

# Scroll

Temple Beth Shalom – Needham, Massachusetts

February 2023

Shevat/Adar 5783



## How Do You "Thicken" a Value?

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## On the Cover

"R' Todd's Lego Yoda *Mezuzah*"

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## Editorial Board

Publisher – Steven Sherry

TBS Staff Liaison – Jessica Baim

Advertising – Joe Marcus

Layout & Photography – Alan Novick

## Editors

Joni Burstein

Robyn Glazier

Sandy Hain

Gail Lustig

Joe Marcus

Peter Mesnik

Alan Novick

Lois Sockol

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please email: [scroll@tbsneedham.org](mailto:scroll@tbsneedham.org)

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## From the Editorial Board

There is something heartwarming about walking down the hallway of an apartment building and seeing a familiar symbol silently signaling that the people on the other side of the door share your identity. And heartwarming turns into astounding when walking down the street in Israel. Indeed, *mezuzahs*, our reminders to follow the ways of Torah, excite and unite us with others, even if we never see or meet them. They also evoke a sense of wonder: we wonder why some are diagonal and some vertical! In this issue, you'll find your answer.

As you admire the featured *mezuzahs* and learn some fun facts, you may think to yourself, "But wait, she says *mezuzahs* and the articles say *mezuzot*." Yes, within Judaism, variation is welcome. Slanted, upright, *mezuzahs*, *mezuzot* - let's call the whole thing wonderful!

### Holocaust Remembrance: Reflections and Family Names

#### Reflections:

To commemorate Holocaust Remembrance Day, we want to dedicate our April issue to the memory of those who perished and to the important role that those who survived have played in perpetuating the understanding of what transpired and its impact on all of us. We understand this is a very personal ask for a very public way of sharing. Perhaps you are a survivor or a family member of someone who survived or perished during the Holocaust. Maybe you or someone in your family was involved in freeing those in camps at the end of the war. Perhaps your connection is distant but compelling. Whatever the connection, if you are willing to tell your story or share your written or visual reflections related to this part of our collective history and present, please do. If you are unsure and would like to talk with an Editorial Board member, please reach out to us at [scroll@tbsneedham.org](mailto:scroll@tbsneedham.org) and one of us will get back with you.

#### Family Names:

If members of your family perished in the Holocaust and you would like to have their family names listed, please send us your name and the last names of your family members you would like included. For example:

Rick and Leigh Stein - Members of the Stein, Rosenberg, Rudkov, and Siden families

Please email your remembrances and/or family names to [scroll@tbsneedham.org](mailto:scroll@tbsneedham.org). Deadline: February 15.

By *Joni Burstein on behalf of the Editorial Board*

# Services in February

Services will be in person and via livestream for the month of February.  
Please check the TBS website and emails for livestream links.

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 3 (13 Shevat 5783)

6:15 PM Tot Shabbat Service (Beit Midrash)  
7:15 PM Simchat Shabbat Evening Service (Sanctuary)

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 (13 Shevat 5783)

Torah: *B'shalach* Ex. 13:17 - 17:16  
8:30 AM Shabbat Morning Service (Beit Midrash)  
9:00 AM Torah Study (Beit Midrash)  
9:15 AM Finding Our Jewish Values in the Torah  
(Front Conference Room and online)

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 (20 Shevat 5783)

7:15 PM Erev Shabbat Service (Sanctuary)

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11 (20 Shevat 5783)

Torah: *Yitro* Ex. 18:1 - 20:26  
8:30 AM Shabbat Morning Service (Beit Midrash)  
9:00 AM Torah Study (Beit Midrash)  
9:15 AM Finding Our Jewish Values in the Torah  
(Front Conference Room and online)  
B. Mitzvah: Evan Block and Dylan Block

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 (27 Shevat 5783)

6:15 PM Erev Shabbat Service (Sanctuary)

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 18 (27 Shevat 5783)

Torah: *Mishpatim* Ex. 21:1 - 24:18  
8:30 AM Shabbat Morning Service (Beit Midrash)  
9:00 AM Torah Study (Beit Midrash)  
9:15 AM Finding Our Jewish Values in the Torah  
(Front Conference Room and online)

## FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 24 (4 Adar 5783)

6:15 PM Erev Shabbat Service (Sanctuary)

## SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25 (4 Adar 5783)

Torah: *Terumah* Ex. 25:1 - 27:19  
8:30 AM Shabbat Morning Service (Beit Midrash)  
9:00 AM Torah Study (Beit Midrash)  
9:15 AM Finding Our Jewish Values in the Torah  
(Front Conference Room and online)

### Please join the TBS Community for *Minyan*

- Monday and Thursday mornings at 7:00 AM in person, in the Sanctuary.
- Tuesday through Thursday evenings at 6:45 PM online only. Zoom links are published in the "TBS This Week" email.

# Committee Meetings in February – Stay Involved!

Committees not listed will not meet formally this month.

