Shabbat Shalom

Chaye Sarah

November 7, 2026 |27 Cheshvan 5787
Havdalah 5:35pm

בית יעקב
BETH JACOB CONGREGATION

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

Executive Director:
Sonya Rapport
Sonya@Beth-Jacob.org

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Frances Fischer
Frances@Beth-Jacob.org

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Marisa Goffman
Youth@Beth-Jacob.org

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
Rabbi Tamar Magill-Grimm

Davenners:
Bernie Miller, Emery Sher

Greeters & Security:
Robert Binder, Sharon Press, Davida Alperin, Tessa Silver,

Gabbaim: Erin Webb, Jonathan Ehrlich

Mashgiach: Beth Pearlman

Kitchen:
John Allen & Sharon Benmaman, Neil & Susan Moses-Zirkes, Harold Samtur, Tessa Silver



Veterans Day Shabbat

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	Genesis 23:1-23:16	p. 127	Giulia Girgenti
Second / Sheni Aliyah	Genesis 23:17-24:9	p. 130	Sara Lynn Newberger
Third / Shelishi Aliyah	Genesis 24:10-24:26	p. 132	Marisa Goffman
Fourth / Revi'i Aliyah	Genesis 24:27-24:52	p. 134	Benj Kamm
Fifth / Chamishi Aliyah	Genesis 24:53-24:67	p. 137	Ruth Jewett
Sixth / Shishi Aliyah	Genesis 25:1-25:11	p. 139	Monica Kelley
Seventh / Shevi'i Aliyah	Genesis 25:12-25:18	p. 141	Marc Gutman
Maftir	Genesis 25:16-25:18	p. 141	Otto Ogman
Haftarah	I Kings 1:1-31	p. 143	Sharon Press

This week's kiddush is sponsored by the Lois Newberger (z"l) legacy fund.
It is also sponsored by Barbie and Sara Lynn in honor of their 30th anniversary.
30 years since their first "wedding" and 12 years since their second "wedding".
They are grateful that in more and more settings one wedding can be the norm.

Abraham's Blended Family

The relationship between Sarah and Hagar — and their two sons — is more complicated than you think.

By Erika Davis

Erika Davis writes about the intersection of race, sexual orientation and religion on her blog, Black, Gay and Jewish.

The title of this week's Torah portion, Chayei Sara, is Hebrew for "the life of Sarah." That's in spite of the fact that it opens with Sarah's death and then proceeds to detail Abraham's mourning, him finding her a burial plot and then selecting a wife for their son, Isaac. But to understand what's happening here, I think it's best to look back.

Just prior to this Torah portion is the binding of Isaac, when Abraham almost sacrifices Isaac. Two things happen after Isaac's life is spared by God. First, he flees to his mother's former handmaid, Hagar, and older brother, Ishmael. Then, his mother, Sarah, dies. She dies, perhaps, of heartbreak at not only the potential loss of her son in the sacrifice but the physical loss of her son to Hagar, a woman with whom she has a strained relationship to say the least. It is at this juncture in the lives of our forebears that Chayei Sara opens.

In this Torah portion, which is so much more about Isaac than about Sarah, we don't actually see Isaac until after he's returned from Beer-lahai-roi, which the passage says he "settled in the region of the Negev." If you recall from earlier in Genesis, Beer-lahai-roi roughly translated means "the well of he who sees me. " This same place to which Hagar retreated after being cast out by Sarah is where Isaac goes to find comfort after the betrayal of his father and death of his mother.

I first noticed the complexity of the familial relationship of Isaac, Ishmael, Sarah, Hagar and Abraham while studying at Pardes, a coed pluralistic yeshiva in Jerusalem, in the summer of 2015. Our forebears lived in a time of complicated family structures. It was not unheard of for a man to have several wives, each with several children. These women and children often go unnamed.

