

December 2020 / Kislev—Tevet 5781

Volume 31, Issue 12



**Chag Sam'rah!  
Happy Hanukkah!**



**Something's Coming, Something Fun**

**The name of the event is Move-Your-Tuchus-A-Thon.**

**March 13 thru 27 it is scheduled to be**

**Look in the next *ORacle* for more info to see.**

**It's to help you stay healthy, build community and more**

**And especially to support our Temple Beth Or!**

**—Anonymous**

See page 4 for information about the Move-Your-Tuchus-A-Thon **Logo Contest!**

A fun opportunity to use your creativity! G-rated, of course!

**The Temple Beth Or Semi-Annual Membership Meeting will be held  
virtually on Saturday, December 5, at 4:00pm.**

**Please join us for a senses-rich *Havdalah*, the election of the 2021 Governing Board,  
Strategic Planning updates, Volunteer of the Year Award, and so much more!**

**See page 10 for the tentative agenda.**



**House of Light**

**3215 Lombard Ave, Everett, WA 98201**

**425.259.7125**

**Founded 1985**

**TempleBethOr.org**



## Our Rabbi

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Message

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## Sharing the Light of Hanukkah



My daughter, Galit, has been asking for weeks if Candy Cane Lane will be open this year. It's a cul de sac in the north end of Seattle that goes all out with Christmas decorations. It has been a Kort family tradition for more than 30 years to drive around the small block, usually multiple times, enjoying the decorations and listening to our favorite Hanukkah music. While we aren't a "Christmas" family, we sure do enjoy our neighbors' holiday displays during the darkest, longest days of winter.

It's not a coincidence that many cultures celebrate holidays that include festive lights around winter solstice. While some years, holidays coincide to create a kaleidoscope of light, this year Diwali, Hanukkah, Christmas, and Kwanzaa are nicely spaced apart. The more opportunities to enjoy light, the merrier, in my opinion.

Our Jewish tradition

encourages us to share our unique light of Hanukkah. Our Sages in the Talmud invite us to publicize the miracle of the oil by lighting our Hanukkah menorahs in a place for the public to enjoy. In Israel, many folks light their *chanukkiyot* outside of their homes, placing them in glass or plexiglass boxes to keep the wind from blowing out the flames (see below). It is magical to walk around religious neighborhoods there and enjoy the warm glow from wicks burning in olive oil. Broad living room windowsills make a nice public place for us to light our candles publicly while still warm in our homes.

If you are uncomfortable displaying a *chanukiyah* in public or if you are looking for new opportunities to share Hanukkah light, Zoom technology offers alternatives.

While my family is disappointed that we cannot spend Hanukkah physically with grandparents who live

around the country and just up the street, we have planned a designated candle lighting time each night of Hanukkah so we can all enjoy the gift of family and regular connection for eight days. Our Small Group Task Force wants to invite you to find a night of Hanukkah to light candles and enjoy conversation with your Small Group. In addition, think about people in your life, Jewish and non-Jewish, who could use a bit of extra light and levity during these dark times. Invite them to share candle lighting with you over Zoom or another platform. This is not the right year for large in-person Hanukkah and holiday celebrations, but it is the most important time for us to share our special Hanukkah light.

*Rabbi Rachel Kort*



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](mailto:RabbiKort@TempleBethOr.org)

Rabbi Kort's sermons and writings can be found on the TBO website under "About Us/Rabbi."



## It Takes a Village

For the final time, I prevailed upon the *ORacle* editor to give me a page in this month's edition. Why this month? This will be the last written message I will address to you as president of Temple Beth Or. My reason is to urge you to come to the **General Membership Meeting on December 5, at 4:00pm.**

First and foremost, this is the meeting where we do one of our most important tasks — electing our new Board members for the coming year and for some, beyond. I am grateful to the Nominating Committee, led by Sonia Siegel Vexler, for presenting us with such a qualified slate of candidates. Please see pages 8 and 9 to “meet” our nominees. Let us show these people our honor and support by joining to vote on the slate, welcoming them to the Board, and thanking them for stepping into these positions. In addition to the new blood coming on the Board, we have the balance of strong returning Board members. I am looking forward to working on next year's Board. I will be continuing on the Board as past president, comfortable in the knowledge that our congregation is in the most responsible and capable of hands — those of Melanie Field. Many thanks to those who served this year and will not be continuing.

