CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL

THE CHRONICLE TEMPLE APRIL 2025 VOLUME 25 - ISSUE 4

THE RABBI SPEAKS Rabbi Barry Block



Dear Friends,

I write in the afterglow of extraordinary, fun, and meaningful Purim celebrations, but we will be preparing for Passover as this Chronicle reaches you. With that calendar

in mind, I would like to introduce you to an observation articulated by my teacher Yossi Klein Halevi: Some of us, he writes, are "Purim Jews," while others are "Passover Jews." It's worth quoting Halevi at length:

"Jewish history speaks to our generation in the voice of two biblical commands to remember. The first voice commands us to remember that we were strangers in the land of Egypt, and the message of that command is: 'Don't be brutal.' The second voice commands us to remember how the tribe of Amalek attacked us without provocation while we were wandering in the desert, and the message of that command is: 'Don't be naive.'

"The first command is the voice of Passover, of liberation; the second is the voice of Purim, commemorating our victory over the genocidal threat of Haman, a descendant of Amalek.

"Passover Jews' are motivated by empathy with the oppressed; 'Purim Jews' are motivated by alertness to threat.

"Both are essential; one without the other creates an unbalanced Jewish personality, a distortion of Jewish history and values."

WORSHIP AT-A-GLANCE

FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICES IN APRIL

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

FRIDAY, APRIL 4 Shabbat Service Led by Rabbi Block and E. Lee Ronnel Student Cantor Aleksandra Dubov Sermon: "Combating Antisemitism in 2025" Oneg Shabbat Hosts: Executive Committee, to Welcome Luke Frauenthal and Michael Roberts Accompanist: Kathy Cooper

FRIDAY, APRIL 11 Shabbat Service for *Shabbat HaGadol*, the Shabbat before Pesach Led by Rabbi Block

Sermon: "Awaiting Messianic Redemption" Oneg Shabbat Hosts: Bari and Mark Himelfarb Music: Jana Cohen, Teddy Ferguson, and David Korenblat

FRIDAY, APRIL 18 Shabbat Service Led by Rabbi Block Sermon: "Stepping into the Sea" Music: Richard Estelita and John Willis

FRIDAY, APRIL 25 Shabbat Service Led by Rabbi Block and E. Lee Ronnel Student Cantor Aleksandra Dubov Sermon: "The Israeli Government and Global Antisemitism" Oneg Shabbat Hosts: Janet and Scott Korenblat Accompanist: Diana Brandon

Continues on next page

The Temple Chronicle

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(The Rabbi Speaks continued from front page)

Recently, the Confirmation class and I studied Halevi's words and supporting texts from Torah and our rabbinic sages. Only a decade ago, virtually any Reform Jewish teen would have insisted that our central obligation is to be "Passover Jews." The obligation of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world, reminds us of the reason that we are Jewish.

Now, though, our teens are increasingly aware of antisemitism. While some face antisemitism personally, they know that many others, in America and around the world, confront severe discrimination and

SATURDAY MORNINGS IN APRIL

Shabbat Torah Study at 9:30am, led by Rabbi Block on each Shabbat morning in April.

Shabbat Morning Worship at 11am, led by Rabbi Block and Cantor Dubov on April 5 and 26 and by Rabbi Block on April 12 and by Rabbi Block and Jana Cohen on April 19.

The service on April 19 will be a Shabbat and Festival morning service for the last holy day of Passover, including *Yizkor*-Memorial prayers.

persecution as Jews. They agree with Halevi, as do I: In 2025, we must be both "Purim Jews" and "Passover Jews."

Recently, our Arkansas General Assembly considered legislation to combat antisemitism, and for that we should be grateful. However, I have two concerns, one that I expressed to the general public. The other is one that shared with you in my Kol Nidre sermon half a year ago.

