

THE ORACLE



December 2025 Kislev/Tevet 5786 Founded 1985 Volume 36, Issue 12



Eight nights of giving: let's raise the roof on our addition

This year's Hanukkah appeal is focused on lighting our way toward the completion of our Capital Campaign. Please consider a gift to the Campaign. All pledges to the Capital Campaign received by December 10 will be generously matched dollar for dollar up to \$100,000! See the article on page 4.

templebethor.org/building/pledge

Unity in Lynnwood

Semiannual membership meeting



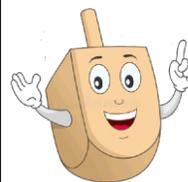
- Schmooze and refreshments at 3:30 pm
- *Havdalah* and meeting (on Zoom) at 4:00 pm
- President's and Rabbi's messages
- Updates from Remodel Task Force, Capital Campaign, and Youth Education
- Presentation of slate of Board candidates and voting
- Volunteer of the Year
- Wine auction
- Committee and task force reports
- Volunteer opportunities and upcoming events

[Zoom link to be emailed to members](#)

Shabbat Hanukkah

Friday, December 19, at 7:30 pm

Join us for Shabbat and the sixth night of Hanukkah



Details on page 4





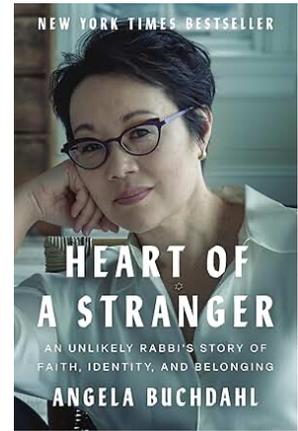
Rabbi's Corner

My PNW version of Adam Sandler's Hanukkah Song

I recently read Rabbi/Cantor Angela Buchdahl's new memoir, *Heart of a Stranger: An Unlikely Rabbi's Story of Faith, Identity, and Belonging*. Rabbi Buchdahl is the senior rabbi at Central Synagogue in Manhattan, leading one of the largest pulpits in the United States. 500,000 people streamed her Yom Kippur services during COVID,

and many have continued to follow her teaching. She is, without a doubt, one of the most influential rabbis in the world. Steven Colbert even helped launch her new book.

And most significantly for us? She grew up right here in Tacoma, Washington, at a small Reform congregation very similar to Temple Beth Or. She beautifully describes how the Pacific Northwest and Mount Rainier shaped her Jewish and spiritual identity. As I read Rabbi Buchdahl's book, I found myself *kvelling* - bursting with pride - that one Jewish girl from Tacoma could have such a great impact.



In just a few days, on Sunday evening, December 14, Hanukkah will begin. We will start the holiday by lighting our *shamash* candle, the helper candle that ignites and spreads the light to the additional candles on the *hanukkiyah*. The *shamash* reminds us that small things can have a big impact.

Inspired by Rabbi Buchdahl, by Pacific Northwest Jewish pride and by the message of Hanukkah, I want to share eight ways Jews from Western Washington have spread our energy and light and had a great influence:

- Rabbi Buchdahl is the first East Asian-American to be ordained as a rabbi, and the first East Asian-American to be ordained as a cantor. She is also the first woman to serve as senior rabbi of the historic Central Synagogue in New York.
- The song "I Have a Little Dreidel" has been a Hanukkah hit since it was written by Cantor Samuel Goldfarb, who served as the musical director at Temple De Hirsch Sinai in Seattle from 1930 to 1968.
- Smooth Jazz saxophonist Kenny G is one of the best-selling artists of all time. Kenneth Gorelick grew up in the Jewish community in South Seattle and studied music at the University of Washington.
- David Guterson, author of the 1994 number one best-selling novel, *Snow Falling on Cedars*, grew up Jewish in North Seattle and also studied at the University of Washington.
- In addition to faith and the arts, PNW Jewish folks have influenced the corporate and consumer world, too. The late co-founder of Costco, Jeffrey Brotman, grew up Jewish in Tacoma.
- Before Costco, many of the grocers who helped establish Pike Place Market, the oldest operating market in the U.S., were from the Sephardic Jewish community of Seattle's South End.
- At around the same time Pike Place was being built, Ashkenazi immigrants in Everett were building their first synagogue on Lombard Avenue. Did you know that our Temple Beth Or building is the longest continuously used religious building in Washington state? (Shameless plug: Don't forget to donate to the Capital Campaign to receive generously offered matching funds!)
- It is not only our little building that has a big impact. Temple Beth Or members played a critical role in establishing Camp Kalsman, the largest Jewish summer camp in the PNW, where more than 1,000 kids attend each summer.

