

CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS

THE CHRONICLE

TEMPLE

NOVEMBER 2024 VOLUME 24 - ISSUE 11

THE RABBI SPEAKS

RABBI BARRY BLOCK



Dear Friends,

Across North America, NFTY, the Reform Jewish youth movement, has struggled since the pandemic. NFTY's Southern Region, NFTY-So, is an extraordinary exception. The credit is due to Jacobs Camp, Rabbi Katie Bauman, and

LAFTY/Congregation B'nai Israel.

This month, LAFTY will host NFTY-So's Fall Kallah.

Anna Herman, Jacobs Camp director, values the opportunity for our regional Reform Jewish high school community to gather regularly. She has provided resources for NFTY-So, even when the Union for Reform Judaism writ large has been unable to do so. Regional youth leadership has continued to be terrific, and LAFTY scarcely missed a beat, except at the height of the pandemic.

Over a year ago, Rabbi Bauman, who grew up in our congregation and is now the Senior Rabbi of Touro Synagogue in New Orleans, declared that the youth need to gather more frequently than once a year or so. NFTY gathered last fall in the Crescent City and in the spring at Jacobs Camp. On both occasions, attendance far outstripped pre-pandemic numbers! Rabbi Bauman has also devoted considerably thought leadership and resources to building a strong youth culture in New Orleans, at Jacobs Camp, and throughout the region.

After last fall's success, the question was: Who could host a city-based event the next year? LAFTY raised its hand, enthusiastically. To members of our congregation who see our youth in leadership regularly, that's not surprising. By comparison to other congregations close to our size and even to others much larger, with many times over the number of teens, it's remarkable. After all, it's not our "turn" to host.

Continues on next page

WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES IN NOVEMBER

Oneg Shabbat at 5:45 pm
Services at 6:15 pm

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1 SHABBAT SERVICE

Led by Lewis, Mira, and Milo Krain
Music: Sunny Baker and Teddy Ferguson,
accompanied by Diana Brandon
Oneg Shabbat host: Carol Parham

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 8 SHABBAT SERVICE

**Led by Rabbi Block and E. Lee Ronnel Student
Cantor, Aleksandra Dubov**
Sermon: "What I learned from Cuba's Jewish
Community"
Accompanist: Kathy Cooper
Oneg Shabbat host: Marla Shivers

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 15 MUSICAL SHABBAT SERVICE

led by LAFTY, Jacobs Camp song leader Aaron Rothko,
and Rabbi Block for the annual Fall Kallah of the North
American Federation of Temple Youth-Southern Region
Sermon by Sade Storthz, Director of Israel and
Community Engagement, University of Texas Hillel

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 22 SHABBAT SERVICE

Led by Rabbi Block
Sermon: "Hebron, Then and Now"
Music: Jana Cohen and Perry Young
Oneg Shabbat host: Shelly Baron

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 29 SHABBAT SERVICE

Led by Rabbi Block
Sermon: "Lying for a Cause"
Music: Richard Estelita and Josiah Wheeler,
accompanied by Kathy Cooper
Oneg Shabbat host: Meg Marion

(The Rabbi Speaks continued from front page)

We last hosted in February 2020, weeks before the world shut down. No congregation outside New Orleans has hosted NFTY-So since we last did.

What is special about our teens?

They love coming to Temple. For a long time, I said, “Kids complain about Religious School only in the morning when they don’t want to get up and moving. They don’t complain afterwards.” Now, increasingly, they don’t complain at all. They value the opportunity to be together with their Jewish friends in a supportive environment.

Our youth are mentored and supported. Temple adults are there for them, guiding them and providing resources to them. That’s a longstanding tradition here, long predating Eileen and me, though she certainly deserves credit for what’s happening now. Eugene Krupitsky, even in the midst of a school board campaign, has stepped up to guide the program, and so many others are volunteering in a myriad of ways. Rita Fagan has fed generations of NFTY-So youth when they’ve come to Little Rock, dating to when Rabbi Bauman and Eugene were in LAFTY, and perhaps before that.

They’re just great kids. Our teens have earned the credit themselves, and their parents have reason to be proud.

