

# The Kibbitzer

**Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon**  
706 Bryan Road, Brandon, FL 33511  
Phone (813) 681-6547  
[www.BethShalomBrandon.org](http://www.BethShalomBrandon.org)

March 2024 Volume 34 Issue 10



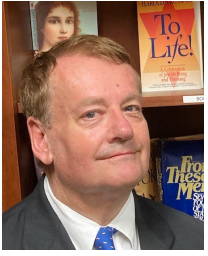
Queen Esther Purim Art  
Krypto Tree Art

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## From the Rabbi's desk...



### A Jewish Girl Wins the Beauty Contest

King Ahasuerus marries a Jewish woman by the name of Esther, who uses her position ultimately to save the Jewish people. Mordechai, a cousin of Queen Esther, kept their religious origins a secret. Haman, the adviser to the King and who was very powerful,

became infuriated with Mordechai because he did not bow down to him.

As a direct result of this interaction with Mordechai, Haman brilliantly conceives an evil plot to exterminate the Jews. Haman thereupon tells the King that he should not tolerate the Jews to continue to exist because they are of no use to the King's empire. The King agrees to Haman's plan. However, the King and Haman are unaware that Queen Esther is Jewish. Mordechai advises Queen Esther to speak with the King to plead for mercy on behalf of her Jewish brethren.

In hindsight, we can now see how G-d orchestrated the placing of Queen Esther in the palace of the King to defuse this crisis of the Jewish people. She was successful in turning King Ahasuerus against his evil adviser, Haman, who was eventually hanged, and she saved the lives of the Jews.

As a Jewish community, we need to be very cautious of any type of mistreatment of any Jew. Antisemitism is on the rise, and we have to deal with all these terrorist groups in such a way that they understand that their antisemitic actions will not be tolerated. There are many Hamans in the world.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Robert Lefkowitz





## The President's Corner



Steve Billor

Shalom Everybody!

Hope everybody is doing well. It has been a spiritual month for me this past January, enjoying Shabbat services and spending time with my Beth Shalom Family. We had such a wonderful turnout at Stephen Feldman's Celebration of Life. Rabbi Lefkowitz did such a wonderful job officiating the event and it was so nice seeing people come and honor Steve and show support to Anna. We had a nice Dinner with the Tribe at "The Yummy House" in Tampa. Loved their round spinning tables, so you can steal food from others! (LOL)

We continue to bring in new families one at a time. We just received a new family membership application this second week in February and will be voting them in, during our next board meeting. It is so exciting getting new families and watching our congregation grow.

Gabe Lifschitz continues to push forward with the endless paperwork necessary to spend the Federal Grant money we have been awarded. We will soon be looking for companies to begin working on our projects. Thank you very much, Gabe!

Faith Family Church is planning another CBS Bingo on Sunday, March 3<sup>rd</sup> from 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM and I hope we have a nice turnout. The money donated goes to the Food Bank and a small portion comes back to the Temple to help with our utility bills associated with running the event.

I would like to ask people to continue keeping Anna Feldman in your prayers. She has so much to do to get her affairs in order. In addition, please keep Shelia and Errol Fishman in your prayers as well. For those who do not know them, they were long-standing and very active members of CBS. Shelia was a previous CBS President and is fighting cancer. Errol Fishman was my son's Hebrew School Teacher. They are both wonderful and giving souls. So, I would like to suggest how important it is to become involved with your Jewish Family and Congregation. Life is Fragile and Short, and we should all "be all that we can be" while we are still able to.

As always, Todah Rabah (Thank you very much) for being a part of the Beth Shalom Family and for your time in reading this article.

Steve Billor



# Building and Grounds



**Gabe Lifschitz**

While CBS continues to provide its services to the community, attract new members, and sponsor Faith Family Church, the temple and property at large require attention in maintenance and repair. Every other month I write to emphasize that our building needs your help and contributions. While I receive notes of gratitude and recognition, the reality is that taking care of our second home is much more than whatever effort I put into it, and I lean much on everyone who can contribute. Even if you can only help to keep the building tidy it goes to great lengths to make maintenance and upkeep easier. There is a path ahead to do some temporary fixes and I will mention a few below.

The rain gutter on the south wall is corroding and some sections have opened a path for rainwater to stream down the wall instead of channeling to each downspout. A proposed repair to corroded sections of the gutter proves too expensive and is outside our budget while we tend to other pressing needs. A gutter replacement contractor sent a quote that is much higher and unaffordable unless someone is willing to pay for it. As a temporary fix, the plan is to do a job in-house to fasten in place sheets of the same type of metal used to make gutters and use a water sealant, with all the materials available at the local home improvement store. This fix does not remove us from the long-term responsibility to replace the affected sections and look forward to the time when the gutter is in good condition for many years ahead.

