

A New Haven Tradition since 1892



BEKI bulletin
Congregation
Beth El-Keser Israel

Elul 5777 - Tishri 5778

Vol. 23 Issue 9

Rabbi's Message: Page 17

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 through Rosh HaShana. Psalm 27 is also included in each morning and evening service until the festival of Hoshana Rabba.

Selihot at BEKI

Our members are welcome at our USCJ-affiliate and neighboring Congregation B'nai Jacob

for the First Selihot Service on Saturday night 16 September 2017. 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 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



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Jewish Foundation of Greater New Haven



All of us. One Foundation.

BEKI Bulletin

The newsletter is published monthly by Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel for the benefit of its members.

Congregation Beth El-Keser Israel is affiliated with the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

To contribute articles or for inquiries regarding membership:

- Call the Synagogue office: 203.389.2108
- Write: 85 Harrison Street, New Haven, CT 06515-1724
- Email: jjtilsen@beki.org
- Visit our web page: www.beki.org

For advertising information, call the synagogue office.

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Editor

Associate Editor
Associate Editor
Associate Editor
Photographer
Layout & Design

Rabbi Jon-Jay Tilsen

Donna Levine
Donna Kemper
Herbert Winer
Charles Ludwig
Bruce Oren



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President

Days of Awe

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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.

We are using *Mahzor Lev Shalem*, an annotated version of the common Ashkenazic liturgy for Yamim Nora'im, which we adopted in 2016. 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. Members and supporters are welcome to dedicate a volume in honor or memory of a person or event, which will be recognized in the bookplate and listed in the Bulletin; contact office@beki.org for information.

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. Shaharit 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.



Michael Stern



[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 wel-

come 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 Wednesday night 20 September 2017 at 6:30p with the Mincha service, followed by Maariv at 6:45p. Candle Lighting is at 6:33p. The service concludes by 7:30p. Morning services begin at 8:30a on Thursday 21 September; 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, Thursday 21 September, from 5:30p to 5:45p, 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, poetry and singing. It is held beside a body of natural water. Please encourage friends and neighbors to join you. It is not necessary nor recommended to throw anything into the

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Days of Awe

Continued from **Page 3**

water. The access to the Edgewood Bridge is via a stairway; see park map for non-stair and handicap access at Edgewood Avenue and Pendleton Street.

On Thursday afternoon of Rosh HaShana, *minha* service begins at 6:30p, followed by the evening service at 6:45p. Candle lighting is *after* 7:33p. 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 Friday 22 September, morning services are also at 8:30a. Youth services are held as well. *Shofar* is sounded on Friday morning, also around 10:25a or 10:30a. Afternoon service (*minha*) begins at 6p on Friday. Shabbat Candle Lighting (Home Ritual) is at 6:29p.

Tsom Gedalia Minor Fast Day

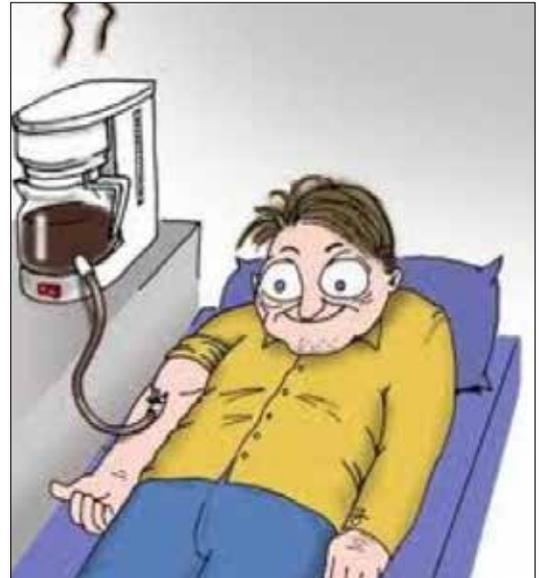
The day after Rosh HaShana, this year deferred until after Shabbat, Sunday 24 September, is observed as a minor fast day in commemoration of the assassination of Gedalia ben Akhikam, a puppet governor appointed over Judea by Babylonian King Nebukhadnezzar, around the year 582 BCE. The story is recounted 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 observed 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 10:30a at the Hamden Cemetery, and at 11:30a at the West Haven Cemetery on Sunday 24 September, 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 tradi-

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.”

