



Beth Israel – Ner Tamid: Thrashing About – Steady Presence *from Rabbi Alter*



I'm a competing values kind of guy. Much as I'm drawn to the clarity of path and purpose in ideological ideals, and often admire the resolute devotion of true believers, the older I get the more I see that the tension between extremes is what holds

us together.

A fundamental Midrash on Torah is that God initially planned to create the world exclusively with the attribute of justice – *din* – so that it would follow discernable, predictable rules of cause and effect. But even before God opened the Divine toolbox, God realized that the project, if so constructed, would fail. The world God intended could not be sustained on justice alone. And so, God paired mercy – *rachamim* – with justice and, employing both attributes together, fashioned the world we know.

Ours is a world that God conducts within the bounds – the clarity and accountability – of *din*, and also with the flexibility – the variability and generosity – of *rachamim*. In the physics of structural engineering, I believe this tension is known as *structural flexibility*. A bridge or tower that does not sway with the wind and other forces, will fall. In Torah, this is known as God's way.

Our congregation is called Beth Israel Ner Tamid. The name Israel – *Yisra'el* – is about the wrestler spirit we inherited from Jacob after his relentless overnight struggle with God's angel in Genesis 32. Ner Tamid is the eternal light signifying God's steady presence – our wrestling notwithstanding. God doesn't abandon us even when we waver. But Ner Tamid also signifies the Levites' lighting of the Menorah each night in the

Temple. We might want to hold up the Levites as unflinchingly steady in their devotion, and heroic because of it. In this view, the light illuminating the Temple each night perfectly echoes the devotion of the Levites themselves, and by extension, of our whole people.

But isn't it possible that the real greatness of the Levites' nightly practice was that they held to it, their wrestling notwithstanding? That is, though they wavered – perhaps wrestling with trust, perhaps with habits of practice – still they illuminated the light nightly. That looks to me like the bounds of *din* and the flexibility of *rachamim*.

One way to define our congregational purpose is: To represent and uphold the structures that give purpose, content, sanctity, and – yes – accountability to our people and our Torah, on the one hand, while also embracing – protecting, or making space for – the variability that comes with our wrestler people's thrashings about, on the other.

Paradoxically, we at CBINT need more flexibility, more forgiveness, and more space for wrestling with tradition, at the same time that we need more commitment to the bounds that define the core. We need more learning, more davening, more Torah reading, more singing, more volunteering, more hosting, more leading, more serving, more giving, more commitment to Israel, more particularism, more kashrut, more tallit and t'fillin-wearing, more social action as religious action ... and more. *And* we need more creativity, more responsiveness to disquiet, more engagement with the disengaged, more embrace of multifaith households, more embrace of LGBTQ Jewish identity, more partnership with other faith communities in Milwaukee, more inspiration for the uninspired, more shul life outside our shul's walls, less judgment, and more trust.

Last fall, we learned from Rabbi Shai Held

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that Judaism is About Love. Recall that Judaism's love is not about more flexibility. Nor is it about more devotion to its boundaries. Love is about holding fast to both, together. These are the

competing values that hold Judaism together, and that will hold CBINT together as we move forward into new seasons under the twin banners of *din* and *rachamim*.

Let's Repeat Our Bat Mitzvah Experience *from Hazzan Stein*

Wow! Can I say that again? WOW!!! January 10 was quite the day for my family as we celebrated Mirit's Bat Mitzvah ceremony. True, we had already celebrated it in June at Camp Ramah in New England, right after Mirit's 12th Hebrew birthday. And yes, as she put it in her *D'var Torah*, Mirit has already been "Jewish adulting" for over half a year. But still, to be able to mark the milestone with our Milwaukee community was very special. Thank you to everyone who took part, whether you were there in person or sending your love from afar.

It was a wonderful time, but also surreal. For years, my job has been to guide families toward and through this milestone. And to experience it from the perspective of the guide and the celebrant simultaneously was a little strange. But in a good way. As a father, I'm obviously proud of Mirit. And I want to express how grateful I am for such a wonderful, loving, supportive community.

