

Hakol

the voice of temple beth david



TEMPLE BETH DAVID

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December 2025

Temple Beth David Phone

Directory

(631) 499-0915

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Rabbi's Message by Rabbi Beth Klafter

Hanukkah begins on the 25th of the Hebrew month of Kislev every year. This year we will light the first candle on Sunday evening, December 14th. Please find the blessings in this HaKol. We will enjoy tasty treats cooked in oil – latkes or sufganiyot (doughnuts) - as a reminder of the leg-

end about the oil in the Temple which was relit when the Temple was re-dedicated. And, of course, we play dreidel!

The four letters on the dreidel here in North America and everywhere outside of the land of Israel are: Nun, Gimel, Hey, Shin, standing for: Nes (miracle), Gadol (great), Hayah (happened) and Sham (there): “A Great Miracle Happened There.” In Israel, the last letter is Pey, for Po (here): “A Great Miracle Happened Here.

There is also another explanation for these four letters on the sides of the dreidel. They are said to represent four empires which sought to control the Jewish community during our history:

- Nun represents the Hebrew word, nefesh (soul) which was severed when the Holy Temple was destroyed by the Babylonian Empire.
- Gimel represents the Hebrew word, guf (body) which was threatened by the kingdoms of Persia and Media.
- The Hey, is for the word, hakol (all) considered the Roman exile, a summation of all other exiles. [Note that this word, hakol is not the same HaKol, the name of this monthly bulletin which means, “The Voice.”]
- The last letter, the Shin represents the attack on the sechel (wisdom) of Israel, by the Greeks.

Thus, the dreidel can teach us lessons of our people's history and tradition. And playing dreidel with coins or candy adds fun and joy to the holiday. One year when I was a teenager growing up at Temple Beth El in Great Neck, I decided that if a little dreidel could bring some fun, then surely a giant dreidel could bring a giant dose of joy! Here I am with the giant dreidel I created for a temple holiday celebration (see photo).

Surely this season, we need lots of fun and joy. I pray that we are reminded of miracles and the blessings of joy and celebration this Hanukkah.

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Message from

Movin' On

As we come to the close of the calendar year 2025, it's a good time to bring everyone up to date about the projects we are actively moving ahead with behind the scenes. First, congratulations to Margie Gursky and the Religious School Committee. They are off to a good start this year with classes running smoothly and events happening frequently. It's great to know that our school now has more than 100 students and is growing. This is important because it represents the future of our Congregation. These young families will form the basis of our leadership for years to come.

The Constitution Committee, led by David Gaines, is working its way steadily through the existing document. They have made many suggestions for modernization and improvement of our foundational processes. They still have some distance to go, but the work is solid thus far and will bring about significant clarification and efficiency. Their progress is being shared with our Board and will be brought to the Congregation for approval early in 2026.

Our steering committee is now focused on how to optimize and modernize our physical space. A fundamental plan for offices and school rooms is evolving. The committee is also now thinking about our sanctuary and its modernization. This involves a lot of effort by Beverly Wolcott, Art Salander, Bill Ackerman, Laura and Bill Joseph and others. Once we get to a point where design and costs are approximated, the plan will come to the Board and then the congregation. Please look for this early next year as well.

Finally, our excellent pulpit committee is well on the way to identifying what we want in our next clergy. This small committee is composed of three past presidents and congregants of a variety of ages and interests to make sure we are considering the needs of our entire congregation. Led by Beverly Wolcott, the committee has completed and submitted the extensive application to the CCAR (Rabbi's Organization) which will be sending us candidates, early next year. This committee has done the hard work and provided insight on who we are and the direction we want to take going forward.

As you can see, there is a lot going on behind the scenes at Temple Beth David. We are all looking forward to continuing our journey together in 2026.

Ken

Continued from page one



Rabbi Klafter & her Dad
1977

From my home to yours, Happy Hanukkah!

