



# Our first virtual **Templet** issue

## Stories of COVID-19 Time...

MAY/JUNE 2020 - IYAR/SIVAN/TAMMUZ 5780

We are pleased to bring you this digital version of *Templet*, our temple newsletter...a special edition for COVID-19 time. We hope that together with a few regular columns, you will find interest and some usefulness among these selections. May we all be able to celebrate Shabbat and life together soon.

### CANTOR'S 🎵 🎵 🎵

Shira Ginsburg

**Often when I look overhead** in our sanctuary during services, my eyes are drawn to the ten hanging lights that represent the ten people required for a minyan. These ten lights, each unique blown glass, hang at a slightly different height than its neighbor. Each fixture on its own, lovely, but when hung together create a warm light reminiscent of the security of being together in community.



**During these last eight weeks**, I have been thinking of those lights, envisioning all of us in the sanctuary, the rabbi to my right elucidating some key element of the weekly Torah portion, all of you in the pews coming together in song. Something new, forged of the same communal strength and love that is the heart of those services, and the core of East End Temple has quickly grown out of our new socially distant and homebound circumstances.

**Leading services on Facebook Live and Zoom** at first seemed like a stopgap measure for me. I had no expectation that these services would become the touchstone of my week, and that I would actually feel so fully connected to all of you, our community. Perhaps the biggest surprise is the palpable energy that I can honestly feel emanating from each of you towards me. More than that I have come to rely on that as the source for my energy. Services don't seem so remote any more.

**All of this is to say thank you to you.** Thank you for showing up each Friday night, for typing in Shabbat Shalom, for greeting one another with hearts and smiley faces, for posting links to the prayer book and the songbook for one another and for saying Kaddish together and holding our community together. Thank you for illuminating our communal spirit with each of your individual lights. I had no idea that we would do it with such brilliant, beautiful light.



### FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

Joshua M. Z. Stanton

#### **Farther Apart and Closer Than Ever**

**I have seldom experienced** such sweetness from fellow New Yorkers as I have in the past few weeks. Scrupulously walking six feet (or more) from each other and donning face masks that obscure our identities, strangers have become interlocutors, interlocutors have become friends, and friends have become family. Could it be that the physical distance that we need to stay safe is fostering the emotional intimacy and support that we need?



**Conversations**, Zoom hangouts, online learning sessions, and Shabbat services within the East End Temple community have likewise taken on a new valence. Community members have opened up in new ways, reflected on their lives with renewed insight, and shared bravely of their wisdom.

**Our tradition is no stranger** to the idea of closeness without physical proximity. Many Orthodox communities abide by the idea of *shomer negiah*, in which men and women forego physical contact with those of other genders, except for their spouses. While such restrictions reinforce outdated gender norms, many who are traditionally observant find ways of conveying warmth and care – as evidenced by the close web of relationships within those communities.

**While physical distance has created pain** and isolation for so many of us, I wonder if we might heed the remarkable social transformations taking place before our very eyes (and screens). As much as I look forward to shaking hands and hugging community members, perhaps we could also share even more love in the way we speak to each other and listen to each other's words.

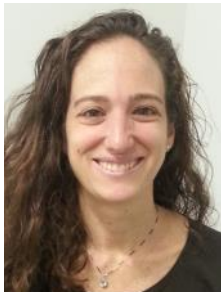


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**FROM the Co-PRESIDENT**

Rebecca Shore



**Each member of our community** has been impacted over the recent months: we have been sick, we have lost loved ones, we have lost jobs and income, we have experienced feelings of sadness, isolation, anger, and frustration, while also guiding family members, young and old, through this new – and hopefully temporary – normal. For each of your losses, I convey my heartfelt condolence and support.

**Something else happened during this time.** Our always welcoming and caring congregation has come together even stronger. In a time when each of us needs community, members of EET and the broader Jewish community have been attending, in record numbers, Shabbat services and our daily programming for support and companionship (leaving comments for each other in the “chat” so we can feel even more togetherness). When we could not be physically with our loved ones during Passover, our congregational Zoom Seder filled that void, and surrounded us with our extended EET family. Through our clergy, Chesed community, Board, and so many of you, members receive regular and personalized outreach, so that we can interact with, and care for, each other. I am personally appreciative for your regular phone calls and texts to me and my family. Through the generosity of so many of you, we have a COVID-19 Community Support fund to provide financial support to members who need it, and members are donating to support EET.

