Tikkun Olam update – January 2021

Despite the challenges of the pandemic, our fellow congregants are rising to the occasion to perform acts of Tikkun Olam – to repair the world – now more than ever. Please email tikkunolam@bethelsudbury.org if I’ve missed anything or if you’d like more information.

- **Green Team:** The Green Team is helping members reduce our collective carbon emissions. With the New Year comes new climate learning and action opportunities.
  - On February 2nd, the Green Team hosts a webinar on composting with Black Earth Compost.
  - February 17th will see a Green Team webinar on Greening Your Home Heating & Cooling for Your Home.
  - If you’ve not already done so, you can create your own MassEnergize account and list your household climate actions. Click here to sign up: https://community.massenergize.org/JCAN
  - Jerry Kazin, Beth El’s VP/Tsibur, advises that the temple attic insulation and air infiltration project is almost done. This will reduce our energy operating costs and improve comfort at no cost to the Congregation.
  - Want to attend a webinar? Have questions on possible actions you can take to reduce your energy use and carbon footprint? Contact John Harper, jpharper47@gmail.com.

- **Anti-Racism Working Group:** The Antiracism Working Group presented the video “Breaking the Antisemitism Cycle Through Solidarity” with Dove Kent, followed by a discussion of the relationship between racism and antisemitism. Beth El co-sponsored an interfaith Martin Luther King Day event and will co-sponsor other upcoming events, including a facilitated film discussion at Lincoln-Sudbury High School titled “I’m Not a Racist, Am I?” The next antiracism book group meeting is on January 24. Between the World and Me by Ta-Nehisi Coates will be discussed. Working Group leadership has been meeting with other congregations to explore models of congregational antiracism work. Contacts: Judy Goldberg and Karen Blumenfeld

- **Sanctuary Committee:** We continue work in multiple areas:
  - We are trying to take stock of exactly where we are financially with respect to the Ayalas. They are more self-sufficient now than they were even a few months ago, but they still do need support in various areas.
  - In conjunction with HIAS, we will be hosting a “Refugee Shabbat” at Beth El. We are trying to work out the logistics of it as we speak. Many more details to come. We would very much like to have it at the end of Pesach.
  - We organized a celebratory Stand-Out in Sudbury Center on the morning of January 20, Inauguration Day, to mark this moment before moving forward with more work to be done.

For more information on the Ayala family, contact Judy Katz (judy16k@gmail.com) or Judy Sletzinger (jsletzinger@gmail.com). For details on legislative action, contact Kath Bean (kathleencbean@gmail.com). For info on Friday afternoon stand-outs or other Sanctuary Committee activities, contact Carl Offner (carl.offner@comcast.net).

- **Support for Beth El members:** Winter is upon us and Covid-19 has us firmly in its grasp. Some of us are sheltering in place with family, trying to be parents and teachers and athletic directors as well as work, while others are alone in our homes with nobody to talk to and no one to give us a hug. No matter what your situation is, these are trying and stressful times for everyone. This is a time for our
community to step up and take care of one another. There are currently two community support initiatives underway:

1. **Phone Buddies** make weekly or bi-monthly calls to other congregants. Anyone can do this, no matter how young or old (or in-between) you are! If you would like to make calls, let us know. If you would like to receive calls and/or would like to refer someone else to be a recipient of calls, let us know that too. Please contact Carol Sheingold.

2. **Soup Group!** Formerly called the Share Warmth and Love Brigade, this group of congregants make and deliver soup to other community members. To date we have made multiple soup deliveries to four recipients, and a fifth recipient will be getting soup starting this weekend! The soups have received rave reviews, nourishing both body and soul.

As a reminder, soup can be delivered for serious needs like illness or being homebound, soup can also be sent to someone feeling lonely, cold, or just having a tough week. We can deliver even just because you feel like having a warm soupy hug! If you would like to volunteer to make soup and have not yet done so, please let us know! If you would like to request soup or nominate someone else to receive soup don’t hesitate to reach out! Please contact Jocylyn Bailin.

- **Help for Congregants Who Need Food Assistance:** If there are any congregants who could use some food assistance, they should contact Deborah Oppenheimer directly at deb_oppenheimer@alumni.pomona.edu; all information will kept confidential. If any need assistance getting pantry (or other) groceries delivered to them, they should contact Neighborhood Brigade (with whom Deborah has partnered). If they live in Lincoln or Sudbury they should contact Sudbury Neighborhood Brigade about home deliveries, at Sudbury MA Neighbor Brigade <sudburyma@neighborbrigade.org>.

