

Vol. XV No. 6

Tevet/Shevat 5786

February 2026

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*Rabbi's Message by
Rabbi Beth Klafter*

During the month of February, we celebrate the lives and legacies of two great United States Presidents: George Washington and Abraham Lincoln. Until 1970, we celebrated Washington on his actual birthdate, February 22nd, and Lincoln on his birthdate, February 12th. The third Monday in February became Presidents' Day to honor both men in 1971. Born in 1732 and 1809 respectively, we honor the roles these two men held in our nation's history. There are many individuals born in February who contributed to the Jewish community over the centuries. This month I would like to honor some of them as well.

Born on February 8, 1878, Martin Buber was an Austrian Israeli philosopher; his most famous work is called, "I and Thou." Published in 1923, he describes the world in terms of the kinds of relationships we have. For Buber, God is the "Eternal Thou," who we encounter through meaningful relationships with others. His philosophy informs my own understanding of the Divine and of our purpose in life. Buber died in 1965.

The most well-known Jewish person on my list is Carole King. Born Carol Joan Klein on February 9, 1942, she has written hundreds of songs and released 25 solo albums with Tapestry being the most successful having sold over 75 million records worldwide. She has won four Grammy Awards, along with other honors. For me and many of you, I imagine, Carole King's contributions to the American songbook have been among my favorites for decades. Her impact, especially as a Jewish woman, has been profound.

One of the most famous and prolific commentators of Jewish literature, born on February 22, 1040, was Rashi, an acronym for Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki. He wrote commentaries on the Talmud as well as the Torah and Hebrew Bible. His work explains the meaning of texts concisely; it is the basis of hundreds of additional commentaries and is one of the most widely quoted to this day.

Gertrude Stein, American novelist, poet, playwright, and art collector was born in Allegheny, PA, on February 3, 1874. In Paris she gathered leading authors and artists, such as Pablo Picasso, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound, and Henri Matisse. In 1933, Stein published a quasi-memoir of her Paris years, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*, written in the voice of Alice B. Toklas, her life partner.

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Message from President Ken Marenus

Hold Fast

We are living through a complicated time. On the macro scale there are multiple things floating around, each potentially concerning. Some may even have personal impact. Locally, Temple Beth David continues its long journey to new beginnings. More change is on the way and that can be disconcerting

How are we to navigate our way through all of this while keeping our humanity and sanity? The answer is right in front of us in the teachings of the Torah and in our commitment to Reform Judaism.

Reform Judaism has been in practice at Temple Beth David for over 50 years. It provides the moral compass that enables us to decide the right thing to do. It provides direction to our youngest members and will provide for future generations.

This is primarily accomplished by the dedication of the members of our congregation who participate in our synagogue and in our community in so many ways. They give money and more importantly their time, effort and enthusiasm to help make Temple Beth David the place it is and will continue to be in the future.

We, now more than ever, need more dedicated members to help us continue to grow, create, and build. This can only be accomplished by each of us doing our part and by contributing to the moral and practical elements that allow us to hold fast to our beliefs and the Temple we love.

Ken

Save the Date!
Friday, June 19, 2026 @ 7:30 pm
Shabbat Celebration to Honor
Rabbi Klafter and Rabbi Halpern
Festive Oneg to Follow

Continued from page one

The book became a literary bestseller. Her activities during World War II have been the subject of analysis and commentary as a Jew living in Nazi-occupied France. She died on July 27, 1946.

As we celebrate our nation's history, visit these websites to learn more about individuals who have helped to shape American and Jewish history.

www.americanjewisharchives.org

www.jwa.org Jewish Women's Archives

Personally, I celebrate an incredibly special American Jew born this month. My daughter, Deborah Klafter Hecht, entered the world on February 18, 1990, giving me the cherished title, Mom.