Rabbi Beth Klafter

Rabbi Beth H. Klafter

Clergy Reflections by Rabbi Audrey Halpern



Dear Friends,

It feels like the season of lasts: the last month of the year; the final year as your rabbis, the last Chanukah we will share and so on. If I sound melancholy, well, I suppose I am – at least a bit.

Our dog Finn has been diagnosed with lung cancer. It comes after a long and wonderful life; a pampered life and many medical problems for which he has been treated with the very best care available. Finn has more Manhattan specialists than I do – and thank goodness he also has better health insurance. Steve spares no expense when it comes to his little boy. Just to give you an idea of their bond, Finn's nickname is 'boyfriend.' This little Cavapoo came to us at six weeks old after Rachel worked her magic on us through begging and coercion and before we knew it, we had a new little white, fluffy member of the family.

Now, I must confess, I am not a dog person. I don't walk him; I don't feed him and only occasionally do I even pet him or put out his fresh morning water. Steve, on the other hand, takes him to work every day and will not even take a vacation for more than two nights since Finn has been diagnosed. As crazy as I think that is, there is an ever-growing part of me that understands.

Because lately when I hear him coughing, I realize that this is also part of my list of lasts. He may not be here next Chanukah or even next summer. Now, when I make chicken soup, I sneak him some plain white meat – how bad could that be? And boy, does he love it.

We all go through these losses and "lasts" at different times in our lives – some bigger than others. Maybe that is the silver lining of the lights of Chanukah. The candles shining even as they burn out leave a memory of light that stays long past the dreidels and gelt.

So it is with the memories of people and things we love. The lights of this season remind us of our connection, our history and the continuity that brings us comfort even as we face the vicissitudes of life. To all of you, my dear friends, on this last Chanukah we will share together, my prayer is that we will always see the light in the darkness and remember the precious years spent together. Happy Chanukah!

B'shalom,
Rabbi Audrey Halpern

Rabbi Audrey B. Halpern

Save the Date!
Friday, June 19, 2026 @ 7:30 pm
Shabbat Celebration to Honor
Rabbi Klefter and Rabbi Halpern
Festive Oneg to Follow



Margie Gursky Religious School News

Religious School in November was very busy! Classes are well underway with learning Hebrew, Jewish culture and history. Students and our volunteer Student Aides are connecting with each other and forming their own Jewish communities. In addition, Rabbi Klafter and I started the PACT Family programs for fourth through seventh grades in November.

At our K-3 Art Show & Shabbat Service, we had a huge turnout of families admiring their children's artistic talents. The teachers, Joan Gilbert, Stacey Kravette and Liat Hanuka did a great job guiding the students as they created their individual artwork. Ms. Kravette's and Ms. Hanuka's classes painted wooden dreidels and colored the Hebrew letters on their dreidels. Ms. Gilbert's K-1 students decorated several puzzle pieces, part of a giant puzzle in the shape of a dreidel.

We also kicked off Kindness Week with our students (accompanied by their parents) singing a few songs for the residents at Gurwin Assisted Living. A special thank you to Stacey Kelly and Mor Schwartz for practicing with the students and also to Mor Schwartz for leading them in song that day. During class hours that week, all of our students participated in several activities to help our community, including making dog toys for an animal shelter, painting rocks to help beautify TBD's new entry way and making cards for Gurwin residents.

In December we look forward to the sixth/seventh grade Shabbat service on December 5, as well as the Hanukkah Happening on December 7. All ages are invited! Please feel free to bring grandparents, friends, neighbors... the more, the merrier. We expect this event to be a huge success with crafts, games, contests and of course Latkes! If you are new to TBD or you know someone who is interested in checking us out, the Hanukkah Happening is a great way to meet people and experience TBD's welcoming culture.

Enjoy the photos of the Art Show and Kindness Week activities.

Happy Hanukkah to you and your families!



SPONSOR AN ONEG!

Do you have something to celebrate?
A birthday, an anniversary or special
occasion? Maybe you just want to show
your love for TBD?

Sponsor a Friday night oneg!

