Be Happy It’s Adar

מְשֵנֶינֵקְנָה אָדָר מְרַבֵּים בְּסִיָּמְחָה
Mishenikhnas Adar marbim besimha
When Adar inaugurates, joy accumulates.
— Talmud Eruvin 29a

Mishloaḥ Manot – Purim Baskets
Contact the office at 203-389-2108 x 14 or office@beki.org if you need a form to order Purim Baskets. Please distribute mishloaḥ manot on Purim evening and day.

Shabbat Zakhor
The “Sabbath of Remember!” occurs immediately before Purim, Shabbat 24 February 2018. 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 Wednesday 28 February 2018, 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 hatchers, 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 (5:15a Eastern Standard Time) on Wednesday 28 February 2018.

The Wednesday 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 5:00p. The fast ends at 6:16p EST, or when the person observing the fast eats or drinks, whichever comes first.

Light fare for fasters and hungry people will be available at 6:15p.

Purim at BEKI

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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:

• 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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Purim
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See Rabbi Tilsen’s essay, The Problem of Purim.

Megilla Readings
Most of the Jewish world will observe Purim on Wednesday night 28 February and the following day, Thursday 1 March 2018.

The Wednesday afternoon service is from 5p to 5:45p (a special schedule this year). The Megilla (Scroll of Esther) is read during the evening services (6:15p to 8p) on Wednesday night 28 February, and then again during the Thursday morning service, which begins at 8:15a (ending 10:05a) on 1 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 napsacks, or rocking in rucksacks.

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-evyonim) and a feast on Purim day (mishte or seuda). Children are reminded to keep their adults from talking or making too much ruckus during 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.

Persons dressed as Lady Gaga wearing meat suits should sit in the designated fleishig area and are advised to keep a distance from people wearing M&M and other dairy costumes. This year, there will be a refrigerated section for those dressed as fresh vegetables.

Persons associated with Occupy Shushan, Occupy BEKI, or other Occupy groups, as well as people impeding pipelines, must remain behind police barriers. Since our police are unarmed (see above), Occupy participants are asked to be especially gentle in any confrontation. If you are coming with a group of 10,000 or more women, please notify the office in advance to allow coordination of logistics.

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 Thursday 1 March from 5p–7p; payment and reservation are required. The registration form is at on the BEKI calendar at www.beki.org or contact Peggy office@beki.org.

The Big Gulp Purim Seuda (Feast & Party)
Thursday 1 March 2018, 5p–7p Social Hall
Light dairy dinner will be served
$10 per person or $18 per household in advance by 26 February
$18 per person or $36 per household after 26 February
Preregistration by noon 26 February 2018

Queen of Shushan Beauty Pageant
National personality Mark Wisenheimer will host a Queen of Shushan Beauty Pageant at BEKI’s Purim Seuda on the afternoon of Purim, Thursday 1 March. Reservations for the Seuda should be made in advance (office@beki.org). “I encourage everyone, especially my own four daughters, to compete,” says Wisenheimer. “This will help them do better at chanting Torah at their bat mitzva,
LifeCycle

HaMaqom Yinahem
With sorrow we note the passing of

Aby van Creveld, brother of Sascha van Creveld
Martin Buckman, father of Kenneth (& Linda) Buckman
Jonathan Gutman, father of Rachel Light (& Jonathan Freiman)
Nathaniel Hurwitz, brother of Michael Hurwitz (& Deborah Chirnomas)

May the Almighty comfort those who mourn

Welcome New Members

• Arthur & Susan Kabakoff • Mildred Kalison • Daniel & Diane Krevolin • Colleen Rue • Benjamin Kann & Viviana Benitez and Eliana
• Deborah Craig (& David Wright) • Caroline Rosenstone • Evan & Stacey Wyner and Jacob, Alex, 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

HaNoladim beMazal Tov
Eva Landau & Frank Schultz, and grandparents Helen Rosenberg & Keith Richter, on the birth of Jillian Elizabeth, in New Haven, in January
Deborah Craig & David Wright on the birth of grandchildren Callum Henry, in Pittsburgh, PA, and Celia Quinn, in Florida, in December
Lynn & Jay Brotman on the birth of a granddaughter in December
Allan Samuel & Rhoda Zahler on the birth of grandson Jacob in December

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because everything you work hard at builds your work ethic.” Short people, children, and gardeners are especially encouraged to enter, because, as Wisenheimer claims, “Beauty pageants can help people grow.”

