

THE SHOFAR

The Monthly Bulletin of the BJCC

December 2025 / Kislev -Tevet 5786



Blacksburg Jewish Community Center
Corner of Church and Roanoke Streets, PO Box 782
Blacksburg, VA 24063 (540) 300-BJCC
Website: www.bjccblacksburg.org



SCHEDULE OF SHABBAT SERVICES

[Saturday Shabbat services begin at 10:00 AM]

Dec. 6–Vayishlach–E. Hallerman (at BJCC & livestreamed) **followed by a potluck lunch
Dec. 13–Vayeishev–B. Klein (Zoom)
Dec. 20–Miketz (Chanukah & Rosh Chodesh)–R&S Scheckler (Zoom)
Dec. 27–Vayigash–S&M Kranowski (Zoom)

SERVICES MOSTLY ONLINE IN DEC.

The one in-person Shabbat service this month is on Dec. 6, followed by our monthly potluck lunch. The other services will occur via Zoom.

POTLUCK LUNCH ON DEC. 6

We'll enjoy a potluck lunch after services on Sat., Dec. 6. You can bring a dish with you (plan to arrive downstairs with it a few minutes before 10:00 AM) and attend the service, or simply join us at 11:30 AM. Please bring a vegetarian or kosher-fish dish to share. If you come for the service, your dish can be refrigerated and/or heated in the oven to the best serving temperature.

HILLEL at VT's ANNUAL CHANUKAH FORMAL

Hillel's annual formal benefit on Sat., Dec. 6 will feature a local jazz trio, hors d'oeuvres, desserts from pastry chef Rebekkah Chen, a photo booth, horoscope readings, and a dance party. Obtain more info at https://secure.lglforms.com/form_engine/s/99YleWtFqgVLkq2Yl3qD8Q. Tickets range from \$15 to \$45.



SHOFAR DEADLINE, DEC. 24

The deadline for submitting news for the next issue of the *Shofar* is Dec. 24. Send information to Richard at [richard\[at\]vt.edu](mailto:richard[at]vt.edu).

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Friends:

The sukkah has come down, and days are getting shorter, but things are still happening at the BJCC.

A couple of weeks ago, Sean Sidky, Visiting Assistant Professor in Judaic Studies, gave a presentation on a selection of Yiddish poetry from the Holocaust period to more than a dozen congregants and visitors. As exciting, our Sunday School will hold a Chanukah party on Dec. 14. All members are welcome to attend this festive event.

If you are feeling generous, the Montgomery County Christmas Store and the Interfaith Food Pantry are collecting donations for those in need. Ruth Grene and Linda Deemer (our Community/Tzedakah co-chairs) remind everyone that food insecurity in our area is on the rise while SNAP benefits are being curtailed. So, if you would like to make a monetary donation, please reach out to our Treasurer, Marta Brinberg.

On a happier note, it looks like our elevator will be back in service soon. It should provide an uplifting experience.

Finally, I would like to wish a fond farewell to Simona Fried, our Religious School co-director, who is leaving for a professional opportunity in Boston next year.

Best wishes, Prez Aaron

THANKS FOR THE DONATIONS

We're grateful for the donations to the BJCC.

To the general fund:

- Lynda Chamowitz
- Alasdair G. Cohen
- Debora Schneller
- Richard and Doris Zallen, in memory of Claire Klein

To the Sunday School:

- Gary Long

To the Blacksburg Interfaith Food Pantry

- Debora Schneller

DUES—IN CASE YOU FORGOT

Please pay BJCC dues promptly. Member dues are \$800 per year for families and \$400 per year for single households. Our BJCC treasurer encourages members to pay their dues via PayPal or by mailing them to: Blacksburg Jewish Community Center (BJCC), PO Box 782, Blacksburg, VA 24063-0782. As always, individuals and families can privately discuss dues reductions with Treasurer Marta Brinberg. The BJCC's mission is to serve the Jewish community in the New River Valley. No one will be turned away due to a lack of financial resources.

CEMETERY INFO

The BJCC has entered into an agreement with Memorial Gardens of the New River Valley (MGNRV) to designate a Jewish section in this locally owned cemetery, situated at the northern end of Main Street in Blacksburg. Visit www.memorialgardensnrva.com/jewish-gardens.php if you're interested in purchasing burial plots in the Jewish section. Several plots have already been purchased; others are still available. BJCC members, their Jewish or non-Jewish immediate family members, and non-members who are Jewish are eligible to buy plots in this area.