- 1. Even with the uptick in antisemitism in 2025, many Arkansans face discrimination and repression on account of their identities—not only Jews, but Black Arkansans and other people of color, gay men, lesbians, trans and nonbinary people, and immigrants, including law abiding folks who are in this country legally. In a legislative session that did anything but make life easier for these Arkansans, the singular focus on antisemitism is problematic. This is an obligation for all "Passover Jews."
- 2. The governments of the United States and Arkansas are increasingly identifying and combating antisemitism only when it comes from the extreme left, not the equally terrifying antisemitism coming from the extreme right. Those of us who vote "blue" have a particular obligation to fight antisemitism on the extreme left. Those who vote "red" have an equal duty with regard to antisemitism on the extreme right. All "Purim Jews" must be alert to these threats and respond to them. Our congregation celebrates the Jews of Color, LGBTQ Jews, and immigrants in our midst; being a "Purim Jew" means not being naïve about the oppression that **any** Jew faces, whether it's on account of antisemitism or another form of hate.

In a better world, a better America, and a better Arkansas, we would all be "Passover Jews." We do not have that luxury as we move from Purim to Passover in 5785/2025.

Faithfully,

Farry 20, Block

Adult Learning at Congregation B'nai Israel presents...

Rabbi Marc Katz Author of Yochanan's Cradle



YOCHANAN'S GAMBLE



Some two thousand years ago, the story goes, a rabbi named Yochanan makes the epitome of pragmatic gambles—wagering the entire fate of the Jewish people. His quick thinking inspired generations of sobriquet rabbis to navigate their own ethical challenges pragmatically determining truth, upholding compromise, convincing others, keeping peace with neighbors, avoiding infighting, weighing sinning in hopes of promoting a greater good.

In his book, *Yochanan's Gamble*, Rabbi Katz lays out a new Jewish path forward for resolving moral conundrums in our day and breaking the deadlock that exists in our broken political discourse.

Rabbi Marc Katz serves Temple Ner Tamid in Bloomfield, New Jersey and is Adjunct Professor of Talmud at Hebrew Union College in New York. His earlier book, The Heart of Loneliness: How Jewish Wisdom Can Help You Cope and Find Comfort, was a finalist for the National Jewish Book Award. He also wrote a chapter in The Mussar Torah Commentary, edited by Rabbi Block.

Scan the QR Code to join Sunday, April 7, 9:30 via Zoom



SCAN M



"Let all who are hungry come and eat"

Congregational Passover Seder

Join Temple B'nai Israel and the community for a beautifully catered Seder

Thursday, April 17 ~ 6:00 pm

Please RSVP by contacting the Temple office at 501.225.9700 or templeadministrator@bnai-Israel.us

Adult Member - \$38 Non-member \$47 Kids 10 - 18 - \$12

Kids under 10 eat free.

Vegetarian meals available by request.

The Seder is generously supported by the Charles, Freddie, and Sylvia Newfeld Fund

If the cost would prevent you from attending, please contact Rabbi Block at <u>bblock@bnai-Israel.us</u>



5785 Passover Morning Worship Services 2025

Sunday, April 13, at 11am

Festival Morning Worship for the First Holy Day of Passover, led by Rabbi Block. Daniel Block will chant from *Shir HaShirim*, Song of Songs, traditionally read during Passover.

Saturday, April 19, at 11:00 am

Shabbat and Festival Morning Worship for the Last Holy Day of Passover, including *Yizkor*-Memorial Prayers, led by Rabbi Block and Jana Cohen. This service will be followed by the Vogel Caring & Sharing Fund's Pesach Luncheon.

Both services will be held in the Library and will also be available via Zoom with the Meeting Owl.



Thank you, Lane Boyd!

In February 2024, Lane Boyd joined our Temple staff as our part time Administrative Assistant. From day one, Lane has been dedicated to his work and exceeded every expectation. Lane would soon become our Administrative Assistant and our Facilities Manager.

Since October 2024, Lane has been the only fulltime Temple employee other than Rabbi Block. He has partnered with Rabbi, Temple leaders, volunteers, and part time staff, to assure excellent administration and service to our congregation in every area.