Contestants will be judged by an all-male panel based on several factors: Quality of Costume, Makeup, Clever use of Cliché, Elegant Showboating, Engaging Smile, and Overall Feminine Beauty. As a progressive, egalitarian congregation, persons of all ages and sexes may enter the competition. Four winners will be chosen! You’ve got nothing to lose except your self-esteem and entry fee.

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, and one dollar shorter, than the rest of the Jewish world. The observance of Shushan Purim is Thursday night 1 March and Friday 2 March 2018. At BEKI this day will be marked liturgically by the omission of the recitation of the tahamun prayer. Also on this date, we will not recite the Star Spangled Banner, Yellow Submarine, The Gettysburg Address, and Miranda Rights. Please join us on Thursday evening from 5:45p–6:10p, and then again on Friday morning from 7:00a–7:35a, for this joyous non-recital marking Shushan Purim.

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. 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 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. Wednesday night 28 February 6:15p–8p in the sanctuary.
When the ark needs to be opened and a torah carried, who you gonna call? On Shabbat morning at Beth El - Keser Israel, a group of teenagers decides. For the last fifteen years, teen shamashim have selected people for all of the honors and have kept the service moving along.

At benei mitzva services, their job shifts to locating the family members selected for the honors and then patiently teaching those visitors what to do.

A teen was first trained in 2002 to fill in when adult shamashim were unavailable, Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen recalls, “but what I did not expect was the quality of their work. They proved to be dedicated and quickly acquired the skills to run even the more elaborate services with poise and efficiency. They learn the names and tribal status (Jewish? Kohen? Levi?) of most of the regular attendees, as well as their interests and skills, and whom they can call on at the last minute to lead or read.”

“The position of shamash,” Rabbi Tilsen notes, “requires the skills of an air traffic controller, a stage manager, and a White House social secretary. The shamash has to know the order of the service, understand the peculiarities of the liturgical calendar, and deal with grumpy or anxious adults. The shamash sometimes has to work very quickly in a high-pressure setting, and has to have the courage to approach strangers – including visiting scholars – and invite them to have a part in the service.” The shamash also has to know when to ask for guidance.

Although the shamashim are too discreet to reveal any details, they learn some rather intimate knowledge about congregants, including who is having a medical problem and cannot carry the Torah scroll that day or who is a leftie and therefore best suited to lifting the Torah scroll during the months when it’s rolled to Genesis.

“Over the years, we have had about two dozen young people involved,” Dr. Jay Sokolow estimates.

Although the current team is all boys, “the shamashim have sometimes included girls in a role that is still typically male in many congregations,” Carole Bass notes.

“The shamashim play an incredibly important role,” she adds, “not only helping the services run smoothly, but also greeting guests and visitors and helping people feel comfortable in taking on honors.”

“It’s a challenging job, I’m sure,” she continues, “and I hope they feel greatly appreciated for it.” She notes that they are learning more than just the details of the service. “It provides great training in other life skills, like planning ahead, interacting with adults you don’t know, and taking mishaps in stride.” Dr. Sokolow adds, “Noam Benson-Tilsen stands out as a shamash in that regard.” Among Noam’s predecessors was his sister Tova, but Noam credits the prior team of shamashim, including Jacques and Yedidya Ben-Avi, for his training.

