Shabbat Shalom

Nitzavim/Vayelech

September 5, 2026 |23 Elul 5786
Havdalah 8:24pm

בית יעקב
BETH JACOB CONGREGATION

Senior Rabbi:
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Sonya@Beth-Jacob.org

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Co-Presidents:
Michael Keller & Geoffrey Marshall
President@Beth-Jacob.org

Rabbi Emeritus:
Rabbi Morris Allen

Welcome to Beth Jacob Congregation, a Jewish community that comes together to nurture relationships with God and each other. We are a Conservative synagogue that values Torah (study), Avodah (reverential service) and Gemilut Hasadim (acts of loving-kindness). We believe every person has an equal opportunity to be part of our community regardless of age, race, ability, special needs, financial status, sexual orientation or gender identity. We're glad you've joined us this Shabbat!

D'var Torah
Tovah Levitt

Davenners
Tovah Levitt
Hannah Levitt

Gabbaim:
Erin Webb
Stuart Kaufman
Brian Millberg

Mashgiach:
Mira Miller

Kitchen:
Claire Zupetz
and her crew

Greeters & Security:
Robert Binder
Davida Alperin
Mindy Ratner
Kate Sandweiss
Steve Ukes

Mazal Tov
to Tovah Levitt on
becoming a Bat Mitzvah!

Our services depend on the participation of our community members. We welcome diverse voices and talents to lead our community in prayer and to read Torah.

Please use this QR code, or sign up at
Beth-Jacob.org/DavenorTorah

Torah Reading

First / Rishon Aliyah	Deuteronomy 29:9-29:28	p. 1165	Tovah Levitt & Brad Elkin
Second / Sheni Aliyah	Deuteronomy 30:1-30:6	p. 1169	Hannah Levitt
Third / Shelishi Aliyah	Deuteronomy 30:7-30:14	p. 1170	Giulia Girgenti
Fourth / Revi'i Aliyah	Deuteronomy 30:15-31:6	p. 1171	Giulia Girgenti
Fifth / Chamishi Aliyah	Deuteronomy 31:7-31:13	p. 1174	Giulia Girgenti
Sixth / Shishi Aliyah	Deuteronomy 31:14-31:19	p. 1175	Louis Hunter
Seventh / Shevi'i Aliyah	Deuteronomy 31:20-31:30	p. 1177	Naften Sadoff
Maftir	Deuteronomy 31:28-31:30	p. 1178	Tovah Levitt
Haftarah	Isaiah 61:10-63:9	p. 1181	Sharon Press

This week's kiddush is sponsored by Tovah Levitt's family in honor of her becoming a Bat Mitzvah.

Living Like it's 'Hayom' Every Day

Moses' final address to the Jewish people takes on added significance because of its proximity to his death.

By Rabba Rachel Kohl Finegold

Rabba Rachel Kohl Finegold is the rabbinic leader of Moriah Congregation in Deerfield, IL

Parashat Nitzavim begins on the final day of Moses' life. The text emphasizes the significance of this with its repetition of the word hayom — today — five times in the first six verses of the portion. According to the biblical commentator Rashi, Moses knew which day he would die. He knows this is his last chance to address the nation.

There is a principle in Jewish law that before death, a person is assumed to be speaking sincerely. Divrei sh'chiv mera — a person's words on their deathbed are as legally binding as a written contract, the Talmud says. Secular law has a similar concept, called the dying declaration. We implicitly understand that when someone is close to death, they are speaking with deep sincerity. Regardless of whether those moments are difficult or serene, they carry great weight. We listen carefully; a person's last words carry deep significance.

On the final day of his life, Moses speaks words that are not new, but serve to refocus the nation on their relationship with God. The medieval Spanish scholar Ramban describes the events of Nitzavim as a repetition of the covenant of Sinai. On a practical level, this makes sense. Moses is speaking to a new generation who were either not present at Mount Sinai, or were there as children. It is an opportunity for him to reiterate the national commitment for a new generation who are about to enter the land of Israel.

But repeating the covenant and the rituals of Sinai also takes on extra significance because this was Moses' last day on earth. Even if the nation has heard these lessons repeatedly over the years, even though Moses has taught again and again about God's promise to our patriarchs and about the importance of following God's ways, the nation will listen on this day like never before. Hayom – on his final momentous day – Moses knew this was his chance to make a greater impact than he could have made on any other day of his life.

