

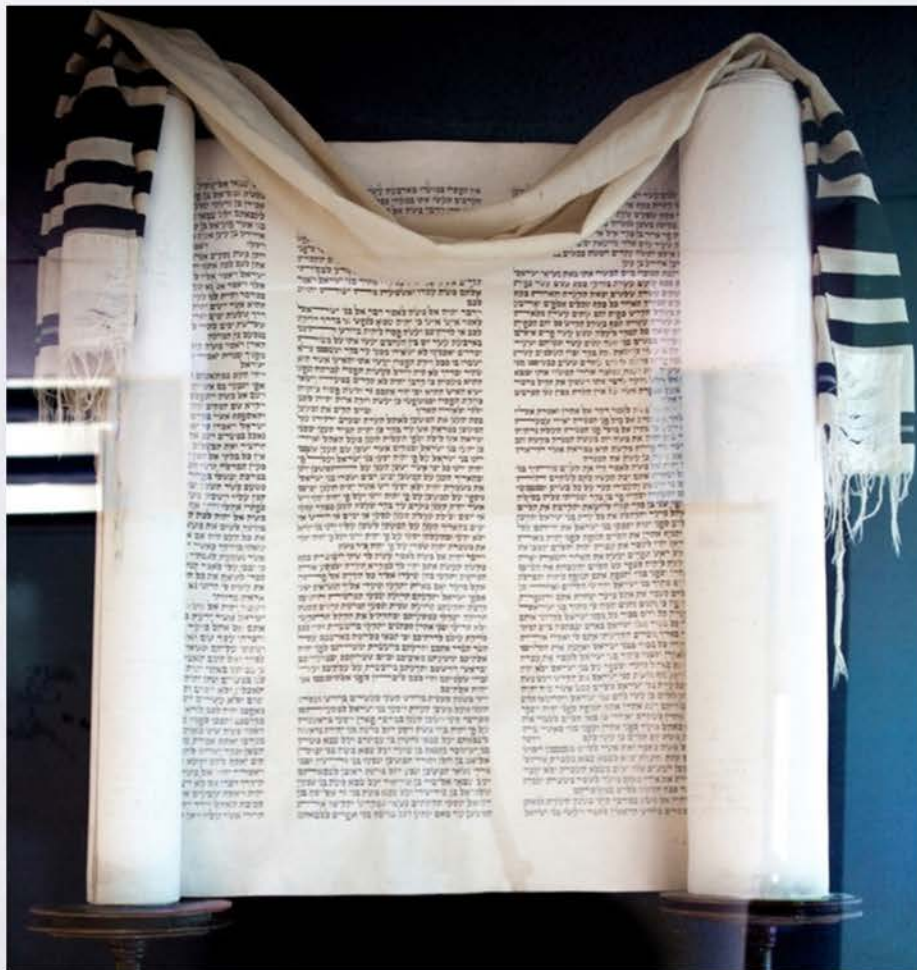
TERUAH

MAGAZINE

70 YEARS OF



BETH SHALOM



Sivan - Tammuz 5786

June 2026 Edition

The Progressive Jewish Congregation of Auckland, New Zealand [t/a Beth Shalom]

www.bethshalom.org.nz

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Community Stories - A mini series



AIFC visits Beth Shalom

On Friday 8 May Beth Shalom hosted members of the Auckland Interfaith Council Executive along with some other Interfaith supporters at an Erev Shabbat Service beautifully led by Rabbi Dean. Our guests really enjoyed the service which they found most meaningful. Afterwards we hosted an Oneg Shabbat during which our visitors enjoyed mixing and mingling with our Community.

Our Shavuot Tzedakah for the Auckland City Mission

Thank you for all the wonderful donations of canned and dried fruit. We collected double what we collected last year which is most impressive. Thank you also to Pam Miller who, once again, organised this collection on behalf of the Ritual Committee and took our fruit donation to the Auckland City Mission.

Pam notes "The Auckland City Mission has food boxes stacked high to serve people in need. Half of what they give out comes from food donations, such as ours, and they pay for the other half. They are clean, organised and polite, serving a massive need in our community. I have been supporting the Auckland City Mission for many years and I'm able to share contacts if anyone is interested in supporting the mission on a regular basis."



