Welcome Congregation Sinai

As I mentioned in my Kol Nidre address, BEKI is warmly welcoming the members of Congregation Sinai (formerly of West Haven and Milford) as part of our kehila. Here is a little background as to how this transpired.

This past summer Congregation Sinai made the very difficult decision to close their doors after almost 90 years. Their membership, as is too often the tale in Jewish communities around the country, had become too small to continue operating.

As BEKI President, I was contacted by Congregation Sinai President Diane Krevolin to discuss the possibility of a merger. Rabbi Tilsen and I met with Congregation Sinai officers and had a lovely initial discussion. Further meetings included BEKI members Jonathan Gordon, Roger Colton, Cynthia Rubin, Bruce Oren and Yaron Lew.

Discussions were had by the BEKI Executive Committee and the BEKI Board of Directors as how to best accommodate the needs of Congregation Sinai. A most important aspect, we all agreed, was to be respectful of other members of the greater Jewish community who were in need of a new home. While in the end it was not a merger in the traditional sense, the BEKI Board entered into an agreement with Congregation Sinai so as to welcome their membership into our community, to help meet the needs of their members and help preserve the long history of their Congregation.

Over time, you will start to see some of the legacy items of Congregation Sinai that will be displayed at BEKI including a Tree of Life, memorial boards, and beautiful stained-glass windows of which some of our artistic members have a wonderful plan for their display.

Congregation Sinai will also be providing BEKI with their *sifrei* Torah which Rabbi Tilsen is eager to incorporate into our services. There will also be an *aron qodesh* (holy ark) for storage of sifrei Torah and other religious writings, as well as many other items both artistic and functional coming over.

There will be a *qiddush* welcoming new members on the Shabbat of Hanuka (16 December 2017). There will also be a special celebration, with a date to be announced, when the Sinai sifrei Torah will be welcomed upon their arrival. Hopefully you will be able to join us for these events to help greet the newest members of our community.

As I have frequently said, welcoming new members is a core strength of the BEKI community, and I know that our new members will be glad they decided to join this special community as we get to know each other over the coming months.

— Harold Birn

Luncheon Honoring Clarence Bromell

A luncheon honoring Clarence Bromell, marking his retirement after almost three decades of service to our congregation, will be held on Sunday 17 December 2017, from noon to 2:30 p.m. RSVP required to office@beki.org 203.389.2108 x14.
 Benefit Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel

Ask us about
establishing a fund, trust or annuity
to ensure BEKI’s future.

Charitable giving strengthens our Community
and provides the donor with tax savings.

Stephen Glick
Chair, Board of Trustees
Lisa A. Stanger, Esq.
Director

203.387-3424 x362
lстаnger@jewishnewhaven.org

Visit us at www.beki.org
BEKI Bulletin December 2017 - January 2018

Amazon Commission

If you are buying items from Amazon and use the link on BEKI’s home page bekı.org (bottom) then BEKI will receive a small commission (about 4%) on the sale at no cost to you. Bookmark our link. (Other Amazon programs provide only 0.5% so use our link.)
Abraham’s Tent

וַיֵּרְא אָבִיו שָׁבַע וּלְאַשְׁרֵי הָאָרֶץ נֶפֶשׁ וַיֵּרְא אֵלָה שָׁבַע וְאַשְׁרֵי הָאָרֶץ וַיִּלֶא מְדִינָה וַיֵּרְא אֵלָה שָׁבַע וְאַשְׁרֵי הָאָרֶץ

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 in partnership with the Columbus House shelter which, through the generosity of local religious congregations and organizations, provides shelter and case management for three months each winter for 12 adult men experiencing homelessness in Greater New Haven. On a rotating basis, volunteers from each host site (one church or synagogue per week) provide shelter, meals, and fellowship from early evening through breakfast each day.

BEKI will next host Abraham’s Tent from 12-19 March 2018.

Your help will be needed in all of the following ways, so please think now about what you’d like to do:

• Volunteer to help shop before and during the week
• Volunteer to help cook or serve dinners or breakfasts before or during the week
• Sponsor breakfast, lunch or dinner for one or more nights
• Sign up as an overnight volunteer for one or more nights
• Help with logistics and equipment (moving around furniture, TVs, provide power strips, etc.)
• Donate funds to help defray additional costs

More detailed information and online volunteer sign-up information will be sent at the end of January.

