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BEKI bulletin

Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel

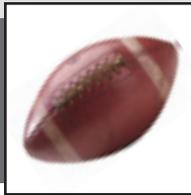
January 2007

Tevet 5767
Vol. 13 Issue 1

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Murder in the Model City Brunch

Journalist and BEKI member Paul Bass will speak about *Murder in the Model City* (Basic Books 2006), the book he co-authored with Yale political scientist Douglas Rae, at a brunch on Sunday 21 January at 9:30a in the downstairs social hall. With him will be the convicted – and rehabilitated – murderer, Warren Kimbro.

The community is welcome to attend and enjoy this free event.

Kirkus Review calls *Murder in the Model City*, “A thoughtful work of true crime, recounting a ‘political execution’ and its unanticipated results. Bass and Rae skillfully relate these events, and a narrative interesting from the first paragraph steadily gathers storm force, as befits its era. A fine study in modern – but largely forgotten – history.”

The book traces the events surrounding the 1969 murder of Black Panther Alex Rackley by Warren Kimbro. Kimbro was known and respected in the community for his work with disaffected youth and drug- and alcohol-addicted residents of New Haven, but joined the Black Panthers and, acting on orders from local leadership, killed Rackley, who was a suspected police informant. Kimbro was arrested and put on trial.

continued on page 5

Elm City Girls' Choir

Back by Popular Demand

Hamden Cantata

Sunday 28 January 2007

11:00a

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Reception to Follow





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BEKI Bulletin

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To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership, donations, or special activities, call the Synagogue office (203) 389-2108, or write to:

85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724

or email: jjtilsen@beki.org

or see our web page: www.beki.org

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BEKI Bulletin

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi

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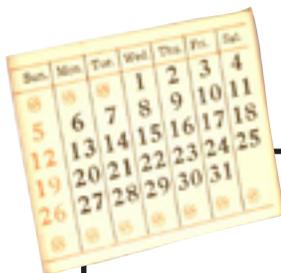
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Mark Your Calendar

- **Sunday Brunch** with Journalist Paul Bass & Warren Kimbro 21 January 2007
- **Elm City Girls' Choir** presentation Sunday 28 January 2007
- **DeliBox Orders** Due Friday 26 January 2007
- **Erev Shira Song Night** Saturday 3 February 2007 7-9p off-site
- **BEKI Israel Experience** 18 February to either 25 February or 1 March or 6 March off-site
- **Civic Leadership Tribute Dinner** Sunday 6 May 2007



Andy Weinstein

40 Orange Avenue
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CJLS Statements on Gay and Lesbian Rabbis and Same-Sex Couples: Life Goes On

The Rabbinical Assembly's Committee on Jewish Law and Standards endorsed two papers in December, one of which finds that Gay and Lesbian Jews may celebrate civil unions with the blessing of Jewish law and may serve as rabbis in the Conservative Movement. The other paper affirms the Biblical ban on homosexual acts, provides a basis for excluding "avowed" homosexuals from the rabbinate, and does not allow for any ceremonial or legal recognition of same-sex couples under Jewish law.

The CJLS discussed a set of issues relating to the treatment of Gay and Lesbian Jews and endorsed multiple positions, which are mutually inconsistent, indeed contradictory. For the most part, the papers addressed different questions. As a matter of process, the Committee was acting in an advisory, and not judicial, capacity. Nothing was "decided" for the movement. The various institutions, such as the Rabbinical Assembly, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, Cantors Assembly, Seminario Rabínico Latinoamericano, Jewish Theological Seminary, Zeigler School, and the rest, may individually or collectively address the issues of how we deal with Gay and Lesbian Jews. The papers endorsed by the Committee give some food for thought, but there is no force-feeding. There is not a satisfying meal, either. So nothing really was decided at this point.

Although it is disconcerting to many people, it is normal for the CJLS to approve inconsistent or contradic-

tory positions from time to time. The Committee aims to develop positions on issues or practices that a significant body of our scholars and *posqim* (decisors or judges) view as valid, even when they are a minority. The Conservative Movement has tried to value "broadness" and inclusivity above doctrinal purity or uniformity. Masorti is supposed to be an affiliation of rabbis, cantors and congregations that are community-based, not a hierarchy that imposes its agenda or viewpoint. Minority positions are validated on many issues. Indeed, some individual Committee members have voted for multiple and contradictory positions in the name of diversity, saying that all are "valid."

