



CONGREGATION
Beth Ami

4676 MAYETTE AVENUE, SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA 95405

Shofar

707-360-3000

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2023

5783

TU B'SHVAT

*Tu B'Shevat, new year of the trees,
starts on Sunday February 5
(see page 15)*

Leanne Schy

Congregation Beth Ami

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Office Hours

Mon.–Thurs. 10 a.m.–5 p.m.; 10-2 on Friday

Gift Shop and In-Person Appointments

Elizabeth Jarlsberg, office manager, is in the office Monday, Wednesday and Friday. She can also help you with gift shop purchases and library access. Contact **Bonnie Boren**, bonniegboren@gmail.com for special gift shop assistance. Appointments are appreciated, masks and vaccination required.



Please “like” us at facebook.com/CongregationBethAmi

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OUR MISSION:
A KEHILLA THAT IS OPEN, WHERE
RELATIONSHIPS MATTER
CONGREGATION BETH AMI
ENRICHES OUR LIVES, TRANSFORMS OUR
HEARTS, HELPS HEAL THE WORLD AND
SUSTAINS OUR JEWISH HERITAGE. WE ARE
DEEPLY ROOTED IN JEWISH TRADITION AND
WELCOME ALL TO OUR COMMUNITY FOR
CELEBRATION, LEARNING, EDUCATION AND
PRAYER.

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Clubs & Classes
Yom Hashoah Commemoration
Cultural & Social Events



Jewish Community Center

SONOMA COUNTY

1301 Farmers Lane, Suite C103, Santa Rosa, CA 95405
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RABBI'S REMARKS

Rabbi Mordecai Miller

The Underlying Message of Psalm 27

In shining the stark light of Truth on ourselves, we cannot fail to see how far each one of us falls short of perfection. In fact, *Teshuvah*; the process of introspection, the recognition and admission of guilt and, finally, the determination not to repeat the errors of the past is considered so important that those who achieve this are considered on a higher spiritual plane than those who never erred. The Universe couldn't exist without the room for *Teshuvah*. In fact, *Teshuvah* had to be built into the Plan of Creation before God could even begin to create the world.

One of the greatest ironies found in the Bible happens to be the story of Cain and Abel. We read (Genesis 4:3-5k) how "in the course of time, Cain brought an offering to the Lord from the fruit of the soil; and Abel, for his part, brought the *choicest of the firstlings* of his flock. The Lord paid heed to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering He paid no heed..."

Our early sages are quick to pick up on the suggestive language of this text. The fact that the TaNaCh goes out of its way to point out that Abel "brought the choicest of the firstlings of his flock" (italics mine) while Cain simply "brought an offering," would indicate that Cain's offering was inferior. The fact that these "gifts" were intended to express appreciation to God, the Source of all life, Cain's effort could be seen as begrudging, if not downright insulting.

No wonder his offering wasn't accepted.

To make matters worse, Cain doesn't have the courage to look at his own actions. His reaction is to be jealous of his brother and, soon afterwards, he murders him.

Given the fact that "the Lord *paid heed* to Abel and his offering" (Gen 4:4), it seems ironic that Abel should lose his life. In fact, it

was God's reaction to the brothers' gifts that led to Cain's insane jealousy!

For years I've been troubled by this story. However, it's quite possible that the TaNaCh is actually trying to make a point regarding the true purpose of our lives.

The book of Ecclesiastes emphasizes Life's ultimate futility; that is, if we restrict the purpose and value of our lives to the physical/material world in which we live. Life's short - even the longest lifespan pales into insignificance when compared to the millions (Billions?) of years that preceded us, and the

countless years that will probably follow our demise. If we're willing to face the fact that life on this planet is finite, we realize that whatever success, power, fame or fortune, we may succeed in obtaining is brief.

We may succeed in adding something profound to the lives of those who follow us, but given the overwhelming challenges of earning a livelihood, providing for our family's needs, maintaining our physical and mental health, let alone having to deal with criminal behavior on the part of those who would rob us of whatever tranquility we may strive for; the truth is that 99.9% of us will be forgotten within four to five generations.

This seems quite inadequate given the amazing capabilities with which each one of us is naturally endowed. (The functions of the body: breathing and circulation, nervous and digestive systems, locomotion and hand manipulation, the five senses, growth and development and our ability to sense emotion and - if we care enough - to think! even



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RABBI'S REMARKS

Continued...

self-consciousness, only begin to spell out the miraculous nature of human living).