Committee Name	Date and Time	Email Contact for Information
Adult Learning	Wed. Feb. 1, 7:30 PM	AdultLearning@tbsneedham.org
Brotherhood Board	Tue. Feb. 14, 7:15 PM	Brotherhood@tbsneedham.org
Communications	Wed. Feb. 15, 7:15 PM	Communications@tbsneedham.org
Environmental Action	Thur. Feb. 23, 8:00 PM	EnvironAction@tbsneedham.org
Garden Club	Tue. Feb. 7, 7:15 PM	GardenClub@tbsneedham.org
Library	Every Wednesday, 9:30 AM	Library@tbsneedham.org
Scroll Editorial Board	Tues. Feb 28, 12:00 PM	Scroll@tbsneedham.org
Three Score/More or Less	Mon. Feb. 27, 7:30 PM	ThreeScoreMoreOrLess@tbsneedham.org

Please check with the email contact in case of a change in date and for meeting location.

## Welcome New Members

Risa and Steven Geller and Emelia (2)  
Jacob Shapiro and Hetal Patel and Maya (2)



# Mezuzah FAQs

By Cantor DJ Fortine



This month's issue of the *Scroll* focuses in large part on *mezuzot*. I've found affixing *mezuzot* in my own home to be a rewarding Jewish ritual that brings meaning to my day-to-day life, so I thought I'd take the opportunity to talk through the fundamentals of fulfilling the mitzvah of *mezuzah*! Whether you're preparing to hang your own *mezuzot* in a new home/office, have received a *mezuzah* as a gift, or if you've just wondered about the ins-and-outs of *mezuzot*, I hope that you find this little FAQ column informative!

## Why do we hang *mezuzot*?

The custom of affixing *mezuzot* derives from the Torah verses we recite each time we say *Sh'ma/V'ahavta*: "... *uchtavtam al mezuzot beitecha, uvish'arecha*" — the idea that we should inscribe the words of the *Sh'ma* on our doorposts and gates as a reminder of the Torah's sacred teaching. Beyond the biblical commandment to do so, many find meaning in hanging *mezuzot* as an outward expression of Jewish pride and/or commitment to living in a home that emphasizes Jewish values.

## What makes a *mezuzah* a *mezuzah*?

The word *mezuzah* translates literally as "doorpost," but when we use the word *mezuzah* in a contemporary context, we're most often referring to the special ritual objects that we place on our doorposts. Each *mezuzah* consists of two essential components: its scroll and its case. The scroll (or *klaf*) contains the text of the *Sh'ma*, and should be handwritten by a specially-trained *sofer(et)* (scribe). The case is meant to both protect the scroll and beautify our religious tradition of affixing the words of the *Sh'ma* to our doorposts; this function is known as *hiddur mitzvah* (literally "beautifying a commandment") — devoting extra time, aesthetic style, or other resources to a *mitzvah* so that it may be performed as beautifully and with as strong an intention as possible.

## Where should I hang a *mezuzah*?

*Mezuzot* are hung in the entrances of any rooms that don't serve "undignified" purposes (i.e., everywhere besides

restrooms). If one has a limited number of *mezuzot*, their priority should be hanging a *mezuzah* in the home's main entrance and in the entrances to rooms most frequently used. According to tradition, we affix *mezuzot* permanently (using nails, glue, or screws) to the right hand doorpost of each room's entrance. *Mezuzot* should be mounted so that they might be seen/reached easily upon entry.

## When should I hang my *mezuzot*?

There are many opinions regarding the specifics of when one should hang and bless *mezuzot*, but most "experts" agree that *mezuzot* should be affixed as soon as possible in any dwelling that one would consider "permanent." Many Jews engage in housewarming rituals known as *chanukat habayit* (dedication of a home), during which individuals or families mark new beginnings in their homes by affixing *mezuzot* and saying *shehecheyanu*. We performed this ritual as a community at our TBS *Mikdash* dedication in 2016!



## What is the blessing over hanging a *mezuzah*?

*Baruch atah Adonai, Eloheinu Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tzivanu likboa mezuzah.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who makes us holy through Your mitzvot and commands us to affix *mezuzot*.

Happy hanging!

-Cantor DJ



## Sharing Our Gifts

By Wendy Gutterson, Congregational President



Recently I sent my mom a gift she didn't really need and that wasn't for any special occasion. More stories than recipes, *Eating Delancey, A Celebration of Jewish Food* is a book about the foods of the Lower East Side of New York; in so many ways, it is a book about my mother's roots. I saw the book on the Tenement Museum website, and I knew she would like it. However, I didn't know this would turn into an amazing gift for me and my brother, Scott. Our phone calls with Mom now include many stories about her childhood, our grandparents, and our great-grandparents.

Growing up in Brooklyn, not the hip Brooklyn of 2023 but rather the Sheepshead Bay neighborhood of my childhood (Ocean Avenue between X and Y for those Brooklynites), was truly a gift. Our Brooklyn apartment was on the same street as many of our relatives and I had aunts and uncles always nearby. In fact, one of my earliest memories is realizing that I could literally look out my kitchen window and see into Grandma Annie's kitchen. Even as a kindergartner, I would walk around the corner from my elementary school (PS 254) to her apartment for lunch and I always loved the gift of an afternoon spent with my great-grandmother playing cards or cooking in her tiny kitchen.