Similarly, as Hazzan, I want to draw attention to what an amazing congregation we showed ourselves to be! Yes, many of those present were there specifically for the *simha*, but once there, together we (and I mean we, it was more than just me) created a service that mirrored so many of our spiritual goals as a congregation, specifically what we want in a service.

Singing. Really good, spirited singing. When we gather together, our voices rise in beautiful, spirited music. The more people, the more voices, the easier it is for each person to add their own voice in an uplifting musical prayer.

Spirituality. Again, I know that the Bat Mitzvah ceremony is what brought people there, but the *simha* aside, we spent Shabbat together, shared in prayer, and enjoyed a Shabbat meal.

Learning. We learned from Mirit – a beautiful teaching that I had never heard – about Pharaoh's daughter and seeing the presence of God in another person. And from Rabbi Alter we learned



from Moses' example about the importance of rising to the challenge of our calling, no matter how daunting it may be or how unfit we may see ourselves.

Community. How often do I hear people say they want to see their friends at synagogue? A lot! Well, guess what? We had a lot of people there, some regulars, some occasionals, and some not-in-a-long-timers. And it was great! Let me say that again. IT WAS GREAT! We can make Shabbat services (and kiddush lunch) the time and place when we come together to find and build a strong, supportive, caring community that together combines the values of singing, spirituality, learning, and community.

The Bat Mitzvah ceremony was a lot of things, for me and my family and Mirit, but it also modeled something special and achievable for our congregation. What would it be like if we approached Shabbat, whether every week or every now and again, as if it were the special occasion that the Bat Mitzvah was? I'd love to make it happen, and I believe it can be done. If you do too, let's talk.

We will continue to celebrate Mirit's growing presence, participation, and leadership in the synagogue. I invite you to be a part of the ongoing journey as we build a beautiful community together.

Why You Shouldn't Dance on Graves *from Beata Abraham*



(Stay with me here...)

There's a bit of a peculiar tension in Jewish thought: on the one hand, we're encouraged to celebrate the triumph of good over evil (sure, sign me up!); on the other hand, we're told not to gloat when evil finally trips over its

own shoelaces (a bit of a buzzkill, if we're being honest). So how do we know the proper response when our enemies – those who have caused us deep pain, those whose actions go against everything we hold dear, and those are deeply entrenched in furthering injustice – meet their demise? Do we break out the champagne, or do we light a *yahrzeit* candle and murmur a somber and insincere “*Baruch Dayan HaEmet*”? Do we celebrate, or mourn, or look the other way and keep our mouths shut?

When the Sea Split and Heaven Went

Silent. Let's start at the shores of the Red Sea. The Israelites have just crossed on dry land, the Egyptians are drowning behind them, and the people burst into spontaneous song: “*Ashira l'Hashem ki ga'oh ga'ah.*” “I will sing to God, for He is exalted!” (Exodus 15:1). You'd think God would be humming along with this tune, especially given that the Egyptians had not been the Israelites' best friends, but the Midrash (Megillah 10b) paints a different picture. When the ministering angels joined in the singing, God straight up admonished them: “My creatures are drowning in the sea, and you are singing?”

It was fine for the people to sing to celebrate their long-awaited freedom, after all, they had a rough couple of hundred years, but even so, God Himself refused to celebrate destruction. It's as if He was saying: Sure, *you can feel relief, even joy, but you went too far when you celebrated their demise.*

A Divine Eye Roll (yes, God rolls His eyes).

Proverbs (24:17–18) puts it bluntly: “Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and let not your heart be glad when he stumbles, lest the Lord

see it and be displeased.”

Rashi points out that God is, shall we say, sensitive to gloating. Not because He wants to spoil the party, but because He's reminding us that our joy should come from justice, not from vengeance. The downfall of evil is necessary, but it's not meant to be a fun spectator sport.

