



THE TENT

Congregation Beth Jacob's Monthly Newsletter
January, 2026



CBJ Calendar of Upcoming Events:

January 2: Erev Shabbat Service with Gala Hello/Goodbye Dinner. Goodbye to Pleasant Street synagogue building and hello to 2026 and CBJ's future! **This will be the last potluck dinner at our building.** Sign up for our potluck dinner featuring sweet and bittersweet foods (dairy - no meat!) [CLICK HERE TO SIGN UP!](#)

6:00 pm: Dinner 7:00 pm: Erev Shabbat Service (hybrid)

January 8, 7:00 - 8:00 pm: Mussar Torah Class Begins! See the article for a description and RSVP to receive the Zoom link! (Please Note: The purchase of the book is required.)

January 9, 7:00 pm: Erev Shabbat Service with Rachmiel. **This will be the last Shabbat service held in our synagogue building!** (hybrid)

January 12, 3:00 pm: Social Justice in our Texts - The Torch of Reparations, presented by Jordan Berg Powers. This series is free and is open to everyone, but registration is required to receive the Zoom link. (See the article for details and registration.)

January 12: 7:00 pm: Sisterhood Meeting (by Zoom)

January 16, 7:00 pm: Erev Martin Luther King Shabbat Service with guest speaker Rev Khaden Nurse of Plymouth Bethel AME Church (Zoom only)

January 17-19: Martin Luther King Events (See the article for details.)

January 21, 8:00 pm: "Heart of a Stranger" Book Discussion
Join URJ President Rabbi Rick Jacobs in conversation with Rabbi Angela Buchdahl, the first Asian American to be ordained as a rabbi, as she discusses her new book, "Heart of a Stranger"—a stirring account of her journey from feeling like an outsider to becoming a renowned leader. Registration is required. [CLICK HERE.](#)

January 23, 7:00 pm: Erev Shabbat Shasheret (Teal & Pink) Service featuring Speaker Marcy Wintrub - (Zoom only) This service was rescheduled from our original December date.

January 27: Holocaust Remembrance Day

Saturday, January 31, 10:00 am: Morning Shabbat Service with Torah Study and bagel brunch (held in the Board Room of the Plymouth Public Library) **In person only.** Please rsvp if you are planning to attend. (rsvp@cbjplymouth.org) The brunch is being sponsored by Sisterhood

[To see the complete CBJ Calendar on our website, click here.](#)



REFLECTIONS FROM THE RABBI

As we begin the New Year 2026, it is in the shadow of the shooting at Brown University and the attack on the Jewish community of Sydney Australia as they publicly lit their menorah to commemorate the first night of Chanukah. Religion is supposed to provide comfort and hope in times of tragedy, and yet none of us can understand with certainty the operation of the world or the rationale of a God who created our imperfect and all too often cruel world. As Jews we are told not to focus on the unknown, the questions that we can't answer, but rather do what we can to improve the world we know, to make this world a better place with the hope that one day if enough people work at perfecting this world, we will reach the time when we will have eliminated the urge to do evil.

Franz Kafka told a story about a little girl who arrived home late one day. Her mother asked her where she was. The girl said that she saw her friend Ruthie on her way home, and Ruthie's doll had broken. "Did you help her fix it?" her mother asked. "No," the girl replied, "I don't know how to fix it. I stopped to help her cry." We all need to cry about the evil that causes someone to shoot innocent individuals, whether university students here in the United States, or Jewish families publicly celebrating our ancient traditions. But if we really want comfort, we must work through the pain and ask ourselves "What can we do?"

Judaism demands that we not leave the care of the world to national or even local leaders, rather Judaism expects each of us to take action and do what we can. In most of these way too frequent, in fact now almost commonplace shootings, the very disturbed shooter did not care how many lives he destroyed or how much pain he inflicted. The shooter usually is an individual who did not fit in, who had been on the fringes, and many times this individual had himself been ridiculed or bullied. What if each of us was always kind to those in our schools or workplaces who were a little different? What if we reached out to, instead of pushing away the unpopular or shy child or adult? Even a small word of encouragement or act of kindness can have incredible power in making someone who feels isolated to instead feel valued.

Judaism also teaches the one who saves a single life it is as if that individual has saved the entire world. We truly never know when our random acts of kindness may truly make a difference in this world, the world we have the responsibility to work toward perfecting. And we do all know there is nothing ever to be gained by being mean or making someone else feel small. Let us weep for the innocent lives lost, but let us also dry our tears and work at being inclusive and welcoming to all individuals- we are all created in God's image and we must recognize in everyone's individuality a holiness. I truly believe we each have the power to stop evil and that it begins when each of us makes an effort to be kind and truly reach out to those who need our kindness the most. May 2026 be a year in which the world is improved because each of us did something, some little action, to make the world a better place.

Adult Education

"Social Justice in Our Texts" is a monthly, free, Zoom-based program exploring how our Jewish sacred texts speak to today's pressing social issues such as reproductive rights, climate change, racial justice, poverty, LGBTQ+ rights, and so much more. These classes are accessible, deeply rooted in Jewish values and focused on some of the most important issues of our time. **All of the sessions are free and open to anyone.** The classes are taught by our rabbis from across the liberal movements. Register at laasok.org/current-offerings/#justice

Social Justice in our Texts

Jewish Wisdom for Building a Better World

צדק

zedek

justice

A monthly 1-hour study session - free and open to all

Programs are Mondays at 3pm ET / Noon PT

 <p>Human Rights, Jewish Roots Rabbi Gabriel Kanter-Webber September 15, 2025</p>	 <p>Prophetic Voices Then and Now Rabbi Barbara Symons October 20, 2025</p>
 <p>Bodily Autonomy & Reproductive Rights Rabbi Cookie Lea Olshein November 17, 2025</p>	 <p>Repairing the World: Tikkun Olam as a Mystical Praxis Rabbi Leah Moser December 8, 2025</p>
 <p>The Torah of Reparations Jordan Berg Powers January 12, 2026</p>	 <p>Jewish Responses to Climate Change Rabbi Glenn Jacob February 2, 2026</p>
 <p>Speaking Up to Power: Learning From Esther Rabbi Laura Rappaport March 2, 2026</p>	 <p>What We Leave for the Poor Rabbi Barry Block April 20, 2026</p>
 <p>The Right to Live, The Right to Die Rabbi Sylvia Rothschild May 11, 2026</p>	 <p>Protecting LGBTQ+ Rights: A Jewish View Rabbi Micah Buck June 8, 2026</p>



