



SUCCESSFUL
ANNUAL APPEAL

SEE PAGE 5

UPCOMING EVENTS

Honoring Legacy Donors

On Saturday, Feb. 24, we will celebrate all of our members who have arranged legacy gifts to BEKI. Our honorees have added to our endowment funds during their lifetimes or arranged to leave \$1,000 or more to BEKI in their estates (through a will or trust, or as a beneficiary designation through a retirement account or life insurance policy).

Jay and Margie Hirshfield made that commitment. "Over the past 50 years," they explain, "we've celebrated b'nai mitzvah for two of our sons and two of our grandsons at BEKI. We've designated our Legacy bequests to BEKI to help secure its future, in the hope that this sort of continuity will remain open to families in the greater New Haven area. Furthermore, at this time of heightened concern for Jewish life in America, we believe that BEKI can be a local focus for strengthening individual and community Jewish identity."

We hope you will become a legacy donor also. For more information on how you can make these arrangements (free of charge, and very simply), contact our Finance Chair, Attorney Donna Levine at sdsij@aol.com or 203-668-6473.

Silly Hat Shabbat

We'll begin our Adar celebration on Saturday, March 2. Adults and children are encouraged to wear silly hats as a warmup to Purim.



Chris George

Chris George from IRIS

Also on Saturday, Feb. 24, join us for a Shabbat Schmooze at 12:45 pm with Chris George, who will discuss "The Future of Refugee Resettlement in the U.S. and how CT helped shape it."

For the past 18 years, Chris George has been the Executive Director of IRIS, Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services, the New Haven-based refugee resettlement agency that welcomed 1,000 refugees to Connecticut last year. IRIS is our partner in JCARR, the Jewish Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement.

George recently retired from that position. Please join us in saluting him.

Order Your Purim Bags

Be sure to reply about Shalach Manot by Wednesday, March 13. The order form is [here](#) at the website. You can pay by check or by [credit card](#) to send bags to a few friends or to the entire congregation.

Every member household may pick up a bag, but even if you don't pick one up, you'll receive your Purim card with your donor list. Bags can be picked up after the Megillah readings Saturday night, March 23, or Sunday, March 24, or by arrangement with the office later that week.

This year, by popular demand, we will include more hamantaschen and other goodies. Every item in the bag has proper hechsher, but we also will post those specifics on the BEKI website.



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BEKI Bulletin

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: 203.389.2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: bulletin@beki.org
- Visit our web page: www.beki.org

- Follow us on social media:  
- For advertising information, call the synagogue office.

Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the first of the month preceding publication.

Annual subscription is \$36

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Editor

Rachel Bashevkin

Associate Editors

Donna Levine, Donna Kemper

David Spitzer

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If you have questions or concerns, please speak with a Board member.

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BEKI STAINED GLASS WINDOW DESIGN BY CYNTHIA BETH RUBIN



Can You Provide a Meal?

BEKI has a long tradition of providing meals to families who have welcomed a child. You can prepare and deliver the dinner or arrange delivery from a restaurant.

Anything you need to know about preferences or address is provided at the platform called Lotsa Helping Hands.

Just [log in](#) and choose your password. When the calendar is set up for meals, you'll receive an email with a link.

We're currently providing meals to two families, with more anticipated in the weeks ahead!

**Lia, Benjamin, and Anna Greenberg
with baby Emma Shayna**

New Contract with the Rabbi

Rabbi Woodward and BEKI have entered into a long-term contract extension. "The Board is pleased that Rabbi Eric has made the commitment to stay at BEKI," President Rachel Bashevkin announced.

"As nearby congregations search for rabbis, BEKI's leadership knows that we found the right one, and we are delighted that this contract will give us stability for the years ahead. We look forward to an outstanding future together."

"My family and I are thrilled to have found our home here," Rabbi Woodward said. "We love BEKI, Ezra Academy, and New Haven, and are excited to be a part of this community's story. Personally, I'm excited for the future of BEKI, and inspired by who we are now."

Mazal Tov to

- Maytal Saltiel on her appointment as the next Yale University Chaplain.
- Rachel & Jason Greenberg (and big siblings Anna, Benjamin, and Lia) on the birth of Emma Shayna.
- Tamara Schechter & Jessica Bod (and big siblings Emmanuelle and Matthias) on the birth of Akiva Isidore.