Recently, the door lock system became faulty. While other items in the building require attention, door security is a high priority and bumps everything else that needs to be done. A service provider submitted a quote to do diagnostic work, and the plan is to trace the problem internally within CBS and find out if the affected parts can be replaced at a lower cost than the quote to do diagnostics.

Based on at least two examples above, I ask that if you have good handyman skills, are good with power tools, or know a good handyman, please send me a note at: [cbs-building@outlook.com](mailto:cbs-building@outlook.com)

I now write to remember Steven Feldman whom I shared many experiences with, mostly in the form of intellectual conversations over religion, freedom, and rights. While in years past we worked in the team to assemble Sukkas and set tables for the holiday dinners, there was that time several years ago when Steve crafted a strategic plan to bring the temple back together when COVID was causing emotional stresses in the congregation. He was careful to ensure that words about mutual respect, limiting what to write in emails and being kind to each other were brought to the forefront and calm down emotions while assessing and resolving controversy. These were difficult times when members left the congregation, but Anna and Steve stayed strong. For this as an example of Steve's character and I miss him as a friend, fellow veteran, and his Jewish values.

Thank you.



### **Building/Capital Fund**

Gerry Pliner

### **Caring Committee**

Judith Pliner

### **Dinner With the Tribe**

Anita Clifford

### **Eblast:**

Toby Koch and Carol Anne Friedman

### **Facility and Safety**

Gabe Lifschitz

### **Finance**

Gerry Pliner

### **Fundraising**

Open

### **Kibbitzer Editor**

Lynn Kaler

### **Library**

Steve Hindin

### **Membership**

Judith Pliner

### **Men's Club**

Myron Feldman

### **Onegs**

Marilyn Sobel

### **Page Turners**

Toby Koch & Anna Feldman

### **Publicity**

Toby Koch

### **Religious School**

Rabbi Lefkowitz

### **Ritual**

Toby Koch

### **Social Action**

Open

### **Web Administrator**

Toby Koch

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provides a meaningful spiritual home for people of all ages and levels of knowledge, a place to learn and to question, a place to worship and to celebrate, and a place to find a community that cares.

### **We offer:**

- ✧ Friday worship services at 7:00 PM
- ✧ Complete B'nai Mitzvah preparation
- ✧ Adult Education classes
- ✧ Communitywide events
- ✧ Community Food Bank

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# Candle Lighting Times

| DATE             | TIME    | PARSHA    |
|------------------|---------|-----------|
| Friday, March 1  | 6:12 PM | Ki Tisa   |
| Friday, March 8  | 6:16 PM | Vayak'hel |
| Friday, March 15 | 7:20 PM | Pekudei   |
| Friday, March 22 | 7:24 PM | Vayikra   |
| Friday, March 29 | 7:27 PM | Tzav      |



# Oneg Schedule

## March Sponsors

*There can be no joy without food and drink.*

Talmud, Mo'eJ Katan

|                 |                  |   |
|-----------------|------------------|---|
| <b>March 1</b>  | CBS Congregation | Please bring a dish to share                      |
| <b>March 8</b>  | Anna Feldman     | In honor of Anna's and Meral Ginsberg's birthdays |
| <b>March 15</b> | CBS Congregation | Please bring a dish to share                      |
| <b>March 22</b> | CBS Congregation | Please bring a dish to share                      |
| <b>March 29</b> | CBS Congregation | Please bring a dish to share                      |

**If you'd like to sponsor an oneg, please call**

**Marilyn Sobel at (813)727-1189 or nurseknitter@aol.com**





# *Shabbat Morning Services*

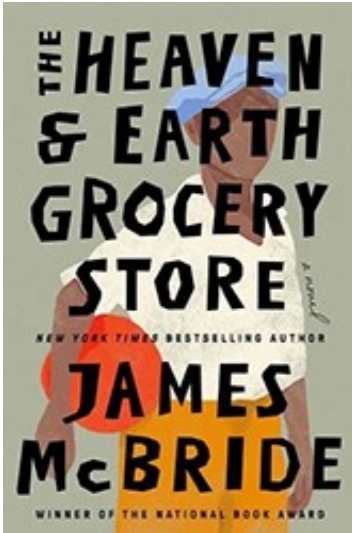
*Saturday, June 15, 2024 at 10:00 AM*  
*Saturday, September 7, 2024 at 10:00 AM*  
*Saturday, December 7, 2024 at 10:00 AM*

