

HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE



Bulletin

April 2017

HB *t*ogether



PESACH AND UPCOMING FESTIVALS AT HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

Erev Yom Tov Service Monday, April 10, 2017 | 6:00 p.m.

Yom Tov Pesach Services Tuesday, April 11, 2017 | 10:00 a.m.

Congregation-wide Service with the Temple Singers and our Simcha Band will include Songs of Freedom and Songs of Hallel. A festive Kiddush lunch will follow the service.

Holy Chag! Pesach Tuesday, April 11, 2017 | 10:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.

Bring your whole family to our Congregational Pesach service at 10:00 a.m., which includes great breakout sessions for children. The “Kids-ONLY” fun begins at 12:00pm, and runs until 2:30pm.

Ve’ahavta’s Third Night Seder at Holy Blossom Temple Wednesday, April 12, 2017 | 7:00 p.m.

This will be the third year of partnership between Ve’ahavta and Holy Blossom Temple in running our Third Night Seder – a chance to ‘break matzah’ with those who are hungry in our city.

Erev Yom Tov Service and Concert in celebration of the 7th Day of Pesach

Sunday, April 16, 2017 | 7:00 p.m. - Service | 7:45 p.m. - “A Glorious Leap of Action” with Rabbi Yael Splansky

Concert - Glorious: A musical extravaganza by Abraham Kaplan, inspired by the biblical narrative of Psalms. Colorful choral music and an exotic instrumental ensemble made up of two sets of percussion, guitar, bass guitar, flute, piano and more.

Yom Tov and Yizkor/Memorial Services for the Seventh Day of Pesach Monday, April 17, 2017 | 10:00 a.m.

This Congregation-wide Service celebrates the last day of Pesach with Songs of Hallel and the Song of the Sea. We’ll honour the memories of loved ones with Yizkor. All are invited for our Kiddush Luncheon, sponsored by the Bernard, Carol and Samuel Braun Memorial Fund in memory of Bernard, Carol, and Samuel Braun.

Yom HaShoah Monday, April 24, 2017 | 7:00 p.m.

Our congregant, Dr. Ivan Hronsky, is a cardiologist who speaks four languages. He is also a child-survivor of the Holocaust. Come hear his remarkable story of survival; bear witness to his testimony of what he experienced before, during, and in the aftermath of The Shoah.

Shabbat before Yom HaAtzmaut Saturday, April 29, 2017 | 10:30 a.m.

In anticipation of Yom Haatzmaut Israel’s consul general Galit Baram will address the congregation and we invite all congregants who travelled to Israel within the last year to come to the Torah for a special Aliyah of Honour.

Yom HaZikaron and Yom HaAtzmaut Monday, May 1, 2017 | 6:00 p.m.

Service to commemorate the fallen soldiers of Israel will be followed by a celebration of Israel’s 69th birthday. Israeli food and wine-tasting, “Treasures from the Israel Museum,” and Info Session for Holy Blossom’s fall trip to Israel in partnership with UJA 100.



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Life can blossom here.





Afikomen — a Just Dessert

Rabbi Yael Splansky
ysplansky@holyblossom.org

Early in the seder, the leader breaks the middle matzah and hides it away. Most of us at table forget all about it as we enjoy the ideas of the Haggadah and the delicious Feast of Freedom, but the children don't forget. They wonder and wait in anticipation – Where could it be? Who will find it? The children are more excited by the search-and-find than by whatever prizes may await them. They are motivated by knowing there is a holy object hidden somewhere in this house and knowing everyone and everything depends on it.

After the detective work, and a few hints perhaps, there is the thrill of the discovery. In some households there is some negotiation and bartering with the leader of the seder. And then there is the moment, when like a magician, the leader unwraps the two pieces, holds each high in one hand, and brings them together to see if it's a perfect match. And it is! The joy in seeing what was once separated be brought together again is not only felt by the children. The satisfaction of seeing what was once broken be made whole is shared by everyone around the table, indeed by everyone around the world. The relief of seeing what was lost be found and restored to its rightful place is a holy act.

Jonathan Safran Foer describes the entire seder as “an exercise in moral optimism.” Some of the symbols on the table represent tears and bitter enslavement, plagues and homelessness. Other symbols represent springtime and fertility, redemption and the real possibility that we will all be “Next Year In Jerusalem.” But the middle matzah is half “the bread of affliction” and half “the bread of freedom.” We cannot complete the seder without bringing the two halves to make a whole. The two halves brought together become the symbol of moral optimism. The reunion of suffering and freedom becomes the bridge we construct from here to there, from degradation to dignity, from homelessness to hope, from oppression to open possibility. We find the Afikomen through great human effort, but when it is matched together with its other half, it seems a miracle.

Afikomen means “dessert.” We conclude the seder by sharing in the sweet taste of the world's potential for Eden. Everyone at the table eats a piece of the Afikomen

– a just dessert for the moral optimism, which is the hallmark of the Jew.

HBTogether

There's nothing like a good match -- when the pieces fit, when the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. A good match, like the reunited middle matzah takes on an element of the sacred. It can be like that when people come together, too.

I've written often about Holy Blossom Temple growing larger and smaller at the same time. We must grow larger in our ambitions to influence and serve. We must grow smaller in our ability to connect with one another, to attend to the small needs of our congregants (because they are never really small at all), and to build relationships through an accumulation of small, meaningful moments.

We are now ready to launch an important initiative of Holy Blossom's Renewal of Spirit – HBTogether. On the following pages you will read about just a few of the many circles, which already exist within our congregation. Individuals, couples, and families link themselves to one another to mark Jewish time, to explore Jewish ideas, a common interest or a common cause. There is the identified reason for coming together (see page 7 for examples), but in time, the unarticulated benefits of belonging to a micro-community become apparent -- fellowship, a new challenge, support when you need it, strengthened attachment to Holy Blossom, and meaningful Jewish expression. We aim to launch ten new “small groups” and “open circles” in the coming year. Please consider what would be meaningful participation for you. Our HBTogether team of devoted volunteer and professional leaders will help to identify fellow congregants who share common interests and we will guide you along the way.

Like the Afikomen, there's a piece of each of us waiting to be found, wanting to be attached to something greater than ourselves, and willing to make a renewed commitment to share in this good life with others. Spring is the time for new growth and new potential. Let's embrace it. Life can blossom here.