A Tale of Two Cups of Wine. Fast-forward to Purim. We raise our glasses to celebrate Haman's well-deserved downfall (*l'chaim!*), but we also read the ten names of his sons in one fast breath, an intentionally rapid-fire recitation that leaves no space for our smugness.

The Talmud (Megillah 16a) tells us that when Mordechai was paraded through the streets, he didn't sneer or gloat; he simply fulfilled his role. Even today, our modern Purim joy is balanced with a wink of approval from God: we noisily

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blot out Haman's name, but we also send gifts of food (*mishloach manot*), which are nothing less than acts of friendship. Because in Judaism, true victory requires that we transform it from simply

conquest into some kind of connection (and eating opportunity).

Let's be honest. There's a part of every human being that is tempted to enjoy a little *schadenfreude*, that perfect German word for taking pleasure in (a deeply flawed) another's downfall. Jews, however, have refined this into an art form: we'll feel bad for enjoying it, and then make jokes about how guilty we feel.

King Solomon understood this intricate dance of the soul perfectly. In *Kohelet*, he dramatically proclaims, “There is a time to laugh, and a time to weep.” Of course, the art is knowing when one ends and the other begins. Jewish ethics never demands that we detach from our emotions like robots; it asks that we behave in an emotionally mature way. It's ok for you to breathe a sigh of relief when evil is removed from the world. But please don't take a victory lap around the burning ruins (especially in broad daylight when everyone can see you).

From Pharaohs to Your Foes. This wisdom isn't limited to ancient biblical villains. It applies to everyday life, too. When a personal “enemy” (the one that just popped into your head) finally

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Why You Shouldn't Dance on Graves *from Beata Abraham (continued)*

faces that setback you have been waiting for, we're tempted to feel vindicated. Luckily, the Torah metaphorically taps us on the shoulder with a "You were raised better than this" to bring us back to our moral selves.

Rav Kook, ever the optimist, wrote that even the wicked have a divine spark waiting to be redeemed. Let's hope that their downfall, painful as it is for them to experience, is a part of that process. And if indeed this is true, our job is not to cheer but to hope that what's been broken finds repair, even if it's not in our lifetime or through our efforts. This is the advanced level of "taking the high ground," but I have faith in you.

A Toast Without Triumph. So what's the Jewish way to respond when our enemies fall? Maybe something like this:

- **Acknowledge justice** – evil must be confronted, and its defeat matters.
- **Resist cruelty** – mockery and revenge cheapen our own moral victory.
- **Feel relief, not relish** – gratitude, not glee, is the Jewish response to justice served.
- **Pray for healing** – even a fallen foe reflects a world that still needs repair.

Because in the end, to be Jewish is to exist in a bit of a paradox: grateful for every deliverance from evil, aware of the divine spark in every soul (even when it's not obviously there), and always cognizant of God's pet peeve dancing on the graves of our enemies, even metaphorically. It is ok to hum quietly while walking by.

Sisterhood is Selling Challah!

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**Two – 1lb Braided Challah
or
1 Baker's Dozen Rolls (limited supply)**



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office for purchase**

Big News!

Beginning with the May edition of the Kehillah Connection (Bulletin), **CBINT is moving to digital delivery!**

Don't worry, if you prefer to continue to receive the Kehillah Connection in your mailbox, you will still have that option.

We are excited to give you the opportunity to choose your preferred way to receive the Kehillah Connection.

Details to follow soon.

CBINT PRESENTS

CHECK MATE!

A MULTIGENERATIONAL CHESS MEET-UP

SUNDAY, MARCH 8

10:00 - 11:30 AM

All ages welcome — 3rd grade and up!
Join us for a fun morning of strategy,
snacks, and friendly matches.

Whether you're a grandmaster
or a beginner, come make
your next move!

- Caregivers & family members encouraged to play too!
- Bring your own chess set or use one of ours.
- Snacks provided!

RSVP AT
CBINTMILWAUKEE.ORG

WHY IS THIS PASSOVER DIFFERENT FROM ALL OTHER PASSOVERS?

