

Shabbat Shalom

Mishpatim/Shabbat Shekalim

February 14, 2026 | 27 Shevat 5786

Havdalah 6:22pm

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!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Shabbat services this week.

Greeters & Security:

Eric Pasternack, Nicole Guthrie,
Lydia Schultz, Mindy Ratner
Laurie Radovsky

Mashgiach: Mark Usem

Kitchen Crew: Isaac Pommer, Steve Krovitz, Harold Samtur

D'var Torah:

Rabbi Tamar Magill-Grimm

Gabbaim:

Neal Gale
Stuart Kaufman
Leonard Oppenheimer

Torah Reading

First / Rishon Aliyah
Second / Sheni Aliyah
Third / Shelishi Aliyah
Fourth / Revi'i Aliyah
Fifth / Chamishi Aliyah
Sixth / Shishi Aliyah
Seventh / Shevi'i Aliyah
Maftir
Haftarah

Exodus 21:1-21:19
Exodus 21:20-22:3
Exodus 22:4-22:26
Exodus 22:27-23:5
Exodus 23:6-23:19
Exodus 23:20-23:25
Exodus 23:26-24:18
Exodus 30:11-30:16
II Kings 11:17-12:17

p. 456
p. 461
p. 465
p. 470
p. 472
p. 474
p. 475
p. 523
p. 1277

Giulia Girgenti
Eric Pasternack
Natan Paradise
Otto Ogman
Louis Hunter
Monica Kelley
Benj Kamm
Emery Sher

Senior Rabbi:

Rabbi Tamar Magill-Grimm
RabbiTamar@Beth-Jacob.org

Executive Director:

Sonya Rapport
Sonya@Beth-Jacob.org

Director of Congregational Programming:

Frances Fischer
Frances@Beth-Jacob.org

Youth and Education Coordinator:

Marisa Goffman
Youth@Beth-Jacob.org

Co-Presidents:

Leonard Oppenheimer & Tessa Silver
President@Beth-Jacob.org

Rabbi Emeritus:

Rabbi Morris Allen

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.

This week's kiddush is unsponsored and supported by donations made to the Kiddush Fund. Thank you to everyone that has donated to the fund to make this kiddush possible. If you would like to help offset costs of kiddush, please consider making a donation to the [Kiddush Fund](#) to allow Beth Jacob's kiddush tradition to continue.

Overcoming Victimhood

This Torah portion offers a vital ethical message for a people who have suffered centuries of oppression.

By Rabbi Zachary Truboff

Director, International Beit Din Institute for Agunah Research and Education

In The Temptation of Innocence, French social theorist Pascal Bruckner highlights a little known insight of Sigmund Freud regarding the psychology of victimhood.

In one chapter in his Essays on Applied Psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud examines the nature of certain people who, having suffered diseases or setbacks during their childhood, believe themselves exempt from the sacrifices that apply to humanity as a whole. They have endured enough to never have to accept any further deprivation ... They can commit injustices since they have suffered injustices themselves: they are exceptions, and life owes them reparations.

Those who feel they have been wronged in some deep fashion often believe they have earned the right to act how they see fit. The same morality that binds others is not relevant to them. This psychology of victimhood often manifests itself in the most terrible of ways. Too often those who were victims go on to become abusers. Statistics show that the vast majority of parents who physically abuse their children were abused by their own parents.

It is to this point that the Torah offers a powerful ethical message, one that is essential for the Jewish people to hear after having suffered as slaves for hundreds of years. In Parashat Mishpatim, among the litany of laws that Moses communicates to the Jewish people, is this one repeated again and again throughout the Torah: “You shall not oppress a stranger for you know the feelings of the stranger, having yourselves been strangers in the land Egypt.” (Exodus 22:20)

Instead of holding on to pain and using it as a weapon against the world, God asks the Jewish people to use it as a source of empathy and moral responsibility. Because the Jewish people were taken advantage of in their vulnerability, they must strive never to do the same to others.

Is this expectation reasonable? How can one break the cycle that causes a victim to become an abuser? The truth is that if we look more closely at the reality of abuse, we see that while most abusers were themselves abused, most children who suffer abuse do not go on to become abusers as adults. All human beings have the capacity to transcend the pain and suffering inflicted upon them. Being a victim of violence need not turn one into a monster.