This list is a wonderful reminder that despite being a relatively small Jewish community here in Western Washington, our collective light shines brightly and reaches far. This year, as we light Hanukkah candles, remember that you, too, are a *shamash*. I hope the stories of these local Jews inspire you to share your unique energy, your talents and your light with the world. You never know how far the flame of a single candle can spread!

Rabbi Rachel Kort
Rabbi Rachel Kort (she/her)

From our President

Remembering who we are



I was recently reading a book called *Black and Autistic* by Kala Allen Omeiza. In the book, I found a definition for a term I've seen bandied about on the Internet: intersectionality. Intersectionality can be defined as recognizing the necessity to acknowledge everything about an identity that marginalizes a person - being a Black autistic woman in a war zone, for example. For me, it might be being a white Jewish woman "of a certain age" who supports Israel and also some positions where being a Zionist makes you an outsider. In some circles, for example, it means you don't have the right to also be a feminist. I reject that idea. On Rosh HaShanah, when Rabbi Kort reminded us that no one has the right to define who you are as a Jew except you, it really struck a chord for me. Perhaps it did for you, too.

A Venn diagram is a useful tool for visualizing your social network. We are someone's child, maybe someone's parent or sibling, neighbor, co-worker, friend, therapist, patient, bridge partner, you get it. If each one of those things is a circle, we are in the center where all those circles overlap. Where does being a member of Temple Beth Or fit into your Venn diagram? To me, TBO is a big circle that includes all of us, including me, and all of what we are. In a way, it's the hearth of our home or maybe the home of our heart.

I hope that you also think of Temple Beth Or as being close to your heart. This month, we will have several opportunities to be together around the hearth of TBO, even if it's still outside our building on Lombard Avenue. On December 6, we will be together, online and in person, for our semiannual membership meeting, where we will thank outgoing Governing Board members and vote on the proposed slate for 2026. The meeting will be preceded by a nosh and schmooze and *Havdalah*, led by **Rabbi Kort**. There will be presentations by the Remodel Task Force, the Religious School Youth Ed Committee, and the Capital Campaign Committee, and I will introduce our Volunteer of the Year (yes, it's a surprise). Rabbi Kort and **Neil Weinstein** will conduct a family Shabbat service on Friday, December 5, and Rabbi and **Shoshana Stombaugh** will lead a Shabbat service on Saturday, December 13. Then the next day, erev Hanukkah - first candle - Religious School will celebrate with a "Hanukkahpalooza." Book Club will gather on the 14th as well. This is all in addition to regularly scheduled monthly committee and task force meetings. I hope to see many of you here and there throughout the month.

An important way for all of us to show our appreciation for Temple Beth Or and its significance in our lives is to contribute our time, talents and treasure, as we are able. Thank you for your ongoing support through your Sacred Commitments. I don't think we celebrate that enough because it seems "routine." But I am thanking you now. In addition, the community has been more generous than we could have imagined during the Capital Campaign, so that we can have our new building and not have a mortgage. As Jeff and I wrote to you recently, two TBO families have offered to match up to \$100,000 in pledges that are received by December 10. Won't you help us reach the \$100,000 goal, which will turn into \$200,000 when it is matched? What a great way to celebrate Hanukkah, the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem, as we look forward to rededicating our temple on Lombard Avenue this spring.

Wishing you peace and joy and a Happy Hanukkah.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy".

Nancy Rosen, President (she/her)

Facilities Committee needs members and a chair

At this exciting and historic time, the Facilities Committee needs members and a chair. The team will work in cooperation with the Remodel Task Force to get us settled into our new home. If you have ever moved, you know that the first year involves a lot. "Learn the building," and help others learn it, too. Address the unexpected. Contact **Nancy Rosen** if you're interested.