LAASOK
לעסוק
SACRED TEXTS
MODERN MEANING



Keshet
קשת



TEMPLE
SHOLOM
CIRCUMCISING THE FLAME OF REFORM JUDAISM



Central
Synagogue



Kirva
מירב



Congregation
Shir Chadash
of the Hudson Valley



Congregation & Synagogue
of the Hudson Valley

The Next Program:

The Torah of Reparations: Slavery, Justice and Repair in Jewish Texts

With Jordan Berg Powers
Monday, January 12 at 3pm ET

Free and open to all, but registration is required.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER.](#)

What does the Torah have to say about slavery, restitution, and repairing historical wrongs? In this powerful session, we'll explore how ancient Jewish texts confront the legacy of enslavement and offer a moral and practical framework for justice. Grounded in biblical and rabbinic sources, this class connects Torah wisdom with today's urgent conversations about racial injustice and the moral case for reparations. Together, we'll ask: What guidance can our tradition offer as we strive to build a more just and equitable society?

The Torah of Reparations

Slavery, Justice & Repair in Jewish Texts

Monday, January 12
3pm Eastern on Zoom
With Jordan Berg Powers



Part of the “Social Justice in Our Texts” Series



This program is part of the “Social Justice in Our Texts” Study Series.

Free and open to all. Register at laasok.org/current-offerings/#justice

Oh No! Did You Miss the Bus?



Did you miss the presentation by Rabbi Lelah Moser on December 8th on Repairing the World: Tikkun Olam as a Mystical Proxis? No worries!

Click on the link below for the YouTube recording.

<https://youtu.be/mIY1oH6jfil?si=jgnPDZSgM2LHSriS>

Introduction to Judaism Class Starting in January!



Our Introduction to Judaism class will be co-taught by Rabbi Mills, along with rabbis from other small congregations. It will be available on Zoom on Wednesday or Thursday evenings from mid-January through May, from 7:30pm-9pm.

The cost to attend and the registration link will be sent at a later date. The cost for non-members will be applied toward membership dues. This course will be free for members of Congregation Beth Jacob who would like to learn more about Judaism.



Study the Weekly Torah Portion from a Musar approach with Rabbi Mills
Thursdays, from 7:00-8:00 pm (by Zoom)
Starting January 8th!

Starting with an introduction to Musar, Rabbi Mills will be leading a Torah study class that will approach each portion using the techniques of Musar. Mussar is a Jewish spiritual practice focused on personal ethical and spiritual growth, aiming to cultivate virtues and improve one's character. It emphasizes self-reflection, mindful actions, and consistent effort to align one's behavior with core Jewish values. The practice involves identifying areas for improvement (middot or soul traits) and developing a daily routine that includes a mantra, mindful action, and journaling.

Mussar offers a framework and a toolkit for translating the philosophical wisdom of kabbalah into a personalized, ongoing spiritual discipline. Although compared to Musar, Kabbalah is the more widely known branch of Jewish spirituality, Musar is a more reachable way to incorporate spirituality into your life.

Required Text: The class will use Rabbi Barry Block's text: The Mussar Torah commentary which you can read more about and order using this link::

https://www.ccarpress.org/shopping_product_detail.asp?pid=50475

All individuals taking the class should purchase this book!!!

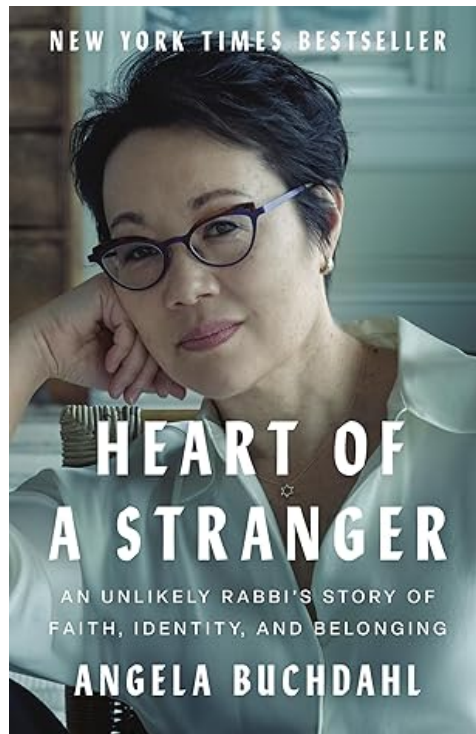
It is also available on Amazon. Search for **The Mussar Torah Commentary: A Spiritual Path to Living a Meaningful and Ethical Life** by Rabbi Barry H. Block. The Kindle edition costs \$9.99.

If you are interested in taking the class, please email Rabbi Mills at cbjplymouthrabbi@gmail.com to get the Zoom link.

To read more about this class and about Mussar, click below.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1HVabTIdM6A1VL8GOqr4CmMIDVqAxNTdn/view?usp=sharing>

**You Are Invited to Join a Book Discussion of
"Heart of a Stranger"
By Rabbi Angela Buchdahl
January 21st at 8:00 pm (by Zoom)**



Join URJ President Rabbi Rick Jacobs in conversation with Rabbi Angela Buchdahl, the first Asian American to be ordained as a rabbi, as she discusses her new book, "Heart of a Stranger"—a stirring account of her journey from feeling like an outsider to becoming a renowned leader.

