Yamim Noraim: Days of Awe

Schedules, Information, Order Forms

Information, schedules, registration and order forms for Yamim Noraim – Days of Awe – are available at www.beki.org under the “Worship” tab. A schedule of Sukkot and Shemini Atseret services is available there as well.

Volunteers Needed

To volunteer either to help with planning or to participate in our High Holy Day worship services, please contact Darryl Kuperstock at kuperst@gmail.com. Help is needed for mailings, Break Fast shopping and planning, greeters and ushers, minyan makers (early attendees), English readings, printing Yizkor Memorial Book, and more. If you have any questions, please speak with Darryl.

Need a Letter for Employer or School?

Shul members occasionally need letters to employers or principals explaining the nature of the Jewish holiday observance. Despite the high level of understanding in our community, there is still a need for education and information. It is important that our children be in shul for all of Yontif.

It is also important to defend your right – by tradition a God-given right – not to have to work on these days. So often, we find that if we can work, we must work. Nuanced reservations and distinctions are often lost in practice, and so clear-cut and undifferentiated rules are needed.

If you would like such a letter for Rosh HaShana, Yom Kippur or Sukkot, contact Rabbi Tilsen at jjtilsen@beki.org or 203.389.2108 x10.

Shofar So Good

The sound of the shofar calls us to teshuva each morning from Rosh Hodesh Elul (Sunday 4 September 2016) through Rosh HaShana. Psalm 27 is also included in each morning and evening service until the festival of Hoshana Rabba.

Selihot at BEKI

Our congregation was a guest of our USCJ-affiliate and neighboring Congregation B’nai Jacob for the First Selihot Service on Saturday night 24 September 2016. The selihot (penitential) prayers are said during the middle of the night (or pre-dawn) during the period immediately before Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. It is believed that a heightened sense of spiritual awareness can be achieved during those hours.

Days of Awe

Michael Stern will serve as our Hazzan Rishon (lead cantor) for the High Holy Days, as he has done each year since
Amazon Commission

If you are buying items from Amazon and use the link on BEKI’s home page beki.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.)
5773. Michael, a resident of Skokie, IL, is a BEKI alumnus and a student of Rabbi Alan Lovins, who served as Hazzan Rishon for seventeen years. In addition to Michael, the services will again be led by BEKI members serving as volunteer hazzanim. Rabbi Tilsen will conduct the services, as he has each year since 1993.

New this year is our adoption of Mahzor Lev Shalem, an annotated version of the common Ashkenazic liturgy for Yamim Noraim. The edition features extensive commentary and a wider selection of popular piyyutim (medieval poems), as well as many transliterations of passages sung in unison and occasional choreographic directions. The commentary incorporates literary, historical, linguistic and inspirational material on the service structure, liturgical selections and specific words and phrases. MLS also includes the full Hebrew and English texts of the ancillary services such as the Maariv Evening Service following Neila, which was represented only in Hebrew in our prior mahzor. Large-print copies are available on request from our ushers upon entering the sanctuary.

Services are organized and led entirely by our members. Generally, Michael will lead the morning Torah service and musaf on all three days, as well as Kol Nidre, Maariv and Neila on Yom Kippur. Birkhot ha-Shahar (morning blessings) and Pesuqei de-Zimra (Verses of Song) represent a poetry reading that creates or reinforces a spiritually sensitive atmosphere, which is an experience unto itself as well as prelude to the recitation of Shema and Amida. Shacharit morning services, essentially the recitation of Shema and Amida, include popular “sing along” Hebrew piyyutim (poems). Musaf services, the particular additional Amida for the holy day, include several interpretative or contemporary English readings as well as cantorial (and sometimes choral) elaborations. The shofar is sounded after the haftara reading and again during musaf on both days of Rosh HaShana. The recitation of Shema and hearing the shofar are both considered Biblical precepts not to be missed.

Tickets are required for adult entrance to most services. Among other reasons, this is to ensure the safety and security of the Congregation. Full-time students and military personnel on active duty may enter upon presentation of proper identification. Every person in the building must be identified before entry and is subject to search.

Some of the ushers serving during the Holy Days may be new members. Veteran members who do not recognize the ushers are urged to introduce themselves, as our ushers wish to meet as many members and visitors as they can. If you forget your tickets, our ushers will be able to find your name on the members or guests list.

For safety and planning reasons, pre-registration for children’s services is helpful. For registration information, contact office@beki.org or 203.389.2108 x14.

If you are interested in babysitting service, please contact office@beki.org or 203.389.2108 x14. Walk-in babysitting is not available and will not be available at all unless a prior arrangement is made. Children and infants are welcome in the sanctuary; quiet non-electric toys are permitted. Children and adults who prefer to crawl or sit on the floor are especially welcome in the carpeted open area in the front of the sanctuary.

Rosh HaShana
See our website under “Worship / High Holy Days” for a complete schedule and additional information.

Rosh HaShana services begin Sunday night 2 October 2016 at 6:15p with the Minha service, followed by Maariv at 6:30p. Candle Lighting is at 6:14p. The service concludes by 7:15p. Morning services begin at 8:30a on Monday 3 October; several services for children and youth, and a learners’ service, are held as well. Shofar is sounded at about 10:30a in the sanctuary; please come to the sanctuary at that hour, or as directed by the ushers, if you are elsewhere in the building.

