

Chag Sameah! Happy Hanukkah!



Light Up the Night: *Havdalah* and Hanukkah Saturday, December 4, 3:30-5:00 pm, In Person at the Temple

Rabbi Kort and the TBO Membership Committee cordially invite you to don your hats, scarves, mittens, and of course masks, and join your Temple Beth Or family as we light up the winter sky with luminaries — *Havdalah* and Hanukkah candles. There will be dreidels, Hanukkah singing, and doughnuts to go. Please note that this service is outside, weather-permitting.

3:30 Schmoozing and luminary making

4:00 *Havdalah* and Hanukkah candle lighting

Pre-registration required. Registration opens on November 30. **Registration closes December 3 at noon.** To register please visit: <https://templebethor.org/service-registration/>.

Important information regarding the last Town Hall Meeting
and the Semi-Annual Membership Meeting on page 4.
The Slate of Candidates for the 2022 Governing Board is on pages 12-13.



From Our Rabbi

Celebrating and Embracing the Diversity of Our Jewish Community

When I was a rabbi in California, I hosted one of the great rabbis of our time, Rabbi Gershom Sizomu, as a scholar-in-residence. Rabbi Sizomu is the first native-born black rabbi in Sub-Saharan Africa. He serves the Abayudaya Jewish Community in eastern Uganda where an entire village converted to Judaism in 1919. In addition to being a Jewish leader, Rabbi Sizomu is a member of the Ugandan Parliament!

Galit was three years old at the time of Rabbi Sizomu's visit. She attended preschool at the synagogue where I worked. Each day before heading home with the nanny, Galit would run into my office to give me a hug. When Galit saw Rabbi Sizomu in my office she stopped in her tracks and declared, "You have the darkest skin I have ever seen. It isn't brown, it is black!" I was mortified. Gershom didn't skip a beat. "I'm Rabbi Sizomu and my skin is black because I am from Uganda, Africa. Your hair is beautiful and blond! What is your name?" Galit introduced herself and explained that her hair is blond from the California sun and going to the beach.

Our Torah teaches that our people emerged from slavery in Egypt as a "mixed multitude." We've never been a homogeneous group. The Book of Exodus explains that "an

erev rav, a mixed multitude went up with them" (12:38). We are not only the descendants of Abraham and Sarah. Egyptians and slaves chose to cast their lot with the Israelites. We've always been a diverse people.

It is not simply our global Jewish community that is racially and ethnically diverse. The 2021 Pew Research study on American Jewish community estimates that 12-15% of American Jews are people of color. What's more, 17% of the U.S. Jews surveyed said they lived in households in which at least one child or adult was Black, Hispanic, Asian, some other non-white race or ethnicity, or multiracial.

While my three-year-old had the ability to understand that Jewish people are racially and ethnically diverse, we know as adults that there are complex layers with regard to race, especially in the United States. Marcella White Campbell, the director of the Jewish diversity awareness organization *Be'chol Lashon*, believes that it is critical for American Jews to understand our own diversity before we can engage in broader racial equity work. "We contain Jews of color, we contain multiracial and multiethnic Jews. And once we begin to acknowledge that, it makes it easy for us to engage with ideas of racism and inequality

in the United States at large. They are Jewish issues and when we say it, it means we can look at them through the lens and lean on Jewish values to help us approach these issues."

This issue of the *ORacle* should arrive at your home just in time for Hanukkah. As we celebrate the Festival of Lights, I would like to invite you to explore and celebrate the racial and ethnic diversity of our Jewish people. *Be'chol Lashon* has beautiful resources available on their website <https://globaljews.org>. Consider telling the story of the Abayudaya as you enjoy the light of your Hanukkah menorah. Rabbi Sizomu wrote this essay about his people through the lens of the history of Hanukkah <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/2015/12/07/modern-maccabees-an-african-hanukkah-story/>.

Just as light is a beautiful spectrum, so too are our Jewish people! Wishing you and yours a happy and meaningful Hanukkah.

Rabbi Rachel Kort
(she/her)

Rabbi Kort invites you to call upon her for help, support, or just to talk. Please contact Rabbi Kort directly to make an appointment. She's working remotely and is happy to set up a virtual meeting over Zoom or by phone. Phone: 425.954.1223; Email: RabbiKort@TempleBethOr.org
Rabbi Kort's sermons and writings can be found on the TBO website under "About Us/Our Rabbi."

From Our President



Thank You, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You and . . . VOTE!