The work of running the Temple can be daunting at times. Even in non-COVID times many have responsibilities that make it difficult to take on major volunteer jobs. However, now is the time when it is most important for all our members to “be present.” Come to the meeting and hear from some very dedicated people. Let us know your thoughts. We need to hear them in order to be the best stewards of our Temple. And of course so many have, but if you haven't jumped into the fray, consider volunteering — even for a small job. Every little bit helps. Lots of hands make lighter work.

Who would have ever predicted that this year would be turned on its proverbial head by COVID? And who would have predicted that we would be holding not one, but TWO virtual membership meetings this year? Hard as it is to be physically separated we have learned the value of having a virtual option for those who are not able to attend meetings in person. Our world is forever changed. We had record attendance at the last virtual meeting in June and I encourage you to help break that record at this meeting!

We will be sending a more thorough reminder of “How to Zoom the General Membership Meeting” but a few important reminders here:

1. Please use one device per household. Our Zoom account limits the number of devices per meeting and we don't want to exclude anyone due to space restrictions.
2. We will open the meeting a few minutes prior to beginning. Please join as promptly as possible and visit with others, as it will take time to admit everyone.
3. Everyone except those directly involved in running the meeting will be muted in order to control extraneous sounds. We have two very capable Board members who will be monitoring chat and you are encouraged to use the Zoom chat feature for questions and comments.
4. Voting will be the same as we used for approving our budget in June and will be explained in ORbits and at the meeting.
5. Make sure the names of all voting participants are in your Zoom window so all votes can be counted (right click on the name in the left corner of your picture; click to rename).
6. Reminder: This meeting is for members only. Please do not share the link.

While there have been challenges, it has been an honor to serve. Wishing all a happy, healthy 2021. May we all be able to be together again next year!

Shalom,  
*Vicky Romero*

*Our Rabbi*  
**President's  
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## Next Chapter

Join other Next Chapter members for three rounds of a friendly game of trivia. Gather around your screens and play with other Temple members. We will provide the questions, you will provide the answers, and your beverages and snacks.

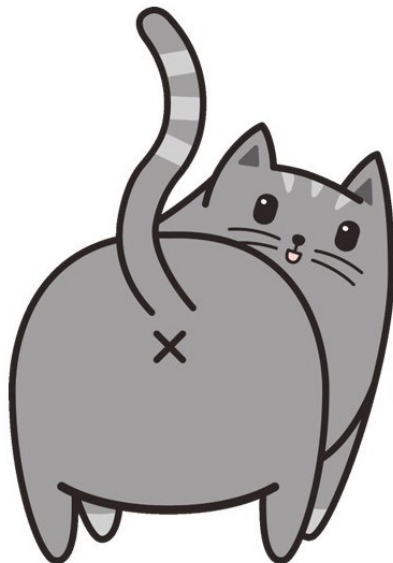
Date: Saturday, December 12, 2020

Time: 7:30 – 9:30 pm

Venue: Zoom

RSVP to Sonia Siegel Vexler. Once you RSVP you will receive a confirmation email. On the trivia night, an email link will be sent on how to join the Zoom event.

Next Chapter is a *chavurah* (from the word *chaver* which means friendship) for adults seeking to form a social community with others who are at the same stage of life, experiencing a home without children, and for people looking to build a friendship community with others that don't have young or teenage children at home. The group comes together periodically to learn, socialize, and have fun.



## Move-Your- Tuchus-A-Thon Logo Contest

**Coming in March!**

Join us for an all ages, all abilities chance to move your tuchus! Kayak, bike, run, walk, just get out there and move! More info to come!

Help us create a logo for the *Move-Your-Tuchus-A-Thon* and win a prize plus have endless bragging rights.

Please make it simple and easy to reproduce as a stamp. Get to work and have fun!

**Logo submissions due to [office@templebethor.org](mailto:office@templebethor.org)**

**by December 11**

## Borrowing Shabbat Prayer Books: *Mishkan T'filah*

As we did with High Holy Days prayer books, during COVID social distancing we are loaning out *Mishkan T'filah* books for families to use from home for Shabbat Zoom.

Please email Sarah in the Temple office ([office@templebethor.org](mailto:office@templebethor.org)) to let her know if your family would like to participate. Vicki Schwartz will follow up with you to arrange for you to pick up a book.

