



# Temple Beth Torah

Rabbi's Message Rabbi Lisa Hochberg-Miller



# You have the opportunity to vote in the World Zionist election, and speak up for a pluralistic, democratic Israel.

n the late 1800s, the Zionist dream was articulated that this was the right time politically for Jews to claim self-determination and to achieve national sovereignty in our ancestral homeland. As modern countries were beginning to emerge in Europe, it was the right time to return to the place that we never forgot, for even if we lived and died outside the land of Israel, our connection was always there, in our daily prayers, the sacred texts we studied, and our 4,000 year history.

Today, we marvel at the success of the fulfillment of the dream. And we are continually in the process of evolving that dream. While last century was often about Israel's body, today's dream is about Israel's soul. It is about how we want to use our success, and what messages does Judaism tell us about the society we want to live in and create. And this year, by virtue of being members of a Reform congregation, we have the opportunity to actively participate in the ongoing development of an Israel that is reflective of the pluralistic, democratic values that are hallmarks of our movement.

So, what kind of Jewish State do you want to see? Do you want a Jewish State that recognizes the rights of minorities? Do you want to uphold equality in general, and between, sexes, genders, and all streams of Judaism in particular? Do you want the State to end its monopoly on religious life and Jewish observance? If so, then I ask you to vote for the Reform Movement in the upcoming World Zionist Congress elections. The World Zionist Congress is Diaspora Jewry's only democratic opportunity to influence what happens in Israel. The WZC, also known as the Parliament of the Jewish People, comprises 500 delegates and meets in Jerusalem every five years. It enables delegates to exert ideological influence on both Israeli society and the global Jewish agenda, as well as allocate financial and other resources to various organizations - including the Reform Movement - in Israel. Your vote for ARZA- the Association of Reform Zionists of America-- is one way to assure that the Reform Movement's values of a Jewish and democratic State committed to equality, pluralism, and tolerance, are the values the WZO brings to every discussion with the State of Israel.

Your vote gives you a voice. It allows you to take what you wish for Israel and the Jewish people and put it into action. It is a chance to take both concerns and aspirations and to do something about it. Few of us in America will make our lives in Israel. But, many of us care deeply and can make a difference.

The voting will take place beginning January 21st – March I I thand will be a simple online process for any Jew, age 18 and over living in the U.S. There is a \$7.50 fee for voting, \$5.00 if you are 40 or younger. For more details please visit www. arza.org or speak with me.



TBT 5780: Jewish Community Jewish Life Jewish Belonging

### UPCOMING EVENTS

ADULT EDUCATION Adult B'nai Mitzvah Sunday, February 2, 9 and 23 at 9:30 a.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

**Preserving Memories** Saturday, February 1, 8 and 15 at 12:30 p.m. *TEMPLE BETH TORAH* 

**Crafting Memory Albums** Tuesday, February 25 at 2:00 p.m. or 7:00 p.m. *TEMPLE BETH TORAH* 

Short Story Discussion Tuesday, February 18 at 2:00 p.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

**Brotherhood Brunch** Sunday, February 9 at 9:30 a.m. *TEMPLE BETH TORAH* 

**Family to Family\*\*** First Sunday of the Month at 6:30 a.m. DOWNTOWN VENTURA

**Food Share** Every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

# Women of TBT-Crafting and Kibbitzing

First and Third Tuesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH LOBBY

#### Mahjong

Every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m.. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

#### **River Haven Food Drop Off**

First Monday of the month at 3:00 p.m. *TBT KITCHEN* 

#### Tot Shabbat

Friday, February 7 at 6:00 p.m. TBT SANCTUARY

#### **Torah School 3rd Fridays**

Family Shabbat Friday, February 21 at 6:00 p.m. Family Services 6:45 p.m. Dinner

continued on page 3

### **President's Message**





### I have benefited from your kindness, your counsel, and your companionship.

ver the last few weeks I have had many people ask how I am doing and I thought I should give you an update as I was so public with my diagnosis. I am well. It is very nice to be able to write those words. I got lucky because I went through radiation with few side effects; I never experienced the physical fatigue that affects so many. I did, however, have a few weeks of mental fatigue once I finished the treatments. I normally spend a lot of time thinking of thoughtful and imaginative gifts to give for the holidays and this year I found that I simply couldn't do it. Poor Sam's birthday gift was a little strainer and a rubber stopper for his sink. He claims it's exactly what he needed and wanted. Good man!

