



**“Life's most persistent and urgent question is:  
What are you doing for others?”**

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

**JOIN MLRT IN HONORING  
THE LEGACY OF DR. KING  
ALL WEEKEND LONG!**

### UNITY WEEKEND SERVICES

**Friday, January 15 - 6:00 pm**

*Virtual Service hosted by  
Beth Am Israel*

**Sunday, January 16 - 10:30 am**

*Virtual Service hosted by  
Zion Baptist Church*

### DAY OF SERVICE

**Monday, January 17**

*Participate from the safety of your own home!*



**Details about our Unity Weekend Services can be found on page 2**

**Details about our Day of Service can be found on page 7**

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# Above all, Hope

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**Rabbi David Straus**

Yes, I know, we start the Jewish Year with Rosh Hashanah, which comes in the late summer or early fall, not January 1. But what a year we have just lived through: the COVID epidemic; an election cycle that as I write in early December is still being contested; a year of economic dislocation and struggle for so many; a year in which the issues of race, racism, and racial justice are again front and center in our understanding of America, and what America can and should be; a year in which violence and rioting returned to so many American cities; a year in which Israel's place in the Middle East has changed for the better, perhaps opening the door to a new possibility of peace and normalization; a year that has brought MLRT great financial challenges; a year in which we have come to learn that while our building may be closed for many "normal" activities, MLRT has never been closed—we have learned new ways to pray, learn, teach, pastor and form community; a year in which we have experienced both existential loneliness and isolation, and at the same time come to appreciate perhaps more than ever how important it is to be connected with one another; to be part of a community; to be part of something larger than ourselves; a year in which the quest to live our lives with meaning and purpose and intentionality have a new urgency.

In most "normal" years (how we all crave a return to "normal") our MLK Unity Weekend is one of the highlights of the year. We share Friday Evening Services with the members of Zion Baptist Church and Beth Am Israel, and "do church" together on Sunday morning at Zion; we laugh and smile as we sing and pray; we literally dance our prayers in the aisles as we are led by our Unity Choir, and then on Monday remind ourselves of what it means to be in God's hands during our MLK Day of Service.

We will still celebrate MLK Unity Weekend this year; as with so much of what we have learned to do this year, it will just be a bit different. We will join together on Friday night, January 15, virtually at Beth Am Israel as we welcome Shabbat at 6:00 pm, and Reverend Pollard will share a message. On Sunday morning, January 17, we will gather virtually at Zion Baptist Church at 10:30 am, and be led in song by our Unity Choir, and I will share a brief message. *If you want to participate in our completely virtual Unity Choir this year, please contact Cantor Rudnick at frudnick@mlrt.org.* Following the service, during our "fellowship hour", we will discuss a film (TBD) we encourage you to watch ahead of time. Details can be found at [mlrt.org/MLK](http://mlrt.org/MLK).

And on Monday, we will still have our MLK Day of Service, though all activities will be home-based. Details can be found on page 7 or on our web page. Our hope is to have a second Day of Service this spring, if it is possible for us to be together at MLRT or in the community.

"We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope." Martin Luther King, Jr. spoke these words in a Washington, D.C., address in February 1968, just two months before he was assassinated in Memphis. They echo across the decades and endure as one of the most positive messages of the great civil rights leader's legacy—that the challenges that weigh us down today should never dissuade us from imagining a better, more just, and more love-filled future.

I was taught—and I believe—that no feeling can last forever. Disappointment, sadness, embarrassment, excitement, relaxation, joy—not one of those emotional states, for better or worse, can be sustained indefinitely.

But could hope be the single exception to that rule? Dr. King thought so, and the impact of that belief continues to reverberate, even a half century after his death.

In his personal and public life, he endured many disappointments. Dr. King encouraged that we "accept" those challenges even as we hold onto the hope that makes his message so relevant. A disappointment or setback can put any of us in danger of giving up on our goals, hopes and dreams, whether for ourselves or for the world. Accepting that setback is simply part of the road toward what he famously called "the promised land" frees us to process our failures in a larger context of progress, connection and above all, hope.

There are so many ways to remember and honor Martin Luther King, Jr.; among them is taking today to reflect on this question—what do you hope for, infinitely?

**Details on our first ever virtual MLK Day of Service can be found on page 7.**



# MLRT Is Very Special!



I meet monthly with a group of Philadelphia-area synagogue presidents to discuss the issues and challenges of our congregations. I also communicate on a regular basis with many synagogue presidents across the country. As I listen to them discuss the programming and services their congregations provide, I am constantly amazed and impressed by our programming and services, especially what we have been providing during the current pandemic. We offer a wide variety of religious services, educational and musical programs, and social action and social justice projects to keep our Jewish community alive and connected.

There are many sights and sounds of music at MLRT. In addition to the beautiful music offered in our regular religious services, we are fortunate to experience many other musical programs. In November, our own Ross M. Levy shared his talents in a special magical Shabbat service. In December, we were joined by Doni Zasloff and Eric Lindberg of Nefesh Mountain, who shared their Bluegrass interpretations of our Jewish musical heritage. In the upcoming months, we will have expert classes on the music of the Mendelssohns, a Shabbat with recording artist Elana Arian, and some special musical evenings featuring the extraordinary talents of some of MLRT's own members.

We believe in life-long learning and offer many education programs for people of all ages. There are regular programs with our clergy including Bible and Torah study and our Nosh and Drash and Forward Thinking programs. We have a regular series of Jewish Book Council programs where you can read and then discuss interesting fiction and non-fiction books with their outstanding authors. We also offer the Hassel Lecture programs throughout the year. As an example, in October, Bill Haltom, a well-known lawyer from Memphis joined us to discuss his book about Joseph Hanover, an Orthodox Jew from Poland and his leadership of the fight for women's suffrage in Tennessee, the deciding state that ratified the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment to give women the right to vote. Finally, we offer special programs such as "From Kristallnacht/Pogromnacht to Liberation: An Evening with Ernie Gross and Don Greenbaum", a program that honored two veterans who bore witness to the Holocaust as they described their experiences of survival and liberation.