Is death, decay and oblivion all we have to inevitably face? It certainly appears that there is no absolute proof. However, we might be willing to take into account "intimations." Night and day; the seasons (such as nature's "death" in winter and its "rebirth" in spring); sleeping and waking; dream awareness and conscious awareness; illness and healing and the very miraculous nature of procreation. Do we really even understand the nature of "being alive" to the deepest level?

The TaNaCH has so many examples of how God didn't or won't allow our enemies to ultimately triumph. The more I study such texts, the more I understand them to be saying that "immortality" would certainly place us "beyond the reach of our enemies." As to the purpose of our current state of material being, it is to learn the countless lessons that involve "becoming a mensch." Trial and error certainly play their part, but direct learning from our Tradition and the Torah as well as the personal example of others, give us the opportunity to discover joy in this world and inherit the one beyond.

As Abraham Joshua Heschel might put it: God is reaching out to us in the hope that we can train our souls - that part of us which has the potential for immortality - to achieve the very purpose for which God has created us.

With fondest wishes, *Mordecai Miler, Rabbi*



***Caren Drezner, Nursery School Director,
lighting first candle on our new menorah.***



NURSERY SCHOOL

Caren Drezner, Director

Looking back on the holidays

This time of year I am always reminded of a time when my son was five years old, and he came home from school (a private Jewish Day School) excited to tell me about Sinterklaas Day. One of his classmates' mom was from the Netherlands, and she had shared with his kindergarten class her tradition of putting carrots in her shoes for Sinter Klaas' horse, so he would come and leave presents. My son thought this was a great idea and wanted to try it. I told him that in our house, Sinter Klaas did not visit, as this was not our holiday. He picked out his favorite sneakers anyway, put them by the fireplace and put carrots in them, convinced that Sinter Klaas would visit.

Unfortunately, Sinter Klaas did not visit our house that night. It would have been so easy to take the carrots out of the shoes and leave a little gift for him. It would have made him so happy. But I didn't. The next morning, he saw the shoes with the carrots still there and was heartbroken. "She lied!" "She said it would work!" As hard as it was to see him so upset, it was important for him to understand that someone else's holiday tradition was not a means to more presents for him. We can enjoy and appreciate so many traditions and cultures while still staying true to our own. People celebrate many holidays in many special ways. Some families bake cookies for Christmas, and some families play dreidel with chocolate coins for Hanukkah. Some people celebrate Sinterklaas Day, and some people don't. His friend can enjoy her holiday, and he can enjoy his. Maybe they can even enjoy each other's holidays together.

I recently asked my son, now in college and about to turn 19, if he remembers that day. He does. He said it was his first real lesson in diversity. I would call that a successful lesson.

However you celebrate, I wish you much happiness with family and friends.

—Caren



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Barbara McGee, President

Plans in the "Post" Pandemic world

As I write this article, staff and active volunteers are in the process of scheduling community events for the rest of the fiscal year. After the Hanukkah party, it was apparent that many persons are wanting to come back in person to CBA in a big way.

We had 109 people attend the Hanukkah party. The food was great. The atmosphere was warm and friendly. Thank you to the latke makers, kitchen crew and decorators headed by Richard Kahn, Myra Thomas and Bonnie Boren, respectively. Thanks to those who donated toiletries and cold weather clothing to the Social Action Committee project for The Palms. And special thanks and appreciation to the mother/son musical duo of Susie Boimoil and Jeremy Lipsin who brought much joy and light to the occasion.

We also have a new free standing 5 foot Hannukiah, thanks our Nursery School director, which was presented to the congregation and the Nursery School. Speaking of the Nursery School, they had a joint Hannukah party with the JCC for young ones and their parents that was very successful. Thank you to the BACNS staff and director Caren Drezner for all their hard work.

The Nursery School has a new two-year-old's program starting up. Please let anyone with young ones know. Enrollment for next year's program for 2 to 5 year olds starts mid January. Call Caren at 707-360-3030 for information or email her at bacnsdirector@bethamisir.org.

So what offerings are coming up in the near future for the congregation? Our monthly CBA Friday night Shabbat dinners are back. The first one is scheduled for January 6th. David Kahn will be cooking a scrumptious salmon dinner. This first dinner will feature music and lively conversation. Kabbalat services start at 6 p.m. and dinner will be at 7 p.m. Please call the office to make reservations and arrange payment by noon on Thursday, January 5th.

February and March Shabbat dinners are scheduled for the first Friday of the month. Please see cybershul for updates. We are hoping for speakers for upcoming dinners. If you have someone in mind, please send me or Bob Cooper an email or call us through the office.

Other events in the works are a Tu B'shvat wine event in early February and a Purim community event in mid March. More information to follow in cybershul. For those of you without access to the internet, we will contact you by phone or by mail.