Many women at TBT have told me about their encounters with breast cancer and the number has shocked me. You read the statistics, but it is stunning to have woman after woman tell you that they are also a member of that crummy club. It's not a sisterhood anyone would want to join, but it is one in which women lift each other up. I have benefited from your kindness, your counsel, and your companionship. I recently had another friend get diagnosed and now I am the one extending the sympathy, advice, and care that I received from so many of you.

You enter a different world when you are di-

agnosed with cancer. There are so many tests blood work, biopsies, MRIs, ultrasounds. You see your family doctor, a surgeon, an oncologist, a radiologist. You are assigned a case manager who calls you every week to see how you are doing. You walk through doors labeled Cancer Center. You get weekly emails with cancer updates. You get tired of it and you get angry.

Becoming a patient is tough, but it is important to learn what kind of patient you are. I learned early on that I must know what is going to be done to me at least the day before the procedure. I have to be mentally prepared. Some people don't want to know, they don't want to think about it. They want to be told just before the markers stain the skin, the camera flashes, the needle enters. That's fine for some, but not for me. I have to process that information and it's valuable to know such a thing about yourself. At one point, I changed doctors because I found that I also cannot tolerate a condescending attitude from someone I am entrusting to care for me while I am vulnerable. I was lucky. I could change doctors, my cancer wasn't aggressive, and I have decent insurance.

One of the offices emailed me forms to fill out before an appointment and this is a piece of advice I hope all of you will consider. Fill out the

forms on the computer and save them. Or fill them out and scan them, leaving the date and signature line empty. You can then print them and date and sign them before your appointment, and you can print the same set of forms for every new doctor you see. They all need the same basic information. My cancer was found during an annual physical, but by the time I finished with all tests and treatments, I had filled out eight sets of forms. It is very depressing to write over and over how many people in your family had cancer. I know I can't get prostate cancer, but still ... In the last office they handed me forms to fill out and I drew lines through many of the pages. Sam was shocked. I was polite to the people at the front desk, but they have access to my electronic records and they can easily obtain all of that information. It was enough already! I also discovered that I am a rather prickly patient.

I had a list of people I was going to call to drive me if I had a hard time with my treatments. I never had to use it, but I want all of you to know how much I needed it. That list was a talisman for me. Having your names and knowing you would be there for me gave me courage and comfort and I am grateful to you all.

B'Shalom, Pam



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### FEBRUARY WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### Friday, February 7- Parshat

**B'shalach** Shabbat Shirah 6:00 p.m. Tot Shabbat 7:30 p.m. Erev Shabbat Services featuring the TBT choir

### Saturday, February 8

10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Services I I:30 a.m. Kiddush & Torah study- Bank Library

Friday, February 14- Parshat Yitro 7:30 p.m. Erev Shabbat Services Followed by oneg

### Saturday, February 15

10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Services I I:30 a.m. Kiddush & Torah study- Bank Library

### Friday, February 21 - Parshat Mishpatim

6:00 p.m. Erev Shabbat Family Service featuring our 5th/6th graders

6:45 p.m. Community Dinner, provided by Women of TBT

Grilled Cheese & Tomato Soup/please rsvp!

### Saturday, February 22

10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Services II:30 a.m. Kiddush & Torah study- Bank Library

### Friday, February 28- Parshat Terumah

7:30 p.m. Erev Shabbat Services Followed by oneg

### Saturday, February 29

10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Services I I:30 a.m. Kiddush & Torah study- Bank Library



Community Shabbat Dinner Friday, February 21, 6:00 p.m.

