

NOVEMBER 2025

CHESHVAN/KISLEV 5786

THE SHOFAR

TEMPLE BETH EL OF ONEONTA'S MONTHLY BULLETIN



MONTHLY MESSAGE

The High Holy Days were a high point for the Temple Beth El congregation last month. We had a large attendance for all services. There were single women, single men, a retired rabbi, couples, young families, grandfathers and grandmothers, parents with grown children, members and visitors. It was so great to gather to sing, pray, listen, forgive, and think. We were a true congregation of all kinds of Jewish people. We enjoyed everything about it and hope you did too.

We celebrated Sukkot with a bring-your-own dinner that was also well attended. We shook the lulav and etrog in the sukkah, said the blessings, and gathered around three tables in the social hall to eat our dinners. The weather was cooperative, and the breezes were refreshing. We want to thank Steve and Roger for erecting the sukkah for us. We also thank Hollie and Faye who decorated the sukkah, led the blessings and rituals, and Faye who baked the most delicious cakes for us. Thank you.



ONEGS

If you would like to sponsor an Oneg to celebrate a simcha or in honor or in memory of someone, please CALL or TEXT Faye Munson at (607) 434-3911. PLEASE DO NOT SEND EMAILS.

TODA RABA

- For a donation to Temple Beth by Architect Elizabeth Davidson in memory of Andrew Paisley Winters Bell.
- To Al and Marilyn Lubell for sponsoring the November 7th Oneg Shabbat.
- For a donation to Temple Beth El by Bob Garfield and Anne Green in memory of Lila Garfield, z"l. For a donation to Temple Beth El by Anne Green and Bob Garfield in memory of Shannon Munson, z"l.
- To Steve Feuer, Roger Chauveron, and Ohad Shem-Tov for erecting the Sukkah, and to Faye Munson for demonstrating how to shake the lulav and etrog.

Cantor Green will be holding Friday night services and Saturday morning Torah study the weekend of November 7 and 8. We hope you will join us.

Thanksgiving is around the corner. According to Gloria Kaufer Greene, author of the "New Jewish Holiday Cookbook" (Times Books, 1999), "The pilgrims based their customs on the Bible." "They knew that Sukkot was an autumn harvest festival, and there is evidence that they fashioned the first Thanksgiving after the Jewish custom of celebrating the success of the year's crops."

Gratefulness is a Jewish quality that we strive for in daily life. We have blessings for

everything, for rising in the morning and going to sleep at night, for every kind of food you can imagine and a generic food blessing in case you aren't sure what specific one to use. There are some parallels with the Passover Seder. Some people can't stand the idea of gefilte fish at the Seder. In my house, people can't stomach cranberry relish. For the Seder, the same foods are served every year. In my family we joke and say we should freeze the Seder leftovers and save them for next year. It would save a lot of cooking time. The same holds true for Thanksgiving dinner. We look forward to the same seasonal dishes every year. The sheer volume of foods is equal in both Thanksgiving dinners and the Seder. But the attitude of gratitude is the most important. As we gather with our families and friends for Thanksgiving this year, be sure to bring out the Jewish qualities too.

We hope you have many blessings to be grateful for this November.

Stephanie Bauer and Phyllis Sherman



IMPERFECTION OF REPENTENCE



Cantor David Green

What Do Chabad, Evangelical Christianity, & AT&T Share in Common? Chabad, Evangelical Christianity and AT&T share one major thing in common. This commonality comes from the Torah portion Vayera, beginning with Genesis 18:1. The Talmud emphasizes the theme of "Hachnasat Orchim", which means welcoming the guest or stranger. With this Torah portion, Abraham welcomes three strangers with a great show of hospitality. Rashi states this a major part of our Jewish tradition. One Midrash even says that Abraham stood over his

guest to provide them with shade, protecting them from the hot sun. Our tradition believes that this sense of G'milut Chasidim, acts of loving kindness grows into spiritual kindness.

So, what is the connection with the abovementioned institutions. One of the Evangelical Christian churches in Baltimore adds 500 new families as members every six months. How do they do this? They have volunteers who personally greet each new parishioner, sit with them during the service, introduce them to other members and call them a day later to engage them in some other church activity.

