

A New Haven Tradition since 1892

BEKI bulletin

Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel



Elul-Tishrei 5771-2

Vol. 17 Issue 8

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YAMIM NORAIM: DAYS OF AWE

Schedules, Information, Order Forms

Information, schedules, registration and order forms for Yamim Noraim – Days of Awe – are available at www.beki.org by clicking the Yamim Noraim High Holy Days image at the upper left corner.

Volunteers Needed

To volunteer either to help with planning or to participate in our High Holy Day worship services, please return the form you received in the mid-month mailing, or to complete the form online, follow the link for “information, registration and ticketing” and then to [Yamim Noraim High Holy Days Participation and Volunteer Opportunities](#). Help is needed for mailings, Break Fast shopping and planning, greeters and ushers, minyan makers (early attendees), English readings, printing Yizkor Memorial Book, and more. If you have any questions, please speak with Darryl Kuperstock.

Selihot at B’nai Jacob

Our affiliated Congregation B’nai Jacob will host the Conservative-Masorti Community First Selihot Service on Saturday night Sept. 24. The evening begins at 8 o’clock with Maariv and Havdala in the Chapel. At 8:20, we will present “The Gates are Closing,” a play by Merle Feld. The service begins at 10:15 and ends at 11:18.

The *selihot* (penitential) prayers are said during the middle

of the night during the period immediately before Rosh Ha-Shana and Yom Kippur. It is believed that a heightened sense of spiritual awareness can be achieved during those hours. The Conservative Communal service is sponsored by Congregations B’nai Jacob, Beth Sholom, Or Shalom and BEKI.

Qever Avot Cemetery Memorial Services

The annual Qever Avot Cemetery Memorial Services will be held at 10 a.m. at the Hamden Cemetery, and at 11 a.m.

at the West Haven Cemetery on Oct. 2, which is the Sunday *between* Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur, and which coincides with Tsom Gedalia. Rabbi Tilsen will lead a brief communal memorial service and will be available for individual prayers. Those who wish to visit the graves of their ancestors or loved ones but



are unable to do so because of distance are invited to attend along with those whose loved ones are buried in the BEKI cemeteries. If you would like a ride to the service, please contact the office a few days in advance.

In addition, a representative of the Cemetery Association will be present to answer questions and concerns of those owning or considering the purchase of plots at the BEKI cemeteries.

Directions to the cemeteries and more information can be found at www.beki.org/cemetery.html. For information on

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BEKI Bulletin

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: (203) 389-2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: jjtilsen@beki.org
- Visit our web page: www.beki.org

For advertising information, call the synagogue office.

Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the first of the month preceding publication.

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi
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Rabbi's Annual Report

Rabbi Tilsen's Annual Report (July 2010 – June 2011) is available after July 1 at www.beki.org/tilsen/annual11.pdf and in the literature rack in the lobby. The report supplements the reports of synagogue committees and describes highlights, progress and challenges of the year.

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Charitable giving strengthens our Community and provides the donor with tax savings.

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lstanger@jewishnewhaven.org

Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven



All of us. One Foundation.

Days of Awe

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cemetery purchases or upkeep, contact the BEKI Cemetery Association at cemetery@beki.org or (203) 389-2108 x57.

High Holy Days Participation

Please be sure to return your High Holy Days volunteer/participation forms. We will definitely need help with every aspect of our holiday celebrations. The form is also available on the BEKI website at www.beki.org/forms.html.

Services Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur

Rabbi Alan H. Lovins will serve as our Hazzan Rishon (lead cantor) for the High Holy Days. In addition to Rabbi Lovins, the services will again be led by BEKI members serving as volunteer *haz-zanim*. We also are hopeful that additional members of the Lovins Family will join Alan on the bima. Rabbi Tilsen will conduct the services, as he has each year since 1993.



Alan Lovins

Services are organized and led entirely by our members. Generally, Alan leads the morning Torah service and musaf on all three days, as well as Kol Nidre, Maariv and Neila

on Yom Kippur. Birkhot ha-Shahar (morning blessings) and Pesuqei de-Zimra (Verses of Song) represent a poetry reading that creates or reinforces a spiritually sensitive atmosphere, which is an experience unto itself as well as prelude to the recitation of Shema and Amida. Shaharit morning services, essentially the recitation of Shema and Amida, include popular “sing along” Hebrew *piyyutim* (poems). Musaf services, the particular additional Amida for the holy day, include several interpretative or contemporary English readings as well as cantorial (and sometimes choral) elaborations. The shofar is sounded after the haftara reading and again during musaf on both days of Rosh HaShana. The recitation of Shema and hearing the shofar are both considered Biblical precepts not to be missed.

Tickets are required for adult entrance to most services. Among other reasons, this is to ensure the safety and security of the Congregation. Full-time students and military personnel on active duty may enter upon presentation of proper identification. Every person in the building must be identified before entry and is subject to search.

