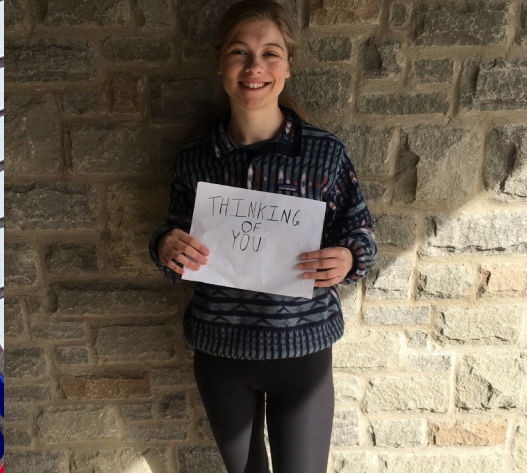
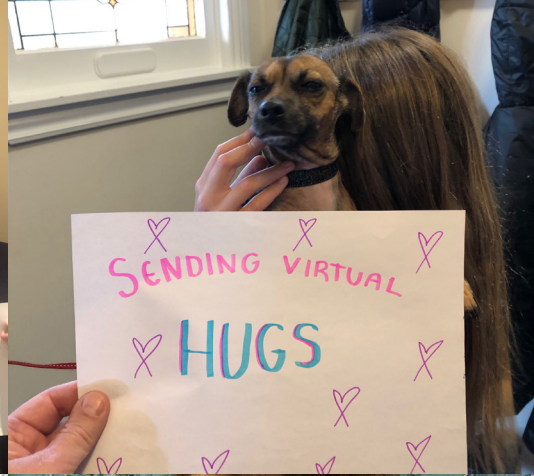
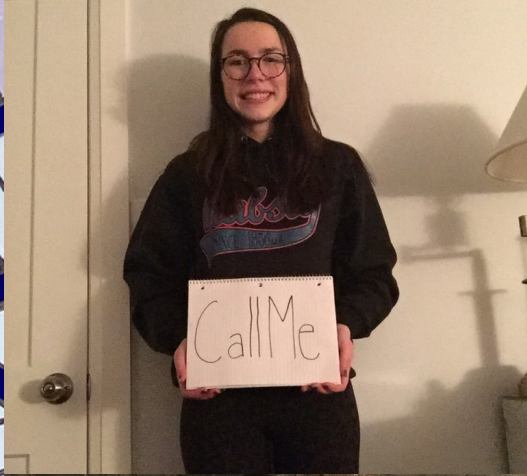


HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE Bulletin

PESACH 5780



OUR VIRTUAL CONGREGATION

Ritual and prayer, melody and meditation are especially powerful during these trying days. We look forward to joining you in our virtual congregation for our Pesach 5780 Livestream Services.

Visit Holy Blossom Temple's Facebook Page or website for the Livestreams.

Pesach 5780 Online at Holy Blossom

Women's Virtual Seder*

Sunday, April 5, 2020, 2:00 pm

Erev Yom Tov Service via Zoom

Wednesday, April 8, 6:00 pm

Virtual Seder*

Wednesday, April 8, 2020, 6:45 pm

If you can, bring your own: Seder Plate with its components (you may have to get creative this year!), Candles, Wine/Grape Juice, Matzah, Special Meal

We'll provide the Hagadah, the leadership, the melodies, and the festive spirit!

Yom Tov Morning Service via Livestream

Thursday, April 9, 10:00 am

Erev Seventh Day Pesach via Zoom

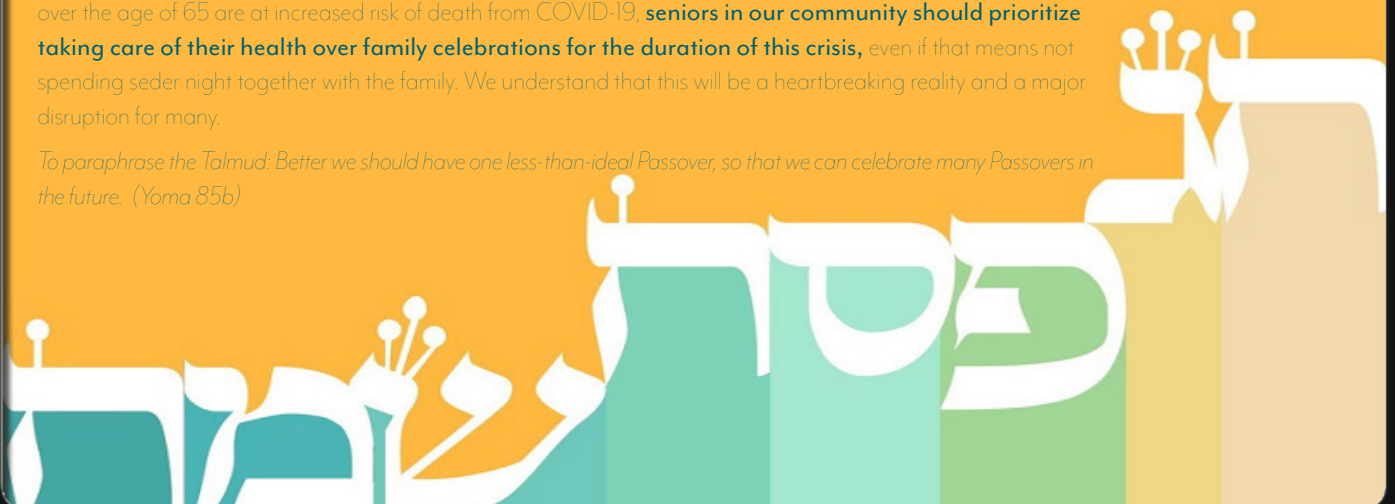
Tuesday, April 14, 6:00 pm

7th Day Pesach & Yizkor Service Livestream

Wednesday, April 15, 10:00 am

***Passover Seders should only be celebrated with the members of one's immediate household.** To be clear, especially since those over the age of 65 are at increased risk of death from COVID-19, **seniors in our community should prioritize taking care of their health over family celebrations for the duration of this crisis**, even if that means not spending seder night together with the family. We understand that this will be a heartbreaking reality and a major disruption for many.

To paraphrase the Talmud: Better we should have one less-than-ideal Passover, so that we can celebrate many Passovers in the future. (Yoma 85b)





HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE Bulletin

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On the cover: Holy Blossom Teens want you to know they are thinking of you! At this time of social distancing and isolation, We pray that through the use of technology we will continue to provide a Jewish anchor at an unsteady and uncertain time.

"Chazak, Chazak v'Nitchazeik. Be Strong. Be Strong. And let us strengthen one another." If ever there was a time for these three words to be said together in hopeful prayer, it is now.