- **Tzedek Scholarship Fund:** The Tzedek Scholarship Fund is truly grateful to all the generous donors at Beth El who continue to support our work. We’re continuing to support our three Framingham State scholars, who are managing well adapting to the new realities of education in the time of Corona. Below are short statements from two of our Tzedek scholars, both of whom will soon graduate Framingham State University.

  My goal for this Spring semester is to earn Deans List as I conclude my undergraduate education. Learning during the pandemic has been challenging but I have continued to succeed and made President’s and Dean’s list for the Fall semester. At this time I’m applying for Framingham State University HR graduate program.

  Thank you for your support.

  Sincerely,

  Sashell Thebaud

  My goals when graduating is to start an after-school program to help children have a vision and mission for their life at an early age, by teaching real life technique. Children will explore all jobs, and how life works. I want to thank those who had contributed to helping someone like me be able to graduate May 2021. It has been a dream of mine to attend college and this dream wouldn’t be possible if it wasn’t for people like you.

  Thank you for your kindness.

  May God bless you and your future.

  ---Rayanne Silva

- **Criminal Justice Reform:** Criminal Justice Reform, in conjunction with the Anti-Racism Interest group, has begun work on a project to publicize and, if possible, aid in the establishment of more Restorative Justice Circles. There is a group in Concord which is already doing this but has not been able to connect to poorer communities. We are reaching out to the former for advice, which communities are already involved, etc. We are considering Framingham, Hudson, Maynard and Marlborough. For more info, contact Elaine Barnartt-Goldstein at ebarnarttgoldstein@gmail.com.

- **Tzedaka Hevra:** The Tzedaka Hevra has had a very busy and productive year, giving away roughly $30,000. 60% went to 3 organizations and the remaining 40% to 27 other organizations. We also made
an emergency Covid donation of $1000 that we split between Yad Chessed and Rabbi Breindel's discretionary fund. We heard from speakers representing organizations that we donate to, or that we may donate to. The Hevra meets regularly and is open to any Beth El member. To learn more, contact Ira Silver: isilver@framingham.edu

- **MetroWest Free Medical Program**: The MWFMP is “seeing” patients remotely through a combination of video calls, phone conversations, and text messaging. We’re limited right now to patients we’ve seen before and hope to extend our services to new patients at in the future when we have more infrastructure in place to support telemedicine. We’ve received some emergency grants from funders that are helping to make the transition to telemedicine. We anticipate operating this way for the foreseeable future, into 2021. Visit their [website](https://www.jfcsboston.org/About/COVID-19-Update) to learn more and get involved.

- **Blood Drive**: Due to COVID, the blood drive has been postponed.

- **Kiddush donation opportunities**: In lieu of hosting Kiddush at the temple, consider joining a Beth El Kiddush group, which plans to donate funds to food pantries, including [Sudbury Food Pantry](https://www.sudburyfoodpantry.org), Greater Boston Food Bank and [Feeding America](https://www.feedingamerica.org).

- **Covid-19 volunteer opportunities**: Our community rises to the current Covid-19 challenge! Many Tikkun Olam efforts are already underway in support of Beth El members and the broader community. More opportunities arrive in our inboxes every day. The CJP, JCRC, Jewish Family & Children's Service, and others offer many opportunities. If you’re able to help, please take a look at their websites: https://www.jfcsboston.org/About/COVID-19-Update
  https://www.jcrcboston.org/covid-19/
  https://www.cjp.org/get-involved

- **COVID-19 Support Services From CJP**: If the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) crisis has affected someone you know financially, the CJP WarmLine (1-800-CJP-9500) may be able to assist. With one phone call or by filling out a simple online form, trained Warmline counselors can begin to help navigate available services across the Jewish community. JewishBoston.com also has additional information about community resources during the COVID-19 crisis. CJP has launched the CJP [Coronavirus Emergency Fund](https://www.cjp.org/coronavirus-emergency-fund) in order to extend greater support to numerous Jewish social service agencies providing critical services during this time. 100% of the money raised will help community members who are facing hardship as a result of this pandemic. Anyone feeling overwhelmed with sadness, anxiety or stress, or who wants to harm themselves or others, can access the mental health, emotional support and suicide prevention program Call2Talk by dialing 2-1-1, calling 508-532-2255 or by texting C2T to 741741.

**Thanks to everyone for your holy work!** If I’ve missed anyone’s Tikkun Olam efforts at Beth El, please let me know. We’d like to share the news with the community! If something here interests you, and you don’t see contact information, let me know and I’m happy to connect you.

L’shalom,

Michelle Fineblum, VP, Tikkun Olam  tikkunolam@bethelsudbury.org

[Beth El's Tikkun Olam web page](https://www.bethelsudbury.org/tikkun-olam)