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Rabbi Mordecai Miller leads the lighting of the first candle of Chanukah



PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Continued...

We also have other programs that will be offered by committees in the next few months. If you have any ideas for new programs and are willing to help coordinate them please give me a call. Programs can happen only if community members are willing to be involved with the planning and implementation.

There are a few fundraising events as well. Mark your calendars for a HaLayla HaGadol dinner on March 26th at Mark Dierkhising's restaurant. A Last Act Rehoming Art Sale on a Sunday afternoon is in the works.

With the new secular year, as promised in the last Shofar President's article, we announce the members of Rabbinic search committee. They have met twice and are planning conversations with each community members by phone or in person in the next few months. The process of finding our next spiritual leader takes many steps and coordination by the committee. I am honored to announce Bonnie Boren and Karen Herskovic are leading the committee with CBA members Graham Cooper, Russ Gurevitch, Judy Kupfer, Carolyn Orlik, Dave Ballo, Patty Bernstein, Arnie Herskovic, Dan Anbar, Ed Sherman and Larry Gregg. Each person brings a unique perspective and have agreed to take on the task for the next eighteen months.

And finally, attending any gathering on the campus whether religious, social or educational brings ruach and connection. Please spend time on the campus when we are open during office hours on Mondays and Wednesday (10 to 5), Fridays (10 to 2) and every Saturday morning. And when the Nursery school is in session, the doors to the social hall can be open by calling me or Elizabeth to arrange it. If you need to schedule an event or service during other hours just give the office 707-360-3000 or me a call at 707-953-2526.

In peace and good health to you and yours,
Barb Brust McGee, CBA President 2022-2023



EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS



Mazeltov! Bat Mitzvah of Zoe Baruch

Hi, I'm Zoe. My Bat Mitzvah is coming up on February 11th, 2023, Shabbat Parashat Yitro. I'm really looking forward to telling you all about my parsha.

I'm a voracious reader and will read everything from fiction to physics.

I'm at home in the outdoors and love the company of animals. I also love to learn just about everything under the sun.

I enjoy hanging out with and having a good time with my friends. I started a debate club for kids and it's been a lot of fun.

I hope you can all come to my Bat Mitzvah.

Our Condolences to the Families of:

Jay Holloway, son of Lenore Holloway

Diana Connors Schilling, sister of Tish Levee

Betty Siegel, mother of Sandi Shulkin and grandmother of Ken Plattner

Wishing a Speedy Recovery to:

Michelle Baime

Debra Chapman

Linda Emblen

Richard Feldman

Robin Cooper

Anna Judd

Dennis Judd

Etienne Sampiere

Pnina Loeb

Lindsay Kvam



EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Continued...

Beth Ami Book Group

by Linda Emblen

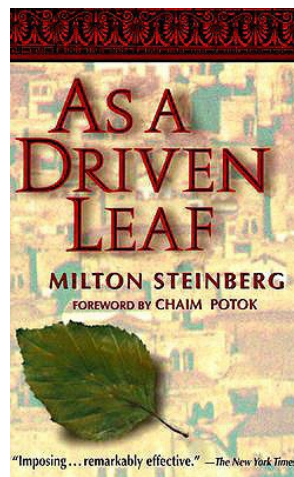
Our current read is an historical novel: *As A Driven Leaf* by American Conservative Rabbi Milton Steinberg (1939, 480 pgs.) Chaim Potok in his foreword to the book says this is “A novel of ideas & passions,,, An exploration of Judaism in conflict with a vigorous and powerful surrounding culture... the pagan world of Greece and Rome.” Jayne Rosenberg, a regular member of our group who has almost finished this classic, highly recommends it.

For those of you new to our congregation, many of you that I haven’t had the pleasure of meeting, we usually read fiction by Jewish authors and/or on Jewish themes, many taking place in Israel, Eastern Europe, and the U.S.

Also, we’ve vicariously traveled to England, Ireland, Persia, Spain, Holland, Italy, Egypt. Australia, Shanghai, the Caribbean and wherever else in the past 6 or so yrs, that I have been coordinating, organizing, and leading this book group. We have had a glimpse of Jewish people in different cultures and time periods.

Our group participates in the SF Jewish Community Library’s Book Club in a Box program sponsored by Jewish Learning Works. We borrow 12 copies of the same book with over 100 different choices, including some written in the original Hebrew for our Israeli members. JLWorks & the SFJCLibrary also have a Jewish-calendar yearly OneBayOneBook selection, which our CBA group just finished reading. They have several more ZOOM talks and discussions scheduled on Omer Friedlander’s *The Man Who Sold Air In The Holy Land*. For more info contact Leah Strauss, librarian, at Leah@jewishlearning.works.

