

THE SHOFAR

The Monthly Bulletin of the BJCC

December 2020 / Kislev-Tevet 5781



Blacksburg Jewish Community Center
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SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

[Saturday Shabbat services begin at 10:00 AM]

SERVICES

Dec. 5–Vayishlach–S&M Kranowski

Dec. 12–Vayeishev–E. Hallerman

Dec. 19–Miketz–R. Scheckler

Dec. 26–Vayigash–M&S Kranowski

SERVICES WILL STILL BE REMOTE

Our leaders have become masters of Zoom, and services are fun and meaningful. We often have visitors (former members and friends) attend services from as far away as Japan. Drop in on Saturday mornings at 10:00 AM. You will receive an email a day or two before the services telling you how to join the upcoming session.

ISJL FELLOW TO JOIN US FOR SHABBAT, DEC. 5

Isaac Gamoran, the ISJL fellow, will be joining our Dec. 5 Shabbat service via Zoom. He will lead us in some prayers.

SHOFAR DEADLINE, DEC. 23

The deadline for submitting news for the next issue of the *Shofar* is Dec. 23. Send information to Richard at [richard \[at\] vt.edu](mailto:richard@vt.edu).



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Chanukah! Our holiday season commences this week. For those connected with Virginia Tech, enjoy breathing the collective sigh of relief that comes with the Thanksgiving break. Time for turkey and parades! My family's holiday looks a little different this year; we are staying in town rather than traveling to see others. However, we will have a Zoom dessert to show off some goodies and get to chat with people. Chanukah will probably be similar; a shipment of latkes has already been delivered. Plans for kugel are being made.

Last week, I attended a Zoom bat mitzvah. It was different and consisted of pre-recorded video clips at the temple, along with my cousin and her many family members. It wasn't easy, but there is something reassuring that we can reconfigure our traditions to account for our pandemic difficulties.

In last month's newsletter, you may have seen the "Maskabees" helping pack meals at Micah's backpack. It was a nice opportunity to give back to the community. If you are interested in helping, communicate with Aaron Goldstein, the coordinator. Contact me if you want to volunteer on other projects. Our deep tradition of tzedakah is highly relevant and needed at this time.

May your turkey (or meat substitute) remain juicy; may your latkes soak up much oil!

Shalom! Dan, BJCC President



DON'T FORGET TO PAY DUES

If you haven't done so already, please send in your dues (\$700 per family, or \$350 per individual) and Religious/Sunday School fees (new lower rates; see BJCC website) and contact Marta Brinberg for details. As always, individuals and families can discuss a reduction of dues and/or fees in privacy with the treasurer, Stephen Scheckler. The BJCC mission is to serve the needs of New River Valley Jews. No one will be turned away for lack of financial resources.

MICAH'S BACKPACK

Following on the heels of Jacob and Madeline Keesee's highly successful food drive for Micah's Backpack (MBP) in October, Nich Goldstein reached out to John Stramiello at MBP to see if his Boy Scout troop could help pack food bags after school. For those of you not familiar with it, MBP is run out of St Michael's Lutheran Church and distributes food each Friday to roughly 300 boys and girls in the area, helping them through the weekend. Although Nich got approval, he couldn't secure the commitment from his troop, so he reached out to the BJCC. Thus was formed team "Maskabees," consisting of Dan and Tommy Hindman, Wendy Silverman, Nich and Aaron Goldstein, Suzan and Jon Antin, and Ruth Grene. Last week was our second "bagging."



HILLEL NEWS

See the Hillel calendar, and obtain more info at <http://hillelatvirginiatech.com>.

THANKS FOR MANY THINGS

- Many thanks to Nitza Kats for her ongoing support to the BJCC's High Holidays services.
- New River Community Action thanks our BJCC members for their generous support of time and donations
- Thanks go to all our members who have designated the BJCC as a recipient of rewards for their AmazonSmile and Kroger purchases

TAX DEDUCTION SUGGESTION FOR DONATIONS

If you have some appreciated stock or mutual fund shares that you would like to give to the BJCC, here's an approach that can benefit everyone. Instead of selling the securities and giving the proceeds to the BJCC, you can donate them directly to the BJCC and allow us to sell them. The BJCC gets the same amount as a contribution, but you benefit by not having to pay capital gains taxes. Moreover, the value of your gift (not your cost) is used to calculate your charitable gift contribution when you determine your income taxes. You therefore get a larger deduction and pay no capital gains taxes.