December Shabbat services

Family Shabbat

Unity in Lynnwood

Friday, December 5, 7:00 pm, with Rabbi Rachel Kort and musician Neil Weinstein



Our entire Temple Beth Or community is invited to our Family Shabbat service designed especially to nurture and engage our children and Religious School community. The evening will include songs, prayers and a story, and will last less than an hour.

Guests - Register at templebethor.org/service-registration/. Registration ends Friday, December 5, 3:00 pm.

Shabbat morning service

Unity in Lynnwood

Saturday, December 13, 10:00 am, with Rabbi Rachel Kort and musician Shoshana Stombaugh



Join us for a Shabbat worship experience, including a Torah reading and a *drash* (sermon). This service is geared toward our adult and *b'nei mitzvah* student communities, and will last about 90 minutes.

Guests - Register at templebethor.org/service-registration/. Registration ends Friday, December 12, 3:00 pm.

Shabbat Hanukkah

Unity in Lynnwood

Friday, December 19, 7:00 pm, with Rabbi Rachel Kort and musician Noah Zeichner



Join us for Shabbat and the sixth night of Hanukkah. We'll light Hanukkah and Shabbat candles, and sing lots of Hanukkah songs. Then we'll enjoy latkes and other Hanukkah treats at our *oneg*.

Guests - Register at templebethor.org/service-registration/. Registration ends Friday, December 19, 3:00 pm.

[Click here to access our TBO Hanukkah songlist curated by Rabbi Kort and Noah Zeichner.](#)

Shabbat Zoom: tinyurl.com/tboshabbatzoom
Meeting ID: 837 4187 0594 Passcode: 531760
Dial-in users: 253-215-8782



AT TBO



ONLINE



OUTDOOR



OFFSITE



ADULT EDUCATION



Capital Campaign – point, set, MATCH

Two very generous families are offering up to \$100,000 in matching funds to help us complete our remodel project INCLUDING THE KITCHEN. The condition of the match is that we must receive new pledges by December 10 to receive the matching funds. So \$100,000 in new pledges + \$100,000 match would give us \$200,000 in new money for our remodel. As of November 26, we've received **\$93,900** in new pledges eligible for the match!

Recall that our original fundraising goal did not include funds for the kitchen. But now that we see the light at the end of the tunnel, we want to put the kitchen construction back into our immediate plans. So many of you have asked for that to happen! We need to commit to contracts for cabinets, appliances and installation soon, as lead times for these items can be very long.

Please know that even if we reach the goal of the match, your continued donations and pledges are still much needed for other important building demands, and are greatly appreciated.

A pledge made now can be paid in 2025 or 2026. *Todah rabah* to our community for all of its support for this wonderful project.

Your Capital Campaign Task Force



designed by freepik



From our Youth Education Committee



A beautiful Consecration ceremony

We are excited to welcome new families to our Religious School community. It's amazing to watch our Religious School continue to grow, in numbers as well as in rituals. November 7 marked not only our first Religious School Shabbat of the year, but also the revival of a beautiful ritual at Temple Beth Or - Consecration. Consecration is how many Reform Jewish communities worldwide celebrate the start of Jewish learning.

Our Consecration service was truly inspiring. During the service, families stood beneath a canopy of outstretched *tallitot* held by our faculty, and received a touching blessing written and led by our Youth Education Director, **Stefanie Somers**. The Congregation helped mark the occasion by joining in the *Shehecheyanu*, and all new students received the gift of honey, symbolizing the sweetness of Jewish learning. It created a moment of connection and tradition that everyone felt deeply. And, of course, both kids and adults enjoyed celebrating afterward with ice cream sundaes - sweet smiles all around!

It was heartwarming to welcome the new families joining us, and to see everyone come together in such a meaningful setting. We look forward to watching their children grow in our community. Our youngest members are, without question, the best part of us.

We will have a second Consecration ritual to recognize, honor and bless our returning Religious School families on April 17. Going forward, this will be a tradition that happens at the beginning of each school year.