Contact Wendy Perry



Do you need help getting to
Friday Night services?

We have member volunteers
who will drive you to and
from services.

Volunteer drivers also needed.

Contact Wendy Perry
Wendy@tbdcommack.org
631-499-0915 x 312

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL ACTIVITIES



K-3RD GRADE ART SHOW



PIC•COLLAGE

Sisterhood

It seems as though I was just welcoming everyone back in September, and now we are approaching winter. Even though it's dark outside at 5:00 pm, I'm brightened by the thoughts of my "sisters" and the past and upcoming events of Sisterhood.

Book club read a nonfiction book called *George Washington's Secret 6* about the spy ring that was instrumental in winning the Revolutionary War. How else could we have won against the British Army that had more soldiers and ammunition than the colonists? The spies developed techniques, such as invisible ink, that are still used today. George Washington was known to pray and seemingly, miracles happened, that also helped to thwart the British. The book club also went on a walking tour in Setauket, led by a direct descendant of one of the spies, to see where much of the work took place. The group learned that a female spy hung laundry in a specific way to convey messages. They saw where Jewish residents were buried with stones placed upon their graves. In addition, there were prefabricated houses along the tour that had been bought from a catalog in 1771. It was a beautiful day topped with baby swans and turtles sunning themselves. Our next book is *Churchill's Secret Messenger* by Alan Hlad. We will be meeting virtually on the temple Zoom at 8:00 pm on December 18. Please join us. Book club, as well as book club related events are planned and led by Jodi Maisel, Sandi Burgess, and me.

Our next event was our Paid-Up Membership Dinner at Spuntino's in Dix Hills. We enjoyed the food, of course, but the greatest enjoyment was visiting with old friends and new ones. Our hostesses, Irma Sarisohn and Robin Prager, provided door prizes and put together two baskets of Judaica items to raffle off. We will be donating the raffle proceeds to a cause we will choose at our next Sisterhood meeting on December 4 at 7:30 pm. This meeting is open to all Sisterhood members.

HaKol is distributed on December 1, and that is also the day for a special cultural arts program, an Eco Printing Workshop, arranged by our chairperson, Toni Spring. Check out next month's HaKol to see photos of our art!

Please join us at services on December 5 to celebrate the 90th birthday of our Sisterhood member, Marian Kent. In addition to the religious school preneg, her family is sponsoring an oneg after services. Come to honor her, eat, pray, and eat again!

Then join us on December 14 from 1:00-3:00 pm for an afternoon of Israeli dancing, organized by Deborah Faust. All temple members, as well as non-members, are invited. You don't have to know the dances because we have instructors who will teach us the steps.

As always, feel free to contact me with questions and/or comments.

Warmly,

Jodi Maisel, President

516-313-8890/jodilie@optonline.net



FEED YOUR IMAGINATION

TBD's TOGETHER WITH TOTS

ARTS AND CRAFTS * MUSIC * STORYTIME

**LEARN TOGETHER ABOUT SHABBAT AND
HOLIDAYS WITH YOUR 3 -5 YEAR OLD
CHILD/GRANDCHILD**

Classes will meet monthly on Wednesdays throughout the school year, 4:30-5:30pm. All families with young children are also invited to join us for TBD Family and Holiday Events.

TBD's Together with Tots Monthly Classes:
November 5, December 3, January 7, February 4, March 4, April 15, May 6

TBD Holiday and Family Events (RSVP required):
September 8, October 16, December 15, March 16, May 18.

Fees: Members \$200/Child; Non-Members \$250/Child



TEMPLE BETH DAVID
RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Temple Beth David
100 Hauppauge Road, Commack, NY
(631) 499-0915
school@tbdcommack.org

Hat Looming

Easy and Fun to make!

Beginners welcome, no experience needed!

Simple loom and finger-knitting.

Recommended for 4th graders and older.

All hats and scarves made will be donated to the Dolan Center, a family wellness center in Huntington that gives help and healthcare to families in need.

