



Congregation Beth Israel
חבורת בית ישראל

CBI NEWSletter

May/June 2015 - Iyar/Sivan/Tamuz 5775

From the Rabbi

Holy friends,

As I write these words, we are immersed in the special time of year between Pesach and Shavuot -- the seven weeks of the Omer, which connect our spring festival with our early summer one, liberation with revelation.



There's a tradition of Counting the Omer: counting the 49 days between one festival and the next. This is one of my favorite customs in the Jewish year. Once we counted the days between the Pesach barley offering and the Shavuot wheat offering at the Temple in Jerusalem. Now as we count the days we prepare an internal harvest of reflection, discernment and readiness.

Our weekly Omer group has been meeting since Pesach (and will continue meeting until Shavuot, which falls on May 23 this year on the Gregorian calendar) and our conversations have been rich and interesting. Even if you're not able to join us on Friday afternoons, there are a wealth of opportunities online for Counting the Omer.

The Jewish Mindfulness Network is sending out daily emails which bring meaning to the journey (www.ravjill.com/the-jewish-mindfulness-network/welcome-to-the-journey/), and I'm sharing daily Omer poems on my blog Vel-

veteen Rabbi which are intended to spark personal reflection (you can subscribe by entering your email address into the subscription box at velveteenrabbi.blogs.com/blog/).

Our tradition teaches that Shavuot is the anniversary of the revelation of Torah at Sinai. But revelation wasn't just once-upon-a-time. In every moment of our lives we can open our hearts and minds to the unfolding of revelation: in the glory of a sunrise, a loved one's smile, a new idea or flash of insight...

What is the Torah which you most need to receive this year? And what practices might you want to try out, over the next few weeks, to prepare yourself emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually for that receiving?

I hope to see many of y'all at our annual Tikkun Leyl Shavuot on May 23 at 8pm (there's a flyer enclosed in this newsletter.) Once again we'll gather at the Jewish Religious Center at Williams College, along with the Beth El community from Bennington, to study Torah, nosh on cheesecake, and enjoy espresso milkshakes and soulful learning together until the wee hours of the morning. Even if you can't stay all night, please join us for whatever you can.

You're also invited to CBI on the morning of May 24, when Rabbi Pam Wax will lead a Festival Morning Service for Shavuot -- complete with Yizkor, the memorial prayers we recite four times a year.

May your journey toward revelation be sweet!

Blessings -- Rabbi Rachel

Service times

Periodic Friday nights (check our website)

Every Saturday
9:30 a.m. Shabbat Service
11ish a.m. Kiddush/Torah Study

Meditation minyan
Friday mornings, **9a.m.** No experience with meditation is required; all are welcome!

May/June Shabbat candle and Havdalah times



If you want to light Shabbat candles and make havdalah at the halakhically-accepted times, here they are:

May 1 7:34p lighting; May 2 8:43 havdalah
May 8 7:42 lighting; May 9 8:51 havdalah
May 14 7:50 lighting; May 15 8:59 havdalah
May 22 7:57 lighting; May 23 9:06 havdalah
May 29 8:03 lighting; May 30 9:12 havdalah
June 5 8:08 lighting; June 6 9:17 havdalah
June 12 8:12 lighting; June 13 9:21 havdalah
June 19 8:15 lighting; June 20 9:23 havdalah

June 26 8:16p lighting; June 27 9:24 havdalah

If it is your practice to light candles at a different hour of the day (perhaps not quite so early as halakha indicates during the winter, and not quite so late as halakha indicates during the summer), that's also a legitimate Reform Jewish choice. What's most important is that you're finding a way to incorporate Shabbat into your life.



WE WANT YOU!

Want to Edit This Newsletter?

We're seeking a volunteer to edit this newsletter! The CBI Newsletter comes out every two months. The editor's job is to compile submissions (and also to solicit them when required), to collect them into a readable and pleasant format, and to get a pdf of the newsletter to the office and the rabbi so that it can be uploaded to the From the Rabbi blog, emailed to our membership, and sent via postal mail to those who have requested paper newsletters. You can use whatever word processing program is comfortable for you.

If you are interested in taking this on, please let the rabbi know at rabbibarenblat@gmail.com. Thanks!