How does this Board of Directors differ from all other boards?

Joan Garson

President
president@holyblossom.org

This is the time of year when Holy Blossom Temple's Nominating Committee is reaching out to Congregants to serve on the Board of Directors of Holy Blossom Temple. How does this Board of Directors differ from all other boards? (and yes the echo of the first of the four questions of Pessach is intentional)

As Board members, Professional Staff, Rabbis and Cantors come together in the Max Enkin Boardroom, they become more than a Board. This disparate group united by love of Temple and by a desire to do good becomes a community of leaders, a leadership chavurah.

The work of the elected members of the Holy Blossom Board of Directors (in partnership with the others around the table) is far more than convening for 2 or 3 hours a month. Identifying some of those who sit together tells an important part of the story. Our group includes three past presidents and twenty current Board members, and brings together participants with Congregational histories going back in some cases decades, with new members of the Board under 30, and members who have only recently joined our community. The range of ages extends some 50 years. The range of Temple experiences is immeasurable.

The favourite moment at Board meetings is "good and welfare", when we share news of people in the Congregation and around the table, and upcoming activities at Temple. The shared excitement at hearing each others' family news and Congregational successes demonstrates the warmth and personal connections which develop over our time together.

This is not to say that the Board doesn't address important policy issues. Brief examples: the recent and very successful new membership model for young families was approved by the Board, after long and careful thought. The Board gave life to "Life Can Blossom Here". Policies, strategies, challenges, big ideas for change, oversight of the Renewal Project and so much more intended to improve Temple life end up at the Board table. And in all of our work we try to remain true to the values which we articulated together as a Board, and which, we hope, inspire Temple.

At the same time, in a Congregation built on a foundation of relationships and committed to building and supporting new ones, the Board tries to build warm ties around our table, and beyond. It is a Board member whose personal warmth and commitment drives the greater program every Shabbat. Another Board member is leading an ad hoc Board committee to discuss how to expand the connection between the Board and the Congregation.

As President I am currently thinking hard, with input particularly from Rabbi Splansky and Vice President Darren Sukonick, about how to enable our Board to benefit from the good thinking taking place in Temple about groups with common interests. How can we do more to welcome each other, and engage more deeply with each other and with the Congregation?

Our Board is a dynamic body, moving to undertake bold steps and address their challenges, overseeing and inspired by our renewal of space and spirit. It is also striving to be itself an engaging group supported by a developing web of relationships, building during Board service and extending long after.

The answer to the question I posed above, "how are we different from all other boards", is deeply rooted in who we are as a Congregation: we are, we hope, well governed and wisely led, and also so much more. Our tagline, adopted by our Board, captures our aspirations, whether in the Boardroom, the Sanctuary, the classroom or a living room filled with congregants: Holy Blossom: Life can blossom here.

The Temple's Nominating Committee is currently beginning its work; members will be nominated to fill vacancies for the period beginning after the next Annual General Meeting in November. If you would like to discuss the possibility of putting your name forward (or if you have suggestions of others that the Committee should approach) please contact, on behalf of Nominating Committee chair, Rick Howard, our Executive Director, Russ Joseph (rjoseph@holyblossom.org).



Introducing HBTogether

article by **Cheryl Sylvester**
VP Membership

When working with an amazing team of Temple members on developing the line “Life can blossom here”, one of the conversations centered around Holy Blossom as a “community of communities”.

We talked about how although the temple is a large congregation, it actually contains many communities of members – some formal, some informal. For some it’s about their family legacy, for some its about a shared passion for serving others at Out of the Cold or bringing companionship to a senior, for some its about the familiar faces who gather on Shabbat and education programs, and for some its about cycling or curling or playing the ukulele together.

In fact, one advantage of a large congregation is with the breadth of programming and people here, you will likely find others who share your interests or passions in a common expression of your Jewish values. So how do you go about doing that?

Another dimension of the conversation with the “Life can blossom here” team of Luke Sklar and David Rosenberg was – what is what does “community” actually mean? Of course, it means the relationship between the Temple and our members. Community also means the connections and relationships between members and each other.

Over the last couple of years, we have been more actively encouraging connection with each other. Welcoming by our Greeters and invitations from our clergy to wish each other a Shabbat Shalom in the service open the doors to new relationships. And of course, members bond with each other naturally by participating in Temple activities. Doing good

work, singing or worshipping together can foster conversation and begin relationships.

These organic connections are wonderful, just ask some of the folks who’ve shared their stories in this bulletin. Now, in what other ways could Temple also support and facilitate our connections with each other, building our shared community?

Introducing HBTogether – an initiative for and with temple members. With the launch of HBTogether we are naming what happens here already, and setting the stage to support building our community of communities with more depth.

Now with Tema Smith, our Director of Community Engagement in place, we are ready to start more actively building community within our congregation.

Our lead volunteers in HBTogether are Co-Chairs Jill Kamin and Sandra Lyons. Together they make a great team who each bring a love of people, spark and talent to this role. They also bring complimentary perspectives — with Jill being deeply engaged and having so many relationships at Holy Blossom for a long time, and with Sandra bringing fresh eyes of a newer Temple member with community building experience in Montreal.

I encourage you to join one of our “Open circles” -- or if you wish to start or engage with a “Small group” who may share your interests, reach out to Tema, Jill or Sandra! Perhaps, now more than ever, you will find your community in our community of communities.



So you want to be in a Small Group?.... Here's how!

Tema Smith
tsmith@holyblossom.org

It is with great excitement that we are ready to launch this major membership initiative — HBTogether. We know that a synagogue like Holy Blossom with so many members has the potential to feel too big. How do you meet people? Where do you find like-minded members? How can you build your own *community* inside the greater Temple community? HBTogether is a new place to start!

Small Groups, also sometimes called *Chavurot*, provide micro-communities — a group of Temple members who you will get to know through small gatherings organized in one of three ways: by like-interests (**affinities**); by life-stage (**demographics**); or by neighbourhood (**geography**) — sometimes groups might be brought together based on all three!

