



**Temple Beth-El's  
36th Annual  
Martin Luther King Service**  
Friday, January 22 at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us for a Zoom service honoring the life, work and vision of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. with keynote address by

**Winard Harper, internationally celebrated jazz drummer and neighbor of Temple Beth-El (See page 3)**



Usually a beautiful and moving community-attended service in our sanctuary. In the time of COVID, let's continue the tradition of this meaningful Beth-El tradition on Zoom.

**Blessings of The Dark**

Over the centuries, a little known ancient Jewish tax day developed into the holiday of Tu B'Shevat, often called the New Year for the trees. Today, it is mostly known as something akin to "Jewish Arbor Day." It is on this holiday we recall and rightly celebrate the Jewish lessons of environmentalism, sustainability and guardianship of the earth.

However, it was not always so. Led by the 16<sup>th</sup> century Kabbalists of Sefad (Israel), this holiday was resurrected from obscurity for another purpose. It was then that disciples of Rabbi Isaac Luria created a Tu B'Shevat ritual aimed at stimulating God's blessing from within the darkness.

At that time in history the darkness was Jewish expulsion from Spain. After centuries that saw the unprecedented flowering of Jewish life and a free multicultural

environment in which Jews thrived in culture, politics, science, literature and more, in 1492 that all ended. In an effort to ensure that the Iberian Peninsula was inhabited only by Catholics, the monarchy there decreed a date by which the Jews would be forced to leave the country, convert or die. Hundreds of thousands of Jews were affected and the aftershocks were profound.

In the wake of this trauma, the Kabbalists saw Tu B'Shevat as a holiday "ripe" for transforming their experience into one of hope and rebirth. With eternal truths culled from nature, history, peoplehood and a deep psychological need to heal and emerge whole from darkness, they created the ritual of the Tu B'Shevat Seder.



All Kabbalat Shabbat (Friday night services) at Temple Beth-El will be via Zoom video conferencing technology until further notice. For bar mitzvah services on YouTube click [here](#).

To use Zoom:

1. Download the Zoom program at <https://zoom.us>
  2. Click [here](#) to enter
  3. Enable your camera to view
  4. Make sure your computer's sound/microphone is muted. (All participants will be muted during the service.)
  5. Wait to be granted access from the "waiting room."
- Zoom on your computer/laptop, iPad/tablet or cell phone.

To follow the service with a digital flip book siddur, click [here](#)

*Virtual is good, but really bringing Shabbat into your home is even better! Set up candles, wine/juice and challah/bread in front of your screen and let's literally light the candles, make kiddush and motzi together.*

All Shabbat morning services and pot luck dinners are suspended until further notice.

Friday, January 1 *Zoom* 6:30 pm  
First Friday Kabbalat Shabbat Family services

Friday, January 8 *Zoom* 8:00 pm  
Kabbalat Shabbat Services

Friday, January 15 *Zoom* 8:00 pm  
Kabbalat Shabbat services

Friday, January 22 *Zoom* 7:00 pm

**36th Annual Martin Luther King Commemorative Kabbalat Shabbat services**  
With guest speaker Winard Harper, world renowned jazz drummer and TBE neighbor



Friday, January 29 *Zoom* 8:00 pm  
Kabbalat Shabbat services

Friday, February 5 *Zoom* 6:30 pm  
First Friday Kabbalat Shabbat Family services



**Temple Beth-El**

2419 Kennedy Boulevard at Harrison Avenue  
Jersey City, NJ 07304

Phone: 201-333-4229

Fax: 201-938-0445

[office@betheljc.org](mailto:office@betheljc.org)

[www.betheljc.org](http://www.betheljc.org)



Office hours: Mon-Fri 10am – 1pm

**Rabbi Moritt is available for virtual pastoral counseling and her other usual duties during this challenging time. To keep our employees healthy, most are working from home with adjusted hours and limited access to files. Our phones and emails are up and running.**