A message of appreciation from the Auckland City Mission

"Kia ora! Thank you so much for the items you've generously donated to Auckland City Mission - Te Tāpui Atawhai. Your support plays a vital role in helping us care for people who are doing it tough across Tāmaki Makaurau. Quite simply, we rely on donations of food, toiletries and other essential items to meet the growing demand for our services.

Because of your generosity, we're able to provide practical support while also offering dignity, choice and hope to people who need it most. Your donated items help ensure people feel cared for, respected and supported during challenging times. We are deeply grateful for your kindness and for standing alongside the Mission as we work to support people, today and into the future."

Rabbi Dean's *Column*



[Photos source: Rabbi Dean Shapiro]

A 'mechaya' is a joyful, life-affirming occasion. The ordination of Sarah Livschitz as a rabbi, along with five of her classmates, was absolutely a mechaya.

After five years of study (one in Jerusalem followed by four in Los Angeles), Sarah was presented for ordination by her mentor, Rabbi Laura Geller. She then stood under the chupah where the director of the Rabbinic Program at Hebrew Union College laid hands on her shoulder's in the act of smicha, transmitted in a chain of tradition across the generations. In that moment, Sarah was transformed – both the latest in a long line of rabbis, and entirely her own.

It was extraordinary for me to witness that holy act. I remember Sarah so clearly as a teenager at Beth Shalom, bubbly, eager and full of light. We've stayed in touch through the years, catching up when I've visited Los Angeles or she's come through Auckland. I've heard about her studies and her career choice. We share a student pulpit – Shir Ami, in Casto Valley, not far from San Francisco.

And, of course, her parents, Jenny and Harvey, and sister Meira remain dear to our hearts even now that they live in Wellington. What a mechaya to see someone's dreams fulfilled, and to know they'll bring great passion and integrity to their work. Rabbi Sarah Livschitz will serve Temple Beth Tikvah in Bend, Oregon.

This year is the eighteenth anniversary of my own ordination. Witnessing Sarah's brought back to me all the feelings – the eagerness, the awe, the indescribable sensation of standing under the chuppah – symbol of the rabbi's marriage to the Jewish people and tradition – and the mesmerizing moment when Rabbi David Ellenson placed his hands on my shoulders, over my tallit. And then, the call: "Rabbi Dean Shapiro!" The kahal erupted in applause, and I felt myself grow, even as my feet stayed planted.

Beth Shalom gifted Sarah with a yad made of pounamu, the perfect present for a Kiwi rabbi. It was engraved with her name, lovingly, by our own Leonard Bloksberg. That makes it extra-special, and I know it will hold a place of honour in Sarah's offices through the years. Before I left New Zealand, we passed the yad through the kahal, each of us blessing it and her.

Welcome Rabbi Sarah Livschitz!

Introducing the 2026-27 new Board of Management members

Nan Jensen (Vice-President)

I've been a Beth Shalom member since 1995 when we immigrated to New Zealand from Denmark - to Whakatane, my first time living in a small town. I grew up in New York and had lived in Denmark for 7 years prior to New Zealand. My husband Søren is Danish and we have four Danish/Kiwi children, all adults now. We lived in Whakatane for the first five years and have been in Hamilton since then. I've done a lot of driving back and forth to Beth Shalom for Hebrew School and Bar/Bat Mitzvah prep. I believe we held the only B'nei Mitzvot ever in the Te Kowhai War Memorial Hall. A fun fact : one of my closest friends in Graduate School turned out to be Paul Wilton's childhood best friend - Paul introduced me to Beth Shalom!



Professionally I am completely involved in the disability sector. I am in sole practice as a Disability Law specialist and I am on a number of boards, mostly of disability related organisations. I am going to be working on the Governance and Constitutional Review for Beth Shalom and welcome contact from anyone who has experience in this area and would like to help out.

[Photo source: Nan Jensen]



Hannah L. Rossiter (Board member)

I was born and raised in Whangarei and moved to Auckland in 2003. I have worked as a guillotinish for an Auckland Printing Company. In 2008 I became a community support worker supporting clients with high and complex needs. I like reading and listening to Jewish or Israeli podcasts. I play video games Baldurs Gate 3 and Mount and Mount & Blade II: Bannerlord.

