



FROM PESAH TO SHAVUOT

Sefira – Counting the Omer

At the second Seder (Tuesday night March 26), we began daily *sefirat ha-omer* (counting of the *omer*), a counting of days to Shavuot, the next major festival. The counting, preferably done each night for 49 nights, is an expression of eager anticipation, commemorating the period of expectation and preparation we experienced in the Exodus from Egypt until the revelation at Sinai.

The simple home ceremony is printed in most *siddurim* (prayer books), including *Sim Shalom*, immediately after the weekday evening service. While it is a mitzva prescribed for adults, *sefirat ha-omer* can also be a fun, artistic and joyous ritual for families with children.

In the days before printed calendars, calendar watches and daily newspapers, the *sefira* served to keep the liturgical calendar of the Jewish People synchronized, no simple accomplishment, given the dispersion and isolation of much of the community. The term *omer* refers to the measure (one handful) of grain that was used to create a physical relic of the counting. With a physical reminder, even illiterate people could do a recount in case they forgot the day's number.

Families with young children may use this opportunity to help their children understand and experience anticipation, planning, counting and hope.

Teach us to number our days, that we may attain a heart of wisdom
– Psalm 90:12

LaG BeOmer

BEKI's Practically Annual LaG BeOmer Kumsitz Camp-

fire Singalong, on Motse'ei Shabbat (Saturday Night) April 27, at the residence of hosts Andy Hirshfield & Monica Starr, was a fun and well-attended event. Although scheduled to end at 10 p.m., the event went overtime as the embers burned late into the night. Numerous Hebrew and other folk-songs were sung, many bags of vegan marshmallows were consumed, and countless twigs were burned in the fire without incident.

This Singalong was made possible with the support of the Morris & Sara Oppenheim Endowment for Sacred Music at Beth El-Keser Israel and by Andy & Monica.

Shavuot Two-Day Festival: The Jewish Hajj

The Festival of Shavuot ("Weeks"), one of the three major pilgrimage festivals, celebrates the anniversary of the Giving of the Torah at Sinai some 3,325 years ago. The word *hag* (pilgrimage festival) is known widely by its Arabic cognate, *hajj* (which, for Muslims, means pilgrimage to Mecca). The Torah commands, "Three times a year – on the Feast of Unleavened Bread, on the Feast of Weeks, and on the Feast of Booths – all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place that He will choose. They shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed, but each with his own gift, according to the blessing that the Lord your God has bestowed upon you" (Deut. 16:16-17).

Shavuot comes at the culmination of the counting of seven weeks from Pesah, and will be a major observance at BEKI

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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.

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Pay Now or Later

Your payment of outstanding dues, pledges or charges this month will help us close our books on the fiscal year ending in June. If you need help setting up a monthly or regular direct payment to the synagogue, please contact Peggy at office@beki.org (203) 389-2108 x14.

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Shavuot

Continued from Page 1

this summer. Just as we look forward to important events in our personal lives, so too our ancestors enthusiastically and devoutly anticipated the event at Sinai. By participating in BEKI's Shavuot observance, we re-enact the extraordinary experience of our ancestors and show our own enthusiasm for receiving Torah.

Tiqun Leil Shavuot

Our annual Tiqun Leil Shavuot Night of Study takes place on the first night of Shavuot, Tuesday May 14. Dairy and pareve refreshments will be served. That means **cheese-cake**.

Candle lighting is at 7:44 p.m. The evening begins with the Minha Service, from 7:45 to 8 in the George G. Posener Daily Chapel. A shiur will begin at 8 o'clock.

The brief Festival Evening service, from 9:15 to 9:35, will be followed by refreshments and additional presentations.

Shiurim begin at 8 p.m. and will be presented late into the evening. Presenters include Robert Oakes and Rabbi Joshua Whinston of Temple Beth David (Cheshire). Please



Robert Oakes



Joshua Whinston

see "This Week at BEKI" (www.beki.org/bulletin/happenings.pdf) for a complete list of presenters and schedule.

Shavuot Mornings

Yizkor Memorial Service

Book of Ruth

The Shavuot First Day Festival Shaharit Morning Service begins at 9:15 on Wednesday May 15. The service includes the full recitation of Hallel. The afternoon and evening services begin at 5:45. Candle lighting Wednesday night is at 8:45 or later.