**What has come through clearly** is how much members truly care about the well-being of each other. What was once a standard greeting of “how are you?” has now become a meaningful “how ARE you?” At a recent Shabbat Saturday lunch and schmooze after what had been a hard week for many of the participants on the call, one member noted the miracle that discussing one’s mental health and struggles is now encouraged, rather than what had been perceived by some as a taboo in the past. As each of us has struggled emotionally over the past months, being able to discuss our struggles with others gives us strength and support.

**When I think of these moments of support,** I am even more proud of our community. Thank you. I look forward to the day that we again can greet each other in person. For now, know that East End Temple is here for you.



**EAST END TEMPLE EVERYWHERE**

Alas, we cannot meet in person during this time of public health needs. But we can connect via Facebook, Livestream, and Zoom. Please check our website <https://eastendtemple.org/east-end-temple-everywhere/> for a list of upcoming programs, which we will update each week, until we can see each other face-to-face. We look forward to staying connected and would welcome you to invite family, friends, and colleagues to join us, as well.

In order to stay connected online, you may need to use new technology. Instruction on how to connect are through the link above. If you would like to volunteer your time and talents for a program, please contact us at [info@eastendtemple.org](mailto:info@eastendtemple.org).

It was eight weeks ago when we closed East End Temple and decided to move all our programming online, including moving our religious school online. When I hired our faculty last summer, it was because of their skillset in the classroom -- I didn't even think to ask them what online skills they could bring to the table!



You do not know what people are truly capable of until they are tested. Our religious school faculty was put to the test, and we saw what they are truly capable of. Every teacher embraced this new way of teaching and opened their creativity box. In less than a week, they learned how to use Zoom. They came up with different ways to engage the students in an online classroom. They figured out how to balance learning and creating a space where students feel cared for and heard.

We start each class with teachers checking in on the emotional well-being of each student. We have been using the whiteboard option in Zoom to play different versions of Pictionary. We used storytelling to continue to teach about Jewish values. We use www.kahoot.it to create games online to review Hebrew. We celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut with singing and dancing.

Our students are engaged in learning and continue to feel part of the community because of the hard work of our religious school teachers. This time has tested our limits, but also has allowed us to see what we are truly capable of. As Henry Stanley Haskins said, "What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."



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CONGRATULATIONS TO

Julia Gewirtz and Jack Rootenberg, our May  
bat and bar mitzvah celebrants.

Mazal tov from your EET Community.





**Sisterhood Pivots and Schmoozes**



**Sisterhood provides** our biggest events of the year each Spring, including the Helene Spring Library event, Sisterhood Shabbat and Lilith Seder. With the news of social distancing, we had to pivot to provide some degree of normalcy and connection in a suddenly unpredictable world. Food For Families was replaced by direct City Harvest donations and Rosh Chodesh, Lilith Seder and our Stitch A Thons became successful virtual programs. We are rescheduling the annual Library event and Sisterhood Shabbat for next year, whether it be in person or virtual.

**Recognizing even greater need to connect** and overcome feelings of isolation, we added weekly "Sisterhood Schmoozes". This form of casual connection each week allows us to feel like we are in each other's living rooms. We discuss what we are doing to keep busy and have meaningful and lively conversations on a variety of topics. We inspire and support each other. We share opportunities for entertainment and learning. We are grateful to be in each other's company, even if only through the wonders of technology. I hope to see you at one of these schmoozes.

**We continue to identify** opportunities to be present for each other. I would love to hear from you as to what topics or programs would be of interest to you – whether now or as we program for next year and whether women-focused or of interest all genders. Please drop me a line at [sisterhood@eastendtemple.org](mailto:sisterhood@eastendtemple.org).

Belong. Connect. Grow.



