



BETH EL NEWSLETTER

The Heights Synagogue

September 2004
אלול 5764 תשרי 5765



Rabbi Moshe Adler

The World Calculation

From Nili
and me
to the
entire
BE-THS
family:
L'shanah
tovah
tikatevu
– May
you be
written
down for
a good
year.

When the Volkswagen “Beetle” was revamped and reissued several years ago, the manufacturer ran an ad that said, “If you sold your soul in the eighties, here’s your chance to buy it back.” If only it were that easy!

In medieval folklore, one who had no soul was believed to cast no reflection in the mirror. The metaphor is quite apt. When you feel you’ve sold your soul, the person who looks back at you from the mirror is no one you know, and may as well not exist. This is why it can be so difficult to be, say, a politician or an entrepreneur who is ethical as well as effective. You want to see yourself, not some soulless ghost of the person you used to be, looking back at you from the mirror.

One of the difficult things we learn (or, all too frequently, fail to learn) is how to know the difference between compromise and selling one’s soul. For hippies, taking any action that did not hew to their ideals was called “selling out,” and for yuppies, taking any action that still hewed to their ideals was called being hopelessly naïve.

When, however, one is neither a born-yesterday idealist nor a burned-out cynic, one asks oneself a grown-up’s question: “When did I make

mature and sensible compromises during the course of the year, and when did I cast aside what I knew to be right and do what was expedient?” The distinction applies to family and social relationships, to child-rearing, to the workplace, and to one’s personal relationship with G–d.

During this month of Elul, as we prepare for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, we search our lives for ways to correct our shortcomings and improve our virtues. We think about things we did and things we failed to do, and muse, “If only I had thought it over first. From now on, I will.”

This, says the Talmud (Bava Batra 78b), is the essence of choosing right over wrong, and of repenting the wrong choices one has made:

Come, let us make the World Calculation: weighing the immediate loss incurred in performing a mitzvah against its ultimate reward, and weighing the immediate reward gained in committing a sin against its ultimate loss.

The World Calculation can be the key to a good new year. If we make that calculation, the Sovereign of the World will help us do the math.





Jack Valancy

**QUESTIONS?
CONCERNS?
COMMENTS?
COMPLAINTS?**

As always, please do not hesitate to contact your President by e-mail jack@valancy.com or home telephone (216) 371-1439

HELP US STAY IN TOUCH! Please be sure we have your current contact information: phone number and home and e-mail addresses. Send changes to Blanche Valancy, blanche@valancy.com or call her at (216) 371-1439

E-Mail Newsletter If you'd like to get the pdf e-mail version, contact benews@apk.net (You must have the free Acrobat Reader in order to open the attachment.)

We're Different

We're different from other synagogues. For starters, we don't have a brand name. We are not Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, or Reconstructionist. We describe ourselves as traditional, egalitarian. "Traditional" in that we do a full service every Shabbat and holiday morning, including a full Torah reading. We're the first non-orthodox congregation in 30 years to do this in Cleveland. "Egalitarian" because women and men are equal in all aspects of synagogue life. We offer more mitzvot for women, not fewer for men.

Something else distinguishes us: While we acknowledge that synagogue memberships do keep us afloat, we don't believe people should have to pay to pray. This was an important principle during our earliest living room meetings when we were deciding who we were and how we wanted to do things. Several of our founders told of inappropriate requests for money elsewhere. We decided that financial circumstances should not limit a member's full participation in our congregation.

It's not that we don't need the money. As you know, we face a significant operating deficit. With this in mind, our Board considered whether we should begin charging for High Holy Day tickets, rather than continue to offer them on a complimentary basis, with the hope of receiving voluntary donations.

After a spirited discussion and thoughtful deliberations, our Board decided to continue our policy of not charging for High Holy Day tickets. Despite our financial challenges, we remain true to our founding principle of not requiring people to pay to pray. We are confident that our friends will look into their hearts and make voluntary donations appro-

priate to their financial circumstances. We also set out to provide educational opportunities. Look at the education programs listed throughout each edition of our newsletter. Consider the variety of topics, settings, and leaders. We are interested in many different things and are happy to share our knowledge and curiosity with others.