Rabbi Leana Moritt [rabbimoritt@betheljc.org](mailto:rabbimoritt@betheljc.org)

Rabbi Emeritus Kenneth Brickman

[rabbibrickman@betheljc.org](mailto:rabbibrickman@betheljc.org)

Cantorial Soloist/Director of Education

Marian Kleinman

[morahmarian@betheljc.org](mailto:morahmarian@betheljc.org)

Tom Rosensweet, President [tom@betheljc.org](mailto:tom@betheljc.org)

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Kay Magilavy, Past President

[kay@betheljc.org](mailto:kay@betheljc.org)

Irwin Rosen, Past President

**Shabbat Candle Lighting**



Friday, January 1	4:22 pm	Friday, January 22	4:44 pm
Friday, January 8	4:28 pm	Friday, January 29	4:53 pm
Friday, January 15	4:36 pm	Friday, February 5	5:01 pm

## Our guest speaker for Martin Luther King Services — Winard Harper

Celebrated jazz drummer Winard Harper was born in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1962. He was encouraged to play the drums by his father who noticed him beating on cans as a toddler. By the age of five, Mr. Harper was developing his skills and making guest appearances with his older brother’s rock and roll band. During the years that he worked as a sideman to some of the world’s greatest jazz artists, he also laid down the foundation for his own bands. As founder of The Harper Brothers, bandleader of a sextet and most recently The Jeli Posse, and as featured educator in multiple jazz clinics and workshops, he is widely regarded for his ability to enlighten and inspire those within his scope of influence by his example and experience. Sought after as a collaborator for musical sensibilities and professional conduct, he has performed in the world’s leading venues and appeared regularly with some of the greatest names in jazz of our time.



As a performer, Mr. Harper is dedicated to the jazz idiom and has a personal style that reaches everybody, young and old. He performs with the stated intent of paying tribute to past masters while at the same time adding his own innovative touch. He has opened doors to a new level of jazz music with the spiritual sounds of African drums.

Says Mr. Harper: “The music that Jeli Posse performs comes from a deep legacy and enlightened traditions. This great art form jazz is not just entertaining but we hope to inspire and provoke thoughts of love and praise and spread love and goodness. It is a music that the world is in need of right now and we believe that together and through the music we can contribute to the healing and make a difference.”

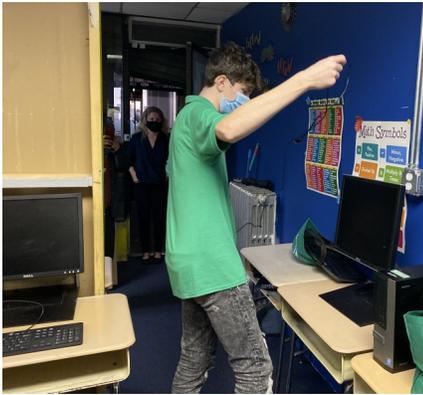


During Covid, Winard Harper has been putting his message into practice, performing regularly outside to provide joy to his neighbors.

***“In a time of COVID,  
curbside jazz with Winard  
Harper and company.”***  
Click [here](#) for the article in  
The Jersey Journal.



## Dylan Zajac Member Spotlight



Dylan Zajac, the founder of [Computers4People.org](https://www.computers4people.org), is a real go-getter. “If I have an idea, I do it,” said the high school senior. He has already built a non-profit organization that a seasoned philanthropist could be proud of.

“I’ve always been really motivated to do different businesses,” said Zajac. He got his “million dollar idea” two years ago. It started as a simple hobby, refurbishing computers to sell online. “I saw how all these companies were throwing away computers,” he said. He also noticed a need for computers in the community. “I saw that students need them for school, and adults need them for jobs.”

The organization grew from there. Zajac was quickly determined to turn his idea into a bonafide charity. He took in computers through word of mouth and fixed them up himself. It took an entire summer to achieve official non-profit status. “I looked up how to do everything,” he said, filling out the tax forms with a little help from his dad (who happens to be on the Friends of Temple Beth-El board) and stepmom.

