

BEKI BULLETIN

Monthly Newsletter of Congregation Beth El – Keser Israel, a Full-Service Synagogue for Greater New Haven Jewry

October 1994

ק"ק בית אל-כתר ישראל

תשרי-חשוון תשנ"ה

Shabbat Programs at BEKI

Shabbat Dinner

Leave the cooking to us! All are invited to enjoy a catered Shabbat dinner with friends and family at BEKI on Friday 14 October following 6:00 PM services. Vegetarian and non-vegetarian entrees are available.

Please make your reservations by Tuesday 11 October.

Seuda Shelishit

Join us for a half-hour of fellowship, food, song and Torah following the Minha services on Saturday 15 October and Saturday 29 October. The Minha services begins at 5:45 and ends at 6:10. It comprises a psalm, a brief Torah reading, the amida prayer, aleinu, and mourner's qaddish. Then we will join together for a seuda shelishit, the third meal of the Shabbat before the evening service, which lasts 12 minutes. All are invited for this friendly community time.

Children's Havdala Havura Forming

Families with young children are invited to join havurot to share a seuda shelishit (third meal) and havdala at the conclusion of Shabbat. Groups of 4 or 5 families will meet monthly late Shabbat afternoon and early evening in their homes to celebrate, eat a pot-luck dairy/vegetarian seuda, learn and share. A havura is a committed friendship circle learning and sharing together.

Call Janet Felton 387-6050 by 10 October to join a group or for more information. Havurot will begin meeting in November.

Darshanim

Steven Cohen will present a devar Torah during Shabbat morning services 29 October. Services begin at 9:15 AM.

Calling New Daveners and Haftara Readers

If you would like to lead the Shabbat morning services or read the Haftara but are not currently on the rotation, or if you would like to learn to lead or read, please call Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108.

Dates and Times to Remember

OCTOBER EVENTS

- 1 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
10:45 AM Shabbat Learners' Minyan
5:45 PM Minha
- 3 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group
2:00 PM Registration due for
Caregivers' Workshop
- 4 Tuesday 2:00 PM Reservations due for
Shabbat Dinner
- 7 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
8:00 PM Late Evening Service
- 8 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
5:45 PM Minha
- 9 Sunday 9:30 AM Men's Club Breakfast
Speaker: Steve Wizner
- 10 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group
7:30 PM Jr. Cong. Organizing Meeting
- 12 Wed 9:00 AM Topics in Halakha
- 13 Thursday 7:30 PM Mourning Workshop with
James Shure & Rabbi
- 14 Friday 6:00 PM Shabbat Dinner
- 15 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
10:45 AM Shabbat Learners' Minyan
5:45 PM Minha
6:00 PM Seuda Shelishit & Maariv
- 16 Sunday 9:40 AM Hesed-Soc. Action Committee
2:00 PM How to Trace your Jewish
Roots
- 17 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group
- 19 Wed 9:00 AM Topics in Halakha Study
Group
- 20 Thursday 7:00 PM Caregivers' Workshop #1
- 21 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
8:00 PM Late Evening Service
- 22 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
Bat Mitzva: Sarah Beller
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
5:45 PM Minha
- 24 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group
- 26 Wed 9:00 AM Topics in Halakha
- 27 Thursday 7:00 PM Caregivers' Workshop #2
- 28 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
8:00 PM Late Evening Service
- 29 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
Darshan: Steve Cohen
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
10:45 AM Shabbat Learners' Minyan
5:45 PM Minha
6:00 PM Seuda Shelishit & Maariv
- 30 Sunday 2:00 AM Set Clock Back One Hour
- 31 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group

NOVEMBER EVENTS

- 2 Wed 9:00 AM Topics in Halakha
- 3 Thursday 7:00 PM Caregivers' Workshop #3
- 4 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
8:00 PM Late Evening Service
- 5 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
Darshanit: Susan Wall
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
4:25 PM Minha
5:15 PM Maariv
- 7 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group
- 10 Thursday 7:00 PM Caregivers' Workshop #4
- 11 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
8:00 PM Late Evening Service
- 12 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
Darshan: Steve Wizner
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
10:45 AM Learners' Minyan
4:15 PM Minha
5:10 PM Maariv
- 14 Monday Rashi on Vacation
- 17 Thursday 7:00 PM Caregivers' Workshop #5
- 18 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
8:00 PM Late Evening Service
- 19 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
4:10 PM Minha
5:05 PM Maariv
7:00 PM Erev Shira at Benson-Tilsens
- 21 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group
- 25 Friday 6:00 PM Qabbalat Shabbat Service
ONLY
- 26 Shabbat 9:15 AM Morning Service
10:45 AM Children's Shabbat Havura
10:45 AM Learners' Minyan
4:05 PM Minha
5:00 PM Maariv
- 28 Monday 7:45 AM Rashi Study Group

Rabbi's Tzedaga Fund

Esther & George Alexander
Lori & Natan Weinstein in appreciation

A MESSAGE FROM RABBI TILSEN

You don't need to come to services any more, you just need a fax machine. Many eyebrows were raised when a wire service story with photograph appeared in newspapers and television programs around the world some months ago depicting an Israeli Telephone Company employee stuffing faxes into the Western Wall. It is in fact a custom among many of our brothers and sisters to insert small handwritten personal notes and petitions to God between the stones of the Kotel, the Western Wall of the Temple in Jerusalem. The service provided by the phone company allows people unable to visit the Wall in person to fax their petitions to an agent who then carefully inserts the sheets into cracks between the stones.