6:00 p.m. Erev Shabbat Family Service featuring our 5th/6th graders 6:45 p.m. Community Dinner, provided by Women of TBT

> Please RSVP by calling the Temple office (805) 647-4181 by noon Wed., February 19

### Women of TBT

Your Sisterhood

Ann Kerman and Kathy Randall

s we enter a new year, it's a great time to explore things that can promote health and happiness in our lives. We are thrilled to announce that Deni Jones has agreed to introduce us to Meditation and guide us in experiencing Meditation at our February meeting, which will be held on Wednesday, Feb. 12, at 6:30pm. Nominal fee of \$5.00 to defray costs. We will be sitting on the floor or in chairs so to be more comfortable, please bring a small blanket that can be folded, or a yoga mat, or cushion. Deni will discuss,"Why Meditate", a background of the reasons and goals of Meditation. She will introduce how and why Meditation is part of the path to happiness and joy. She will also include setting up your Meditation space and part of the discipline. Per a New York Times article, by David Gelles, Meditation is a simple practice available to all ages and abilities, that can reduce stress, increase calmness and clarity and promote happiness. Learning how to meditate is straightforward, and the benefits can come quickly. Deni will offer basic tips to get us started on a path toward greater equanimity, acceptance and joy. Take a deep breath, and get ready to relax. And as an added bonus, an article in ourfabriq.com suggests friends and community are especially good for our health and wellbeing... so get involved with Women of TBT (WoTBT) and make some new friends! Smoothies will be blended and served after the program.



At our December meeting event, Joy Goldowitz led women of WoTBT in making beautiful Hanukkah cards. There were work stations where women could move from table to table creating several unique cards. The event was a lot of fun! Prior to our card activity, WoTBT enjoyed a beautiful dinner prepared by Inessa Gelman. She prepared vegetarian quiches and a lovely green salad. Wine and a Hanukkah signature cocktail were also served. Thank you Joy and Inessa!

WoTBT were extremely generous in donating children's toys, and baby items. These were distributed to local charities before the holidays. Thank you ladies for your generosity!

At the time this article was written, we had not had our January meeting, where we were proud to have Rochelle Oslick discuss Women in Flight. Rochelle is a retired Boeing aerospace engineer and acrobatic pilot!

Each month we want to honor WoTBT birthdays. In December, we were happy to celebrate Marlayne Bellenson and Susan Sher.

- Future WoTBT events to add to your calendar: Introduction to Meditation with Deni Jones -Feb.12, 2020
- Grilled Cheese and Tomato Soup for Torah School
  Feb. 21, 2020

Women's Seder - April 5, 2020

#### Warm regards,

Ann & Kathy Calling Green Jews(Own Box)







### Life Cycle

Condolences: Ron Turner on the death of his wife Dianne Turner Harriet Friedman on the death of her husband Harold Friedman. Pam, Cheryl and Debra Tucker on the death of their mother Gwen Tucker, TBT member since 1957 Childrens' World parent Shane Nessell on the death of his wife Carolina Nessell

### UPCOMING EVENTS CONT'D FROM PG. I

#### MEETINGS

**AA Meeting** Every Thursday at 8:00 p.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

**Ritual Committee Meeting\*\*** Thursday, February 6 at 6:30 p.m. *TEMPLE BETH TORAH* 

#### **Brotherhood Meeting**

Monday, February 3 at 6:00 p.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

**Board of Director's Meeting** Thursday, February 13 at 7:00 p.m. *TEMPLE BETH TORAH* 

Women of TBT Meeting

Wednesday, February 12 at 7:00 p.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

#### **House Committee Meeting**

Thursday, February 20 at 7:00 p.m. *TEMPLE BETHTORAH* 

#### **Social Action Committee**

Thursday, February 20 at 7:00 p.m. TEMPLE BETH TORAH

\*\*offsite

Office closure: February 17 in observance of President's day

### **Calling Green Jews**

Climate change has affected us deeply here in Ventura County; from the fire conditions we have experienced, to the degradation of our coastal waters. We have the opportunity to use our resources, creativity, and community to make important changes that can have an effect on our world. What have you been doing? Riding the bus? Striving for net zero waste? Changing your driving, eating, shopping, packaging habits? If so- we want to hear from you!

