

Temple Beth El Bulletin

Volume 53 Issue 4 (bi-monthly)

July-August 2026

Tammuz/Av/Elul 5786

MICHAEL KNOPF, SENIOR RABBI

This past spring, I participated in Flourish, a program offered by the Institute for Jewish Spirituality focused on contemplative practice and mindful Jewish leadership. It has been one of the more formative experiences of my rabbinate, and I look forward to opportunities to share what I've learned with the congregation, especially now that I have received certification as a meditation teacher through the program.

One practice I learned was called DROPS — Don't Resist Or Push, Soften. The idea is simple, and for someone like me, counterintuitive. Even the notion of softening in the face of challenge probably strikes many of us as off, or wrong. Isn't that passivity? Isn't that just accepting the problem, rather than working to fix it? When we encounter a stubborn problem, every instinct says push harder, grasp tighter. But that instinct, DROPS teaches, often makes things worse. Often, what opens a path forward isn't force. It's softening — loosening our grip enough to see what we've been missing. I believe this is true. I also find it genuinely hard — which, I suspect, means that's exactly where the real learning is.

Torah, it turns out, got there first.

When the Torah describes the plague of frogs descending on Egypt, it uses an unexpected word: Not *tzfarde'im*, the plural, but *tzfarde'a* — singular. One frog. The rabbis in the Talmud notice this and ask: Where did all the others come from? Their answer is astonishing. There was only one frog at first. But when it emerged from the Nile, the Egyptians panicked and started striking at it. Every time they struck, it multiplied. One became two. Two became four. And on and on until all of Egypt was overrun. Striking created the plague.

What should they have done instead? Perhaps they could have asked why there was a frog at all. The answer was available the entire time: there were enslaved people in their midst. Letting the Israelites go would have solved every plague problem at its source. But they were so busy striking at the symptom that they never saw the root cause. When you are just reactive to the frog, you cannot see what is causing the frog in the first place.

I shared this teaching at our annual meeting in May, because I think it speaks directly to where we are as a congregation right now.



KATIE KAPLAN, CANTOR Renewal, Rest, and Sacred Presence

As the summer months arrive, many of us begin to shift our rhythms. School schedules wind down, vacations appear on calendars, gardens begin to bloom, and opportunities emerge to spend more time outdoors with family and friends. Summer invites us to reconnect with parts of ourselves that can easily become neglected amid the busyness of the year. It offers us a chance to renew our spirits and remember what matters most.

Our tradition has long understood the importance of sacred rest. Abraham Joshua Heschel famously wrote, "The Sabbath is not for the sake of the weekdays; the weekdays are for the sake of Sabbath. It is not an interlude, but the climax of living." In a world that constantly urges us to do more, achieve more, and move faster, Shabbat reminds us that our worth is not measured by productivity. Instead, it calls us to simply be; to notice, to breathe, to pray, to connect, and to remember the holiness that already surrounds us. Heschel also described Shabbat as, "a palace in time." Unlike physical structures that can be entered or left behind, this palace is built anew each week through intention, presence, and community. It is a sacred space of restoration that travels with us wherever we are.

As we enter the summer season, I encourage each of us to consider what sacred spaces of restoration might look like in our own lives. For some, it may be attending services more regularly and allowing prayer, music, and community to nourish the soul. For others, it may be found in the quiet tending of a garden, long walks outdoors, creative hobbies, meaningful conversations, or time spent with loved ones. These activities can help us reconnect with essential values: Self-care, community, family, gratitude, and reverence for the Divine presence woven throughout our lives.

One of the greatest gifts our congregation offers is the opportunity to accompany one another through life's joys and challenges. We celebrate together, mourn together, learn together, and grow together. Our shared humanity becomes most visible when we show up for one another; when we witness each other's stories and walk beside one another through moments of triumph, uncertainty, grief, and hope. Community is not simply a gathering of individuals; it is a sacred covenant of presence.

This summer, I hope you'll find opportunities to deepen

Continued on page 17...



Continued on page 17...