If you'd like to join our group of Torah readers,  
please contact Neil Spindel at 813-597.6880



# The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store

By James McBride



**AN INSTANT *NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER**

**A *NEW YORK TIMES* NOTABLE BOOK**

**NAMED A BEST BOOK OF THE YEAR BY *NPR/FRESH AIR*, *WASHINGTON POST*, *THE NEW YORKER*, AND *TIME MAGAZINE***

James McBride's latest novel takes place on Chicken Hill, the low-income section of Pottstown, PA. In the 1910s, its inhabitants are primarily Jews and African Americans. But by the 1930s, almost all residents are African American — except for Moshe and Chona, a white Jewish couple who own and operate The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store. Chona was raised in this store and has decided to keep it rather than leave, as the rest of the Jews have; and, as a result, she's built loving relationships with the Black folk in town. When they call on her to hide a young disabled boy from authorities who want to put him in a mental institution, she quickly takes up the cause.

There are a number of novels that examine the relationships between Jews and African Americans, but few do so as expert-ly and elegantly as McBride's. After years of cultivating warm relationships with their African American neighbors, the Jews move away to be nearer to the white Christians in the "better" part of town. They become wary of the Black folk, seeing proximity to them as a stain that will keep them from advancing out of their social class. The African Americans recognize the Jews' attitude toward them and become resentful. Of course, there's Chona, who, with her immense love and compassion, transcends this divide. Even still, there are those on Chicken Hill who don't trust her kindness and charity. Her husband Moshe has his concerns, too: is it worth it, he asks her, to keep operating the store when they have the means to move out and live in a "better" neighborhood? These many conflicting outlooks intersect to create a robust picture of interracial relationships at a pivotal time in American history.

Early in the book, Dodo, the boy whom Chona is meant to protect, gets taken to the mental institution. This propels the novel into its second act: plotting and ultimately executing a rescue mission. Many communities work together, not just the Jews and the African Americans on Chicken Hill, but also a group of African Americans known as the Lowgods, a group that doesn't want to associate with the other African Americans. They feel that those living on Chicken Hill are too much like the white folk, that they reject their African heritage. Inside the mental institution, living conditions are terrible, and a child-predator LowGod works on the floor on which Dodo's being housed — all of which adds pressure for the characters to act fast.

These characters are just as compelling as the plot; most would be worthy of having a novel centered on them. There's Paper, a Black woman who's beloved by all the men on Chicken Hill and is the community's primary source of news. One morning a week, she comes to the Heaven & Earth Grocery Store to share her gossip, consistently gathering together a large crowd. There's Malachi, a Hasidic immigrant from Eastern Europe who's known for his incredible dancing and who, unlike Moshe, believes that Black people have it better in America than Jews because "at least they know who they are." The novel cycles between points of view, allowing for Paper, Malachi, and many others to have their stories told.

*The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store is an excellent read for those interested in American history, and it is another example of James McBride's talent as a novelist.*

Review by Benjamin Selesnick—January 8, 2024 in the Jewish Book Council

*Benjamin Selesnick lives and writes in New Jersey. His writing has appeared in decomP, Lunch Ticket, Santa Fe Writers' Project Quarterly, and other publications. He holds an MFA in fiction from Rutgers-Newark.*

# Reading the Megillah

myJewishLearning.com  
By Rabbi Ronald H. Isaacs

The Scroll of Esther, known as the *Megillah*, is chanted in the synagogue on the eve of Purim and again the next morning. It is the last of the five scrolls that form part of the third division of the Bible, known as the *Ketuvim*, or Writings.

*Megillat* Esther tells the story of the salvation of the Jews of the Persian Empire. The Scroll of Esther is universally known as the *Megillah*, not because it is the most important of the five scrolls, but due to its immense popularity, the prominence that is given to its public reading, and the fact that it is the only one that is still generally read from a parchment scroll. At one time, it was normative for every Jewish household to possess a Megillah, and much time and skill were devoted to the production of beautifully illuminated texts and elaborate wooden and silver cases that would house the scroll.

The primary synagogue observance connected with Purim is the reading of the Book of Esther, called the Megillah (“scroll”). It is traditionally read twice: in the evening, after the *Amidah* prayer of the *Maariv* service and before the *Aleinu*, and in the morning after the Torah reading.