For more information, please contact Tikun Olam Committee co-chairs Darryl Kuperstock at kuperst@gmail.com, 203.215.8555 or Steve Werlin at shwerlin@gmail.com, 617.721.8213.

A Taste of India

Once again this year, you are invited to a festive annual mid-winter fundraiser to support BEKI’s Abraham’s Tent initiative. Save the date of Saturday night 27 January (snow date: Saturday night 24 February). We’ll be celebrating the music, dance, art, food and more from India.

We all need a break from the cold and dark of winter, so for at least one evening, enter a world of hot colors, hypnotic melodies and an atmosphere full of warm spice and mystery. Our recent annual Tikun Olam fundraisers have been wonderful — Fiesta (Mexico), Heat Wave (Caribbean), Down Home Hootenanny (Southern/Bluegrass) – and this is looking just as exciting.

All profits raised will go toward food and supplies for our 2018 Abraham’s Tent program. Any additional funds will go toward other BEKI Tikun Olam Initiatives.

Watch for more information in your mail and email!

Tikun Olam Together - Chapel On The Green

BEKI will once again be joining forces with Congregation B’nai Jacob and Westville Synagogue to provide Christmas Eve dinner to about 150 people in need on Sunday afternoon 24 December 2017.

Chapel on the Green is an ongoing project of Trinity Church in downtown New Haven. Every single Sunday (in any weather), following a short service, a full meal is provided on the Green behind the church. Many churches and synagogues help out by providing food and volunteers all through the year. This will be BEKI’s fourth time hosting a Sunday.

Items comprising a full festive menu (including among other things, eight roasted and carved turkeys) will be prepared in advance at the homes of volunteers (kosher or non-kosher accepted). All food will be brought to the BEKI parking lot and loaded for transporting from there to the church. From three synagogues we’ll need about 20 volunteers on-site that afternoon.

Your help is needed. To sign up for cooking, schlepping or serving, ASAP go to:

www.SignUpGenius.com/go/4090548A4A92EA0FD0-tikun

or contact Darryl Kuperstock at kuperst@gmail.com 203.215.8555.

Current Donations Drives

Please bring all donations to the BEKI lobby and leave where indicated.

• New or only gently used adult winter coats, socks, scarves, gloves, hats - collecting thru 31 December.
• Blankets – new only, desperately needed this winter for many local people in need – collecting through 31 January.

For more information promptly about BEKI donation drives, please contact Mimi Glenn at 203.397.3851 (please do not email).

Operation Isaiah

Thank you so much for your generous donations of food during our recent High Holy Days food drive. Through your efforts approximately 1,250 pounds of non-perishable
food was donated to the Jewish Family Service Food Pantry – enough for 960 meals!

### Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen

The first Monday of every month, one of BEKI’s rotating teams of volunteers gathers at the Downtown Evening Soup Kitchen (DESK) in New Haven to help out in every way they can: preparing food, serving, cleaning up, talking with clients, etc. Because of the rotation, each volunteer is on duty about 4 times during the year. Our efforts are coordinated by Lynn Brotman – and help is always needed (even if you can only fill in sometimes for regular team members). For more information or to volunteer, contact Lynn at lynnbrotm@aol.com.

### Qiddush Leftovers

Each week, we enjoy a bountiful qiddush lunch sponsored by the generous support of folks from our community and the considerable efforts of our amazing Qiddush Committee. From time to time, there is food left over that cannot be used for a future meal. In these cases, leftovers are packed up and picked up on Sunday or Monday for donation. In recent months, some leftovers have been taken to local refugee families (thanks to Gilah Benson-Tilsen), and for many years leftovers have been and are being brought to Marrakech on Whalley Avenue by Mimi Glenn, where the food is distributed to those receiving needed services from this wonderful organization.

If you are interested and available to help pick up leftovers on Sunday or Monday (regularly, or occasionally) for immediate donation, please contact Mimi Glenn at 203.397.3851.