Baby Akiva Isidore

Prize this month is a mug

Within an article in this bulletin, there's a 9 digit Prize Code. If you are one of the first five people to find it and email it to bulletin@beki.org, you will win a BEKI coffee mug.

Contacting Our Custodian

If you need to reach custodian Fatima Alyasari about setup for a special event, you can call/text her at 203-507-8560 or email her at custodial@beki.org. She's at BEKI Tuesday & Wednesday & Thursday 10:30 am to 6:30 pm, Friday 11:30 am to 7:30 pm, and Saturday 8 am to 4 pm. Her husband, Amer Hassoon, works at BEKI on Saturdays and also during the week as needed.



Fatima Alyasari and Amer Hassoon

Scholarship Opportunities for Children and Teens

Jewish Camp Scholarships

The website “[One Happy Camper](#)” helps families explore a variety of traditional and specialty Jewish day and overnight camps. Some camps offer need-based financial assistance, and parents are encouraged to inquire about the level of assistance available.

In addition, the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven offers needs-blind incentive grants of up to \$1,000 for first time campers as well as needs-based scholarships for all campers; applications are due by June 10.

Music Educator Rachel Beaver teaches a new song to kindergarteners and first graders at BINA.

Scholarships for Israel Trips

The Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven provides Israel Experience scholarships for Teens and Young Adults. [Applications](#) for summer trips are due by April 5.

USY is offering a variety of EPIC Israel trips this summer. All participants are eligible for a [RootOne Voucher](#) subsidy in the amount of \$3,000, a gift of the Marcus Foundation.

College Scholarships

Three different college scholarship programs—one of them needs-blind—are [available](#) through the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven. The deadline for all of them is May 31.



Rachel Beaver

Spotlight on a BINA Teacher: **Rachel Beaver**

Rachel Beaver is in her second year as our music educator. Morah Rachel works with every class at BINA, teaching new songs and prayers and accompanying us with her guitar. Rachel's teaching enriches our students' Hebrew learning and helps students prepare to lead prayers at BINA Shabbat.

Rachel, who grew up in Texas, holds an MDiv in Biblical Studies from Union Theological Seminary. A rising scholar of Religious Studies and Art History, she is finishing an MA in Religion and the Arts at Yale Divinity School. We will miss her next year when she continues her studies towards a PhD.

Honoring Our Annual Appeal Donors

We needed you, and you came through.

Thank you to everyone listed below who made donations to BEKI's 2023 Annual Appeal.

Your contributions will allow us to cover BEKI's operating budget, including salaries for the rabbi and staff, heat and power, and our increased security.

Thanks to your generosity, we exceeded our budgeted goal for the Appeal.

Murray & Barbara Akresh
Anonymous
Carl N. & Sharon Astor
Joseph & Ravit Avni-Singer
Kranie & Earl Baker
Rachel Bashevkin
Morris Bell & Raina Sotsky
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Marc & Carol Weitzman
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Lisa Yelon
Shoshana Zax & John Weiser
Eve & Joshua Zelinsky
Ronald Zlotoff & Donna Kemper

Add your name to this list today!
Call or email Peggy at 203-389-2108
x114 or office@BEKI.org.

Contributions

Kiddush Fund

- David Golden and Jessey Palumbo
- Elan Weinstock & Sarah Silverman and the Oppenheimer family
- Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow
- Rachel Bashevkin
- Ken & Linda Buckman

Chai/Synagogue Fund to support synagogue operations

To David Spitzer and family with sympathy on the passing of Susanne Spitzer by

- Shirley & David Goodman
- Rachel Bashevkin

In honor of Debbie Margolis by

- Michelle Gavins & Brian Margolis

With thanks for the generosity of allowing Isaiah Cooper to host the Men's Group at BEKI by

- Peter Huvelle

To the Rabbi Andrew Klein

Fund by

- Mindy Portnoy

To BEKI by

- Laura, Sidney & Madeleine Cahn

Yahrzeit Fund to support synagogue operations

In Memory of:

- Bernice Margolis by David Margolis
- Linden Bently Arthur, Mary Belle Rogan Arthur & Elizabeth Meade Arthur by Marilyn A. Katz
- Stanley Watsky by Kal Watsky
- Samuel M. Alper by the Alper family
- Pearl Weiner by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- Ida Buckman by Linda & Ken Buckman
- Sam Miller by Howard Miller
- Thelma Chernikoff by Janet Chernikoff
- Irving Weinstein by Elaine Weinstein
- Sarah Franzman by Larry & Susan Franzman
- Marilyn Blatt Margolis by Arnie Margolis
- Toby & Louis Blatt by Arnie Margolis
- Beth Sharon Margolis by Arnie Margolis
- Benjamin Levine by Lillian Gross
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- Rose Koblantz Olmer by Diana Bander Olmer
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- Wilbur Witten by Marvin Witten
- Louis Rochlin by Kranie & Earl Baker
- Simon Frank by Lauren Brown
- Marion Goldstein by Louis J.

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- Susan Birn by Harold & Stephanie Birn
- Her mother Esther Heller by Rhoda Lemkin
- His father Sidney Yaffe by Cliff Yaffe
- Zelda Rosenbluth by Lynn & Rick Saltz
- Frances Saltz by Rick & Lynn Saltz
- Phyllis Rogoff by Jonathan Eagan
- Rivka Perecman by Shirley & Jay Brodach
- Diane Lee Kaufman by Lewis & Minna Kaufman
- Jack Nankin by Sheldon & Sandra Nankin

Sisterhood

Books at the GiftShop

What makes the BEKI Giftshop unique? A well curated selection of books. Are you feeling overwhelmed and confused about Israel? Are you looking for a new take on your relationship with Judaism? Come peruse our shelves.

Please consider purchasing a pretty yellow leather heart for \$10. All proceeds go to #bringthemhomenow, an organization providing support for the families of hostages.

We are open every day by appointment, except Shabbat. You can usually drop in around maariv, but it's best to text or call first: Karen 203.430.2182 or Harriet 203.675.8607.

המקום ינחם HaMakom Yinachem

With sorrow we note the passing of

Linda Saslow

Pesach Lew, brother of Yaron Lew
Harold D. Levy, father of Betsy (& Robert) Sachs
Michael Schochat, father of Clifford Merin
(& Anna Rothfus Merin)

May the Almighty comfort those who mourn

Women's League Project in Uganda

BY MIMI GLENN, PRESIDENT OF SISTERHOOD

One of the latest projects of Women's League for Conservative Judaism is in Uganda. Through donations from BEKI and other Sisterhoods, the Shifrah and Puah Maternity Center services the women of Mbale and its neighboring villages, with a multi-denominational clientele and staff of Jews, Christians and Muslims.

All services provided by the center are completely free of charge—to encourage women to come in for prenatal, birth and post-partum services, rather than going through their pregnancies unassisted. The Center was established in 2018, thanks to the efforts of an Israeli nurse and midwife, Ilana Shemesh.

Please join BEKI Sisterhood this year. 2024 Membership is still only \$25.

Tree of Life Awaits Your Leaf

The Tree of Life at the entrance to BEKI is a collection of golden leaves that honor people and moments in our lives. For \$118 you can add a leaf. Contact Marjorie Wiener at 203.387.6278 or marjoriewiener@yahoo.com.

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Contact Peggy in our office, or speak to a
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John Weiser, Murray Akresh,
Jessey Palumbo, or John Wareck.



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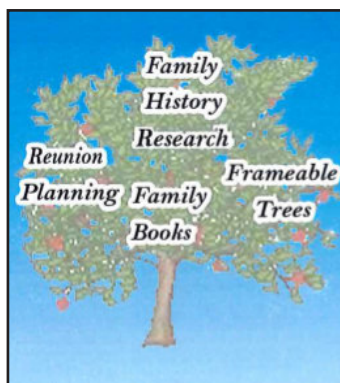
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What will your Jewish legacy be?