Key highlights for me as a member of Beth Shalom has been "attending Purim spiel, attending Passover in the Park and holding the Torah scroll as it been dressed for High Holidays."



Hannah's aspiration for the community as a new member of the Board is "to help the members ensure the Synagogue thrives."

[Photo source: NPokura]



Gillian Wess-Bercovitch

Born in London and raised in the Jewish Liberal and Progressive Synagogue movement, my Jewish education started at the age of five and continued through attending the JFS (Jewish Free School), Europe's largest Jewish secondary school. Arriving in New Zealand I lived in Christchurch and was a member of the CHC for 30 years. I have been a member of Beth Shalom since moving to Auckland 10 years ago.

My late husband Jacob Bercovitch z"l was a Canterbury University academic, our adult daughters are Liora and Daniella, and I am Savta to Ava and Jacob.

We are closely connected to Israel through four generations of our extended family. Jacob, my husband, was born in Romania in 1946 and settled in Israel with his Holocaust survivor parents when he was three or four years old. They were joined in Israel by other survivor family members.

My father's aunts were chalutzim from Czechoslovakia in 1936 and helped establish kibbutzim Kfar Maccabi and Hefzibah, while other family relations were also founding members of Afikim and Misgav Am.

Originally trained in book publishing, I have enjoyed a varied career spanning the arts, property, education and advocacy. I have gained extensive governance and executive leadership experience across the commercial and not-for-profits sectors, most recently as the former CEO of the Holocaust Centre of New Zealand.

I am honoured to be elected to the Board and to serve the Beth Shalom community alongside my fellow Board members.

[Photo source: J-Wire (via google.com)]

Burial & Benevolent Society *AJBBS*

Jack Wilton (*AJBBS President*)

Invitation: Introduction to Tahara

Date: Thursday 25th June

Time: 4.45pm

Duration: no more than 45 minutes

Venue: David Funeral Home, 400 Dominion Road, Mt. Eden

The Auckland Jewish Burial and Benevolent Society warmly invites you to an introductory session on Tahara. This will be a gentle and informative opportunity to learn about this important Jewish tradition, ask questions, and explore whether you may wish to be involved now or in the future.

Tahara is the traditional ritual washing and preparation of the deceased before burial. It is carried out with great care, dignity, and respect, and is considered one of the most meaningful acts of kindness in Jewish life. There is no obligation to take part after attending this session; it is simply a chance to understand what is involved. The session is open to both men and women, and anyone interested is very welcome.

Please RSVP to David Singer at treasurer@ajbbs.org.nz or 021 610635. We would be grateful if you could reply in advance so we can confirm numbers with Davis Funeral Home.

If you are unable to attend but would like to know more, please contact Jack Wilton (president@ajbbs.org.nz) and the notes will be sent after the meeting. If you have any questions please contact Jack.

YACHAD - Term Two 2026

Term 2 Jewish Values sessions are well underway as we continue to explore Jewish values and Jewish festivals through stories, discussion, and interactive activities, with a focus on connection, identity, and everyday relevance

So far in the term, we have gone through a very meaningful, educational, and engaging journey together. We began with a special joint activity with Habonim, during which the children learned about Lag Ba'Omer and Rabbi Akiva in a highly interactive, enjoyable, and enriching way. We then continued learning about Shavuot and the giving of the Torah, and about the significant transformation the Israelites underwent - from slaves to free people - and how they learned to become a united nation and community, responsible for one another under the leadership of משה רבנו (Moses).

In our most recent session, we held a particularly important and meaningful lesson focused on the power of speech - Lashon Hara and Lashon Tov - where we explored how powerful our words can be and the tremendous impact they have on ourselves and those around us, both positively and negatively.

In addition, we also discussed the importance of listening and how meaningful and influential it can be in our relationships and environment.

The lesson was filled with fascinating discussions, interactive demonstrations and experiments (such as squeezing toothpaste out of a tube and then trying to put it back in - illustrating how words, once spoken, cannot truly be taken back), alongside creative art activities in which the children created beautiful posters titled: "Please Use Kind Words."

Our interactive Hebrew language online classes run weekly and continue to be a wonderful space for learning and connection.

