



**Congregation Beth Mordecai**

*A Jewish Home for the Soul*

August 2015

Av/Elul 5775



**Tuesday, August 18 at 7:30pm**

Get excited for the High Holidays and another wonderful year at Beth Mordecai!

We will update you on exciting programs and opportunities to  
engage with your Jewish Home for the Soul!

Tasty snacks and fun rally towels will be provided!

**Friday, August 28 at 6:00pm**

Enjoy a special celebration bringing  
families and community together!

6:00pm - Family Shabbat Experience - a fun-filled,  
kid-friendly, family-oriented Shabbat experience  
with stories and singing!

6:30pm - Pizza Picnic for the WHOLE Beth Mordecai  
Community - a delicious picnic dinner of pizza  
and vegetable crudités at Bayview Park.

7:30pm - Musical Shabbat Service - share in a  
special musical and spiritual service

RSVP on our [Facebook page!](#)

*Shabbat by the Sea*



*The Gazebo at Bayview Park*



## Congregation Beth Mordecai

Established 1897

Address 224 High St., Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
Office Phone 732.442.1373  
Rabbi's Phone 732.442.2431  
Office E-mail OfficeBethMordecai@gmail.com  
Rabbi's E-mail Ari.Saks@gmail.com  
Office Hours 10am - 2pm Monday - Thursday  
Website http://BethMordecai.org

### Synagogue Staff

Rabbi Ari Saks  
Executive Director Elliot Rubin

### Board of Trustees

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Vice President Cheryl August  
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Trustee Louis Sher

### Committee Contacts

Caring Sherry Weber 908.451.9708  
Duck Race Alan Roy 908.403.4303  
High Holidays Marc Fertik 732.390.3348  
David Bennett 732.494.9029  
Oneg/Kiddush Betty Fertik 732.407.0821  
Jeremy Strauss 732.331.4049  
Social Media Avi Duvdevani 917.301.1045  
Strategic Planning Marc Fertik 732.390.3348  
YJPA Stella Morrison stella.morr@gmail.com



## Acknowledge the Occasion through Beth Mordecai

*"Tzedaka is equal in importance to all other commandments combined."*  
-Talmud

**I am pleased to make a contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
to the following fund...**

- ☐ **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**  
Allows the rabbi to support special programs and individuals in need.
- ☐ **General Fund**  
Applied to the operating budget of the congregation.
- ☐ **Friday Night Oneg Fund**  
Used for cookies and other noshes following Friday night services.  
A contribution of \$75 supports one oneg.
- ☐ **Shabbat Morning Kiddush Fund**  
Used for luncheons and noshes following Saturday morning services.  
A contribution of \$125 supports one Kiddush.

**...in honor, memory or appreciation of:**

### My Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

**Please send this contribution form and check directly to the synagogue office.  
Checks should be made payable to "Congregation Beth Mordecai".**



**Contributions to the above listed funds may  
also be made on the synagogue website  
through our secure PayPal link.**

*Thank you for your generous and thoughtful support of our funds  
which keep the synagogue running & help with a multitude of worthy  
projects that enrich & invigorate our community.*

*Todah Rabbah - many thanks to you all!*

### General Fund Donations

Janet Cohen, in honor of the 50th Wedding Anniversary  
of the Grubers and the Bernhards  
Sheila & Stanley Mandel  
Vardi & Alan Roy  
David Silberstein

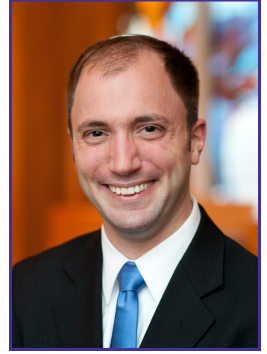
### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Lois St. Lifer Fields, in memory of Ronald Fields  
Henry Safran



## Tradition & Change

*The following is the third part in a four part series on the importance of Shabbat, Faith, Belonging, and Tradition in our community.*



When we walk outside, we sense it: the beautiful sunshine, the howling wind, the cacophony of sounds. All of life, all of creation lies before us if only we are willing to pay attention. And at the heart of those sensations, at the core of those experiences lies a question that our patriarch Abraham asked when he stepped into life as a young boy. "Who created all of this?" That is the question that is the beginning and end of faith; that force within us that yearns to ask the biggest most unanswerable questions of life. Abraham thought he found his answer, he thought it was the sun. But he was wrong. Yet he continued to ask that question as he found more faulty answers - the moon and the stars. Still, he asked the question because it drove him. My question for us though is...does the question of faith still drive us?

Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, one of the finest Jewish minds of the late 20th and early 21st centuries, wrote "Our fin de siecle [i.e. end of the 20th century] is not an age of faith...We do indeed believe or half-believe, in thousands of things -- some of them pure nonsense -- but not in Faith, in the capital F sense" (Simple Words, 74). If faith is about always asking a question in which the answer is ever elusive, perhaps our collective lack of faith is due to being in an age after the ages of Rationality and Skepticism. Rationality taught us that the only questions worthwhile are those with answers that can be worked out and proven, and Skepticism taught us to be careful of those answers that may appear as if they are reasonable, but are actually not. In other words, both rationality and skepticism put an emphasis on the importance of the "answer." A question is only significant if it leads us to the right answer. And if there is no answer? Then the question is worthless. And when we ask the question "who created all of this?" can we really prove any answer?

What's more, there is a particular Jewish issue that attacks the worthiness of this eternal question. The Holocaust. The devastation of our people in Europe tore apart what, for many of our people, was the fortitude of our faith. No matter how an individual Jew answered the question "who created this?," from Abraham to Maimonides and beyond, the existence of God was never in doubt. As the great Jewish philosopher Martin Buber once said: "Biblical man is never in doubt as to the existence of God. In professing his faith, his *emunah* (אמונה), he merely expresses his trust that the living God is near to him as he was to Abraham and that he entrusts himself to Him." To biblical (and rabbinic man), the commandments of the Torah are the expression of this trust, of our *emunah* in God. But to the post-Holocaust Jew, the trust that the question of "who created all of this" will lead us to God and to following God's commands, has been shaken. Because if God "created all of this," then God, even in God's absence, created the Holocaust. The theological stain this leaves on our spiritual psyche is that even when we think God saved us from a car accident, even when we think God wants us to pray and keep kosher, even when we think we sense a presence beyond us, we feel we must be kidding ourselves, because why would God help me but not my six million Jewish brothers and sisters? So the tiny miracles each of us experience in our daily lives, from coincidences to commandments, which would normally have been chalked up to God's providence, now get attributed to randomness, chance, or tradition. For many of us, our post-Holocaust answer to the question of "who created all of this?" faith is so toxic, that it's painful to even ask the question. And if we follow tradition, it's for tradition's sake. Not for God's.

But though at times it is painful, though at times we don't want to think about the hazy, unclear, challenging answers that come when we ask "who created all of this?" we need to ask it. It's a part of us like our skin and blood are a part of our bodies. Just because we may wish to ignore it doesn't mean it will go away. We need to ask the question without worrying about the inevitable failure of our answers. We must see that faith isn't about having to hold onto ideas that we know from the outset won't hold up. Or as one writer put it, faith is like "having" running water. In order to have running water, you must let the water go. You can't hold onto it with a bucket, because once you hold onto it, grasp it; it will cease to be running water. The question of faith must always be allowed to run. At times we will use buckets to give a sense of clarity as to what that faith looks like in that particular moment, and then we will get rid of that bucket when it no longer works for us. Our traditions, our ways of being Jewish, are not ways to hold the running water of faith. They are the mechanisms to remind us to turn on the faucet.

Rabbi Ari Saks

**Online Parashah Class - Fridays - 12pm - Open to All**

Get in the mood for Shabbat... from the comfort of your computer! Join the Rabbi for interesting insights into the week's Torah portion during the lunch hour. To attend the LIVE class, email the Rabbi (ari.saks@gmail.com). If you miss it, watch it online (Click [here](#).)

