Dear Friends – Shalom Chaverim,

In a description of the annual pilgrimage festivals (Passover, Shavuot and the Fall harvest, Sukkot), we are told that people were supposed to travel to Jerusalem to celebrate and everyone had to bring something, each according to his or her capability. I just love this teaching and it resonates with me: “you shall not appear empty-handed, but each with his own gift, according to the blessing that the Lord your God has bestowed upon you” (Deut. 16:16).

Everyone has something special, some gift – be it a talent, a donation, work, humor, guidance… something that they can offer to help others and build their community. Anne Frank, just a young teenager, wrote “Give of yourself… You can always give something, even if it is only kindness… no one has ever become poor from giving.”

Indeed, even though I say jokingly, “we are the little shul that could,” we really couldn’t, without the help, support and generosity of so many of you. We have accomplished many things this past year at CBE from all kinds of wonderful programs, services and activities to installing a beautiful, large movie screen, getting a new custom-built Torah-reading table and painting the exterior of the building (it looks great!). We look forward to continuing our social, religious and charitable programs in 2016 and also working on our physical building upgrades (painting the interior, new flooring and more). If you have something to contribute, we welcome your help and support.

May 2016 be a year of good health and blessing.

Shalom and Be Well!

Rabbi Michele Paskow

Tu Bishvat

This year Tu Bishvat, the New Year for Trees will be celebrated on January 25th. I hope you will plant some trees in Israel in honor of the holiday; inftrees.com is the easiest way to do this. Our Religious School students and families will be visiting a Butterfly Reserve right in Simi Valley to learn about Monarch butterflies and the plants that attract and feed them. Then we will return to the Temple and plant some milkweed and trees to welcome the “parparim” – פרפרים butterflies to CBE. Chag Samayach!

The Women of CBE will be celebrating with our annual Tu Bishvat Seder on Tuesday January 19th. All women are invited to attend- please RSVP. (See page 7)
**Board of Directors and Affiliates**

**Rabbi**  Michele Paskow  
**Cantor**  Michael Russ  
**President**  Mitchell Salberg  
**Executive Vice President**  Ryan Richmond  
**Secretary**  Debbie Knecht  
**Treasurer**  John Elhai  
**Co-VPs/Membership**  Michael Hollander & Max Patera  
**Co-VPs/Fundraising**  Open  
**Co-VPs/Programs**  Sanford Miller  
**VP/Havurah**  Penny Neugroschl  
**Co-VPs/Religious School**  Emily Doepking & Frieda Bahr  
**Co-VPs/Social Action**  Linda Martins-Mann & Jill Katell  
**Financial Secretary**  Eric Bordo  
**Sisterhood President**  Meridith Patera  
**Men’s Club President**  Michael Enright  
**Temple Adm. Asst.**  Marilyn Hollander  
**Preschool Director**  Lindy Schneider  
**Preschool Office Mgr./Newsletter**  Robyn Voigt  
**Religious School Admin.**  Meridith Patera  
**Chai Lites Editor**  Suzanne Epstein  
**Gift Shop**  Bobbie Sion  
**Choir Director**  Irwin Cohen  
**Photographer**  Max Patera  

The minutes of CBE Board meetings are available to all members in the Temple office.  
Black and white hard copies of the newsletter are also available in the Temple office.

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**Bulletin Bytes**

Thank you to Amy, Mike, Gail & Ron Mittelman for making all of the latkes for the Hanukkah party!!! Wow! Thank you also to Sandy Miller and RuthAnn Rossman for helping to organize the Temple Hanukkah party and putting together all of the gift baskets for the auctions. A special Todah Rabbah to Sandy Miller for single-handedly collecting over $1,400 worth of donations for our silent auction.  

_Yasher Koach_ to Meridith Patera, Irwin Cohen and the CBE cast for this year’s magnificent Hanukkah productions. The actors and musicians (all part of the CBE family) were superb! Thank you to everyone!!!

**Save the Date:**

- **Sunday January 31** – 2 PM (at CBE) – E. Europe 2016 Information meeting + sign up with Rabbi Michele and the representative from our travel company “Ayelet”. (See page 11)

- **Friday March 4** – Shabbat Across America & Family Shabbat, 6:00 PM kiddush and Pot-luck hors d’oeuvres, followed by 7 PM service.

