

TORAH SCROLLS RESTORED

In June 2013, the [Bulletin](#) reported that a special gift from Stanley, Judith and Adina Rosenbaum and their family has continued the good work associated with Paula Hyman, of blessed memory, through furthering specific projects in the Congregation. One project was the restoration of two 120-year-old Torah scrolls, among the legacy scrolls brought from Europe before the founding of the congregation. The preservation of the scrolls is one expression of Paula's concerns, as well as an expression of the continuing concerns and involvement shared by Stanley, Judith and Adina and their family.

The restoration has been completed, and both scrolls have been returned to service. The larger scroll, measuring 55cm,

was written in Russia, more than 120 years ago. The smaller scroll, which measures 44.5cm, is the smallest in use at BEKI. It was written in Romania more than 120 years ago. It is substantially lighter and easier to lift than the others. This scroll was used on Rosh Hodesh Adar, a day on which the celebratory Psalms of Hallel are recited, a poignant moment for those present as it represented the first time the scroll was used in decades.

In addition to the Rosenbaum family, who sponsored the restoration, we extend thanks to Harold Birn and Becky & CJ May for transporting the scrolls back and forth to the hands of the *sofer* (scribe) in New York.

SUSAN TURNER TO EXHIBIT AT BEKI



Wimple, by Susan Turner

Susan Turner, a video and print artist from Winnipeg, Manitoba, will be exhibiting her [Tabernacle](#) print series in the BEKI Gallery from May 28 through Aug. 30. The series focuses on fabrics in Jewish tradition.

She explains: "The use of fabrics in Jewish ceremonies and rituals has become a constant, with many developed in response to customs and interpretations and often borrowing from the fabric work of the larger society. In [Tabernacle](#), I have focused on the tallit,

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BEKI Bulletin

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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.

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A Message from Rabbi Tilsen & Dear Rabbi
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Exhibit

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the parokhet (ark cover), and on the fringes that adorn those items. Because they elicit memories of family or they recall particular sensations, these fabrics have special resonance for me.”

“The digital camera, computer, scanner, and Photoshop are my key working tools. I am exploring the concept of ‘boundaries’ between what is here and what is absent and between what is known and what is incomprehensible. The source for each print is a recognizable image that I manipulate in order to investigate intersections between representation and abstraction. I am interested in creating spaces that are mysterious, open to possibility, and where interiors and exteriors collide. What starts as a flat surface gains physicality through the arcing, twisting and turning applied to it through Photoshop.”

“My images are constructed of many layers; when overlapped, meshed and filtered together, do not reveal a photographic ‘truthfulness’ or representation, but rather a way to

interpret experience – memory, nightmare, the sensations of the body – and conceptual musings. What interests me is not faithful reproduction or narrative or polemics. Rather, I search for the particulars of detail that point to an entry portal for an exploration of how images are transmuted by the imagination and by technology. I see the process of working digitally as well as the results I derive as reflecting the imposition of technology on the physical world, the nature of imagery, and the physical world itself.”

Susan has shown prints and photo-based work in solo and group shows in Canada, the U.S., Japan, Holland, Hungary and Great Britain. Her videos have been curated at festivals in Winnipeg and other global sites. She has been active in Winnipeg’s art community, taught and served as a thesis advisor at the School of Art, University of Manitoba and was a MAWA (Mentoring Artists for Women’s Art) mentor. She has also been the recipient of many grants and awards for her artwork.

Susan received her BA (1968) and BFA (1982) from the University of Manitoba and also studied typography at the London, England, College of Printing (1975-76).



Youth

Kadima & USY

Hello BEKI families,

It has been a fun and wonderful year for BEKI-BJ USY and Kadima youth group programs. Our youth group summer break is fast approaching, but here are some great June events planned.

For **BEKI-BJ Kadima**, we will have a 4th-Grade Welcoming Event on Sunday, June 7. 4th-8th graders are welcome to join.

Also, don’t miss the BEKI-BJ Kadima Pool Party on Sunday, June 14. 4th - 8th graders welcome to join.

Details and locations for both events to be announced; please contact Stefan Kostolitz, BEKI-BJ Youth Group Coordinator, at bekibjkadima@gmail.com for more information or to join our e-mail list to receive updates.

For **BEKI-BJ USY** (8th-12th grade), don’t miss the final two lounge nights. USY Board Member elections will be held at Lounge Night on Tuesday, June 2 at B’nai Jacob synagogue. Are you interested in developing as a leader, meeting new people, and creating and sharing Jewish

experiences with other teens? If so, apply to the BEKI-BJ USY Board! Please contact Stefan Kostolitz, BEKI-BJ USY advisor, for more information at bekibjusy@gmail.com.