The Megillah is read from a parchment scroll that is written the same way a Torah is written — by hand, with a goose quill. If there is no such scroll available, the congregation may read the Book of Esther from a printed text, without the accompanying benedictions.

The Book of Esther is chanted according to a special cantillation used only in the reading of the Book of Esther. [This cantillation parodies the tropes used for reading at other times of the year.] If no one is present who knows this cantillation, it may be read without the cantillation, as long as it is read correctly. According to the Code of Jewish Law (*Orach Chayim* 690:9), it may be read in the language of the land. In practice, however, the usual custom is to chant the Megillah from the scroll in its original Hebrew.

Before the reading, the custom is to unroll the scroll and fold it so that it looks like a letter of dispatch, thus further recalling the story of the great deliverance.

## Contemporary Observances:

A festive meal, packages of food and other small treats offered to friends and family (*mishloach manot*), and gifts to the poor (*matanot la'evyonim*) as cited in Esther 9:22 remain key components of traditional celebrations until today. Purim is a holiday where celebrants are obligated to be happy — and to drink until they are unable to tell the difference between Mordecai and Haman (Babylonian Talmud, Megillah 7b). The reading of the Book of Esther from an actual scroll, often an object of special decoration and care, is performed with distinctive cantillation on both the evening and morning of Purim. These readings include numerous ancient customs, among which are jeering and making noise each time the villain Haman’s name is mentioned, as well as reciting the names of Haman’s 10 sons in one breath.

\*Edited for length



# Why I Am Observing International Agunah\* Day

Lilith.org  
Rishe Groner  
February 28, 2018

In a luxurious bedroom in an elegant estate somewhere in Iran thousands of years ago, a woman lies on a velvet chaise. Bedecked in jewels and the finest silks, she's trapped. In a marriage to a man she never chose, forced to play to his whims and go only when she is summoned, she has no agency in her life. Her gilded cage is the only life she knows.

In Israel, America and throughout the world today, in spaces far less luxurious, women are similarly trapped. The first woman is a Queen, Esther of the story of Purim, trapped in an unwanted marriage with the king of Persia; the others are women around the world. But no matter how silky the sheets, the pain is still paramount.

When Purim approaches, our conversation centers around the miraculous shift from despondency to hope; from mourning to joy. The term used in the scroll of Esther is wonderfully alliterative: "*Venahapoch hu!*" And it flipped over. Turns right around. We talk about Purim as being topsy turvy, and that's why it's traditional to dress in costume, make irreverent plays (Purim shpiels) and even ridiculous words of Torah (Purim Torah). It's about, to quote my senior year high school essays, highlighting the absurdity of the issue. The Jews were a minority people, on the verge of cultural genocide. An unpredictable plot twist occurs—a queen (female! Of all people!) obtains a place of power, and then the gallows that were intended for Mordechai were used to hang his enemy instead.

In the world we live in now, where so much is absurd and inane, I'm praying that the energy of Purim helps us turn things right side up.

*\*An agunah is a woman indefinitely stuck in an unwanted marriage, in which the husband is gone but she is still considered married. It is the word for a woman's perpetual state of limbo, in which she is chained to a man who has complete freedom to move, marry, produce offspring and live a normal life.*





# Congregation Beth Shalom

## Shabbat Services

**Can't make it to services? Join us online with a live feed from Zoom or Facebook!**

**Zoom Link:**

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89710744448?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89710744448?pwd=dkpTR2RFcGtNzdZVFc1Uk5wMFpiQT09)  
[pwd=dkpTR2RFcGtNzdZVFc1Uk5wMFpiQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89710744448?pwd=dkpTR2RFcGtNzdZVFc1Uk5wMFpiQT09)**

**Meeting ID: 897 1074 4448**

**Passcode: 721348**

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**Find the Mishkan Tefilla (Siddur):**

**[https://www.ccarnet.org/publications/mishkantfilahforshabbat/?fbclid=IwAR2sT9TxlbCvAT\\_VGvYArkHVRfMZTkvxVuSjKSXodlExMFCl7LWOACMzwA](https://www.ccarnet.org/publications/mishkantfilahforshabbat/?fbclid=IwAR2sT9TxlbCvAT_VGvYArkHVRfMZTkvxVuSjKSXodlExMFCl7LWOACMzwA)**

### CBS Office Hours

The administrative office is currently open by appointment only. We can be reached by calling the office, (813)681-6547, email, [cbsbrandon@outlook.com](mailto:cbsbrandon@outlook.com) or you may contact Rabbi Lefkowitz on his phone or email. (407)222-6393 or [rlefkowi@bellsouth.net](mailto:rlefkowi@bellsouth.net).