We are gathering ideas to plan some programs on sharing and teaching some of our best practices, in spring/summer 2020.Are you interested? Have ideas to share? Want to be part of planning such a sharing? Please email Rabbi Lisa, *rablhm@templebethtorah.com* 



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### Buying Beds for those in Need

In January we kicked off a Temple-wide challenge to purchase 10 beds for The Arch, the new center to house, and to help with support services those who are experiencing homelessness in our community. TBT's Social Action Committee challenged us to purchase ten beds, each bed costing \$500. We asked Haverot to respond to the challenge. We asked Rosh Hodesh groups, committees, and torah school classes. Our Men of Brotherhood was one of the first Temple groups to rise to the challenge. Let their example inspire the rest of us! Contact your friends, fellow students and classmates, whatever group you connect most to at TBT, and take the challenge! Our goal is to see how many beds we can purchase this month! For more information, contact: Lynn Geller lynngeller@gmail.com



Ron Halpern, President of TBT Brotherhood presents a check for \$500 to TBT VP of Finances, Joel Goldenberg, to be sent to The Arch, Ventura's new space for housing and helping those experiencing homelessness. Deborah Pollack, VP of Adult Programs, watches the exchange at a recent Board Meeting.

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# TRANSPARENT **TBT**

- 1. The Social Action Committee has committed to funding 10 beds in the new homeless shelter.
- 2. The Security Manual has been updated.
- 3. Looking at the next steps for the capital campagne—updating the sanctuary.



### Have you moved?

Please call the Temple office to keep us informed of any new addresses, phone numbers or e-mails.

#### ADULT EDUCATION & PROGRAMS

# **Expand Your Horizons- Learn Something New!**

by Deborah Pollack, VP of Adult Learning and Programs

February is a short month, even with 29 days this year, so it can be a time to look both backward and forward. Activities this month involve searching the past for written memories and photos while learning how to store and protect them for our children and grandchildren. This is something many of us have thought about doing—so here's our opportunity! Memory mavens Pam Small and Nancy Marcus will show us how. And then there's a story discussion ...



#### **Preserving Memories**

Pam Small Saturdays, 12:30-1:30 p.m. February 1, 8, & 15

Want to learn more about your family's histories and mysteries? Using her own fascinating progenitors as examples, Pam will demonstrate how to conduct effective genealogical online research. She'll then show us how to use software to create a family tree that can be maintained on your computer or other personal devices. Finally, we'll learn how to digitally store family documents and photographs. Who knows what amazing family secrets you can uncover and pass on to future generations!

### **Crafting Memory Albums**

Nancy Marcus Tuesday, 2:00-3:00 p.m. OR 7:00-8:00 p.m. February 25

Making Digital Photo Books and Cards We will learn to make digital photo books and cards. We will explore various websites so you will see the variety and different options and find the one that works best you. You will need a laptop or iPad. Please be sure to have photos on your laptop or ipad.

#### **Story Discussion**

Deborah Pollack Tuesday, 2:00-3:00 p.m. February 28 Pick up a copy of the story outside the TBT office.



Ron Halpern









### **Education & Family Programs**

Marisa Schrier



### Purim Carnival 2020 will be on March 8th, from 10:00am-12:30, and the theme will be, Under the Sea.

hank you to the Women of TBT for cosponsoring with Torah School a successful and fun movie night. After the kids checked to see how many stars were in the sky, Rabbi Lisa led us in a warm Havdalah Service. Dinner was classic movie food: hot dogs, popcorn and candy. In between the kids running around and being silly.We watched, Night at the Museum. I am looking forward to our next joint event.

Thank you to all of the Mishpacha Families who helped host January's Torah School Shabbat. It was so much fun watching our youngest class sing, wiggle and laugh. Please remember to join us for Torah School Shabbat the 3rd Friday of each month, 6:00 Services and 6:45 RSVP for Pizza and Salad Dinner \$5 or BYO Dairy Dinner.

Our Trans Kinder-Kindergarten Class had a wonderful family learning day focusing on bedtime rituals. Students wore their favorite pajamas to class and families created Shema Pillowcases, learned about this beautiful bedtime blessing, listened to a bedtime story, had milk and cookie and went home with a dental hygiene kit (thank you Sunny smiles)! Each grade level has a specific Sunday

aside for family learning; Ist-2nd Grade is on February 23rd, 3rd-4th Grade is on March 29th and 5th-6th Grade is on April 19th.