WOMEN OF REFORM JUDAISM  
*stronger together*

**RIVERSIDE MEMORIAL CHAPEL**

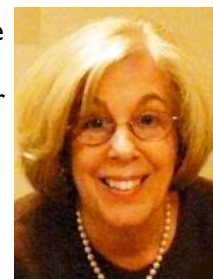
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**LIBRARY BUZZ**

Barbara Ringel



**As summer approaches** we often have more time to read, and I always suggest a few titles available for check out from our Helene Spring Library. Unfortunately, as we are currently in the midst of a pandemic that has forced the temporary closure of the temple, I am suggesting a few titles which are part of our collection but available online through the public library or for purchase through Amazon and other sites.

- **The Plot Against America** by Philip Roth, recently adapted as an HBO series, is an exceptional, very timely novel, a must-read. Taking place in early 1940's Newark, New Jersey, the novel centers on a working-class Jewish family struggling with the rising tide of anti-Semitism when Charles Lindbergh is elected President. Let your imagination go from there.
- **Unorthodox** by Deborah Feldman, is a memoir given new life by its recent adaptation as a series on Netflix. While quite different from its television adaptation, the memoir centers on a young ultra-orthodox woman struggling with the rigidity of her community, and her subsequent flight from that community to a search for freedom, identity, and self-fulfillment abroad.
- **Becoming Eve** by Abby Stein, a transgender woman, LGBTQ activist and speaker, and social media standout, grew up as a male in an ultra-orthodox family, a family whose descendants include the first Grand Rebbe. Her story is one of pain but ultimate joy in becoming who she always knew she was.

Enjoy!

**Judith Lorber:** On Sunday, April 26, I tried a Rosh Chodesh on Zoom. It worked very well with 20 participants. We are reading selected chapters of *The Hebrew Priestess* by Jill Hammer and Taya Shere.



Sharon Shemesh helpfully scanned and emailed that day's chapter, *Mourning-Women Priestesses*. It's an elegiac account of women from the Biblical period on who led grief rituals, fitting for this sad time. As we usually do in Rosh Chodesh sessions, we read paragraphs in turn and then discussed the chapter and our feelings about death and grief.

At the end we called out our thoughts on the day's gathering. In person, we light little candles floating in a bowl of water. Suellen Eshed came up with a picture of those candles in a heart shape. The only thing that was missing was our great assortment of brunch food.

## OUR TEMPLE COMMUNITY — COVID-19 STORIES

**Nancy Flaxman:** My partner Lila and I live in California and have family in New York. It has surprised us both how connected we feel to the spirituality and community of EET from across the country. We have been troubled and upset in recent years about what is happening in our country. How do we care deeply about human suffering and injustice and still enjoy the blessings in our own lives? How do we balance the daily outrage with hope? It has been important to us to stop on Fridays and rise above our daily concerns to see the bigger picture. We often do not even realize how much we need that until we sit at our dining room table, set up the iPad, and connect to the inspiring words and music of EET. All that we were concerned about has only intensified in recent months, with so much suffering and loss. More than ever I need the wisdom, warmth, and spirituality of EET at this time of being afraid for loved ones, physically isolated, and concerned for not just our country but the world. Because we all have to connect remotely, whether blocks apart or 3,000 miles, we now have more opportunities to connect with East End Temple. We are getting to know people at the Shabbat lunch (breakfast for us) that feels like we have gotten together in someone's kitchen. Thank you, EET, for all you bring into our lives. (Note: Nancy Flaxman is the mother of Rebecca Shore.)



**Fran Kolin:** I like grocery shopping, so the pandemic was the first time I had to try my hand at ordering groceries on-line. And my computer skills are minimal. But I was very pleased to receive my order at the door on the scheduled delivery day.

However, I was less than pleased to receive an identical order three days later! I tried calling various numbers, and after three hours on hold (while we enjoyed their hold music during our dinner), we were told that nothing could be done.

So one way (my fault) or another (their fault), I wound up with 20 pounds of onions. There are two of us in quarantine here. What to do?

I broke out my four largest frying pans and proceeded to make beautiful caramelized fried onions. I knew that I'd have to freeze them to make them last. I envisioned a large bag in the freezer, but I'd needed a way to break off an amount of onions for whatever I'd be cooking. So rather than freeze them all together, I got out my ice cube trays, and loaded onions into every opening. They froze solid overnight. The results? Baggies of sweet caramelized onions, in perfect portion sizes.



