

# December 2025 Bulletin



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TempleIsraelVestal.org

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The Temple Concord/Temple Israel Adult Education program  
presents "The Exciting Lives of Small-City Jews"  
by Benjamin Kellman



The Adult Education Committee of Temple Concord and Temple Israel will hold a program and light brunch on Sunday December 7, from 10am-noon at Temple Concord, 9 Riverside Drive, Binghamton.

Benjamin Kellman will introduce aspects of his Ph. D dissertation in progress, "The Anxious Americanization of Small-City Jews: 1939-1979".

The entire community is welcome to attend. Suggested donation of \$5-20. Kindly RSVP by December 1st.

Contact Temple Israel at 607 723-7461,  
[office@templeisraelvestal.org](mailto:office@templeisraelvestal.org) or  
Temple Concord at 607 723-7355.



## Letter from the Rabbi

Dear Temple Israel Members,

I hope you all are doing well and staying warm as December brings us such frigid weather! In the middle of this month, we will celebrate Hannukah! On the very darkest days of the year, our tradition instructs us to choose to cultivate light and to pause to savor it.

According to Halakha, after we light candles for Hannukah, we are meant to set aside some time to gaze at the flames and appreciate their light for about half an hour. By sitting with the small, yet powerful lights of the Hannukah candles, we can experience how each small choice we make can magnify light in the world. May we each be inspired to bring more light into the lives of others through a joyous celebration of hannukah!

We will have 4 different opportunities to gather over Hannukah at Temple Israel! On the first day of Hannukah, Monday 12/15, you are invited to join with me in the joyous singing of Hallel, in-person or online at 10:30am. Then, on Tuesday 12/16, after our weekly minyan, we will light the Hannukiyah together and enjoy some latkes and other refreshments. On Wednesday 12/17 at 4:30, in place of our regular Hebrew School, we will have a celebratory candle-lighting for children and families. Feel free to bring your own hannukiyah along to light together! Finally, we will gather on Shabbat Hannukah 12/19-20 for our regular services which will be particularly joyous as we sing Hallel and mark Rosh Hodesh.

November was a full month at TI, with a number of members volunteering to read Torah and lead parts of our Shabbat services. The first week of December included a meeting to propose a special celebration this July of the 10th anniversary of the reconstruction of Temple Israel and the 140th anniversary of the founding of the synagogue. This shul has a remarkable history and will have a bright future, with the dedicated participation and leadership of each of you, every member! I hope to celebrate with you by cultivating light and warmth in this dark and cold season and to look ahead to warmer and brighter days!

A freilikhn hannukah! A joyous Hannukah to you!



Dear Members and friends of Temple Israel,

**Letter from the President**

### **A season of miracles**

As the days grow shorter and our beautiful synagogue grounds are transformed by a blanket of white powder, we seek light wherever we can find it. And after a quiet month-long break from Jewish holidays, along comes Chanukah! The festival of lights offers an eight-day crescendo of light, warming our spirits with an additional flame each evening. Neither a bomb cyclone nor an arctic vortex can compete with this triumph of spirit as we retell the history and light the chanukiah. Our synagogue family will gather to celebrate together with Rabbi

Friedman in a festive candle-lighting ceremony adjunct to our Tuesday minyan on December 16th. Please watch the Weekly Upcoming email for details on this and other programs, and plan to participate.

Chanukah also ushers in our Temple Israel Lottery for 2026. Please participate in this fun way to support your synagogue. Buy a ticket - or several - and pick a number. If the number comes up in the NY State Lottery, you win a cash prize! Hundreds of chances to win! Tickets make great Chanukah gifts for family and friends - keeps on giving (maybe) all year long. Check your email or contact Tammy in the office for details on how to participate.

The winter season does present a challenge for Temple Israel, and you can help. Many of our regulars head for warmer climes during part or all of the winter. It will be very helpful if you can join some of our Tuesday or Shabbat services to help make the minyan. Our Chapel and Sanctuary are warm havens from the Southern Tier winter, and whether in-person or via zoom, YOU are counted in our minyan, enabling a full service with the opportunity for those in mourning or observing a yahrzeit to recite the kaddish. We strive to provide our community, from children to seniors, with all the aspects of Jewish life. Throughout the year, Rabbi Friedman offers classes and counseling for groups and individuals, as well as pastoral visits and life cycle support. Please keep us informed if you or someone you know needs this support, so that we can provide it.