Some of the ushers serving during the Holy Days may be new members. Veteran members who do not recognize the ushers are urged to introduce themselves, as our ushers wish to meet as many members and visitors as they can. If you forget your tickets, our ushers will be able to find your name on the members or guests list.

For safety and planning reasons, children must be pre-registered to participate in these services. For registration information, call (203) 389-2108 x14.

If you are interested in babysitting service, please call (203) 389-2108 x14. Walk-in babysitting is *not* available and will not be available at all at most services unless a prior arrangement is made.

Rosh HaShana

Rosh HaShana services begin Wednesday night Sept. 28 at 6:30 p.m. with the Minha service, followed by Maariv at 6:45. Candle Lighting is at 6:22. The service concludes by 7:20 p.m. Morning services begin at 8:30 on Thursday Sept. 29; several services for children and youth, and a learners’ service, are held as well. Shofar is sounded at about 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary; please come to the sanctuary at that hour if you are elsewhere in the building, or as directed by the ushers.

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Saykhel



In preparation for the full-day fast of Yom Kippur, it is suggested that caffeine users reduce their intake to avoid withdrawal symptoms on the Holy Day. Some people avoid wearing leather shoes on Yom Kippur, so do not be surprised to see canvas sneakers or other non-leather shoes in use. Some also follow the custom of wearing a *kittel* (white robe) or other white garments on Yom Kippur.

People who need to eat or drink or take medication on Yom Kippur may speak with an usher, or contact the office in advance, for assistance. Rabbi Tilsen notes that “People for whom fasting represents a significant medical threat are prohibited from fasting. Water, milk or a simple meal should be consumed as needed.”

While it is customary to stand for some parts of the service, those for whom standing is difficult, impossible or dangerous should feel comfortable sitting. Rabbi Tilsen comments that “You get five points for answering ‘Amen!’ but only one point for standing, so keep it in perspective. This applies to people of all ages.”

Days of Awe

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Tashlikh (“casting”) services will be held on the *first* day of Rosh HaShana, Thursday Sept. 29, at 5:30 p.m., at the Edgewood Bridge and at the Whitney Museum Covered Bridge. For *tashlikh* at Beaver Pond Park, contact office@beki.org (203) 389-2108 x14. The *Tashlikh* service is a popular outdoor event for people of all ages, and includes a brief prayer, poetry and singing. It is held beside a body of natural water.

On Thursday afternoon of Rosh HaShana, *minha* service begins at 6:30 p.m., followed by the evening service at 6:55. Candle lighting is after 7:22 p.m.

On Friday Sept. 30, morning services are also at 8:30. Youth services are held as well. Shofar is sounded on Friday morning as well. Afternoon and Shabbat evening services begin at 6 o’clock on Friday.

For instructions on preparing meals for Shabbat in compliance with halakhic considerations in light of the three-day sequence, please see *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* p.306 s.v. *Eruv Tavshilin*.

Yom Kippur

On the afternoon before Yom Kippur, Friday Oct. 7, the *Minha* service begins at 6 p.m. Candle Lighting is 6:07 (or earlier). The *Kol Nidre* and *Maariv* Evening services begin promptly at 6:20 and end by 8:36. *Shaharit* services begin at 9 a.m.; the *Yizkor* Memorial service begins after 11 a.m. The *Minha* Afternoon service begins at 4:30, and is followed immediately by the *Neila* and *Maariv* services. The services end with *Havdala* and the sounding of the *Shofar* at 7:07 p.m.

George G. Posener Break Fast Concludes Yom Kippur

Following the concluding Yom Kippur services on Shabbat Oct. 8, please join us as we gather for our amazing community Break Fast. This year we are again pleased that, to honor the memory of his beloved family, George Posener’s generosity is enabling us to provide you with a lovely meal and great company.

Each year, the George G. Posener Family Memorial Break Fast is prepared entirely by members of the BEKI community. Overseen by Darryl Kuperstock and Linden Grazier, some of the prep work is done in advance, but the bulk of the assembly and

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Days of Awe

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plating (and clean-up) of this banquet is done by *you*, the fantastic volunteers who join us in the kitchen during the afternoon break on Yom Kippur. It's fun, intense, and extremely satisfying – so come help us out this year.

The **George G. Posener Family Memorial Yom Kippur Break Fast Fund at Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel** in *blended memory of*

his wife, parents, sisters, brother and two precious sons was established by George G. Posener in 2001 to create a lasting memorial at the time of the *yahrzeits* of his family members. Proceeds from this endowment provide for a special and meaningful community gathering at the end of Yom Kippur. The Posener Fund is held and managed by the



George G. Posener

Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven.

High Holy Days Schedule

For a complete schedule of services please call the office at (203) 389-2108 x14 or see the schedule at www.beki.org/yamimnoraim.html (or under “Service Schedule” on the main page).