Chabad raises one billion dollars a year. They never ask for shul dues or Hebrew School tuition. What they do very well is get to know each person who walks in the door of their shul or comes to one of their functions. One Chabad Rebbe knew the English, Hebrew, and Yiddish names of every single resident of five nursing homes and independent living facilities near his shul and he visited all of them every week including Shabbat and all the holidays.

A salesman from AT&T answered the customer service line as an alive, "in person" individual who talked to his potential customers about fishing, sports, weather, their family or anything else the customer wanted to talk about.

Chabad, the Baltimore Evangelical Church, and AT&T all share Abraham's action of Hachnasat Orchim, welcoming the stranger. The Prophet Amos believed the same thing when he stated, be welcoming by the action of doing it, not just saying it.

There is a Kabbalistic metaphor about vessels that says it all: "Those that received but did not give ultimately self-destructed; Only those that passed on what they received, that were part of an interconnective network on both ends, fulfilled their function and were able to serve God's creative purpose." If we can all promote and practice human relations and welcome friends and strangers alike, we can build community and follow in the footsteps of Abraham that he set out in Parsha Vayeira. Temple Beth El already exhibits a great deal of welcoming to the stranger and visitor who comes to the synagogue. It is a great trademark of being a small and intimate shul, where everyone knows everyone and feels a great sense of community. With Abraham, as our role model, may that sense of community continue to thrive and grow.

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SUKKOT AT TBE



Photo credit: Hollie Jaffe



Photo credit: Ohad Shem-Tov



Photo credit: Roger Chauveron

THE TEMPLE BETH EL DISCUSSION GROUP RETURNS!

On Saturday, Nov. 1st, Jim Bercovitz and Alice Lichtenstein will again moderate the Group from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. If possible, please bring a dairy/pareve nosh to share.

We will be reading and discussing Abraham Joshua Heschel's, "The Sabbath", a short, but profound classic of Jewish spirituality, often hailed as a meditation for people seeking meaning in modern life. In these times when many of us are looking for a way to connect to the spiritual strength of Judaism--far from the political world--Heschel's masterpiece is an essential read.

Please order your copies now. We will, however, hand out copies of the first chapter. We hope to see our beloved former discussion members and our beloved newcomers!

For more information, contact Alice Lichtenstein arlichtenstein3@gmail.com



WHEN YOU SEND MAIL TO TEMPLE BETH EL

Please address all mail to Temple Beth El to our post office box (PO Box 383, Oneonta, NY 13820) and not to the physical building.

And please direct your mail to the "Attention of" the Treasurer, President, or other Officer or Committee Chair, on the envelope. Thank you.

NOVEMBER ADULT TORAH STUDY WITH OHAD SHEM TOV

Please join Ohad on Saturday November 15th for a lively and informative discussion of Torah and related topics. These discussions call on Ohad's wonderful depth of scriptural and historical knowledge. Further, as a native speaker, Ohad explores and explains subtleties of the Hebrew text.

Feel free to bring snacks (dairy or pareve) or drinks to share with your fellow learners as we study in the spirit of hevruta—learning in partnership and community. All are welcome!



COMMUNITY NEWS



Mazel tov to Bob Garfield and Anne Green on the wedding of their daughter, Claire Marilea Garfield, to Leandro Ponce on October 16, 2025, at the Origin's Cafe in Cooperstown, after a ride on the Carousel and a pat for the cow at the Farmer's Museum. They are both PHD students at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia.

Mazel tov to Danielle Mentzer and John DeMarco and their families on the birth of a son, Leonardo. The naming ceremony will take place at erev Shabbat services on Friday December 5th.

Congratulations to Brett Heindl, Associate Professor of Political Science at SUNY Oneonta, who has been promoted to Associate Dean of its School of Liberal Arts and Business.

ONEONTA INTERFAITH THANKSGIVING SERVICE

The annual Oneonta Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be held on Tuesday, November 25th at 7 pm at the Elm Park United Methodist Church, located at 401 Chestnut Street (at the corner of Ceperley Street), in Oneonta. If you are interested in singing with the interfaith choir, please contact Hollie Jaffe at hjaffe@hotmail.com.