Sarah and Hagar are different. These sister-wives not only are each beloved by God (he makes great nations, 12 chieftains from them both) and Abraham (he is twice distressed by Sarah's treatment of Hagar and Ishmael), but by the sons they share. I find it hard to believe that the strife we read about between Hagar and Sarah is ongoing; instead, I think the two Torah mentions of Sarah treating Hagar harshly are extreme events. It is through this lens that it makes sense for Isaac to seek refuge, safety and a piece of home with Hagar after these two terrible events — almost being murdered by his father and then losing his mother. He grew up with both these women as his caretakers, his mothers. He grew up with Ishmael as his playmate, his brother. With Hagar and Ishmael sent away and his mother dead, he was left alone.

It's only after Sarah has been buried and a wife, Rebecca, is selected for Isaac that we see him again. We read that Isaac loves Rebecca and takes her to his mother's tent, where he is finally comforted after Sarah's death. It seems that Abraham, too, finds comfort after his wife's death and his son's marriage, because in the next chapter we learn that Abraham takes a second wife called Keturah.

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Torah Commentary

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There are some scholars who believe that Keturah is a new figure, while others believe that Keturah is merely a new name for Hagar who returns to the family after the death of Sarah. I tend to place myself in this column. I have never viewed Hagar as a mere handmaiden or servant of Sarah, but rather a woman who Abraham loved as a wife. A woman who possibly loved Sarah with a complex intimacy because of their shared husband. A woman who loved her children, both the son she bore and the son she helped to raise. It may seem uncomfortable to reconcile, but if we look at the way the story plays out, Hagar is the Jewish people's stepmother and her son, Ishmael, our brother.

To me the connection of Hagar as Keturah is evident by the fact that the sons of Keturah are named as well as the names of their descendants. Naming of people in the Torah is often a sign of significance. The text tells us that children of Abraham's other concubines are given gifts while he is alive and sent to the east. But these children aren't named, indicating a lack of importance.

This idea of Keturah as Hagar is also supported by how the text ends, with the death of Abraham. When Abraham dies we read that both of his sons bury their father in the same cave where Sarah is buried. We close with a recitation of the 12 sons of Ishmael, the grandchildren of Hagar/Keturah and Abraham. Some pieces of Midrash argue that this recitation of Ishmael's children is proof of the promise that God makes to both Abraham and Sarah and Abraham and Hagar; that his descendants will be as numerous as grains of sand and stars in the sky. God fulfills his promise to Abraham not just through Isaac, but also through Ishmael. And therefore through Hagar.

These lessons of Torah push us to think beyond our comfort and encourage us to consider the nuances of identity, peoplehood and family. I think God's lesson is to lean into that complexity, because it's evident that we prosper only together.

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.

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.



Yahrzeit List for Week Beginning November 7, 2026 / 27 Cheshvan 5787

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.

November 7/27 Cheshvan
Inga Gersh
Henry Goodman
Daniel Gould
Gertrude Gurstelle
Cynthia Sultan
Ida Weinstein
Dora B. Snyder
Dora Rischall Snyder
David Paper

November 8/28 Cheshvan
Barbara Eiger
Marshall Goldman
Joseph Nisker
Carol Schaumann

November 9/29 Cheshvan
Alvin Abrahamson
Hyman Chern
Bruce Cronmiller
Anna Meltz
Bella Perry
Morris Sanders
Michael Volk
Lawrence Jaffe
Herbert Curchack

November 11/1 Kislev
Eva Cherkasky
Sheldon Dray
Florence Gillman
Jerome Grandt
Meyer Grossman

November 11/1 Kislev
Herman Rischall
Freda Rubenstein
Alex Uditsky
Ben Poboisk
Lois Newberger

November 12/2 Kislev
Fannie Chase
Hannah Kramer
Leonard Lazarus
Leon Price
Noah Rosenbloom
Ira Schultz
Anna Silverstein Levin
Teresa Galban
Jacob Freed

November 13/3 Kislev
Eddie Ackerman
Chasiah Cohen
Hannah Feldman
Giorgio Girgenti
Fred Grantz
Renay Kushner
Benjamin Markovitz
Seymour Peyton
Rae Robinson
Jaye Peschko
Mitchell Kowitz
Hyman Glicken

TODAY at Beth Jacob

Limudim: Our Learning Community

Limudim starts at 9:30am

French Table at Kiddush



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



Praying Body Workshop
A Post-Kiddush Learning

Using theater practices and physical movement, this workshop teaches prayer from the inside out. We focus on Kavod reverence/presence) and Hitpa'alut (wonder/awakened awareness). Led by Cantor Tamar Havilio.

