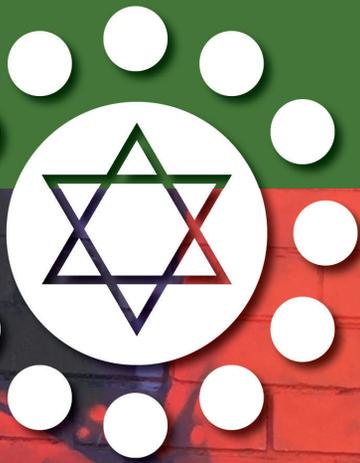


HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

Bulletin



5779 YEAR IN REVIEW

Holy Days and Festivals 5780*

Selichot | September 21, 2019

Rosh HaShanah | September 29 - October 1, 2019

Yom Kippur | October 8 - 9, 2019

Sukkot | October 13 - 20, 2019

Shemini Atzeret | October 20 - 22, 2019

Simchat Torah | October 20 - 21, 2019

Chanukah | December 22 - 30, 2019

Tu B'Shvat | February 9 - 10, 2020

Purim | March 9 - 10, 2020

Pesach | April 8 - 15, 2020

Yom HaShoah | April 20 - 21, 2020

Yom HaZikaron & Yom HaAtzmaut | April 27 - 29, 2020

Yom Yerushalayim | May 21 - 22, 2019

Lag BaOmer | May 11 - 12, 2020

Shavuot | May 28 - 29, 2020

Tishah B'Av | July 29 - 30, 2020

**Holidays begin at sundown on the first date listed above*



6



9



11



16



19



24

HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE Bulletin

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On the cover: HABSTY enjoyed a walk through history retracing our Jewish roots as they enjoyed treats of the neighbourhood. From left to right: Matthew Lidsky, Jesse Sol, Sophie Atkinson, Mitchell Cait-Goldenthal, Eli Sol, Lisa Isen-Baumal, Lylah Adler, and Camille Lisser.

Photo credit: HABSTY

THRESHOLD

Rabbi Yael Splansky, Senior Rabbi

RABBINIC REFLECTION



THreSH (h)ōld

noun

1. a strip of wood, metal, or stone forming the bottom of a doorway and crossed when entering a house or room.
2. the magnitude or intensity that must be exceeded for a certain reaction, phenomenon, result, or condition to occur or be manifested.

We have crossed the threshold and we are now ready to inhabit our new home. How wonderful!

Before we lit the first Chanukah candle, we affixed a *mezuzah* to celebrate and sanctify the opening of our new doors at 1950 Bathurst Street. That housewarming celebration brought all the same emotions one feels when crossing the threshold of a new home. Looking back, I see how the metaphor carries all the way through -- from the excitement of dreaming of a new home, to searching for the place that can hold those dreams, to worrying about the price tag, to the responsibility of weighing out priorities and rigorous decision-making, to the support and encouragement from family and friends, to the ultimate leap of faith in the direction of the future. We have gone through all of these emotions and growing pains together as a congregation. Now we have crossed the threshold and we are moving in.

A House Unfinished

It is taught in the Talmud (Baba Batra 60b) that when a Jewish home is built, a small section by the entrance should remain unfinished, unplastered to expose the building blocks beneath. Like the breaking of the glass at a wedding, this symbol reminds us of the ancient Temple of Jerusalem and that our world is in need of repair and restoration.

When you enter our new doors, you'll notice an unfinished wall. The exposed concrete was erected in

1938. When we look upon it, let us rededicate ourselves to our congregational values and to advancing the legacy of those who came before us. Our house is built on these five pillars: *Torah* (life long learning), *Avodah* (prayer), *Gemilut Chasadim* (acts of justice and compassion), *Kehillah Kedoshah* (building a sacred community), and *Ahavat Yisrael* (love of Israel). The words of the First Century Sage Rabbi Tarfon are inscribed by the wall to urge us to pursue these sacred deeds with all our might: "You are not required to complete the task – but neither are you free to desist from it." (*Pirkei Avot* 2:16)

Mezuzah

God's name, *Shaddai*, is inscribed on the back of the parchment scroll. *Shaddai* or its first letter, *shin*, is usually included in the design of the *mezuzah* case. Our Sages suggest this early biblical name for God stands for *Shomer Daltot Yisrael*, Guardian of the Doors of Israel. Many have expressed concern over the physical safety of our Temple-House. In addition to the many layers of security, which have been put into place, let's not forget the additional layer of spiritual and emotional security. When we claim it we feel fears recede into proportion and we feel ourselves more able to stand with confidence, dignity and strength in God's Presence.

When dedicating a new house, hopeful homeowners write a prayer for their lives over the threshold. Every congregant can now say these words too as we inhabit our House together, fill it with sacred memories, meaningful relationships, common values, and a shared vision for our future.

"We offer thanks for the promise of security and contentment this House represents. We will strive to make it a sanctuary illuminated by beauty, holiness, and love. May God's Presence fill this house, making it a real home. Amen." (*Siddur Pirchei Kodesh*, page 431)

A ROLLER COASTER RIDE — THE HIGHS AND LOWS OF THIS PAST YEAR

Judy Winberg, President, Holy Blossom Board of Directors

FROM THE PRESIDENT



I look back on the months since the high holy days with feelings of incredible pride and with a sense of sadness and deep loss.

There was great anticipation and excitement at being able to be back in our 'old' Temple for Rosh Hashanah last September. The building was ready enough for a sneak preview and as we moved from the Sanctuary into the Atrium we were in awe of the majesty of the renewed space.

On December 2, we gathered in the Atrium for the official Housewarming Celebration. Over one thousand friends and family members joyously shared a collective deep pride as we cut the ribbon and Cantor Maissner led the Temple Singers in the Hallelujah Chorus from the central staircase. Rabbi Splansky then invited the six-generation Holy Blossom Temple Hellen family to the *bimah* to kindle the first Chanukah light.

Now, Sundays in the Atrium programs highlighting the talent of young musicians from the Glenn Gould School at the Royal Conservatory have helped to make the Holy Blossom Atrium the newest concert venue in the city.

But, in the Fall of 2018 a black cloud fell over the Jewish community in Pittsburgh with an unspeakable act of antisemitism as eleven innocent victims were shot down at Shabbat services. That the one Canadian victim, Joyce Fienberg z"l had been a member of Holy Blossom Temple, attended religious school, was confirmed and married at the Temple was truly shocking. Joyce Libman Fienberg was my first cousin, and her husband Steve z"l, was a first cousin to several other Temple families. May her memory be a blessing.

The Temple has long been a leader in social justice activities and continued this year with programming for interfaith gatherings, partnerships with Ve'Ahavta and Syrian and Yazedi immigrant families and sadly, to support our friends in the Muslim community after they too fell victim to terrorist activities.

Sadly, too many of our long-time members and too many young people passed away this year.

The untimely death of our Executive Director, Russ Joseph z"l, had a profound affect on many congregants and Temple professionals.

And then, what tremendous pride we felt when our member, Larry Enkin honoured his father's memory by introducing The Tailor Project on May 1. The presence of the Prime Minister, the Right Honourable Justin Trudeau's enhanced what was already a highlight on the Temple's calendar.

