

Congregation Beth Am Bulletin



January 2026

Tevet-Shevat 5786

First Friday for 2026

The first First Friday of the new year will be on January 2 at 6:30 p.m. The parasha is *VaYechi*. Wendy Drezek will offer a brief lesson about the Torah and Haftarah portions.

February's First Friday is on the 6th.

Participation in Our Services

If you would like to help lead any upcoming Shabbat services, read the Torah or Haftarah portion in Hebrew or English, or give a d'var Torah, contact Gary Kurzban at kurzban.ruiz@gmail.com.

If you'd like to attend services via Zoom, contact Marion or Henry Bernstein, hbmbtx@gmail.com.

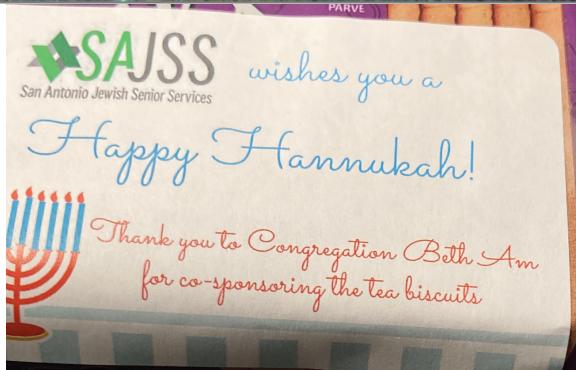
Contributions

A generous contribution was made to Congregation Beth Am by:

Vivian Weinstein, in memory of Estelle Katz, her mother.

Mark Shiver, in memory of Michael Shiver, his father.

**Contributions to Beth Am should be sent to: PO Box 780893
San Antonio, TX 78278-0893**



Stan & Wendy Drezek made a contribution to SAJSS with credit given to Beth Am (see above).

Thank You

To those who helped with Shabbat services in December: Rona Aduna, Karen Berkowitz, Marion Bernstein, Wendy Drezek, Natalie Gernsbacher, Andy Gravin, Marianne Kestenbaum, Gary Kurzban, Nancy Oseasohn and Vivian Weinstein.

To Gary Kurzban and Terry Ruiz for hosting our congregational Hanukkah party.

Reconstructing Judaism

Antisemitism: Understanding Our Contemporary Moment

December's antisemitic terrorist attack in Sydney, Australia, targeting Jews celebrating Hanukkah, is a stark reminder of why these conversations matter. We're living through a moment when antisemitism is resurgent across the political spectrum, straining relationships, communities, and political alliances throughout the Jewish world.

Yet the way we speak about antisemitism often fails to capture the full complexity of the Jewish experience, particularly when it comes to racial identity. This isn't about finding easy answers or demanding uniformity. It's about building the language and understanding we need to navigate this moment with integrity and care for one another.

We need better conversations. Join us for three.

Antisemitism: Understanding Our Contemporary Moment

Thursdays, January 15, 22, 29
8:00-9:30 p.m. EST on Zoom
\$72 for all three sessions
Scholarships available

***Bonus:** All registrants receive \$25 off [B'Yachad Convention 2026](#)

Led by:

- **Rabbi Deborah Waxman, Ph.D.**, President & CEO, Reconstructing Judaism
- **Rabbi David Teutsch, Ph.D.**, Emeritus Professor, Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC)
- **Rabbi Mira Wasserman, Ph.D.**, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Associate Professor of Rabbinic Literature, RRC
- **Amanda Beckenstein Mbuvi, Ph.D.**, Director of the Center for Jewish Ethics; Teaching Fellow, Race, Culture, and Jewish Ethics
- **Representatives from Project Shema**, bringing crucial perspectives on race and Jewish identity to our conversation about antisemitism.

What we'll explore together:

- What does antisemitism look like today and historically?

- How does racial identity shape how Jews experience antisemitism?
- How can we speak about it accurately and compassionately, leaving space for nuance?
- What can we do about it, individually and collectively?

[**Register Now**](#)

Can't make all three sessions?

Register anyway. You'll receive recordings of any sessions you miss, so you can participate in the live conversations that work for your schedule and catch up on the rest.

In the Community:

Hebrew with Rachel Walsh



Yahrzeits

14 Tevet (Jan. 3) Joseph Engel, uncle of Vivian Weinstein
14 Tevet (Jan. 3) Frieda Engel, aunt of Vivian Weinstein
15 Tevet (Jan. 4) Bernice O'Brien, mother of Terri Foose
19 Tevet (Jan. 8) Nathan Friedman, father of Rona Aduna
20 Tevet (Jan. 9) Fay Saunders, grandmother of Michele Saunders
26 Tevet (Jan. 15) A. Ferdinand Engel, father of Robert Engel
28 Tevet (Jan. 17) Max Katz, father of Vivian Weinstein
28 Tevet (Jan. 17) Gerald Holloway, brother-in-law of Gail Jennings
29 Tevet (Jan. 18) Edward Hattenbach, cousin of Marion Bernstein
1 Shevat (Jan. 19) Roslyn Kestenbaum, mother of Lenny Kestenbaum
6 Shevat (Jan. 24) Donald Teller, uncle of Marion Bernstein
8 Shevat (Jan. 26) Red Davis, uncle of Mark Shiver
8 Shevat (Jan. 26) Leslie Saunders, uncle of Michele Saunders
9 Shevat (Jan. 27) Murray Toback, father of Natalie Gernsbacher
9 Shevat (Jan. 27) Leon Cahan, husband of Marga Speicher
10 Shevat (Jan. 28) Allan Gale, uncle of Marianne Kestenbaum
10 Shevat (Jan. 28) Florence E. Bender, mother of Marjorie Gregerman
11 Shevat (Jan. 29) Sophie Friedman, mother of Rona Aduna
12 Shevat (Jan. 30) Avram Elia ben Edward, father of Monica Perlmutter

JANUARY SHABBAT SERVICES

Services are held on Zoom. If you would like to attend, contact us at hbmbtx@gmail.com.

Jan. 2, 2026: *Va-Yechi* First Friday Kabbalat Shabbat, 6:30 p.m. Shiur: Wendy Drezek

Jan. 10: *Shemot* Shaliach Tzibbur: Marion Bernstein; Torah: Gary Kurzban; Haftarah: Andy Gravin; D'var Torah: Nancy Oseasohn

Jan. 17: *Va-Era* Shaliach Tzibbur: Marion Bernstein; Torah: Marianne Kestenbaum; Haftarah: TBA; D'var Torah: Natalie Gernsbacher

Jan. 24: *Bo* Shaliach Tzibbur: Marion Bernstein; Torah: Gary Kurzban; Haftarah: Vivian Weinstein; D'var Torah: Rona Aduna

Jan. 31: *Beshallach/Shabbat Shira* Shaliach Tzibbur: Marion Bernstein; Torah: Karen Berkowitz; Haftarah: Vivian Weinstein; D'var Torah: Nancy Oseasohn

Feb. 6: *Yitro* First Friday Kabbalat Shabbat, 6:30 p.m. Shiur: Wendy Drezek

2026 BETH AM OFFICERS & BOARD

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