Events during recent months have brought out the best in our community. In July, we cancelled our annual congregational picnic to attend a dear member's funeral and lend support to her grieving family. We also celebrated simchas as we've witnessed several of our fine young people become bar or bat mitzvah.

Each week I am delighted to join our members and friends at kiddush after Shabbat services. While we offer more than a cup of wine and a piece of kichel, I'm convinced it's not the bountiful table that holds people for an hour or longer. Most of us socialize, and many stay to discuss Talmud, pray, and sing together.

Our secret is that we like being with each other. Each of us contributes strength and vitality when we pray together, learn together, support each other, socialize, and build our synagogue together. Whether you attend services every week and participate in many programs, or are with us just a few times a year, you are always welcome in our home for worship, learning, and community.



Blanche, Zev, and I wish you a sweet New Year filled with good health and happiness. We look forward to sharing joys and sorrows with our dear friends.

Adult Education

At the Siegel College of Jewish Studies

Our member, Cheryl Birkner Mack, will be teaching a course on “Understanding Jewish Prayer” at Siegel College on Tuesday mornings, from 9:15-11:00, this fall. The course is meant to explore general themes of prayer, and of weekday, Shabbat and Holiday services, as well as the history and meaning of individual prayers. The class will also examine ritual objects, the role of music, and gender issues. Cheryl would love to have Beth El - The Heights Synagogue members join her for the class.

Jewish Short Story Discussion Group

Beth El - The Heights Synagogue’s Jewish Short Story Discussion Group will hold its first meeting on Sunday, August 29, 7:00 PM at the home of Sondra and Harvey Jacobs.

Joy Goldman Collas, an experienced teacher of writing and poetry, will facilitate the discussions of short stories by Jewish authors. The initial meeting will focus on selecting authors and stories and deciding how often the group will meet and other organizational matters.

Contact Sondra Jacobs for more information:
(216) 397-1481 or hajacobs@juno.com

Chesed Committee

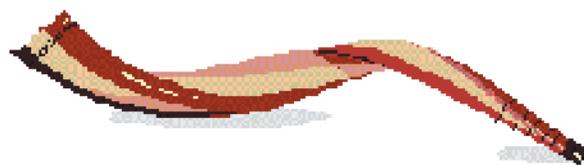
Cemetery Cleanup Volunteers Needed

A community-wide effort to beautify the Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery will take place on Sunday, August 29, 2004, from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM at 3740 Ridge Road in Brooklyn Heights.

If you or your family are interested in participating in the annual Cemetery Cleanup, please contact Beth Wachter at (216) 932-5964 or wachter@nacs.net. This is a family-friendly event that allows our congregation, along with other area congregations, to participate in the mitzvah of beautifying the grounds of Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery. This cemetery was for indigent and/or non-affiliated Jews, and has fallen into disrepair in recent years. Snacks, water, sunscreen and garden gloves will be provided. Volunteers are encouraged to bring hats, tools and wheelbarrows. Jobs are also available that do not require physical work, such as doing inventory of headstones, greeting people, etc. There will be a small talk in the middle of the morning about the importance of this mitzvah. Please consider being a part of this worthwhile project, for just a few hours on Sunday, August 29th.

Nursing Home Outreach Project

Beth El-The Heights Synagogue has been matched with Homewood Residence in Cleveland Heights as a part of the Jewish Community Federation’s efforts to reach out to Jewish residents of non-Jewish nursing homes and assisted living facilities. Volunteering at Homewood might involve friendly visits to Jewish residents, celebrating holidays with special foods, etc. Examples might be bringing in hamantaschen at Purim or some challah and grape juice for a Friday afternoon visit. Details are pending, but please consider some participation in this act of kindness. Bringing children to visit residents would be a wonderful activity, as well. Involvement can be as little or as much as you want. Once more information is available on the residents, we’ll go from there. Please contact Beth Wachter if you might be interested, at (216) 932-5964 or wachter@nacs.net.