Angela Buchdahl was born in Seoul, the daughter of a Korean Buddhist mother and Jewish American father. Profoundly spiritual from a young age, by sixteen she felt the first stirrings to become a rabbi. Despite the naysayers and periods of self-doubt—Would a mixed-race woman ever be seen as authentically Jewish or chosen to lead a congregation?—she stayed the course, which took her first to Yale, then to rabbinical school, and finally to the pulpit of one of the largest, most influential congregations in the world.

Today, Angela Buchdahl inspires Jews and non-Jews alike with her invigorating, joyful approach to worship and her belief in the power of faith, gratitude, and responsibility for one another, regardless of religion. She does not shy away from difficult topics, from racism within the Jewish community and the sexism she confronted when she aspired to the top job to rising antisemitism today. Buchdahl teaches how these challenges, which can make one feel like a stranger, can ultimately be the source of our greatest empathy and strength.

Angela Buchdahl has gone from outsider to officiant, from feeling estranged to feeling embraced—and she's emerged with a deep conviction that we are all bound to a larger whole and mission. She has written a book that is both memoir and spiritual guide for everyday living, which is exactly what so many of us crave right now.

"Heart of a Stranger" was published on October 21, 2025 and has already risen to the top of the New York Times bestseller list. **To watch a YouTube video with Rabbi Buchdahl** on CBS, [CLICK HERE](#).

This program is free and open to all, but registration is required. [CLICK HERE](#).



2026 Martin Luther King Weekend Events

Plymouth for All (formerly known as Plymouth No Place for Hate) invites you to join us at one or more of the following events on MLK weekend, January 17-19:

Saturday, January 17: MLK Day of Service: Volunteers needed to staff Food Drives at four locations in Plymouth, benefitting SIX local food pantries. Locations, hours, and sign-up details to follow. The need for food assistance has never been greater!

Sunday, January 18: 10 AM: Joint MLK Service at Bethel AME Church, 6 Sever Street

4:30 PM: FREE screening of “Selma,” the award-winning historical drama which tells the story of a key event in the Civil Rights movement and Dr. King’s crucial role in it. To be shown at the Plimoth Cinema at the Plimoth Patuxet Museum.

Monday, January 19: 8:30-11 AM: Breakfast Program at Plymouth South High School. Breakfast, songs performed by South Elementary School Choir, MLK Essay Contest winners reading their inspirational works, and keynote speech by Bishop Samuel Lawrence Green, Sr. of the First Episcopal District, AME Church. Celebrate Dr. King’s vital message for our world today. Ticket information to follow.

Co-sponsored by Plymouth Public Schools, The Church of the Pilgrimage, Bethel AME Church, Christ Church, the Rotary Club of Plymouth, and the Plymouth Area Interfaith Clergy Association.

Beit Sefer News



Under the leadership of Rabbi Mills, CBJ's Religious School provides a program where students master the skills of Hebrew reading, learn the ritual prayers and songs that are integral to our religious services, learn about Jewish history and the lessons about Jewish values and ethics in the Torah - all taught in a creative way that engages them. Students have become comfortable and familiar with being on the Bimah and leading portions of Shabbat services long before their Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremonies. Our new Beit Sefer school year for Kindergarten through 7th grade students began on Sunday, September 7th. **This year, these classes will meet from 9:30 am to 11:30 am.** Our theme for the year is Israel Extravaganza. This promises to be another creative and exciting year for our Religious School students! We welcome the enrollment of additional students into our Religious School; program. For additional information, please contact Devon Fernald at devon.portney@gmail.com.

CONGREGATION BETH JACOB 2025-2026 BEIT SEFER CALENDAR

September 7, 2025	1. The Founders (the Yishuv Period)
September 14, 2025	2. Overview of pre-1948 History
September 21, 2025	3. Rosh Hashana Lesson
September 28, 2025	4. Yom Kippur Lesson
October 5, 2025	5. Sukkot Lesson
October 12, 2025	NO SCHOOL: Indigenous People Day
October 19, 2025	6. Simchat Torah Lesson
October 26, 2025	7. The Fight for Independence
November 2, 2025	8. The Compromise: Knesset and the Gov't
November 9, 2025	9. The Early Year: Israel and its Neighbors
November 16, 2025	10. The Army
November 23, 2025	11. Kibbutzim and Moshavim
November 30, 2025	NO SCHOOL: Thanksgiving Weekend
December 7, 2025	12. Geography: Cities and Famous Places
December 14, 2025	13. Chanukah Lesson
December 21, 2025	NO SCHOOL: New Year's Break
December 28, 2025	NO SCHOOL: New Year's Break
January 4, 2026	14. Medot: Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi
January 11, 2026	15. The Israeli Arab & the Palestinian Arab
January 18, 2026	NO SCHOOL: President's Day Weekend
January 25, 2026	16. Magic Carpet: the Ethiopians Arrive
February 1, 2026	17. Tu B'shvat Lesson
February 8, 2026	18. The Religious and the Secular
February 15, 2026	NO SCHOOL: Winter Break
February 22, 2026	NO SCHOOL: Winter Break
March 1, 2026	19. Purim Lesson
March 8, 2026	20. Foods of Israel
March 15, 2026	21. Culture: Music and Sports
March 22, 2026	22. Famous Modern Israelis
March 29, 2026	23. Passover Lesson
April 5, 2026	24. Israeli Tech: Israel's gifts to the X World
April 12, 2026	25. Yom Ha'atzmaut Lesson
April 19, 2026	NO SCHOOL: Spring Break
April 26, 2026	NO SCHOOL: Spring Break
May 3, 2025	26. Lag B'omer Lesson
May 10, 2025	NO SCHOOL: Mother's Day
May 17, 2025	27. Shavuot Lesson

SPECIAL EVENTS

- ❖ **Saturday, September 13, 5:30 P.M.**
Selichot on a Boat
- ❖ **Tuesday, September 23, 10 A.M.**
Rosh Hashana Youth Service
- ❖ **Wednesday, October 1, 10 A.M.**
Yom Kippur Youth Service
- ❖ **Friday, October 10, 5:00 P.M.**
Beit Sefer Sukkot on the Farm
- ❖ **Friday, October 17, 6:00 P.M.**
Family Simchat Torah Service
- ❖ **Friday, December 12, 6:00 P.M.***
Family Chanukah Dinner & Service
*Tentative
- ❖ **Friday, March 6, 7:00 P.M.**
Family Purim Dinner & Service
- ❖ **Thursday, April 2, 5:30 P.M.**
Second Night Passover Seder

To see the entire Beit Sefer Calendar for the year 2025-2026, [CLICK HERE](#).