“The worst part is the learning curve – especially the beginning,” Noam explains. “It can be very difficult for a new shamash to learn the sequence of events that needs to happen during any type of Shabbat or holiday service, and then be able to politely and clearly interact with honorees who may not know how to perform a part of the service.”

BEKI adults say that the teen shamashim program has been a great success. “I love the way the teens take charge and have real authority in the service,” Paul Bass says.

“I love the interaction with adults as peers – a situation that is rare for young people in other settings,” Dr. Sokolow agrees.

“It is a good experience in many ways,” Noam says, including allowing him to connect with the adults in the community. “I just wanted to try it out, and I ended up continuing.”

“Working with our shamashim has been one of the most inspiring and satisfying part of my work at BEKI, so far,” Rabbi Tilsen says. — Rachel Bashevkin

Sharon and I wish to acknowledge all of the contributions to BEKI in memory of my mother, Mary Astor. In addition, we would like to express our deep appreciation for all of the loving support and warm welcome that we have received since coming to this community. It is a very special place and we are fortunate to be here. Toda rabba!

— Carl and Sharon Astor
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 Carl Astor, 27 January 2018, parashat BeShalah.

Ina Silverman, 3 February 2018, parashat Yitro.

Mark Oppenheimer, 17 February 2018, parashat Teruma.

Shula Chernoff, 24 February 2018, parashat Tetsave – Shabbat Zakhor.

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 shulgoers 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.

Hebrew with Will

Back by popular demand, an hour of Hebrew with Will, alternating Shabbat mornings in January, February and March, 10:45a-11:45a, office. Free. Meeting on Shabbatot alternating with SSTS. Info perfectexodus@gmail.com.

Sunday
Uplifting experience

Learn the fine points and practice the art of hagba, lifting a Torah scroll, at a workshop on Sunday morning 25 February, 9:45a–10:15a.

Mondays
Rashi Study Group: I 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 19 February (Presidents’ Day), following our 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.

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Adult Studies
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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.

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 15 February 2018 (erev Presidents Day Weekend), not on 1 March 2018 (Purim) nor 29 March 2018 (day before Passover).
**Contributions**

**Rabbi’s Tzedaka Fund**
- Joanna Klyuchenko in appreciation
- David Schwartz
- Sandy & John Balayan

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- To Lana & Martin Gad & family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Gloria Cohen
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- To Lana & Martin Gad & family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Joy Kaufman & Stewart Frankel
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of James Michael Williams by Joy Kaufman & Stewart Frankel
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- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Dan & Beth Weintraub
- To Lana & Martin Gad & family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Dan & Beth Weintraub
- To Lana & Martin Gad & family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Dan & Beth Weintraub
- To Lana & Martin Gad & family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Amy, Rob, Sophie, Jacob and Esther
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins and family with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by the Marx & Schonberger family; Amy, Rob, Sophie, Jacob and Esther
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Marx & Schonberger family; Amy, Rob, Sophie, Jacob and Esther
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Marx & Schonberger family; Amy, Rob, Sophie, Jacob and Esther
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Marx & Schonberger family; Amy, Rob, Sophie, Jacob and Esther
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by the Lettick family
- To Varsha, Prashant, Akshay & Shriya Mehta with sympathy on the passing of Akash Mehta by the Lettick family
- To Melinda Blanch & family with sympathy on the passing of Muriel Banquer by Hannah & Herbert Winer
- To Karissa Stolzman & family with sympathy on the passing of John Crenshaw by Marisol, Natalya & Tom Moycik
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of James Michael Williams by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Jalina Secchiaroli in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Dina & Mike Secchiaroli and family with sympathy on the passing of Martin Knecht by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Melinda Blanch & family with sympathy on the passing of Muriel Banquer by Ruth Zeltich
- To the BEKI community by Jesse Mattison
- To the BEKI community with thanks for everyone who expressed condolences on the passing of my sister Michele, the support helped at a very difficult time by Tamar Edelkind
- In honor of Raya Hakakian & Ramin Ahmadi by the Stanger & Colodner family
- To the BEKI community by Janet Felton & Marty Gilens
- To Bruce & Susan Amatruada with sympathy on the passing of Sylvia Amatruada by Louise Petrillo
- To Robert & Susan Amatruada with sympathy on the passing of Sylvia Amatruada by Louise Petrillo
- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by Julie Cohen
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- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by Harriet Friedman, Charles Bruce and family
- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by Deborah Craig & David Wright
- To Gail Greenberg with sympathy on the passing of Ruth Gimple by the Lettick family
- To Lori & Natan Weinstein with sympathy on the passing of Shirley Bober by the Lettick family
- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by the Lettick family
- To Gadiel & Julie Robbins with sympathy on the passing of Bella Robbins by Cathie & Ron Miller
- To In memory of Alexandra Breslin by Al Barnett
- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by Irene Schienberg
- To Lillian Silverman in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Marilyn Goodless
- To David Wright & Debbi Craig in honor of the birth of their granddaughter Celia Quinn and grandson Callum Henry by Barbara Cushen
- To the BEKI community with thanks by Peter Salovey
- To the BEKI community by Adena Herskovitz
- To the BEKI community by Sarah Magidson

