



# Shabbat Shalom

28 Elul 5776  
October 1, 2016

Parashat Nitzavim

## This Week at Beth El Synagogue

### Saturday, October 1:

*Havdalah—7:18 pm*

Shabbat Mishnah Study	8:45 am
B'nai Mitzvah Peer Tutoring	9:00 am
Orthodox Kehillah Services	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services	9:30 am
Rabbi Fischer Shiur on Sukkot	1:00 pm

### Sunday, October 2:

NO Talmud Torah

Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Erev Rosh Hashanah Services	6:30 pm
Erev Rosh Hashanah Babysitting	6:30 pm

### Monday, October 3:

Rosh Hashanah Day 1 Services	8:30 am
Rosh Hashanah Day 1 Children's Services	10:30 am
Teen Room Open	10:30 am
Rosh Hashanah Day 1 Babysitting	11:30 am
Erev 2nd Day Services	7:00 pm

### Tuesday, October 4:

Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Services	8:30 am
Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Children's Services	10:30 am
Teen Room Open	10:30 am
Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Babysitting	11:30 am

### Wednesday, October 5:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
Talmud Torah	4:40 pm

### Thursday, October 6:

Executive Committee Meeting	8:30 am
Synagogue Life Committee Meeting	6:00 pm
Rabbi Greyber's Siddur Class	7:30 pm

### Friday, October 7:

*Candle Lighting—6:08 pm*

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is sponsored by:  
Lori Bernstein and Doug Merrill, Inessa and Brian Fannin,  
Rachelle Bienstock and Scott Snyder, Michaela Davidai, Susan  
and Mike Roth, and Eunice Shatzman

Beth El is a welcoming community of members with diverse backgrounds, ideas, levels of knowledge, and observance. We are an egalitarian Conservative congregation, and a member of the Southeast Seaboard district of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), and the Orthodox Union.

### Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 10/8 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 10/8 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Service
- ✧ Sat. 10/8 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 10/8 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 10/8 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Sat. 10/8 Jesse Summers: "Scrupulosity: When Mistakes Seem Unforgivable"
- ✧ Sun. 10/9 Kitah Zayin Field Trip: Cemetery Visitation
- ✧ Sun. 10/9 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 10/9 Cemetery Visitation
- ✧ Tue. 10/11 Pre-Fast Dinner
- ✧ Tue. 10/11 Kol Nidre Services
- ✧ Tue. 10/11 Social Action Kol Nidre Food Drive Bag Handout
- ✧ Wed. 10/12 Yom Kippur Morning Services
- ✧ Wed. 10/12 Teen Room Open
- ✧ Wed. 10/12 Study Session
- ✧ Wed. 10/12 NO Talmud Torah
- ✧ Wed. 10/12 Havdallah

### Gabbai Schedule

Contact the scheduled gabbai if you'd like to request an *aliyah*, other honor, or to volunteer to lead a service in the Main Sanctuary. Gabbaim will try to accommodate requests made on Shabbat morning (by 10:15am, before the Torah service) but we ask for your understanding if all honors have been previously claimed during the week.



10/1 Nitzavim	
Diane Markoff	
Diane.markoff@earthlink.net	919-969-8953
10/8 Vayelech Shuva	
David Kirsch	
David.kirsch@dm.duke.edu	919-286-4516
10/15 Ha'azinu	
Jon Wahl	
jmwahl@email.unc.edu	919-942-382
10/17 Sukkot I	
Isaac Price	
Isaac@isaacprice.org	919-866-5453

## Parashat Nitzavim

Adapted from <http://www.jtsa.edu/jts-torah-online>

This week's Torah Portion, Nitzavim, speaks profoundly about *teshuvah*, the literal and figurative struggle to return to God. When we turn back to God "with all [our] heart and soul," the parashah tells us, then God "will bring you together again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you" (Deut 30:3). Being scattered is a state of disorientation and disconnection. *Teshuvah* represents a coming home. There's an organic connection between the return to the Land of Israel—the land at the center of the Jewish soul, from which we have been banished—and the return that involves changing our ways and opening our hearts to God.

The next verse says: "Even if your outcasts are at the ends of the world, from there the Lord your God will gather you, from there He will fetch you" (Deut 30:4). There is no place that is too far away for God to reach us, either literally or figuratively. Even those of us who live on the edges of society will be gathered up. In this *teshuvah* process, God's passionate commitment to the marginalized is front and center.