In our very close-knit, very Jewish community, food was the celebration. Holidays focused on whether to serve brisket or chicken and who would make the matzo ball soup. We always knew my mom would bake cookies and we never worried about how many people could fit at the table, or if there was enough matching silverware. We could always add

another bridge table or folding chair and often, our holiday table extended beyond the dining room. Being together was the key and I knew then, as I do now, that regardless of how big our family became, it was always small enough for each person to matter. With two, three, and four generations at the table, the conversation never faltered. As you might imagine, there were often many simultaneous conversations and so many places to jump in and participate. Our gatherings were filled with the gift of laughter and sense of belonging.

This is also true at Temple Beth Shalom. As our congregation has grown in size, we've also grown in warmth and opportunity to jump in and participate. When entering our TBS building, it's easy for me to experience that same community feeling I had as a child in Brooklyn - there's always someone here who knows you or wants to get to know you; there's always someone here who has something to share. I invite you to continue making our community even more connected by your presence and sharing the gift of your participation.

L'Shalom,

Wendy

P.S. As a gift to each of you, I'm sharing my mom's recipe for my favorite childhood cookie. Enjoy!

### Lemon Log Cookies (Makes 30 cookies)

1 cup butter	1 cup walnuts, finely chopped
1 cup sugar	½ teaspoon salt
1 3-ounce package of cream cheese	½ teaspoon lemon rind
1 egg yolk	6-ounce package of semi-sweet chocolate chips
2½ cups flour	Nuts, colored sugar, sprinkles (optional)

Cream butter, sugar and cream cheese together until light and fluffy. Add egg yolk and beat well. In a separate bowl, combine flour, walnuts, salt and lemon rind, then add to the butter-sugar mixture and chill for at least 2 hours.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees.

Roll portions of about 1 tablespoon of dough into small logs then place on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for 12 minutes. Cool completely. Melt the chocolate chips in the microwave for 1 minute 15 seconds and stir until smooth. Dip one end of the cookie in the melted chocolate and sprinkle with nuts, colored sugar or other sprinkles.



# B. Mitzvah

## **Evan Block, Saturday, February 11**

**School:** Pollard Middle School

**Interests:** Evan loves the Celtics and playing basketball, along with video games, his animals and hanging out with friends!

**Mitzvah Project:** Evan is collecting sports equipment, toys and books for families in need.

## **Dylan Block, Saturday, February 11**

**School:** Pollard Middle School

**Interests:** Dylan loves sports, animals and video games, but most of all spending time laughing and having fun with friends!

**Mitzvah Project:** Dylan is collecting toys, books and sports equipment to donate to families in need.

*To participate in B. Mitzvah services, join us in person in the Sanctuary, or check your Shabbat email for Vimeo links.*

# February Highlights

## Refugee Shabbat 2023

### **Friday, February 3, 7:15-8:45 PM, TBS**

Please join us for the Fifth Annual Refugee Shabbat, during which TBS will dedicate our Shabbat experience to refugees and asylum seekers. We are excited to welcome Wasan Durrah - a member of our TBS Children's Center faculty - and her son, MJ, to our services; and we are excited to hear MJ tell us their story as refugees seeking a new home here in our community. The fastest-growing European refugee crisis since World War II is still ongoing. People seeking asylum are being turned away at borders around the world. And this year, for the first time ever, the total number of displaced persons globally is over 100 million. This is a critical moment for all of us to reaffirm and redouble our support for immigration justice.

## Brotherhood SchmoozeFest and Dinner

### **Sunday, February 5, 6:00-8:00 PM, Mandarin Cuisine, 238 Highland Avenue**

Catch up with your friends and make some new ones. Cost is \$25 payable by check or cash at the door.

Register at [t-b-s.me/schmooze](https://t-b-s.me/schmooze) in advance here so we can reserve enough tables. For questions, contact [brotherhood@tbsneedham.org](mailto:brotherhood@tbsneedham.org).



## Sisterhood: Challah Making/Baking with Susan Brisk

### **Thursday, February 9, 6:30 PM, TBS kitchen**

Come bake challah with Sisterhood Member Susan Brisk in preparation for our Sisterhood Shabbat Schmooze! We will meet in the TBS kitchen. Information with what to bring will be emailed prior to the event.

To register go to [t-b-s.me/SHChallah](https://t-b-s.me/SHChallah).



## Sisterhood: Shabbat Schmooze

**Saturday, February 11, TBS**

Stay for the entire day or join when you can for morning Shabbat services, exercise, lunch, games, social action, *Havdalah*, and dinner. Rabbinical Intern Abi Oshins will join us for part of the day as well.

To register go to [t-b-s.me/ShabbatSchmooze](http://t-b-s.me/ShabbatSchmooze). For questions contact Marsha Moller at [mbmoller@comcast.net](mailto:mbmoller@comcast.net).