From the day that Lane joined our staff, he let us know that he would not be working at Temple long-term. He had studied computer science in college, and he was always looking toward a career in that field. His IT skills have been a tremendous asset to our operations.

Now, Lane has begun a full time position with One80 Intermediaries, and we are thrilled for him to have this opportunity.

While we will miss working with Lane as a staff member, Lane is a Temple member. In addition to attending Temple services and programs, Lane looks forward to joining the ranks of our Temple volunteers.

Welcome New Operations Manager Michael Roberts!

Michael Roberts has joined our Temple staff as Operations Manager. Michael's duties will include oversight of our Religious School, alongside facilities management and a variety of administrative tasks.

Michael comes to us from Target, where he was a team leader, having previously been an editor, writer, and critic at the *Arkansas Times*. He also has a background in education.

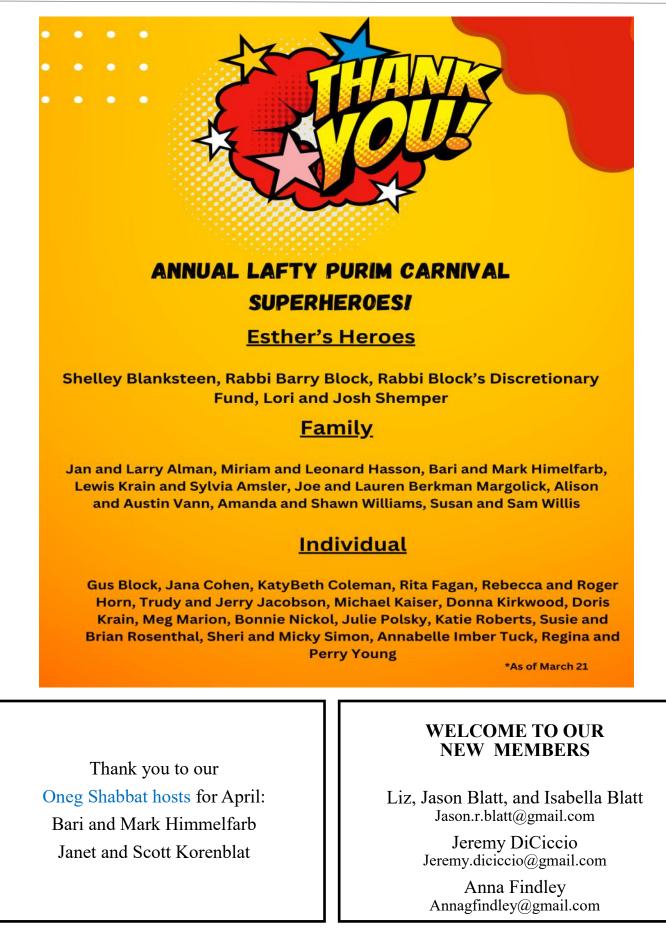
Michael, too, is a Temple member, so he knows us pretty well already, and many Temple members know him. As a lifelong Arkansan whose father and late grandfather were preachers, he has inside knowledge of congregational life.

Fun fact about Michael: He lives in a small complex of seven apartments, and three of them are occupied by Temple members!



The Temple Chronicle





From Lewis Krain, President

I'd like to take this month's column to fill you in on the new staffing in the CBI office. We're trying something new; we've split the position of Director of Administration, Education, and Youth Engagement into two new positions: Operations Manager and Member Services Manager. The hope is that we will be dividing a single job that could be overwhelming and time intensive, especially on off hours, into two more manageable positions.

Michael Roberts is our new Operations Manager. This role encompasses various aspects of facility maintenance and general administration, stewarding the physical and IT infrastructure of the Temple. He'll also coordinate with the Board of Trustees Treasurer and our Bookkeeper to manage day-to-day aspects of financial operations such as billing and accounts payable. In addition, Michael will manage operations of the religious school such as enrollment, scheduling, purchasing supplies, and implementing events and curriculum. Curriculum planning and design will remain a task handled by the Rabbi in conjunction with the Religious School Committee, currently led by Alex Daniel.