Before the pandemic we met at CBA and several times had 12 - 15 people present for our book group. Since the start of the pandemic we had to meet outside in small groups at my house for safety’s sake. Sometimes we had 2 separate small groups for the same book



to accommodate different people’s schedules and personalities. Some of us, including myself, enjoy participating each time and are reluctant to speak up in the larger format. Small can mean more informal and spontaneous.

So we would like to continue the small groups. By the way, Thomas Mann’s *The Magic Mountain* is one of my favorite novels of all time, it is in a sanitarium in Davos, Switzerland, and many conversations take place when patients are “taking the cure” sitting in the fresh air. Most of us don’t like temp. extremes, so we met in my living room a few days ago with heat and comfy chairs. Some wore masks and others did not. (All vaccinated.)

We always meet in person, at my house, in small groups, and not on Zoom. If you or a family member needs to stay home, a few loaner copies are available for people who can’t make it to our discussion. I’m happy to deliver them.

An invitation to form other book groups

Several of us do like the small numbers, so each one has more time to lend knowledge and express opinions in our discussions. So, please, if you want to start another book group and maybe get your own books, or whatever, contact Leanne Schy at Leanne@sonic.net and she will help you publicize your meetings.

Our group is open to all CBA members and friends & will remain so. We’re probably meeting on Sunday, Jan. 8 or 15, when each participant will talk a little about a book, Jewish or not, that they are reading. Phone me if you are interested. Also, probably, Sunday, Jan. 29, we’ll discuss the Milton Steinberg book. Come join us. For more info: Linda (707) 544-4532.

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SOCIAL ACTION

by Lyla Nathan, Chair

Thank you

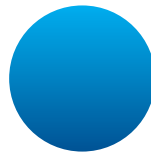
I want to thank everyone for all your hard work in making the Palms holiday dinner and clothing event a HUGE success on Wednesday December 14. After the terrible news on Tuesday, [of a Palms resident murdered by a non-resident] the dinner couldn't have come at a better time. The residents were so appreciative and kind in their response to us. It was a good feeling that I think everyone felt.

There was plenty of delicious food and the clothing from the committee and from Beth Ami were first class. Lots of new socks, slightly worn jackets, sweaters, pants, hats and toiletries. Many residents stayed around, ate their dinners and tried on clothes. One woman in particular took a whole outfit from shoes to coat and came back down to show us how she looked.

So todah raba to everyone for all your fabulous energy and generosity. You are all wonderful!!!! And take care, *Lyla*



The SAC brought winter clothing as well as a hot dinner to The Palms.



MEN'S GROUP

Richard Kahn



Men's Group members volunteered at the Redwood Empire Food Bank.

Volunteering at the Food Bank

The Men's Group is back in action after a brief Interlude. We did the 10 to 1 shift at Redwood Empire Food Bank on Tuesday December 13, followed by lunch. The Redwood Empire Food Bank volunteering is now taking place inside in the heated warehouse. No more outside produce sorting!

Then on the following day, Wednesday, December 14 we did a wine tasting followed by pizza lunch.

With Shalom, *Richard Kahn*



COMMITTEE ON RACISM & SOCIAL JUSTICE

by Carol Swanson, Chair

What we have been doing lately:

Anti Semitism

Recently, our committee responded to a letter that our synagogue received from a fellow Jew, who lives in Sonoma County and is concerned about Antisemitism. This person is not affiliated with any synagogue in the area, but was asking for some support. Their concern was about a new curriculum being adopted at their son's school that they felt was Antisemitic. We met with them and discussed their concerns and some possible actions they might take. Representing ourselves as citizens concerned about the rise in Antisemitism, we attended a board meeting at the school district and shared our concerns with the board. It was well received and since then, the district has discontinued use of the curriculum and is reviewing it for the future.

Several members of our committee attended the Antisemitism event sponsored by Shomrei Torah. Santa Rosa Chief of Police, John Cregan spoke. The police department is carefully watching activity in our community. We should report antisemitic acts to the police department whether they are a hate crime or not. A hate crime is when an antisemitic act also has broken a law. Ex: graffiti. Paula Simon, who has worked with the Jewish Commission Relations Council of San Francisco also spoke at the event. Presently, she is working with the California State Board of Education to develop curriculum on the Holocaust for secondary schools to use. This event was useful in allaying some of our fears and uneasiness about the rise in Antisemitism.