January 4: Medot: Ashkenazi, Sephardi, Mizrahi
January 11: The Israeli Arab & the Palestinian Arab
January 18: No School - President's Day Weekend
January 25: Magic Carpet: The Ethiopians Arrive

Our Beit Sefer Students Made a Pretend Visit to The Dead Sea!

On Sunday, December 10th, our Beit Sefer students made a virtual visit to the Dead Sea as a part of their studies about the land of Israel. The mud from The Dead Sea is known to have therapeutic and beautifying properties (not that our kids need any beauty treatments!) See the photos below of our kids enjoying Dead Sea mud facials!







Chanukah is over, but [click HERE](#) to see photos of CBJ's Chanukah celebrations, including our family Chanukah Shabbat service and Latke dinner at The Loring Center and our chocolate gelt drop!

Our Teen Talk Learning and Social Program for our Post-B'nai Mitzvah Students has Started!



Teen talk is a joint learning and social program for our post-B'nai Mitzvah students (grades 8-12) that is a cooperative program between Congregation Beth Jacob and Cape Cod Synagogue in Hyannis and Falmouth Jewish Congregation. This program meets monthly on Sundays from 12:30 to 2:30 usually in a location in Sandwich which is equal distance for all 3 congregations. We will be discussing the Jewish view on mature topics that we cannot do at a younger age such as antisemitism or the Jewish view of afterlife as well as having the opportunity to meet and socialize with other Jewish teens in the area. The sessions will include lunch.

The highlight of each year will be a trip either to L'taken, the Reform movement's youth social justice training weekend in DC, to Jewish New York, or to follow in the footsteps of the Jews who impacted the Civil Rights Movement (a trip through key places in the deep south). This program also will facilitate going as a group to NFTY-NE (National Federation of Temple Youth-North East) social events in the Boston area.

Registration for this program is on the CBJ website under Beit Sefer. The cost of the program is \$100.

DATES FOR 2026:

January 11
February 8
March 8
April 12
May 17

**Are You in Your 20's or Early 30's?
Looking for a Social Group to Meet Other Jewish Individuals in the
Plymouth Area?
CBJ Gen Z is For You!**



For all those in their 20's and early 30's, CBJ has started a new social group to help meet other Jewish individuals your age in the Plymouth area. Singles and couples are welcome, and significant others need not be Jewish. The first meeting was held on October 21st at 6:15 pm at Tree House Brewing in Sandwich. To be put on the email list of their activities please email Noa Mills at noa.r.mills@gmail.com.



The Essential Prayers and Songs for Our Shabbat Evening Services

To access a document with YouTube videos of the prayers and songs that we sing at our Shabbat evening services, [click here](#).



**Limud Torah/Torah Study Group
with Rabbi Emeritus Lawrence Silverman
Monday mornings, from 8:30-9:45 am**

For updated information about meeting dates, please contact Rabbi Silverman at rabbilawrence@gmail.com.

To join the Zoom Meeting, click on the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/2947234661?pwd=RVFTQmFFYXBVWHRJQ3RkeDhjTVptZz09>

Meeting ID: 294 723 4661, Passcode: 720299

Social Action Overnights of Hospitality November 30 - April 4

CBJ is invited to participate with many of the Plymouth area churches in supporting **The Plymouth Taskforce to End Homelessness**. Starting on Sunday, November 30th, the Plymouth Taskforce to End Homelessness, in collaboration with the Father Bill's and Mainspring (FBMS) organization, will offer winter emergency shelter to 20-25 single individuals through Saturday, April 4th. The Taskforce needs folks to serve as Shelter Volunteers and Meal Providers. Shelter Volunteers commit to give one evening of their time from 4:45 to approximately 9:00 pm. They provide support to the FBMS staff. Meal Providers prepare meals at home to serve at the shelter. The shelter rotates weekly among three congregations beginning Sunday, November 30 th through Saturday, April 4th - Christ Church, First Baptist Church and St Mary's and St. Joseph Collaborative at St Mary's Parish Center, using the fellowship halls. Orientation is provided.

- To sign up as a Shelter Volunteer or Meal Provider, go to <https://www.mealtrain.com/trains/k4w5gd>. Slots for Meal Providers tend to fill up quickly.
- To review the Shelter Volunteer and Meal Provider guidelines, go to <https://plymouth-taskforce-homeless.org>
- Questions? Call Connie Melahoures, President of the Plymouth Taskforce to End Homelessness at 508.367.0516 or email conmel@aol.com



**PLEASE HELP THE LOCAL PLYMOUTH IMMIGRANT COMMUNITY
THROUGH THE NEW FORMED ACTION WITH NEIGHBORS GROUP
a collaboration of our local houses of worship**

If you have a monetary donation, please make the check out out and mail it to:

Peace Abbey Foundation
8 Town Square
Plymouth, MA 02360

We are collecting-

- Gift cards to Walmart, Market Basket
- Food: Dried white rice, dried black beans, red beans, canned beans, Goya spices, garlic powder, paprika, canola oil, pasta, canned tomato products, bags of onions, garlic, Goya cookies.
- Monetary donations for rent, legal aide, utilities
- Baby products: Diapers- Size 1,4,5 and 6, wipes, baby wash, baby lotion
- Kids/adult Clothing: hats, gloves, winter coats- 2T, 5, 6 (boys and girls), teens (boys and girls), adults (women and men), socks men and women, boys and girls, babies (infant, 4 mos, 6 months to 2T)

Together we CAN do what we cannot do apart.