Purim Carnival 2020 will be on March 8th, from 10:00am-12:30, and the theme will be, Under the Sea. The day promises to be a splash with activities for everyone in the family. Sea shell crowns, ocean themed sensory bottles, bubble play and boat races are just a sample of the activities that will be available. Please contact us in the Torah School office to let us know in what ways you are available to help out. I'm looking forward to enjoying the Carnival with you!

During the month of February we will be observing the holiday, Tu B'shevat. Tu B'shevat is commonly referred to as the New Year of the trees. In contemporary Israel, this day is celebrated as an ecological awareness day, and trees are planted in celebration. This is wonderful time to plant parsley seeds, as they will sprout in time for Passover.

Wishing you a wonderful month, Marisa



(And fruity, too!) The New Year of the Trees, Tu B'Shevat, is coming, starting sundown on February 9. Dedicated to the health of fruit trees, and thereby the health of those who consume fruit, and care for trees, Tu B'Shevat is called the New Year of the Trees. On that day-the 15th of the month of Shevat—ancient agriculturists would consider the orchards "one year older," counting age to determine when trees had matured to the age that its fruit could be picked without stunting the productivity of the tree. So, help yourself to a lot of fruit and nuts that day! Almonds remind us of Israel. Their hard outer shell reminds us of our outer tough skin, but that we are soft, ripe and delicious within. Enjoy figs or olives—fruits with pits—which are edible outside and have a pit within; the pit representing the creative spark of renewal implanted in the core of every one of us. And relish an apple, a piece of fruit where the

seeds of creativity and renewal are interspersed with the fruit to be eaten, signifying there is no space between us and divinity. Wash it all down with red and white wines, signifying the white of winter and the rebirth of spring. Now you have yourself a seder celebration reflecting our mystical tradition! Happy Tu B'Shevat!



### By Jody Shapiro

The Seventeenth Annual Jewish Film Festival Begins March 14 and continues all Month!!!

The Seventeenth Annual Jewish Film Festival will begin with a delicious sponsor's dinner on Saturday, March 14. This amazing evening, that includes an elegant gourmet dinner for two, followed by the Israeli film Turn Left at the End of the World, is offered to everyone who sponsors the Festival at the \$400 level and higher.

Then, on Sunday evening, the official kick-off event, Golda's Balcony, The Film (2019) at 7:00 p.m. will be followed by a Talk-Back featuring our special guest, David Fishelson, best known for being the lead producer of Tovah Feldshuh's Golda's Balcony, longest-running one-woman show in Broadway history.

The following weekend will feature Who Will Write Our History on Saturday evening, March 21. Joining us will be Roberta Grossman, writer, director and producer of this remarkable chronicle that tells the story of historian Emanuel Ringelbaum, who, in the midst of the chaos of the Warsaw Ghetto, assembled and hid important documents to chronicle the events unfolding in the Warsaw Ghetto. Grossman spoke at Temple in 2015, when we screened Above and Beyond and we look forward to hosting her again.

On Sunday afternoon, everyone is invited to view The Catcher Was a Spy, a bio-pic about the extraordinary life of major league ball-player Moe Berg. The free movie is a gift from Mimi Diller honoring the memory of Ray Diller, through the auspices of Jewish Family Services-Jewish Federation of Ventura County.

Sameh Zoabi's comedy Tel Aviv on Fire will provide an entertaining Saturday evening, March 28, as he reveals some of the realities and humorous aspects of living in Israel for both Palestinians and Jews.

The annual Film Festival Brotherhood Brunch will also feature a dark comedy, Maktub, as we watch the transformation of two low-level criminals become guardian angels. This popular windup to our Festival month begins with Temple Beth Torah Brotherhood's delicious brunch.

Please consider supporting the Festival at the "Screenwriter Level" so you can partake in all the events. At that level you get two of everything and do a mitzvah besides. Refer to your festival brochure for all the details.

### Children's World & TBT Preschools

Marion Levin-Welch



### Did you know that we provide our preschoolers snack from our produce?

ebruary, what a month! It is a month of healthy hearts, jog-a-thons for both preschools, and the continued celebration of planting, continuing celebrating Tu'BShevat every week. We just don't stop. We are always playing, watering, planting and pulling weeds. But this time Mother Nature helped us with some rain. Amen. Thank you, Adonai. Part of the advantage of having land to plant in is the education component of seeing how things grow, what fruit our trees produce and how many worms and lizards we can find. We love it. Did you know that we provide our preschoolers snack from our produce?

