Shabbat Shalom

Vayetzei

November 21, 2026 |11 Kislev 5787
Havdalah 5:21pm

בית יעקב
BETH JACOB CONGREGATION

Senior Rabbi:
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RabbiTamar@Beth-Jacob.org

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

Director of Congregational Programming:
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Frances@Beth-Jacob.org

Youth and Education Coordinator:
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
Mira Miller

Mashgiach: David Zehavi

Kitchen:
Benjamin & Mary Bejar,
Jonathan & Holly Brod Farber,
Eli Gottfried, Dan Klausner,
Rachel & Ilan Silva

Gabbaim:
Bernie Miller
Jonathan Ehrlich
Barb Curchack

Greeters & Security:
David Alperin
Roy Kay
Mickey Minsberg

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 28:10-28:22	166	Eric Pasternack
Second / Sheni Aliyah	Genesis 29:1-29:17	169	Louis Hunter
Third / Shelishi Aliyah	Genesis 29:18-30:13	171	Natan Paradise
Fourth / Revi'i Aliyah	Genesis 30:14-30:27	176	Susan Moses-Zirkes
Fifth / Chamishi Aliyah	Genesis 30:28-31:16	178	Natan Paradise
Sixth / Shishi Aliyah	Genesis 31:17-31:42	181	Jonathan Ehrlich
Seventh / Shevi'i Aliyah	Genesis 31:43-32:3	185	Rosanne Zaidenweber
Maftir	Genesis 32:1-32:3	187	Rosanne Zaidenweber
Haftarah	Hosea 11:7-12:12	195	Jonathan Ehrlich

This week's kiddush is sponsored by Leonard Oppenheimer and Lydia Schultz in celebration of their 47th wedding anniversary. Mazel Tov!

This week's kiddush is also sponsored by Patricia and Ethan Jewett in celebration of their 15th wedding anniversary. Mazel Tov!

Good Deeds, Bad Consequences

What goes around, comes around, even if you're Jacob.

By Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger

Rabbi Hanan Schlesinger serves as the Director of International Relations for Roots/Judur/Shorashim, the Israeli Palestinian Local Initiative for Understanding, Nonviolence, and Transformation

'Why do bad things happen to good people?' is a question that almost all of us have been plagued by at some time. It is probably one of the most pressing theological issues of all time, one that apparently has no universally satisfying solution. Despite that, a hint of a very partial answer may be found in this week's Torah portion.

The night that our forefather Jacob has been eagerly anticipating has arrived. For seven years he has toiled in the house of Laban for the right to marry the family's youngest daughter Rachel. But he is duped, and upon waking in the morning he discovers that the woman he has wed is not his beloved Rachel, but rather Laban's oldest daughter, Leah. Jacob confronts his father-in-law with angry words: "What is this you have done to me? I worked with you for Rachel! Why did you deceive me?" But Laban is not one to back down or admit guilt. A ready answer is on his lips: "It is not the practice in our place to put the younger before the older."

The accusation that is heard between the lines is a biting one indeed. In your place the younger may be put before the elder, but heaven forbid that such inappropriate behavior be condoned in our neck of the woods.

And the memories of those oh-so-difficult events of over seven years ago flood back into the consciousness of Jacob, memories he had been so valiantly trying to suppress. How his mother prevailed upon him, the younger son, to impersonate his older brother Esau and thereby obtain from his blind and aging father Isaac the blessing usually reserved for the firstborn. How he went in to his beloved father and lied to him, answering the question "Who are you?" with the words "I am Esau your firstborn." How his father trembled, and his brother cried out in anguish, when the treachery became known. And how his enraged brother vowed to kill him, and he was forced to flee from home for his very life. And now Jacob's head is spinning; he is stung to the core. The past has come back to haunt him.

This is exactly the type of thing that our ancient sages called "measure for measure." He dished it out, and he got it back. The deceiver has been deceived. The younger who usurped the position of the elder, has been given the elder when it is the younger that he so greatly longed for.

But this is much more than punishment. It has all the makings of tragedy, for Jacob had done what he did only for the sake of heaven. His motives, according to various Midrash texts, were nothing if not pure. He and his mother Rebecca were convinced, and justifiably so, that Esau was not fit to receive the blessing that Isaac was apparently bent upon giving him. Esau was an impulsive type, concerned only with the here and now; he sold his birthright for a bowl of porridge only because he was ravenously hungry at the moment. He was a bit animal-like in the way that he gobbled down his food. And he did the unthinkable by marrying a local Canaanite woman, something that Abraham had sternly warned against and that caused great anguish to Isaac and Rebecca.

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Torah Commentary

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Parashat Toldot unfolds along the lines drawn in Rebecca's womb. Esau, the man of the fields, sells his birthright to satisfy his basic physical needs and human desires. Jacob, the homebody, uses his mind and intellect to trick his father into giving him the blessing reserved for his brother. The Torah— and later Jewish tradition— maintains this dichotomy: Esau is forever painted as the wild man, the violent one, while Jacob becomes the dynastic patriarch of the Jewish people, wise and gentle.