I am dedicating my space this month to conveying a few rounds of gratitude to those that are part of the annual transition from one year's Board to the next. Somewhat chronologically:

Thank you #1 - As we approach the end of the calendar and Board year, I want to extend deeply heart-felt thanks to the members of the 2021 Governing Board. It feels like we ran a marathon together! There was a lot of heavy lifting and you were all amazing. As everyone on the planet knows this year was incredibly challenging with COVID-19 related matters (such as finding ways to engage the community virtually, fighting off isolation, keeping everyone safe and COVID comfortable, reinventing how we do almost everything); plus tackling our facilities decision, re-envisioning the entire Religious School and youth programming, and doing regular/normal business. Our TBO Board members are superheroes!

In particular I'd like to mention those who are reclaiming their Sunday mornings and leaving the TBO Board on December 31. **Deb Henry** has served admirably on the Board for several years as a Member-at-Large. She has shared her extensive executive and technical expertise and helped us to work smarter and more efficiently. Deb will continue on the Communications Committee and keep our FB page active. **Tina Roth**, our north star secretary, who kept up with meeting minutes through difficult and lively debates served two years on the Board. She will be

refocusing her energies as co-chair of the Youth Ed Committee. Both Tina and Deb stuck with us despite serious medical situations. Thank goodness they both came through their procedures and treatments successfully and are fully recovered. **Bob Goodmark** who has spearheaded our finances since just a few minutes after he moved to the area from out-of-state has reached his 7-year term limit. I'm so grateful for his high level of commitment, reliability, and service. Not to worry, he will continue on the Finance Committee and keep tending to our financial health and well being. Last, but certainly not least, I want to thank and honor **Vicky Romero** for her passion and dedication to our community. Vicky stepped up to serve when there was no other volunteer. These were her 4th and 5th years as President of TBO, more than any previous President. She brought enormous commitment to her TBO work and she was prepared to handle almost anything — she even dealt with a fire and a plague! Thanks to these amazing outgoing Board members. You will be missed!

Thank you #2 - Thanks so much to the members of the Nominations Committee who worked their magic to generate another wonderful slate of candidates for the new Board who will lead our community (pending congregational approval) in the year ahead. This team, chaired by **Sonia Siegel Vexler**, also included **JonaRose Feinberg**, **Debbie Halliday**, and **Dan Paquette**. The care that they took in making sure that our Board fully represented our membership, including new members and longer term members,

young families, midlife families, and retirees/empty nesters, members, with varied Jewish perspectives and wide-ranging skill sets and talents is much appreciated. I'm so grateful for their efforts to bring us a well-rounded, diverse slate of candidates.

Thank you #3 - Thanks to the Board members who have opted to continue spending many Sunday mornings with me, either completing their terms, recommitting to their positions or in some cases even assuming more responsibility. This group includes **Wanda Bresnick**, **Jennifer Cail**, **Eric Elsemore**, **James Feinberg**, **Mila Lowery**, **Jeff Napp**, and **Melissa VonAschen-Cook**. I'm counting on these folks, after congregational approval, to help the rookies get up to speed!

Thank you #4 - To those who offered to be candidates to fill year-end vacancies on the Board, a big thank you. Pending approval by the congregation, I look forward to extending a warm welcome to these new folks - **Will Burgamy**, **Tom Elsemore**, **Nancy Rosen**, and **Michael Tarr**. Hoping that they find their time on the Board to be rewarding and satisfying. You can read all about them on pages 12 and 13.

My closing word is a simple one. We have a big decision coming up later this month, so be sure to **VOTE!**

Vote,
Melanie
(she/her)

K'hilah/Mishpachah — Family and Community

Town Hall Meeting and Annual Membership Meeting

Your voice matters.



Please find Zoom invitation links in *ORbits*.
For those who use dial in, the phone number is
+1 253-215-8782 US (Tacoma).
Meeting IDs and Passcodes are listed below.

As we make our way to the vote later in the month, we are wrapping up this phase of our Facilities Planning efforts. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all who have contributed to our series of Town Hall Meetings and Facilities Planning work in general. Special thanks to the leaders of our two task forces (TF) - the New Facilities TF, chaired by **Paul Vexler** and the Alternative Options TF, led by **David Fine**. Their vision and leadership have been outstanding. All their hard working team members have also really stepped up. Our member presenters, **Glen Pickus** and **Norm Black**, shared their expertise and knowledge so generously and effectively.