Tashlikh (“casting”) services will be held on the first day of Rosh HaShana, Monday 3 October, from 5:15p to 5:30p, at the Edgewood Bridge and at the Whitney Museum Covered Bridge. The Tashlikh service is a popular outdoor event for people of all ages, and includes a brief prayer,
AWESOME TIPS

In preparation for the full-day fast of Yom Kippur, it is suggested that caffeine users reduce their intake to reduce withdrawal symptoms on the Holy Day. Some people avoid wearing leather shoes on Yom Kippur, so do not be surprised to see canvas sneakers or other non-leather shoes in use. Some also follow the custom of wearing a kittel (white robe) or other white garments on Yom Kippur. People who need to eat or drink or take medication on Yom Kippur may speak with an usher, or contact the office in advance, for assistance if needed. Rabbi Tilsen notes that “People for whom fasting represents a significant medical threat are prohibited from fasting. Water, milk or a simple meal should be consumed as needed.”

Taking a Stand

While it is customary to stand for some parts of the service, those for whom standing is difficult, impossible or dangerous should feel comfortable sitting. Rabbi Tilsen comments that “You get five points for answering ‘Amen!’ but only one point for standing, so keep it in perspective. This applies to people of all ages.”

Days of Awe

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poetry and singing. It is held beside a body of natural water. Please encourage friends and neighbors to join you.

On Monday afternoon of Rosh HaShana, minha service begins at 6:15p, followed by the evening service at 6:30p. Candle lighting is after 7:15p. Candle lighting on the second night is about an hour later than on the first night because on the second night we wait until the first day of the holiday is complete before beginning the second day, whereas on the first night we light candles before sunset, thereby slightly extending the festival day beyond 48 hours.

On Tuesday 4 October, morning services are also at 8:30a. Youth services are held as well. Shofar is sounded on Tuesday morning. Afternoon service (minha) begins at 5:45p on Tuesday. Havdala (Home Ritual) is at 7:15p or later.

Tsom Gedalia Minor Fast Day

The day after Rosh HaShana, Wednesday 5 October, is observed as a minor fast day in commemoration of the assassination of Gedalia ben Akhikam, a puppet governor appointed over Judea by Babylonian King Nebukhadnezzar, around the year 582 BCE. The story is recounted in Jeremiah 41 as well as in Josephus’ Antiquities. The fast is referenced in Zekharia 8:19. Because the assassination appeared to result in an intensification of the foreign-backed civil war and the complete collapse of any semblance of Jewish autonomy at that point, it is remembered to remind us of the danger of political violence even when wielded against compromised officials.

Qever Avot Cemetery Memorial Services

The annual Qever Avot Cemetery Memorial Services will be held at 10:00a at the Hamden Cemetery, and at 11:00a at the West Haven Cemetery on Sunday 9 October, which is the Sunday between Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur. Rabbi Tilsen will lead a brief communal memorial service and will be available for individual prayers. Those who wish to visit the graves of their ancestors or loved ones but are unable to do so because of distance are invited to attend along with those whose loved ones are buried in the BEKI cemeteries. If you would like a ride to the service, please contact the office a few days in advance.

In addition, a representative of the Cemetery Association will be present to answer questions and concerns of those owning or considering the purchase of plots at the BEKI cemeteries. Now is a good time to purchase your choice of prime locations for traditional Jewish burial in these historic cemeteries. Members enjoy a substantial discount; only traditionally honored remains of legally Jewish persons may be interred in these cemeteries.
Directions to the cemeteries and more information can be found at [http://www.beki.org/about/directions-to-the-cemeteries/](http://www.beki.org/about/directions-to-the-cemeteries/). For information on cemetery purchases or upkeep, please contact the BEKI Cemetery Association at cemetery@beki.org or 203.389.2108 x57.

**Yom Kippur**

On the afternoon before Yom Kippur, Tuesday 11 October, the Minha service begins at 6:00p. Candle Lighting is 5:59p (or earlier). The Kol Nidre and Maariv Evening services begin promptly at 6:15p and end by 8:15p.

On Wednesday 12 October, the Shaharit Morning services begin at 9:00a; the Yizkor Memorial service begins after 11:00a. The Minha Afternoon service begins at 4:30p, and is followed immediately by the Neila and Maariv services. The services end with Havdala and the sounding of the Shofar at 7:00p.

For security reasons, tickets are required for all Yom Kippur services, including the afternoon and Neila services. If you arrive without your tickets, please introduce yourself to a Greeter who will be able to find your name on the Members and Guest list.

**George G. Posener Break Fast Concludes Yom Kippur**

Following the concluding Yom Kippur services on Wednesday 12 October 2016, members and ticket holders are invited to gather for our amazing Break Fast. For many years, George G. Posener sponsored the break fast in memory of his family. George G. Posener died on Yom Kippur 5772 (2011), so the break fast now honors his memory as well.

The George G. Posener Family Memorial Break Fast is prepared entirely by members of the BEKI community. Overseen by Darryl Kuperstock, most of the preparation and all of the cooking is done in advance, but the assembly and plating (and clean-up) of this banquet is done by the fantastic volunteers who join us in the kitchen during the afternoon break on Yom Kippur. It’s fun, intense, and extremely satisfying – so come help us out this year. Help is also appreciated in the days before Yom Kippur.