ANNOUNCING
OUR
BETH EL
- THE
HEIGHTS
SYNAGOGUE
WEB SITE!

For timely
and
archived
information,
please visit
our new
web site.
The
address is:
[http://www.
bethel-
heights.org/](http://www.bethel-heights.org/)
(no hyphen)

The web site
maintains
the
synagogue
calendar,
archived
issues of
the
newsletter,
a brief
history
of the shul,
a statement
from Rabbi
Adler
and much
more...

HIGH HOLY DAY DETAILS

Labor Day
Morning
Minyan

Join us
for a
Labor Day
morning
minyan,
Monday,
September
6,
at 9:30 AM,
at the
synagogue.

Enrich your
holiday
with the
stirring
sounds
of the
shofar,
a preview
of the
weekly
Torah
portion
and an
enthusiastic
Shaharit
service.

High Holy Day Child Care

Beth El–The Heights Synagogue is pleased to welcome your child to our High Holy Day services for 2004/5765. Your child is welcome to sit with you during all services. Realizing, however, that even the most patient child may need an occasional break, we are offering babysitting for several of our holiday services:

- Babysitting is for pre-schoolers, 18 mos. to 5 years of age.
- Babysitting will be offered on the first and second days of Rosh Hashanah, Sept. 16 and 17, from 9:00 AM until 2:00 PM and on Yom Kippur day, Sept. 26, from 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM.
- Care will be provided by experienced teens.
- Kosher snacks will be served (including on Yom Kippur).

• Cost of babysitting is \$9.00 per child per day, with a maximum total cost per family of \$50.00 for all three days. Because we are not permitted to write or handle money on the Holy Days, it is mandatory that you pre-register your child, using the form that accompanied your tickets, and pre-pay by check.

• We will also have Holy Day programming for grade-school age children from 10:30 AM to 12:30 PM on the dates listed above. Kosher snacks will be served, including on Yom Kippur. No advance registration is required, and this programming is free.

• Again this year: In addition, we will have a Kids' Drop-In on Erev Yom Kippur for all ages from 6:30 PM to 9:30 PM. No advance registration is required, and this evening of quiet, supervised care is also free.

Contact the synagogue, at (216) 320-9667, if you have any questions, or if you need another copy of the registration form.

Selihot סליחות

Selihot is at 9:30 PM on Saturday night, September 11. Our selihot observance will begin with a musical celebration of the High Holy Days. We will explore the nusach (melodic line) of the High Holy Day services and share some of our favorite piyyutim (devotional hymn tunes). Please come prepared to sing and, if you would like, to teach others melodies that you particularly like. Our musical celebration will close with the selihot service which will be held at midnight. Please call Lisa Berusch at (216) 397-9060 with questions -- or if you would like to arrange to teach a piyyut or two.

Tashlikh תשליך

Tashlikh is a ceremony which helps us symbolically/physically remove our transgressions. We go to a live body of water to *(continued on p. 5)*



You probably wouldn't like our shul.

REASON #5:

We change the melodies.

We're a small shul with no *bazzan* — by choice.

Members lead all services. Some of us have great voices. Some of us don't. Some of us know the tunes you grew up with. Some of us teach melodies we learned last week somewhere else. Some give a learned *dvar torah* or sermon, some just bring a fresh eye and thoughtful mind.

We try to take pride in every leader, every teacher, every melody. It's not always familiar, but it's always from the heart. And we'd love to add your melodies.

If you think you might like this kind of place, give us a call.
Beth El–The Heights Synagogue. (216) 320-9667.

HIGH HOLY DAY DETAILS

(Tashlikh, continued) throw away any wrong doings before asking God for our final judgment for the year. This is traditionally done on the first day of Rosh Hashanah and some have the custom of using bread crumbs to represent their transgressions, thereby also performing a mitzvah of feeding the fish in the water. (Tashlikh can also be done anytime until Yom Kippur if necessary or desired)



Tashlikh: Thursday, September 16, meet at the Kugelman's home, 2904 Washington Blvd., between Berkshire and E. Overlook, at 5:00 PM. The group will proceed together from there to the Coventry School ravine/creek. Copies of the customary prayers will be available.