To overcome the danger of seeing oneself as a victim, one must perceive the suffering as having a greater purpose. It must fit into a narrative that gives one's life meaning. This is what the Torah is trying to achieve. Yes, the Jewish people suffered in Egypt. But that pain can be given a purpose and perhaps even be made holy. While suffering can make us vulnerable, it can also make us empathetic. Given the choice, this is not an option we usually choose, for to open oneself to the pain of others is to be reminded of the pain we carry within us.

Torah Commentary

CONT.

To overcome the danger of seeing oneself as a victim, one must perceive the suffering as having a greater purpose. It must fit into a narrative that gives one's life meaning. This is what the Torah is trying to achieve. Yes, the Jewish people suffered in Egypt. But that pain can be given a purpose and perhaps even be made holy. While suffering can make us vulnerable, it can also make us empathetic. Given the choice, this is not an option we usually choose, for to open oneself to the pain of others is to be reminded of the pain we carry within us.

Rabbi Jonathan Sacks frequently pointed out that the story of humanity has too often been about victimhood. When God questions Adam in the Garden of Eden for having violated God's command and eaten from the Tree of Knowledge, Adam doesn't deny it. Instead he tries to paint himself as the victim. "It wasn't my fault," he says. "It is the woman who you gave me. She is the one who tempted me into sin."

Rabbi Sacks explains that since the creation of the world, the culprits have changed, but the sense of victimhood remains. He writes:

We say it wasn't us. It was the politicians. Or the media. Or the bankers. Or our genes. Or our parents. Or the system — be it capitalism, communism or anything between. Most of all, it is the fault of the others, the ones not like us, the infidels, the sons of Satan, the children of darkness, the unredeemed.

We prefer to see ourselves as victims because it absolves us of responsibility for our actions. But the Torah teaches that this is the wrong answer. If we feel wronged, treated unfairly, and hurt, then it is our responsibility to take that pain and let it open our hearts to others.

TODAY at Beth Jacob



Limudim: Our Learning Community

We begin with breakfast at 9:00am. We are so excited to see our building full of families engaged in fun and meaningful Jewish learning!

Stand Up... Sit Down... What Does It All Mean?

Every 2nd & 4th Saturday, 9:15 in the Saide Chapel

For the curious and confused – each week is taught by a leader in our congregation.

Science Fiction Table at Kiddush

Sit with the SciFi fans and discuss the topic of the day.



Loving the Stranger--A Post Kiddush Learning

After kiddush, Mira Steinberg will discuss her experiences in Nogales and the Borderlands.

Yahrzeit List for Week Beginning February 14, 2026 / 27 Shevat 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.

Masks are required on the bimah during the Torah service. If you do not have one, please get one from the basket by the greeter and put it on prior to coming up for an aliyah.

February 14/27 Shvat

Jean Beverly Blank
Jonathan Etzler
Flora Levine
Abraham Perry
Temple Radovsky
Nathan Schulman
Rita Goldetsky
Louis Nilva

February 15/28 Shvat

John (Shaky) Absey
Jennie Goldberg
Louis Greenberg
Elsie Koen
Eve Needleman
Hy Rosen
Phyllis Schloff Stahl
Barah Gaba
Harvey Winthrop
Bessie Fink



February 16/29 Shvat

Hyman Dworkin
Mollie Finberg
Frances Raport Silver
Fernande Rogers
Carl Sharpe
Ettie Weiss
Rubin Werner
Esther Eugenie Bonan
Anna Leviton Papermaster
Pauline Barsky
Kate Gordon

February 17/30 Shvat

Zalick Fischman
Jacob Gordon
Jack Guthertz
James Gwost
Marcus Hertz
Arthur Hirsch
Mae Markowitz
Matthew Parasol
Pearl Rakove

February 17/30 Shvat (con't)

February 19/2 Adar

Rebecca Rosowsky
Sarah Silberstein
William Weiman
Jennie Winer
Anna Zlotnick
Irving Schechter
Abraham Bogdonoff
Louis Taple
Samuel Zimmon
Nathan Fink