The BJCC and MGNRV have agreed on a set of regulations to maintain this section's Jewish character in perpetuity. If you are considering such a purchase, please speak with a member of the BJCC cemetery

committee (Eric Hallerman, Muriel Kranowski, and Marta Brinberg) to explain these regulations. If you are not a BJCC member, your purchase must be approved by the cemetery committee.

PJ BOOK NOOK INFO

Chanukah begins on Sun., Dec. 14 and runs through Mon., Dec. 22. Our Book Nooks can supply you with Hanukkah stories, ideas for crafts, and lots of recipes!

Of special note: PJ Library's *A Time to Hope* is a beautifully illustrated guide to the four Jewish holidays that fall each year between November and March: Sigd, an Ethiopian Jewish

holiday of homecoming; Chanukah, the festival of lights; Tu B'Shevat, the birthday of the trees; and Purim, the holiday of turnarounds. They are joyful celebrations of hope. A hard copy of this book is available in the

upstairs book nook outside the sanctuary. You can also access a digital copy at <https://pjlibrary.org/hope>.

Happy reading! --Suzan



Image from *A Time to Hope*

How to Use our Book Nooks for PJ Library

- Color Coding
 - Teal bins—ages 9+.
 - Royal blue ages 6 months to 8 years—books for younger children in the front; topics are labeled on the front of the bin.
 - White bins—adults.
 - Hot pink bin—for book cards and returns.
- Each bin has a QR code on the left side; scan it to view a list of books in that bin, including photos of the covers, titles, and suggested age ranges.
 - Tap on a book to get more info, such as theme, genre, and the last date it was sent to PJ subscribers.
- Please check out and return books and games with a library book card. Cards and returns can be left in the hot pink bins.









BJCC Officers and Board Members 2025–26

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

President	Aaron Goldstein	Goldst [at] vt.edu
President–elect (V.P.)	Open	
Past Presidents	Gary Long	glong [at] vt.edu
	Eric Hallerman	ehallerm [at]vt.edu
Treasurer	Marta Brinberg	martabrinberg [at] hotmail.com
Secretary	Maddy Keesee	mekeesee [at] gmail.com
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Community Service/Tzedakah	Ruth Grene	greneruth [at] gmail.com
Co-chairs	Linda Deemer	lrdeemer [at] comcast.net
Religion Chair	Muriel Kranowski	murielk [at] vt.edu
Social Chair	Open	
Building Chair	Al Kornhauser	alkorn [at] vt.edu
Culture Chair	Rebecca Scheckler	3050hawks [at] gmail.com
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	Cindy Rosenbaum	cbrosenb [at] hotmail.com
	Sharone Tomer	Sharoneltomer [at] gmail.com
	Rebecca Scheckler	3050hawks [at] gmail.com
BJCC listserv keeper	Open	
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	Gil Hersch	gil251 [at] gmail.com
Education director	Richard Hirsh	richard [at] vt.edu
<i>Shofar</i> Editor		

December 2025

Kislev – Tevet 5786

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 11th of Kislev	2 12th of Kislev	3 13th of Kislev	4 14th of Kislev	5 15th of Kislev	6 16th of Kislev Parashat Vayishlach Service at BJCC and livestreamed Hillel Chanukah formal
7 17th of Kislev	8 18th of Kislev	9 19th of Kislev	10 20th of Kislev	11 21st of Kislev	12 22nd of Kislev	13 23rd of Kislev Parashat Vayeishev Zoom service
14 24th of Kislev Chanukah: 1 Candle Sunday School Chanukah party 	15 25th of Kislev Chanukah: 2 Candles 	16 26th of Kislev Chanukah: 3 Candles 	17 27th of Kislev Chanukah: 4 Candles 	18 28th of Kislev Chanukah: 5 Candles 	19 29th of Kislev Chanukah: 6 Candles 	20 30th of Kislev Chanukah: 7 Candles Rosh Chodesh Tevet Parashat Miketz Zoom service 
21 1st of Tevet, 5786 Chanukah: 8 Candles Rosh Chodesh Tevet 	22 2nd of Tevet Chanukah: 8th Day	23 3rd of Tevet	24 4th of Tevet	25 5th of Tevet	26 6th of Tevet	27 7th of Tevet Parashat Vayigash Zoom service
28 8th of Tevet	29 9th of Tevet	30 10th of Tevet	31 11th of Tevet			

Diaspora holidays schedule

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