



# Shabbat Shalom

21 Tamuz 5777  
July 15, 2017

Parashat Pinchas

## This Week at Beth El Synagogue

### Saturday, July 15:

Orthodox Kehillah Services	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services	9:30 am
Havdallah	9:14 pm

### Wednesday, July 19:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
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### Friday, July 21:

Candle Lighting	8:10 pm
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### Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 7/22 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 7/22 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 7/22 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Wed. 7/26 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Sat. 7/29 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 7/29 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Mon. 7/31 Tish'a B'Av Community Services
- ✧ Wed. 8/2 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Thu. 8/3 MoB Night at the Durham Bulls
- ✧ Sat. 8/5 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 8/5 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Wed. 8/9 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Sat. 8/12 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 8/12 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Wed. 8/16 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Sat. 8/19 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 8/19 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Wed. 8/23 Weekly Wednesday Minyan

### **BE Remembered**

Beth El Synagogue extends condolences to the family of Judy Byck, long-time member of Beth El, who passed away on July 12, 2017 at home in Durham.

Shiva minyanim will take place Saturday evening at 9:30pm and Sunday evening at 7:30pm at 1004 West Forest Hills Blvd in Durham, NC.

May the Ever Present One comfort them among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

Kiddush is sponsored by:  
Beth El Synagogue

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.

### 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.



7/22 Mattot-Masei Isaac Price isaac@isaacprice.org	919-866-5453
7/29 Devarim Hazon Shula Bernard shulabernard@gmail.com	919-967-9393
8/5 Vaetchanan Nahamu David Kirsch dkirsch@md.duke.edu	919-286-4516
8/12 Ekev Diane Markoff Diane.markoff@earthlink.net	919-969-8953

# Parashat Pinchas

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

“What does your dad do at Google?”

One of our JustCity Leadership Institute pre-college program students explained that her mother works at Google in a significant leadership position. Yet each time she wears a Google T-shirt, people ask her what her father does there.

In 2017, nearly a century after the ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment, people still jump to the conclusion that a high level leader of one of the country’s largest technology firms is a man. The tired feeling of having to address latent sexism that my student feels each time someone asks her this question is what I felt, to my surprise, rereading the story of the daughters of Tzelophehad.

In this week’s parashah, Tzelophehad, a member of the tribe of Manasseh, dies, and his five daughters protest the fact that they are being denied his inheritance. He has no sons, and inheritance passes only to sons. The daughters beseech Moses. They reason that their father should not be deprived of having his legacy passed on, with all his resources thus passing out of his family, simply because he only had daughters. Surely his daughters should be able to inherit from him. Moses confers with God and returns with the answer that the daughters can indeed inherit from their father—but really only to preserve his legacy.

This 21st-century female rabbi felt disappointed as I read the story this time. I wished the daughters of Tzelophehad hadn’t requested an inheritance only to honor their father. I wished that they’d done so because it was just and they believed in egalitarianism. I wished God and Moses hadn’t gone out of their way to say they were granting the right solely to honor Tzelophehad. I wished gender inequity wasn’t baked into even our most egalitarian stories.

In her book *Rereading the Rabbis*, Rabbi Dr. Judith Hauptman, E. Billi Ivry Professor Emerita of Talmud and Rabbinic Culture, explores this story and concludes that the Rabbis of the Mishnah and Talmud were also conflicted about it. Several of them were really committed to the idea of women and daughters being able to inherit from a father and a mother. Others were not. So they read and reread the passage and commented and re-commented, with some rabbis concluding that yes, women could inherit from a parent and others concluding that no, a woman couldn’t inherit from a parent. Artfully they created a category of “gifts in contemplation of death,” which were essentially inheritances by another name. They also created a way for marriage dowries to be equivalent to the portion a daughter would have inherited from a parent. According to Hauptman, although the Rabbis recognized that the Torah text does not grant women equal ability to inherit from their parents, they were not satisfied with this. As a consequence, they went back and forth for centuries and found creative solutions to deliver the *equivalent* of an inheritance.

In my role as associate dean of JTS’s rabbinical school, I have the privilege of directing our Slifka project, which brings egalitarian rabbinical students to college campuses for several weekends throughout the year. They work on campuses where there is both a critical mass of egalitarian-raised students and a vibrant Orthodox community life, but insufficient staff support for the egalitarian students to create robust communities. There they model an egalitarian Jewish life that is sophisticated and joyful. They offer students raised with a Jewishly egalitarian perspective the opportunity to deepen their full connection to Jewish life, rather than feel that they have to choose between secularism or an engaged Jewish life that requires them to check their commitment to egalitarianism at the door. And they offer the possibility to students who grew up in non-egalitarian settings to explore their religious lives in ways that resemble the egalitarian spirit they have in the rest of their lives.