- **Sunday March 7** – 5 PM Dr. Itzhak Brook will discuss the Yom Kippur war of 1973. Dr. Brook served as a battalion physician in the war and published a book about his experiences entitled: _In the Sands of Sinai: A Physician’s Account of the Yom Kippur War_. We will be making a donation to the Disabled Veterans of Israel “Beit HaLochem” in his honor.

- **Saturday, March 19** - Women of CBE presents: Can You Dig It? Sixties dinner dance and party.

- **Friday March 25** - PURIM service, 7 PM. Wear a costume (win a prize!), watch the Purim story pantomimed by the Religious School students- guest starring Haman, Esther, and King Ahasueros!

- **Sunday March 27** – Special Purim events….. more will be revealed!

---

**Havurah**

If you are a member of CBE and you are interested in joining or learning more about Havurah, please contact:

_Penny Neugroschl_  
VP Havurah  
805-546-1570, [pennyneugroschl@yahoo.com](mailto:pennyneugroschl@yahoo.com)

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**In This Issue:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rabbi’s Message, Tu Bishevat, Rabbi’s Trip</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Bulletin Bytes”</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Havurah, CBE Board</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President’s Message, Bat Mitzvah, Books &amp; Bagels, 60’s Party</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs, Men’s Club</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanukkah Photos</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cantor’s Message, Choir Building Committee Update</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recent Donations, Building Improvement Donations, Photo of Temple</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women of CBE, January &amp; February Events</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shabbat Oneg Sponsors, Sisterhood Photos</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Photos—Spooky Shabbat, Interfaith Service, Hanukkah Shabbat</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birthdays, Anniversaries, Mazel Tov, Adult Education</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbi’s Trip to Eastern Europe</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yahrzeits, Talmud Quote</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israel Bods Ad</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calendar of Services, Events, Candlelightings, &amp; Torah Portions, School Calendar</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
**President’s Message**

Shalom!

I would like to wish everyone a Happy New Year! Congregation B’nai Emet has had a lot of exciting changes in 2015. What exciting things are planned for CBE in 2016? The Temple Board has many wonderful ideas planned for this coming year. You will have to come by and see.

As the consummate optimist, I feel that 2016 will be a great year. For those who have New Years Resolutions, one great resolution would be to volunteer some time supporting your synagogue. Congregation B’nai Emet is always looking for a few more good hands. There are many ways you can show your support. Please contact the temple office or ask a board member if you would like some ideas on how you can support CBE. You will be doing a great Mitzvah!

My wish for 2016 is that everyone have a happy, healthy and successful 2016.

See you at temple!

Shalom,

Mitchell Salberg

---

**Bat Mitzvah**

My name is Emily Richmond. Many of you have watched me grow up over the last six years at CBE and welcomed me into the temple family. In addition to attending religious school at CBE, I keep busy with a variety of activities: soccer, singing, serving on the ASB at Redwood Middle School, spending time with my family—including my two beagles. As an animal lover, I dedicated my summer to collecting pet supplies for an underfunded animal shelter in California City. I thank my temple family for their support with the project. As part of this mitzvah, I began to understand the true meaning of “tzedakah.” I understand that I must take on this lifelong responsibility to give aid, assistance, and money to worthy causes. My parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles have demonstrated the importance of assisting worthy causes with both time and money. When I am called to the Torah on February 13th, I will be the first member of my family to read from the Torah in over 100 years. I am excited to be in a position to restart a family tradition, which unites me with my ancestors and to the local Jewish community.

---

**CBE BOOKS & BAGELS**

Next meeting: Sunday Jan. 10th, 10 am

Book club meets bi-monthly.

*All the Light We Cannot See* by Anthony Doerr

*The New York Times* bestseller about a blind French girl and a German boy whose paths collide in occupied France as both try to survive the devastation of World War II.

For location, RSVP to CBE: (805) 581-3723 or bnaiemet@rain.org.
**Men's Club**

The CBE Men's Club meets for breakfast at 9:15 AM on the second Sunday at The Junkyard Café, 2585 Cochran Street, Simi Valley (Cochran Street just west of Sycamore). Call Alan Mann, (805) 341-3836 or write to alanmann60@att.net for more info or to RSVP.

