

# BEKI Bulletin

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July-August 2000 Vol. 6 Issue 7-8

ק"ק בית אל-כתר ישראל

Tammuz-Av 5760

## **Tisha BeAv Services at BEKI**

The fast day of *Tisha Be'Av* ("ninth day of the Hebrew month of Av") will be observed on Wednesday night 9 August & Thursday 10 August. Minha afternoon services begin at 8:00p on Wednesday night 9 August, followed by the traditional *Maariv* (evening) service at 8:15p, and the *Shaharit* (morning) service on Thursday from 8:15a to 9:30a. The evening and morning services include the reading of the Biblical Book of *Eikha* (Lamentations). The fast is observed from 7:50p Wednesday night until 8:40p Thursday night. As a sign of mourning, many refrain from wearing leather shoes and ostentatious clothing, and do not enjoy music, intimate physical relations or entertainment. Tisha Be'Av commemorates the destruction of the first two Temples and other tragedies that have taken place in our long and glorious history. The fast is the only full-day fast on the Hebrew calendar besides Yom Kippur.

## **Religious School Registration Open**

Registration is open for BEKI's religious school. All interested new and returning students should have registration material completed by the first week of August. Registration forms will be mailed in July. For more information contact the school at 389.2108 x13 or principal Terri Stern at [bejesteb@earthlink.net](mailto:bejesteb@earthlink.net).

David Goldblum is the School's representative on the BEKI Board of Directors.

## **Paula Hyman Awarded Honorary Degree by JTSA**

Professor Paula E. Hyman, BEKI Director, was awarded an honorary DHL by the Jewish Theological Seminary of America at its 106th commencement exercises on 18 May 2000. The long list of Dr. Hyman's accomplishments, which served as the basis for the award, was prefaced by the following. "Blessed with depth of intelligence, clarity of thought and facility of expression, you are one of the foremost Jewish historians of the modern period." The full text of the award statement can be found at [www.beki.org/hyman.html](http://www.beki.org/hyman.html).

## **Michael Rothman Bar Mitzva**

Michael Rothman, son of Dr. Stephen & Sheryl Rothman, will be called to the Torah and will conduct services as a bar mitzva on Shabbat morning 26 August at BEKI.



*Conservative Jewish man prays  
at the Kotel for the rights of  
Women of the Wall*

**How to Contact the BEKI Bulletin**

Responses to "A Message from Rabbi Tilsen," questions for "Dear Rabbi" and Letters to the Editor can be sent to: Editor, BEKI-Bulletin, 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515 or by email to [jjtilsen@beki.org](mailto:jjtilsen@beki.org).

*Rabbi Tilsen's mail and e-mail are opened directly and exclusively by the Rabbi himself and are as secure and confidential as mail and e-mail can be.*

**Calling BEKI**

To call BEKI, dial (203) 389-2108.

When the automated attendant answers, dial any of the numbers below for the desired extension. You don't have to wait to hear the whole recorded greeting. If you don't have a "touch-tone" phone (i.e. a phone that dials by sending tones), wait to the end of the greeting and you will then be able to leave a message for the Administrator. A shortcut: To skip to the end of a greeting, press asterisk (\*).

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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, 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](mailto:jjtilsen@beki.org)

or see our web page created by Phill Simon:  
[www.beki.org](http://www.beki.org)

For information about advertising, call the synagogue office. Deadline for submission of ads or articles is the 1st of the month preceding publication.

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**BEKI-Bulletin**

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi  
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**Daily Services**

Daily services at BEKI provide an opportunity to learn, pray, reflect, transition and center one's own spiritual life. Services provide a context for fulfilling the mitzva (religious obligation) of daily worship. Services are held every weekday morning and evening. See the calendar for a schedule. During the summer, there will be a special need for more participants on Tuesday mornings (7:00a), Thursday mornings (8:15a) and Sunday nights (5:45p).

