



338 WALNUT AVE
CRANFORD NJ 07016
Paul D. Kerbel, RABBI
Andrew Feldman & Craig Schwartz, CO-PRESIDENTS
908.276.9231 tbenc.org

February 21, 2025

Dear Congregants,

"The Lord has sent us into Beth-El." This quote, engraved on the front of our building, refers to Genesis 35:1 where G-d tells Jacob to go to Beth-El, settle there, and to build an altar to G-d, therefore making it a spiritual home.

The original founders of our shul named us Temple Beth-El, our House of G-d, and erected our building to be a spiritual home for our community. Within these walls, we have celebrated life's richest moments together and supported each other through our darkest times. During all these life cycle events, we turned to our Torahs to teach and to guide us, reading from them at ours, and our children's B'nei Mitzvah and learning from them when the road forward seemed impossible.

Through decades of loving use, our sacred scrolls have fallen into disrepair. The words are fading, which has deemed them unkosher by a distinguished Sofer and has made them inaccessible to large sections of the generations that comprise our community.

By now, we are sure you have heard about the generous donation from Mark and Debbie Kaplan which ignited the process of acquiring a new Torah. **We are thrilled to announce that we will be getting a brand-new Torah, one that is being written specifically for our congregation.** Moses Maimonides, in his magnificent work *Sefer HaMitzvot*, lists the writing of the Torah as one of the 613 commandments of the Torah. He taught: "Every person is to have a Scroll of the Law for himself. If he writes it with his own hand, he is greatly praised but if he cannot write it himself, a Jew is obliged to purchase one or, hire a scribe who will write it for him."

Many of our congregants attended the first of two days to share an opportunity with a Torah scribe (sofer) to write in our actual Torah. We're inviting the rest of our congregation to participate in this once-in-a-generation event by attending the second sofer visit on Tuesday, March 25, 2025. A link to an on-line scheduler will be on the Temple's website shortly. There remain a multitude of opportunities for you and your family to dedicate books, portions, verses, selected readings, and other items. Dedicating a portion of our new Torah leaves a lasting impression on our community for decades to come while remembering the momentous events your family has shared with us.

Our beautiful new scroll dedicated on Erev Shavuot (June 1st) at a festive celebration being planned now. It will be read aloud for the first time on Simchat Torah this Fall. Through your participation, we will ensure that Temple Beth-El Mekor Chayim remains the spiritual home for all and that our sacred Torah is available for many more generations. We hope that you will look over the enclosed documents describing the many ways you can participate in this exciting event.

As we celebrate this Year of the Torah, may you be blessed by its teachings and ensure the transmission of its sacred words – l'dor va'dor – from generation to generation.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Rabbi Paul David Kerbel

Craig Schwartz, Co-President

Andrew Feldman, Co-President

BJ Solomon, Vice President

David Springer & Laura Cohen, Honorary Co-Chair



Amudei HaTorah (Pillars of the Torah)\$10,000

- ☐ Dedicate a book of the Torah *1 of 5 available*
- ☐ Dedicate a Day of Learning with the Scribe
- ☐ Sponsor a Scholar-in-Residence

Hiddur Mitzvah (Beautify the Torah).....\$7,500

- ☐ Torah Cover and Yad - *taken*
- ☐ Restoration of a current Torah

Zichron HaTorah (Remembrance of the Torah).....\$5,000

- ☐ High Holy Day Torah Readings

Shomrim (Guardian).....\$3,600

- ☐ Shma *taken*
- ☐ Ten Commandments *taken*
- ☐ Birkat Kohanim
- ☐ Holiness Code (Love Your Neighbor as Yourself)

Mishpachat HaTorah (Family of the Torah)\$2,500

- ☐ Sponsor the Family Torah Celebration

Chogegim HaTorah (Festivals of the Torah).....\$1,800

- ☐ Sukkot *taken*
- ☐ Shmini Atzeret
- ☐ Simchat Torah *taken*
- ☐ Hanukkah
- ☐ Passover *taken*
- ☐ Shavuot *taken*

Bonei Ha-Torah (Builders of the Torah)\$1,000

- Dedicate a Parasha of the Week

Madrichim (Guiders).....\$540

- ☐ The Matriarchs *many available*
- ☐ Patriarchs *many available*
- ☐ Biblical Personality
- ☐ First or Last verse
- ☐ Bnai Mitzvah Maftir parsha

Sofrim (Writers).....\$360

- ☐ one verse
- ☐ favorite Mitzvah
- ☐ Torah Poles *multiple available*
- ☐ first, middle, or last word

Chaverim (Friends).....\$180

- Dedicate any word of the Torah (except the first, middle, or last)

If you need help picking verses or sections of the Torah to dedicate or have any questions about these opportunities, please call Allison in the synagogue office. She will arrange a time for you to speak with Rabbi Kerbel or Laura Cohen to review your questions and assist you in making a meaningful decision.



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Name _____

Total Pledge \$ _____

Please indicate how you would like the gift to be recognized or if you would like to remain anonymous.

(e.g. The Goldberg Family or your names) _____

____ Please send a pledge reminder

____ I am enclosing payment.

Please make checks payable to Temple Beth-El Mekor Chaim and note **“Year of the Torah”** in the memo section.
Please mail with this form with your check to:

Temple Beth-El Mekor Chaim
338 Walnut Avenue
Cranford, NJ 07016