The [George G. Posener Family Memorial Yom Kippur Break Fast Fund at Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel in blessed memory of his wife, parents, sisters, brother and two precious sons](http://www.beki.org) was established by George G. Posener in 2001 to create a lasting memorial at the time of the yahrzeits of his family members. Proceeds from this endowment provide for a special and meaningful community gathering at the end of Yom Kippur. The Posener Fund is held and managed by the Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven.
**SUKKOT IS COMING**

*A complete schedule of services is available in table format at www.beki.org/worship/sukkot-thru-simhat-torah/.*

If you feel a sense of loss at the end of the High Holy Days, do not despair: it is time for Sukkot, called *the* Festival by our ancestors. Lulav & Etrog are used each day of Sukkot except Shabbat, until and including Hoshana Rabba. Information on the festival observances and schedules are published at www.beki.org/worship/sukkot-thru-simhat-torah/.

Set up of the Morris “Moishe” Schnitman Memorial Sukka is planned for Thursday 13 October 2016 from 3:30p to 6:30p. Come when you can. Add a personal touch by bringing some of your own *sekhakh* (evergreen branches are preferred) for the roof to enhance the beauty and aroma of our congregational *sukka*. Breakdown and storage are planned for Sunday 30 October, following *Shaharit*. Bring gloves; portable power drivers and ladders are welcome. Please come and help. For information and to let us know if you can help, contact *office@beki.org*.

**Lulav & Etrog Orders**

BEKI Religious School will offer *lulav* and *etrog* sets. To order, please contact Ina at *principal@beki.org* 203.389.2108 x13.

**Sukkot & Shabbat Ḥol HaMoed**

Sukkot begins on Sunday evening 16 October 2016. Minḥa afternoon service begins at 5:45p, followed immediately by the evening service, ending at 6:20p. The services will be held in the Sukka, weather permitting. Candle lighting on Sunday night is at 5:51p.

The morning service on Monday 17 October begins at 9:15a and includes the recitation of Hallel, waving of Lulav and Etrog, and the recitation of a Hoshana for that day. A BEKI Family Sukka Hop will run (or hop) on Monday from 2:45p to 5:45p, beginning at a local residence; reservations and location of first stop at *mirbenson@aol.com* 203.389.6137. Services on Monday night also begin at 5:45p, but candle lighting on Monday is after 6:51p. Services on Tuesday morning 18 October are from 9:15a to 11:36a and again include the taking of Lulav and Etrog. Havdala that evening is after 6:50p.

On Friday night 21 October 2016, afternoon and Shabbat Festival Evening Services begin at 6:00p. Services the next morning, Shabbat Ḥol HaMoed Sukkot, begin at 9:15a. We do not use Lulav and Etrog on Shabbat.

**Shabbat Ḥol HaMoed**

Shabbat Hol HaMoed, Saturday 22 October 2016, is marked by reading selections from the Biblical Book of Qohelet (“Ecclesiastes”). Qohelet, attributed by tradition to King Solomon in his old age, is a “wisdom” book that many see as being out of step with the rest of the Torah. While it includes such well-known passages as “To everything there is a season” and “There is nothing new under the sun,” it also contains statements that seem cynical or nihilistic. The Book will be chanted according to its beautiful and ancient melody.

Shabbat (Saturday) afternoon service begins at 5:45p and ends about 6:20p.

**Ḥol HaMoed Sukkot**

“Ḥol HaMoed,” also known as the “intermediate” days of the festival, are those days between the first two and last two days of Sukkot (and of Pesah). They have a “semi-holiday” status. The rules against *melakha* (“work”) that apply on Festivals are not fully in force during this period, although we are encouraged to take this time as a holiday and to avoid work as much as possible. Our weekday morning services are enhanced with a brief Torah reading, the recitation of the musical “Hallel” section of Psalms, and a brief Musaf (additional) service. Weekday morning services thus take 60 minutes, instead of our usual 30 to 45 minutes. Afternoon and evening services are the usual length. The *lulav* (branches) and *etrog* (citron) are waved each morning of Ḥol HaMoed Sukkot (except Shabbat), and one is obliged to dwell (to eat is to live) in a *sukka*. Some morning and evening services will be held in the BEKI *sukka*. Some people do not wear tefillin during Ḥol HaMoed; others (common Ashkenazic practice outside of Israel) wear them for shaharit but remove them before Hallel. Tefillin are never used on the full festival day.

**Hosanna! Hosanna!**

The Hoshana Rabba (“Great Hosanna”) morning service on Sunday 23 October 2016 begins at 9a and ends by 10:50a. This is one of the most colorful, fun and tactile
services of the year, featuring seven circuits around the sukkah or shul with lulav and etrog (palm and citron) and the hoshana service in which willow twigs are beaten on the chairs. Special holiday melodies make this an unforgettable spiritual experience. Be sure to come to this “service for all ages.”

Hoshana Rabba is a semi-festival on which work is not strictly prohibited as it is on the major festivals. It serves as a “closing ceremony” for the weeklong Sukkot observance in preparation for the concluding festival of Shemini Atseret. If the sukkah is dry and rain or snow is not imminent, the Hoshana Rabba service will be in the sukkah.

Shemini Atseret & Yizkor Memorial Service

The Festival of Shemini Atseret (“Eighth Day of Assembly”) serves as a conclusion to the autumn Festival of Sukkot (“Booths”). The festival begins Sunday night 23 October 2016. The minha service begins at 5:45p; the festival maariv service begins immediately after, about 5:55p. It is customary to light a memorial candle on that night immediately before lighting the Festival candles. Candle lighting is 5:41p (or earlier).

During the morning service, which begins at 9:15a on Monday 24 October, Hallel is chanted. The unique festival nusah (musical mode) is used for this service. For Carole Bass’s comment on Hallel, go to www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak2Wg2XYks (youtube cv “Carole Bass Hallel”).