Please contact Michael Enright at 805-388 6617 for more info about the Men's Club.
Cantor’s Message by Cantor Michael Russ

Recently at our interfaith Thanksgiving service I told a story with a little lesson. I now realize there is so much more in the story than I explained at the time. The Story:

When I was very young and lived in Brooklyn N.Y., people would dry their laundry on a clothes line which hung from one building to the next. A young couple moved in to our building and as she and her husband were sitting for breakfast, she looked out the window and saw a neighbor’s laundry hanging out to dry. She said to her husband, “I can’t believe that people hang dirty laundry outside! Her husband sat and continued reading his paper.

The next day, once again the woman saw laundry hanging outside to dry and said to her husband, “I still can’t believe people hang their dirty laundry outside! The husband continued reading his paper just as before.

Finally on the third day, she looked through the window and she said, “Finally they hung up CLEAN laundry!” Her husband, with his head in the newspaper, said, “I cleaned the window.”

On Thanksgiving I said the lesson was that we should always see the world with clean windows. We should see the world without the distortion of dirt. Now I understand that we should also realize that there are others looking at us through those same windows. What is the “schmutz”… the dirt … that distorts the view? It is hatred, prejudice, bigotry, fear, and ignorance that distort our view in the world. Remember, others see us through those same “dirty” windows and therefore make all kinds of distorted assumptions of who and/or what we are.

Please don’t misunderstand. There is evil in the world. The world is not all pretty and warm and good. But when we clean the windows … when we remove the “schmutz” … then we can see more clearly and make better decisions of how to deal with the world around us. When our hearts are full of a lot of “schmutz” we don’t think clearly and often make poor decisions. No matter which way people look through the window we all need a clear view.

To clean up the hatred and anger, we need intelligence, tolerance, and the ability to understand those different from us. We need strength and knowledge so we can fight evil in a smart way and continue to promote freedom. We need others to see this in us clearly as well, so that perhaps others will learn to understand and accept us as good human beings. Our freedom, knowledge and understanding are our strengths.

My mother would be so proud to know that I believe in having clean windows.

THE ONE WHO PLANTS A TREE: A poem for Tu Bishvat (15th of the Hebrew month of Shevat) by Richard J. Dorer

The man who plants a tree
Must first prepare the fruitful earth
By moving duff or sod,
And cherish in his heart a silent prayer
For he is working hand in hand with God.

It is a sacred task, to plant a tree,
That always should be done on bended knee.

The artisans may strive for years to raise
A structure reaching to the vaulted sky.
That well deserves the everlasting praise
And words of wonderment from passerby,
But he, the humble man who plants a tree,
Is fashioning his nation’s destiny.

Ceremony at Mt. Sinai to Bury Retired Prayer Books
Look how beautiful the building looks! The outside has been repaired and painted! The Preschool was painted as well, and now the buildings match. Now it’s time to focus our efforts on updating and improving the inside. The first two goals are to paint the interior and install new flooring. We have received a very generous gift toward the interior painting, but still need to raise $15,000 to complete these two projects.

If you would like to contribute, please speak with Temple President Mitchell Salberg, Rabbi Michele, or Marilyn in the Temple office. Help us make CBE look great!
**Women of CBE**

In the past couple of months, the Women of CBE had several very well-attended, successful and profitable events:

- The Donor Luncheon on Nov. 1 honored our diligent volunteers and raised a lot for the building improvement fund. Thanks to Laura Tepfer for all her help.
- The Nov. 10 meeting/Tupperware party at RuthAnn Rosman’s was a smash hit.
- The Nov. 15 Hanukkah Boutique/Tree Sale was great. Thanks to Sandy Miller and Max Patera for all their help.
- Sisterhood bought gelt, dreidels, toys, and large fillable dreidels for the Dec. 4 Hanukkah service, the Dec. 6 CBE Hanukkah Party, the Dec. 9 Community Candle lighting, and gifts to Religious School and Preschool students.
- We purchased 2 full-page ads in the Temple Hanukkah Party program.
- Our December meeting was our Hanukkah Dinner & Gift Exchange at the home of Jill Katell. We raised money for the Women of Reform Judaism’s YES (Youth, Education, Special Programs) Fund, plus we had a blast eating and gifting.

Our amazing Program VP, Miriam Hintz, is now getting us ready for our Tu Bishvat Women’s Seder, which is always a big hit, on January 19, with Rabbi Michele presiding. In February we’ll hear from an expert on how to prepare for emergencies. Join us for socializing and learning. And noshing, of course.