The possibilities within a Small Group are endless. Each group may want a different structure, a different leadership model, different programming opportunities. We let our imaginations run wild and came up with many ideas of how our members might connect. Here are a few of my favourites from that brainstorm:

- HBT Cedarvale dog-walkers, who meet at a local pet store and take the canine members of our community for a walk together on a nice Sunday afternoon;
- Dads and Donuts — an opportunity for fathers with young kids to meet up at the park, with coffee and donuts... while the dads schmooze, the kids play;
- Jewish starters and re-starters — ever wondered how certain rituals are observed? A group can come and learn together, taking on different things like, taking and making *challot*, celebrating lesser known holidays, baking *hamantaschen*, studying Torah
- Art and theatre lovers, who visit various exhibits and shows together and discuss them over coffee afterward;
- Adult learners, who take advantage of the numerous skilled teachers in our greater Toronto community to make deep dives into their topics of interest.
- Family Havdallah, where families with kids of similar ages get together monthly to celebrate this fun ritual...

The possibilities are endless! Whether it's for adults of-a-certain age, families (with or without their kids — consider this: parents can schmooze while a Jewish educator provides an experiential educational experience with the kids!), teens, multi-generations,

we *know* that Small Groups are one of the best ways to add even more meaning to your Temple life.

What's more, the Temple is here to support you! We will help nascent Small Groups:

- Make “matches” — find participants for your group;
- Set up a leadership model;
- Find educators;
- Give you space in the building for your programs;
- Identify opportunities for you to participate in Temple life as a small group;

...and many other things that we learn together as we develop this initiative. With your HBTogether Manual in hand, our dynamic Co-Chairs, our Clergy Team, and the Director of Community Engagement behind you, we look forward to building this community of communities with you!

As Rabbi Splansky says, as we grow larger, we must also grow smaller. So let's become HBTogether.

Groups forming now:

- Downtown adult Jewish learners
- Stay-at-home moms of school-aged children
- Don Mills Adult Kabbalat Shabbat/Havallah
- Downtown arts lovers

Have an idea for a group? Already part of a group of Temple members like this? I want to know all about it! Contact me at tsmith@holyblossom.org or 416.789.3291 ext. 232.



Jill Kamin and Sandra Green Lyons: We are really excited to be working together on this new initiative. Developing new relationships and deepening connections are so integral to feeling part of the Holy Blossom community.

Understanding Your Bereavement & Healing

Whether a loved one died recently or long ago, we hope you will take comfort in this opportunity to find meaning and motivation in memory.

When this group was offered to me after losing a member of my immediate family, I had to weigh in on if I would feel comfortable sharing my raw and vulnerable “me” with a group that were strangers, but sadly, in similar situations as myself.

But to my pleasant surprise, along with the professional knowledge and caring manner of our grief counsellor Helen Gia Levine and our weekly get togethers with our congregants from the Temple, it has been a most comfortable and rewarding experience. No longer strangers but a very caring extended family.

Being a member, with my family, at the Temple for many years and getting involved with our Tuesday evening group has helped me realize that when I say or feel “why me”, there are many “why me’s” at this group, who if you extend a hand to them for emotional support – they won’t let you down. There is always a gentle hug or some kind words of encouragement to help you through this journey.

I know it’s just a saying but more times than none the glass is really half full instead of half empty!



The Jewish Film Night Chavurah: From Intrigue on the Shtetl to Award Winning Israeli Films

article by **Helena and David Fine**

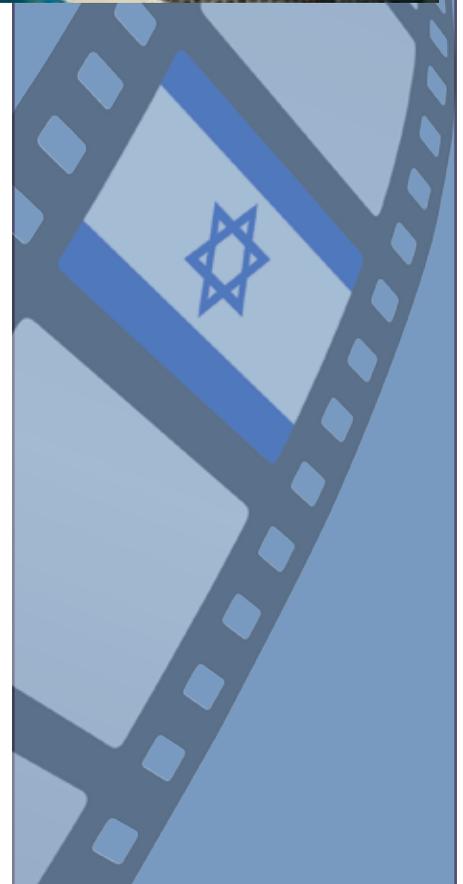
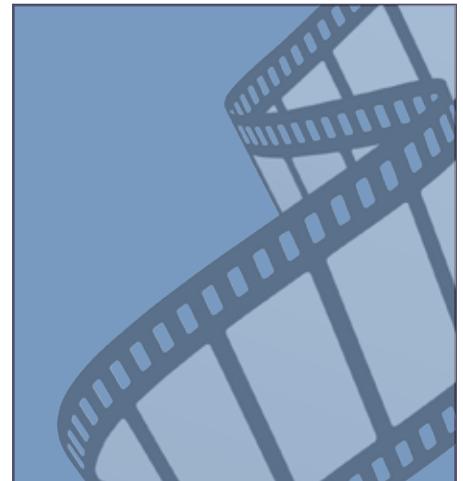
Who knew the intrigue that could be generated by a handsome Jewish boy from the city visiting a small Polish shtetl in the 1930s! This is just one example of the wide and eclectic selection of films we have seen over the last three years since the start of the Jewish Film Night chavurah.

The small group was the idea of Cantor Benny Maissner - and now involves about 25 of us meeting once -a -month or so on a Sunday evening. Different members graciously host the evenings, providing an intimate movie experience as well as the prerequisite popcorn and delicious desserts. An introduction by an expert in the field provides context and a historical perspective for the movie. And a discussion over dessert follows.

The group brings together a small intimate group of us with a common interest. We learn, laugh, joke and get to know people we would not otherwise meet in the synagogue.

This is our second chavurah experience. Our first one was in 1981 when we were new arrivals in Toronto. We were invited to join a small group of young couples that met monthly at different people's homes to hear a speaker. This was invaluable in helping us settle into the community and make friends. Thirty five years later we are still close friends with a number of couples we originally met at this chavurah. We have grown together from being young families with kids to grandparents sharing experiences of our wonderful grandchildren!

