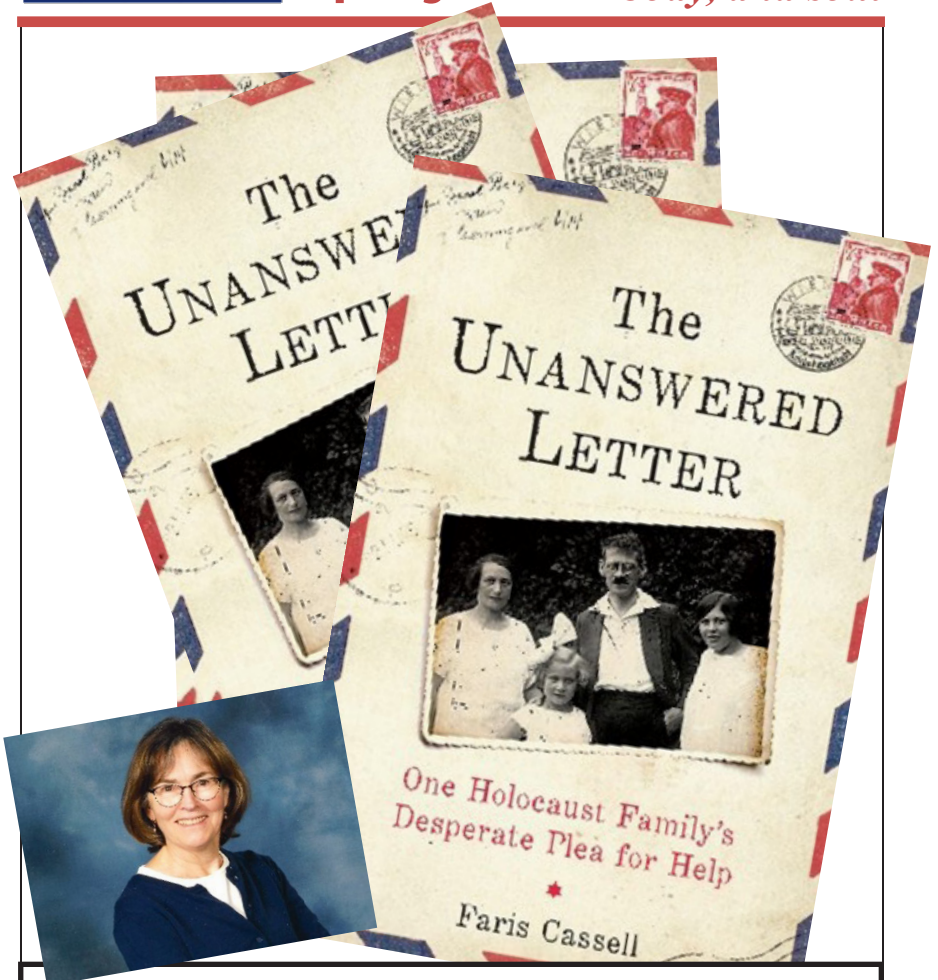




Temple Beth Israel *Center for Jewish Life*

Spring 2021 *Feed your mind,
body, and soul*



Wednesday, April 7 (YouTube)

Yom HaShoah Observance, 7:00pm

Faris Cassell, Featured Speaker, 7:30pm



Programs and classes are open to all, and we welcome students from within TBI and from the larger community. All programs are currently online, unless noted otherwise.



All of the classes and events for Spring 2021 are free of charge. However, because membership commitments do not cover the full cost of community education, we rely on donations to continue offering this diverse programming. Please donate if you are able.



Interested in joining the Community Education Committee, or have ideas for teaching or a class offering? Contact Rabbi Solomon, rabbisolomon@tbieugene.org, 541.485.7218 x109.

Omer Mincha Moment *w/Rabbi Solomon*

Mondays, March 29 to May 10

Noon - 12:30pm (Zoom)

We'll focus on the weekly tikkun, the healing potential, found within the practice of counting the Omer. We will study a brief text, sit in meditation or journal privately, and reflect together on the weekly theme, supporting each other to go deeper in our own spiritual count-up. For more info on counting the omer, go to ritualwell.org or en.wikipedia.org and search for "counting the omer."



Yom HaShoah – Holocaust Remembrance Day

Wednesday, April 7 (YouTube)

Yom HaShoah Observance, 7:00pm

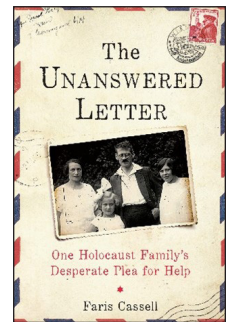
Faris Cassell, Featured Speaker, 7:30pm

Cantor Evlyn Gould will lead a commemorative service for Yom HaShoah, followed by special guest, Faris Cassell, speaking about her award-winning book, *The Unanswered Letter—One Holocaust Family's Desperate Plea for Help*.



