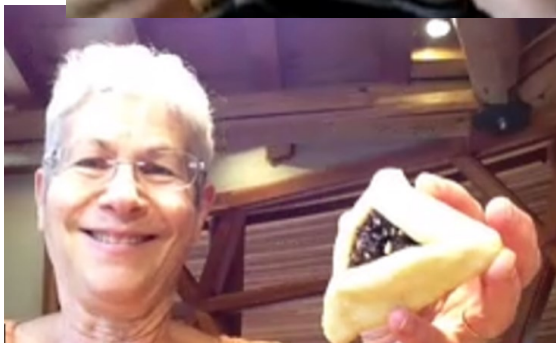
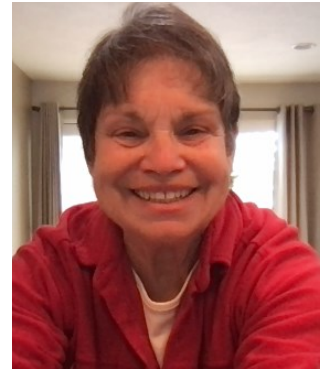


April 2021 / Nisan — Iyar 5781

Volume 32, Issue 4

Purim Baking Fun!

Several people joined **Leslie Elsemore** for a Zoom hamantashen bake. Looks like they all had some delicious — and beautiful — cookies to eat! See pages 4 and 5 for more Purim fun from last month.



House of Light

3215 Lombard Ave, Everett, WA 98201

425.259.7125

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TempleBethOr.org



Our Rabbi

President's

Message

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Mishpachah

Torah

Avodah

Tzedakah/

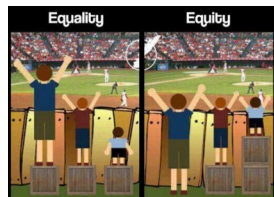
Tikkun Olam

Leadership

Justice and Equity in Our Jewish Tradition

I am proud that Temple Beth Or is joining the national and global movement of learning and engagement around diversity, equity, and inclusion. While these concepts are new to many of us, they embrace our ancient and essential Jewish value of pursuing justice. Our tradition's idea of *tzedek*, Hebrew for "justice," is tied to an understanding of equity.

You might be familiar with the following illustration of equity by Dr. Craig Froehle, professor of business at the University of Cincinnati.



Our rabbinic tradition (c. 5th Century) describes equity through the following example using camels instead of a baseball game.

"Justice, justice you shall pursue," Deuteronomy 16:20. The first use of the word *tzedek*, "justice," refers to a decision based on strict law; the second is a compromise. How so? If two camels met each other while on an ascent, perhaps to Beth-Horon; if they both ascend at the same time both may tumble down into the valley; but if they ascend after each other both can go up safely. How then should they act when ascending? If one is laden and the other unladen, the latter should give way to the former. If one is nearer to its destination than the other, the former should give way to the latter. If both are equally near or far from

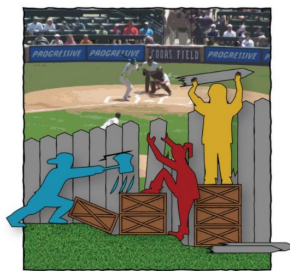
their destination, make a compromise between them. The one which is to go forward compensating the other which has to give way. (Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 23a).

In this Talmudic illustration one component of justice is equity. In order for all of us to ascend, thrive, and self-actualize, we have to compromise and help each other carry our burdens.

I recently read a critique of Craig Froehle's equity illustration by the organization Cultural Organizing. This critique applies to our sages' camel illustration too. The reason that some people have more difficulty seeing the baseball game than others is not because of their height, but because of the context around them. The issue is not height, but the barrier that has been placed in front of them. In the case of the camels, each camel is burdened with a different load.

The artist and organizer, Paul Kutner, offers a variation of the equity fence illustration, portraying his idea of justice. In order to bring about justice, we must work to break down the structures that cause inequity.

Upholding justice by



JUSTICE

rebuilding the structures in our society is daunting work. I find comfort in knowing that this work of re-creation is familiar to our sacred stories of creation. Our tradition teaches that God did not get the creation of humanity right on the first try. Violence filled the world and God felt the need to start over, saving Noah and his family to rebuild society (Genesis 6). The Torah tells us that God chose Noah because he was a *tzadik*, a righteous person. *Tzadik* is related to the word *tzedek*, justice. For God in the story of Noah the value most important to uphold when rebuilding our broken world was righteousness or justice and according to our sages, justice is equity.