The newly named *Computers4People* donated its first bunch of computers in 2019, when Zajac was a junior in high school. A Temple Beth-El connection—that first donation was through Family Promise, a non-profit focused on unhoused families in the region, often collaborates with the Temple—perhaps you’ve stayed overnight when the Temple hosts families sponsored by Family Promise. Zajac donated 7 laptops and one desktop to Family Promise. And that was just the beginning. “We started partnering with all these different nonprofits,” he said, focusing on smaller organizations that could really make use of the computers he offered. “It was really fun to give computers to those who really needed them,” he said.

*Computers4People* quickly grew from just one teen with a good idea to an organization with a five-person board, plus several volunteers, who help Zajac with all aspects of the collection, refurbishment and donation process.

The pandemic made the goals of *Computers4People*—to help people access technology—much more urgent. Although Zajac saw the need before the pandemic, “it brought a lot of light to the situation,” he said. He received many more requests for donations during the pandemic, as well as more media attention. Computers has been featured in several Northern New Jersey media outlets, including [nj.com](https://www.nj.com). The flurry of articles drew the attention of Verizon, who produced a mini-documentary starring Zajac this year. The documentary was shot in Jersey City, following Zajac as he and volunteers/family members donate computers at various non-profits in the area—Temple members might recognize the Triangle Park Community Center and Welcome Home New Jersey. Zajac describes the three hour shoot for the mini-documentary as “really intense”—luckily, he brought his mom and stepbrother for moral support. The video spot focuses on the “digital divide” and the importance of technology to young people, especially during the pandemic.



So far, the nonprofit has donated 120 computers. Zajac has big plans, including a brand new Hoboken office and a new website. The site will work like the Common Application, he said. And he should know—he’s at the tail end of the college application process. Zajac is planning on studying marketing and entrepreneurship in college. He hopes that this company he has created will live on once he heads off to school—“I want it to be sustainable without me,” he said.

And how will Zajac fare, if he leaves the company behind? He’s not worried about trying new things. “I fall fast,” Zajac said, about his desire to try new things and come up with new ideas. “If I fall, I get up really quickly. Why would I let that defeat me?”



## Religious School Chanukah with the Governor!

On December 17th, Governor Phil Murphy and First Lady Tammy Murphy honored Rabbi Moritt with an invitation to speak at a virtual Chanukah celebration to remember the power of light over darkness and the miracles of the season. Our Religious School children and their families received an exclusive invitation to join in this very special event.

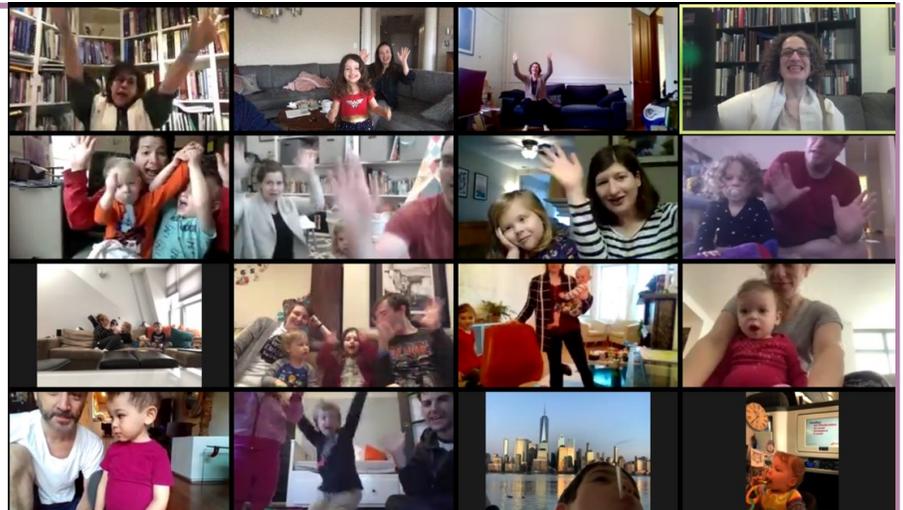
During this invitation-only event, the Governor and First Lady were joined via Zoom by hundreds of state residents and school children who participated in the lighting of the Menorah, sang Chanukah songs, and heard the inspirational words of Rabbi Moritt, and other religious and community leaders. In addition to Rabbi Moritt, rabbis from a cross section of denominations participated including Rabbis Yosef Carlebach and Mendy Carlebach of Chabad House at Rutgers University. The festive and uplifting program also included Israel's Consul General Israel Nitzan, Assemblyman Gary Schaer and the Governor's Chief of Staff, Deborah Cornavaca. Cantor Jacki Menaker of Ventnor Congregation Shirat Hayam entertained the group with the singing of festive and spirited Hanukkah songs.