However, it is one thing to live with differences in kashrut or Shabbat standards, and another to reconcile contradictory practices on family status and rabbinic ordination.

Each Jew is supposed to live according to a consistent approach and the rulings of one rabbi or school of thought, and may not select opinions or rules made for other communities. You can have the meatloaf and potatoes, or the bagel and cream cheese, but you can't have the meatloaf and cream cheese. If you incorporate a company in one state, you have to follow that state's rules; you can't pick the most favorable rules for each state. But a company in one state does not follow the rules of a company in another state. The diversity is necessary in part because conditions and values, which are often part of the halakhic



Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen

formula, vary from place to place; and in part because different *posqim* see things differently. Mutually exclusive options are the price we pay for this democracy and diversity.

With respect to the question of accepting Gay & Lesbian rabbis, there are three decision points: the rabbinical schools, the Rabbinical Assembly (RA), and the shuls and schools that hire rabbis. In the past, many quietly Gay and Lesbian rabbis have been ordained and found productive rabbinic careers (which is true in all of the non-Conservative movements as well). The Ziegler school has said that it intends to welcome openly Gay and Lesbian rabbinical students; JTS is in the process of reconsidering its policy, and is widely expected to eventually accept openly Gay and Lesbian students to the Rabbinical School. Openly Gay and Lesbian students have been welcome in the undergraduate and graduate programs of those

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen

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institutions all along (at least, in recent years); the question now is one of the rabbinate and cantorate.

Some synagogues have been perfectly open to hiring Gay and Lesbian Conservative rabbis. Our president, Donna Levine, explicitly said to me, “Jon-Jay, you are free to change your sexual orientation.” It is commonly believed that Beth El or Keser Israel has engaged quietly gay rabbis in the past. Our congregation, like many, simply accepts Gay and Lesbian individuals and families on the same basis as we accept everyone else. If you’re Jewish, and your check clears the bank, you can be a member. There are no ritual debilities and no institutional discrimination. We try to actively welcome Gay and Lesbian people, particularly in light of the unhappy experiences many Gay and Lesbian Jews have had in their interactions with communal institutions and fellow Jews. Doing so is a specific mitzva called *qeruv*.

The papers themselves are all very thought-provoking and engaging. They are worth reading. However, had I been on the Committee, I would have voted against all of them. The papers do not, for the most part, focus on specific questions of law and often suffer from a lack of precision in conceptualization and argumentation. Each author made up his own question and then answered it. All we needed, to answer the Rabbinical Assembly’s request for guidance, was the answer to a specific, narrow question.

The question, “May the Rabbinical Assembly accept Gay and Lesbian members” is really a simple question of law that does not need hundreds of pages of analysis. The halakhic answer is, “The RA may admit anyone it wants to.” This is not unlike the question, “May the RA admit rabbis who do not follow the rules of family purity (*nida*) (for which the restriction and punishment is on the same level as male homosexual acts), or who drive on Shabbat, are married to gentiles, wear a mixture of wool and linen, struggle academically, are jerks, speak Hebrew poorly, are theatre stars, are unmarried, avoid military service, smoke marijuana, smoke cigarettes, play poker, chant Buddhist mantras, studied at Orthodox *yeshivot*?” It is the same answer: The RA can if it wants to. For some of those questions, the RA says yes, for others, no.

The more serious question, though, is “*should* the RA admit openly Gay and Lesbian people?” That is a matter of policy, a political question, more than a halakhic or legal question. My answer to that is, Yes, the RA should continue its historic policy of admitting Gay and (more recently) Lesbian rabbis, acknowledging the fact that people now normally live *openly* Gay and Lesbian lives. All that changes is that whereas in the past we quietly overlooked what was considered a technical (but significant) Biblical violation, today we are publicly overlooking (or disregarding) a Biblical rule that has become untenable. Perhaps in the next few years we will see a better way to reconcile an ancient rule with a radically changed world, but in the meantime, life goes on. After all,

we don’t want to take Biblical rules lightly; but in this case, there is not much else we can do but treat it the same way we treat some other technical violations.