Cassell uncovered an untold Holocaust story 75 years after WWII by traveling across the globe to answer a family's 1939 cry for help. As the Nazis closed in, Alfred Berger mailed a desperate letter to an American stranger who happened to share his last name. He and his wife, Viennese Jews, had found escape routes for their daughters. But now their money, connections, and emotional energy were nearly exhausted. Alfred begged the American recipient of the letter, "You are surely informed about the situation of all Jews in Central Europe. . . . By pure chance I got your address. . . . My daughter and her husband will go . . . to America. . . . Help us to follow our children. . . . It is our last and only hope. . . ."

After languishing in a California attic for over sixty years, Alfred's letter came by chance into Cassell's possession: "I felt like I held a life in my hands." Questions flew off the page at her. Did the Bergers' desperate letter get a response? Did they escape the Nazis? Were there any living descendants? For decades, Cassell could not rest until she discovered the ending of the story.



Faris Cassell is a journalist and writer. She and her husband, Sydney, live in Eugene and are long-time members of TBI. She earned a B.A. in history from Mount Holyoke College and an M.S. in journalism from the University of Oregon. Her decades of research into Alfred and Hedwig Berger's story were supported by a Mount Holyoke Alumnae Scholarship and by the generous cooperation of the Berger family.

Tot Time in the Ohel (Tent) *w/Rabbi Solomon*

Saturday, April 10, 9:30am



Celebrate Shabbat in-person in the new ohel (tent) in the courtyard with songs, stories, sharing, and Shabbat! Tots ages 0 to 5 (and parents and siblings) are welcome to join for this fun half hour that's geared to our youngest community members.

Shabbat Yoga *w/Rabbi Solomon*

April 10, and second Saturday of the month
1:00-2:00pm (Zoom)



Join Rabbi Solomon via Zoom for chanting and gentle yoga. Ideal to have a mat, some water, and comfortable clothes. Elders, tots, and pets are all welcome! We may begin offering in-person yoga in May. Stay tuned!

Queer Chavurah Presents...

Alphabet Soup for Everybody

Sunday, April 11, 6:30pm (Zoom)



What do all of the letters in the LGBTQIA+ acronym stand for? Sometimes it's hard to ask. Will I offend someone if don't ask in just the right way? What if I'm confused about He/Him/His, She/Her/Hers, and Them/They/Theirs? Is this whole pronoun thing really that important? Will the world really come to an end if a transwoman uses the "Ladies Room"? What is a "transwoman" anyway? Get the lowdown.

Our panel is going to answer all your questions, serious and silly, and get you up to date on the wonderful world of queer folk. Our awesome allies are especially invited to this serious and lighthearted gathering. Sign up and submit your questions using the link in the weekly e-news, or contact Judy Boles (judy.boles@comcast.net).

Siyum Shekalim *w/Rabbi Ruhi Sophia & Friends*

Monday, April 12, 7:30pm (Zoom)

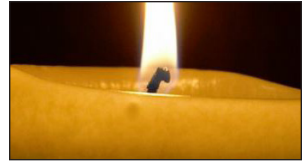


Gather for a virtual siyum celebration completing the fifth tractate of Talmud, Shekalim, which deals with the annual half-shekel tax that ancient Jews paid every year to make possible the maintenance and proper functioning of the Temple in Jerusalem. You do not have to have studied the Talmud in order to attend.

Yom HaZikaron *w/Rabbi Ruhi Sophia*

Wednesday, April 14, 5:30pm (Zoom)

Gather during Wednesday Minyan for special Yom HaZikaron prayers.

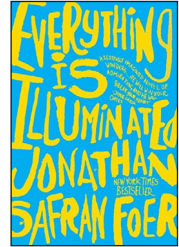


Jewish Literature Group

Thursday, April 22, 7:00pm

The group welcomes those who have read the book and want to join the discussion. April's book is *Everything Is Illuminated*, by Jonathan Safran Foer.

Meetings are on Zoom at 7:00pm. Contact Martha Ravits at mravits@teleport.com for more information and the Zoom link. Watch the weekly e-news for May and June meetings.



Seven Species: Tastes and Texts *w/Rabbis Jonathan Rubenstein & Linda Motzkin*

Sunday, April 25, 10:00am (Zoom)

Pre-registration required. Look for link in the e-news.