But you don't even need a fax machine to reach God. Our sages valued sincerity in prayer above all else. Length, language, or location are secondary considerations. Better a few words from the heart than the whole confessional of Yom Kippur. Indeed, the Prayer of Moses for his sister Miriam is pointed to as an ideal prayer: "Please God, please heal her." In Hebrew it is five single-syllable words. The traditional prayers are valuable in that by reciting them we are habituated to prayer, we learn the vocabulary of prayer, and we fulfill our obligation to recite the Shema and Amida which are statutory prayers. But beyond the "fixed prayers" one should say what is in one's heart.

Moses Maimonides firmly noted that a person may pray in any language. Yes, God understands English. We encourage everyone to learn Hebrew and to pray in Hebrew, and for good reasons. But a prayer is valued by God regardless of language. In our prayer book there are even prayers such as the qaddish that are not written in Hebrew, but rather Aramaic, because that was the language spoken by the people when those prayers were written.

In the time of the Mishna, 2,000 years ago, the question arose as to what to do if one were, say, climbing a tree or riding a donkey when it came time to say the Shema. According to our sages, one can pray almost anywhere—even up a tree.

Now, it is a good idea to come to shul, because community adds a whole new dimension, and it is great to pray near the Temple site in Jerusalem, because the atmosphere for some can heighten their spiritual awareness. But ultimately, God can hear you anywhere.

There are many approaches to prayer. As the Psalmist says, "God is near unto all who call, unto all who call upon God sincerely." May all of our prayers be from our heart and may they rise to heaven.

ברוכים הבאים

**BEKI Welcomes
New Members
and their families**

**David & Sharon Bender
& Max & Nina**

**Rena Cheskis-Gold & Martin Gold
& Danya & Ariella & Carmi**

**Steven Cohen & Susan Wall
& Edeet & Adam**

**Kim Hirsh & Mark Widmann
& Elana & Isaac**

**Anne Johnston
& Robert Johnston and Sandy**

Sharon & Bennett Lovett-Graff

**Ken Marcus
& Lisa Marcus & Sara & Katherine**

Belle Reese

Phyllis & Stephen Selipsky

DEAR RABBI

A column of answers, advice and helpful household hints.

Dear Rabbi,

Why do we say Mourner's Qaddish so many times at the end of some services?

Signed,
Late for Work

Dear Late,

Why? Because it's a tradition.

Originally only one qaddish was said, and it was said by only one person, usually a mourner. There are some communities that still do it that way.

But if there were more than one mourner present, the other mourners were deprived of the honor. Qaddishes were then added so that more of the mourners would have the opportunity to say a qaddish. We can say qaddish any time there is a minyan and we recite a Psalm or other passage from the Torah or Rabbinic literature. So they simply added a Psalm and followed it by qaddish. There were now several times in a service when qaddish was said, so that several mourners would have a turn. There are some communities that still do it that way, too.

But this procedure often created a dilemma: If the number of qaddishes was limited, there might still be some who did not get to say one; if there was no limit to the number of qaddishes added, the service became burdensomely long. So after careful scrutiny the rabbis allowed all mourners to say qaddish simultaneously.

This Rabbinic solution was adopted only after careful consideration, and after it was determined that mourner's qaddish is not one of the types of public prayers that can be said by only one person at a time, such as is the case with the reader's recitation of the

Amida, the Torah Blessings, or even other qaddishes.

We can see now how the practice of saying mourner's qaddish two or more times in a row evolved. First only one person said only one qaddish, then one person at a time said one in a succession of qaddishes separated by a Psalm, then everyone said several qaddishes together.

There is no logical reason to say more than one mourner's qaddish in a congregation where all say it together. The practice of saying multiple qaddishes is a remnant of an intermediate stage in the development of the liturgy.

If you say, 'the more qaddishes the better,' then why stop at three? Why not say ten or a hundred? And if you had to say qaddish after every Psalm, we'd say qaddish dozens of times each service. But if the goal is to have qaddish so that all who need to may say it, then it is enough to say it once early in the service in case someone leaves early, and once late in the service in case someone comes late. The earlier practice of saying just one mourner's qaddish should have been restored when it was first permitted for several to say qaddish simultaneously.

This, then, is a classic case of a practice persisting even when the original reason for the custom no longer exists. The custom endures by the force of tradition. So when Dear Rabbi answers your question by saying, "Because it is a tradition," you know that this is exactly the case.

All letters to Dear Rabbi should be addressed to Rabbi J-J van Tilsen, care of this newsletter. Due to the volume of mail received, Dear Rabbi cannot answer all inquiries.