Rereading the account of the daughters of Tzelophehad reminded me that the work to address gender inequity is something we visit and revisit. The Rabbis weren’t comfortable that it existed or that they’d resolved it, which is why they kept returning to it.

And we, too, should not be satisfied. Yes, in the Conservative Movement we have women rabbis and Talmud scholars, and women wear tallit and tefillin. But have we each committed enough to eradicating sexism when we see it or experience it? When we are in egalitarian Jewish spaces, do we see tallit and tefilin for girls and women as a burden, or as something we are glad we *can* do but at the same time are relieved that we don’t feel social pressure to do? I’d suggest that really being engaged as egalitarian Jews requires each of us to perform and internalize these mitzvot and to contribute to affirming a culture in which it is expected and celebrated.

When I was a child, my father would ask me each night at bedtime, “what did you do

today to make the world safe for democracy?”

There are many parts of democratic civil society that I feel called to act on today. Yet women’s leadership and egalitarian values are core to that work. Even 32 years after the Conservative Movement ordained Rabbi Amy Eilberg, our first female rabbi, we benefit from reading about the daughters of Tzelophehad. And perhaps we should recommit to remembering their names: Mahlah, Noa, Hoglah, Milkah, and Tirzah.

32 years into Conservative women’s ordination, nine years after my own ordination, and 20 years since my father passed away and last asked me what I did today to make the world safe for democracy, I ask you: What have you done today to make the world safe for democracy—and in particular, to make sure that nobody assumes that only dads lead at Google?

## Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

<i>Adelah bat Avrom v’Chenya (Adele Abramowitz)</i>	<i>Moshe Yosef ben Vishka Elka (Michael Perkins)</i>	<i>Alvin Jacobson</i>
<i>Chaim ben Shraga</i>	<i>Sarah bat Hinda</i>	<i>Anne Boyd</i>
<i>v’Tziporah (Jerry Cramer)</i>	<i>(Sylvia Dante)</i>	<i>Alan Marty</i>
<i>Chana bat Malka</i>	<i>Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)</i>	<i>David Thomas</i>
<i>Chana Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)</i>	<i>Shalom ben Sprintze (Stanley Ramati)</i>	<i>Ezra Rapport</i>
<i>David ben Sarah (David Leitner)</i>	<i>Shira Batya bat Meirav</i>	<i>Gail Freeman</i>
<i>David Yosef ben Avraham v’Chana (Donald Goldstein)</i>	<i>Shmuel ben Shoshana</i>	<i>Harold Strauss</i>
<i>Esther Malka bat Chaya Fruma</i>	<i>Shrage ben Devorah Leah (Phillip Samuel Ramati)</i>	<i>Harry Mellon</i>
<i>(Elinor Fleishman)</i>	<i>Shraga Feivel ben Leib (Philip Skoletsky)</i>	<i>Helen Rosenberg</i>
<i>Herschel David ben Aharon haKohen u’Bela Miriam</i>	<i>Sura Malka bat Rivka (Molly Grossinger)</i>	<i>Jack Reich</i>
<i>Israel ben Zalman u’Malkah Leah bat Miriam (Eileen Abramson)</i>	<i>Tuvia ben Shmuel v’Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)</i>	<i>Jeff Shields</i>
<i>Llan ben Eunice (Lani Harrington)</i>	<i>Tziporah bat Esther</i>	<i>Joyce Romm</i>
<i>Malka bat Leah (Meg Anderson)</i>	<i>Ya’akov Roni ben Margalit</i>	<i>Lauren Schiro</i>
<i>M’cor Eyshel bat Esther Tzvia Michael Pinchas ben Binyamin v’Rachel Mishulamit bat Maryam (Marcia Hogan)</i>	<i>Yehoshua Heschel ben Tova Gitel (Joshua Shatz)</i>	<i>Lorraine Morley</i>
<i>Miriam bat Batya (Joyce Gudeman)</i>	<i>Zvi ben Chanoch v’Rivka (Harold Strauss)</i>	<i>Netta Boswell</i>
		<i>Nina Gorback</i>
		<i>Orrie Wilner</i>
		<i>Richard Roth</i>
		<i>Sidney Barker</i>

Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.

## Yahrzeits יארצייט

Sidney Stern	Bertha Agid	Grant Anderson
Shayna Belenko	Willie Massey	Joani Gudeman
Arlene Bergman	Irma Fischer	
Steve Hershenow	Carolyn Lubovsky	
Myer B. Marcus	Sadie Kramer	
Pedro Urow	Gerri Ann Pomerantz	

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber

Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager

Synagogue President: Noah Pickus