**Saturday, January 16  
@ 10:30 over Zoom!**

Calling all children 0-5 and their grownups! We can't wait to "see" you again at Tot Shabbat! Bring your favorite stuffed animals, and even more important, bring your ruach (spirit) and singing voices!

Bracha the bear is waiting for us to return to our Temple! Meanwhile, Rabbi Moritt will bring Tot Shabbat to your home. We will sing, dance tell a story and have fun together! Click [here](#) to join in. Have juice and challah/bread ready at home as we will make the blessings and enjoy our snacks together.



Mark your calendars for Tot Shabbat mornings:  
February 20    March 20    April 17    May 15  
June 12        July 10        August 14

Watch your emails for when we return from our virtual location back to our Beth-El home. If you are not on our Tot Shabbat list, please email [office@betheljc.org](mailto:office@betheljc.org) and ask to be added to our email list. Drop-ins always welcome.

## Rabbi's Message *(continued from page 1)*

In Israel, the 15<sup>th</sup> (“tu”) of the month of Shevat is the time when winter yields to spring. The ground is saturated with the rains of the new year, the sap rises in the trees; fruit begins to bud; and new life is starting to emerge. In Judaism, the symbol of life has long been the tree. These rabbis saw this season as the most propitious time to cast their eyes on prayers for our rebirth after a season of darkness. As good Kabbalists, they made the analogy of the water causing the sap to rise in the trees to the flow of God’s blessing in our lives and in the world. They celebrated the Tree of Life in the Kabbalistic map of the Sephirot and used the mystical 4 worlds model to relate symbolic foods to the human experience.

These rabbis understood the trauma the Jewish people had experienced and used Tu B’Shevat to create an example of “post traumatic growth” within the Tu B’Shevat Seder. Modeled on the Passover seder in that it contains symbolic foods eaten in a certain order, they transformed the meaning of the holiday from its Biblical and Mishnaic roots to one of timeless healing using timeless tools. We do this at a Tu B’Shevat Seder by eating fruit often native to the land of Israel, drinking wine of varying shades of color, singing songs of transformation and offering stories of our lives and visions of a world renewed.

Just like pain is real but suffering is optional, trauma is real-- but what emerges from it is not pre-ordained. Positive growth comes from trauma at least as often as stress and decline. Like the Jewish people after the expulsion, we have all been traumatized on some level by this virus. And as we come upon the one-year mark of living with it, we can embrace Tu B’Shevat as a spiritual tool and lesson for our own day.

This year, Tu B’Shevat begins on January 27<sup>th</sup>. Clearly, in New Jersey and during this unprecedented year, it is a little early to celebrate either the spring or the end of this dark period of illness, fear and suffering. At the same time, it is not too early to look toward the days—that we know will come soon—when the buds on the trees will return; the vaccine will be available to all, and we can emerge from the darkness to blessing and life renewed together.

In friendship and in health,  
*Rabbi Leana Moritt*



**This is  
how to  
join our  
Temple!**

Returning members please [click here](#) to pledge to renew your membership. If you’ve been thinking about joining, please [click here](#) to learn about the membership process.

