



Welcome to Congregation Beth Am A vibrant Reform community!

We are thrilled you have chosen to deepen your connection with Judaism with us. Our welcoming congregation brings together individuals and families of all backgrounds to share in meaningful religious, life cycle, and community experiences. With programs and events for all ages, we offer a place to feel at home, connect with others, and grow on your spiritual journey.



A message from Rabbi Rosenberg

Skiping Shabbat

As a rabbi, I hear a *lot* of apologies. One of the most frequent is the “I don’t go to Shabbat services enough” apology. It might be when a member finally gets to services, or it might be some other time, but so many people tell me that they *want* to attend more regularly, and that they’re *trying* to attend more frequently, but it’s just not happening. And, I pretty much always tell them the same thing:

One of the main reasons that I became a rabbi is that I am certain – really, truly certain – that if I wasn’t a rabbi, I’d be a terrible Jew. I hate calling *anyone* a terrible Jew, but what I mean by that is that I’d be the kind of person who, every Monday says, “It’s been too long, and I am absolutely going to synagogue this Shabbat.” And then, every Friday at around 4:00, I’d be saying, “Nope. I’m staying home!”

Look, I get it – I really get it. Life is so busy, and so exhausting, and it’s a rare person who can get to the end of the week and feel like they have energy for anything else. The call of a dinner with friends or family, or just with ourselves, and then the couch and a good movie can be a Siren’s song, almost impossible to resist. There are *plenty* of Fridays where the only way I get myself to get back in my car and head to CBA is to remind myself that it’s kind of mandatory for me to show up. So, I do.

And, almost always, once I get there, I’m glad I did. Maybe not right away, but at some point in the service, I realize that I’m better off for being there, and that I feel better. It’s just about always worth it. But, that temptation to stay home will be back next week, just about every week.

So, look – I’d love to see you at synagogue. Our services have such a renewed energy and joy of late, and more and more people are showing up, and it just feels so good. And, I’m pretty sure that if you *do* come, you’ll be happy you did.

But, I also know how hard it can be, and I will never begrudge you a peaceful Shabbat in the sanctuary of your own home. Just know that we’ll do it again next week. And, I’ll almost definitely be there next time, too!



Sunday Snapshot - August

It's hard to believe that the summer has come to an end! Here at the CBA Religious School, we are busy getting ready for the new school year, which starts on Sunday, August 16.

You may have heard, but our Religious School isn't like the Religious School you might have attended when you were growing up. Sure, we teach our students Hebrew and the values, traditions, and texts of Judaism. But gone are the days when students read from a textbook while a teacher stands at the front of the classroom and lectures to them about Judaism. At CBA, our first curricular item is joy, and creating a love of Judaism through experiential learning is our number one priority. To that end, we put the learning in the hands of our 4th through 8th grade students through fun, project-based learning in classes that match their own interests. Each student gets the opportunity to choose 3 Judaics classes each year. Past classes have included Judaism and the Environment, Performing Arts, Jewish Music, Creative Writing, Jewish Art and Ritual Objects, Jewish Museums and Artists, Jewish Medieval History, Jewish Superheroes and Supervillains, Tikkun Olam, and Jewish Folklore and Folktales. And who knows what fun, engaging classes we will add in the future!

This teaching methodology has a proven record of success. In fact, the Union for Reform Judaism makes repeated references to including this kind of learning in the article "New Approaches to Supplementary Education" (<https://urj.org/sites/default/files/URJNewApproachesSupplementaryEducationReport.pdf>).

In the words of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z"l, "Education means teaching a child to be curious, to wonder, to reflect, to enquire. The child who asks becomes a partner in the learning process, an active recipient. To ask is to grow." We can't wait to partner with your children in our Religious School. You can register for the upcoming school year at <https://forms.gle/nhZNFG4VtQijyK3z8>. If you have questions about our school or would like more information, please contact Hillary Rosenberg at hrosenberg@bethamtampa.org.