Yom Kippur Afternoon

Rabbi Adler will lead a study session on Maimonides' Laws of T'shuvah at 4:30 PM. on Yom Kippur afternoon. All are welcome. The study session will end with the resumption of Yom Kippur services at 5:15 PM.

Yom Kippur יום כפור Concluding Services

Services will resume at 5:15 PM. The shofar will be blown at approximately 8:00 PM. A light break-fast will be served at the conclusion of the services.

Simhat Torah יום כפור

Join us on the evening of Thursday, October 7, at 7:45 PM for a joyous celebration as we dance around the sanctuary with the Torahs. Schnapps and snacks will be served.

On the morning of Friday, October 8, we will continue the celebration with more song and dance. We will finish the yearly cycle of Torah reading and immediately begin again. It is traditional to honor every member of the congregation, including the children, with an aliya on Simhat Torah. We will also honor two respected

members of the congregation with the last aliya of the Torah, Hatan/Kallat Torah, and the very first aliya of the Torah, Kallat/Hatan Bereshit.

Sukka Construction

Please come and help build our shul sukka on Sunday, September 26th at 1:00 PM.

Marvin Palevsky, our sukka maven, has all the tools and materials, but could use some helping hands. Bring children, friends, and creativity; we need to decorate as well.

Once it is built, the sukka is available throughout Sukkot. If you are interested in reserving some time for your family and friends to bring your own meal to eat in the Beth El sukka, call Lisa at (216) 397-9060.



You probably wouldn't like our shul.

REASON #5765:

You don't have to pay to pray.

We know, it's "customary" to charge for High Holyday tickets. And sometimes "custom" becomes law.

But we don't do it that way. It's not as if we don't need the money. It's just one of our founding principles.

When we set out to build our home — for worship, learning, and community — we decided to welcome all Jews, regardless of their financial circumstances.

We welcome you and hope you will make it your home, too.

If you think you might like this kind of place, give us a call.
Beth El—The Heights Synagogue. (216) 320-9667.

חדשות NEWS FROM BETH EL

Welcome New Members: ברוכים הבאים
Gerson and Kimberly Carr

Thanks for Contributions: תודה!

Mrs. Joseph Berger
Henry Bloom and Marilyn Malkin
Michael Bloom and Peggy Sullivan
Michael Bloomfield and Shelly Costa Bloomfield
Lois Butler
Emily Landis Dennis, *in memory of her brother, Jeffrey Landis*
Clara Dick
Jonathan Entin
Loretta Gatins
Chester and Stephanie Gordon
Louis Gray, *in memory of his mother, Esther Gray*
Francis and Meyer Goldberg
Ann and Irwin Jacobs
Stuart and Theresia Kline
Dorothy and Irving Lackritz
Arlene Magar
Elizabeth and Michael Shapiro
Linda and Robert Silver, *towards adult education*
Linda Tobin and Stephen Pepper, *in honor of the birth of Maya Dori*
The Valancy family
The Wachter family, *who donated a portion of the proceeds from their neighborhood ice cream wagon evening on July 28*
Mark Weber *in memory of Ben Silver*
Mark Weber *in appreciation of the newsletter*
Ari Klein and Ditte Wolin *towards children's programming and adult education*

Thanks for Contributions to the Chesed Fund: תודה!

Adi and Judith Gerblach
Henry Bloom and Marilyn Malkin
Connie Friedman and David Shutkin
Stephen Pepper and Linda Tobin
Ellen and Harold Ticktin

Thanks for Contributions to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund: תודה!

Leon Gabinet, *in honor of the Rabbi*
Chester and Stephanie Gordon
Marsha Weisberg-Cohen, *in memory of Laille Gabinet*

Thanks for Contributions to the Kiddush Fund: תודה!