RE-READING THE HAGGADAH

Rabbi Yael Splansky, Senior Rabbi

RABBINIC REFLECTION



Our core narrative of the Exodus has instructed our people to be grateful, hopeful, and generous in every age, in every unthinkable situation and strain. Pesach in isolation from COVID-19 is no exception. As we begin to prepare for our Virtual Seder, I see how easy it is to infuse every verse, every symbol, every ritual with new meaning and relevance this year.

1. **Pass-over** – Our Festival got its English name from the verse, Exodus 12:13. “God instructs the Israelites: ‘And the blood on the houses where you are staying shall be a sign for you. When I see the blood I will *pass over* you, so that no plague will destroy you....’” God instructed our ancestors to self-isolate in order that the plague will not reach them. So this year, as instructed by our government and by The Toronto Board of Rabbis, we will stay home on the night of the seder, no matter how sad it will be without extended family and friends around the table.
2. **Give and Receive the Pesach** – Exodus 12: 3-4 instructs us further about Pesach: “Each shall take one lamb per family, one lamb per household. Let them share with a neighbour who dwells nearby, in proportion to the number of persons. You shall contribute for the lamb according to what each household will eat.” If you have too much, share with your neighbour. If you don’t have enough, accept from your neighbour. More than the buying frenzies, these trying days have shown remarkable generosity. If you have something to give – a talent of skill, a gift of funds, the ability to reach out to another -- Pesach is the time to give it. And if there is something you need, Pesach is the time to receive it from your neighbours, your fellow congregants, fellow Jews, fellow citizens. Because God knows, we truly are all in this together.
3. **Urchatz and Rachtzah** – According to the order of the Haggadah, we wash hands twice: once before the Karpas and a second time before the Motzi-Matzah. We expect to wash before “breaking bread,”

but why before Karpas? Because according to the Talmud, “Any food that is dipped into a liquid requires washing of the hands before it is eaten,” (Pesachim 115a) because liquids can carry impurities to solid foods. Before all the soaps and bleaches were invented, there was ritual washing. Jewish historians teach that to a degree this protected us from previous plagues. So, let’s act as our ancestors did. Wash and then wash again to spare us from infection.

4. **Karpas dipped in Salt Water** – There may be tears of loneliness and fear this Pesach, but that little sprig of parsley on the seder plate reminds us of spring and rebirth. Like that little seed nestled in the soil now, we are held safely by the four walls of our homes. We are dormant, but still so full of potential and life! One congregant recently told me: “I don’t want to just hibernate. I want to use this time to grow.” What do you want to learn, explore, create now that you have more time? We are offering many online opportunities for Jewish intellectual and spiritual growth. I hope you’ll take advantage of them so that like the Karpas, you can emerge from this time with fresh gifts to share.

Last week I was invited to join other faith leaders to consult with Mayor Tory, who wanted to hear about the needs of religious communities in the immediate, medium, and long term. Because our tradition teaches us how to respond to one threat or another, we know what to do. 1) Stay home. 2) Be generous in all kinds of giving and receiving. 3) Wash hands. 4) Grow. And finally, 5) Hope.

We conclude the seder with the hopeful prayer: “Pure One Who Dwells in the High Places, support Your People who are countless in number. May You soon redeem all Your People joyfully in Zion. *BaShanah HaBa’ah biY’rushalayim!* Next year in Jerusalem! Next year may we all be free!” We place our eyes eternally on the hopeful horizon and pray: “*Bimheirah b’yameinu b’karov.* May it come speedily, in our days, and soon!”

SOCIAL INTERACTION TO SOCIAL DISTANCING (IN LESS THAN 5 DAYS)

Avra Rosen, President, Holy Blossom Board of Directors

FROM THE PRESIDENT



We have gone from socializing at services, programs and simchat to physical distancing. There is no question that the world has changed. And so have we.

As COVID-19 spread in North America, my in-person meetings as Holy Blossom's President moved to phone or videoconference calls. All of us were living in the moment, and we at Holy Blossom Temple were making decisions on a day by day or sometimes hour by hour basis, in the interests and safety of our members, students, clergy and staff. This unprecedented situation had no manual or guidebook.

In the early days of the virus, after consulting with other organizations and our own congregant medical professionals, we remained open for services and programs with appropriate distancing from one another as we implemented new procedures, including safe hygiene practices, restrictions on kissing the Mezzuzot or Torahs, self-monitoring, suspension of all kiddush luncheons. Those early and thoughtful decisions were consistent with Jewish tradition and values which teach us to be responsible for our fellow citizens and for all humanity. However, in less than a week, and with heavy hearts, we moved to what we have called Plan B. Our beautiful building was closed to all except staff and clergy. They have been working remotely from their home offices and have remained available to all of our congregants by phone.

When it became clear that congregants and guests could no longer attend at our services, our incredible team of clergy, staff and lay leaders worked tirelessly to innovate and help us step out of our comfort zone. We transported a Judaism that revolves heavily around in-person social interaction to relying on the internet and digital world, by livestreaming all of our services and certain programs. While admittedly, there were a few hiccups in the early stages, we went from never having livestreamed a service to livestreaming all of our services within a few days. Holy Blossom has pivoted to a virtual platform, and there is no turning back now - a small silver lining. The number of viewers online speak to its success; our congregants and friends are able to have a meaningful spiritual connection in their homes as well as

intellectual stimulation from our lecturers. Even former Holy Blossom members outside of Canada have joined us digitally for the first time - we welcome all of them back.

We have also been speaking and working individually with our B'nei Mitzvah families since the outbreak, as well as those that are scheduled in the coming weeks, to not only provide options but to ensure that the livestreaming service is meaningful to their family in these difficult times. Even this Bulletin, which had been prepared and written around the theme of celebrations and smachot, was hastily redrafted in a few days to be reflective of this crisis.

Lay leaders, Board members, past Presidents, volunteers and teenagers have been personally calling each member of our congregation to check in on them and their family. As my calendar opened due to the various closures in the legal community, I too have time to make these phone calls, calling congregants from all sectors, and I am continuing to do so. I have been so touched by the gratitude expressed by all of you in response to our personal outreach by phone. It has been a privilege to see our community at Holy Blossom become even stronger during this pandemic, another silver lining.

As a precaution, we have prepared a Plan C and hope never to have to implement it. When we are able to reopen our doors and welcome all of you back, we will have to move to a recovery plan. For now, we are still living in real time, from day to day.

As President, I am very grateful to Rabbi Splansky and Ron Polster - working together in these uncharted and moving waters, we have relied on each other, our strengths and wisdom to grapple with COVID-19, its impact on our community and the community at large, and in making very difficult decisions in the best interests of Holy Blossom.

We can all do our part in pulling through this crisis together as a community. While I look forward to resuming our spiritual, educational and social interactions face-to-face, for now, we are working together to ensure that [#lifecanblossomherevirtually](#).