But what might their futures — ours — have looked like if someone had helped Esau nurture other facets of his personality, had helped him balance his physicality with social and emotional growth? What might Jacob had learned if he'd been encouraged to trust and challenge his body?

Later in his life, with the tables somewhat turned, Jacob has the opportunity to bless all of his children (in Parashat Vayechi, just wait a few weeks). And his blessings are profound — they are both realistic, addressing each child for who they are in the world, and aspirational, giving a hope for who and what they can be. Perhaps (after the own unfortunate results of him favoring one child, Joseph, over his others), he learned from what his parents could not give him— and perhaps we can too.

Parents or not, our job — living in the world of relationship — is to help the people that we love to bridge the two: the current and the aspirational. It is to help people—our children and our students, our friends and our family — to become most fully who they are now — and then guide them and nurture them on the path to becoming who they want to be.

And along the way, perhaps we too, will become new, become changed, transform.

TODAY at Beth Jacob

For the Jew in the Pew

This class on Psalns meets with Rabbi Lynn Liberman at 9:15 in the Chapel.

Limudim: Our Learning Community

Limudim starts at 9:30am

Tot Shabbat 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.

Spanish Table at Kiddush

Every second Shabbat of the Month

Game Day After kiddush

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

Yahrzeit List for Week Beginning November 21, 2026 / 11 Kislev 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 21/11 Kislev
Irene Krause
Harry Isaac Mack
Millicent Olstein
Hazel Shamblott-Berenson
Melvin Simon
Dorothy Wolfson Smith
Samuel Coddon

November 22/12 Kislev
Amalia "Abuela Ama" Bejar
Abraham Bercovitz
David Caplan
Dolores Fink
Patric Labara
Mark Lorberbaum
Sam Rosenblatt
Alvin Siegel
Naomi Steinberg
Sarah Volk

November 22/12 Kislev
(cont'd)
Hymie Yuffe
Yale Rutzick
Calvin Calmenson
Hayim Shlomo Malmon

November 23/13 Kislev
Louis Ackerman
Joe Bongart
George Chase
Yale Drazen
Herman Flauman
Esther Peck
Edward Aloysis Pickett
Gertrude Slavin
Fanny Ostfield

November 24/14 Kislev
Mary Calof
Larry Johnston
Renee Rosenberg
John Sethna
Helen Ruth Tench
Donald Klass
Gilbert Gordon

November 25/15 Kislev
Jacob Davis
Shirley Fox
Harry Moreno
Max Rose
Sidney B. Schwaidelson
Benjamin W. Snell

November 26/16 Kislev
Rose Cohen Boslov
Ida Goldman
Frances Levine
Sylvia Schachtman
Louis Steinberg
Rose Weisgurt
Eva Weisgurt
Ludwig Rosenfeld
Louis Cohen

November 27/17 Kislev
Goldie Cole
Rose Diamond
Shirley Greenstein
Rose Margaret Klass
Beverle Zela Lebowitz
Herman Roitman
Helmut "Henry" Windmueller
Herbert I. Pearlman
Sarah Boriskin

Trans Day of Remembrance 2026

Today, we will be reading names of victims of transphobic violence.
If you are interested in learning more about these individuals and their stories please go to
https://www.transremembrance.org/in-memoriam

Trans Remembrance Project
By Advocates for Trans Equality



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.



Upcoming at Beth Jacob - November 21, 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

ADULT ED at Limudim: Our Learning Community

Jewish Rituals: Connecting to Self, Community, and the Divine
with Sara Lynn Newberger
Tuesdays from 6:30-7:30, Jan. 5, Jan 12, Jan 19, Jan 26

Jewish tradition prescribes many rituals for many different occasions and settings. We will unpack four of them - tallit, mezzuzah, kashrut, and mikveh - looking briefly at the "hows". We will spend most of our time exploring the "whys", the significance they might have in our lives as ways to connect and deepen our experiences, and what options we might have to work with and modify our practice of them.
Register at Beth-Jacob.org/adulted



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

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.

Upcoming at Beth Jacob - November 21, 2026

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

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Thanksgiving Shabbat
November 28

Kiddush will be sponsored by Beth Jacob and members who are grateful for our community. Express your gratitude by donating at Beth-Jacob.org/kiddush

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Hanukkah 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. Latkes will be provided!

If you want to light candles at shul, bring your Chanukkiah at 4:00, and stay for singing and games.Let us know what you are bringing at Beth-Jacob.org/Shabbatluck

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Lotsa Latkes
for 20s/30s
Monday, December 7
7:00pm

Join us for potato shredding, friendly chatting, and of course latke eating! Beth-Jacob.org/2030

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.



Kids Clothing Drive
through December 31
Bring gently used or new clothing to the donation box in the front hall. Underwear and socks need to be new. Especially needed: Long sleeve dresses, Boys underwear, Socks,T-shirts, Sweatshirts sizes 6+, Leggings and sweatpants, Waterproof mittens, Snow pants, Boots