Lisa and Russell Berusch, *in honor of the Preuss family*
Michael Bloomfield and Shelly Costa Bloomfield
Emily Dennis, *in honor of the Preuss family*
Robin Dubin and Richard Krueck
Laura Gooch and David Kazdan, *in honor of the Preuss family*
Harvey and Karen Kugelman, *in honor of the Preuss family*

Thanks for Contributions to the Torah Repair and Book Fund: תודה!
Chester and Stephanie Gordon

Thanks for Contributions in memory of Laille Gabinet: תודה!

Henry Bloom and Marilyn Malkin
Anita and David Botnick
Clara Dick
Louis Gray
Harvey and Karen Kugelman
Meredith and Nissim Lugasy
Enid and Irving Kushner
Law Firm of Chernett, Wasserman, Yarger & Pasternak
Toby Oshuns
James and Judith Saks
Abbie and Steve Sender
Ellen and Harold Ticktin
The Valancy family
Beth and Scott Wachter
Joshua and Pnina Wiesel

Thanks for Donations: תודה!
To Elliot Magalnik, *who donated an oxygen unit*

Mazel Tov!

מזל טוב!

To Aryeh and Galit Dori on the birth of daughter Maya. Maya was born July 6, and weighed in at 6 lbs. 8 oz. Yonah, Maya's 5-year-old brother, is very proud, as are his parents.

Yasher Koach to:

יישר כוח!

Roger Kohn, who had another article published, "A Treasured Legacy: Hebrew Manuscripts at the Bodleiana," The article was published in England by Library History (vol. 20, July 2004, pp. 95-116).

Linda Silver, who edited "A Selection of American Jewish History Resources in Greater Cleveland Libraries," a bibliography funded by the Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland in conjunction with the celebration of 350 years of Jewish life in America.

Nili Adler, who taught an intensive summer Ulpan via distance learning to students in Milwaukee, Kansas City and Chicago. Nili was thrilled that the Siegel College of Jewish Studies was able to make the technology available that enabled her to do this. This was her first experience with distance learning, and it seems to have gone well. (See Photo Below)

Welcome Sign Out, in Boston

Gil and Terri Preuss invite their friends to call and/or visit them at their new home:

83 Walnut Hill Road, Newton, MA 02461

(617) 964-2491

gapreuss@sbcglobal.net

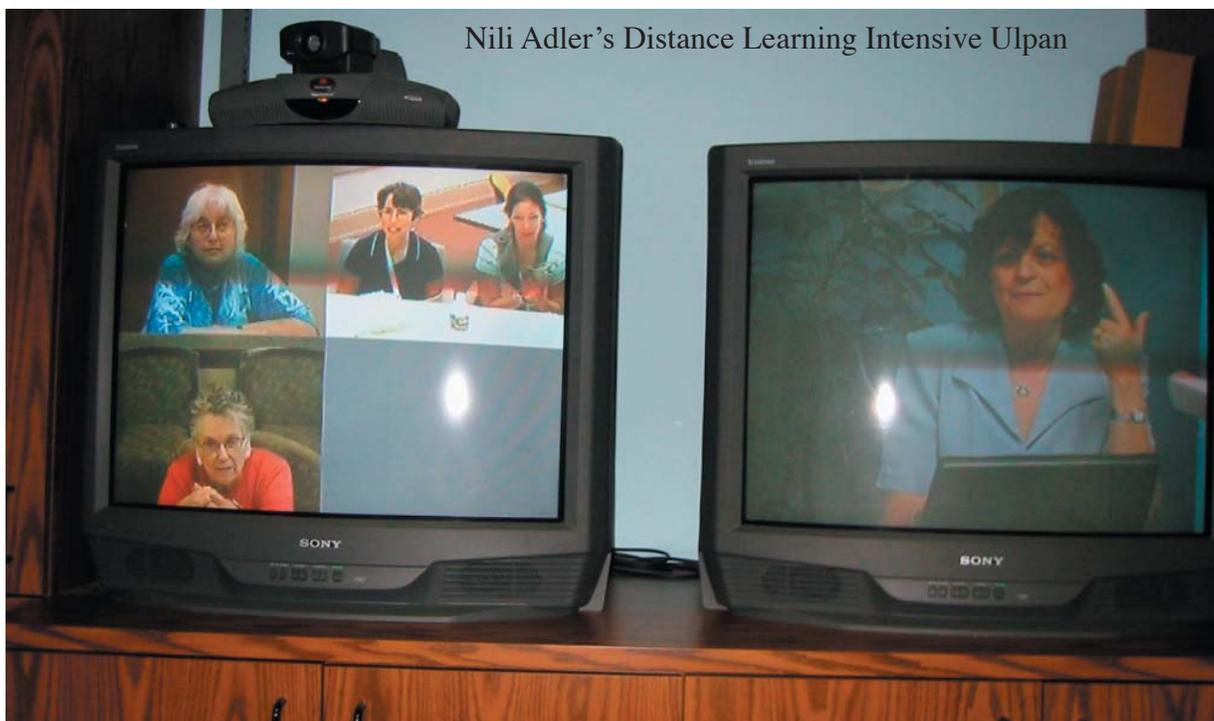


Board Approves Bingo

After careful consideration, the Beth El–The Heights Synagogue Board has decided to sponsor state-licensed Bingo games to provide additional revenue for our congregation. As this newsletter goes to press, we are awaiting the approval of our Bingo application. If the State of Ohio approves, we will move forward with plans to sponsor regular Bingo games at an outside location.

Don't forget to preorder your etrog and lulav for Sukkot.

They are available from numerous sources, including Frank's Hebrew Book Store, Jacob's Judaic Books, Gross Schechter Day School, and Reverend Eli Levy.



CALENDAR, SEPTEMBER 2004

אלול 5764\תשרי 5765

- Sunday, August 29, 9:30 to 11:00 AM – Cemetery Cleanup, Chesed Shel Emeth Cemetery, Ridge Road (*details on page 3*)
- Sunday, August 29, 7:00 PM – Jewish Short Story Discussion Group, at the home of Harvey and Sondra Jacobs (*details on page 3*)
- Monday, September 6, 9:30 AM, – Labor Day Morning Minyan, at the synagogue
- Saturday, September 11, 9:30 PM – Join us for a musical celebration to start the High Holy Days (*details on page 4*)
- סליחות – Selihot services at 12:00 Midnight
- Wednesday, September 15, 7:30 PM – ערב ראש השנה – Erev Rosh Hashanah
- Thursday, September 16, 8:30 AM – ראש השנה – Rosh Hashanah Day 1
- 5:00 PM – Tashlikh – Meet at the Kugelman's home, 2904 Washington Blvd. (*details on page 5*)
- 7:30 PM – Evening Services
- Friday, September 17, 8:30 AM – ראש השנה – Rosh Hashanah Day 2
- Sunday, September 19 – צום גדליה – Fast of Gedaliah
- Friday, September 24, 2:00 PM – Erev Yom Kippur Minha services
- 6:30 PM – Kol Nidrei services
- Shabbat, Sept. 25, 8:30 AM – יום כפור – Yom Kippur Morning Services (Yizkor mid-morning)
- 4:30 PM – Study session, led by Rabbi Adler, on Maimonides' Laws of T'shuvah
- 5:15 PM – Afternoon service
- Shofar at approximately 8:00 PM
- Sunday, September 26, 1:00 PM – Help Build the Congregational Sukka (*details on page 5*)
- Thursday, September 30, 9:15 AM – סוכות – Sukkot Day 1
- Friday, October 1, 9:15 AM – סוכות – Sukkot Day 2
- Sunday, October 3, 2:00 to 5:00 PM – Hold the date for the annual Sukka Hop (*details/locations forthcoming in October newsletter and via e-mail*)
- Wednesday, October 6, 6:30 AM – הושענא רבה – Hoshana Rabbah shaharit services
- Thursday, October 7, 9:15 AM – שמיני עצרת – Sh'mini Atzeret services (Yizkor mid-morning)
- 7:45 PM – Evening service and Simhat Torah hakafot
- Friday, October 8, 9:15 AM – שמחת תורה – Simhat Torah services and hakafot

Sukka Building

Please come and help build our shul sukka on Sunday, September 26th at 1:00 PM.