Meghan Lefrancois-Hanson & Rani Linarelli,
Committee Co-chairs



Meet the nominees for our 2026 Governing Board

Jonathan Roselle (he/him), President-elect

Jonathan and his wife Suzanne moved to Everett in 2015 and joined Temple Beth Or with their daughter Juliet in 2021. “Temple Beth Or has become central to our family’s life, and I’m excited to contribute my skills and energy to help our community grow and thrive.” Jonathan runs a small software development company and looks forward to bringing his technical expertise and organizational experience to the role of President-elect. Purim right now holds the most meaning for his family. They all make hamantaschen together.



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

James and his family joined TBO in 2012, after moving from California. At TBO, James was previously the Assistant VP of Finance & Facilities Management, and is a graduate of the Atidaynu program. He’s excited to continue 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.



Dana Sanders (she/they), Assistant VP of Community & Engagement

My family joined TBO so our children could grow up in the Jewish community. I am especially excited to foster a welcoming space for families with young children and the LGBTQIA community. I love Purim because we get to make hamantaschen!



Bob Goodmark (he/him), Assistant VP of Finance & Facilities Management

Bob was born in Florida and is a graduate of the University of Florida and the University of Houston. He is a chemical engineer and is retired from Shell Oil Company. Bob and his wife Michele moved from Houston to Mill Creek in 2013 to be close to their son and daughter-in-law. They joined TBO in 2013 and have been active members since joining. Bob joined the Finance Committee shortly after joining and served as VP-Finance from 2015 thru 2017; Asst. VP-Finance in 2019, and VP-Finance and Facilities Management in 2020 and 2021. He is currently active on the Finance Committee, Capital Campaign Committee, and the Remodel Task Force.



Matt Sowell (he/him), Assistant VP of Jewish Life

Matt joined Temple Beth Or in early 2025. “Temple Beth Or has been a great source of support and guidance in my life, and I want to help give some of that support back where I can.” He works as a veterinary technician and gets involved in far too many crafts on his time off. “I’d have to say my favorite holiday is Yom Kippur.”



Melissa VonAschen-Cook (she/her), Secretary

Melissa VonAschen-Cook has been a member of Temple Beth Or since she moved to Washington from Oklahoma in 2017. Now serving on the Board as secretary, she returns for another term. Melissa works for Snohomish County Public Works in the Engineering Services department as the materials engineer. She is an avid weaver and also has her own business specializing in handwoven pride flag accessories. She now lives in Marysville with her dog Maggy and a handful of roommates. Her proudest moment was when she recently read from the Torah at her adult bat mitzvah.



Gwen Campbell (she/her), Member-at-large

Gwen joined Temple Beth Or in 2022 after launching her daughters, retiring, and moving back to the Puget Sound area from a sojourn in Minneapolis. “I felt immediately welcomed by the TBO community, and I look forward to contributing to the health and vitality of the Temple as a member of the Board.” Gwen’s career included positions in communications, human resource management and nonprofit management. She enjoys volunteering for several nonprofits, including the Stanwood-Camano Food Bank. Gwen’s favorite prayer is the Kaddish.



Rani Linarelli (she/her), Member-at-large

My name is Rani Linarelli, mother of three, wife, physical therapist, fitness enthusiast and knitter! I have been a member of TBO for two years and aspire to grow this Jewish community...to make it a home for all of our children and generations to come!



Rich Spitzer (he/him), Member-at-large

I am honored to be asked to continue to serve on the TBO Board. In the three and a half years since joining the shul, I have met many of our wonderful, dedicated members. I have enjoyed contributing to the Remodel Task Force and Communications Committee. I especially appreciate your trust in me as the *ORacle* publisher; my goal is for it to be fun, informative, factual, and in full color! My favorite holiday is Hanukkah because it brings light to the darkest time of the year.



The following have one more year on the Board:

- **Nancy Rosen** continues as President
- **Jeff Napp** continues as VP of Community and Engagement
- **Ron Green** continues as VP of Jewish Life

Huge thank yous to **Wanda Bresnick** as she steps down as Past-president and to **Pattipeg Harjo** as she leaves the position of Member-at-large.