At Lounge Night on Tuesday, June 9 at B’nai Jacob synagogue we will be celebrating the end of our 2014-15 USY year. Haven’t been to a USY event before? No problem, come celebrate with us; we’re happy to meet you.

Finally, don’t miss out on this great deal for 2015-16 BEKI-BJ USY and Kadima membership!

Non-members: \$45 membership for the rest of 2014-15 academic year AND all of the 2015-16 academic year.

Current members: \$20 membership for 2015-16 academic year.

Please contact Stefan Kostolitz, BEKI-BJ Youth Group Coordinator, at bekibjusy@gmail.com or bekibjkadima@gmail.com to sign up as a BEKI-BJ USY or Kadima member!

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Youth

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Record BEKI Contingent at Camp Ramah

At least 22 BEKI youth will attend Camp Ramah this summer, surpassing recent years' records of 18 to 20. BEKI has one of the largest Ramah contingents in Connecticut and the largest contingent proportional to membership.

BEKI Ramah families pay camp tuition totaling somewhere around \$100,000 – **we could use more scholarship support.**

A gift of \$10,000 to a BEKI endowment could make camp



possible for one student each year by providing a partial scholarship. A gift of \$100,000 would pay full tuition for one camper a year for one session. A gift of \$1,000,000 for camping at BEKI would make Jewish summer camp available to all of our kids. Several children attend other fine Jewish and Zionist camps. Their experiences reinforce the atmosphere we try to create during the year in our shul and school. The sense of community built during the summer will last a lifetime. Paying for BEKI kids to go to Ramah and other Jewish camps is one of the best investments we can make in the future of the Jewish People. Parents are urged to consider sending their children to fine Jewish summer camps such as Ramah, and all are invited to help support this effort. Information on the [Marcel Gutman Scholarship](#) is available at [beki.org](#) under “Sisterhood.”

Benei Mitzva Parents' Meeting

Parents of youth planning to celebrate becoming benei mitzva in 2016-18 are invited to meet with Rabbi Tilsen on Monday June 29 from 6:15 to 7 p.m. in the Beit Midrash (Library-Chapel) for an overview of the [Benei Mitzva Program](#) at BEKI. The conversation will focus on the developmental and educational approach to instruction and the specifics of program structure. Planning considerations and timeline will also be presented. Students and younger family members are welcome to attend if they wish. Classes are held during the school year, but tutoring is year-round. For info contact jjtilsen@beki.org.

The [Benei Mitzva Program Information & Registration](#) form, a [Bar/Bat-Mitzva Date Reservation Form](#), and a 66-page planning tool, [Guide to Benei Mitzva](#)

[Observance](#), as well as other information and forms, are available under [Youth | Benei Mitzva Program](#) at [beki.org](#) and from the office (office@beki.org).

BMP Classes on Summer Recess

While [Benei Mitzva Program](#) tutoring is year-round, the weekly classes meet according to the [BRS](#) academic schedule for Wednesday afternoons, and thus ended in mid-May. Eleven students participated in the class this year. Faculty included Cantor Shoshana Lash, Isaiah Cooper, Marsha Beller, Naomi Caldwell, Myles Caldwell, Eva Gerber, Tova Benson-Tilsen, Sophia Bruce, Hannah Feldman, and Sophia Colodner. Students attend a weekly class and meet with tutors individually. When prepared, even before reaching the age of bar- or bat-mitzva, students may lead the Qabbalat Shabbat service, Torah service, read Torah and Haftara, and lead Pesuqei deZimra (morning Psalms). Students of age can also lead the Maariv, Shaharit and Musaf services proper even if they have not yet formally celebrated bar- or bat-mitzva. With this experience, and with frequent attendance at Shabbat services, students gain familiarity and confidence as participants and leaders.

“At the outset,” says Rabbi Tilsen, “some of the students would probably rather be left to survive on their own in the forest for seven days as a rite of passage rather than lead ‘Ashrei’ in front of 200 people, but by the time they have completed our program, they are ready to stand as our representatives before the Throne of Glory. May God have mercy.”



A discussion group meets during “Break the Hate: The New Antisemitism on College Campus” on April 12.

Shabbatot (Saturdays)

דַּרְשָׁנִים

Darshanim

Darshan – *noun, plural dar-sha-nim.* Judaism. a preacher or teacher of Aggadah or Halakha in a synagogue.

Rabbi Tilsen has invited the following speakers to serve as guest Darshanim in the coming weeks:

Ina Silverman, Principal of BRS, will serve as darshanit on Shabbat *parashat Shelah*, June 13.