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Days of Awe

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tional 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/>. 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, Friday 29 September, the Mincha service begins at 6:15p. Candle Lighting is 6:17p (or earlier). The Kol Nidre and Maariv Evening services begin promptly at 6:30p and end by 8:30p.

On Shabbat 30 September, the Shaharit Morning services begin at 9:00a; the Yizkor Memorial service begins after 11:00a. The Mincha Afternoon service begins at 4:45p, and is followed immediately by the Neila and Maariv services. The services end with Havdala and the sounding of the Shofar at 7:18p.

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.

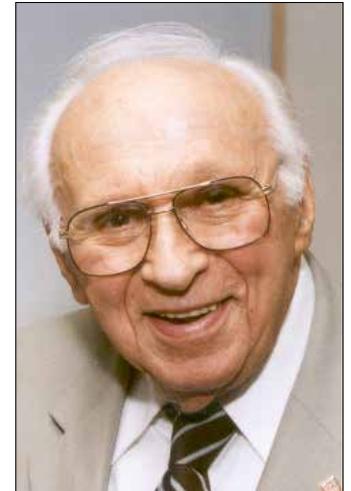
George G. Posener Break Fast Concludes Yom Kippur

Following the concluding Yom Kippur services on

Shabbat 30 September 2017, 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* 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. 



George G. Posener



SUKKOT IS COMING

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

Set up of the Morris “Moishe” Schnitman Memorial Sukka is planned for Sunday 1 October 2017 from 9:30a to noon. 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 15 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 Wednesday evening 4 October 2017. 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 Wednesday night is at 6:09p.

Morning services on Thu & Fri 5-6 October begin at 9:15a and include 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 Thursday from 2:45p to 5:45p, beginning at a local residence; reservations and location of first stop at mirbenson@aol.com.

Services on Thursday night also begin at 5:45p, but candle lighting on Thursday is *after* 7:09p.

On Friday night 6 October 2017, afternoon and Shabbat Festival Evening Services begin at 6:00p, in the Sukka if dry, and candle lighting is 6:06p. 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 Ḥol HaMoed, Saturday 7 October 2017, 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

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Sukkot

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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 Hōl 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.

Sukka Hop

Thursday 5 October 2017, 2:45p-5:45p.

A light progressive meal and Sukkot activity will take place at each *sukka*; RSVP to Miriam, mirbenson@aol.com by 1 October so hosts can plan. Each minor child with a parent; wear good walking shoes for the trek; bring your favorite songs to sing for the walks; and running strollers for your little ones. Sukkot to be visited include the Rastelli-Weiner Sukka, Robbins Sukka, Rohner & Gordon Sukka, Korda & Grutzendler Sukka, Werlin & Frame Sukka, Lebowitz Sukka, 358 Central Ave.; 4:30-4:45 PM, Oppenheimer Sukka, Abraham and Goldberg Sukka, and the BEKI Sukka. Minha-Maariv services conclude the hop from 5:45p to 6:20p.

Hosanna! Hosanna!

The Hoshana Rabba (“Great Hosanna”) morning service on Wednesday 11 October 2017 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 *sukka* 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 *sukka* is dry and rain or snow is not imminent, the Hoshanot and Haqafot will be in the *sukka*.

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 Wednesday night 11 October 2017. 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 5:58p (or earlier).

During the morning service, which begins at 9:15a on Thursday 12 October, Hallel is chanted. The unique festival *nusah* (musical mode) is used for this service. For Carole Bass’s comment on Hallel, go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ak2Wqg2Xyks> (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 Thursday 12 October 2017. 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* 6:58p.

Festival Morning services begin at 9:15a on Friday 13 October. Three Torah scrolls are removed from the ark (around 10:00a) and seven brief *haqafot* are conducted. Because this festival service is close to Shabbat, we intend to concentrate and expedite our joyfulness. 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. Shabbat candle lighting is 5:54p, Festival *minha* service is 6p, followed by Shabbat Festival Maariv, ending about 6:40p.



