

The Kibbitzer

Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon

706 Bryan Road, Brandon, FL 33511

Phone (813) 681-6547

www.BethShalomBrandon.org

October 2025/5786 Volume 36 Issue 5

G'mar Chatima Tova!



Karin Foreman Art

CBS Welcomes Rabbi Jonathan Katz



Yom Kippur

Thursday, October 2nd - 10:00

High Holiday Calendar 5786/2025

Kol Nidre

Begins sunset of
Services

Wednesday, October 1
7:00 PM

Yom Kippur

Services
Yizkor Memorial Service
Children's Service
Afternoon Service

Thursday, October 2
10:00 AM
11:00 AM
3:30 PM
4:00 PM



Break the Fast

To follow Ne'ilah

Build the Sukkah

To be determined

Sukkot Shabbat Dinner

Friday, October 10
6:00 PM

Simchat Torah

Tuesday, October 14
7:00 PM





Holiday Candle Lighting Times

Yom Kippur

Wednesday, October 1	6:49 PM
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Sukkot

Monday, October 6	6:44 PM
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Tuesday, October 7	7:35 PM
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Wednesday, October 8	7:34 PM
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Shemini Atzeret

Monday, October 13	6:36 PM
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Simhat Torah

Tuesday, October 14	7:28 PM
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Yom Kippur: How it Changes Us

10 October 2016

Based on the teachings and writings of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

To those who fully open themselves to it, Yom Kippur is a life-transforming experience. It tells us that God, who created the universe in love and forgiveness, reaches out to us in love and forgiveness, asking us to love and forgive others. God never asked us not to make mistakes. All He asks is that we acknowledge our mistakes, learn from them, grow through them, and make amends where we can.

No religion has held such a high view of human possibility. The God who created us in His image, gave us freedom. We are not tainted by original sin, destined to fail, caught in the grip of an evil only divine grace can defeat. To the contrary we have within us the power to choose life. Together we have the power to change the world.

Nor are we, as some scientific materialists claim, mere concatenations of chemicals, a bundle of selfish genes blindly replicating themselves into the future. Our souls are more than our minds, our minds are more than our brains, and our brains are more than mere chemical impulses responding to stimuli. Human freedom – the freedom to choose to be better than we were – remains a mystery but it is not a mere given. Freedom is like a muscle and the more we exercise it, the stronger and healthier it becomes.

Judaism constantly asks us to exercise our freedom. To be a Jew is not to go with the flow, to be like everyone else, to follow the path of least resistance, to worship the conventional wisdom of the age. To the contrary, to be a Jew is to have the courage to live in a way that is not the way of everyone. Each time we eat, drink, pray or go to work, we are conscious of the demands our faith makes on us, to live God's will and be one of His ambassadors to the world. Judaism always has been, perhaps always will be, counter-cultural.

In ages of collectivism, Jews emphasized the value of the individual. In ages of individualism, Jews built strong communities. When most of humanity was consigned to ignorance, Jews were highly literate. When others were building monuments and amphitheatres, Jews were building schools. In materialistic times they kept faith with the spiritual. In ages of poverty they practiced tzedakah so that none would lack the essentials of a dignified life. The Sages said that Abraham was called *ha-ivri*, "the Hebrew," because all the world was on one side (*ever echad*) and Abraham on the other. To be a Jew is to swim against the current, challenging the idols of the age whatever the idol, whatever the age.

So, as our ancestors used to say, "*Zis schver zu zein a Yid*," It is not easy to be a Jew. But if Jews have contributed to the human heritage out of all proportion to our numbers, the explanation lies here. Those of whom great things are asked, become great – not because they are inherently better or more gifted than others but because they feel themselves challenged, summoned, to greatness.

Few religions have asked more of their followers. There are 613 commandments in the Torah. Jewish law applies to every aspect of our being, from the highest aspirations to the most prosaic details of quotidian life. Our library of sacred texts – Tanach, Mishnah, Gemara, Midrash, codes and commentaries – is so vast that no lifetime is long enough to master it. Theophrastus, a pupil of Aristotle, sought for a description that would explain to his fellow Greeks what Jews are. The answer he came up with was, "a nation of philosophers."