[Dr. Hillary Rosenberg](#)

Religious School Director



A word from our President

I think we all know that excessive screen time is not good for us, and if you're working on your sleep hygiene, most doctors would likely say that one of the first things you should do is eliminate phone usage for as much time as possible prior to trying to go to sleep. For many, especially parents of younger children, that can be a very big ask considering that, most likely, the end of the day is the only period of time that you might actually get to yourself to relax. Personally, I've improved tremendously in this area, though I'm still far from perfect.

Television, on the other hand, is a different story. There's rarely a night that I don't fall asleep to the background noise of whatever my preferred sitcom is for the evening, knowing that the tv will turn itself off long after I've shut down for the night. At this point, those evening rehashes of some of my favorite or most familiar shows is really the vast majority of times

that I actually watch tv, or, in this case, listen to it. To me, it's a comforting way to unwind from an often busy or hectic day.

While a preferred white noise would likely work just as well for me, what I've come to realize with the rewatching or relistening to these familiar sounds, voices, or episodes is the broader comfort of certainty it brings. I'm fortunate to not struggle with anxiety, though I do know it to be a common recommendation for those that do, to find contentment in the rewatching of a favorite sitcom or movie because there's peace of mind from knowing what's about to happen: we're not going to be surprised and there's no reason to be anxious when we already know what's going to occur. How often in our lives is there little to no question as to what the next 15 minutes, 30 minutes, or next few hours might bring?

Some might consider repetition to be boring, but there's safety in this scenario. There's comfort. There's relaxation and less stress. I find the same to be true about Friday nights, or most any of our services, really.

For those who attend regularly, you know that while a few melodies or that evening's sermon might change a bit from week to week, the prayers, in general, will be the same ones that we said the week prior. The order is going to be the same. The location will be the same. The length will be roughly the same, and you can probably even count on the celebratory spinning of children (and adults like me who enjoy joining in) during V'shamru.

Being in attendance every week (unless missing being there is completely unavoidable) is not just an expectation of my role, but rather the seeking of what is often the most tranquil parts of an otherwise overwhelming schedule.

To me, it's that familiar sitcom, that movie to which I know every line, that certainty of knowing what the next hour will bring. It is the definition of Shabbat Shalom, a peaceful respite from the busyness of the week.

And I hope it can serve the same for you.

[Jared D Kohn](#)

Religious School Returns!

The first day of Religious School is Sunday, August 16! You can register for the upcoming school year at <https://forms.gle/nhZNFG4VtQijyK3z8> If you have any questions about our Religious School, please contact Hillary Rosenberg at HRosenberg@BethAmTampa.org



Congregation Beth Am Open House

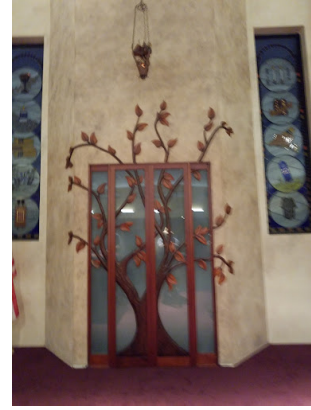
Sunday, August 16
9:30 am - 12:30 pm

Join us for Congregation Beth Am's Open House!

This is a wonderful opportunity to meet members from our many committees, affiliates, and programs and learn how you can get involved. Representatives from Sisterhood, Men's Club, Social Justice, House Committee, Caring Committee, our Choir, Religious School, and other groups will be available to share information and answer your questions.

Whether you're new to the congregation or simply looking for new ways to connect, we invite you to stop by, meet fellow members, and discover the many ways Beth Am enriches our community.

Complimentary breakfast will be served. We look forward to welcoming you!



