

Temple Beth Sholom Presents

## Our Voices - A Monthly Newsletter

May 2020 Iyar/Sivan 5780 | Issue 3 | A Jewish Center for Life, Learning, and Connections



### How Can We Help?

*General Assistance* | Rabbi Heidi - [rabbicohen@tbsoc.com](mailto:rabbicohen@tbsoc.com); Cantor Reinwald - [dreinwald@tbsoc.com](mailto:dreinwald@tbsoc.com);

Ruth Irving – [rirving@tbsoc.com](mailto:rirving@tbsoc.com)

*Grocery Assistance* | If you need assistance in obtaining groceries, either physically or financially, please contact Rabbi Heidi or Ruth Irving. We have volunteers who will shop for you and Grocery Store gift cards for those in need.

*Chai Times* | Susan Silberman - 714-618-8841 or [svs@silbermanlaw.com](mailto:svs@silbermanlaw.com)

*Torah Study* | Held each Saturday online through Zoom.

*Services* | Shabbat Evening Services will be offered online through livestream and Facebook Live.

\*For a Complete List of Event Links Please Visit <https://www.tbsoc.com/>\*

### Worship at TBS

At least three times a week I enjoy going online to Facebook Live and sharing in our Boker Tov together. We start with our Modeh Ani, thanking God for giving us life and this beautiful day, even in the midst of our quarantine. Some mornings we share in Nisim B'Chol Yom, for our daily miracles. And even when it feels like there are so few miracles to give thanks for, we continue to find them. It may not be easy to identify those miracles at first, but when we look more closely at that which is around us and that which is within us, we are more aware of the miracle that is our breath and life within. Amy Asin shares her version of these blessings. Some include:

Praised be the Eternal God, Source of the Universe...

...who has implanted mind and instinct within every living being. Who has given us a new day where we are alive and we too can see the difference between day and night, between light and darkness, between true and false, and between appropriate concern and panic.

...who has made me to be free. While my ability to be in physical community may be limited, help me see that I am still free to make choices every minute, every day.

...who crowns Israel with glory. Let us still find the holiness in every day, in big and small ways.

May we each find blessings and miracles every day, no matter how big or small, and may we continue to be blessed with good health and strength. Amen. *-Rabbi Heidi Cohen*

To read the full version of Amy Asin's blessing, you can visit:

<https://reformjudaism.org/blog/2020/03/16/nisim-bchol-yom-prayer-daily-miracles-coronavirus>

Temple Beth Sholom | 2625 N. Tustin Ave. Santa Ana, CA 92705 | [www.tbsoc.com](http://www.tbsoc.com) | Temple Office: 714-628-4600

## President's Message

I recently met Avraham Infeld. He's easy to find on the internet and has an excellent book, [A Passion for a People](#), in which he explains that "We are not a religion or simply a nationality. Rather, we are an extended family, a tribe that shares a common past, present, and future."

Early in the book, he asks a critical question which is extremely relevant for our TBS community: "How can we be unified when we are not uniform?" We achieve unity by commonalities in the "5-Legged Table" that build our Jewish identity. Since there are 5 legs, every Jew that commits to at least 3 not only creates a stable table, but a bond with another Jew.

1. *Memory*: "Jews have memory, not history." What Jewish traditions bring meaning to you?
2. *Family*: Do you have a sense of belonging? Do you feel connected and responsible to others?
3. *Mount Sinai*: Do we follow the values and rituals that "...govern our behavior, our role in the world, and our contribution to humanity?"
4. *Israel*: "Israel is the only place that is home to all Jews."
5. *Hebrew*: Our language unites Jews all over the world and is our bridge to the past.

As we continue to navigate through these challenging times, think about your Jewish table. How many legs support it? Can you add another leg, or two, to strengthen your bond with fellow Jews locally and globally? If so, how?

-Mitch Cohen, TBS President

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## Brotherhood | Community - Fellowship - Action - Service

For many, life has changed dramatically from just a short time ago. Most communication has gone digital—except for this newsletter which has become a ray of sunshine. It's nice not having to stare at a screen to read something. And after you have read it, and if you still don't have toilet paper, well, let's just say this can be put to other uses.

TBS Brotherhood has tried to move forward on various fronts. We are still accepting donations toward Holocaust candles for TBS members to light in remembrance of the Holocaust and we thank you for your patience as we find a way to safely distribute them.

We are working to move our Speaker Series to Zoom. As this event is free and people have plenty of free time these days, we should have a great attendance. However, bagels and coffee will have to be on you.

Brotherhood is once again offering college scholarships to help defray the cost of books for first year students. Please visit the TBS website or contact Mark Borovay for rules and to submit applications. We are offering up to \$2,000 in scholarships so encourage your future college student to apply.

We haven't done much BBQing lately, but we are keeping our charcoal handy for when we can return to the grill. We are also planning some Men's Night Out events and will finalize dates when we can safely gather in person.