Because this year you have replaced your old Haggadahs with new ones!
Because this year you have added a new Seder Plate to you or your family's Seder!

Because you have been to the Glass Box to receive your 25% off all Passover items during the month of March: Seder plates, Haggadahs, Matzoh plates, Matzoh covers, Afikomen pouches.



Senior Brunch & Learn

From Grief to Growth: Israel and the Diaspora



Breakfast Served

Monday, March 9 10am

A familiar, engaging and fun learning session with Eileen Graves



Eileen is a retired educator of children with special needs. In her volunteer world, she has been a longtime Milwaukee Jewish Federation volunteer, serving as Women's Philanthropy President for three years and as a campaign solicitor for over 20 years. She serves on the MJF board and Jewish Community Foundation board, and she is chair of the Israel and Overseas Committee. Nationally, she serves on the Jewish Federation of North America (JAFI) Israel and Overseas Committee and on the task forces for Ethiopian Immigration and Disabilities in Israel. She is also on the board of the United Jewish Appeal.

CBINT Members: FREE
Non-Members: \$7

RSVP AT
CBINTMILWAUKEE.ORG

Questions? Contact 414-352-7310 or aimeek@cbintmilwaukee.org

A Discussion On

CHRONIC PAIN & MENTAL HEALTH

**Lead by Michelle Sommers
of Mosaic Counseling**



Michelle earned her undergraduate degree in Community Health Education from UW-La Crosse and her master's degree in Professional Counseling from Concordia University-Wisconsin.

She offers a compassionate, personalized approach to therapy that integrates mindfulness, cognitive strategies, and somatic techniques to support the mind-body connection.

Chronic pain doesn't only affect the body – it places constant strain on mental health as well, often leading to depression, anxiety, irritability, trouble concentrating, and withdrawal from activities and relationships.

The good news is that by learning to change unhelpful thought patterns, the brain can gradually be rewired to better manage pain, making daily life feel more manageable and meaningful again.



**March 15, 2026
10:00 am**

at CBINT. A light breakfast will be served.
Online registration required.

**RSVP AT
CBINTMILWAUKEE.ORG**

Freedom. With a Side of Saltwater.



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL
NER TAMID

6880 N. Green Bay Avenue, Glendale, WI 53209

2nd Night Community Pesach Seder Thursday, April 2 6pm

Join Rabbi Alter and Hazzan Stein in a Seder for All.

Creative, interactive, and inclusive.

Full Yom Tov dinner catered by Hannah's Kitchen.

Plenty of appetizers with Karpas to hold you until Shulchan Orech (dinner).

