

Beth Israel Congregation

291 Main Street/P.O. Box 1882
Waterville, ME 04903
(207) 872 - 7551
bethisraelwaterville.org

September 2022

Words of Torah from Rabbi Isaacs

The days from Rosh Chodesh Elul until after Yom Kippur have many different names. One of the names, according to the Kitzur Shulchan Aruch, is “Yamei Ratzon,” meaning “days of desire,” or “days of favor.” Even though God welcomes our teshuva, or repentance, any time, these days are special. According to tradition, it was on Rosh Hodesh Elul that Moses went up to Mount Sinai to receive the second set of tables (he smashed the first set after seeing the Golden Calf), he stayed there for forty days, and descended the mountain on the 10th of Tishrei, Yom Kippur.

Why are these days of favor? Partly because this was a time when God gave Moses and the Children of Israel a second chance, even when we were at our moral and spiritual nadir; this is a time when God remembers a supreme act of Divine mercy, and we hope that God will return to that mercy as we return to repent.

Beyond this historical reason, I think that there is another reason that these days are considered days of favor. We need a special time to dedicate ourselves to teshuva - we need a deadline, a due date, and a hope that the hard spiritual work we need to do will be worthwhile. As we enter Elul, let us remember that we are heading into a holy time, a time of great expectation, but also of Divine Desire. We are in relationship with a God that desires deeply our return to our better selves, and is willing to bring us back if we repent in good faith. I look forward to seeing you at selichot and High Holiday services as we return to one another (and the sanctuary!), to God, and the people that God desires us to be.

Hodesh Tov! (A happy new month)
Rabbi Isaacs

Rabbi

Rabbi Rachel Isaacs

President

Judy Hansen-Childers

Vice President

Melissa Breger

Secretary

Elizabeth Geller

Treasurer

Leo Livshits

Board

Shoshannah Cotton

Marvin Eisengart

Sidney Geller

Sandy Maisel

John Margolis

Julie Miller

Jen Yoder

Shabbat and Holiday Services

Please see page 3 for the full High Holiday service schedule.

Joint Selichot Services with Temple Beth El of Augusta: Saturday, September 17, 7–8:15 pm at Temple Beth El (3 Woodlawn Street, Augusta). Join Rabbi Isaac and Asch, plus special guest teacher Professor Reverend Cheryl Townsend Gilkes to learn about the themes of repentance in the book of Nehemiah.



Reverend Cheryl Townsend Gilkes is the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Professor Emerita of African-American Studies and Sociology at Colby College (Waterville, Maine). An ordained Baptist minister, she is an assistant pastor for special projects at the Union Baptist Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts. She has served as visiting faculty at several seminaries and schools of divinity, most recently Chicago Theological Seminary. Her research, teaching, and writing have specifically focused on the role of African American women in generating social change and on the diverse roles of black Christian women in the twentieth century.

From the Center for Small Town Jewish Life

Our teen program is up and running for the year! We have an AMAZING year planned, and our first event is **Sunday, September 11**

For more information and to register:
<https://colbycollegejewishlife.regfox.com/teen-track-2022-2023-1>

Learning and Volunteering Opportunities at Beth Israel

Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class Returns! Thursdays, September 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 4–4:45pm. This class is hybrid! Join in-person at Colby College (Lovejoy 347), or via Zoom: Meeting ID: 962 8019 3086 and Passcode: 884518
Link: <https://colby.zoom.us/j/96280193086?pwd=dWM5YWtFMlV1T0hWYkh3dkljbkVxZz09>
Email Rabbi Isaac directly with any questions about this class!