TRANSFORMING A HOUSE OF GATHERING INTO A VIRTUAL CONGREGATION

Ron Polster, Executive Director

The turning point for me was when it was announced that the NBA basketball season was being postponed indefinitely. It was Thursday evening, March 12. Temple leadership had already been pivoting from Plan A to Plan B. “Social distancing” was already a part of our lexicon. But now we were challenged with the more dramatic question: What if simply “distancing” ourselves in services and programs wasn’t enough? What if, for an indefinite period, we were required not to gather at all? How could we best serve a congregation that could no longer congregate in the traditional sense?

In less than 72 hours, Holy Blossom Temple transformed from a House of Gathering into a Virtual Congregation. Upon reflection, there were six critical steps taken that enabled us to do so:

1. **We were open to the news of the hour.** In many ways, what we were dealing with was information overload. We very quickly recognized the fluidity of the situation and that we were in uncharted waters. But being open to the news of the hour also meant being open to the good guidance of Toronto Public Health, of medical advisors from within the congregation, and of other local synagogues as well as of our sister URJ congregations south of the border. Benefitting from the wise counsel of others was going to be critical in helping to weather the storm.
2. **We established internal communications amongst our professional team.** While there was the natural concern for everyone’s health, we also acknowledged the business challenge: was everyone set up to work remotely? Did everyone have access to the files they needed? Were our financial systems sustainable remotely? How do we continue to pay bills, sign cheques, and take donations? Despite not seeing each other day-in and day-out, we needed to know that our systems were stable.
3. **We took stock of the technology required on the backend to support the innovative, front-facing initiatives.** Livestreaming and Zooming and FaceTiming quickly became ALL of our best friends, and not just the techies amongst us.
4. **We relied on a resilient, creative, collaborative team of professionals to partner effectively with resilient, creative, collaborative teams of lay leaders.** Communications and Worship took up the task of figuring out the livestreaming of services. Our daily minyan became a virtual minyan via Zoom, with Rabbis and Cantors leading these services from their homes, and with mourners receiving comfort by the many faces of fellow congregants as they say Kaddish. Membership and Community Engagement and *Kehillah Kadosha* created an online survey to elicit feedback of congregational needs, and took up the task of calling to check in with congregants. Our Department of Education worked with teachers in designing and delivering creative, online classes and one-on-one tutorials children and teens, ages 2-16. Even our Little Blossoms Music and Movement Class for babies met virtually!
5. **We communicated with - and continue to communicate with – our community.** Providing regular updates was, of course, essential. But we also needed to be mindful of the many different ways people actually hear messages – by email, by social media, by video, by phone. Until our doors would be fully open again, we needed to rely on providing meaningful links that people could click on to maintain access and connection.
6. **We attempted to maintain some normalcy, some consistency – albeit from the comfort of our own homes.** In addition to the day-to-day phone calls and emails, we continued to hold:
 - Regular clergy meetings
 - Regular departmental meetings
 - Bi-weekly all-professional meetings
 - Weekly Senior Leadership Team meetings
 - Weekly calendar planning meetings with our admin team

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, **we continue to work at two speeds at once.** We continue to respond to the urgent and emergent issues, coming up with new initiatives to meet our congregational needs during this time of uncertainty. At the same time, we continue to plan for what will be. And the irony of ironies: maybe, just maybe, by successfully social distancing and ultimately becoming more of a virtual congregation we’ve actually strengthened our role as a House of Gathering, bringing us closer together more than we could have ever imagined!



LIFE CAN BLOSSOM HERE...VIRTUALLY!

Deanna Levy, Director of Communications & Marketing

With the world changing so swiftly, our lay and professional leadership have completely transformed Holy Blossom Temple into a virtual congregation. *We are still a leading, learning, and loving congregation, just as before the current health crisis – only now we can enjoy it from the safety of our own homes.*

From Livestreaming our Kabbalat Shabbat and Shabbat Morning Services, daily #VirtualMinyans through Zoom, and many incredible educational and social programs implemented and underway, it is clear that Holy Blossom has provided a Jewish anchor through meaningful use of our virtual platforms.

On the Horizon

Visit our website (www.holyblossom.org) to find our Virtual Congregational offerings. Our website will serve as a resource for both our congregation and our broader community, with information on our services, programs, events, and all the innovative programming we have on the horizon. We have something for everyone!

Our *Virtual Mishkan*

A mosaic cannot exist without all its pieces coming together, and our virtual congregation cannot exist without our community. You have made this *Virtual Mishkan* a home, creating connections from near and far. We have seen this impact in action, from over 2K views of our Shabbat HaChodesh Livestream, to new followers to our social media channels by the minute. We are honoured to provide you with comfort and community during these unsettling times, and we will continue to create connections to our vital community and to Judaism during this period of physical isolation.

Connect with us online!

We will be sharing messages, teachings, Livestreams, and updates on our Facebook Page. Like or follow us to stay connected (www.facebook.com/holyblossomtemple/).

We also send regular updates through email. Be sure to subscribe to our Life@HolyBlossom newsletter by visiting our website.



EACH ONE OF US CAN PERSONALLY CONNECT

Abigail Carpenter-Winch, Director of Membership and Community Engagement
& Rabbi Zachary Goodman, Assistant Rabbi

While this is a time that calls for isolation and social distancing, we want you to know you are not alone. Your Holy Blossom Temple family is committed to helping during these difficult times and to maintain your connection to Judaism and this *Kehila Kedosha* - sacred community.

We have been reaching out to the congregation, looking for volunteers as we attempt to personally call all of our almost 2000 adult fellow congregants. It has been heartwarming to witness how many people came forward and generously volunteered their time and spirit. We began with our most vulnerable seniors, and within the next few weeks, we are hoping to call every household! Perhaps you have already received a call from one of our incredible volunteers! As much as we want to offer a helping hand to every individual, our primary focus is to reach out on behalf of Holy Blossom to offer a personal connection and share our warmth with the community. Please greet the volunteer callers warmly and let us know how you are doing during this time.

Many of the people we spoke with are experiencing a level of anxiety. This is absolutely understandable as we begin to cope with the realities of this global health crisis. Thanks to the incredibly important work of the Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative, we created a resource guide for people of all ages to learn about best practices in anxiety management. These resources can be found on the Holy Blossom website.

We want to continue these important connections in the coming weeks and months ahead! If you are interested in making calls to your fellow congregants,

please reach out to Abigail Carpenter-Winch, awinch@holyblossom.org. Rabbi Goodman is also available to speak with you should you have any questions about this initiative zgoodman@holyblossom.org.

The Holy Blossom Temple family is truly a *Kehila Kedosha* – Holy Community. We can learn from the wise words of Dan Nichols, who sings the following in his song “Kehillah Kedoshah”:

Each one of us must start to hear.
Each one of us must sing the song.

Each one of us must do the work.
Each one of us must right the wrong.

Each one of us must build the home.
Each one of us must hold the hope.

Each one of us, each one of us.

Kehilah kedoshah, kehilah kedoshah
Kehilah kedoshah, kehilah kedoshah

It's how we help. It's how we give. It's how we pray.
It's how we heal. It's how we live.