Nominations Committee: **Debbie Halliday**, **Mark Bresnick**, and **Sonia Siegel Vexler**



Remodel news



Construction:

- Major concrete work is completed, and only minor concrete work remains, such as sidewalks and ADA ramps.
- The stormwater system is now fully installed and connected to the city system in the alley.
- Fire sprinkler and plumbing work is underway.
- Framing work is ongoing, with the building expected to be topped out in early December.
- Next key steps will include the installation of the roof on the new building and re-roofing of the existing building, followed by installation of the windows. Once the roof and windows are in place and the building is sealed, electrical and HVAC work can begin.
- Delays in the delivery of structural steel have resulted in a schedule shift. The CPM work is now expected to be completed in early February, delaying our estimated move-in time to later in the spring.

Other progress:

- The Governing Board approved the proposed site plan that includes spaces for the community garden, the Religious School play area, an outdoor service/sukkah area, and a Life & Legacy bench. In addition, the space will include the legacy hydrangeas, trees in honor of **Billy Sturman** and **Fred Weiss**, and stepping stones with the painted rocks from the community celebration.
- Flooring has been selected and ordered. Interior paint colors are being considered. Exterior paint has been selected.
- Kitchen design is in progress and the cabinet vendor has been selected. Appliances have been chosen.
- An information session for Religious School families was held on November 23.
- **Rich Spitzer** has taken on the task of designing storage areas in our new space. If you are interested in helping, please contact Rich.
- We need a volunteer to coordinate the move back in. If you are interested in leading this effort or learning more about what it entails, please contact **Melanie Field**.

Please join us at the December 6 meeting where you can get all the latest information about the remodel project.

Construction photos (November 24)



View from the alley



Upstairs hall to classrooms

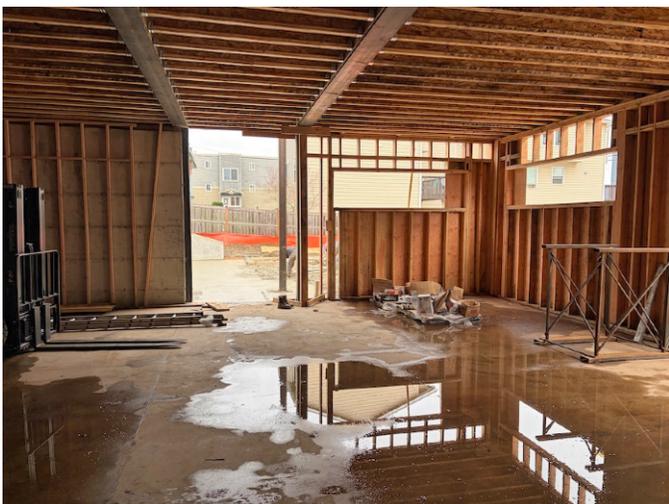
TBO construction tours



Would you like to tour the new Temple building during construction? Member **Glen Pickus**, our construction project manager, will be giving tours on weekends in December. Come for a behind-the-scenes look at our new building. Ask questions of the expert to understand how the building is being constructed and why. Tour dates and times are Saturday 12/6, Sunday 12/14 and Sunday 12/21; times are 10:00 am, 11:30 am, and 1:00 pm.

Tours are limited to 10 people, *b'nei mitzvah* age and older. Members should wear sturdy shoes that can get muddy, and be prepared for cold and rain as the building is not yet completely enclosed. Take a tour and have a wonderful story to tell your friends and family. Registration is required: tinyurl.com/tboconstructiontour.

More great photos at templebethor.org/building



New social hall



Outdoor patio

Social Action Committee news

The *Tzedakah* Box recipient for October-December is Project Girl Mentoring Program. The vision of this local, nonprofit organization is to create change by building the voices of young women of color through mentoring and tutoring. They help girls and young women flourish and reach their goals. After-school tutoring is a crucial part of Project Girl. The girls arrive with their own textbooks and homework instructions in their backpacks, so that the tutor knows just where to begin.

Donations to this worthwhile organization can be made through the physical *Tzedakah* Box at services, on the TBO website, or directly to Project Girl at project-girl.com.



Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) guidelines for bystanders and observers

Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network (WAISN) is a great source of information on advocacy and on working to fix our broken immigration system. Go to WAISN.org for a link to resources and a hotline phone number.