Unfortunately, most of the CJLS papers promote sweeping and far-reaching approaches where a simple answer to a narrow question would have worked better. The approaches described in the papers are not really practical for us, do not represent solid halakhic positions, and do not satisfactorily address the tension between the radical change in our understanding of same-sex relationships in our social context, and the need for coherence, if not continuity, in our legal framework. The former is now an issue because it is no longer “normal” for Gay and Lesbian people to hide the fact of their orientation and relationships, and is often quite harmful for them and society in general to do so. This means that the system that worked in the past (and still works in some non-Conservative communities) -- where Gay rabbis “hide” -- no longer works in our Conservative world.

This question, which is somewhat trivial if we are considering only rabbis or cantors, is very significant once we look at the same issue in other areas of communal Jewish life. What are we supposed to do with our devoted Jews who are openly Gay and Lesbian, where most of us don’t see any moral or other debility in homosexuality, and where we affirm a legal tradition that does not have much precedent for acceptance? It is clear to me that the broader issues require far-reaching development of Jewish law, and I hope

that it will happen. The current papers of the CJLS each -- including Rabbi Joel Roth's essay -- suggest paths that could be explored.

In the meantime, Gay and Lesbian people and their families directly suffer, and our community is weakened, from the fact that their relationships are not normalized in Jewish law. And the Conservative rabbinate loses great talent, which often just accrues to the benefit of the Reform, Reconstructionist and Orthodox movements. (The latter happens because some people from Orthodox backgrounds would join our Rabbinical Assembly if they could live their observant lives while being openly Gay or Lesbian.) But at BEKI, life will continue as usual -- we will continue to treat Gay and Lesbian Jews the same as everyone else.

Murder in the Model City Brunch

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Eight other people, including Black Panther Party National Chairman Bobby Seale, were charged with murder by the FBI, federal and state agencies, and brought to trial in New Haven.

On the night of 15 April 1970, demonstrators in Cambridge, Mass., protesting the upcoming trial in New Haven, stormed through Harvard Square and clashed with police in riot gear. A May Day protest was set for the New Haven Green. The situation was extremely volatile. Activists from around the country descended on the city and the Yale campus. The Nixon administration sent 4,000 National Guardsmen. U.S. military tanks lined the streets outside of New Haven.



Paul Bass

before being released. He graduated from Harvard shortly afterward and dedicated himself to assisting people leaving prison. The story of Kimbro's redemption is a major theme of the book, and Kimbro himself will speak at the BEKI brunch with Bass.

Paul Bass has covered Connecticut for local, regional, and national publications since he was an undergraduate at Yale. He has won dozens of awards for journalistic excellence and was twice named the New England Press Association's "Journalist of the Year." He and his wife Carole and daughters Annie and Sarah are active members of BEKI.

Paul's co-author Doug Rae is the Richard Ely Professor of Organization and Management at Yale and a professor of political science. His other books include the prize-winning *Political Consequences of Electoral Laws, Equalities and City: Urbanism and its End*.

The evening before the rally, Yale President Kingman Brewster met with leaders of the protest, among them radical activists Abbie Hoffman and Jerry Rubin. Thanks to their decisions and the moderate and thoughtful actions of the trial judge disaster was averted, and the trial proceeded. Warren Kimbro was sentenced to life in prison for the murder, but served less than four years

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Basketball Challenge

BEKI's New Haven Mavens Men's Basketball team won accolades for excellence in play in response to a December challenge game from The Westville Synagogue's Westvillains, although the Mavens did not actually win the game. The score was tied twice during the game, and the Mavens held the lead for several seconds, until the Westvillains squeaked by and won by only a few baskets in the final 32 minutes of play.

Rabbi Wes Kalmar, who issued the challenge, was a star player for his team, and scored several points. Rabbi Tilsen, whose background as a volleyball player was evident, also received praise from his team. Captain

Steve Rothman commented that "we were proud of Jon-Jay for not shooting the ball into the wrong basket, not even once." Rabbi Kalmar commented that this was "a great opportunity to reach out, to build community and friendships."

The game was almost cancelled due to a rabbinic controversy over the question of whether a violation by a 12-and-a-half-year-old counts against the player or his father. In the spirit of compromise, the rabbis agreed that they would refer the question to the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards and then ignore the Committee's decision.



New Haven Mavens

photo by S. Zalesch

Mavens players included Ariel Ben-Chitrit, Daniel Ben-Chitrit, Coby Ben-Chitrit, Aaron Cohen, David Friedman, Jon Friedman, Lloyd Friedman, Andy Hausler, Nathan Janette, Matthew Lettick, Robert Lettick, Seth Pauker, Steve Rothman, Rob Schonberger, Jon-Jay Tilsen, John Weiser, and Sam Weiser; and Tsvi Benson-Tilsen and Alex Shragis operated the clock and scoreboard. An enthusiastic if decorous cheering section supported the team.