On a regular basis, Holy Blossom Temple continues to offer rich early childhood, young adult and adult education and cultural programs. They include study sessions, the Florence Melton Mini School series, film nights and book reviews, mindfulness and yoga retreats, the Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative programs, bereavement support, Brotherhood and Sisterhood events, ukulele, Temple singers and Musical Heritage performances.

And so, while looking back evokes both sadness and pride, I look forward with great anticipation. These next months bring new leadership to the Temple with Ron Polster, our new Executive Director, and our new Assistant Rabbi Zachary Goodman. The library, café, and Judaica shop will be operational, the landscaping will be restored with improved accessibility, and permanent wayfinding signage will be in place.

Holy Blossom Temple is our synagogue and we are always open to new members. Please share your pride and enthusiasm by inviting family and friends to join us.

Judy Winberg,
President, Holy Blossom Board of Directors

WHAT “RENEWAL OF SPACE AND RENEWAL OF SPIRIT” MEANS TO ME, A CAMP GUY

By: Ron Polster, Executive Director

What an exciting time to join Holy Blossom Temple!

As you walk into the Schwartz/Reisman Atrium, one can't help but be struck by the awe. How awesome it is that Holy Blossom Temple was able to actualize a compelling vision for Renewal. I am so grateful to my predecessor, Russ Joseph z"l, and to the leadership of the Temple – to the donors, the board, and the clergy and professional staff - who were so integral to, and continue to be so integral to - making the Renewal of Space and the Renewal of Spirit such a smashing success.

Renewal of Space and Renewal of Spirit means something a bit different to me. For me, for more than 20 years the summertime has been about getting out my duffle bags and moving up to camp. Formerly the Director of both Camp Ramah and, before that, URJ Camp George, I have always been committed to building community and bringing the joyfulness of Jewish living to young people. I am fond of quoting Mark Twain's adage, "Never let school interfere with your education." Summer camp was all about "teachable moments." In a 24/7 immersive environment like camp, staff always had to be prepared to teach, because one never knew when children were ready to learn.

Fast forward to Holy Blossom Temple. For me, Renewal of Space and Renewal of Spirit intersect in a profound way. Moving forward, we need to continue thinking creatively and strategically about ways in which the Temple space – both new and old, both spaces for worship and spaces for gathering - can be used effectively, safely, and efficiently to provide those "teachable moments," impacting generations of members at times when they perhaps least expect it.





COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT UPDATE

By: Tema Smith, Director of Community Engagement & Cheryl Sylvester, Vice President, Membership

Membership Update

Holy Blossom Temple continues to thrive, with new members joining us at every life stage. Our Young Families membership model brings us new families with children 8 and younger every year. Our YAD program for young adults under age 35 is growing. And Temple continues to attract older adults who are drawn to our inspiring clergy, engaging programming, and connected community.

With the opening of our renewed spaces, we are hard at work to invite people who may not know Holy Blossom at all, or who may want to give us another look, to see what it means to belong to a community like ours. We hope you will help us to spread the word. Invite a friend or family member to join you for Shabbat or for one of our many enriching programs, join us for a tour, or find out how Holy Blossom could be their Jewish home away from home.

Volunteer Engagement

We hear it every day from our congregants: volunteerism is one of the most meaningful ways to participate in Temple life. The sacred partnership between our clergy and professionals, and our lay leadership and volunteers is the driving force behind so much of Temple life.

Our Volunteer Engagement Committee has been hard at work planning a strategy for meaningful volunteerism at Holy Blossom Temple. You'll find in your membership renewal package a Volunteer Interest Questionnaire that will help us get to know a bit more about how you might like to be involved in Temple life. We hope that you will get involved – whether for the first time, or just in something new to you.

Navigators

Did you know that each new member to Holy Blossom Temple is paired with another member who helps guide them through their first year of Temple life? The Navigator program ensures that people just joining our community have a welcoming face at Temple programs, and a person to turn to for answers to any questions they may have about Temple life. This year, navigators and new members came together for a lovely wine and cheese reception in the home of our lead navigator, Sarah Kaufman, to meet each other and learn about ways they can get involved in the Temple community.

Interested in becoming a Navigator? Contact Tema at tsmith@holyblossom.org or 416-789-3291 x232.



SHALOM AND L'HITRA'OT

By: Rabbi Michael Satz, Associate Rabbi

When I began my tenure at Holy Blossom Temple in 2014, I knew a bit about this community. My wife, Rabbi Janice Elster, worked here while she was a student at U of T and was mentored by Rabbis Moscovitz and Splansky. Rabbi Karen Thomashow was one of our closest classmates and friends. Of course I knew the reputations of Rabbis Plaut and Marmur and their influence on all of the Reform Movement. What I was unprepared for was our congregants' hunger for meaningful Jewish learning, spiritual exploration, passion for justice, and true concern and love for each other. All congregations strive to be places like this, and Holy Blossom is a model.

In my five years at Holy Blossom it has been my honour to learn with you the words of Torah, to weep with you at your loved ones' graves, to hold your hands in the hospital, to rejoice with you at your *simchas*, to sing my heart out on Shabbat with you, and to stand in coalition with you and our interfaith partners to fight for a better Toronto and Canada. I am especially proud that we brought high level group study series like Melton and the Hartman Institute's iEngage series. Also, facilitating the Mussar Institute's programs has been spiritually fulfilling to me. I hope that I helped the students in these courses deepen their practice of *mentchlekeit*.

There have been too many congregant-partners I have worked with to name everyone, but I would like to thank the people I have worked with most closely from the Schwartz/Reisman Centre for Jewish Learning, the Bikkur Cholim Committee, the Israel Committee, the volunteers of Mondays at the Temple, the Out of the Cold leaders and all of those dedicated to social action like our volunteers who welcome refugees, and to the volunteers of the new Luke Sklar Mental Health Initiative.

I also owe much gratitude to all of the professionals at

Holy Blossom, especially the assistants who have worked with me—most recently Elana and JoAnne. The holy work of Holy Blossom would come to a halt without you. And of course, I thank with all of my heart my clergy colleagues Rabbis Splansky and Helfman, Cantor Maissner and Cantorial Soloist Rivers. Yael, Jordan, Beny and Lindi, you have mentored me, challenged me, inspired me, and everyday make me a better rabbi because of your wisdom, grace, and dedication.

During my first interview to become a rabbi at Holy Blossom I gave a *drash* on the Hebrew name of Holy Blossom, *Pirchei Kodesh*. (You might have heard a variation on this teaching the last few years from me.) *Pirchei Kodesh* means blossoms of holiness. It probably comes from the phrase used to describe the kids training to be priests in the ancient Temple in Jerusalem—*Pirchei Kehuna*, the blossoms of the priesthood. The priests were, of course, those who were commanded to live lives of holiness as an example to the people of Israel who is called to be “a holy people, a kingdom of priests.” So, what does holiness have to do with blossoms? A blossom is technically a flower on a fruit tree. This flower has the potential to transform into a fruit. Holiness is about potential. Every minute of every day we have choices to make whether we are aware of it or not. Sometimes we can be aware that the choices we make have the potential to increase love, joy, beauty or justice in the world. This is holiness. Living a life that has a potential to bear fruit.