The Facilities Communication Group who together crafted a decision making process, the bylaws amendments, the electronic voting process, the facilities planning webpage, the periodic facilities planning emails, a timeline, motion language, and so much more, have worked tirelessly. This group included **Bob Goodmark, David Fine, James Feinberg, Jerry Waldbaum, JonaRose Feinberg, Julie Mackoff, Paul Vexler, and Sheryl Shapiro**. Kudos to them for their tremendous efforts. Many, many thanks to **Fisher Qua**, who facilitated several of our Town Hall meetings. He helped us process some challenging thoughts and feelings.

If you have not had the opportunity yet, check out information on the facilities planning page of the website for more details. (<https://templebethor.org/facilities-planning/>). If you need the password to access this protected area contact the office. Also watch for periodic emails from the Facilities Planning Group with updates and additional information. Meetings will be recorded and can be watched using links that will be shared in both of these and our other communication tools, including *ORbits* and FB.

Our last Town Hall Meeting is scheduled for Thursday, December 9 at 7:00 pm. The Zoom link can be found on *ORbits* or FB. This **Dynamic Transition Workshop**, facilitated by Fisher Qua, will give members one last chance to ask any outstanding questions and share their thoughts.

Meeting ID: 847 7918 1449 Passcode: 496930

We encourage all members to participate in the upcoming events related to our ***facilities decision vote in December***. We hope that you will have attended the town hall sessions that have already taken place. If not and you would like to see them, look for the recording information also listed on the Facilities Planning page.

Saturday, December 11, 4:00 pm - Annual December *Havdalah* and Membership Meeting -- There will be the opportunity to ask questions about the mechanics of how to vote. Voting on the slate of candidates for the 2022 Governing Board will happen at the meeting, per usual, however ***voting on facilities will be conducted electronically over the following week. Those unable to vote electronically will be given additional instructions.*** The link for the Membership Meeting will be in *ORbits*.

Meeting ID: 847 5043 8109 Passcode: 321031

K'hilah/Mishpachah — Family and Community

Celebrate December 25 The Jewish Way! With *Havdalah*, Chinese Food and a Movie!

If you don't already have plans with friends and family, join TBO for a very virtual Chinese dinner and a movie. People can "get" a table for one or a table for 12. No masks required (and potentially not even pants), just Zoom access, Netflix, and some take-out, delivered or homemade Chinese food with your choice of beverage.

We will start with ***Havdalah* at 5:30 on Zoom**, enjoy schmooze time and dinner, then choose from three age-appropriate movies as we move to our "theatres" and then come back together to schmooze again after.

Registration is required (where and how will be available soon) including detailed instructions on how this virtual extravaganza will work.

No matter what the weather we can enjoy December 25 together — well, as long as we have power.



Welcome to TBO's Newest Members!

Since the High Holy Days, the Membership Committee has been pleased to welcome **eight** new member households!

**Andrea Tucker,
Dana Sanders and Meghan Lefrancois-Sanders,
Corrie and Mark Wilder,
Jenna Rubens,
Jenny and Matt Akers,
Kiah and Phil Webster,
Nancy Rosen and Don Snitz
Tovah and Brian Yenna**

Please introduce yourselves and make them feel welcome when you meet them at Religious School, services, and/or TBO gatherings.

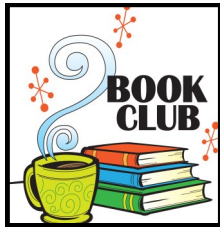
Mitzvah Corps — The "Heart" of Our Congregation

Mitzvah Corps continues to offer support to many members through phone calls and notes in the USPS mail. We have supplied numerous meals to members with health related issues and have accommodated 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 great.

K'hilah/Mishpachah — Family and Community



TBO Book Club

Our next meeting will take place on **December 19 at 10:00 am** via Zoom. Our book for discussion is ***Morningside Heights*** by Joshua Henkins, “a sweeping and compassionate novel about a marriage surviving hardship.” Please note the author because there are two novels with this title. Contact **Julie Maltos** to RSVP or with questions. All are welcome.

Contact Info and Photo Release

You may have heard that you should check the batteries in your smoke detector twice a year when the clocks change. Have you heard that you should update your contact info with TBO, too? The Communications Committee would like to remind you around the time of our semi-annual meeting to consider if any of your info has changed. Did you move or change your email address? Please share any updated contact info with Sarah in the office so we can be sure we have the most up-to-date information. Now that we are starting to have events in person again, we also want to remind you that we may occasionally use photos taken at events in TBO publications (like this one) or on the website. If you do not want your photo used, please contact the office for a photo Opt Out form so we're aware of your preferences. Thanks!



A Time for Change.....