Guido Secchiarioli, bar mitzva, will serve as darshan on Shabbat *parashat Qorah* June 20.

Adin Jennings, bar mitzva, will serve as darshan on Shabbat *parashat Huqat* June 27.

Fiona Jennings, bat mitzva, will serve as darshanit on Shabbat *parashat Huqat* June 27.

Shabbat Shalom Torah Study

The *Shabbat Shalom Torah Study* meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45 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



Ina Silverman



Steven Fraade



Alan Lovins



Nadav Sela

background. It is suitable for mature, or at least well-behaved, youth along with adults.

Mondays

Rashi Study Group: Shemuel

Each Monday morning from 7:45 to 8:30 adults meet in the Library Chapel to read Rashi's commentary on the TaNaKh (Hebrew Bible). The Rashi Study Group (RSG) has begun the Book of 2 Shemuel (Samuel). Characters in the narrative include the Prophet Samuel, King Saul and King David, Mikhal, Batsheva, and more. 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 meets immediately following the 7 a.m. *shaharit* service. With Jon-Jay Tilsen.



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, enhancing personal study and public Torah discussion.

Rabbis' Study Group

Wednesdays with Murray is a weekly study group exclusively for rabbis, facilitated by Rabbi Murray Levine. The Wednesday study group affords local rabbis an opportunity to pursue their own *talmud torah* (Torah study) in a "safe" setting and with opportunities to learn from each other's experience and insight. The



Murray Levine

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Adult Studies

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study group meets Wednesday mornings in the Rosenkrantz Family Library. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at (203) 397-2513. The Group will be on recess from 10 June through the beginning of September.

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

Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group

The *Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group* meets on Thursdays from noon to 1. The Group has met weekly since 1999. For some participants, this is their first direct experience

with Talmud text; for others, it is a continuation of a long journey. The Group focuses on the issues raised in the Talmud, with less attention to the technical aspects of the text. Knowledge of Hebrew or Aramaic is helpful but not required.



Isaiah Cooper

The Talmud, based on an oral text, has no beginning or end. One can begin study at any point; now is the best time. The Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group meets in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Family Library.

For information, contact Isaiah Cooper at his law office icooper@cooperlaw.net.

Every Day

Divrei Torah on the Web

A [collection of Divrei Torah](#) (Torah commentaries) and essays by members and Rabbi Tilsen is posted on BEKI's website under "Learning."



A Message from Rabbi Tilsen

THE URGE TO PURGE

Hundreds of ancient shrines and archaeological sites and countless works of art in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria and elsewhere have been destroyed recently by the Taliban, Islamic State and others. The Buddhas of Bamiyan and the ancient artifacts of Nimrud, Nineveh and Tadmor are among the cultural sites looted or devastated by dynamite and the sledgehammer. While trivial compared to the loss of life and livelihood, this rampage diminishes the cultural heritage of humanity. "A tragedy and catastrophic loss for Iraqi history and archaeology beyond comprehension," Amr al-Azm, a Syrian anthropologist and historian, called the destruction, as reported in the [NYT](#). The Taliban and Islamic State are destroying their past along with future prospects.

For the most part, the ancient artworks in museums and carved in monumental stone works are not currently the objects of worship. Rather, they represent what some see as the shameful past of Arab and other Muslim peoples who have since been enlightened by the message of their

Prophet. They seem to believe their past is embarrassing and must be erased.

In Israel, in recent decades, there has grown a "Temple denial" culture that not only calls the well-established historicity of the First and Second Temples in Jerusalem a lie, but also destroys physical evidence of the Temples. This is done to delegitimize the historical and present Jewish connection and claim to Jerusalem and environs. This is being perpetrated not only by religious fanatics, but by secular leaders promoting a political agenda. Three-thousand year-old Jewish artifacts have been recovered from the landfills left by those who would destroy our history. Although there is a disinclination by some Israelis to preserve Arab art and artifacts in Israel for similar reasons, the shrines and art are protected by law.

If this urge to purge seems familiar, it should.

"When Adonai brings you to the land... you shall tear down their altars, smash their pillars, cut down their sacred

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The Urge to Purge

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posts, and consign their images to the fire” says The Lord God in Deut 7:5 and in over one hundred other places in Hebrew Scripture, in case you missed it.

There is no particular point in judging our Israelite ancestors, whose altar-smashing occurred barely 500 years after the time of Fred Flintstone. But it is worth trying to understand them.