The Shavuot Second Day Morning service begins at 9:15 on Thursday May 16 (Memorial Day). The Festival service includes a *Shaharit* morning service, *Hallel* (Psalms of praise), a Torah reading and *Haftara*. Following the Haftara (prophetic reading), the Yizkor Memorial Service is held. The Yizkor memorial service is one of four such services during the year that help us recognize our feelings of loss, which are sometimes especially intense during the Festival season, and to honor the memories of our loved ones.

Following Yizkor, the Book of Ruth is read to a uniquely beautiful and ancient melody based on the same system of *ta'amei hamiqra* ("trope") found in most of the Hebrew Bible. Then the Festival *Musaf* additional service is recited.

Some Congregants may leave during qiddush for a hike to the top of West Rock. Weather permitting, bring appropriate shoes and leave with friends from the lobby.

The Festival Minha service is held in the George G. Posener Daily Chapel from 5:45 to 6:05 p.m.



Washrooms and Lounge Renovation

The downstairs women's lounge, women's washroom and men's washroom are undergoing renovation. For details, see Rabbi Tilsen's message, "It's a Mitzva, or, Yes We Can!" in this issue.

Bomb Squad?

Yes, the New Haven Police Bomb Squad really has consulted with the BEKI security taskforce and visited our facility. ADL has also advised. Please attach a name tag or write your name

on your bags, backpacks, and other belongings brought to BEKI. That will enhance our security and reduce the likelihood of loss. Unlabeled bags may be removed from the cloakroom or other areas for security reasons.

Read Torah

Darryl Kuperstock is coordinating the reading of the Book of Numbers and Shavuot Festival readings, from May 4 (afternoon) to July 6. To volunteer to read or to learn to read contact Darryl (203) 387-0304 kuperst@aol.com.

Summer Bulletin

Submissions for the July-August issue of the Bulletin are due on June 1. The Bulletin is issued eleven times a year, with the July-August issues combined.

Annual Meeting

The synagogue's annual meeting is scheduled for Wednesday June 26 at 6:15 p.m., following the 5:45 to 6:15 afternoon and evening services. All members, friends and supporters are welcome.



Celebrate 60 years of Camp Ramah

- Where: Palmer, Mass.
- Date: Sunday May 19
- Time: 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

All Ramahniks and Ramah friends are invited to this special event to celebrate 60 years of Ramah magic. Join fellow alumni, staff, parents, grandparents, campers and friends for a *ruach*-infused experience that reflects the sense of connection and community unique to Camp Ramah in New England.

Alumni and their families are also encouraged to join the Alumni Reunion, to be held May 17-19, at camp. This will be a full reunion for all of our alumni – former campers and staff from Ramah in Connecticut, Glen Spey and Palmer.

For more information or to register for one of these events, visit www.campramahne.org/60th-anniversary/palmer-day-event/ or call Madeline Mayer, Ramah Development and Alumni Associate, at madelinem@campramahne.org or (781) 702-5290 x233.

Children's Library News

Thanks to generous donations to the Ari Nathan Levine Fund, the following items have been purchased for the Ari Nathan Levine Fund Library. They will be of special interest to and support of the parent leaders of our weekly Shabbat Childrens' Programs. The items are ten copies of

Morah, Morah, Teach Me Torah by [Tobey Greenberg](#) and [Nechama Retting](#); *Izzy the Whiz and Passover McClean*; and *The Shema in the Mezuzah: Listening to Each Other*.

Spring News from Kadima

Kadimaniks kicked off spring this year with some wildly successful events in April. On April 7, the 5th-8th graders showed off their throwing-and-ducking skills in the Ezra Gym with a Dodge Ball Tournament, and the following week, they trekked up to Judges' Cave on West Rock Ridge for our Shabbat Hike. Kadima also had the opportunity to welcome this year's 4th graders with a Bowling Party in April.

And the year's not over yet! In May, we'll be hitting the rides high and fast at **Lake Compounce** in Bristol on Sunday, May 19. We'll end the year with a **Kadima-USY Picnic** at Lighthouse Point Park on Sunday, June 9. All Kadimaniks, USYers, and 4th graders, as well as all family members, are welcome to come and celebrate the start of summer (almost)! There'll be games, there'll be swimming, and, of course, there'll be ice-cream! And best of all, the antique Lighthouse Point Park Carousel will be open for rides.