There are also many ways that you can participate in activities to support our neighbors and others in our community. The MLRT Tikkun Olam Network has continued its work during the pandemic supporting food banks and other projects to address food insecurity and the material needs of families in our area. In December, a group of members participated in the annual Mitzvah Circle Foundation run and we collected clothing, toiletries and toys for those in need. We also continue to support immigrants through our involvement in HIAS. This past fall, a group of our members and clergy began conversations about racial justice both internally and with other faith-based organizations in our area. Another group of our members has organized to support various civic engagement initiatives.

MLRT is very active in learning about and supporting Israel. Our congregation has been building a partnership with a small Reform congregation in Ma'alot Tivon, in Northern Israel near Haifa. We are learning about life as a progressive reform Jew in Israel, making new friends, and diving deep into issues that matter to all of us. During the year we have many other activities and programs about Israel. For example, in October we engaged in a discussion with the Israeli Consul General and the New York correspondent for Haaretz, and in November we had programs with Women of the Wall and Hand-in-Hand, an organization operating schools in Israel that teach both Arab and Jewish children. More programs are planned for the winter and spring.

Finally, MLRT provides opportunities for all of us to have fun and enjoy being with each other. Our Sisterhood and Brotherhood are both very active providing a variety of educational, social action, and social programs. We have had family trivia and bingo nights to play games together. On Monday nights, we get together to review and discuss many interesting and enjoyable movies. Finally, if you want to get a little exercise and fresh air, join us on our monthly nature walks on Shabbat.

These are some of the many opportunities offered by MLRT to be active, involved, and connected with other people while you endure the restrictions imposed to keep us all safe from this pandemic. If you are interested in participating in any of these inspiring activities or many others, please check the Bulletins, our weekly emails, or contact the clergy or the MLRT office for more details.

As I write this article, the first COVID-19 vaccines are being approved. I hope that by the late spring or early summer there will be sufficient doses available to enable all of us to be vaccinated and that we will be able to get back together in our building and out in the community. In the interim, please wear your masks and social distance so that you and your families stay safe and well and the number of people infected by COVID-19 will decrease. I pray that 2021 will be a sweeter year and a safer year for all of us!

# Lifelong Learning

## Happy New Year!

We are ecstatic to share the first MLRTMatters issue of 2021, which highlights the many opportunities for worship, study, connecting and creating community at MLRT. Our top priority is ensuring the safety of our MLRT family and we are constantly evaluating, adjusting, and adapting our programming to the rapidly changing times.

We ask for your understanding during this time and urge you to visit our website at [mlrt.org](http://mlrt.org) or call the Temple office at 610-649-7800 for the most up-to-date information on all our services and programs.



Sally Brown,  
Librarian

Welcome to the New Year at Main Line Reform Temple! I hope you have been reading some memorable books and stories during this time. Concentrating on a good book can help get us through the winter as we try our best to be healthy and safe. Our next short story gathering on Zoom will be by Leonard S. Bernstein, who wrote Death by Pastrami, a portrait of New York over the last 50 years, filled with tales of the garment district of the 1950's. We will read the first story, "The Guided Tour of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue." Leonard S. Bernstein is a retired owner of a garment factory. The stories evoke a time and place, Seventh Avenue in New York City, as it changes and evolves. Join us on Thursday, January 7, 2021 at noon for our discussion.

Because the story is short in length, please look for an additional story on our website which will give us a preview of our February 23, 2021 program. Author Susie Schnall will speak to our Sisterhood at their Annual Book/Author Visit. Susie came to us two years ago, leaving with wonderful photos of Sisterhood members wearing sashes from her book, The Subway Girls. Susie has written another book of historical fiction, this time about the 1939 World's Fair in Flushing Meadows, New York, titled We Came Here to Shine. Once again, she gives us historical detail of this remarkable event. The New York World's Fair of 1939 holds an important place in history as it took place as the Great Depression was winding down and World War II was beginning.

I want to suggest a story written by the multi-talented actor and author, Tom Hanks, who wrote a book of short stories titled Uncommon Type. The collection contains "The Past Is Important to Us", recounting one man's time travel to the 1939 New York World's Fair. This twist-ending story has wonderful descriptions of the fairgrounds and exhibits and is perfect for those planning to attend the program on February 23 or for anyone who enjoys science fiction and history.

Looking ahead to more reading related to upcoming programs, the book currently being read by the Bernie Kleinman Book Club, The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties that Helped Create Modern China, will be discussed by the author, Jonathan Kaufman, at our virtual service on Friday evening, February 26. Jonathan Kaufman is a Pulitzer Prize winning reporter who has been writing and reporting on China for 30 years. He won the National Jewish Book Award in 2018 for Broken Alliance: the Turbulent Times between Blacks and Jews and is the Director of the School of Journalism at Northeastern University in Boston.

I hope you will peruse the above book and story in preparation for the two important programs that will take place in February. Further details about Susie Schnall and Jonathan Kaufman's visits will be shared in the February bulletin and on our website.



## Do you love books? The Bernie Kleinman Book Club is looking for new members!



We welcome anyone interested in reading to join us on select Tuesday evenings throughout the year for friendship, discussion and review. Our Tuesday, January 26 selection is The Last Kings of Shanghai: The Rival Jewish Dynasties That Helped Create Modern China, an epic, multi-generational story of two rival dynasties who flourished in Shanghai and Hong Kong as twentieth-century China surged into the modern era, from the Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Jonathan Kaufman. Please join us on Zoom for our January 26 discussion at 7:30 pm!

Jonathan will be the featured speaker during our virtual Friday night service on February 26. Sally Brown provides more information about this amazing author above.

If you are interested in joining the Bernie Kleinman Book Club, please contact Norman Fienman at [nfienman@gmail.com](mailto:nfienman@gmail.com).

**All programs are virtual and can be found at [mlrt.org/zoom](http://mlrt.org/zoom)**



# Lifelong Learning

## Good News From Israel

Starting with this issue of MLRT Matters, we will be bringing you a monthly update on the good news coming out of Israel on a wide-ranging list of topics. For the next few months, Renee Margulies, Jackie Shulman and Sherrill Neff will take turns bringing to your attention things happening in Israel that intrigue us or amaze us!

