

beth
shalom
auckland new zealand
בית שלום



December 2021

Kislev~Tevet 5782

Teruah



*A strong, vibrant community with a spiritual heart
embracing Jewish life and its diversity.*

(ISSN 1177-2352)

Our Board members

Affiliated with the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ)

Charities Commission Registration Number CC29542

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- Secretary, Rachel Zussman, secretary@bethshalom.org.nz
- Treasurer, David Singer, treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz, (Finance Committee)

Board members and portfolios

- Julie Dick, primroseji@gmail.com, Burial & Benevolent Society
- Ted Ries, tedbries@gmail.com, Security, JCC
- Shane Sampson, shane@bethshalom.org.nz, Finance Committee
- Michelle Wise, wisemichelle@gmail.com Membership
- Co-opted to the Board, Arie Rosen, rosenari@gmail.com, Ritual Committee

- Educator, Debbie Miller educator@bethshalom.org.nz
- Community Care, Lita Summerfield, serendipitylins40@gmail.com
- Senior Outreach, Chris Shiller, shiller@orcon.net.nz
- Auckland Jewish Burial & Benevolent Society, Sue Berman ... 022 051 3589, ajbbs@bethshalom.org.nz

Service times are Fridays at 6:30pm and Saturdays at 10am.

Our services are currently on Zoom. That's the best way to ensure everyone's safety AND to be as inclusive as possible. Until further notice, we will continue to use this platform for any gathering that would usually occur in the building. We will remain careful: our communal use of Zoom may or may not align with government alert levels for Auckland. In so doing, we are prioritising the Jewish value of PIKUAH NEFESH - Saving Lives and Valuing Health. This is central to Jewish thought and practice. We will keep you updated.

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Coming up in December ...

- Rabbi Dean will be joining us for a nightly candle lighting of Hanukkah candles at 7.30pm for 15 minutes on Zoom and will be leading our 6th night Hanukkah Erev Shabbat service at 6.30pm on Friday 3 December. A different family from across New Zealand will host the zoom candle lighting each night. Mona Williams will be telling us a story on the 3rd. Please look out for the posters on Facebook and the website with more details and the Zoom links in the weekly email. We invite you to send in photos of your Hanukkah celebrations which we will post on our Facebook page.
- **Save the date:** We are planning an in-person Havdalah evening on Saturday 11th December from 7.30-8.30pm in the Shul garden. This will be an opportunity to catch up with your friends as well as trial our new Covid policy and protocols. Numbers will be limited so registration will be essential, more information coming soon.



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From the President

A friend of mine had her parents, who couldn't speak English, staying with her and her family for 6 months. I asked her how it was going, and she said "Very good and very bad". This really stuck with me, because so many things in life are very good And very bad. Or very bad, but also with some good.

As we pass our 100th-day anniversary of lockdown, I know that it has been hard for many people, on many different levels, economically and psychological.

For me, the good has been how we've continued to function as a community. I'd like to acknowledge the people who've put in so many hours to ensuring that Beth Shalom continues to reach out, keep the bonds between us strong, run services. With leadership from Rabbi Dean and a core group of wonderful people, we've managed during this seemingly interminable lockdown to meet and talk to each other, to enjoy praying together, to celebrate and grieve together, to learn together, and even to have coffee meetups.

We've continued to support each other, to care for one another. We've continued to be a community. At the risk of leaving out any of the wonderful group of people who have given so generously of your time and ahava, I won't name you, but you know who you are and we are truly thankful to you.

And thank you also to those people who've reached out for support. I hope you have felt the love and caring of the community. This is a time to give and receive.

As we enter the eight days of Hanukkah, with our nightly candle lighting, we also have cause to stop and give thanks. To Rabbi Dean, who will lead the nightly lighting of candles, to the families who've offered to have us join them as they light candles, and to Naomi and the Ritual Committee for all their work putting this together.

Here's hoping for a time of light ahead!

Wishing you a chag sameach, Olga



Paul Wilton, UPJ Vatik Award

Paul Wilton has been awarded the Vatik Award!

The Vatik award is given by the UPJ to past presidents of congregations who have continued, in the 5 years since their presidency, to give excellent service and make a valuable contribution to their community and the wider community.

It will come as no surprise for those who know Paul Wilton that, as soon as we could, we nominated Paul for this award, as a way of recognising him for the huge amount of love, caring and plain hard work he puts into what he does for us as a community, as well as his outreach on behalf of Beth Shalom and Progressive Judaism.

Paul and Wendy arrived from South Africa with their sons, Jack and Perry, in 1989. Thankfully for us, he continued his deep commitment to Progressive Judaism. Paul lives and breathes his Judaism.

Paul's involvement with the community has been unbroken over the 33 years he has been in New Zealand. He has been one of our most accomplished lay readers, mentored other lay readers, taught at Hebrew School, been on the Board, and organised our "choral bench" year after year for the chaggim.