The groups have truly enriched our lives and helped us feel part of the community.



How very helpful and uplifting it is to look forward to coming to **Mondays at the Temple**

article by **Bev Borins**

As one ages, we find we are unable to do various things which we have done all our lives. If we stay home we often find ourselves feeling neglected, over looked and depressed.

How very helpful and uplifting it is to look forward to coming to Mondays at the Temple. Members and non-members are greeted with a smile and asked how we are.

Some with health challenges and medical problems, accompanied by caregivers, all are welcome. No matter what the weather, we are all there. We know we are amongst our friends where we can compare notes and kvetch if we want to. We are able to share joys, birthdays, and sad occurrences. All are acknowledged. These are vital parts of our lives. The warmth of the Temple makes us feel protected and respected.

We enjoy the variety of programs which are informative and interesting. If it is a music venue, we just sit back, relax and listen. Our exercise session is tuned to everyone's needs and capabilities. That is appreciated consideration.

"Breaking bread" with our members gives us the opportunity to visit and talk. The delicious soup lunch made by our energetic volunteers is graciously served. They also have the satisfaction of knowing they are doing a mitzvah by enhancing our lives and keeping us happy and well fed.

We are most appreciative and thankful to Holy Blossom Temple for making this delightful opportunity possible.



The 10 most important things I learned while volunteering at **HBT Mondays at the Temple**

article by **LindaNeufeld**

10. Volunteering enhances your quality of life and offers an incredibly rewarding experience
9. Volunteering is investing and strengthening our community to make it a welcoming place
8. You make a difference that shows every person counts at HBT and we care
7. Smiles and hugs are universal. If you can make as many people smile and give hugs each day you are making the greatest impact.
6. It is nice to exchange small talk in Yiddish. They respect you that you're truly making an effort to immerse yourself in their life.
5. Volunteering a few hours on Monday helps someone who needs a boost and it brings a powerful new attitude of gratitude from everyone.
4. You get to hear the best jokes that you have never heard before.
3. You hear the most amazing stories.
2. Some of our HBT members are likely to only have us on Monday for company.
1. They will always remember you and know that you cared.



Holy Blossom Temple

MUSSAR

A Continuing Education Program Yields a Pleasant & Surprising Bonus

article by Maurice A. Green

During 2016 Kathy and I chose to join a study group led by Rabbi Michael Satz delving into an introductory course on Mussar. We were a class of approximately ten. Although we were acquainted with some of the group none of us were close friends. When studying Mussar, as Rabbi Satz forewarned us, we had to be willing to openly expose our various weaknesses (and maybe strengths) when it came to our soul (personality) traits, such as “Humility”, “Patience”, “Gratitude” and “Honour”, being amongst the many Middot being reviewed. The fascinating result was that all too quickly the group became most comfortable in discussing how such “soul traits” (Middot) played a greater or lesser role in our lives, both personal and professional. The sessions always ended with some well-led meditation.

Having spent the months discussing how the Middot affected our lives it became apparent that the group had unconsciously

created very real spiritual bonds. But what were we to do once the course ended? The answer stared us in the face; namely, why not carry on studying together on a regular basis having created this new “circle of friendship”. Thus, we meet at one or another’s house approximately every six weeks to probe the Middot that have helped countless Jews over the centuries both “maintain their sanity” in an ever maddening world, and continue to mature as individuals regardless of our age.

When Kathy and I think back to how our “Young Congregants” Chavura evolved in the late 1970s, early 1980s, many Rosh Chodeshim ago, it was not too dissimilar. We came together as a result of the then called “Young Congregants” programming, but soon realized that we wanted to explore numerous other Jewish topics with a smaller group of new found friends, apart from some fun socializing, and thus another Chavura was born.

What is the point of this short anecdote? Very simple – Involve yourself in any HBT activity; participate in any Shul program that attracts you. If you cannot find one, give us suggestions as to what would attract you. You never know what... wait for it... “Blossoms” from such involvement – hopefully life long friendships.



We joined Holy Blossom Temple in 1982. Neither of us was brought up in the Reform Movement; Judith was from a conservative family, and I was from a secular one. We decided to join a small group (Chavurah) in order to meet people, and joined an existing one in 1983.

article by **Uriel and Judith Prives**

Membership has enabled us to form friendships within the Congregation

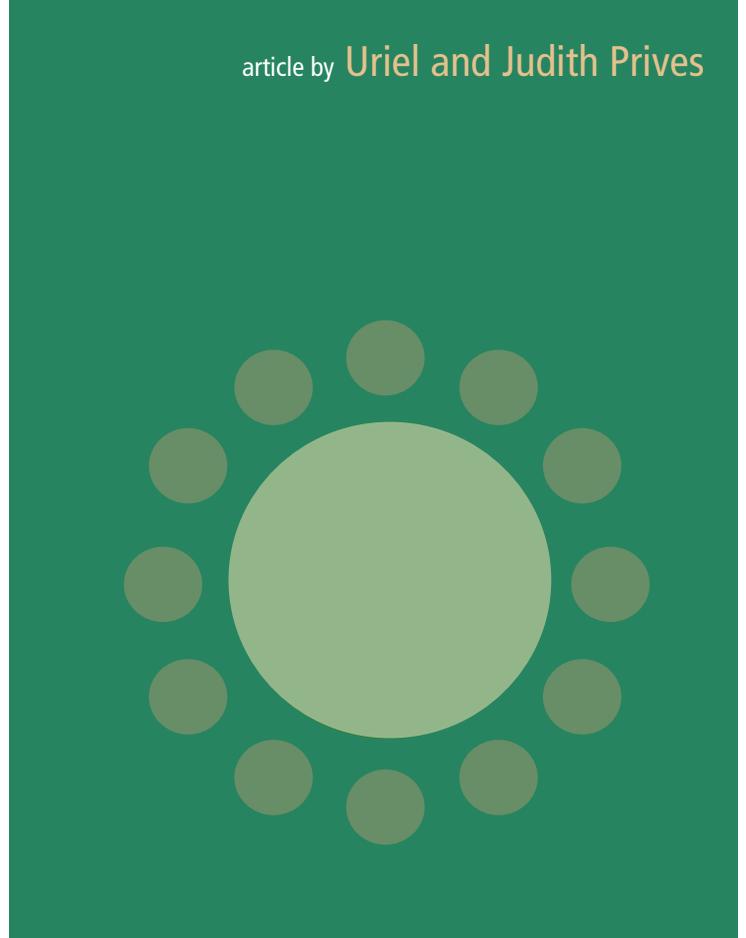
Our group meets monthly in members' homes, to discuss topics of Jewish interest, with or without a speaker. Some speakers are members, and others are invited to address us. We also review and discuss books relevant to contemporary Judaism, and socialize.