### Refugee Resettlement - JCARR

JCARR (Jewish Community Alliance for Refugee Resettlement), a synagogue consortium comprised of BEKI, Temple Emanuel, Shalom, B’nai Jacob and Mishkan Israel in partnership with IRIS, continues to help refugee families adjust to life in New Haven. Although numbers are down from last year, we do expect a significant number of refugees to arrive, who will need help negotiating job placement, the education system, learning English, and many other challenges.

JCARR is also helping new arrivals from the natural disaster in Puerto Rico by partnering with JUNTA and IRIS. JUNTA is still in need of personal care products, warm weather clothing in all sizes, and funds for various expenses. New socks and underwear that are still in original packages are also welcome. To donate funds for assistance to resettling Puerto Ricans, checks should be made payable to Temple Emanuel with either JCARR Hurricane Relief in the memo line and mailed to Peter Stolzman, 20 Peddlers Drive, Branford CT 06405, or you can donate online at https://www.crowdrise.com/jcarrpr.

Coats and warm weather clothing that was collected by BEKI in November was distributed almost immediately as the need was so great!

For more information, contact Gilah Benson-Tilsen at JCARR.BEKI@gmail.com.

### BEKI Tikun Olam/Social Action Committee

If you are interested in participating in any of the projects described, or have ideas for new Tikun Olam initiatives on which you’d like to work, please contact the committee co-chairs: Steve Werlin at shwerlin@gmail.com, 617-721-8213 or Darryl Kuperstock at kuperst@gmail.com, 203-215-8555.

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### Sisterhood

For a few hundred years, especially during the Middle Ages, Jewish people liked to play arithmetical word games to challenge the mind. One such game, called *gematria*, involved affixing a number equivalent to each letter of the Hebrew alphabet, where 1 = aleph, 2 = bet, etc., with some letters having numerical values of multiples of ten or one hundred. Equivalencies were created from the numerical values of words. During Hanuka we Jews play a game with a spinning top called a sevivon (top). Each of the four sides of the top is inscribed with one of these letters: nun, gimel, hey, shin, which begin the Hebrew words Nes, Gadol, Hayah, Sham, meaning: “A great miracle happened there.” This refers to the miracle of the small flask of oil lasting eight nights in the Temple. Thus by spinning the top, Jews are remembering the past.

Spinning the top is a way of divining the future. According to *gematria*, the numerical equivalent of the Hebrew letters is 158. The same number is assigned to the word mashiah (Messiah). In Israel, the letters on the sevivon (top) will be, nun, gimel, hey, pay. Nes, Gadol, Hayah, Poh. A great

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Continued on Page 5
Welcome New & Returning Members

• Daniel & Diane Krevolin • Colleen Rue • Benjamin Kann & Viviana Benitez and Eliana • Deborah Craig (& David Wright) • Caroline Rosenstone • Evan & Stacey Wyner and Jacob, Ari and Aviva • Beth McDaniel and Geanna • Susan & Alan Dardik • Madeleine Kleinman • Russell & Susan Epstein, and Hannah and Samuel • Sam Purdy & Emma Sokoloff-Rubin and Miriam • Carol Marcus • Robert Snyder & Eileen Schuman

Mazal Tov to

Steve & Sherry Rothman on the birth of granddaughter, born to Danielle & Aryeh in November.

Steven Stoll (& Leslie Powell) on the publication of Ramp Hollow: The Ordeal of Appalachia, reviewed in the NYT

Sisterhood

Continued from Page 4

miracle happened here. The numerical equivalent of these four letters is 138, the same as numerical equivalent of the Hebrew word leqakh, part of the biblical verse from Proverbs: Leqakh tov natati lakhem, “I give you a good doctrine.” This biblical connection lends the spinning top a sense of the sacred.

Hanuka is a time for parties – and for eating. In Yiddish we call potato pancakes latkes and in Hebrew levivot. Libyan Jews prepare theirs in the shape of a heart (note the Hebrew word for heart is lev). Deep-fried sweets dipped in honey are traditional in Greece and Iran; and sufganiyot (jelly doughnuts), fried and dipped in sugar, are the most popular in Israel. All this frying symbolizes the miracle of the burning oil lamps in the ancient Holy Temple in Jerusalem.