The Seven Species (Shivat Haminim), derived from Deuteronomy 8:7-8, are two grains and five fruits associated with the Land of Israel and imbued with special holiness and significance. The Mishnah (Bikkurim 1:3) states that “Bikkurim (first fruits) are brought only from the seven species.” The first fruits of the seven species—wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates—were the only acceptable offerings in the Temple in Jerusalem. Kabbalists ascribe special spiritual qualities to each of them. Customarily the first fruits are eaten on Tu B'Shevat, Shavuot, and Sukkot. The Seven Species are also a Jewish folk motif and are frequently represented in Jewish art.



In addition to a text study and discussion of a selection of biblical, rabbinic, and kabbalistic sources on the significance of the Seven Species, we will also show some artistic representations of the Seven Species, and share ideas on how to incorporate the Seven Species into a special Shavuot challah and other special holiday foods.

Lag B'Omer

Thursday, April 29th 8:00pm in the TBI Parking Lot

The period between Pesach and Shavuot is called the “Counting of the Omer” (sefirat ha'omer), after the ancient rite of the bringing of the first sheaf (omer) of the barley harvest to the priest (Lev. 23:9-14). Lag B'Omer is the shorthand way of saying the thirty-third day of the omer. It is celebrated to commemorate the day a plague ended in which thousands of students of Rabbi Akiba, a Talmudic scholar, died during the Counting of the Omer. The period of counting is traditionally observed as a period of mourning. The mourning, however, is set aside on Lag B'Omer, making it a day of special joy and festivity.

Lag B'Omer is not mentioned in the Torah and only hinted at in the Talmud. Consequently, there is no formal ritual, but rather a series of customs that the people found attractive and meaningful.

Many weddings take place on Lag B'Omer. In the Israeli traditional community, it has become a day when three-year-old children get their first haircuts. Parties and picnics abound and, at least in Israel, hundreds of people attend midnight bonfires and many children carry little bows and arrows. For more information visit: myjewishlearning.com/article/lag-baomer/.

To commemorate the holiday, we're having a firepit with smores. Bring a lawn chair, blankets, and warm clothes. We'll provide basic ingredients for smores—graham crackers, chocolate, and gelatin-free marshmallows. In case of rain, this event will be cancelled.



Tikkun Leil Shavuot *w/Rabbi Ruhi Sophia*

Sunday, May 16, 8:00pm (Zoom)

Traditionally, one stays up all night studying until dawn and eating dairy snacks on the night of Shavuot to celebrate the giving of the Torah. This year you can do so in your pajamas from the comfort of your own home. Grab a pint of ice cream, some bonbons, a cheesecake, or your favorite dairy alternative and join the celebration. We'll have diverse teachings offered by clergy and lay leaders from TBI and Temple Beth Sholom in Salem (and possibly other regional synagogues, TBD). Stay all night, or tap in and out as you have energy and interest. Details will be announced closer to the event.



There will be Shavuot Services Monday, May 17, and Tuesday, May 18, at 9:00am.

Ongoing (on zoom)

Torah Study *w/Rabbi Ruhi Sophia*

Thursdays @ Noon

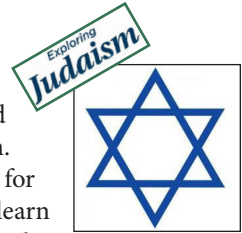
Join Rabbi Ruhi Sophia as she leads an engaging and interesting discussion of the weekly Torah portion.



Exploring Judaism

3rd Sunday of the month, 3:00pm

Join the group for a monthly discussion with the Rabbi and non-Jews, new-Jews and any-Jews interested in exploration. All are welcome, but this is an especially good opportunity for people new to Judaism in general and TBI in particular to learn more and get to know fellow explorers in a welcoming, casual setting. Questions? Contact Mark Watson (mrwatson44@comcast.net).



Learners' Services *w/Rabbi Ruhi Sophia*

Saturdays, April 3 (D), May 1 (E), June 5 (F)

9:00am

A service for anyone who wants to better understand the flow of the Shabbat morning liturgy. Each session (A-F) focuses on a different section of the service, in rotation. You do not need to attend them in order.



The Vinkl (Yiddish Corner)

1st & 3rd Mondays of the month, 2:00pm

Yiddish, or mama-loshn, is one of several languages with which we Jews are blessed. Known for warmth and wit, it may evoke memories for you, or perhaps be the gate to new knowledge and pleasures. New learners encouraged.



Email Ellen Rifkin at ellen.rifkin04@gmail.com for details and the Zoom link.

Temple Beth Israel

1175 East 29th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97403

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
EUGENE OR
PERMIT NO. 275



SPRING 2021 Program Guide