So high does Judaism set the bar that it is inevitable that we should fall short time and again. Which means that forgiveness was written into the script from the beginning. God, said the Sages, sought to create the world under the attribute of strict justice but He saw that it could not stand. What did He do? He added mercy to justice, compassion to retribution, forbearance to the strict rule of law. God forgives. Judaism is a religion, the world's first, of forgiveness.

Not every civilization is as forgiving as Judaism. There were religions that never forgave Jews for refusing to convert. Many of the greatest European intellectuals – among them Voltaire, Fichte, Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Frege and Heidegger – never quite forgave Jews for staying Jews, different, angular, countercultural, iconoclastic. Yet despite the tragedies of more than twenty centuries, Jews and Judaism still flourish, refusing to grant victory to cultures of contempt or the angel of death.

The majesty and mystery of Judaism is that though at best Jews were a small people in a small land, no match for the circumambient empires that periodically assaulted them, Jews did not give way to self-hate, self-disesteem or despair. Beneath the awe and solemnity of Yom Kippur one fact shines radiant throughout: that God loves us more than we love ourselves. He believes in us more than we believe in ourselves. He never gives up on us, however many times we slip and fall. The story of Judaism from beginning to end is the tale of a love of God for a people who rarely fully reciprocated that love, yet never altogether failed to be moved by it.

Rabbi Akiva put it best in a mere two words: *Avinu malkeinu*. Yes, You are our sovereign, God almighty, maker of the cosmos, king of kings. But You are also our father. You told Moses to say to Pharaoh in Your name: “My child, my firstborn, Israel.” That love continues to make Jews a symbol of hope to humanity, testifying that a nation does not need to be large to be great, nor powerful to have influence. Each of us can, by a single act of kindness or generosity of spirit, cause a ray of the Divine light to shine in the human darkness, allowing the Shechinah, at least for a moment, to be at home in our world.

More than Yom Kippur expresses our faith in God, it is the expression of God’s faith in us.



Kol Nidre (1900) by Wilhelm Wachtel

Donations

Gary Uremovich
Viveca Yoshikawa



President's Column



Shalom, everyone,

By the time you read this, our High Holidays will likely have concluded. As I write, we're still in the week leading up to Rosh Hashanah, and I'm eagerly anticipating celebrating these sacred days with Congregation Beth Shalom. I pray for a strong turnout—these are the holiest days of our Jewish year, and attending is not only a mitzvah, but a meaningful opportunity to reconnect with our Judaism and with CBS.

Steve Billor

I want to take a moment to thank our devoted members whose presence makes our services whole. And I especially want to express deep gratitude to our core volunteers—the ones who keep our synagogue running day in and day out. Whether it's monthly board meetings or specialized committees like Ritual or Building & Grounds, these individuals give generously of their time and energy to ensure CBS remains vibrant and functional.

As I complete my fourth year as president, I continue to be amazed by their dedication to the Judaic life of our congregation. Neil Spindel, Eric and Ianna Rosenthal, Gerry and Judith Pliner, Toby Koch, Sandy Schwartz, Gerry and Diana Gutenstein, Anita Clifford, Gabe Lifschitz, Myron Feldman, Lynn Kaler, and others—you are the heartbeat of our community.

Last month, I coined a phrase that I think fits our core group perfectly: “a can of concentrated orange juice.” In larger congregations, there may be dozens or even hundreds of people contributing small tasks throughout the year—like a pitcher of diluted juice. But here at CBS, our small size means each person takes on more, and their impact is all the more powerful. I can't thank our daily volunteers enough for keeping us moving forward.

Please continue sharing your thoughts and suggestions with any board member. While we can't promise every idea will be implemented, we're always listening—and if something is possible, we'll do our best to make it happen.