Here's an example:

Suppose you bought 100 shares in XYZ Company years ago for \$20 per share. The value today is \$50 per share. If you sold the stock, you would receive \$5,000, but you would have to pay capital gains tax of about 20% (\$600) on the profit. Hence, you would net only \$4,400 for your contribution and get a deduction for that amount when you gave it to the BJCC. But if you donated the appreciated stock before selling it, the BJCC would get the full \$5,000, and you could take a deduction of the \$5,000 as well, while never paying capital gains tax. Everyone wins!

If you are considering such a gift, contact Treasurer Steve Scheckler as well as your tax advisor.



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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 15 Kislev	2 16 Kislev	3 17 Kislev	4 18 Kislev	5 19 Kislev Parashat Vayishlach
6 20 Kislev	7 21 Kislev	8 22 Kislev	9 23 Kislev	10 24 Kislev Chanukah: 1 Candle 	11 25 Kislev Chanukah: 2 Candles 	12 26 Kislev Parashat Vayeishev Chanukah: 3 Candles 
13 27 Kislev Chanukah: 4 Candles 	14 28 Kislev Chanukah: 5 Candles 	15 29 Kislev Chanukah: 6 Candles 	16 1 Tevet Rosh Chodesh Tevet Chanukah: 7 Candles 	17 2 Tevet Chanukah: 8 Candles 	18 3 Tevet Chanukah: 8th Day 	19 4 Tevet Parashat Miketz
20 5 Tevet	21 6 Tevet	22 7 Tevet	23 8 Tevet Deadline to submit info for January <i>Shofar</i>	24 9 Tevet	25 10 Tevet	26 11 Tevet Parashat Vayigash
27 12 Tevet	28 13 Tevet	29 14 Tevet	30 15 Tevet	31 16 Tevet		



Dear friends,

I'm writing today with exciting news and with a request for help in documenting these extraordinary times.

The [Goldring/Woldenberg Institute of Southern Jewish Life \(ISJL\)](#) is proud to be working with Jewish cultural institutions around the country and the [Council of American Jewish Museums \(CAJM\)](#) to record and collect stories about what it means to be Jewish in the era of COVID-19. This project will provide a snapshot for researchers and future generations of the American Jewish community in 2020—how we have collectively and individually experienced the pandemic, struggles for racial justice, and all of the other life-changing events of this year. This effort represents a collective approach to collect stories, preserve and interpret them, and create a historical record of these times.

We want to include your voice in this collection of stories about this complicated moment in history. Perhaps you have stories to share about parenting during the pandemic, or you've gotten involved in advocacy for racial justice this year. You might have celebrated the High Holidays in an unfamiliar setting, or found comfort and meaning in lighting the Shabbat candles. Whatever your story, we want to hear it.

We are looking for Jewish community members of all ages and backgrounds to be interviewed for this project. ISJL staff members are conducting these interviews remotely via video call, with the goal of completing interviews in mid-December.

If you are interested in sharing your story with us, [please fill out this form](#). We'll get in touch to schedule an interview with one of our staff members.

If you have questions about this project, please email Nora Katz, ISJL Director of Heritage and Interpretation, at heritage@isjl.org. Please share this email with friends and family members who might be interested in being interviewed.

Thank you for your continued support of our work, and have a wonderful Thanksgiving.

Best,

Nora Katz
ISJL Director of Heritage and Interpretation
heritage@isjl.org

Sign up now



Construction progress at our building



For more information on CAJM, click [on](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUIIeQxDTEPiiNhydPP8TNxq2RaiQ4s74jhou-D9jB7pc3Tw/viewform)
<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdUIIeQxDTEPiiNhydPP8TNxq2RaiQ4s74jhou-D9jB7pc3Tw/viewform>

BJCC Officers and Board Members 2020-21

(Officers are definite; some committee chairs need to be verified)

These email addresses are being protected against automatic spamming by using “[at]” and a space before and after what would normally be an @ sign. If you use one of these addresses, be sure to replace the [at] with @ and without the spaces.

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