

A New Haven Tradition since 1892

BEKI bulletin

Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel

Tevet-Shevat-Adar 5780

Vol. 26 Issues 1 & 2

BEKI Art Gallery: Page 7

ABRAHAM'S TENT

יְכִי-יָמוּךְ אָחִיךָ, וּמָטָה יָדוֹ עִמָּךְ--וְהִחַזְקֵתָּ בּוֹ, גֵר וְתוֹשֵׁב יְחִי עִמָּךְ

If your brother becomes poor and cannot maintain himself with you, you shall support him as though he was a stranger and a sojourner, and he shall live with you. – Leviticus 25:35

Abraham's Tent is a community-based program with the Columbus House shelter which, through the generosity of local religious congregations and organizations, provides shelter and case management for 12 adult men for about 15 weeks from the end of December through March in Greater New Haven. On a rotating basis, volunteers from each host site provide shelter, meals, and fellowship from early evening through breakfast each day for one week. The program is named to remind us of Abraham's hospitality to strangers in the book of Genesis.

BEKI has participated in this outstanding initiative since the winter of 2011-12, working closely each year with our partners (and after all these years – our friends) at the Church of the Holy Spirit (COHS) in West Haven. BEKI has been the primary host site for this partnership since 2015, and we look forward to continuing to work together in this wonderful program.

**BEKI will host Abraham's Tent
February 10 through February 17, 2020**

The Abraham's Tent participants must apply before the winter to participate. Once chosen and the program begins, the men arrive in the late afternoon daily to Columbus House, are

interviewed to make sure they are in suitable condition to participate that day, shower, collect or store their belongings and bedding, and travel together by van to that week's host location, arriving by about 6pm with several members of the Columbus House staff. After settling in, participants and volunteers dine and spend the evening together, and the staff leaves for the night. The men will spend a comfortable, warm and safe overnight at BEKI, with several BEKI or COHS volunteers on-site. In the early morning, breakfast is served for all, and the van will transport the participants to Columbus House to continue

their daily activities. They will return each night of that week to BEKI. All case management is done by professionals from Columbus House.

Most host organizations prepare meals through pot-luck



Darryl Kuperstock and Cynthia Rubin prepare dessert for BEKI's guests.

What will your Jewish Legacy be?



CREATE A
JEWISH LEGACY
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Create your legacy for Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel



For more information about Create A Jewish Legacy, contact Lisa Stanger,
(203) 387-2424 x382, lstanger@jewishnewhaven.org,
www.newhavenjewishfoundation.org | www.jewishlegacynewhaven.org

BEKI Bulletin

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

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

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: 203.389.2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: jjtilsen@beki.org
- Visit our web page: www.beki.org

For advertising information, call the synagogue office.

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

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi

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Abraham's Tent

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participation of their members. Because of BEKI's kosher standards, all meals will be prepared either in the BEKI kitchen or through an approved kosher caterer.

Over the last 11 years, most of the men who participated in this program have moved to transitional or permanent housing. Each works with a case manager to figure out his best next step. There are times when BEKI members have offered additional support to some of the men as they settle into their new situations, providing employment opportunities, furniture, food and friendship.

The BEKI Tikun Olam Committee is proud once again to coordinate BEKI's effort in this worthwhile project.

Volunteer Now

Sign up online at tinyurl.com/ATatBEKI2020 as soon as possible. Your help is needed in all of the following ways:

- Volunteer to help **shop** before and during the hosting week



Ivan Alvarez works the grill.

- Volunteer to help **cook** dinners and/or breakfasts before or during the hosting week
- Volunteer to help **serve** dinners and/or breakfasts
- Volunteer to **dine** with our guests one or more nights
- Volunteer to **lead an activity** or presentation for our guests
- **Sponsor** dinner or breakfast for one or more nights
- Sign up as an **overnight volunteer** for one or more nights
- Help with **logistics, equipment and set-up** (moving around furniture,

TVs, provide power strips, computers, etc.)

- **Donate** funds to help defray additional costs
- We'll be running a **One Day Toiletries Drive** on Sunday, February 9th. Please bring in what you can and leave in the bins provided in the BEKI lobby.

For more information about this and other Tikun Olam (Social Action/Justice) programs at BEKI, please contact co-chairs Darryl Kuperstock (kuperst@gmail.com 203-215-8555) or Steve Werlin (shwerlin@gmail.com 617-721-8213).



Set-up and cooking for Abraham's Tent, a project to support people experiencing homelessness, a Columbus House effort in which BEKI partners with the Church of the Holy Spirit (West Haven) and other local synagogues and churches.

BE HAPPY IT'S ADAR

משנכנס אדר מרבים בשמחה

Mishenikhnas Adar marbim besimha – When Adar inaugurates, joy accumulates. – Talmud Eruvin 29a

Mishloah Manot – Purim Baskets

See the [online form](#) (beki.org under “Resources/Forms”) or contact the office at 203-389-2108 x 114 or office@beki.org if you need a form to order Purim Baskets. Please distribute mishloah manot on Purim evening and day.

Shabbat Zakhor

The “Sabbath of Remember!” occurs immediately before Purim, Shabbat 7 March 2020. This Sabbath is marked by reading the Biblical passage reminding us to remember and never forget the cruelty of Amalek. The reading of this passage is in fulfillment of the mitzva which it references,

and hearing this reading is considered a mitzva unto itself. For that reason, children’s programs may be timed to let adults and children hear this required reading. Like Taanit Esther, Shabbat Zakhor expresses the serious side of Purim.