The Yizkor Memorial Service is also incorporated into the Shemini Atseret liturgy. In the Yizkor service we call upon the memories of our ancestors and loved ones who, while not physically present, are part of our “Assembly.” During that memorial service, individual and communal prayers and remembrances will be offered for all of our departed loved ones.

Simhat Torah Celebration

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is the place to be for the evening and morning of Simhat Torah. Minha services begin at 5:45p and evening services begin at 6:00p on Monday 24 October 2016. Evening services include seven haqafot (circumambulatory dances) with Torah scrolls and a brief Torah reading, the only time that we read Torah in public at night. Candle lighting on Monday night is after 6:41p.

Festival Morning services begin at 9:15a on Tuesday 25 October. Three Torah scrolls are removed from the ark (around 10:00a) and seven brief haqafot are conducted. The final chapters of the Book of Deuteronomy, parashat Ve-Zot Ha-Berakha, are read, followed by the opening passages of the Book of Genesis, part of parasha Bereishit. This concludes the annual Torah reading cycle, and begins the new cycle. This is particularly joyful at BEKI because so many members are involved in Torah reading throughout the year, and these readers dedicate considerable effort to preparing accurate and melodious chanting. A maftir portion is read from Numbers, which describes the observance of Shemini Atseret in the ancient Temple. The haftara is recited from the opening passages of Joshua, which is the sequel to Deuteronomy, sometimes called the “sixth book” of the Five Books of Moses.

Goodie Bags will be presented by the Sisterhood to all the deserving children at services evening and morning. Afternoon minha service begins at 5:45p as is usual at BEKI. Havdala (home ritual) is after 6:41p.
Contributions

Rabbi’s Tzedqqa Fund
- The Zlotoff Family in appreciation and in memory of Robert Zlotoff

Qiddush Sponsors (minimum $280)
- Corinne Blackmer & Pilar Stewart
- Harold & Stephanie Birn
- Margie & Jay Hirshfield
- Andy Hirshfield & Monica Starr
- Cathie & Ron Miller
- Sarah Miller & Lee Cruz
- The Abraham Family

Chai Fund (minimum $18) to support synagogue operations
- To Rachel Gerber and family with sympathy on the passing of J. Gordon Miles by Harriet Friedman, Charles Bruce & family
- To Barbara Cushen with wishes for a speedy recovery by Harriet Friedman, Charles Bruce & family
- To Ms. Rita Brieger with sympathy on the passing of Rabbi Gerald Brieger by Alan Lovins
- To Helene Sapadin in honor of the marriage of Molly Sapadin & Austen Katz by Donna Kemper & Ron Zlotoff
- To Darryl Kuperstock with wishes for a speedy recovery by Donna Kemper & Ron Zlotoff
- To Noam Benson-Tilsen in honor of his Bar Mitzva by the Avni-Singer family

The Barzillai Cheski BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund
- To Corey Stone in honor of Hachnasat Orchim by Rena Cheskis-Gold & Marty Gold

The Harold & Arthur Ratner Memorial Fund
- In loving memory of my son Arthur Ratner by Mikki Ratner
- In loving memory of a fabulous husband, father & superb friend by Betsy, Howie, Shilo, Indigo & Sage (and “shining” great-grandfather from heaven)

Frankel-Mattler Memorial Fund
- In memory of her sister Zelda Frankel Katz by Shirley Mattler
- In memory of her sister-in-law Dorothy Seigle Mattler by Shirley Mattler

Yahrzeit Fund ($5 minimum) to support synagogue operations
- In memory of Ben Marks by Lynne Marks
- In memory of Madeline Bear by Syma Solomon & Bruce Haynes
- In memory of Alan Haynes by Syma Solomon & Bruce Haynes
- In memory of Avraham Epstein by Syma Solomon & Bruce Haynes
- In memory of Bessie Epstein by Syma Solomon & Bruce Haynes
- In memory of Jacob Cohen by Betty Swinkin
- In memory of her aunt Lillian Senderoff Resnick by Sherry Kent
- In memory of Herb Weiner by Rebecca Weiner
- In memory of George Ralph Schnitman by Helene Schnitman Vanderhoef & Edward Vanderhoef
- In memory of Joseph Stern by Barbara Akresh
- In memory of Irving Guttenberg by Elma Guttenberg
- In memory of David “Frank” Goldberg by Sue & Wayne Cole
- In memory of Eli & Simon Berman by Richard Neveloff
- In memory of Joseph Swinkin by Betty Swinkin
- In memory of Everett Rader by Dennis & Barbara Rader
- In memory of Louis Blatt by Marilyn Margolis
- In memory of Faye Schwartz by David Schwartz
- In memory of Leah F. Wallach by Mickey & Bud Chorney
- In memory of Irv Zerwitz by Ron Zlotoff
- In memory of Mordechai Rosmarin by Ghislane Rosmarin Palumbo
- In memory of Fannie Siegel by Eileen S. Rogoff
- In memory of Harry Fleischner by Robert Fleischner
- In memory of Irving Kaufman by Florence Kaufman
- In memory of Bernard Avroch by Martin Avroch
- In memory of Muriel Kaltman by Anonymous
- In memory of Sylvia Fleischner by Sara-Ann & Hillel Auerbach
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:

Helen Gerber, bat mitzva, 29 October, parashat Bereshit
Mia Goldstein, bat mitzva, 5 November, parashat Noah
Sophie Marx Schonberger, bat mitzva, 19 November, parashat VaYera

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, or at least well-behaved youth along with adults.