Rabbi Beth H Klafter

Rabbi Beth H. Klafter

*Clergy Reflections by
Rabbi Audrey Halpern*



Dear Friends,

This past month we have had lots of little celebrations because Steve and I have both reached milestone birthdays. Before our children came in from all over the country, we spent an evening in the city and saw Jerry Seinfeld at the Beacon Theatre.

He has long been one of my favorite comedians and I love the Jewish slant he brings to all of his topics – sometimes quite subtly. One of my favorite subjects that he spoke about that hilarious evening was marriage. He mentioned how long he had been married and the crowd burst into applause.

“Why, he asked, do we always applaud when someone tells us how long they’ve been married?” Of course, he went on to talk about all the challenges of being in a relationship for so many years when he was perfectly happy before he met his wife...not that he’s not happy...he quickly reassured us. He loves his wife; he dutifully reassured us.

It made me think about love as we find ourselves in February, the month when the world celebrates Valentine’s Day. Yes, even we Reform Jews have been known to send a card and reach for a bouquet of flowers or a box of chocolates. As I have been known to explain to some couples about to be married, the word in Hebrew for love is Ahava and the root of that word comes from the word Hav – meaning ‘to do.’

So often we become consumed with the initial phase of romantic love that it is easy to lose sight of the reality that anyone in a long-term relationship will acknowledge that this phase is only the beginning. It is important and if it’s not there, an alarm bell should go off. But there is so much more. The doing part of love takes sacrifice and the will to want to be in a partnership where both people can feel happy and fulfilled. It can mean a combination of giving up or giving in; speaking up and listening and working things out when things get messy and complex.

Jerry went on, as only he could, to make us laugh at his marriage and in doing so, we all laughed at ourselves. Love and marriage, parenthood and long-term relationships take work. If we do give and care and bring our best to the other, the precious seed of love that began at the start can blossom into a precious gift that brings meaning and abiding blessings to our lives.

With love and shalom,
Rabbi Audrey Halpern

Rabbi Audrey B. Halpern

SIMCHAS AND NACHAS

We are starting a new column in *HaKol* to bring a bit more community to our TBD family.

“Simchas and Nchas” will include happy news from our TBD family. So, if you have a birth (child or grandchild), promotion, new job, retirement, bar or bat mitzvah, graduation, engagement, or marriage announcement that you would like to share, please send it to Diane Kraut at dianekraut@optimum.net.



Margie Gursky Religious School News

The winter holiday of the Jews is Tu Bishvat, the 15th of the month of Shevat is the celebration of the trees. Why are we celebrating trees on February 2nd? In Israel, February is springtime, tree buds are forming and the weather is warming. Sitting here looking outside at the remnants of snow and ice and listening to the wind blow, I wish there were some tree buds here. During Tu Bishvat, we remember all the benefits trees provide us: shade, fruit, lumber, shelter, oxygen, beauty, etc. Celebrating trees reinforces why we need to care for our environment, a purpose it is sometimes easy to forget while we are shoveling snow. We also need to remember that we are fortunate to have warm homes with food. Please don't forget to help our less fortunate neighbors by donating food to the SYJCC Food Pantry and doing all we can to support our environment so that our trees are here in the future to help make our world a better place.

Even though it has been a cold and snowy winter, Religious School has kept busy. Many of our families attended Rabbi Klafter's Challah program. It was so interesting to learn about Rabbi Klafter's mom and how she passed her challah baking expertise to her. It was fun talking to those of you who were there and so delicious to eat the homemade challah. Please see the photos on the following pages.

We also had our January PACT Family Programs on Zoom. It was nice to stay in our warm homes while Rabbi engaged us in fun and meaningful activities.

We have two big programs coming up. On February 6th, we will have our "Singing Shabbat" with our second, third and fourth graders. This will be a fun service and I hope many of you join us.