We're excited to introduce Luke Frauenthal as our new Member Services Manager. This role tackles most of the public-facing aspects of CBI administration. This includes program planning, fundraising, rental contracting, and volunteer management. In addition, he'll have administrative tasks of maintaining the membership database, assisting with correspondence, and maintaining the cemetery database.

In addition, both of these roles will cross-train to cover the other to ensure that we are not struggling to maintain operations during times of vacation, illness, or other absences. The Executive Committee is hoping this will put the congregation on a footing of increased stability and coverage moving forward. Credit for the design of this model goes to Shelly Barron, who is currently heroically filling the roles of both Administrative and Executive Vice President, and I want to stress the number of hours that she's put into designing, recruiting, and filling these roles.

If you have any trouble remembering the breakdown of these two positions, don't worry... we're all learning the new ropes together. The most important thing is that everyone take the time to welcome and get to know Michael and Luke as you see them over the next few months, and that you give them a chance to show you how great they can be in their new roles.

Safety Security Peace of mind

What you provide when you sponsor security for Shabbat worship

Congregation B'nai Israel is committed to the safety of our Temple.

Will you help us keep our sacred Temple safe for worship? Your donation is greatly needed and appreciated more than ever.

Contact Lane at LBoyd@bnai-israel.us or 501.225.9700 to select a date.

Sponsor Shabbat evening or morning worship for \$180.00.

Congregation B'nai Israel - Vogel Caring and Sharing Pesach Luncheon

Please join us on Saturday, April 19 following morning services for our Vogel Caring and Sharing Pesach Luncheon.

Please RSVP to the Temple Office at templeadministrator@bnai-israel.us or 501.225.9700

This event is hosted by the Caring and Sharing Committee and made possible by a generous grant from the Vogel Caring and Sharing Fund.

Caregivers and drivers are welcome as well.





What a Wicked night at the Congregation B'nai Israel Purim Shpiel!



March at Congregation B'nai Israel Religious School!

As I took a seat in the sanctuary for my first day of religious school at B'nai Israel, Rabbi Block was asking the kids a question: "Why do we sing Shabbat songs on Purim? It's a Sunday!"

"Because we're weird!" came one answer, accompanied by a round of laughter.

"NO!" said the Rabbi. "It's because on Purim, things are ALL MIXED UP!"

I felt that to the very center of my being, because let me tell you, starting a new job at the Temple has been a case of being all mixed up over and over. But it's been a blast getting to know new faces, reestablishing relationships with people I already knew, and learning the ins and outs of all the moving parts that keep our Temple functioning.

I could not be more honored to be a part of this community, first as a brand-new Jew-by-choice in 2020, then as a member, and now as part of Temple staff. And as I get to know our religious school faculty and students more, I can't express how excited I am to be here with you all.

I'd like to take a moment to offer my deepest thanks and appreciation for outgoing Administrative Assistant and Facilities Manager, Lane Boyd. Lane has been instrumental in helping me transition into this role, and I couldn't be happier he is pursuing a job in his field – not to mention that he will be able to attend services again as a layperson! A list of thanks to everyone else who deserves them would take up more space than I have, so let me end this by saying: thank you for this opportunity, Congregation B'nai Israel. Even if I sometimes get all mixed up!

Michael Roberts Operations Manager



Fun times at the LAFTY Purim Carnival!

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DONATIONS

Sustaining Fund

In memory of Lina Himmelfarb Bonnie Nickol

Yahrzeit Fund

In memory of Joyce Arick and Shara Adams Dr. Carmen Arick and Emily Adams

In memory of Ruth Rodell Daniel and Luci Rodell

In memory of Laura Reifer Ken and Judy Reifer

In memory of Elizabeth Levinson Levin Fred Levin

In memory of J.B. Heyman Mike Hart, Jr.