New Kadima/USY Advisor

Introducing: Your new Kadima/USY Advisor, Gilah Benson-Tilsen. The first-born of the Benson-Tilsens, I hail from Westville (although, little-known fact, I was born in Greenwich Village). My experience working with younger people includes having spent more than my fair share of time babysitting siblings and others; teaching at a summer program in New Haven; periodically visiting my alma mater Ezra Academy to confound K-1 and astound the middle-schoolers with my presence; and spending a year working in a Sacramento elementary school as an AmeriCorps member. At BEKI, I have been a Benei Mitzva tutor for the past decade, and am currently coordinating Torah readings for the book of Devarim, as in past years. Additionally, I am the volunteer liaison (along with Cynthia Rubin) between BEKI and the local Jewish Community

Alliance for Refugee Resettlement (JCARR). This fall, after spending the two previous years doing consulting and research at Demographic Perspectives in New Haven, I am beginning a two-year Master of Public Health (MPH) in Health Policy program at the Yale School of Public Health. In between classes this year, I'll be dreaming up fun activities for our middle- to high-school age crowd. Look out for communications from me about our kick-off event this fall.

I want to hear from you about youth group activities we might organize this year, especially anything relating to Jewish holidays and traditions. And we're always looking for new members! Reach out to me in person; or on Facebook individually and at the BEKI Kadima/USY page, <https://www.facebook.com/bekibj.usy>.

Retirement

Forming a support group for people who are dealing with the challenges of retirement

8 weekly sessions

Contact:
Alan H. Lovins, Ph.D.
alovins@aya.yale.edu
203-530-3835

המקום ינחם

HaMaqom Yinahem

With sorrow we note the passing of

Alvin Serkez, father of Scott Serkez

Michele Edelkind Lechner,

sister of Tamar Edelkind

May the Almighty comfort those who mourn

Benei Mitzva

Dani Callaghan, daughter of Rebecca Gratz & Steve Sitrin, and of Joseph Callaghan, 3-4 November 2017, *parashat VaYera*

Jalina Secchiaroli, daughter of Dina & Michael Secchiaroli, 10-11 November 2017, *parashat Hayei Sara*

Sisterhood

We will be observing Rosh HaShana and Yom Kippur in the month of September, the Hebrew month of Tishrei. It is fitting that the words Rosh HaShana literally mean ‘head of the year.’

The entire month of preparation at the end of the year paves the way for God’s judgment. According to a Yiddish proverb, “In the month of Elul even the fish tremble.”

On this two-day festival three books are open before God: one for the totally righteous, who are immediately inscribed by God and sealed for the coming year in the book of Life; one for the totally wicked, who are immediately inscribed in the Book of Death; and a third book that remains open for the majority of people, those who are neither totally wicked nor totally good. These people are held in suspension for ten days until Yom Kippur which falls on the tenth of the month.

There are special foods that play an important part of the holidays. To insure a sweet and fruitful new year we serve round *hallot* studded with sweet raisins, symbolizing the continuous cycle of the year and God’s endless sovereignty; pomegranates, with their many seeds, believed to bring fruitfulness; apples, representing the Shekhina, the feminine spirit of God, dipped in honey to produce a sweet year; carrots, cut into small circles resembling pennies, to produce good incomes. The Yiddish word for carrots, *mehern*, means “to increase,” as our merits will in the coming year.

Sefardi Jews eat carrots as they recite, “May it be God’s will that the harsh decree on us be torn up.” The Hebrew word *gezer* (carrot) sounds like *gazar* (Hebrew for “decree”).

On Yom Kippur, we hear a prayer called “Unetane toqef,” a Rosh HaShana poem repeated on the Day of Atonement, which captures the essence of the day: “Who shall live and who shall die? Who by fire and who by water?” The prayer is followed by the reminder that repentance, prayer, and righteous acts can avert the harshness of God’s decree.

Sisterhood Gift Shop

Please remember to shop for all your Rosh HaShana needs in our gift shop.

We have beautiful qiddush cups, honey holders, holiday candle holders, kippot, fine jewelry and much more. We will be open on Sundays and Wednesdays during religious school and by appointment. Peggy will be happy to open the store during office hours.

Please join BEKI Sisterhood for the coming year. Membership is still only \$25.

Membership application will be forthcoming.

The board of BEKI Sisterhood wishes to extend a Happy and Healthy New Year and Gemar Hatima Tova to the BEKI community.