Sisterhood and our Religious School will be celebrating Hanuka together on Wednesday afternoon 13 December in the upstairs social hall. Please join us for songs, games, and refreshments.

Sisterhood gift store has a large selection of items for Hanuka. A large selection of metal and ceramic menorot, dreidels, games and toys are also available for sale. Store hours are Sunday 11:15a - 12:15p, Wednesday 5:30p - 6:15p, and by appointment. Peggy, our Office manager, will be happy to help you during office hours. For more information call Mimi Glenn 203-397-3851

Shabbat Minha Winter Schedule

During December, our Shabbat (Saturday) Minha afternoon service begins at 4:10p, is followed by Maariv and Havdala, concluding around 5:30p. In January through March 2018, the Minha (only) service will be at 1p and end about 1:35p; evening services at the end of Shabbat are not scheduled for those months. The earlier hour in these winter months was adopted for the convenience of regular participants, in light of the typical weather conditions and early sunset in those months. This period includes Shabbat Day 31 March, which is the first day of Passover.

In April and through the spring and summer, the Minha service will be at 5:45p–6:30p. All other daily afternoon or evening services (Sunday through Thursday nights) begin at BEKI at 5:45p year-round, and the Shabbat Evening (Friday Night) services begin at 6p, except on certain major Jewish holidays.

Visit us at www.beki.org
Rabbi’s Tzedaka Fund (minimum $25)
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Rob Forbes
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Karel Koenig
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Jay & Joe Palumbo
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Steven Stoll & Leslie Powell
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Jessey & Joe Palumbo
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Karel Koenig
- To the BEKI community by Jesse Mattison

Chai Fund (minimum $18) to support synagogue operations
- To the Perecman family with sympathy on the passing of Gershon Perecman by the Lettick family
- To the Dimenstein family with sympathy on the passing of Mort Dimenstein by Patty Schein
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Rastelli-Weiner family
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Freiman-Light family
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by the Rastelli-Weiner family
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by the Freiman-Light family
- To Lisa Stanger in memory of her father Melvin Stanger by Lou Petriello
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- To Ella May in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Harriet Friedman & Charles Bruce and family
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To the family of Muriel Gurian Banquer with sympathy on her passing by Bill Shragis
- To the family of Muriel Gurian Banquer with sympathy on her passing by Leon Cummings
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by Bill Shragis
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by Darryl Kuperstock
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Hakakian & Ahmadi family
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Darryl Kuperstock
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Bill Shragis
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Harriet Friedman & Charles Bruce and family
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by the Avni-Singer family
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by the Freiman-Light family
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- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by the Freiman-Light family

Barzilai Chesekis BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund
- To Lana & Martin Gad and family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Rena Chesekis-Gold & Marty Gold

BEKI Religious School
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow

Frankel-Mattler Memorial Fund
- In memory of her husband Edward Mattler by Shirley Mattler

Yahrzeit Fund ($5 minimum) to support synagogue operations
- In memory of Moshe Anisfeld by Shimi Anisfeld
- In memory of Jay Moscowitz by Mike Moscowitz
- In memory of Sylvia Feldman by Sara & Steven Salomon
- In memory of his wife Ellen Slopak Schwartz by David Schwartz
- In memory of Ruth Maltin by Ted Maltin
- In memory of Jacob Cohen by Ted Maltin
- In memory of Gertrude Maltin by Ted Maltin
- In memory of Esther Kabakoff by Marvin Kabakoff
- In memory of Lester P. Isenberg by Janis Isenberg
- In memory of Michael Rudof by Joanne & Steve Rudof
- In memory of Rose Klein by Lester & Arlynne Klein
- In memory of Sylvia Feldman by Lois K. Feldman
- In memory of her sister Myra Ruth Brunswick by Barbara Cushen
- In memory of her mother Rose Goldring Brunswick by Barbara Cushen
- In memory of Elsie Miller by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- In memory of Chester Tomkins by Bruce Tomkins
- In memory of Herman Goldstein by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of Jacob Sokoloff by Shirley Goldstein Frumento
- In memory of Bruce Newman by Rheba Newman
- In memory of her mother Florence Supowitz by Barbara Greenberg
- In memory of her aunt Martha Kantrowitz by Sherry Kent
- In loving memory of her bubbie Sophie Walinsky by Harriet R. Friedman
- In memory of Irving Rudof by Steve & Joanne Rudof
- In memory of Norma Granoff by Jeff Granoff
- In memory of Samuel Flamer by Mickey & Bud Chorney
- In memory of Evelyn Cohen by Cliff & Donna Cohen