# Save the Date

## Playing the Part of the Jewish Mother - and other insights from Caroline Aaron

**Sunday, March 12, 9:30AM, TBS**

Caroline Aaron portrays Shirley Maisel, Joel's mother on the hit Amazon Prime show *The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel*. Hear about her experiences as an accomplished film and TV actor and her interesting life having grown up in the South. Caroline's late mother, Nina Friedman Abady, was a Selma, Alabama, civil rights activist who walked with Martin Luther King, Jr., and she had to endure cross-burnings on her Virginia front lawn. Caroline Aaron next will be seen in the Israeli new hit comedy series, *Chanshi*, selected for Sundance international screenings, as well as the independent feature *Theatre Camp*.

She has a recurring role on Amazon's *Transparent* and Showtime's *Episodes* and plays Annie Schmidt in the *21 Jump Street* franchise. In addition to the many film and TV appearances during her career, Caroline has appeared in four films directed by Woody Allen: *Crimes and Misdemeanors* (1989), *Alice* (1990), *Husbands and Wives* (1992) and *Deconstructing Harry* (1997).

A bagel breakfast will be served.

To register go to [t-b-s.me/maisel](http://t-b-s.me/maisel) (Free for members, \$10 per non-member). For questions, contact [adultlearning@tbsneedham.org](mailto:adultlearning@tbsneedham.org).



## Diaper Drive Supporting Beantown Baby Diaper Bank

**Wednesday, March 15, 9:00-9:45 AM, TBS Front Parking Lot**

Join TBS Social Action in supporting Beantown Baby Diaper Bank (BBDB), a non-profit organization that collects and distributes diapers to local providers of child and family services.

One third of families with young children in the Commonwealth cannot afford a sufficient supply of diapers. To help, Social Action is hosting a drive-thru collection on behalf of BBDB. We will be accepting donations of any brand of disposable diapers, new or open packages, loose diapers, pull-ups and swim diapers.

To participate, sign up at [t-b-s.me/diaper](http://t-b-s.me/diaper).

We will be in the TBS Front Parking Lot, ready to transfer your items from your car. Or you may email [socialaction@tbsneedham.org](mailto:socialaction@tbsneedham.org) to arrange a dropoff at a TBS member's home from March 1-14.



# Recurring Events

## Pre-Shabbat Yoga

**Fridays, 9:00-10:00 AM, TBS and online**

Join Stephanie Javaheri for pre-Shabbat yoga. Yoga is all about the inside and not the pretty or bendy postures that we see on the outside. It's about self inquiry, observation and awareness of your body, breath and mind to help feel more grounded.

Set aside preconceived yogic notions and come experience an hour of bliss with slow mindful movement. No experience necessary. Just an open mind.

Drop in at TBS for the in person class, or join in online at [t-b-s.me/yoga](https://t-b-s.me/yoga). No registration is necessary.



## Finding Our Jewish Values in the Torah

**Saturdays, 9:15-10:15 AM, TBS and online**

Each week we will focus on a single Jewish moral or ethical value found in that week's *parsha* (Torah portion). These will include, but not be limited to, Justice, Compassion, Environmental Ethics, and Business Ethics. A variety of rabbinic sources will enrich our exploration as we seek to apply each week's value to our lives today.

Drop in at TBS to join the discussion in person, or go to [t-b-s.me/findingvalues](https://t-b-s.me/findingvalues) to join in via Zoom. No registration is necessary.



## Israeli Dance

**Mondays, 7:00-8:30 PM, TBS**

Join Emily Perlman for a wonderful Israeli dance experience. Israeli dance is a great way to engage the culture of Israel and the Jewish people through music and movement. This is an intermediate-level class for those who have some Israeli dance experience. Those who are willing to learn by watching others are also encouraged to attend. The tuition is \$5 per session, which is paid when you attend.

For more information or questions contact [eperlman@tbsneedham.org](mailto:eperlman@tbsneedham.org).



## A History of Antisemitism: The Age of Enlightenment Until Today

**Wednesdays, 12:00-1:00 PM, beginning February 8, online**

The past few years have seen a dramatic increase in antisemitic language and acts. During our course, we will be looking at the history of "the world's oldest hatred" to better understand what has driven both individuals and governments to target Jews.

Register at [t-b-s.me/falllunchandlearn](https://t-b-s.me/falllunchandlearn).



## Bag Lunch and Breakfast Food Drive-up Collection for Homeless Shelters

**Friday, February 10, 9:15-9:45 AM in the TBS Front Parking Lot.**

Help TBS Social Action individually or as a family with our monthly collection of bag lunches and breakfast foods for donation to homeless shelters. You can make bag lunches or donate breakfast items or cases of water or juice. Please drop off in the TBS Front Parking Lot.

To sign up for specific food donation items, go to [t-b-s.me/baglunch](https://t-b-s.me/baglunch)

If you can't make it on February 10, just sign up for your food donation items and then email us at [socialaction@tbsneedham.org](mailto:socialaction@tbsneedham.org) to arrange for an earlier delivery date.





