#TBHtogether
When We’re Apart, We’re Together
Mazel Tov to our Confirmands!
Please join us for Confirmation on May 29 at 7pm
Confirmation Service and Reading of the Ten Commandments

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May, 2020 Remote Adult Learning Opportunities
Check these sources regularly for zoom links, new offerings & details
- Weekly eblast (to sign up email nrivkin@tbhla.org)
- Tbhla.org, under TBH Online
- Facebook.com/tbhla
- *Zoom information is found on tbhla.org or weekly eblast

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Visit wrj.org to register for free
May, 2020 programs open to everyone!
This is how Barbara Javitz, NIHFP Director, has been referring to the outstanding Pantry team during COVID-19. From the core group managing a new world of operations and logistics, to long-time members, to newly recruited volunteers—this little engine is making a big impact for people who need help securing their next meal.

Leadership at Temple Beth Hillel, a founding NHIFP partner, since the doors opened March 13, 1983, recognized early in this crisis that food would be at the center of need. Despite the unprecedented challenges we would all face due to COVID-19, it was clear that TBH would continue doing our part to keep the Food Pantry open. In short order new policies and procedures were outlined to keep people safe during unpacking and packing of food. Without hesitation, our amazing head of TBH security, Jesse, and head of TBH Maintenance, Janessa, adjust hours at the drop of a text to make sure the Food Pantry can mobilize when food and volunteers are available.

What has Javitz seen as a silver lining? “It is always heartwarming and inspiring when people help people, especially during a crisis.” She has also seen increased awareness of the Food Pantry’s important mission. Because of the desperate need for more volunteers during COVID-19, there has been an increase in grass roots mobilization, social media efforts, and neighborhood council outreach. Because of these efforts, NHIFP has been able to recruit new volunteers and further educate our local community about the everyday tragic reality of people who are hungry and need a helping hand. As we are seeing across the TBH family during this challenging time, the North Hollywood Interfaith Food Pantry is another shining reminder of the power of people helping people!

#TBHTOGETHER!

The Little Engine That Can!

If you can help!
The need for food is up by 60%. If you are ordering or going to the grocery store consider picking up some extra items for the NHIFP. Food can be dropped off safely at TBH Monday-Friday between 9am – 2pm.

FOOD DROP-OFF AT TBH
MON-FRI, 9AM-2PM

• Protein – tuna, chicken, Spam, Vienna sausages
• Dry Cereals
• Canned Soups and Vegetables (Pop-tops!)
• Any type of cleaning supplies
Passover traditions look different for every family – this is part of the beauty, not just of Passover, but of Judaism. Throughout history, Jews have adapted and persevered – this year TBH families continued this legacy with safer-at-home Passovers. Two of our TBH families shared with us their Passover adaptations during COVID-19. A common thread is the value of religious school and how an early, consistent and strong Temple connection creates traditions that you can turn to in moments of crisis. These stories will likely sound familiar to many of us. We’d love to hear your COVID-19 Passover Story! Email us at passover@tbhla.org.

Leslie and Steve Rouff, long-time TBH Members and supporters since 1970, had a very different Passover this year. In the past, Passover meant hosting between 15-30 people at their house (and all of the sounds, chaos and love that this brings) - friends, family, people with nowhere to go – everyone was welcomed.

This year, the table was set and decorated with their special linens, Passover plate and frogs, and the food was prepared. But, instead of 30 people seated around the table, it was just Steve and Leslie. Enter Zoom! Through the power of technology, they were still able to celebrate Passover with their two sons, two daughters-in-law and two young grandsons. Everybody read and they ate dinner “together.”

Their table was decorated, as always, with Steve’s Elijah cup from when he was in 2nd grade at TBH Religious School!

Some traditions were adapted but many were the same…They still used the family Haggadah – the copy-and-paste version Steve created many years ago. Their celebration still included Steve’s Bar Mitzvah cup from his TBH Bar Mitzvah! Leslie reminded me that she doesn’t have a cup because girls weren’t having Bat Mitzvahs at that time – I felt gratitude for the path to equality forged by the many women across time. During COVID-19, I find gratitude is flowing more freely.

For Jen Brown, David Schnider and their three sons, Jack (college), Nathan (12th grade) and Will (7th grade), Passover is a wonderfully crowded and busy holiday….always held at SOMEONE ELSE’S HOUSE! Since David grew up in Los Angeles, he has tons of family in the area. Night one usually takes them to Culver City to his aunt’s house for a Passover best described as a “social distancing nightmare,” where you play a human game of Tetris just getting out of the table to go to the bathroom. Night two is with his mom’s side of the family, at his uncle’s in Tarzana. Both nights bring lots of different family members and traditional foods.