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WHERE TO FIND IT

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Abby Allen, Rabbinic Intern	aballen@jtsa.edu

OUR STAFF IS MOST EAGER TO ASSIST YOU

Monday-Thursday, 9am-5:00 pm | Friday, 9am - 2:00pm

Phone: 203-322-6901 Fax: 203-322-0532

Michael Knopf, Senior Rabbi (rabbiknopf@tbe.org)	ext. 307
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Mindy Rogoff, Temple Secretary (office@tbe.org)	ext. 308
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EASYSHUL - STAY CONNECTED

EasyShul: A New Way to Stay Connected at TBE

Temple Beth El is excited to introduce **EasyShul**, our new online membership platform designed to make synagogue life simpler, more accessible, and more personal for every member of our community.

For years, our congregation has relied on a mix of systems, forms, and phone calls to manage membership information, event registration, and contributions. EasyShul brings these functions together in one secure, user-friendly place — giving you more control and making it easier to stay connected.

What EasyShul Can Do for You

EasyShul offers a suite of tools that support everyday synagogue life. Members will be able to:

- Update household and personal information at any time - including yahrzeits
 - Register for programs and events with ease
 - Manage online payments and contributions securely
- Access the TBE membership directory and choose what contact information others can see

What Happens Next

Every adult member of the congregation with an up-to-date email address on file should have received an invitation to log in to their EasyShul account. The setup process is quick — just a minute or two — and once inside, you'll be able to review your information and begin exploring the new features.

If you didn't receive an invite, please let us know (see below) so we can update our records and resend it. We're planning to use EasyShul to automate a large part of our membership renewal process this year, so it's vital that you're able to log in and your data is correct.

EasyShul will roll out in phases, allowing us to introduce new capabilities gradually and ensure a smooth transition for everyone.

We're Here to Help

We know that learning a new system can sometimes feel daunting. Our staff is ready to support you every step of the way. If you need assistance, please call the office at **203-322-6901, x301** or email easyshul@tbe.org. We're happy to walk you through the setup or troubleshoot anything that comes up.

We're also planning a "hints and tips" section in our Shabbat Announcements to help everyone get comfortable with the new platform.

Thank You

Thank you for your partnership, your patience, and your ongoing commitment to our TBE community. EasyShul represents an important step forward in how we stay connected - and we're excited to share this new chapter with you.

JOSHUA HAMMERMAN, RABBI EMERITUS

The Three Distinguishing Marks of the Jewish People



It's been a busy time up here in Madison. Thanks in part to my recent speech to thousands gathered in the Shoreline area for No Kings Day, I've gotten more involved in civic and Jewish life here, including at two local synagogues. When I read Torah at Madison's Temple Beth Tikvah (TBT), I was pleasantly surprised that the next person to read was an old Stamfordite and former student at TBE – and she read really well! I was gabbai, standing next to her, so after she concluded I bent over and asked, "Where did you learn to read Torah like that?" And she replied, "From you." It was a great line, but Hazzan Rabinowitz should get most of the credit!

Anyway, I'll be filling in here in Madison for Rabbi Danny Moss on the Shabbat of July 17-18, doing the D'var Torah on Friday evening and leading Torah study the next morning. Stop by if you happen to be in the area. It's always nice to see a familiar face.

Or you can wait and see Mara and me back on familiar ground at TBE on the Shabbat of August 28-29, when I'll be helping to lead services, standing in for Rabbi Knopf. Weather permitting, we hope to be outdoors. Last year was so much fun.

These are fateful times, demanding resolve, courage and more than a touch of hope. As we face an onslaught of Antisemitism, along with no shortage of issues on our end, we need to be able to remember what is most essential to our calling as Jews. At a time like this, of all times, the Jewish people need to set an example by reaffirming the brilliant wisdom found in our traditional sources.

In the Talmud (Yevamot 79b), it states, **"There are three distinguishing marks of this nation, the Jewish people. They are merciful, they are shamefaced, and they perform acts of kindness."**

Those are the qualities that have sustained us and will continue to into the future. We need a forgiving heart that sees the humanity even among those whose kin have caused us harm. We also need to recognize and take responsibility for our own failings. And despite all the damage inflicted on us, we need to perform acts of kindness, which helps us to adopt a posture of hope. We need to foster partnerships and alliances.