Schedules are also available in the lobby literature rack, and are included with the High Holy Days mailings sent to all BEKI members.

For information on seating and ticketing, contact (203) 389-2108 x14 or office@beki.org.

Need a Letter for Employer or School?

Shul members occasionally need letters to employers or principals explaining the nature of the Jewish holiday observance. Despite the high level of understanding in our community, there is still a need for education and information. It is important that our children be in shul for all of *Yontif*.

If you would like such a letter for Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur or Sukkot, contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10 or jjtilsen@beki.org.



HaMaqom Yinahem

With sorrow we note the passing of

Tillie Friedman, mother of Harriet Friedman (& Charles Bruce)

Grace Cohen Geisinger

Inge Fish

Marvin Missan

BeBe Greene,
mother of Bobbie (& Harold) Miller



Grace Geisinger



Inge Fish



Marvin Missan

May the Almighty comfort those who mourn



Maya Gersch

Mazal tov to

Morris Bell & Raina Sotsky on the birth in June of their grandson Mayer James Redding, and to Mayer's parents Drs. Julia & David Redding

Sid & Donna Levine on the birth in July of their granddaughter Maya, and to Maya's parents Sara Levine & Timothy Gersch

Welcome New and Returning Members

• Ben Karp • Ian York & Annie Wareck, and Zev and Malachai



Margaret Martin sports medals she earned at Chapel Haven's annual Bowl-A-Thon

Sisterhood

Summer is fading and we are all in the New Year mode. BEKI Sisterhood is looking forward to a New Year of many events for our 120th Anniversary.

Our gift store will be open during the regular hours with many new and exciting items for the holidays. Once again Barbara Cushen will be accepting orders for this year's Torah Fund and will be giving out the beautiful new pin. For \$180 you can be a proud Benefactor. Please call her to order a pin at (203) 397-0263.

We will be having our first Sisterhood meeting on Oct. 11 at 7:30 p.m. in conjunction with Wepawaug Hadassah. The topic "Women's Health-Focus on Wellness" will be discussed by our own Jennifer Botwick and Sue Neufeld. More information will follow in our mid-month mailing.

Adele Tyson and Mimi Glenn co-presidents and the Sisterhood board of BEKI wishes all the congregants and friends a Happy and Healthy New Year.



This year's Torah Fund pin

Darshanim

Bob Oakes will serve as darshan on Shabbat parashat Ki Tavo, Sept. 17.

Rabbi Murray Levine will serve as darshan on Shabbat parashat Nitsavim-VaYeilekh, Sept. 24.



Bob Oakes

Shabbatot

Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan

The "Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan," which meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45 in the office, is an ideal setting for veteran and novice shul-goers alike to become more comfortable and proficient in the Shaharit (morning) and Torah services in a supportive setting.

Expertly led by **Steven Fraade, Rabbi Alan Lovins, Rabbi Murray Levine** and others, the Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan is a nurturing exploration of practice and theory presented in a participatory, non-threatening and multi-generational setting. Many members who take advantage of this unique offering feel a deeper sense of awe born of increased understanding and appreciation of the services. Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background.

Mondays

Rashi Study Group

Each Monday morning from 7:45 to

8:30 adults meet in the Library Chapel to read Rashi's commentary on the Book of Joshua. It is possible to join the study group for a single meeting or to begin at any time. Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. Rashi purported to explain the *peshat* of the text, i.e., the meaning in its historical, literary and linguistic context. Visitors and new participants are welcome. The Rashi Study Group meets immediately following the 7 a.m. *shaharit* service (but begins at 9:45 a.m. on Sept. 5, Labor Day). With Jon-Jay Tilsen.

Wednesdays

Word for the Day

The Wednesday morning service (shaharit) features a 90-second "Hebrew word for the day" to promote the learning of Hebrew. The Hebrew language is highly structured. Most words are based on three-letter roots, and are made with a limited set of verb or noun forms. By learning a few dozen roots and a small set of word-forms, it is possible to roughly translate Hebrew words isolated from any context, something not normally possible in English. The Word for the Day often relates to the weekly scriptural readings, enhancing personal study and public Torah discussion. Word for the Day is not presented during October but will resume in November following Simhat Torah.

Rabbis' Study Group

Wednesdays with Murray is a weekly study group exclusively for rabbis, facilitated by Rabbi Murray Levine. The Wednesday study group affords local rabbis an opportunity to pursue their own *talmud torah*



Murray Levine

(Torah study) in a "safe" setting and with opportunities to learn from each other's experience and insight. The study group meets Wednesday mornings in the Rosenkrantz Family Library. The group is on summer recess and will resume following Simhat Torah. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at (203) 397-2513.