The search for CBJ's future new home is over! At the Congregational meeting held on September 16th, a majority of our membership voted to approve the signing of the Purchase & Sale for the land located at 279 Summer Street in Plymouth for the purpose of erecting a Morton-style steel building for our new synagogue. Our new home will be fully handicapped accessible, will offer adequate parking, will have space for us to hold social and education events, will provide an inviting environment for our Hebrew School students to meet and learn, and will have a kitchen that is large enough to accommodate congregational dinners. This new space will give us the opportunity to grow and flourish far into the future.

The Purchase & Sale (P&S) Agreements for both the sale of our present building and the purchase of the new property have been signed, and we have made our initial deposit. The full Engineering Report has been completed, and we will apply for the required Town building permits. We expect to close by the end of January. The existing house on the property will be torn down, the land will be leveled, and we will hire an architect to design our new Morton-style steel building to be constructed on the site. Examples of Morton religious buildings can be seen at <https://mortonbuildings.com/projects/church>. The architectural renderings for the exterior and interior of our new building will be provided to the Congregation when they are available.

After the sale of our synagogue building in February, many congregants have asked about where we will conduct our Shabbat services and Hebrew School classes. Although we had anticipated sharing space with the First Baptist Church on Westerly Rd, unfortunately their building is in some disrepair and they do not feel they can offer us proper space at this time.

Our co-Presidents, Devon and Dianne, along with the Rabbi and the CBJ Board, are working with Plymouth area churches that have generously offered to share space in their buildings during our transition period. Updated information will be available in the Weekly Update as soon as arrangements have been finalized. Exciting times are ahead for Congregation Beth Jacob! Stay tuned!

Volunteers Needed!

We will be packing up our building and moving out on January 31. We will have multiple "packing" sessions so congregants can volunteer at a time that works for them. (Sisterhood will be taking care of the kitchen.) If you can, please select a time in the link to come help us pack. The more we pack ourselves, the less we pay the movers! [SIGN UP HERE.](https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F49ADAD28AAF49-60829151-cbjpacking?useFullSite=true#/)

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0F49ADAD28AAF49-60829151-cbjpacking?useFullSite=true#/>

Most things will go into storage, and some will go to wherever we are sharing space for the next year or so. We are getting closer to our forever home, and this is only the next step in our exciting journey!]

There's No Harm in Asking....



We are looking for individuals to host some services and our monthly potluck dinners in their home during the months our new building will be under construction. If you are willing to host a dinner and service in your home, please contact Rabbi Mills. (cbjpymouthrabbi@gmail.com)



As we all know, "It takes a village" to make an organization successful. There are many opportunities for congregants to lend their talents to the work that it takes to keep our congregation running smoothly.

Do you enjoy singing? Do you play a musical instrument? A few simple chords played on a guitar or the ethereal sound of a flute can do so much to enhance the beauty of our services. Are you adept with handling computer technology? We need someone in our congregation who is willing to assist with managing Zoom audio and video settings for our Shabbat services and other programs that are being streamed. There are so many different ways that your skills could enhance CBJ!

Please contact our co-Presidents, Devon Fernald and Dianne Bluestein, if you are able to help. president@cbjpymouth.org



Please Volunteer to Sponsor an Oneg!

If you would like to honor a special occasion (birthday, anniversary, etc.) in a very special way, please consider sponsoring an Oneg. A beautiful, welcoming Oneg table of challah, fruit, baked goods, or even ice cream sundaes is a sign of our warm hospitality to our congregants, guests, and prospective members.

When you are a member of our congregation, you are asked to step forward **once a year** to host or sponsor an Oneg Shabbat for the members who attend services in person. Sponsors are asked to contribute \$54.00 to cover the cost for the Oneg. We will purchase the foods for the Oneg table, set up and clean up. [Click here to sign up for a specific date and pay.](#) If you prefer, you may send a check, payable to CBJ Sisterhood, to Cindy Teles at 31 Birch Avenue, Plymouth, MA 02360.

Hosts are expected to purchase or bake the items for the Oneg and be there in person to help to set up and clean up. The choice of food items is up to you. The Oneg can be as elaborate or as simple as you like.

Please contact our Oneg Coordinator, Trish Garland ((trishrgarland@gmail.com) if you would like to sponsor or host an Oneg. Trish can provide advice about what items are popular, such as fresh fruit, nuts, baked goods (not necessarily homemade), ice cream with toppings, etc. It's a mitzvah!

MEMBERSHIP NEWS



Welcome to Our Newest Member!

Elayne (Laney) Kalaminsky

Laney is no stranger to CBJ. She has been a member of our CBJ family, off and on, for many years. She conducted a class in macrame for Sisterhood a couple of years ago, patiently guiding us in the intricate art of weaving and knotting colorful threads together into beautiful bracelets. (Editor's note: Although I am somewhat of an accomplished knitter, the art of macrame totally eluded me! My finished bracelet was far from beautiful!)

Welcome back, Laney!

If you would like to learn more about CBJ and are interested in becoming part of our Jewish community, please contact our Membership Chair, Barbara Aharoni, at ahabubs@gmail.com. [Click here for a link to CBJ's Application Form.](#)



Congregation Beth Jacob is grateful for all donations that are received. The following donations were recently received:

Yahrzeit/General Fund:

Allan & Judith Sherman - in loving memory of Allan's father, Louis Sherman

Rose Sherman Geller Fund for Jewish Family Life:

Allan & Judith Sherman - in loving memory of Judith's father, Max Krenis

New Building Fund:

Deb & David Dauer

High Holiday Appeal:

Jack & Nora Luftman

General Fund Donations:

Sue Resnick, in honor of the Resnick family, among whom were the Founders of CBJ:

Alice S. Resnick
Bernard T. Resnick
Bessie A. Resnick
Celia Resnick
Charlotte Helen Resnick
David Resnick
Frieda Resnick
Harold Michael Resnick
Ida B. Resnick
Joseph George Resnick
Louis Resnick
Maurice Benjamin Resnick
Morris Resnick
Nettie B. Resnick
Pauline Resnick
Rachel Resnick
Ralph Jacob Resnick
Samuel Resnick
Simon Resnick
Stanley Resnick
William David Resnick