Book Club: Tuesday, September 13, 7:00 – 8:00pm on Zoom. Use link <https://colby.zoom.us/j/91926969481?pwd=dklweENhNHJsbzIzNDlKdWY0dnZWdz09>, or meeting ID: 919 2696 9481 and passcode: 096139
This month, Book Club will discuss **Lies My Mother Told Me: Tall Tales from a Short Woman** by Melissa Rivers. Read more about this book here: <https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Lies-My-Mother-Told-Me/Melissa-Rivers/9781642937404>

We are looking for volunteers for a Beth Israel shift at the Waterville Soup Kitchen! Other volunteer opportunities will be coming up. **Please email Mel if you have regular daytime availability and want to be contacted directly for volunteer opportunities.** We also have a variety of needs for donated items -- please see the weekly email and be in touch if you have things to contribute.

Hebrew School

Hebrew School begins September 8.
We run 3 – 5pm; doors will be locked so please knock clearly if showing up late.

September 8, 15, 22, and 29

Please make sure your child has something to write with. Snacks will be provided.

The High Holidays at Beth Israel

Rabbi Isaac's Elul shofar videos start on the first of Elul (August 28). Check them out on Facebook Sunday – Friday throughout the month of Elul!

All services will be held at Beth Israel unless explicitly stated otherwise.

Rosh Hashana

Erev Rosh Hashana services and community dinner: Sunday, September 25, 5:30 services and 6:30 dinner (See below for information on how to RSVP to the dinner)

Rosh Hashana morning services: Monday, September 26, and Tuesday, September 27, 9:30am

Tashlich, Monday, September 26, 1:30pm at the boat launch across from Thayer Hospital

Shabbat shuva services, Friday night, September 30, 6pm

Yom Kippur

Kol Nidre services: Tuesday October 4, 6pm

Yom Kippur morning services: Wednesday, October 5, 9:30am

Mincha/Neila: Wednesday, October 5, 5pm

Break the Fast dairy potluck: Wednesday, October 5, 7pm

Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, and Simchat Torah

Welcome in Sukkot/Erev Sukkot event: Sunday, October 9, 5:30pm, location TBA

Community and Hillel Potluck and Shabbat services in the Colby sukkah: Friday, October 14, 6pm. (Directions to the Colby sukkah will be available in the weekly email, and the sukkah will be located in between the Foss and Dana buildings, as it has been in previous years.)

Shemini Atzeret services, including Yizkor: Monday, October 17, 10am

Erev Simchat Torah celebration: Monday, October 17, 5pm

Our services are free and open to the public! We look forward to seeing you throughout the holidays. If you wish to join the festivities for our community Rosh Hashana dinner, please note:

- You must RSVP to Mel Weiss at maweiss@colby.edu. We prefer RSVPs before September 18, but will accept them up until the holiday.
- The cost of the meal is \$25/person (children under 12 are free). You can pay online through our website's donation page, or send a check to POB 1882, Waterville, ME 04903. Please do not bring money to the dinner. Cost should not be a barrier.
- Meat and vegetarian options will be available; all food provided is kosher. If you have significant additional food restrictions, please email Mel in a timely manner.



Introducing Our New Rabbinic Apprentice!

Arielle Stein is a fourth-year student at Hebrew Union College in New York. Originally from Long Island, Arielle is an alum of New York University. She spent this past summer doing chaplaincy training at Bellevue Hospital, and the past academic year as the student rabbi of Congregation B'nai Sholom in Bristol, Tennessee. She is a visual artist who loves to draw and sculpt. She will be working with Beth Israel Congregation in Waterville.

WE REMEMBER

The Yahrzeits for the month of
September 2022
(5 Elul – 5 Tishrei):

Lillie Abeles
Sala Banner
Miriam Bosek
Jacob Brisk
Rachel Brisk
Pearl M. Brody
Henrietta Cohan
Milton Epstein
David Fromson
Reuben Goldberg
Harry Hains
Jacob Hornstein
Isaih Jacobson
S. Paul Krouse
Isadore Lax
Lewis Levine
Michael Levine
Louis Levine
Rubin Lipschutz
Stuart Merle
Howard Miller
Samuel Pachowsky
Jennie Paikowsky
Susman Russakoff
Louis Schiro
Maybelle Schneider
Morris Shapiro
Alfred Weisel
Myer Wolman

May Their Memories
Be For a Blessing

Call for Yahrzeits

If your yahrzeit list for Yom Kippur has changed this year, please email Rabbi Isaacs by September 16.