Fast of Esther

The holiday of Purim commemorates the failure of a genocidal plot against the Jews in the Persian Kingdom over twenty centuries ago. The dramatic (and some would say comic) story is told in the Biblical Book of Esther, which is read on the night and morning of the holiday.

Taanit Esther (The Fast of Esther) is observed on Monday 9 March 2020, the day immediately before Purim, which begins that night. While on Purim we joyously celebrate the failure of the plot and mock the racism of its hatches, on the Fast of Esther we fast and pray that we will bring the world to an era that does not know the threat of genocide. This year, the Fast of Esther begins at dawn

(5:51a Eastern Daylight Time) on Monday 9 March 2020.

The Monday *shaharit* morning service is from 7a – 7:50a and includes “Avinu Malkenu -- Our Father, Our King,” as on Yom Kippur. No food or drink is consumed. The Fast of Esther is a minor observance, and therefore those with any significant medical contraindication should not undertake the fast. This year, we will hold a *minha* afternoon service at 5:45p. The fast ends at 7:23p EDT, or when the person observing the fast eats or drinks, whichever comes first.

See Rabbi Tilsen’s essay, [The Problem of Purim](#).

Megilla Readings

Most of the Jewish world will observe Purim on Monday night 9 March and the following day, Tuesday 10 March 2020.

The Monday afternoon service is from 5:45p to 6:25p.

The Megilla (Scroll of Esther) is read during the evening services (6:30p to 7:50p) on Monday night 9 March, and then again during the Tuesday morning service, which begins at 7:00a (ending 8:50a) on 10 March. The reading is from the Megilla scroll produced according to ancient custom, which, like a Torah scroll, is hand-written on parchment by a trained *sofer*. Children are welcome to dress as children in pajamas ready for bed, asleep in sleeping bags, napping in knapsacks, or rocking in rucksacks.

The Whole Megilla

The ruler of the most powerful country on the globe has trouble with the women in his life – and with every woman in the country. His chief advisor has a problem with Jews – especially a refugee journalist. What could go wrong? Hear this implausible fantasy story from long ago retold in its original form by skilled performers (with signing for the musically impaired), see the all-new executive summary projected on two screens. Come in costume or pajamas, bring a grogger or use ours, enjoy light fare before and Sisterhood-provided refreshments after the service. How far does this go? ‘Ad de-lo Yoda’ – until you can’t tell the difference between the heroes and the villains, at which point you are qualified to vote. Monday night 9 March 6:30p–7:50p in the sanctuary.

Hearing the reading of the *megilla* (or reading it oneself) in the evening and morning is a Biblical commandment (*mitzva*). Other Purim *mitzvot* (religious imperatives) include sending food gifts to a neighbor (*mishloah manot*), alms for the poor (*matanot le-eyyonim*) and a feast on Purim day (*mishte* or *seuda*). Children are reminded to keep their adults from talking or making too much ruckus during

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Purim

Continued from Page 4

the actual Megilla reading at BEKI. If the congregation makes too much noise during the reading, we will have to start over to insure that everyone hears each word.

Groggers (noisemakers) will be available so that no one will have to hear the name of the Purim story's villain. The use of internal combustion engines, explosives or blackboards as noisemakers is no longer permitted at BEKI. Please keep hands and feet within the sanctuary until the service comes to a complete stop.

Please do not bring assault rifles, firearms, explosive devices or weapons of any sort, or any toy that *realistically* resembles any form of weapon (these will be confiscated at the door – we mean it). Absolutely no weapons of mass destruction are permitted in the sanctuary or lobby during the service.

Enhanced security procedures will be in place. Members and guests may be wanded at the entryway, by Tinkerbelle or Hermiones. Shushers have been trained to tape shut mouths of those violating the gag rules or otherwise talking in the sanctuary during the evening service or Megilla reading.

During the morning reading, when some participants may be *groggier* than usual due to late drinking or the early hour, groggers are limited to 4 decibels (equivalent to the sound of a marshmallow dropped on a pillow from 18 centimeters).

Following the evening and morning services, help is

requested in collecting and delivering the *mishloah manot* (Purim Baskets) to neighboring households. Delivering just one can be a big help and a great joy.

BEKI Purim Seuda (Festive Meal)

A [Purim Seuda](#) (Feast) will be held at BEKI on Tuesday 10 March from 5p–7p; payment and reservation are required. The [information form](#) is at beki.org under “Resources/Forms” or contact Peggy at 203-389-2108 x 114 or office@beki.org.

Shushan Purim

Persons who live in ancient cities that were walled in the 13th century BCE (such as Jerusalem and Mundigak, Afghanistan) will celebrate Purim a day later than the rest of the Jewish world. The observance of Shushan Purim is Tuesday night 10 March and Wednesday 11 March 2020. At BEKI this day will be marked liturgically by the omission of the recitation of the *tahanun* prayer. ✡

משתה גדול

The Big Gulp Purim Seuda (Feast & Party)

- **Tuesday 10 March 2020, 5p-7p Social Hall**
 - Light Dairy dinner will be served
 - \$10 per person or \$18 per household in Advance by 5 March
 - \$18 per person or \$36 per household at door



Monsters have invaded BEKI's sanctuary in Purims past.

USY and Kadima News

Our youth groups had a terrific fall programming schedule, starting with a joint USY and Kadima opening event. Other Kadima events included an afternoon of bowling and a movie night complete with Havdallah, playing Apples to Apples: Jewish edition, a pasta supper, and watching the original “Charlotte’s Web” film. Latke-making closed out 2019, and in 2020, we plan a series of community-based events including clothing drives and helping with Abraham’s Tent. Kadima is for grades 5-8, but by spring, rising 5th graders are eligible.