Sarah Beller Bat Mitzva

Sarah Dahlia Beller, daughter of Eric I. B. & Marsha Beller, granddaughter of Helen & Alfred Beller and Bess Bloom, will lead services as a Bat Mitzva on Saturday 22 October. Sarah, an Ezra Academy student, serves as BEKI KADIMA's co-vice-president for Tiqun Olam/Social Action.

All are invited to attend this service marking this special occasion.

Pinat Ivrit

The Meteg

Most Hebrew words are accented on the final syllable. When an accent falls elsewhere, our siddur notes this with a meteg. A meteg is a small vertical segment under the word. The syllable immediately before the meteg is accented.

For example, *melekh* is accented on the first syllable; the meteg indicates this by appearing after the initial segol vowel.

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Mourning Workshop

What helped you when you were mourning? What do you do during a shiva call? What are the requirements for Jewish burial? How do you arrange a funeral?

The answers to these and other questions on dying, death, and mourning will be examined in an evening workshop lead by **James Shure**, a Jewish Funeral Home Director with Rabbi Tilsen on Thursday evening 13 October at 7:30 PM in the BEKI Library.

All are invited to participate. Mark your calendar right now.

Call for Social Action/Hesed

The world rests on three things: Torah (study), Avoda (worship), and Gemilut Hasadim (social action). Hesed (acts of kindness) are mitzvot that can repair our world and are an essential part of our shul's mission.

Please join **Jaye Sela**, **Roger Hess** and **Rabbi Tilsen** on Sunday 16 October at 9:40 AM at BEKI for an organizational meeting of the Hesed Committee.

Caregivers Workshop

Are you a family care giver? Family members caring for aged and disabled relatives face many challenges. The Family Caregiver Workshop will address your needs for education, support, and community resources to help maintain a family member at home or in seeking a nursing home placement.

The program is presented by the Consultation Center & BEKI in our library for five consecutive Thursday evenings beginning Thursday evening 20 October. The workshop will include Effects on the families, an understanding of Dementia, an Understanding of Depression, an evening with community service professional, and legal considerations.

To register call 389-2108 by Monday 3 October and send your \$5 registration fee to the office.

Support Group at BEKI

If you would like to discuss organizing, participating in, or underwriting a support group for Jewish alcoholics, chemically dependent persons and significant others, please contact Rabbi Tilsen at 389-2108.

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**BEKI Cemetery Association
Announces . . .**

The Board of directors of the Beth El - Keser Israel - Keser Israel Cemetery Association announces that the price to purchase plots at our cemeteries will be increased as of January, 1995.

In view of increased costs of maintenance and planned improvements, the charge per plot for members will increase from \$350.00 to \$425.00; and for non-members from \$500.00 to \$600.00. These charges are equal to or less than charges at other local synagogue-affiliated cemeteries.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of this early announcement to save the additional cost. Please call the synagogue office for information about the cemeteries or to arrange a visit for site selection.

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Junior Congregation Organizational Meeting

An organizational meeting for BEKI's Junior Congregation will be held in the shul library on Monday 10 October at 7:30 PM until 8:30 PM. At that meeting we will discuss parents' expectations for the program, including frequency, length, and style, as well as determine logistics and roles of parents and other volunteers.

The Junior Congregation is intended to address the spiritual, educational and social needs of children ages 7 to 13. Children enrolled in the United Hebrew School, Ezra Academy, and the Talmud Torah Meyuhad (Special Education Hebrew School) are encouraged to participate, as well as all other children.

If you are interested in participating in some way in Junior Congregation but cannot attend the meeting, please call **Paulette Lehrer** at 389-9263 for more information.

Halakha Study

Join Rabbi Tilsen in BEKI's Rosenkrantz Library for an hour-long investigation into topics in Jewish Law on Wednesday mornings beginning October 12. Familiarity with Hebrew is not required. All are welcomed.

Rashi Study

The Rashi Study Group meets every Monday morning at 7:45 until 8:30 AM. Give it a try. Knowledge of English, Old French and Hebrew is helpful but not required.

BEKI's College Students

BEKI's Youth Commission will maintain contact with our college students. You can help by providing the BEKI office with the names and addresses of all those who are in college.

Please call or write the shul.

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HAMAQOM YINAHM
המקום ינחם אתכם

We note with sorrow the passing of:

Ida Karas

Louis Friedman
Father of Ralph Friedman

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and Torah readers
and to welcome back
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& Susan Wall
and Edeet.

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marking the
Yahrzeit of his mother.

Alan Weiss
in appreciation.

**Linda Schultz &
Howard Gralla**
marking their
first wedding anniversary.

Daily Minyan

Sunday Morning	9:00 AM
Sunday Evening	5:45 PM
Mon-Fri Morning	7:00 AM
Mon-Thurs Evenings	5:45 PM

Shabbat

begins at candle lighting:		ends:
7 October	6:06	6:53
14 October	5:54	6:42
21 October	5:44	6:32
28 October	5:33	6:21

Shabbat Services

Friday night	see calendar
Morning	9:15 AM-12:00
Afternoon/Evening	see calendar

BEKI Bulletin

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regarding membership, donations,
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(203) 389-2108, or write to
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