Holy Blossom has given me the opportunity to participate in holiness. I pray that this *kehilah kedoshah*—this holy community will continue to inspire me and point me towards holiness as I continue my rabbinate at Temple B'nai Or in Morristown, NJ.

A MESSAGE FROM RABBI ZACHARY GOODMAN

By: Rabbi Zachary Goodman, Assistant Rabbi

Dear Holy Blossom Community,

I am incredibly honoured and beyond excited to be serving as the Assistant Rabbi at Holy Blossom Temple. As a newly ordained rabbi from the Cincinnati campus of the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion, I consider myself remarkably lucky to be beginning my career as a rabbi at such an exceptional congregation.

Throughout rabbinical school, I was always passionate about young professional and youth engagement, modern Jewish thought, theology, inter-faith dialogue and Israel education. I hope to bring my passion for these various fields to my rabbinate at Holy Blossom!

On a personal note, when my great-grandmother escaped the pogroms of Europe, she landed in Nova Scotia and lived in Toronto for over a decade. In many ways, joining this vibrant Jewish community feels both like an arrival and a homecoming. As my wife, Katie, and I reclaim my Canadian roots, we also look forward to planting some roots of our own.

In our free time, Katie and I love to explore the outdoors, travel, cook, watch sports and host game nights with our friends. Music is also an important part of my life and I love to play the guitar, piano and sing. We are eager to meet you and your family soon!





THE POWER OF RENEWED SPACES. AND BUSTING THE \$30 MILLION BARRIER.

By: David Rosenberg, Renewal Project Steering Committee

Space of any kind, but especially well-designed space, has the power to affect our behaviour, thinking, mood, and what we invest of ourselves in that space. There are times when this truth goes largely unnoticed. Other times, it's palpable. We can see and feel it in action.

The latter is absolutely the case with the completion of Phase 1 of our Renewal Project. It is noticeably changing, well, *everything* at Holy Blossom. How we relate to one another at Temple. How we lead. How we learn. How we pray. How we help ourselves, and how we help others. How we celebrate. How we heal. How our community comes together. How we give of ourselves. How we fundraise. How we spend casual time. And ultimately, how we grow together.

Our values are still at the core of all of these things. But as a reflection of those values, our new space enables so many different kinds of initiatives and ideas to flourish. It's been purpose-designed to beget a renewed sense of spirit, community and growth in our congregation.

In only a few short months, so many of us have seen the way the gorgeous, open spaces of our Atrium pull us together. Embracing one another after services, or waving and blowing kisses from one level to the next. How we enjoy music (and each other's company) at ongoing programs like Sundays in the Atrium with the Royal Conservatory of Music. How we've attracted thousands from the community who want to learn, share and celebrate with events like the David Frum lecture, The Tailor Project, and the launch of the Luke Sklar Mental

Health Initiative. How joyously we welcome Shabbat in the comfort and beauty of our new Mishkan, or Family Chapel. How families have better opportunities to *shep nachas* at their *B'nei Mitzvah* and weddings in beautiful, new spaces. Or how we can just choose to grab a comfortable perch to relax or get a little work done, in various nooks all over the building.

If you haven't yet seen our beautiful Phase 1 spaces, please drop in for a visit at any time. As these spring days turn to summer, our beautiful, glass-panelled Atrium becomes ever-brighter. Our welcome, ever-warmer.

Over 30 million reasons to keep believing

Just a short update to let you know momentum continues to build as we get closer to completing Phase 1 fundraising. We've now surpassed \$30 million dollars and we thank the many generous donors who have tangibly demonstrated their belief in our shared project. As we've said before, ***Renewal will only succeed when this project of many, becomes a project of all.*** We need to finish this fundraising job, and we need to finish it together. To this end, if you haven't heard from us already, we'll be contacting you soon to talk about making your own meaningful gift to Renewal.

If you feel inspired to make your donation right now, Jonathan Ain, our Director of Development, would love to speak with you. He can be reached at jain@holyblossom.org or 416.789.3291 ext. 249.



YAD:20S AND 30S @ HBT'S LIOR SAGI

By: Rabbi Jordan Helfman, Associate Rabbi

Take the power of music to elevate the every-day and make it sacred, and blend it with engaging learning and rich personal relationships, and you have an idea of the magic which Lior Sagi has brought to our 20s and 30s programming here at Holy Blossom Temple.

On Yom Kippur, Lior and his wife Anna Gurevich were unnerved as they walked by the bustling street, past the busses and the tumble of everyday life in North America's third largest city, until they arrived here, at Holy Blossom. When Lior and his wife stepped foot into our building on Yom Kippur, Lior says he felt "like I was at home again." The sacred respect in the space reminded him of how the Holy Day is observed in Israel, where he has spent almost his whole life.

Lior grew up in a secular kibbutz, Kibbutz Ein Gedi, in Israel - distant from traditional Jewish observance. Though Yom Kippur was a solemn day there, it was not a day for prayer. While Pesach was important, it wasn't a day filled with liturgy of Exodus, but a celebration of spring. Fast-forward to a beautiful day in Israel when he was at the Port in Tel Aviv, and saw a group gathering. Those convening were participants in a Kabbalat Shabbat service - and picking up the *siddur* (prayer book) for one of the first times in his life - Lior found himself swept away by the music which blended Israeli melodies and the traditional prayers of our people. He has not looked back, volunteering with refugee children on holidays, becoming a Torah chanter and, with his wife, the 20s and 30s coordinators of Beit Tefillah Israel. They formed a deep Israeli connection with a Judaism beyond that which many Israelis consider in a conception of religious Jews.

I met them after they arrived in Canada to support Anna's studies. I was immediately impressed by Lior's ability to navigate the synagogue culture and his overwhelming warmth. YAD, our 20s and 30s group, quickly hired Lior as a

coordinator and educator, alongside the outstanding Mitch Reiss. Lior's work with the Canadian Zionist Federation, the World Zionist Organization's Department for Diaspora Affairs, and with YAD: 20s and 30s @ Holy Blossom Temple, has brought his unique blend of Israeli and Jewish to enrich our community. He says, "I am an Israeli. I love it. And I value strengthening the connection between Israel and the Diaspora as a mutual relationship." His approach to Israel education is to hear how people "learn, connect and talk about Israel in open dialogue without judging" - a perfect attitude for the diverse opinions in our 20s and 30s group.

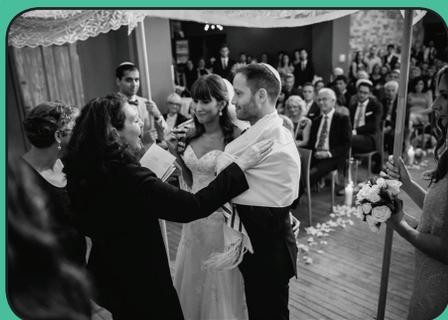
Besides the relationship with the core of individuals which form our 20s and 30s group, Lior has helped Israelis living in Toronto access our Judaism and our Jewish community - breaking down their idea of what it means to be part of religious community and rebuilding it with an experience of connection and openness. From the Tachles! Hebrew courses to the Cooking it up in Hebrew program with Israeli chefs to the Musical Kabbalat Shabbat, Lior continues to enrich our community with fantastic programming and learning which connects his Israel with our lives here in Toronto.