Cheshbon HaNefesh — An Accounting of the Soul for the High Holy Days

Wednesdays, Aug 19, 26 and Sep 2

7:00 pm



Tradition teaches us that, in preparation for the *Yamim Noraim* (the Days of Awe) we should take an Accounting of the Soul — we should prepare ourselves spiritually for the season of repentance. Every year, we get together to do just that — we use texts, meditation, discussion, and journalling, all to prompt us towards self-reflection, and hopefully a more meaningful season of holy days.

Class is in person, and on Zoom (please use our regular Shabbat Zoom room)

People are encouraged to attend all 3 sessions, but of course everyone is welcome at any of them.

Reverse Tashlich

Sunday, September 6

9 am - 12 pm

Please join us as we participate in the 2026 Reverse Tashlich at Rivercrest Park on the Hillsborough River. Questions? Email [Sarina here](mailto:sarina.ergas@gmail.com).



Bat Mitzvah of Marilyn Sobel

A beautiful article written by Marilyn's sister:

Last weekend, over the Fourth of July holiday, I had the extraordinary privilege of witnessing my sister-in-law Marilyn become Bat Mitzvah at the age of seventy.

Marilyn had been married to my brother for twenty-nine years before she made the decision to convert to Judaism just over a year ago. Although she had long felt drawn to Jewish life, she assumed that her questions about God somehow disqualified her. When I shared that I was teaching a course called Open Judaism:



A Guide for Believers, Atheists, and Agnostics, she realized there was room within Judaism not only for certainty, but also for curiosity, searching, and honest questions.

She began studying with my colleague, Rabbi Jason Rosenberg, a Reform rabbi in Tampa, FL, faithfully attending Shabbat worship services, participating in Talmud study, and immersing herself in Jewish learning. She joined her synagogue's Social Action Committee and now sits on the Board of Directors. Following her conversion, she began studying Hebrew in preparation for becoming Bat Mitzvah. [Read More.](#)

Bat Mitzvah of Avery Russell

Avery Russell, daughter of Reggie and Steven Russell, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, August 29th, 2026 at 10:30 Am, Congregation Beth Am, Tampa.

Avery is homeschooled and loves books, shopping, playing video games and listening to music. She has been collecting donations to the Tampa Humane Society and encourages others to donate.



Everyone is invited to attend and support Avery for this special life cycle event.

House and Security Committees Updates

Vehicle tags - In order to maintain security during services and other events, we distribute a CBA vehicle tag. We have specifically asked the deputy or security service to check and make sure everyone who comes in has one.

Please contact Deb in the office to obtain your tag. The tag should be placed on the driver's side in the lower portion of the windshield.

Dishes and Kitchen items - There is a collection of serving dishes and other kitchen items that have been left after special events. Please feel free to come and pick them up if they are yours.

Lost and Found - Are you missing your reading glasses (or something else)? They may be in the synagogue office. Contact Deb for more information.

Please note that the CBA walkers are taking it indoors!

Please meet us at the front entrance of the Citrus Park Mall (near BJ's) Tuesdays and Thursdays at 9:45 a.m. Following our walk, there is a Starbucks there for a refreshing beverage.

Please let [Judy](#) know if you will be there a day or two prior, so that someone will be sure to meet you.



Religious Action Center (RAC)

I am reaching out to ask you to join me in a Tampa Bay wide outreach for Every Voice Every Vote. I am working with the Religious Action Center (RAC) of Reform Judaism, to

coordinate this effort.

The focus of the Religious Action Center (RAC) of Reform Judaism for 2026 is Every Voice, Every Vote. This is a non-partisan effort, and is relevant to every voter.



Let's work together to ensure that every eligible voter has a say in the decisions that impact our lives to create a better future for ourselves and for all people. August 18th is the upcoming primary (for those registered in a political party) but also may include non-partisan races such as school boards, judges, etc.

In Florida, if you want to vote by mail, you must request a mail ballot prior to the next general election. Your driver's license is used to confirm your identity. If you renewed your license after 2024, you were assigned a new number, and it might not match what the Election Office has. So this must be updated to request a mail ballot. These new rules affect every voter regardless of party affiliation.