A rematch has been issued, along with a challenge from the BEKI Ball-a-Boosters Women's Basketball team. If you would like to play men's basketball for BEKI, please contact Captain Steve Rothman or Lloyd Friedman; if you would like to play women's basketball, please contact Rabbi Tilsen at jjtilsen@beki.org 389.2108 x10.

Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel's

New Haven Mavens

The Renewable Energy Basketball Team

וקו' ה' יחליפו כח יעלו אבר בנשרים ירצו ולא ייגעו ילכו ולא ייעפו:

They who trust in the Lord shall renew their energy...

They shall run and not be weary.

Isaiah 40:31

A Message from Education Director Dr. Lauren Kempton

I had the good fortune to attend the Mitzvah Hero Reunion and workshop in New Brunswick, New Jersey at Anshe Emeth. Just last February, I was in Israel with thirty educators from across the United States and Canada studying with Danny Siegel, Founder of the ZIV Tzedekah fund. Learning about Mitzvah Heroes in Jerusalem was powerful, but so was learning about and meeting the incredible Mitzvah Heroes right here in the United States. As Danny Siegel states: “The stories of our Mitzvah heroes...teach us how Tzedekah money makes miracles happen and why Tzedekah is so intimately connected to Life itself.” We heard seven presentations, but I will focus on the one that moved me the most, the Quincy Kids.



Dr. Lauren Kempton

The Quincy Kids are a group of middle school students from Quincy, Massachusetts led by their teacher Ron Adams. The history of their project follows. In 1994, due to their Human Rights curriculum, they had a visit from Iqbal Masih, a Pakistani activist who was sold into bonded labor at age four as a carpet weaver. He escaped from slavery and spoke out against the widespread scourge of childhood slave labor. After his visit the Quincy students started a letter-writing campaign. Then the students were shocked to hear that he was murdered. The students decided that they must take action, and build a school in Pakistan in Iqbal's memory.

As their teacher Ron Adams said, “I have learned not to limit my students' dreams.”

The students first asked for donations, \$12.00 to symbolize the price paid for Iqbal to be a slave and the age at his death. The campaign grew and the students raised \$150,000.

With this money, these middle school students connected with non-governmental agencies and actually put out their first Requests for Proposals. Their diligence and fund-raising built a five-room school for former bonded child laborers in Iqbal's hometown of Kasur. Three-hundred twenty students (former child laborers) attend that school today.

The power of watching these three Quincy thirteen-year-olds tell their story is still with me. Their advice was, “Find your voice and begin.” Their presentation concluded with the parable of the star fish. A young child was throwing stranded starfish back into the ocean. A businessman walked by and said, “Why waste your time, there are so many to be saved. The child responded, “If I save one, I have made a difference.”

We are taught as Jews, “One who saves a life is as one who saves an entire world.” These teens in Quincy have many lessons that we as adults can learn. Perhaps we can use their example to work as a congregation to elicit change in Darfur or Social Action projects here in New Haven. If you would like to know more, please see Darryl Kuperstock, who is on the Board of Directors for the ZIV Tzedekah Fund or Lauren Kempton.

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Just send in the order forms you will receive in the mail. (Order forms are available at www.beki.org/forms.html and will be on their way via *schleppost*.) Start making your list. There is enough time to check it twice!

Let There Be Music!

BEKI will host the Elm City Girls' Choir in a free, public concert on Sunday 28 January at 11a in the downstairs social hall. Please come and enjoy this special treat, which is suitable for all ages.

The performance will include Hebrew and English songs, both sacred and



secular, performed by singers from the United Girls' Choirs of Hamden and North Haven and the Elm City Girls' Choir Academy Division, led by Musical Director Rebecca Rosenbaum.

BEKI participants include Mara Rothman, daughter of Sherry and Steve Rothman, and Olivia and Julia Joy, daughters of Stephen and Debby Joy.

The United Choir School is a private, non-sectarian educational organization that offers musical training and performance opportunities to over 500 talented young musicians throughout Connecticut, organized into 16 choral ensembles. The United Girls' Choir, founded in 2000, is the School's largest division, and is the fastest-growing youth choral group in the region. The Elm City Girls' Choir, established in 1993, is the School's premier performance ensemble. It has received

national recognition, and has appeared at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center, Walt Disney World, and on CBS.