Rabbi Lefkowitz will be available for in person meetings on Fridays. You may call him directly to schedule an appointment.

Although our hours are limited, we are always here for you. Do not hesitate to reach out with any needs, concerns, or questions.

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provides a meaningful spiritual home for people of all ages and levels of knowledge, a place to learn and to question, a place to worship and to celebrate, and a place to find a community that cares.

#### We offer:

- ✧ Friday worship services at 7:00 PM
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*Call Judith Pliner (856) 8162174*

# Dinner With the Tribe

## Tibby's New Orleans Kitchen

### Tibby's New Orleans Kitchen

1721 W Brandon Blvd

Brandon, FL 33511

Saturday

March 30, 2024

6:00 PM

If it has been a while since you sampled New Orleans style food, you are in luck! Our next Dinner with the Tribe will be held at Tibby's New Orleans Kitchen.

Please let me know you will be there, and I'll add you to our group reservation. I must let them know how many to expect. Looking forward to seeing you there! Thanks, Anita.

You can reach me at [niewdnarb@yahoo.com](mailto:niewdnarb@yahoo.com) or 813-545-8769.



Friday, March 8th at 6:30 PM  
Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon will have a Tot Shabbat. Toddlers, preschoolers, and children in early grades of elementary school are all welcome. Rabbi Lefkowitz and Cantorial Soloist, Sandy Santucci will be running the program.



Faith Family Church will now be taking over the Food Bank. A great big thank you to Meral Ginsberg for getting this enormous project up and running. You and your group of helpers have done an amazing job, and we appreciate all your hard work.

Bingo is going to be held on Sunday, March 3 from 1:00 to 3:00. Let's turn out to support this Food Bank Fundraiser!



| B  | I  | N          | G  | O  |
|----|----|------------|----|----|
| 13 | 18 | 37         | 58 | 61 |
| 6  | 27 | 32         | 54 | 65 |
| 1  | 19 | FREE SPACE | 56 | 67 |
| 15 | 25 | 38         | 55 | 69 |
| 14 | 29 | 36         | 59 | 66 |



# Photos from Superbowl Party



Jackie & Myron Feldman,  
our party hosts

# DWTT Bernini's Night





# Our Congregation

## Yahrzeits



|      |            |          |               |           |           |
|------|------------|----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 3/8  | Charlie    | Reisner  | Uncle         | Of Gary   | Ronay     |
| 3/8  | Lillian    | Santucci | Mother-In-Law | Of Sandy  | Santucci  |
| 3/9  | Ely        | Sandberg | Father        | Of Sandy  | Santucci  |
| 3/10 | Louis      | Kay      | Grandfather   | Of Iylene | Miller    |
| 3/11 | Irwin      | Zazulia  | Uncle         | Of Iylene | Miller    |
| 3/26 | Joseph     | Koch     | Father        | Of Toby   | Koch      |
| 3/28 | Pascuala   | Roldan   | Mother        | Of Julie  | Shienbaum |
| 3/31 | Jeffrey S. | Zazulia  | Brother       | Of Iylene | Miller    |

## Birthdays

|      |        |          |
|------|--------|----------|
| 3/9  | Anna   | Feldman  |
| 3/11 | Carole | Plesur   |
| 3/12 | Sandy  | Schwartz |
| 3/17 | Felica | Melcer   |
| 3/18 | David  | Friedman |

## Anniversaries

|      |                          |
|------|--------------------------|
| 3/13 | Howard and Dee Korn      |
| 3/27 | Myron and Jackie Feldman |
| 3/27 | Toby Koch and Alan Weiss |