Rachmiel Klein's Cantorial Services:

Allan & Judith Sherman



Funding for Rachmiel Klein's Monthly Cantorial Performances

Rachmiel has been a featured songleader at our Shabbat services over the past year, adding a new vibrancy and joy to our worship. His fee is not paid from your dues or from CBJ's General Fund, but is being subsidized by generous donations from a congregant family, together with contributions from the Ray & Milly Russo Fund for Music and the Arts and the Rose Sherman Geller Fund for Jewish Family Life. If you have been enjoying the music of Rachmiel Klein at our services, you may wish to contribute to those funds or make a small monthly donation designated for the funding of Rachmiel's cantorial services. [Click here for a list of funds where donations may be made.](#)

[Click here to make a donation online.](#)



Food Bank Donations to Families in Need

The need for food assistance is greater than ever in the Plymouth area, As of November first, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has had no government funding. This will affect 41.7 million Americans who depend on SNAP to feed their children and themselves, including our seniors. CBJ Beit Sefer has already been collecting food for Tikkun Olam.

Many of our congregants are anxious to respond to this outrage by donating to our CBJ Food Drive. Below are guidelines for what items are needed most urgently. **Please be aware that for donations to SNAP, the focus is on the quality and safety of canned goods rather than just the expiration date. High-acid canned goods (like tomatoes) are best within 18 months past the date, while low-acid foods (like meats and vegetables) can last 2-5 years or more.** [Click HERE for guidelines for what items are needed most urgently.](#) Please bring non-perishable food items, as well as disposable diapers and personal hygiene items, to the temple Social Hall when you attend services.

Cash Donations: If you wish to make a monetary donation, you may do so online [using this link](https://www.cbjplymouth.org/donate/donate-now), (<https://www.cbjplymouth.org/donate/donate-now>) or you may send a check to Congregation Beth Jacob, PO Box 3284, Plymouth, MA 02361, Attention: Treasurer. **Be sure to note that this is a donation for the Food Bank.**



Mi Sheiberach (Prayers for Healing)

We pray for the Healing and Recovery of the following people, as well as all of those throughout the world who are suffering from violence, war and famine:

Ina Lashin
Joseph Keller
Tracey Gutman
John R. Sore
Susan Basiri
Mary Ellen Dalgren
Maryann Leonard
Sandy Magnes Silverman
Julian Lindquist
Erin Sullivan
Linda Dauber
Susan Penchansky
Callan Crowley
Lynne Matson

Leslie Portney
Lauren DeFranzo
Nan Noble
Len Kaplan
Marilyn Levine
Andrea Weiss
Chris Davis
Ruth Anne Repking
Meredith Hoffman
Marlene Benjamin
Esther Rucha
Neil Rosenstrauch
Susan Moore
Trisha Brown
Rabbi Estelle Mills

[To hear the beautiful song, Heal Us Now, performed by Hazamir Hasharon, click here.](#)



Yahrzeits That Will be Observed This Month

(A memorial candle should be lit on the preceding evening.)

January

1 Alvin Weinstein	Peter Weinstein's father
2 Frank Kabelsky	CBJ Founder
2 Susanne Lelyveld Wittenberg	
3 William Smick	Arnold & Lois Weiss' family
4 Albert Keil	
5 Rhoda Burstein	Arnold & Lois Weiss' family
5 Louis Sherman	Allan Sherman's father
6 Esther Lee Bloom	Morris' Bloom's wife
6 Elaine Winter Brown	Sherri Sore's Mother
6 Kay Hodosh Falstein	Meredith Hoffman Silverman's aunt
6 Harvey Limon	Suzanne Goldberg's uncle
6 Ruth Ross	Janet Strauss' mother
7 Samuel Gereboff	Rose Geller's brother-in-law
8 Helen Evans	Pam Koplan's mother
8 Jacob Joseph Fortunow	
8 Adeline Winokur	Steve and Larry Winokur's mother
11 Ronald Goldberg	Susan Moore's father
12 Isadore Albert	Founder; Ruth Albert Shiff's father
12 Edith Beatrice Kagan	Adeline Keller's sister
12 Pauline Resnick	Bernard Resnick's mother
13 Jason Andrew Oak	Peter Weinstein's son
15 Shirley Lubin	Sandy Brooks' mother
15 Bessie Skulsky	Debbie Cohen's grandmother
16 Hyman J. Aranowitz	Manny Arons' father
16 Herb Brochstein	Glover Grandpa
19 Mendel Aranowitz	Manny Arons' grandfather
20 Harry Guttman	Rabbi Mills Uncle
20 David Resnick	CBJ Founder
20 Simon Resnick	CBJ Founder
20 Rebecca Shriber	Harriette Minsky's grandmother
21 Emil N. Winkler	Brenda Baler's father
22 Alan Koplan	Pam Koplan's husband
22 Louis Policow	
23 Irene Toabe Fagen	Mitchell Toabe's sister
23 Joseph Rains	Lois Klasky's grandfather
23 Samuel Resnick	Donna Matross's father
24 Philip Aranowitz	Manny Arons' family
24 Arthur Goodman	Harriet Goodman's husband

24 Rose Gottman	Rabbi Mills grandmother
25 Charles "Chuck" Ginsburg	Myra Glansberg's nephew
25 Fred Greenbaum	Ann Fried & Donald Greenbaum's father
25 William Lewis	CBJ Founder
25 Michel Toabe	CBJ Founder; Mitchell Toabe's grandfather
26 Karin Goldstein	CBJ member/CBJ historian
26 Seymore Horenstein	Ruth Horenstein's husband
26 Annie Mankoff	Adeline Winokur's mother
26 Barbara Righter	William Righter's Aunt
27 Shirley Greenbaum	Ann Fried and Donald Greenbaum's mother
27 William David Resnick	
27 Charles Righter	William Righter's grandfather
28 Hannah Cooper	William Righter's grandmother
29 Benjamin M. Feinberg	
29 Mildred Koplan	Alan Koplan's mother
29 Angy Moore	Susan Moore's mother
30 Reina Etta Feinberg	
30 Bernard Riback	Ronnie Hirschhorn's father

May their memory forever abide as a blessing.