Sunday, December 14th

10:30-11:30 AM in Room 4

Questions: Abby Taft, debbieabby4@gmail.com





ISRAELI DANCING

All Are Welcome!

No Experience Necessary!

Sunday, December 14th

1:00 - 3:00 PM

TBD Social Hall

Questions:

deborah@fausthouse.org



Spotlight on Brotherhood

November was a busy month for Brotherhood. On November 2 we honored our veterans by attending the Michael Murphy Navy Seal Museum in Sayville where we learned about the history of the Navy Seals from a retired member of that elite group of men. Michael Murphy displayed an extraordinary degree of bravery in service to our country, for which he posthumously received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Less than a week later, on November 7, Brotherhood sponsored the pre and post oneg for the Friday night service. If you could not make it, you missed “onegs from around the world”, a display of oneg delights representing many countries. The agreed upon highlight were the Swedish Fish.

We held our annual paid-up membership dinner on November 17 when we gathered in fellowship, ate heartily, and enjoyed the magical showmanship of fellow congregant Art Salander.

Brotherhood will conclude 2025 by making latkes at the Chanukah Happening, sharing food and drink at our Miller's Minyon on December 10, and observing our first ever Christmas Day dinner on December 25. Everyone is invited to join us at the Chinese Buffet. You KNOW that you will be having Chinese food that day. Why not have it with us?!

It is not too late to join Brotherhood and experience the friendship, fellowship (and food) that we have to offer!

Steven Sarisohn, President

631-455-2387/ssarisohn@sarisohnlaw.com





News from Isaiah 58

As we snuggle down for a cozy winter and the Festival of Lights, take time to de-stress and savor the joyful moments. Use your sense of smell to breathe in the aromas of latkes frying in the pan or brisket roasting in the oven. Deep breathing is one of the most effective ways to slow down and enjoy the present experience. Laughter is the other sure-fire way to manage stress and keep from feeling overwhelmed. Being with friends and loved ones, playing a game, or taking a walk are guaranteed to keep your spirits up long after the cold winter is over.

I am sure you have heard the news. Imagine the stress of running short of food due to government subsidies being cut. More folks are hurting, making a tough situation even worse. Our temple Social Action Committee ran our annual Thanksgiving Food Drive and we partnered with the SYJCC. Thank you to everyone who donated to make our food drive such a success! We thank the residents at Sutton Landing, our temple neighbors, and Dawn Blee for her partnership. Thanks to Beverly Horowitz and Joe Benesch for coordinating this food drive. Together we can make a difference!

Our mission will continue later this month with our hands-on opportunity to cook and deliver meals as we partner with the Huntington Interfaith Homeless Initiative (HHI) coordinating with Family Service League. Thank you to TBD chefs Lynn Soriano, Cara Millman and David Gaines who volunteered to cook, box and deliver these homemade meals.

Hat Looming Club continues to hand loom hats and scarves to donate during the winter months. Abigail Taft continues her friendly and confident leadership of this project and welcomes anyone to join. No experience is necessary. Next meeting: December 14 at 10:30 a.m. in Room 4.

We all get stressed out. We lead busy lives involving important responsibilities for our work, our families, and our community. Take a moment, take a breath, and ease someone else's anxiety by reaching out to those in our midst who may be alone, ailing, cold or in need. Reach into your pocket if you can and send a small donation to the Isaiah 58 Social Action Committee. We buy canned food, we buy yarn to knit hats and scarves, sometimes we buy peanut butter, jelly and bread or whatever we think is needed for our community outreach to be successful. Donate canned goods and shelf-stable items and place them in our lobby bin each time you come to the temple. When you help others, you reap the benefit.

Come to our meetings and share your ideas for positive social action. Everyone is welcome! We will meet on Zoom December 10 and January 15 at 7:30 p.m.

The Isaiah 58 SAC wishes you all a Happy Hanukkah and a healthy, happy and prosperous 2026!