# Donations

## In Loving Memory

### Stephen Feldman

*Husband of Anna Feldman*

Sheryl & Mark Finke

Sharon & Ira Albert

Stephen Osborne

Carol Anne & Dave Friedman

### Phyllis Newman

*Mother of Jeff Newman*

Lynn & Larry Kaler

### Allan Krone

*Brother of Ilene Schwartz*

Carol Anne & Dave Friedman

**Berne Luboxme** (*father*)

**Florence Plesur** (*MIL*)

**Esther Lubofsky** (*Aunt*)

Carole Plesur

**Sally Bloom**

**Lou Verlin**

Gail Verlin

**Nathan Spindel**

Neil Spindel

## Bricklet

Toby Koch & Alan Weiss

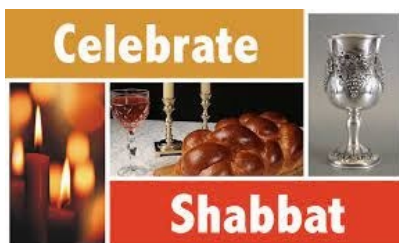
## HH Donation

Gail Verlin

Carol Anne & Dave Friedman

## General Fund

Neil Spindel



Marilyn Sobel



**Marilyn Sobel** has graciously taken on the job of being our new oneg chairperson. If you are celebrating a birthday, anniversary, or any life cycle event, sponsoring an oneg is just the way to commemorate your special event. Enjoying an oneg after our worship service is a terrific way to usher in Shabbat. If you'd like to sign up for an oneg, you may reach Marilyn at (813)727-1189 or nurseknitter@aol.com



The Jewish Telegraphic Agency — The Noshers' partner site — is excited to announce a new documentary podcast series:  
**The Nightingale of Iran.**



It was a golden age for Jews in Iran. In the 1950s, a religious Jew — Younes Dardashti — became a national celebrity, singing at the Shah's palace and on the radio. In the 1960s, his son Farid became a teen idol on TV. They were beloved by Iranian Muslims. But at the height of their fame, they left the country.

It has always been a mystery to our host Danielle Dardashti and her sister Galeet — why did their family leave Iran? Now, in a documentary podcast series, the sisters reveal painful secrets unspoken for generations. **The Nightingale of Iran** is a story that will resonate with outsiders everywhere.

The first episode is now available to listen to on all podcast platforms. Episodes drop every Tuesday through March 12. Listen and subscribe wherever you listen to podcasts!



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# Donation Opportunities

Congregation Beth Shalom accepts donations for many purposes, with a variety of opportunities for donors to support the good works of the Temple. You may contact the office either by phone or email to contribute, or head to our website to make a secure online payment through a PayPal account or by using a credit card.

## Funds:

- **General Fund** (unrestricted): An unrestricted gift to the General Fund allows the temple to use those funds wherever they may be needed most. This fund incorporates contributions received from our High Holy Day Appeal, Yahrzeit donations, Bricklets, AdoptABook, Tree of Life (unless otherwise indicated) and other nonrestricted gifts.
- **Building Fund:** A fund to ensure the continuing physical growth of our spiritual home. Intended for capital improvements and major building repairs.
- **Endowment Fund:** Gifts to this fund are placed in an investment account and temporarily restricted or can be defined/restricted by the donor. This fund ensures the future of our temple.
- **Religious School Scholarship Fund:** These funds will be made available to Religious School students who are in need of tuition assistance, as determined confidentially by the Treasurer.
- **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund:** a fund for assistance to families in need, scholarship assistance, interfaith council, Holocaust museum and other endeavors at the Rab-

If you wish to designate a gift to a particular purpose, for example, Food Bank, Choir, Oneg, Social Action, etc., you may do so by noting as such on your payment method or with an accompanying note; otherwise, your gift will be used where it is needed most.

## Opportunities:

- **AdoptABook:** A dedication label will be placed in one of our prayer books, to commemorate a simcha or in honor or memory of a loved one for just \$54.
- **Bricklets:** For as little as \$9 you can send a Bricklet Card instead of buying a card for birthdays, condolences, etc. A Bricklet Card in your name will be sent to the person you wish stating that a donation has been made in his or her name to Beth Shalom to honor the occasion.
- **Tree of Life:** The Tree of Life is on the back wall of our Sanctuary. An engraved leaf or stone can commemorate many simchas, b'nai mitzvah, wedding, birth, graduations, etc. Leaves are \$180, and stones are \$1800.
- **Yahrzeit Plaque:** To honor the death of a loved one, you may purchase a plaque that will be cared for in perpetuity for \$350. The name of the deceased along with their date of death is included on the plaque.

## Congregation Beth Shalom - Donation Form

At times of sorrow & memory, as well as at times of joy, tradition teaches us that we honor others by giving of tzedakah. Please return your completed donation form to the temple office.