Jay and Margie Hirshfield Created a Legacy for Their Synagogue, Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel

"Over the past 50 years, we've celebrated B'nai Mitzvah for two of our sons and two of our grandsons at BEKI. We've designated our Legacy bequests in the hope that this sort of continuity will remain open to families in the Greater New Haven area, strengthening individual and community Jewish identity." –Jay and Margie

Create Your Jewish Legacy Today by Scanning the **QR Code** or Visiting newhavenjewishfoundation.org/create-a-jewish-legacy

For more information, contact the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven
 Lisa Stanger, Executive Director | (203) 387-2424, ext. 382 | lstanger@jewishnewhaven.org
 Tamara Schechter, Create a Jewish Legacy Manager | (203) 387-2424, ext. 325 | tschechter@jewishnewhaven.org



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JUDAISM AND VALENTINE'S DAY

Valentine's Day is not a Jewish holiday. We don't celebrate it in my family, although I do enjoy buying fair-trade Dove chocolate candies that week.

I don't really like Valentine's Day, and not because it's the story of a saint. I don't like it because I think it does more harm than good.

Over the years, I've seen the way that our society can cause people who aren't in couples to feel less-than. I have seen people whose spouses have died, or who are not married or coupled, or who have had tough relationships, be made to feel bad about themselves by these holidays.

So, truthfully, I am thrilled that Judaism doesn't claim Valentine's Day. Any day is a good day for going out on a date, for telling people you love them, for eating Dove chocolates, but it's not good to make people feel excluded or bad by having a holiday with a giant "should" about these things.

But the truth is, even though I'm proud that we don't celebrate this, the Jewish community isn't always great about

these issues. A lot has been written about how synagogues can sometimes be unwelcoming to single people or people without kids; a lot has also been written about how holidays like Valentine's Day, Mother's Day, Father's Day, can cause a painful focus on loss for many people.

What can we do to make our community one that helps all people feel valued? What can we do individually to help this? In educational settings, we often recognize how important it is not to say things like, "everyone remembers their grandmother's kugel," as exclusionary, but how are we doing in our individual lives, at kiddush and Shabbat tables, at social events, or elsewhere?

Let's take this idea, and bring it up by one spiritual level. Are there parts of your own spiritual life that you think might not belong? Do you have feelings of guilt or shame that you try to isolate and ignore? The Hasidic tradition tells us, "*leit atar panui minei*," "there is no space devoid of God," which means that, even in these places of shame or feeling other, there is God — there is belonging. Prayer is better if you bring your whole self — and your whole self is what we all want at synagogue.

May this be a winter of acceptance, of ourselves and of others.



Eric Woodward

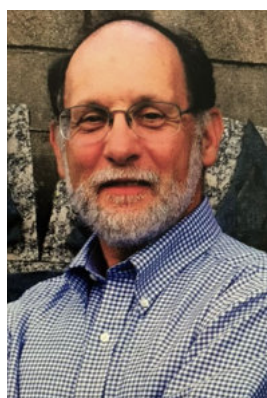
Ritual

Prayer and Liturgy

On Wednesday, Feb. 21, explore prayer and liturgy at 7:30 pm on BEKI [Zoom](#) with Rabbi Carl Astor. Hebrew proficiency is not required. This is not a class, but rather an open forum to learn together and share ideas.

Supporting Daily Services

To make sure we have a minyan consistently, please use [Minyan Maker](#). Up top, you choose which weekday service you are planning to attend (morning or evening). Then find your name below and choose "I'll be there." If your name does not appear on the list, just use "Guest Member."



Carl Astor

Sign up for Torah Reading

If you are able to read an aliyah of Torah or a Haftorah, make your selection via our online [spreadsheet](#).

Just scroll down to the proper date to see details about each aliyah.

Questions? Consult Rachel Adelstein at ritualcoordinator@beki.org.

Weekly Classes

Join Rabbi Woodward for a discussion of the week's Torah portion on Thursdays 9-9:45 am in the library, following 8:15 am Shacharit.