The idolatrous practices in the ancient Near East included human sacrifice, sex cults and a cosmos ruled by multiple false gods whose capricious acts and narcissism often demanded cruelty, injustice and inanity. The world-view was based on falsehood and magic. Our more enlightened ancestors believed that those idolatrous practices were dangerous and had to be suppressed and abolished, and this was done by destroying the symbols and accoutrements of idolatry, as well as the idolaters. These idolatrous practices were sometimes followed by our ancestors themselves, before the revelation at Sinai and for at least a thousand years after. The struggle to end idolatry was a central mission of formal Israelite civilization.

The impetus to eliminate evidence of idolatry was not simply an attempt to cover up a shameful past. Rather, it represented a response to continuing imminent danger.

In polite American culture, we prohibit the exhibition of the Confederate flag or the swastika. Reference to the genocide of American Indians is taboo in political discourse and the media, and the physical evidence is erased. You can hardly find a “Whites Only” sign anymore. Is it a healthy desire to suppress and eliminate the horrors of racism and genocide, or is it a cover-up?

Do we want to destroy the Death Camp at Auschwitz, or do we want to preserve it?

Long ago in the Mishna and Talmud (see for example

Avoda Zara 12a-b), our rabbis discussed the meaning of artistic symbolism in the context of using a public water fountain shaped as an idol (such as a Greek goddess), the use of which appeared as “kissing” the idol thereby resembling the very way the idol may have been “worshiped,” or kneeling to draw water from a public fountain that might have a statue of a false god in the middle, again appearing to “serve” the idol. Even in that era, our sages realized that these items were merely “public art” and that no one believed these were gods. In the same way, today, no one would think a Santa Claus figure or Roman statue is any sort of deity or power whatsoever, but only a marketing symbol or work of art – though I would not display one in the synagogue lobby. We are also commanded both to remember what Amalek did, to wipe out the memory or evidence of Amalek, and – in the same verse – to not forget.



A member of ISIS in Mosul, Iraq, destroys the winged bull that guarded the gates of Nineveh in the 7th century BCE.

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We have to openly confront our past, and repudiate some of our ancestors’ practices while “accepting” our history in order to grow beyond it. As a people, and as individuals, we grow by acknowledging our past, appreciating our development, and learning from our mistakes. Admittedly, I was not always as wonderful as I am now, and that is one of the wondrous things about me. We recognize that ancient art or contemporary trademarks do not represent a real or present threat. The richness of our 3,500-year literary tradition is that our own history and development is preserved, with all its guts and glories, forcing us to admit our past as we take pride in our advancement.

Knowing that our people were once in this respect somewhat like the Taliban and Islamic State, and that in some ways we are still like them, could help us better understand them and ourselves, in the hope of helping us protect ourselves and our neighbors, and maybe even preserve some of the relics from our past. Instead of erasing our past, we leave it so we can learn from it.



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BEKI Religious School

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LifeCycle

Benei Mitzva

Isaac Callaghan, son of Rebecca Gratz & Steve Sitrin, and of Joseph Callaghan, June 5-6, *parashat BeHa'alotekha*.

Guido Secchiaroli, son of Dina & Michael Secchiaroli, June 19-20, *parashat Qorah*. For his Bar Mitzvah project,

Guido is hosting a book drive. His goal is to collect as many gently used books for children and adults as he can. While there are a number of worthy organizations, he has chosen to donate to New Haven Reads.

Adin Jennings and **Fiona Jennings** children of Jeff & Miriam Jennings, June 26-27, *parashat Huqat*.



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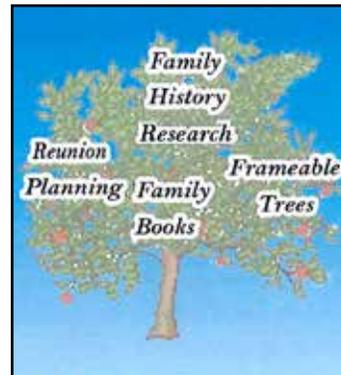
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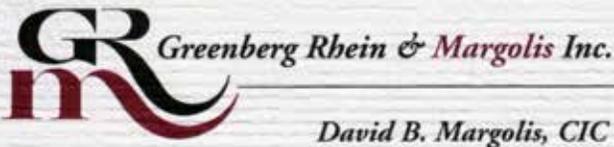


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Hamden Hall Country Day School

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We celebrated National Mix It Up Day
in October to foster greater respect
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meets on the
third Wednesday
of each month
at Tower One/
Tower East in
New Haven*