Jane Oberwager Gaines
Isaiah 58 Social Action Committee Chair

**To make a donation to
Temple Beth David for a
special occasion or in memory of a loved one,
please contact Wendy in the Temple office at
499-0915 ext. 312 or
wendy@tbdcommack.org**



HANUKKAH HAPPENING



Sunday, December 7th
9:30-11:00 AM

All Welcome, Ages 0 to 100!



LEGO Contest (Bring your own Legos)

Make an Edible Menorah

Yummy Hanukkah Treats

Create an Electric Circuit Menorah

(Grades 3 and up)

**Crafts, Games and much more for all
ages!**



RSVP REQUIRED BY DECEMBER 3rd:

<https://tbdcommack.shulcloud.com/hanukkahhappening>

ALL WELCOME! NEW FACES MUST RSVP AND BRING PHOTO ID



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RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SINGS AT GURWIN



SIMCHAS AND NACHAS

We are starting a new column in *Hakol* to bring a bit more community to our TBD family. “Simchas and Nachas” will include happy news from our TBD family. So, if you have a birth (child or grandchild), promotion, new job, retirement, bar or bat mitzvah, graduation, engagement, or marriage announcement that you would like to share, please send it to Diane Kraut at dianekraut@optimum.net.

Hanukkah Blessings

Candles are added to the *hanukkiyah* (menorah) from right to left but are kindled from left to right. The newest candle is lit first. On the Shabbat of Hanukkah, kindle the Hanukkah lights first and then the Shabbat candles.

Light the *shamash* (the helper candle) first, using it to kindle the rest of the Hanukkah lights. As you do, say or sing:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו,
וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, asher kid'shanu b'mitzvotav v'tsivanu l'hadlik ner shel Hanukkah.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who hallows us with mitzvot, commanding us to kindle the Hanukkah lights.

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבוֹתֵינוּ
וְאִמּוֹתֵינוּ בַּיָּמִים הָהֵם בַּזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, she-asah nisim laavoteinu v'imoteinu bayamim hahaeim baz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who performed wondrous deeds for our ancestors in days of old at this season.

For first night only:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהֵחֵינֵנוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְּמַן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah, Adonai Eloheinu, Melech haolam, shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higiyanu laz'man hazeh.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of all, who has kept us alive, sustained us, and brought us to this season.

Hanerot Halalu

We kindle these lights because of the wondrous deliverance You performed for our ancestors. During these eight days of Hanukkah, these lights are sacred; we are not to use them but only to behold them, so that their glow may rouse us to give thanks for Your wondrous acts of deliverance.

Gracious Gifts from Thoughtful People

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Hal Wicker

In honor of Rabbi Klafter

Jerry Feldbau

In memory of Jeryl

Joel and Robyn Sklar

In appreciation of Rabbi Klafter

Rabbi Halpern's

Discretionary Fund

Randi and Ezra Zelkin

In honor of Jordan Zelkin's Bar Mitzvah

Hal Wicker

In honor of Rabbi Halpern

Susan Canin

In memory of Joseph Rothbaum

Diane Walsh

In memory of Joan Roses

Choir Fund

General Fund

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In memory of Alfred Margolish

Shirley Rose

In memory of Joel and Sysan Rose

Nira Schwartz-Nyitray

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In memory of Rosemirel Mandel

In memory of Hy Mandel

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In memory of Marvin Linnemann