Thursdays

Mini Morning Learning Service

The Thursday morning services are supplemented with commentary and teaching relating to the history, themes, choreography and language of the daily morning service. Shaharit service is from 8:15 to 9:11 on Thursdays; on other weekdays, the service begins at 7 a.m. (This schedule is superseded by Rosh HaShana, Sukkot and Shemini Atseret.)

Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

The Sanhedrin Study Group is on recess in September and will resume Thursday, Oct. 3 in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library. For information, contact Isaiah Cooper at his law office icooper@cooperlaw.net.



Isaiah Cooper

Every Day

Divrei Torah on the Web

A collection of Divrei Torah (Torah commentaries) and essays by members and Rabbi Tilsen is posted on BEKI's website under "Adult Studies" and "Meet Rabbi Tilsen." Nadav Sela's most recent Devar Torah on Shabbat Nahamu is available at <http://beki.org/dt/selanadavnahamu5770.pdf>.



A Message from Principal Ina Silverman

As I plan the coming school year, I realize how many wonderful moments and highlights we shared in the past year. The BRS community enjoyed the annual sukka dinner, an Israeli dance class with Eric Dunsker to prepare for dancing on Simhat Torah, Art Day with Darryl Kuperstock when students made beautiful mizrachs, the Sisterhood Hanuka party with special guests, the Global Day of Jewish Learning at the JCC, the Purim seuda, learning about the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, the Pesah program, Yom HaShoa and Yom HaZikaron memorials, and our Yom HaAtzmaut celebration. Each month we also celebrated Rosh Hodesh and Hebrew birthdays. Graduation last May was a lot of fun, and Mr. George G. Posener was able to join us once again to give each student a gift.



Ina Silverman

Mora Helene's K-1 class should be commended for collecting tzedaka to help victims of the Japan earthquake and tsunami. Other classes raised money from snack sales that was donated to the Jewish Federation's Neighbor to Neighbor Fund helping local families.

In the coming year we will continue our Honors Program for students with an interest in learning texts in depth taught by Reb Moshe. The second and third grades with Mora Shlomit and Mora Iris will be learning Ivrit B'Ivrit. Thanks to generous donors we have been able to participate in the Young Emissary program. Last year Mora Lisa enhanced the Israel curriculum with a distinctly sabra flavor. (A sabra is both the fruit from a thorny desert plant with a soft, sweet interior, and the nickname given to native-born Israelis.) We can't wait to meet our new Emissary.

We said goodbye to Mora Tara who moved to New Jer-

sey, and welcome Mora Cissy to the BRS family. Next year will bring some other exciting changes as well. If you or your post-bar/bat mitzva student is interested in continuing Jewish education in a Sunday morning program that could include in-depth text study, hands on learning, and local field trips, let me know. If you know families with children who would benefit from BRS, please send me contact info.

Thank you to all our wonderful BRS supporters. I am looking forward to a fantastic coming year. Come visit us.

Special Ed at BEKI

Just as we were finalizing plans for the coming year in the Religious School, I learned that the Greater New Haven Jewish Federation will not be supporting the special needs Talmud Torah Meyuhad program at BEKI in its current form. For quite some time the community's special needs religious school was based at BEKI and employed two teachers and one or two aides. Last year, program support from the Federation was cut to one teacher and BEKI covered the aides' salaries.

The Meyuhad program at BEKI is extraordinarily successful. Under the direction of Mora Susan Jacobson, and in past years with Morah Shlomit Daniel as well, we have celebrated the bar and bat mitzvahs of many special needs students. Often these students remain active in their congregation after graduation; that is certainly true here at BEKI.

It is unfortunate that Federation funding has been cut but BEKI is committed to providing a Jewish education to all its students who wish to avail themselves of the opportunity. We are in need of additional financial support from generous friends and members to ensure that all our youngsters, including those who require one-on-one attention from a teaching specialist, are afforded the opportunity to learn about Judaism and gain skills to participate in synagogue life. Please contact me if you can help!

– Ina Silverman

BEKI-BJ USY

BEKI/BJ USY has a new board! After wrapping up a great year with President Tsvi Benson-Tilsen and Vice President Daniel Ben-Chitrit, and other Vice Presidents, Alex Shragis, Matan Markind, Maya Levine-Ritterman, Dana Lew and Sasha Weitzman, we have inducted six new board members.

Dana Lew and Sasha Weitzman will be Co-Presidents. Maya Levine-Ritterman will be Vice President of Social Action/Tikun Olam. Mara Rothman will be Vice President of Israeli Affairs. Kate Shragis will be Vice President of Membership and Kadima. Shayna Weinstein will be Vice President of Religious Education.

Last year we continued on with some of our classic USY programming including the limo scavenger hunt and Thanksgiving pie-baking event. We raised a total of over \$1,000 for the USY Social Action/ Tikun Olam fund. We also started a few new events this past year including paintball with the Rabbi, and had a great time at Bounce-U. We were named as a chapter of excellence in the Hanefesh Region.