Hebrew with Will

Hebrew with Will meets every other Saturday morning from 10:45a – 11:45a in the office (on the weeks that Shabbat Shalom Torah Study does not meet). Practice Hebrew listening, speaking, and Alef-Bet recognition. Modern Hebrew; suitable for those interested in Biblical and Prayer Book study as well. Free; all welcome. With Will Auiermme.

Mondays

Rashi Study Group: I Kings

Each Monday morning from 7:45a 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 beginning 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 meets immediately following the 7:00a shaharit morning service; not meeting on Festivals. With Jon-Jay Tilsen.

Sundays

New – Mishna Berakhot for Teens

A four-week reading of the initial chapters of Mishna Masekhet Berakhot, especially for teens, 30 October – 20 November, Sundays 9:45a–11a, with Rabbi Tilsen. The Mishna is the law compendium compiled by Tsipori resident Rabbi Yehuda HaNasi in the second century of the common era. The Mishna is the basis for the Talmud and is a fundamental text for the study of the development of Jewish law and practice. Tractate Berakhot deals in large part with common rituals including the recitation of the Shema and the Amida. Free. Everyone welcome.

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 study group meets Wednesday mornings in the Rosenkrantz Family Library. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at 203.397-2513.

**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.

**Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group**

The *Sanhedrin Talmud Study Group* meets on Thursdays from 1p to 2p and 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.

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. The group, led by Rabbi Tilsen, will meet in June and July, and then will be on recess until after the festivals.

**Every Day**

**New Divrei Torah on the Web**

Devar Torah by Alan H. Lovins on “Israel: My Positions” (30 July 2016), see under “Learning / Members’ Divrei Torah”

Devar Torah by Robert Oakes on “The Decalogue” (14 February 2009), see under “Learning / Members’ Divrei Torah”

BEKI Bulletin (“The Scroll – Bulletin of Beth El–Keser Israel”) April 1973, see under “Calendar & Events / Bulletins & Happenings” and “See Archives” link.

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**Upcoming Benei Mitzva**

**Helen Gerber,** daughter of Alan & Rachel Wiseman Gerber, 28-29 Oct. 2016, *parashat Bereishit*

**Mia Goldstein,** daughter of Daniel Goldstein & Grace Jenq, 4-5 Nov. 2016, *parashat Noah*

**Sophie Marx Schonberger,** daughter of Amy Marx & Robert Schonberger, 18-19 Nov. 2016, *parashat VaYera*

**Mazal tov to**

David & Rayna Belowsky on the birth of grandchild Max Avi Dudek in August, and to parents Emily & David. Max was entered into the covenant of Abraham through brit mila in Massachusetts.
Happy 5777. BEKI is proud host to local chapters of Kadima and USY, the Conservative Movement’s synagogue-based youth groups for grades 5-8 and 9-12. This year the BEKI chapters are independent of B’nai Jacob, which has decided to make other arrangements.

The groups aim to nurture Jewish community and connection to synagogue life through a balance of recreational, leadership activities and community service to the BEKI, Jewish and general community. It includes participation in regional, national (and even international) Kadima and USY events. BEKI’s chapters have won many awards in the past for their strong performance in these areas and we look forward to continuing this tradition.

Advise and Consent

BEKI member Becky May is serving as joint advisor for this year under the guidance of the BEKI Youth Commission. Parents and other congregation members continue their vital role as chaperones. We welcome even greater involvement including an ongoing opportunity for someone to share the paid, part-time position since each group has often had its own advisor as well. If interested contact Becky, Jennifer Myers, or Rebecca Weiner, Youth Commission Parent Liaison.

Kadima

Kadima kicks off this month with “Meet, Sort, Play Games, and Eat” – a ‘service to synagogue’ and pizza and ice cream social where kids help prep High Holiday printed materials and have some fun. Sunday 9 October from noon-2:30p at BEKI.

USY

Many of last year’s USY officers have graduated or taken positions at a regional level leaving several youth positions open for new leaders (no prior experience required). Meantime, past and prospective participants remain active carrying on the tradition of tsedaqa and teen mentorship, conferring gifts of kippot made by a Guatemalan women’s cooperative on new benei mitzva at their individual celebrations throughout the fall.

Activities

We also have conducted a survey of current and prospective youth group parents, and created a community calendar of dates and/or events for Kadimaniks, USYers and their families, which will continue to be updated. You can see the draft calendar on the Kadima and USY section of www.beki.org. Examples of past favorites considered include baking Thanksgiving pies whose proceeds go to Tsedaqa, Shabbat afternoon games, trampoline park, snow tubing/ice skating, swim parties, synagogue overnights, lounge nights for teens, plus several new ideas. Activities are open to all Jewish kids regardless of BEKI affiliation. Bring a friend, make a friend.

Through the generous support of the Barzillai Cheskis BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund, the Marcel Gutman Scholarship Fund, and the Jewish Federation of Greater New Haven Israel Scholarship Fund, Ari Kaufman-Frankel recently returned from Israel where he participated in the Na’aleh program run by Camp Yavneh Na’aleh is a six-week educational experience aimed at enhancing the participant’s Jewish personal growth and love of Israel.

Letter from Ari Kaufman-Frankel

In August 2015 at the end of my counselor-in-training summer at Camp Yavneh, I knew there was only one way I wanted to spend the summer before my senior year of high school, on my camp’s Israel Leadership trip, Na’aleh. I was going to return to the Jewish homeland with my closest friends for the opportunity of a lifetime. I can honestly say that spending the summer in Israel, instead of getting a job or an internship, was the best decision of my life.