Gentle reminder: The Temple is closed. Books may not be picked up without these prior arrangements.



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Come join the TBO Zoom Book Club

When: December 20, 2020

Time: 10:00 am — Noon

Book: *The Woman Who Named God: Abraham's  
Dilemma and Birth of Three Faiths*

Author: Charlotte Gordon

Facilitator: Leslie Elsemore

*The Woman Who Named God* is a compelling, smart, and provocative take on one of the Bible's most intriguing and troubling love stories.

Please RSVP to both Ellie and Leslie to let us know you will be attending.

Ellie will send out the Zoom link to you as soon as you RSVP.

Looking forward to an interesting conversation!

Warmly,

*Ellie Hochman*

### **FYI: 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 do reach someone.

In the event of a death we will provide all possible guidance and assistance to members of Temple Beth Or.

Bereavement Coordinators are:

Susan Cross	Carolyn Wexler	Melanie Field
Amy Paquette	Melanie Bober	Lori Wolff



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## Virtual Shabbat and Worship Service

### Offerings in December

*Please find Zoom invitation links in ORbits.*

#### Shabbat Service

**Friday, December 4, 7:30 pm**

Join **Rabbi Kort** and **Shoshana Stombaugh** for a more formal 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 our b'nei mitzvah student community and will last just over an hour.

#### ZOOM-AKKAH!

##### Virtual Shabbat Hanukkah Celebration

**Friday, December 11, 5:45 pm**

Join **Rabbi Kort** and our song leaders **Noah Zeichner** and **Taryn Webber** for a once-in-a-lifetime, Multi-Generational ZOOM-AKKAH Celebration over Zoom.

- Candle lighting--Let's all share the light of our Hanukkah menorahs (3 candles, including the *shamah* candle) and Shabbat candles
- Hanukkah and Shabbat sing-a-long
- **Special** TBO Hanukkah Singers Video
- Time to enjoy community
- Bring a dreidel and a handful of coins or dried beans to play

#### Tot Shabbat Hanukkah

**Saturday, December 12 at 10 am**

Join **Rabbi Kort** and song leader/early childhood educator **Shoshana Stombaugh** for an interactive Hanukkah and Shabbat experience geared towards 2-5-year-old children +/- . All are welcome. Please feel free to share with your friends and family around the country or even the world.

#### Shabbat Service

**Saturday, December 19, 10 am**

Join **Rabbi Kort** and song leader, **Noah Zeichner**, for a more formal Shabbat worship experience using our prayer book, *Mishkan T'filah*. This Shabbat service will include a Torah reading, Torah teaching, and 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.

#### Shabbat Candle Lighting, Lay Led

**Friday, December 25, 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.



## Social Action

### **Tzedakah Fund Distribution**

Our Social Action Committee, along with Rabbi Kort, will work to determine our *Tzedakah* Fund recipients for end of year 2020 at the Social Action Committee meeting on **Sunday, December 6 at 10:00 am**. All are welcome to participate in this important work. We hope you will

consider joining us for this opportunity to learn and give! Contact Naomi Katsh Barger to find out more information and to receive the link for the meeting.

Even though we can't use our community *Tzedakah* Box, please continue to give *tzedakah* if possible during these tough times. You can give to a charity of your choice or consider the information here about organizations that are doing important work.

### **FOOD LIFELINE**

Many people are still suffering great financial hardship related to the pandemic. Please consider donating to local food pantries in your area or Food Lifeline. Food Lifeline obtains surplus food from farmers, manufacturers, grocery stores, and restaurants, then sorts and packs and distributes the food to food pantries.

For more information or to donate go to [foodlifeline.org](http://foodlifeline.org).

### **LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS**

The divisive 2020 election is over (except for important run-offs for both of Georgia's Senate seats). However, The League of Women Voters of Snohomish County keeps working in a non-partisan way. Their goal is to bring people together to bring healing for our divided country through civic discourse and finding common ground.

For more information go to <https://lwvsnoho.org>.

### **THE HAND UP PROJECT**

The Hand Up Project is a local advocacy group for the homeless and those who suffer from addiction. They provide resources to facilitate safe housing, detox, mental health support, addiction support, and other community services. For more information or to donate go to [handupproject.org](http://handupproject.org).