This coming year, our chapter will be under the leadership of a new advisor, as I will not be returning as advisor. It has been a wonderful two years and I am glad to have been a part of this wonderful youth group. A new advisor will be introduced soon, but I am looking forward to working with the Youth Commission to help our programs continue to be great. If you have a son or daughter in 9th-12th grade, you can contact Dana Lew at dana.lew09@gmail.com for more information about signing up for USY.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who made my time with USY so easy and so successful: The members of the youth commission, including president Rena Cheskis-Gold, and Susan Dardik, Andy Weinstein, Rachel Sutin, Bill Shragis, Darryl Kuperstock the previous advisor NoriAnna Cohen for everything else she did above and beyond, Rabbis Tilsen and Levinson, Office Manager Peggy Hackett and everyone else involved with the smooth running of these youth programs.

– Matthew Wiener, Outgoing USY Advisor

Sunday Testing for SAT and ACTs

The Youth Commission encouraged all BEKI-BJ teens to utilize the special Sunday testing date for the SATs. Testing on Sunday instead of Saturday is an especially nice form of Shabbat observance. It provides solidarity with other Jewish teens, and, as an extra benefit, you'll test in a smaller,

quieter environment. Here's the info online:

SAT <http://sat.collegeboard.com/register/special-circumstances>

ACT <http://www.actstudent.org/faq/answers/nonsat.html>

Sheqolarships

Your extra Israeli currency (New Israeli Sheqels) can be used for scholarships for BEKI youth studying in Israel. Deposit currency in the "foreign currency and tokens" pushke (charity box) in the beit midrash; or if you want a receipt (in US dollars at current published exchange rate) please send or deliver to office. Save yourself and our students the cost of currency exchange and encourage them in their studies.

Benei Mitzva Program Begins

First class meeting Wednesday Sept. 14 from 5 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. For information and registration, see www.beki.org/forms/bmp.pdf or request a copy by *schleppost*, fax or email from the office at office@beki.org.



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Sukkot is Coming

If you feel a sense of loss at the end of the High Holy Days, do not despair: it is time for Sukkot, called *the* Festival by our ancestors. Lulav and Etrog are used each day of Sukkot except Shabbat, until and including Hoshana Rabba. Information on the festival observances and schedules are published at www.beki.org/sukkot.html.

Set up of the Morris “Moishe” Schnitman Memorial Sukka is planned for Sunday morning Oct. 9 from 9:40 to 11:30, immediately following the 9 o’clock morning service. Add a personal touch by bringing some of your own *sekhakh* (evergreen branches are preferred) for the roof to enhance the beauty and aroma of our congregational *sukka*. Breakdown and storage are planned for Sunday Oct. 23, following *Shaharit*. Additional power drivers and ladders are welcome. Please come and help. For information, contact David Kuperstock (203) 387-0304.

Lulav and Etrog Orders

BEKI Religious School will offer *lulav* and *etrog* sets for Sukkot. To order, please leave a note for Peggy or Ina with your name and address and check for \$36 per set in the BEKI office, or mail to BEKI, 85 Harrison St., New Haven, CT 06515. For more info contact principal@beki.org (203) 389-2108 x13.

Sukkot and Shabbat Hol HaMoed

Sukkot begins on Wednesday evening Oct. 12. Minha afternoon service begins at 5:45, followed immediately by the evening service, ending at 6:20. The services will be held in the Sukka, weather permitting. Candle lighting on Wednesday night is at 5:59.

Sukkot Dinner

For reservations for a Sukkot dinner, contact the office at office@beki.org (203) 389-2108 x14.

For instructions on preparing meals for Shabbat that immediately follows the festival days of Sukkot in compliance with halakhic considerations, please see *Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals* p. 306 s.v. *Eruv Tavshilin*. Attention should be given to this matter on Wednesday afternoon, before the onset of the festival.

The morning service on Thursday begins at 9:15 and includes the recitation of Hallel, waving of Lulav and Etrog, and the recitation of a Hoshana for that day. Services on

Thursday night also begin at 5:45, but candle lighting on Thursday night is after 6:58. Services on Friday morning Oct. 14 are from 9:15 to 11:36 and again include the taking of Lulav and Etrog.

Candle lighting on Friday night is at 5:56. Services begin at 6 o’clock on Friday night. We do not use Lulav and Etrog on Shabbat. Shabbat morning service begins at 9:15 and includes the recitation of Hallel and the recitation of a Hoshana for that day. Although the Shabbat nusah (musical mode) predominates, certain passages are recited according to the unique Festival nusah.