I urge congregants to volunteer during the Kallah weekend, November 15-17. You will be inspired by the future of our congregation and of Reform Judaism in our region and beyond it. I especially hope that you will come to services on Friday night, November 15, to be swept up in the spirit of our youth—and to hear from our special guest speaker, Sade Storthz, who not so long ago was a Congregation B’nai Israel teen!

Faithfully,



SATURDAY MORNINGS IN NOVEMBER

Shabbat Torah Study at 9:30am, led by Rabbi Block on November 2, 9, 23, and 30 and by Bruce Greenberg on November 16.

Shabbat Morning Worship at 11am, led by Rabbi Block on November 2, 23, and 30, by Rabbi Block and Cantor Dubov on November 9, and by Annabelle Imber Tuck on November 16.

Volunteer Opportunities for Fall Conclave, November 15-17

We have needs that may fit your
schedule!

Please contact Rabbi Block,
bblock@bnai-israel.us, if you can:

- Help Rita in the kitchen, preparing for Shabbat dinner and/or lunch on Saturday.
- Help pick up and organize Sunday breakfast.
- Pick up an out-of-state attendee or two at the airport on Friday afternoon and bring them to Temple.
- Drive teens from Temple to their social action work sites on Saturday afternoon at 1:30pm.
- Drive an out-of-state attendee from Temple to the airport on Sunday morning.
- Pick up snacks, sodas, etc., and drop them at Temple. (If you’re willing to donate those, that’s even better!)

KIDDUSH LUNCH
Saturday, November 9, 12pm,
following Shabbat Morning Services
Hosted by Doris Krain



WITH PROFESSOR
REBECCA GLAZIER

*Author of Faith and
Community: How Engagement
Strengthens Members, Places
of Worship, and Society*

There is no charge, but reservations are requested no later than November 6 by contacting Lane, TempleSecretary@bnai-israel.us or 501-225-9700, or visit www.bnai-israel.us/rsvp.

Through more than a decade of multi-method data collection through the Little Rock Congregations Study, Glazier, who serves as director of the research project, has surveyed more than 4,000 congregants and nearly 500 clergy in Little Rock to gather opinions from members and leaders on community issues and engagement. Together with interviews and case studies, her findings indicate that active congregants are happier and more civically involved.

Dr. Glazier is a Professor in the School of Public Affairs at UA Little Rock and the Coordinator of the Middle Eastern Studies Program. She joined the faculty in 2009, after completing her Ph.D. at the University of California Santa Barbara. Dr. Glazier's research agenda is focused on issues of religion, community engagement, framing, and U.S. foreign policy. She has published articles and book chapters on political Islam, religiously-motivated violence in Iraq, and just war theory.

Congregation B'nai Israel has been a participant in the Little Rock Congregations Study over a period of years, and Rabbi Block has been engaged with Professor Glazier and her important work. He looks forward to sharing Professor Glazier with our congregation.




Sade Storthz to Address Congregation and Youth on November 15

During Shabbat Eve services on Friday, November 15, Sade Storthz will offer the sermon to our congregation and to youth assembled from throughout the Deep South for the annual Fall Kallah of the North American Federation of Temple Youth's Southern Region (NFTY-So).


The theme of the NFTY Kallah, planned by our own Temple youth group, LAFTY, is "Survivor," focusing on the ways that the Jewish people have survived and thrived time and again, in the wake of catastrophe. Nobody is better positioned to address teenagers on this topic than Sade Storthz.

Sade is Director of Israel and Community Engagement at University of Texas Hillel. In this role, she engages diverse university students in Jewish life, focused particularly on Israel. She has recruited for and led numerous Birthright Israel trips for University of Texas students.

Sade grew up in our congregation and celebrated all the special Jewish moments of her young life in our sanctuary, including her Bat Mitzvah and Confirmation. She is the daughter of Temple members Suzanne Klimberg and Sam Storthz, the granddaughter of our congregant Ann Storthz, and the niece of Temple member Phyllis Storthz.