The choir previously performed at BEKI in 2004 to a large, delighted audience of adults and children.

Rotation Schedule Available

The "Master Rotation List" for Shabbat & Festival service participation was mailed in late December to participating BEKI households. (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 led 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 weekday services, those who prepare BEKI mailings, the work of the Board and its committees, the work of the Sisterhood and Religious School, the Renovations Committee and Qiddush Committee, and much more.

Leaders of the *shaharit* (morning) service on Shabbat may sometimes be asked to yield leadership of the Torah service (*hotsaat haTorah*) to benei mitzva students. Leadership of this segment of the service is not scheduled separately.



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The BEKI/B'nai Jacob Joint Youth Commission sponsors the 14th Annual

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For more information contact Darryl at (203)387-0304 or kuperst@aol.com

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graders. Remember, you don't need to be watching the big game to treat yourself to a delicious deli dinner!



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Please make sure to send your order forms (available in your BEKI mail or from the BEKI website) and payment to Darryl Rotman Kuperstock, 2 Debby Lane, Woodbridge, CT 06525 by Friday 26 **JANUARY!** Pick up will be at your choice of BEKI or B'nai Jacob from 11:45a - 1:30p. Deli Boxes are produced under the supervision of KINAHARA Kosher (www.kinahara.org).

Join us on Sunday 4 February from 9:30a to noon to help make sandwiches, assemble the boxes, and fill orders! *Everyone welcome - all ages.*

For more information, please contact Darryl at (203)387-0304 or kuperst@aol.com.

January 2007

11 Tevet 5767 - 12 Shevat 5767

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Office Closed 9:00am Shaharit 9:45am Rashi Study Group	2	3 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program	4 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A.	5 4:18pm Candle Lighting	6 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Learner's Minyan Qiddush: Avni-Singer 4:20pm Minha 4:45pm Topics in Tefila 5:20pm Maariv
	11 Tevet	12 Tevet	13 Tevet	14 Tevet	15 Tevet	16 Tevet
7 9:00am Religious School 9:30am MAKOM	8 7:45am Rashi Study Group 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting (off-site)	9	10 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program	11 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A.	12 4:25pm Candle Lighting	13 Darshan: Bill Hallo 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Stanger-Colodny 4:30pm Minha 5:00pm Topics in Tefila 5:30pm Maariv
17 Tevet	18 Tevet	19 Tevet	20 Tevet	21 Tevet	22 Tevet	23 Tevet
14 No Religious School	15 Office Closed/MLK Jr. Day 9:00am Shaharit 9:45am Rashi Study Group	16	17 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program	18 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 6:00pm KINHARA 8:00pm A.A.	19 4:33pm Candle Lighting	20 Rosh Hodesh Darshan: Marc Oppenheimer 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Learner's Minyan Qiddush: Roten 4:35pm Minha 5:05pm Topics in Tefila 5:35pm Maariv
24 Tevet	25 Tevet	26 Tevet	27 Tevet	28 Tevet	29 Tevet	1 Shevat
21 9:00am Religious School 9:30am Brunch Featuring Guest Speakers Paul Bass & Warren Kimbro	22 7:45am Rashi Study Group 7:30pm General Board Meeting	23	24 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program	25 12:30pm Talmud Study Group (off-site) 2:00pm Writing Group 8:00pm A.A.	26 4:42pm Candle Lighting	27 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Stone-McDonald 4:45pm Minha 5:15pm Topics in Tefila 5:45pm Maariv
2 Shevat	3 Shevat	4 Shevat	5 Shevat	6 Shevat	7 Shevat	8 Shevat
28 9:00am Religious School 11:00am Elm City Girls Choir Concert	29 7:45am Rashi Study Group	30	31 8:30am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program			
9 Shevat	10 Shevat	11 Shevat	12 Shevat			

Service Times

Sundays:
9a Shaharit
5:45p Maariv

Mondays
7a Shaharit
5:45p Maariv

Tuesdays:
7a Shaharit
5:45p Maariv

Wednesdays:
7a Shaharit
5:45p Maariv

Thursdays:
8:15a Shaharit
5:45p Maariv

Fridays:
7a Shaharit
6p Maariv

Saturdays:
9:15a Shaharit
See calendar for
Minha-Maariv

Calendar Notes in January

On Monday 15 January 2007, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, morning services are from 9:00a to 9:45a; the Rashi Study Group meets from 9:45a to 10:30a; and the office is closed. Other services are at their usual times.