If you would like to receive email reminders of a loved one's yahrzeit, please email Mel Weiss with their name (Hebrew and English, if possible), and date of death.

Thank you to our August Donors!

To the Foundation and the Future
Campaign:

Marta Ameri, Drs. Dorothy and Marvin
Eisengart, Benjamin Forester, Jonathan
Isaacs, Raizel McNally, Samuel Shapiro, The
Wolman Family

Barbara and Roy Leopold, in honor of the
yahrzeits of Busha Banner, Laura Gold-
berg, and Jack Breiter, and in memory of
Shoshanna Greenbaum

Donor listing does not include payment of dues,
fundraiser tickets or booklet ads, or holiday meals,
though we appreciate those very much!
You can donate at BethIsraelWaterville.org

Simchas and Updates

Have a simcha you'd like to see printed in the Beth Israel monthly newsletter? Email melanieaweiss@gmail.com by September 22.

Want to sponsor a kiddish?

We're excited to offer the opportunity to sponsor the oneg after our monthly Shabbat morning services. It costs \$54, and we'll announce your sponsorship in the monthly newsletter, weekly emails, and on Shabbat. It's a sweet (and delicious!) way to celebrate an anniversary, birthday, or other occasion. Bagels provided by Sunrise Bagel, with sides chosen by you! Email Mel Weiss for more information.

MEMORIAL PLAQUES

To purchase a Yahrzeit plaque contact Rabbi Isaacs or Judy Hansen-Childers
\$200 members/\$400 non-members

CALL FOR YAHRZEITS

If you wish to have your loved ones' Yahrzeit observed during services, please e-mail Rabbi Isaacs.

Notes from the Board of Directors Meeting

August 15, 2022; in person and Zoom; 4:15 p.m.

Present in person: Judy Hansen–Childers, Sandy Maisel, John Margolis, Liz and Sid Geller; also Rabbi Isaacs and Yochanan Selasie. On Zoom: Shosh Cotton, Melissa Breger, and Marvin Eisengart.

Minutes of July 11: Sandy moved to approve as amended; Sid seconded; approved.

Rabbi Isaacs: Words of Torah – love and care from G–D to the Jewish people. In the desert “our feet never swelled; did not become like dough/sour.” Message: don’t become arrogant or “sore.”

Special presentation: : Yochanan and Chris Davis (of Davis Landscape Co., Inc.) were at the meeting to present a proposal for a sprinkler system because the lawn has dried out from lack of rain while the gardens have been maintained by manual watering. The cost of installation and continuing upkeep were discussed, but a concern was raised about the image of the synagogue if a too perfect landscape were maintained. No decisions today; this will be an ongoing discussion.

Treasurer: No report

Buildings and Grounds: John asked if we should continue with Justin for our lawn work and snow removal or have a landscape company do the yard work. If we hire a landscaper, Justin would still do snow removal. This committee is trying to create a yearly plan. Yochanon had suggested creating a synagogue garden club to help with planting, weeding, etc.

Capital campaign committee. Sandy reported that the launch event at enchanted Gables was a tremendous success; more than 150 people attended, and the donations exceeded our expenditures. Between what has already been collected and what is pledged before the first of the year, we should have enough money in the bank to start construction.

Old Business: No report

New Business: Rabbi Isaacs takes Tuesdays off and asks not to be contacted during her day off and also during vacations and sabbaticals.

High Holidays – back to “normal,” services in the sanctuary.

September to May programming – classes will continue and will be in person.

Sandy moved to adjourn at 5:35; Sid seconded.

Submitted by Elizabeth Geller, Secretary