You know, back in 2017, in Israel, one of the first Hebrew hashtags for #MeToo was "*Gam Anachnu*," which means literally "*US too*." Perhaps the key to the kind of cultural transformation that #MeToo imagined is for us to think a little less about the "*me*" and a little more about the "*too*."

The more we follow that advice from the Talmud, the more it will help us to get beyond the dangers that confront us. We still need to protect ourselves, but not only from the dangers that lurk around us – but those within us too.

I hope to see you over the summer, and check out my Substack newsletter at [https://](https://rabbijoshuahammerman.substack.com/)

rabbijoshuahammerman.substack.com/



Rabbi Joshua Hammerman

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Night services are held at 7:00 pm

Shabbat Morning services are held at 10:00 am

Our services may be seen on livestream

<http://www.tbe.org/tbe-live/>

All are welcome!

CELEBRATE SPECIAL OCCASIONS ON SHABBAT MORNING

Celebrate a birthday with our TBE family! We warmly invite you to celebrate your birthday with the congregation on Shabbat morning. During that service, we will invite you for a celebratory Aliyah. We hope you will share in that joyous moment. If possible, please let us know ahead of time which Shabbat you'll be attending, and we will gladly provide you with an Aliyah at that time. Please also note that we are proud to continue marking special milestone birthdays with personal blessings in addition to this new ritual. If you fall into that category, you may contact Eileen H. Rosner at rosnereileen@gmail.com to make the appropriate arrangements.

Celebrate an anniversary! On behalf of the entire congregation, we invite you to celebrate your wedding anniversary with the congregation with an Aliyah on Shabbat. If possible, please let us know ahead of time which Shabbat you'll be attending, and we will gladly provide you with an Aliyah at that time.

While it is most certainly not expected, if you would like to elevate your birthday or anniversary celebration and the congregation's joy by helping to sponsor Kiddush on the Shabbat of your Aliyah, we would be most grateful for your generosity. Please call Mindy Rogoff at 203-322-6901, ext. 301 or office@tbe.org.

Special Occasion?

Sponsor the Shabbat Announcements
(emailed every Thursday afternoon)

or

Rabbi Knopf's Shabbat Reflections
(emailed every Friday morning)

Donation of \$118

All sponsors will be acknowledged at the top of each of the eblasts and also listed in our bi-monthly Bulletin.

Contact Mindy to reserve your date
office@tbe.org

WE WELCOME YOU TO JOIN US ON SHABBAT MORNINGS

We warmly welcome you to show up for services on Shabbat in whatever way is meaningful to you. A reminder: you don't have to attend services to come for lunch on Shabbat! Services begin at 10 am, and we get to lunch around 12:15 pm. You can also show up for and/or leave services any time:

- From 10 until about 10:30 am, we sing the joyous and soulful melodies of P'sukei D'zimrah, the preliminary service.

- From about 10:30 to 10:45 am is the morning service, Shacharit (including greatest hits like Shema and the Amidah).

- We take the Torah out at about 10:45 am, and chant from the Torah and Haftarah portions until about 11:30 am.

- The D'var Torah (sermon) takes place around 11:30 am.

Between 11:45 am-12:15 pm, we conclude the service with Musaf, Aleinu, and Adon Olam (we always invite children up to help lead some of these final prayers, and any kid who helps lead gets to pick a prize from the Rabbi's "Tchotchke Chest").

And for those who wish to partake, you are welcome to make a "L'chaim!" with us on a beverage of your choosing (whether alcoholic or non-alcoholic) after services.

Get involved, please...

Help Wanted! In order to maintain our vibrant and dynamic community, the Fund-Raising Committee needs more members to support TBE and volunteer their skills and talents. Many of these opportunities ask for very small-time commitments. Please consider getting involved with the:

Annual Appeal | Temple Rock | Cantor's Concert

If you are interested in volunteering, please contact us and we will give you more information.

Thank you!

Contact Joyce Resnick joyres@aol.com or Erica Newman execdir@tbe.org for information.