It is time for a new *ORacle* editor. I have edited the *ORacle* for many years — 1999-2014 and then recently for a total of 18 years. It was fun, kept me well-informed, satisfied my miniscule creativity, and allowed me some control (after all, I set the deadlines, and as some discovered the hard way, stuck to them). When I needed a break I was confident that someone would take it over. Unfortunately, that did not happen so after a long hiatus I have been *ORacle* editor again. I really enjoy creating the *ORacle* each month — going from a mostly blank slate to a completed newsletter could even be exciting. However, I do recognize that after a while things can get a bit stale and need a change. Therefore, I am stepping down.

Our Office Administrator, Sarah, will be taking it on as of January. She is creative and her computer skills leave mine in the dust. It will be fun to see how she makes it her own. Still, this is a job for a volunteer. She is happy to be the interim person but we need a volunteer to take this on. Some of the great advantages of this job are that it happens monthly (no “emergency” editions), the editor sets the deadlines, makes decisions about article placement, sets their own guidelines, works from home (even post-COVID), in their own time frame (2:00 am is OK but ONLY if that is your choice!), and has a great proofing team making them look good. Sarah and I would be happy to be a support getting going. It will be a new year soon. Think about taking on this new, rewarding, appreciated, and fun position!

Lastly, I need to thank my wonderful team of proofreaders. If the *ORacle* looks good, it is in large part due to them: **Kathie Roon, Michele Goodmark, Nancy Sosnove, Melanie Field, Sarah Davis, and JonaRose Feinberg** — the “make it look good team!”

Vicky Romero
(she/her)

K'hilah/Mishpachah — Family and Community

Friendly Reminders for Our Community Members

If There Is A Death In The Family...

Please contact Rabbi Kort (425-259-7125, option 2) or one of the Bereavement Coordinators listed below. If you can't reach someone, continue down the list of contact people until you speak with one of us. In the event of a death we will provide all possible guidance and assistance to members of Temple Beth Or. Should you need our support the Bereavement Committee will be sensitive regarding the restrictions of COVID-19 social distancing in order to meet your needs. Bereavement Coordinators are:

Susan Cross, Carolyn Wexler, Melanie Field, Amy Paquette, and Lori Wolff



Update Your Directory! Stay Connected!

Has your personal TBO directory information changed recently?

Or is it time to update your TBO directory? We have several new families. Email **Sarah** at office@templebethor.org and she will be happy to email you an updated one. Those without email may receive a mailed one. Please remember to shred outdated directories. Contact Sarah in the office if you'd like to take it in and have her shred it for you.

Do you have a *simchah* to share with your TBO community?

We'd love to include it in the *ORacle*!



Don't Forget Your Flu Shot!

With all the focus on COVID-19, please don't forget to get your annual flu shot! The flu is back and could prove to be more virulent for having skipped a year!

Just a Reminder...

Our wonderful office maven, **Sarah**, is a notary. If you need anything notarized, contact her and she would be happy to schedule a time for you to come in.



Go Paperless in 2021

Just a reminder that statements are available via email!
If you would prefer to receive your sacred commitment statements via email instead of USPS, please contact Sarah at office@templebethor.org.

Torah — Lifelong Learning, Searching for Meaning, and Seeking Comfort and Healing

Women of the Wall March

As you may recall hearing in a few *ORacles*, TBO donated two old, unused Torah mantles to Women of the Wall (WOW) in Jerusalem to be used in their march at the Western Wall. “Women of the Wall not only seeks empowerment in group prayer and Torah reading at our most sacred site, but also strives for recognition of our prayer service by the legal and religious Israeli authorities, for the sake of all Jewish women. Our group, with a membership that is not only multi-denominational but spans the political spectrum, embodies a message of tolerance and pluralism.”

On Sunday, November 14, Temple Beth Or received the following email from WOW. The email contained many photos, including the ones below which show a bit of the march and one of TBO’s donated Torah mantles marching along! We can be proud of our support of religious equity at the Western Wall in Jerusalem!

“Women of the Wall would like to thank you once again for your support of our historic Torah Mantle Parade that was held on Friday, November 5. Because of your enthusiasm, women and girls, men and boys marched, holding 70 covers. The message was clear: women must have access to Torah at our holiest Jewish site.

Our parade attracted tremendous media attention worldwide. The exposure brought our struggle to the forefront of the social agenda in Israel.

I would like to share with you the link to the pictures of the parade: <https://tinyurl.com/womenofthewall>. On behalf of the Staff and Board of Women of the Wall, I send you our deepest gratitude. I hope that we will soon be together here in Israel. It would be an honor to host you at our monthly Rosh Hodesh prayer service.