Sponsoring a Ukrainian Family

Last summer our committee hosted a Shabbat service honoring the citizens of Ukraine. We



invited the family of Dan Levitus from Santa Rosa who has been providing housing for refugees from Ukraine. Yana Kalmykova and her son, who recently immigrated to the US came to the shabbat service with Dan's family. Our committee was very moved by Yana's story

and has sponsored her to attend Santa Rosa Junior College. We have had wonderful conversations over tea and lunch together so we could get to know each other better. Gratitude for our friendship has been mutual. It has been meaningful to learn what it is like to uproot your family from the country you love because of the dangers of war. Finding a way out of the country was risky and dangerous. Now her husband is here with Yana and her son. Last Monday, they moved to the Los Angeles area, hoping to find good job opportunities. It is their wish to have a new life in America. We plan to keep in touch and wish them well.

Future Shabbat Dinner Speakers

Shabbat dinners will be starting January 6. We are looking for future speakers on race, equity, climate and all social justice issues, both local and beyond. If you have a topic or an individual you would like us to consider, please let us know. We welcome input from the congregation. You can call Carol Swanson (707-206-2336) or email (see below).

We continue to meet monthly to share and discuss recent current events, books, articles, etc. that are relevant to our goal of advocating for social justice. We meet every third Thursday of the month in the afternoon. If you are interested in joining or learning more about the committee, contact Carol Swanson at swan-girl@comcast.net

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THE KITCHEN CORNER

Janet Stein-Larson

(Myra Stern-Thomas, Chair of the Kitchen Committee)

What's happening in the CBA Kitchen?

In this new 'post-pandemic COVID' era, our usage of the Congregation Beth Ami Kitchen is increasing. The Kitchen Committee's priority is to do our best to keep our events as safe as possible regarding both food and health safety, especially during this season of flu, colds, respiratory viruses and COVID. To prevent germ spreading we are not just hand washing the serving pieces, stainless-ware or glasses; volunteers are coming in during the week to put them in the dishwasher/sanitizer unit. Currently at Congregation Beth Ami, the weekly COVID statistics for Sonoma County are posted, along with current recommendations, which may include masking indoors, washing hands, proper distancing, etc., to assist in preventing the spread of COVID virus.

The regular potluck lunches after Shabbat Services have been back since November. For those who wish to contribute a dish for these potlucks, remember you need to follow the Food and Potluck Guidelines. If you have any questions, find a volunteer mashgiach or a member of the Kitchen Committee to ask. If they don't know the answer, they know how to find out.

Starting this January 6th, we will have our first monthly **First Friday night Shabbat dinner** in quite a while. At 6:00 PM there will be the Kabbalat Shabbat services live at CBA (and also on Zoom). Afterwards, at 7:00PM there will be dinner with our volunteer chef in charge, David Kahn. **PLEASE remember to Reserve Your Space by Wednesday, January 4th by 5:00 PM.** We want enough food to feed you all, and we want to set-up the tables as safely as we can. And please remember to follow the posted CDC and California State COVID guidelines for these and other events, especially to protect our 'at risk' members or attendees.

On Sunday, December 18th, we had the biggest and the best, First Night Hanukkah Party.

Well over 100 people attended. For those of you who missed out, not only were there latkes, salads, champagne punch, and desserts, there were games to play and music to listen to. Focusing on the kitchen part of this event,



Lee Feinstein bakes challah for our Shabbat lunches in the Beth Ami kitchen.

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THE KITCHEN CORNER

Continued...

the volunteer chef in charge of latke dinner was Richard Kahn. A big thank you goes to him and to those who helped him with the cooking and serving of the dinner. Myra Stern-Thomas was in charge of the set-up and clean up. Thank-you to her and her huge team of volunteers.

It's those volunteers who make these events a success. They are the planners, coordinators, decorators, cooks, set up and clean-up crew. With more volunteers, the tasks are finished better, quicker and with more cheer (especially the clean-up when the event is over). More events are in the works for 2023. Watch for them; there maybe another fried matzah brunch, or perhaps something special for Purim. Whatever it is, we'll need more volunteers!

Of course, the kitchen has other uses as well. We have been known to make a few (only a few...? how about 700) hamantashen (and the way, Purim is coming on March 7th, so stay tuned for calls for volunteers for baking sessions, sometime during February and March) or blintzes. And once every two to three months or so, we have a volunteer challah baker, Lee Feinstein, come in to make 16... 18 ... challahs for us to enjoy for the Saturday, Shabbat Kid-dush . I can attest that that is a lot of dough and a lot of work. (Think eight plus hours of work for two people, herself and her mashgiach helper). Yes, she is a mashgiach, but we want all of our volunteer cooks to work with at least one mashgiach for double checking on Kashrut issues and for safety reasons. There is an art to baking challah (as well as other breads), and I honestly believe that challah made in the Beth Ami kitchen demonstrates that, mmmm.