We will be having voter outreach activities this summer so watch the weekly email for dates and times! We are also planning an event on the evening of July 30th with Hillsborough County's Supervisor of Elections, Craig Latimer as a featured speaker! You will be able to learn how Craig and his team secure our elections to make them free and fair! We are hoping to invite some local non partisan candidates for a panel discussion. RAC has some great trainings for this effort. Please sign up through [my team link here](#) to get started.

[For RAC trainings and information click here.](#)

RAC Florida is one of the state-based affiliates to help our community engage in the goals and vision of RAC. Again, this is a non-partisan group, not endorsing or affiliating with any political party. RAC Florida has a lead staff, Michele Eiger, whose role is to coordinate our efforts across the many Reform congregations and includes outreach to secular and other religious organizations.

Thank you for all you do! I hope you will join me in this effort!

[Jan Wessells](#)

Mark Your Calendars for these Upcoming Events

August 16 - CBA's Annual Open House

August 20 - Ritual Committee Meeting

August 27 - Caregivers Meeting

August 29 - Avery Russell's Bat Mitzvah

August 30 - You Have to Read This

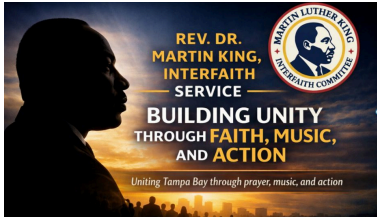
September 6 - Reverse Tashlich @ Hillsborough River





Welcome to our newest members to CBA:

- Barbara Schwaid
- Emilie Carr
- Cassidy and Daniel Shapiro
- Deb and Ron Lilley
- Lisa Wilcox



Calling All Singers for the MLK Interfaith Service!

This year's MLK Interfaith Service is scheduled for Sunday, January 17th at 4:00 pm, and they're putting together the choir now. If you want to be part of an incredibly joyful musical experience, please reach out to Rabbi Rosenberg.

June Donations

We would like to recognize all who have donated for the month of June.

In honor of Peg's and Alan Dakoff's Wedding

Susan Vosmik

Memorial Plaques

David and Rudina Richter

Religious School

Sisterhood

Donations

Gabrielle Anderson

Doris Singleton

Cassidy and Daniel Shapiro



Kvell Korner

- Mazel Tov to David Howen on completing airplane mechanic training and his moving to the east coast of Florida
- Mazel Tov to Eileen & Joel Poiley on the birth of their grandchild, Alexander Ryan (and the parents Lauren and Paul Marconi).
- Mazel Tov to Bruce Meier on the birth of his third grandchild, Abigail daughter of Ilana Meier and Scott Berlin.

- Thanks for all who have recently sponsored or contributed to our onegs:

Jan Wessells, Emilie Carr, Marilyn Sobel, Sheryl Bowman, Criss McConnell, Jodi Logan

Did you miss the last text reminder?

Your FOMO is over! Join the CBA text group and never miss a reminder again. Sometimes it's about our great upcoming events or other times just a simple Shabbat reminder. We don't want you to miss out. [Sign up here.](#)



Looking for that special gift?

A unique way to say thanks?

Want a way to recognize a graduation?

Bar or Bat Mitzvah gift?

Looking for a way to remember someone special?



You can have an engraved leaf on the Tree of Life!

Have a brick created with a special message added to the walkway!

You can have a leaf engraved for the Tree of Life in the lobby at Congregation Beth Am and/or a brick engraved and placed in the walkway at Congregation Beth Am.

The current pricing for a leaf or a brick is \$108.

Want more information? Please contact Admin@BethAmTampa.org

Did you know the Congregation Beth Am has a cemetery?