As always, Temple Israel relies on your participation, your Annual Dues, and your generous donations to our standing funds and fund-raisers. Whether you are celebrating a simcha, memorializing a loved one, wishing someone a speedy recovery, or just want to give to sustain your synagogue and Hebrew School, your donations - large or small - are welcome. See you at our synagogue soon!

Wishing you a Happy Chanukah and a healthy winter,

Art

**DECEMBER 2025**

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		Birthday of Shirley Bronsky  Torah & Our Times 4:30pm minyan 5:30pm Exec Board meeting 7pm	Birthday of Larry Bleier, Arlene Osber  Hebrew School 4:00pm  Ritual Comm mtg 10am	Birthday of Jonathan Harris	Erev Shabbat svcs 5:30pm Light candle 4:34pm	Shabbat services 9:30am Havdalah 5:45pm
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Adult Ed-10:00am @ Temple Concord	Rabbi conference	Birthday of Alexandra Segal  minyan 5:30pm	Hebrew School 4:00pm	Birthday of Abraham Tanenhaus  Office hours will be 10am - noon	Erev Shabbat svcs 5:30pm Light candle 4:15pm	Birthday of Barbara Roberts  Shabbat services 9:30am Havdalah 5:45pm
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	Birthday of Esther Gilinsky, Tony Turnbull Hanukkah Day 1 Hallel for Hanukkah 10:30am	Birthday of Jeff Horowitz  minyan 5:30pm Community Candle lighting @TI 6:30pm BOT mtg 7:00pm	Birthday of Alex Chase-Levenson Hanukkah Celebration for kids and families 4:30pm	Anniversary of Joel & Heidi Thirer	Birthday of Mika Friedman Anniversary of Rita & Larry Bleier Erev Shabbat svcs & 5:30pm Light candle 4:17pm	Shabbat services 9:30am Havdalah 5:30pm
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
Birthday of Al Lavker	Rabbi off	minyan 5:30pm	Birthday of Peter Bronsky Office closed  Anniversary of Stuart & Vicki Rouff		Erev Shabbat svcs 5:30pm Light candle 4:21pm	Shabbat services 9:30am Havdalah 5:30pm
28	29	30	31	January 1	January 2	
Rabbi off Birthday of Betty Warner, Flo Balin		Birthday of Dick Lewis  minyan 5:30pm	Office closed  Birthday of Fran Goldman			

## General Fund

### For the Yahrzeit of...

**Edward Rosenberg** by *Barbara & Marvin Guter*

**Diane Gartell** by *Susan Gilinsky*

**Irving Markowitz** by *Barbara Markowitz*

**Aharon Mah'pud** by *Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu*

**Sylvia Polishook** by *Merri Pell-Preus & Tony Preus*

**Ida Braslow** by *Merri Pell-Preus & Tony Preus*

**Marion Sommers** by *Marcia Brown*

**Howard Engel** by *Jim Mason & Carol Engel-Mason*

**Ludwika Horowitz** by *Ilana Segal*

**Gussie Mendelson** by *Sue Austenfeld*

**Michael Mendelson** by *Sue Austenfeld*

**Charles Baken** by *Cookie Greenblott & Family*

**Martin Paston** by *Roy & Sandra Paston*

**Cantor Daniel Gildar** by *Roy & Sandra Paston*

### In memory of...

**Susan Savitch** by *Alan & Julie Piaker, Beverly & Jim Novak, Joan Rozen Jacobson & Walter Jacobson*

**Rhoda Lemkin** by *Marcy Cohen*

**Elaine Levine** by *Marcy Cohen, Shirley, Mark, Shari & Peter Bronsky, The Devore, Skootsky & Costello Families, Carolyn & Jeff Schapiro, Piaker & Lyons PC, Joseph & Risa Sontz, Herbert Kline*

**Julia & Bernard Sandler** by *Sarah Beth Sandler*

### Mazel Tov to...

**Larry & Kathy Hurwitz** on the birth of their first grandchild **Ruchami**

**Ahava Burrell** by *Alan & Julie Piaker, Beverly & Jim Novak*

### In honor of...

**Arieh Ullmann's special birthday** by *Merri Pell-Preus & Tony Preus, Charles & Susan Gilinsky*

**The Temple Israel member for their hospitality when we visited** by *Deborah & Shira Kirschner*

## Contributions

**Marcy Cohen's special birthday** by *Beverly & Jim Novak*

### Wishing good health to...

**Maxine Rosenberg** by *Marcy Cohen, Lynne Green, Bonnie & Howard Brown, Alan & Julie Piaker, Marcia Hofstein, Dan & Mimi Bartschi, Len & Naoma Feld, Beverly & Jim Novak, Don & Barbara Zelter*