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Shabbatot

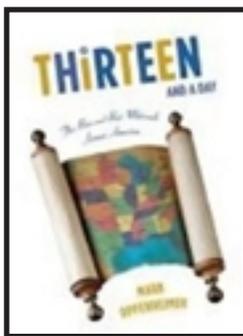
Darshanim in January



William Hallo

William "Bill" Hallo will serve as darshan on Shabbat morning 13 January 2007, parashat Shemot.

Marc Oppenheimer will be our darshan on Shabbat morning 20 January 2007, parashat VeEra.



Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan

The "Shabbat Shalom Learners' Minyan," which meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45a in BEKI's Library Chapel, 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 for the services. Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background.

Shabbat Afternoon Topics in Tefila

What do the prayers in the siddur mean, and are they relevant? Should we say things we don't believe? Is there leeway between standardization and sincerity? What is our responsibility to truthfulness or tradition? Does "authentic" mean historical, or spiritual, or intellectual? Can we change the wording or the melody? What is the psychology of prayer? Where do the prayers come from? Is it all merely lip service?

On Shabbat afternoons throughout the winter, we will explore issues of prayer and the prayerbook. These forty-minute sessions will follow the Mincha afternoon service (which begins 20 minutes before sunset – about the same time as candle-lighting time on the preceding Friday night) and will be followed by the Maariv evening service and Havdala.

Presenters include Steven Fraade, Rabbi Lina Grazier-Zerbarini, Michael Kligfeld, Rabbi Pete Stein, and Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen. The time and topic

will be published in the weekly "BEKI Happenings."

Sundays

MAKOM Beit HaMidrash at BEKI: "Introduction to Talmud" & "Talmud Berakhot, Chapter II" with Moshe Meiri

Beginning & Intermediate Sections

Serious youth are invited to dive into the "sea of Talmud" on Sunday mornings with Moshe Meiri. Two sections will be offered; one for beginning students, and another for continuing students. Students are expected to have studied some Mishna and be able to read Hebrew. An acquaintance with Rashi's commentaries is helpful. The text, the *El-Am* edition, will be supplied. This text is vocalized for easy reading and is accompanied by an English commentary and translation. The classes meet Sunday mornings from about 9:45a to 11:00a and 11:05a to 12:15p. Students wishing to enroll should speak with Arnold Carmel at MAKOM. The classes are open only to students in grades 8-12. This is an honors program class and will be taught in an academic Jewish Studies style. Disciplined attendance is expected. Moshe may be reached at moshe@snet.net

MAKOM Beit HaMidrash at BEKI: "The Genesis Chronicles" with Margolit Kern

Margolit Kern will be teaching *Miqra* (Scripture) for youth at two challenging levels on Sunday mornings.

The classes are part of the MAKOM honors program at BEKI for students in grades 8-12. The classes meet Sunday mornings from about 9:45a to 11:00a and 11:05a to 12:15p. Students wishing to enroll should speak with Arnold Carmel at MAKOM. This is an honors program class and will be taught in an academic Jewish Studies style. Disciplined attendance is expected.

Mondays

Rashi Study Group

Each Monday morning from 7:45a to 8:30a adults meet in the Library Chapel to read Rashi's commentary on the Torah. 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 7:00a *shaharit* morning service.

Wednesdays

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

Thursdays

Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

The "Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group," hosted by Isaiah Cooper, meets weekly on Thursdays during the lunch hour (12:30p to 1:30p) with Rabbi Tilsen at a downtown New Haven professional office for Talmud study. The Group has met weekly since 1999. For some participants, this is their first direct experience with Talmud text. 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. For location or information, contact Isaiah Cooper at 233.4547 or icooper@cooperlaw.net.

Writing Group

The writing group meets on each Thursday in the Chapel Library from 2:00p to 4:00p. Each week a group of interested writers come together to share the short pieces that they have written: memoirs, poetry, children's stories and short stories. The goal of the group is to encourage writing, critique of written pieces, and publishing. Each week the writers come together with a piece of their writing. The writer then has a "Read-Aloud" and the group provides feedback. For more information please contact Ruth Silver at bergida1@yahoo.com or Dr. Lauren Kempton at 389-2108 x13 or lkempton@beki.org.