**No Parking**

Members and visitors are advised that parking is prohibited at all times on the East side of Harrison Street as indicated by the "No Parking" signs. Parking is usually available across Harrison Street, and ample parking is available in the BEKI lot at the rear of the building. When driving in the BEKI parking lot, please observe the 5 miles-per-hour speed limit, which is enforced by random speed bumps.

## A Message from Rabbi Tilsen: What Shul Do You Belong to?

Reprinted from the BEKI Bulletin July 1997

I looked through my high school yearbook and made a Jew count. (A Jew count is when you look through a list of names and pick out the Jewish ones.) Since I knew personally every one of my Jewish classmates, and the majority of my total 498 classmates, my count was probably accurate to the person.

Of the 39 Jewish kids in my class, myself included, all but one or two belonged to a synagogue. Most belonged to the Temple of Aaron, a Conservative "mega-shul" in St. Paul, Minnesota. A few belonged to Mount Zion, a Reform "mega-shul," also in St. Paul.

In the Midwest, the majority of adults Jews are members of a synagogue. But in Connecticut, only a minority of adults Jews belong to a synagogue. While several explanations have been put forward to explain this difference, I would like to point to one of them.

In some Jewish communities there is an expectation of belonging. Sure, many adults in their college years and first few years thereafter went to shul on their parents' tickets, but even singles under 30 were shul members. Upon meeting another Jew from elsewhere in the Metropolitan area, it was not considered impolite to ask, "What shul do you belong to?"

Whether or not one is "religious" or "observant" in any sense of the word, belonging to a synagogue is an important affirmation of one's Jewish identity, and even more, a concrete act of support for the continuity of Judaism and the fulfillment of our mission. Belonging is something that everyone should do.

Therefore I want to propose that each of us, when we meet other Jews in the community, ask, "What shul do you belong to?" I'm not suggesting that we offer lectures on why they should belong. I'm simply positing that by asking the question we create the idea that there is an expectation for Jews to belong.

This is also an opportunity to invite others to visit BEKI. Fortunately, we in the Greater New Haven area are blessed with a number of fine synagogue communities, so someone can find the place right for them. Even if they are not interested in joining BEKI, they ought to be joining somewhere else. So please ask politely, "What shul do you belong to?"

*Reader responses are welcomed and may be addressed to Bulletin Editor, 85 Harrison St., New Haven CT 06515 or [jjtilsen@beki.org](mailto:jjtilsen@beki.org)*



Rabbi Tilsen



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Continued from page 3

## Renaissance Campaign Reaffirms Commitment of BEKI Members

The 1999-2000 BEKI Renaissance Campaign ended on 1 June \$106,852 in pledges raised. The final total surpassed the campaign's goal of \$93,000 by over 10%. Historically, the campaign shattered all previous records for raising funds for general operations. The total sum raised for the 1998-99 fiscal year was approximately \$50,000, at that time a record.

According to campaign co-chair Stephen Pincus, the Renaissance Campaign was an outstanding success: "The results of the Renaissance Campaign has confirmed the commitment of our members to BEKI. For the first time, the synagogue made a systemic effort to educate its members about the annual challenges facing BEKI. Many members responded in an unprecedented manner when they learned of BEKI's financial situation."

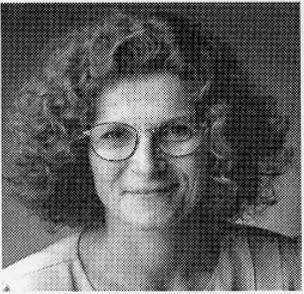
Because basic dues account for only 40% of the operating income (typical for synagogues), a large percentage of BEKI's annual income must come from the generosity of BEKI members and friends

making significant contributions. The Renaissance Campaign accounted for about 25% of BEKI's annual budget. This year, over 35 members (singles and families) made pledges of \$1,000 or more, nearly triple the number in previous years. Dozens of members in all categories of giving doubled or tripled their previous gifts.