Please bring donations of food or cash/check, which will be distributed among the three community feeding programs- Your Safe Haven, Salvation Army, and St. Mary's Church. If you wish to donate but will not be attending, please contact Hollie Jaffe at hjaffe@hotmail.com.



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CHESHVAN/KISLEV 5786

MEN'S CLUB BY STEVEN FEUER

Men's Club will hold its breakfast on Sunday, November 16th, at 10 a.m.

SISTERHOOD BY FAYE MUNSON

Our next meeting is November 16th at 12:30. We welcome all Temple Beth El women to join the Sisterhood. If you wish to find out more about Sisterhood, please contact Faye Munson. Fayemala27@gmail.com.

YARZHEITS

October 31 – November 6 (9 – 15 Cheshvan)

Irving Hertzendorf

November 7-13 (16-29 Cheshvan)

Esther Mintz

November 14 – 20 (23 – 29 Cheshvan)

David Morton Gelbsman
Irene Allen

November 21-27 (Kislev 1-7)

Louis Friedlander

May their names always be remembered for a blessing

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

In the event of a rabbinic emergency, or in the case of an urgent need, please contact Temple Beth El's Interim President, Ron Feldstein, at 607-988-7455 or tbeoneonta@gmail.com. In the event of a death, please contact Steven Feuer at 607-434-2538.



GOOD NEWS ISRAEL

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TORAH PARASHOT FOR NOVEMBER

November 1 – Lech-Lecha – (Genesis 12:1-17:27) “Lech-Lecha” means “Take yourself.” G-d tells Abram to go forth to a land He will show him. Abraham has a child with Hagar, named Ishmael.

November 8 – Vayeira – (Genesis 18:1-22:24) “Veyeira” means “And He appeared”. Three guests appear and tell Abraham that Sarah will bear a child. She does. Abraham is tested when G-d asks him to sacrifice his son, Isaac. The cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are destroyed when the people do evil.

November 15 – Chayei Sarah – (Genesis 23:1-25:18) “Chayei Sarah” means “The life of Sarah”, but ironically starts with Sarah’s death. Abraham buries her in the cave of Machpelah. He then marries Keturah, has more children, and dies.

November 22 – Toldot – (Genesis 25:19-28:9) “Toldot” means “Generations”. Isaac and Rebecca have twins, Jacob and Esau. Isaac favors Esau, who brings him meat. Rebecca favors Jacob, who likes to cook. Esau sells his birthright for some of Jacob’s stew. Rebecca tricks her husband, Isaac, into giving his blessing to Jacob instead of Esau. Jacob leaves town when Esau finds out.

November 29 – Vayeitzei – (Genesis 28:10-32:3) “Vayeitzei” means “And He left”. Jacob leaves his uncle’s place and has a dream of angels going up and coming down a ladder. Laban tricks Jacob into marrying Leah and only lets him marry her sister Rachel after many years. Rachel has a son, Joseph.



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THE SHOFAR

Published by Temple Beth El

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Save the dates:

Nov. 1	10 am-12	Book Discussion Group with Alice Lichtenstein and Jim Bercovitz (see page 4)
Nov. 7	7 pm	Services with Cantor Green
Nov. 8	10 am	Torah Study with Cantor Green
Nov. 15	10 am	Torah study with Ohad Shem-Tov (see page 4)
Nov. 16	10 am	Men's Club Breakfast
Nov. 16	12:30 pm	Sisterhood meeting
Nov. 25	7 pm	Oneonta Interfaith Thanksgiving Service at Elm Park United Methodist Church (see page 5 for details)

Shabbat times:

Fri. October 31	Light Shabbat candles at 5:41 pm
Fri. November 7	Light Shabbat candles at 4:32 pm
Fri. November 14	Light Shabbat candles at 4:25 pm
Fri. November 21	Light Shabbat candles at 4:20 pm
Fri. November 28	Light Shabbat candles at 4:16 pm

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