If you enjoy the many benefits offered by Temple Beth-El, from our Shabbat and holiday services to Tot Shabbat and Religious School, pastoral care and life-cycle events, do your part so that we can continue to provide these benefits this year and in the future. This is no casual request. Our budget for fiscal year 2020-2021 shows a significant deficit.

If your financial means are limited, [click here](#) to learn more about “giving what you can.” If, however, you’re able to, please make an extra contribution to help those who can’t. We welcome all. We simply ask that you give what you can.

**Every pledge at every level is deeply appreciated.**

## facebook

Temple Beth El Jersey City Members is a **Private** Facebook Group created exclusively for our Temple Beth-El member community to continue being together while promoting health and wellness. If you are a member you will be accepted immediately. For security purposes we are limiting this group to members only. If you are not yet a member, please consider joining.

There is also a separate page for Beth-El families!

# Youth Group

Set your calendars. Our 2021 Meeting Dates will occur on the last Sunday of every month:

January 31	April 25
February 28	May 30
March 28	

See you then!

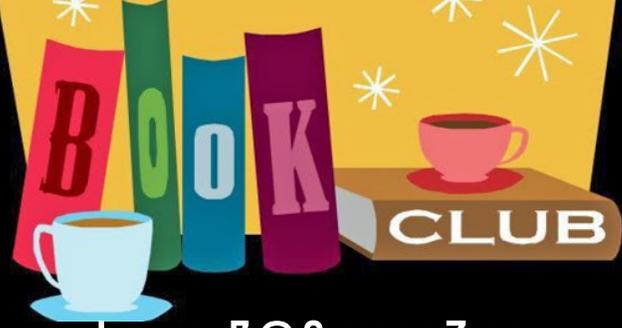


Our Twitter feed has over 800 followers! Check it out [here](#).

A timely and wonderful new video by our very own Ben Rauch!  
[Stay At Home - YouTube](#)



# Join the TBE



January 7 @ 8 pm on Zoom

*We Love Anderson Cooper*

by R. L. Maizes

The author will be joining us!

From Amazon: *"In this quirky, humorous and deeply human short story collection, Pushcart Prize-nominated author RL Maizes reminds us that even in our most isolated moments, we are never truly alone."*

Email Joanna Tartikoff at [bookclub@betheljc.org](mailto:bookclub@betheljc.org) for the Zoom link.

# Religious School

Religious school continues every Sunday from 9:30am—12noon. Detailed emails are regularly sent to all enrolled parents. If you're not receiving an email for your child's grade, or for further information about our school and classes, please contact Rosa Escandon (Ms. Chaya), who is covering for Morah Marian while she is on medical leave, at [rosa@betheljc.org](mailto:rosa@betheljc.org).



## WEEKLY on Wednesdays at TBE

### Our neighbors need your generosity

Please lend a hand by volunteering [here](#) for our Wednesday Food Pantry, by donating the foods and clothing listed [here](#), or by donating funds [here](#) so we can purchase needed items. Our neighbors in need can use them. (See below if you'd like to use a QR code to access the wishlist.)

Donations to the Food Pantry are tax-deductible. If you donate cash, you'll receive an acknowledgement as usual. If you donate items, email the receipt to [kpd@betheljc.org](mailto:kpd@betheljc.org) or click [here](#) for a downloadable copy of the Temple's In-Kind Donation Form. Click on the second form to donate, complete it, and send it to [kpd@betheljc.org](mailto:kpd@betheljc.org). Keep a copy of the blank for future use.

Thank you so much for your support in keeping our food pantry running during these difficult times. And please stay safe and well.



Scan with QR Studio



### Neighbors helping Neighbors

If you are having difficulties getting essential food or medication into your home, if you are living alone, out of work or feeling isolated, please contact Nancy Sambul at [nancy@betheljc.org](mailto:nancy@betheljc.org). Our members want to help as best as we can. If you are able to help deliver groceries or medication on one of your trips, or if you are able to make calls to check in on our elderly or isolated, please let Nancy know.