So, as you can see, things are heating up in the kitchen.

Here's a toast: "to 2023 and using the kitchen for food and fun events at the Congregation Beth Ami."

Shalom,

—Janet Stein-Larson



ISRAEL COMMITTEE

*Dr. Eli Cohen, Chair,
Israel Committee*

Israel's elections and the future of Israel's democracy

There are three approaches to Jewish identity. The most obvious is religion, that is, through observing Rabbinic Judaism's precepts. The other two are: Negation and Peoplehood.

Negation refers to identifying in response to Jew-hatred and the growing assimilation. The holiday of Hannukah reminds us of the Maccabean uprising over assimilation into the Hellenic culture. Prior columns have featured identification through negation, i.e., Jew-hatred and assimilation. This column's focus is on the third element of Jewish identity: our peoplehood in the Diaspora and our homeland. We look at how the recent election in Israel impacts all Jewish people in Israel and the Diaspora. We examine it from both sides. Finally, we end with some happy findings.

Israel's elections

The recent elections brought to the government ideas that have been considered extreme. It must be noted that some believe that the Palestinian leadership's refusal of all peace proposals and support for terrorism led to the election results. Bassam Tawil writes, "The real extremists are also the Palestinian leaders who deprive their people of the international aid and encourage their youths to kill Jews. The real extremists are those who are responsible for firing rockets at Israeli cities from the Gaza Strip. The real extremists are those who do not believe in the right of Israel to exist and work non-stop to destroy it." That is, the refusal by the Palestinian leadership of all peace proposals led to a transformation of public opinion.

Is there a movement away from the past? For some, this means moving on from Israel's socialist start. But for others, this means moving away from having orthodox rabbis define Judaism. This division of thought is seen most strongly in the Tel Aviv/Jerusalem divide.

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ISRAEL COMMITTEE

Continued...

Status Quo or Status Ante Quo?

Prime Minister Netanyahu declares Israel will stay a Liberal-Nationalist state. Netanyahu says, "Everyone will live in accordance with their own faith. This will not become a nation of religious law. It will be a country in which we tend to all citizens of Israel, without exception." To stay in power, Netanyahu needs a coalition among the various parties, each putting forth its own demands. And there are efforts by members of his coalition to move Israel away from its status quo.

For example, United Torah Judaism (UTJ) party proposes that Israel does not generate electricity on Shabbat. It wants beaches segregated by sex. They also want to exempt full-time yeshiva students from national service. Shas, a Haredi religious political party, has changed the law to allow its head, Aryeh Deri, to serve as treasury minister. The law had prohibited this since he was convicted [and jailed for taking bribes while interior minister.]

And they want to change Israel's supreme court. The idea proposed is to allow the Knesset to overrule the court.

Other ideas are to change the number of members and how they are appointed.

The third idea being floated by the religious parties has the greatest impact on diaspora Jews. It is to change the Law of Return. Anyone with even one grandparent who was Jewish can claim citizenship in the State, regardless of their religious affiliation. What is proposed is to limit the Right of Return to those with at least one Jewish parent. Such a change would have limited impact US Jewish immigration because most Jewish Olim have at least one Jewish

parent. But 30% of Olim from the former USSR meet this criterion.

Reality Check

News reports tend to focus on negative aspects of Israel. But these reports do not fully reflect the results by surveys comparing Israel to other countries.

Israelis are very happy: The World Happiness Report, now in its 10th year, bases its findings on people's own assessment of their happiness and economic and social data. The United States is in 16th place of the 146 nations surveyed. This is one place ahead of Britain. France climbed to 20th, its highest ranking yet. What about Israel? She ranked 9th, ahead of New Zealand, the UK, Canada, etc.

Safest for tourists: The Swiftest insurance company conducted an international survey, examining statistics of the 50 most visited countries. The US ranked 30th of the 50. Israel is the 5th safest country for tourists.

Reading the news exposes you to media bias against the Jewish State and the Jewish People. Facts show that Israelis are happy and safe compared to other countries. Its democracy may make some unhappy, but not the Israelis. Those interested in joining the Israel Committee, email Eli at EliCohen@IsraelUpdate.INFO.