A SPECIAL EVENING FOR
THE JEWISH COMMUNITY



Rhapsody by The River

Presented by the
Jewish Federation of Arkansas
in partnership with
the Arkansas Symphony Orchestra

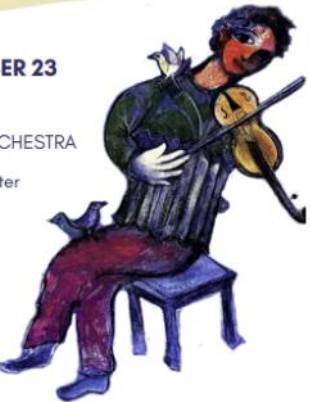
SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 23
7:00 PM - 9:00 PM

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\$1800 Gold (includes 4 tickets)



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Near the Beginning

From Bruce Greenberg, President

We are about to begin a new cycle of Torah study as I write this, and perhaps it is a good time to review what we have learned. Near the beginning, all that existed was radiation. The residual background microwave radiation still present is the oldest aspect of the universe that is detectable. Only when the universe expanded and began to cool was matter formed from radiation. Radiation can be defined by the peaks and troughs that we identify as frequency and wavelength. All that is and all that ever will be in the universe is defined by this pulsatile pattern of radiation. This description is not from Genesis or Jewish

mysticism, but the standard model of the universe put forth by modern physics.

Examining the microscopic world of the atom or distant pulsar stars shows the same pulsatile template characteristic of radiation. Biologic systems followed the same pattern because it is the template for the universe. As a practical matter, we see these rhythmic patterns in day and night, work and rest and even in the music that we play.

The writers of the Chumash and later Jewish scholars sought for meaning in life and recognized patterns for living a good life. They realized that humans living in a civilization did best when they cooperated. The mitzvot create a natural rhythmic pattern for the week, a year or a lifetime. The laws and mitzvot were attempts to imbed a pattern of cooperative living to Jews. These men and women did not understand the physics that underlies this and ascribed these patterns for living a good life to rules set down by an anthropomorphic God. They empirically answered the question of how to live as a community without understanding the why.

Initial understandings of God are anthropomorphic with descriptions of God's hands or other body parts described in Torah. These descriptions of God are little different from contemporary cultures of ancient Israel. Later, descriptions of God's physical being were passed off as metaphors, but attributes of God remained completely anthropomorphic. Justice and goodness are human attributes. Philosophers have long struggled with the contradiction of a good and just God in a world that appears unjust and filled with evil. Ascribing human attributes to God fails a test of consistency of thought.

Spinoza recognized that the world is the way it is because it could not be any other way. This was a remarkable idea for a time that was only on the cusp of modernity. Spinoza believed that God is eternal and since the universe is the only thing that we know to be eternal that God and the universe are the same. We are part of God. Like philosophers before him, both Jewish and gentile, he could see that human communities benefited from living for each other rather than individuals living only for one's personal benefit. Spinoza believed that performing mitzvot as worship to God was not freedom since we would only be doing this by being compelled. True freedom comes from doing good to others because it is inherently the right thing to do and that makes our lives better. He may have progressed closer to the truth than ancient rabbis, but he still did not know the answer to why this was true.

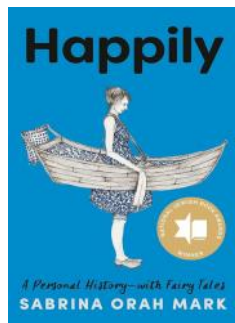
Anthropology has shown that humans and our near relatives developed to live in cooperative groups. It is no wonder that small bands of chimps forage together and Jews seeking a new place to live traditionally migrate as a minyan. We are not meant to be alone. This pattern was intuitive prior to civilization, but the knowledge was attenuated by the fragmented aspect of specialization and class distinction inherent in civilization. How to live together in a community needs to be learned within a civilization. A pre-civilization people do not need the golden rule since they live the golden rule to survive. Cooperation is built into the rhythm of pre-civilization. Science is concerned with understanding what the universe is and how it functions. Ironically, in this case, science provides the answer to the question of why we should live lives filled with mitzvot.

