



Community Chaplain

Chaplain Larry Batchlear is available for Jewish Life-cycle events and can be reached at 352-7191

Business Office

Larry Batchlear (806-355-0023) or
Bob Blinderman (806-372-9401)

Looking for articles.

Have you read a good book lately?
Or perhaps an inspirational
reading or poem? Do you have a
recipe you would like to share?

Temple B'nai Israel newsletter is
published monthly. Submissions
for the newsletter are due the 21st
of the prior month. Send to:

bnaiisraelamarillo@gmail.com

Attn. Mary Blinderman

*We welcome your contributions
to the newsletter.*

Know someone interested
in becoming a part of our
community? New to town? Or
looking to find a way to connect
with Temple B'nai Israel? Contact
any of our board members and
we will be glad to assist you.

December 2021

President's Message

Shalom chaverim!

As 2021 comes to a close, I look back on this year with mixed emotions. The year started with trepidation as COVID continued to spread, mixed with optimism as the COVID vaccines rolled out. The Temple was still closed, but we remained active with the help of Zoom and Go-To-Meeting. We continued our friendship with Congregation Shaareth Israel in Lubbock, and enjoyed virtual Shabbats with Rabbi Goldmann and our Temple lay leaders. Our community Seder was cancelled, but then we actually had a Temple Annual Meeting, in person, this year. Finally, we felt comfortable enough to invite student Rabbi Paige to come open the Temple, and we celebrated Preston's conversion. Mazel Tov to Preston! That joy was short-lived as COVID again began to surge. We decided not to renew our student rabbi contract due to the uncertainties that COVID was creating which made long-term planning impossible.

As the High Holy Days approached, the Board decided to try a different path, and we hired a visiting rabbi, Rabbi Lotker, to lead our Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. The feedback has been all positive! Another visiting rabbi, Rabbi Taub, then came to Amarillo to officiate the Bar and Bat Mitzvah of Lucy and David Schneider. What a joy it was to host this event in our Temple!! Mazel Tov to Lucy and David!

Next, we held our first fundraiser of 2021, a garage sale. Many thanks to the fundraising committee for a successful garage sale! This was quickly followed by a visit from Rabbi Cohn. Attendance was reduced, but we are blessed with finally having our livestream working well so those who were unable to be there in person could still be present, virtually. Rabbi Cohn's first visit was wonderful, and she returned again in November to lead Shabbat and also participate in our 24th annual Community Thanksgiving celebration. This interfaith celebration was enjoyed by many, as was the Israeli dancing! The High Plains Food Bank and the Warming Station appreciated the contributions to their organizations.

Today I had the pleasure of attending Alexis Roberts' private conversion ceremony, officiated (virtually) by Rabbi Alexis Erdheim, in our sanctuary. Mazel Tov, Alexis! Our Temple family will celebrate this joyous event together with Alexis and her family when Rabbi Cohn returns for Hanukkah.

After attending the conversion ceremony today, I realized how much I take for granted the blessing of being Jewish. This year, I watched Preston and Alexis work very hard to achieve their dream of converting to Judaism. I simply had to be born to Jewish parents! It is easy to be complacent when we didn't have to exert much effort for a privilege. Whether you are a Jew by birth, a Jew by choice, or just a dear friend of the Temple who enjoys sharing the Jewish traditions and teachings, remember that it is a gift to be a part of this amazing religion that has endured for centuries. Give back, so that our Temple will continue to be the home of Judaism in the Texas panhandle. I encourage you to give your time, your service, and tzedakah.

Happy Hanukkah!!!!

With love and gratitude,
Candy

Adult Education Classes

We are discussing the book, *People Love Dead Jews*, by Dara Horn. The group meets in hybrid fashion. You can attend in person at the boardroom or remotely through GoToMeeting at <https://www.gotomeet.me/TempleAdministrationBnaiIsrael>.

Please join us on Sunday mornings, at 10:30 CT.



TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL COVID POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to welcome you to Temple B'nai Israel. We have a shared responsibility for the health and wellbeing of all who come to B'nai Israel for worship and study.

- ★ Masks are requested, but not required
- ★ COVID vaccination is requested, but not required
- ★ Social Distancing - Requested seating:
 - Alternate row seating in the Sanctuary (see marked rows)
 - No Masks: Seating on south side of Sanctuary (by piano)
 - Masks: Seating on north side of Sanctuary (by entry)
 - Groups not living together: sit separately
- ★ Note: The rules are subject to change to accommodate visiting Rabbi's requests.



APPROVED BY PRESIDENT OF B'NAI ISRAEL BOARD OF TRUSTEES

REFUAH SHELEMAH

The following people are in our thoughts and prayers:

Joan Altman	Carrie Delaney
Andrew Alpar	(Yael bat Avraham Avinu)
Alan Alpar	Bruce Kriegel
Mike Hibbs	Mabel Knox
Joel Kaplan	David Altman
Larry Katz	Neal Scott
	Preston Doerfler

Please offer prayers that they all have a full and speedy recovery.