BRS Grant from Jewish Federation
- The BEKI Religious School has been awarded a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven to support BRS special needs education programs.
Shabbatot (Saturdays)

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:

- Rabbi Andrew Hechtman, 2 December 2017, parashat VaYishlah
- Rabbi Richard Eisenberg, 6 January 2018, parashat Shemot
- Nanette Stahl, 13 January 2018, parashat VaEra
- Ina Silverman, 3 February 2018, parashat Yitro
- Mark Oppenheimer, 17 February 2018, parashat Teruma

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, Rabbi Murray Levine, 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 advantage of this unique offering feel a deeper sense of awe born of increased understanding and appreciation of the Torah reading, Haftara (Prophetic reading) and liturgy.

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

Everyone is welcome to participate regardless of religious status or background. It is suitable for mature youths along with adults.

Mondays

Rashi Study Group: 1 Kings

Each Monday morning from 7:47a to 8:30a adults meet in the Library Chapel to read Rashi’s commentary on the TaNaKh (Hebrew Bible). The Rashi Study Group (RSG) is reading First Kings. 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. Hebrew and English texts are available. The RSG usually meets immediately following the 7:00a shaharit morning service, but will meet at 9:47a-10:30a on 25 December and 1 January, following the 9a civil holiday schedule. With Jon-Jay Tilsen.

Wednesdays

Hebrew Word of the Week

The Wednesday morning service (shaharit) features a 180-second “Hebrew word of the Week” to promote the learning of Hebrew. The Hebrew language is highly structured. Most words are based on three-letter roots, and are made with a limited set of verb or noun forms. By learning a few dozen roots and a small set of word-forms, it is possible to roughly translate Hebrew words isolated from any context, something less often possible in English. The Word of the Week often relates to the weekly scriptural readings or current events.

Rabbis’ Study Group

Wednesdays with Murray is a weekly study group exclusively for rabbis and clergy, facilitated by Rabbi Murray Levine. The Wednesday study group affords local rabbis an opportunity to pursue their own talmud torah (Torah study) in a “safe” setting and with opportunities to learn from each other’s experience and insight. The study group meets Wednesday mornings in the Rosenkrantz Family Library during the school year. In 5778, the rabbis are reviewing selected sugiyot in B. Shabbat. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at 203.397.2513.

Continued on Page 8
Adult Studies
Continued from Page 7

Thursdays
Mini Morning Learning Service
The Thursday morning services are supplemented with commentary and teaching relating to the history, themes, choreography and language of the daily morning service. Shaharit service is from 8:15a to 9:15a on Thursdays; on other weekdays, the service begins at 7:00a.

Berakhot Talmud Study Group
A weekly study of the Talmud Bavli Berakhot meets in the Beit Midrash on Thursday mornings 10a–11a with Rabbi Tilsen.

The Talmud, a hypertext extended outline of discussion organized around the Mishna and based on an oral text, has no beginning or end. One can begin study at any point; now is the best time. No prior knowledge is required, but basic facility in English is helpful; students with all backgrounds are welcome, beginner to advanced. The Berakhot Talmud Study Group meets each Thursday but not on 28 December 2017 (Fast of Tevet) and not on 4 January 2018.
27th Annual

Super Deli Boxes

Sunday, February 4, 2018!!!
PICK-UP at BEKI from 11:45 – 1:30pm
85 Harrison St., New Haven

On SuperBowl Sunday, don't worry about the food

LET US PREPARE
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Remember - You don’t have to be watching the big game – watch a movie, play bridge, have a party or just relax and enjoy the break! Invite some friends over!