It's how we help. It's how we give. It's how we pray.
It's how we heal. It's how we live.

To our Holy Blossom family, thank you for strengthening our community. Your generosity of time and spirit is appreciated by the clergy, staff and congregation! Please do not hesitate to reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.



THE ECC HAS GONE VIRTUAL!

Wendy Steinberg Himmel

As we were beginning to learn the Pesach story and all the many symbols associated with the holiday, the school closed its doors on Friday March 6. On that last day of school, each child took home a package of learning materials (with learning objectives and how-to instructions), Passover stories, song sheets, crafts, etc. These materials will be instrumental in our virtual learning opportunities.

Each day, the teachers have been sharing messages and pre-recorded visual teachings, regular email, scheduled Zoom classroom learning and weekly phone calls with children. Some of our specialty programs have also gone virtual.

Through the use of technology we have continued to provide meaningful learning opportunities and stay connected with our ECC families. For now, we are grateful to stay connected with the children and see their

beautiful smiles, sweet voices, lovely messages and posting of their school creations completed at home.

Thank you to our devoted ECC team for the incredible work during these trying times. *Kol HaKavod!* It has been very clear the mutual love, respect and support shared with our families and children.

Mark Weinstock went live with his interactive sing a long as he continued to delight our Little Blossoms families for our weekly music class. Thank you, Mark, for bringing the joy of music to our homes.

For many of us, this Pesach will not resemble our past Seders. On behalf of the ECC team, I wish you good health, individual strength, strength in family and in community.

Chag Pesach Sameach.



VIRTUAL SHEMA

Rabbi Jordan Helfman, Associate Rabbi

By the time I joined, there were already five people starting the minyan. I wasn't late, but others like being early so they can schmooze.

Anyone who has participated in the heart-beat of the congregation knows its strength, and its power; daily worship, the gentle pulse of our community, bringing comfort and hope.

You might ask: Has this current health crisis dampened our spirits? Have the evening and morning rushing beat of congregational life become intermittent?

Despite the physical separation, the closeness continues. Our building is special – it has been with us for over almost half of our congregation's long life. But distancing doesn't need to mean isolation. Those of us with our ears to the ground at Holy Blossom Temple still hear the pulse – the evening assembly gathering strength, beginning to match the morning minyan. The pleasantries and prayers are still said which pushes the congregation steadily forward through each new day.

To move beyond the confines of your own walls into a feeling of greater self through tradition and community – Holy Blossom Temple community – join the daily minyan here:

holyblossom.org/prayer-tefillah/daily-services/

A step-by-step tutorial is on that website.

For our Shabbat worship, we livestream on facebook, which thousands of individuals have watched and appreciated in the time of the quarantine:

www.facebook.com/holyblossomtemple/

I could spend time on this page talking about all of the wonderful personalities that make our weekday and Shabbat worship worth attending – that make our greater community worth belonging to – but instead, I'll leave it to you to join and meet the minyan.

I look forward to seeing you 'there' soon.



2020 Annual Congregational Appeal

This issue of the Holy Blossom Bulletin, Pesach 5780, is written at a challenging time for all of us. The onset of the Covid-19 virus has affected every aspect of daily life, and the situation changes hourly. More than ever, we need to look ahead and plan for the needs of the Congregation, especially those who are most vulnerable.

As of now, Holy Blossom has enacted the following extraordinary measures, in response to the Covid-19 crisis:

- **Virtual Blossom:** Wherever possible, religious services and Temple programming have been streamed online. Our members have the opportunity to connect with the Congregation from nearly any location.
- Our teachers have been designing and delivering creative online classes and one-on-one tutorials for our children and teens from ages 2 – 16. Even our Little Blossoms Music and Movement Class for babies met virtually!
- We have rolled out a series of Pre-Pesach workshops and a Virtual Seder.
- Our Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative is offering a series of resources and support groups to help us cope with fear, isolation, and boredom.
- **Members Together:** A team of dedicated volunteers and staff members is actively contacting every Temple household, beginning with seniors and those with underlying health conditions, to identify families who may need assistance during the crisis. Callers are also ensuring that every household has the technology and know-how participate in our virtual congregation.

Together we worship, learn, engage in social action, serve others and celebrate. Together we look after those who are most vulnerable. These will continue to be so, even as we learn new ways to come together as a community.

A gift to the 2020 Annual Congregational Appeal, one that is above and beyond your regular membership contribution, ensures that Holy Blossom Temple can continue to respond quickly to Covid-19. While the situation is everchanging, a constant factor for all of us the availability of Holy Blossom Temple to our members during these truly uncertain times.

Donors of \$600 or more will be proudly displayed on the Donor Wall in time for Rosh Hashanah.

(Make your gift before May 19 to ensure your name is included on our Annual Appeal Early Donor card, distributed to the congregation in the summer).

Gifts of all sizes will be listed on the website and in the Temple Bulletin.

The 2020 Holy Blossom Annual Congregational Appeal will support kehillah k'doshah – our sacred community, our spiritual home.



OUR CONNECTED COMMUNITY

Abigail Carpenter-Winch, Director of Membership & Community Engagement

Membership survey in light of COVID-19

This is a time to take care of ourselves, our loved ones, and our community. We are mobilizing to help the Holy Blossom Temple community connect during this challenging time, and would like your feedback on how you are coping during this crisis and your input to what programs and services the Temple should create.

This information will be held in the strictest confidence and is for the sake of shaping our offerings and supporting one another at this trying time.

Please complete the survey at www.holyblossom.org

HBTogether is meeting on Zoom!

HBTogether is our small groups initiative, connecting members for intimate gatherings, conversations, learning, support, and fun.

In this time of physical distancing, we all need to keep searching for connections. We encourage existing HBTogether small groups to continue meeting over Zoom, and are here to help support you in this transition. We can

set up a meeting for you on the Holy Blossom Zoom account – just let us know the date and time. The URJ offers excellent trainings for small group leaders about how to meet over Zoom. Let us know if you are interested in this and we will sign you up.

Are you interested in joining a new HBTogether small group that will meet over Zoom? Please let us know.

Jill Kamin and Karen Kollins, HBTogether Co-chairs.

Contact Abigail Carpenter-Winch, Director of Membership and Community Engagement (416-789-3291 x 232) for more information on HBTogether.

We will help you connect!

Would you like to know how to use Zoom and other on-line platforms? Are you not sure how to access Holy Blossom's virtual prayer services, classes, programs and gatherings at this time?

Please call Abigail Carpenter-Winch at 416-789-3291 ext. 232 and she will match you with a volunteer from our community who has offered to teach you how to access these. We want to help you combat social isolation during this time of physical distancing.

Getting ready for your seder with the WHOLE family

By: Lisa Isen-Baumal, Director of Youth Engagement

Passover plans have changed for many of us this year, and our celebrations will be different. Here are some ideas and resources that can help make this years' seders special, meaningful, and fun for kids and adults of all ages.