When you (or your children or grand-children in their 20s or 30s) hear about our next events, please make sure they register quickly, so they can get in, and experience how music can be a bridge from every-day life into belonging - from the mundane to the sacred.

Our next Musical Kabbalat Shabbat is June 21st at Geary Lane, and is RSVP only. The music is provided by Cantor Maissner - and led by our 20s and 30s member musicians, Igor Kurtzman (piano), Carina Newton (vocals), Adam Sniderman (saxophone), Jonathan Resnick (bass), Jonathan Medow (drums), Harley Jonatan (joining new on guitar), and me (Rabbi Helfman, guitar). Lior, Anna, and I will see you there.

HBT By the Numbers

Life can blossom here



234

Life Cycle Events Shared

- 46** Baby Namings/Blessings
- 45** Confirmations & Consecrations
- 38** B'nei Mitzvah
- 12** Conversions
- 12** Weddings
- 31** Member Funerals



110+

Torah & Haftarah
chanters



2,600

Attendees at **3**
Signature Events



1000+

Guests at our First Cande of Chanukah &
Housewarming Celebration

300

Breakfasts delivered
to women & children
living in shelters
through the HABSTY
Bagel Project.



1808

Member Households

- 276** Over 50 years of membership!
- 470** 25-50 years of membership
- 249** 15-25 years of membership
- 392** 5-15 years of membership
- 466** Under 5 years of membership
-
- 167** Young Families
- 328** YAD: 20s & 30s members



9

Talented Musicians from the Glenn
Gould School at the Royal Conservatory
for our Sundays in the Atrium Free
Concert Series