While it appears that this year's Renaissance Campaign appears to have ensured that BEKI balances its budget for the fourth straight year, BEKI faces significant short-term and long-term financial challenges. Most notably, the synagogue's heating and air conditioning systems are in desperate need of replacement. The projected cost of this project is over \$200,000. BEKI does not currently have a capital fund reserved for such projects.

If you would like to join the Renaissance Campaign Committee and help ensure BEKI's viability, please contact Stephen Pincus at 397-8816.





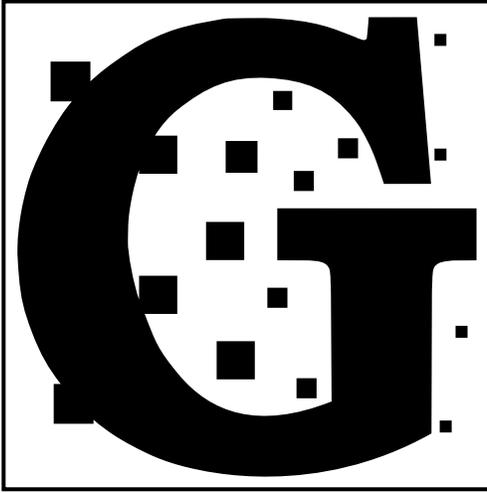
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**With sorrow we note the passing of**

*Lottie Chorney*, mother of Betsy (& Gary) Rosenberg, on Sunday 21 May 2000 - 17 Iyar 5760, in Connecticut

*Helen Liner Richey*, sister of Rena Miller, on Thursday 18 May 2000 - 13 Iyar 5760, in Wisconsin

*Sherman Kasowitz*, father of Bryna (& Seth) Pauker, on Monday 15 May 2000 - 11 Iyar 5760, in Hamden

**Mazal Tov**

Mazal tov to BEKI members **Ken & Linda Buckman** on the birth of their daughter **Rachel Hannah Rose Buckman** on 12 May 2000, and to Rachel's siblings **Lauren and Evan**, to her grandparents BEKI members **Ivan & Rita Sachs**, to her uncle and aunt BEKI members **Mark & Ilene Sachs**, and to the entire Buckman and Sachs family. The Buckmans can be reached at [kjbuckman@worldnet.att.net](mailto:kjbuckman@worldnet.att.net).

Mazal tov to BEKI family **Jonathan & Yoko Silk** on the birth of their son **Oliver Solomon Ryujin Silk** on Wednesday 17 May 2000 - 12 Iyar 5760, and on his being entered into the covenant of through brit mila. Mazal tov also to Oliver's brother **Benjamin Silk**, and to the entire family.

Mazal tov to **Sarah Shoshana Serkin** on her graduation from high school, and to her parents BEKI member **Tamar Edelkind** and BEKI member **Stuart Serkin**.

Mazal tov to **Ariel Serkin** on graduating from Brandeis University, and to her parents BEKI member **Tamar Edelkind** and BEKI member **Stuart Serkin**.

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Announces the establishment of her practice in child, adolescent, and adult psychotherapy.

Mazal tov to **Jennifer Goldfarb**, niece of BEKI member **Hyla Greenberg**, on her qiddushin (Jewish marriage) to **Solomon Matisoff**, on Sunday 28 May 2000 - 23 Iyar 5760, at BEKI. Rabbi Tilsen served as the *mesader qidushin* (officiant).

Mazal tov to **Nicole Kolodny**, daughter of BEKI members **Haim & Yvonne Kolodny**, on her *qiddushin* (Jewish marriage) to **Eran Feit**, on Sunday 11 June 2000 - 8 Sivan 5760. Rabbi Tilsen served as the *mesader qidushin* (officiant).

Mazal tov to **Dan Berns**, grandson of BEKI member **Herbert Etkind**, on his graduation from university.

Mazal tov to **Mimi & Efram Glenn** on the marriage of their son **Jay Glenn** to **Lynne Tobins**

Mazal tov to **Joshua Prober**, son of **Dan & Sharon Prober**, on receiving the Eagle Scout Award

Mazal tov to **Rafi Prober**, son of **Dan & Sharon Prober**, on graduating Magna Cum Laude from the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service Rafi plans to attend Georgetown University Law School in the fall

May these be signs of blessing for them, for us, for the Jewish People and for all humanity.