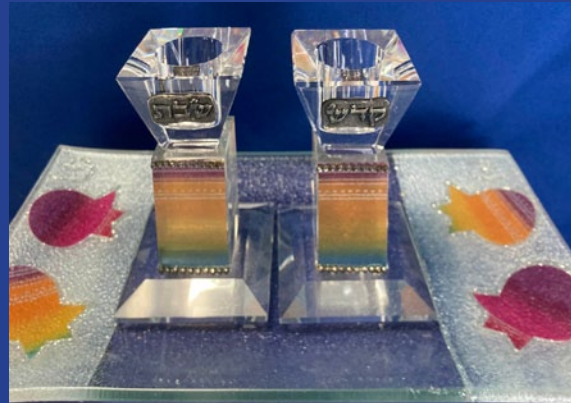


Demonstrators outside Israel's Knesset on Dec. 29 express concern over plans to hobble the High Court, extremist policies, erosion of women's and LGBTQ rights, and ministers with criminal records. -Times of israel

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special items.**



Services at Beth Ami

We welcome you to join us for services. All Shabbat morning services will be held on Zoom, as well as in person: protocols for vaccination and masking will follow Sonoma County guidelines. Friday Erev Shabbat services will be held on Zoom, first Fridays of the month will be in person as well as Zoom and feature a Shabbat dinner following. Weekday services are on Zoom. See the Rabbi's Virtual Calendar each week on the Beth Ami website: bethamir.org. Hearing Assistive Devices are available for in-person events, and live transcript captioning is available for Zoom.

Daily Daven

Sunday - Friday Mornings

7:30 am. Torah Study

8:00 am. Morning Services

Sunday- Thursday Evenings

7:00 pm. Evening services

January Services

January 6 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story from "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Kabalat Shabbat Service with Rabbi Miller

7:00 pm Shabbat Dinner
(Reservations required)

January 7 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Miller

4:50 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

5:51 pm. Havdalah

January 13 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story, "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Sing in Shabbat with Lisa Iskin

January 14 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Miller

5:00 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

5:58 pm. Havdalah

January 20 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story from "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Sing in Shabbat with Lisa Iskin

January 21 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Miller

5:05 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

6:05 pm. Havdalah

January 23 Monday

Rosh Chodesh Shevat

January 27 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story from "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Sing in Shabbat with Lisa Iskin

January 28 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat morning service, lay led

5:15 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

6:13 pm. Havdalah

February Services

February 3 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story from "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Kabalat Shabbat Service with Rabbi Miller

7:00 pm Shabbat Dinner
(Reservations required)

February 4 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Miller

5:20 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

6:21 pm Havdalah



ט"ז בשבט

February 5 Sunday Erev Tu B'Shevat

February 6 Monday Tu B'Shevat

February 10 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story, "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Sing in Shabbat with Lisa Iskin

February 11 Saturday

9:30 a.m. Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Miller,

Zoe Baruch Bat Mitzvah

5:30 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

6:29 pm. Havdalah

February 17 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha;

5:45 pm. Story, "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Sing in Shabbat with Lisa Iskin

...continued next page

Services at Beth Ami

Continued...

February 18 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Miller

5:15 pm. Mincha, Discussion
Ma'ariv

6:37 pm Havdalah

February 21 Tuesday

Rosh Chodesh Adar (1st day)

February 22 Wednesday

Rosh Chodesh Adar (2nd day)

February 24 Friday

3:30 pm. Mincha

5:45 pm. Story, "Elijah's Violin"

6:00 pm. Sing in Shabbat with Lisa Iskin

February 25 Saturday

9:30 am. Shabbat Rosh Chodesh morning service

5:30 pm. Mincha, Discussion, Ma'ariv

6:40 pm Havdalah



WHAT IS TU B'SHEVAT? *by Tori Avey*

Tu B'Shevat gets its name from the date on which the holiday occurs, the 15th of the month of Shevat. A minor Jewish holiday, it is often referred to as the new year (or "birthday") of the trees. The holiday originated in the Talmud, and was based on the date chosen for calculating the agricultural cycle of taking tithes from the produce of the trees, which were brought as first-fruit offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem.

How is Tu B'shevat celebrated?

The holiday of Tu B'Shevat fell out of practice after the destruction of the Second Temple, but was revived by kabbalists in the Middle Ages. They instituted the practice of the Tu B'Shevat seder, a meal that partly mirrors the Passover seder and involves eating biblical foods native to the Holy Land and drinking four cups of wine.

Tu B'Shevat has developed into an ecological holiday that reminds Jews of our connection to the earth and to our role as caretakers of the environment. Some modern practices include donating money to plant trees in Israel or planting trees locally. The kabbalistic Tu B'Shevat seder has also been reclaimed. As part of the Tu B'Shevat seder it is customary to eat from shiv'at ha'minim (seven species endemic to the Land of Israel): wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, dates.