Rabbi's Tzedaka Fund (minimum \$25)

- Darcy McGraw & Bruce Altman with condolences to Carole Bass & Family in memory of Rita O. Smith
- Louis & Lisa Petrillo in memory of Peter Meyers
- Harriet Friedman & Charlie Bruce, and Aaron, Ben & Sophia, in memory of mother and bubbie Tillie L. Friedman
- Qiddush Sponsors (minimum \$320)
- Marty Gold & Rena Cheskis-Gold
- Helene Sapadin
- Karen & Roy Herbst
- Families of the 2017 graduates: Aaron & Ben Bruce, Alex & Jonathan Friedman, Ari Kaufman-Frankel, Ben Surman, Caleb Freiman, Daniel Cooper, Dustin Gad, Eitan Hirshfield, Jaden Labowe-Stoll, Matthew Lettick & Noam Benson-Tilsen
- David Wright & Deborah Craig
- Beth Wallace
- Rachel Doft
- Donna & Sid Levine
- Dennis & Barbara Rader
- Rachel Bashevkin & Eric Dunsker
- Jonathan Gordon, Jonathan Rohner and Meryl & David Gordon

Chai Fund (minimum \$18) to support synagogue operations

- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by his daughter Sarah Manion
- To the Volain family with sympathy on the passing of Bud Volain by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To the Volain family with sympathy on the passing of Bud Volain by Leon Cummings
- To the Volain family with sympathy on the passing of Bud Volain by Ed & Rhoda Lemkin
- To Roni Woolfson with sympathy on the passing of Evelyn Woolfson by Mark & Cyd Oppenheimer
- To Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of his aunt by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Erin & Ben Karsif in honor of the birth of their son by Cathie & Ron Miller
- To Libby & Mark Abraham in honor of the birth of their son by Cathie & Ron Miller

- To Hannah Herbst in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Lana & Martin Gad
- To Hannah Herbst in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Gloria Cohen
- To Hannah Herbst in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Polina Naiman
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Bill Shragis
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Steve & Rachel Wizner
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Gloria Cohen
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Linda Schultz & Howard Gralla
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Donna & Sid Levine
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Julie Cohen
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Rhoda Zahler Samuel & Al Samuel
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by the Friedman & Bruce family
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Sherry Kent
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their wedding by Sherry Kent
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Alice Kosowsky
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by the Freiman-Light family
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by David Wright & Deborah Craig
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Trish Loving & Alan Lovins
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Steve & Rachel Wizner
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Bob Spear
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Arnold Gorlick
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- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Eleanor Stutz
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Jennifer Fleming
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Rachel Lovins & Andrew Hogan
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by the Rastelli-Weiner family
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Michael Stern & Kathy Rosenbluh
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by the Avni-Singer family
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of the marriage by Ellen Cohen & Steven Fraade
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Julie Cohen and Laura & Allan Visocheck
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Leon & Diane Cummings
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Morris Bell & Raina Sotsky
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Wendy & David Chorney
- To the Dimenstein family with sympathy on the passing of Morton Dimenstein by Joanne Foodim & Rob Forbes
- To the Dimenstein family with sympathy on the passing of Morton Dimenstein by Julie Cohen
- To the Dimenstein family with sympathy on the passing of Morton Dimenstein by Jennifer Fleming
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by the Lettick family
- To Roni Woolfson & Ben Surman with sympathy on the passing of Evelyn Woolfson by the Lettick family
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by the Lettick family

Continued on Page 11

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Synagogue Fund (minimum \$10) to support synagogue operations

- To the Volain family with sympathy on the passing of Bud Volain by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To the Volain family with sympathy on the passing of Bud Volain by Bill Shragis
- To Roni Woolfson & Ben Surman with sympathy on the passing of Evelyn Woolfson by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Roni Woolfson with sympathy on the passing of Evelyn Woolfson by Bill Shragis
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by David & Darryl Kuperstock
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Bill Shragis
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Joan Gelbert
- To Carole & Paul Bass and family with sympathy on the passing of Rita Smith by Dan & Sharon Prober
- To the Dimenstein family with sympathy on the passing of Morton Dimenstein by Bill Shragis
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Rheba Newman
- To Stanley Saxe in honor of his new apartment by Rheba Newman
- To Barbara Cushen in honor of David Wright & Deborah Craig's marriage by Rheba Newman

The George G. Posener Kadima & United Synagogue Youth Fund

- In honor of their son Ben's marriage to Sarah Peteraf by Donna Kemper & Ron Zlotoff

BEKI Religious School

- To the Volain family with sympathy on the passing of Bud Volain by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow
- To Roni Woolfson with sympathy on the passing of Evelyn Woolfson by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow

- To Ina Silverman with thanks by Jon-Jay Tilsen & Miriam Benson
- To the Dimenstein family with sympathy on the passing of Morton Dimenstein by Ina Silverman & Jay Sokolow