Our Jewish community is a diverse community. It is imperative that we address equity and inclusion both within and as a part of our greater society. This work is also Jewish work because it supports our core Jewish value of pursuing justice. As we commit ourselves to learning about diversity, equity, and inclusion through the DEI Challenge, I want to invite us to see this work as essential Jewish work, contextualized with the following blessing:

We praise You, Eternal God, Sovereign of the universe, who calls us to holiness through *mitzvot*, commanding us to pursue *tzedek*/justice.

Rabbi Rachel Kort

Inspiring Words

Recently our Social Action Committee (SAC) encouraged me to check out a link on the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Religious Action Center (RAC) page. This was a truly inspirational read for me. The RAC page entitled "Bringing Social Justice Into Your Congregation" can be seen as a call to action. The article found at <https://rac.org/bringing-social-justice-your-congregation> identifies six areas that can help us to become a *k'hilat tzedek*, a community of justice. Our track record on these items at TBO varies: there are the ones that are fully integrated into our TBO culture, the ones we are working on, and the areas we have yet to address.

The six areas the article listed are:

1. Accessibility – making all of our services and activities available to all, regardless of their abilities.
2. Community Investment – investing capital in the redevelopment of a community.
3. Environmental Considerations – considering the environmental impacts of our operations including purchasing, landscaping, waste reduction, energy conservation, recycling, transportation, etc., and promoting environmental awareness.
4. Labor Matters – treating and paying employees fairly.
5. Outreach to Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews – considering the needs of LGBTQ+ Jews as we create

programming.

6. Members' Sensitivity with Financial Needs – providing equitable sacred commitments relief and assistance for other program expenses in a way that protects those struggling financially from embarrassment.

I would suggest perhaps the addition of a #7 dealing with inclusion and welcoming of Jews of color. I encourage you to read this article to see the full discussion. Which of these areas speak to you as an individual? Think about the areas listed above (and maybe others) that you would like to see us embrace or tackle, as a community in the coming months and years.

One effort currently underway at TBO to make us more *k'hilat tzedek* is the Equity Challenge, being organized jointly by the SAC and the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force. This 10-week program involves a weekly topic. Those who wish to join need to register; information is in *ORbits* or contact the office to do so. Registration is open throughout the program. The Monday of each week participants will receive materials, videos, articles, etc. related to the topic of the week. On Sunday afternoon there will be discussions around the week's issue. You can participate in whatever manner suits your life. You are welcome to engage in whatever way you can. We hope you will go for all of it! This program is intended to

make us all re-think how we view and approach the world. It promises to be thought provoking, most likely difficult, and potentially uncomfortable. Perhaps we have all been a little too comfortable and now is the time to challenge that. Our Mission Statement directs us to pursue *tikkun olam*. This program is a great way to continue that journey.

Feel free to reach out to the appropriate committee/task force chairs or me to share your thoughts on these matters. Maybe you will be inspired to start some new habits at home, work, or school, promote an activity within the TBO community, or maybe even choose to join our SAC or DEI Task Force. They are always happy to welcome new members and ideas.

Here's to working towards a more just world.

Melanie Field



Our Rabbi

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Leadership

A Country-Western Blast from the Past

For Purim this year, we viewed a DVD of the 2007 TBO production of The Megillah Goes to Nashville. Festivities included an almost historically accurate account of the Story of Esther, complete with vittles and moonshine, and our real live country band!



Queen Esther and the King



Our MC and Moonshine distiller



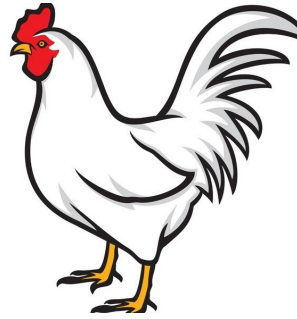
Our GREAT Band



Our Country Western Women-folk



Our Country Western Women-folk



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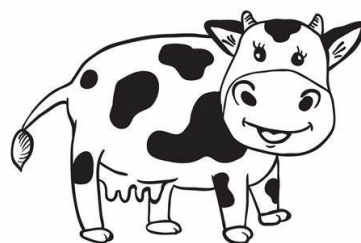
Our Country Western Men-folk



The "Dixie Chicks"



Our Country Western Men-folk



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Legacy Committee News

The Legacy Committee has spent the past several months revising the Temple's Endowment Policy, which dated to 2005 when members of the Montefiore Congregation donated money for an endowment for Temple Beth Or. The policy addresses procedures for accepting gifts, donor recognition, confidentiality, investing, and spending. Currently, TBO has three separate endowment funds: The LIFE & LEGACY Endowment, the Wexler Music Fund Endowment and the original Montefiore Endowment. We are grateful that many of you have already made arrangements for bequests or donations to LIFE & LEGACY. Many have also donated to the Wexler Music Fund which helps cover the cost of cantorial services during High Holy Days.