Yahrzeit Donations

[Donations in memory of a loved one may be made here.](#)



**The Next Sisterhood Meeting
Monday, January 12, at 7:00 pm (Zoom)**

Regular Monthly Sisterhood Meetings: are held on the second Monday of each month. Your input is important to us! What sorts of programs would YOU like to participate in during the coming months? Future potential events include a mystery ride, a book discussion, a game night, a talent show, and a series of programs focusing on Jewish Women of Action. Please come to the meeting and share your ideas!

The Zoom link for Sisterhood Meetings:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81885106141?pwd=dHd6LzMzSTRJZ2J6VmM2WIBZenpXZz09>

Meeting ID: 818 8510 6141 Passcode: 579857

**Dues for 2025-2026 Are Now Due!
To join Sisterhood or to renew your membership, see below.**

Sisterhood has always been a backbone of CBJ, with its donation to the temple, the sponsoring of onegs and other events, and its various activities. In order for Sisterhood to continue in this vital role, we need you!!! **It is not necessary to be a member of CBJ to be a member of Sisterhood.**

There are 3 levels of dues: \$25- Ruby level; \$36- Emerald level; and \$54- Diamond level

Please send your check, payable to CBJ Sisterhood, to Cindy Teles at 31 Birch Ave. Plymouth, MA 02360.

OR

You may pay online at <https://my.cheddarup.com/c/cbj-sisterhood/items>



Sisterhood Application Form 2025-2026

Name _____

Phone _____ (home) _____ (cell)

Email _____

Area of interest _____

Talent you would be willing to share with the group _____

Program suggestions _____

If you prefer to be an inactive member, please indicate that preference here: _____

Dues are a primary source of funds for many projects. Even if you can't participate, please join us and support our important programs and activities. **You do not have to be a member of CBJ to join our Sisterhood (although we hope that you will!)**

Ruby Membership: _____ \$25.00

Emerald Membership: _____ \$36.00

Diamond Membership: _____ \$54.00

Make your check payable to Beth Jacob Sisterhood and put "Sisterhood Dues" in the Memo line. Please mail to: Cindy Teles, 31 Birch Avenue, Plymouth MA 02360.

NEW! ONLINE PAYMENTS ARE NOW AVAILABLE!

You may now pay your Sisterhood dues online! [CLICK HERE](#)! Be sure to note that your payment is for Sisterhood dues. Thank you!

CBJ Gift Card Program



Please support CBJ by purchasing Gift Cards. When you do, CBJ receives a substantial commission and it costs you nothing.

Which popular restaurants and retail firms participate in our Gift Card program? Texas Roadhouse, Panera, Chipotle, Olive Garden, Fridays, Chili's, and 99, along with retail firms such as Stop & Shop, Shaw's, Big Y, Walmart, TJ Maxx, Marshall's, Zappo's Walgreen's, CVS (gift cards can be used to pay for your prescriptions), Home Depot, and hundreds of others.

[Check out this link to get a partial listing.](#)

You Can Order Gift Cards Online!

To order gift cards online, download the RaiseRight app on your Smartphone or computer. Set up your method of payment. **Enter CBJ's Enrollment Code 3477L3C988L9 which will designate Congregation Beth Jacob as your organization.** The gift cards can be mailed to you, or better yet, they will be available instantly in digital form in your RaiseRight wallet on your phone. Gift cards can also be refilled online. How convenient is that!

You Can Now Book Travel through RaiseRight!

Make your earnings go the distance! You can now book hotels and car rentals directly through RaiseRight. Enjoy low prices, higher earnings, and the flexibility of booking with a credit or debit card while you raise money for CBJ! More information is available on RaiseRight.com.



Brotherhood Bowling

The 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the Month at 3:00 pm at Kingston Ten Pins

We bowl 3 strings and pay only the special rate of \$4.50/string. This is a great way to get together with other members of Brotherhood, renew old friendships, and make new ones. You don't have to be good at bowling to participate - all you need is a good sense of humor! Contact Seth Teles at scteles@aol.com or Arnold Gladstein at aralglad@verizon.net and let us know if you would like to join us. Is your spouse or significant other welcome? Of course!

Something a Little Different....

In reading a recent issue of the BBC newsletter, I stumbled across an article that intrigued me and I felt the need to share it. At a time when anti-semitism seems rampant and our world is torn by wars, racial and political divides, this story provided a glimmer of hope - a vision of what our humanity could become.

'I'm Muslim but I mark Shabbat': How an Indian man is keeping a Jewish legacy alive

By Anubha George



Sarah Cohen's Home.

That's the sign welcoming anyone who walks into Thaha Ibrahim's shop in a narrow cobbled lane in the southern Indian city of Kochi.

The bustling street, where vendors sell everything from antiques to Persian carpets and spices, is called Jew Town - some decades ago, every house on this street had a Jewish family, and the place was known as the Jewish quarter.

Thaha now runs the last Jewish embroidery shop in Kochi.

When some American tourists walked into the shop on a humid afternoon, Thaha, 55, was stitching a kippah, the traditional Jewish skullcap. The tourists gathered around a photograph on the wall which showed the then Prince Charles meeting the residents of Jew Town in 2013.

"That's Sarah aunty," Thaha told them, pointing at a woman with short white hair in the photo.

"This was Sarah Cohen's home and embroidery shop."



Sarah Cohen was part of a close-knit population of Jews whose ancestors settled down centuries ago in Kochi, once known as the Queen of the Arabian Sea for its importance as a port and a major spice trade centre.

Thaha has been running the shop since 2000 - first on Sarah's behalf while she was still alive, and taking over fully in 2019, when she died aged 96.

"I was like a son to her. I spent more time looking after her than my own mother," he says. "I'd buy her kosher food and fish, spend time at the shop which was also her home and leave only after closing up."