Thursday 18 January 2007

KINAHARA: Topics in Kitchen Procedures & Supervision



Thursday 18 January 2007 6:00p (immediately following 5:45p to 5:55p Maariv evening service). Presented by KINAHARA: Kashrut Initiative of the New Haven Area Rabbinical Assembly. For people who work in BEKI kitchen (special events, Qiddush Committee, Religious School, USY & Kadima, Sisterhood, mashgihim).

AA Meeting

The *Here We Are* Group of AA meets at BEKI every Thursday night at 8:00p. The weekly 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. It is currently engaged in a 12 & 12 Study – Discussion. This is not a specifically Jewish recovery group, although a large proportion of participants are Jewish. For information on the weekly meeting contact Jay at (203) 387-6019 or sokolow@snet.net

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."

Erev Shira on Shabbat Shira & Tu B'shevat

Join us on Motse'ei Shabbat (Saturday night) 3 February from 7p to 9p at the Minsky-Fenick Residence, 56 McKinley Avenue (RSVP 397-3789 by 30 January). Bring songsheets, musical instruments, and a kosher dessert or drinks to share. This event is supported by the Morris & Sara Oppenheim Fund for Sacred Music at BEKI.

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. Purim is observed on Saturday night 3 March and Sunday 4 March 2007 in New Haven and other cities that were not walled in the thirteenth century BCE.

Friendly Face?

If you might like to serve as a "Greet-er" on a Shabbat or Festival morning, to welcome guests, direct visitors, and assist those with special needs, please contact Ritual Committee Chairperson Steven Fraade at 397-9430 or steven.fraade@yale.edu, or Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 x10 or jjtilsen@beki.org.
-- *Shammai taught: Greet every person with a cheerful face* (Avot 1:15)

Important Tax Information

You can contribute stocks and securities directly to BEKI. For some, significant tax advantages can be realized by contributing appreciated stocks.

IRS regulations normally allow the donor to deduct the appreciated value of the security if it has been held for more than one year.

Taxpayers are reminded that synagogue dues, pledges and contributions are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. For many people it is advantageous to pay dues, pledges and contributions before the end of the tax year (for most people 31 December). Additional tax benefits were provided by Congress for the year 2006 for some taxpayers. Further, unlike other deductions, charitable deductions usually can be enjoyed even by those subject to the Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT). For some people, January presents a new opportunity to contribute in a way that is deductible in the new year. It is also helpful to BEKI to receive your payment at an early date. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

Viruses Available: Pick Up at Synagogue or Acquire by Email

To reduce transmission of illness-causing viruses and bacteria, some people refrain from shaking hands or embracing. Please do not be offended if others refrain from contact greetings on Shabbat or other occasions.

BEKI email addresses, like those of many other fine institutions, have been "spoofed," that is, used as the "sender" address in forged messages containing viruses or spam. The "sender" information can be easily set by any user and there is nothing we can do about it. Some viruses read the addresses in

a computer's "in box" or address book and then send the virus-laden message or spam to every other address, falsifying the addresses of legitimate users. That is why you often get email with spoofed addresses of people or institutions you know. This means a mutual friend or contact may have a virus. Legitimate email from Rabbi Tilsen always includes a subject beginning "BEKI:" or another meaningful subject line. Actual email sent by BEKI is checked by current anti-virus software. "If in doubt, throw it out."

LifeCycle

BEKI Welcomes New Members

Seth & Sharon Feuerstein and Jacob and Joshua

Mazal tov to

- Arthur Levy on his appointment as Medical Director of the Inpatient Oncology Unit of Yale-New Haven Hospital and of the Outpatient Solid Tumor Clinic
- Arthur & Betty Levy on the birth of their granddaughter Ariella to Rachel & Corey Shemtov
- Herbert Etkind on the engagement of his granddaughter Wendy to Jared Segal

Barukh Dayan HaEmet

With Sorrow We Note

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Or Hadash – New Lights

This year, we are undertaking a campaign to promote Conservation and Renewable and Alternative Energy (CARE). As part of this effort, much of the incandescent lighting in our building has been replaced by compact florescent (CFL) and light emitting diode (LED) bulbs. This has included twenty-eight illuminated exit sign bulbs (saving about \$200 per year in electric use); 250 large memorial tablet bulbs; 600 miniature memorial tablet bulbs; the sanctuary menorah; the sukka; and several bulbs in other public spaces such as washrooms.