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**minimum $10** to support synagogue operations
- To Lana & Martin Gad & family with sympathy on the passing of Cynthia Schneider by Lynn Bullard
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of James Michael Williams by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of James Michael Williams by Bill Shragis
- To Angela & Bruce Oren with sympathy on the passing of James Michael Williams by Leon Cummings
- To Joyce Handlerman with wishes for a speedy recovery by Rheba Newman
- To Rabbi Tilsen in appreciation by Joanna Klyuchenko
- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Carl & Sharon Astor with sympathy on the passing of Mary Astor by Dan & Sharon Prober

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Contributions (continued)

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• In memory of her uncle Samuel Schwartz by Joan Gelbert
• In memory of her grandmother Sarah Schwartz by Joan Gelbert
• In memory of Shirley & Benjamin Brodner by Richard & Leatrice Brodner
• In memory of Kate Weinstein by Suzanne Weinstein
• In memory of George Weiss by Suzanne Weinstein
• In memory of Benjamin Levine by Lillian Gross
• In memory of Elsie Hodes by Joyce & Dave Popowski and Lynne & Jeff Heinser
• In memory of Benjamin Levine by Diane Hoberman
• In memory of Gabrielle Smirnoff by Bea Smirnoff
• In memory of Benjamite & Jeanette Spivak by Sheila & Allen Mushin
• In memory of Jacob Cohen by Carol Cohen
• In memory of Lester Feldman by Lois K. Feldman
• In memory of Anna Chain by Max & Shirley Shepro
• In memory of Benjamin & Rebecca Yankeloff by Donald & Shirley Halprin
• In memory of her mother Ida Caminear Levine by Bernice & Lester Margolis
• In memory of her father Samuel Kantrowitz by Sherry Kent
• In memory of Mary Sagerman by Doris Sagerman
• In memory of Elizabeth Mohr by Judy Mohr Hayward
• In memory of Julius Brody by Frances Goldberg-Cohen
• In memory of Jacob Pepper by Richard L Levine

Visit us at www.beki.org
**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-mitzvah, 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

**Abraham’s Tent**

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 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

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.

**Caryn Azoff “Works on Paper” Exhibition**

The BEKI Art Gallery presents “Works on Paper” by Caryn Azoff in an opening on 21 January 2018, with a talk by the artist on 3 March at 12:45p.

The exhibition includes selections from Azoff’s ongoing series of small works on paper derived from her daily practice of sketching in colored pencils, watercolor, gouache, and vinyl based mediums. Using the sketches as a point of departure, Azoff evolves her uniquely personal visions of abstract colors and shapes through a repetitive process to develop new works. The resulting geometric juxtapositions of vibrating colors are deceptively simple, as they allow the complexity of the abstract relationships of form to emerge and captivate our imagination. Although her approach is uniquely her own, Azoff draws inspiration from both medieval illuminated texts and the work of the Bauhaus tradition.

