

BEKI Bulletin

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January 2003 Vol. 9 Issue 1

ק"ק בית אל-כתר ישראל

Tevet 5763

Meet Andy Schultz

We decided at the last BEKI Religious School Parent Meeting to highlight a different staff member each month to allow the congregation to better know our staff. The highlight this month is in Andrew Schultz, new Director of the Benei Mitzva program. Andy leads class each Wednesday in prayer and service procedures. He checks with the tutors of the thirteen students for the 2002-2003 Benei Mitzva class. Andy is also responsible for the transition of the 2001-2002 class.

Andy brings to BEKI a rich background as a Jewish educator. He is currently the Director of the B'nai Brith Youth Organization, CT Valley Region. Andy completed his undergraduate studies at the University of Connecticut. During college, he led services for Hillel and was President of Alpha Epsilon Pi, a national Jewish fraternity.

Andy is a newlywed, married to Mindy Schultz, our Second Grade teacher at BEKI Religious School. We are very fortunate to have such a committed leader direct our young people. You can contact him at aschultz@beki.org or 389-2127.

LK

USY Universe

Thanks to everyone who supported the USY Thanksgiving Pie Sale this year! We hope that our delicious pies were a big hit at your holiday dinner! Because of your support, we will be able to make another significant financial donation to the USY Tikun Olam Fund this year.

Our Hanuka Limousine Scavenger Hunt was a great success! We had a blast in the five chaperoned limos, following mystery clues, videotaping team performances all over Woodbridge, Orange, Milford and Derby, and celebrating the end of Hanuka together. Great fun, great friends, great food, great memories!

Our own Aliza Kuperstock, Regional President of Hanefesh (CT Valley) Region USY led a regional delegation of about 72 USYers at the USY International Convention. The 11 BEKI/BJ USYers who made the trip had an amazing experience! They reported on their trip at a BEKI Board of Directors meeting.

Remember, as of January 8th graders are enthusiastically invited to **all** chapter USY programs!

A Message From Rabbi Tilsen

"I haven't stepped foot in a synagogue in 20 years." The power of but a single negative encounter within the synagogue to permanently alter the course of one's association with the Jewish community surprises me. I hear stories from those who were hurt, offended or alienated by a reactionary rabbi, an unkind remark by a fellow congregant, or an over-aggressive fundraiser. Often an incident that may have occurred 20 years prior in a different area of the country, seems to permanently alter a person's relationship to their Jewish community.

It would be deemed bizarre if someone announced they refused to further their education because their third grade teacher was mean to them. Likewise, no one would stop obeying speed limits because they were ticketed for speeding while other speeders were not penalized. And it would seem drastic to abstain from all charitable donations simply because the money given to a beggar one time was spent on a beer. Yet, somehow it seems justifiable to hold onto old hurts that happened in the hallowed hallways of a synagogue.

Sometimes people who are ethically or spiritually sensitive feel let down by their Synagogue community. They may feel personally wronged by their rabbi or peers, taken for granted as volunteers, passed over for honors, ignored on the one hand and nudged for dues or donations on the other.

There are others who may feel unwelcome in the community for a variety of reasons. Discrimination, real or perceived, may be felt as a result of age, intermarriage, sexual preference, financial status, degree of religious observance, and physical or mental health. Still others may feel embarrassed because they do not know how to participate in the service or how to read Hebrew. Still others lose their connection with their synagogue when the rabbi, with whom they have had strong spiritual and emotion bonds, leaves.

Ironically, these wounded people are sometimes the very ones the community needs most, for they are well-equipped to help the community recognize its problems and to heal itself.



Rabbi Tilsen

Many of the most talented and dedicated individuals in this community recognize that BEKI, like every other synagogue community, has areas that need improvement. It is my hope that the talented and dedicated individuals in this community meet the challenge to work with the shortcomings and turn them into opportunities for healing and growth. We should recognize the tremendous contributions this community has made to the spiritual well-being of its members and of the larger community. We have a lot going for us.

Hillel said, "*Al-tifrosh min ha-tsibur* – Do not leave the community."

— Avot 2:5

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A Message from Education Director Dr. Lauren Kempton

I have a picture that hangs in the dining room of my home by Judy Chicago. It was a Hanuka present from my husband Brooks, when we moved to New Haven three years ago. The picture is her dream of Shabbat in which people of all ethnicities come together for Shabbes. I know Judy Chicago only as a feminist painter always involved in works of inclusion. So I was surprised when I found some of her writings in a book edited by Rabbi Chaim Stern entitled *Day by Day: Reflections on the Themes of the Torah from Literature, Philosophy, and Religious Thought*.