On Sunday, February 8th @ 11am-1pm we will be holding our 3rd Annual Bingo Brunch Fundraiser. This is our biggest fundraiser of the year with Bingo games and prizes, a bagel lunch and great raffle baskets. Our Religious School Parent/Grandparent Committee has done an amazing job coordinating this event. This year, all of our class parents/grandparents undertook the task of getting donations from other parents of children in the class and making Class Raffle Baskets. We are always looking for donations so that we can purchase lunch items as well as for Bingo prizes. It is recommended that you purchase your entry tickets in advance online. To do this or to provide a monetary donation for this amazing program, please use this link: <https://tbdcommack.shulcloud.com/form/rs-bingo-brunch-2026.html>.

I hope to see you at our services and events. Stay warm!

ONEG שabbat

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Do you have something to celebrate?

A birthday, an anniversary or special occasion? Maybe you just want to show your love for TBD?

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Do you need help getting to Friday Night services?

We have member volunteers who will drive you to and from services.

Volunteer drivers also needed.

Contact Wendy Perry
Wendy@tbdcommack.org
 631-499-0915 x 312

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Religious School Bingo Brunch Fundraiser
Sunday, February 8th 11am-1pm
Bingo, Bagels & Raffles

Pre-Purchase and RSVP Recommended by January 30:
Entry Tickets (includes One 5 Game Bingo Booklet & Lunch): \$18 Each

Additional Bingo Booklets: \$5 Each

Raffle Tickets:

1 for \$3

10 for \$20

100 for \$100

WE NEED DONATIONS TO MAKE THIS AN AMAZING EVENT!!!!

Click on this link to make a monetary donation:
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Friends and Extended Families are Welcome!

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RAFFLES!

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TEMPLE BETH DAVID
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Sisterhood

As the cold winter weeks creep by, we reach out for the warmth and support of our Sisterhood here at Temple Beth David. At this time of uncertainty in the world, we are grateful for the kindness and comfort of the community at Temple Beth David.

These past few months have been very busy ones for Sisterhood. On January 4, we took a backstage guided tour and learned the rich and fascinating history of New York City's Metropolitan Opera House at Lincoln Center. This event was organized and facilitated by Toni Spring; we greatly appreciate all that she and the Cultural Arts committee bring to Sisterhood. Further trips and events are planned for the late winter and spring, so stay tuned.

A fun time was had by all on January 15 at Sisterhood's second annual game night. Thank you to all who joined in the fun playing Left-Right-Center and Scattegories. A heartfelt thank you to Denise Jacobs for always planning such fun evenings for us!

Our book club met on January 29, and we discussed the Jane Austen classic, **Pride and Prejudice**, in celebration of Jane Austen turning 250! This timeless story was appreciated by all. Thank you once again to Sandi Burgess for facilitating the book club discussion.

A beautiful Tu B'Shvat seder is scheduled for February 1. Tu B'Shvat is also known as the New Year of the Trees and is celebrated on the 15th day of the Hebrew month Shevat. It focuses on environmental awareness and nature's renewal. We share a seder featuring symbolic nuts, wheat, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives and dates, as well as different colored wine and juice. We heartfully thank Deborah Faust for chairing this wonderful seder.

The next book club meeting will be on March 9 when we will discuss **The Lost Story of Eva Fuentes** by Chanel Cleeton, a story that takes the reader from Boston in 1900 to Havana in 1966 and finally London in 2024. All temple members are welcome to read and discuss this well-reviewed book with us on Zoom; please feel free to invite a friend to join us.

Our next Sisterhood meeting will be on Wednesday, Feb 4 when all are welcome to share new ideas or just check in and have some coffee with good friends.