Curious about Kadima? Check out our website – bekibjkadima.blogspot.com – where you'll find information on membership, our social events and community service work, and photos. Our group operates through BEKI and B'nai Jacob, but we welcome kids from throughout the Jewish community of Greater New Haven. Membership in Kadima helps to fund our events and activities, so please join to support what we do! Feel free to contact me with any questions at bekibjkadima@gmail.com.

– Steve Werlin

USY News

BEKI-BJ USY has been hosting many activities the past few weeks. We had a dodgeball event and a movie-fro-yo event in the past week and a members only Shabbat Dinner at our Religious Education VP, Tova Benson-Tilsen's house. We started up our Monday night meetings again on April 15. We would like to thank everyone who donated soda tabs for the Ronald McDonald House fund. We collected over 2000 tabs. The bucket is now in the lobby at BEKI, so help us to keep collecting.

– Shayna Weinstein, BEKI-BJ USY Chapter President



**Kadima Dodge Ball Tournament
at the Ezra Gym on April 7.**



**4th Graders
and parents
are welcomed
to Kadima
with a
Bowling
Party.**





USYers hit the cold stuff.

BRS students create colorful artwork with Pesah themes.



BRS students learn about the magic of composting and the mitzva of ba'al tashhit with CJ May.

Benei Mitzva

בני מצוה

Sophia Colodner, daughter of Lisa Stanger & Greg Colodner, May 10-11, *parashat BeMidbar*.

Benjamin Sauberman, son of Marcia Landesman & Oren Sauberman, May 24-25, *parashat BeHa'alotekha*.

Rachel Buckman, daughter of Ken & Linda Buckman, Sunday June 8, Rosh Hodesh Tamuz.

Justin Lazarus, son of Illana & Sean Lazarus, Shabbat June 21-22, *parashat Balaq*.

Sisterhood

nos-tal-gia *n* [N.L., fr. Gk *nostos* return home + NL *-algia*; akin to OE *genesan* to survive] **1** : The state of being homesick; **2** : a wistful or excessive sentimental sometimes abnormal yearning for return to or of some past period or irrecoverable condition.

In observance of BEKI's 120th Anniversary I read some of the old *Bulletins* and Sisterhood archives. I found some interesting articles that I thought you might like to read.

Part of Rabbis Klein's message in 1959

A Shavouth Message May/June 1959 Dr. Andrew Klein, Keser Israel:

In the symphony of the Jewish calendar year, the concluding holiday note is a birthday song, sung with joy and thanksgiving in honor of the Torah and, especially, in honor of the heart of the Torah, the Ten Commandments.

Shavouth is called "Z'man Matatan Toratenu" (the time of the giving of the Torah). This is a fitting note in the holiday symphony, for Torah is the all-important word in the Hebrew language. I cannot translate it because Torah is a concept, not merely a word.

Torah means the scroll, Five Books of Moses, the whole as well as the part of it. The Bible and all of its 24 books of any kind. Midrash, the Aggadah and the Halachah, the book of books of any kind. It means that these were taught by fathers to their children. It means interpretation of countless rabbis and scholars, it means revelation and logic, philosophy, wisdom and warning, education and learning.

The Torah is likened to a tree, "Etz Hayim", living tree. Its roots in the beginning of Judaism. Its roots are in the past but

its branches are reaching into the distant, unending future.

We will read it, rather re-read it on Shavouth. We will have confirmation of the 165 year old ones. We will also have a Yizkor service to remember those who lived of and by and for the Torah.

Cabernet Night 1959

Mr. and Mrs. Club invites you to a CABARET NIGHT Sunday Dec. 25th 8:00 p.m.

Featuring Frieda, Her Solovox and Her Boys. Frank and Beans. Admission \$1.00 Share the wealth-someone will go home with a bundle of dough.

1959 Sisterhood News

Sisterhood's installation supper Monday evening May 11, 1959. Mrs. Peter Pergament will present a review of events of the year 1958-59 and enumerate all of Sisterhood's accomplishments, which are many.

