

May 2020

Temple Beth-El

Serving Judaism in Northeast MI since 1891 at

125 E. White Street, Alpena, MI 49707

Mailing Address PO Box 55, Presque Isle, MI 49777

www.TempleBethElAlpena.org



Hello Temple Beth-El Website Visitors!

We hope and pray you and your loved ones are well. The day-to-day aspects as well as the short-range plans of our lives have been drastically altered by the coronavirus pandemic. In spite of it all,

WE GIVE THANKS TO

- **Hashem** for His faithfulness in the midst of the storm. May His peace and protection cover you always.
- **Service Leaders** who will bless us once again at Shabbat services when it is safe to do so. A special thanks to Cecile, who helped us transition to the Eit Ratzon Siddur and served as Services Team Leader until her recent resignation. Our thanks to Deborah for stepping into that role.
- **Gift Givers** who were once again very generous to us with donation of a Commemorative Spoon, a Netilat Yadayim HandWashing Cup, and prayer books for Birkat Hamazon, the blessings at meals.
- **Webmasters** for setting up and maintaining this new website.

Visitors

Visitors – Jewish as well as non-Jewish - are always welcomed at Temple Beth-El.

Please call 989-595-3544 for further information such as Shabbat service dates and times.

Spring/Summer Service Schedule:

Services are cancelled until further notice. When the shelter-in-place restrictions are lifted, we will advise you when and how we will safely resume Shabbat services.

GREAT EVENTS!

Z-Onegs are here! Thanks to a brilliant idea by our members, we are enjoying virtual “Z-oneg” on Shabbat at 11:45 a.m. Each week they set up the Zoom meeting, and we gather together for a joyous time of breaking bread, singing, praying, and sharing. Some of our members join us after participating in Rabbi Reuven Silverman’s virtual Shabbat service while others join us after “attending” other Shabbat services.

Our Third Congregational Meeting On Sunday, May 17, we held our annual Congregational Meeting via Zoom. Thanks to the diligent work of the Nominating Committee, we are proud to announce that Ken Diamond, who has faithfully served TBE as Trustee-at-Large and as Chief of Security, was elected President, and long-time member Ann Saretsky, who has a rich family history of serving TBE, was elected Trustee-at-Large. Ken and Ann will strengthen the Board with their vast experience, diverse abilities, and new ideas. May Hashem bless this new Board and grant them the wisdom of Solomon.

A Timely Message from Guest Rabbi Howard Morrison Rabbi expressed his pleasure at spending Shabbat with us March 14 and presenting a Community Outreach Program that Sunday. He spoke about the building of the tabernacle and G-d’s command that the Israelites “make for me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them”. He stated that, “G-d is not confined to a physical structure...The purpose of the sanctuary is for us, the people, the community, a place where individuals become more than themselves.” He then tied his message with that Shabbat’s Torah portion, Ki-Tisa, regarding the mandatory tax of half of a shekel. “Why half of a shekel? The half teaches us that alone we are incomplete. We are only complete when we are part of something larger than ourselves, be it a partner in our private lives, connecting to a synagogue, a community, the history and culture of a 4000 year Jewish experience. It is said in many cultures that a stick alone is breakable, but a bundle of sticks is unbreakable.”

Rabbi continued: “Why did our people need a sanctuary at all? Ask yourselves, why do we need Temple Beth-El in Alpena?...In the brief time I have known you, I continue to marvel at how well a small but dedicated number of people and families keep one of the oldest synagogues in the country alive and strong, as well as a Jewish presence in this part of Michigan...Everybody has a part to play. Everybody should give of him/herself personally and fiscally as much as humanly possible. There is a meaningful role for everyone in any synagogue community... As the sanctuary of old and the synagogue of today symbolize sacred space, the Shabbat symbolizes sacred time...A famous early Zionist, who considered himself a cultural Jew more than a religious Jew, named Ahad Ha’Am once said: “More than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews. I pray that this sacred place called Temple Beth-El of Alpena and this sacred time, called Shabbat, will continue to be and to grow for generations to come.”

We share Rabbi Morrison’s wise words with you as a reminder: Temple Beth-El is incomplete without you, especially on Shabbat. We look forward to seeing you soon.

Guest Rabbis We were eagerly anticipating Cantor Nina's visit in June, Rabbi Maya Leibovitch's Shabbat service in July, and Rabbi Reuven Silverman's return in August. Instead, they will be our very welcomed guests in 2021!

JHSM The Jewish Historical Society of MI invited Temple Beth-El to be included in one of their synagogue and cemetery stops on their up-north fall foliage tour. The tour has been cancelled, yet we are hopeful it will be rescheduled for 2021.

Grants As soon as possible, we will move forward with the electrical repairs funded by a \$1,500 grant from the Comstock Fund as well as the security training and building enhancements funded by a \$4,000 Ravitz Foundation Initiative for Small MI Jewish Communities grant and \$19,500 FEMA grant.

A NOTE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Shalom,

I hope you and your family are being cautious, staying safe and are well. These are challenging times. However, challenges create opportunities and necessity sparks change and innovations. We are doing things differently and will continue to for the foreseeable future. This too shall pass.

First, I want to thank Kathleen (and Tim) for their years of leadership, guidance, hard work and commitment to Temple Beth El. They are not going away and will continue to be very active with TBE.

Second, I want to welcome Ann Saretsky to the Board. I know that she will add to the passion of the Board with her thoughts and opinions.

Third, I want to thank the other members of the TBE Board for all their hard work. This is a hard-working Board and while we have accomplished many things there is still much to do. As we move forward, I shall be reaching out to other members for their help and participation



Thank you

for helping to make Temple Beth-El a synagogue where Hashem and His Torah are honored, where the customs and traditions of the various branches of Judaism are blended and respected in our services, and where peace and harmony reign among our members.

President Ken Diamond

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Next, I want to thank the entire Congregation for their continued support and devotion to TBE. We are family and will continue to thrive.

The Board will continue to evaluate the current conditions and reestablish our in-person services, Onegs and celebrations as soon as possible. But for the immediate future we turn to technology as a substitute. Rabbi Silverman in Deland Florida graciously invites us to join the services at Temple Israel via Zoom Meeting. We will continue to hold Zoom Oneg following shabbat services with many thanks to members for leading them. Our website continues to flourish and be updated thanks to our webmasters (TempleBethElAlpena.org). In June, we will host Cantor Nina Fine on Zoom with a "Sneak Peek Medley" of music. And more events to come.

With Blessings from HaShem, I wish all of you peace, good health and happiness. As I said earlier, this too shall pass!

Shalom,

Ken

IMPORTANT REMINDERS...

As Gregg reported at the Congregational Meeting, for the second year in a row, "the synagogue's finances are in the black and TBE is now financially sound and living within its means. Its future is bright". We applaud Gregg for his faithful stewardship of TBE funds and you for giving generously. "By the way", Gregg also said, "if anybody would be willing to take on the role of Treasurer, I am getting tired of it."

Checks, payable to Temple Beth-El, may be sent to Dr. Gregg Resnick, 110 Arbor Lane, Alpena, MI 49707 or secure payment may be made via PayPal or credit/debit card at our website at www.TempleBethElAlpena.org

Volunteers: Like dues, always welcomed, always needed. All of us have lots of responsibilities so whatever you can do for TBE is greatly appreciated.