Obviously, the usual wasn’t happening this year. With so many family members in the area, Jen hadn’t expected to ever host Passover, at least not until she was a grandmother. So, when faced with the current reality, they were thrilled to have inherited David’s grandmother’s candlesticks and Elijah cup. Instead of fighting to get the right ingredients and trying to make a traditional meal themselves, they ordered from Will’s bar mitzvah caterer to support the catering industry.

At 8pm Steve said “We gotta go, going to join TBH for after drinks.” They disconnected their family zoom so they could connect with their TBH family. They joined the Passover #TBHtogether to share Seder stories and concluding half of the seder. Steve told the Zoom group, with his beloved dry tone and chuckle – that this year “nobody fought, it was kind of nice actually.” Leslie added “nobody cried, nobody carried on, and nobody said things tasted better last year.” Everyone Zoom laughed together and Frank Balkin jokingly asked if they made it out of Egypt! The answer was “Yes!”

They began the first night with a large family Zoom (Zoom saves the day again) for the usual guests to check in and wish one another a happy Passover. The usual “letting” people in and unmuting. Immediately afterwards, they joined the Passover #TBHtogether to share Seder stories and concluding half of the seder. Steve told the Zoom group, with his beloved dry tone and chuckle – that this year “nobody fought, it was kind of nice actually.” Leslie added “nobody cried, nobody carried on, and nobody said things tasted better last year.” Everyone Zoom laughed together and Frank Balkin jokingly asked if they made it out of Egypt! The answer was “Yes!”

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“I like seeing my friends, such as Olivia, at my fourth grade Hebrew School Zoom class.”

“Online Tefillah is a good way to see everyone, and I like singing the songs!”

“I enjoy the online HRTY meetings, like the one where we did a scavenger hunt around our houses.”

“We’ve loved the bonding we can do through TBH. My five-year-old loves singing and dancing with teachers and his friends from the ECE. Hebrew school for my third graders is giving us more structure to our days. For me it’s been a good touchstone for foundation and connection. It’s meaningful to see all of us being together even when we are physically apart and the programs at TBH are fostering this connection.”

A candid conversation on one family’s experience with religious learning
Thank you to Jennifer Brown for her time and sharing

Kami: Why did you and David decide to prioritize religious learning for Jack, Nathan and Will?
Jen: We wanted them to understand that Temple is not just a place you go to for the High Holy Days, but also a community and another place you can really belong. It’s a good way to connect with other people who share your values. That’s what we always wanted for the kids.
Kami: When did they start religious school?
Jen: They all started in Kinder. The two oldest continued through Confirmation, and Will is going to as well.
Kami: Why did you want them to continue through Confirmation?
Jen: They really got to rethink their relationship with being Jewish. Confirmation is less about being taught as a kid is taught and more about thinking about Judaism for yourself.
Kami: Have the boys built that connection that you’d hoped for?
Jen: Yes, Jack has connected with his college’s Jewish Student Union, for example, going to their Seder last year when he couldn’t be home. Nathan is eager to join Jewish organizations on campus when he goes to Syracuse next year. As a parent, I know this gives them another way to have a community to belong to when they are out in the world on their own.
Kami: Any final thoughts on the importance of lifelong religious learning?
Jen: It’s easy to go through life without thinking about the purpose of life or about who you really want to be in the world because we get caught up in tasks and don’t spend time thinking about the bigger picture. Religious school is a way to begin that type of thinking early. If we want to build a healthier society, we have to think about why we do things the way we do. Things are bad for many people right now. We’re seeing problems now that were easy to ignore because they only affected a few. When we rebuild, we need to rebuild things better than before. Religious school promotes and teaches the type of lifelong thinking we need for these challenges.

While we never imagined having Religious School in the virtual setting, it has been inspiring to continue our love of Jewish learning and community-building virtually. I am reminded often during this challenging time of how special our religious school community is – everyone quickly adapted to, and embraced, this new format with patience, grace, gratitude and enthusiasm!

There’s also been a silver lining in seeing people in their own homes, which has shown me that the love and dedication to religious learning extends beyond the physical walls of Temple Beth Hillel. I’ve had the joy of seeing artwork completed from our in-person classes hanging on the walls behind students, afikomen covers made during a virtual class used in pesach seders, and entire classes waving homemade Israeli flags to celebrate Yom Ha’atzmaut. Our Religious School families have warmed my heart with their words of encouragement and appreciation and their continued dedication to learning, to Judaism, and to one another. It has been renewing and moving to spend this virtual time together. I look forward to our return to in-person learning but I have gained strength from how our community hasn’t missed a beat - jumping in and trying new things, demonstrating new levels of patience and support, and finding many moments to laugh, learn and be #TBHtogether!
To be an educator means to create, effuse, inspire, connect. That doesn’t change within the confines of a pandemic, but what does change is how it looks. To educate in the times of COVID-19 is to emphatically embody growth mindset. There is truly no adequate substitute for physically being in proximity in a classroom, but our goal is to bring that feeling of connection through the screen, into each and every home. We may be in different spaces, but we still teach face to face and soul to soul.