# REAL MAH JONGG

auntnancy (3095 points) • [My Account](#)

**New Game**

**Nancy Schneider:** How to Play Mah Jongg during the Shutdown. One of my passions is Mah Jongg. I usually play twice a week. How do you play Mah Jongg when you can't get together? Some brilliant women (and probably her techie child) managed to create an on-line version a few years ago.

**It is called Real Mah jongg and costs \$5.99 per month.** It models a live game closely and can be played by yourself or up to four people. You can play by yourself with the computer taking the other three hands or you

can play with others while they are on their computers at home. The others can be strangers who have signed in to play or with your friends. The rules are the same for the on-line and the actual live game. There is a chat option as a way of communicating while playing.

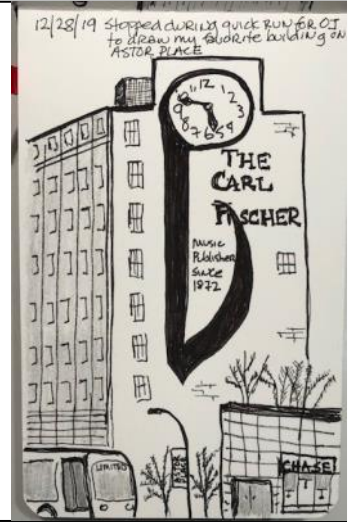
**My Mah Jongg group was excited to play again.** However, some of us still felt isolated if we could not see or speak to our friends. Someone came up with the idea of setting up a conference call via our cell phones. We have our phones on speaker sitting next to us while we play. We are able to kibitz and of course the usual kvetching – “hurry up and throw a tile”; “I picked the wrong hand”; “someone else must be collecting my same tiles”. It fills up parts of our days with fun, laughter, sharing and the ability to talk with others.

## OUR TEMPLE COMMUNITY — COVID-19 STORIES

### **Judith Sussman: Capturing Living In the Pandemic Through Drawing.**

In 2017, I took a class while visiting San Miguel, Mexico entitled “10 Steps to Draw Anything” and it unleashed a new passion. Since then I have discovered that I prefer a more architectural style of ink drawing than my friends who enjoy loose watercolor painting, though I have been adding some color to my drawings. I started by doing iconic buildings that I’ve admired in different cities during my travels.

**Recently**, friends suggested that I capture these surreal times by drawing empty city streets, but I thought that too depressing. Instead, I have been doing what I call “diary” illustrations. The first one summarized my experience of sheltering in place, the second is of the changes in co-op living during Covid-19. I am also enjoying urban sketching of buildings along my Village and SoHo walking route, as this drawing demonstrates.



## COVID-19 CAN KEEP US IN, BUT OUR MINDS & BODIES ARE MOVING FORWARD

Looking for a good book to read, a virtual museum tour, or a kid-friendly activity? Try one of the suggestions below. Thank you, **Joy Newman** (joy@youngurbanadventures.com) for suggesting, and feel free to contact Joy for more information and ideas...

**A bright spot to start each day:** <https://www.inspiremore.com/morning-smile/?referrer=5e99e877a41e4f49531d689e>

**Jewish Life/Virtual Israel Visits:** <https://momentumunlimited.org/all-tv-series/>

Visit Synagogues - <https://synagogues360.bh.org.il/tours/>

Jewish Heritage Europe - <https://jewish-heritage-europe.eu/2020/03/17/stuck-at-home-take-a-virtual-tour/>

### **Kids Activities**

- Minneapolis Institute of Art - <https://new.artsmia.org/art-from-home/>
- Visit RXArt for color page downloads - <https://rxart.net/projects/coloringfromhome/>
- Visit MoWillems for 1pm each day “Doodling with Mo” - <https://www.kennedy-center.org/education/mo-willems/>
- Visit Taronga Zoo Webcams for Aussie critters but remember the time difference between here and “down unda” - <https://taronga.org.au/taronga-tv#animallivecams>

### **Listen to a podcast**

The Women’s Wisdom Project - Confab Podcast, Audible and FREE - <https://stories.audible.com/discovery>

### **Museum Visits**

- Uffizi - Florence – Virtual Uffizi - <https://www.virtualuffizi.com/map-%26-virtual-tour.html>
- National Gallery – London - <https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paintings/must-sees>