365

Days of the year Holy
Blossom is Open

365

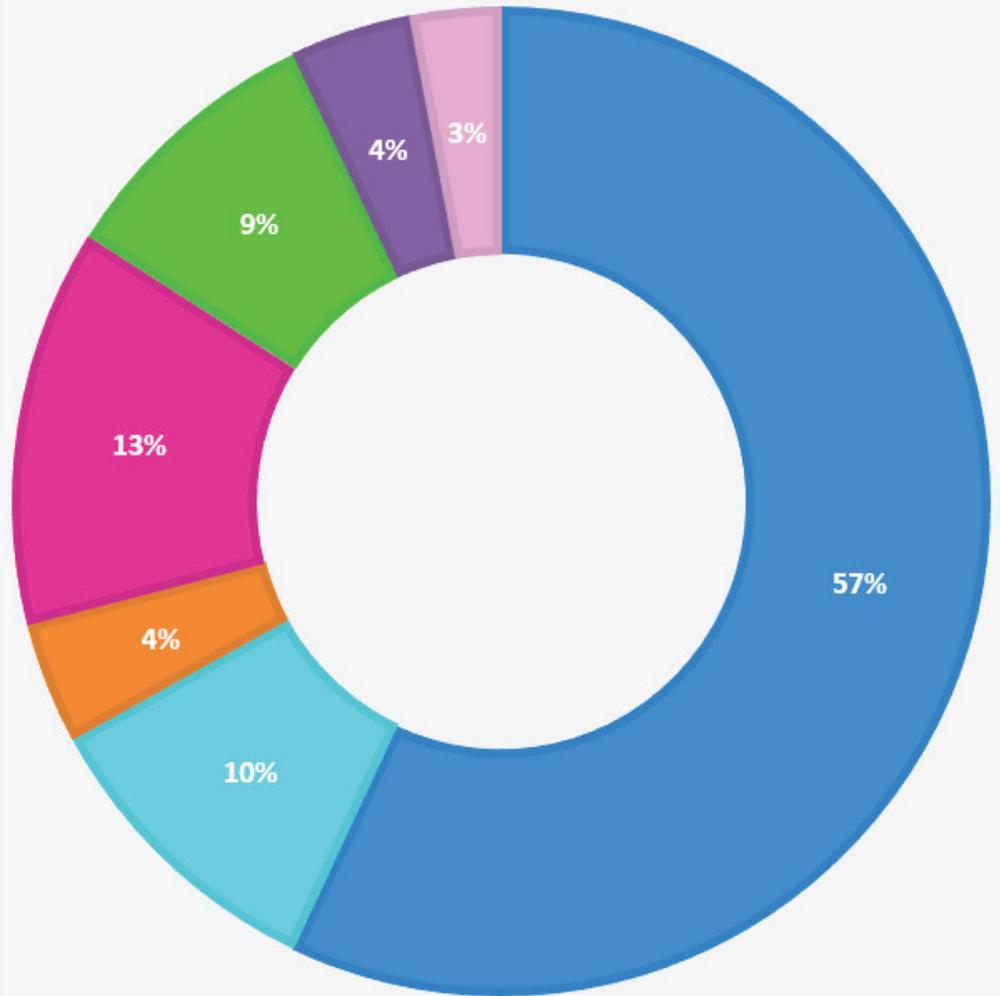
**OVER
\$30 MILLION**

Pledged for Canada's largest synagogue
building project

HBT Financials

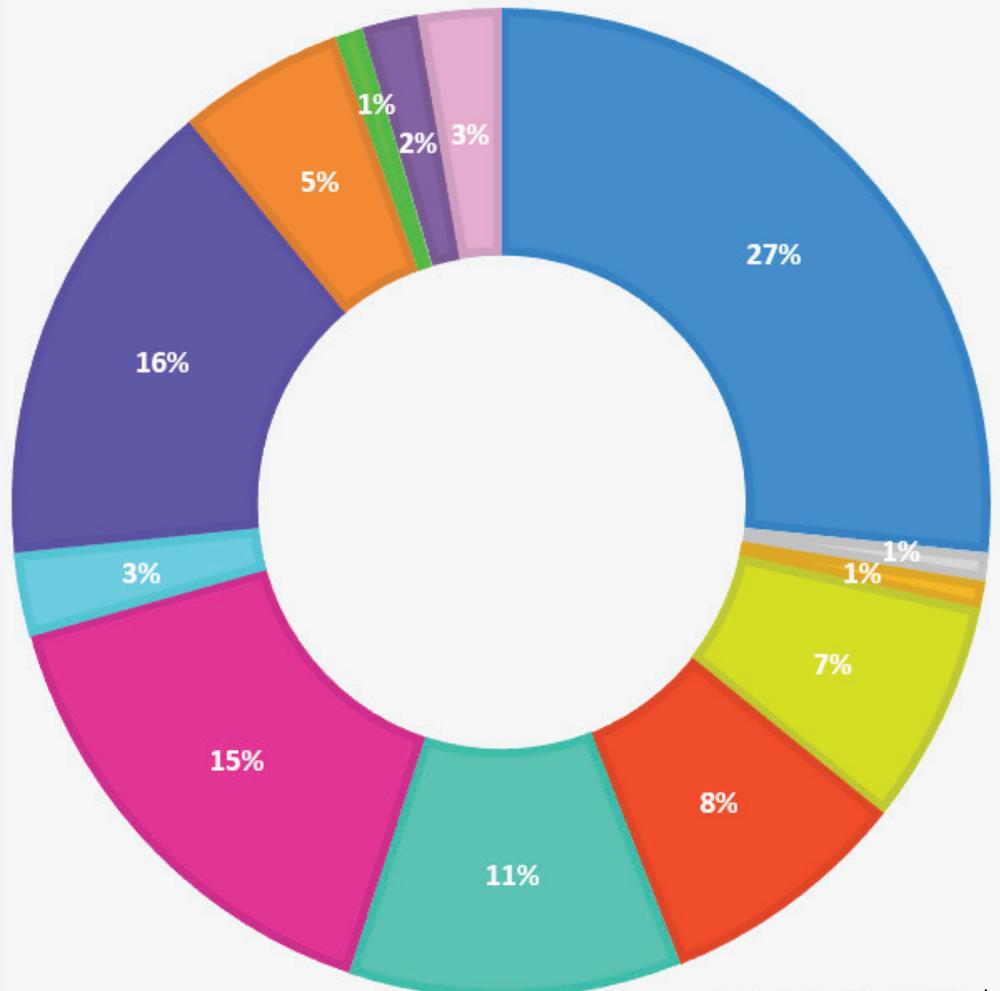
REVENUE

- Membership Contributions
- Annual Appeal
- Religious School
- Early Childhood Centre
- Foundation & Grants
- Cemetery
- Other



EXPENSES

- Worship & Life Cycles
- Programming & Adult Education
- Congregational Hospitality
- Youth Education
- Early Childhood Centre
- Administration
- IT/Security
- Facility & Maintenance
- Cemetery Upkeep
- Reform Affiliation Contributions
- Communications
- Other



YOUTH EDUCATION: PROGRESS REPORT

By: Debbie Spiegel, Director of Education

The Youth Education Centre (Grades JK-7) and JTEM (Jewish Teen Experience Midtown – grades 8-12) have been a bevy of activity this past year with many highlights. We have chosen our top 15 moments that will hopefully give you a flavour for what life is like with our students.

Our Younger students, had a blast “Cooking with Debbie Baker” baking yummy cookies for Pesach.

Our weekly *tefillah* with David Gershon was an incredible experience. The voices of our students certainly rose to heaven each week. Personal and thoughtful blessings were created by our students every week.



Year 12 did not disappoint! Thank you to our Shinshinim, Ido Levy and Lia Sulimany who shared their love of Israel in so many corners of our synagogue/school. We treasure the time they are with us and know that we will hold a special place in their hearts, as they do in ours.



Our *Madrichim* (student teachers) love being with us – these are special Grade 11 & 12 students who come each week to work diligently with our students. Thanks to Riva Menon, Lily Samuel, Lily Samuel, Jessie Schnoor, Maddie Ziedenberg, Abby Shore, Mara Baker, Remy Abramson, and Avishai Sol. You have all made a difference in the lives of our students.

Our Teaching Assistants make all the difference! Our students appreciate your thoughtfulness and ability to work with each and every one of them! Thank you to Alex Charendoff, Tikvah Avraham, and Michelle Lipschitz. We also thank Serra Behar, Sarah Kamiel, Jane Harris-Koblin and Sarah Krider for all they do.

Snack on Sundays and Mondays is a huge part of our experience. We thank our students for supporting our efforts and for buying snack each week. All the proceeds of our snack dollars go to a variety of *tzedakah* projects, including allocating monies back to the Religious School to assist those in our school that need assistance with tuition.

“Children’s children are the Crown of the Aged.” (Proverbs 17:6) It is always a pleasure to welcome our grandparents, and older relatives to join our students in school for Intergenerational Day. What a great time we all had together.

We thank all our parents for joining us at our Parent programs – and there were many. Each class hosted parents to join us on a Sunday or two. We made Havdalah candles, created *mezzuzot*, participated in a mock Jewish wedding, a school wide Pesach Seder (for the first time in years!), and so much more!



Grade 7 students participated in a Tzedakah Fair – learning about a variety of Jewish agencies in Toronto and Israel and allocating our Tzedakah funds (raised by snack \$\$) to these agencies. It was a great informative night with agency representatives extolling the wonderful questions our students asked. What a joy to give our students a taste of our what our Jewish community has to offer.

Our Grade 7 students had a tour of our city, visiting other houses of worship (Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Imdadul Islamic Centre and the Timothy Eaton Church), the Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre, and The Reform Mikvah. Our Grade 6s also had their own tour of Old Kensington, and did a *mitzvah* of packaging Pesach food at National Council for Jewish Women.

Our Shabbat Retreat with our students in Grade 6 & 7 is always a highlight. Our students adore being together with us in the “great outdoors,” merging the spirituality of Judaism with the wonders of nature. It is a very special time together.

Without a question, when our friends from Imdadul Islamic Centre joined our JTEM students was a true highlight of our year. We shared our mutual values which come from the Torah and the Koran. The similarities were overwhelming for the visitors and for our students and parents who joined us that evening. It is a pleasure to have this ongoing relationship with our Muslim brothers and sisters.



And *acharon acharon haviv* – last but certainly not least, thank you to all of our teachers who have worked tirelessly with our students this year. They have shared so much of themselves each week personally. They love what they do and we love having them with us. THANK YOU to: Daniel Abramson, Geri Durbin, Sami Eisen, David Gershon, Melody Gilboord, Adina Heisler, Rabbi Helfman, Elana Paice Lidsky, Karina Milech, Lindsay Mockler, Tova Nathanson, Sari Papular, Rabbi Satz, Sharoni Sibony, and Tali Weiss.



A YEAR IN REVIEW: ADULT EDUCATION AT HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

By: Gillian Helfield, Chair of Adult Education

It's an exciting time for Adult Education at Holy Blossom. Along with the renewal of space and spirit, we have renewed our programming, with additional lecture series, book talks, film nights, special events, and inspiring initiatives.

Looking back on 2018, it's wonderful to see the continuity of engaging programs from previous years:

In Jewish Studies, we had our popular text study courses, taught by Rabbi Splansky and other lay leaders, including Mark Goodman. Rabbi Satz continued to run the Business Ethics Course, in which participants get together once a month, over lunch in a corporate office, to study Jewish ideas and approaches to ethical issues in the world of business. This year we had two different courses running, one downtown and one midtown.

In languages, Conversational Yiddish was brought back by popular demand, and of course Hebrew Studies took a big leap forward with a spectacular weekend Hebrew marathon this year!

In Arts and Culture, the Centre for Contemporary Jewish Literature, led by Cynthia Good, continued its incredible program with study sessions on contemporary Jewish novels, and readings by renowned Jewish authors. In July we welcomed award-winning novelist Daniel Silva, at an event co-hosted by Beth Tzedec Congregation and attended by 1100 people!

Our York@HBT program continued for a second year, featuring four York University Jewish Studies professors, who presented unique lectures their areas of study: Professor David Koffman spoke about recent Canadian Jewish interest in Indigenous Peoples' issues, Professor Kalman Weiser lectured on old and new theories about the origins of Yiddish and the Ashkenazi People, Professor Sara Horowitz gave a presentation about women who cook in Israeli Cinema, and Professor Carl Ehrlich spoke about various Hollywood adaptations of the story of Moses.