If you have not yet made a commitment to LIFE & LEGACY, please contact a member of the Legacy Committee for information. The process is quite simple.

Harold Dash

Safety and Security Committee

Do you have an interest in the safety and security of our TBO family, both in person and online? Do you have ideas or concerns about TBO safety? The TBO Safety and Security Committee needs volunteers to join us in this important work for our congregation. No experience is required! We will be learning about best practices and developing ways to implement them for our community.

Please reach out to me if you have questions or would like to join us!

Miriam VonAschen-Cook

Reopening Task Force – We're Getting Ready For You!

Our goals include:

- Improving the ventilation system in the sanctuary;
- Updating our security plan;
- Developing safety and security training;
- Increasing sanitizer availability.



The focus of this month's article is ventilation and COVID-19 prevention.

The Department of Health (DOH) found that good ventilation and air quality are important in reducing airborne exposure to COVID-19. The goal is to decrease the number of viral particles indoors by increasing the flow of outdoor air to the inside.

Temple Beth Or does not have an HVAC system — but not to worry. Following the guidelines from the DOH for buildings without HVAC systems, we have plans to strategically place window fans in the synagogue that will be on timers and will circulate outdoor/indoor air.

This will significantly improve air quality.

For more information on air flow and COVID-19, here is a link to an excellent article that illustrates how air flow impacts ventilation: <https://nyti.ms/2Pj09Sz>.

More to come on reopening in our next *ORacle*.

Wanda Bresnick

Spotlight On A Committee

Each month, the *ORacle* will highlight one or more TBO committees and/or task forces. If one or more of these speak to you as an avenue of Temple involvement, please contact the chair.



Bereavement Committee

The Bereavement Committee is here to help with the death of a loved one. We can assist in funeral preplanning, at time of need, or when there is a death of a member of your family. We are also responsible for the Yahrzeit Board and the Temple Beth Or section of the G. A. R. Cemetery in Snohomish. The members of the committee are **Susan Cross** (chair), **Carolyn Wexler**, **Melanie Bober**, **Amy Paquette**, **Melanie**

Field, and **Amber Waldbaum**. We would be happy to welcome new members to the committee. Please join us in helping care for members and families in their time of need.

Susan Cross

“Being on the Bereavement Committee has afforded me the opportunity to help others in my community when they are experiencing great sadness. It is comforting for me to know that when I am in that position, members of the committee will be there to help me as well. I enjoy working with the other people on the committee as we perform this mitzvah.”

Melanie Bober

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Small Groups - Next Campaign begins in April

The Small Groups Committee wishes to thank everyone who participated in the first ever Temple Beth Or Small Group Campaign. The next campaign will kick off in April. Look for communications from the Small Groups Committee in the next *ORbits* for information on the upcoming campaign.

Rebecca Hicks

Mitzvah Corps — The “Heart” of Our Congregation



Mitzvah Corps continues to offer support to many members through phone calls and notes in the mail. We have supplied numerous meals to members with health related issues, accommodating their dietary restrictions. Please let **Carolyn Wexler** know if you are aware of a member with a Mitzvah Corps need or if you would like to be part of this amazing team of caring congregants.

The obligation is small and flexible while the rewards are abundant.

Carolyn Wexler

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Virtual Shabbat and Worship Service Offerings in April

Please find Zoom invitation links in *ORbits*.

For those who use dial in, the phone number is +1 253-215-8782 US (Tacoma).

Avodah

Tzedakah/
Tikkun Olam
Leadership

K'hilah - Community Shabbat Service and Small Group Celebration Friday, April 2, 5:45 pm

Join **Rabbi Kort** and song leader **Shoshana Stombaugh** for a multi-generational Shabbat experience. Our evening together will include candle lighting, singing, contemporary and traditional prayers, and time with community. There will be an opportunity to remember loved ones with our *Kaddish*—mourner's prayer. As we mark just over a year of virtual Beth Or gatherings, we will reflect on our strength as a community and celebrate the completion of our first Temple Beth Or Small Group Campaign with a special blessing. This service is great for all ages and will last about 45 minutes.