USY fall events included the annual Thanksgiving pie-baking, which we combined with an overnight. Everyone enjoyed helping with this traditional tzedakah fundraiser. Our USY bakers made well over 200 pies, nearly a quarter of which were donated. Spring plans include community events, discussions, and events for Purim and Passover.

To suggest a future event, please contact youth advisor Seth Zabin, sethbekiadvisor@gmail.com.

Regional and International USY Events

BY NOAM BENSON-TILSEN

At Spring Convention last May, we had elections for the Regional Executive Board for USY (United Synagogue Youth), along with learning sessions and other activities.

The 2018-19 programming year ended with a day at the Seekonk Grand Prix. USYers came from all over New England for an afternoon of bumper cars, go-karts, arcade games, mini-golf, and more. August brought Encampment with the Eastern Canada Region and Tzafon (upstate New York). Notable events included a day at Six Flags, the Maccabiah color war, the Color Run, a dance, and Shabbat. Many new members attended these events, the vast majority without leadership positions.

Next came the Fall Boards Weekend in Newark, NJ. This was the annual meeting of all the Regional Executive Boards, as well the International General and Executive Boards. Various speakers came and some business meetings were held. In November, the BEKI Chapter Board delegation went to Leadership Convention at Camp Ramah, during which we participated in various workshops and chapter-to-chapter discussions, as well as a Saturday night of bowling and dodgeball. Our regional leaders of the new HaNer Region – as well as many first-timers – discussed ways to improve our local chapters.

International Convention is December 22-26 in southern California; hundreds of USYers and USCJ staff will attend a week of tefillah, study sessions, and sightseeing in the Los Angeles area.



Kadima Bowling event



JOIN US!

12th Annual BEKI - Ezra Academy Community Shabbat Dinner

Friday eve January 10, 2020
(around 7pm)

immediately following
6:00 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat/Ma'ariv services

85 Harrison Street, New Haven
Register by January 7

\$18 per adult; \$10 per child aged 4-12; \$50 maximum per family.

Please consider making a donation to host a teacher,
prospective family, or other guest.

Names: _____

Please reserve places for ____ Adults ____ Children

#chicken meals: _____

#parve (non-dairy, vegetarian) meals: _____

dietary restrictions: _____

We are unable to attend but would like to make a contribution: _____

Send your check (payable to Ezra Academy) to Ezra Academy, 75 Rimmon Rd,
Woodbridge, CT 06525

Questions? Contact Rachel at 203-887-1182 or wisemangerber@gmail.com.

PHOTOGRAPHS OF JEWISH CALCUTTA

The BEKI Art Gallery is pleased to present *Sanjeet Chowdhury, Photographs of Jewish Calcutta*, during the months of January and February.

Although only about twenty Jews currently reside in Kolkata (as the city is now known), the city retains the traces of the Jewish visual culture that informed the visual culture of its urban spaces. Many monuments, including a cemetery in North Kolkata where gravestones are occasionally written in three languages, remain and are cared for by non-Jewish Bengalis, many of them Muslims. Nahoum's, the Jewish bakery, remains one of the city's favorites.

Sanjeet Chowdhury's beautiful photographs illustrate the diversity, poignancy and history of Jewish culture in Calcutta. An independent photographer, filmmaker, and curator committed to representing the everyday, Chowdhury is based in Kolkata. His photographic works have been exhibited in London, New York, Basel, and other cities worldwide. His video arts and films have been screened at international festivals in Washington, Berlin, Tel Aviv and Stockholm. He is currently involved in several book projects, among them an anthology of the culinary history of Bengal.

While Chowdhury's photos will be in the upper gallery during this period, the newly renovated lower lobby gallery will feature selected artwork from the BEKI collection, including some paintings and prints from Congregation Sinai.



Torah Scrolls, Kolkata



Jewish Grave,
North Kolkata

Shabbatot (Saturdays)

דַּרְשָׁנִים

Darshanim

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 Darshanim in the coming weeks:

Isaiah Cooper, 4 January 2020, *parashat VaYigash*

Maytal Saltiel, 11 January 2020, *parashat VaYehi*

Nanette Stahl, 18 January 2020, *parashat Shemot*

Steve Werlin, 25 January 2020, *parashat VaEra*

Corinne Blackmer, 1 February 2020, *parashat Bo*

Shula Chernoff, 8 February 2020, *Shabbat Shira, parashat BeShaleh*

Becky May, 15 February 2020, *parashat Yitro*

Josh Zelinsky, 22 February 2020, *parashat Mishpatim*

Rabbi Joshua Ratner, 29 February 2020, *parashat Terumah*

Shabbat Shalom Torah Study

The *Shabbat Shalom Torah Study* meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45a in the office and is an ideal setting for veteran and novice shul-goers alike to explore the scriptural readings and liturgy of the day in a supportive setting. Expertly led by Steven Fraade, with Rabbi Alan Lovins, Nadav Sela, Isaiah Cooper 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 ad-



Isaiah Cooper



Maytal Saltiel



Nanette Stahl



Steve Werlin



Corinne Blackmer

vantage 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 youths along with adults.

Mondays

The Rashi Study Group

The group is on winter break, and resumes Monday 2 March 2020.

Wednesdays

Hebrew Word of the Week

The class is on winter break and resumes 4 March 2020.

The Rabbis' Study Group

The group is on winter break and resumes in March.