Passover Crafts

As you are preparing for your seder, make sure you have everything you need for the table, and if not, get your kids to make it! Here's a list of a few items that are easy to make with things you have at home:

Afikomen bag - use a linen napkin, fold in half and either glue gun or sew three sides. Decorate with found objects, markers, paint, etc.

Mini seder plates for each person at the table

Elijah's Cup and Miriam's Cup - you can use just about anything to decorate a glass: paint, sharpies, nail polish, hot glue found buttons, beads, gems, etc. or cover the whole cup in plasticine or clay!

Matzah cover - similar to the afikomen bag, get creative with a plain linen napkin or an old tea towel!

Pillow cases - since we are meant to recline at the seder, kids can decorate special pillow cases using fabric markers or sharpies to use for seder night.

Get your house ready with decorations

I love to decorate for holidays, and Passover is no different!

Creating a 'parting of the sea' scape on your table is a great use of all kinds of figurines and lego people you might have at home.

Create an Egypt scene by making origami pyramids and frogs or fill jars with representations of 10 plagues.

Make a play

Kids can script mini scenes to incorporate into your seder:

An explanation about the 10 plagues complete with props and/or puppets, and maybe a few modern-day plagues added on...

the four children: imagine a conversation between them all, or create a mini autobiography for each child crossing the sea - getting ready to leave, and then taking the actual trip



A few fun food ideas

Try some of these ideas to give your guests a bit more to nibble on during the seder (and keep your kids happy and not hungry!)

Create a Charoset bar - have different ingredients and individuals can mix their own!

Dipping - put out a bunch of veggies and various dips on the table, or even consider fondue! Who said the only thing you can dip is parsley in salt water?



Holy Blossom Online Education Offerings

Shabbat Morning Torah Study, with Rabbi Yael Splansky, 9:00 am via Zoom.

Together and Apart: The Future of Jewish Peoplehood, Rabbi Yael Splansky teaches a 7-part course, the first half of the Hartman Institute I-Engage Series 5, Mondays, March 30 - May 11, 2020 at 2:00 pm

Freedom, Justice & Existence: The Ethics of Abraham Joshua Heschel, with Rabbi Zachary Goodman, Sunday, April 5 and Monday, April 6, 2020 at 12:00 pm

Reform Jewish Voices, with Rabbi Jordan Helfman, Tuesdays March 31, April 7, 14, 2020 at 11:00 am

Good Books: What Cynthia is Reading, with Cynthia Good, Tuesdays, 10:30 am via Zoom, Starting March 31; every 2 weeks, Co-Sponsored by *The Canadian Jewish News*

L'Chayim! Raise a glass or teacup with fellow congregants over Zoom. Jack Kugelmass, dear congregant and social worker, together with Cantorial Soloist Lindi Rivers, will introduce the chat with insight about how to diminish anxiety during these trying times. Open and supportive discussion will follow until all are invited to join the Mincha service. Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays, from 5:30 - 6:00 pm

Dalia will work with you on your Hebrew reading! Dalia is happy to work with you and teach you in a calm and relaxed atmosphere. Contact Dalia to set up a lesson by facetime or whatsapp video! Dalalouf@holyblossom.org

Want to improve your cantillation skills for Torah or Haftarah? You can share your skills at one of our zoom services! Contact Lindi, lrivers@holyblossom.org

JOIN MELTON ONLINE:

From Sinai to Seinfeld: Jews and Their Jokes Four Tuesdays: March 24, 31; April 21, 28, 2020, at 8:00 pm, with Cantor Mark Childs, Santa Barbara

(Vayikra): A Call To Holiness, with Judy Snowbell Diamond, Course Author & Melton Coordinator of Educational Projects, Four Wednesdays: March 25; April 1, 22, 29, 2020, at 12:00 pm. *Courses are being offered at no charge, although donations will be gratefully accepted. In place of books, registered learners will receive lessons electronically.*

Jewish Medical Ethics: A 21st Century Discussion, with Dr. Sandra Lilienthal, Melton Master Teacher in Miami and Boca Raton, Four Thursdays: March 26; APRIL 2, 23, 30, 2020 at 3:00 pm

Courses are being offered at no charge, although donations will be gratefully accepted. In place of books, registered learners will receive lessons electronically.



JORDANA'S BAT MITZVAH

Dear Holy Blossom,

Thank you so much for your support with my daughter Jordana's Bat Mitzvah. Holy Blossom was beyond exceptional at creating a warm and meaningful environment for Jordana to be called to the Torah. We all learned to adapt this week and change our plans from something we once envisioned to something completely new. The beauty of it is that we were able to focus on what was really important and the significance of Jordana becoming a Bat Mitzvah. Please pass along my message to acknowledge a few key people who transformed this experience for our family:

Rabbi Splansky – Thank you for being the calm voice who helped guide us through this week and show us the silver lining. You told me several days ago that this experience would be impactful as we stood next to Jordana as she read from the Torah, and you were right. Thank you for being there on Shabbat as it was a wonderful surprise, and your words inspired us all.

Rabbi Goodman – Thank you for supporting Jordana over the past few weeks and pushing her, with kindness, she prepared to deliver her Torah portion, Haftarah, and D'var Torah. She really stepped up her efforts and performed with your encouragement.

Tali Weiss – Thank you for being by our side for the past year. You helped to transform a girl who could not read Hebrew a year ago, to a girl who sang with confidence. From lessons at Holy Blossom, to our home, and then Whatsapp and Zoom, your constant presence made this possible. Thank you for coming on Shabbat as it was a huge support not only for Jordana, but for me.

Deanna Levy – You have transformed Holy Blossom into a virtual community! Last I checked there were over 2.3K views and 119 comments on the HB Facebook page the shabbat service!! Thank you for bringing my family and friends together, who were devastated that they could not be here in person and now feel that they were included in our experience. The positive feedback I have received about the impact of virtual service has been overwhelming.

With my sincerest gratitude,

Rachel Ross
Jordana's mother



TRIBUTE TO CANTOR MAISSNER: UPDATE

So many ways to say ‘Thank You’ to Cantor Maissner for his years of service. So many ways to be part of an extraordinary, once in a congregational lifetime opportunity.

Planning for the Celebration fondly referred to as ‘Beny 2020’, currently planned for June 10, 2020, is well underway and we are excited to share with you a couple of the virtually endless ways you can participate in this special event.

Personal messages of thanks to Cantor Maissner will fill an online Tribute Book and be a lasting memento of an extraordinary 41-year career. With music, video, photos and words, this will truly be a virtual love letter from our congregation to Cantor Maissner. For those who feel able to make a donation at this time, choosing to place a message in the Tribute Book is one way to participate in “Beny 2020.” For details, please contact Ellen Ostofsky at EOstofsky@holyblossom.org.

