



Congregation
B'nai Israel
The Orthodox Synagogue for All Jews

the Voice

High Holiday Edition

VOLUME LXXXI · NUMBER 1

FALL 2023



A Message From Rabbi Brodkin

Dear Friends,

I hope you enjoyed a refreshing summer! As we approach 5784, we look forward to a sweet New Year. 5783 was a time of change and fulfillment for me. I experienced change in moving to a new community, and fulfillment in connecting with family and our new Kehila.

One of my goals in moving to the east coast was to gain more access to my kids. To that affect, it was gratifying to get involved in my son, Dov's, medical school application process. In one application essay, Dov wrote about growing up in Portland.



Dov explained that we were constantly hosting folks in our home, and he learned to communicate with all types of people. "During my childhood," he wrote, "we weren't taught 'how can we make things easier for us?' rather, 'what can we do to make others feel welcome?'"

This recollection is accurate. From veteran congregants to potential converts, Jewish neighbors or visitors, we hosted a myriad of people over the years. In fact, I recall running after Dov at age four while entertaining guests in our Sukkah. This past year, we began to host folks in our New Jersey home, and we hope for many more similar occasions.

I felt joy reading Dov's lessons learned from our home. We must constantly ask ourselves: how can we make others feel welcome? This lesson began with Avraham who welcomed guests to his tent.

How we make people feel welcome is a central question at any synagogue. After all, involvement in Shul life is not a mere transaction; it's a transformation. Becoming part of a Shul means that person starting to identify with the synagogue as one's spiritual home.

Here at B'nai Israel, we strive to keep this question at the forefront of our mind. When someone new walks into Shul, how can we make sure they find the right page in the Siddur, know their way around the building, or have someone to sit with at our Kiddush?

As we build on our welcoming environment, word will get out that B'nai Israel is THE place to be part of the Jewish community. It's my hope that every person—be they longtime member or passerby—will feel at home in our embrace.

In the spirit of welcoming, I hope you will enjoy our new quarterly format of The Voice. This Fall/High Holiday edition is designed to "welcome" and prepare you for the 5784 High Holiday experience.

When you come to Shul, keep in mind that all aspects of our program are open to you! If you choose to pray in the main sanctuary, you're welcome to join our Simcha Room Minyan any time you wish. Every aspect of our program is open to all congregants.

As we come together in 5784, let's ask ourselves: How can we make one another—and others—feel welcome at B'nai Israel?

Shana Tova,

Rabbi Ken Brodkin



A Message From Our President - Jay Fields

Welcome to the new format of the Voice. We decided that a more vibrant and quarterly version would be more impactful, in addition to our new monthly and condensed "Voice Express." We welcome your continued feedback.

There's a lot happening at Congregation B'nai Israel. If you haven't been to Shul in a few weeks, you need to stop by. In fact, please join us for a Shabbos morning or any of the weekday minyan.

We've brought in twelve new member families over this past year. We've held some exciting new programming, with the most recent event being our second annual Shul picnic. In total, we've held nearly two dozen events in the past year. Attendance has been excellent and people walk away asking for more.

Your Board is working hard to continue this exciting momentum. At our first meeting of the 2023-2024 term, I asked each Board member to send me a list of three items that they would like to see us accomplish over the coming year. The following were most prevalent:

- 1) **Community outreach for new members.** Without a doubt, engaging new members is vital for our Shul.
- 2) **Renovation.** Our sanctuary was built in the 1960s. It's time to bring it up-to-date. This is a major project that requires design and funds. This will not happen overnight, but we are actively discussing it.
- 3) **Learning opportunities.** Rabbi and Aviel Brodkin offered a number of classes over the past year, and we are pleased that people are interested in more.
- 4) **Supporting our minyanim.** It is imperative for an orthodox shul to have a daily minyan. We need your support! If each man would commit to two days a month or ideally one day per week, we would go a long way to solving this issue.
- 5) **Expanding the eruv.** While there is an eruv in our area, it does not encompass the housing behind our Shul. It is our goal to have this completed over the coming twelve months. An eruv is an important item for an orthodox community, especially for young families.

As you can see, we are working hard to move our Shul forward. We have scheduled board meetings on the third Tuesday of every month. Board meetings are open to all members. If you have any items that you wish to bring to the Board, please let me know or feel free to attend in person.

Shana Tova,

Jay Fields, President



High Holiday Campaign

I look forward to connecting with you during our upcoming High Holiday services. Whether you participate in the mixed seating or mechitza service, coming together as a Jewish community is impactful for so many people. I encourage you to experience all B'nai Israel has to offer this season including: a Rosh HaShana Kiddush; Shabbat Shuva when we will dedicate the Bloom Family Shabbos House and remember our friend, Larry Bloom;



a (quick) community Yom Kippur break-fast, sukkah decorating; "Pizza in the Hut;" and so much more!

Our synagogue is a pillar of Jewish life here in Central Jersey, as we offer weekly and monthly programs and services that are vital to Jewish life. Our congregants share a love for this community, our Synagogue, and our collective desire to see it succeed!

We have lofty goals for the upcoming fiscal year, including to fund a dedicated childrens' / parents' room, clean / repair various aspects of our building, and hire a dedicated program manager to further boost our programming, learning opportunities and community involvement.



Our annual dues and monthly donations do not cover the expenses of the Shul, and each year we rely on the generosity of our membership. Your donations help ensure we can continue to grow, flourish, and remain a warm and welcoming home for all Jews for years to come.