A country roughly the size and population of New Jersey, Israel can boast of at least six world class universities. At Ben Gurion University in Beersheba, scientists are uncovering ways to preserve the biodiversity of the Red Sea's coral reef. Other research is focusing on making liquid fuel from used tires. A technology for the production of jet fuel developed from vegetable oils is ready for commercialization. More pertinent to our current pandemic, Professor Gabby Sarusi has developed a one minute electro-optical test of nose, throat or breath samples that will identify carriers of COVID-19 in under one minute, with over 90% accuracy. The results are being submitted for FDA approval. At the Weizmann Institute, researchers are conducting some 65 Coronavirus related projects on campus. They are also making important findings on Alzheimer's, Autism and Parkinson's. Beyond its borders, the Hebrew University's Medical Faculty signed an agreement with Thomas Jefferson University to facilitate staff exchanges and collaborate on scientific research. Ben Gurion University is also partnering with India to improve food and water sustainability.

We hope you will enjoy these "good news" bulletins from Israel. Please email Sherrill at [sherrill.neff@gmail.com](mailto:sherrill.neff@gmail.com) or Jackie at [jjshul@gmail.com](mailto:jjshul@gmail.com) if you have any questions, or want to contribute to future issues.

## Multitude of Virtual Learning Opportunities this month with MLRT!

### ◆ KEEPING IT REEL

*Mondays, January 4, 11, 18, and 25 at 8:00 pm*

Get your popcorn ready for these weekly movie discussion with Rabbi Newburge! All movies are on Netflix.

**January 4:** The Ballad of Buster Scruggs

**January 11:** Trumbo

**January 18:** Cookie's Fortune

**January 25:** Uncut Gems

### ◆ FORWARD THINKING

*Tuesday, January 5 at 12:15 pm*

A thought-provoking lunchtime discussion of selected articles from The Daily Forward with Rabbi Straus.

### ◆ PLURALISM IN AN AGE OF POLARIZATION

*Thursday, January 7 at 7:30 pm*

Learn from Zach Schaffer on how to communicate constructively across political divides.

### ◆ LUNCH & LEARN

*Tuesday, January 12 at 12:00 pm*

Take a break for lunch while Rabbi Straus serves up interesting conversation.

### ◆ MUSIC CLASS

*Thursday, January 21 at 7:00 pm*

Part one of an in-depth look at the Mendelssohns, focusing on the life and music of Felix Mendelssohn. This class will be taught through music and dialogue by professor of music, Karl Middleman, and feature Andy Heller, Jessica Lennick, Diane Steinbrink, and Sherrill Neff. Co-sponsored by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church.

### ◆ NOSH & DRASH

*Friday, January 22 at 12:00 pm*

Start your Shabbat with some learning together with Rabbi Newburge. Explore ancient and modern texts for new perspectives in Jewish life and thought.

### ◆ SHABBAT SHIRA

*Friday, January 29 at 6:30 pm*

Be a part of this special service dedicated to the music of the Israeli Reform/Progressive Movement.

***All programs are virtual and can be found at [mlrt.org/zoom](http://mlrt.org/zoom).***

*Please see page 17 for all of our wonderful weekly offerings.*

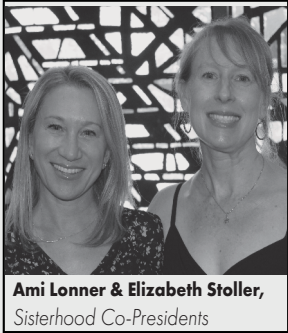


## HASSEL ADULT EDUCATION LECTURE - THE INSPIRING HISTORY OF AMERICAN JEWISH WOMEN'S ACTIVISM

**Sunday, January 24 at 10:00 am**

Dr. Melissa R. Klapper is Professor of History and Director of Women's & Gender Studies at Rowan University. She is the author of Jewish Girls Coming of Age in America, 1860-1920; Small Strangers: The Experiences of Immigrant Children in the United States, 1880-1925; and Ballots, Babies, and Banners of Peace: American Jewish Women's Activism, 1890-1940, which won the National Jewish Book Award in Women's Studies. Her most recent book, Ballet Class: An American History, was published this past March.

# Sisterhood



Happy New Year! Let's hope 2021 brings joy, health and a vaccine! We can't believe the year is half over – where did the time go? We have been very busy with Sisterhood. We held an event in December in honor of Chanukah by hosting a panel discussion, moderated by Rabbi Newburge, with some of our local community partners – HIAS PA, Mitzvah Circle Foundation, and the Narberth Community Food Bank. We chose to “shine a light” on these important groups to see how they have fared during the pandemic and to introduce our sisterhood to ways that they can help these longtime friends of MLRT.

Then later in the month, we sponsored a program with Positive Psychologist (and Temple member), Robert Zeitlin, to discuss Parenting and Partnering in the Pandemic. Thank you to everyone who attended this timely discussion.

We are very excited for our next Zoom event on Thursday, January 7 at 7:30 pm with speaker, Zach Schaffer. Zach will speak on *Pluralism in an Age of Polarization*. Too often, members of our community find themselves struggling to understand the “other” and communicate constructively across divides. We are left wondering why we are so bitterly divided and if we can transcend this new normal. Zach has been searching for answers to this question by placing himself at the center of healing complex political divides.

In his work and research, he has found that polarization has little to do with how much we disagree and a lot more to do with the way our brains are wired. So many of our divides - from Israel and the Diaspora to Democrats and Republicans - have less to do with our competing beliefs and more to do with our divergent identities. He will join us to share this perspective on why we are polarized in the hopes that by understanding those dynamics we can begin to take meaningful steps toward depolarization. This event is free to the Main Line Reform Temple community and accessible via the link on [mlrt.org/zoom](http://mlrt.org/zoom).

Then, please join us for our January general board meeting on Tuesday, January 12, where we will get an update from our very own Leslie Brier about the important work she does with the United Nations as the WRJ representative to the UN. The program will be available on Zoom at 10:00 am.