CBA owns a portion of the Jewish section of Hillsborough Memorial Gardens in Brandon. If you'd like to learn more, and to find out about buying a plot, please contact

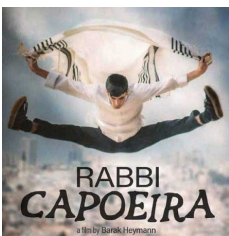
Admin@BethAmTampa.org

Yahrzeit Plaques

Congregation Beth Am has memorial yahrzeit plaques located on the back wall area of the sanctuary as way for your family and our community to honor the memory of your loved one.

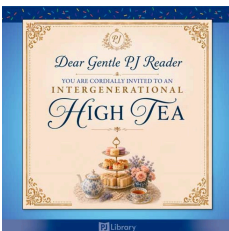
Want more information? Please contact Admin@BethAmTampa.org

Jewish Community Events:



Rabbi Capoeira - Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival - Real to Reel film series

The Tampa Bay Jewish Film Festival presents Rabbi Capoeira. August 13 - 7:00 pm - Shanna & Bryan Glazer JCC and August 16 - 1:00 pm - Green Light Cinema in St. Petersburg. [Learn more.](#)



PJ Library's Intergenerational High Tea

You are cordially invited to an Intergenerational High Tea. August 30th at 1:00 - 3:00 pm at the Shanna & Bryan Glazer JCC - Glazer Ballroom - PJ Friends under 12 FREE. [Learn more.](#)



Hakarat Hatov - an event to show gratitude and to honor our supporters.

Shanna & Bryan Glazer JCC September 16. Special Guest Speaker: Judge Roy Altman - United States District Judge. And honoring USF President, Moez Limayem with the Maureen & Doug Cohn Builders Award. [Learn more.](#)

August 2026 Anniversaries

August 5–11

Dana and Linda Hansen, Robert and Cathy Friedman

August 12–18

Fern and Robert Musselwhite, Jerry and Janice Nepon-Sixt, James and Kaitlynn Wander

August 19–25

Richard and Susan Guess, Michael and Lorinda Gamson, Jodi and Michael Rigberg

August 2026 Birthdays

August 1–4

Jacob Ryan Gerstein, Matthew Rigberg, Elizabeth Carter

August 5–11

Robert Alagna, Gina Poteet, Tyler Rafsky, Janice Nepon-Sixt, Lisa Venger, Golda Brunhild, Lauren Rothchild, Jordan Rafsky, Davis Byrkit

August 12–18

Carol Bakwin, Jodi Logan, Samuel Weiss, Hannah Eriksson, Frances Weiner, Jodi Rigberg, Avery Kaylynn Russell

August 19–25

Jillian Frary, Kerry Joy-Weiss, Maggie Gamson, Linda Crollick, Peggy Dakoff, Alan M Fein, James Lewis, Anita Dillmann, Della Mandel, Judith Plavnick

Yahrzeit List

August 1 - August 31, 2026

If you would like to donate in memory of your loved one, please use our [PayPal link here.](#)