Our ‘Purim Ball’ will be March 19. It will have a ’60s theme. Get your headbands and love beads out of storage and come join us for dinner, dancing, and surprises!

We are brainstorming ideas for future fun and fund raisers. Remember, everyone can support sisterhood by buying gift cards and tribute cards, and shopping in our House of Judaica Gift Shop.

We are all stronger together. Wishing you a happy and prosperous 2016!

In sisterhood,

**Meredith Patera**

mspatera@earthlink.net

President, Women of CBE

---

RSVP appreciated by January 14th.

Questions and to RSVP: Miriam Hintz Miriam.hintz@gmail.com
or call the temple office at (805) 581-3723
Oneg Sponsors

October 30, 2015
The Family of Sydney Newnham in honor of her Hebrew naming
The Foster Family in memory of Michelle’s grandmother Rose Bercow
The Ribstein Family in memory of Joel Ribstein
RuthAnn Rosman in honor of Spooky Shabbat
Sharlene Pass in memory of Ann Miller
Sy & Shelly Botan in honor of Sydney’s Hebrew naming
The Perez Family in honor of Sydney’s Hebrew naming & in memory of Carl Kitt
Mike & Julie Mutal in honor of their 16th anniversary
The Breiter Family in honor of Jessica completing her Dental Hygiene Program

November 6, 2015
Minnie Anzo in memory of her sister Rose Warren
The Family of Rose Warren in her memory
Alice Fiducia in honor of John’s birthday
Miriam Hintz in memory of Steve Giles

November 13, 2015
Sylvia LeVine in honor of her son Morrie’s birthday, her brother Ron’s birthday, & her great-niece Emily’s birthday
Tony & Laureen Hart in honor of their 45th anniversary
Miriam Hintz in memory of her brother Aaron Chusid
RuthAnn Rosman in honor of our guest speaker Simcha Butchart

November 20, 2015
Alice Fiducia in memory of Michael Grauman
Gabe & Jill Katell in honor of their 27th anniversary

December 4, 2015
The Singh Family in honor of their 24th anniversary

December 11, 2015
The Rossman Family in honor of CBE’s new members
The Bergmann Family in memory of Bertram Bergmann Carol Rosado

December 18, 2015
Mel & Louise Edelson in honor of their being thrilled to be new members of CBE & Louise’s being new member of sisterhood

December 25, 2015
The Family of Samuel Forster in honor of his bar mitzvah Rabbi Michele in memory of her Aunt Dorothy, and in honor of Sam’s bar mitzvah Charlene Pass in memory of Anna Leader, Gertrude Miller & Jack Miller Ronnye Sacks in memory of Florence Howard & Steven Sacks

Sisterhood Activities

Tupperware party with Aunt Cassie Rolle

Hanukkah Bake Sale, Boutique and Tree Sale

Hanukkah Party, Gift Exchange and Tami Plotkin’s Menorah-shaped Challah

Wishing everyone a very Happy New Year 2016!
From Linda Mann Social Action VP

Noah’s Ark Shabbat New Members Shabbat
What do you do when Halloween and Shabbat occur on the same day? **Spooky Shabbat!**

**Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**

Participants—top row, l to r:
- Cantor Michael Russ, CBE
- Rev. Sarah Kitch, St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church Simi Valley
- Mayor Bob Huber
- Yahya Merchant, Islamic Society of Simi Valley
- Rabbi Michele Paskow, CBE
- Pastor Phil White and Pastor Jan White, Seventh-day Adventist Church of Simi Valley
- Rev. Sandra Ochs, SV United Church of Christ
- Betty Eskey, Samaritan Center
- Rev. Rachel Tabutol, Simi Valley United Methodist Church
- Matt Epstein, CBE

Combined choir including CBE’s Max Patera, Marty Richter, Marilyn Hollander, Sandy Melnick, Louise Edelson, and Irwin Cohen

Not pictured: Rev. Andy Mattick, SV United Methodist Church; Simi Valley Covenant Church

**Hanukkah Crafts and Shabbat Pictures**
**Let’s Celebrate!**

### Birthdays

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### Anniversaries

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<td>Anthony and Laura Luskin</td>
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<td>Michael and Marilyn Hollander</td>
<td>29th</td>
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### Mazel Tov

to John and Cindy Elhai. Their daughter, Julia, was selected to participate in the Hasbara Fellowship program based on her leadership skills and commitment to advocating for Israel. She will spend 16 days in Israel focusing on Israel’s accomplishments and challenges.