Remember that Brotherhood is still here and willing to be of help where we can. We hope you are well and keeping safe. Thanks to all for your continued support.

-Sylvan Schwartz, Brotherhood Director of Membership

## Sisterhood

Like everyone else, TBS Sisterhood has been rethinking how to keep our members connected and keep a bit of normalcy in our lives during these times. To this end, Sisterhood's crocheting group, The Knotty Sisters of TBS, is now meeting via a Zoom call on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. Participants are crocheting in their homes while chatting and getting caught up with each other online. They crochet caps and blankets to be donated to Knots of Love, an organization that distributes handmade items across the country to chemotherapy patients and those facing life-threatening illnesses. During the time they have been working at home, the Knotty Sisters have completed dozens of caps. This is in addition to the hundreds of caps that they have produced over the years this group has been in existence. The Knotty Sisters is open to everyone and even includes members from the local community. If you would like to join this group and crochet from your own home while chatting with friends, contact Sharon Tanner at [sharon@plot180.net](mailto:sharon@plot180.net).

-Brenda Beck, TBS Sisterhood President

## Mitzvah Meals

Mitzvah Meals is currently on semi-hiatus. While we can't use our kitchen, we still pick up Trader Joes' generous donations every Sunday and pass them on to Western Service Workers in Santa Ana. They, in turn, are providing food to the underserved, jobless and/or homeless. Thank you to Stacey Silberman, Marc Zdunich, Steve Lipson, and Rich Dixon who make this happen every Sunday.

Since we have no kitchen activity, I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge our volunteers—many of whom have been with us since Mitzvah Meal's inception 9 years ago. Hollis O'Brien trained our original Shift Leaders, Sara Aviram, Steffanie and Steve Belasco, Shelly Wellins, Paula Pitluk, Carol Kanofsky, and Carol Weiss. Shift Leader Debi Reaves is not a TBS member but heard about our MM program and jumped on board several years ago. We also have volunteers from Temple Beth Tikvah including Todd and Emily Menaker, Gary Gruber, Henry Cohen, and Judy Kancigor. Judy has written two cookbooks and was so impressed with our meals that she wrote an article about MM for The OC Register. I can still smell the brownies baked by Donna Fliegler, Karen Warren, Amy Grayson, and Linda Weissberg. Richard Stein has volunteered from day one and his son and daughter joined him until they went off to college.

Finally, thank you to our past and present volunteers: Mary Balmages, Bessie Lorad, Denise Silberman, Donna Wolffe, Hank and Robin Gotterer, Hitomi and Mike Rice, Jeff and Caron Winston, Jeff and Karen Merkow, Steve Friedman, Susan Scheffler, TBS President Mitch Cohen, Nancy Silverman, Pam Young, Marlene Burnett, Rita Chemers, Rosalie Lubell, Sandra Rofsky, Brian and Patty Arnold and the basketball team, Scott Singer, Shani Boone, Rhea Dorn, Rachel Alm, Susan Glass, and Sylvia and Mark Borovay. There are no words to express my gratitude to Cheryl and Barry Escoc. They have supported MM since its debut by providing carloads of food and helping Hollis wherever she needed them. Todah rabah to Hollis, Cheryl and Barry.

My deepest apology to anyone I may have omitted. I am indebted to all of you for bringing this dream to reality and am grateful to my husband, Irv, for his support every step of the way. *-Monica Engel TBS Member*



## Thank You to Our Sponsors!



*This newsletter is also made possible by the generous contributions of Patti Widdicomb, Susan Glass, Barbara Ulmer, the Escoe Family, the Borchard Family, Rabbi Heidi Cohen, and Leonard & Susan Silberman*

## Preschool Happenings

I sat in the park earlier today, the scent of freshly mowed grass permeating the air. Under a tree, 20 feet away, a mother sat with her two young daughters, a canopy of green shading their picnic blanket while she read a book. Her daughters gamboled about giggling and holding contests to see who could produce the most challenging gymnastic pose. On a nearby pathway, two little boys rode past with their father and further up a green hill, a couple executed an enviable Vinyasa flow. I was transported back into a time where running barefoot through the grass and riding bikes were the norm. Electronics started with the radio and ended with the television set. Programs were limited, so reading in the sunshine took precedence. I was immersed in a Norman Rockwell painting.

I can't help but think that we needed this time to truly understand the essence of family. We required this worldwide pause to reflect upon and appreciate the gifts we have. While it is true that this time brings enormous financial and emotional stress, it also brings about a unique opportunity to create lifelong, meaningful memories with our children. Schools will reopen and our previous lifestyles will, in all likelihood, reestablish its frenetic grip. Take this unexpected gift of time and make memories that you and your children will have for the rest of your lives.

*- Tamara Levin, Preschool Director*

## Religious School



Welcome to online Religious School where we continue to meet every Tuesday and Sunday. Our students have gathered for songs, stories, games and more! We had a Zoom Passover scavenger hunt with our students. We sent them searching for all sorts of things related to the symbols on the Passover table. Here are some of the clues and responses from our students:

Shankbone represents the sacrifice the Hebrews made before they fled Egypt. Find something you can sacrifice. Something you can't live without. Students brought their pets and electronics.