By the end of the Na’aleh program I had become a new person. I became extremely proud of my Judaism and I want to show it off to the world, which is exemplified by the Chai necklace that I now wear every day. In addi-
tion, through various speakers and programs, I feel that not only do I have an enhanced sense of Israeli culture but I also have a good understanding of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and, importantly, I now have factual information at my fingertips to support my pro-Israel arguments and to educate my peers on the Israeli culture. Obviously Israel is not perfect, but I am extremely proud of the progress the country has made in only a handful of decades.

My friends, both Jewish and non-Jewish, do not hate Israel; however, the only information they have regarding Israel is the misinformation that is reported in Western news. I want to educate them and I especially want to use my knowledge of Israel when I go to college next year. American collegues are full of anti-Israel organizations, such as the BDS movement, that hate Israel and work to influence students, who do not have the full information about the conflict to advocate against Israel’s policies. Using all that I learned on Na’aleh, I want to be able to educate my peers in college and help them to understand the conflict from the Israeli perspective in the hope that my generation of Americans will continue to support and advocate for Israel throughout our lives.

My favorite part of the trip, and the part that I am positive I will remember for the rest of my life, was the Negev Experience. We camped out in the desert for three days and nights without phone service, electricity, or bathrooms. It was an incredible experience for me. I discovered the hidden beauty of the desert and learned to love it thanks to our incredible tour guide, Yuval. Through various programs Yuval instilled the importance of going off the path both literally on the trail, but also in life. In one exercise, he asked us to write down three characteristics that our friends would use to describe us. After collecting all of our papers, he burned the entire pile before our eyes -- we were in shock. He said that what people think about us does not matter, what matters is what we think of ourselves and how we strive as individuals to be the best versions of ourselves. Right after this exercise, Yuval sent each of us out into the desert for a solitary walk. I loved the experience of being alone in the desert and experiencing nature for what it really is. For me the experience was amazing, not only because I loved the solitude of the desert and the opportunity to pay attention to my inner thoughts, but afterwards I felt an incredible connection with my friends when we came back together to discuss our experiences and to support each other. Yuval opened up my heart and my mind and helped me to discover not only the beauty of the Negev, but through his guidance I also discovered how nature can provide for me a space where I can go when I need a break from the busy world, where I can self-reflect, sort out my thoughts and, in a sense, get a fresh start.

Three days before we flew back to America, we were informed of tragic news: Yuval had died in a motorcycle accident. This news was crushing at first. I knew the only way to truly honor Yuval’s memory was to work every single day to abide by what he taught me in the desert and to share this experience and what I learned from it with my peers. Yuval was an incredible man with amazing dreams and aspirations including his plan to bring drug-addicted Israeli youth into the Negev to help them to have transformative experiences, like the one I had, so that they too can have a fresh start in life. Yuval will always be with me. Because of him I am no longer afraid to follow my own path instead of always conforming to what society and my peers are doing. Going forward I plan to do what I feel is right and I have confidence that I will achieve this goal as this is my way to honor Yuval’s memory. The next time I venture to Israel I will make sure to visit the Negev to see the amazing night sky full of vibrant stars and be in the most sacred place in the world for me, and for Yuval. In the Negev, his teachings are as vibrant as the stars.
Sisterhood

**Sukkot**

Sukkot welcomes us just as we have emerged from asking forgiveness of other people and pray for the forgiveness of G-D. We are returning to our daily lives and all its challenges, joy and vicissitudes.

Sukkot is a holiday of harvest. It reflects the theme of impermanence: In an agricultural society nothing is so unsure as rains and new crops. The *sukka* not only represents the hut in which our ancestors dwelt as they made their way through the wilderness; it also represents the harvest booth in which people dwelt during the ingathering of produce before winter.

The most important ritual of Sukkot is living in a *sukka*. The *sukka* must be a temporary structure, not a permanent one. BUT we treat the *sukka* as our home during the holiday. We eat, drink, sleep and entertain in the *sukka* all the seven days as though it is a permanent abode for us and our house a temporary abode. One should also engage in rabbinic study in the *sukka*.

Today we use the *sukka* mostly for eating. There is a special obligation to do so on the first night. On that night, even if it is raining, we try to eat a token meal by reciting *qiddush* over wine and the blessing of *motzi* for bread.

The commandment to especially rejoice on Sukkot gives rise to an unusual attitude. The rabbis will often make exceptions to various other laws to encourage people to go beyond the letter of the law and perform the commandment anyway. Their attitude is the opposite in regard to the *sukka*. The rabbis are saying that you must leave the *sukka* if it is raining. In this way, they try to ensure that the *sukka* will be seen as a symbol of joy, not as a burden.

*Please join BEKI Sisterhood in celebrating Sukkot in our beautiful decorated sukka for Qiddush after services.*

It is not too early to think of your Hanuka shopping. Sisterhood gift shop will have new merchandise for all your needs for Hanuka, including candles. Please help us by supporting Sisterhood and shopping in the gift store.

*We will be sending out membership to BEKI Sisterhood in the near future. Please consider becoming a member for 2016-17.

The board of Sisterhood wishes all BEKI members Shana Tova UMetuqa and Gemar Hatima Tova

Happy and Healthy New Year

News

**Free Books**

In classroom 4 and in basket on table in Library. Some are fine books for which the library already has a copy or are outside of our focus. Take books on condition you don’t return them.

**Get Your Stuff**

Coats, umbrellas, shoes, glasses, keys and other unclaimed items in the coatroom will be donated or discarded before Rosh HaShana. Come collect your stuff.