**Dr. Bob Weiss** by *Len & Naoma Feld*

**Fred Weitsman** by *Marcia Hofstein, Roy & Sandra Paston, Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu and the students of Hillel Academy, Don & Barbara Zelter*

**Lee Foreman** by *Merri Pell-Preus & Tony Preus*

**Roy Paston** by *Beverly & Jim Novak*

**Lynne Green** by *Beverly & Jim Novak*

### Kiddush Fund

### Speedy recovery to...

**Fred Weitsman** by *Larry & Kathy Hurwitz, Beverly Rozen*

**Maxine Rosenberg** by *Larry & Kathy Hurwitz, Beverly Rozen*

### For the Yahrzeit of...

**Melvin Shapiro** by *Ruth Shapiro*  
**Alec Malkin** by *Steven & Sandra Malkin*

### In memory of...

**Elaine Levine** by *Shelley Drazen*

### Landscaping Fund

### Wishing good health to...

**Fred Weitsman** by *Maxine Rosenberg, Al Lavker & Darcy Paul, Arlene Osber, Beverly Rozen*  
**Maxine Rosenberg** by *Al Lavker, Beverly Rozen*

**Dr. Bob Weiss** by *Al Lavker*

### In memory of...

**Elaine Levine** by *Steve & Sandra Malkin*

### For the Yahrzeit of...

**Mathew Epstein** by *Arlene Osber*

### In honor of...

**Arlene Osber's special birthday** by *Marcy Cohen, Maxine Rosenberg*

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

### Speedy recovery to...

**Maxine Rosenberg** by *Judy & Irwin Simon*

**Fred Weitsman** by *Judy & Irwin Simon*

### In honor of...

**Rabbi Micah Friedman** by *Bill & Birdie Levine*

**The High Holiday Ushers & Greeters** by *Steven Malkin*

### For the Yahrzeit of...

**Ira H. Cohen** by *Marilyn Kent - Cohen*

### Clergy Sustaining Fund

### In honor of...

**Rabbi Friedman's inspiration and Teachings** by *Steven Malkin*

### Cemetery Fund

### For the Yahrzeit of...

**Jacquelyn Jaffe** by *William Jaffe*

### Hebrew School Fund

### In memory of...

**Susie Savitch** by *Nancy Bittman*

### Bernie Shifrin Music Fund

### In memory of...

**Elaine Levine** by *Shelley Drazen*

### VINES

### Wishing good health to...

**Fred Weitsman** by *Kathy Seitel-West & Jerry West*

## ADULT LIBRARY

The Yiddish Book Center in Amherst, Massachusetts, is home to numerous Yiddish cultural and educational programs in addition to over one million Yiddish books. During the last 45 years, all of this was made possible by its founder, Aaron Lansky. Outwitting History is his story.

As a 23 year old graduate student, Aaron realized that Yiddish culture and language in America was rapidly disappearing with the death of his grandparents' generation. Knowing that, in 1980 he began his mission to save as many Yiddish books as possible. His search began with his family and his friends' families. Word spread quickly and it didn't take long for his adventures to begin. Books were being rescued from dumpsters, abandoned buildings, nursing home residents and individual homes. He found himself collecting much more than just old books. He and his friends heard histories of "the old country" and immigrant experiences from everyone they met. His travels took him throughout the country and later to Europe, Asia, South America and even the USSR.

Aaron was rescuing much much more than books. He was outwitting history by preserving the Yiddish language and culture. What started out as a small project, as he put it, resulted in the creation of one of the largest Jewish cultural organizations in America. The National Yiddish Book Center that Aaron Lansky founded currently has 35,000 members. It is home to the Stephen Spielberg Digital Yiddish Library, Great Jewish Books summer programs, a translation program, the Wexler Oral History Project, White Goat Press, the Yidstock Festival and much more. (And yes, they still accept Yiddish books.)