Her passage is a type of *shehianu*, a blessing upon experiencing a wonder.

She says:

For the wonder I experience here and now, I give thanks.
And then all that has divided us will merge.
And then compassion will be wedded to power
And then softness will come to a world that is harsh and unkind
And then both men and women will be gentle
And then both women and men will be strong
And then no person will be subject to another's will
And then all will be rich and free and varied
And then the greed of some will give way to the needs of many
And then all will share equally in the earth's abundance

And then all will care for the sick and the weak and the old
And then all will nourish the young
And then all will cherish life's creatures
And then all will live in harmony with each other and the Earth
And then everywhere will be called Eden once again.



Dr. Lauren Kempton

As I reflected on these simple and profound words, I realized: we – you and I – are the “All” that Judy Chicago speaks of. Each of us here at BEKI uses our talents to nourish and cherish. I can take these words and apply them to Israel, to our leaders, to the Connecticut budget crunch, to the wonderful faces of our BEKI kids and to my own life. What part of “All” are you and what wonder have you seen?

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BEKI Religious School

This month we will highlight the activities of Grade Five. The students in "Mr. Guy's" class, assisted by madrikh Jessie Karsif, are involved in an intensive study of Israel in their Judaics curriculum to complement their formal study of Hebrew. The class is divided into learning teams and has split their classroom into four sections corresponding to regions of the Land of Israel: North, South, East and West. The teams are responsible for researching the geography, history and politics of their region.

Their study started with the geography and peoples of modern day Israel. The students prepared Israeli food (a special thank you to Cindy Smernoff). During the next class they studied Israeli music with a special CD created by Rachel Green.



Carol Ferency-Takacs, Guy Lord and Rita Sela at USCJ teacher training seminar

The students have festooned their "four corners of Israel" with posters. The class wishes to thank the Curtis-Resnik family for the framed Israeli photos they donated.

Ongy Zizling, our Israeli Emissary, visited for one class session to introduce a "People of Israel" game of his own creation. Our Fifth graders will be presenting their findings to the entire Religious School in January during Teach Israel Month. If you have any posters you would like to donate, please call the Religious School office.

Religious School Parents are especially invited to attend the Wednesday evening service from 5:45p to 6:10p.

LK

Benei Mitzva Program

The Benei Mitzva class has been busy working with their tutors in preparation for their events. In addition, each student has chosen a Mitzva Hero, a Jewish adult who personifies the concept of Mitzvot. The class has mastered interview techniques that they will use to create a biography of their Mitzva Hero. In December, the class visited TowerOne/Tower East to bring Hanuka greetings and help light the *hanukiya*. LK

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LifeCycle

BEKI Welcomes New Members and their families

- Annie Wareck & Iain York and Zev
- David & Reyna Ottenstein and Noah and Yael
- Victor & Susan Stein
- Allon & Merav Canaan and Tomer, Yarden and Yael

Mazal Tov to

- Amy & Stephen Pincus on the birth of their son Jacob Ezra Pincus. Their address is 5855 Bartlett St., Pittsburgh PA 15217
- Paula Hyman on the publication of *My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman: Memoirs of a Zionist Feminist in Poland*
- Morris Bell on being awarded for Distin-

guished Contributions to the Science of Psychology in Public Service by the American Psychological Association

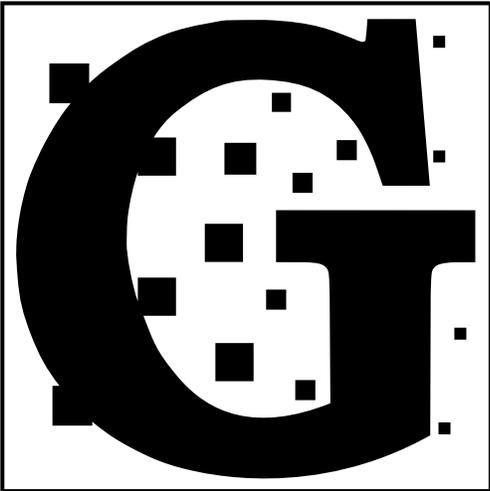
Births, Baby Event and Benei Mitzva Notices can be found on BEKI's website www.beki.org in the Lifecycle section.

Death Notices and Yahrzeit Observances listed by name and date can be found on BEKI's website www.beki.org in the Lifecycle section.