Thank you (Todah Rabah) for your time in reading this article.

From the guy who signs up for everything,

Steve Billor



Gabe's Column

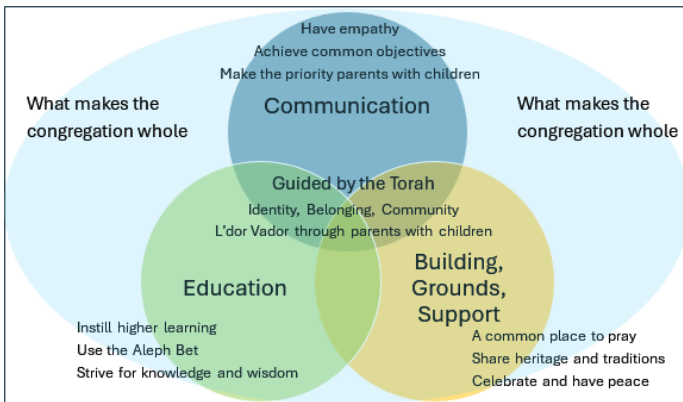


Gabe Lifschitz

L'Dor Vador in today's complex world

I emphasize the priority we need to place on parents with children by using two examples. The first is that in our congregation, having parents with children adds energy socially, spiritually, and with a yearning to learn from the Torah. The second example is about the recent passing of Charlie Kirk. Although he was unknown to many, he was a young adult who had only recently gained exposure to the media and was willing to identify problems to fix shortcomings in how we relate to each other. Charlie represented the dor, the upcoming generation that will run this world. Older and wiser people may provide guidance, but the young generation has the energy to continue. In Parashat Ki Tavo, Moses and the elders instruct the young generation that “when you enter” the land to settle, you must abide by the commandments to be blessed. No one said it would be troublesome or without conflict.

In the diagram I presented in previous articles, we can do mitzvot by focusing on three areas: communications, education, and, as a whole, building, grounds, and support. The reason I created the three areas is that since we cannot do everything, if we focus on only common objectives, parents with children, education, and the building, we can continue to be of service to the community.



At the intersection of the three circles, everything we do to be of servitude is guided by the Torah. The Torah defines our identity and affirms our sense of belonging. The objective through all means of communication is to ensure L'dor Vador by attracting parents with children. Every statement we make and every question we ask must include the words “parents with children”. This is the start of L'dor Vador.

Recently, it seems acts of nature damaged the fire alarm and the largest air conditioner. For everyone's safety, we need to undertake a fire watch while the building is in use. The administration section's air conditioner works but is off due to its connection to the fire alarm. Only the sanctuary air conditioner works. Most likely, repairs may happen after the high holidays. Additionally, we need to be ready in the event of hurricanes. Here is the link to hurricane preparedness items that are permanently tax-exempt. [\(20+\) City of Tampa - Key disaster prep items are now permanently on sale... | Facebook](#)

I welcome questions or comments about how to maintain our building for the future. Your help and undivided interest will be a mitzvah.

Shalom

Gabriel Lifschitz

Congregation Beth Shalom

Shabbat Services

Can't make it to services?

Join us online with a live feed from Zoom!

Zoom Link:

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83776565288?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83776565288?pwd=V3RIZzRXWkdaTjhsejBpNWJFTjIBUTo9)
[pwd=V3RIZzRXWkdaTjhsejBpNWJFTjIBUTo9](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83776565288?pwd=V3RIZzRXWkdaTjhsejBpNWJFTjIBUTo9)**

Meeting ID: 837 7656 5288

Passcode: 101324

CBS Office Hours

The administrative office is currently open by appointment only. We can be reached by calling the office, (813)681-6547, email, cbsbrandon@outlook.com.

Although our hours are limited, we are always here for you. Do not hesitate to reach out with any needs, concerns, or questions.

Congregation Beth Shalom

provides a meaningful spiritual home for people of all ages and levels of knowledge, a place to learn and to question, a place to worship and to celebrate, and a place to find a community that cares.