Shabbat Hol HaMoed is marked by reading selections from the Biblical Book of Qohelet (“Ecclesiastes”). Qohelet, attributed by tradition to King Solomon in his old age, is a “wisdom” book that many see as being out of step with the rest of the Torah. While it includes such well-known passages as “To everything there is a season” and “There is nothing new under the sun,” it also contains statements that seem cynical or nihilistic. The Book will be chanted according to its beautiful and ancient melody.

Shabbat afternoon service begins at 5:45 and ends at about 6:20.

Sunday Sukkot

The Sunday Sukkot festival service begins at 9:15 a.m., and includes the recitation of Hallel, the use of Lulav and Etrog, and a Hoshana accompanied by a *haqafa* (circumambulation). Sunday morning service may be held in the sukka if it is dry. The afternoon service begins at 5:45.

Hol HaMoed Sukkot

“Hol HaMoed,” also known as the “intermediate” days of the festival, are those days between the first two and last two days of Sukkot (and of Pesah). They have a “semi-holiday” status. The rules against *melakha* (“work”) that apply on Shabbat and Festivals are not fully in force during this period, although we are encouraged to take this time as a holiday and to avoid work as much as possible. Our weekday morning services are enhanced with a brief Torah reading, the recitation of the musical “Hallel” section of Psalms, and a brief Musaf (additional) service. Weekday morning services thus take 60 minutes, instead of our

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Sukkot is Coming

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usual 30 to 45 minutes. Afternoon and evening services are the usual length. The *lulav* (branches) and *etrog* (citron) are waved each morning of Hol HaMoed Sukkot (except Shabbat), and one is obliged to dwell (to eat is to live) in a *sukka*. Some morning and evening services will be held in the BEKI *sukka*. Some people do not wear tefillin during Hol HaMoed.

Kulanu Sukka Shindig

BEKI's Kulanu outreach program for adults with special needs and the Jewish Family Service's Shalom Group will jointly hold a Sukka Shindig on Tuesday evening Oct. 18 at 5:30 in the BEKI Sukka (or indoors in the event of precipitation). For information on attending or helping, please contact Ina Silverman at principal@beki.org (203) 389.2108 x13.

Hosanna! Hosanna!

The Hoshana Rabba ("Great Hosanna") morning service on Wednesday Oct. 19 begins at 7 o'clock and ends by 8:50. This is one of the most colorful, fun and tactile services of the year, featuring seven circuits around the *sukka* or shul with *lulav* and *etrog* (palm and citron) and the *hoshana* service in which willow twigs are beaten on the chairs. Special holiday melodies make this an unforgettable spiritual experience. Be sure to come to this "service for all ages."

Those who must leave for work before the end of the service are encouraged to attend the early portion of the service and leave early. Those who are not able to arrive at the starting time are encouraged to attend for the latter part of the service.

Hoshana Rabba is a semi-festival on which work is *not* strictly prohibited as it is on the major festivals. It serves as a "closing ceremony" for the weeklong Sukkot observance in preparation for the concluding festival of Shemini Atseret. Weather permitting, the Hoshana Rabba service will be in the *sukka*.

Shemini Atseret & Yizkor Memorial Service

The Festival of Shemini Atseret ("Eighth Day of Assembly") serves as a conclusion to the autumn Festival of Sukkot ("Booths"). The festival begins Wednesday night Oct. 19. The *minha* service begins at 5:45 p.m.; the festival *maariv* service begins immediately after, about 6 o'clock. It

is customary to light a memorial candle on Wednesday night immediately before lighting the Festival candles. Candle lighting is 5:48 (or earlier).

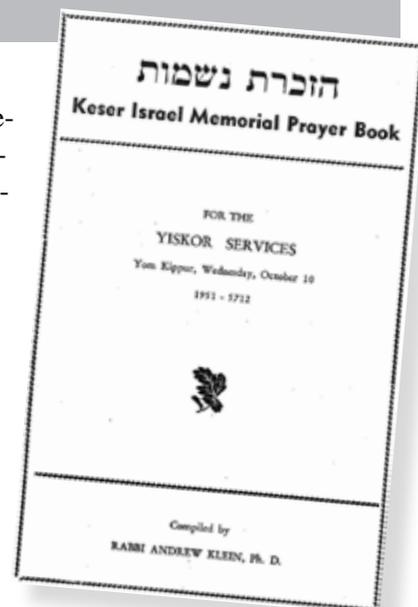
During the morning service, which begins at 9:15 on Thursday Oct. 20, Hallel is chanted. The unique festival *nusah* (musical mode) is used for this service.

The Yizkor Memorial Service is also incorporated into the Shemini Atseret liturgy. In the Yizkor service we call upon the memories of our ancestors and loved ones who, while not physically present, are part of our "Assembly." During that memorial service, individual and communal prayers and remembrances will be offered for all of our departed loved ones.