Barzillai Cheskis BEKI Youth Israel Scholarship Fund

- To Michael Winter & Ellen Mackler in honor of Leah Winter's engagement by Rena Cheskis-Gold & Marty Gold
- To Hannah Herbst in honor of her Bat Mitzva by Rena Cheskis-Gold & Marty Gold
- To David Wright & Deborah Craig in honor of their marriage by Rena Cheskis-Gold & Marty Gold
- To Carol & Marc Weitzman in honor of Sasha's aliyah to Israel

Yahrzeit Fund (\$5 minimum) to support synagogue operations

- In loving memory of her father Louis Rogoff by Eileen S. Rogoff
- In memory of Sam Siegel by Eileen S. Rogoff
- In memory of Edward Rosenbluh by Lynn & Richard Saltz
- In memory of Anna Savin by Ronald Savin
- In memory of Grace Goldberg Cohen Geisinger by Lewis & Renee Cohen
- In memory of Louis Goldbloom by Norman & Edith Goldbloom
- In memory of Norman Katz, Bessie Greener Katz, Rose Appell Caplan & Sam Katz by Hy & Karol Katz
- In memory of Robert Zusman by Howard Zusman
- In memory of Grace Cohen Geisinger by Carol Cohen
- In memory of Louis Hodes by Jeff & Lynne Heisner
- In memory of Alan Hodes by Jeff & Lynne Heisner
- In memory of Samuel Kitavitz by Betty Swinkin
- In memory of Richard Weinstein by Suzanne Weinstein
- In memory of Ruth Weiner by Rebecca Weiner
- In memory of Ezra Sagerman by Doris Sagerman
- In memory of Samuel Zarnes by the Sagerman family
- In memory of Arnold Levine by Fania Levine
- In loving memory of Louis Melnick by Jay & Margie Hirshfield
- In memory of Mendel Rosner by Sara-Ann & Hillel Auerbach
- In memory of Arthur Supowitz by Barbara Greenberg
- In memory of Robert Colten by Roger Colten & Sarah Berry
- In memory of Robert Nelson by Sarah Berry & Roger Colten
- In memory of Dov-Bear Naiman by Polina Naiman
- In memory of Isadore Miller by Bobbie & Harold Miller
- In memory of Miriam Zerwitz by Ron Zlotoff
- In memory of Raymond Snyder by Irwin & Zelda Snyder
- In memory of Bernard Weinstein by Suzanne Weinstein
- In memory of Sidney & Estelle Levinson by Carol Novick
- In memory of Benjamin Braginsky by Sidney Braginsky
- In memory of Anne Mushin Venetianer by Allen & Sheila Mushin
- In memory of Everett Rader by Dennis & Barbara Rader
- In memory of Samuel Garfinkel by Lawrence & Doralee Garfinkel
- In memory of Eva Krall by Donna Greene
- In memory of Isaac Walinsky by Harriet Friedman
- In memory of her beloved mother Mollie Nuht by Joan Gelnert
- In memory of her father-in-law Dr. Samuel Gelbert by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of her grandmother Taube Nuht by Joan Gelbert
- In memory of David F. Goldberg by Susan & Wayne Cole
- In memory of Sue Eisenberg by Rick & Judy Eisenberg
- In memory of Samuel Matloff by Harriet & Jack Kitavitz
- In memory of Samuel Kitavitz by Jack & Harriet Kitavitz
- In memory of Herman Leo Winer by Herb Winer
- In memory of Hajnalka Winer by Herb Winer



Shabbatot (Saturdays)

דַּרְשָׁנִים

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:

Noam Zion, 28 October, parashat Lekh Lekha

Dani Callaghan, bat mitzva, 4 November 2017, parashat VaYera

Jalina Secchiaroli, bat mitzva, 11 November 2017, parashat Hayei Sara

Shabbat Shalom Torah Study

The *Shabbat Shalom Torah Study* meets every other Saturday morning at 10:45a in the office and is an ideal setting for veteran and novice shul-goers alike to explore the scriptural readings and liturgy of the day in a supportive setting. Expertly led by **Steven Fraade**, with **Rabbi Alan Lovins**, **Rabbi Murray Levine**, **Nadav Sela**, **Isaiah Cooper** and others, the Shabbat Shalom Torah Study is a nurturing exploration of practice and theory presented in a participatory, non-threatening and multi-generational setting. Many members who take advantage of this unique offering feel a deeper sense of awe born of increased understanding and appreciation of the Torah reading, Haftara (Prophetic reading) and liturgy.