## ***Purim is around the corner and Sisterhood is hard at work on our annual Shalach Manot fundraiser!***

*We can't think of a better way to let friends and family know that you are thinking about them during these isolating winter months than by sending a cheerful package of Purim treats! Be on the lookout later this month for an email from [shalachmanot@mlrt.org](mailto:shalachmanot@mlrt.org) with all the details and your personalized link to order Shalach Manot packages. Thank you!*

# Brotherhood

Dear reader, short of following the weekly opportunities for activities promoted by the MLRT calendar of events, which are plentiful, and a yet-to-be formalized partnering with either Sisterhood or the Tikkun Olam Network for Martin Luther King Day, Brotherhood and our congregational families continue to face the stark reality of stasis, of neither here nor there due to the all-encompassing virus that confines us to hoping for ultimate relief. Whatever that relief may be, or when it will arrive, is not yet clear; what is clear is that we dare not succumb to meaninglessness or hopelessness for, like the following winter-evoking words from Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain* (1924), there always are moments for discarding ennui then striving for a fulfilling day.

“Yet there was a momentary hint of blue sky, and even this bit of light was enough to release a flash of diamonds across the wide landscape so oddly disfigure by its snowy adventure. Usually the snow stopped at that hour of the day, as if for a quick survey of what had been achieved thus far; the rare days of sunshine seemed to serve much the same purpose—the flurries died down and the sun's direct glare attempted to melt the luscious, pure surface of drifted new snow. It was a fairly-tale world, childlike and funny. Boughs of trees adorned with thick pillows, so fluffy someone must have plumped them up; the ground a series of humps and mounds, beneath which slinking underbrush or outcrops of rock lay hidden; a landscape of crouching, cowering gnomes in droll disguises. . . But there was something roguish and fantastic about the immediate vicinity through which you laboriously made your way, the towering statues of snow-clad Alps, gazing sown from the distance, awakened in you feeling of the sublime and holy.”

May we all make our way to awakened feelings of the sublime and holy in our daily lives.

Kindly,  
Gary Brock, Vice President

# MLRT's MLK Jr Day of Service

**Participate at Home on Monday, January 18, 2020!**

**Ready for some good news?**

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day is still a day of service TOGETHER with our MLRT Community this year! JOIN US at 10:00 am LIVE on Zoom from the MLRT Zoom Room to kick-off the day with our Clergy. Our project leaders will then continue briefly on Zoom to introduce the day's projects. On your own, you and others in your "bubble" can complete one or more of the projects of your choosing together on your own time during the day.

Then join us later IN-PERSON for a drive-up/drop-off of your day's project between 3:00 - 5:00 pm at MLRT. Pull up to the curb in your mask where a masked volunteer will take your items from your trunk and deliver a hot chocolate to anyone in your car who wants one! Bring your own reusable cup or we will provide a disposable cup to you. Physically distanced and masked chatting in the parking lot welcomed!

The key to this day is getting prepared ahead of time! Here are some of the potential projects and supplies you will need for the day. Like everyone else this year, we have learned to be flexible while making plans, so please look at the MLRT website for the latest correct information.

## **Cradles-to-Crayons Clothing and Book Donation & Sorting Activity**

Cradles to Crayons is a non-profit organization that provides children (ages 0-12 years) living in poverty in the Philly region with essentials like clothing, school supplies, hygiene kits and books. If you are interested in participating in this activity, you will need some small trash bags, rubber bands, and gently used clothing (sized NB - Adult M), winter coats and/or books for kids! If you want, you can also purchase new underwear, new pants (boys sizes 5/6 through 14/16) or new long sleeved T-shirts (boys and girls sizes 5/6 through 10/12) since those items are needed most at this time. Be on the lookout for more details in a forthcoming email.



## **Toiletry Bag Assembly for Lankenau Maternity Clinic**

This year, we will be collecting gift bags of trial-sized toiletries, to be given to the patients of Lankenau's maternity clinic. These can be individually pre-assembled at home: all you need are trial-sized containers of shampoo, body wash, toothpaste, deodorant, etc, and a sandwich baggie or cellophane bag to put them in. Use the picture on the left for suggestions/ideas, but the bags need not be fancy!

## **Salad Making for Narberth Community Food Bank and Ardmore Food Pantry**

Come pick up some containers from MLRT and then make your own salad at home. You will need spinach, lettuce, carrots, tomatoes, cucumbers, and a bean, such as kidney or chickpeas. Extra special attention to hygiene is also required. At the end of our Day of Service, please deliver your delicious and nutritious salads to MLRT.

## **Period Supply Collection For Mitzvah Circle Foundation**

Did you know that period supplies are not covered by the SNAP assistance program??!! It's true! And many women and girls are forced to stay home from school or work because they do not have the proper supplies. Collect supplies from your friends and neighbors and drop them off at MLRT before or on MLK Day, January 18, and we will deliver them to Mitzvah Circle Foundation in Norristown. They will then distribute them to the families and agencies that they serve.

***Details on our annual Unity Weekend services with Beth Am Israel and Zion Baptist Church can be found in Rabbi Straus' article on page 2.***



# Teach Our Children: Early Childhood Education

In the ECE, not only do we celebrate New Year's for people, but we love to celebrate Tu B'Shevat, New Year for Trees! From our two-year olds to our Kindergarten classes, we are learning about the importance of trees and taking care of the world we live in. We encourage all our students to take advice from the trees; stand tall and proud, take chances and go out on a limb, remember their roots (specifically the Jewish ones), appreciate your natural beauty and enjoy the view!

Take a deeper look into Tu B'Shevat in the ECE:



"Tu B' Shevat is a fun holiday to share with our Toddlers in the Shiny Apple Room!! We introduce the children to this holiday by using lots of songs, books, and hands on activities. The children will get to taste fruit provided by trees such as grapes (cut up of course), dates, figs and olives!! They will do some planting in honor of planting a tree for the Tree of Life and learn the importance of trees in our lives.

Tu B'Shevat inspires us with the idea that, "Man is like a tree of the field" D'vorim 20:19. Trees provide us with food and we as people can use this as an example to be positive and help/do good deeds for others.

We will be teaching the children how the trees share their fruit with us, and we can share and help others as the trees are an example to us in life."

– Colleen Falo, 2-Year-Olds Teacher

The Cool Cats, one of our Pre-K classes, had a lot to say about why they like trees.