Simhat Torah Celebration

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is the place to be for the evening and morning of Simhat Torah. *Minha* services begin at 5:45 p.m. and evening services begin at 5:55 on Thursday Oct. 20. Evening services include seven *haqafot* (circumambulatory dances) with Torah scrolls and a brief Torah reading, the only time that we read Torah in public at night. Candle lighting on Thursday night is *after* 6:48.

Festival Morning services begin at 9:15 on Friday Oct. 21. Three Torah scrolls are removed from the ark (around 10 a.m.) and seven brief *haqafot* are conducted. The final chapters of the Book of Deuteronomy, *parashat Ve-Zot Ha-Berakha*, are read, followed by the opening passages of the Book of Genesis, part of *parasha Bereishit*. This concludes the annual Torah reading cycle, and begins the new cycle. This is particularly joyful at BEKI because so many members are involved in Torah reading throughout the year, and these readers dedicate considerable effort to preparing accurate and melodious chantings. A *maftir* portion is read from Numbers, which describes the observance of Shemini Atseret in the ancient Temple. The *haftara* is recited from the opening passages of Joshua, which is the sequel to Deuteronomy, sometimes called the "sixth book"



Continued on **Page 12**

Sukkot is Coming

Continued from **Page 11**

of the Five Books of Moses. Goodie Bags will be presented by the [Sisterhood](#) to all the deserving children at services evening and morning. Afternoon *mincha* service begins at 6 as is usual for Friday nights at BEKI, and is followed by the Maariv service, ending about 6:40 (earlier than usual).

Sukka Storage

The deconstruction of the Sukka will take place on Sunday Oct. 23 at 9:40 a.m., immediately following the morn-

ing minyan service (join us at 9 a.m.). Bring your ladders, tools and gloves if you have them; if not, come anyway. Your help is greatly appreciated. For more information about the BEKI Sukka deconstruction, contact David Kuperstock (203) 387-0304, ndk1024@aol.com.

Sukkot Schedule

A complete Sukkot & Shemini Atseret schedule is posted at www.beki.org/sukkot.html (or under "Service Schedule" on the main page).



BEKI Religious School again offers sets of lulav and etrog for Sukkot



Please fill out this order form and return to the BEKI office by Monday Sept. 26.

Sets will be available for pickup in the BEKI Religious School office on Sunday Oct. 9 from 9 a.m. to noon and Monday Oct. 10 to Wednesday Oct. 12 during office hours.

Thank you for helping BEKI Religious School!

I wish to order _____ set/s sets X \$36 = _____ TOTAL ORDER

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Shabbat Clock at Whalley & Harrison

The crosswalk at Whalley Avenue at Harrison Street operates according to a Shabbat timer. On Friday nights and Saturdays, a 15-second exclusive pedestrian phase occurs each minute. It is not necessary to push the "walk" button. Please exercise extreme caution at all times as some drivers do not obey the stop light. Thanks to our City

of New Haven Transportation, Traffic & Parking Director Mike Piscitelli and Mayor John DeStefano for making this happen, and to Jay Sokolow & Ina Silverman for working with our city officials.

Don't Cross the Line

A sensor on Harrison Street at the corner of Whalley Avenue senses vehicles on Harrison Street (such as those leaving BEKI) and after a delay of

less than two minutes provides a green light to vehicles on Harrison Street. The sensor will not work if a vehicle approaches at a very low speed. When vehicles cross the stop line (the white perpendicular line before the crosswalk) and partially enter the intersection, the system will treat it as if the vehicle is gone and will not provide a green light, so be sure to stop at the "stop line" before the sidewalk as the law requires.

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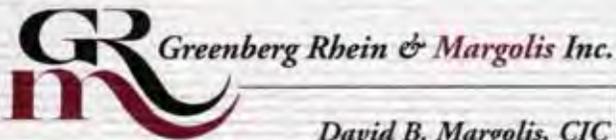


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We the People or A Floor Wax and a Dessert Topping!

Wife: New Shimmer is a floor wax!
Husband: No, new Shimmer is a dessert topping!
Wife: It's a floor wax!
Husband: It's a dessert topping!
Wife: It's a floor wax, I'm telling you!
Husband: It's a dessert topping, you cow!
Spokesman: [enters quickly] Hey, hey, hey, calm down, you two. New Shimmer is both a floor wax *and* a dessert topping! Here, I'll spray some on your mop . . . [sprays Shimmer onto mop] . . . and some on your butterscotch pudding. [sprays Shimmer onto pudding]
[Husband eats while Wife mops]
Husband: Mmmmm, tastes terrific!
Wife: And just *look* at that shine! But will it last?
Spokesman: Hey, outlasts *every* other leading floor wax, 2 to 1. It's durable, and it's scuff-resistant.
Husband: And it's delicious!