Membership has enabled us to form friendships within the Congregation, and has increased our sense of belonging. We have gained further appreciation and knowledge of Judaism and have been exposed to different perspectives on our religion, history and identity.

Because the background of our members is varied both as to interests and politics, our Chavurah gives us an opportunity of gaining insight into unfamiliar facets of Judaism, and of Zionism.

We get opportunities of discussing happenings within the Congregation, and taking an interest in its affairs. A few years ago, two of our members ran for positions on the Board, as a result of group discussions.

Many of us attend services and other Temple activities regularly. Meeting with each other on these occasions strengthens our friendship and our bond with Temple.



Why Small Groups Matter (and You May Not Know It)

article by **Nikki & Adam Stiavnicky**

We joined Holy Blossom approximately three years ago – at the time, we were expecting our first child (Leah, now 2.5 years old) and we joined because the idea of becoming parents was a catalyst for us to ensure that our young family would have a connection to the Jewish community. While being new members of HBT provided us with an opportunity to be a part of a greater community, as with most things, the value of any opportunity is what you make of it.

We live in the Beaches neighbourhood – a lovely place to live and to raise a family but not exactly a bastion of the Jewish community. Also, not really down the street from the shul. In addition to this, like lots of other professionals and parents of a young family, we're busy people who are often pulled in many directions. This is all to say that while we had become members of HBT, we didn't feel like we really belonged.

This changed for us two years ago, when we received an invitation to join a small group of young families that planned to meet on a monthly basis so that our kids could play, and we all could share dinner and enjoy Havdallah together. This group (comprised of 6 or 7 families), or Chavurah, has been meeting regularly – each time hosted on a rotation by a different family – for two years. Over that time, we've gone from absolute strangers to friends. This small group of people has enhanced our connection to HBT and to the Jewish community overall – and this has happened because our connection has become personalized.



When we joined HBT three years ago, we had never heard of a Chavurah. Embarrassingly, we had never participated in Havdallah either. We weren't seeking out such a group, it just sort of... happened. We're glad that it did! It's easy to feel anonymous in a congregation of thousands of people, and for some of us, this has been our life's experience with shul in general. That said it's also easy to connect – to enhance one's sense of belonging, whatever that means to you. The importance isn't so much in what you do, but why you do it. We joined Holy Blossom so that our family would have a greater connection to the Jewish community at large; we realized that connection when we became part of a small group.

Temple Singers:

a short story about the value of communities within a community

by Lewis Molot

My wife and I joined Holy Blossom in 1995 after attending services for a while. Since both of us were from away (translation: neither of us grew up in Toronto), we only knew a handful of members. That didn't bother us as we assumed we would eventually meet people at HBT somehow over time. How could we not with such a large congregation? About a year after joining, I received a personal letter from Cantor Beny Maissner using flowery prose that we have all come to know, inviting me to join the congregational choir – the Temple Singers. I was reluctant to participate since I had no training at all in singing (although I remembered the basics of reading music from high school guitar lessons) but someone mentioned to him that I had two desirable characteristics – I had a decent tenor voice and was well under 60 years of age. Beny desperately needed more men because as he told me later, tenors are rare. So I showed up for the first rehearsal in September 1996 and loved it. And still do.

It is gratifying to sing High Holiday music which has a different feel to it than Shabbat music, and there is joy at hitting a high 'F' note in full chest voice at the end of Adon Olam but there also are non-musical joys in belonging to a small community of less than 40 people. We know each other by name. We spend time at the synagogue together and are at home there. We have become the best of friends over the years, a support group when needed. We might not have ever met if it were not for this small community within a community at HBT.



If you are thinking of participating somehow, take the long view – it will be well worth it to join a group at HBT not only for its contributions to synagogue life but just as importantly for the fellowship that follows. By the way – you don't have to know how to sing to join the Temple Singers. We'll teach you.



Members Helping Members

by **Jonathan Ain**
Director of Development



A warm welcome. An inclusive spirit. And a sacred community that is always striving to create the finest expression of a Reform Jewish way of life. These are the values guiding all we do at Holy Blossom Temple.

We are proud of the diversity of our membership which includes members who joined our ranks as recently as 2017 as well as families whose Temple ties go back several generations. Our congregants reside throughout the GTA and beyond, with many travelling significant distances to join us for services and programs.

Regardless of life stage or geographic location, Holy Blossom members share a common desire to belong to and contribute to our sacred Temple community.

Unfortunately, 40% of our congregants are unable to afford the full membership contribution or school fees. Without our support, these cherished members would find themselves without access to Holy Blossom Temple. This is a situation our congregation could never accept.

This is where you and the **Holy Blossom Annual Congregational Appeal** can help. Each year, we ask our members with financial ability to donate above and beyond their regular membership contribution to assist those who have less. By putting forth this *members helping members* Campaign, we live up to our promise of ensuring everyone can participate with full dignity, equity, and pride.

Last year, the Annual Congregational Appeal raised \$600,000 to help maintain and enhance life at Holy Blossom. In 2017, we are hoping for a 10% increase over last year's results to help ensure that we can continue to provide our unique and varied array of Temple programs and services, 365 days per year.

Holy Blossom Temple's ability to serve our members depends solely on your generosity. Please consider making your gift now.

Gifts made before May 19, 2017 will receive recognition in our Temple Membership package. Additionally, the names of donors contributing \$600 or more will be proudly displayed on our Donor Wall, located in the Bathurst foyer of the Main Sanctuary. All donations will be listed on our website and in our December 2017 Bulletin.

Regardless of your gift, please know that we appreciate contributions of all sizes. Understanding that the strength of Holy Blossom depends on us, we know that we can count on you to once again strongly support the Annual Congregational Appeal.