"I like trees because the leaves change color"

– Hannah



"I like how trees grow from seeds"

– Ryker



"I like when cheetahs sleep in trees"

– Daniel

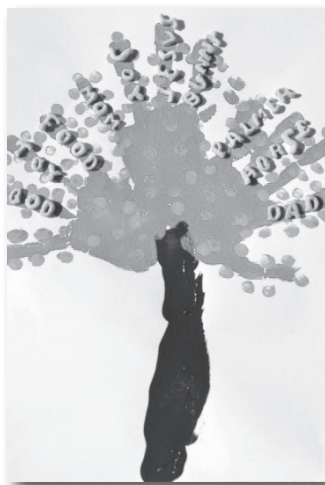


"I like trees because money grows on them"

– Julian

This Tu B'Shevat, get "hands-on" with your family!

The craft below is a perfect way to celebrate the holiday and inject a little extra gratitude to these difficult times. It can be adapted for all ages and for your available supplies.



Here's what you'll need:

- Alpha-Bits cereal
- Paint (brown, green, yellow) & brush
- Glue
- Paper

1. Paint a brown stripe on the paper to represent the tree trunk (you can also paint the inside of your arm if you want to get a little messy!)
2. Using the green paint, cover the palm & fingers of your hand with green paint, and press it to the paper in a slightly overlapping pattern.
3. Put yellow paint on your fingertips and use them to add leaves to the hand-print tree.
4. Spell out what you are grateful for with Alpha-Bits and glue them to the dried tree.

You can also trace hand-prints onto green paper, cut them out, and glue them onto a piece of paper to avoid using paint; spell out words with letter beads; use crayons or markers; or make an entirely edible tree out of food!

We can't wait to see the great Gratitude Trees you create!

# Teach Our Children: Religious School



**Rabbi Kevin Kleinman**

There is a *midrash*, a story about the stories in the Torah that is core to my work as a Jewish environmentalist. After God has created the Garden of Eden and the first two human beings, God walks Adam and Eve around and shows them the marvels of creation. God then turns to Adam and Eve and says, "See all of this, I have created it for you. But be mindful that you don't destroy it. For if you do, there will be nobody after you to repair it."

Caring for the Earth and its inhabitants, being *Shomrei Adamah*, is an important mitzvah found throughout Jewish literature. In addition to letting the land rest every seventh year, there are laws about feeding animals before human beings, building gardens around houses, ensuring water is kept clean, limiting the amount of food waste, and sharing crops that are planted with those in need. In the days of the Torah, you could not eat the fruit from a tree until the fourth year of that tree's life. The mechanism for keeping track of how old a tree was, is found in a minor holiday called Tu B'Shevat – the day on which all trees aged a year.

In modern times, Tu B'Shevat has been revived to become the Jewish Arbor Day. Jewish communities plant trees at home and in Israel. We study Jewish environmental texts and commit to act in a more compassionate way towards the Earth.

Tu B'Shevat occurs in the winter, the season in which trees are storing energy and preparing for blooming in the spring. This year, Tu B'Shevat falls on January 28. We will be celebrating Tu B'Shevat in Religious School with special guests and projects. I can't wait to share what we are doing with our MLRT community!

**No Religious School: January 3 and January 17**



*K-2<sup>nd</sup> grade students proudly display the mezuzot they made for their bedrooms after learning all about the mitzvah of mezuzah!*

## Tu B'Shevat

Tu B'Shevat or the "New Year of the Trees" is Jewish Arbor Day. The holiday is observed on the 15<sup>th</sup> (tu) of the Hebrew month of Shevat. Scholars believe that originally Tu B'Shevat was an agricultural festival, marking the emergence of spring. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Kabbalists created a ritual for Tu B'Shevat that is similar to a Passover Seder. Today, many Jews hold a modern version of the Tu B'Shevat Seder each year. The holiday also has become a tree-planting festival in Israel, in which Israelis and Jews around the world plant trees in honor or in memory of loved ones and friends.

While the holiday is not biblical in nature, it is mentioned by the rabbis in the Talmud, and plays an important role in the Jewish calendar. Many different customs have evolved over the centuries to honor this new year of the trees. Some examples include: planting a tree, eating a new fruit, or eating from the Seven Species (*Shivat Haminim*) described in the Torah as being abundant in the land of Israel. The *Shivat Haminim* are: wheat, barley, grapes (vines), figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates (honey).

# Contributions

(As of December 8)

## *Anne Simon Adult Education Fund*

Rhona Shane  
Yahrzeit of Gertrude Chenetz

## *Annual Fund*

Irene Krause  
Yahrzeit of Sophie Satton  
Yahrzeit of Robert Berenholz

Shana & Ryan Margolis & Family  
In memory of Elaine Gold

## *Art Fund*

Karen Freedman  
In memory of Elaine Gold

## *Barbara Silver Levin Playground Fund*

Arnold Levin  
In memory of Barbara Silver Levin

## *Camp Harlam Scholarship Fund*

Nancy & Larry Abrams  
In memory of Samuel Rosenberg

Richard Ehrenberg  
Yahrzeit of Hyman Ehrenberg

## *Cantor Portnoy Music Fund*

David Krupnick  
Yahrzeit of Fredric Krupnick

## *Caring Committee Fund*

Janet Kaye  
In appreciation of the MLRT Caring Committee

## *Community Action Fund*

Patsy & Lee Herman  
In memory of Elaine Gold

## *Covid-19 Emergency Fund*

Jamie, Michael, Carol & Norman Brest  
Yahrzeit of Suzanne Brest

Amy & Terry Buckman  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Wilma Caine  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Helene & Marc Cohen  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Ann & Gordon Gelfond  
In support of MLRT

Deborah & Fred Greene  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Janet & Steven Handleman  
In support of MLRT

The Heppen Family  
In support of MLRT

Michele Cohen & Marc Prizer  
In support of MLRT

Nina & Michael Rosenthal  
In support of MLRT

## *Covid-19 Emergency Fund Drive cont.*

Cindy & Jeffrey Ruben  
In support of MLRT

Jackie & Richard Shulman  
In support of MLRT

Robin & Eric Siegel  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Stephen Stamm  
In support of MLRT

Liz & Jason Stoller  
In support of MLRT

## *Gordon Israel Trip Scholarship Fund*

Amy & Robert Silverman  
In memory of Arthur Coleman

## *Hassel Adult Education Fund*

Avivah & Gabriel Pinski  
In memory of Marvin Barsky  
A Happy Birthday to Martin Goldberg