We offer:

- ✧ Friday worship services at 7:00 PM
- ✧ Complete B'nai Mitzvah preparation
- ✧ Adult Education classes
- ✧ Communitywide events
- ✧ Community Food Bank

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Becoming a partner in our congregation offers an opportunity for enduring friendships and a personal spiritual journey. A place in our Jewish community.

Members also have free access to many of our educational and entertainment events.

October Yahrzeits

Dorothy S. Goldstein	4-Oct	Mother of Judith Pliner
Louis Kaplan	5-Oct	Father of Janice Perelman
Arlene Shapiro	11-Oct	Mother of Myron Feldman
Jack Kaler	15-Oct	Father of Larry Alan Kaler
Mildred Spindel	23-Oct	Grandmother of Neil Spindel
David Saviet	22-Oct	Brother of Howard Saviet
Arnold Krulish	27-Oct	Father of Lee Schwartz



Dinner with the Tribe



**Sunday,
October 12, 2025
6:00 PM**

Stonewood Grill and Tavern
612 East Bloomingdale Avenue
Brandon, Florida 33511

Let's Go to Stonewood Grill and Tavern!

Join us for a delicious outing at Stonewood Grill and Tavern—conveniently located with plenty of parking. Their menu offers something for everyone, from fresh seafood to hearty meat dishes, all expertly prepared and sure to please. Prices are moderate, service is excellent, and the company will be even better.

It's a holiday weekend—what better time to relax and connect?

Please let Anita know you'll be joining us by emailing niewdnarb@yahoo.com.

We can't wait to see you there!

Candle Lighting Times

Date	Time	Parsha
10/03/2025	6:47 PM	Ha'azinu
10/10/2025	6:40 PM	
10/17/2025	6:33 PM	Bereishit
10/24/2025	6:27 PM	Noach
10/31/2025	6:22 PM	Lech-Lecha



Join Us for Shabbat!

Every Friday night at 7:00 PM, our congregation comes together to welcome Shabbat with beautiful tunes and inspiring prayers. After the service, we continue the celebration with an oneg.

Would you like to sponsor an oneg to celebrate a mitzvah?
Please reach out to Toby Koch at (813) 654-0877.



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2nd Vice President

Toby Koch

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Lynn Kaler

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Eric Rosenthal

The Kibbitzer

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MEMBERSHIP

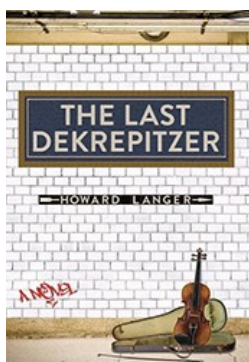
Becoming a partner in our congregation offers an opportunity for enduring friendships and a personal spiritual journey. A place in our Jewish community.

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Jewish Book Council

The Last Dekrepitzer

by Howard Langer



Howard Langer's inventive novel, *The Last Dekrepitzer*, imagines what would happen if the last remaining survivor of a Hasidic sect found his way to the pre – Civil Rights American South and took on a new identity as a blues musician named Sam Lightup. In doing so, the novel explores subjects like race, the legacy of the Holocaust, music, and G-d.

Although the story jumps around in time, Sam's story begins when he is in the shtetl, learning how to lead his community as the rebbe-in-waiting. His particular sect is known for having leaders who are famous for their peculiar style of fiddle playing, and Sam, called Shumel Meir at the time, is getting ready to become that leader. Yet the Holocaust is looming, and Sam gets conscripted into the Russian army as a fiddle player. When he finally finds his way out, his world has been destroyed and he has to start over.