We're looking forward to a meaningful enjoyable term of learning together for our children and all those attending.

June						2026
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
01 King's Birthday	02	03	04	05	06	07 Jewish Values 2.00 - 4.00pm
08	09	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 Jewish Values 2.00 - 4.00pm
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	01	02	03	04	05

Community Notices

The Women's Refuge Winter Appeal 2026

Winter and the cooler months has begun, and it's that time of year to launch our winter Pyjama and warm clothing collection for the children who are cared for in the Women's Refuge safe houses.

They are in need of new or "clean, near new" clothing especially once again - **winter pyjamas, warm socks, undies – boys and girls, rain wear.**

All sizes needed from toddlers to teens.

The Refuge is also in need of non-perishable food items such as - **cereals, porridge soup, soup mixes, spreads e.g. jam, peanut butter, Vegemite, honey, long life milk, tea and coffee, lunch box snacks for school lunches.**

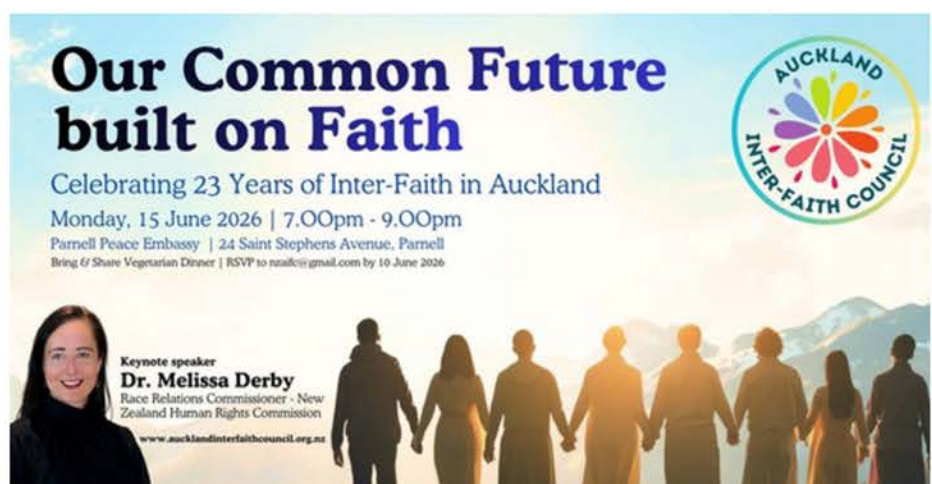


Photo courtesy: Canva.com



Auckland Inter-Faith Council Anniversary

RSVP to nzaifc@gmail.com



Community Notices

Bar Mitzvah - Joshua Chitayat



Shalom, my name is Joshua Chitayat and I will be celebrating my **Bar Mitzvah on June 27th**.

I am excited to share the experience of my Bar Mitzvah with the Beth Shalom community. As I am new to New Zealand, I wanted to show my appreciation for this country by supporting the planting of native trees for my Mitzvah project.

All members are invited to join the Chitayat family for Joshua's Bar Mitzvah.

Looking for new e-Shammashim

Contact:
office@bethshalom.org.nz

We're searching for E-SHAMMASHIM

If you have access to a computer with zoom and strong wi-fi and would be available to help a few services a month



The role includes co-ordinating with the in-person shammash, admitting people on zoom and sharing the digital siddur.

please contact: office@bethshalom.org.nz

SAVE THE DATE



**B'YACHAD
KADIMA**
Moving forward together

BIENNIAL CONFERENCE
MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
NOVEMBER 19TH - 22ND 2026

UPJ Biennial Conference

Keep up to date with information about the biennial conference 2026 through the UPJ website



Community *Promotion*

A festival of learning.

**LIMMUD
NZ 2026
JUNE 13-14
WELLINGTON**

Where curiosity connects us.

NOA LAVIE

Noa Lavie was born in Ukraine and made aliyah to Israel, where she is an experienced journalist and political communications strategist with over twenty years of rich and diverse experience across Israel's leading media outlets. She was spokesperson and senior advisor to Naftali Bennett during his national election campaigns and tenure as Minister of Economy, and served as a political interviewer and program host on the Knesset Channel. Noa has also been a senior reporter, editor, panelist, and studio host at Ynet, Laleha Magazine, and other platforms of the Yedioth Ahronoth Group, Israel's largest media organization. She currently serves as Spokesperson and Strategic Partnerships Manager at Yad Labanim, Israel's national organization for bereaved families of fallen soldiers.