## *L'dor V'dor Fund*

Judy & Steve Bleyer  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Nancy Gabel Broder & George Broder  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

David Chornock  
In appreciation of Mark Komen

Ann & Gordon Gelfond  
In memory of Edward Sable  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Renee & Ricky Liss  
In memory of Donald Hoffman

Barbara Miller  
In appreciation of the MLRT Clergy

Mona Zeehandelaar & Ken Harris  
In memory of Elaine Gold

## *Mitzvah Fund*

Susan & Larry Picker  
In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Gabe Deringer  
In memory of Lindsay Lane

## *Odell Diamond Library Fund*

Marcia & Marc Dashevsky  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Judy Horowitz  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Judy Horowitz & Howard Rosenblatt  
In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Ashley Albert

## *Rabbi Newburge Discretionary Fund*

Sande Cohen  
In memory of Barry Cohen

Marcia & Marc Dashevsky  
In honor of Rabbi Geri Newburge

Renee Margulies  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Rachel & Richard McCurdy  
In honor of Rabbi Geri Newburge

## *Rabbi Newburge Discretionary Fund cont.*

Aaron Muderick  
In memory of Michael Muderick

Elizabeth & Aaron Muderick  
In honor of Sara & Rebecca Muderick

Marilyn & Herb Vichnin  
In appreciation of Rabbi Geri Newburge

## *Rabbi Straus Discretionary Fund*

Wendy & Andy Abrams  
In memory of Elaine Gold  
In memory of Arnold Raichek

Beth Cutler Lloyd  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Judy & Barry Fireman  
In support of our food-insecure neighbors

Patsy & Alan Gruenberg  
In memory of Arnold Sagar

Bobbie Halpern  
In support of our food-insecure neighbors

Sharon & Aaron Kanze  
In memory of Shirley Greenbaum  
In memory of Elaine Gold

Maxine Koenig  
Yahrzeit of Sarah Greenberg  
Yahrzeit of Albert Greenberg  
Yahrzeit of Adella Greenberg

Elaine & Don Krasnick  
In memory of Elaine Gold

The Orloff Family  
In memory of Edward Sable

Beth Ross  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

Robert Saltzman  
In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Gabrielle Saltzman

Dessie Sewel  
In memory of Arnold Sagar

Marilyn & Herb Vichnin  
Yahrzeit of Rose Goldberg  
Yahrzeit of Irene Mintchine  
Yahrzeit of Sonia Vichnin

Nicholas Zarvalas  
In appreciation of MLRT Torah Study

Merle Zucker  
Yahrzeit of Marvin Zucker

## *Rick J. Carocci Torah Study Fund*

Lew Rosenblatt  
In memory of Beryl Kolsky

## *Senior Adult Activity Fund*

Gloria & Martin Goldberg  
In memory of Elias "Eli" Cohen

## *Sisterhood Fund*

Joan Blum  
In honor of the birth of Jude Lee Cumberland,  
Grandson of Donna & Larry Miller

Continued on the following page



# Contributions cont.

*Temple Floral Fund*  
Joan Frost & Jared Frost  
Yahrzeit of Ken Frost

*Thanksgiving Fund*  
Shelley & Don Greenbaum  
In support of the Thanksgiving Gift Card Collection

*Youth Engagement Fund*  
Kari & Kenneth Kurtz  
In support of Giving Tuesday

If you have any questions about your donation listing, please contact Davida Chornock, Director of Marketing & Communications, at [dchornock@mlrt.org](mailto:dchornock@mlrt.org).

## Mazal Tov!

**Lee & Kathleen Balefsky** on the birth of their granddaughter, Lucia "Lucy" Mae Martone

**Debbie Foreman Cohen** on the birth of her granddaughter, Maya Perla Cohen, and the birth of her grandson, Jonah Raphael Lingel

**Irma & Roy Foreman** on the birth of their great-granddaughter, Maya Perla Cohen and the birth of their great-grandson, Jonah Raphael Lingel

**Janis & David Glusman** on the engagement of their son, Brian, to Renee Murdock

*We want to share in your simchas!*

*Please email Davida Chornock at [dchornock@mlrt.org](mailto:dchornock@mlrt.org) so we can share your good news with the congregation*

## In Memoriam

*We extend condolences to members of our community on the loss of their loved ones*

**Elias Cohen**  
Husband of Marcy Cohen

**Jerry Cohen**  
Uncle of Beth Cutler Lloyd  
Great Uncle of Peri and Jackson Lloyd

**Elaine Gold**  
Mother of Jill Caine  
Sister of Jerry Harvitz  
Aunt of Betsy Dubin

**Harold Gross**  
Brother of Anita Gross

**Donald Hoffman**  
Husband of Janine Hoffman

**Solomon Littman**  
Husband of Rosette Littman  
Grandfather of Justin and Eric Littman

**Rhoda Miller**  
Sister-in-law of Anita Beckett

**Arnold Raichek**  
Father of Evan Raichek  
Grandfather of Abigail and Rebecca Raichek

**Edward Sable**  
Father of Jill Federman  
Grandfather of Eli and Katie Federman

**Mark Jay Zenstein**  
Father of Cherie Shulick  
Grandfather of Julia and Skylar Shulick



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*Honor the memory of your loved ones and celebrate your simchas by submitting your MLRT contributions online at [mlrt.org/giving](http://mlrt.org/giving).*

*Log on to the ShulCloud portal via the "Member Portal" button on our website to update your membership information, pay your dues, add yahrzeits, and so much more! If you have any questions, contact Gil Marder at [gmarder@mlrt.org](mailto:gmarder@mlrt.org).  
**Save a stamp and time by paying online!***

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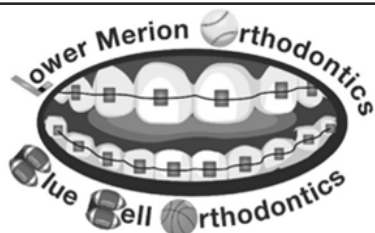
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## You Belong Here.