Thanks to Jewish Federation

Dear Berkshire Jewish Voice,

On behalf of Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams, I would like to publicly express our gratitude to the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires for their continued support of our education program. Without their support, we would not be able to offer the high quality, meaningful Jewish education program that we currently do. The funds we receive from Federation help us to pay for an education director and teachers as well as materials for learning. These individuals bring a passion for Judaism and for education that is transmitted to our students. Children in grades K-4 learn Hebrew letters and also stories from the Torah, while children in 5th-7th grades prepare for their Bar and Bat Mitzvahs while also engaging with fundamental questions, such as “does G-d exist” and learning rituals, such as how to make tallit. It is so refreshing to find my children bubbling with excitement to tell me what they learned that day when I pick them up from Hebrew School. Through this excitement, they have also encouraged us to be more observant of Jewish rituals, such as lighting candles, making motzi, and saying Kiddush on Shabbat, at home. None of this would be possible without the assistance of the Federation, and we greatly appreciate your effort and support.

Elizabeth Miller
Vice President, Congregation Beth Israel
Parent and Member of Education Committee

President's Column

Blessings, learning, meditation, prayers and songs, joys and sorrows, fill the years at CBI. We become like a family as we get to know each other and as a family we are committed to the shared values of educating our children and supporting our Jewish community.

You probably know by now that CBI receives

financial assistance from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires (see, in this issue, the letter from Vice President and Education Committee member, Liz Miller) for our Hebrew School. This funding is critical for our small community. Additionally, the Federation offers programs and services for older adults; supports regional Jewish cultural events; coordinates volunteer efforts, and are vigilant and responsive regarding problems and needs of the Jewish population. They also provide coordinated ways for individuals and synagogues to contribute, volunteer and be of service.

I have met and worked with the people who run our Federation and I know that they are committed to strengthening Jewish life and in particular Jewish life in the Berkshires. I totally support them, as they support us.

Please join me and the CBI Board of Directors in giving as generously as you are able to this years' campaign.

Thank you,
Pattie Lipman

Ride Share

Are you are in need of a ride to and from CBI to attend services or events?

Are you in need of a ride for local errands or appointments?

The CBI community can try to help. Please let Jack know what your needs are.

If you are able and willing to share rides or give rides, please send your information on your availability to Jack (office@cbi-web.org)

Summer Performance at CBI

Clarinetist and co-director Paul Green will present a Lecture/Performance about the Development of Jewish Art Music at Congregation Beth Israel in North Adams in June. The concert will explore the development of Jewish Art music from biblical times to the present day and will include a lecture, several recorded examples and live performance from Mr. Green.



Remembering the Jar of Tears

Our Education Director, David Arfa, shared a memorable storytelling performance of a "Jar of Tears" in the CBI sanctuary on April 19th. It was a too beautiful Sunday afternoon keeping the audience intimate. The tragic existence of all Jews living in the Warsaw Ghetto and spirituality of this particular Rabbi, Rabbi Kalonymous Shapiro, were brought to life through the Rabbi's words and sermons that had been buried in a jar and only unearthed after the war. David's only prop was a menorah with lighted candles that he extinguished one or several at a time during the performance.

Worth 1000 Words...



Members of CBI leadership attend a leadership retreat sponsored by Jewish Federation of the Berkshires. Thanks, Jewish Federation!



Jewish Federation
OF THE BERKSHIRES



Volunteers Needed

Join us for a fun day of service as we come together as a caring Jewish community to raise money for the Berkshires' 2015 Annual Campaign. Together we will build, strengthen and care for our Jewish community across the Berkshires, in Israel and around the world.

Super Sunday Phone-a-Thon MAY 17, 2015

Make the call and make a difference! Food, fun and caller training provided.

Choose from two convenient call locations:

Jewish Federation of the Berkshires*

196 South Street, Pittsfield
8:30 am-11 am
10:30 am-1pm

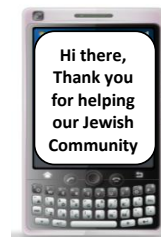
Mahaiwe Performing Arts Center

at their Administrative Office
244 Main St., Suite #3, Great Barrington
9 am-12 pm

*Kids & Families Welcome: 10:15-11:30 am

Doing a mitzvah makes you a superhero!
Bring your tzedakah box and join us for superhero themed activities, mitzvah stories and super "sundaes." Costumes welcome!

**Bring Your Cell Phone.
Land lines provided too!**



Follow up phone-a-thons also need volunteers!