### **WATER.ORG**

The health of families around the world depends on access to sanitation and safe, clean water. This is always true but especially now during the global pandemic. Through small, affordable loans [Water.org](http://Water.org) provides families hope, health, and the opportunity to break the cycle of poverty. Please consider this worthwhile organization if you are in a position to give *Tzedakah* this month.

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## 2021 Temple Beth Or Governing Board Slate



### **Melanie Field — President**

Melanie and her family (Vinaya, Sunita/28 and Sanjay/25) joined TBO about 26 years ago. She has served in a number of roles, most notably as Vice President, Chair of the Fundraising Committee, twice on Rabbinic Search Committees, Chair of HHD Committee for nearly a decade, member of Bereavement Committee for over two decades and most recently as chair of the By-Laws Task Force. Melanie is a retired Environmental Engineer and now serves as a "professional volunteer" in various ways in the community. Her favorite Torah person is Miriam.



### **Vicky Romero — Immediate Past President**

My family and I were founding members of the Temple. At the beginning I was a member of the Youth Education Committee, including as chair. I also volunteer-taught Katan class for five years. I have held many committee and board positions, including board VP and president (now for 5 years total), auction chair, member of the Rabbinic Search, Bereavement, Social Action, High Holy Days, and Membership Committees, and *ORacle* editor for many years. My fondest memories are the b'nei mitzvah of my daughters and my conversion in 1997, officiated by our then rabbi, Rabbi David Fine.



### **Eric Elsemore — Member-at-Large**

I am Eric Elsemore, son of Tom and Leslie Elsemore, father of Erica and Andie Elsemore. Shelley and I, along with our children, joined Temple Beth Or in 2018 because of the family atmosphere and the friendly welcoming members of the Temple. I work as a nurse anesthetist primarily at Madigan Army Medical Center in Tacoma. This is my first board position in a temple and I look forward to working with everyone at Temple Beth Or.



### **Deb Henry — Member-at-Large**

My daughter Victoria (22) and I have been TBO members since 2001. I've been active for many years on the Membership Committee, support the Mitzvah Corps, sang in past Purimspiels, and previously served 4 years on the Governing Board. I still work FT and volunteer by sharing Temple events and news on our public Facebook page, and in the TBO Members FB group. The past few years I had missed having a close connection to our community, and I'm happy to be re-engaged and contributing as a member-at-large board member. My favorite Torah person is Miriam.



### **Mila Lowery — Member-at-Large**

Mila and her family moved to Mill Creek from Baltimore, MD, six years ago and have been members of Temple Beth Or since 2015. She and her husband, Ken, are proud Ohio State Buckeyes. They have two kids, ages 11 and 8, and love living here in the beautiful PNW. "I am excited to serve the Temple Beth Or community and add my voice to the Board. My favorite Torah person is Miriam."



# 2021 Temple Beth Or Governing Board Slate



## **Tim Douglass — VP of Community & Engagement**

Tim and his family joined Temple Beth Or in 2017, after relocating from Los Angeles. They were looking for an active and vibrant Jewish community and an opportunity to make a difference. He and his wife, Michelle, live in Snohomish with their daughter Maya and son Jonah. Their oldest daughter, Marena, is completing her Masters in Nursing back in Los Angeles. Thank you to the TBO community for being welcoming and providing an opportunity to give back.



## **Jennifer Cail — VP of Jewish Life**

Jennifer has been a member of TBO since 2015. In the past year it has been her honor to serve on the TBO Board during these unprecedented times and is looking forward to two more years. And also Purimspiel when it is once again safe to sing in public!



## **Wanda Bresnick — Assistant VP of Community & Engagement**

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 HHD Committee, and the Rabbinic Search Committee. Currently, I am on the Membership Committee. Earlier this year I joined the board as an Assistant VP of Membership. I look forward to continuing in that role to help TBO thrive. I am a family therapist in private practice.



## **James Feinberg — Assistant VP of Finance and Facilities Management**

James and his family joined Beth Or in 2012, after moving from California. At TBO, James was previously on the Safety and Security committee and is a graduate of this year's *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 Torah person is Joseph for his eponymous musical.



## **Melissa Von Aschen-Cook — 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 Beth Or, where she is honored to serve the community. She works for Snohomish County Public Works. Melissa and her wife, Miriam, have two children ages 21 and 17. They live in Brier with their many different pets. "My favorite Torah person is Chanah, Samuel's mother, with her heartfelt weeping prayers in the Temple."