Meeting ID: 875 8235 1792; Passcode: 430242

Serenity Shabbat

Friday, April 9, 7:30 pm

Rabbi Kort and song leader **Shoshana Stombaugh** will be joined by guest speaker, **Marla Kaufman** from the Jewish Addiction Awareness Network (JAAN). Temple Beth Or is partnering with JAAN for Serenity Shabbat, a service focused on addiction awareness that celebrates the wisdom of Jewish traditions as it relates to the spiritual practice of recovery. Everyone is welcome, including members of the recovery community, friends, and family who have been affected by a loved one's addiction, and anyone interested in this meaningful spiritual experience. Please spread the word. Our service will include an opportunity to remember loved ones with our *Kaddish*—mourner's prayer. This service is geared towards our adult and our b'nei mitzvah student community and will last just over an hour.

Meeting ID: 890 3110 8490; Passcode: 543389

Shabbat Morning Service

Saturday, April 17, 9:00 am **Note time

Stay tuned for more information.

Shabbat Candle Lighting

Friday, April 23, 5:45 pm

Join our Temple Beth Or family as we welcome Shabbat with singing, a healing prayer, candle lighting and *Kiddush*. This service is great for all ages and will last less than 30 minutes.

Meeting ID: 886 9913 0502; Passcode: 040906

Social Action



**HOUSING
HOPE**

we keep hope alive

The Tzedakah Box Fund recipient for April – June 2021 is Housing Hope.

The mission of Housing Hope is to “promote and provide affordable housing and tailored services to reduce homelessness and poverty for residents of Snohomish County and Camano Island.”

The housing-related support services include life-skills training, childcare (Tomorrow’s Hope Child Development Center), case management, and employment services.

One example of their amazing success rate is the fact that 90% of the families who “graduate” from the transitional housing program go on to obtain long-term stable housing.

In this difficult time of housing and food insecurity for so many in our community, please consider a donation to Housing Hope for the good work they do.

Donations can be made online at www.housinghope.org or mailed to:

Housing Hope Administrative Offices

5830 Evergreen Way
Everett, WA 98203

Naomi Katsh Barger

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Leadership

TBO 10-Week Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Challenge

The Temple Beth Or 10-Week Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Challenge is a powerful opportunity for shared learning, action, and growth. The DEI Taskforce invites you to explore and develop a deeper understanding of how inequity and racism affect our lives and our community.

Each Monday registrants will receive an email with options for learning. Each following Sunday there will be Zoom conversations to deepen participants’ understanding. The content is appropriate for those who have become b’nei mitzvah; kick-off is March 29. Register by calling the office at 425-259-7125. If you have questions, contact me.



Sonia Siegel Vexler

COVID-19 Vaccination Support

COVIDWA.com is a free COVID vaccine finder website that lists COVID-19 vaccine availability including links to each providers' scheduling site. You can use COVIDWA.com to search for availability by county, city, zip-code, or specific provider within Washington State.

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February Governing Board (GB) Meeting Report

1. **Melissa Von AschenCook** volunteered to be the librarian when we are back in the building. Thank you, Melissa!
2. The GB was "introduced" to the Finance Committee.
3. The GB learned about the Endowment Program.
4. Updates were shared re: the budget, the Youth Educator Search, B'nei Mitzvah Program, the Reopening Task Force, and the Hybrid Task Force.
5. Results of the DEI TF survey of the Board were presented.
6. Rabbi shared that she has joined the Seattle Jewish Coalition.
7. Reminders about registering for the Move-Your-Tuchus Fundraiser, the upcoming Purim events, and the Committee and Task Force Chair Orientation were announced.

How to schedule an item on the TBO calendar and set up a Zoom meeting: Fill out the Calendar/Event Submission form on the TBO website: <https://templebethor.org/calendar-submission/>. This includes all committee meetings.

At no cost to you here are three ways for TBO to earn money from rewards programs.

1. AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support TBO every time you shop. AmazonSmile registration is available at smile.amazon.com on your web browser and can be activated in the Amazon Shopping app for iOS and Android phones. When you shop at AmazonSmile, you'll find the same low prices, vast selection, and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to TBO.

2. Fred Meyer Rewards Card Program

Earn money for TBO by linking your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to our TBO account at <http://www.fredmeyer.com/communityrewards>. Our account number is **94444**.