They also have guidelines for bystanders and observers so that we know our rights and what is legal when we observe ICE activity. Please follow this link to learn what you can do: waisn.org/bystander-and-observer-guidelines/.

If you are concerned with the treatment of immigrants, the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice Northwest also has opportunities for volunteering and advocacy. Here is a link to their November newsletter - a few of the events have already occurred, but it is a good source of information <https://www.jewishcoalition.org/news/newsletter/november2025>.

Protect public lands - The federal administration plans to sell off or lease millions of acres of public lands mainly to oil and gas companies. Jewish Earth Alliance is pushing back against these plans, which would be devastating for our environment. Learn more at www.jewishearhalliance.org/post/protect-public-lands-for-all-people-november-2025.

SAVE THE DATE

Everett's annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. march and celebration sponsored by the Snohomish County Black Heritage Committee



A valuable note from Hebrew Free Loan Association



With recent challenges affecting SNAP recipients, Hebrew Free Loan Association can help. They have funds available to provide small, short-term loans to members of the Jewish community who need help with groceries this month. Repayment will begin in January.

Eligibility

- Must be Jewish
- Must have a realistic means with which to repay the loan
- Must have lived in Washington State for at least six months

To get started, visit [pre-qualification survey](#).

Questions? Contact Melissa Gianotti at melissa@hflawa.org.

Membership news

*Happy TBO anniversary!
We appreciate your being
a part of our community:*

- Helen and Carl Grossman - 31 years
- Kayla Mohrbacher - 3 years
- Talia and Kevin Cronk - 1 year
- Matt Sowell - 1 year

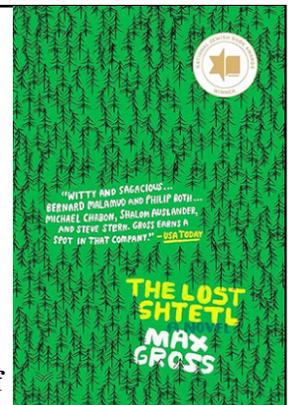


Moadon Kriya Book Club

Our next Book Club meeting is Sunday, December 14. We will read and discuss *The Lost Shtetl* by Max Gross.

Gwen Campbell will be leading the discussion. Thank you, Gwen, for volunteering and suggesting the book! I am delighted to host at my place.

Wyndi Russakoff





December *yahrzeits*



12/1	Patricia Ledbetter	Temple Beth Or Family
12/1	Barry Tepfer	Temple Beth Or Family
12/1	Harold Siegel	Uncle of Carolyn Wexler
12/2	Carrie Voit	Grandmother of Sandy Voit
12/3	Joan Cecilian	Mother of Kathy Pickus
12/5	Jonathan Field	Nephew of Melanie Field
12/6	Aaron Bell	Temple Beth Or Family
12/6	Lila Fishman	Temple Beth Or Family
12/6	Anne Raymond	Grandmother of Steven Russakoff
12/6	Walter H McPherson	Father of Kathie Roon
12/8	Mannie Voit	Grandfather of Sandy Voit
12/9	Risa Eger	Grandmother of Julie Mackoff
12/13	Martha Emily Field	Sister of Melanie Field
12/13	Rubin Dayan	Uncle of Barb Ingram
12/14	Murray Fishman	Temple Beth Or Family
12/14	Paul Vexler	Father of Jess Burgamy
		Husband of Sonia Siegel Vexler
12/15	Ruth K. Blank	Temple Beth Or Family
12/15	Sidney Baldwin	Uncle of Nancy Sosnov
12/15	Esther Blatt Blustein	Mother of Marvin Blustein
12/16	Rashel Alfi	Temple Beth Or Family
12/16	Lena Cohen	Grandmother of Mim Edelstein
12/16	Ethel Scott	Mother of Terri Viglietta
12/17	Terry Miller	Mother of Rand Miller
12/17	Charlotte Green	Aunt of Ron Green
12/18	Gilda Wexler	Mother of Eldon Wexler
		Grandmother of Koby Wexler
		Temple Beth Or Family
12/19	Marguerite Nathan	Father of David Gross
12/19	Ben Gross	Grandmother of Janet Karr
12/19	Rachel Mahaney	Father of Andy Siegel
12/20	Armand Siegel	Mother of Aviva Goodwin
12/20	Aliza Shemesh	Mother of Judy Magidson
12/21	Berthilde Horowitz	Father of Helene Paroff
12/23	Arthur Weiss	Grandmother of Glen Pickus
12/24	Lillian Pickus	Father of Mirs VonAschen-Cook
12/24	Stanley Rosen	Mother of Phyllis Busch
12/25	Rita Cohen	Father of Angela Riggins
12/25	John McAfee	Grandfather of Helen Grossman
12/29	Morris Lichtman	Father of Sheryl Shapiro
12/29	Morris Shapiro	Father of Howard Schoenfeld
12/30	Irwin Schoenfeld	Father of Pat Azus
12/30	William Schoenwolf	Grandfather of Sheryl Shapiro
12/31	Charles Halber	Grandmother of Michael Glosser
12/31	Frances Finkelstein	