*Sincerely,
Shoshana Hoffman, Women of the Wall”*



Each mantle in the march had the name of the donating congregation on it. Check out the photo to the left!



See more photos at the website listed above.

Avodah — Worship



Shabbat and Worship Service Offerings in December

To register for in person services, please visit: <https://templebethor.org/service-registration/>.

The Zoom links will be in *ORbits*.

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

Hanukkah and Shabbat Candle Lighting with Rabbi Kort and Dan Steingart

Friday, December 3, 5:45 pm on Zoom

Join our Temple Beth Or family as we celebrate the 6th night of Hanukkah and welcome Shabbat. The service will include a healing prayer, Hanukkah and Shabbat candle lighting, and *Kiddush*. This service is great for all ages and will last less than 30 minutes.

Meeting ID: 876 5879 4840 Passcode: 216285

Light Up the Night: *Havdalah* and Hanukkah

See the front page for information about the candle lighting and activities on Saturday, December 4, 3:30-5:00 pm, in person at the Temple. *Please note the early registration deadline.* This outdoor celebration is not able to be virtual.

Shabbat Service with Rabbi Kort and Shoshana Stombaugh

Friday, December 10, 7:30 pm, on Zoom

Join Rabbi Kort and Shoshana over Zoom for an online and interactive Shabbat worship experience using our prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*. This Shabbat service will include a *drash* (sermon) and an opportunity to remember loved ones with our *Kaddish*—mourner's prayer. This service is geared towards our adult and b'nei mitzvah student community and will last just over an hour.

Meeting ID: 895 5356 1292 Passcode: 839773

Tot Shabbat with Rabbi Kort and Noah Ziechner

Saturday, December 18, 9:45 am, Streamed over Zoom

Join your community of families with small ones for Shabbat singing, stories, a craft, and Torah too.

****Craft pick-up will be available at Religious School on Sunday, December 12 or contact Sarah for pick-up.****

Meeting ID: 842 1851 3592 Passcode: 014360

Shabbat Morning Service with Rabbi Kort and Noah Ziechner

Saturday, December 18, 10:30 am, in person at the Temple and streamed over Zoom

Join Rabbi Kort and Noah for a Shabbat morning service using our prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*. This Shabbat service will also include a reading from the Torah and an opportunity to remember loved ones with our *Kaddish*—mourner's prayer. This service is geared towards our adult and b'nei mitzvah student community and will last just over an hour.

Meeting ID: 843 7550 5175 Passcode: 410976

Tikkun Olam — Tzedakah/Social Justice



The Social Action Committee welcomes new members and input from the congregation. Please contact **Melissa VonAschen-Cook** or **Naomi Katsh Barger** with questions or your thoughts about social justice issues.

Tzedakah Box

For our final month of the October-December Tzedakah Box Fund the recipient is **Jewish Family Service Refugee and Immigrant Services**. We have all heard about refugees from Afghanistan and the hardships they have endured. Resettlement is also difficult and the refugees will need a lot of support. Thousands of refugees are expected to settle in Washington State. Please consider a donation to Jewish Family Service. For more information and a link to donate online go to: <https://www.jfsseattle.org/get-help/refugee-and-immigrant-services/>.



For donors who prefer to mail a check, you can send it to:
Jewish Family Service
1601 16th Ave, Seattle, WA 98122

Jewish Family Service of Seattle (JFS) is a Section 501(c)(3) public charity. Gifts to JFS are tax deductible in the U.S.A. Their Federal Tax ID # is 91-0565537.

The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism (the RAC) works to educate, inspire, and mobilize the Reform Jewish community to advocate for social justice.



The RAC works on behalf of the [Union for Reform Judaism](https://urj.org/) and the [Central Conference of American Rabbis](https://ccar.org/) and represents the values of the largest and most diverse Jewish Movement in North America to governments at all levels. As part of a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, their work is nonpartisan. Go to <https://rac.org> for more information.



Another worthwhile organization that is doing good work to help immigrants is AIDNW (Advocates for Immigrants in Detention Northwest).

The first stop for many immigrants leaving the Northwest Detention Center is AIDNW which is housed in a trailer outside of the Detention Center. Established to support immigrants when released from detention, AIDNW volunteers have been serving as many as 30 released detainee guests each day. Immigrants are released without a map, bus fare, or any way to contact relatives.