3. Bartells B Caring Program

Up to 4% of your purchase amount will be contributed to TBO. No purchase is required up front. Once registered, just have the cashier swipe your "B Caring Card" at checkout or type in your 10 digit phone number, and a percentage of your total bill will be allocated to TBO. To sign up to participate, ask any Bartell Drugs associate. You can also find additional information and register your card at www.secure.escrip.com/signup.

Temple Leadership Rabbi

Rachel Kort

Governing Board

President
Melanie Field

VP of Finance & Facilities Management
Bob Goodmark

VP of Community & Engagement
Tim Douglass

VP of Jewish Life
Jennifer Cail

Board Secretary
Tina Roth

Assist. VP of Finance & Facilities Management
James Feinberg

Assist. VP of Community & Engagement
Wanda Bresnick

Assist. VP of Jewish Life
Melissa VonAschen-Cook

Members-At-Large
Deb Henry
Eric Elsemore
Mila Lowery

Immediate Past President
Vicky Romero

Committees & Task Forces

Adult Education: Vacant
Bereavement: Susan Cross
Book Club: Ellie Hochman
Building: Jeff St. George
Calendar: Janis Warner
Campership: Sonia Siegel Vexler
College and Military Outreach: Sarah Davis
Communications: JonaRose Feinberg
COVID-19: Ron Green
Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI):
Sonia Siegel Vexler
Facebook: Deb Henry
Financial Administrator: Norm Black
First Chapter: Michelle Douglass
Fundraising: Michele Goodmark
High Holy Days: Vacant
Hybridization: Glen Pickus
Legacy: Harold Dash
Library: Melissa VonAschen-Cook
Membership: Leslie Elsemore
Mitzvah Corps: Carolyn Wexler
Next Chapter: Sonia Siegel Vexler
Nominations: Sonia Siegel Vexler
ORacle: Vicky Romero
ORbits: Lori Wolff
Re-Opening TF: Wanda Bresnick
Security: Miriam VonAschen-Cook
Small Groups: Rebecca Hicks
Social Action: Naomi Katsh and
Melissa VonAschen-Cook
Spirituality & Ritual: Vicki Schwartz
Strategic Planning: Paul Vexler
Website: JonaRose Feinberg
Youth Education: Mila Lowery and Tina Roth

Staff

Office Administrator: Sarah Davis
Youth Group: Eian Snyder



April 2021

Nisan — Iyar 5781

All Activities are virtual at this time. Links are in *ORbits*.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 <i>K'hilah</i> Shabbat Service 5:45pm	3
4 Exec. Bd. 9:00am The Nosh 12:00pm DEI Challenge 4:00pm	5 Finance Committee Mtg. 6:30pm	6	7 DEI Task Force 4:00pm	8	9 Office Closed Serenity Shabbat 7:30pm	10
11 Gov. Bd. Meeting 9:00am The Nosh 12:00pm DEI Challenge 4:00pm	12 Communications Committee Mtg. 6:30pm <i>ORacle</i> Submission Deadline	13	14	15	16	17 Shabbat Service 9:00am *Note Time Change
18 Book Club 10:00am The Nosh 12:00pm DEI Challenge 4:00pm	19 Membership Committee Mtg. 7:00pm	20	21 DEI Task Force 4:00pm Reopening Our Doors TF Mtg. 7:00pm	22	23 Shabbat Candle-lighting 5:45pm	24
25 Committee and TF Orientation 9:00am The Nosh 12:00pm DEI Challenge 4:00pm	26	27	28	29	30	

The Temple building remains completely closed with the exception of our Office Administrator, Sarah, and one weekly cleaning. We will keep you posted regarding reopening.

Check *ORbits*, TBO Facebook page, or the TBO website for the most up-to-date information.



Temple Beth Or
3215 Lombard Ave
Everett, WA 98201
425.259.7125

Return Service Requested

Temple Beth Or Mission Statement

Temple Beth Or is a warm, compassionate, vibrant, spirited, inclusive, and participatory Reform Jewish community.

We are religiously and geographically diverse,
serving the northern Puget Sound region of Washington State.

As God's covenantal partners in fulfilling mitzvot, our priorities are:

- ***K'hilah*** (community)/***Mishpachah*** (family) — nurturing our interactive, multigenerational extended family;
- ***Torah*** — lifelong learning, searching for meaning, and seeking comfort and healing;
 - ***Avodah*** — worship and celebration through the observance of meaningful, creative, and traditional rituals;
- ***Tikkun Olam*** — transforming ourselves and our world through *tzedakah* (fairness), social justice, and *g'milut chasadim* (acts of loving kindness).