Rabbi Herbert & Rose Weinberg of Jerusalem seek a home to rent or exchange during August - Dec. 2003 in Westville in walking distance to BEKI. Contact hrbrose@netvision.net.il.

Audio Library on Web

Various blessings and prayers are recorded for educational purposes on BEKI's web site. Shabbat, Hanuka, and daily liturgical selections are presented. To hear the selections, go to www.beki.org/audio.html.



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Saul's Circle

Saul's Circle, BEKI's outreach program for adults who are mental health services consumers, celebrated Hanuka with a party at Fellowship Place New Haven on 16 December. Latkes were served and lessons presented on the history of Hanuka and the menorah.

Dana Etra, assisted by Jon Singer, answered questions about the traditions of Hanuka. Three Hanukiyot were lighted and those gathered enjoyed singing Hanuka songs. Dr. Lauren Kempton and Sara Mag, Director of Fellowship Place, have instituted a series of mini-workshops for Saul's Circle participants. The first was conducted by Imam Nasif Muhammed of the Council of Churches. Similar to his presentation at BEKI Religious school, Nasif explained the tenets of Islam.

The discussion was spirited. Future workshops will be held on weekdays from 5:00p to 6:30p. If you have this time free and would like to present a workshop, please call Lauren at BEKI, 389-2108 x33 or lkempton@beki.org.

Food Donations for Jewish Family Service

Food Donations for Jewish Family Service and other local food charities can be left in the BEKI coatroom. Canned and other dry packaged foods are accepted. Clean out your cupboard - if that can or box has been there for a year and you haven't used it, you may as well give it away.

Kadima Korner

We are so excited to announce that Sabrina Spector will be our new Kadima Advisor. Sabrina comes to us with a wealth of Jewish education, experience with youth, and marketing, communication and programming skills.

We look forward to the renewal of an exciting and engaging Kadima chapter at BEKI and BJ. Programs for 6th through 8th grade will resume in January.

Order Your USY / Kadima Superbowl Sunday Deli Box Dinner!

20s-30s Havura at BEKI

Jewish singles and couples in their 20s and 30s are invited to contact BEKI member Valerie Sandler (777-4784 or valerie.sandler@yale.edu) or Mary Ellen Mack (389-2108 x14 or beki@snet.net) for information on special events of interest. BEKI's 20s-30s Havura is primarily for adults without children, and meets about once a month at BEKI for Shabbat services, dinner and *shmoozing* and informal discussion. An event is planned for Shabbat Evening 11 January; *reservations are required*. People with children are encouraged to contact Lauren Kempton (389-2108 x33 or lkempton@beki.org) or Mary Ellen Mack (389-2108 x14 or beki@snet.net) for information on the Children's Shabbat Havura and other activities of special interest.

Kulanu

Kulanu, BEKI's outreach program for adults with special needs, celebrated Hanuka at Chapel Haven. Mimi Glenn told stories of Hanuka and Dr. Lauren Kempton shared her dreidel collection and led fun activities with the adults present. Latkes were enjoyed by all.

We are presenting monthly classes on Judaism at Chapel Haven. In December, the subject of "Abraham: Father of Three Faiths" was presented. This outreach is funded in part by a grant from the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven.