**Julia Elhai is front and center behind the banner**

---

**ADULT EDUCATION WITH RABBI MICHELE**

**10 GREAT BIBLE STORIES EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW**

6 Thursday nights from 7-8 PM, beginning on January 21st

$36 for CBE members; $50 for guests

Please register either by emailing or calling Marilyn in the Temple office:

bnaiemet@rain.org; 805-581-3723

---

**We’re On the Web!** [http://congregationbnaicemet.org](http://congregationbnaicemet.org)
Join Rabbi Michele Paskow & Congregation B'nai Emet

on an amazing tour to

EASTERN EUROPE

June 26 - July 7, 2016

Budapest * Vienna * Prague * Berlin

This amazing tour includes...
- 2 nights at Intercontinental Hotel, Budapest
- 2 nights at the Hilton Stadtpark, Vienna
- 3 nights at the Kings Court Hotel, Prague
- 3 nights at the Marriott Hotel, Berlin
- Breakfast daily
- Welcome dinner with Rabbi Katia Kelman
- Dinner in Vienna
- Shabbat dinner in Prague
- Box lunch on bus
- Dinner with Rabbi Hamolka in Berlin
- Farewell dinner in Berlin
- Group transfers & entrance fees per itinerary
- Porterage

On This Outstanding Journey, together we will...
- Explore and enrich our knowledge of Jewish History in Budapest, Vienna, Prague & Berlin.
- Experience all that Eastern Europe has to offer.
- Confront the horrors of the past and celebrate the re-birth of the communities of today and tomorrow in the region.

Full itinerary & online registration:
www.ayelet.com/PaskowEE2016.aspx

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P 800-237-1517 • F 518-783-6003
19 Aviation Rd., Albany, NY 12205
**Yahrzeits**

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<td>Jan 06</td>
<td>Paul Sytten</td>
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<td>Patricia Geiger</td>
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<td>Richard Levy</td>
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<td>Richard Schatz</td>
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<td>Morris Winner</td>
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<td>Robert Gurstein</td>
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<td>Willard Levin</td>
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<td>Alex Leyton</td>
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<td>Rochelle (Shelly) Richter</td>
<td>Shevat 5</td>
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<td>Jan 16</td>
<td>Darrius Eugene (Shelly) Richter</td>
<td>Shevat 6</td>
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**THE TALMUD TEACHES...**

By ten things is the world created, by wisdom and understanding, and by reason and by strength, by rebuke and by might, by righteousness and by judgment, by lovingkindness and by compassion.

*Hagiga 12A*
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Call Temple office
For more information
Calendar of Services, Events, Candle lightings, & Torah Portions

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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
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<td>4:38 PM</td>
<td>Family Shabbat Service 7 PM</td>
<td>Shemot—Exodus 1:1 - 6:1</td>
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<td>4:44 PM</td>
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<td>Va’era—Exodus 6:2 - 9:35</td>
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<td>4:50 PM</td>
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<td>Bo—Exodus 10:1 - 13:16</td>
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<td>4:57 PM</td>
<td>Shabbat Service 8 PM</td>
<td>Beshalach—Exodus 13:17 - 17:16</td>
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<td>5:04 PM</td>
<td>Shabbat Service 8 PM</td>
<td>Yitro—Exodus 18:1 - 20:23</td>
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<td>Bat Mitzvah of Emily Richmond</td>
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<td>5:24 PM</td>
<td>Shabbat Service 8 PM</td>
<td>Tetzaveh—Exodus 27:20 - 30:10</td>
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<td>Feb 26/18</td>
<td>5:30 PM</td>
<td>Shabbat Service 8 PM</td>
<td>Ki Tisa—Exodus 30:11 - 34:35</td>
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School Calendar

**JANUARY**

4 – Judaica High School Session #13
10 – Sunday School Session #15
11 – Judaica High School Session #14
24 – Sunday School Session #16
25 – Judaica High School Session #15
31 – Sunday School Session #17

**FEBRUARY**

1 – Judaica High School Session #16
7 – Sunday School Session #18
8 – Judaica High School Session #17
21 – Sunday School Session #19
22 – Judaica High School Session #18
28 – Sunday School Session #20
29 – Judaica High School Session #19

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Congregation B'nai Emet

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