



# Shabbat Shalom

27 Tishrei 5777  
October 29, 2016

*Parashat Bereshit*

## Upcoming Events at Beth El Synagogue

### Saturday, October 29:

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
Havdalah	6:36 pm

### Sunday, October 30:

Talmud Torah (Pre-K-7th grade)	9:30 am
Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am

### Wednesday, November 2:

Wednesday Minyan (Rosh Chodesh)	7:45 am
Talmud Torah (2nd-6th grade)	4:40 pm

### Thursday, November 3:

Rabbi Greyber's Siddur Class	7:30 pm
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### Friday, November 4:

Candle Lighting	5:29 pm
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### Saturday, November 5:

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
Parasha Study	9:30 am
Havdalah	6:28 pm

### Sunday, November 6:

Talmud Torah (Pre-K-7th grade)	9:30 am
Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Aleph-Bet Movie and Pizza Lunch	12:30 pm
USY Chopped (Judea Reform)	2:00 pm
"What Not to Like?" 7th Annual Yiddish Songfest	3:00 pm

### Additional Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Wed. 11/9 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Wed. 11/9 Talmud Torah (2nd-6th grade)
- ✧ Thu. 11/10 Rabbi Greyber's Siddur Class
- ✧ Sat. 11/12 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 11/12 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 11/12 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 11/12 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 11/12 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Sat. 11/12 Lifelong Learning: "Politics and Religion"
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 Talmud Torah (Pre-K-7th grade)
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 Simchat Tot!
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 Knitting Chevra
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 Kitah Zayin Family Beit Midrash (Kashrut)
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 5th grade B'nai Mitzvah Date Selection Meeting
- ✧ Sun. 11/13 Kadima Kitchen Competition
- ✧ Mon. 11/14 Sisterhood Board Meeting
- ✧ Tue. 11/15 Va'ad HaChinuch Meeting
- ✧ Tue. 11/15 Finance Committee Meeting

### 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.



10/29 Bereshit Isaac Price Isaac@isaacprince.org	919-866-5453
11/5 Noach Bernie Fischer Bernie.fischer@duke.edu	919-493-0306
11/12 Lekh Lekha Diane Markoff Diane.markoff@earthlink.net	919-969-8953
11/19 Vayera Jon Wahl jmwahl@email.unc.edu	919-942-3827

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is hosted by:

Abby & Gary Zarkin, Rachel & Ya'akov Ariel, Sally & Steve Brown, Michelle Shrott & Jeff Krolik, Ann & Kevin Leibel, Beth & Adam Goldstein, Sharon van Horn & Steve Lerner  
In honor of the aufrufs of Josh Zarkin & Allison Griffith, and Tamar Ariel & Matt Kravitz!

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.

## Parashat Bereshit

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

There's a good quip about the Jewish people: we're the longest running book club on the planet. This week, in synagogues and study halls across the world, Jews are rolling the scroll of the Torah back to the beginning and starting again. This is a different kind of reading than we do in other spheres of our lives. We read books, articles, and stories at specific times. They could be life-changing—we might return to those texts and reread them—or they could quickly be forgotten. Some people will do that more than once, at which point they have become either fans or scholars, giving those texts a place of privilege in the formation of their individual identity.

But this Torah is something else: a book we are always reading, in intervals fixed by a community. We are brought into literacy by it. We start over again as soon as we finish, racking up countless readings and rereadings. What does this choice mean for us? On a basic level, it means allowing this text to exert fundamental moral influence on our personhood. It means having a growing relationship with the text, constantly revising our understanding with the accumulation of life experience. It means being humble enough to revisit questions we thought we already answered. We belong to that tribe of people who think it worthwhile to go back to one book, over and over again, even if it doesn't advance our careers.

The narrative arc of the first eleven chapters of Sefer Bereishit offers us the foundation stone for our collective worldview. What is the nature of the world and humanity, what are gender relations, what causes violence, and what is the source of human diversity? These are all questions that we are compelled to revisit and revise annually *as a group*. We struggle as a group to develop our moral knowledge and refine our values, and we struggle as a group both to use our holy texts toward that end and to bring our understanding of those holy texts in line with our highest moral conclusions.

This is not merely a scholastic exercise. There is no knowledge of the Torah that is disconnected from pedagogy, even if you are working outside of an educational context. Jewish education is necessarily a collective activity whose medium is study of the Torah. What we learn can and must be shared—even among our newest and youngest members. They, in turn, will make something new of it that we cannot yet imagine.

Allow me to share an example of what is at stake.

Once, when I was substitute teaching at a progressive Jewish day school in New York, I overheard a boy in the first grade boast to a girl that boys were created first. It says so in the Torah, he said. I flinched. It's hard not to feel bad when you hear something like that, especially if you're not used to commonplace childish competition between genders. As a teacher of the Torah, I was ashamed to hear it exploited in that way. I have great respect for this day school, and I know the teachers there do not teach male chauvinism. The boy in question was not parroting the way Genesis had been taught to him. He was innovating. He was making creative use of the Torah he had inherited, and I can only hope that his understanding of the Torah and of gender have both evolved with time. What is sad to me is that the girl was not prepared to reply with her own *devar Torah*. She could have cited Genesis 1:27, which says the two sexes were created at once. But I sympathize with her. I have also been speechless in the face of the ugliness of my tradition, and painfully aware of my own limits in responding to that ugliness.

We cannot invent all the myths that drive us. The traditions, however broken, that compose our contemporary world inform us as well, and color our reading of our sacred books. They grant us a view of some of the possibilities of Torah while blocking access to new ones.

What this means is that the full power of the Torah has yet to come into our view. A new generation of the Torah is unfolding still. There are some places we can sense the shift, even if we don't know what it will be. We know that the tale of Adam, Eve, and the Edenic vision will someday hold within its new structures and possibilities of gender, though we can't yet quite imagine how. Passages that are puzzling ciphers to us now, or academic curiosities (such as the children of "*elohim*" in Gen. 6:1-4), will find their place in the next generation's moral imagination, helping them articulate their vision for the world.

So toil in learning! Whether you are a prized scholar, or reading the parashah in English for the first time, your insight could help new worlds come into being.

## Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

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

## Yahrzeits יארצייט

May their memory be a blessing

Martin Leiss	Sidney Brettler	Marvin Chester Wahl
Harry Lyons	Leonard Sperling	Dan Portnoy
Alex S. Tulskey	Ruth Shecter	Dolores Ginsburg
David Liptzin	Eliot Kraft	
Alberto Levy	N. Herbert Halberstadt	
Jennie Nachamson	Paul Perilstein	

## Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to Dr. Ralph Snyderman on the publication of his book "A Chancellor's Tale: Transforming Academic Medicine."

Mazel Tov to Rachel Galanter on the birth of her grandchild, Xiomara Raquel, on October 25 to her daughter, Diana Enriquez and son-in-law Jorge Galeana.

## Beth El Synagogue

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Noah Pickus