The Hebrew reads "*biktzeh hashamayim*", the ends of the heavens. How is it that "the ends of the heavens" is translated as "the ends of the world"? In Psalm 19, the sun moves from one end of heaven to the other, crossing the sky in an arch:

His rising-place is at one end of heaven,  
And his circuit reaches the other;  
Nothing escapes his heat (v. 7).

As the sun moves across the heavens each day, it also moves from one end of the earth to the other. So the ends of the heavens and the ends of the earth are the same. This is a beautiful image of interconnectedness and reconciliation. At the ends—and in the end—the divine world and the human world come together. The outcasts are gathered in. *Teshuvah* is the space in which *out* and *in* are reconciled. The promise that we will be gathered up by God can offer a profound comfort for those of us who experience ourselves in far-flung places, whether emotionally, spiritually, or physically.

If we return to our original verse, we see something interesting in the language. The New JPS translation I quoted earlier says: "He will bring you together again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you." But the word that is being translated as "bring you" is actually "*veshav*", which means "He will return." ("Bring you" is the causative form of the same Hebrew root.) The translation skips over the problem, but the rabbis in the Talmud do not.

And when they will be redeemed in the future, the Shekhinah will be with them, as it says, "Then the Lord your God will return [with] your captivity" (Deut. 30:3). It does not say here *veheshiv* [and He shall bring back] but *veshav* [and He shall return]. This teaches us that the Holy One, blessed be He, will return with them from the places of exile. (BT Megillah 29a)

The verses in the parashah seem to convey that we are the outcasts and God is eternally at the center. But this Talmudic midrash complicates the picture. Just as we are outcasts, God is an outcast. Somehow, God, in the form of the Shekhinah, God's in-dwelling presence, is also in need of return. The image of God returning us, bringing us back, conveys one kind of power. But the image of God coming back *with* us, alongside us, conveys a different kind of power. I cannot pretend to understand this power fully, but I understand the Rabbis to be teaching us that this power is rooted in connectedness, in being with the outcast, dwelling inside the "not yet."

There's something about being joined by the divine in this place on the edge that has the potential to shore us up as we long to return. Perhaps it is the experience of being joined in this way which enables us to open up "with all [our] heart and soul" and return at last.

## Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Avigal bat David haLevi (Alice Gold)	Tzvia Mishulamit bat Maryam (Marcia Hogan)	Yakov ben Sarah (Jacob Schonberg)
Avram Moshe ben Esther (Alan Mandel)	Miriam bat Rivka v'Natan (Miriam Sharp)	Ya'akov Roni ben Margalit Yehuda ben David (Jerry Robins)
Baracha bat Sarah	Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Sidney Barker Anne Boyd Cynthia Brown Alan Marty Lorraine Morley Ezra Rapport Jack Reich Helen Rosenberg Richard Roth Lauren Schiro Edward Thompson-Starkey Christine Walters
Batya bat Shprintza (Barbara Roberman)	Mordechai ben Mathilda (Morty Berkowitz)	
Chana bat Malka	Ovadya ben Esther Malkah (Ovadya Fleishman)	
Chana Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Sarah bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	
David Yosef ben Avraham v'Chana (Donald Goldstein)	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)	Shira Batya bat Meirav Shmuel ben Shoshana Shraga Feivel ben Leib (Philip Skoletsy)	Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.
Esther bat Yankale Sura	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	
Esther Malka bat Chaya Fruma (Elinor Fleishman)	Tziporah bat Esther Ty-Esther Tobi bat Tzeryl (Mindy Shapiro)	
Malka bat Leah (Meg Anderson)		
Malka Chana bat Basha Rachel		
Mashah bat Fanny (Marsha Schonberg)		
M'cor Eyshel bat Esther		

## Yahrzeits יארצייט

May their memory be a blessing

Clarence Berman	Rhea Fishman	Lottie Samuel
Robert Lubovsky	Polly Gutman	Leveritt A. Wallace
David Alexander Rosefielde	Irene Silverstein	
Sidney "Chick" Mandel	Rebecca Emenitove	
Sam Zarkin	Heinz Speier	
Abraham Roskin	Roberta Morris	
	Sydney Back	

## BE Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Caryn Rossi on her new position teaching Chinese in the Chapel Hill- Carrboro City schools!

### Beth El Synagogue

1004 Watts Street  
Durham, NC 27701  
919.682.1238

info@betheldurham.org  
www.betheldurham.org

Rabbi: Daniel Greyber  
Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager  
Synagogue President: Noah Pickus