Azoff received her BA and MS degrees from Central Connecticut State University. She is the chair of the Arts Department, Gallery Director, and Upper School Visual Arts Teacher at Hamden Hall Country Day School.

Currently her work is exhibited in locations throughout the United States and available for purchase at Susan Eley Fine Art in New York City. Locally, her work can be seen at her studio at West River Studios in Westville Village and, recently, on a mural on Fountain Street in the Village.

Her work can be seen online at [www.carynazoff.com](http://www.carynazoff.com)

**Super Deli Boxes XXVI**

Saturday night – Sunday morning 3-4 February. Fundraiser supporting BEKI Youth Program sponsored by the BEKI Youth Commission. A wide selection of deli (meat and non-meat) sandwiches and salads packed as box lunches/dinners with extras whether you are watching the big game or not. Set up will be at BEKI on Saturday night 3 February; Westville Kosher Market early Sunday morning (4 February) then at BEKI from 9:30am (2/4). Volunteers absolutely needed for all phases.

**Taste of India**

Saturday night 24 February, 7:30p–10:30p. (Revised date.) Fundraising Party for Abraham’s Tent at BEKI, featuring authentic Indian music and dance, food, spirits, henna, activities, art and Tikun Olam. RSVP required . Watch your mail for details or contact Darryl Kuperstock at kuperst@gmail.com 203-215-8555 . Volunteers needed.

**Meditation with Robin**

Noon on Wednesdays, through 28 March.

**Torah Reading**

Noam Benson-Tilsen is coordinating the readings for Shemot; contact him to volunteer noam@tilsen.org .
NOLAN’S
HAMDEN MONUMENT COMPANY
LICHTENSTEIN COMPANY
323 Washington Ave, Hamden CT 06518
(203) 288-8486
(203) 287-1593
CT toll free only (800) 852-8865
Fax (203) 287-1593
John Nolan
Michael Nolan
nolansmonuments@att.net

Child and Adolescent Health Care, L.L.C.
A. Joseph Avni-Singer, M.D., FAAP
Shari Storeygard, M.D., FAAP
Carol Dorfman, M.D., FAAP
Shannon Martinello, M.D., FAAP
Child, Adolescent and Adult Psychottherapy
Parent Consultation
Ravit Avni-Singer, MSW, LCSW
1 Bradley Road, Suite 102
Woodbridge, CT 06525
(203) 389-9174
BY APPOINTMENT

WES MILLER
Professional Certified Math Tutor
K-10
(203) 804-3400
Wesley42377@aol.com

WESTVILLE Kosher MARKET
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New Haven (off exit 59 Merritt Pkwy)
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389-1166
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Under Strict
Rabbinical Supervision
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Thurs. 8:30-7:00 • Fri. 8:30-3:00 • Closed Sat.
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Auto Body Shop
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Tel: 203.932.1200 Fax: 203.932.1222
Scott Walstedter

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

Visit us at www.beki.org
We celebrated National Mix It Up Day in October to foster greater respect and understanding among our students.

www.hamdenhall.org  203.752.2610
110 Whitney Ave., Hamden, CT 06517
My cousin was a slave beaten to death by Egyptian taskmasters. His name was Ben Sherman Goldman, a son of Israel & Pessie Portugal Goldman, a grandson of Haim Eliezer & Liba Bluma Goldman.

God is essential to the story of our slavery and Exodus from Egypt. This idea has to be kept in mind so what comes next will not be mistaken for a secularist revision. Rather, what follows is presented as a normative rabbinic understanding.