Hoping you will join us in the future,
Holly Dornfeld





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6:30PM SERVICE

6:00 PM PRE-NEG

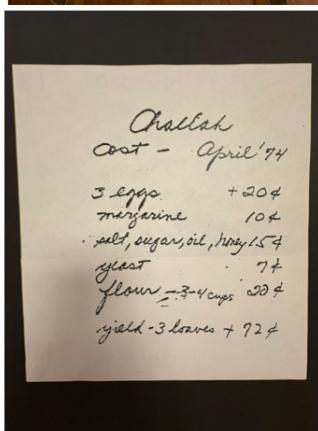
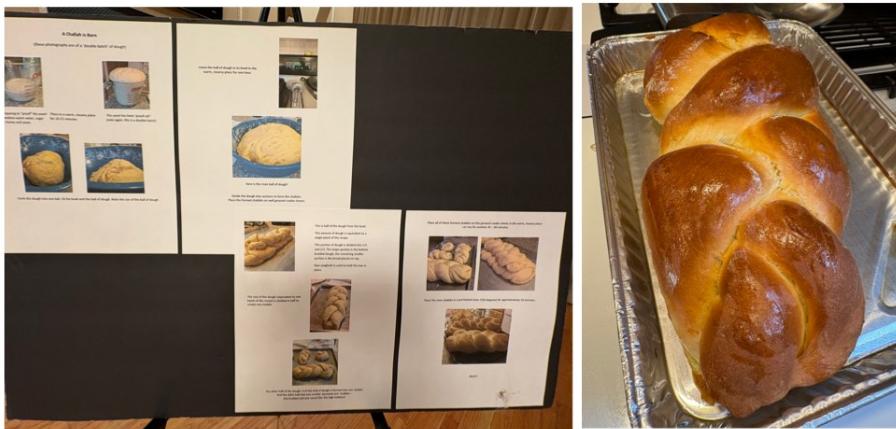
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TEMPLE BETH DAVID
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL



Challah Baking with Rabbi Klafter



Additional Challah Baking with Rabbi Klafter



Spotlight on Brotherhood

I write this article in mid-January; roughly the mid-point of Brotherhood's journey through the Temple Beth David year. What is this journey and where are we going you may ask? As a member of Brotherhood we promised to take you on a trip consisting of friendship and fellowship with frequent stops along the way that included food and participation in events that support our congregation.

As I look in the rear-view mirror of recent events, I see in the distance the Hanukkah Happening. Do you remember the taste and smell of those potato delicacies? Yup, Brotherhood cooked and served them to the friends and families of our Religious School students. On Christmas Day we continued a Jewish tradition but started what we hope to be a Brotherhood one as well. Did you eat Chinese food on Christmas Day? We did! At a buffet no less!

On January 11th we played our annual Wallyball game. For those not up to date with sports trends, Wallyball is a friendly game of volleyball played within the confines of a racquetball court. Nothing is out of bounds.

January 25th marked the day that the NFL played its conference championships. Though most of us did not have a team to root for (See: Jets and Giants), we did enjoy pizza, wings and beer rooting for our second choice.

So what is in store for Brotherhood as we look ahead? Miller's Minyon returns on February 16th. Join us for food, drink and camaraderie at Miller's Ale House. Everyone is welcome.

For those who like to look far ahead, mark your calendar for March 29th. New York Post sportswriter Ken Davidoff has just written a new book "101 Lessons from the Dugout". He will share his baseball insights with us and how they apply to us in our everyday lives and as parents. Ken will be available for a book signing.

Brotherhood has more events in the works. Please keep a lookout for details.

Steven Sarisohn, President

631-455-2387/ssarisohn@sarisohnlaw.com



To make a donation to Temple Beth David for a special occasion or in memory of a loved one, please contact Wendy in the Temple office at 499-0915 ext. 312 or wendy@tbdcommack.org



News from Isaiah 58



What we do with our time matters. Recently, shoveling took my time...Work, play, health, being with family, and socializing with friends occupy much of my time. Charitable good works, personal hobbies, spiritual growth, and rest round out the days. As we welcome the new year and celebrate Tu B'Shevat, I am reminded to be grateful. Especially for the trees and the beauty of nature! The winter seems long but the arrival of spring is near. All the cold weather efforts of our Social Action Committee have continued. Hat Looming meets to hand-loom warm hats; stocking the pantry shelves is a must after the holiday donations dwindle; and helping others in our community is a year-long commitment.