**Holiday Hosting**

Chapel Haven participants seek hosting for haggim. If you can host someone in walking distance of BEKI, please contact Ina principal@beki.org.

**Torah Reading**

Gilah Benson-Tilsen gilahbt@gmail.com will coordinate readings for Devarim and Sukkot (through 25 October).

**Meditation for the Season of Awe**

A Shabbat Schmooze with Robin Goldberg. 1 October, following qid-dush, 12:45p–2p.

**Magic in Darkness**


**Pizza in the Hut**

Kosher Dairy Pizza made in the BEKI Kitchen, Wednesday 19 October, 6:30p, RSVP by 14 October office@beki.org, $10 adult, $5 under 12, $30 household. BYOB. Includes some vegan and gluten-free pizza, salad, beverages. Rain or shine. Volunteer to Shoshana zaxweiser@aol.com.

**Mishna Berakhot for Teens**

A four-week reading of the initial chapters of Mishna Masekhet Berakhot, especially for teens, 30 October – 20 November, Sundays 9:45a–11a, with Rabbi Tilsen. Everyone welcome.
We celebrated National Mix It Up Day in October to foster greater respect and understanding among our students.
A Message from Rabbi Tilsen

A VERBAL HOLOCAUST

One of the national “Black Lives Matter” organizations, “The Movement for Black Lives,” a coalition of dozens of mostly local organizations, gained the attention of world Jewry for stating that “Israel is an apartheid state” and that Israel is responsible for “the genocide taking place against the Palestinian people.” Here is the primary paragraph under discussion in its entirety. The larger context of the organization’s platform includes little reference to U.S. foreign policy or other countries, so this really sticks out.

The US justifies and advances the global war on terror via its alliance with Israel and is complicit in the genocide taking place against the Palestinian people. The US requires Israel to use 75 percent of all the military aid it receives to buy US-made arms. Consequently, every year billions of dollars are funneled from US taxpayers to hundreds of arms corporations, who then wage lobbying campaigns pushing for even more foreign military aid. The results of this policy are twofold: it not only diverts much needed funding from domestic education and social programs, but it makes US citizens complicit in the abuses committed by the Israeli government. Israel is an apartheid state with over 50 laws on the books that sanction discrimination against the Palestinian people. Palestinian homes and land are routinely bulldozed to make way for illegal Israeli settlements. Israeli soldiers also regularly arrest and detain Palestinians as young as 4 years old without due process. Every day, Palestinians are forced to walk through military checkpoints along the US-funded apartheid wall. (https://policy.m4bl.org/invest-divest/ 1 September 2016.)

Rational and informed supporters of the Black Lives Matter organizations will dismiss the use of the terms “genocide” and “apartheid” as crazy talk, as have many black public officials and organization heads. Even in the most brutal wars, such as the wars in Lebanon and Gaza, Israel’s conduct has been judged as being similar to or better than that of other nations; the record of atrocities (such as executing prisoners or rounding up and executing non-combatants) committed during the War of Independence in 1947-49, with under 1,000 deaths, compares favorably with the conduct of other armies and militias in the modern era. Calls for genocide were, and continue to be, heard from various Palestinian and neighboring Arab and Muslim states and militias, while the mainstream pre-state Jewish organizations and the government of Israel have used words of coexistence and peace. As atrocious as has been the war and violence over the years, there has been no conduct on Israel’s part that deserves the label “genocide.”

By the same token, the degree and nature of the separation of ethnic groups in Israel has represented a continuity of regional tradition, while the State of Israel has been a major force promoting equal civil rights and open opportunity. Arab citizens of Israel enjoy formal equal rights and do better than most minorities in developed countries. Arab residents of the West Bank should not expect the rights or responsibilities of citizenship. If one believes an independent Palestinian Arab state is being created, or should be created, in the West Bank, then one can’t call the future international border an “Apartheid wall.”

Other Americans have argued that these terms are appropriate because hyperbole or non-standard usage expresses the intensity of the contempt felt for Israel. This novel use of the term genocide signifies the killing of an individual or small group because of their race or ethnicity, or describes an attempt to weaken or suppress cultural expressions or the interests of a racial or ethnic group. “Apartheid” here means any hint of social segregation based on ethnicity or nationality.

But using these words in “new ways” is demeaning to actual people who have suffered genocide or Apartheid, such as American Indians, Armenians, Kurds, South Africans -- and Jews. The accusation of “genocide” strikes a particularly sensitive nerve among Jews, as does the term “apartheid” among Black Americans and Africans. While applying these
terms to Israel might accomplish the goal of making Israel look bad, it dilutes the power of those words. If “genocide” merely means that a cemetery gets relocated in favor of a new highway, and if “apartheid” merely means that the Arabic font on a highway sign is smaller than the Hebrew font, then maybe all that talk about the genocide against the American Indians and the apartheid in South Africa was just political propaganda. When the words “genocide” and “apartheid” are applied to such cases, or to the hoax of the “Jenin Massacre,” it trivializes the words. No need to be a Holocaust denier if a Holocaust is ubiquitous event to begin with.

We would not want to say that the Movement for Black Lives, in using “genocide” and “apartheid” in these ways is “gang-raping” or “enslaving” the minds of the American people. Using these words devalues the trauma of people who have been raped, and strikes a resonant anti-black cord, inasmuch as false rape charges have been used to incite and justify lynching or imprisoning many black men in this country and otherwise to terrorize and control black citizens. Using the wrong words is not just playing with fire. It is a verbal holocaust.