AIDNW provides orientation, snacks, backpacks filled with clothing and other basic supplies, and bus fare so that people can reunite with their families. AIDNW needs our help to cope with this surge, especially as the weather gets colder. You can donate to AIDNW through links on its website, credit card through Karma Payments, or by mailing a check to: AIDNW, 1915 S, Sheridan Ave, Tacoma, WA 98405. See *ORbits* for links.

Tikkun Olam — Tzedakah/Social Justice

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

About two years ago a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Task Force was formed at our Temple. The Task Force was not given a goal to accomplish. Instead as we learned and grew we realized our goal was to evaluate the diversity, equity, and inclusion landscape at Temple Beth Or, to create more awareness of our role in systemic racism, and to create a roadmap for improving our culture.



Creating a warm, welcoming, and inclusive community takes effort and purpose. The Task Force wanted our congregation to be more intentional and to encourage participation from all who seek connection to Jewish life regardless of religious background, race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, political affiliation, ability, age, sexual orientation, or gender identity. We wanted to create an open tent.

We started by examining our own biases, misconceptions, misperceptions, and prejudices through the lens of DEI, surveyed the Board using an edited DEI survey from the Union for Reform Judaism, offered spring and fall weekly challenges and identified barriers to fully participating in our Temple. That list of recommendations was sent to the Board. The list is not exhaustive. We only made seven recommendations that we thought would be easy to implement and yet continue to support interfaith families, LGBTQIA+, and people with mobility challenges as well as helping our congregation to be more welcoming.

We know that there is more work to be done. Yet task forces are temporary in nature and it is time to roll the work of DEI into the Social Action Committee. We know that the Temple will continue to make our community more diverse, equitable, and inclusive.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Task Force

**Sonia Siegel Vexler, Janet Robertson, Maggie Feinberg, Melissa VonAschen-Cook,
Nancy Wilkinson, and Naomi Katsh Barger**



Let's Prevent Unnecessary Hardship Jewish Values In Action

The Hebrew Free Loan Association (HFLA) recognizes that the cost of living is rising and affecting many of us. Its mission is to prevent individuals and families from falling through the cracks. It is empowered by Jewish values to provide assistance when funds are tight. The loan program includes:

- **Mini Loans** - provides \$750 to make ends meet.
- **Offers up to \$5,000** - to help with larger expenses.
- **Help for college** - provides assistance of up to \$7,500 to meet the unique financial challenges of students.

Loans have no fees or interest so people only repay what they borrowed.

HFLA works with borrowers to customize repayments. The Jewish community has set aside these funds for you when needed. Contact them at (206) 397-0005 or office@hflawa.org.

Leadership

2022 Governing Board Slate of Candidates



Wanda Bresnick (she/her), President-Elect

My husband Mark, our children, Zach and Kelsey, and I joined Temple Beth Or in 1996 because it was warm and welcoming to our interfaith family. Many years later, I made the decision to convert. Over the years, I have served on the High Holy Days Committee and the Rabbinic Search Committee. Currently I am on both the Membership Committee and the combined Covid Task Force. and I am the VP of Community and Engagement. I look forward to continuing to help TBO thrive during these ever changing times. I am a family therapist in private practice. My favorite Jewish holiday is Passover because I love sharing the seder ritual with family and friends.



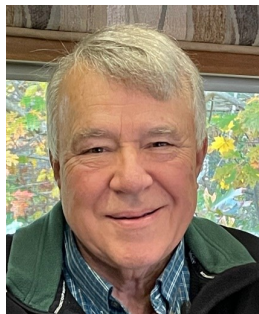
James Feinberg (he/him), VP of Finance and Facilities Management

James and his family joined TBO in 2012 after moving from California. At TBO James was previously the Assistant Finance and Facilities Vice President and is a graduate of the *Atidaynu* program. He's excited to serve on the Board and give back to the community. James is a systems engineer at Boeing and his two children became b'nei mitzvah at TBO in 2019. His favorite Jewish holiday is Passover when relatives from both sides of the family celebrate together; and also for the Gefilte Fish movie, even though he doesn't actually like gefilte fish.



Nancy Rosen (she/her), Secretary

A new member of the Congregation, I have felt connected to TBO through my children, Mirs and Melissa VonAschen-Cook. They and my grandsons, Alex and Aaron Cook, finally brought me to the PNW. In Tulsa, OK, I was chair of Temple Israel's Social Justice Committee and a member of the Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation. When I lived in Florida, I was Director of the Florida-Israel Institute. I taught French and English in colleges and schools for many years. In Israel, I lived on Kibbutz Ayelet Hashahar. My favorite holiday is *Pesach* because it brings family together and celebrates new beginnings.



