thompson
Eliyahu Mejia	Paulette Thompson
Michelle Miller-Adams	Abram Wasser

We are saddened to inform you of the passing of long-time TBI member Jean Gal, wife of Martin Gal (d. 2009). The Gals resided in the Kalamazoo area before moving to Amherst to be closer to their children. Please visit [www.beersandstory.com](http://www.beersandstory.com) to sign the online condolence register.

# Temple B'nai Israel

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Webmaster Randy Lubratich

Temple B'nai Israel, founded in 1866, is a thriving congregation that actively engages all its members in Reform Jewish cultural, spiritual, and educational growth, individually and as a diverse and welcoming community.



**UNION** *for*  
**REFORM**  
**JUDAISM**

A Proud Member of the URJ