**Screenagers** - coping skills on Tech Talk Tuesdays and the opportunity to see their two (2) valuable films from home - <https://www.screenagersmovie.com/>

### **Theater**

Check TDF.org each day for theater performances - <https://www.tdf.org/stages/home?>

### **Online Volunteering**

- [DorotUSA.org](https://www.dorotusa.org) - <https://www.dorotusa.org/volunteer/youth-and-family-volunteering/birthday-and-holiday-making> <https://www.dorotusa.org/volunteer/youth-and-family-volunteering/birthday-and-holiday-cardmaking>
- TeensGive - [www.teensgive.org](http://www.teensgive.org)

card-

### **Yoga**

- CorePowerYogaOnDemand - <https://www.corepoweryogaondemand.com/keep-up-your-practice>
- Humming Puppy - [https://hummingpuppy.uscreen.io/categories/category-VO\\_CClDrP4](https://hummingpuppy.uscreen.io/categories/category-VO_CClDrP4)

## OUR TEMPLE COMMUNITY

### WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- Martine Appel
- Douglas Fower and Margery King
- Michael and Sandra Gordon
- Andrew Heyman and Meredith Ganzman
- Jess Kent and Jesse Guy-Herman
- Zelda Penzel
- Bess & David Rosowsky
- Amanda Veraldi and Brett Robbins



### IN MEMORIAM

#### Babette Hollister

1932 – 2020

East End Temple mourns the death of Babette Hollister, a long-time member of East End Temple and an avid supporter of Sisterhood's social action program Food For Families.

*Zechrona Livracha, may her memory be for a blessing.*



### IN MEMORIAM

#### John Stackhouse

1939 – 2020

East End Temple mourns the death of John Stackhouse and sends condolences to Joan Beranbaum, Ross Stackhouse and the extended family on the death of husband, father and grandfather.

*Zechrono Livracha, may his memory be for a blessing.*



### MAZAL TOV TO

- Karen Feuer and Robert Liiv on the birth granddaughter Harlan Bea Caplan, daughter of Alix Liiv and Monte Caplan.

### DEEPEST CONDOLENCES TO

- o Maggie Abraham and family on the death of her husband Robert Abraham
- o Rachel Frank and family on the death of her grandmother Mildred Worth
- o Lisa Goldenberg Corn and the Corn family on the death of her father, Dr. Marvin Goldenberg
- o Sandy Hirshkowitz and the Bressler family on the death of her father Arthur Hirshkowitz
- o Michael Kuritzky and the Meyers/Kuritzky family on the death of his mother Tina Kuritzky
- o Brian Lifsec and the Rosen/Lifsec family on the death of his father Harry Lifsec
- o Jill Menoff and the Schneider family on the death of her mother Rene Menoff
- o Liz Parish and the Lubin family on the death of her step-father Keith Hertz
- o Larry Safran and Romulo Aromin Jr., on the death of his mother Irene Ann Safran

And for those who have loved ones who died in recent weeks and are not mentioned above, may their memory be for a blessing.

**Shavuot:** The festival of Shavuot celebrates the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai and encourages us to embrace the Torah's teachings and be inspired by the wisdom Jewish tradition has to offer. Shavuot is the Hebrew word for "weeks," and the holiday occurs seven weeks after Passover. Shavuot, like many other Jewish holidays, began as an ancient agricultural festival that marked the end of the spring barley harvest and the beginning of the summer wheat harvest. In ancient times, Shavuot was a pilgrimage festival during which Israelites brought crop offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem. Today, it is a celebration of Torah, education, and the choice to participate actively in Jewish life, not to mention eating delicious food. **Here is a Blintz Souffle recipe from East End Temple Welcome To Our Table Cookbook, courtesy of our member Cynthia Dubensky.**

#### Souffle:

1/4 lb. butter, softened  
1/3 C. sugar  
6 eggs  
1 1/2 C. sour cream  
1/2 C. orange juice  
1 C. flour  
2 tsp. baking powder

#### Filling:

1-8 oz. pkg. cream cheese, cut up  
1 pt. (2 C.) small curd cottage cheese  
2 egg yolks  
1 T. sugar  
1 tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 13x9 baking dish. In large bowl or blender mix souffle ingredients until well blended. Pour half of batter into baking dish. In another bowl, mix filling ingredients, Consistency will be lumpy. Drop filling in heaping spoonfuls over batter in baking dish and spread evenly with a knife. Filling will mix slightly with batter. Pour remaining batter over filling. Bake uncovered 50-60 minutes.