Contributions: Tree of Life: Mr. and Mrs. Harold Ratner in memory of father, Charles Miller. Mr. and Mrs. Adolf Hamburger in memory of mother, Rosalie Homburger.

Sisterhood Gift Shop 1959

In the spring a Lady's fancy turns to the attractive new merchandise in the Sisterhood Gift Shop. Now is the time to purchase confirmation, graduation and wedding gifts. Shop leisurely and take advantage of the gift wrapping and delivery service.

Back in the Present

In 2013, our gift shop is still selling merchandise for all occasions. We do gift wrap free and even send some gifts out of town. We are still selling our Sisterhood Cook Book as well as the Kiddush Cook Book. Come visit.

Shabbatot (Saturdays)

דרשנים

Darshan in May & June

Darshan –noun, plural dar·sha·nim. Judaism. a preacher or teacher of Aggada or Halakha in a synagogue.

Rabbi Tilsen has invited the following speakers to serve as guest Darshan in the coming weeks:

Rabbi Yonaton Yussman, Head of School, Jewish High School of Connecticut, will serve as darshan on Shabbat morning May 4, parashiyot BeHar – BeHuqotai.

Sophia Colodner, bat mitzva, will serve as darshanit on Shabbat morning May 11, parashat BeMidbar.

Ben Sauberman, bar mitzva, will serve as darshan on Shabbat morning May 25, parashat BeHa'alotekha.

Ina Silverman, Principal of BEKI Religious School, will serve as darshanit on Shabbat morning June 1, parashat Shelah Lekha.

A Special Guest will serve as darshan on Shabbat morning June 15, parashat Huqat.



Yonaton Yussman



Ben Sauberman



Ina Silverman

Justin Lazarus, bar mitzva, will serve as darshan on Shabbat morning June 22, parashat Balaq.

Shabbat Shalom Torah Study

The *Shabbat Shalom Torah Study* meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45 in the office and is an ideal setting for veteran and novice shul-goers alike to explore the scripture readings and liturgy of the day in a supportive setting.

Expertly led by **Steven Fraade**, with **Rabbi Alan Lovins**, **Rabbi Murray Levine**, **Nadav Sela**, **David Kuperstock**, **Isaiah Cooper**, **Rabbi Eric Silver**

and others, the Shabbat Shalom Torah Study 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 Torah reading, Haftara (Prophetic reading) and liturgy.

The program often focuses on the scriptural readings, but also addresses the prayer liturgy and other topics related to the liturgical calendar, scriptural readings or current issues of concern.

Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background. It is suitable for mature, or at least well-behaved, youth along with adults.

Mondays

Rashi Study Group: Shoftim

Each Monday morning from 7:45 to 8:30 adults meet in the Library Chapel to read Rashi's commentary on the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible). The Rashi Study Group (RSG) is studying the Book of Shoftim (Judges). Characters in the narrative include the Prophet Devora, General Baraq, Warlord Yiftah, Mrs. Manoah, and Samson and Delila. 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



Eric Silver



Steven Fraade



Alan Lovins



Nadav Sela



David Kuperstock



Jon-Jay Tilsen

Continued on **Page 9**

Adult Studies

Continued from Page 8

in its historical, literary and linguistic context. Visitors and new participants are welcome. Hebrew and English texts are available. The RSG meets immediately following the 7 a.m. *shaharit* service. On Monday May 27, Memorial Day, the Study Group will meet after the 9 a.m. service, that is, from 9:45 to 10:30.

With Jon-Jay Tilsen.

Tuesdays

Hebrew (עברית)

New sections may open this season. To register for the next session, contact Peggy at office@beki.org.

Wednesdays

Hebrew Word of the Week

The Wednesday morning service (shaharit) features a 180-second “Hebrew word of the Week” 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 less often possible in English. The Word of the Week often relates to the weekly scriptural readings, enhancing personal

study and public Torah discussion.

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* (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. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at (203) 397-2513.



Murray Levine

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 9:15 on Thursdays; on other weekdays, the service begins at 7 a.m.

Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

The Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

meets weekly on Thursdays during the lunch hour (12:30 to 1:30). The Group has met weekly since 1999. For some participants, this is their first direct experience with Talmud text; for others, it is a continuation of a long journey. The Group focuses on the issues raised in the Talmud, with less attention to the technical aspects of the text. Knowledge of Hebrew or Aramaic is helpful but not required.