**Friday Night Services - Fridays - 8pm - Open to All**

Join us for spirited and lively participatory services. Each service includes elements of singing, storytelling and conversation with the community. Monthly themes:

***Celebration Shabbat - August 7***

Commemorate your birthday or anniversary in the upcoming month with a special Friday night celebration, to be followed by a Blowout Oneg Shabbat. (Sponsorship opportunities available; contact Friday Oneg chair, Jeremy Strauss, at [straussjer@gmail.com](mailto:straussjer@gmail.com).)

***Pardon the Interruption - August 14***

A series of 3 conversations that interrupt the Jewish ritual service in order to understand different prayers and sections of the service on a deeper level. The conversations, each 5-7 minutes long, are thematically tied and interspersed throughout the service.

**Saturday Morning Services - Saturdays - 10am - Open to All**

Traditional, egalitarian and informative. We connect participants to traditions while actively engaging them in the service. There is ample opportunity for in-depth learning of the prayers and the Torah Portion. Monthly themes:

***Torah Talk - August 1***

Delve into the rich teachings of the week's Torah reading. In lieu of a formal sermon, we will pause the service after the Torah reading for a lively 10-15 minute discussion on how we can apply the wisdom of the Torah to the needs of our every day lives.

***Pardon the Interruption - August 8***

See description above.

***Shabbos, Schnapps & a Schtick of Yiddishkeit - August 15***

A new monthly program to learn more about Jewish tradition, religion and history while having an early morning sip of schnapps (optional!). The hour long (beginning at 11am) runs in lieu of services when preceded by Tot Shabbat (beginning at 10am). We'll schmooze with families from Tot Shabbat as they have a kiddie Kiddush, then learn something interesting together according to Tot Shabbat's theme for the month, and we'll wrap up with a delicious kiddish lunch. This program is intended for ALL members of Beth Mordecai, but especially for those who are more interested in learning and discussion than services.



KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
SHABBAT  
SHALOM

TOT

**August 15****10am**

Celebrate Shabbat through this fun and interactive service with songs, story time, an activity or craft and a kiddie Kiddush!

This is a FREE 1 hour program for children ages 2-5. Kiddush with the congregation to follow.

For info., or to register, please contact the office.







bettymf@me.com  
732.407.0821

LIGHT CANDLES		SHABBAT ENDS	
Jul. 31	7:55pm	Aug. 1	8:58pm
Aug. 7	7:47pm	Aug. 8	8:49pm
Aug. 14	7:38pm	Aug. 15	8:39pm
Aug. 21	7:28pm	Aug. 22	8:28pm
Aug. 28	7:18pm	Aug. 29	8:16pm
Sep. 4	7:07pm	Sep. 5	8:04pm
Sep. 11	6:55pm	Sep. 12	7:52pm
Sep. 18	6:43pm	Sep. 19	7:40pm
Sep. 25	6:32pm	Sep. 26	7:28pm

Times are specific to Perth Amboy; from Chabad.org.



straussjer@gmail.com  
732.331.4049



### Bible Study with the Rabbi

**Wednesdays - 9:30am**

**Panera Bread in Woodbridge (by Wegman's)**

A non-sectarian, non-denominational, open-to-all learning experience at "Yeshivat Panera"!

### Ask the Rabbi

**Wednesdays - 12:00pm**

**Menlo Park Mall Food Court**

Have a question? Take a seat! Rabbi Saks will answer any question on any topic. This is also a great opportunity to introduce potential new members to the Rabbi and our Jewish Home for the Soul... so spread the word!!!

**Special "Ask the Rabbi / Ask the Pastor" on August 19:**

#### **WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE FAITH?**

Once per month, Rabbi Saks will be joined by Pastor Nicholas Johnson of Raritan Valley Baptist Church in Edison for a joint "Ask the Rabbi/Ask the Pastor".