Supporting The Cantor Benjamin Maissner Musical Legacy Fund at any level will ensure our musical future provides depth and richness to our congregants and the broader Jewish community. The musical legacy that Cantor Maissner maintained and enriched at Holy Blossom Temple will endure through the years. For details, please contact Anna Gurevich at agurevich@holyblossom.org, for gifts over \$500, please contact Ellen Ostofsky.

While we had hoped to have tickets for the multi-media Tribute Event available for purchase online the end of March, we are now looking at a later date to open sales. We will continuously update our website as information becomes available.

Please check in with us online at holyblossom.org/beny2020/

Stay connected, stay tuned, but above all, stay well.



A MESSAGE FROM AVRA ROSEN, TEMPLE PRESIDENT & RABBI Yael SPLANSKY, SENIOR RABBI

February, 17, 2020

Dear Holy Blossom Community,

It is our pleasure and privilege to announce that we have made a shiduch (a match) with Cantor David Rosen! On and off the bimah, a Cantor plays many roles in the spiritual life of the congregation. We've been on a quest to find a Mensch, a Maestro, and a Mover. One of North America's most esteemed cantors, Cantor Rosen is certainly all three.

As a Mensch, Cantor Rosen has amazed us with his ability to connect with young and old and everyone in between. He will be an excellent partner for our Clergy Team. And it won't be long before he is recognized as a sought-after leader of the Toronto Jewish Community and beyond.

As a Maestro, Cantor Rosen is as masterful with a full choir and instrumentalists as he is with a circle of students in our Early Childhood Centre. His voice is both commanding and engaging. His expansive repertoire draws from a wide range of Jewish musical genres to uplift any occasion.

As a Mover, Cantor Rosen will both move us in prayer and move our congregation from strength to strength with creativity, curiosity, and confidence. Cantor Rosen is full of energy and ideas which will build bridges from our current time of pride and joy to our future which is brimming with possibilities and promise.

We thank our Search Committee, so ably co-chaired by Jeff Denaburg and Rachel Malach, for successfully bringing us to this exciting moment in the life of Holy Blossom Temple. The search process has been thorough and thoughtful. We thank the hundreds of congregants who participated in our Listening Campaign, which informed our search and shaped the Committee's outlook.

We look forward to officially welcoming Cantor Rosen and his family on July 1, 2020.

With gratitude and anticipation,
President Avra Rosen and Rabbi Yael Splansky



A MESSAGE FROM THE SENIOR CANTOR SEARCH COMMITTEE

February, 17, 2020

Shalom fellow congregants,

Your Senior Cantor Search Committee is thrilled to introduce you to the next Senior Cantor of Holy Blossom Temple. We are thrilled to welcome Cantor David Rosen as our new Senior Cantor! Cantor Rosen will begin in the role starting in July 2020, as Cantor Maissner transitions to Cantor Emeritus.

We believe that Cantor Rosen will be a strong leader for our Temple musically, spiritually, and in the continued blossoming of our community. He brings a lot of positive energy. He is open and engaging with all congregants and beyond, from pre-schoolers to seniors. Building relationships is one of his key strengths.

Cantor Rosen has both respect for the musical traditions of Holy Blossom, and a flair for innovation. He will build on the incredible foundation that Cantor Maissner has built over four decades, and will bring new ideas and approaches to engage our community and attract new followers.

Cantor Rosen is already highly respected in the world of Reform Cantors. He holds a teaching position at Hebrew Union College and has served in the most senior roles of the Reform Cantors organization (American Conference of Cantors).

To add to all this, Cantor Rosen, his wife, Rabbi Ilyse Glickman, and their son Joel are all originally from Toronto and are familiar with the Canadian Reform movement. They already feel at home among us.

Our committee wants to express our gratitude to you, our congregation, for the amazing input we received through the many focus groups that Temple members attended, individual feedback you shared through individual committee members, and close to 300 responses to our survey last year. Your input led directly to the job description and the criteria we used to evaluate candidates.

As co-Chairs, we also thank our extraordinary committee for their tireless effort over 18 months during our listening campaign, definition of requirements and evaluation of candidates. We had many strong candidates, and selecting the right one required many months of careful, diligent and thoughtful consideration. The Senior Cantor Search Committee members are Maddie Axelrod, Barry Borden, Jeff Denaburg (co-chair), Jascha Jabes, Rachel Malach (co-chair), Lewis Molot, Joanne Roher (Vice-Chair), Elliot Salmons, Brenda Saunders, Rob Sniderman, and Rabbi Splansky (ex-officio).

As Cantor Rosen and his family transition back to Canada this spring and summer, please join us in giving them a warm welcome to Holy Blossom Temple. We can't wait to introduce you to Cantor David Rosen in person!

With excitement,

Rachel Malach & Jeff Denaburg, Co-Chairs, Senior Cantor Search Committee



A MESSAGE FROM CANTOR ROSEN

February, 17, 2020

Dear Congregants and Friends,

I am honoured and humbled to join you as Senior Cantor at Holy Blossom Temple this coming July. My wife Ilyse, our son Joel and our shih-tzu, Molly are all eager to meet you. We have already felt the warmth and friendly embrace of this community in our brief encounters thus far and we look forward to deepening those relationships and creating new ones with all of you.

Music has been, and will continue to be, at the heart of this sacred community. Under the leadership and guidance of world-renowned Cantor Benjamin Maissner these past four decades, Holy Blossom has become a model of Jewish Music and worship in Toronto and beyond. I plan to continue the legacy that Cantor Maissner brought to this congregation and I look forward to expanding upon it while continuing to nurture your souls and spirit with song. I'm greatly looking forward to working with the incredible choirs and musicians who are a vital part of worship at Holy Blossom.

I am thrilled to have the opportunity to work with an incredible clergy team led by Rabbi Splansky along with a talented and dedicated Senior staff. I look forward to connecting with multiple generations from singing songs and telling stories with our Early childhood students, to celebrating B'nei Mitzvah and Confirmation with our teens, to rejoicing in a milestone birthday of one of our centenarians.

Holy Blossom is also guided by a strong cadre of lay leadership and volunteers who work tirelessly to make Holy Blossom a warm and welcoming community to all who enter its doors.

I would like to take a moment to extend a huge thank you to the entire Cantorial Search Committee led by co-chairs Rachel Malach and Jeff Denaburg.

As Holy Blossom's next Senior Cantor, please know that my door is always open and it is my hope that you will visit often!

This synagogue holds such prominence within Canada and is internationally known as one of the leading congregations in the Reform Movement; I will always aspire to honour that distinction.

May this kehilla kedosha (holy community) continue to go from strength to strength for generations to come and may we all work together to embrace our past, celebrate our present, and envision our future.

Cantor David M. Rosen



A MESSAGE FROM CANTOR MAISSNER

February, 17, 2020

What a bright future!

My dear beloved congregation. It is with open arms and overwhelming delight that I personally welcome our new Senior Cantor David Rosen.

It is hard to believe that forty-one blessed years have passed so quickly, as I was privileged to serve you as Cantor. Now the time has come for us to look towards a glorious future with the bright, young, energetic, talented Cantor as David Rosen is.