He is also deeply involved with the Burial and Benevolent Society (the B&B) and, in the absence of a rabbi, conducts most of our funerals, with his usual empathy and kindness.

And his generosity doesn't 'end at home' - He generously gives up his time to travel to sister congregations and communities, as far away as the South Island, to conduct services and run teaching sessions, especially over the High Holy Days.

Paul also works tirelessly for Progressive Judaism to have a voice in the wider Jewish world. He has been central in launching and running ARZA in New Zealand, with the aim of ensuring that Progressive Judaism has a voice in Israeli national institutions - The World Zionist Organization, the Jewish National Fund, the Jewish Agency for Israel.

One of Paul's many strengths is that he sees the need for Progressive Judaism to be seen and understood as a dynamic and active part of New Zealand society. In service to this goal, his contribution to interfaith has been enormous. He is an active and respected member of the Interfaith Trust and the Council of Christians and Jews. He works closely with the Pearl of the Islands Foundation. He is deeply involved in interfaith relations and is a well-respected voice both locally and nationally on interfaith issues. Paul has been invited to speak at Parliament on interfaith issues and is a frequent speaker at interfaith meetings around the region. He has represented Progressive Judaism on issues varying from protecting the environment, to supporting the Muslim community after the Christchurch tragedy

He has established and fostered relationships with the Orthodox community, including being a central part of the joint committee looking at the sharing of facilities in the future.

He has passed on the legacy of Progressive Judaism to both of his sons. They have both been involved youth leaders in their time. Jack was also responsible for setting up the first Moishe House in Auckland and is currently busy with starting a second one.

It is usual for a representative from the UPJ to travel to New Zealand to present the Vatik award. Hopefully this can happen in the not-too-distant future. In the meantime, I know you will join me in congratulating Paul on this special and significant award. And thanking him for all he has done and does for us and Progressive Judaism.

With deep gratitude and admiration, Olga



Ritcom Reports

As you have seen, our first in-person event post lockdown will be Havdalah in the Garden on Saturday 11 December. Havdalah is a beautiful Jewish ritual marking the separation from Shabbat and the start of the new week.

Havdalah: Celebrating the Uniqueness of the Jewish people

BY RACHEL SCHEINERMAN

Havdalah (literally: distinction or separation) is the ceremony that marks the end of Shabbat and the beginning of the next work week. The rituals of sipping wine, smelling sweet spices, and creating shadows in the light of a multi-wicked candle are all designed to draw our attention to the vast gulf between Shabbat, the sacred day of rest that is a foretaste of the World to Come, and the rest of the week.

Jewish tradition teaches that drawing distinctions is critical – a key to wisdom, in fact. But it's not just a distinction between Shabbat and the rest of the week that is celebrated in the Havdalah ceremony. The primary blessing for Havdalah highlights three other distinctions of import to the Jewish people:

Blessed are you, Lord our God, ruler of the universe, who distinguishes between the sacred and the profane, between light and darkness, between Israel and the other nations of the world, and between the seventh day and the six days of creation.

The four separations in this list are not value-neutral. We know that sacred is preferred to profane. Shabbat and the six days of work. Light and darkness, too, are not without moral valence. So where does that leave the distinction between Israel and the nations of the world? Are we to understand that Israel is superior to other peoples?

It is not troubling to say that Jews, like any group of people, are distinct – and to celebrate that uniqueness. But are we to understand from this prayer that Jews are better than other people?

The rabbis who formulated Havdalah drew these distinctions from the Torah, from places where the biblical text uses the same word, *l'havdil* (to separate), that gives us the name of this ceremony. As we can see from their recorded conversation in the Talmud, these four were not the only options available to them.

In the tenth chapter of Talmud tractate Pesachim, the rabbis discuss Havdalah at some length. They conclude that, strictly speaking, naming only one distinction – that between Shabbat and the other six days of the week – is necessary for the ceremony. And yet, in the spirit of beautifying and elaborating the ritual, they noted that as many as four other distinctions could be added to the list. They are:

...between the ritually impure and the ritually pure; between the sea and the dry land; between the upper waters and the lower waters [a reference to the second day of creation]; between the priests, Levites, and Israelites. (Pesaham104a)

Not all of these additional items imply a strong value judgment. Can we say which is greater, sea or dry land? And when God created the sky above and the sea below by separating the waters, and then subsequently populated each with birds and fish respectively, was there a strong sense that one was better than the other? This longer list allows for the idea that there can be distinctions between two things that have equal value. (And one would certainly hope this is the case for Israel, the Levites, and the priests as well.)

Toward the end of the Talmudic discussion of Havdalah, we find this argument about the final concluding blessing of the ceremony:

What formula should be used to conclude the blessing of Havdalah?