Temple Contacts

Candy Alpar, President 341-8741
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Kim Hooker, Secretary 505-463-8402
Bob Blinderman, Treasurer 372-9401
Larry Batchlear, Community Chaplain 355-0023

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Victoria Thompson, Co-President 670-5866
Lisa Hunnicutt, Vice-President 670-7137
Karen Schroeder, Secretary 681-5196
Mary Blinderman, Treasurer 372-9401

Mark Your Calendar



Please welcome Rabbi Holly Cohn Friday, December 3rd through Sunday, December 5th for Hannukah at the Temple.

We will celebrate Hannukah on Friday night with a community candle lighting. Bring your menorahs for this event.

Jelly donuts will be featured at the Oneg.

Shabbat Services

Please check your email for upcoming services and other Temple activities.

The 24th Thanksgiving Gathering



Community Lunch



Presentation of Colors



Music



Israeli Folk Dancing

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all our donors for your continued support! (as of November 25, 2021)

General Fund

In Support of Temple B'nai Israel

Anonymous

Dorrie Carskadon

Emilio and Dora Barrera

For equipment expenses for Remote Services and Meetings

Alex Rimmel Toombs

In Memory of S. Arnold Eisenstot

Carolyn and Stuart Dowlen

Honoring Candy Alpar for her time and effort in the cheesecake fundraiser for the Temple

Mary and Bob Blinderman

Victoria Thompson and Ray Martin

In loving memory of Mona and Leslie Kaitcer . . . Temple B'nai Israel held a very special place in their hearts.

Steven Kaitcer

Please consider donating to the Temple

It is a wonderful way to:

- Mark a simchah
- Honor someone's memory
- Wish someone a speedy recovery
- Express Gratitude

December Birthdays

12/4 Daniel Kohn

12/5 Louise Adelman

12/8 Neal Scott

12/8 Dr. Sarah Shields

12/9 Paul Pan

12/14 Lily Roberts

12/14 Harry Tallert

12/14 Kim Hooker

12/18 Nathaniel Lapp

12/20 Cleon Roberts

12/21 Lillian Schaeer

12/22 Dan Schneider

12/26 Jacob Aron Kohn

12/27 Sarah Schachter

12/27 Bess Schachter

12/28 Aaron Kothari

12/28 Meera Kothari

12/31 Dyana Duman

December Anniversaries:

12/12 Alexandra and Charles Toombs

12/24 Lily and Cleon Roberts

Note:

If you would like to be included in the birthdays and anniversaries, please send an email to bnaiisraelamarillo@gmail.com

Attn: Newsletter Editor

Meet your New Members

We are pleased to welcome Alexis Roberts and Rosa Roberts to our congregational family.

And Mazel Tov to Alexis on her conversion to Judaism in a virtual service officiated by Rabbi Alexis Erdheim at Temple B'nai Israel on Tuesday, November 16th.

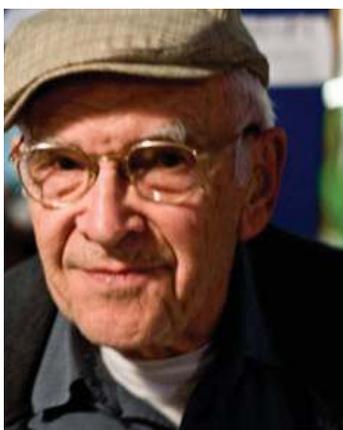


President Candy Alpar and Alexis Roberts



Alexis with family and friends

We Remember



Former Temple member Scott Hyde passed away on November 20th. He was 95 years old.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Phyllis Miller Hyde, beloved Temple member.

Scott was a photographer who spent his life promoting photography as an art form.

Those who knew him were grateful for their time with him.

His work is included in the permanent collection of the International Center of Photography and the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Cheesecake Fundraiser



Thank you to our "Cheesecake Maven" Candy Alpar for making delicious cheesecakes for a great fundraiser success

Rabbi Sacks Began a Conversation Which we Need to Continue

By Daniel Finkelstein
October 21, 2021

Sir David Amess was a British Member of Parliament who died October 15, 2021, from a stabbing while meeting with constituents in Leigh-on-Sea, England at the age of 69. In the aftermath of the killing of Sir David Amess, we can learn much from the writing and teaching of Lord Sacks, by trying to trust and understand each other and our differences.

When I was working as comment editor of The Times, the hardest days were when we were reporting on a natural disaster or a terrorist attack. What was there to say that was appropriate and useful and insightful and, if possible, consoling?

I did, however, develop an approach which rarely let me down. I would contact Rabbi Jonathan Sacks. I knew he wouldn't let me down and he never did. Somehow he would find light to shine on the darkness, words that would make one reflect, help one understand and begin to heal.

I was always proud that the religious leader best able to rise to such a moment was a Jew.