I have known David for over twenty-five years. He was my student and I considered him to be my Star Student! I have seen Cantor Rosen grow into a skilful, mature Hazzan. I have witnessed how he excels in every aspect as a true SHLIACH TZIBUR, a compassionate and sensitive Emissary of the Jewish People.

I know David will succeed and will be beloved by all. I am more than excited to welcome David personally into our congregation. I am also so grateful for and impressed by the members of the Search Committee for their depth and clarity in making this incredible choice.

Let us cheer and wholeheartedly welcome Cantor David Rosen into our midst!

Your loyal Beny



IN MEMORIAM

Tillie Bardikoff, mother of Dr. Alan Bardikoff and Cheryl Englander

Marilyn Birenbaum, wife of Isaac Birenbaum; mother of Solomon (Sol) Birenbaum and Rachel Birenbaum; sister of Lyba Spring

Gary Allan Calverley, husband of Julia Marie Calverley; father of Matthew Calverley, Mark Calverley, Elizabeth Hewitt, and Robert Calverley; brother of Sherry Smith and Christopher Calverley

Vivian Campbell, mother of Barry Campbell, Henry Campbell and Jeffrey Campbell; sister of Judy Silver

Susan Freedman, mother of Jeffrey Freedman, Stephen Freedman and Elisa Bain; sister of Jeanette Rogerson and Rick Stickle

Dr. Reva Gerstein, mother of Senator Irving Gerstein and Ira Gerstein

Lilian Gordon, mother of Denise Gordon, Carol Kates, Marilyn Rothman, Stephen Gordon, David Gordon, Brian Gordon, Gerald Gordon, and Alexandra Gordon

Stanley Griesman, husband of Frances Griesman; father of Jory Griesman, Tracey Abrahami and Penny Charendoff; brother of Lynn Burton

Monica Kaiser, wife of Steve Schuster; mother of Paulette Kaiser and Annalise Kaiser; daughter of Marilyn Kaiser; granddaughter of Bella Bernstein; sister of Dr. Amy Kaiser and Judi Bonagura

Elsie Kay, mother of Paul Kay and Ian Kay

Henry Samuel Kay, son of Josh & Elizabeth Kay; brother of Evelyn Kay and Rose Kay; grandson of Rachel Walters, Steve Kay & Karen Cooper, and Dave & Jane Horrocks

Marvelle Koffler, mother of Tom Koffler, Leon Koffler, Theo Koffler, Adam Koffler, and Tiana Boyman

Ruth Levine, mother of Randall (Randy) Levine and Mitchell Levine

Doris Levinter, mother of Marcie Gordon; sister of Roy Lipman

Robert Charles Levinter, father of Adam Levinter and Hayley Hurst; brother of Marcie Gordon

Sloane Ryder Leon, daughter of Benjamin Leon & Amy Greenberg; granddaughter of Jeff Leon & Carol Best, Alex Raphael, and Elliot & Carrie Greenberg

Mildred Margulies, Holy Blossom Temple member

Nissin Mayo, husband of Raquel Aljanati de Mayo; father of Marcela Mayo and Adriana Mayo; brother of Perla Mayo, Matilde Coronel and Bety Donio

William (Bill) D. Moull, husband of Cynthia Moull; father of David Moull, Benjamin Moull and Zachary Moull; brother of Thomas Moull, Geoffrey Moull and Fraser Moull

Arthur Muscovitch, husband of Freda Ariella Muscovitch; father of Zak Muscovitch and Noam Muscovitch

Dr. Douglas Alan Nyquist, husband of JoAnn Nyquist; father of Jonathan Nyquist, Gurston Nyquist and Rebecca Baelen; brother of Bonnie Bell and Susan Nyquist

Teresa Peralta Cruz, mother of Teresa (Tere) Quiroz, Juanita Noriega Peralta and Beatriz Noriega Peralta

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Louise Shanfeld, wife of Leon Shanfeld; mother of Terry Watson, Martin Webb and Leah Fish; sister of Anne Freeman, Doug Tucker, Leo Tucker, and Paul Tucker

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Gloria Sossin, mother of Ellen Sossin, Wayne Sossin and Lorne Sossin; sister of Alan Dessau and Lori Tauber

Simeon Joshua Weinroth, father of Eva Vanek, Aaron Weinroth, Isaac Weinroth, and Dena Shulman; brother of Howard Weinroth and Benjamin Weinroth

November 18, 2019 to February 24, 2020

WELCOME TO OUR CONGREGATIONAL FAMILY

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to Holy Blossom Temple:

Darren and Deborah Abrahams and children Rachel and Matthew

Erol Alaluf and Mary Zarikos

Rebecca Brenner and Benjamin Israel and child Sylvi

Anna Bruder

Andrew Cassel

Bina and Orie Enav

Nazli and Axel Goldenberg and children Derrin, Cem, and Mey

Sara Gottlieb and Christopher Cocca and children Laine and Max

Evelyn Harlow

Lori Houzer

Julie Levine

Deborah Palter

Marla Pilpel and Zachary Fleming

Andrew Rosner

Evelyn and Steve Stieber

November 15, 2019 - February 18, 2020



BIRTHS

Dara & Jordan Rosenbaum, on the birth of their son, Kyle Lev. Brother to Ryan. Proud grandparents are Karen & Yoel Abells and Susan & Sam Rosenbaum. Proud great-grandmother is Mary Seldon.

Aviva & Ryan Altschuler, on the birth of their son. Brother to Eden James. Proud grandparents are Janice & Larry Babins and Ami Altschuler.

Amy Ticoll & Daniel Wilson, on the birth of their daughter, Jacqueline Hope. Sister to Michael. Proud grandparents are David Ticoll and Tracey Macey, and Jonathan and Diane Wilson.

Michael and Adrienne Krygier-Baum, on the birth of their son, Peter Jacob. Proud grandparents are Richard and Carolina Walls and Lonia Krygier and Harry Baum.

Joshua Burnett and Lauren Siegal, on the birth of their son, Jacob Eli. Proud grandparents are Monelle and Alan Siegal and Theodore and Esther Burnett z"l.

Jonathan Schwartz and Jordanna Waisglass Schwartz, on the birth of their son Reid Jackson. Proud grandparents are Julie & Larry Schwartz and Sharon & Joel Waisglass. Proud great-grandparents are Al Waisglass and Freda Blankenstein.

Ian and Kate Rosen on the birth of their daughter Ella Madeleine Rosen. Proud grandparents are Susan Jackson and Larry Rosen and Joan Shnier and Jake Chazan. Proud great grandparents are Harry and Evelyn Rosen.

Katy and Hartley Lambert on the birth of their daughter Andi Shaye Lambert. Sister to Elias James. Proud grandparents are Howie & Barb Alter, Hildi Abrams & Gary Bensky and David Lambert. Proud great grandparent is Sybil Rothschild.