Rav said the blessing should conclude with the phrase: Who sanctifies Israel.

And Shmuel said the concluding phrase is: Who distinguishes between sacred and profane.

Abaye, and some say it was Rav Yosef, cursed those who concluded the blessing in accordance with that opinion of Rav. (Pesahim 104a)

Shmuel argues that the final blessing should point back to the main purpose of Havdalah – distinguishing between the sacred (Shabbat) and the profane (the six days of the week). But Rav suggests a different closing formula, “who sanctifies Israel.” Rav is likely using this formula because it echoes the conclusion of Kiddush on Friday night (“who sanctifies Shabbat”), creating a beautiful set of liturgical brackets around Shabbat. But Abaye vociferously condemns this formulation, whatever its literary merit, cursing those who close Havdalah by thanking God for sanctifying Israel. We could understand him to be registering disgust with those who would conclude the holiest day of the week with a statement of Jewish superiority



Hanukkah on Zoom with Hebrew School



Hanukkah Party and Candle Lighting on Zoom



Check the weekly email newsletter for Zoom links

Please see weekly email newsletter for service leader information and Zoom links through December, as they become available.



Prayers for Healing Group

A group of Beth Shalom members has commenced, to think of and pray for individuals in our community, who are in need of healing.

The idea is that this group is not an organised group or minyan. Simply, caring people who, when made aware of the need, help healing with the power of prayer.

And that families in distress might receive comfort from the knowledge that this is taking place.

Caring for the unwell is part of being a community.

For those interested, I can supply articles: "The Jewish Way in Healing", and some scientific research on the positive power of prayer in healing.

- If you wish to be part of this group or if you know of someone who is unwell that would appreciate our prayers.
- Please contact Leon Goldwater or Christine O'Brien at shul office
- Leon: ldgoldwater@gmail.com 020 403 88054
- Christine: office@bethshalom.org.nz 524 4139

Zionist Federation of NZ Community Facilitator

The Zionist Federation of New Zealand (ZFNZ) is responsible for developing, enriching, and supporting meaningful relationships between the New Zealand Jewish community and the wider New Zealand community while fostering a greater understanding of Zionism and the State of Israel. It supports the Jewish community in exploring and understanding their Jewish identity within the diaspora while upholding the values of New Zealand.

The Community Facilitator will have a community facing role, engaging with the local community, enabling events, groups, and activities, and supporting projects that benefit the Zionist Federation of New Zealand. The overarching vision for this role is to create connections and a sense of belonging, develop friendships, provide a strong sense of self, and foster leadership capabilities of our youth to help serve the New Zealand Jewish Community in the future.

Please see the [full job description here](#)

To apply, please send a cover letter and CV to osnat@zfnz.org.nz by 31st of December 2021.

We're Hiring

Community Facilitator

.....

An exciting opportunity has become available to establish, manage and facilitate a leadership and education programme for Jewish youth across New Zealand.

For more details
<https://www.zfnz.org.nz/about/community-facilitator/>

Send your CV to:
osnat@zfnz.org.nz

Shalom Court News

Shalom Court is very pleased to announce that we have entered into a heads of agreement with **HBH Senior Living** for them to assist us in the day to day management of our facility.

Subject to agreeing to a contract, HBH Senior Living will take over day to day management of Shalom Court in February 2022. It has become apparent over the last few months that professional management is required, and linking with a larger organisation is a cost-effective way for Shalom Court to continue its tradition of close knit, family focussed care. While Shalom Court is a 'not for profit' entity, it is imperative that operationally it runs at a surplus to enable investment back into the facilities, building and general amenities for our residents.

HBH and Shalom Court have much in common - faith-based, community and family orientated not-for profit organisations with missions to serve older people by providing high quality care. HBH also has a management contract for another small non-profit care provider, so has experience in working in partnership this way.

They follow the principles of The Eden Alternative which is a philosophy of care that aims to transform residential care by putting the needs of older people at the centre of everything they do. The key message of Eden is simple: that those who live there should feel as healthy, happy and fulfilled as possible, irrespective of their health and disability challenges. Further, that the three major problems of residential care are loneliness, helplessness and boredom, and these can be overcome by:

- Loving companionship - especially with animals and children
- Providing opportunities for residents to give as well as receive
- Imbuing life with variety and spontaneity by creating an environment where the unexpected and unpredictable can take place.

We are very excited at this new development which will enable Shalom Court to continue to provide our elderly with the professional and warm care that they currently receive, implementing principles of The Eden Alternative.

The Jewish ethos of Shalom Court will remain intact with HBH management.

Esther Haver

Chair - Shalom Court

Community Care ...

Hi Everyone,

At the time of writing we are still in lockdown, but the light seems to be at the end of the tunnel, albeit a 'Traffic light', which hopefully is going to make life a lot more normal for us all.