On select Sundays from 10 to 11 am (after 9 am Shacharit), Rabbi Woodward leads in-person study of Talmud, Chapter 2 Tractate Shabbat. Prior study of Jewish texts is not required. 202457842

February 2024

22 Shevat 5784 - 20 Adar I 5784

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

Saturday

Mark Your Calendar

March 2 Silly Hat Shabbat
 March 23 Erev Purim
 March 24 Purim Day
 April 22 First Seder
 April 28 Moth Night at BEKI
 May 6 Yom HaShoah
 May 22 Stop the Bleed training

				1 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	2 7am In-person/Zoom Service 4:50pm Candle Lighting 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat	3 9:15am Shabbat Services (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
				22 Shevat	23 Shevat	24 Shevat
4 9am BINA 9am In-person/Zoom Service 10am Talmud Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	5 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	6 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	7 7am In-person/Zoom Service 4pm BINA 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	8 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	9 Rosh Hodesh I 7am In-person/Zoom Service 4:59pm Candle Lighting 6pm BINA Shabbat	10 Rosh Hodesh II 9:15am Shabbat Services (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
25 Shevat	26 Shevat	27 Shevat	28 Shevat	29 Shevat	30 Shevat	1 Adar I
11 9am BINA 9am In-person/Zoom Service 10am Talmud Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	12 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting (online)	13 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	14 7am In-person/Zoom Service 4pm BINA 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service 6:30pm Teen Keshet	15 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	16 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:08pm Candle Lighting 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat	17 9:15am Shabbat Service (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation
2 Adar I	3 Adar I	4 Adar I	5 Adar I	6 Adar I	7 Adar I	8 Adar I
18 No BINA 9am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	19 Office Closed 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service 7pm General Board Meeting (online)	20 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	21 7am In-person/Zoom Service No BINA 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service 7:30pm Prayer & Liturgy w/Rabbi Carl Astor (Zoom)	22 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	23 Purim Katan I 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:17pm Candle Lighting 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat	24 Purim Katan II Legacy Shabbat 9:15am Shabbat Service (in-person) 11am Children's Havura, K-2 Kehila, Jr. Congregation 12:45pm Shabbat Schmooze w/Chris George, retired Executive Director of IRIS
9 Adar I	10 Adar I	11 Adar I	12 Adar I	13 Adar I	14 Adar I	15 Adar I
25 9am BINA 9am In-person/Zoom Service 10am Talmud Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	26 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	27 7am In-person/Zoom Service 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service	28 7am In-person/Zoom Service 4pm BINA 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service 6:30pm Teen Keshet	29 8:15am In-person/Zoom Service 9am Torah Study 5:45pm In-person/Zoom Service		
16 Adar I	17 Adar I	18 Adar I	19 Adar I	20 Adar I		

Service Times

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays
9am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv	7am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv	7am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv	7 am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv	8:15am Shaharit 5:45pm Maariv	7 am Shaharit 6 pm Kabbalat Shabbat	9:15am Shaharit



Advertise in the Bulletin

Would you like your ad here in the coming year? Each month, the BEKI bulletin reaches over 700 households, most of them in the New Haven area. Check with Peggy in the BEKI office about our variety of ad rates.

Easy Fundraiser

The Stop & Shop gift cards sold by the BEKI office are debit cards for groceries or gasoline. This is an ongoing fundraiser that costs you nothing. Contact Peggy office@beki.org to arrange pickup.

Join BEKI on Facebook

Everyone is encouraged to join the [BEKI Facebook group](#). You'll enjoy the humor, community information, and links to cultural opportunities. You'll want to choose the private group with the stained-glass window image. Just ask to join. (The BEKI page with the hamsa is the public-facing page, which has few postings).

E-Statements

Due to rising costs and BEKI's efforts to be more Earth-friendly, we have transitioned to e-statements and e-yahrzeits. If you prefer to receive them by paper, please contact the BEKI office at office@beki.org or 203-389-2108 x114. The BEKI Green Team supports BEKI's movement toward paperless communications and hopes the community will also.

Services

All services are also available on Zoom except Friday night and Saturday morning.

Sunday 9 am	Wednesday 7 am
Sunday 5:45 pm	Wednesday 5:45 pm
Monday 7 am	Thursday 8:15 am
Monday 5:45 pm	Thursday 5:45 pm
Tuesday 7 am	Friday 7 am
Tuesday 5:45 pm	Friday 6 pm
	Saturday 9:15 am

For the latest information on services, check [Happenings](#) or email bekitefilla@gmail.com