The Talmud, based on an oral text, has no beginning or end. One can begin study at any point; now is the best time. The Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group meets in BEKI’s Rosenkrantz Family Library. For information, contact Isaiah Cooper at his law office icooper@cooperlaw.net.

Hebrew: Modern and Prayerbook Hebrew

See description, above, under “Tuesdays”

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.”



Isaiah Cooper

Shabbat Schmooze on Habitat

Shabbat afternoon May 18 (after qiddush), “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know About Habitat for Humanity.” Guests, including Sleeping Giant Build President Mike Healy, will discuss the history of Habitat, and address its religious origins and present affiliations, homeowner assignments, land acquisition, participation by unskilled or

skilled volunteers, how building professionals can help, and more. We are about to begin our next house. Learn about the work that BEKI is doing to help stabilize neighborhoods, provide opportunities for home ownership to hard working families and provide opportunities for Tiquin Olam in our community. Info: Darryl Kuperstock (203) 387-0304 kuperst@aol.com.



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- Steve & Rachel Wizner
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- To Rabbi Murray Levine in honor of his 85th birthday by Barney Spivack & Robin Oshman
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- To Ruth Silver with sympathy on the passing of Mort Silver by Robert & Susan Spear
- To the Kasowitz family with

- sympathy on the passing of Milton Kasowitz by Laura & Jack Yakerson & family
- To Ruth Silver with sympathy on the passing of Mort Silver by Leon Cummings

BEKI Religious School

- To Ina Silverman, Jay Sokolow and family with sympathy on the passing of Robert Silverman by Rachel & Morris Statlender
- To Ruth Silver with sympathy on the passing of Mort Silver by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow

Ari Nathan Levine Children's Library Fund

- To Harold Miller in honor of his milestone birthday by Susan & Robert Nobleman

Hesed Committee

- To Becky & C.J. May and family with sympathy on the passing of Charles and Edie Seashore by Linda Schultz & Howard Gralla

Qiddush Fund

- To Bill Hallo in honor of his birthday by Jay & Margie Hirshfield

In-Kind Donations

- Roger Colten & Sarah Berry for their donation of a set of new hand tools

Yahrzeit Fund (\$5 minimum) to support synagogue operations

- In memory of Lilyan Goodwin by Stacey Goodwin-Podell & Jeff Podell
- In memory of Bessie Kaufman by Florence Kaufman
- In memory of her husband Jack Sam Greenberg by Belle K. Greenberg
- In memory of Paul Klein by Elaine Klein
- In memory of Benjamin Ludwig by Charlie & Violet Ludwig
- In memory of Phillip Kantrowitz by Violet & Charlie Ludwig
- In memory of Sam Maltin by Ted Maltin
- In memory of Arlene's father Harry Spiegel by Howard Gold
- In memory of Leila Glaser Stone by Howard Glaser
- In memory of Charlotte Gralla by Linda Schultz & Howard Gralla
- In memory of Bennett Schultz by Linda Schultz & Howard Gralla
- In memory of Nathan Spear by
- Bob & Susan Spear
- In memory of his father Marvin Spielman by James Spielman
- In memory of her husband Boris Levitan by Polina Naiman
- In memory of Bella Avrin by Susan & Bob Spear
- In memory of Frances Ray by Barbara & Dennis Rader
- In memory of her father Jess Charleston by Delci Lev
- In memory of Harriet Winer by Herbert Winer
- In memory of Samuel Herschderfer by Sherman & David Herschderfer
- In memory of their beloved parents Rose & Louis Katz and Murray Prober by Sharon & Dan Prober
- In memory of Herbert Hershbaum by Debbie & Louis Siegel
- In memory of Bessie Flamer by Mickey & Bud Chorney
- In memory of Sylvia Matloff by Harriet & Jack Kitavitz
- In memory of Marilyn Shure Savin by Ronald Savin
- In memory of his father Michael Freiman by Jonathan Freiman
- In memory of Freda Dimenstein by Morton Dimenstein
- In memory of his father Samuel Friedman by Albert Friedman
- In memory of Helene Kasha by Henry Kasha
- In memory of Walter Greenwald by Roberta Vine
- In memory of Dora Shure by Betsy Shure Gross & Gary Gross
- In memory of Anna Levine by Diane Hoberman
- In memory of Toby Blatt by Marilyn Margolis
- In memory of Sylvia Kindis by Shirley & Max Shepro
- In memory of Sylvia Hoberman by Judith Hoberman & Dominic Kinsley
- In memory of Philip Lipkin by Gladys Lipkin
- In memory of Sophie Hershbaum by Debbie & Louis Siegel
- In memory of Morris "Moishe" Schnitman by Helene & Edward Vanderhoef
- In memory of Susan Schnitman by Helene & Edward Vanderhoef
- In memory of Estelle Gottfried by Helene & Edward Vanderhoef