Beteavon – Enjoy.



## TEMPLE FUNDS

### El Emet Fund

helps beautify and maintain our temple; underwrite holiday festivities, projects.  
Note: simcha, mishebeirach, yahrzeits.

### Cantor Discretionary Fund

used for charitable giving; enrichment of the congregation and community.

### Floral Fund

purchases flowers to decorate our pulpit on Shabbat and the High Holy Days.

### Fund For The Future

helps ensure future growth in all temple activities.

### Hamermesh Music Fund

provides special music programs and resource materials.

### Kehila Fund

ensures the growth and permanence of our Temple. At the \$1,800 level, your name will be inscribed on the honor roll mounted on the Sanctuary lobby wall. Starting at \$5,000, your name and/or the name of an honoree will be engraved on a bronze plaque.

### Leonard Spring Memorial Fund

dedicated to supporting our Livestream, Zoom and Facebook Live services and unfunded temple projects.

### Oneg Shabbat Fund

provides refreshments after Shabbat evening services.

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

used for charitable giving; enrichment of the congregation and community.

### Sara A. Spencer Children's Educational Fund

provides educational materials for the Religious School.

### Simchat Shabbat Programs

provides musical Shabbatot, diversified community programs.

### Naming Opportunities

Memorial Board Plaque; Simcha Tree Leaf

## SISTERHOOD FUNDS

### Sisterhood Birthday Fund

contributes to a social action fund benefitting women and girls, selected annually.

### Helene Spring Library Fund

helps purchase new and archival books, library equipment and additional materials for our library.

### Food For Families Fund

purchases the food and meal supplies volunteers need to use for filling the bags of meals prepared to feed the hungry.

### Food For Families Day Sponsor

underwrites this social action program. Contribution designates you as co-sponsor for the day.

For summer contribution listing, please have your messages and checks sent to the office by August 10.

## EAST END TEMPLE DONATION FORM

Please use this form to make contributions to all East End Temple funds. Make checks payable as indicated below and write the name of the fund(s) on your check. Some funds require separate checks. Send checks to East End Temple, 245 East 17th Street NYC 10003. All contributions are per listing and your canceled check is your receipt. Email or call the temple office at [info@eastendtemple.org](mailto:info@eastendtemple.org), 212.477.6444 for further information.

### FOR THESE FUNDS MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO EAST END TEMPLE

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>El Emet Fund</b> _____ → \$10 min.   | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Leonard Spring Memorial Fund</b> _____ → \$18 min.                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Cantor's Discretionary Fund</b> _____ → \$36 min.<br>(Separate check required) | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rabbi's Discretionary Fund</b> _____ → \$36 min.<br>(Separate check required) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Fund For The Future</b> _____ → \$100 min.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sara A. Spencer Children's Ed. Fund</b> _____ → \$18 min.                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hamermesh Music Fund</b> _____ → \$18 min.                                     | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Simchat Shabbat Programs</b> _____ → \$54 min.                                |

For the following gift opportunities, please contact the EET office via phone or email:

Floral \$75, Kehila min. \$5,000, Memorial Board Plaque \$720 each, Oneg \$400/\$250, Simcha Tree Leaf \$234 each

### FOR THESE FUNDS MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO EET SISTERHOOD

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Food For Families</b> , Chair: Celia Vimont _____ → \$18 min.  | <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sisterhood Birthday Fund</b> _____ → \$18 min.<br>Chair: Jodi Malcom |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Food For Families Day Sponsor</b> _____ → \$360 min.   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Helene Spring Library Fund</b> _____ → \$18 min.<br>Chair: Barbara Ringel (Separate check required, made out to <u>East End Temple Library</u> ) |  |

**Name of contributor:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Name & address of recipient to be notified:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Amount Enclosed:** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Message:** \_\_\_\_\_