The popular 'Eye on Israel' film series, continued for its 4th consecutive year, showcasing life and culture in Israel. The series was presented by our current ShinShinim, Lia Sulimany

and Ido Levy, with screenings/discussions of *Apples in the Desert*, *Maktub*, and *Bananot*.

There were also some very memorable 'firsts' – newly launched and very successful programs. Here are the highlights:

We began our first year of the Florence Melton School of Jewish Learning, a fantastic experience for our 25 participants, which will be followed by the Year Two Core course. Rabbi Helfman also taught a new course for parents called Foundations for Jewish Living. This is all part of a larger community initiative, hoping to bring the world of Melton to many students in our community. We will be offering more Melton Courses in the coming year, so stay tuned for important updates or contact Debbie Spiegel for more information (dspiegel@holyblossom.org).

Adult Education also co-hosted 'A Common Thread.' This event told the story of 'The Tailor Project' spearheaded by Max Enkin, who along with other important members of the Canadian business community, helped to rescue some 2,500 tailors and their families from the European DP camps, and brought here to work in the garment trade in 1948. We welcomed many of those families to Holy Blossom on May 1 for a meaningful Yom HaShoah commemoration.

Still to come: On June 17, Adult Education will present, Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia: *Moving from From Hate to Hope*, featuring Marni Fienberg and Imam Hassan Guillet from Québec speaking about their work of fostering interfaith understanding.

On June 24, we welcome Alana Newhouse with her new book, *100 Most Jewish Foods*. David Sax and Michael, Toronto contributors to the book, Wex will join her for the program.

We hope that you will join us for these fabulous programs. We thank you for your continued support and welcome your participation. We'd love to hear any ideas you may have for exploring new areas of study. Looking forward to next year!

TEENS @ HBT

By: Lisa Isen Baomal, Director of Youth Engagement & Avishai Sol, HABSTY President

This was another year of activity, energy, friendships and growth for youth at Holy Blossom. Students in grades 3-5 played at the 'beach', created movies, made delicious chocolate, and more together.

Our grade 6&7 JewCrew baked bread, cookies, muffins and more for Out of the Cold and Ve'ahavta, celebrated holidays together, and ate tons of pizza on Monday nights.

Teens participated in monthly Mitzvah Bakers, baking hundreds of muffins, volunteered at Out of the Cold together, shared a variety of snacks and games at lounge nights, and much more!



Avishai Sol, HABSTY president shared his reflection of HABSTY's year:

This year of HABSTY was a huge success. Going into the year, our main goal was to rekindle interest in HABSTY among the younger members of our temple youth. After the departure of a large 12th grade class HABSTY was itching to gain new members and we are happy to say that we have accomplished our goal. With a dozen new teens participating, and new youth becoming interested all the time, HABSTY completed our annual Mother's Day Bagel Project with great success.

We also enjoyed the opening of our renewed space, and have been settling into the amazing new youth lounge. New HABSTY members have been helping to decorate the room, giving it our own personal flair and building and strengthening our new temple youth community.

This may have been a bit of a rebuilding year but we also had successful programs and Monday night lounge nights, and sent teens to NFTY-NEL regional events. The future of youth at Holy Blossom has never looked brighter and with a large group of enthusiastic young members we expect great things for the following year as well.



All around, our youth made new friends and strengthened existing relationships, laughed a lot, tried new things, learned together, ate yummy snacks, and continued to build a vibrant youth presence at HBT.



THESE ARE A FEW OF MY FAVOURITE THINGS...

By: Pam Hamovitch, Interim Director of the Early Childhood Centre

Smiles on small children and sounds of them singing
Watching them grow and the joy they are bringing
6 trips to Baycrest with flowers in hand
These are the things that make our ECC grand.

Chanukah concerts and Friday sing songs
Using our words helps *chaverim* get along
Building resilience and giving them wings
These are a few of our ECC things.



(Chorus)
When the errands pile
When the wind stings
When I'm feeling sad
I simply remember my favourite place
And then I don't feel so bad.

September's tears become happy 'goodbyes' now
Putting on one's own jacket - so proud and how!
No more diapers - you can spell your name
These are the milestones - favourites just the same.



Laughing together or phoning a sick friend
The ECC builds mensches - a helping hand to lend
Each child holds something special and stays in our hearts
These are a few of my favourite parts.

(Chorus)
4 Friday classes each week - our sweet 'Little Blossoms'
Singing with Marky or Josh is quite awesome
A little challah to take home each week
These classes are favourites - come in! - take a peek!

Our Tuesday 'Drop-In' for 6 months to age three
Just \$5.00 at the door, it's practically free!
We just added Thursdays to meet the demand
Yet another program that makes us so grand!

(Chorus)
Young children see the magic in places
We see the wonder that shows on their faces
Out of their mouths come some marvellous tales
A few family secrets - it never fails.

Making new friends and memories to treasure
A real love of learning - one cannot truly measure
Great colleagues surround me, I'll miss you all so
These are my favourite memories you know.



(Chorus)
When the errands pile
When the wind stings
When I'm feeling sad
I simply remember my VERY favourite place
And then I don't feel....so....bad!

It has been my absolute pleasure returning to the ECC for the year. While I may be retiring (for the 2nd time) I look forward to seeing many of you around the neighbourhood or in the 'pick up' line! Thank you for entrusting us with your children. Getting to know each and every child for me, is truly one of my favourite things!! L'hitraot, Pam

LOOKING BACKWARD; LOOKING FORWARD

By: Michael Cole and Sheila Smolkin, Holy Blossom Temple Archives

It is, of course, the business of archivists to look backward. But this year, Holy Blossom's archivists have also been looking forward.

Looking backward

As part of the wonderful exhibit on The Tailor Project on display in our new Atrium, we designed two displays. The first was on Max Enkin, one of the initiators of the Project and an Honorary President of Holy Blossom. Mr. Enkin was the recipient of many awards for his contributions to Canada, and the medals he received during his lifetime of accomplishment and lent to us by his family, including his Order of Canada, were on display. Our research into Max's contribution to Temple unearthed this citation found in the Bulletin of Sept. 25, 1947 lauding Max for his upcoming visit to DP camps following the war. This visit would lead to the initiative developed by Max to bring many Jews to Canada as part of the Tailor Project.

The second exhibit showed the contributions our congregants have made over the years to refugees and asylum seekers. We displayed photographs and mementos of our members helping Vietnamese Boat People, Soviet Refuseniks, and Syrians seeking refuge from the war that has devastated their homeland.

Looking forward

We will soon complete our permanent exhibition in the showcase situated along the Dewbourn window at the north end of the Atrium. This exhibit will consist of artifacts that outline the decisive moments in Holy Blossom's history from our founding in 1856, through our transition from Orthodoxy to Reform, to our moves from Richmond Street to Bond Street to Bathurst Street.