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

In Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Donor's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\$18\_\_\_\_\_ \$36\_\_\_\_\_ \$54\_\_\_\_\_ \$180\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

### Designated Fund:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> General Fund   | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Group Fund                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Endowment Fund | <input type="checkbox"/> Rabbi's Discretionary Fund        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Building Fund  | <input type="checkbox"/> Religious School Scholarship Fund |

- ☐ My check is enclosed  
☐ Please bill me

***"Tzedakah weighs as much as all the other commandments combined" - Talmud***

Congregation Beth Shalom 706 Bryan Rd. Brandon, FL 33511 813-681-6547

# Adopt a Month



It is nice to come home to a clean house. CBS is our home. The cleaning crew does an excellent job. They need to be paid monthly: \$400. For the 2023-2024 fiscal year we are looking for people who want to adopt a month of cleaning or even a partial donation is welcome. Several families have adopted months, but more are needed. Please pick a month and send the check marked "cleaning" or we can incorporate your donation into your due's commitment. Contact our treasurer, Sandy Schwartz; [drsandy18@gmail.com](mailto:drsandy18@gmail.com).





# A Short History of Babka

The backstory of our favorite baked treat.

By Joanna O'Leary

Part bread, part cake, and totally delicious: *babka* is among the most iconic Jewish sweets and a common fixture at the dessert table of religious celebrations. Culinary historians credit Polish cooks with its creation and in the late 19th century a wave of emigrants from that and other central European countries brought babka with them to the United States, where it became a staple ware in Jewish bakeries. In its most traditional form, babka is made by twisting a yeast-based dough swathed in different fillings around itself into a tortuous loaf that is baked at medium heat for around an hour. The top of the babka may be dusted with streusel or seeds and warm syrup sometimes serves as a final garnish. Different nations in the Jewish diaspora add their own inflections; for example, in Israel butter is incorporated into the dough to produce a flakier, more delicate crumb, and babkas may be parceled into individual smaller portions before the baking process.



Babka was eternally memorialized in pop culture in a 1994 episode of *Seinfeld* in which Jerry and Elaine camp out at Royal Bakery (based on real-life Royale Pastry Shop in NYC) to wait their turn to buy a babka to take to a dinner party. When they finally reach the head of the queue only to learn the bakery is flush out of chocolate babka, Jerry is convinced by the attendant to purchase a cinnamon variant, which Elaine deems a “lesser babka.” He valiantly defends its potential merits, noting “Cinnamon takes a back seat to no babka. People love cinnamon. It should be on tables at restaurants along with salt and pepper.”

Although most establishments like Royal Bakery limit their offerings to the most popular flavors (chocolate, cinnamon-sugar, apples, raisins) the past decade has seen the rise of innovative recipes on the internet for babkas filled with sweet potato, goat cheese, cherries, and, (irony noted), bacon chocolate butterscotch.

If you're eager to meander off the beaten babka path yet less eager to test your home baking skills, add Breads Bakery to the top of your foodie destination bucket list. Their rotating selection of sophisticated babkas include cheesecake, apple almond, and raisin walnut babkas and, in holidays past have even made “Fall Harvest,” laced with zucchini, browned onions, and Gruyère cheese, and, a chocolate babka pie.

Similar to the fate of the humble knish, many bakeries devoted to specializing in babkas have all but disappeared. Hope for the reversal of this trend briefly flickered then faded in California when Babka by Ayelet opened in 2018 in Palo Alto. Its haute sweet and savory babka iterations, which included raspberry cream cheese, Nutella, and tomato mozzarella, made it an immediate darling of the local media but unfortunately, it closed in February of this year due to a real estate dispute. Fortunately, it seems the bakery is down but not for the count, for its intrepid master pastry chef and owner Ayélet Turgeman Nuchi is still making babkas that can be specially ordered online and has plans to re-open upon securing another area location.

Those storied babka purveyors that remain are mostly family-owned shops in New York City, such as Williamsburg's Green's Bakery, Oneg Heimische Bakery and the East Village's Russ & Daughters. Craving babka but don't live in the Big Apple? Well, you don't have to *fuhggettaboutit* because all of the aforementioned deliver nation-wide through Goldbelly (though check availability regularly due to COVID-19 safety concerns).



# Babka

*The World of Jewish Cooking*  
By Gil Marks



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Babka, (literally “grandmother’s loaf”) is a rich egg-and-butter bread from eastern Europe. There are two styles of babka: The Polish style is made from a soft yeast dough with a texture and shape that is similar to a kugelhupf; the Jewish style is a kuchen (coffee cake) dough that is rolled out, spread with a filling, rolled up jelly roll style, and baked in a loaf form. Chocolate and cinnamon are the most common fillings, but cheese, poppy seed, almond paste, raspberry, and apricot are also popular.