Beth Jacob recognizes our US Veterans

David Bailey
Robert Birnbaum
Gavriel DePrenger-Gottfried
Stephen Froelich
Peter Glick
Shiloh Henderson
Alan Kagan
Dan Klausner
Isaac Pommer
Peter Rosen
Steve Rosenthal
Allan Schultz
Ron Scott

Upcoming at Beth Jacob - Novembber 7, 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--Third Shabbat of the Month, 10:00 in the Nursery
Join us in the nursery for Tot Shabbat, led by Talia Vital. 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.

ADULT EDUCATION



Judith And The Maccabees, with Dr. Shayna Sheinfeld
Tuesdays, 5:30-6:30pm
October 6, 13, 27, November 3, 10, 17, December 1, 8
Judith and the Maccabees: Illuminate your Hanukah experiences by diving into the book of Judith, a text from the Apocrypha that is strongly associated with the holiday of Hanukah (though different from the traditional Hanukah story). If time allows, we may also look at the book of 2 Maccabees. Register at Beth-Jacob.org/AdultEd



Judaism 101: Core Principles and Practices, with Rabbi Tamar
Tuesdays, , 5:30-6:30 on Zoom
Starting November 10
For anyone seeking to better understand Jewish thought and practice.
Whether you are already Jewish, Jewish-curious, or on the path to conversion.

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

What is Jewish History and Why Does It Matter?
Dr. Noam Sienna
November 16, 4:00pm, UofM



Attend Dr. Noam Sienna's inaugural lecture as the Deinard Chair, co-sponsored by the Department of History and the Center for Jewish Studies, at 412 Pillsbury Hall (310 Pillsbury Dr SE)

Upcoming at Beth Jacob - November 7, 2026



Shabbatluck
Friday, December 4: Services at 5:30, Dinner at 6:15
Come to Beth Jacob on the first Friday of the month for Ma'ariv, Kabbalat Shabbat, and a delicious pot luck dinner. Let us know what you are bringing at Beth-Jacob.org/Shabbatluck

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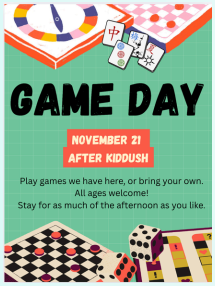
Braille Megilla Workshop
Sunday, November 8, 5-7pm
Help create the world's first kosher, blind-accessible scroll of Esther . Beth Jacob will sew the panels together making the megillah kosher for reading this upcoming Purim! Beth-Jacob.org/Braille

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Federation Shabbat
November 14



Hear from David Kaplan, CEO of the St. Paul Jewish Federation, about the remarkable work that Federation does in our community and around the world. Kiddush sponsored by the Federation.



Game Day
November 21, after kiddush
Game Day is open to everyone! Bring a game, or play one we have here. All ages, all abilities, all fun!

Helping the Archives
November 22, 2pm, on Zoom
There are many unidentified Beth Jacob photos at the archives. Archivist Kate Dietrich will show us photos - we will identify the event, the people, etc, and the information will be preserved for posterity! Register at Beth-Jacob.org/Archives





Bringing Climate Action Home - the Easy Way.
A Post-Kiddush Learning
December 12
The Climate Action Committee will present a "show and tell" to introduce small, simple changes in your life that will reduce your ecological/ carbon footprint.

Beth Jacob Reads a Book: Embracing Exile by David Kraemer
A Post-Kiddush Learning
December 19
Join Rabbi Tamar for a discussion about this fascinating book. Limited copies available to borrow in the Beth Jacob library.