Carolyn Freedman & Jonathan Zipursky, on the birth of their son, Matthew Barry Zipursky. Brother to Arielle Zipursky. Proud grandparents are Debra Katzman and Robert Zipursky, and Cathi Borsook and John Freedman. Proud great-grandparents are Mel and Rene Katzman, Alvin Zipursky, and Elinor Borsook.

Avi Leigh Bader & Jacob Doran of London, UK, on the birth of their daughter Edie Rae Bader Doran. Proud grandparents are Rena & Bob Bader and Sue & Alan Doran.

WEDDINGS & ENGAGEMENTS

Daniel Rosen & Anna Mackenzie on their engagement. Proud parents are Susan Jackson and Larry Rosen and Ana Lucia.

ackenzie and Don Mackenzie. Proud great grandparents are Harry and Evelyn Rosen and Margaret Mackenzie.

Graham Rosen & Jordana Goldman on their engagement. Proud parents are Susan Jackson and Larry Rosen and Judy Litwack-Goldman and David Goldman. Proud great grandparents are Harry and Evelyn Rosen and Donna and Ralph Goldman.

Alex Sapera & Max Liporace on their wedding, February 22, 2020. Proud parents are Sam & Judy Sapera, Lauren Midlarsky and David Bellman, and Lisa and David Liporace. Proud grandparents are Roz Sitzer, Helene Midlarsky and Mary-Jane Liporace.

Sarah Rosen & Alexander Kolodkin on their recent marriage on February 16. Proud parents are Avra Rosen & Mark Goodman and Ella Kolodkina & Leonid Aizman. Proud grandparents are Laz Rosen and Yetta Goodman.

Mazel Tov!

B'NEI MITZVAH



Jack Angel
Son of Sara & Michael Angel
February 8, 2020



Georgia Myers
Daughter of Jeffrey & Gillian Myers
March 7, 2020



Jordana Ross
Daughter of Rachel & Jehred Ross
March 21, 2020



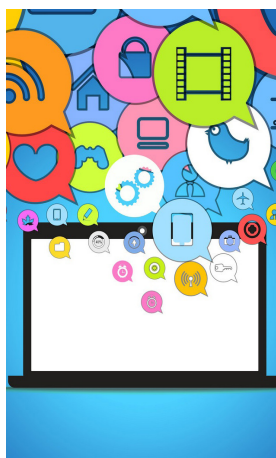
Sam Mogil
Son of Eli & Robyn Mogil
March 28, 2020



Ella Brown
Daughter of Jay & Jennifer Brown
April 23, 2020

Sabrina Merkur
Daughter of Samantha Bederman and
Darcy Merkur
January 25, 2020

Rebecca Corlett
Daughter of Charles Corlett
& Kari Abrams
March 16, 2020



B'nei Mitzvah Livestreams

Until the day we can all gather together to celebrate our incredible B'nei Mitzvah youth being called to the Torah, Holy Blossom will Livestream these special milestones so that family, friends, and the Holy Blossom Community can celebrate together!

Like or follow Holy Blossom Temple on Facebook, or visit our website to watch the Livestream Services.

WE THANK OUR GENEROUS DONORS

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Sara & Michael Angel, in honour of their son, Jack's Bar Mitzvah

Gillian & Jeffrey Myers, in honour of their daughter, Georgia's Bat Mitzvah

Kari Abrams & Charles Corlett, in honour of their daughter, Rebecca's Bat Mitzvah

Rachel & Jehred Ross, in honour of their daughter, Rachel's Bat Mitzvah

Robyn & Eli Mogil, in honour of their son, Sam's Bar Mitzvah

Jennifer & Jay Brown, in honour of their daughter, Ella's Bat Mitzvah

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Joanne Steinberg, In Honour: Judy Winberg

Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Honour: David Wexler

Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Appreciation: Rick Lash & Liz Tarshis

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Bonnie Weinstein-Masters, In Memory: Fran & Bernie Weinstein

Peter Weinwurm, In Honour: Arlene Roth

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Kyle Lev, In Honour: Loren & Mark Roth

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Arthur Muscovitch, In Memory: Elliott Jacobson & Judy Malkin

Dora Penciner, Yahrzeit: Bernice Penciner

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Seymour Schulich, In Honour: David Goodman

Louise Shanfeld, In Memory: Liz Tarshis

Bob Smolkin, Yahrzeit: Sheila Smolkin and Family

Irwin Title, Yahrzeit: Tema Title

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Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Honour: Mr. & Mrs. Philip & Stephanie Ganson; Linda Grossman; Margaret Kardish; Teri & David Leese; The Rotman Family Foundation; The Philip Smith Foundation

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Zeilig Leibovici, Yahrzeit: Martin Leibovici and Family

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Arthur Muscovitch, Yahrzeit: Freda Ariella Muscovitch and Family

Marie Philosophe, Yahrzeit: Isidore Philosophe

Lionel Rubin, Yahrzeit: Ronna Rubin, Philip Smith and Family

Samuel Sax, Yahrzeit: Michael & Julia Sax

Mary Louise Shanfeld, In Memory: Barbara L. Grossman; Beverley Rodd

Jack Shapero, Yahrzeit: The Goodman Family

Frank Shapiro, Yahrzeit: Heather Shapiro &

Terry Axelrod, Bill Shapiro & Cheryl Madeira

Dorothy Shekter, Yahrzeit: Mark, Richard, Lorie and Rhonna Shekter

Lucas Slan, Aufruf: The Slan-Glickman Family

Harry Smith, Yahrzeit: Ronna Rubin & Philip Smith

Bob Smolkin, Yahrzeit: Sheila Smolkin

Nancy Steele, Yahrzeit: Ruth Halperin & David Weil

Eugene Weil, Yahrzeit: Ruth Halperin & David Weil

Herbert Wolfson, Yahrzeit: Joy Wolfson

LUKE SKLAR MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVE

Phillip Gorlicky, Yahrzeit: Frances & Murray Ellis

Bernie Kurtz, In Memory: Carol & Alan Lavine

Audrey Markle, Yahrzeit: Julie Markle, Joel Mickelson, Max, and Jonah

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Tillie Bardikoff, In Memory: Anne Lesarge

Livia Barto, Yahrzeit: Helene Barto

Spring Celebrations & Commemorations at Holy Blossom Temple

Yom HaShoah

Service and Commemoration: Wednesday, April 20, 7:00 pm

Yom HaZikaron/Yom Ha'atzmaut

Yom Ha'Zikaron Service & Commemoration: Tuesday, April 28, 6:00 pm

Erev Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration: Tuesday, April 28, 6:45 pm

Confirmation

Shabbat Service & Celebration: Saturday, May 23, 10:30 am

Shavuot

Erev Shavuot Service & Tikun Leil Shavuot: Thursday, May 28, 8:00 pm

Service, Baby Blessings, Yizkor Service: Friday, May 29, 10:00 am



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