February 18/1 Adar

Ada Abramson
Bernard Glaser
Sam Goldberg
Shmuel Yitzchok Katz
Louis Leichter
Julius Leichter
Harry Levine
Frieda Roshal
Fred Windmueller
Mary Winthrop
Dorothy Schmuckler
Fannie Moses
Benjamin Barenbaum

February 20/3 Adar

Esther Dribin
Kenneth Herman
Bernard Levy
Louis Liberman
Carol Itzkowitz Neiman
Thomas Newman
Sam Taran
Seymour Weisman
Jennie Zavotsky
Pearl Zlotnick

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.

Upcoming at Beth Jacob - February 14, 2026

For the Jew in the Pew

Every 1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturday 9:15 am in the Saide Chapel

Join Rabbi Lynn Liberman in the Chapel for some thoughtful study of the Book of Psalms.



Stand Up, Sit Down, What Does It All Mean? TODAY

Every 2nd & 4th Saturday, 9:15 in the Saide Chapel, Starting January 10

For the curious and confused. Guest teachers will explain the prayers, the services, and the movements associated with Shabbat. Attend as you can.



Tot Shabbat

10:00 - 10:30 am 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.



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.



ADULT EDUCATION:

Introduction to Judaism, with Rabbi Cathy Nemiroff

Monday evenings Beth-Jacob.org/Intro



Morning Mishnah, with Rabbi Tamar Magill-Grimm

Wednesdays 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.



Limudim Adult Ed

Tuesdays 6:30-7:30 Register at Beth-Jacob.org/LimudimAdultEd

Upcoming Shabbatlucks with DCL Candidates:

Feb. 20, 2026, March 6, 2026, March 13, 2026

Friday Night | Kabbalat Shabbat Service & Potluck

5:30pm Services | Sanctuary

6:30pm Potluck | Social Hall



Upcoming at Beth Jacob - February 14, 2026

<p>Meet the top 3 candidates and join for their shabbat visits!</p> <p>Save these dates:</p> <p>Feb. 20-22, 2026 Max Davis March 6-8, 2026 Maayan Lev March 13-15, 2026 Rabbi John Carrier</p>	
<p>New Member Brunch February 22</p> <p>If you have joined Beth Jacob in the last 1-2 years, or longer and would appreciate more orientation, join the Kesher Committee for the New Member Brunch on February 22. Look for your email invitation!</p>	
<p>Hamentashen Baking February 22</p> <p>Join a friendly group of bakers, pinchers, painters, ploppers, and packers as we make delicious hamentashen for the congregation. No experience needed. Free samples!</p> <p>Sign up at Beth-Jacob.org/Bake</p> <p>Order Your Hamentashen</p> <p>Let us do the work and you can give delicious hamentashen in your mishloach manot! Prune, Poppy, Apricot, Raspberry, Nutella or Assorted. \$18/Dozen.</p> <p>Beth-Jacob.org/BuyHamentashen</p>	 
<p>PURIM IS COMING!</p> <p>Mendota Megilla Madness is March 2 at 6:30pm. Come for the Megilla, stay for the Madness, Frivolity, Food, Dancing, and Shenanigans.</p> <p>Family Dinner is available before the Megilla Reading to make it easier for families to attend. Please reserve your spot at Beth-Jacob.org/PurimDinner</p> <p>Minyan Megilla Madness is March 3 at 8:30am.</p> <p>Family Megilla Reading Sunday March 8 at 10:15am--come hear the story of Purim, with costumes, snacks, music, and silliness.</p> <p>Purim Carnival Sunday March 8, 11am-1pm. Games, Prizes, Inflatables, Food and Fun for all ages! Buy your tickets at Beth-Jacob.org/Carnival (or at the door)</p>	  
<p>Save the Date! The Beth Jacob Blood Drive will be Sunday, May 31.</p> <p>To be eligible to donate on May 31, your last donation must be on or before:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feb 7 for Double Red• April 4 for Whole Blood <p>Please sign up to donate at www.beth-jacob.org/blood.</p>	 Memorial Blood Centers