How I missed him last week when the lovely, kind, smiling David Amess was stabbed to death. Rabbi Sacks surely would have had something profound and moving to say and some insight into David, himself a deeply religious man.

Just a few days later I had been at the inaugural 'Sacks Conversation,' held in the beautiful setting of Spencer House, a new event in the Jewish (and hopefully more than Jewish) calendar. Rabbi Sacks was always perceptive in his selection of staff and drew high quality people to him and they have now set about keeping his memory and his teaching alive. The Conversation is just one part of their effort. It is a venture that we must all do our best to support in order to keep the light of Rabbi Sacks burning.

His leadership and his words were a gift to us, and we mustn't carelessly waste that gift.

The Conversation was accompanied by the publication of *The Power of Ideas*, a collection of the writings and speeches of Rabbi Sacks. It includes some of his best Thought for the Day talks, speeches in the House of Lords, lectures and articles.

One theme in particular seems relevant now, in the light of what has happened in the last few days with the murder of

David Amess. It is Lord Sacks' emphasis on what he called the "dignity of difference".

The start, the middle and the end of the Rabbi's teaching was the Torah, and all the arguments, interpretations, conversations it initiated. What gave his contributions to the public debate such weight was his learning and his deep commitment to his own community.

You could trust that the Rabbi's interpretation of Jewish thinking and history was soundly based, that it was scholarly and authoritative. He didn't plead to understand the religion of others out of a failure to understand his own.

Yet as Tony Blair said, "he was a Jewish Rabbi, but he was also a rabbi for the universe, his teaching grounded in Judaism but somehow never constrained by it". He believed that co-existence was part of God's plan along with neighborliness, care for the stranger and respect for others.

This allowed him to, as Mr. Blair put it "rescue faith from fundamentalism, doctrine from dogma [and] the spiritual from the temporal". He had written his book on the dignity of difference in the aftermath of 9/11 as a clarion call for interfaith harmony.

Mr. Blair joked that the two of them had often discussed who had the hardest job of leadership and that Rabbi Sacks had said that his desire to unify and overcome division came "possibly from my experience in trying to lead the Jewish community".

This exchange had obviously been jocular but, like a lot of what Rabbi Sacks said, it was also profound. I have long regarded the differences that separate Jews from each other as the curse of our community, but I wonder whether it isn't also a blessing.

Maybe by learning to trust and understand each other, by accommodating our differences, by respecting our alternative ways of living as Jews we can learn how to do that with other religions and develop ways of working and talking to each other that allow us to be leaders in interfaith dialogue.

I think Rabbi Sacks himself did that. He may have gone from us, but his teaching has not. He began a Conversation, and it isn't over yet.

Daniel Finkelstein is Associate Editor of The Times

Yahrzeits for December

*David Spector 12/1	*Raye Blinderman 12/8	Annie Sisson 12/20
*Nathan Spector 12/1	*Ben Hirschland 12/9	Johanna Ellen Kramer 12/22
*Sarah Jeanne Harris 12/2	Elaine Gaynor 12/9	Mike Bruton 12/22
*Dr. Daniel J. Schwartz 12/3	Nathan Goldstein II 12/10	*Julius S. Grodjeski 12/23
Deanna Brown 12/3	Frieda Genzer 12/11	*Neita Axelrod Benjamin 12/23
Sadie Blank 12/3	*Sam A. Fenberg 12/11	Carolyn Lipshy 12/23
*Albert Kligman 12/4	Dennis Weisbart 12/11	*Lucy Bessie Weinberger 12/24
Mannie Rubin 12/4	Arnold M. Gates 12/11	*Bella Lotman 12/24
Anne Block 12/5	Robert Blank 12/12	*Meyer Darryl 12/27
George Skora 12/6	Abbe Kischinovsky 12/12	*Max Silverman 12/29
*Sol Levine 12/6	Janet Ziffer Wells 12/13	*Eli Raffkind 12/30
*Abe Latman 12/6	*Dan Berg 12/13	*Julian Levy 12/31
Dorothy Gimp Brand 12/7	*Minnie Cohen 12/13	Gloria Altman 12/31
Sara Munic 12/7	Ada Brenner 12/15	Isadore Goodman
*Audrey Ball-Kaufman 12/7	Milton H. Dresner 12/16	Minnie Samuels
*Jayne Cowen Seliger 12/7	Alice Maples 12/17	Charles Robinson
Anne Moskowitz (Tevet 4) December 8, 2021	*Julia Ecker Berger 12/20	Sol Alpert
Golda Meir 12/8	Leopold Kischinovsky 12/20	D.M. Spector

The “” indicates individuals whose names are on the Yahrzeit boards in the sanctuary.*

If any member would like to add a name to the monthly yahrzeit list, please send the name, date of yahrzeit and your relationship to bnailsraelAmarillo.org, Attn: Mary Blinderman. Thank you.