# How Do You “Thicken” a Value?

By Emily Kestenbaum and Sara Berk



At TBS, we often speak about Jewish values throughout all parts of congregational life. In August during our Professional Development training, the K-12 faculty were challenged to think about the Jewish values we teach and how to incorporate them into our lessons in even stronger - or “thicker” - ways, as outlined by the Institute for Experiential Education. For example, inclusivity is not just including everyone (a “thin” value) but seeking and using resources to ensure people are included in ways appropriate to them (a “thick” value).

As grade-level teams, we worked together to create lessons grounded in “thick” values, and in some of the older grades, we have even taught students how to create their own expressions of “thick” values. Three values we have focused on “thickening” are Leadership, Inclusivity, and Knowledge.

**“Thick” Leadership:** *“Thick” leadership is teaching others to become better, supporting them in their endeavors, and working alongside them. A good leader would only expect their “followers” to do what they would be willing to do themselves. Good leaders are open to feedback, and are open to learning and growth themselves.*

In Jr. Etzim, our sixth and seventh graders learn leadership through the *G’milut Chasadim* (Acts of Loving Kindness) curriculum. In sixth grade, they learn how to create games and learning tools, and then use them by working with younger TBS children. In seventh grade, a social justice lens is added. Through topics such as social responsibility, inclusion, and bystanders vs. upstanders, the seventh graders learn about who they are, how they are part of a group and how the group can positively impact the larger community. Through this learning they begin to understand the leadership qualities they will need to take on as they approach B. Mitzvah and become Jewish adults in the TBS Community

**“Thick” Inclusivity:** *As a community, we strive to include all. Each person has a fair opportunity to participate in any community function. Some require accommodations to participate in the community in a way that is similar to everyone else. As a community we seek to make tools available so that all can be included.*

Educators check in with Jr. Etzim students each day to learn more about them and help them understand that each person brings their own story each day. By asking them questions like, “Do you feel bogged down by homework?” or “Is there a big life event coming up?” educators create a space that feels welcoming and trusting so deeper topics can be explored in a comfortable way, with students feeling they can make valuable contributions.

**“Thick” Knowledge:** *We prioritize learning with Torah at the center. We learn the stories of our ancestors and the lessons that we can learn from them. Jewish history did not end when the Torah ended, and there is much to learn from more recent ancestors, from the ancestors that immigrated here, and those who lived through recent historical events.*

Torah is a central part of our curriculum in sixth grade. We spend time learning and thinking critically about each section of Torah. Students ask questions and learn lessons from each story (e.g., welcoming the stranger as Abraham did). They also hear personal stories from residents at NewBridge. Finally, they think about their own stories and answer the questions, “Where do I fit into the larger narrative?” and “How does my story connect to those who came before me?”

In seventh grade, we learn about the Holocaust. Our goals are to understand why it happened, how it was able to happen, and how our people came out stronger than ever before. We discuss the stories of our families so we can continue to pass on the understanding of “never again” even when the survivors of the Holocaust are no longer with us.

As the faculty in Jr. Etzim continues to “thicken” our values, we hope to convey these values with shared, thickened meanings to our students so they can continue to learn on a deeper level.



# ASAI Meeting Report

On Sunday, November 20, 2022, the TBS community gathered for an informative discussion regarding rising antisemitism locally, nationally, and internationally. “A Call to Action Against Antisemitism” featured Rob Leikind, Director of the New England region of the American Jewish Committee, the global Jewish advocacy organization, and was moderated by Mark Maremont, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist and TBS member. The event was jointly sponsored by the TBS Antisemitism Awareness Initiative (ASAI), TBS Brotherhood and Sisterhood, Three Score/More or Less, and the Adult Learning, Tzedek and Social Action Committees.



The presentation addressed issues surrounding the growth of antisemitism worldwide. Specific attention focused on the complexities of defining antisemitism, why the discussion of antisemitism is so difficult both within and outside the Jewish community, and why such conversations are important. Both our live and virtual audiences heard ways to facilitate dialogue with community partners and the importance of local involvement in such discussions.

This presentation was part of the ongoing activities of the recently formed TBS Antisemitism Awareness Initiative, whose goal is to educate our community about this growing problem and to determine what role we can play in combating antisemitism. Other initiatives to date include participation in the “Antisemitism and our Kids” workshop series taught by Hebrew College instructors at TBS in the fall and ongoing involvement in *Kulanu: Synagogues in Action Against Antisemitism*, ADL’s congregational engagement program.

We encourage all interested in learning more or becoming engaged in addressing issues related to antisemitism to join the ASAI committee. In addition, information regarding future opportunities and events can be found in the *Scroll* and TBS This Week. For more information, please contact Gary Goldman at [asai@tbsneedham.org](mailto:asai@tbsneedham.org).



# Thank You Project EZRA Volunteers

By Lois Sockol and Ann Braunstein, Co-Chairs of Project EZRA

The sun was out on Christmas morning. The air was cold, but the sky was bright. Not quite as bright, nor as promising, as in the kitchen of Temple Beth Shalom, where Project EZRA was in full swing. It was there that a cadre of volunteers were preparing the 157 Christmas dinners to be delivered to our Needham neighbors, most of whom usually receive meals through the Board of Health's Traveling Meals Program.