BEKI Events

January - Tevet - Shevat

5763

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			27 Tevet 1	28 Tevet 2	29 Tevet 3	1 Shevat 4
Shaharit=Morning Minha =Afternoon Maariv=Evening SSLM=Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan	Office Hours: Mon 9a-12 & 1p-3p Tue by appt. only Wed 10a-12 & 1p-6p Thu 9a-12 & 1p-3p Fri 9a-2p	BEKI phone numbers: (203) 389-2108 Fax (203) 389-5899 Mary Ellen-Office x14 Religious School x13 Rabbi x10 Dr. Lauren Kempton x 33	<i>New Year's Day</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 9:00a Shaharit No Religious School No Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Maariv	8:15a Shaharit 5:45p Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 4:17p Candles 6:00p Maariv	<i>Rosh Hodesh</i> 9:15a Shaharit <i>Kiddush Sponsor: Tina Rose</i> 10:45a Children's Programs 4:15p Minha, Avot, Maariv, Havdala
2 Shevat 5	3 Shevat 6	4 Shevat 7	5 Shevat 8	6 Shevat 9	7 Shevat 10	8 Shevat 11
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 7:45a Rashi Study Grp 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Maariv	8:15a Shaharit 12:30p Sanhedrin Study Grp (off-site) 5:45p Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 4:24p Candles 6:00p Maariv	9:15a Shaharit <i>Kiddush Sponsor: Alumni & Supporters of Conservative Yeshiva in Jerusalem</i> 10:45a Children's Programs 10:45a SSLM 4:20p Minha, Avot, Maariv, Havdala
9 Shevat 12	10 Shevat 13	11 Shevat 14	12 Shevat 15	13 Shevat 16	14 Shevat 17	15 Shevat 18
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px;">9:30a Cong Mtg Renovation</div>	7:00a Shaharit 7:45a Rashi Study Grp 5:45p Maariv 7:30p Exec. Board (off-site)	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Maariv 6:15p Principles of Judaism	8:15a Shaharit 12:30p Sanhedrin Study Grp (off-site) 5:45p Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 4:32p Candles 6:00p Maariv 6:00p Family Ed Shabbat Dinner (by RSVP)	<i>Tu B'Shevat/Shabbat Shirah</i> 9:15a Shaharit 10:45a Children's Programs 4:30p Minha, Avot, Maariv, Havdala
16 Shevat 19	17 Shevat 20	18 Shevat 21	19 Shevat 22	20 Shevat 23	21 Shevat 24	22 Shevat 25
9:00a Shaharit No Religious School 5:45p Maariv	<i>Martin Luther King Day</i> <i>Office Closed</i> 8:00a-3:00p KISS 9:00a Shaharit 9:45a Rashi Study Grp 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 5:45p Maariv	8:15a Shaharit 12:30p Sanhedrin Study Grp (off-site) 5:45p Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 4:41p Candles 6:00p Maariv	9:15a Shaharit 10:45a Children's Programs 10:45a SSLM 4:40p Minha, Avot, Maariv, Havdala
23 Shevat 26	24 Shevat 27	25 Shevat 28	26 Shevat 29	27 Shevat 30	28 Shevat 31	
9:00a Shaharit 9:00a Religious School 9:30a Family Ed Brunch 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 7:45a Rashi Study Grp 5:45p Maariv 7:45p General Board	7:00a Shaharit 5:45p Maariv	7:00a Shaharit 12:00-5:00p KISS 4:00p Religious School 4:15p Benei Mitzva Pgm 6:15p Principles of Judaism	8:15a Shaharit 12:30p Sanhedrin Study Grp (off-site) 5:45p Maariv 8:00p A.A.	7:00a Shaharit 4:49p Candles 6:00p Maariv	Email Addresses: Office: beki@snet.net Rabbi: jjtilsen@beki.org Religious School/Education Director: lkempton@beki.org Benei Mitzva Teacher: aschultz@beki.org website: www.beki.org

Calendar Notes in January

On Wednesday 1 January 2003, "New Year's Day," morning services are from 9:00a to 9:30a. The office is closed. The evening service is at the usual time, 5:45p to 6:00p.

On Monday 20 January 2003, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, morning services are from 9:00a to 9:45a; the Rashi Study Group will meet from 9:45a to 10:30a; KISS meets from 8:00a to 3:00p; and the office is closed. Other services are at their usual times.

Special Renovations Meeting Sunday 12 Jan
9:30a to 11:30a with Brunch. All Welcome

Rotation Schedule Available

The "Master Rotation List" for Shabbat & Festival service participation was mailed in mid-December to some households on the BEKI membership list. (Additional copies are available from the BEKI office at 389-2108 x14, in the literature rack, or at www.beki.org/rotate.html). The list is the schedule of services and programs to be lead by volunteers. If you would like to lead a children's or adult service, or learn to do so, contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10 (jjtilsen@beki.org).

The "Master Rotation List" offers only a partial picture of the volunteerism at BEKI. Not listed there are the over fifty Torah Readers and the Torah Reading coordinators, the leaders of the Late Friday service and weekday services, those who prepare BEKI mailings, the work of the Board and its committees, the work of the Sisterhood and Religious School, and much more.

BEKI has a long history of volunteerism. Over the past decades, much of the building was built and maintained by its members' own labor. Food preparation for programs and cleanup was done by members. In our day, many have now extended this "Jew-it-yourself" approach to the worship and teaching services as well. This has earned BEKI the epithet of "The People's Temple."

MLK Day & KISS at BEKI

Morning services at BEKI begin at 9:00a on Martin Luther King Day, Monday 20 January 2003. The [Rashi Study Group](#) meets from 9:45a to 10:30a that morning. The office is closed.