In memory of Irving Balto Karen Sherman

In memory of Arthur O. Sanders Keith Maddison

In memory of A. Dan Phillips Sandra Phillips

In memory of Chester E. Miller Raida Snyderman

In memory of Gertrude Solomon Pat and Barry Solomon

In memory of Stanley Falk, Geraldine Defrance, and Dr. Sidney Jacob Fields Carol Fields

In memory of Beatrice Saltman Miller and Joseph A. Miller

Ann and Larry Miller

Bauman Family Music Fund

In memory of Marilyn Robison Jill Hershaft

Oakland Jewish Cemetery Fund

For the unveiling of Sam Nickol's headstone Bonnie Nickol

In memory of Stanley Falk, Geraldine Defrance, and Dr. Sidney Jacob Fields Carol Fields

Vogel Family Caring and Sharing Fund

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Anonymous

In memory of Jalna Byron Kottwitz Gus Block

In memory of Norman Glosserman Gus Block

In appreciation of the Rabbi's blessing at our 60th anniversary Patty and Herb Monoson

Ann and Sam Storthz Religious Education Fund

In memory of Ann Storthz Anna Marks and Joshua Epstein

In memory of Ann Storthz Martha and Charles Alman



Lauren Berkman Margolick and Joseph Margolick, who welcomed their new baby Noa Rebecca Margolick on March 20.

Beth Levi, who received a 2025 Faculty Excellence Award at the William H. Bowen School of Law at University of Arkansas-Little Rock.

Timothy Kessler, who as Sasha Harrison was named Miss Gay Southern Arkansas America 2025.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

1st 2nd	Judith Coffey Phillip Young Justin Young	11th 12th	Zane Chrisman Camille Dante Larry Nafe	22nd 23rd	Raelynn Marie Williams Van Gates Vaughn Gates
3rd	Daisy Keith	13th	Rebecca Horn	24th	Gabriel Elson
	Amanda Williams		Emily Lewis	25th	Alex Daniel
4th	Charles Newfeld		Mickey Loeb		Harvey Miller
	Rickie Oliva		Jeffrey Nodelman		Hannah Singer
5th	Eowyn Davidson	14th	Susan Flemming	26th	Lucy Towbin
	David Lowitz		Ellen Moore	27th	Bettina Brownstein
	Betty Rosen		Nancy Phillips		Katherine Hulett
6th	Mark Strauss		Lori Shemper	28th	Mark Levin
	Tracye Townley	15th	Gary Weisbly		Julie Polsky
7th	Deanna Arrants	17th	Philip Axelroth	29th	Layla Bell
	Julian Keith		Mikhail Ivanovsky		Lane Boyd
8th	David Pear	18th	David Mack		Michael Krupitsky
	Alexa Shemper	20th	Miriam Hasson		Eden Willis
9th	Luke Kramer		Jaxon Horn	31th	Isaac Matthew Aronson
	Charlene Prousnitzer	21st	Ellie Daniel	31th	Shannon Davidson
			Magnolia Ada Teeter	2	

MAY WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES

1st	Noel Strauss and Joan Early Strauss	26 years
2nd	Nancy and Tad Phillips	18 years
5th	Eoin Dockter and Jessie Curtis	16 years
6th	Susan and Phil Axelroth	25 years
7th	Samuel Kauffman & Kathryn Tull	9 years
9th	Amanda and Shawn Williams	14 years
10th	Debbie and Brad Diner	27 years
11th	Jamie and Thomas McGarry	29 years
12th	Kelsey Utne & Karl Rozyn	13 years
	Susan and David Lowitz	12 years
13th	Sandie and Aaron Lubin	36 years
17th	Libby and Lee Thalheimer	45 years
19th	Kathy and Jack Grundfest	35 years
21st	Nancy and Claud Alexander	47 years
22nd	Heather and David Gerson	32 years
	Sandi and Barry Uretsky	20 years
23rd	Deborah and Bernie Bevill	44 years
24th	Sunny and Eli Baker	10 years
	Charlene and Chuck Prousnitzer	44 years
	Aaron Rabiroff and Maureece Levin	10 years
	Susan and Sam Willis	15 years
25th	Lisa Coffey Hulett & Cidney Hulett	17 years
	Denny and Gary Ticker	45 years
26th	Galina and Michael Krupitsky	46 years
27th	Jonathan Aronson & Lauren Appell	7 years
28th	Tracy Grinstead-Everly and Rob Everly	30 years
	Alan Thalheimer & Betsy Gray	9 years
	Cori and Tim McGrath	25 years
29th	Don Pfeifer & Maggie Hogan	9 years
	Byron Kantrow & Susan Rosenthal Kantrow	26 years
31st	Betsy and Arnie Mayersohn	44 years
	Corbin and John Levin	22 years
		-