Tom Elsemore (he/him), Assistant VP of Finance and Facilities

I have been a TBO member for 24 years. Passover is my favorite holiday because the family all gets together for the seder.



Will Burgamy (he/him), Assistant VP of Community and Engagement

My family and I officially joined TBO this past summer but we have attended services many times over the years. My wife, Jessica (Vexler) grew up in the TBO community. We are excited to be members and I look forward to finding ways to get involved. I have served on several non-profit boards over the years and currently spend my free time being a dad to my daughters Lucille (6th grade) and Adelaide (5th grade). My favorite Jewish holiday is *Yom Kippur* because it is a time to reflect and refresh on becoming a better person in the coming year.

Leadership

2022 Governing Board Slate of Candidates



Melissa VonAschen-Cook (she/her), Assistant VP of Jewish Life

Melissa moved to Washington with her family in 2017. She was an active member of her Temple in Tulsa, OK before moving and was pleased to find a new Temple home at TBO, where she is honored to serve the community. She works for Snohomish County Public Works. Melissa and her spouse, Mirs, have 2 children, ages 22 and 18. They live in Brier with their many different pets. "My favorite holiday is Tu BiShvat. Even though I have frequently described it as Jewish Arbor Day, it is a holiday that I think of as uniquely Jewish and it has really spoken to me since I first began to study Judaism."



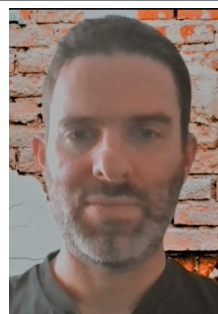
Mila Lowery (she/her), Member at Large

My family and I moved to Mill Creek from Baltimore, MD, 7 years ago and have been members of Temple Beth Or since 2015. My husband Ken and I have two kids; they are in 7th and 4th grades. We are happy to have found our Jewish "home" here at Temple Beth Or. My favorite Jewish holiday is Hanukkah because it is so much fun for the kids.



Eric Elsemore (he/him), Member at Large

I am Eric Elsemore (he/him), husband of Shelley (she/her), and father of Erica (she/her) and Andie (she/her) Elsemore, who were both became bat mitzvah at TBO. My parents Tom and Leslie Elsemore, are long time members. My family joined in 2018 but both my daughters had baby naming ceremonies here at TBO. I am happy to be returning to the Board for a second year. This past year has been a positive experience on the Board and I am looking forward to this coming year as well. My favorite holiday is Passover. This has always been a very fun family gathering and everyone in my family looks forward to it every year.



Michael Tarr (he/him), Member at Large

My family and I have been members since 2019. We have two girls, and I serve on the Mitzvah Corps. I see Board membership as an opportunity to provide greater service to the community and to learn more about our congregation. My favorite Jewish holiday is Passover, which combines ritual and celebration in a way that powerfully brings the sacred Jewish tradition to our homes.



Jeff Napp (he/him), VP of Community Engagement

Sheryl Shapiro and I moved to Seattle from Miami in 1990, and joined the congregation the following year after receiving a very warm welcome from its members. Our daughter Ravenna, now 28, had her naming and bat mitzvah at TBO. I previously served on the Board in the late 1990s/early 2000s when Sheryl and I co-chaired the Youth Education Committee. I served on several of the past strategic planning committees, and am currently serving on the TBO Combined COVID-19 Task Force. My favorite holiday is Hanukkah. I love making (and eating) latkes, and bringing light into our lives during the darkest time of the year.

Leadership

During the November 14 Board meeting and the associated email Board meetings the following happened:

1. COVID protocols recommended by the Combined Covid-19 Task Force related to various activities and including notification of families for Religious School in the event of a COVID-19 case were approved.
2. The Governing Board slate recommended by the Nominations Committee was approved.
3. Two more policies were re-affirmed and put into our new standard policy format - Gift in Kind & Leadership Mediation and Conflict Resolution. An old Name Tags policy was deleted.
4. A modified motion presented by Norm and Bob related to the Financial Feasibility Study was approved.
5. The Board approved the motion to withdraw funds from the Wexler Family Music Fund to use in covering the cost of the HHD cantorial soloist.
6. After a conversation about the need, style, and timing of a fundraiser, it was agreed that the Finance Committee should reassess and bring another idea to the Board.
7. Paul Vexler shared information about the draft motion language for the December vote and James showed sample ballots.
8. Sonia Siegel Vexler presented recommendations from the DEI Task Force to the Board.
9. The Board reviewed the status of the policy update/review project and what will happen as Vicky moves on.
10. Melanie took a moment to honor Vicky and thank her for her service.
11. Bob summarized the finance reports.
12. Logistics for the December Membership meeting were reviewed.
13. The Board was asked to review the mega-calendar and the list of accomplishments for the year and get any changes to Melanie.
14. The Board was given a copy of the newly revised by-laws as an FYI and a copy of the most recent version of the recordkeeping SOP to review for discussion at our next meeting.