SEEKING SHABBAT GREETERS

Do you like getting a warm "Shabbat Shalom" as you enter shul on Saturday morning?

Our greeting program has been extremely well received. To keep this program going, we need volunteer greeters like you.

For more information Contact Erica Newman at execdir@tbe.org.

Thanks for helping make Temple Beth El a warm and welcoming place to be.

MAZAL TOV TO...

Risa and Michael Pollack on the marriage of their son, Jonathan, to Sophie Trotto.

Caryn Halbrecht and Tommy Haendler on the birth of a granddaughter, Lilah Haendler, born to Rachael and Alex Haendler.

Susan and Carl Shapiro on the birth of a granddaughter, Lila Gene Keller, born to Peri and Nat Keller.

Rabbi Michael Knopf on being appointed to the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Rabbinical Assembly.

Lieba and Steven Lander on the birth of a grandson, Logan Hunter Lafferty, born to Karen Lander-Lafferty and Kevin Lafferty

Karen and Richard Hainbach on the engagement of their son Geoffrey to Allison Klein.



Share your family's simcha (engagement, marriage, birth, Bar or Bat Mitzvah of a child or grandchild) and other joyous event. Just contact the TBE office at office@tbe.org or 203-322-6901, ext. 301.

HONORABLE MENSCHEN TODAH RABAH TO OUR TORAH READERS

ADDISON AVNIR ★ BARRY ERNER ★ WARREN FISHER
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THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING ONEG/KIDDUSH

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LESLIE and JOSEPH HEYISON
MELANIE MASSELL
LINDSAY and PETER ROSEN
MARGE SHAMEER
BARBARA BRAFMAN and LARRY STEIN

The deadline for the
September-October 2026 Bulletin
will be Monday, August 3, 2026.

BETH EL CARES

Beth El Cares focuses on chesed and tzedakah by helping the poor and unfortunate through mitzvot, both in our synagogue and the greater Stamford community. We welcome volunteers! This is the work we are currently engaged in. If you are interested in volunteering in any of these endeavors, please contact the person listed.

Reyut (Friendship): Committed to serving the needs of those in our TBE community, including friendly visits, assistance with errands and transportation, Shabbat bag delivery to hospitalized patients. Contact Melanie Massell at reyut@tbe.org or 203-274-1708.

Project Ezra: Providing shiva meals to the bereaved in the congregation. Contact Debra Adler-Klein at dakmd75@gmail.com or 203-253-1664.

Serving the homeless: Help prepare and serve food — you can do either or both throughout the year. Contact Julie Rosenberg at julierosenbergsjp@gmail.com or 203-273-6794.

High Holiday Food Drive: Contact Sharon Turshen at 203-323-3872

Christmas dinners at local homeless shelters: Contact Karen Resnick at kmr925@sbcglobal.net or 203-536-3115.

BETH EL CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

Information about the Beth El Cemetery Association, Inc. is available from:

Allan Lang at 203-327-6418
or
Eileen H. Rosner at 203-461-0506

OPPORTUNITY TO PERFORM A MITZVAH

Summer is here and many TBE members are traveling. Please consider attending, in person, morning minyan on Thursday at 8:00 am and/or Sunday at 9:00 am. There are several members reciting Kaddish and others will observe yahrzeits. They cannot recite Kaddish if we don't have a minyan.

Thank you for your help.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR TBE MEMBERS

Your bill for the new fiscal year will be sent out at the beginning of July. Please remember that High Holiday tickets are released to TBE members in good standing. A member in good standing has an account that will be paid in full by July 1 and who has either paid the coming year's dues or has made payment arrangements.



Kesher ("connection") Beth El is a PreK through 7th grade learning community serving the Conservative Jewish community of Stamford, Norwalk, and the surrounding towns. Classes meet in-person on Sunday mornings, with one-on-one Hebrew lessons via Zoom on Thursdays for older students.



KESHER



BETH EL

You can see photos from the past school year at tinyurl.com/kesher25-26photos, and check out the calendar for next year at tinyurl.com/kesher26-27.



Questions? Email Leo Linder at eddir@tbe.org.

