



*Serving Lower Fairfield County for more than 80 years*

Ita Paskind, Rabbi

David Loewenberg, President

July 2025, Tammuz 5785

Dear Fellow CBE Member,

It's that time again! At Beth El, we are starting to think about the Jewish year of 5786, which will begin on Monday evening, September 22nd.

Prior to these Holidays, we have several fabulous community events planned for September and hope you'll be there.

- Friday, September 5: Schmooze Into Shabbat with wine and appetizers, featuring French JTS Student Rabbi Tamara Settbon!
- Saturday night, September 13: We are excited to continue our Selichot collaboration established last year with TCS Westport, Or Hadash, B'nai Israel, and Rodeph Sholom. This is a night of soulful and uplifting music, and the perfect way to prepare for the New Year.

Please read through the attached flyers that give additional details about a number of other upcoming events, and be on the lookout for your invitation to celebrate Simchat Torah and honor fabulous congregants on Tuesday evening, October 14.

As we look ahead to the High Holidays, we are introducing one new way to communicate with you: CBE videos! Beginning next month, look out for short videos highlighting unique High Holiday improvements to our Beth El experience. For example: We will debut our "Prayground", a dedicated space in the social hall for kids ages 0-10 to play with Shabbat/holiday appropriate toys (under the watchful eye of a parent or caregiver). Another example: We will be excited to share our special Beth El Rosh Hashanah gift with you, and you will learn more in another video release. (Hint: It's not composting, but it could lead to recycling.)

Building on last year's success, we are pleased to offer the second annual Yom Kippur Conversation, in which Rabbi Paskind discusses with local leaders about how their work brings the prophet Isaiah's vision of justice to life. This year, we will welcome the CEO of the Open Doors shelter Michele Conderino. Please plan accordingly and join us!

On a more serious note, we want to assure you that the professional and lay leadership has been working hard with community and national safety organizations to ensure that all services and activities at Beth El will remain safe and secure. Only when we feel safe can we truly open our hearts to prayer, to sing out loud together, and to welcome the New Year.

We hope you enjoy the remainder of the summer and we look forward to seeing you soon.

May each of us be inscribed and sealed in *Sefer HaChayim*, the Book of Life.

*Bivracha*, in blessing,

Rabbi Ita Paskind and David Loewenberg, President