## Sweet Yeast Dough:

1 pkg (2 1/2 teaspoons) Active dry yeast  
1 cup warm water, 105° to 110 °  
1/2 cup sugar  
1/2 cup vegetable oil, or melted  
margarine, or butter  
2 large eggs  
1 teaspoon table salt or 2 teaspoons of  
kosher salt  
About 4 cups unbleached all-purpose  
flour

## Cinnamon Babka Filling:

3/4 cup brown or granulated sugar  
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon  
1/2 cup raisins (optional)  
1/2 cup finely chopped walnuts or  
pecans (optional)  
1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter or margarine,  
melted

## Chocolate Babka Filling:

1/2 cup sugar  
1/3 cup bread crumbs or ground walnuts  
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder  
2 tablespoons melted butter or margarine  
2 tablespoons water or milk  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

## Directions for the Sweet Yeast Dough:






1. Dissolve the yeast in 1/4 cup of the water. Stir in 1 teaspoon of the sugar and let stand until foamy, about 5 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the remaining water, remaining sugar, oil, margarine, or butter, eggs, and salt. Blend in 1 1/2 cups of the flour. Add the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, until the mixture holds together.
3. On a lightly floured surface, knead the dough until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes.
4. Place in a greased bowl, turning to coat. Cover with a towel or plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature until double in bulk, about 1 1/2 hours, or in the refrigerator overnight. (The dough is easier to handle when chilled, which is beneficial for cakes that require rolling.)
5. Punch down the dough.

## Egg Wash:

1 egg yolk beaten with 1 tablespoon  
water or 3 tablespoons melted butter  
or margarine.

## Directions for putting together the Babka:

1. Divide the dough in half and roll out each half into a 1/4 inch-thick rectangle about 10 by 8 inches. Spread half of the filling over each rectangle, leaving a 1/2 inch border on all sides.
2. Starting from a narrow end, roll up jelly roll style, pinching the seams to seal. Place the rolls, seam side down, in 2 large loaf pans or large tube pans. (The babka can be prepared ahead to this point, sealed in a plastic bag, and left to rise in the refrigerator for up to 2 days, then placed directly into a preheated oven.) Cover loosely with a towel or plastic wrap and let rise at room temperature until double in bulk, about 1 1/2 hours.
3. Position a rack in the lower third of the oven. Preheat the oven to 350°.
4. Brush the loaves with an egg wash or, for a softer crust, brush with the butter or margarine. Bake until golden brown and hollow-sounding when tapped, 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from the pans and let cool on a wire rack.

|   |    |  |   |   |   |   |
|---|----|--|---|---|---|---|
| <p><b>Adult Education will now be on Zoom.</b></p> <p><b>In person classes to be determined.</b></p>  |    |  |   |   | <p>1<br/><b>Erev Shabbat Service</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>  | 2   |
| <p>3<br/><b>FF Church</b><br/>1:00 PM<br/><b>BINGO!</b></p>        | 4  | <p>5<br/>6:30<br/><b>Ex Bd Mtg</b><br/>7:00<br/><b>Board Mtg</b></p> | 6   | <p>7<br/><b>Adult Ed</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>                                      | <p>8<br/><b>Tot Shabbat</b><br/>6:30 PM<br/><b>Erev Shabbat Service</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>  | 9   |
| 10  | 11 | 12   | 13  | <p>14<br/><b>Adult Ed</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>                                     | <p>15<br/><b>Erev Shabbat Service</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>                                  | 16  |
| <p>17<br/>1:00 PM<br/><b>Baking</b><br/><b>Hamentaschen</b></p>  | 18 | 19   | 20  | <p>21<br/><b>Adult Ed</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>                                     | <p>22<br/><b>Purim Spiel w/Pot Luck</b><br/>6:00 PM</p>                                | <p>23<br/><b>Erev Purim</b></p>  |
| <p>24<br/><b>Purim</b></p>                                       | 25 | 26   | 27  | <p>28<br/><b>Adult Ed</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>                                     | <p>29<br/><b>Erev Shabbat Service</b><br/>7:00 PM</p>                                  | <p>30<br/><b>DWTT</b><br/><b>Tibby's 6:00 PM</b></p>  |
| 31  | 1  | 2  | <p>3<br/><b>Jewish Arts &amp; Cultural Spring Festival</b><br/><b>JCC</b></p> | <p>4<br/><b>Jewish Arts &amp; Cultural Spring Festival</b><br/><b>JCC</b></p> | <p>5<br/><b>Jewish Arts &amp; Cultural Spring Festival</b><br/><b>JCC</b></p>   | 6   |