NATAN KUCHAR

Natan is the Director of Communications & Community Engagement at Oakland Hebrew Day School, where he designs special moments for students, faculty and community members to learn, connect and grow. Previously Natan has held the roles of Assistant Director of Youth Development at JFCS San Francisco, Director of Edsh, and the Music Director at JCHS of the Bay. Natan is known for bringing together whole communities in song, emphasizing creativity, and facilitating joyful experiences that respond to the needs of the community. He earned his Bachelor of Music degree from Berkeley College of Music, and a Certificate in Arts Integration from the Alameda County Office of Education. Natan was honored by Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguin for his outstanding contribution to the arts, is a Pomegranate Prize recipient and a fellow in the M¹ Senior Educators Cohort 7.

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Security Notices

Security Protocol



SWIFT ENTRY AND EXIT

Please enter and exit the gates swiftly, ensure they are fully closed.



NO ENTRY WITHOUT CLEARANCE

Please do not admit entry to anyone you do not know. Please do not linger on the street in front.



LARGE BAG RESTRICTIONS

Please refrain from bringing big bags to the synagogue. They will be checked, and you might be refused entry.



BE ALERT AT ALL TIMES

Please have a heightened level of awareness and vigilance at all events and services, be aware of threats, and report any suspicious activity.



REPORT UNUSUAL ACTIVITY

If you see something unusual, report it to the security guard, service leader or to the office.

Non-members and visitors

(local or overseas) need to contact the office to assist with security clearance process. Call **09 524 4139** or email:

office@bethshalom.org.nz

In case of emergency, contact the Police first on 111 and then call CSG on 0800 282 527

File incident reports with CSG at [Report an Incident Form Online](#)

File police reports with NZ Police at [Report Incident Form Online](#)

Items required to assist with security clearance requests:

- A valid photo ID
- Confirmation of Jewish heritage or member standing notification from home Synagogue or Temple (or character references, social media information or referral from a member of Beth Shalom can be provided if the above confirmation is not available)

Contact Information

Board of Management

President: [Vacant]

Vice President - Nan Jensen, vice_president@bethshalom.org.nz

Treasurer – Tamara Liebman, treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz

Secretary – [Vacant], secretary@bethshalom.org.nz

Board of Management Members

Stephanie Richling, Hilary Hemmins, Ashley Strain, Gillian Wess (New), Hannah Rossiter (New); and Rabbi Dean Shapiro (*ex-officio*)

Board of Trustees

David Kranz, Judith Marks, Peter Bruell

Rabbi

Rabbi Dean Shapiro, rabbi@bethshalom.org.nz

Tzedakah - Women's Refuge

Donations are welcome from members or friends to support the Auckland Women's Refuge. Non-perishable items, women's toiletries, winter appeal items, children's pyjamas etc., place your donations in the designated bin in the foyer. Contact Chris Shiller - shiller@orcon.net.nz for assistance.

Prayers for Healing

If you would like our home prayer group to pray for healing—for yourself or someone close to you—please contact the office - office@bethshalom.org.nz

Kvetch and Kvell: Feedback

To offer constructive feedback—whether positive or critical - feedback@bethshalom.org.nz

Membership

membership@bethshalom.org.nz

Community Care [including Senior Outreach]

shiller@orcon.net.nz or care@bethshalom.org.nz

Security - Board Representative & Security Working-Group

office@bethshalom.org.nz

Auckland Jewish Burial & Benevolent Society

president@ajbbs.org.nz, secretary@ajbbs.org.nz or treasurer@ajbbs.org.nz

Ritual

services@bethshalom.org.nz

Education - Yachad & Hebrew School

educator@bethshalom.org.nz

Office Coordinator

office@bethshalom.org.nz

Administrator:

administrator@bethshalom.org.nz

Shaliach

shaliach@bethshalom.org.nz

Affiliated with the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ)
Charities Commission Registration Number: CC29542

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Website: www.bethshalom.org.nz