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

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



Steven Fraade



Alan Lovins



Nadav Sela



Isaiah Cooper

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 reading First Kings. It is possible to join the study group for a single meeting or to begin at any time.

Knowledge of Hebrew is not necessary. Rashi purported to explain the *peshat* of the text, i.e., the meaning in its historical, literary and linguistic context. Visitors and new participants are welcome. Hebrew and English texts are available. The RSG meets immediately following the 7:00a *shaharit* morning service, but will meet at 9:45a on the Monday of Labor Day (4 September) following the 9a 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 or current events. Word of the Week will be on holiday break from 13 September and will resume 18 October 2017.

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 during the school year. For more information, call Rabbi Murray Levine at 203.397.2513.



Murray Levine

Continued on **Page 13**

Adult Studies

Continued from Page 12

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 8:15a to 9:15a on Thursdays; on other weekdays, the service begins at 7:00a.

Berakhot Talmud Study Group

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

The Talmud, based on an oral text, has no beginning or end. One can begin study at any point; now is the best time. No prior knowledge is required, but basic facility in English is helpful; students with all backgrounds are welcome, beginner to advanced. The Berakhot Talmud Study Group meets each Thursday but will be on holiday break beginning 21 Sept. (Rosh HaShana) and will resume 19 Oct. 2017. ☆



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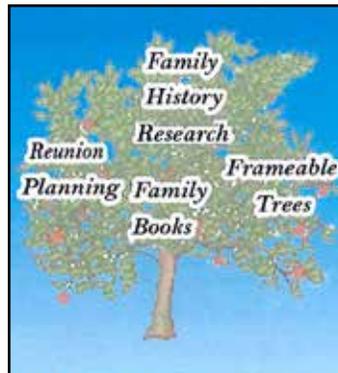
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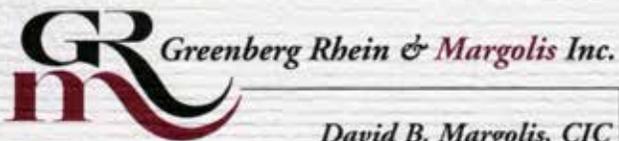
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Michael Barone

Staff Update

Michael Barone has joined our staff as a custodian. See story in October Bulletin.

Shabbat Schmooze

Facing Literacy Challenges in Our Community. Shabbat 9 September, 1p, Library. BEKI volunteer literacy mentors join Jewish Coalition for Lit-

eracy Coordinator, Brenda Brenner, to explore this issue and opportunities for personally making a difference.

Disturbing the Peace

Film & discussion, Thursday 14 September, 7p, followed by discussion with the filmmaker, Stephen Apkon; light refreshments; free.

BMP

[Registration & Payment form for Benei Mitzva Program](#) and [more info](#) at [beki.org](#) under “Youth” tab. Class begins 11 September, 5p-6:20p; register now before price increase. [BMP](#) meets same Wednesdays as [BRS](#).

BRS

[BEKI Religious School](#) classes begin Sunday 10 September, 9a-12m. Register or info principal@beki.org.

Cook & Freeze

For Break Fast, cooking Sunday 17 September 9:45a.

Kadima Kickoff

Save the date for our first event of the fall on Sunday afternoon, 17 September at BEKI. Food and fun for 6-8th graders, details TBA. See <https://bekiisykadima.blogspot.com/p/kadi->

[ma-events.html](#).

JCARR

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

Dedicate a Mahzor

Dedicate one or more copies of the High Holy Day Prayerbook *Lev Shalem* to honor or memorialize a person or event, or simply as a gift to the Congregation. Dedications are recognized in bookplates and in the Bulletin. Forms are in the lobby and at www.beki.org. Info at office@beki.org.

Torah Sparks:

Brief commentary on weekly parasha from the Conservative Yeshiva (Jerusalem).

Yibane – Rebuilding Update

Repair and restoration work on the south wall scheduled to continue in stages. We expect minimal disruption to planned events.

The 613

Read [Ella May’s devar Torah on parashat Ekev](#).