MLRT strives to uphold the value of welcoming all people into our spiritual home that is so near and dear to our heart as a Jewish people. And we truly do welcome all people, regardless of age, gender, ability, race, sexual orientation, and political leanings.

### Be Inspired. Be Connected. Belong.

Believing in those words means we want everyone who joins or visits MLRT to feel at ease and comfortable participating in all aspects of temple life: spiritual, ritual, social, educational, and musical. Our Inclusion Committee's mission is to proactively combat and remove barriers to participation and engagement of all kinds so that our collective mission of a warm and thoughtful community is widely realized and maintained from generation to generation.





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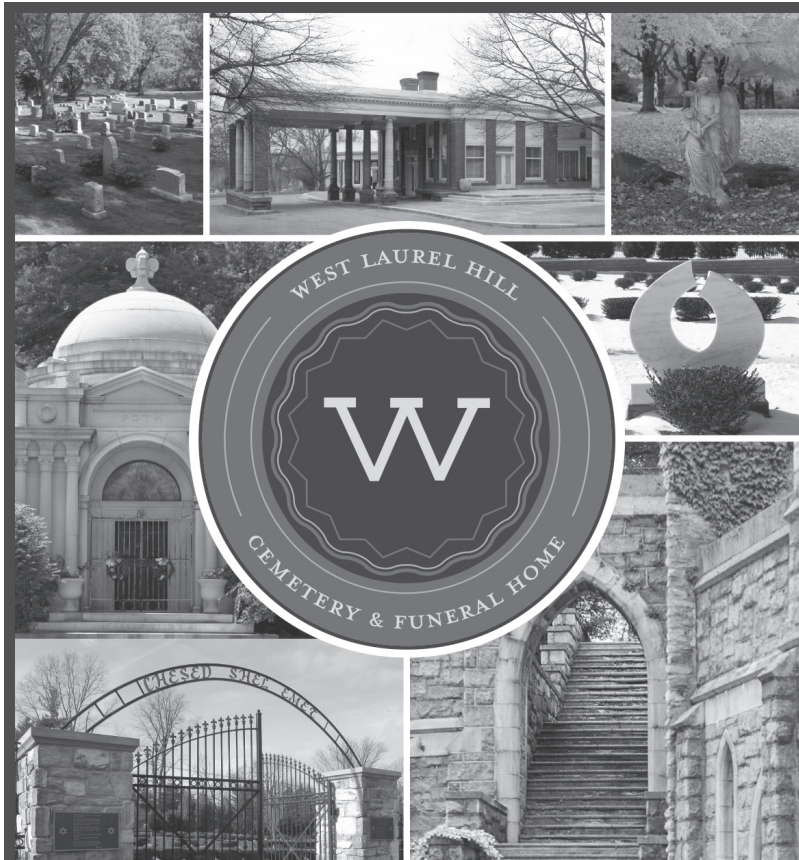
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**We are constantly adding new programs. Check our website often for the most up-to-date information**



**KEEPING IT REEL - MONDAYS, JANUARY 4, 11, 18, AND 25 AT 8:00 PM**

Get your popcorn ready for Keeping it Reel, a weekly movie discussion with Rabbi Geri Newburge!  
All movies can be found on Netflix.

4: The Ballad of Buster Scruggs

11: Trumbo

18: Cookie's Fortune

25: Uncut Gems



**FORWARD THINKING - TUESDAY, JANUARY 5 AT 12:15 PM**

Join Rabbi Straus for a thought-provoking lunchtime discussion of selected articles from The Jewish Daily Forward.



**SHORT STORY DISCUSSION - THURSDAY, JANUARY 7 AT 12:00 PM**

Enjoy a riveting discussion of "The Guided Tour of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue" from Leonard S. Bernstein's Death by Pastrami.



**LUNCH & LEARN - TUESDAY, JANUARY 12 AT 12:00 PM**

Take a break for lunch while Rabbi Straus serves up interesting conversation during our monthly joint Lunch & Learn.



**MUSIC CLASS - THURSDAY, JANUARY 21 AT 7:00 PM**

Part one of an in-depth look at the Mendelssohns, focusing on the life and music of Felix Mendelssohn this month.



**NOSH & DRASH - FRIDAY, JANUARY 22 AT 12:00 PM**

Start your Shabbat with some learning with Rabbi Newburge. Explore ancient and modern texts for new perspectives in Jewish life and thought.



**HASSEL ADULT EDUCATION LECTURE - SUNDAY, JANUARY 24 AT 10:00 AM**

Learn about the inspiring history of American Jewish women's activism with Dr. Melissa Klapper.



**SHABBAT SHIRA - FRIDAY, JANUARY 29 AT 6:30 PM**

Be a part of this special service dedicated to the music of the Israeli Reform/Progressive Movement.

**WEEKLY OFFERINGS**

**THURSDAYS**

**11:00 am - Bible Study**

Our rabbis lead an ongoing discussion of the Tanakh over the year. Join anytime, whether you are an avid Torah student or have never looked at the Torah before.

**FRIDAYS**

**6:30 pm - Friday Shabbat Service**

We invite you to join us as we say Shabbat Shalom to one another, light candles together and make Kiddush. At the end of services, we will un-mute all for our Virtual Oneg Shabbat, when again we can talk to one another.

**SATURDAYS**

**9:00 am - Torah Study**

Each week our Rabbis lead us in lively discussion as we read from the Parsha, or weekly portion, and learn about its context and history. All are welcome to join us, from wherever you are.

**10:00 am - Shabbat Morning Service**

Immediately following Torah Study, join us for a lovely Shabbat Service featuring our clergy.

**6:30 pm - Havdallah with the Rudnicks**

Join with Cantor Rudnick and her family for songs and Havdallah, as we look with hope towards a new week of peace and of good health.

As we continue to utilize technologies, such as Zoom, to gather as a community, we are constantly reviewing protocols to ensure the safest virtual community possible. We look to you all to be our partners in creating a safe virtual space. When you sign into a meeting, class, or services, your name must be present in the waiting room; we cannot admit anyone whose device name appears solely as iPad or iPhone.

Before you enter a Zoom, please make sure your device is listed correctly. You can do this on your iPhone or iPad by doing the following:

Go to Settings —> General —> About  
Tap the first line, which is the name of your device  
Rename your device so it reads your FIRST AND LAST name, and then tap done.