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. Shahrut service is from 8:15a to 9:15a on Thursdays; on other weekdays, the service begins at 7:00a.

The Berakhot Talmud Study Group

The group is on winter break and resumes on 8 March 2020.



Shula Chernoff



Becky May



Josh Zelinsky



Joshua Ratner



Steven Fraade

המקום ינחם

HaMaqom Yinahem

With sorrow we note the passing of

Marianne Schoeffel Nelson,
mother of Sarah Berry (& Roger Colten)

Herbert Winer, husband of Hannah Winer

May the Almighty comfort those who mourn

Welcome New Members

Lauren & Phillip Brown

Upcoming Benei Mitzva

Dylan Sachs, son of Robert & Betsy Sachs, grandson of Rita Sachs, afternoon of 7 March 2020, *parashat Ki Tisa*

Teya Klein-Berger and Hannah Klein-Berger, children of James Berger & Jennifer Klein, 13-14 March 2020, *parashat Ki Tisa*



Hannah Klein-Berger



Teya Klein-Berger

Mazal Tov to

Rabbi Carl & Sharon Astor on the birth of a grandchild, and to parents Avi and Lucija, and on his being entered into the covenant through brit mila, in November in Spain.

James Stacey and Libby Abraham & family on the birth of baby boy Aaron Edwards Stacey to their son & brother Timothy E. Stacey & Kathryn A. Edwards.

Herb Winer

Herbert Isaac Winer, son of the late Herman Leo Winer and Hajnalka Langer Winer, born in New York City Sept. 19, 1921, died in New Haven, CT on Dec. 11, 2019 at the age of 98. Brother of the late Joseph, the late Fruma (late Albert Ginsburgh), the late David (Janet), and the late Louis. Widower of the late Harriet Herzog Winer, and survived by their children, Lise, Daniel and Laura Winer, grandson Joshua Vazquez-Winer, and great-granddaughter Jasmine Vazquez. Survived by his loving wife Hannah Bress Breitman Winer and step-son David Breitman (Kathryn Stuart).



Herbert Winer was born in Manhattan, and grew up in Mount Vernon and Spring Valley, N.Y. A member of the Yale Class of '42, he served in the U.S. Army in the Pacific

during World War II. He returned to Yale, completed a PhD in Forestry, and taught at the Forestry School. He was a member of Congregation Beth El until moving to Montreal in 1964, where he worked in pulp and paper research. In 1979 he became head of woodlands management at Mead in Dayton, Ohio. On retirement, he returned to New Haven and BEKI, and to the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies.

A devoted son and brother, husband and father, grandfather and great-grandfather, Herbert Winer was a mensch, a man of great integrity and high standards, a generous and compassionate person, curious and knowledgeable, and a great wit. He will be sorely missed by extended family, colleagues, friends, and all those whose lives he touched.

Very special thanks to Jane Pettway, and the staff at Coachman Residence for their compassionate care.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Herb Winer was a hero of The Milgram Experiment, one of the world's most famous psychology experiments. In Yale psychology professor Stanley Milgram's 1961 experiment, researchers instructed participants to deliver stronger and stronger electrical shocks to a "victim," in actuality an actor, in an attempt to test participants' obedience to authority. Psychologists expected few participants to continue following orders after the "screams" of the "victim" heightened. But over the course of the experiment, most of the participants continued to shock the "victim" to the maximum voltage.

Former School of Forestry professor Herb Winer, who was a participant in Milgram's experiment, was in the minority that refused to deliver what it believed to be high-voltage shocks. "I refused, which was an extremely stressful decision because I was a reasonably obedient student, a reasonably obedient child and a very obedient member of the U.S. Army in World War II..." Winer said.

Rabbi's Tzedaka Fund

- Lou & Lisa Petrillo marking the *yahrzeit* of Dr. Melvin Stanger
- (The rest to be published in the March bulletin, when Rabbi Tilsen is back from sabbatical)

Qiddush Sponsors (minimum \$320)

- Anonymous
- Harold Birn, Lauren Brown, Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes, Mimi Glenn, Karel Koenig, Donna Levine, May family, Angela Oren, Jessey Palumbo, Dan & Sharon Prober, Tamara Schecter, Amy Schwartz, Weiner & Rastelly family, Wyner family, Rhoda Zahler Samuel honoring BEKI Veterans and their families
- BEKI in honor of Corey Stone & Sue McDonald
- Steven Fraade & Ellen Cohen

Chai Fund (minimum \$18) to support synagogue operations

- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Helen Rosenberg & Keith Richter
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To Marsha Beller and family in honor of the birth of her grandchild by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- To Marsha Beller and family in honor of the birth of her grandchild by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To Helen Rosenberg and family with sympathy on the passing of Barbara Wamback by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To Gloria Cohen in honor of the birth of her great-great grandchild by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Gloria Cohen
- To Marsha Beller and family in honor of the birth of her grandchild by Ellen Cohen & Steve Fraade

- To Marsha Beller and family in honor of the birth of her grandchild by Gloria Cohen
- To Helen Rosenberg and family with sympathy on the passing of Barbara Wamback by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Shoshana Lash with sympathy on the passing of Jane Manton Marshall by Gloria Cohen
- To Malachi Light in honor of his Bar Mitzva by Gloria Cohen
- To Jacob Marx Schonberger in honor of his Bar Mitzva by Gloria Cohen
- To Marsha Beller and family in honor of the birth of her grandchild by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Diane Firestone
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Madeleine Kleinman
- To Art & Susan Kabakoff in honor of their 50th anniversary by Sandy Naclerio
- To Art & Susan Kabakoff in honor of their 50th anniversary by Paul Kasden
- To Art Kabakoff with wishes for a speedy recovery by Paul Kasden
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Vanessa Avery
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Carl Goldfield
- To Rayna & David Belowsky in their honor by Steven Belowsky