Thurs. May 28, 6:30-8 pm at the Federation
Thurs, June 4, 6:30- 8pm at Hevreh
Tues, June 9, 6:30-8 pm at the Federation

Be a superhero to your community - RSVP by May 11

Call (413) 442-4360, ext. 14, jfb.volunteer@verizon.net

Thank you to these organizations for their support of this important community event



COHEN | KINNE | VALICENTI | COOK



JOIN CBI & BETH EL FOR

A TIKKUN LEYL

SHAVUOT!

(late-night Torah study party)

CELEBRATE REVELATION!

short & sweet festival service; followed by
learning, noshing, espresso milkshakes...

MAY 23, 2015, 8PM - ...?

WILLIAMS COLLEGE JEWISH RELIGIOUS CENTER

WHAT NEW TORAH DO YOU NEED TO RECEIVE THIS YEAR? COME AND LEARN.

(if you want to teach. email rabbibarenblat@gmail.com)

PosterMyWall.com

Getting It ... Together

A Multi-Faith Shabbaton Celebrating
Reb Zalman's Legacy &
The Jew in The Lotus 25th Anniversary

July 3–5, 2015

aleph.org/together

One River, Many Wells

Ruach Ha'Aretz
Summer Retreat
Exploring Deep Ecumenism

July 6–12, 2015

aleph.org/ruach



The Fourth of July weekend this summer will feature a weekend of learning, worship, music and ritual offered by followers of all faiths, culminating in a summit of faith leaders and artists promoting the vision of deep ecumenism through various expressions.

Reb Zalman was fond of saying “The only way to get it together... is together.” An innovator of ecumenical dialogue with practitioners of a wide variety of spiritual paths, Reb Zalman leaves us a legacy of Deep Ecumenism. His deeply personal approach to dialogue led to significant friendships with many of the world’s great philosophers and spiritual teachers.

This summer, we celebrate the 25th anniversary of the remarkable journey of Reb Zalman and a small and varied group of Jewish leaders to Dharamsala, India, at the request of the Dalai Lama, to help Tibetan Buddhist leaders learn how a People survives (and thrives) “in a diaspora.”

Special guest presenters include: Rabbi Yitz and Blu Greenberg, Rabbi Moshe Waldoks, Rodger Kamenetz (author of *The Jew in the Lotus*, which chronicles the 1990 journey), Rabbi Leah Novick and spiritual leaders from many faith communities.

*Rabbi Rachel will be attending the **Getting It...Together** Shabbaton outside of Philadelphia over the July 4 weekend. Learn more at the aleph.org website!*

And if you're in town over the Glorious Fourth...

And, of course, for those who are not going to the Getting it Together retreat we will have our annual 4th of July barbecue at CBI! Stay tuned for more information.

Upcoming Occasions

We wish happy birthdays and anniversaries to our members who have simchas during the coming months.

May Anniversaries

Heather Levy & Timothy Herrmann
Richard & Elaine Parmett
Lawrence & Judith Weber
Joseph & Anne Apkin
Paul & Karol White

June Anniversaries

Rabbi Rachel Barenblat & Ethan Zuckerman
Philip & Lori Guy
Dr. Kenneth & Fern Sann
Richard & Anna Jo Dubow
Audrey Thier & Peter Murphy
Richard & Patricia Reichler
Robin Brickman & Jefferson Strait
Jerrold & Carol Jacobs
Michael & Pamela Smith
David & Maribeth Pomerantz

April Birthdays

Jacob Thompson
Danielle Wineberg
Rose Ellis
Elizabeth Miller
Sheila Shapiro
Steve Fein
Sophie Gerry

Margaret Larabee
John Gerry
Carol Oshinsky
Kayla Rooney
Andrew Sullivan
Catherine McAllister
Adam Cohen
William Levy
Ethan Rudin
Erin Casey
Jerrold Jacobs
Marc Gotlieb
Becky Cellana
Bob Miller
Madeline Cohen

June Birthdays

Joseph Apkin
Robert Bashevkin
Jordan Callahan
Anne Apkin
Helene Armet
Elizabeth Miller
Deborah Wineberg
Lewis Kronick
Addison Lentzner
David Pomerantz
Kenneth Sann
Carrie Greene
Noah Howard
Miriam Pomerantz
Jared Strait