This Hanukkah, give the Gift Box of Hope, and rebuild lives in Israel

Over the past two years, Israel and the Jewish people have faced deep trauma and uncertainty. But from the ashes of destruction, resilience has emerged - and now you can be part of the rebuilding.

The American Zionist Movement (AZM) has partnered with ESEK and Israel Food Rescue to create the Hanukkah Gift Box of Hope - a beautifully curated basket featuring products from Israelis directly impacted by the war.



Twenty-five percent of every purchase supports the AZM Resilience Campaign, funding local leadership and trauma recovery programs in the Eshkol Region - communities along the Gaza border rebuilding their lives and future.

What's inside the box

Every box includes products infused with stories of survival, strength and hope:

- Olive oil from Kibbutz Erez
- Lavender soap by Yonat Midbar
- Gourmet chocolate by De Karina
- Handmade Hanukkah candles by Safed Candles
- Chamomile tea by Shalva Tea
- Pure honey by Negohot Honey

Each box tells a story - together, they tell the story of a people unbroken.

Every donation helps fund the AZM Resilience Campaign, which supports local leaders rebuilding nine communities across the Eshkol Region - restoring trust, providing trauma support, and rebuilding the fabric of Israeli society.

Share the light. Rebuild the future.

This Hanukkah, your generosity will not only brighten homes but also strengthen the heart of Israel. If interested, click here to access the Gift Box of Hope through the AZM website: [ESEK Gift Box](https://www.esek.org/gift-box). You can also go directly to the ESEK website at tinyurl.com/esekgiftbox.

Life & Legacy

Life & Legacy® is a partnership program which helps communities such as TBO build endowments to provide long-term stability and support to sustain Jewish life. Life & Legacy encourages individuals to plan for after-lifetime giving. Periodically, we'll answer some questions about Life & Legacy on this page. To learn more or to start the conversation, please contact one of our Life & Legacy Committee members:

- Bob Goodmark**
- Debbie Halliday**
- Deb Henry**
- Eldon Wexler**
- Sonia Siegel Vexler**





Leadership news

During the Governing Board meeting on November 2, 2025, the Board did the following:

- **Sonia Siegel Vexler** explained the Life & Legacy program’s history and process.
- The Board approved the 2026 Governing Board slate as presented by Nominations Committee Chair Sonia Siegel Vexler. See pages 6 and 7.
- The Board voted to give its support to the Site Plan Working Group’s proposal, presented by **Melanie Field**, that includes a community garden, a Religious School playspace, a Life & Legacy Monument, and the TBO stepping stones that were painted during the groundbreaking ceremony last March.
- **Bob Goodmark** presented a remodel update.
- **Jeff Napp** presented a Capital Campaign update.
- **Wanda Bresnick** presented a High Holy Days recap with a view toward planning for 2026.
- **Gwen Campbell**, Chair of *Ruach* & Ritual, announced that a Hanukkah Shabbat is being planned.
- The Board worked on logistics for the semiannual membership meeting, including *Havdalah* and *oneg*, scheduled for December 6, 2025.