Details on page 5.



What's Going On?

BETH EL

The Heights Synagogue

Issue 13, September 2004

A Firm Foundation

Excavation for the elevator addition was completed and the foundation was poured in mid-July, but we encountered a few problems along the way. When the excavation reached its final depth, we found shale. Exposed shale has the potential to expand over time, which could cause the building to settle or heave and lead to cracking. In order to prevent this, the excavation was made two feet deeper, and a low-permeability clay cap was compacted on top of the shale. Foundation work then continued as planned. Remedying the foundation problem caused a bit of a delay, so that our new estimated completion date is in late September.



Going Up!

As this is being written the walls of the addition have been completed up to ground level. By the time the newsletter hits the streets, we should have brick walls to look at! In addition to the work on the main elevator addition, masons and roofers have been working to tuckpoint the brick, repair cracks in the school wing walls, and repair the roof.

The Inside Job

As you've probably noticed, the decorating committee has been hard at work. In addition to planning renovations to the sanctuary, committee members have already painted the steps to the bima, added greenery, and replaced the Ner Tamid globe. Now that brick and roof repairs that will prevent more water damage at the back of the sanctuary have been completed, we can move ahead with more work. Before High Holy Days, look for balcony curtains, new wall paper on the bima, plaster repairs and painting in the back part of the sanctuary, and more. Please pardon a bit of disarray while the work is underway.



Give Green for Greenery!

As Beth El – The Heights Synagogue completes exterior construction of our new entrance, we will begin to landscape the grounds. This fall we will be installing trees, shrubs, and perennials. To help defray these costs to the Capital Fund, we invite you purchase plants, perhaps to memorialize a family member or honor a beloved friend.

Trees and Shrubs Available for Purchase

4	Red Maples	@\$250.00 ea.	= \$ _____
2	Serviceberry	@\$135.00 ea.	= \$ _____
1	Hornbeam	@\$ 95.00 ea.	= \$ _____
2	White Fringetree	@\$105.00 ea.	= \$ _____
1	White Spruce	@\$150.00 ea.	= \$ _____
12	Boxwood	@\$ 25.00 ea.	= \$ _____
2	Holly	@\$ 40.00 ea.	= \$ _____
29	Juniper	@\$ 40.00 ea.	= \$ _____
35	Pink Spirea	@\$ 15.00 ea.	= \$ _____
3	French Lilac	@\$ 30.00 ea.	= \$ _____
11	Korean Spice Virburnum	@\$ 40.00 ea.	= \$ _____
1	Allegheny Viburnum	@\$ 40.00 ea.	= \$ _____

Perennials

25	St. John's Wort	@\$ 5.00 ea.	= \$ _____
5	Siberian Iris	@\$ 5.00 ea.	= \$ _____
5	Black-eyed Susans	@\$ 10.00 ea.	= \$ _____
2	Ornamental Grass	@\$ 10.00 ea.	= \$ _____
TOTAL			= \$ _____

*Checks should be made to **Beth El Capital Fund** and mailed to the synagogue office with a note regarding the purpose of the donation.*

All donations will be acknowledged and are fully tax deductible.

Next spring we will create a “volunteer” garden on the east side of the building with divisions from our own home gardens. So hang onto your burgeoning hostas, ferns, and other plants till then!

Questions? Contact Emily Dennis at (216) 589-0663 or glendennis@rmrc.net.

Donor _____

Address _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

In Honor/Memory of _____

לשנה טובה



לשנה טובה תמכתבו

**Beth El -
The Heights Synagogue**
Wishes You and Your Family

**A Good Year,
A Sweet Year,
A Year of Peace.**