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## Leadership Nus

At the November Governing Board (GB) meeting the following business occurred and information was shared.

1. Paul Vexler, Ron Green, and Glen Pickus presented the completed sections of the Strategic Plan which include Community Building and Programs and Activities.
2. They then gave an update of recommendations for Facilities which includes a phased remodel of our current site.
3. The Youth Education Committee is moving forward with planning for our b'nei mitzvah and teen cohorts. We may have enough interest to restart a BOTY (Beth Or Temple Youth) group.
4. Small Groups will be beginning soon (has begun!). Registration is going well with many people registering. The initial groups will run through February.
5. The *L'dor Vador* Policy, which was approved last month was modified to change the word "children" to "adults having grown up as members of Beth Or."
6. The *Tzedakah* Fund and Box are being reevaluated and combined in order to simplify and clarify donations.
7. Our new fundraiser, Move Your Tuckus-a-Thon was introduced (see page 4). All are encouraged to participate in the logo contest. More information about the event in the coming months.

### General Membership Meeting Tentative Agenda

TIME	ACTIVITY	POINT PERSON
4:00 PM	Schmooze	Bob
4:15 PM	Havdalah and Rabbi's Message	Rabbi
4:40 PM	Welcome/Call to Order/ Review of Voting & Chat	Vicky
4:45 PM	Minutes Approval	Tina
4:50 PM	Elections	Sonia
5:00 PM	President-Elect	Melanie
5:05 PM	Strategic Planning Report	Paul
5:35 PM	COVID Report	Ron
5:40 PM	Finance Report	Bob
5:45 PM	Volunteer of the Year Award/ President's Message	Vicky
5:55 PM	Q&A	All (Chat)

### Temple Leadership Rabbi

Rachel Kort

### Governing Board

President  
Vicky Romero

VP of Finance & Facilities Management  
Bob Goodmark

VP of Community & Engagement  
Tim Douglass

VP of Jewish Life  
Jennifer Cail

Assist. VP of Finance & Facilities Management  
Ken Moses

Assist. VP of Community & Engagement  
Wanda Bresnick

Assist. VP of Jewish Life  
David Gross

Board Secretary  
Tina Roth

Members-At-Large  
Beth Burstein Fine  
Janis Warner  
Deb Henry

President-Elect  
Melanie Field

### Committees & Task Forces

Adult Education: Vacant

Bereavement: Susan Cross

Book Club: Ellie Hochman

Building: Jeff St. George

Calendar: Janis Warner

Communications: JonaRose Feinberg

Financial Administrator: Norm Black

First Chapter: Michelle Douglass

Fundraising: Vacant

High Holy Days: Vacant

Library: Vacant

Legacy: Harold Dash

Membership: Leslie Elsemore

Mitzvah Corps: Carolyn Wexler

Next Chapter: Sonia Siegel Vexler

ORacle: Vicky Romero

ORbits: Lori Wolff

Spirituality & Ritual: Vicki Schwartz

Security: Vacant

Social Action: Naomi Katsh

Website: JonaRose Feinberg

Youth Education: Jessica Hill

### Staff









Office Administrator: Sarah Davis



A Proud Member of the URJ

# December 2020

## Kislev — Tevet 5780

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<b>ALL ACTIVITIES ARE VIRTUAL AT THIS TIME. Links are in ORbits.</b>					
		1	2 DEI Task Force 4:00pm	3	4 Shabbat Service 7:30pm
					5 General Membership Meeting 4:00pm
6 Social Action Mtg. 10:00am Adult Hebrew Class 12:00pm	7 Finance Committee Mtg, 6:30pm	8	9	10 Hanukkah 	11 Hanukkah 
					12 Hanukkah 
13 Hanukkah 	14 Hanukkah 	15 Hanukkah 	16 Hanukkah 	17 Hanukkah 	18
Governing Board Orientation 10:00am-4:00pm			DEI Task Force 4:00pm		19 Morning Shabbat Service 10:00am
20 Book Club 10:00am Adult Hebrew Class 12:00pm	21 Communications Committee Mtg. 6:30pm	22	23	24 Office Closed	25 Office Closed <i>K'hilah</i> Shabbat Candle-lighting Service 5:45pm
27	28	29	30	31	2021 Board Installation Service Jan. 8, 7:30pm

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 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).