I read the story as history. It is an account of something that in fact actually happened. If you had a camera, you could have filmed it. It is told in a Biblical Epic style, and has to be appreciated on that basis. If it had been a CNN report, it might have included a six-second sound bite from Aaron, and maybe one from Pharaoh. Had it been in the New York Times, it would have been six or eight one-column stories on page six that did not mention the ethnicity of the particular slave group involved. The Bible itself provides two markedly different accounts of the Deborah Story in chapters 4 and 5 of Judges – one a narrative and one a poem.

Were the Exodus a film made today, it might star Charlton Heston as Moses and Patrick Stewart as Pharaoh.

The miracles and wonders in the story are extraordinary cases of “every-day miracles,” nisim she-bekhol yom, to use the language of the siddur. Some of our great sages believed that the miracles in the episode, such as the plagues and the parting of the sea, were events that did not defy the laws of nature. Rather, they were “amazing” in their timing and surprising in their precise manner of occurrence. The Vikings victory over the Saints (14 January 2018) was widely described by as a “miracle” though we do not believe any laws of physics (or of football) were violated. It seemed highly unlikely to occur, but it did anyway. The video replay has been viewed a billion times. Had the Minnesota team won its subsequent game, a statue of Odin would have been erected in the state capitol.

In the epic language of Exodus, the plagues represent real things that can, and did, occur. Remarkably, they seemed to transpire at the command of Moses and Aaron. The plague of darkness – palpable darkness – could be a dust storm, a shared bout of major depression, or as midrash has it, a “dark” period during which collaborators “disappeared.” The latter would be an expected part of a social revolution.

Even the tenth plaque, the “killing of the firstborn,” was understood as something that can, and does, take place, as a sociological or political phenomenon (see the explanation of this phrase and of Ps. 136 in Pesiqta deRav Kahana).

We were slaves to Pharaoh in Mitsrayim. Even as slaves, we enjoyed Hebrew privilege, living in suburban Goshen, with our own flocks, homes and crops. Accounts of slavery in America mostly sound worse than what we experienced in the Land of the Pharaohs. Don’t get carried away with...
the Exodus story: We did not liberate Egypt; we liberated ourselves. But the thought has always been that others can follow our lead if we are successful, that we can hope to be a “light unto the nations.”

We were slaves for many generations, but then things changed. The government cut the budget for medical care for infants and children, with the inevitable result of greater infant mortality and debility. The babies were, in effect, thrown into the Nile (Ex. 1:22). The share of production taken by the ruling class – the top 0.1% of Egypt – was raised, meaning more work from the masses, who now had to extract their own raw materials and manufacture the bricks (Ex. 1:11, 5:6ff). Eventually, Pharaoh proposed splitting up Hebrew families (Ex. 10:7-11) by deporting some family members and retaining others.

While these stories are obviously fantastical Biblical yarns that could never occur in modern times to real people, the Torah for some reason calls our attention to them.

That reason is that if the Torah is to be of value beyond entertainment, we best read the Exodus as an account of events that really took place, and take to heart the directive of Rabban Gamliel (Talmud Pesahim 116b) popularized in the Hagada of Pesah, that “in each generation we should see ourselves (or show ourselves) as though we personally had exited Egypt.” It doesn’t matter how great your Torah is; what matters is what you do with it.

My cousin Ben Sherman (Binyamin Shimon) Goldman was a cap maker in Minneapolis. He was beaten to death when he was 23 years old, and died in September 1922. At that time, 600,000 workers were on strike nation-wide, including 8,000 in St. Paul and another 8,000 in Minneapolis. The strike seems a minor episode in retrospect, not one of the great labor battles acclaimed in song and story, and Ben’s death was not even reported in the newspapers. He is not mentioned by name in the Torah.

The police officer who beat him was merely enforcing the law. Strikes were illegal. A picket line prevented people from working – what could be more immoral than keeping an eager worker (“scab”) from a job someone else didn’t want, depriving that worker of his right to work? Picketing was considered criminal extortion, seeking money (a livable wage), or safety measures or other benefits, from factory owners, by force and threat of withholding labor, by blocking shipments and implicitly threatening hooliganism. If such extortion were permitted, the social order would collapse. If a worker thought the factory unsafe, he was welcome to quit. There were no walls or barbed-wire fences surrounding Egypt.