All the trees that were planted by families March 2016 will reap the benefits of the rain and your caring and love. And in January we did our annual pruning with the help of Camilo and the parents of room 6 and 7.

We are very proud to announce registration for the school year 2020-21 which started in January for our current families. August 2020 we will have longer classroom time moving from 9-11:45 to 8:30-12:30 to help families that have multiple children in different schools.And we still operate from 7:30 to 5:30 each day except on Fridays, where we are here from 7:30 to 4:00. Let your friends know that we would love them to be with us. The ages of our students are from 2-6 years of age. We provide a great curriculum as well as enrichments throughout the mornings and afternoons. Our staff is so committed to the education of your children as well as assisting you in any way we can. We will offer a Shabbat club as enrich-

ment for our students on Friday starting this September.We already offer great programs M-F with two choices of activities for our yeladim.

In January we celebrated by having a School of Choice evening where parents could come to meet teachers and ask questions of them and the great curriculum we provide. This was open to the community as well. We had a Winter Fest, Soccer, as well as a Magic Show and Dinner for our families. We cleaned in the garden between the rain drops, enhanced our Butterfly Garden area and had educational days for our families in the same spot.

Students from the Boswell School (Special Needs) continue to help make the garden projects possible. Specialists join the teachers at staff meetings to enhance our education about sensory issues, autism, language challenges, Tri-Counties services, Easter Seals, Jewish Family Services and so much more.

Marissa and I continue to implement Shabbat in the sanctuary and the kids love it. TBT preschool will be getting ready for Purim with all its merriment and noises as well as the wonderful distractions. Look for pictures in the next issue of the Shofar.

Shalom Marion Levin-Welch M.A.



Rabbi Michael Weinberg, President of ARZA, with Rabbi Lisa in January at a Rabbinic Conference.



Singing the Shehecheyanu at Tot Shabbat to Wyland Stoyanoff for losing his first tooth!

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TEMPLE BETH TORAH SHOFAR

### Shabbat Shirah— **Get Ready to Sing!**

Each year we celebrate a special Shabbat that is all about music! It is Shabbat Shirah, the Sabbath of Song, and it is our special name for the week when our Torah reading is that of the Israelites crossing the Sea as they flee Egypt. Torah says they sang out to God with praises. The tradition has been to lift voices, musical instruments and celebrate the gift of music to elevate the human soul.

We are delighted that this Shabbat Shirah will kick off a welcome inclusion of our TBT Choir, who we last heard from at the High Holy Days. Under Robin's guidance, they will perform on these Erev Shabbat services: March 13, April 24, and June 12.



We gratefully acknowledge the sponsors of our Shofar. Please show your appreciation with your patronage.

If you would like to become a sponsor, please call the Temple office at (805) 647-4181 for more information.





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### **Torah School Dates**

February 2020

Wednesdays: 5, 12, 19, 26 Sundays: 2, 9, 23 Mishpacha: Sunday: 9 No Torah School: Sunday: 16

### Upcoming Events March 2020

March 8, 2020—Purim Carnival

March 14, 15, 21, 22, 28, 29— Jewish Film Festival

### Sign up to receive our weekly **T'Kiah** and **Lifecycle** notices by email.

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### How to reach us

Phone: (805) 647-4181 Email: TBTVentura@TempleBethTorah.com Web: www.TempleBethTorah.com

### **Temple Auxiliaries & Affiliates**

Brotherhood Ron Halpern (805) 647-5278 Women of TBT (Sisterhood) womenoftbt@gmail.com

Children's World & TBT Preschools Marion Levin-Welch (805) 647-3798

Senior Youth Group/VCTRY (9th–12th grade) Marisa Schrier educator@templebethtorah.com Junior Youth Group (6th–8th grade) Tassi Benjamin (805) 647-4181

U/A/Federation

Cheri DeKofsky (805) 647-7800

JFS Office (805) 641-6565



Check out the Shofar, photos, and lots more about TBT at www.TempleBethTorah.com. LIKE us on FACEBOOK!

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