All order forms MUST be received by FRIDAY, JANUARY 26, 2018

3 WAYS TO ORDER!

BY MAIL:
Enclose Pre-Payment by check
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BY EMAIL OR PHONE
(or for more information):
Darryl:  kuperst@gmail.com /203-215-8555 or Eva:  eshragis@hotmail.com/203-258-1243
Payment due at pick-up (check or cash only)

DELI BOXES ORDER - 2018 (please fill in ALL information and return w/payment – PLEASE PRINT)
Name __________________________ Cell Phone________________________ Email __________________

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

____ Corned Beef _____ Pastrami _______ Salami _______ Turkey Breast _______ Roast Beef
____ 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 = $___________

Beverage (CHOOSE 1 PER BOX)  ____ Coke ____ Diet Coke ____ Sprite ____ Apple Juice ____ Spring Water

ADDITIONAL DONATION TO BEKI Youth Programs $________

Total amount of payment payable to BEKI/BJ Youth Commission $________
A TASTE OF INDIA
A Fundraiser for Abraham’s Tent 2018 and BEKI Tikun Olam

Saturday Nite
JANUARY 27
2018

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(203) 776-1243
FAX (203) 785-1247

Shari Storeygard, M.D., FAAP
Carol Dorfman, M.D., FAAP
Shannon Martinello, M.D., FAAP

Many Generations
Kim Formica
Genealogist
PO Box 1248
Orange, CT 06477
tel. 203/376.8551
kimformica@optonline.net

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Hamden Hall Country Day School
Educating students in PreSchool through Grade 12.

We celebrated National Mix It Up Day in October to foster greater respect and understanding among our students.

www.hamdenhall.org  203.752.2610
1108 Whitney Ave., Hamden, CT 06517
The Very Modal of the Modern Rabbi, in General

Once (and only once) I was introduced to a crowd by a wonderful past member as “a perfect rabbi.” Seeing their incredulous looks, I was compelled to explain that I used to be perfect, but am no longer so. Although not particularly logical, the answer enabled us to move on.

The reality though is that I am just like everyone else. It turns out that “everyone else,” or at least most people, view themselves as being above average. Like most people, I think I’m a better driver, pay more than my fair share of taxes, and have better judgment than the average schlub. I am a child of Lake Wobegon.

There was a period in my earlier years when (some readers will not believe this) I was described as a perfectionist. In part due to the challenges of my office, which involve a large number and great diversity of tasks, I have struggled over the years to meet a different standard – “average.” While I have gradually gained some professional skill, my general capabilities are declining with age. I have tried to compensate for that by dressing better.

An analysis of our membership data reveals that as of June 2017, my (then) age of 55 matches precisely the modal age of our congregation’s members. There are more members at the age 55 than any other, and I am not far below the median (and mean) age of 60. By American Jewish standards, the age of 55 or 60 is considered “young.” And it is only fair, as this “average age” excludes the children (effectively, anyone under 18) since it counts only adults.

I am also of exactly the average height and weight for American men of my year of birth, and my state of fitness is about average, which explains why the US military does not accept men my age. Medical data, other than self-reported gender, is not maintained for our membership; the limited data shows I am a member of the second most-popular gender category.

Thanks to managed expectations and institutional inertia, my tenure at BEKI has been above average. I came in 1993, the same year Rabbi Murray Levine and the late Malka Levine moved to New Haven to be closer to their family in retirement. While admittedly self-serving, I am a big fan of continuity of leadership, which is one contributor to the strength of the Greater New Haven Jewish community. Though I am the record-holder for longest-serving rabbi of BEKI (including its predecessors), our recently-retired custodian Clarence Bromell served longer – almost 30 years. The revered shamash (professional ritual director and teacher) Louis Friedman (of blessed memory) served over 40 years.

Considering the size of our building, the complexity of building systems, the variety of frequency of events, and our ever-changing membership, it is a mark of accomplishment for Clarence to have managed this position as a staff of one, with only some part-time help. While visiting a 350-member congregation for a bar mitzva, I observed they had five custodial staff people on duty that day. I don’t know what they all were doing, but at least one of them had the job of watching the others work. Our congregation has benefited enormously by having a conscientious, caring and dedicated person in charge of our building. His successor has a high standard to match. Clarence is a record-holder, not only for length of service.