Ready to register? Sign up for the '26-'27 school year at tbestamford.easyshul.com/school or scan:



What a wonderful end to the year! Kesher's final few sessions were jam-packed with exciting events. It was so cool to have students come up on stage during the Cantor's Concert to sing with rockstar Noah Aronson – they had everyone on their feet singing and dancing along! We partnered with Schoke JFS for the first annual Mitzvah Day, transforming CBE's Social Hall into a festival of *chesed*. Students got hands-on with projects around literacy, brain health, food insecurity, and community art. Of course, stocking the mobile food pantry was a particular favorite! The same energy was on display at the Tzedakah Carnival, where each class planned and led an activity booth so that their families and community could give back in some way. I have to say, this is my favorite carnival of the year – it's great to see students leading and teaching! The end of the year had some classes thinking about endings, like the 6th grade; as part of their life cycle unit, they participated in a *geniza* ceremony where they buried books and ritual objects that have one of God's Hebrew names. And other classes are looking ahead to the coming year, like the K/1 students, who welcomed new friends during Prospective Families Day. The Closing Ceremony gave everyone the chance to celebrate a successful year and their growing knowledge.

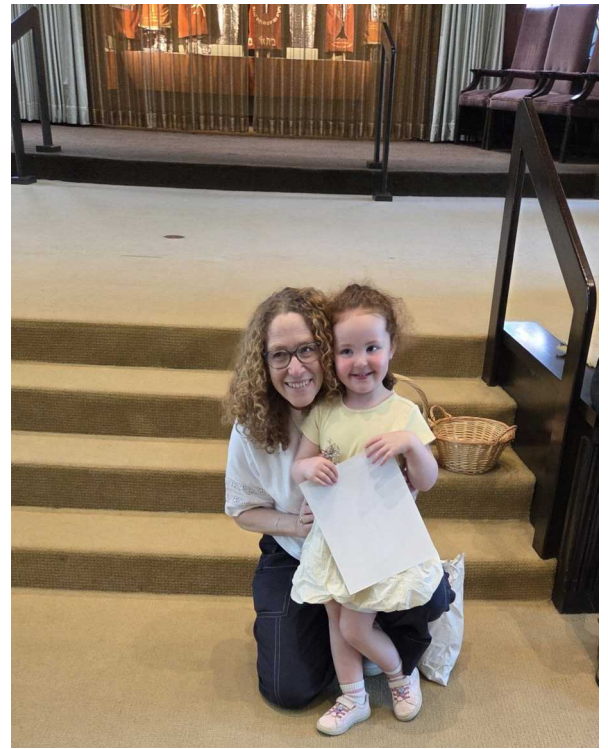
Interested in joining us or want to learn more? Email me (eddir@tbe.org) for more info!

Leo Linder

Kesher Director



KESHER BETH EL - LAST DAY OF THE SCHOOL YEAR





Shabbat at Temple Beth El
Friday, July 10, 2026
we welcome back special musical guest
BEN PAGLIARO
leading a special musical service
with Cantor Katie Kaplan



Kabbalat Shabbat service begins
at 7:00 pm
and will be held outside - weather
permitting (no livestream)

Join us for an Oneg Shabbat
following the service.

All are welcome!

Temple Beth El, 350 Roxbury Road, Stamford, CT
www.tbe.org | 203-322-6901 | office@tbe.org

REGISTRATION REQUESTED - [CLICK HERE](#)



REWIND...
RELAX...
RELATE...

ROUNDS WITH THE RABBI

**16
JUL** **4-6
PM**

@COALHOUSE PIZZA
85 HIGH RIDGE ROAD
STAMFORD



ROOTS SHABBAT

Friday, July 17, 2026
7:00 pm

Step into an unplugged Shabbat evening service that blends the depth of tradition, the warmth of connection, and the energy of joyful community.

Through a fuller Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv, focused on traditional prayers, familiar melodies, and spirited congregational participation, we'll create an intimate, vibrant, and uplifting atmosphere.

Celebrate Shabbat with song, connection, and the warmth of shared spirit — where ancient roots meet resonant voices.

All are welcome!