Birthdays	Anniversaries
Barbara Greenspan	Judy & Les Wurtzel
Les Wurtzel	Alyson & Dion Roy
Dorothy August	Evonne & Dan Goldman
Lisa Weiss	Sandra & Louis Sher
Larry Gruber	Beth & Lawrence Rudnick
Gennadiy Barskiy	Betty & Marc Fertik
E. Fred Bernhardt	
Eric Gordon	

### *Can you lend a hand?*

**Volunteers are needed for:**

- Office Assistance
- Writing for the Bulletin
- Caring Committee Visitors
- Opening Up for Services & Events
- Shabbat Morning Coffee Set-Up
- Organizing & Sponsoring Kiddush

**To help, please contact the office!**

## TORAH on Tap



**Torah on Tap: "I'm too Broke to Give to Charity"**  
**Sunday, August 16 at 7:00pm**  
**George Street Alehouse, New Brunswick**

Come and have a drink and learn some Torah! Rabbi Saks will give an explanation of the challenges and opportunities of wanting to give tzedakah (charity) when we feel like we cannot afford much to give.

We will be meeting up with the Oneg Group of Highland Park for this special YJPA event.

Contact Stella Morrison for more details  
 (YJPerthAmboy@gmail.com).

### Mini Golf

**Thursday, August 27 at 7:00pm**  
**Colonial Park in Summit**

Play mini-golf at a unique putting course at Colonial Park in Summit, NJ. Instead of amusements or traditional "boxed" holes, this one and a half acre course has natural landscaping features and fairway greens from 25 to 75 feet long, providing challenges suitable for first-timers and experienced golfers.

Paddle boating will also be available on beautiful, nearby Powder Mill Pond.

The cost is \$10 per person for the Golf & Boating combo.

RSVPs required for the group rate - contact Nessa Madison (nrosenstein@hotmail.com) to RSVP and for more details.



## SHABBAT DINNER



**Friday, September 11**  
**7:00pm**  
**Private Home in Perth Amboy**

Come celebrate Shabbat at a private home in Perth Amboy with other young adults and families.

Contact Stella Morrison for more detail and to RSVP  
 (YJPerthAmboy@gmail.com).



### Who Do I Call?

When a death occurs, the emotion of the moment can cause a bit of confusion. Some important phone calls need to be made.

- First, a medical authority must be contacted to sign a death certificate.
- Second, the funeral home must be contacted to make arrangements to transfer the deceased to the funeral home.
- Third, contact the synagogue. A death may occur at any time of night or day; it is important to leave messages in a few places to ensure the rabbi will get back to you. Please call/email

**Rabbi Ari Saks**

**732.442.2431 or 732.442.1373**

**ari.saks@gmail.com**

### A DONATION HAS BEEN MADE TO THE SYNAGOGUE BY:

Rita Arky Aber, in memory of Edward Arky  
 Deborah & Barry Adler, in memory of Tobi Adler Meresman  
 Blanche Adler, in memory of Tobi Adler Meresman  
 Rhona & E. Fred Bernhardt, in memory of Benjamin and Meyer Bernhardt  
 Betty & Marc Fertik, in memory of Dora Sandler  
 Irene & Marty Goldstein, in memory of Benjamin Fenywes  
 Sheila Hollander, in memory of Bernard Rudnick  
 Mary Kaufman, in memory of Lillian Kaufman  
 Jean Kluff, in memory of Tedesco Kluff and Boris Rabiner  
 Dorothy Lemelson, in memory of Lena & Louis Ginsberg and Joyce Ginsberg Yaffe  
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 Maria Pinhal & Jose Lopez, in memory of William Shapiro  
 Bernice & Bernard Magier, in memory of Aaron Rosonsky  
 Arlene & Seymour Miller, in memory of Fannie Miller  
 Diane Salzberger, in memory of Paul Salzberger  
 Robin & Lyle Sandler, in memory of Dora Sandler  
 Samuel Silverman, in memory of Harriet Silverman and Fanny Saltman  
 Dorothy & Jordan Solkowitz, in memory of Nathan Solkowitz  
 Ruth Wurtzel, in memory of Paul Wurtzel

### MAY THEIR MEMORY BE FOR A BLESSING.



### Need a Ride?

The Wilf JCC offers transportation to the synagogue primarily for seniors and those unable to drive.

Special needs accommodated.

Transportation is offered on the 1st Friday & Saturday of the month. Friday services begin at 8pm and end by 9:30pm. Saturday services begin at 10am and end by 1:00pm.