AL BARRON BOOK CLUB

Sunday, December 1, in the lobby

HAPPILY: A Personal Story, With Fairy Tales

by Sabrina Orah Mark



WINNER OF THE NATIONAL JEWISH BOOK AWARD • A beautifully written memoir-in-essays on fairy tales and their surprising relevance to modern life, from a Jewish woman raising Black children in the American South—based on her acclaimed *Paris Review* column “Happily”

OFFICE *hours*

Bruce Greenberg will conduct office hours about twice a month for congregants to express their ideas or concerns. The November office hours are November 10 and 24 at 11am—12 pm. Office hours are casual (no appointments necessary) and will be conducted on Sunday mornings in the Temple lobby.



The Community Outreach Committee is filling **Thanksgiving Baskets** with food for underserved families. We are asking for donations.

Each basket can be sponsored for \$36.

Sponsor as many as you like by sending a check to the Temple office, or applying the amount to your bill.

Call 501.225.9700 or email templesecretary@bnai-israel.us.

If you would like to assemble or deliver the baskets to designated high schools, we need that also.

Any questions?

Contact Kirsta Nigro, kirstanigro1@gmail.com or at 501-425-9188, to let her know if you can help!

Sukkot Fun with Congregation B'nai Israel Students!



DONATIONS

Endowment Fund

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's Special Birthday
Carole and Gary Weisbly

In memory of Lollie Rosen
Nancy and Tad Phillips

In honor of Steve Bauman
In honor of Leonard Hassan
In memory of Allan Mendel
Heidi and James Williams

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's Special Birthday
Nan Selz

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's Special Birthday
Dale Ronnel

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's Special Birthday
Ruthe Kaplan

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's Special Birthday
Arnie Nachman and Patricia Highley

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In memory of Daniela Imber Vanderzant
Annabelle Imber Tuck

In memory of Helen Lockwood Eichenbaum
Peggy and L.R. Jalenak

In memory of Rabbi David L. Blaustein
Milt Baer

Bauman Family Music Fund

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's 90th birthday
Anne and Larry Miller

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's 90th birthday
Karen Sherman

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's 90th birthday
Sheri Simon

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's 90th birthday
Jill & Steve Bauman

E. Lee Ronnel Fund

In honor of Dale Ronnel
Rev. Jonathan Curtis and First Baptist
Church Little Rock

Vogel Family Caring and Sharing Fund

In memory of Rose Schwartz
Sam Vogel, Jr.

Oakland Jewish Cemetery

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
Robert K. Marble

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
Miriam and Leonard Hasson

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
Jane Goff

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
Carole and Gary Weisbly

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
Keith Maddison

Storthz Religious Educational Fund

In honor of Jerry Jacobson's 90th birthday
Eileen and Larry Hamilton

Levy Fund for Camp Scholarships

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
In honor of Barbara Hager's Birthday
Rabbi Gene and Bobbye Levy

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Sandra Pruitt
The family of Sandra Pruitt
Joannie Irwin and Susan Lesser

In memory of Frances Fendler
The family of Frances Fendler

In appreciation of Rosh Hashanah Services
Madelon Scallet

In memory of Gilbert Blass Cohen
The family of Gilbert Blass Cohen

In memory of Max Levit
Gus Block

Anonymous

DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

1st	Barry Goldman	14th	Jana Cohen	23rd	Ravn Breed
2nd	Aliza Brown		Beth Miller		Herbert Monoson
	Marina Ivanovsky		Joshua Shemper		Sophia Young
4th	Alexander Flaxman	15th	Betsy Mayersohn	24th	Carol Parham
	David Goldsholl		Marilyn Sorrells		Dave Vrudny
	Robin West	17th	Bradley Diner	26th	Mollie Axelroth
5th	Philip Levin	18th	Debbie Diner		Richard Estelita
	Emily Wagner	19th	Lynn Greenberg		Beverly Wittenberg
6th	Jules Ifrah		Noah Householder	28th	Tracy Grinstead-Everly
7th	Allison Lux	20th	Rose Back	29th	Asher Hillman
	Sebastian Wolf		Jasper Davidson		Alan Kauffman
9th	Ricki Fram		Avi Helton	30th	Maggie Head
11th	Fred Levin		Alexandra Ifrah		Donna Kirkwood
	Maureece Levin		Paul Michael Roda		Libby Thalheimer
12th	Timothy Kessler	21th	Rebecca Kauffman		
13th	William Cohen		Teddy Rudofsky		
	Candy Levy		Edward Scallet		
		22nd	Daniel Roda		