If you or a loved one are ill and would like to be added to our *misheberach l'cholim* list (prayer for healing), please let Rabbi Moritt know at [rabbimoritt@betheljc.org](mailto:rabbimoritt@betheljc.org). We are happy to pray for the healing of body, spirit, psyche and relationship of anyone of any religion. Please include the Hebrew name of the person/people in your prayers (if known) and your phone number so we can be in touch. As eager as we are to pray for your healing, we are especially happy when we can take you off the list, fully restored. Remember to let us know that too.



Family Promise®  
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### Family Promise during Covid-19

Over five years ago, Temple Beth-El began working with congregations throughout the area to launch Family Promise of Hudson County. Family Promise has provided hosting opportunity for working families, so they can stay together while struggling to get back on their feet and move to a new home. Many have lost jobs or suffered other adverse circumstances, leaving them temporarily homeless. Family Promise provides social services for these people to find jobs and housing and return to the normalcy of their lives as a family.

Prior to the pandemic, Temple Beth-El participated by hosting four or five families, all with children, to sleep over in Temple Beth El's Social Hall, four times a year. After a full day of school and work the families returned to Temple Beth El for dinner and evening activities. Enter Covid-19 and this plan came to a screeching halt, as you can well imagine.

But the work continues, albeit in different ways. Especially in this current crisis, there are so many people in great need of our help. Email Lari at [lari@betheljc.org](mailto:lari@betheljc.org) **subject line: Family Promise**, and tell us what you would like to do to help out. Let us know your questions. Let us know how you plan to make this year one of giving to those less fortunate than yourself.



## Tributes

- To celebrate a happy occasion
- To say I'm sorry for your loss
- To remember your loved ones
- To thank someone for a kindness

A card acknowledging your contribution will be sent to the recipient, and the message will be listed in the newsletter. To send a tribute, use the form [online](#) or write, email or call the Temple office.

### Food Pantry Donations

Robin & Terry Ewert  
Sam Pesin

Mazal Tov to our niece, Brittnay and Raymond Kramer, on the birth of Phoebe  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Stuart Portney and family in memory of Stuart's Sister, Ab Nancy & Nathan Sambul

### Sustaining Fund

Donations were made by  
Robert Marlowe  
Godfrey Rayner & Adam Nizmen

Mazal Tov to Nathan's sister, Caren Elosua, on the birth of her granddaughter  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Morah Marian  
Best wishes for a full and easy recovery from surgery  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

In memory of Ethel and Ben Chodash  
*Gertrude Marley*

Mazal Tov to Kelly and Tess Chanoch Shiau on the birth of Asher Ra  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Beth Achenbach  
Best wishes for a full recovery  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

In memory of Jon Rottenberg  
*Mildred Rottenberg*

Mazal Tov to Jake Lindner and his family on his bar mitzvah  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Chloe Lipman & Ben Litchman  
Best wishes on your move  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

In memory of my daughter, Ronde Wasserman  
*Florence Wellen*

Mazal Tov to Alex Ackman and his family on his bar mitzvah  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Ben Rauch & Sarah Joseph  
Mazal Tov on your wedding  
*Irwin Rosen*

In memory of Helen Wellen  
*Wellen Family Charity*

Mazal Tov to Rafi Lanz and his family on his bar mitzvah  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Marian Kleinman a speedy get well  
*Irwin Rosen*

In memory of Abraham L. Wellen  
*Wellen Family Charity*

In memory of father, Herbert Ziff, on his yahrzeit  
*William Ziff & Renee Remak-Ziff*

Mazal Tov to Jeremy Friedland and his family on his bar mitzvah  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Aaron Visco IMO grandmother, Florence Grossman  
*Irwin Rosen*

### Czech Torah Restoration

*Harvey & Shirley Roter*

In memory of Nancy's father, Jack Gurwitz, on his yahrzeit  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Eve Blaustein in memory of her mother Ann Blaustein  
*Irwin Rosen*