IT'S A MITZVA, OR, YES WE CAN!

Some years ago, during the intermission at Long Wharf Theatre, upon entering the men's room I encountered a senior BEKI member, now of blessed memory, who acted surprised to see me in such an unholy setting (the men's room, not the Theatre), and said, "So you rabbis have to do this, too?" "Indeed we do," I rejoined, "and it's a *mitzva*!"

That was no exaggeration, and not because of any urgency on that particular evening. "A person should not wait at all, but rather whenever he needs to urinate or 'shield his shoes' he should go immediately" (Rambam, *Mishne Torah*, Hilkhot De'ot, 4:1). The *mitzva* (religious obligation) to perform one's bodily needs optimally is derived from the Torah prohibition against endangering one's own life or harming one's body, and likewise, as Rambam indicates, is in harmony with the Divine will that we operate our bodies as designed. While Western thought speaks in terms of "rights" – in popular parlance, "the right to tinkle" – Jewish civilization frames these matters as "obligations," hence the *mitzva* to micturate.

Like every other area of our life, this one is regulated by law and tradition. From ancient times, it was the practice to establish latrines outside of the camp, as a matter of public health and dignity (Deut. 23:13ff). We are enjoined by Jewish law to follow the most hygienic practices, whether camping or enjoying the luxury of indoor plumbing. Indeed, there is even a *berakha* – a blessing – that is recited after using the washroom (see *Siddur Sim Shalom* shabbat edition p. 63, daily edition p. 4).

The idea of *hidur mitzva* – beautification of duty – applies here no less than in other realms of life. When we don a tallit, shake a lulav, or ignite Shabbat lights, we try to do so using artistic, beautiful or pleasant objects, just as we try to do the action itself in the nicest way feasible. This congregation historically has chosen to give priority to education, prayer and acts of kindness over physical facility, and rightly so. We have focused our efforts on the quality of community above the exquisiteness of the building. And yet we understand that aesthetics matter. Our *aron qodesh* (Holy Ark) in the Beit Midrash is not a common wardrobe closet, nor is it a gold-plated diamond-studded case; it is a simple, elegant, functional, artistic container for a physical Torah scroll, an object that represents a link to the Divine.

Our hallways – conduits for holy beings – are adorned with engaging Judaic artwork, with the aim of enhancing our experience in this sacred gathering place.

The current project to upgrade the downstairs washrooms (off the lower lobby) and women's lounge seeks to make the facilities accessible and usable to all of our members and visitors, including those who use wheelchairs and walkers and those who had difficulty entering and using the washrooms as they were formerly configured. The doorways have been widened – cutting through concrete block – and the partitions expanded. Fixtures are now at the optimal height, lighting is improved, and other design features make the rooms more easily usable to most users. In short, we have facilitated the fulfillment of the *mitzvot* that are performed in those rooms.

This project also makes these rooms more beautiful. The colors are complementary; the fixtures match; the appliances work correctly; the atmosphere is better. Care was taken to use materials and designs that are attractive and easy to use and clean. The intent was to beautify the *mitzvot* performed in those spaces. The hope is that this will enhance the overall experience of the synagogue.

Through the generosity of BEKI's Sisterhood, the Buckman and the Sachs Families, the complete renovation of these important areas is being completed this spring. Materials and services were donated by Cherry Hill Construction (cherryhillinc.com) and Stuart Cohen, and provided at wholesale by Bender Plumbing (benderplumbing.com) and Sasso Tile Company (sassotileco.com). With the vision and guidance of these sponsors, and the hands-on work of John Weiser, Bob Spear, Ken & Linda Buckman, Robert Sachs, Adele Tyson, Mimi Glenn, Jay Brotman, Carole Bass, Eric Dunsker and our officers and staff, and others who have consulted, the project took into account the concerns of much of our membership and proceeded on schedule and within budget.