As teachers, we do crazy things to find the materials and the spaces we need to teach. We don’t think out of the box; rather, we have to think like there is no box. We have to still be ourselves except now on a screen. We have to get outside of ourselves and outside of our comfort zones to create moments of connection in 2-D. We make phone calls and send emails. We make videos, inviting our students and their families into our homes. We sing, and dance, and draw and do silly things to keep everyone engaged. We ask deep questions and encourage critical thinking. We treasure the moments we get to “zoom” and virtually teach in real time and space, as kids learn to mute and unmute, show a virtual thumbs up or clap, show their understanding through facial and upper body expression, and relish the time they get to “see” and “be with” all their classmates, a pervasive and collective feeling of communal empathy pervading the screen.

And then there’s the moments we get to venture out safely and connect in spite of the distance learning. As teachers, we travel in caravans to each of our student’s homes and with a serenade of signs, warm chalk wishes and handmade masks, we bring our presence as a present as we reach out to each other. It is in all these moments, whether we are physically distant or in closer proximity, when it is so clear that we are all part of K’lal Yisrael, the Jewish people. This simple yet emotionally complex value of sharing a common narrative and being responsible for each other becomes especially highlighted in a time in history such as this. We come together in community, a TBH and BHDS community, and a community bound by our even larger connection to our Jewish peoplehood. As an educator I feel a shared responsibility for all. Even as I work solo, I reach inward and find strength to reach outward and realize that truly we are #TBHtogether.
Saturday, April 5, 2020 was supposed to be a special day for Teacher Izzy, the beloved ECE teacher in room 6. It would have been the culmination of an exhaustive few months of training and preparing for her first half marathon! She had her classroom of 3-year olds joining the fun as they learned through example about what to do to take on and push through challenges. Each morning room 6 would start their day by moving - participating in a variety of racing games.

A half marathon is 13 miles and there are 13 kiddos in Teacher Izzy’s class. She had shared with her class and families that she would be dedicating each mile of her run to each of child that she adores and cares for in her class. Due to COVID-19, the half marathon was cancelled. However, unbeknownst to Izzy, her class was not going to let this momentous day be lost. They had a very special surprise in store for her. The room parent in her classroom contacted Izzy’s roommate (Teacher Angie) and said that her class had set up a special running route for her. They had Angie communicate with Izzy that she should go forward with her plans to run the length of the half marathon and that she should take this special route that her classroom families put together. Izzy laced up her shoes and headed out for what turned out to be a very touching and emotional endeavor. Along each mile of her run, the classroom families were waiting, holding endearing signs of love and encouragement. As she crossed the finish line, made with a red ribbon and all, her families waited in cars with signs and sounds of love cheering her on! This is just one heartwarming story of how our beautiful community is #TBHtogether.

We are proving every day, in big and small ways, that when we’re apart, we’re #TBHtogether!

Izzy!

We can’t express enough how much we appreciate, miss, and love you! We hope the Izzython gave you as much as it gave all of us! It was an absolute highlight for the kids and doing this for you brought so much joy to all of them.

Love,
Your Chaverim Kiddos
Our beloved ECE is a critical part of the TBH mission. We recently launched a successful outreach to fund the ECE Playground Improvement Project. Thanks to the generosity of our entire TBH community, ECE families, the TBH Board of Trustees and the TBH Endowment Committee, prior to COVID-19 this important and exciting project was ready to launch! Since equipment had already been purchased and contracts had been paid, we are grateful that construction has been categorized as an essential service and therefore we have been able to move forward. We can’t wait to welcome our littlest TBHers back home to enjoy their new and improved playground! Cheers to making great things happen for our community…#TBHtogether!

We all made masks together and have been trying to get out for walks every day. Bruno said “there are only three days of the week now: yesterday, today, and tomorrow,” and we think his point is a great one. With this in mind we have been living ‘in the moment’ and focusing on the positives and things we can be grateful for in our daily lives and those around us.

- The Schimpff Kushnir Family

Growing up I was told not to take for granted all the things I have because others in this world may not have them. However, I always thought of material things. This event has made me realize how much I appreciate being with my friends. I am ever so grateful for all of the zoom events from TBH so I can see my circle of friends and Rabbi Sarah’s word of mussar are always inspiring, especially in this time of personal need.