Ann Cohen

### Congregational News

#### *Condolences to:*

**Bill & Birdie Levine and Family on the passing of his mother Elaine Levine**

**Dr. Robert & Diana Weiss and Family on the passing of his brother  
Richard Weiss**

**The Family of Lawrence (Larry) Davis on his passing**

#### *Get Well wishes to:*

**Fred Weitsman, Lee Foreman, Lynne Green, Susan Gilinsky, Roy Paston,  
Robert Weiss, Marcia Hofstein, Laurence Wyman,  
Ann Spitz, Charlie Pladek, Stephanie Horowitz**

**Congratulations to our November Lottery Fundraiser winners:**

**Sandy Feld, Bill Ondrako**

### **The Caring Community**

**Please inform the Rabbi: If your health condition changes, you undergo a medical procedure, are hospitalized, you move to an assisted living facility or rehab, or if you are aware of anyone in our congregation who needs attention.**

# DECEMBER 2025 YAHRZEITS

**December 1 - 4**

**Kislev 11 - 14**

**Charles Baken** observed by *Cookie Greenblott*  
**Israel Djivre** observed by *Diana Weiss*  
**Cantor Daniel Gildar** observed by *Sandra Paston*  
**Richard A. Brown** observed by *Rabbi Geoffrey Brown*  
**Anna Heller** observed by *Jerry Heller*  
**Maurice Goldman\*** observed by *Steve Gilbert*  
**Ludwika Horowitz** observed by *Ilana Segal*  
**Murray Weber** observed by *Jack Weber*  
**Gussie Mendelson** observed by *Sue Austenfeld*  
**Martin Paston\*** observed by *Roy Paston*  
**Irving Zalbowitz\*** observed by *Beverly Rozen*  
**Diane Gartell** observed by *Susan Gilinsky*  
**Sylvia Horowitz\*** observed by *Andy & Stephanie Horowitz*  
**Israel Margolis** observed by *Brenda Margolis*

**December 5 - 12**

**Kislev 15 - 22**

**Abram Goodman** observed by *Philip Goodman*  
**Alan Grass** observed by *Julie Jurman*  
**Ella Chiron** observed by *Barbara Zelter*  
**Anita Cohen** observed by *Rita Bleier*  
**Helen Drozdow\*** observed by *Louise Sheiman*  
**Alfred Pell** observed by *Merri Pell-Preus*  
**Ida Braslow** observed by *Merri Pell-Preus*  
**Michael Mendelson** observed by *Sue Austenfeld*  
**Helen Simon** observed by *Philip Goodman*  
**Harry Katz\*** observed by *Betty Warner*  
**Leonard Whitelaw** observed by *Jane Mason*  
**Marjorie Whitelaw** observed by *Jane Mason*  
**Ida Sall\*** observed by *Ron Sall*  
**Alfred Hurwitz** observed by *Larry Hurwitz*

**December 13 - 23**

**Kislev 23 - Tevet 3**

**Morton Hofstein** observed by *Marcia Hofstein*  
**Eva Levey** observed by *Fran Goldman*  
**Mary Friedman** observed by *Robert Friedman*  
**Ada Rouff\*** observed by *Stuart Rouff, Linda Rosenbaum*  
**Hyman Goldman** observed by *Philip Goodman*  
**Beulah Riger\*** observed by *Janet Levine*  
**Rose Guter\*** observed by *Marvin Guter*  
**Zelda Goldman\*** observed by *Steve Gilbert*  
**Lillian Goldstein** observed by *Philip Goodman*  
**Jacob Shulman\*** observed by *Gail Shulman*  
**Joseph Marcal\*** observed by *Debra & Michael Martinez*  
**Gertrude Meltzer** observed by *Don Zelter*  
**Martha Bauman** observed by *David Tanenhaus*  
**Morris Goodman\*** observed by *Philip Goodman*

**December 24 - 31**

**Tevet 4 - 11**

**Patti Lapidus** observed by *Cookie Greenblott*  
**Sanford J. Siegel** observed by *Arthur Siegel*  
**Howard Engel** observed by *Carol Engel-Mason*  
**Edith Krasnow\*** observed by *Arthur Siegel*  
**Lillian Cohen\*** observed by *Marcy Cohen*  
**Dr. Irving Licker** observed by *Susan Gilinsky*  
**Sharon Whitbeck** observed by *Hollie Levine*  
**Andrew Mark Krasnow\*** observed by *Arthur Siegel*  
**Anita Foster\*** observed by *Arthur Siegel*  
**Thomas Davis\*** observed by *Larry Davis*  
**Lena Savitch\*** observed by *Brian Savitch*  
**Gertrude Weiss\*** observed by *Robert Weiss*  
**Shirley Cohen\*** observed by *Ann Cohen*  
**Lana Kaufman-Franklin** observed by *Flo Balin*

An asterisk(\*) indicates that the name has a memorial plaque in the Sanctuary.

If you wish to recite Mourner's Kaddish during a weekday service, other than Tuesday or Friday, please contact the Temple Israel office. A notice will be sent to the congregation to make up a Minyan. It would be helpful if you contact us two weeks prior to the date.