If interested, contact Sherry Weber  
 (908.451.9708 or sweber7854@aol.com).



*Flynn and son*  
FUNERAL HOMES

**JAMES J. FLYNN, MANAGER**

424 East Ave.  
 Perth Amboy, NJ 08861  
 732.826.0358  
 NJ Lic. No. 4152

**BRENDAN J. FLYNN, MANAGER**

319 Amboy Ave. 23 Fords Ave.  
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## Beth Mordecai New Year's Greetings

HIGH HOLIDAYS 2015 - 5776

Extend Shanah Tovah, New Year's Greetings, to the entire Beth Mordecai community in the High Holiday issue of our Synagogue Bulletin.

Please use this form and return it together with your donation to the synagogue office before September 1, 2015.

Please wish the Congregation Beth Mordecai community a Shanah Tovah, a good year, from:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Please write above all names exactly as you would like them to appear in the bulletin.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

**ENCLOSED IS MY PAYMENT OF: \_\_\_\_\_ (minimum suggested donation \$18)**

Use the *CREDIT CARD PAYMENT FORM* for charging on your credit card.

**All payments must be received by September 1, 2015**

Please help our membership drive by providing email addresses of your friends. Thank you.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_



## Beth Mordecai Memorial Book

YOM KIPPUR 2015 - 5776

One of the most sacred aspects of our High Holiday observances is the memorializing of our beloved departed. In doing so, we add emotional depth as well as spiritual significance to our ritual. We create a Book of Remembrance with the names of all our loved ones for use at the Yom Kippur (Yizkor) Memorial Service.

Please use this form and return it together with your donation to the synagogue office no later than September 1, 2015. Please see the **NEW** full page now available on the next page.

We wish the following names be included in the Book of Remembrance for use during the Yom Kippur (Yizkor) Memorial Service:

1. Same names as last year: \_\_\_\_\_ (check box, no need to write any names)

2. Please add the following names to my loved ones from last year:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. If you did not participate in last year's Memorial Book, please list the names of your loved ones below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

BY (NAME) \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone number \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

**FULL PAGE** memorials are \$180 and will appear at the rear of the book. Sample on next page.

**ENCLOSED IS MY PAYMENT OF:** \_\_\_\_\_ (requested donation is \$54)

Use the *CREDIT CARD PAYMENT FORM* for charging on your credit card.

**All payments must be received by September 1, 2015**

I will not be able to attend Yom Kippur Services, but please mail a copy of the Memorial Book to:

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



*In My Heart Forever*

*Bessie Greenberg*

*Wife, Mother,  
And My Loving  
Grandmother*

*By Eleanor J. Cohen*

**This full size memorial page  
is available for \$180**

More than one or two names can be accommodated by adjusting the size of the text. Please clearly write the names to be printed and the memorial text (can be two lines or so) to be included.



# Congregation Beth Mordecai

**"A Jewish Home for the Soul"**

**Established 1897**

224 High Street, Perth Amboy, NJ 08861

Office - 732-442-1373 • Rabbi - 732-442-2431

Web site - [www.BethMordecai.org](http://www.BethMordecai.org) Email - [OfficeBethMordecai@GMAIL.com](mailto:OfficeBethMordecai@GMAIL.com)

## ***CREDIT CARD PAYMENT FORM***

Please indicate what you are paying for by credit card:

- ☐ Yizkor Memorial Book \$\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ New Years Greetings \$\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Tickets \$\_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Other \$\_\_\_\_\_ For what?\_\_\_\_\_

Please print clearly:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Card number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Security code \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (last 3 numbers on back of card)

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ (For American Express, 4 numbers on front of card)

Please sign below authorizing Beth Mordecai to charge your card

X \_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE INCLUDE ALL COMPLETED FORMS WITH THIS PAYMENT FORM**



**Make sure you are ready for the High Holidays:  
Tickets, Memorial Book, New Year's Greetings.**

**All the information you need is inside!**



**Congregation Beth Mordecai**

*A Jewish Home for the Soul*

224 High Street

Perth Amboy, NJ 08861