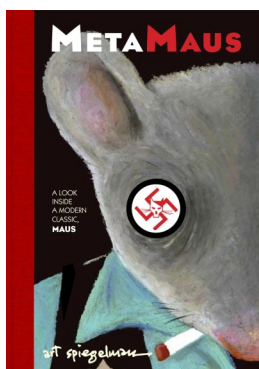
That new beginning takes place in Mississippi. As someone who has been treated as an outcast, Sam is drawn to the African Americans in his community. He befriends Black preachers and falls in love with a Black woman named Lula. Eventually, he makes his way to New York City, where his unique fiddle playing finds an audience.

Throughout the novel, Langer is able to employ humor while also displaying the tragedies happening around Sam. Because of his history, Sam functions as a kind of broken prophet. He struggles with big questions, especially with the place of prayer and G-d after all he has seen. His answer, however, is not to abandon religion whole-cloth. Judaism still matters to Sam, but the way he approaches it is different than most. Through his music, Sam is able to find spiritual meaning. More than anything, the book explores the role that music can play in bringing people closer to one another and the non-believer closer to the Divine.

Review by Marc Katz

MetaMaus

by Art Spiegelman



For the past sixty years, Holocaust survivors have told their stories in writing, but few books have revolutionized the way people looked at the Holocaust as much as *Maus*, Art Spiegelman's graphic biography of his father, Vladek. In his new autobiography, *MetaMaus*, Spiegelman takes readers through the process of his innovative graphic narrative. He tells us why he chose to tell his father's story in comic book form, why he chose to represent Jews as mice, and how he responded to the backlash he received after *Maus* was published. He also includes interviews with his wife and children, discussing their roles in the creation of *Maus* and how it changed their lives.

Not surprisingly, the most striking feature of this autobiography is Spiegelman's art-work. The book is filled with his sketches, inspirations, previous work, and even family photos. Also included is a DVD that contains *Maus I* and *II* and "an exemplary thimbleful from the vast *"Maus Midrash."*

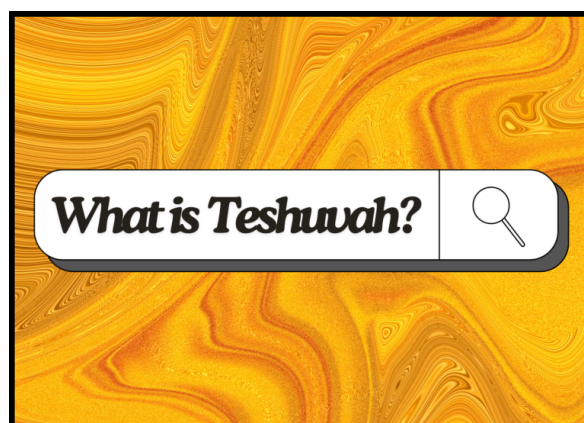
Review by Alyssa Berlin

Teshuvah

How do Jewish people forgive and repent on Yom Kippur? The Rabbinic perspective on teshuvah

Jewish thinkers have explored the meaning of teshuvah for centuries. How do we put these ideas of forgiveness and repentance into practice?

To read this impressive article from Unpacked, written by Sara Himeles, click on the picture below.



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Congregation Beth Shalom
of Brandon



October 2025

October Rabbis

Wed, Oct 1	Steve Billor
Thurs, Oct 2	Rabbi Katz
Friday, Oct 3	Neil Spindel
Friday, Oct 10	Sandy Schwartz
Friday, Oct 17	Steve Billor
Friday, Oct 24	Neil Spindel
Friday, Oct 31	Myron Feldman

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Weds	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Kol Nidre 7:00 PM 	2 Yom Kippur 10:00 AM 	3 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	4
5	6	7 6:30 Executive Mtg 7:00 Board Mtg	8 6:00 B'nai Mitzvah Class	9	10 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00 Sukkot Potluck D Kibbitzer Deadline 	11
12	13	14 Simhat Torah 7:00 PM 	15 6:00 B'nai Mitzvah Class	16	17 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	18
19	20	21	22 6:00 B'nai Mitzvah Class	23	24 Youth Led Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	25
26	27	28	29 6:00 B'nai Mitzvah Class	30	31 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	