DECEMBER WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

1st	Jo and Andy Lawton	40 years
	Becky and Jay Marks	40 years
5th	Muriel Lederman & Brian Storrie	53 years
7th	Tina and Nate Bernstein	39 years
9th	Tricia and Jerry Gold	18 years
17th	Jasper and Wyn Davidson	13 years
19th	Carmen Arick & Emily Adams	38 years
	Karla and Larry Back	53 years
24th	Miriam and Leonard Hasson	52 years
26th	Laura and Allan Gold	51 years
29th	Shirley and Bill Friedman	56 years
30th	Aliza and Jeff Brown	31 years



Kathy and Jack Grundfest, on the engagement of their daughter, Lauren, to Drew Marsh. Congratulations also to Lauren's grandmother, **Judy Grundfest**.

Susie and Brian Rosenthal on the birth of their granddaughter, Evelyn Alaine "Evie" Giles, born to Molly and Madison Giles.

Liz Lucker and **Mary Machen**, whose son, Spencer Lucker, was installed as President of NextGEN Detroit, the young adult division of the Jewish Federation of Detroit.

David Lowitz, who was elected and installed as President of Congregation Agudath Achim.

NOVEMBER YAHRZEITS

November 1/2

Bob Arnold
 Anna Attias
 Nathan Axler
 Helene E. Block
 Shelton Block
 James Coffey
 Betty Davis
 Rose B. Deitz
 Emanuel Dreidel
 Flora Seisel Dreyfus
 Joe A. Feibelman
 Aaron Frank
 Allan Glubok
 Ann Glubok
 Sam Goldenberg
 Dolores Greenberg
 Samuel Lasker
 Manford H. Levy
 Dr. Glenn Lowitz
 Eugene M. Pfeifer Jr.
 Benjamin Raff
 Maurice S. Rubenstein
 Charles M. Simon Sr.
 Liliane Smart
 Joseph Spiegelman
 John Towbin
 Henry Dave Wexner
 Paul Yoder

November 8/9

Robert Axelroth
 William Back Jr.
 Stanley Bauman Jr.
 Susan Forsyth Bauman
 Mark J. Block
 Edwin 'Eddie' Ceitlin
 Howard R. Cohn
 Robert Joel Covin
 Hortense Weil Ehrenberg
 Lazarus Ehrenberg
 Morris Navra Ehrenberg
 Joshua Epstein
 May Newman Gans
 Mollie Gordon
 Vera Diamond Jacobson
 Sol Fisher Klarberg
 Evelyn Kohler
 Naomi Lubner
 Nancy Meyers
 Ella D. Small
 Alan Cole Springer
 Camille Heiman Thalheimer

November 15/16

Maurice L. Altheimer
 Edward S. Back Sr.
 Joseph David Back
 Almen Barron
 M. R. Carb Jr.
 Ruth Ottenheimer Cohen
 Rosabell Dreyfus
 Samuel Lasker Epstein
 Abraham Figarsky
 Irving Greenberg
 Estelle Gurdin
 Dr. Hyman Harberg
 Ariel Barak Imber
 Nathan Kauffman
 Rose Lemle Masur
 Hallie Cohen Miller
 Wolf Moses
 Betty Friedman Nash
 Dr. Percy C. Nordlinger
 Sallie Ottenheimer
 Dan Reikes
 Rachel S. Silbernagel
 Charles M. Simon Jr.
 Jerry Smart
 Leslie Marks Strauss
 Nona Pollock Summerfield
 Henrietta Volmer
 Bernard Waltzer
 Sonia Waltzer
 Rabbi Louis Witt
 Louis L. Wolfort