The Temple Beth Shalom volunteers began their tasks at 7:30 AM. Sixteen cooked turkeys from Roche Brothers were carved, for us a record number. One hundred pounds of potatoes were prepared for mashing; gravy, stuffing, cranberry sauce and veggies were readied. Outside the kitchen still more volunteers led by Margie Glou packed and arranged the bags for pick-up. And by 11:00 AM, the delicious meals, enhanced by cookies and nectarines, were ready for pick-up by another cadre of Temple volunteers, who would deliver each to an awaiting door.

Project EZRA is made possible through the partnership of Temple Beth Shalom and the Needham Community Council, a more than forty-year collaboration that grows stronger every year just as the need also grows larger.

Traditionally, each year we worry that we will be unable to meet the growing need, but the support of the Community Council and the many volunteers of Temple Beth Shalom always prove us wrong. And so it is that 157 Christmas meals left through the doors of Temple Beth Shalom this year!

Thank you all,  
Lois Sockol and Anne Braunstein – Co-Chairs of Project EZRA



# Mezuzot Special to TBS Members

Warm your heart with the *mezuzot* that warm TBS families' homes!

Michael and Julie Bailit

During a weekend visit to New York many years ago we chanced upon Kehila Kedosha Janina, a synagogue that opened in the Lower East Side in 1927. The congregation was founded by an immigrant Greek community. The day we wandered in, members of the community were in the synagogue socializing. We were warmly welcomed and treated to a tour. At the end of our visit we purchased this *mezuzah*, designed in the likeness of the shul's exterior, as a memento of our visit. We placed it upon the entrance of our Needham home when we moved in 20 years ago. It continues to welcome visitors to our home.



Sara and Mike Berk

This *mezuzah*, created by Gary Rosenthal, hangs on our front door. It was a gift for our wedding and inside it contains the glass from our stomping glass. On the outside it says, "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine."



Joni Burstein

I bought this *mezuzah* in Yemin Moshe in Jerusalem as a wedding gift for my brother and his wife, who have been happily married now for 36 years. It was originally shiny brass, and has tarnished beautifully over the years, complementing the coloring of their outdoors.



Diane and Gary Cline

We purchased our beautiful brass and hand-blown glass *mezuzah* on our trip to Italy in 2019, in a charming little shop in the old Jewish Quarter in Venice. The area was so interesting. Many of the houses had brass plaques indicating the families who had lived there. Some descendants, we were told, still reside there. While we were walking around, we met some residents who actually invited us to worship with them at their synagogue! We were attracted to the modern design of an old, traditional religious object. It gives us so much pleasure.



Ralph and Elayne Crystal

We received these two *mezuzot*, which were both purchased in Israel.

One was purchased by our son when he went to Israel many years ago with project Birthright.

The other was gifted to us by our kids, Joey and Amy Crystal Regen (and their sons, Ben and Danny), when they were fortunate to be able to visit Israel this past summer 2022. It is now hung in our entryway at a lower level. It's the way we see double ones at TBS, so those who are shorter can reach it. There is an older one placed higher up at the doorpost.



Jillian Erdos

Editor's note: *The stones on the bottom of this mezuzuah are in the image of the biblical breastplate of Aaron, as mentioned in Exodus 28:17,21, 29: Set [the breastplate] with four rows of mounted stone ... These stones shall contain the names of the twelve sons of Israel ... Aaron will thus bear the names of the sons of Israel in the breastplate of judgment upon his heart when he goes into the holy place, for an eternal memorial before Adonai.*



# More Member *Mezuzot*...

Lisa Garsh and Steven Fransblow

Our daughter, Allison Fransblow, made this for us at TBS in a glass-making workshop! We instantly fell in love with it and knew it was the perfect *mezuzah* for our new front door.



Paula and Seymour Rosen

This very old *mezuzah* was from my parents' house in Chicago and then traveled to Boston when we got our house 55 years ago. It looks like it could tell many stories of the people that came through those doors. I will hand it down to the next generation. It is not fancy but it is a very meaningful remembrance from our family.



Lori and Jon Shaer

The first *mezuzah* is hanging outside our front door. It was given to us by our dear college friend Ali when we moved to Needham 16 years ago.

The second *mezuzah* is filled with shards of blue glass from the glass that Jon stepped on when we were married 23 years ago. It hangs just outside our bedroom door.



Gertrude Silverstein

Fond memory of a month-long stay in Rome.



Anonymous

We also received images from members who wished to remain anonymous but wanted to share the beauty of their *mezuzot*.