The following names will be read during services on Friday, August 7

Susan Maier, mother of Bruce Maier

Yetta Brehm, grandmother of Bill Brehm

Rabbi Isidore Greengrass, father of Martin Greengrass

Charles Coberly, father of Jill Bucholtz

Rev. Albert Quillen Perry, first father-in-law of Geoffrey Gross

Josephene Richter, grandmother of David Richter

Verle Pender, father of Lisa Cohen

Dorothy Poiley, mother of Joel Poiley

Eunice Barfield Bremner, aunt of Elizabeth Carter

The following names will be read during services on Friday, August 14

Jean Sarah Smiles, mother of Gary Smiles

Rose Kramer, grandmother of Elizabeth Strom

Minnie Wisselman, grandmother of Stefanie Wisselman

Mary Estelle Casey, grandmother of Lorinda Gamson

Audrey Portnoy, aunt of Lori Frenden

Louis Cutler, grandfather of David Cutler

Jack Honig, father of Rudina Richter

Lloyd Austin, father of Debra Meister

Jessie Potlack, grandmother of Eileen Poiley

*Ira Stone, father of Morton Stone

The following names will be read during services on Friday, August 21

*Roza Klug Horowitz, grandmother of Margaret Ziegler

Nick Bond, brother-in-law of Lisa Cohen, uncle of Andrew Cohen

Lou Gold, uncle of Golda Brunhild, great-uncle of Victoria Silverman

*Ann Fries Gross, mother of Geoffrey Gross

Abraham Silber, father of Barry Silber

*Gordon Brunhild, husband of Golda Brunhild, father of Victoria Silverman

The following names will be read during services on Friday, August 28

*Frank Kerstein, brother of Joe Kerstein

Leonard Fruchter, brother of Golda Brunhild

Esther Cutler, grandmother of David Cutler

Leonard Fruchter, uncle of Vikki Silverman

*Elinor Horowitz, mother of Margaret Ziegler

Alan Chapin, brother of Donna Rothchild

Hyman Rothman, grandfather of Amy Rothman

Beatrice Baer, mother-in-law of Doris Baer

Norman Mernoff, brother of Doris Baer

*An asterisk * indicates that the name has a memorial plaque on the memorial board in the temple sanctuary.*

Refuah Sheleima

The Congregation extends wishes for a speedy recovery to:

Doris Baer, Robert Bardekoff, Robert Bern, Robert Blalock, Neal Block, Elizabeth Carter,

Wes Crenshaw, Marie Crescenzi, Lillian Cutler, Ben Dunmire, Ross Fischler, Isaiah Fox,

David Hess, Richard Guess, Adam Hess, Keith Merill, Mark Polster, Vanessa Schwartz

Pope, Bill Randle, Susan Razin, Laura Reuterfors, John Roberts, Jason Selmont, Linda

Sherman, Elizabeth Weiss, Stephen Wittenberg, Shayna bat David v' Resela



Shabbat isn't the same without you!

Come make a difference in your Shabbat by taking on a volunteer position. Tap the link below to see how you can enhance your experience and that of others by performing an easy mitzvah! Training/advice will be provided if requested. [Contact Marilyn Sobel Volunteer/Oneg Signup Sheet](#)

Your involvement is needed at Congregation Beth Am

Volunteer Opportunities

Are you ready to meet new friends while doing a mitzvah?

We need a few helping hands in making Beth Am a vibrant and a stronger community for us all. Here's your chance!

Looking for help in the following areas:

- Fundraising ideas
- Upgrading the CBA website
- Help with Religious School events
- Have ideas for adult classes
- Want to have input of the rituals at Beth Am
- Help with building upkeep
- Help with landscaping
- Help is often needed with arranging the chairs in the sanctuary
- Want to be involved with creating social activities
- Help by sponsoring an Oneg
- Ideas for Social Action?
- Want to participate in the caring committee
- Help to plan Social Action events
- Can help with Strategic planning
- Have ideas for expanding membership
- Help with updating CBA Membership Directory

Have ideas? Suggestions? Questions?

Feel free to contact Rabbi Rosenberg at RabbiRosenberg@BethAmTampa.org or 813.968.8511

COLLEGE CONNECTION

We feel very strongly that maintaining connections with our students who are pursuing post high school education so they still feel part of the Beth Am family is very important. Twice a year, Sheryl Bowman will send your student (s) a note and gift card as a way of saying "hi, we miss you and wish you the best". Please [contact Sheryl](#) with your student's name and address so she can reach out to them during this time of year.

See What's Happening Jewishly in Tampa

Do you receive the official, weekly e-newsletter of the Tampa JCCs & Federation?

Sign up today to read Etta's Book Morsels, learn what's happening with Jews in the News and listen to our Third Opinion podcast.

Shalom Tampa is made possible by the Schoenbaum Family Foundation.

Visit JewishTampa.com to sign up and see what's happening in our Jewish community!

Are You a Member of our [Facebook](#) Group?

It's an easy way to stay up to date about all the things happening at Congregation Beth Am.

Join us on [Facebook](#)



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