We read Nitzavim during the season of teshuvah, or repentance, in the weeks before Rosh Hashanah. In Pirkei Avot, the rabbis teach: Repent one day before your death. But of course, we don't know when our final day will be. Moses was unique in having this knowledge, and was able to use his final hours wisely, to make his dying declaration really count.

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Torah Commentary

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Obviously, we cannot possibly adhere to this advice literally. So perhaps the imperative here is to feel the urgency of our words and actions every single day, to live each day as if it were our last. What if we spoke each sentence as if it were our dying declaration, as if we knew people would remember those words for a long time?

The process of teshuvah is one of realigning ourselves each day with the honesty and integrity of someone who is on their deathbed. This does not need to be morbid or depressing. It is a reminder to live every day to its fullest, to speak always with sincerity, and to focus on what is truly important. When worrying about money or business, when arguing with a spouse, when getting frustrated with children or friends, we might choose to live that day as if it were our last. In a moment of frustration, we might ask ourselves, "At the end of my life, is this really going to matter?"

In this way, we might reach the power of hayom every single day.

Children are Welcome in our Sanctuary!

We encourage children's participation in services and love having them in our sanctuary. Older children are encouraged to lead parts of the service and/or read Torah once able to do so. Younger children are invited to carry crowns during the Torah service and are also invited to the bimah for Adon Olam each week. At the end of services they can visit the rabbi's magic tallis bag to receive a lollipop or mini bubbles. Parents, please let Rabbi Tamar know if you do not want your child to receive one of these items.

Inclusivity and Accessibility During Services

We recognize the variety of needs within our community and strive to provide access to all through physical, emotional, and/or sensory accommodations. The majority of our prayers and scripture readings are conducted in Hebrew, so we invite those who do not read Hebrew to use a copy of the transliterated prayerbook (siddur) found on the table near the entrance to the sanctuary. We have large print books, braille prayerbooks, and listening devices available on the bookshelf in the lobby. There is also a sensory-friendly room just off the sanctuary with a speaker and window from which services can be experienced. Please ask the greeter near the sanctuary door if you need help locating any of these. Please reach out to our office if there are needs that aren't being met.

Thank You

To the Siegfried Family for donating a new Ner Tamid in the Saide Chapel in memory of Steve Siegfried (z"l)

To Beth Pearlman and Garry George for generously donating a new energy efficient freezer to the Beth Jacob kitchen in honor of their 30th wedding anniversary.

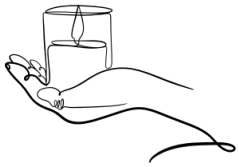
Yahrzeit List for Week Beginning August 29, 2026 / 16 Elul 5786

The seventh aliyah is reserved for those observing yahrzeits during the coming week. If you are observing a yahrzeit this week, please come forward at the seventh aliyah and give your full Hebrew name to the gabbai who will call you to the Torah. Your full Hebrew name includes your name and then ben/bat/mibeit and your parents' names or Avraham and Sarah. Please say your name loudly and clearly, so that the gabbai can hear it.

Masking is optional during the 7th aliyah on the bimah during the Torah service during our current pilot policy.

September 5/23 Elul
Freda Blons
Hilda Peterson
Jeanette Shapiro
Louis Fox
Raisa Wolfson

September 6/24 Elul
Earl Conner
Harold Abramson
Jack Freeman
Leo Reitner
Leon Slavin
Lillian Dunn
Marvin Turk
Shirley Goldfarb



September 7/25 Elul
Eli Paster
Joseph Spector
Leonore Matz Labovitz
Louis Gransberg
Marlene Robinson
Michael Resnick
Mollie Steiger
Molly Kaplan
Nathan Gleeman
Rose London

September 8/26 Elul
Abe Friesen
Abram Rafowicz
Azreal Kaplan
Beila Malkah Midlick
Charles Esensten
David Shacter
Debra Slutzky Chasen
Etta Pessel Midlick
Harry Neren
Isaac Moshe Midlick