It is OK if your device reads (your name) iPhone/iPad, as long as your name is present. We thank you for your help. We want you to be a part of anything and everything that we offer at MLRT.

*If you have any questions or concerns, please contact any member of the senior staff. We look forward to seeing you on Zoom!*

**All programs are subject to change. The most up-to-date information can be found at [mlrt.org/zoom](https://mlrt.org/zoom)**

# Shabbat & Holiday Services

## Friday, January 1

**Temple Offices Closed**

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Service

## Saturday, January 2

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

## Friday, January 8

6:30 pm Zoom Family Shabbat Service

## Saturday, January 9

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

9:00 am Shabbat Morning Walk

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

## Friday, January 15

6:00 pm Zoom Unity Weekend Shabbat Service, hosted by Beth Am Israel

## Saturday, January 16

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

## Sunday, January 17

10:30 am Zoom Unity Weekend Church Service, hosted by Zion Baptist Church

## Friday, January 22

12:00 pm Nosh & Drash

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Service

## Saturday, January 23

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

## Friday, January 29

6:30 pm Zoom Shabbat Shira Service

## Saturday, January 30

9:00 am Zoom Torah Study

10:00 am Saturday Morning Zoom Service

10:30 am B'nai Mitzvah of Aaron & Ethan Silber  
Sons of Nadine & Noel Silber

4:00 pm Bar Mitzvah of Andrew Bennett Rankin  
Son of Abigail & David Rankin

6:30 pm Zoom Havdallah with the Rudnicks

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**All programs, classes, and services, including B'nai Mitzvah services, are subject to change.**

**The most up-to-date information on our virtual Shabbat and Holiday services can be found at [mlrt.org/zoom](http://mlrt.org/zoom)**

**Virtual programming is great, but we miss seeing your (masked) faces! Join us!**

### Shabbat Morning Walk with Rabbi Newburge

Saturday, January 9 at 9:00 am

Meet at the Cynwyd Trail

Celebrate the beauty of nature and Shabbat with Rabbi Newburge and your MLRT community. We will meet at the Barmouth Trailhead at the Cynwyd Trail (at the end of Levering Mill Rd). Wear your mask and your walking shoes for a beautiful winter walk.

*In the case of hazardous inclement weather, this walk will be canceled.*

*If you have questions, please contact Rabbi Newburge at [gnewburge@mlrt.org](mailto:gnewburge@mlrt.org).*

# January 2021

**All programs, classes, and services are virtual unless otherwise noted and can be found at [mlrt.org/zoom](http://mlrt.org/zoom)**

<i>Sunday</i>	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>	<i>Saturday</i>
					<b>1</b> <b>MLRT OFFICE</b> <b>CLOSED</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> Shabbat Service 	<b>2</b> <b>9:00 am</b> Torah Study <b>10:00 am</b> Shabbat Service
<b>3</b> <b>NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL</b>	<b>4</b> <b>8:00 pm</b> Keeping It Reel: <i>The Ballad of Buster Scruggs</i>	<b>5</b> <b>12:15 pm</b> Forward Thinking	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b> <b>11:00 am</b> Bible Study <b>12:00 pm</b> Short Story Discussion: <i>The Guided Tour of 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue</i> <b>7:30 pm</b> Sisterhood Program with Zach Schaffer	<b>8</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> Family Shabbat Service	<b>9</b> <b>9:00 am</b> Torah Study <b>9:00 am</b> Shabbat Morning Walk* <b>10:00 am</b> Shabbat Service <b>6:30 pm</b> Havdallah
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> <b>8:00 pm</b> Keeping It Reel: <i>Trumbo</i>	<b>12</b> <b>10:00 am</b> Sisterhood General Board Meeting <b>12:00 pm</b> Lunch & Learn with RDS	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> <b>11:00 am</b> Bible Study	<b>15</b> <b>6:00 pm</b> Unity Weekend Shabbat Service hosted by BAI	<b>16</b> <b>9:00 am</b> Torah Study <b>10:00 am</b> Shabbat Service <b>6:30 pm</b> Havdallah
<b>17</b> <b>NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL</b> <b>10:30 am</b> Unity Weekend Church Service hosted by ZBC	<b>18 MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY</b> <b>MLK DAY OF SERVICE</b> <b>MLRT OFFICE &amp; ECE CLOSED</b> <b>8:00 pm</b> Keeping It Reel: <i>Cookie's Fortune</i>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> <b>11:00 am</b> Bible Study <b>7:30 pm</b> Music Class Part 1: Felix Mendelssohn	<b>22</b> <b>12:00 pm</b> Nosh & Drash with RGN <b>6:30 pm</b> Shabbat Service	<b>23</b> <b>9:00 am</b> Torah Study <b>10:00 am</b> Shabbat Service <b>6:30 pm</b> Havdallah
<b>24</b> <b>10:00 am</b> Hassel Adult Education Lecture with Dr. Melissa Klapper	<b>25</b> <b>8:00 pm</b> Keeping It Reel: <i>Uncut Gems</i>	<b>26</b> <b>7:30 pm</b> Bernie Kleinman Book Club: <u><i>The Last Kings of Shanghai</i></u>	<b>27</b>	<b>28 TU B'SHEVAT</b> <b>11:00 am</b> Bible Study	<b>29</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> Shabbat Shira Service	<b>30</b> <b>9:00 am</b> Torah Study <b>10:00 am</b> Shabbat Service <b>10:30 am</b> B'nai Mitzvah of Aaron & Ethan Silber <b>4:00 pm</b> Bar Mitzvah of Andrew Rankin <b>6:30 pm</b> Havdallah
<b>31</b>	<b>February 1</b> <b>8:00 pm</b> Keeping It Reel	<b>February 2</b>	<b>February 3</b>	<b>February 4</b> <b>11:00 am</b> Bible Study	<b>February 5</b> <b>6:30 pm</b> Shabbat Service	<b>February 6</b> <b>9:00 am</b> Torah Study <b>10:00 am</b> Shabbat Service <b>5:00 pm</b> Bat Mitzvah of Victoria Benjamin <b>6:30 pm</b> Havdallah

\*In-person Program





Main Line Reform Temple

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