Can't join us in person? Join us on live stream: <http://www.tbe.org/tbe-live/>

SJP

Temple Beth El
350 Roxbury Road, Stamford, CT
www.tbe.org | 204-322-6901 | office@tbe.org





2026/5786

with

CBE Norwalk

TCS Westport and TBE Stamford



Remember ♦ Mourn ♦ Pray

Wednesday, July 22, 8:15pm

at Congregation Beth El Norwalk

Bring your flashlight or use your phone flashlight.

Spread the

sweetness

With our Rosh HaShanah

Honey From The Heart Fundraiser!

Support the Temple Beth El Sisterhood and share sweet wishes for healthy and happy New Year by sending a beautiful 8-ounce jar of kosher honey. Each jar comes with a festive label and a personalized card reading:

"Shana Tova – Wishing you a Healthy and Happy New Year"

Your cost is \$18.00 per jar
which includes shipping and handling.

Steps to order honey:

- 1) Click on www.orthoney.com
- 2) Create or login to your customer account
- 3) Click Order Now and Enter **TEB**
- 4) Enter a new order or reorder from a previous year
- 5) Add recipient details and personalize your greeting. You may add additional recipients
- 6) Verify the address(es)
- 7) Checkout

*Important Dates:

- Order through **August 16** for free shipping
- Orders placed after that date will have an additional charge of \$8 per jar shipped

FREE shipping
Through
August 16

For Help Contact:
Juli Harris-Sekuler
tbesisterhoodpresident
@gmail.com
203-324-1433



THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS



**“Embracing Our Past, Securing Our Future”
Campaign for Temple Beth El
Campaign Co-chairs: Peter Kempner and Gary Lessen
Campaign Executive Director: Steven Lander**

Just as water gives rise to all living things, our members give life to Temple Beth El - steady as a heartbeat, carrying forward the values that strengthen, guide, and enliven our community.

The donor wall stands as a testament to those who contributed to the 2017-2022 Endowment/Capital Campaign with their generosity. Their names rest within luminous bricks that rise like twin pillars, supporting the beam above where our promise is inscribed: **Embracing Our Past, Securing Our Future**. Each brick represents a contribution range (from highest at the top) in which the names of donors are arranged alphabetically.

Together, the pillars and beam enclose a shimmering, water-like glass *Chai*, the Hebrew word for “life,” symbolizing a TBE community that both safeguards its legacy and pours new vitality into its future.

The *Chai* itself is made up of more than a thousand pieces of glass, each hand-scored, broken from large sheets, and chosen from a palette of six colors. Set on end in 19 distinct segments, fused, refined, and fused again, the pieces gather into a single flowing form. Light moves through it like a current, revealing the quiet love and intention held within every fragment.

This radiant donor wall was envisioned and crafted by artist **Roni Bat Shaul Kohanim** (kst-artglass.com) in her home studio in Kfar Saba, Israel.



About the Artist

Roni Bat Shaul Kohanim was born in Houston, Texas in 1951 and spent her first 34 years there. She earned a BSc in Mathematics from the University of Houston and launched a career in high-tech, bringing to it the same curiosity and drive that would later define her artistic life. She had always loved working with her hands in many media, but it was glass that ultimately captured her imagination.

After making Aliyah in 1984, Roni paused her glasswork while continuing her high-tech career at Israel Aircraft Industries, where she met her late husband, Reuven, z”l. Together they raised two children, Shahar and Margalit.

When the time felt right, Roni returned to glass—initially creating Tiffany-style windows, lamps, and similar pieces. Years later she acquired her first kiln for her home studio and immersed herself in the world of fused glass. In 2015 she founded King Saul’s Treasures Art Glass, a name chosen both to honor Israel’s first king and as a tribute to her father, Saul.

Though largely self-taught, Roni has been fortunate to learn from several well known artists. Her greatest satisfaction comes from mastering new techniques and developing original methods — approaching her glasswork with the same dedication, precision, and passion she once brought to computing.

Select pieces from Roni’s portfolio can be viewed at kst-artglass.com.