### Rabbi Discretionary Fund

Aaron & Giovanna Dunkel  
Joseph M. Koskuba & Michael Dzenis

In memory of Nancy's mother, Rose Baritz Gurwitz, on her yahrzeit  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Eric Schkrutz In honor of becoming a Jersey City fire fighter  
*Irwin Rosen*

In honor of the wedding of Ben and Sarah Rauch  
*David Rauch & Susan Marcus-Rauch*

In memory of Nancy's grandmother, Annie Gurwitz, on her yahrzeit  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

### Streaming Service Donation

*Jeffrey Goodman & Meredith Epstein-Goodman*

### Music Fund

Mazal Tov to our niece, Melanie/Peter Century, on the birth of Elisheva  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*

To Michael and Fran Eisenberg in memory of Eileen Eisenberg  
*Nancy & Nathan Sambul*





Extraordinary times may compel one to make difficult decisions for which they were not previously prepared. Whether you find yourself faced with the decisions surrounding the death of a family member or you are considering making advance plans, Temple Beth-El has a plot of burial grounds in **Mount Moriah Cemetery in Fairview, NJ**.

Mount Moriah is a beautiful and well-maintained cemetery that has been serving the Jewish Community for over 100 years. The cemetery is located on the slopes of the Palisades just a few minutes from Hudson County, between Kennedy Blvd and Routes 1&9. The Temple's graves are located on the main road of the cemetery and are adjacent to our original plot where, among many of our founding members, our founding rabbi, the late Maurice Thorner is buried. These graves are available for purchase, either as a family plot or individual graves. For further information, please contact Larry Gutterman at [admin@betheljc.org](mailto:admin@betheljc.org)

**Yahrzeits/Memorial Plaques/  
Simcha Tree Leaves**  
*Remember and Honor*



The yahrzeit, or anniversary of a loved one's passing, is a time to remember the person, in the synagogue by reciting the Kaddish prayer, through the giving of extra charity and through learning. Each week at services we speak aloud the names of those people whose yahrzeit has occurred that week.

- To update your family's yahrzeit listings go to the [TBE yahrzeit list](#) or call or write the office.
- To purchase a Memorial Plaque to honor the memory of your loved ones click [here](#)
- To purchase a Simcha Tree Leaf to honor or congratulate friends or family members for special events or accomplishments please click [here](#)



**Moved? Changed emails?  
We want to stay in touch.**

Please take a moment to let us know if we've got it right or if you'd rather we use different contact information. Send your preferred email address, phone numbers and mailing address of all the members of your household to Bob Kahan, our Office Manager at [admin@betheljc.org](mailto:admin@betheljc.org)

We know that if you're reading this, we have *your* email. However, we may not have your partner's or your friend's email address. Will you help us by asking them to send us an accurate email address if they do not receive Temple emails? Thank you!



**Yahrzeits**



**Week ending January 2**

- Harold Grant
- Nestor Osvaldo Dron
- Doris Woolf
- Benjamin Migdoll

**Week ending January 23**

- Marshall Bergen
- Natalie Kizner
- Harry B. Pearl
- Jeannette S. Rabin
- Carolyn Gromer
- Richard S. Heitner
- Sylvia Wohl
- Edward Schwartz

**Week ending January 9**

- Pearl Ehrlich
- Morris Donner
- Willis Hines
- Lois Rawitzcher
- Ben Hersberg
- Murray Siegel
- Shirley Porte
- Lisa Feldman

**Week ending January 31**

- Anne Kolodny Roter
- Harold Hibell
- Ruth Winograd
- Charles Kenneth Brauer
- Adele Parnes
- Abraham Barland
- Fannie Noveck
- Sidney Karp
- David Press
- Howard G. Sklower

**Week ending January 16**

- Shirley Bayarsky
- Pauline Yankowitz
- David Straus
- Nathan Frank
- Milton Ackman



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Contact [ads@betheljc.org](mailto:ads@betheljc.org)

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- End of life care • Respite care



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