Synagogue Fund (minimum \$10) to support synagogue operations

- To Helen Rosenberg and family

- with sympathy on the passing of Barbara Wamback by Diane & Dan Krevolin
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their first granddaughter by Diane & Dan Krevolin
- To Bruce Small in honor of the birth of his first grandchild by Diane & Dan Krevolin
- To Marsha Beller and family in honor of the birth of her grandchild by Diane & Dan Krevolin
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Bill Shragis
- To David & Darryl Kuperstock in honor of the birth of their granddaughter by Susan & Alan Dardik

BEKI Religious School

- To Sarah Berry and family with sympathy on the passing of Marianne Schoeffel Nelson by Jay Sokolow & Ina Silverman

Harold & Arthur Ratner Memorial Fund

- In memory of their mother Miriam Lubov Kahn by Richard & Michael Kahn

Frankel-Mattler Memorial Fund

- To Shirley Mattler in honor of her 100th birthday by Gloria E. Frankel
- To Shirley Mattler in honor of her 100th birthday by Julie Abrams

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

- In memory of his wife Ellen Slopak Schwartz and her parents Gertrude & Eli Slopak by David Schwartz
- In memory of Anna Altman by Darcy McGraw & Bruce Altman
- In memory of Peter Altman by Bruce Altman & Darcy McGraw
- In memory of Renee Eckstein by William Eckstein
- In memory of Elsie Miller by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- In memory of her son Bruce Newman by Rheba Newman
- In memory of Arlene Chirgwin by Roberta Atteson
- In memory of Susan Gell by John &

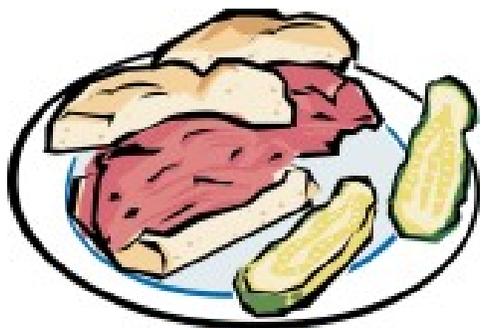
Marcia Gell

- In memory of her dear father Irving Greenberg by Toby & Alan Ignal
- In memory of her grandfather Morris Gray by Toby & Alan Ignal
- In memory of her mother Esther Melnick by Margie & Jay Hirshfield
- In memory of Jacob Sokoloff by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of Herman Goldstein by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of Edith Sokoloff Goldstein by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of Sarah Schwartz by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of Herman Pintell by Janet Chernikoff
- In memory of Evelyn Cohen by Cliff & Donna Cohen
- In memory of Samuel Flamer by Mickey & Bud Chorney
- In memory of her beloved father Ben Kugell by Harriet Pearlin
- In memory of Dr. Melvin Stanger by Louis Petrillo
- In memory of Samuel Snyder by Robert Snyder & Eileen Schuman
- In memory of Joyce Nepiarsky by Seymour Nepiarsky
- In memory of Sadie Kisner by Annette Kisner
- In memory of his grandmother Sarah Rosenblatt by Dan Jennes
- In memory of his aunt Anna Rosenblatt by Dan Jennes
- In memory of his cousin Joseph Mona by Dan Jennes
- In memory of Morris Chain by Marty & Shirley Shepro
- In memory of her father Lester P. Isenberg by Janis Isenberg
- In memory of her aunt Jean Govrin Alderman by Susan Jacobson
- In memory of her uncle Sol Govrin by Susan Jacobson
- In memory of Cynthia Schneider by Lana & Martin Gad
- In memory of her grandmother Ida Kantrowitz by Sherry Kent
- In memory of Herbie Silver by Ruth Silver
- In memory of Harry Goldberg by Eileen Schuman
- In memory of Pauline Altschuler by Roberta Atteson
- In memory of Mary Epstein by Kranie & Earl Baker
- In memory of Jacob Ripkin by Jeri Ripkin

28th Annual

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Please indicate the NUMBER of boxes you would like of each type:

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___ Tuna Salad ___ Egg Salad (vegetarian) ___ Portobello & Peppers (vegan/served on hard roll)
___ Garden Salad (no bread) - specify 1 only: ___ plain ___ w/turkey ___ w/sliced hard-boiled egg

Total # of Boxes _____ x \$13 = \$ _____

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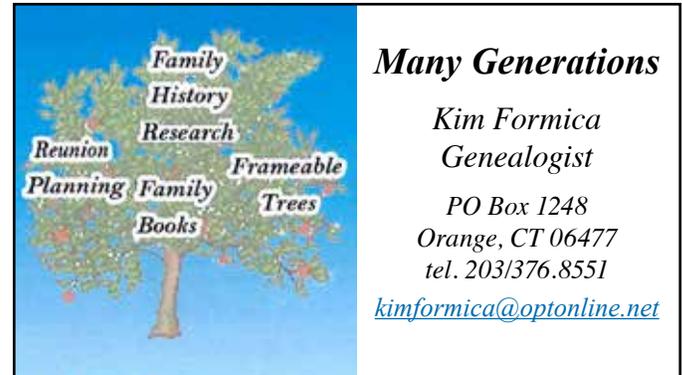
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Rabbi Tilsen is on sabbatical. This essay was written before President Trump's recent executive order concerning Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and discrimination against Jews.