The parody advertisement performed by comedy masters Gilda Radner, Dan Aykroyd and Chevy Chase in the first season of *Saturday Night Live* back in 1976 is a metaphor for the dual nature of the Jewish People. It is a key to understanding Jewish identity and making sense of some of the conflicts we experience around the world.

Is Judaism a nationality or a religion? Western thought and modern political thinking treat “nationality” and “religious profession” as separate categories. But that is a recent development, reflective of the unique status of Christianity as a religious fellowship in place of a national religion.

Our earliest history – or mythology – views *Benei Yisrael* as a large family or clan, a tribal grouping. By our own account, it is only after the exodus from Egypt that we become a *nation* or a *people*. “Benei Yisrael” – the “descendants” or “house” of Israel – becomes “Am Yisrael,” the People or Nation of Israel, comprising the direct descendants of Jacob and the “mixed multitude” that joined them at the exodus. We are called a “nation” at that point because

we have a common history, a common destiny, all of the elements of a culture – law, land, language, legions, cuisine, fashion – and autonomy. Before, we were merely slaves to Pharaoh, doing his will; now, we are a free people making our own destiny.



Jon-Jay Tilsen

In the Middle East, we have always been viewed as a nation, not merely as a religious fellowship. While Arabs may be Muslim or Christian, there is no such thing – in the eyes of most in the region – as a “Jewish Arab.” Even though Jews may be native Arabic speakers, they are still considered a separate people, as are Kurds, Persians and other minorities who retain their own languages and cultures. Similarly, in the Soviet Union, “Jew” was listed on our people’s government identity cards in the box for nationality.

The classical Reform movement in the 19th century sought to define Judaism as a religious fellowship. For the first time, Jews had the possibility, in countries such as France and Germany, to be equal citizens, to be “Frenchmen” and “Germans,” as the new nation-states established themselves. In this context, Jewish identity would become like that of other religious groups. This in part explains why the classical Reform movement was hostile to the notion of Zionism, although that outlook has evolved in the past century.

This explains why you can meet Jews who describe themselves as “atheists” or as “non-religious,” something not found among Protestants or Catholics – by definition, if you’re an atheist, you can’t really be a Catholic, at least as far as I understand the Church’s teachings. Many of these Jews identify strongly as nationalists or Zionists who simply do not like all that religious mumbo-jumbo.

Sadly, the danger of state-established religious institutions that was so wisely recognized by the American

Continued on **Page 18**

We the People

Continued from **Page 17**

Founding Fathers has manifested itself in the Jewish State of Israel. The utter corruption (in financial, halakhic and others senses) and oppression that flows from government control of religious institutions is staggering and represents a grave danger to the Jewish People. Although it may be a matter for

Israeli voters to address, the global Jewish community has the opportunity to help build non-governmental religious institutions in Israel such as the Schechter Institute and the Conservative Yeshiva or the dozens of Masorti congregations, as well as having voice on this issue in various forums of the global Jewish People.

Is Jewish national identity to be feared? The concern with the charge of “dual loyalty” has impelled some to deny Jewish nationhood in favor of Judaism as strictly a religion. Although an interesting theoretical issue, it is not very real, at least for American Jews. There are some millions of other Americans who hold joint citizenships or who maintain strong ties to their overseas families or properties. Even more to the point, each person is part of several units – a country, a state, and a family, as well as holding his or her own individual interests. We all have multiple identities and multiple loyalties, and each of us has to mediate this conflict. Happily, speaking broadly, it seems that American and Jewish national interests are somewhat aligned, and so “conflicting loyalties” are not a significant practical issue.

Because we are a nation, “citizenship” in the Jewish

People was never merely a matter of a declaration of faith. One could be a halakhic (legal) Jew – a legal citizen – only if born to a Jewish mother or after having court approval of “naturalization.” A person born in Nigeria who came to the United States at age three days, speaks only English, serves in the United States Army and knows no other country may still not be a citizen, whereas a person born in America or to U.S. citizens who grows up in Arabia, speaks no English and hates America, has every right of citizenship. Likewise

a person can be born of a Jewish father, attend Jewish schools and live a full Jewish life of Torah and mitzvot but not be legally Jewish, whereas a person who hates Jews and Judaism but was born of Jewish parents is treated as a Jew. Those are inevitable situations, but they are marginal. Fortunately, the road to naturalization for

the “patrilineal Jew” is short and simple in cases where the subject was raised or is to be raised as a Jew.

The 20th century Jewish philosopher and JTS scholar, Mordecai Kaplan, spoke of Judaism as a “civilization” that included an evolving national religion. In doing so, he was accurately portraying the mainstream and normative historical self-perception of the Jewish People. As a modern Conservative-Masorti Jew, I fully embrace this identity, even as I struggle with its implications.



Rabbi's Report

Rabbi Tilsen's Annual report for the 2011 fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 is available at <http://www.beki.org/tilsen/annual11.pdf> and by request from the office.





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