The median length of affiliation of our current membership households is 13 years, which means that half of our BEKI members joined in 2004 or later. Hillel & Sara-Ann Auerbach, Joan Gelbert, Hyla Greenberg, Harriet Kantrowitz, Edward & Rhoda Lempkin, Gladys Lipkin, Charlie Ludwig, Lester & Bernice Margolis, Elinor Miller, Harold & Bobie Miller, Morris Olmer, Mila Pizer, Mikki Ratner, Richard & Helen Ross, Rita Sachs, Doris Sagerman, Linda Saslow, Adele Tyson and Jack & Laura Yakerson have been members for 40 years or longer, plus some who grew up in the congregation and joined as adults (Sachs families, Linda & Ken Buckman, Richard Kantrowitz, Roger & Susan Levine, David & Jill Margolis, Jimmy Shure, Andy & Paige Weinstein). Please let me know if I’ve missed anyone – our data is not 100 percent complete. According to our records, the most senior (though not the oldest) member is Past-President Adele Tyson, member since 1952. Adele, you can call me “the new rabbi,” or better, “the young rabbi,” if you want.
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**Service Times**

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## January 2018
14 Tevet 5778 - 15 Shevat 5778

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<td>Office Closed/Federal Holiday</td>
<td>7:15pm Israeli Dance</td>
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<td>7:15pm Israeli Dance</td>
<td>4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benel Mitzva Program</td>
<td>4:26pm Candle Lighting</td>
<td>Darshan: Rabbi Richard Eisenberg 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: TBA 1:00pm Minha</td>
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<td>9:00am Religious School</td>
<td>7:45am Rashi Study Group 10:00am Yoga Hour 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting (off-site)</td>
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<td>Tu B'Shevat 9:00am Rabbi's Study Group 4:00pm Religious School 5:00pm Benel Mitzva Program</td>
<td>7:30pm &quot;A Taste of India&quot; a fundraising party for Abraham's Tent</td>
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Festival of Lightkes
BEKI is presenting with partners a Westville Community Hanuka Celebration, at the Mitchell Library, Beecher Park and Blake & Whalley Menora, with author visit by Renee Londer, First Night of Hanuka, Tuesday 12 December 4p–6p, multiple locations.

Dreideling Around

Hanuka Menora Lighting Blessings
Hear at https://www.beki.org/resources/audio-files/#hanuka.

Israel Study Group
Guest Ehud Krinis, historian of Jewish Medieval intellectual history at BGU, will explore his work with “Villages Group” working to build long-term personal relationships and partnering, Thursday 14 Dec., 2017, 7:30p, BEKI Library.

Face-to-Face Seniors
Monday 18 December 2017, 10:30a–12m, Library, info Murray Levine mlevine4986@sbcglobal.net.

Last Call

Hurricane Response Project
JCAR & IRIS are working with Junta for Progressive Action to provide essential services to 150 Puerto Rican Hurricane Evacuee families (400 people) who have arrived in New Haven. Funds needed for rental assistance, food cards, bus passes and medical transportation. Spanish-speaking volunteers needed, 2-3 hours per week. Contact JCARR volunteer coordinator Kim Braun volunteerjcarr@gmail.com or Gilah Benson-Tilsen jcarr.beki@gmail.com.

New Under the Sun
Owner-Occupied Residential Solar & Beyond. Sunday 21 January 2018, 10a-12m, light breakfast, free. Representatives from renewable energy organizations will present a workshop on how you can make your home’s energy usage more environmentally friendly while possibly saving you money. Discounts available for contracts signed by 7 March 2018 even if installations occur later. Alternatives will be explored in case solar is not a good option for your home. Info Becky May bseashoremay@aol.com.

Tree of Life
Miriam Kahn z”l and Mikki Ratner have helped BEKI bring life to our Tree of Life in the lobby entrance. Take a look to your left on your way into the synagogue. For the small price of $118, you can engrave a leaf for a bat- or bar-mitzva, birthday, wedding celebration or honoring or memorializing relatives or friends on our wall. What a beautiful way to honor the special people in your life.

Contact me for your order. Thank you. Marjorie Wiener, 203-387-6278, marjoriewiener@yahoo.com.