The calendar is now on the back page of the *ORacle*, and the Mission Statement is on this page. Because we no longer mail the *ORacle*, we can use the back page for the calendar and have an extra page for news and photos.

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).



Temple Leadership

Rabbi
Rachel Kort

Director of Youth Education
Stefanie Somers

Office Administrator
Sarah Davis

Governing Board

President
Nancy Rosen

Immediate Past President
Wanda Bresnick

VP of Community & Engagement
Jeff Napp

VP of Finance & Facilities Management
James Feinberg

VP of Jewish Life
Ron Green

Assist. VP of Community & Engagement
Dana Sanders

Assist. VP of Finance & Facilities Management
Bob Goodmark

Assist. VP of Jewish Life
Pattipeg Harjo

Board Secretary
Melissa VonAschen-Cook

Members-at-large
Gwen Campbell
Rani Linarelli
Rich Spitzer

Committees and Task Forces

Atidaynu: Sheryl Shapiro
Adult Education: Pattipeg Harjo
Bereavement: Susan Cross
B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator: Pam Spitzer
B'nei Mitzvah Family Liaison: Jessica Burgamy
Book Club: Wyndi Russakoff & Linda Chessin
Building: Vacant
Calendar: Gwen Campbell
Campership: Sonia Siegel Vexler
Capital Campaign: Jeff Napp
College & Military Outreach: Marilyn & Mike Glosser
Communications: JonaRose Feinberg
Facebook: Deb Henry
Financial Administrator: Norm Black
First Chapter: Vacant
Fundraising: Vacant
High Holy Days Coordinator: Wanda Bresnick
HHD (Rosh HaShanah): Robyn Klarman
HHD (Yom Kippur): Gwen Campbell
Life & Legacy: Sonia Siegel Vexler
Library: Melissa VonAschen-Cook
Membership: Leslie Elsemore
Mitzvah Corps: Carolyn Wexler
Next Chapter: Sonia Siegel Vexler
Nominations: Sonia Siegel Vexler
Oneg Coordinator: Janet Karr
ORacle Editor: Kathie Roon
ORacle Publisher: Rich Spitzer
ORbits: Janis Warner
Remodel: Harold Dash & Melanie Field
Ruach & Ritual: Gwen Campbell
Safety & Security: Mark Bresnick
Social Action: Naomi Katsh Barger & Melissa VonAschen-Cook
Technology: James Feinberg
Website: JonaRose Feinberg
Youth Education: Meghan Lefrancois-Hanson & Rani Linarelli



DECEMBER 2025

Kislev / Tevet 5786



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Finance Committee meeting 7:00 pm	2 Executive Board meeting 7:00 pm	3 Remodel Task Force meeting 7:30 pm	4 Liaison Committee meeting 10:00 am	5 Family Shabbat 7:00 pm	6 Construction tours Semiannual membership meeting 4:00 pm
7 TBO TOTS Governing Board meeting 10:00 am RS	8 Capital Campaign meeting 7:00 pm	9 Life & Legacy Committee meeting 7:00 pm	10	11	12	13 Shabbat morning service 10:00 am
14 TBO TOTS Book Club 10:00 am Construction tours RS	15 Membership Committee meeting 7:00 pm	16	17	18	19 ORacle deadline Shabbat Hanukkah 7:30 pm	20
21 1 Tevet Construction tours No RS	22	23	24 Safety & Security Committee meeting 7:00 pm	25 Office closed	26 Office closed	27
28 No RS	29	30	31			

You can access this or older issues of the *ORacle* at templebethor.org/oracle.

Fill out the Calendar/Event Submission Form to add an item to the calendar and/or set up a Zoom meeting; this includes all committee meetings. Please submit a form even if you are using a private Zoom.

templebethor.org/calendar-submission

The Temple office is now closed for all in-person business. Sarah Davis is working offsite and can assist you Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 9:00 am–noon and Friday, 9:00 am–4:30 pm. The Temple mailing address, phone and office email (office@templebethor.org) remain the same. Please do not have packages (UPS/FedEx) or overnight mail sent to the Temple. No one will be on site to accept deliveries. **Check *ORbits*, the TBO Facebook page, or the TBO website for the most up-to-date information.**