# ***Meshuga about Mezuzahs!***

## ***(Crazy about Mezuzot!)***

1. A *mezuzah* case is used to protect the parchment, but is not *halachically* required. As such, the case may be made out of just about anything. Our very own Rabbi Todd has a *mezuzah* on his office door made of Legos and featuring Yoda - as shown on the cover. Yes, Rabbi Todd's scroll cover is on our *Scroll* cover!
2. Scrolls are traditionally rolled with the text on the inside. Rolling starts on the left side and continues towards the right, so when unrolled the beginning of the prayer is visible.
3. Ariela Housman, the *soferet* scribing our TBS Torah, got her start with Hebrew calligraphy by scribing *mezuzot*.
4. Not every dignified room needs a *mezuzah*!
  - Rooms need to be larger than 4 cubits square, about 6 feet on each side.
  - The entrance must have two doorposts and a lintel (see below), and the entrance should be at least 10 handbreadths (about 2.5-3 feet) high. If the right side of the opening is flush with the wall, or if the top of the opening is flush with the ceiling, no *mezuzah* is required.
  - The room should be non-holy. This excludes a synagogue, which is holy. Since modern synagogues also contain offices, social halls, etc., a *mezuzah* is required.
  - The room should be intended for human occupancy (e.g., not a barn), and for permanent occupancy (e.g., not a sukkah or tent).
5. What is a lintel?  
*noun*
  - a horizontal architectural member supporting the weight above an opening, as a window or a door.
6. What is a lentil?  
*noun*
  - a high-protein legume that has nothing to do with *mezuzot*.
7. In Israel, every public building – restaurants, government offices, hotels, etc. – has a *mezuzah* on every door (except for bathrooms; see Cantor DJ's FAQs on page 4!).
8. In 2010, officials affixed the world's then-largest *mezuzah* to the interior entrance of Ben Gurion Airport in Israel. It is over three feet long including both the scroll and the case.
9. In 2019, an even larger *mezuzah* was hung at *Aish HaTorah*, a yeshiva in Jerusalem. This one is five feet long including both the scroll and case.
10. If you have one larger than that in your home, please tell us and we'll be sure to feature it in an upcoming *Scroll*.





# Straight, or at a Slant?

By Rabbi Todd Markley

## Ask the Rabbi



"I was in Israel in an ultra-religious home, complete with two sinks, two ovens, etc. I noticed their *mezuzahs* were perfectly vertical, not at a slant. Can you please explain how *mezuzahs* are "supposed" to be placed? Are there multiple thoughts? Is it different in Israel than in the diaspora? Is the diagonal truly a compromise between rabbinical opinions? Also, is it true you're supposed to leave *mezuzahs* on homes you move from? What if it's special to you - like a wedding gift from family?"

For Ashkenazic Jews, it is customary to hang the *mezuzah* at an angle, pointing into the room upon whose right-hand doorpost (when entering the room) the *mezuzah* is affixed. It is angled with the top pointing into the room both as a heartfelt wish that Torah and holiness enter this sacred space and also to resolve a centuries-old debate between two great sages.

In the late 11th century in France, the great Torah and Talmudic commentator Rashi expressed the opinion that the *mezuzah* should be mounted vertically, because the full text of the *Sh'ma* within it (including our *V'ahavta* prayer) instructs us to recite Torah's commandments aloud "when you stay at home and when you are away" (time when one is passing the doorpost of one's home) and also "when you lie down and when you rise up." Rashi, seizing on the phrase "rise up," thought that the *mezuzah* should be mounted vertically, as we appear when we are standing. His grandson, Rabbenu Tam, disagreed, asserting that the *mezuzah* should be mounted horizontally, basing his ruling on the phrase "when you lie down." For generations since then, Ashkenazic Jews have mounted their *mezuzot* at an angle pointing into the room, striking a balance between the ruling of Rashi and that of his grandson.

Non-Ashkenazic Jews (such as Sephardic or Mizrahi Jews from Spain or the Iberian Peninsula), however, were not influenced by the debate between Rashi and Rabbenu Tam and, therefore, mount their *mezuzot* vertically. It is, thus, quite possible that the *mezuzah* you saw was hung as it was not because of the family's Orthodoxy but rather because they are not Ashkenazic in their roots or practice.

As for what to do with our *mezuzot* when leaving a home we've occupied, our tradition's prescribed actions are dependent upon our understanding of who will come to occupy the home once we have departed. If the people moving in are Jewish, we are supposed to leave the *mezuzot* for them. If the people moving in are not Jewish, we are free to remove the *mezuzot* and take them with us. In a case when Jewish people are moving in but the *mezuzot* we have hung in the home are of special personal meaning and significance, we may want to pack up the interior *mezuzot* but leave the ones mounted on the exterior doors into the home (or, at least, the front door). If the *mezuzah* hanging on one of those exterior entrances to the house or apartment is of great personal significance, one could remove that *mezuzah*, replace it with another (be sure to include a kosher scroll inside), and take the one holding great personal meaning to one's next home.

May we all be blessed... in our departures and in our return home.



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## יזכור אלהים — YIZKOR ELOHIM — May God Remember Our Loved Ones and Bring Comfort to...