The unusual friendship between Sarah and Thaha - a Jewish woman and a Muslim man from different economic backgrounds - spanned nearly four decades.

When Sarah died, she left her shop to Thaha. He, in turn, promised to keep her memory and legacy alive in Jew Town - a place which had 2,500 Jews in the 18th Century and is now down to just one.

"In a way, I'm also trying to make sure the Jewish community here is not forgotten," says Thaha.

The most popular account of the arrival of Jews in Kerala dates back 2,000 years during the reign of King Solomon, the biblical king from the Old Testament.

They arrived as traders on the Malabar coast near the ancient port of Cranganore (now Kodungallur), later moving to Kochi. Their early settlements gave them the name Malabari Jews.

The next arrivals were Sephardic Jews fleeing Spanish persecution in 1492. Travelling via Portugal, Turkey and Baghdad, they reached Kerala, settled in Kochi, and came to be known as the Paradesi (foreign) Jews.

Together, the Malabari and Paradesi Jews became the Cochin Jews. They settled in Kochi, a long-time trading hub for the Portuguese, Arabs, British and Dutch, and lived under the protection of the Cochin king, which ensured their safety.

When Sarah was born in the early 20th Century, Jew Town was thriving. She and her husband Jacob, who was also born there, married in 1944.

Thaha met the Cohens by chance in the early 1980s. A school dropout at 13, he eked out a living by selling postcards to tourists.

Visitors to Jew Town would always go to the Paradesi synagogue, which was built in 1568 on land given to the community by the king of Cochin.

"There were lots of visitors and I would sell my postcards from morning till evening," he says.

But one Sunday, when the owner of a warehouse where Thaha stored his postcards didn't show up, Jacob offered him storage space in their home.

Sarah didn't like this, and Thaha recalls she barely spoke to him for three years.

"I'd run errands for her husband at times. Or when I'd watch cricket on their TV from outside their window, he'd invite me in," he recalls.

But one day she asked Thaha to help stitch a cushion cover for the synagogue. To their surprise, he had a natural knack for it - likely inherited from years spent assisting his tailor father.

"I didn't know I could draw patterns and stitch," he says.

Thaha, then 19, helped Sarah open what is still known as "Sarah's Hand Embroidery" from her living room. Here, she sold kippahs, challah covers (a special cloth used to cover bread) and menorahs (a candelabra used in Jewish worship).

"She taught me everything I know," Thaha says.

He's philosophical about his friendship with a Jewish family that has brought him much media attention over the years.

"The Jews and the Muslims in Jew Town didn't interact much. They were wary of each other," he says. "But Sarah aunty and Jacob uncle never made me feel like an outsider, despite our different backgrounds." (South Asians commonly use the terms 'aunty' and 'uncle' to refer to older people)

Thaha's parents didn't object to the friendship because, as they saw it, the Cohens were helping their son find a purpose in life.

But while Thaha and the Cohens were getting closer, the town's Jewish population dwindled - from 250 in the 1940s to 20 in the 1990s. Today, only one remains - 67-year-old Keith Hallegua, who used to work for a travel agency but has now retired.

Many families went to Israel after it became a country in 1948.

"Cochin Jews likely went to Israel because of the idea of going back to the homeland," says Anna Zacharias, who is doing a doctoral thesis on the Jews of Kerala. "But there were also economic factors such as the pull of a better life. They also felt there was a shortage of suitable marriage partners in Kerala."

But religious persecution was never a reason for Jews to leave multicultural Kochi, which had welcomed them for centuries. Some of the older Jews stayed on - including the childless Cohens.

Before Jacob died in 1999, he asked Thaha - who was married with three sons by then - to look after Sarah.

"I told Jacob uncle I will look after Sarah aunty if she allows me," he says. "I said if she allows me because in Islam it's important we honour a dying person's wish. If not, we commit a sin."

When Sarah's health declined, Thaha moved his family closer to Jew Town so they could help look after her. When she died, Thaha got a casket cover with the Star of David for her coffin. He still regularly visits her grave at the Jewish cemetery.

Thousands of tourists visit Kochi every year, including many Jews.

"Jews from around the world come to Jew Town because of a sense of belonging," says Anna Zacharias.

She points out that the Jews here survived for centuries and maintained their identity even in a majority Hindu city.

"Yet they were also integrated - for example, they spoke Malayalam, the local language," she says.

She is also fascinated by how Thaha is keeping Sarah's legacy alive.

"It's exemplary to see how a Muslim man took care of a Jewish woman. He still maintains the traditions she followed religiously."



Thaha has kept the shop the way it was when Sarah ran it. He shuts it on Saturday, the Jewish Shabbat.

"I'm a practising Muslim but I light a lamp on Friday evening to mark the start of Shabbat because it was important to Sarah aunty," he says.

"To me, it's not about religion but about humanity."

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Recipe for Broccoli Falafel

Here's a terrific recipe for vegetarians and meat-lovers alike. It's a healthy and delicious meal option. I found this on the website of a New Zealand food market. Enjoy!



Ingredients

1 large head broccoli, cut into chunks
½ cup frozen peas
1 cup fresh spinach
1 x 400g tin chickpeas, drained
¼ cup fresh parsley
¼ cup fresh mint
1 tsp ground cumin
Zest of 1 lemon
1 egg
½ tsp baking powder
Olive oil

Flatbreads, tzatziki and salad, to serve

Method:

1. Preheat your oven to 220 degrees celsius (425 fahrenheit) fan bake. Place the broccoli chunks, peas and spinach into a food processor, and pulse until the broccoli is finely chopped. Add the chickpeas, parsley, mint, cumin, lemon zest, egg and baking powder, and pulse until all the ingredients are fully incorporated.
2. Take heaped spoonfuls of falafel mixture and press together using your hands, then lay on a lined baking tray. Drizzle with olive oil, and place into the oven to bake for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and crisp.
3. Serve the cooked falafels with flatbreads, tzatziki and salad leaves, or store in the fridge for up to 4 days.