- Susan, Eric and Michael Goldman

Like everyone else, we are wading our way through working from home and managing the kids’ virtual schools. We are lifted by the goodness we see all around us – neighbors dropping off home-grown produce, regularly checking in on others. We have maintained connections to family & friends through Zoom gatherings and social distanced gatherings and social distanced visits. We look forward to slowly finding our way back to in-person socializing, but until then, we know that staying home is the quickest way to resume life as we used to know it.

- Jennifer, Mike, Barrie & Deacon Komsky

We are saddened by the devastation COVID-19 has caused. Our hearts go out to all the people who have lost loved ones or livelihoods. We are grateful that David can continue his work from home. Jodie is trying to do her part by social distancing, donating food to the pantry and blood to the Red Cross. We are blessed with the time to take walks together daily and spend more time with each other. We hope this virus is contained soon and that we have learned from experience how to live our lives better.

- Jodie and David Reff
This is what memory care is all about.

It’s not to say that dementia isn’t an emotional and challenging disease. It’s just that when you see the human instead of the disease you don’t see sadness. You see life. You see history. You see achievements. You see family. You see love. And that’s how we see it at The Village at Sherman Oaks. We can help you with the challenges you’re facing.

To learn more, please call 818.245.5832 or visit our website.
In gratitude, we acknowledge the contributions of our friends to the mission of Temple Beth Hillel.

**RABBI SARAH HRONSKY’S FUND**
In Loving Memory of
Edwin Bartenstein, by Evelyn Lever
Paul Buchman, by Freddie Goldberg
Sheila Beller, by Melanie and Howard Weisenfeld
Anna Applebaum, by Faith Tessler
Jennifer Morgan, by Bobbe Taldeis
Joseph Pasch, by Freddie Goldberg
Benjamin Taldeis, by Barbara Taldeis
Sidney “Sam” Saltsman, by Michael and Jan Saltsman
In Honor of
Sue Balkin’s 91st birthday, by Lynn Butcher
In Appreciation of Rabbi Sarah
By Ellen Sway
By Jonathan and Debi Weiss
By Jamie Stevens
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In Loving Memory of
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Lee Larsen, by David and Naomi Beck
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Lilly Rouff, by Steve and Leslie Rouff
Gary Sirak, by Steve and Leslie Rouff
Lilly Rouff, by Steve and Leslie Rouff
In Honor of
Chris Dwyer and Monica Hamor, by Leslie Nathan and Michael Heiss

**MEMORIAL AND TRIBUTE FUND**
In Loving Memory of
Edith Harris, by Sylvia Marcovitch
Gloria Wiener, by Hal and Francine Wiener
George Cochran, by Arlene, Frank, and Dan Balkin
Sylvia Levey, by Jill Harris
Pearl Bachenheimer, by Toby Bachenheimer
Hyman Hirschsohn, by Harry Hirschsohn
Florence Apple, by Arthur Apple
Florence Apple, by Roger and Sandra Cohen
Sophie Levine, by Irene Levine
Irving Reder, by Marina and Spencer Mistrage
Ralph Katz, by Hal and Francine Wiener
Edna Honeymen, by Karen Stern
Marcella Storozum, by Steven Storozum and Amy Schancupp
Arline Bortec, by Leonard and Katherine Klein

**ROEN & JOHN PASTERNAK SCHOLARSHIP FUND**
In Loving Memory of
Lee Larsen, by Susan Pasternak and Larry Picus
Roen and John Pasternak, by Susan Pasternak and Larry Picus

In Honor of
Chris Dwyer and Monica Hamor, by Susan Pasternak and Larry Picus

**RELIGIOUS SCHOOL DISCRETIONARY FUND**
In Loving Memory of
Harry Slavin, by Herb Slavin

In Appreciation of
Rabbi Keara, by Jamie Stevens

In Honor of
Sue Balkin’s 91st birthday, by Arlene and Frank Balkin

**Please visit tbhla.org/donate to contribute. Thank you.**
Now, more than ever, we look to each other for inspiration, laughter, hope and connection! Join our photo campaign “Feeling Grateful For…” so we can lift one another up with our gratitude, our faces, our creativity, and being #TBHtogether!

1. Download and print the “Feeling Grateful For…” template on the tbhla.org website under TBH Online OR MAKE YOUR own sign! Be Creative!
2. Have fun thinking about what you, and if you’re with others, your fellow quarantiners, are grateful for during this challenging time.
3. Fill in the template (or your own sign) with your “Feeling Grateful For” statement.
4. Take a picture of you, and if applicable your fellow quarantiners, with your sign (submit as many photos as you want!)
5. Email to Media@tbhla.org
6. Be on the look-out for our social media campaign connecting us through “Feeling Grateful For…” Photos of our TBH Community!
7. Need inspiration? See some examples to get you in the mood for feeling grateful!
When We’re Apart, We’re Together

#TBHtogether

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Valley Village, CA 91607
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