To make your gift to the 2017 Congregational Appeal, please contact Cindy Zimmer, Holy Blossom Foundation Manager, at 416.789.3291 ext. 229 or email czimmer@holyblossom.org. All early donations received by May 19 will be recognized in our Membership Package.





RENEWAL PROJECT UPDATE

RENEWAL DONORS HONOURED TO GIVE BACK TO “CARING AND COMPASSIONATE COMMUNITY”

In 1978, Gaye and Andy Stein were searching for a Congregation closer to their home in the Forest Hill area. Their older daughter, Amy, was already enrolled in the Holy Blossom Nursery School and they were expecting their second daughter, Gillian, within a few months.

While neither Gaye nor Andy grew up at Holy Blossom, both came from families who belonged to congregations. For the Steins, joining Holy Blossom seemed like the natural move, and they were immediately delighted with their decision.

“Both of us grew up at Bathurst and Wilson,” says Andy, whose parents were original members of Temple Sinai. “So once we moved south, it made sense for us to join Holy Blossom. And we’ve been very happy members ever since.”

“Quite frankly, I enjoyed the move to Reform,” says Gaye, who grew up at a Conservative synagogue. “As a young married woman, I just didn’t see a place for myself and my daughters in my previous congregation.”

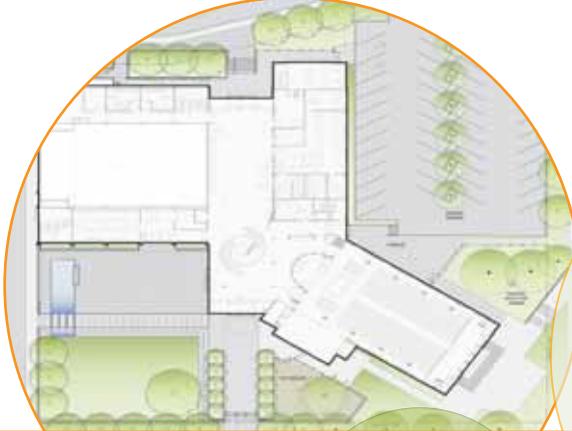
When Andy and Gaye, who operate a major retail business in the GTA, were approached to contribute to Holy Blossom’s historic Renewal Campaign, they felt the opportunity could not be missed.

“We are fortunate,” says Andy. “We live in a great country, at a very important time to be Jewish and Canadian. Holy Blossom is an excellent congregation with world-class rabbis and cantors. So



Gaye and Andrew Stein

when (past president) Larry Babins came to our home and asked us to make a gift to the Renewal, we agreed quite readily.”



To read all our bi-weekly Life at Holy Blossom Renewal Updates, and to see the latest photos and videos, including our live-stream cam, visit holyblossom.org/renewal

Andy says that while the total amount of their pledge might sound like a stretch to many, he stresses that Temple members should be aware that the gift is paid over a number of years.

“I don’t know that many people who can just write a cheque for a hundred-thousand dollars. But once you realize that you can pay over five years and that it’s tax deductible, you realize that it’s not as big a stretch as it seems at first. And maybe for some people the amount is two hundred and fifty-thousand, while for others it’s twenty-five thousand. The point is that everyone gives to the extent that they can.”

For the Steins, contributing to Holy Blossom means they are doing their part to ensure that Holy Blossom is available for their children and grandchildren. “Our grandchildren don’t attend Jewish Day School,” says Andy. “Holy Blossom Temple is therefore vital for them as an anchor of their Jewish identities. That’s compelling for us. It’s our responsibility to make sure this congregation is available to them as it was for Gaye, me and our children.”

“It’s a special place,” says Gaye. “Growing up as a girl in the Conservative movement, I didn’t have a bat

mitzvah and I didn’t think about it much. But once my older daughter had her bat mitzvah and my younger was preparing for hers, I felt I should too. So I joined the adult B’nei Mitzvah class and celebrated my own adult bat mitzvah. It was an extremely meaningful experience.”

For the Steins, who are the parents of two daughters and grandparents of four young children who are all at Holy Blossom, contributing to Renewal was a moral imperative, one that has brought them deep satisfaction. “Temple is a leader in social justice,” says Andy. “Furthermore, Holy Blossom is also a warm and compassionate community that has stood by our family through good times and bad. And I know many others feel the same way. We’re proud and honoured to be able to do our part for the Renewal Campaign.” “You get a great feeling from giving,” agrees Gaye. “Everyone should take the chance to be a part of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build for tomorrow.”

To discuss your participation in the Renewal Campaign, please contact Jonathan Ain, Director of Development at jain@holyblossom.org or 416.789.3291 ext. 249.



Welcome to Our Congregational Family



Weddings & Engagements

- Joan Garson & David Baskin, on the engagement of their son, **Jacob Baskin** to **Jackie Hurwitz**, daughter of Joel & Jill Hurwitz
- Karen & Yoel Abells, on the engagement of their daughter, **Lyla Abells**, to **William Farbstein**, son of Jan Schreiber & Joe Battle and Linda & Jeff Farbstein. Also Mazal Tov to Grandmother Mary Seldon and Shirley Farbstein.
- Barbara Bregman and Michael Bregman on the upcoming marriage of their daughter, **Sarah Bregman** to **Luke Reid**, son of Alexandra and Clive Reid of London, England, on May 14 2017.
- Jeremy Korn**, son of Sherri Lipson Korn & Mel Korn, to **Michelle Paradis**, daughter of Julie & Jean Paradis on their upcoming wedding on August 6, 2017.