November 22/23

Delsie Gans Altman
 Albert Bloom
 Albert A. Ehrman
 Lee Eichenbaum
 Clare Grabin Fein
 Charles Feldman
 Louis Froug
 Simon Gans
 Joan Allenberg Giraud
 Stanley Goodman
 Mark Z. Greenberg
 Mose Hartman
 Bertha L. Heilbron
 Charles F. Hexter
 Amelia Kahn Jacobi
 Esther Jacobson
 Lillian Kahn
 Marion Kaplan
 James Mendel Kempner
 Albert I. Korenblat
 Claire Levy
 Maurice Shae Lifschitz
 Judy Miller
 Edith Peiser
 Jacob Rephan
 Elsa Klein Rosenthal
 Joe Storthz Sr.
 Bernese O. Thalheimer
 Naomi Breitowich Zottoli

November 29/30

Henry Berger
 Priscilla Brown
 Joseph Cohen
 Saul Goodman
 Hattie Heiman
 Minnie Kahn
 Bertha Knoff
 Peggy Kramer
 Hattie Kronberg
 Josephine Landauer Menkus
 Adolph Meyers
 Ronald L. Mulkey
 Virginia Estelle O'Briant
 Mae Lyons Pfeifer
 David L. Reibstein
 Martin David Rosen
 Gayle Wise Slager
 Mary Snyderman
 Marie C. Storthz
 Gege Thalheimer

**WE RECORD WITH
 SORROW THE DEATH
 OF OUR MEMBER**

Robert Flemming

Husband of Susan Flemming

Stepfather of Eileen
 (and Larry) Hamilton

CEMIFY FOR OAKLAND JEWISH CEMETERY

Check out the mapping system at Oakland Cemetery. Find our loved ones' graves and get a lay of the land and history of our beautiful cemetery by using the QR code. Take a photo with your phone and open up the amazing program.



Oakland Jewish Cemetery

Sesquicentennial Year
1874-2024

Dear Members of Congregation B'nai Israel, effective May 31, 2024 the purchase price of a single cemetery space in Oakland Jewish Cemetery is now \$1250.00.

If you are interested in purchasing a space or spaces, please contact the Temple office by phone at 501-225-9700 or by email at templesecretary@bnai-israel.us



[Click to see the Congregation B'nai Israel Brit Kehillah](#)

LEAVE A LEGACY
CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL



REPORT AN ANTISEMITIC OR BIAS INCIDENT

We all have a responsibility to report and respond to antisemitism or hate when we see it.

TO REPORT AN ANTISEMITIC OR HATE INCIDENT, VISIT:
ADL.ORG/REPORTINCIDENT-KULANU

IF YOU FEAR FOR YOUR SAFETY OR THE SAFETY OF OTHERS,
CALL 9-1-1 IMMEDIATELY.

What should I report?

You should report any incident you perceive as antisemitic, biased or hateful.

Here are some examples:

- Antisemitic or other hateful graffiti in public places, including synagogues and schools.
- Vandalism of religious artifacts such as mezuzahs and menorahs and holy places.
- Online harassment, including hateful social media posts and emails. Remember to take a screenshot!
- Verbal harassment, including emails and voicemails.
- Media-based incidents, including antisemitic or hateful content in a news story.
- White supremacist propaganda.

Make an impact in the fight against antisemitism and hate.

Scan this QR code to report an incident:



DONATIONS: THANK YOU FOR YOUR ONGOING GENEROSITY TO YOUR TEMPLE

Your donations support so many of B'nai Israel's programs in so many areas.

All donations to B'nai Israel are appreciated!

To reduce our administrative costs, donations of \$10.00 and less will not be acknowledged to the donor or recipient separately by mail or email but will continue to be gratefully acknowledged in the monthly Chronicle.

ENCLOSED IS MY GIFT OF DONATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ _____

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- E. Lee Ronnel Fund for Cantorial Music
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- Hallie Cohen Miller Archive Fund
- Oakland Jewish Cemetery Fund
- Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- Pfeifer Community Outreach Fund
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- Stern Library Fund

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- Grundfest Israel Scholarship Fund
- Rosa Pfeifer Isaacson Scholarship Fund
- Storthz Religious Education Discretionary Fund
- Leibs Memorial Scholarship Fund
- Memorial Fund for Education and Youth
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