Roasted Egg represents spring and renewal. Find something that represents spring. Students gathered flowers and plants.

Bitter herbs represent the bitterness of slavery. Find something that represents bitterness or slavery. We had one student get a lemon, and one retrieved a picture of a deceased relative.

Charoset represents the mortar slaves used to make bricks. Find something you can build with. Students showed bricks, blocks, and even a pencil to build a story.

Karpas parsley represents spring. Find something green. Students found all sorts of green things such as plants and stuffed animals.

Salt water represents the tears and sweat of slavery. Show us something that represents tears. We had students getting salt water, tissues, and even their siblings!

*-Jodi Kaufman, Director of Congregational Learning*

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## Voices of TBS

While stuck at home, I began to get sad about not seeing my friends and possibly even getting sick, which made me think about how the health crisis is affecting others. After some research, I learned that people with OCD and other mental health conditions are struggling with increased anxiety due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I want to help those people, which is why I created the website [www.solelysunshine.com](http://www.solelysunshine.com). On my website, people can write virtual letters of encouragement which I print out and send to various therapeutic boarding schools and treatment centers across the country. I am proud to say that I am spending my free time (and you can too) writing these letters of encouragement. Please take a few minutes to write a letter on my website and spread some encouragement (what I like to call sunshine) to someone in need. It will not only make you feel good, but make the recipient feel even better. My goal, with your help, is to send 100 letters of sunshine to people with OCD and other mental health conditions across the country.

Please send some sunshine on my website:

[www.solelysunshine.com](http://www.solelysunshine.com)

*-Natalie Salvatierra, TBS Member, Age 16*



If you would like to make a submission for the “Voices of TBS” section, or for more information, please contact Ruth Aptaker ([ruth.aptaker@gmail.com](mailto:ruth.aptaker@gmail.com))

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## From Our Cantor

Shalom to all my friends at TBS! Since returning from my three-month sabbatical, we then entered directly into ‘survival mode,’ and so nothing has been normal for any of us. My original expectation of seeing everyone again, sharing stories from my adventures and experiences, and bringing back new ideas and new music has been somewhat put on hold. And, yet, we are doing a lot of new things in new and creative ways that this situation has directed us toward. And, how amazing is it that we live in an era where communication, education, and inspiration can be right at our fingertips?

I will say that most of my sabbatical was prior to the stay-at-home directive so I had the opportunity to travel. While I was both local and traveling, I got to visit and experience services at many other congregations. It was great taking in these experiences as a “Jew in the pew,” something I rarely get to do as a leader. I also had a fascinating journey through Europe in February, visiting many historic and cultural sites in Normandy, Vienna, the Mauthausen concentration camp, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. The pinnacle of my trip was visiting a small community in Northern Bosnia where a Torah cover in their possession bears my great-grandfather’s name. I look forward to doing a formal program on this in the future.

Until we see one another in person, I do hope you are finding moments of inspiration, and I invite you to be in touch with me at any time via email, Facebook, or the phone!

-Cantor David Reinwald | [cantor@tbsoc.com](mailto:cantor@tbsoc.com) | (714) 654-2945

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## Social Justice

Temple Beth Sholom's Social Justice Committee held a meeting via Zoom on March 23. In attendance were Rabbi Cohen, Len Silberman, Michelle Singleton, Soni Sanberg, Shelia Silver, and Paula Pitluk. Michelle led a prayer for our sponsored shelters, their staff, and their residents. We discussed our various social justice projects and how they can continue during this time of sheltering-in-place.

TBS will continue to provide one meal a week for Cherry Orchard although the delivery method has changed. Donations of clothing for Working Wardrobe will be on hold until the organization has found a permanent site. Rabbi Cohen and Scott Singer will deliver groceries to congregants who need assistance.

Please encourage your state, national, and local legislators to include housing for the homeless in all COVID-19 legislation and funding. Orange County’s shelter capacity is shrinking. Both the National Alliance to End Homelessness and United to End Homelessness are working with the cities of Costa Mesa and Santa Ana to provide separate housing for those who may have COVID-19.

### FAST FACTS:

- ✚ Opening was delayed for a 100-bed shelter in Placentia scheduled for March 19.
- ✚ National Guard Armories in Santa Ana and Fullerton used to house the homeless are closed down and individuals relocated to a variety of shelters in the two cities.

Stay healthy both physically and emotionally during this challenging time.

-Paula K. Pitluk, Social Justice Member

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## A Note of Gratitude

On behalf of myself, TBS staff, clergy, lay leaders and members, I would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to Jill Weinthal who has been single-handedly printing, folding, stuffing into envelopes, and mailing this newsletter during the shelter-in-place mandate. It literally cannot happen with you, Jill. Thank you!

-Ruth Aptaker, TBS Director of Communication