**BEKI Welcomes New Members**

Seth & Bryna Pauker, Max & Laina

*A total of forty-four people joined BEKI as new members since last July — plus those who were born into BEKI families.*



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Your Wedding Day. . .



Photography by Bob

387-2393



## Master Rotation Schedule

The "Master Rotation List" for Shabbat & Festival service participation was mailed in June to all households on the BEKI membership list. (Additional copies are available from the BEKI office at 389-2108, on the counter by the coatroom, or at [www.beki.org/rotate.html](http://www.beki.org/rotate.html)). The list is the compilation of parts to be lead by those who volunteered for the services listed. If you would like to lead a children's or adult service, or learn to do so, contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108 ext. 10 ([jjtilsen@aol.com](mailto:jjtilsen@aol.com)).

The "Master Rotation List" offers only a partial picture of the volunteerism taking place at BEKI. Not listed there are the two-dozen 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.

The list may be of interest to those who are not

service leaders. Shabbat service leaders are chosen in part to present a coherent style of service leadership. For example, some leaders have a "classical cantorial" style, while others encourage the congregation to "sing along" to prayers set to contemporary melodies. Leaders with similar worship styles have been assigned to the same days when possible. That way, those who wish to enjoy that particular style can make a point to attend. (Those who must switch their parts — especially for Pesuqei DeZimra, Shaharit and Musaf — are encouraged to find a substitute with a similar "style" whenever possible to facilitate this system.)

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."

## Information on the Counter

Literature may be placed on the counter by the coatroom and on the Community Bulletin Board by permission only. To request permission for placement on this counter or on the Community Bulletin Board, please contact Synagogue Administrator Mary Ellen Mack at 389-2108 ext. 14 ([beki@snet.net](mailto:beki@snet.net)). After office hours, you may leave

one copy of your submission, with your phone number, under Mary Ellen's door, or you may fax it to Mary Ellen at (203) 389-5899 (24-hours).

The counter by the coatroom is reserved for BEKI program and activities. We receive frequent requests to promote activities of the Jewish Community Center, Jewish Federation, Jewish Foundation, Jewish Home, Jewish Family Service, Ezra Academy, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism, the Jewish Theological Seminary, and the Schechter Institute for Jewish Studies, along with a host of worthy and important communal agencies and institutions. It would not be possible to place them all the counter by the coatroom. Posters and flyers for these institutions are found on the Community Bulletin Board.

Sometimes flyers and posters that are inappropriate for display at BEKI have been found placed without permission. Any flyers and posters placed without permission are immediately discarded. Your cooperation in maintaining a fair and respectful policy is appreciated.

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933-2886	Thurs.	8:00-3:00
	Sat.	

## AA Open Meeting at BEKI marks third anniversary

A weekly 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. For information on the weekly meeting call Jay at (203) 387-6019 or email Jay at jay@jacswweb.org.

## Buying Books on the Web?

Those buying books over the internet can find a registered referral link on BEKI's website to Amazon.com. If you are ordering books through Amazon.com, and you get there through our website, a 5% referral fee will go to BEKI. There is no cost to the book purchaser. The link is at BEKI's Website [www.beki.org/linksofinterest.html](http://www.beki.org/linksofinterest.html) at the bottom of the page — you'll see the Amazon.com logo.

## Rosenkrantz Library News

Jewish law and religious sentiment directs that worn *siddurim* (prayerbooks), *Humashim* (Hebrew Bibles), old mezuzah scrolls, old tefillin, and other sacred writings that may contain the sacred four-letter name of the Almighty be disposed of in a respectful manner when they are no longer useful. One way of traditional disposal is burial. Those who have *shemot* (articles with the Holy Name on them) in need of disposal may leave them in the marked receptacle in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Library. The receptacle is in or near the right-hand side cabinet or lowest shelf in that corner.

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