The illuminated exit signs were changed with the help of parents with children or single adults, who spoke about the religious significance of conservation and their own experiences as the bulbs were changed throughout the building. These people either volunteered to help or were invited “randomly” following another activity such as a class or service. It was a simple activity that parents did with children, an activity that adults or youth could go home and tell their parents, children, and siblings about (“we did something weird today after class”). The memorial tablet bulbs were screwed in by a mixture of adults and children as well. Thirty people were involved in bulb selection or installation.

After considerable consultation with user groups, the lighting system in three entry ways and the parking lot timers were changed. The consultations were necessary to insure that the efficiency measures would not negatively impact users and constituted another opportunity to discuss the impetus and meaning of these changes with them in an informal context. These changes will reduce our electric use by at least \$500 per year.

Our Shabbat custodian worked with the rabbi to identify redundant or unneeded sanctuary lights that can be left off without notice on Shabbat mornings. This includes two rows of six 120 Watt lights that shine on the windows of this room which receives a lot of natural light. The window illumination served no purpose during the day but was done in the past simply because the custodian or volunteer was directed to “turn on all the lights.” Now some switches are marked to be used only at night. Savings: \$60 per year. One member commented, “I turned my porch light off. There is a street light there now anyway so I don’t need it.”

The use of compact florescent lights and LED bulbs has been promoted in Divrei Torah and the various synagogue publications. During Sukkot, three varieties of CFL bulbs were displayed in Moishe’s Place (a.k.a. the Moishe Schnitman Memorial Sukka) and were commented upon and discussed during the Festival and Hol HaMoed services and other programs held there. The theme of conservation fit naturally with the imagery and symbolism of Sukkot. While hundreds of people saw the bulbs, at least 40 were involved in small conversations about them in the sukka.

The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), our local Jewish Community Relations Council, and COEJL, have worked with us as part of their national campaigns to promote conservation through the use of CFLs.

How to choose CFL bulbs for home use

In most cases, using CFL bulbs is as easy as screwing in a light bulb. You don’t have to change the fixture or anything else. Just get bulbs with “standard” base.

- Determine the level of light you want. That can be estimated based on the Wattage of the bulbs you are currently using. For incandescents, 25 W produces about 210 lumens; 40 W produces 460 lumens; 60 W produces 890 lumens; 75 W produces 1180 lumens; 100 W produces 1750 lumens; 150 W produces 2780 lumens.
- Choose a new bulb with a “lumen” output at the level you desire. CFLs usually use about one fourth the energy to produce the same lumen output as incandescents, so a 20 W CFL will produce about as much light as an 80 W

continued on page 22

Or Hadash – New Lights

continued from page 21

incandescent, and may say on the box, “replaces a 75 W bulb.” This is where your electric savings come from.

- Determine the “color temperature” you want. Regular “soft white” or “white” bulbs are about 2750K. Halogen lights are about 3000K. The “cool white” fluorescents sometimes used in kitchens or similar settings are typically 4000K and the “daylight” bulbs are 6000K.

- Note base size and bulb shape. “Regular” bulbs are called “medium” base. You might also be using the smaller candelabrum (C7) base. Bulbs come in several shapes including capsules, globes, floods or reflectors, and torpedoes or candles. Most CFL bulbs are about the same size or smaller than the incandescent bulbs, but in some cases you need to be sure that the new bulb will physically fit in the fixture.

- Check switch. If you are using a dimmer, photocell, timer or three-way switch (on a lamp), you will need to choose bulbs that specify suitability for such use.

- Check location. If you are using a bulb that is outdoors, exposed to the elements, or is in a fully enclosed fixture, you will need to use a bulb that is specifically suitable for that use.

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- Get your bulbs at a local retailer or subsidized bulbs through UI's website www.energyfederation.org/smartliving, or from EFI at www.efi.org. These websites provide much useful information on the bulbs. Note that CFLs are rated to last 8,000 to 10,000 hours, which is about 5 to 20 times as long as incandescents; this is why you save on the cost of the bulbs.

For information on the religious implications of the use of CFLs, see Rabbi Tilsen's "How Many Jewish Leaders Does it Take to Screw-In a Lightbulb?" "Against the Flood," and "Conservation and Alternative and Renewable Energy" available at www.beki.org/tilsen.html and from the BEKI office.