Note: in addition to the Board nominees on the previous pages, Melanie will continue her term as president, and Jennifer will continue her VP of Jewish Life term.

A HUGE THANK YOU to **Vicky Romero** who is retiring as *ORacle* editor. When Vicky took on the role of President, she concurrently agreed to resurrect the *ORacle*, our monthly newsletter. (That was CRAZY!!!) All together she has served as editor of this publication for over 18 years. We will miss her exacting attention to detail and her dedication to this incredibly valuable communication tool. Thanks, Vicky, for your many, many, many hours of hard work keeping the community connected and in the know. We have all benefited from your commitment and passion and will miss your voice in this publication. Fortunately, she will be staying on the Communications Committee and continuing to share her wisdom and expertise. Much appreciation from the entire community!

Temple Leadership Rabbi

Rachel Kort

Governing Board

President
Melanie Field

VP of Finance & Facilities Management
Bob Goodmark

VP of Community & Engagement
Wanda Bresnick

VP of Jewish Life
Jennifer Cail

Board Secretary
Tina Roth

Assist. VP of Finance & Facilities Management
James Feinberg

Assist. VP of Community & Engagement
Jeff Napp

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

Alternative Options TF: David Fine

Bereavement: Susan Cross

Book Club: Julie Maltos

Building: Jeff St. George

Calendar: Sarah Davis

Campership: Sonia Siegel Vexler

College and Military Outreach: Sarah Davis

Combined COVID-19 Task Force:

Melanie Field

Communications: JonaRose Feinberg

Facebook: Deb Henry

Financial Administrator: Norm Black

First Chapter: Vacant

Fundraising: Vacant

High Holy Days: Jerry and Cheryl Waldbaum
and Doug Wallis

Legacy: Harold Dash

Library: Melissa VonAschen-Cook

Membership: Leslie Elsemore

Mitzvah Corps: Carolyn Wexler

New Facilities TF: Paul Vexler

Next Chapter: Sonia Siegel Vexler

Nominations: Sonia Siegel Vexler

ORacle: Vicky Romero

ORbits: Lori Wolff

Ruach and Ritual: Ellis Rose Engbar

Safety and Security: Mirs VonAschen-Cook

Small Groups: Rebecca Hicks

Social Action: Naomi Katsh and

Melissa VonAschen-Cook

Website: JonaRose Feinberg

Youth Education: Mila Lowery and Tina Roth

Staff

Office Administrator: Sarah Davis
Youth Group: Eian Snyder

December 2021

Cheshvan—Kislev—Tevet 5782

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Hanukkah-4th	2 Hanukkah-5th	3 Hanukkah-6th Hanukkah and Shabbat Candle Lighting 5:45pm	4 Hanukkah-7th Light up the Night <i>Havdalah</i> and Hanukkah 3:30pm
5 Hanukkah-8th The Nosh 8:00am Religious School Governing Board 9:00am	6 Bet RS 4:30pm Finance Committee Mtg. 7:00pm	7 Aleph RS 5:15pm	8	9 Facilities Town Hall Meeting #5 7:00pm	10 Shabbat Service 7:30pm	11 <i>Havdalah</i> and General Membership Meeting 4:00pm
12 The Nosh 8:00am Religious School GB Orientation 10:00am ORacle Deadline	13 Bet RS 4:30pm Communications Committee 7:00pm	14 Aleph RS 5:15pm	15	16	17	18 Tot Shabbat 9:45am Shabbat Service 10:30am
19 The Nosh 8:00am NO Religious School Book Club 10:00am	20 Membership Committee Mtg. 7:00pm	21	22	23 Office Closed	24 Office Closed	25 Havdalah, Chinese Food and a Movie 5:30pm
26 NO Religious School or Nosh	27	28	29	30 Office Closed	31 Office Closed	HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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, including those hosted on personal Zoom accounts.

Reminder: The Temple building remains closed except for pre-registered services and scheduled appointments. We are also requiring those who enter to sign in so we are able to follow contact tracing protocols.

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



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Return Service Requested

If you prefer to read the *ORacle* online only please contact the Temple Beth Or office to be removed from the postal mailing list.

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).