Visit us online at www.jblct.org
Reach out to us at info@jblct.org

June 2015

14 Sivan 5775 - 13 Tammuz 5775

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<p>1 7:45am Rashi Study Group 10:00am Yoga Hour 7:30pm Executive Board Meeting</p> <p>14 Sivan</p>	<p>2 7:30pm Israeli Dancing</p> <p>15 Sivan</p>	<p>3 10:00am Rabbi's Study Group - last meeting for the summer (off-site)</p> <p>16 Sivan</p>	<p>4 12:00pm Talmud Study Group</p> <p>17 Sivan</p>	<p>5 Isaac Callaghan Bar Mitzva 7:00pm BEKI/BJ end of year Shabbat dinner (off-site, reservations required) 8:03pm Candle Lighting</p> <p>18 Sivan</p>	<p>6 <i>Behaalotekha</i> Isaac Callaghan Bar Mitzva 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Gratz, Sitrin & Callaghan 5:45pm Minha</p> <p>19 Sivan</p>
<p>7 9:45am Brunch & Panel Discussion "Considering Homelessness in New Haven"</p> <p>20 Sivan</p>	<p>8 7:45am Rashi Study Group 10:00am Yoga Hour</p> <p>21 Sivan</p>	<p>9</p> <p>22 Sivan</p>	<p>10</p> <p>23 Sivan</p>	<p>11 12:00pm Talmud Study Group</p> <p>24 Sivan</p>	<p>12 8:07pm Candle Lighting</p> <p>25 Sivan</p>	<p>13 <i>Shelah</i> Darshanit: Ina Silverman 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: Blackmer & Stewart 1:00pm BEKI in the Backyard at the Oppenheimers 5:45pm Minha</p> <p>26 Sivan</p>
<p>14 1:00pm BEKI/BJ Kadima Pool Party (off-site, reservations required)</p> <p>27 Sivan</p>	<p>15 7:45am Rashi Study Group 10:00am Yoga Hour</p> <p>28 Sivan</p>	<p>16 7:30pm Israeli Dancing</p> <p>29 Sivan</p>	<p>17 <i>Rosh Hodesh I Numbers</i></p> <p>30 Sivan</p>	<p>18 <i>Rosh Hodesh II Numbers</i> 12:00pm Talmud Study Group</p> <p>1 Tammuz</p>	<p>19 Guido Secchiaroli Bar Mitzva 8:10pm Candle Lighting</p> <p>2 Tammuz</p>	<p>20 <i>Korah</i> Guido Secchiaroli Bar Mitzva 10:45am Children's Programs Qiddush: Secchiaroli 5:45pm Minha</p> <p>3 Tammuz</p>
<p>21</p> <p>4 Tammuz</p>	<p>22 7:45am Rashi Study Group 10:00am Yoga Hour 6:30pm Annual Meeting</p> <p>5 Tammuz</p>	<p>23</p> <p>6 Tammuz</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7 Tammuz</p>	<p>25 12:00pm Talmud Study Group (last session for the summer)</p> <p>8 Tammuz</p>	<p>26 Adin & Fiona Jennings Bar & Bat Mitzva 8:11pm Candle Lighting</p> <p>9 Tammuz</p>	<p>27 <i>Hukkat</i> Adin & Fiona Jennings Bar & Bat Mitzva 10:45am Children's Programs 10:45am Shabbat Shalom Torah Study Qiddush: Jennings 5:45pm Minha</p> <p>10 Tammuz</p>
<p>28</p> <p>11 Tammuz</p>	<p>29 7:45am Rashi Study Group 10:00am Yoga Hour 6:15pm Benei Mitzva Parents' Meeting with Rabbi Tilsen</p> <p>12 Tammuz</p>	<p>30 7:30pm Israeli Dancing</p> <p>13 Tammuz</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 Before sunset: Minha

Homelessness in New Haven

Sunday, June 7 from 9:45 to noon. As a follow up to our Abraham's Tent Tikun Olam project, journalist Paul Bass will moderate a solutions-focused discussion, *Considering Homelessness in New Haven: A Community Conversation*. Panelists will include, among others: Alison Cunningham, Executive Director Columbus House; and John Bradley, Executive Director Liberty Community Services. Open to entire community. Abraham's Tent hosts and participants have been invited to join us. For more information or to volunteer, contact Steve Werlin (shwerlin@gmail.com).

Annual Meeting

Members and guests are invited to the Congregation's Annual Meeting on Monday June 22 from 6:30 to 7:45 p.m. Find out what happened last year and what is on the agenda for 2015-16. Recognize the great work of our officers, directors and members in making BEKI a great community. There will be food. Attend the Minha-Maariv services from 5:45 to 6:15 p.m. and then stay for the Annual Meeting.

The fiscal year begins 1 July. While our office is happy to take payments any time, your payment of dues or outstanding commitments in June will simplify keeping our books in order and current.

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