Some fifteen years ago, the "BEKI 2000" visioning process identified washroom upgrades as one of the highest priorities of the surveyed membership, and it has been on the Sisterhood's agenda for some time. Thanks to the generosity and efforts of our supporters, this vision has become a reality.

May 2013

21 Iyar 5773 - 22 Sivan 5773

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Mark Your Calendar BEKI Ezra Families Shabbat: May 4 Darshan: Rabbi Yonatan Yussman May 4 BRS Graduation & Promotion: May 8 Bat Mitzva: Sophia Colodner May 10-11 Tiquin Leil Shavuot: May 14 Shavuot: May 15-16 Shabbat Schmooze with Mike Healy: May 18 BEKI-BJ USY Lake Compounce May 19 Bar Mitzva: Ben Sauberman May 24-25 Aufrauf: Shai Sokolow Silverman & Robyn Drabman June 1 Darshanit: Ina Silverman June 1			1 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program (last meeting) 21 Iyar/36 L'Omer	2 12:30pm Talmud Study Group 22 Iyar/37 L'Omer	3 7:33pm Candle Lighting 23 Iyar/38 L'Omer	4 <i>Behar</i> <i>Behukotai</i> 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: Ezra families 5:45pm Minha 24 Iyar/39 L'Omer
5 9:00am Religious School 25 Iyar/40 L'Omer	6 7:45am Rashi Study Group 26 Iyar/41 L'Omer	7 27 Iyar/42 L'Omer	8 <i>Yom Yerushalayim</i> 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School Graduation 28 Iyar/43 L'Omer	9 12:30pm Talmud Study Group 29 Iyar/44 L'Omer	10 <i>Rosh Hodesh Numbers</i> Sophia Colodner Bat Mitzva 7:40pm Candle Lighting 1 Sivan/45 L'Omer	11 <i>Bemidbar</i> Sophia Colodner Bat Mitzva 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Stanger/Colodner 5:45pm Minha 2 Sivan/46 L'Omer
12 3 Sivan/47 L'Omer	13 7:45am Rashi Study Group 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting 4 Sivan/48 L'Omer	14 <i>Erev Shavuot</i> 7:44pm Candle Lighting 7:45pm Minha 8:00pm Maariv followed by Tiquin Leil Shavuot Night of Adult Study 5 Sivan/49 L'Omer	15 <i>Shavuot</i> <i>Exodus, Numbers</i> <i>Ezekiel</i> Office Closed 9:15 Festival Service Qiddush: TBA 6 Sivan	16 <i>Shavuot II (Yizkor)</i> <i>Deuteronomy, Numbers</i> <i>Habakkuk</i> Office Closed 9:15am Festival Service Qiddush: Glenn 7 Sivan	17 7:47pm Candle Lighting 8 Sivan	18 <i>Naso</i> 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: Blackmer/Stewart & Oren 12:45pm Shabbat Schmooze with Mike Healy of Habitat for Humanity 5:45pm Minha 9 Sivan
19 USY & Kadima trips to Lake Compounce (registration required) 10 Sivan	20 7:45am Rashi Study Group 7:30pm General Board Meeting 11 Sivan	21 12 Sivan	22 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 13 Sivan	23 12:30pm Talmud Study Group 14 Sivan	24 Ben Sauberman Bar Mitzva 7:54pm Candle Lighting 15 Sivan	25 <i>Behaalotekha</i> Ben Sauberman Bar Mitzva 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Landesman/Sauberman 5:45pm Minha 16 Sivan
26 USY trip to NYC (registration required) 17 Sivan	27 Office Closed/Memorial Day 9:00am Shaharit 9:45am Rashi Study Group 18 Sivan	28 19 Sivan	29 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 20 Sivan	30 12:30pm Talmud Study Group 21 Sivan	31 7:59pm Candle Lighting 22 Sivan	

Service Times

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays
9 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Minha-Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Minha-Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Minha-Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Minha-Maariv	8:15 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Minha-Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 6 p.m. Minha-Maariv	9:15 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Minha



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