Photos by Aviva Maller

Shabbat Lab

Shabbat, August 1, 2026

10:00am: Shabbat Service

Led by Rabbi Michael Knopf in the sanctuary with
livestream www.tbe.org/tbe-live/

10:45am: EmBODYing Shabbat

An alternative to our main sanctuary Shabbat morning service, this Embodiment Shabbat Experience will take place from 10:45am-12:15pm outside - weather permitting.

Led by certified Yoga instructor, Rochelle Mitlak, along with Cantor Katie.

Join us to physically and mentally embody Shabbat through chant, breath work, yoga poses, and meditation. Click here to register: www.tinyurl.com/tbeyoga8-1

A personal Yoga mat and/or blanket is advised, but not required. All poses will also be offered with modifications so that all are able to participate in this session.

12:00pm: Kiddush Luncheon for All

Come for any or all parts of the morning.



Temple Beth El, 350 Roxbury Rd. Stamford, CT
203-322-6901 office@tbe.org
www.tbe.org



Shabbat Under the Stars

at Temple Beth El

Friday, August 28 at 7:00 pm



**Rabbi Emeritus
Joshua Hammerman**

Led by



Cantor Katie Kaplan

with Chris Coogan, guest musician

The service will be held outdoors, weather permitting.

There will be no livestream.

Shabbat Morning

August 29, 2026 at 10:00 am

**Join Rabbi Hammerman and Cantor Kaplan
for the Shabbat morning service followed by Kiddush.**

Can't join us in person? Join us on livestream:

<http://www.tbe.org/tbe-live/>

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PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS WELCOME AND ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND

MORE INFORMATION
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RABBI MICHAEL KNOPF continued from page 1...

Our journey this past year has been extraordinary. We launched TBE Together, our small groups initiative. Our TeeBeEs program brought our youngest families together with a full Tot Shabbat series. Congregants and students actively participated in services. About thirty of us went on a Civil Rights Journey through Georgia and Alabama. The Tzedek Committee hosted Refugee Shabbat, Repro Shabbat, and a panel on censorship and first amendment freedoms. In partnership with Temple Sinai, we presented a multi-week Spring Israel Series, giving our community sustained, honest space to wrestle with the hardest questions facing the Jewish people today. And our rabbinic intern, Abby Allen — who built TBE Together from the ground up, launched our 20s and 30s community, and enriched us all through her Torah and her warm, friendly presence — is returning next year in a deepened and expanded role through the Resnick Fellowship at JTS.

I am proud of everything we have built together. And I want us to hold it close as we face the challenges ahead.

We have our own frogs: Membership numbers that are not where we want them; a financial model under real strain; a leadership pipeline in need of renewal. The temptation is to respond the way we respond to most hard problems — with more. More initiatives, more campaigns, more effort, a tighter grip.

But DROPS invites a different approach. Underneath the membership challenge is a belonging problem. Do newcomers encounter our networks as doors, or as walls? Does our dues structure communicate covenant, or transaction? Underneath the financial challenge is a question about ownership — people invest generously in institutions that feel like theirs. And underneath the leadership gap is a question about whether we are building an institution that develops people, or one that inadvertently exhausts them.

We can keep striking at the frogs. Or we can soften and ask the deeper questions.

As we approach the new Jewish year — a season that is itself an invitation to honest reckoning — I want to offer this as our congregational intention: That we approach what is hard with soft hearts and open hands. That we ask the deeper questions and sit with what they reveal. That we resist the reflex to strike, and trust in the extraordinary community that opens up when we soften.

On the evidence of this past year, I know we can.

Chazak chazak v'nitchazek — may we go from strength to strength, together.

Rabbi Michael Knopf

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CANTOR KATIE KAPLAN continued from page 1...

those connections. If you've been meaning to come to a service, I invite you to join us. If you'd like to talk, dream, reflect, or simply connect, I would love to meet for coffee or take a walk together. And if there is a Jewish topic, text, prayer, melody, or question you've been wanting to explore, let's set aside time to study together. Learning is one of the most meaningful ways we cultivate spiritual growth, and I always cherish the opportunity to learn alongside members of our community.

