

Guest of Honor

Dr. Eugene Steinhart

Dr. Eugene Steinhart is the recipient of this year's *Kesser Shem Tov* Award. His loyalty and dedication to Cong. Bais Yitzchok Chevra Thilim is evident in his almost daily presence in the Shul and his active participation. In his own words, he gives us a glimpse into his life's history and involvement with the Shul and, in his quite and unassuming nature, we can see why he is so vital a member of the Bais Yitzhok Family.

After having lived in Israel for a number of years on Kibbutz Maale Gilboa, our family moved to Elizabeth in 1987 for practical reasons. It was somewhere in between The Bronx, where my parents lived, and New Brunswick, where Esther's parents lived. I was applying to graduate schools at the time (Rutgers, Pace, Y.U., F.D.U.) all of which were in easily commutable distance from Elizabeth. When we were looking for places to rent, I met a couple who lived down the block from Bais Yitzchok who wholeheartedly recommended this shul, and stated "you'll really like it there."

When we arrived in Elizabeth, we numbered five. My wife, Esther, myself, Tuvia, Chava a"h, and Avishai. B"H the family grew as we added Kobi, Eliav, Evyatar, Riva, and Gavi. As time went on, Tuvia, Kobi, Eliav, and Evyatar made their way back to Israel. Tuvia married Shaindee Sosevsky and grew the family's next generation with their children Reuven Yosef, Ruchama Kayla, Leah Shoshana, Shimon Yehuda, Chanoch, and Batya Sara. They live in Yerushalayim. Avishai is an E.M.T. working in Mountainside. Kobi married Elisheva Resnik, they also live in Yerushalayim. Eliav recently completed his service in the IDF and is currently residing in Australia. Evyatar continues to serve in the IDF. Riva is completing her B.A. at Excelsior University. Gavi is a junior at Kushner

Over the years I have taken great pride in being a regular morning minyan attendee (thanks Rabbi Oratz.) Besides starting the day with Tefillah, it is followed by a breakfast at which participants learn Mishna Brurah, and benefit from discussions earning them honorary degrees in philosophy, diplomacy, political science, and engineering!

As a Board member, I have been privileged to witness a diverse group of members share ideas and make practical decisions regarding shul practices and policies, always guided by a shared respect for the core values of Bais Yitzchok - Torah, Chesed, and Mentchlichkeit. I also get a thrill each Shabbat or Yom Tov morning as our Gabbai Rishon, somewhat timidly, approaches me to inquire if I can do the Haftorah. He is very generous to give me the "day off" on those occasions when someone else volunteers.