At Kol Nidrei, we come together as a community, for our community. When you receive your pledge cards at services or thereafter in the mail, please consider a generous donation to our appeal. We need your support and appreciate your commitment to helping us reach 100% community participation in this High Holiday campaign. For those looking to help in other ways, consider donating your time. With our increased programming and revitalized morning minyans, we are always in need of human help.

If you have questions or would like to discuss these or other ways to help, please reach out to me at stepper@bnaiisraelnj.org.

Wishing you all a happy, healthy, and prosperous 5784!

Shari Tepper, Treasurer

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High Holiday Schedule

Saturday, September 9

Selichos, 11:00 pm

Friday, September 15, Erev Rosh HaShana

Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat & Maariv, 6:40 pm

Saturday, September 16, First Day Rosh HaShana

Shacharit, 8:30 am
Kids' Time, 11:30 am
Mincha & Maariv, 6:40 pm
Candle Lighting, Second Day Rosh HaShana, After 7:45 pm

Sunday, September 17, Second Day Rosh HaShana

Shacharit, 8:30 am
Mincha, 6:40
Maariv, 7:35 pm
Havdala, 7:44 pm

Monday September 18, Fast of Gedalia

Fast Begins, 5:39 am
Shacharit, 7:00 am
Community Tashlich, 6:30 pm
Fast Concludes, 7:42 pm

Saturday, September 23, Shabbat Shuva

Shacharit, 9:00 am

Shabbat Teshuva Drasha:
Fleeing From God: Why Did Yona Run?
with Rabbi Brodtkin

Plus dedication of the Larry Bloom Shabbat House

Sunday, September 24, Erev Yom Kippur

Shacharit, 8:30 am
Mincha, 4:00 pm
Candle Lighting, 6:33 pm
Fast Begins, 6:51 pm
Kol Nidrei & Maariv, 7:00 pm

Monday, September 25, Yom Kippur

Shacharit, 8:00 am
Yizkor, 10:30 am
Kids' Time, 12:00 pm
Mincha, 4:50 pm
Ne'ila, 6:15 pm
Fast Ends & Havdala, 7:31 pm

Friday, September 29, Erev Sukkot

Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat, 6:30 pm

Saturday, September 30, First Day Sukkot

Shacharit, 9:00 am
Mincha & Maariv, 6:15 pm
Candle Lighting, Second Day Sukkot, after 7:21 pm

Sunday, October 1, Second Day Sukkot

Shacharit, 9:00 am
Mincha, 6:25 pm
Maariv, 7:15 pm
Havdala, 7:21 pm

Thursday, October 5

Community Sukkot Celebration,
Pizza in the Hut, 6:00 pm

Friday, October 6, Hoshana Rabbah

Shacharit, 7:00 am
Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat, 6:15 pm

Saturday, October 7, Shemini Atzeret

Shacharit, 9:00 am
Yizkor, 10:30 am
Mincha & Abbreviated Yizkor, 6:00 pm
Maariv & Hakafof, 6:45 pm
Candle Lighting for Simchas Torah, after 7:10 pm

Sunday, October 8, Simchas Torah

Shacharit & Hakafof, 9:00 am
Mincha, 6:15 pm
Maariv, 7:00 pm
Havdala, 7:09 pm

Shabbat Shuva Drasha

Fleeing From God: Why Did Yona Run?
with Rabbi Ken Brodtkin

PLUS Dedication of the
Larry Bloom Shabbat House



September 23

START YOUR WEEK OFF RIGHT AT B'NAI ISRAEL...

Sunday mornings, 8:30 am Minyan followed by
coffee & croissants, plus 15 minutes of Torah

Starting October 15

Pizza in the Hut

Community
Sukkot celebration

October 5, 6:00 pm



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New Staff Profile - Get to know Faina Smekhov

B'nai Israel is excited to announce that **Faina Smekhov** will be joining our professional team! Faina will be serving the synagogue as our **Synagogue Administrator**, starting in early September. In her role as Synagogue Administrator, Faina will be engaged in a wide array of congregational activities, from supporting our members to programs and events, daily operations and more. Faina's extensive professional background in property management, accounting, and project management will serve her well as she transitions to the synagogue team. "I'm very excited to join the B'nai Israel family and bring my experience and passion to serve the local Jewish community," Smekhov said. Faina resides here in Manalapan along with her husband Alik and their children, where she is very involved in the local Jewish community. Welcome aboard Faina!



New Member Profile - Get to know Ben & Jen Fishbaum

Where are you originally from? And how long have you been in Manalapan?

We are from Brooklyn, NY and have been in Manalapan a little over a year.



What attracted you to Manalapan?

We moved to Manalapan for the great schools and Orthodox life! Our daughter, Aria, age 6, is in Milford Brook Elementary School. Our younger daughter, Lielle, age 2, is at home now and will attend school in a few years. Jen is a Certified Behavioral Analyst and coach and Ben is an Operations Manager for an e-commerce business.

What are your hobbies and interests?

We enjoy cooking together as a family and hanging out with friends!

What is your favorite part of B'nai Israel?

Everyone is so kind, friendly, and welcoming and we appreciate all the different things the Rabbi and Rebbetzin are doing with member engagement.

Congregation B'nai Israel

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Minyan Times:

Saturday: Shacharis, 9:00 am

Sunday & legal holidays: Shacharis, 8:30 am

Monday – Friday: Shacharis, 7:00 am

Friday: Mincha & Kabbalat Shabbat, 7:00 pm



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