A CERTAIN PEOPLE

The attack on Ukrainian-born US Army Lt. Col. Alexander Vindman's loyalty to the United States seems absurd to most observers, in part simply because most cannot imagine having a deeper commitment to Ukraine than to the United States or to one's own sense of integrity. Often, when given a choice as to their "identity," people choose the "better" one – the one with most benefits, prestige, comfort. The talk of "dual-loyalty" in this case may be most disturbing not because it is likely to be true, but because American Jews have heard that trope before and don't like the sound of it.

American and European Jews are high on the list of citizens whose loyalty can be questioned, in part because many Jews do have a strong loyalty to the Jewish People or to the State of Israel. When I've been told, "If you like Israel so much, why don't you move there!" my first thought is to reply "Maybe I will," which does not truly address the underlying problem with the suggestion.

Jews are essentially and primarily a nation, from ancient times until today. The Wikipedia definition recognizes the complexity of our identity:

Jews or Jewish people are an ethnoreligious group and a nation, originating from the Israelites and Hebrews of historical Israel and Judah. Jewish ethnicity, nationhood, and religion are strongly interrelated, as Judaism is the ethnic religion of the Jewish people, while its observance varies from strict observance to complete nonobservance.

You don't have to read Mordekhai Kaplan's *Judaism as a Civilization* or a classic history such as H.H. Ben-Sasson's *A History of the Jewish People* to come to the same conclusion as historians and other social scientists, civil courts and most unbiased observers, that "peoplehood" is the primary

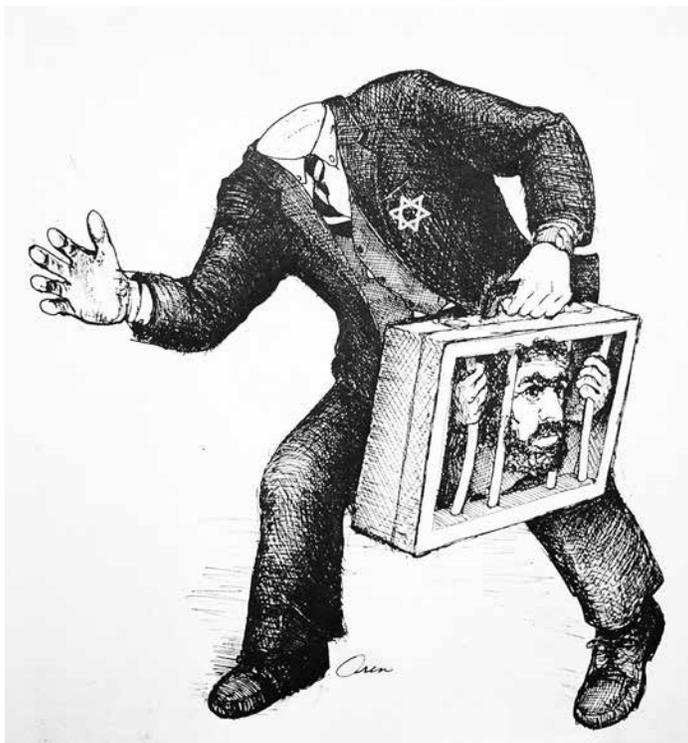
element of "being Jewish." The elements that define a nation – language, locale, law, lore, and more – have been present all along, even as that national religion had evolved.

In ancient times, our ancestors were called Hebrews, Israelites and Jews even while the dominant (though unofficial) religion was idolatrous. In recent centuries, Jews who converted to other religions and their descendants were still treated as "Jews" in many places. Arab lands have Christian Arabs and Muslim Arabs, but not "Jewish Arabs" – just "Jews who speak Arabic." The Preamble to the League of Nations Mandate (1922) states:

Whereas the Principal Allied Powers have also agreed that the Mandatory should be responsible for putting into effect the declaration originally made on November 2nd, 1917, by the Government of His Britannic Majesty, and adopted by the said Powers, in favour of the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people ...

At its inception, the Reform Movement sought to denationalize the Jewish People, removing all elements of peoplehood, and re-forming "Judaism" into nothing more than a religion (See Pittsburgh Platform 1885). While continuing to hold that aspiration, the movement recognized that historically, and presently, the Jews were at the core a people – an inescapable conclusion in the 1930s:

By 1937 the CCAR [Central Conference of American Rabbis] [the Reform Rabbinic association] had reversed its stand on Jewish peoplehood.... This affirmation of Jewish peoplehood was accompanied by a reaffirmation of Reform Judaism's universal message: "We regard it as our historic



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A Certain People

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task to cooperate with all men in the establishment of the kingdom of God, of universal brotherhood, justice, truth and peace on earth. This is our Messianic goal.” (See CCAR “Miami Platform”)

The Soviet Union recognized “Jewish” as a nationality on its identity cards (see *New York Times* 3 May 1970, “On the Jewish Question in the Soviet Union <https://www.nytimes.com/1970/05/03/archives/on-the-jewish-question-in-the-soviet-union-on-the-jewish-question.html>). Moshe Decter (Foreign Affairs, January 1963) (<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/1963-01-01/status-jews-soviet-union>) wrote,

The Soviet Union officially recognizes Jews as a nationality. In the personal identification papers, which all Soviet citizens carry (the internal “passport”), Jews must list their nationality as “Jewish” (Yevrei) just as other nationalities--such as Russians, Ukrainians, Georgians and others--must list theirs. Thus, in the official Soviet census returns of 1959, published in *Pravda* on February 4, 1960, Jews are listed among the official nationalities. In all previous censuses, citizens were required to provide proof, in the form of their internal passport, of their claim to belong to one or another nationality. In 1959, for the first time, they were allowed to volunteer, without proof, the nationality with which they chose to be identified. Despite the possibility thus provided for Jews to “pass,” 2,268,000 people specified their nationality as Jewish (there are reasons to believe that the total number more closely approximates 3,000,000).