September 8/26 Elul
(cont'd)
Martin Flaum
Max Statland
Moshe Starisna
Mr. Elijah Jagoda
Mrs. Elijah Jagoda
Natalie Halpern Eichen
Nathan Lohmanchinsky
Samuel Curchack
Zevi Joseph Midlick

September 9/27 Elul
Ben Blizen
Doris Curchack
Doris Norma Kaner
Ed Berkowitz
Edwin David Berkowitz
Helen Sandler
Jack Erlich
Kermit Hiller
Krane Kozberg
Paul Peyton
Rabbi Jeffrey Leynor
Ronald Miller

September 10/28 Elul
Bess Stone
Goldie Kozberg
Harry Brod
Jonah Goldblum
Joseph Unowsky
Rebecca Doroshow
Sol Minsberg
Zkanah Goldblum

September 11/29 Elul
Esther Efron
Frances Moses
Gabriel Lilienthal
George Werl
Goldie Abrahamson
Hazel Ostfield
Max Joseph Sweet
Ronald Goldman
Sam Sultan

TODAY at Beth Jacob

French Table at Kiddush

Si vous voulez parler en français, rejoignez-vous à la table française!

2 Jews 3 Opinions--A Post Kiddush Learning

Back by popular demand, Jenna Fischer returns to share her expreinces and facilitate a conversations about identity, safety, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Upcoming at Beth Jacob - September 5, 2026

FOR OUR KIDS

Pre-Shul Playgroup–Every Friday at 10:30 am
Join our open play time for young children and their caregivers. Meet in the nursery every Friday morning from 10:30am until naptime.

Tot Shabbat--First Shabbat of the Month, 10:00 in the Nursery
Join us on the first Shabbat of the month in the nursery for Tot Shabbat. We will have a song-filled Shabbat Morning Service for BJC's littlest ones (0-3 years old). We will then have an oneg and playtime for parents to schmooze and kids to play.

Register for Limudim
Beth-Jacob.org/Limudim

Join our learning community at Beth Jacob on Tuesdays and Shabbat to engage in Hebrew education, cultural activities, holiday celebrations, and more! Questions? Contact Rabbi Maayan@Beth-Jacob.org

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ADULT EDUCATION

Morning Mishnah, with Rabbi Tamar Magill-Grimm

TUESDAYS at around 8:00 am (after minyan)
in the Saide Chapel and online
Join on Zoom at Beth-Jacob.org/Minyan

Tanach, with David Rischall

Sundays 7:30-8:30 on Zoom: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/79546614386
Questions? Call David at 651-230-3911

LIVING MUSSAR

Mussar Va'ad
Beginning October 8
Thursday Mornings at Beth Jacob

The Courageous Path: Deepening your Mussar Journey is a new curriculum focused on month-long study of each of five middot. This Va'ad will cultivate the middot of Courage, Forgiveness, Anger, Joy and Strength. This 12 Session Va'ad will be facilitated by Gayle Zoffer and is recommended for those with some prior Mussar learning. Register at Beth-Jacob.org/Mussar

Selichot --TONIGHT, 8:30 at Shir Tikvah

Join rabbis and prayer leaders from our communities for a heartfelt night of learning, song, and connection in preparation for the Days of Awe.

High Holy Days at Beth Jacob

Rosh Hashana Starts September 11! See all of our services, events, register for programs, kids programming, order your lulav and etrog and more.
Beth-Jacob.org/HH

Sign up for Rosh Hashanah Dinner
Beth-Jacob.org/RHDinner

Order Your Lulav and Etrog
Beth-Jacob.org/Lulav

High Holy Day
WINE
Sale

Our cups have runneth over! We have much wine left over from the Pesach wine sale -- this is your opportunity to order more delicious. kosher wine for your holiday meals! Order wine on line and pick it up during our business hours.

Monarca Democracy Defense Training
Tuesday, September 15, 6:30
At Beth jacob

Join Lily Cooper of Unidos and Monarca for a Democracy Defense training to ensure every citizen can cast their ballot safely and that every person has a voice in our country's future. Register: Beth-Jacob.org/Monarca

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Caregiver Support Group
Wednesday, September 23, 7:00pm

Through conversation, reflection, and support with a Jewish lens, creating space for both the practical and emotional realities of caring for a loved one. This group meets once a month on Wednesday evenings at Beth Jacob.