BEKI's unique "Kids In Shul when they close the School" program, also known as the "Snow Day" program, will meet on that day from 8:00a to 3:00p, in the Claire Goodwin Children's Room. The [KISS](#) program offers a fun-filled Judaic program for elementary-school aged children on days when Ezra Academy and public schools are closed for conferences and holidays when parents may have to work. Space is limited. Contact **Lauren Kempton** at 389-2108 x33 (lkempton@beki.org) to reserve your space or fax in the registration form available at www.beki.org/kiss.pdf or from the office.

During December, KISS participants enjoyed stamping one-hundred new siddurim (prayer books) with the BEKI address. The children took great pleasure in stamping, and were happy to help the Congregation with this volunteer effort.

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Torah for the Hungry Mind: Adult Studies at BEKI

Principles of Judaism: Torah on One Foot, will be presented by Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen on Wednesday nights in January and February. The class is especially for adults wishing an overview of the Principles of Jewish thought and life. Ideal for people new to Judaism, considering conversion, or wishing to begin a systematic or holistic study and practice of Judaism. Topics include The Torah; *Halakha* (Jewish Law); The Mitzva System; 3,600 Years of Jewish History; God of Israel; Fundamental Observances; Conservative & Other Judaism; Messiah; Eternal Life; Talmud Torah; and the Sabbath.

The class will meet from 6:15p to 7:30p in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Library on 8, 15, 22, 29 January, and 5, 12 February 2003, immediately following 5:45p evening service. Registration and material fee of \$10 per person is payable to BEKI. To register, contact Mary Ellen at 389.2108 x14 or office@beki.org.

Pirque Avot

Mishna Avot, also known as *Pirque Avot* or Ethics of the Fathers is studied at BEKI each Shabbat afternoon between the *mincha* and *maariv* services during the winter months. Everyone is welcome.

Divrei Torah on the Web

Divrei Torah (Torah Commentaries) by President Gila Reinstein, Bat Mitzva Annie Bass, and Bar Mitzva Zack Bell are posted at www.beki.org under "Adult Studies" along with other Divrei Torah by BEKI members.

"A Hanuka Message" by Rabbi Tilsen is available at www.beki.org/hanuka.html

Rashi Study Group

Special time: 22 January 9:45a to 10:30a
All other Mondays: 7:45a to 8:30a

Each Monday morning from 7:45a to 8:30a adults meet in the Rosenkrantz Family Library to read Rashi's commentary on the Torah. It is possible to join the study 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 at a special time, 9:45a to 10:30a, on Monday 22 January 2003, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, immediately following the 9:00a morning service.

AA Meetings Thursdays at 8:00p

The Thursday night [AA meeting](#) has been held at BEKI since May 1997. Open to any person who can benefit from a recovery program, the meeting is held according to standard AA procedure. This is not a specifically Jewish recovery group, although a large proportion of participants are Jewish. The meeting now features a speaker. For information on the weekly meeting call Jay at (203) 387-6019 or email Jay at jay@jacsw.org.

Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan

The Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan for adults meets in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library every second *Shabbat* (Saturday) morning year-round from 10:45a to noon. The SSLM meets on the 11th and 25th of this month. Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background.

Renovations Planning Special Open Meeting

Sunday 12 January 2003 from 9:30a to 11:30a
Social Hall

Light Brunch - All Members Welcome

Purim Is Coming

This year we will again help you celebrate the Purim mitzva of *mishloach manot* - the sending of gifts - and *matanot la-eyyonim* - presents to the poor - with our beautiful BEKI Purim Baskets.

No worry! No fuss! No shopping!

Just send in the order forms you will receive soon. (Order forms are available at www.beki.org/forms.html.) Start making your list. There is enough time to check it twice!

Megilla Readers Needed

If you would like to read *Megillat Ester* (the Book of Esther) on Purim at BEKI, or learn how to, please contact Rabbi Tilsen (389-2108 x10 jjtilsen@beki.org) at your earliest opportunity.

Torah Readers Wanted

Marsha Beller is coordinating Shabbat Morning Torah Readings for *Shemot* (Exodus), the reading of which we begin on 5 January. If you would like to read Torah on a Shabbat morning during the winter, or would like to learn how to read Torah, please contact Marsha (387-4657 or mbellereco@aol.com). Many thanks to Paula Hyman for coordinating the readings for the *Bereshit* (Genesis). If you would like to plan to read Torah on a Shabbat afternoon or Monday morning, please contact Rabbi Tilsen (389-2108 x10 Reading at BEKI" jjtilsen@beki.org).

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