The municipal police (“cops”) and private security guards (“thugs”) hired by business owners were paid to uphold the rule of law and defend property rights, necessary for the prosperity of all. To insure the ability of laborers to work, and to protect the right of owners to set the terms of employment and protect their means of production, Ben Sherman was beaten, along with others, on the picket line. He died a few days later, from internal injuries exhibiting as bleeding from multiple orifices. No one was charged or punished for this incident. He was a grandson of my children’s great-great-great grandparents, just another Hebrew who died in slavery.

בכל דור ודורisory בנו את עמהTamיהא לכל זה הוא צא ממצרים יודע
והועדלבן ביינו לאמר ובאבר זה שוה ולי באתים מחבר

Rabban Gamliel taught: In each generation, one should view [or show] oneself as having personally exited Egypt, as Scripture says, “You shall tell your progeny on that day, ‘for this purpose God took action for me when I left Egypt.’”
### BEKI Bulletin February 2018

**Visit us at www.beki.org**

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<td>7:45am Rashi Study Group</td>
<td>10:00am Israeli Dance</td>
<td>9:00am Rabbi's Study Group</td>
<td>10:00am Berakhot Study Group</td>
<td>4:52pm Candle Lighting</td>
<td>10:45am Children's Programs</td>
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<td>11:45am Deli Box Pick-Up</td>
<td>10:00am Yoga Hour</td>
<td>7:15pm Israeli Dance</td>
<td>4:00pm Religious School</td>
<td>5:00pm Benel Mitzva Program</td>
<td>10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study</td>
<td>Qiddush: TBA</td>
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<td>10:45am Hebrew with Will</td>
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### Service Times

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<td>6 p.m. Qabbalat Shabbat</td>
<td>Before sunset: Minha</td>
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JCARR

Help refugee families adjust to New Haven. Contact Gilah Benson-Tilsen JCARR.BEKI@gmail.com

JCARR is also working with IRIS and NeighborWorks New Horizon (NWNH) to secure affordable housing for Puerto Ricans arriving in New Haven after Hurricane Maria. Funds are urgently needed to help with security deposits. Donate via link on BEKI Facebook page or contact JCARR.BEKI@gmail.com.

Expecting a new refugee family. Training at IRIS for volunteers to help resettlement. Training Thursday 1 February 9a-4:30p at IRIS, RSVP by 25 January to Jean jsilk@jewishnewhaven.org.

Got Announcements?

Ask President Harold Birn to include your BEKI event in live Shabbat morning announcements by writing to announcements@beki.org. “This Week at BEKI” listings may be up to 50 words.

Improved – Youth Scholarships

(A) Jewish Foundation, for local synagogue schools, scholarships.jewishnewhaven.org/form/religious; (B) Foundation Israel Program scholarships jewishnewhaven.org/scholarships (C) Barzillai Cheskis Youth Israel Scholarship at BEKI (office@beki.org) (D) One Happy Camper for overnight Jewish Camps (E) Noam Benson-Tilsen Fund for Ramah Scamperships (office@beki.org).

Dancing Revised Hours

Israeli Dance starts a little earlier on Tuesday evenings. For Beginners, 7:15p–8:15p; for Everyone 8:15p–10p, Social Hall.

Pop that Corn: BEKI Cinema Opens

Thanks to anonymous donors and many hours of work by Board members Jonathan Gordon and Eric Dunsker, the downstairs social hall has been outfitted as a cinema space. It now has a fourteen-foot wide motorized screen, enhanced sound equipment, and a projector suspended from the ceiling. Films can be shown from Blu-ray, DVD, and many online streaming services.

The first film in the new space will be the February 17 showing of The Frisco Kid, starring Gene Wilder and Harrison Ford, for BEKI’s USY and Kadima youth groups.