Chanukah is earlier than usual this year, and the timing is really good. It is just what we need, a joyful and very positive festival to celebrate (more lights!) and cheer us all up. I'm sure the Ritual committee and Rabbi Dean will be doing all the zoom magic they can, to help us all celebrate it joyously together.

We hope you all have been managing to cope with the lengthy process we have been living through,, but please remember if you are not coping in any way, then to make us aware so we can see how we can help you

HOW CAN THE COMMUNITY CARE TEAM HELP?

As usual, we are here to help and support you. Please feel comfortable to ask us

- After a fall or feeling unwell
- Finding it a challenge to do things for yourself,
- Need a helping hand short term,
- Perhaps need to just talk to someone,
- Need help with filling forms,
- Need someone to be with you when visiting a doctor,
- Or need support getting X-rays done.

We know some of these suggestions may not be possible at the moment, but we can still help you put things into place, for when they are. Like always though, we need to know if you want help of some kind before we can give it.

Do **you** know of someone who is unwell, that would benefit from

- **a phone call?** MOST important at this time. People on their own, even if they are well, can feel very isolated during lockdown and a friendly voice can be very comforting, OR
- a get well card,
- some flowers to cheer,
- receive a frozen meal.

Get a family member to call us if you cannot.

INDEPENDENCE IS WONDERFUL

Consider how a helping hand can support you in achieving this.
Especially, when it is offered willingly by members of our team.

LET US KNOW

We also want to know and share your good things, so tell us if there is a special Anniversary,
or a new baby, or any other happy event on the horizon.

Please, continue to take care and stay safe.

Cheers

Lita (Chairperson) and the Community Care Team.

Contact:

Chris Shiller 021 177 4934 shiller@iorcon.net.nz

Lita Summerfield 021 297 9462 (TEXT ONLY) or email: serendipitylms40@gmail.com

Lorna Orbell 022 026 2897 chaim@slingshot.co.nz

Left to right,
Ora Lefebvre.
Chris Shiller,
Barbara
Sandler, Lita
Summerfield,
Sandra van
Eden, Bill
Merrill, Lorna
Orbell and
Sandra
Brickman.



Tzedakah in December

December can be a very stressful time for many people and even more so for women and children who are victims of domestic abuse – last year the Women's Refuge received approximately 4000 calls for help at this time.

Sadly, many women this December who should be making plans for a family Christmas will be forced to leave everything and seek safety for themselves and their children as victims of domestic violence.

Usually at this time of the year we would have been collecting toys, gifts, pamper packs and food for the women and children who will be spending their Christmas in a safe house.

Covid and lockdown has made this impossible to do as a community project but if you are able, please continue to support the Women's Refuge by donating \$20 to Women's Refuge Safe Night Appeal at:

<https://www.safenight.nz/gift-a-safe-night-for-a-woman-or-child-in-need>

This will pay for one night's accommodation for a woman or child who are victims of family violence.

Thank you for your support.

Community Security Group
***Serving the Jewish Community in
New Zealand***
Phone: 0800 AUCK CSG or 0800 2825 274
Post: PO Box 68 728, Auckland
Email: contact@auckcsg.org.nz

CSG is looking for more people!
THE COMMUNITY NEEDS US – WE NEED YOU.
**If you are aged between 18 and 80 and would like
to contribute to your community then please
contact the CSG using the details above.**



Burial & Benevolent Society

As I write this, today is the second day of Hanukkah - a festival of light and of dedication. Dedication to what we believe, to who we are as people and to our traditional ways of making meaning - including through story, food, song and game playing. This year is again different as we find our way through the best and safest way to be together and in community. We have had to do this a lot over the last 100 days of lockdown, including through life cycle events - most challengingly through death and mourning.

As I write, I acknowledge the Miller family as they approach Shloshim - the 30 day marker of mourning for David z"l - thirty days following burial. Our tradition offers a framework for mourners and also for the community to support. The B&B want to acknowledge with deep gratitude the generous community support given to the Miller family through the shiva period with food and by attending minyan to being available for talking and walking. You showed your love and support also through your tzedakah which was directed to cover the funeral costs [\$13,500] with additional funds tagged specifically for the family support.

If you want to learn more about Jewish practice and how to support those in mourning then My Jewish Learning is a good accessible resource to explore, [CLICK HERE](#)

If you need support or know anyone who requires a helping hand please contact the B&B directly or through Community Care or the Senior Outreach Services.

If you would like to make a contribution to the B&B an AP membership fee donation is the most welcome way of contributing. If you are not a member please enquire at the office about becoming a B&B member. We are able to provide tax deduction receipts as a registered charity. Please enquire via the Beth Shalom office for details:

Take care over the holiday period - Chag sameach!

Sue Berman, President of the B&B

We can be contacted on: 022 051 3589 or email: ajbbs@bethshalom.org.nz