Thank you to all who donated in December prior to Christmas to help 30 immigrant families with food and gifts. We raised over \$800! It was a tremendous turnout – many of these families came from Ecuador, Columbia, and El Salvador. The children were excited to receive gifts, clothing and treats. Parents were thankful to receive lunch, pantry food, clothing gifts and a warm welcome. Thanks to David Gaines, Diane Kraut and Brianna Kraut for their participation at this joyous event and to Sisterhood, the Marenus family, Marian Kent and to all who donated to make this possible.

Susan Knopp delivered 100 baby hats to be donated to Family Service League in Huntington. Many thanks for the darling hats! See the pictures below.

I am very grateful to lead this committee and witness the joy and lift that comes from doing random acts of kindness in service to others. With the support from our clergy, the board, the congregation and auxiliaries at TBD, we continue our mission to feed the hungry and give back to our community.

Looking ahead, Mitzvah Day is on Sunday, May 3, 2026 at TBD! We are looking for children and adults to visit Gurwin and perform for the residents. Please contact Deborah Faust if you are able to share your talents and are interested.

Dates to Remember:

Hat Looming: 1/18; 2/15; 2/22; 3/8; 3/29; 4/12; 4/26

Next I58 SAC meeting: Tuesday, March 10 @ 7:30 pm at TBD Rm 4

Be well, stay warm!

Jane Oberwager Gaines

Isaiah 58 Social Action Committee Chair



THANKS FOR *the Memories*



Holiday Donation Drive TBD & NSSA



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Marjorie Janicola

In memory of Rose Livingston

Gabey Fenster

In memory of Helen Burger

In memory of George Stern

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Geoffrey Weisman

In memory of Marvin Weisman

Linda and Gary Levine

In memory of Barbara Bloom

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In memory of our beloved Arleen Adelman

former TBD President and Sisterhood

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Gabey Fenster

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What's Happening at TBD — February 2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 11:00 am Sisterhood Tu B'Shevat Seder	2	3 4:30 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Steering Committee Meeting	4 4:30 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Sisterhood Meeting	5	6 6:00 pm Pre-neg 6:30 pm 2nd/3rd/4th Religious School Singing Shabbat Service w/B-day Blessings	7 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
8 Brotherhood Bowling (out) 11:00 am Religious School Bingo	9	10 4:30 pm Religious School 5:30 pm Religious School Committee Meeting 7:00 pm Executive Board 8:00 pm TBD Board Meeting	11 4:30 pm Religious School	12	13 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	14 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
15 10:30 am Hat Looming	16 Temple Office Closed	17 No Religious School Brotherhood at Millers (out)	18 No Religious School	19	20 7:30 pm Shabbat Service	21 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
22 9:00 am Brotherhood Pancake Breakfast 10:30 am Hat Looming	23	24 4:30 pm Religious School	25 4:30 pm Religious School	26 7:00 pm Budget & Finance Meeting	27 7:30 pm Shabbat Service w/Anniversary Blessings	28 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
1 11:00 am Purim Carnival	2 6:30 pm Purim Service & Shpiel	3 4:30 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Steering Committee Meeting	4 4:30 pm Religious School	5	6 6:00 pm Pre-neg 6:30 pm 5th Grade Shabbat Service w/B-day Blessings	7 9:15 am Torah Study & Service



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Worship Schedule

Friday, February 6

Shabbat Yitro

6:30 pm 2nd/3rd/4th Religious School Singing
Shabbat Service with Birthday Blessings

Saturday, February 7

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

Friday, February 13

Shabbat Shekalim

7:30 pm Shabbat Service

Saturday, February 14

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

Friday, February 20

Shabbat Terumah

7:30 pm Shabbat Service

Saturday, February 21

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

Friday, February 27

Shabbat Zachor

7:30 pm Shabbat Service with Anniversary
Blessings

Saturday, February 28

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

HaKol
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