Deep thanks to donors

*We offer gratitude to members and friends
for their fiscal support of CBI.*

In Memory of Florence Wineberg

Joseph & Anne Apkin
William & Jane Apkin
Robert & Barbara Bashevkin
Becky & Daniel Cellana
Risa & William Demers
Michael & Sally Ginsburg
Lillian Glickman
Susan Gold
Fred Hobart
Philip & Rhoda Kaminstein
Claire Katz
Myrna Katz
William Levy & Karen Kelly
Joan Krizack
Elaine Loveman
Robert & Jane Miller
David & Joanne Ranzer
Howard & Roberta Saunders
Warner & Amely Smith
Edith Taskin
Mark Thaisz
Dustin & Beth Wees
Carol & Edward Oshinsky
Paulette Wein & Eugene Wein
Sherry Wein

Memorial Donations

In memory of Ruth by Richard & Anna Jo
Dubow Dubow
In memory of Rebecca by Mr. & Mrs. Jordan
C. Hirsh Golding & Dr. & Mrs.
Michael Hirsh
In memory of Daniel by Jerrold & Carol
Goldman Jacobs

In memory of Estelle by Jerrold & Carol
Goldman Jacobs
In memory of Sterling by Jane & Bob Miller
and Ruth Shapiro
In memory of Susan by Jane & Bob Miller
Taskin
In memory of Esta by Barbara Mindel
Feder
In memory of Henry by Barbara Mindel
Feder
In memory of Edith by Dr. George
Rosenthal & Arthur Rosenthal & Jane
Rosenthal MD Fanburg
In memory of William by Charlotte Sabin
Sabin
In memory of Edith by Phyllis & Phyllis
and Arthur Rosenthal Sands
In memory of Jackie by Larry & Anne Wein
Wein
In memory of Susan by Eugene Wein &
Taskin Family
In memory of Irving & by Susan & Charles
Dorothy Golob Welsch
In honor of Yaffa by Fern & Ken Sann
Klooger

Take & Eat Program

Pattie Lipman
Sarah Oshinsky & Gary Quirke
Ross & Susan Ziskind

Holiday Appeal

Lisa & Orion Howard

2nd Night Seder Donations

Jen Burt
Steven Green & Rose Ellis
Susan Hogan
Pamela Wax & Chaim Bronstein

General Donations

Wendy Penner and Steve Fein

Audrey Thier and Peter Murphy

Darlene & Len Radin

Jacob & Dora Wineberg Fund

Thanks, Jewish Federation!

Congregation Beth Israel gratefully acknowledges the receipt of \$7661 from the Jewish Federation of the Berkshires in support of our students' Jewish education. Each student in the CBI religious school received a tuition subsidy of \$333 for the school year. This funding, raised during the Federation's 2014 annual campaign, is a vital part of our school budget and we highly encourage every member of CBI to contribute to the Federation's Annual Campaign.

Seeking Shamashim

The Shamashim are the people who facilitate the Saturday morning services, set out kiddush and bring some snacks for after services. The group is named after the *shamash*, the "helper candle" which lights the candles on a Chanukah menorah.

We are in need of additional Shamashim to help with our Shabbat services each Saturday morning and on periodic Friday nights. The Shamashim have been faithfully hosting our services for years but we need to expand that group by a few. It takes a Saturday morning, from about 9 to noon, once or twice in a 4 month time period.



Hosting services is an honor. It is also a joy, a way to meet members and welcome potential members and visitors. Bringing your children or spouse is welcome, and they can help or just relax and enjoy the service and the beautiful light streaming through the sanctuary windows. That's up to you.

Helping at services is a way to teach children about serving the community and performing a mitzvah.

We provide challah and juice; you are welcome to bring light snacks for the kiddush afterwards, though if that would be fiscally onerous for you, let us know and we can work something out.

If it is something you would like to try, Pattie can match you with one of our hosts for your first hosting experience. If you have questions, ask away!

All are welcome!

Next Newsletter...

If you have items to submit for the May/June newsletter, please submit them **via e-mail** to rabbibarenblat@gmail.com by **June 15, 2014**.

Thanks!

Congregation Beth Israel
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SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS & PHONE NUMBERS

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9am - 1pm

Phone & Fax (413) 663-5830
E-mail cbioffice1@verizon.net

Rabbi's Study:
Mondays 9am-3:30pm
Fridays 9am-4pm
(meditation minyan 9am)
other times by appointment

Phone (413) 822-5267
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