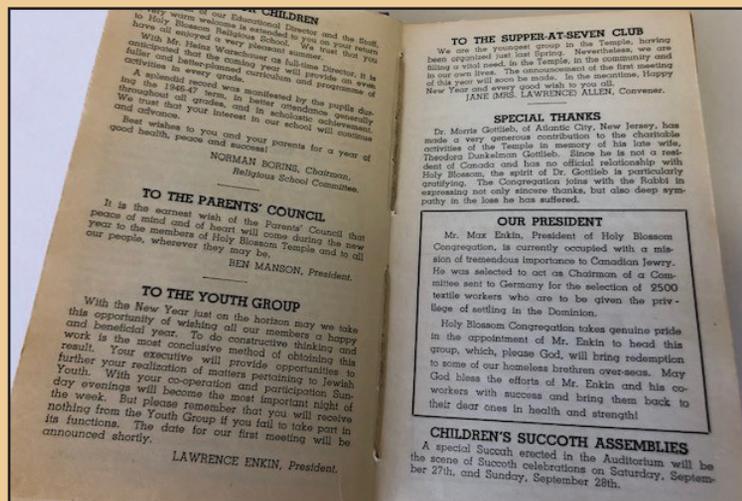
Other mementos will note the inclusion of women in all aspects of congregational life and the contributions of our rabbis, cantors, and educators.

One of the interesting artifacts that will be on display is a golden key presented to President, Alfred Benjamin, by eight-year old Gertie Wolfe dressed in snowy white as part of the dedication of our new synagogue on Bond Street, Sept. 15, 1897. Holy Blossom always marked important occasions with pomp and ceremony.



Of course, a place of permanence will be given to the yad, given in 1857 by the parents of one of our founding members to “the holy blossoms of Toronto.”

We look forward as well to creating more rotating displays that will highlight both the people and the events that have given Holy Blossom such a prominent place in our community—and make our work as archivists so interesting.



HB *t*ogether

HBTogether is a new way for congregants to come together to form their own communities within the larger Holy Blossom congregational family. Any Temple member can form a group. If you have a Small Group (or *Chavurah*) that is already meeting, we want to applaud and support you. Your group is already part of the vision of HBTogether.

If you have a great idea for a small group or an open circle and need help getting started, the Temple is here to support you and help you to find members who might be a good fit.

This past year, our HBTogether initiative continued to gain steam, with small groups and open circles meeting regularly. Highlights of the year have included:

The launch of the Professional Women's Open Circle for International Women's Day, with guest speaker Dr. Sarah Saska, Founder and CEO of Feminuity.



Want to kick off our next small group? Contact Tema Smith, Director of Community Engagement, at tsmith@holyblossom.org or (416) 789-3291 x 232

Tema Smith, Director of Community Engagement
Jill Kamin & Karen Kollins, HBTogether Co-Chairs



A new young families *Chavurah*, with a group of Temple members with young children living downtown

The kickoff of Holy Blossom Book Clubs, in partnership with the Library.

And the continued strength of our many Temple Small Groups, Open Circles, and *Chavurot*, like our Adult Learners, Israeli Film *Chavurah*, Manulife Centre *Chavurah*, Daytime Moms, You Can Ukulele, and more!



HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

ק"ק פרחי קדש

YOUNG FAMILIES
Can blossom here

Do you know someone who would like to join our vibrant community of young families?

It's easy with our personalized membership program

TERUMAH – GIFTS FROM THE HEART.

For more information please contact Tema Smith, Director of Community Engagement at tsmith@holyblossom.org or 416-789-3291 ext. 232



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

HOLY BLOSSOM WELCOMES THOSE WHO HAVE JOINED OUR CONGREGATION THIS YEAR

Angelique Addeo	Ian Hodes	Zeesy Powers
Allan & Stacey Barish	Shelli & Bill Isen	Miriam Rabinovich
Nancy Bennett	Rebecca Joffe & Joshua Hersh	Stephen Rotstein
Neil Besner & Gail Johnson	Andrea Katz	Shoshana Sage
Shelley Birenbaum	Robert Klarer & Karen Molloy	Jackie Saltsman & Michael Binder
Rachel Birenbaum & Michael Hyman	Mark Kos	Aryelle Segal
Courtney & Stephen Brown	Sheldon Kovensky	Jessica Sennet
Joshua Burnett	Emilio Kraizel	Rebecca Shapero
Charles Bram Cadsby & Fei Song	Sheri Krell & Megan Caldwell	Aliza Shupac & Louis Calabro
Eli & Larry Clements	Sarah Krider & Tyler Gow	Graham & Ruth Silver
Jaimie Clements	Susan Krongold & John Peter Bradford	Amanda & Zack Silverman
Peter Collins	Karen & Sarah Kugelmass	Dora & Eric Singer
William & Myrna Collins	Blair Laursen & Evan Braun	Daniel Singer
Erez Cukierman & Jillian Kovensky	Russell Lazar	Geoffrey Singer
Shannon & Alan D’Cunha	Caitlin Lehman & Scott Figler	Jonathan & Karen Soberman
Zachary & Shimrit Dalgorf	David Levenson & Samantha Kives	Elana & Les Solomon
Meaghan & Arthur Einav	Alison Levitt	Jason Stein
Michael & Samantha Feldman	Brad Levitt	Jaymie & Nicholas Stein
Renee Fogelbaum & Michael Kraft	Carolyn Levitt	Matthew Stein
Corey Fraiberg & Joy Ellick	Elizabeth Levitt	Pamela & Michael Stein
Kelly & Joshua Freeman	Harvey & Susan Lupu	Aviva & Dan Stiavnicky
Susan Fremes	Elana May	Ezra Strauss
Sandra & Kal Gabriel	Jed Meltzer & Deborah Perkins-Leitman	Andrew Unger & Ruby Knafo
Melissa & Richard Gardos	Kyle & Helene Mersky	Susan Van
Judith Gelber	Seth & Theresa Mersky	Laura Shiner & Micah Vernon
Melody Gilboord	Lindsay Mockler	Leonard Waverman & Eva Klein
Roman & Julie Gofman	Sarah & Marc Morgenthau	Allan Wexler
Ms. Corinne Goldberger	Carolyn Myers	Judith Wiley
Shelli-Ann Goodman	Natty & Mark Nashman	Joan Yolleck
Rachel Gotlieb	Michael Noble & Sarah Zelcer	Talia & Ian Zenlea
Steven Grabenheimer	Jo Ann & Douglas Nyquist	Aubrey Zimmerman & Patricia Coburn
Kalman Green	Philip & Linda Lee Palter	
Linda Grobovsky & Heriberto Pages	Rebecca Penturn & Steven Weerdenburg	
Michael Warner & Julie Guarasci	Craig Perkins & Mariam Leitman	
Joe Halfin & Jiin Chun	Samuel Pikelin & Charlee Rutten	

IN MEMORIAM

HOLY BLOSSOM REMEMBERS CONGREGANTS WHO HAVE DIED THIS YEAR

Dafna Abells	Russ Joseph
Sam Baker	Helen Kessler
Mary Beck	Joseph Kronick
Gail Berman	Jenny Lewis
Matilda Bigio	Bernard Lissog
Betty Bloomberg	Samuel Milrod
Shirley Bohnen	Raymond Moses
Sharon Clavir	Edward Pearl
Sydney Collins	Thelma Rosen Berris
Estelle Craig	Irving Rother
Michael W. Davis	Hazel Sheaffer
William Draimin	Hanna Shlesinger
Helen Drutz-Stelnick	Harold (Choc) Silverstein
Lila Feldman	Shyrle Solway
Ruth Gales	Peter Theimer
Sylvia Goldman	Jack Toker
Myrna Hanet	George Wortzman
Katie Hoffman	Palomba Yashinsky
Sue Joel	

Congregants who have passed away between May 20, 2018 and May 20, 2019

זכרוןם לברכה

May their memory be a blessing

THANK YOU TO OUR 2019 ANNUAL APPEAL DONORS

We are grateful for the generosity of our “early” donors to the Annual Appeal. So far, over 210 families have made their commitments to the 2019 Appeal, resulting in over \$413,755 in funds raised towards our final goal of \$600,000.