The other odd aspect of the group’s statement is that they apparently believe condemning Israel (and Israel alone) somehow advances the interests of black people in America. There is no evidence to suggest that they believe their statement actually helps Israeli or Palestinian Arabs promote their own legitimate interests. There is not really much similarity between the situation of Arabs in Israel and Palestinian Arabs in the West Bank, on two hands, and the particular situation blacks face in America, on the other, beyond the most generic problems that minorities face anywhere. The insertion of this anti-Israel language is an intrusion into a worthy cause. The charges are false, inflammatory, and diversionary. The Movement for Black Lives should stay in its lane.

One time many years ago, a person accused me of a convoluted conspiracy to harm her interests. There was no truth in it, nor did it make any sense. A friend explained that sometimes people who are conniving and malicious imagine that everyone else is so, too. It is ironic that the charge of “genocide” against Israeli Jews comes mostly from Palestinian Arabs who have been actively and explicitly advocating genocide against the Jews, as have Palestinian Arab leaders for decades, and their European supporters, whose parents actually perpetrated genocide against the Jewish People. It is not hard to explain why these parties use such language, and why some of them even belief what they are saying.

Harder to understand, perhaps, is why people interested in promoting BLM would insert this into their platform. While the more mainstream and focused “Black Lives Matter” organization has endorsed this MBL platform, apparently the anti-Israel language is viewed as peripheral and irrelevant by some activists. One might simply dismiss some of the goofy stuff included in the platform of a political party as being peripheral and of no import. This is a reminder that we, too, should stay in our lane. For other activists, the false charge of “genocide” and “apartheid” is accepted as true by dint of repetition. Even smart and caring people can be gullible.

The illegal and unjust killing and harassment of black Americans by police in some localities, now documented by sporadic videos, outrageous as it is, is in the estimation of some black public officials and organization heads not the single biggest problem facing black people in America. It is not the largest realm where black lives are discounted. But it is one presently in the spotlight, and one that can be fixed.

It is now well-understood that police killings of unarmed civilians, whether through panic, error or murderous intent, is a nation-wide problem involving hundreds of victims
A Message from Rabbi Tilsen

Message
Continued from Page 17

each year. It would be a problem even if there were no black people in America. Those killings intersect with the particularly fraught history of African Americans and the deep-seated bias and hostility toward black people – ranging from violent racial hatred to subconscious bias – in a way that is particularly deadly to black men, who are the victims of this violence to a profoundly disproportionate degree. Social scientist who have sought alternative explanations – local crime rates, types of crimes, age of victims – have generally been convinced that the explanatory variable is a bias against black people. We don’t know if police in general are any more or less racist than the “average American,” but they are the ones with the guns, they are agents of our local governments, and so their behavior and performance should be exemplary. We are a long way from the point where most of our police rightly deserve to be called “peace officers.”

These intersecting problems can be addressed by better regulation and training of police through local and federal efforts. That training has to include best practices in police procedure, awareness of bias, and support for officers in managing stress. If enough wrongful-death suits succeed in the courts, municipalities may find it cost-effective to invest more in officer training, selection and support. A response also can include safe behavior guidelines for citizens interacting with police, with workable strategies for protecting their rights and lives. Intervention by the Department of Justice is necessary in places that can’t fix themselves, and a little national leadership might be encouraging. But a first step, one which some have not yet taken, is to recognize the problem.

As concerned citizens with Jewish values, we can help make this happen at our municipal, state and federal levels. Although that would not solve the fundamental problems of racism in America or undo a long legacy of oppression, it would be a meaning and necessary step that is attainable with focused attention.

This problem will not, however, be solved by hate speech, unfounded conspiracy theories, crazy talk, violence, or redirection. Because police killing of black men is widespread, serious and related to the underlying racism and troubled history of this country, and because creating a world based on the rule of law, civil rights and human rights is central to the mission of the Jewish People, we should support the initiatives to make policing safe, to make sure everyone understands that black lives matter, and to make sure we as Jewish institutions and organizations act accordingly.

*
# October 2016

**28 Elul 5776 - 29 Tishri 5777**

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<td>10 Office Closed/Columbus Day</td>
<td>11 Erev Yom Kippur</td>
<td>12 Yom Kippur (Yizkor)</td>
<td>13 No Talmud Study Group</td>
<td>14 5:53pm Candle Lighting</td>
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<td>23 Hoshanah Rabbah</td>
<td>24 Shemini Atzeret (Yizkor)</td>
<td>25 Simchat Torah</td>
<td>26 9:00am Rabbi’s Study Group</td>
<td>27 1:00pm Talmud Study Group</td>
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<td>30 9:00am Religious School</td>
<td>31 7:45am Rashi Study Group</td>
<td>10:00am Yoga Hour</td>
<td>Executive Board Meeting</td>
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## BEKI Events

**Sundays**
- 9 a.m. Shaharit
- 5:45 p.m. Maariv

**Mondays**
- 7 a.m. Shaharit
- 5:45 p.m. Maariv

**Tuesdays**
- 7 a.m. Shaharit
- 5:45 p.m. Maariv

**Wednesdays**
- 7 a.m. Shaharit
- 5:45 p.m. Maariv

**Thursdays**
- 8:15 a.m. Shaharit
- 5:45 p.m. Maariv

**Fridays**
- 7 a.m. Shaharit
- 6 p.m. Qabbalat Shabbat

**Saturdays**
- 9:15 a.m. Shaharit
- Before sunset: Minha

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**Service Times**

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