Births

- Dara & Jordan Rosenbaum, on the birth of a son, **Ryan David Rosenbaum**. Proud grandparents are Karen & Yoel Abells and Susan & Sam Rosenbaum. Proud great grandparents are Dafna Abells and Mary Seldon.
- Alison & Matthew Toffolo, on the birth of a daughter, **Irene Luciana Toffolo**. Proud grandparents are Ellen & Andrew Kampf.
- Carolyn Freedman & Jonathan Zipursky, on the birth of a daughter, **Arielle Freda Zipursky**. Proud grandparents are Debra Katzman & Robert Zipursky; and Cathi & John Freedman. Proud great grandparents are Alvin Zipursky; Renee & Malvern Katzman; Elinor Borsook; and Louis Freedman

B'nei Mitzvah



Aiden Coleman
Son of Jill Witkin & Greg Coleman
Sat., April 1, 2017



Sasha Steiner
Daughter of Amanda Young & Robert Steiner
Sat., April 8, 2017



Camille Lisser
Daughter of Carol Cruickshank & James Lisser
Sat., April 22, 2017



Lyla Spetter
Daughter of Meredith Englander & Jason Spetter
Sat., April 29, 2017



Eli Sol
Son of Rabbi Yael Splansky & Dr. Adam Sol
Sat., May 6, 2017



Adam Grunberg
Son of Melissa Goldband & Lee Grunberg
Thur., May 11, 2017



Jennifer Shiner
Daughter of Janet & Norman Shiner
Sat., May 13, 2017



Harriet Hylton
Daughter of Melissa and Tim Hylton
Sat., May 13, 2017



Ella Nisker
Daughter of Karen Mazer & Lawrence Nisker
Thur., May 25, 2017



Lilah Petersiel
Daughter of Tami Moscoe & Eric Petersiel
Fri., May 26, 2017



Zoey Wallhouse
Daughter of Stephanie Cohen & Blair Wallhouse
Sat., May 27, 2017

In Memoriam..

- Dorothy Atin**, mother of Jordan Atin, Sydney Atin, Mark Atin and Tracey Atin; sister of Rene Dunkin
- Andrea Baltman**, mother of Stuart Baltman; mother by choice of Ahava Rosenthal and Sara Rosenthal
- Burney Bongard**, father of Warren Bongard, Jaymie Bongard and Faithe Sversky; brother of Shirley Kliaman
- Thelma (Toby) Dunkleman**, mother of Ronnie-Lynne Billet; sister of Evelyn Gardner
- Maurice Kalman**, father of Carl Kalman and Jane Fagell
- David Kettner**, husband of Hilary Kettner; father of Miles Kettner, Jane Kettner and Paul Kettner
- Lillian Kirsh**, mother of Eric Kirsh, Howard Kirsh and Este Hughes; sister of Mike Feldman and Marcia Donsky
- Agnes Lantos**, mother of Robert Lantos
- Lenore Laskin**, mother of Dale Laskin and Barbara Laskin
- Albert Lester**, husband of Billie Allen Steinberg; father of Dr. Michael Lester and Joel Lester
- Etta Ginsberg McEwan**, sister of Sandy Weinberg and Edith Ganz
- Dr. Joy Ruth Mickelson**, wife of Ed Mickelson; mother of Joel Mickelson, Rachel Mickelson and Dov Mickelson
- Manny Mitchell**, husband of Merle Friedman; father of Stacy Mitchell, Steven Mitchell and Sari Sonshine
- Ida Newton**, mother of Rochelle Dennis, Lionel Newton and Arnold Newton
- Clifton Pezim**, father of Howard Pezim and Steven Pezim; brother of Barbara Axelrad
- Elinor Schacter**, mother of Don Schacter and Mark Schacter
- Patti Stark**, wife of Stephen Stark; mother of Joshua Stark, Jared Stark and Shane Stark; sister of Mike Fox
- Coby Sucher**, husband of Rolanda Sucher; father of Keren Groll, Yael Ginsler and Benjamin Sucher
- Philip Zucker**, husband of Helen Zucker; father of Bella Shupac, Faye Kellerstein and Shirley Strutz

We thank our generous donors

Accessibility Fund

Etta Ginsberg McEwan, In Memory: Sheila Smolkin

The Bernard, Carol & Samuel Braun Memorial Fund

Martin Charney, In Honour: Marcia & Ken Cohen

Jean Fine Seniors Fund

Thelma Dunkelmann, In Memory: Bev Rodd

C. David Kofman, In Memory: Shirley Kofman and Family

Shirley Patchen Cohen, Yahrzeit: Marilyn Hahn

Ruth Rosen, In Memory: Ruth Green

Rabbi Michael Satz, In Honour: Mondays @ the Temple

Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Honour: Mondays @ the Temple

Floral Fund

Stephanie Cohen & Blair Wallhouse on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Zoey.

Carol Cruickshank & James Lisser on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Camille.

Meredith Englander & Jason Spetter on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Lyla.

Melissa Goldband & Lee Grunberg on the occasion of the Bar-Mitzvah of their son Adam.

Melissa & Tim Hylton on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Harriet.

Karen Mazer & Lawrence Nisker on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Ella.

Janet & Norman Shiner on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Jennifer.

Rabbi Yael Splansky and Dr. Adam Sol on the occasion of the Bar-Mitzvah of their son Eli.

Jill Witkin & Greg Coleman on the occasion of the Bar-Mitzvah of their son Aiden.

Amanda Young & Robert Steiner on the occasion of the Bat-Mitzvah of their daughter Sasha.

Holy Blossom Adult Education Fund

Eunice Davis, In Memory: Millie & Sheldon Goldstein

Dr. Manny Spivak, In Memory: Millie & Sheldon Goldstein

Holy Blossom Temple Foundation

General Donation: Muriel Cohen

Holy Blossom Temple Clergy, In Honour: Michelle & Gavin Naimier

Agnes Lantos, In Memory: Debbi Lockie

Phoebe Kaiser Rotman, In Honour: Paula & Peter Lunder and Family (The Lunder Foundation)

Holy Blossom Temple Renewal Project

General Donation: Lewis Molot & Linda Kamerman; Adam Sniderman

Jill Hertzman, In Honour: Joan Garson

Sarah & David Kaufman, In Honour: Cheryl Sylvester

Agnes Lantos, In Memory: Richard Rapkowski

Joy Ruth Mickelson, In Memory: Jan & Russ Joseph

Lionel Rubin, Yahrzeit: Ronna Rubin & Phil Smith and Family

Eli Sol, In Honour: Janice & Larry Babins; Carla & Alain Baudot and Family; Claudia Blumberger & Sidney Troister; Susan & Barry Borden; Janet & Michael Diamond; Joan Garson & David Baskin; Ronna Rubin & Phil Smith and Family; Judy & Gerald Slan

Francie & Marty Storm, In Honour: Susan & Barry Borden; Wendy & Elliott Eisen

Jacob's Tower Fund

Marvin Baskin²¹, In Honour: Florence Hertzman

Marvin Baskin, In Memory: Marilyn Shesko & David Hertzman

Jill Hertzman, In Honour: Florence Hertzman; Susan Lieberman & Manny Zeller; Marilyn Shesko & David Hertzman