A hundred years ago, The United States, in its official documents, labeled the Jewish People a “Race or People.” Most recently (2019), federal courts determined that laws prohibiting “racial discrimination” apply to Jews. Other well-know federal cases recognized the Hanuka menorah as a “national symbol” and not essentially religious – consistent with the self-definition of the many utterly non- or anti-religious Jews who proudly display a menorah on Hanuka.

“Judaism” is the national religion of the Jewish People. The Jewish People have an “official religion” but many Jews do not subscribe to that religion. This explains the existence of “atheist” and “non-observant” Jews who nonetheless in-

sist on their Jewish identity.

Other nations have national religions. Denmark, Armenia, Monaco, Costa Rica, South Korea, Iraq, Iran, Jordan and dozens of other countries have official state (national) religions. (See chart at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_religion). Unlike dozens of other countries, Israel, which defines itself as “the Nation-State of the Jewish People,” (Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People) does not have an official state religion. The State of Israel funds common law, Sharia (Sunni and Shiite) and Jewish religious courts.

For complex historical reasons, the State of Israel has been a laggard among decolonizing countries restoring their own legal traditions. For the most part, Ottoman and British common law still form the backbone of Israel’s legal system. The contested legal status of the unincorporated territories (West Bank) is one factor; the pro-Western bias of the State’s founders is another.

“Jewish law,” as the law of the Jewish People, distinguishes between “religious” and “secular” areas of law. The distinction between laws “concerning the relationship between one person and another” and those “concerning the relationship between an individual and God” goes back to ancient times. The sixteenth-century law code *Shulhan Arukh*, the widely-

cited and universally recognized reference work for contemporary Jewish law, divides Jewish Law into four sections. Two of those sections are devoted to what in modern terms is called “Religious Law,” and two sections, *Even ha-Ezer* and *Hoshen Mishpat*, are devoted to “Secular Law.”

This is explained by Former Israeli Supreme Court Chief Justice Professor Menachem Elon (*Jewish Law: History, Sources, Principles. Ha-Mishpat Ha-Ivri*, Vol. 1, Philadelphia and Jerusalem, 1994)

The term *mishpat ivri* [Hebrew law], in its currently accepted meaning, includes only those parts of the Halakhah corresponding to what generally is included in the *corpus juris* of other contemporary legal systems, namely, laws that govern relationships in human society, and not the precepts that deal with the relationship between people and God. An alternative and more specific definition of *mishpat ivri* as currently used is that it includes only those subjects covered in the parts of the *Shulhan Arukh* titled *Even ha-Ezer* and



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A Certain People

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Hoshen Mishpat (plus certain “legal” matters contained in the two other parts of the *Shulhan Arukh*, such as the law of usury in the part titled *Yoreh De`ah*). It does not, however, include the other subjects dealt with in the parts *Orah Hayyim* and *Yoreh De`ah*.

Jewish civil law, for the past two thousand years or so, has developed in a way that is largely independent of the Biblical law. The codes and arguments developed without reference to, and at times in literal opposition to, the Biblical law as the society and the law evolved together. Law was based on logic and precedent, and if an ancient text needed to be consulted or interpreted, it was the Talmud, not the Torah. “Torah law” became either a reference to a historical artifact, or the technical name and source of authority of a contemporary civil and religious legal system. Judges were qualified based on mastery of subject matter, intelligence and integrity, not by religious test or ritual piety (*Shulhan Arukh, Hoshen Mishpat*, section 1).

In comparison, Connecticut civil law claimed to be derived directly and explicitly from “Scripture” as recently as 200 years ago. Connecticut (and Massachusetts) were still executing women for sorcery 1,700 years after the Sanhedrin’s last judicial execution for that or any other offense. Until recently, Connecticut banned interracial marriage, and disallowed divorce, based directly on scriptural interpretations, where such rules have not existed as a matter of social policy in Jewish law in the past 2,000 years.

The fear of being deemed a disloyal citizen of their nation of residence seems to affect Jews’ attitudes profoundly. Ideology – including becoming highly pro-Israel nationalists or downright anti-Zionists – derives in no small part from that inner psychological struggle over identity. Some – Jews and others – have gone so far as to deny the historic identity of Jews as a people, or delegitimize our present identity as

a nation (with or without reference to Israel). As in ancient Persia 2,500 years ago, the notion of Jewish Peoplehood is enormously threatening to some people. My submission is, like it or not, that peoplehood is a reality and should not be denied.

There are people who hold a principled opposition to nationality or nation-states, as there are those who oppose anything called religion. If those principles are applied first and foremost or exclusively to Jews and Judaism, we have a

problem. If they are applied in a principled manner across the board, that is a different matter – and I would just observe that erasing national identities and religions is the aim of every great empire, every colonizer and hegemon.