The incredible fundraising momentum we are experiencing this year is allowing *Life to Blossom Here*.

With your help, we are ensuring that Holy Blossom Temple remains an open and welcome place for all those who wish to participate, 365 days per year. Your generosity allows Holy Blossom to continue to deliver the vital programs, activities, and services that make us one of North America’s leading congregations.

GUARDIAN – \$18,000+

David Baskin & Joan Garson
Wendy & Elliott Eisen
Larry Rosen & Susan Jackson
Carole & Bernie Zucker

PILLAR – \$10,000 - \$17,999

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Lloyd & Gladys Fogler
Joy & Barry Gales
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Gerald Schwartz & Heather Reisman

BENEFACTOR – \$7,200 - \$9,999

Robert Lantos
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FELLOW – \$5,400 - \$7,199

Barry & Susan Borden
Phyllis & Jeff Denaburg
David & Helena Fine
Tom & Jacqueline Friedland and Family
Mary Seldon
The Sol / Splansky Family

PATRON – \$3,600 - \$5,399

The Crawford-Ritchie Family
Earl & Jordanna Lipson
Lorraine & Donald Loeb
Harvin & Rachel Pitch
Stephen & Suzie Pustil
Alison & Alan Schwartz

SPONSOR – \$1,800 - \$3,599

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Lesley & Ron Miller
Karen Minden & Harvey Schipper
Mirsky Family
Nancy & Lloyd Pollack
Karen Reisman
Rhonda Richer & Tim Lipa
Leslie & Darren Richmond and Family
Judith & Jack Rose
Dr. Peter & Cynthia Samu
Matthew Sapera & Darren Sukonick
Judy & Sam Sapera
Brenda & Fred Saunders
Lili & Michael Shain
Michael & Jackie Shulman and Family
Lise Sklar
Sheila Smolkin
Brenda Spiegler & Mark S. Anshan
Carole & Jay Sterling
Francie & Martin Storm
Charles & Rose Tabachnick

Esther & Marvin Tile
Jill & Al Walker
Lawrence & Lori Wilder
Anonymous

LEADER – \$1,200 - \$1,799

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Stephen & Jill Fremes
Nancy Gold
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Gloria Wunder
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William & Carol Kassel
Paula Kirsh
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Kriss Family
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Dr. Charlene Linzon
Jean & Richard Lorie
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Julie Markle & Joel Mickelson and Family
Sharon & Shelley Miller
Freda Ariella & Arthur Muscovitch
Albert & Sandra Page
Shoshana Paice
Randolph & Julia Paisley
Mariam Leitman and Craig Perkins
Dr. Frank Pulver & Dr. Annalee Cohen
Ted & Merle Rachlin
Val & Anita Rachlis
Cantorial Soloist Lindi Rivers
Beverley & Les Rothschild
Marlene & Robert Ruderman
David & Sandra Sandler
Cheryl Sylvester & Robert Schenk and Family
Robert G. Schipper
Ted & Terri Schipper
Brian & Annalee Schnurr
Helen & Edward Sheffman
Saul & Viviane Ship
Nada Simon-Hara
Gerald & Judy Slan
Neri & Peter Slan
Janis & Gary Soren
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Suzanne & Martin Stein
Terry S. Tator
Gloria & Seymour Temkin
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Corinne Black & Richard Vrooman
Craig & Kimberley Walters
David & Hayley Waugh
Joanne Goldberg Weigen
Diane and Jonathan Wilson
Phyllis & Alan Wintraub
Mrs. Linda Wolfe

Dorothy & William Wolfson
Lorne Wolfson & Lorie Shekter-Wolfson
Susan Yack & Eric Rumack
Betty Young
Judith & Lauren Zeilig
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Rita Belfer
Rosemarie Berman
Beverley Borins
Paulette Brodey
Evelyn Charendoff
Nancy & Joseph Dack
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Ellen Karabanow
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**Donations to the Annual Appeal by May 31, 2019*

Holy Blossom Temple extends its gratitude to all donors, including those who have chosen to give anonymously.

Since our establishment in 1856, Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto's first Congregation, has stood for excellence in worship, education, social justice, and Jewish cultural and musical programming. Now, with the strong support and confidence of our loyal and generous congregants, we are maintaining our excellence as we strive to improve and enhance our services, programs and cultural offerings.

Please make your gift today. Donations can be made at www.holyblossom.org/donate (click on Holy Blossom Annual Congregational Appeal link). Or contact Anna Gurevich at 416.789.3291 ext. 227.

HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE

High Holy Days

5780



SELICHOT, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 2019

Study Session & Dessert Reception in honour of Cantor Maissner 9:00 PM
 Service Service to follow

KEVER AVOT

Sunday, September 28, 2019 10:00 AM, Pardes Shalom, Holy Blossom Section
 Sunday, October 12, 2019 10:00 AM, Holy Blossom Memorial Park, Brimley Road

Rosh HaShanah

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 2019

Erev Rosh Hashanah

1st Adult Service 6:00 PM
 1st Family Service 6:00 PM
 2nd Adult Service 8:00 PM

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2019

First Day Rosh Hashanah

1st Adult Service 8:30 AM
 1st Family Service 9:00 AM
 2nd Adult Service 11:30 AM
 2nd Family Service 11:30 AM

Little Blossoms (age 5 & under) 3:30 PM
 Young Readers (age 6-8) 3:30 PM

Tashlich & Picnic 4:45 PM, Cedarvale Ravine

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2019

Second Day Rosh Hashanah

Adult Service 9:30 AM
 Family Service 10:30 AM

Yom Kippur

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2019

Kol Nidre

1st Adult Service 6:00 PM
 Family Service 6:00 PM
 2nd Adult Service 8:30 PM
 Teen Service 8:30 PM

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2019

Morning Services

1st Family Service 9:00 AM
 YAD: 20s & 30s 9:30 AM
 1st Adult Service 10:00 AM
 2nd Family Service 11:30 AM
 Quiet Meditation 12:30 PM
 Study Sessions 1:30 PM

Afternoon Services

Little Blossoms (age 5 & under) 2:15 PM
 Young Readers (age 6-8) 2:15 PM
 Mincha Services 3:30 PM
 Yizkor 5:15 PM (approx.)
 Neilah 6:15 PM (approx.)