May this season bring renewal to your spirit, rest to your soul, and moments of holiness that help you reconnect with what matters most. Whether your summer takes you across the globe or simply into your own backyard, may you find opportunities to create sacred spaces of restoration, and may we continue to strengthen the bonds that make our congregation a true community of belonging.

Wishing you a peaceful, meaningful, and restorative summer.

Cantor Katie Kaplan



HOPE IN MOTION

Thank you to our Temple Beth El members who made this event such a success with their generous contributions to the Bennett Cancer Center.

We also appreciate Nancy Kapchan who led the walkers this year.

Melanie Massell, Team Captain



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Go to: <https://www.tbe.org/donations>

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIVING

- ☒ Adult Education Fund
- ☒ Beth El Cares
- ☒ Rabbi Knopf's or Cantor Kaplan's Discretionary Fund
- ☒ Emmet Manheim Memorial Playground
- ☒ Kiddush Fund
- ☒ Matthew Klein Memorial Sanctuary Garden Fund
- ☒ Frank and Rose Rosner Memorial Fund
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Beth El members may contribute shares of stock to satisfy their dues pledge, their annual fund pledge, and other contributions to the Temple.

After consulting your tax advisor, please contact the TBE office at 203-322-6901.

TREE OF LIFE

A beautiful way to commemorate a special occasion is to purchase a "leaf" on our beautiful "Tree of Life" sculpture adorning our Temple lobby. There are many more leaves available for your own personal inscriptions.



The following categories are still available:

Triple Chai	\$1,000
Silver Leaves - Gold Border	\$750
Silver Leaves (very few remaining)	\$250

Call the office for information 203-322-6901.

HAVE YOU VISITED OUR WEBSITE?

www.tbe.org

Find out about the latest news and upcoming activities ... access our online membership directory ... register for events and make donations ... connect to TBE's Twitter and Facebook pages ... and much more.

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Inscribe the names of your loved ones on a plaque in our Chapel foyer along with a light to commemorate their *yahrtzeit* and *yizkor* observances throughout the year.



For details, contact Mindy at office@tbe.org or 203-322-6901, ext. 301.

INFORMATION FOR YOU...

When making a donation an acknowledgement will be mailed to the designee for donations of \$10 or more. Donations of less than \$10 will be acknowledged only in the Bulletin. All donations will be published in the Bulletin unless you state that you wish to be anonymous.

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In honor of...

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The Cantor's Concert by Sue Frieden

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In honor of...

The marriage of Andrew Krowitz to Julia Ditkoff by Carol and Allen Krim

The marriage of Alex Heyison to Lindsay McCord by Carol and Allen Krim

Sharon Turshen becoming the president of Temple Beth El by Carol and Allen Krim

In memory of...

Louis Seaver, Ann Cepler Seaver, Frank Cepler and Maya Krim Schwartz, z'l, by Carol and Allen Krim

Robert Jaffe, z'l, by Devra Jaffe-Berkowitz & Parry Berkowitz

Selma Blonder, z'l, by Devra Jaffe-Berkowitz & Parry Berkowitz

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In honor of ...

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In memory of...

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David Lander, z'l, by Marilyn & Mitch Sofer

Alan Jaffe, z'l, by Sharon & Jeff Turshen, Barbara & Stan Friedman

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WE MOURN THE PASSING OF...

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LAUREL BENET wife of Alan Benet

MARTIN PRICE father of Glenn Price

CAROLYN CUKIERMAN sister of Elissa Kaplan

SHIVA NOTICES AVAILABLE ON-LINE

Congregants who are looking for shiva information can now quickly look online instead of searching their inbox for the announcement or calling the synagogue office. Just go to TBE's website (www.tbe.org) and click "Shiva Notices" under the WHAT'S NEW menu.



We look forward to greeting you on the High Holidays.

High Holidays 2026/5787

Erev Rosh Hashanah - Friday, September 12

Rosh Hashanah - Shabbat, September 13, 1st day

Rosh Hashanah - Sunday, September 14, 2nd day

Kol Nidrei - Sunday, September 20

Yom Kippur - Monday, September 21





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To create your legacy contact Erica Newman
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