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In memory of Arthur Levin

In memory of Raymond Senzer

Marc and Phyllis Grusensky

In memory of Anne Katz

Joan and Roy Gilbert

In memory of Paul Morris

In memory of Phyllis Morris

In memory of Lucille Gilbert

Sharman Regensburg

In memory of Rosalind Mancher

Ronald and Maxine Alschuler

In memory of Daniel Alschuler

Dave Taft

In memory of Janet Taft

Linda and Joel Evans

In memory of Betty Evans

Joel Schleifer

In memory of Saul Licht

Max Glick

In memory of Max Glick

Jeffrey Glick

In memory of Iris Glick

Wendy, Margie, Myra and Joe

In memory of Honey Friedman

Marcia Ettinger

In memory of Joannette Miller

Laurie Basile

In memory of Joyce Zion

Fred and Susan Paul

In memory of Bertha Paul

Shirley and Charles Offman

In memory of Lola Offman

Isaiah 58 Fund

Randy and Barbara Klein

In memory of Sandy Klein

Jodi Lynn Maisel

In memory of Arnold Bornfreund

Lisa Wilks-Gallo

Larry Marcus Fund

Religious School Fund

Susan & Barbara Stearns

Garden Fund

Economic Crisis Relief Fund

Marsha and Ray Greenberger



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located in sanctuary across from Yahrzeit plaques

Gold or Platinum Leaf

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Foundation Stone

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Sanctuary

One seat

\$ 800.00

Two seats

\$1500.00



What's Happening at TBD — December 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:00 pm Sisterhood Echo Printing Workshop (social hall)	2 4:30 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Brotherhood Planning Meeting 8:00 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	3 4:30 pm Religious School	4 7:30 pm Sisterhood Meeting	5 5:15 pm Baby Naming 6:00 pm Pre-neg 6:30 pm Sixth and Seventh Grade Shabbat Service w/Birthday Blessings Special Oneg following services	6 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
7 9:30 am Hanukkah Happening	8	9 4:30 pm Religious School 5:30 pm Religious School Committee Meeting 7:30 pm Steering Committee Meeting 8:00 pm Adult Choir Rehearsal	10 4:30 pm Religious School 7:30 pm Isaiah 58 Meeting (on Zoom) Brotherhood Event (out)	11 7:00 pm Sisterhood Game Night	12 7:30 pm Shabbat Service w/Adult Choir	13 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
14 10:30 am Hat Looming 1:00 pm Israeli Dancing	15	16 4:30 pm Religious School 7:00 pm Executive Board 8:00 pm TBD Board Meeting	17 4:30 pm Religious School 7:00 pm Hanukkah Candle Lighting at SYJCC	18 8:00 pm Sisterhood Book Club (on Zoom)	19 7:30 pm Shabbat Service and Hanukkah Candle Lighting	20 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
21	22	23 No Religious School 7:00 pm Budget & Finance 7:00 pm Sisterhood Chair Yoga	24 No Religious School Temple Office Closed	25 Temple Office Closed Brotherhood Event (out)	26 Temple Office Closed 7:30 pm Shabbat Service w/Ann Blessings	27 9:15 am Torah Study & Service
28	29 Temple Office Closed	30 No Religious School Temple Office Closed	31 No Religious School Temple Office Closed	1 Temple Office Closed	2 6:00 pm Pre-neg 6:30 pm Shabbat Service w/Birthday Blessings	3 9:15 am Torah Study & Service



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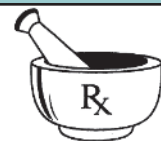
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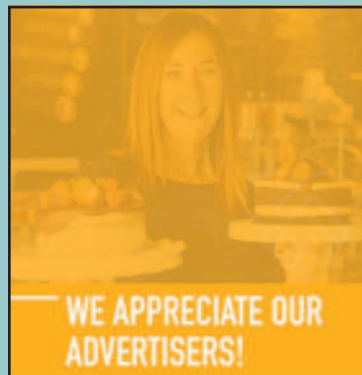
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Worship Schedule

Friday, December 5

Shabbat Vayishlach

6:30 pm Shabbat Service with Birthday Blessings

Saturday, December 6

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

Friday, December 12

Shabbat Vayeshev

7:30 pm Shabbat Service

Saturday, December 13

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

Friday, December 19

Shabbat Miketz

7:30 pm Shabbat Service

Saturday, December 20

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

Friday, December 26

Shabbat Vayigash

7:30 pm Shabbat

Saturday, December 27

9:15 am Torah Study and Service

HaKol
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