Adults
\$53/ea

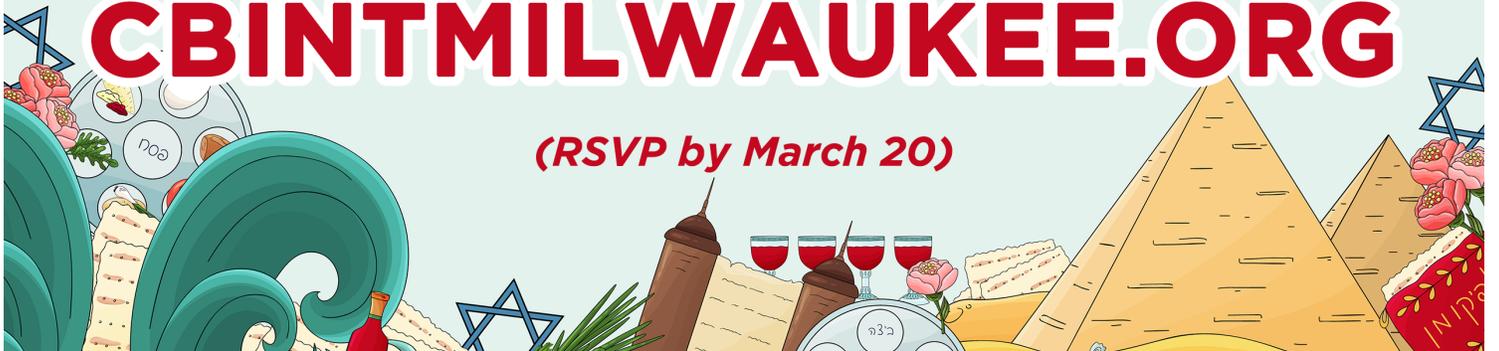
Youth (3-12)
\$38/ea

Kids (0-2)
Free

RSVP AT

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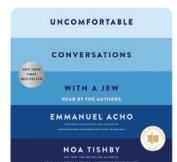
(RSVP by March 20)



Book Club Meets March 16

March's book is "Uncomfortable Conversations with a Jew" by Emanuel Acho and Noa Tishby. The discussion is Monday, March 16, 1 p.m., with Nadine Seligman leading.

April's book is "The History of Love" by Nicole Krause. Sydell Bergtrom leads the discussion on Monday, April 20, 1 p.m., in the Promenade.



Enhancing a

KIDDUSH LUNCH

Is Easy!

Sweeten the Simcha! – \$144

Be the reason everyone stays for dessert! Sponsor a delightful array of specialty cupcakes, a decorated cake, cheesecake, or your favorite treat.

Level up to a crowd-favorite Ice Cream Cake for only \$36.

Artisan Soup & Salad – \$180

Enhance lunch with a refreshing and healthy upgrade. You choose the flavor profile, and we'll prepare a pot of piping-hot soup and a large, artisanal salad bowl featuring the freshest ingredients.

Signature Lox Platter – \$270

Upgrade the buffet with a generous platter of premium, thin-sliced Nova lox. It comes ready for guests to enjoy with all the classic toppings: Sliced tomatoes, cucumbers, red onions, and capers.

Add a variety of fresh, bakery bagels to the spread \$126

Taco Fiesta – \$468

Bring a festive Latino experience to CBINT. Always a crowd favorite and offers a fresh, flavorful alternative for those who enjoy a bit of variety. Features seasoned meat (ground beef/chicken) warm tortillas, freshly prepared veggies, salsa, and guacamole.

Traditional Deli Platter – \$504

Fresh assortment of deli sandwiches (such as turkey, roast beef, corned beef, salami) served on a variety of breads and rolls. Sandwiches are neatly trayed for easy, self-serve access. Served with pickles, mustard, and mayo so everyone can customize their own sandwich.

Traditional Meat Entree – \$972

Enhance the main course with a classic, crowd-pleasing meat dish. This is a perfect way to add a more substantial protein to kiddush lunch at CBINT.

Sponsoring a Kiddush Lunch is even easier!

Work directly with Charlie to hand-pick every component of the meal, from the appetizers to the main course and desserts. Whether you want a traditional Shabbat spread, a modern themed buffet, or a family-favorite recipe, Charlie will help you design a menu that reflects your personal style. Your generous sponsorship will be highlighted in the weekly bulletin and announced during the service, allowing the congregation to share in your family's joy.

To get on our calendar or for any inquiries regarding sponsorships and custom menus, please contact Charlie at kitchen@cbintmilwaukee.org

Contributions

In Honor of Mirit Stein's Bat Mitzvah

Merry Atinsky Kiddush Fund

Arielle Bloom

George & Bea Strick

Matthew & Melissa Honigman

Hazzan's Discretionary Fund for Mirit's Bat Mitzvah Project

Gary Meyer

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General Fund

Vivian Rothschild

In Honor of Hazzan Stein's "Warm Songs" concert

Patrick Young

R'fuah Shlema to Rabbi Alter

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Kenneth Weber Choir Fund

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Chesed Fund

Marlynn Brick & Family

Youth Scholarship

Endowment Fund

Bobby & Jay Miller



Please Find Yahrzeits for March at
cbintmilwaukee.org/yahrzeits



**We Celebrate March's
Member Birthdays!**



Please find the complete list of this month's birthdays on our website:

CBINTMilwaukee.org/celebrate/birthdays



Congregation Beth Israel Ner Tamid
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CBINT Funds

Alan & Rita Marcuvitz Education Endowment Fund – Funds to be used for adult, youth, and family education.