My answer to a charge of “dual-loyalty” is that it is not really a sensible idea at the outset. My loyalties are multiple: God, parents, children, siblings, community, my employer, the Revolution, the Jewish People, Torah law, the State of Connecticut, USA, Israel, my IRA. These loyalties are often competing, and sometimes “at war,” but I manage. When push comes to

shove, I end up getting shoved. Specifically in the realm of “citizenship,” I am a citizen of Connecticut and of the United States, and their interests often diverge, and I don’t have a consistent or simple system to resolve the conflict, but my dual-loyalty arguably is beneficial to both entities. There are certain ideals, of decency, kindness and fairness, of truth and integrity, that I may honor above politics or expedience, and anyone or anything that desires my loyalty will have to compete for it.

Just letting you know where I stand.

ישנו עם-אֶחָד מְפֹזָר וּמְפֹרָד בֵּין הָעַמִּים בְּכֹל מְדִינֹת מְלֻכּוּתָךְ
וְדַתֵּיהֶם שְׁנוֹת מִכָּל-עַם וְאֶת-דַּתִּי הַמֶּלֶךְ אֵינָם עֹשִׂים....

There is a certain people, scattered and dispersed among the other peoples in all the provinces of your realm, whose laws are different from those of any other people and who do not obey the king’s laws....

– The Villain speaking to King Ahashverosh, Esther 3:8



February 2020

6 Shevat 5780 - 4 Adar 5780

Sunday Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday Saturday

• Mark Your Calendar

- Fast of Tevet 7 January 2020
- Rosh Hodesh Shevat 27 January 2020
- Tu BeShevat 9 February 2020
- Abraham's Tent at BEKI 10-17 February 2020
- Shabbat Sheqalim – Sabbath of Coins 22 February 2020
- Rosh Hodesh Adar 24-26 February 2020
- Shabbat Zakhor – Sabbath of Remembering 7 March 2020
- Adopt DST 8 March 2020

- Ta'anit Esther 9 March 2020
- Purim Night 9 March 2020
- Purim Day 10 March 2020
- Shushan Purim 11 March 2020
- Benot Mitzva: Teya Klein-Berger & Hannah Klein-Berger 13-14 March 2020
- Shabbat Para – Sabbath of the Cow 14 March 2020
- Shabbat HaHodesh – Sabbath of the Moon 21 March 2020
- Rosh Hodesh Nisan 25-26 March 2020

1
 Rabbi Tilsen on
 Sabbatical
 Darshanit: Corinne
 Blackmer
 10:45am Children's
 Programs
 10:45am Shabbat
 Shalom Torah Study
 Qiddush: TBA
 1:00pm Minha

6 Shevat

<p>2 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 9:00am Religious School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">7 Shevat</p>	<p>3 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 10:00am Yoga Hour</p> <p style="text-align: center;">8 Shevat</p>	<p>4 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical</p> <p style="text-align: center;">9 Shevat</p>	<p>5 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program</p> <p style="text-align: center;">10 Shevat</p>	<p>6 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical</p> <p style="text-align: center;">11 Shevat</p>	<p>7 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 4:57pm Candle Lighting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">12 Shevat</p>	<p>8 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical Darshanit: Shula Chernoff 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: TBA 1:00pm Minha</p> <p style="text-align: center;">13 Shevat</p>
<p>9 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 9:00am Religious School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">14 Shevat</p>	<p>10 Tu B'Shevat Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent 10:00am Yoga Hour 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting (off-site)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">15 Shevat</p>	<p>11 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">16 Shevat</p>	<p>12 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program</p> <p style="text-align: center;">17 Shevat</p>	<p>13 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent</p> <p style="text-align: center;">18 Shevat</p>	<p>14 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent 5:06pm Candle Lighting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">19 Shevat</p>	<p>15 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent Darshanit: Becky May 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: TBA 1:00pm Minha</p> <p style="text-align: center;">20 Shevat</p>
<p>16 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:00pm Abraham's Tent 9:00am No Religious School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">21 Shevat</p>	<p>17 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical Office Closed/Presidents' Day 9:00am Shaharit</p> <p style="text-align: center;">22 Shevat</p>	<p>18 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical</p> <p style="text-align: center;">23 Shevat</p>	<p>19 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 4:00pm No Religious School 5:00pm No Benei Mitzva Program</p> <p style="text-align: center;">24 Shevat</p>	<p>20 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical</p> <p style="text-align: center;">25 Shevat</p>	<p>21 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:15pm Candle Lighting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">26 Shevat</p>	<p>22 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical Darshan: Josh Zelinsky 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: TBA 1:00pm Minha</p> <p style="text-align: center;">27 Shevat</p>
<p>23 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 9:00am No Religious School</p> <p style="text-align: center;">28 Shevat</p>	<p>24 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 10:00am Yoga Hour 7:00pm General Board Meeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">29 Shevat</p>	<p>25 Rosh Hodesh I Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 7:00pm Columbus House Dinner Prep</p> <p style="text-align: center;">30 Shevat</p>	<p>26 Rosh Hodesh II Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 4:00pm Religious School 4:45pm Columbus House Dinner (off-site) 5:00pm Benei Mitzva Program</p> <p style="text-align: center;">1 Adar</p>	<p>27 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical</p> <p style="text-align: center;">2 Adar</p>	<p>28 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical 5:28pm Candle Lighting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">3 Adar</p>	<p>29 Rabbi Tilsen on Sabbatical Darshan: Rabbi Joshua Ratner 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: TBA 1:00pm Minha</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4 Adar</p>

Service Times

Sundays	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays	Saturdays
9 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Maariv	8:15 a.m. Shaharit 5:45 p.m. Maariv	7 a.m. Shaharit 6 p.m. Qabbalat Shabbat	9:15 a.m. Shaharit 1 p.m. Minha



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