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Misplaced Matriarchs Addendum: Crammed Beats and Displaced Genderqueers

In “[Misplaced Matriarchs](#)” – nominated for the *Least Interesting Rabbi’s Essay Award* of 2014 – I elaborated on the problematic and incorrect insertion of the word “ve-immotenu” (“and our matriarchs”) in the opening blessing of the Amida (the main prayer of every service, after the Shema). Those problems were the improper or awkward (or blasphemous) use of the *semikhut* (attached noun) structure in Hebrew, the disruptive and confusing editorial choice of enclosing the word in brackets in some books, and the undesirable ways the insertion forces the reader to interpret the word “avoteinu” (especially as “our patriarchs” thereby *excluding* women).

It turns out that the problem is worse than I thought.

A Hazzan friend informed me that the addition of the word in this location, along with other “improvements” to the text, wreak havoc on cantorial presentations almost as much as on congregational singing. That is, it throws off the music, or throws the people off the music. It turns out that the melodies we use for these prayers are carefully crafter, elegantly evolved, and recorded in the memories of congregants like grooves on a vinyl disk. For congregants (including some rabbis amplified by a microphone) who are musically illiterate or otherwise challenged, it is very difficult to change from what was learned. It is not simply a matter of substituting a word, but of cramming five beats (ve-im-mo-tei-nu) into a musical phrase or of utterly restructuring the piece. As my childhood friend Mark Freeman said in sixth grade, when our cantor introduced a new (and beautiful) melody for the Shabbat Amida, “By the time the congregation learns the

new melody they will be dead.”

A further consequence of adding the word “ve-immoteinu” derives from the disambiguation of the preceding word “avoteinu,” which, as explained in “Misplaced Matriarchs,” could mean either “our ancestors” or the specifically masculine “our fore-fathers.” The word “avot” can mean a generic group head, or can mean “fathers,” as in “male ancestors.” This word “av” (“father”) is grammatically masculine (as Hebrew is a “gendered” language) but oddly takes a plural form (the “-ot” ending) that is typical of feminine nouns and participles – like your father wearing a pink suit. But when it is “paired” with “ve-immoteinu,” (“our matriarchs” or “our fore-mothers”) it is hard to read “avoteinu” as anything other than “our fore-fathers.” Noted previously is that this encourages us to think of every other instance of “avoteinu” as masculine-specific, driving out the possibility of viewing it as a word including female ancestors.

But there is another expulsion effected by this disambiguation.

Instead of the phrase “our ancestors,” we are forced to read “our fore-fathers and fore-mothers,” establishing and reinforcing a binary gender regime that is not even demanded by normative Jewish culture which legally recognizes four or five main genders (though “male and female” predominate). This phrasing, while intended to include women, ends up excluding people who are [genderqueer](#) (non-binary) and otherwise disturbing those



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Misplaced

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(myself included) who believe the binary gender regime is harmfully over-promoted. That is, there are some people who do not identify as, or identify with, being of a masculine or feminine gender. The insertion of “ve-immoteinu” removes the broad term for our ancestors and replaces it with a narrow binary choice of male or female.

One might say that genderqueer people constitute such a small or exceptional segment of the Jewish People that we need not consider them – which would be the same line of reasoning used by our surrounding American culture to ignore Jewish holidays, diet and cultural practices inasmuch as Jews are generally only 2% of the population, less in some locales, and less if we exclude Jews who do not observe the holidays or other particular practices. You can't structure everything to take into account every minority. Yet our sages have taught us that we do not at this point have a surplus of Jews and for that reason every single one has to be treated as a dignitary – welcomed and honored. That means that even people who are uncomfortable with

other Jews' gender presentation would do well to adapt (get used to it) and to spiritually embrace our fellow Jews.

My early experience as a Jewish male included some degree of differentiation from the models of masculinity in our surrounding culture. The male Jewish students at our high school were distinct as non-hunters and as youth who aspired to academic adequacy if not excellence. Even being in shop class was pushing it; auto mechanics was beyond the pale. Like my fellows, I was a descendant of Jacob (“yoshev ohalim”) and not Esau (“yode'a sayid”), that is, a kid who was more likely to be making rather than shooting bucks, and in that way not matching the gender-norms of our class. The rare Jewish boy who played football might have been thought of as a hero (Gary Starkman was the team's kicker) but that was as close as we came to emulating the manliness of the masses. The vague sense of alienation that I felt is nothing compared to the danger and estrangement experienced by many of our people, particularly youth, who are not gender conformists. Our synagogue community, reflected in everything including the liturgy, should be safe and affirming.



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Bees & Honey on Rosh HaShana Workshop 2017



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