April 4/5

Robert R Besser Billy Eisenkramer Leonard Frankenstein Rose Chozick Jacobson Eleanor Kokes Gertrude Mossovitz Levin Mary B. Levy Sue Maddison Audrey Miller Poritzky Philip C. Prousnitzer Jr. Abraham Alan Shindler Ruby Thalheimer Smith

April 11/12

Barbara Grundfest Bauman Joshua A. Gill Jesse Kaiser Marjorie Kempner Levy Michael Mack Dr. Ellis Rivkin Joseph B. Selz Tommy Wuntch





.April 18/19

APRIL YAHRZEITS

David Axler Rene Bollag Valrus Gates Sandra F. Goldberg Terry Hope, Sr. Phyllis Kaplan Irene Klikna Betty Levy Steven J. Lewis Annie N. Miller Sam Nickol Roberto Oliva Jr. Steven Rosen Malcolm Yahn

April 25/26

Morris Besser Jack Stiel Dante Siesel A. Franklin Margot Strauss Garon Tillie Greenberg Rachael Deroy Kempner Jordan Harold Kiel Ola Leibs Celia Lifshitz Lillian Muchnick Edward Narkinsky Sidney Leo Shlenker

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.





WE MOURN THE DEATH OF OUR BOOKKEEPER

Cheryl Brown

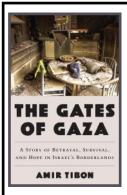


<u>Click to see the</u> <u>Congregation B'nai</u> <u>Israel Brit Kehillah</u>



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*



AL BARRON BOOK CLUB

Sunday, April 2 at 3pm, in the lobby

Book *The Gates of Gaza* by Amir Tibon

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.

- Antisemitic or other hateful graffiti in public places, including synagogues and schools.
- Vandalism of religious artifacts such as mezuzahs or 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:





The Temple Chronicle

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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 \$

From:

In honor of:_____

In memory of:

In appreciation of:

Other:

Send acknowledgment to:

LIST OF NAMED FUNDS

GENERAL ASSISTANCE TO B'NAI ISRAEL

Endowment Fund Sustaining Fund Salinger Landscape Fund Mulkey Sacred Music Fund Bauman Family Music Fund E. Lee Ronnel Fund for Cantorial Music Ottenheimer Fund

LIFECYCLE SUPPORT

Vogel Family Caring and Sharing Fund Hallie Cohen Miller Archive Fund Oakland Jewish Cemetery Fund Rabbi's Discretionary Fund Pfeifer Community Outreach Fund Memorial Prayerbook Fund Stern Library Fund

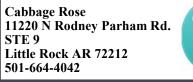
EDUCATION, YOUTH, CAMP, AND **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Mayersohn Leadership Development Fund Grundfest Israel Scholarship Fund Rosa Pfeifer Isaacson Scholarship Fund Storthz Religious Education Discretionary Fund Leibs Memorial Scholarship Fund Memorial Fund for Education and Youth Levy Fund for Camp Scholarships Meir Chayim Camp Scholarship Fund Diner Memorial Fund for Jewish Education Jordan Memorial Fund for Jewish Education **Knoff Family Fund** Newfeld Fund for Interfaith Relations Sisterhood Legacy Endowment Fund

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