Cantor Maissner, In Honour: Florence Hertzman

Tom Schwartz, In Honour: Marilyn Shesko & David Hertzman

Rabbi Splansky, In Honour: Florence Hertzman

Sydney Jacobs Memorial Fund

Rose Strauch, Yahrzeit: Daisy Jacobs

Sam Strauch, Yahrzeit: Daisy Jacobs

Joan Kerbel Leadership Development Fund

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Elizabeth Greifman, In Honour: Holy Blossom Temple Sisterhood

Rabbi Dow & Fredzia Marmur Program for Educational Excellence

David Walter, In Memory: Thelma Rosen Berris

Musical Heritage Fund

Toby Dunkelmann, In Memory: Mary Seldon and Family

Etta Ginsberg McEwan, In Memory: Joy & Charles Cohen

Cantor Beny Maissner, In Honour: Joan Garson & David Baskin

Audrey Markle, Yahrzeit: Julie Markle & Joel Mickelson and Family

Francie & Marty Storm, In Honour: Paula Kirsh & Family

Out of the Cold Fund

General Donation: Susan Sacchi

Jeff Bhagar, In Memory: Phyllis Denaburg

Josephine Celia, In Memory: Sari Simkins

Mollie Hoffman, Yahrzeit: Bernice Penciner

Edward Karabanow, Yahrzeit: Ellen Karabanow and Family

Debra Penciner, Yahrzeit: Bernice Penciner

Ruth Rosen, In Memory: Debra Merowitz

Prayer Book Fund

Anne Fidler Hutter, In Memory: Shirley Kofman and Family

Harry Fidler, In Memory: Shirley Kofman and Family

Sheldon Fidler, In Memory: Shirley Kofman and Family

Rabbis' Discretionary Funds

Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Appreciation: Ronnie-Lynne Dunkelmann and Family

Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Honour: Alice & Ron Charach and Family; Karen

Fainman and Family

Rabbi Michael Satz, In Honour: The Albright and Dale Families

Rabbi Jordan Helfman, In Appreciation: Ronnie-Lynne Dunkelmann and Family

Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner, In Appreciation: Ronnie-Lynne Dunkelmann and Family

Cantorial Soloist Lindi Rivers, In Appreciation: Ronnie-Lynne Dunkelmann and Family

Cantorial Soloist Lindi Rivers, In Honour: The Albright and Dale Families

Nadia Adler, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Naomi Bell, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Toby & Gary Ciglen, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Susan Cohen, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Anne Dublin, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Denise Goldstein, In Honour (Rabbi Yael Splansky's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Caroline Ingvaldsen, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Agnes Lantos, In Memory (Rabbi Yael Splansky's discretionary fund): Miriam & Marvin Dryer

Ellen Levine, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Pnina Margolese, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

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Bernice Penciner, In Honour (Rabbi Yael Splansky's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

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Judy & Uriel Priwes, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Arlene Roth, In Honour (Rabbi Yael Splansky's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Sharon Salzberg Ezrin & Hershell Ezrin, In Honour (Rabbi Yael Splansky's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Viviane & Saul Ship, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Francie & Marty Storm, In Honour (Rabbi Yael Splansky's discretionary fund): Debbie & Marvin Gans

Sheila Weinstock, In Honour (Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner's discretionary fund): Anita & Michael Greenstein

Lula & Irving Saunders Endowment Fund

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Shacharit Fund

Scarlat Albright, Yahrzeit: Albright and Dale Families

Morley Binstock, Yahrzeit: Lesley Binstock Offman and Family

Samuel Braun, Yahrzeit: Marcia & Ken Cohen and Family

Cayle Chernin, Yahrzeit: Beryl Chernin and Family

Arnold Cohen, Yahrzeit: Joy & Charles Cohen

May Cohen, Yahrzeit: Joy & Charles Cohen

Morty Dorfman, Yahrzeit: Michael Dorfman and Family

Steven Dorfman, Yahrzeit: Michael Dorfman and Family

Maxine Drevnig, Yahrzeit: Millie & Sheldon Goldstein

Thelma Dunkelmann, In Memory: Evelyn Gardner and Family

Meyer Fehler, Yahrzeit: Elana Fehler, Carol Poplack, Ron Fehler and Families

Robert Fishman, In Honour: Susan & Brian Fishman

Helen Fogel, Yahrzeit: The Uster Family

Esther & Philip Gorlicky, Yahrzeit: Frances & Manny Ellis

Ernest Gross, Yahrzeit: Lesley Binstock Offman and Family

Charles Hershfield, Yahrzeit: Ruth Ellen & Sheldon Greenwood

Ruth Koblin, Yahrzeit: Jackie & Saul Koblin and Family

Nathan Kozloff, Yahrzeit: Susan Himel & Neil Kozloff and Family

Ahuva Krieger, Yahrzeit: Karine Krieger and Family

Anna Kurlender, Yahrzeit: Claudia Blumberger & Sidney Troister and Family

Zeilig Leibovici, Yahrzeit: Martin Zeibovici and Family

Bella Leikin, Yahrzeit: Helen Hochberg and Family

Ira Ruderman, Yahrzeit: Marlene & Robert Ruderman

Samuel Sax, Yahrzeit: Julia & Michael Sax

Alex Shapiro, Yahrzeit: Cheryl Madeira & Bill Shapiro and Family

Dr. Franklyn Shapiro, Yahrzeit: The Shapiro Family

Blanche Spiegel Posen, Yahrzeit: Joy & Charles Cohen

L. William Spiegel, Yahrzeit: Joy & Charles Cohen

Debra Troister, Yahrzeit: Claudia Blumberger & Sidney Troister and Family

Harry Uster, Yahrzeit: Rosie & John Uster and Family

Syrian Refugee Fund

General Donation: Diamond Family Charitable Fund



Welcome

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

Channa Verbian
Eduardo & Angélica Gus
Jeremy Korn & Michelle Paradis
Karen & Teddy Melvin

Laura Brodie & Andrew Herman
Lesley & Bruce Ferman
Martin & Rachel Steinhouse
Paul Druzin

HB *together*

Life can blossom here.



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