Balkansky Fund – Provides scholarships for Camp Ramah.

Beth Hearst Fund (Formerly Passport to Israel) – Provides funds for current youth and educational programs.

Carl S. and Sandra G. Zetley Generation to Generation Fund – Provides funds for education and family programming.

CBINT/Religious School Fund – Underwrites tuition for children of members attending the CBINT School of Religious Studies.

Ervin & Suzann Colton Education Endowment Fund – Provides funds for Scholars in Residence and other speakers.

Gemilut Hasadim – Provides funds for Shabbat meals for CBINT families with newborns or families in mourning.

General Fund – Provides funds to maintain CBINT.

Harold M. Kramer Beautification Fund – Provides funds for beautification projects at CBINT.

Hazzan's Discretionary Fund – Fund established for charitable causes.

Isadore & Sylvia Blankstein Library Fund – Provides funds for CBINT library acquisitions.

Jacobson Chapel Fund – Provides funds for the maintenance of Jacobson Chapel.

Kenneth Weber Choir Fund – Fund dedicated to supporting the choir and other musical programs.

Marilyn Zetley Children's Library Fund – Provides funds for the children's section of the library (books, furniture, etc.)

Merry Atinsky Kiddish Fund – Helps CBINT Sisterhood provide kiddish lunches after Shabbat services

Panitch CBI Family Education Fund – Assists CBINT families with financial needs who wish to attend family education retreats.

Pentateuh/Humash Fund – Provides funds to purchase Pentateuh/Humashim. Books will have a dedication bookplate.

Prayer Book Fund – Provides funds to purchase prayer books/siddurim. Books will have a dedication bookplate.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund – Fund established for charitable causes.

Rabbi Panitch Camp Ramah Scholarship Fund – Provides scholarships for Camp Ramah.

Sam & Aidee Cooper Art Fund – Provides funds to purchase art for CBINT.

School Fund – Provides funds for the school and special school projects.

Senior Activities Fund – Provides funds for social, spiritual and educational opportunities for mature adults.

Shirley Bass Floral Fund – Provides bima flowers for the holidays.

Sol & Esther Blankstein Scholarship Fund – Assists high school/college students to pursue Jewish Education.

Soloman & Yetta Soloff Memorial Adult Education Fund – Established in the memory of Dr. Soloman & Yetta Soloff. Promotes and supports Adult Education programs.

Special Scholarship Endowment Fund – Provides scholarships for Jewish education.

Stein Mendelson Scholarship Fund – Provides funds for a Camp Ramah scholarship for one student per summer.

The Schuster Family Endowment Fund for Second Home Cemetery

William & June Sherkow Scholarship Fund – Provides funds for charitable, educational, or religious purposes.

Youth Scholarship Endowment Fund (YSEF) (Formerly Youth Education Endowment Fund) – Provides scholarships for trips to Israel, Jewish overnight camp and advanced Jewish education.

CBINT Office Information

Joel Alter.....Rabbi
 Jeremy Stein.....Hazzan
 Herbert G. Panitch.....Rabbi Emeritus
 Beata Abraham.....Executive Director / Director of
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 Dennis Kahn.....Second Home
 Cemetery Administrators
 Charlie Kagan.....Kitchen Manager

Phone: 414-352-7310

Fax: 414-352-2050

Office Hours: Monday – Friday: 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

www.CBINTMilwaukee.org

Please call to confirm office operation hours.

Worship & Service Information

Weekday Services:

7:30 am and 6:00 pm

Sunday and Civic Holidays:

9:00 am and 6:00 pm

Shabbat:

9:30 am

Please advise Rabbi Alter or Hazzan Stein if needed to help recruit attendees for a yearzeit minyan.