Rob and Chrissy Silverman, Carly  
on the passing of their grandmother and great-grandmother, Miriam Sherman

Wendy Faberman, Rachel and Allyson  
on the passing of their husband and father, Stephen Faberman

David Crandell  
on the passing of his aunt, Marcia Ehrlich

Lauren Inker and Richard Blank, Sam and Margo  
on the passing of their mother and grandmother, Elaine Inker

The Family of Joan Berman

Debbi and David Cohen, Jordan and Shelby  
on the passing of their father and grandfather, Steve Stearns



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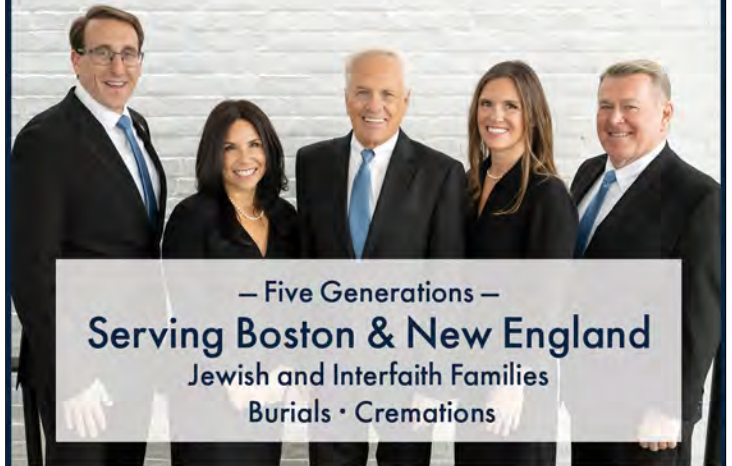
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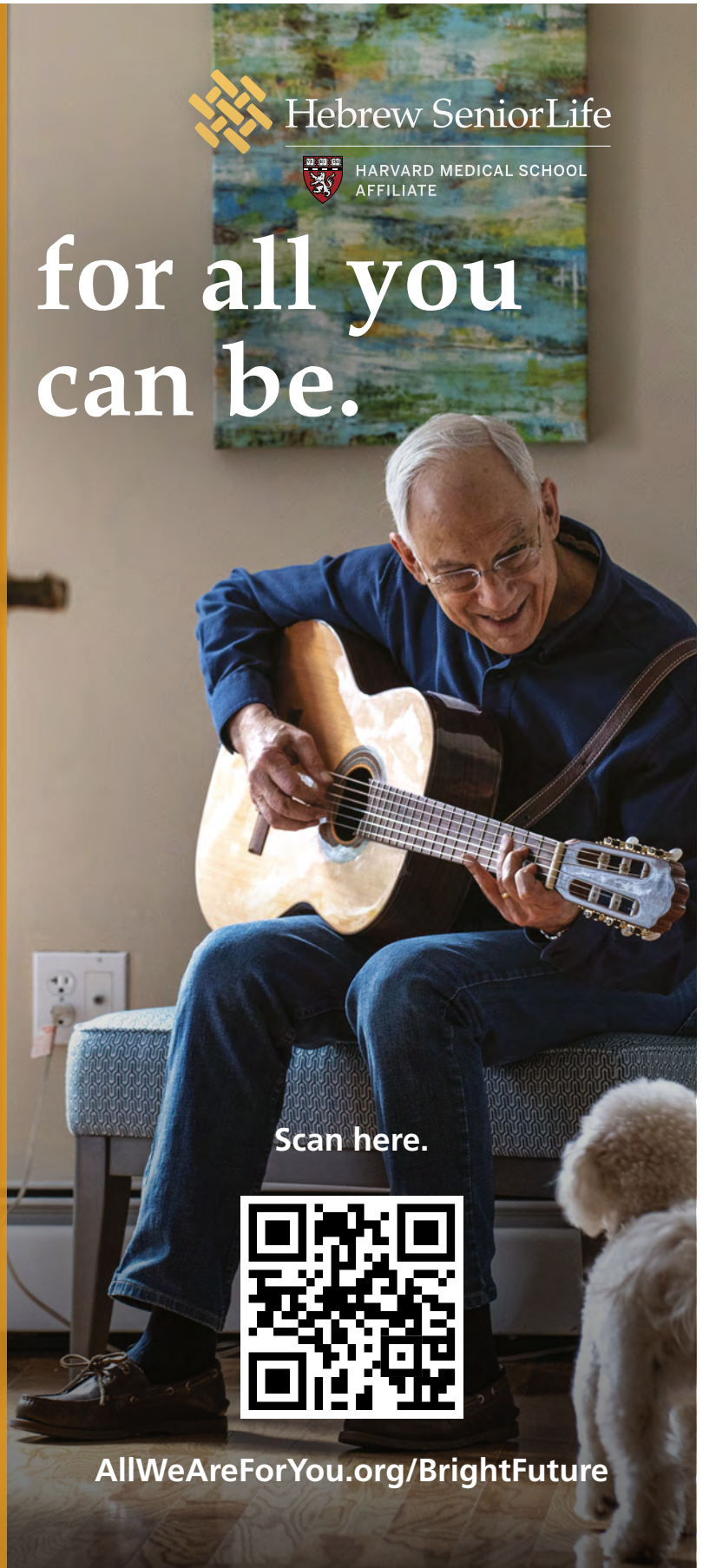


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