.....
At Beth Ami we have conducted seders, walked in the woods, enjoyed nature photography, learned about olives and wine, and helped the Nursery School children to plant trees (above). We hope you join us on this year's adventure. We can't announce it yet, but trees and wine are both involved.



GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR CONGREGATION

We are very grateful for your support and think it's important that your donation is acknowledged in the Shofar. (The minimum donation for each occasion is \$9.00) You can donate online at [BethAmiSR.org /giving/](http://BethAmiSR.org/giving/)

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—*Arnold & Karen Herskovic*

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—*Ana Madden*

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—*David & Margorie Ballo*

Thank you to our Torah readers! —*Anonymous*

In memory of Lila Rogan, mother of Jane Rogan Dwight
—*Edward & Nancy Sherman*

In memory of Betty Siegel, mother of Sandi Shulkin and grandmother of Ken Plattner
—*Anonymous*

A generous donation
—*Anonymous*

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Anonymous

In honor of being called to the bimah. —*Ivan Barta*

In memory My mother, Anna Barta —*Ivan Barta*

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—*Mark Stoelting & Leanne Schy*

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In honor of being called to the bimah. —*Ivan Barta*

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—*Mitchell & Barbara McGee*

In memory of Frances Brust
—*Mitchell & Barbara McGee*

In memory of Jay Holloway
—*Tish Levee*

In memory of Jay Holloway
—*Phil Weil & Bonnie Boren*

In gratitude for the beautiful community at Beth Ami.
—*Judith Stern*

A generous donation
—*Ana Madden*

In memory of Jay Holloway
—*Sandra Shulkin*

A generous donation
—*David Brunstein*

In memory of Diane Connors Schilling, sister of Tish Levee
—*Sandra Shulkin*

In memory of Jacob Goldman, my father
—*Ethel & Stuart Schy*

A generous donation
—*Elise Watkins*

In memory of Betty Siegel
—*Tish Levee*

Thank your for allowing us to use the hall for Israeli Folkdancing—*Will Aubin*

General Fund: Lunch

In memory of Diana Schilling, with condolences to Tish Levee —*Anonymous*

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In honor of Russ Gurevitch's birthday
—*Mark & Carol Rosen*

In honor of Betty Boyd & Eli Cohen's Anniversary
—*Mark & Carol Rosen*

In honor of Nancy Fleming's birthday
—*Mark & Carol Rosen*

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In memory of Jay Holloway
—*Evelyn Gurevitch*

Nursery School Donation

Elsa Ballo, grandmother of David Ballo —*Anonymous*



GENEROUS CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR CONGREGATION

Continued...

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of Jay Holloway
—Richard Kahn &
Anne Brown

Thank you to Rabbi Miller for
honoring Moshe's yahrzeit
—Branagan Branagan

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January Yahrzeits

Secular dates correspond to Hebrew date of death.

Observance of yahrzeit begins at sundown the previous day.

All yahrzeits observed at Beth Ami.

Announced on Jan. 6 & 7

- Jan. 9 William Friedman
Grandfather of
Joslyn Metzger
- Jan. 10 Robert Maurice Deal
Brother of
Barbara Whitaker
- Jan. 10 Jack Schiffman
Father of Bernice Fox
- Jan. 11 Dr. Raymond Kauffman
Father of
Raphael Kauffman
- Jan. 11 Bea Kaplan
Grandmother of
Michelle Zygielbaum
- Jan. 12 Elaine Robinson
Mother of Myrna Morse
- Jan. 13 Mordachai ben Herschel
Brother of
Evelyn Gurevitch

Announced on Jan. 13 & 14

- Jan. 14 Gladys Baba
Mother of William Cordell
- Jan. 14 Avraham Sapojnikov
Father of
Ahuva Simon-Sa'ar
- Jan. 15 Rosa Newman
Mother-in-law of
Edith Newman
- Jan. 17 Jettie Rijnveldt
Stepsister of
Mieneke Drake
- Jan. 18 Edith Volkmann
Sister of Evelyn Gurevitch
- Jan. 20 Ruth Levy
Mother of Janice Sternfeld

Announced on January 20 & 21

- Jan. 21 Evelyn Cooper
Mother of Bob Cooper
- Jan. 21 J.J. Fitzgibbons
Husband of
Andrea Goodman
- Jan. 21 Paul Lazovic
Friend of Tish Levee
- Jan. 21 Ruth Baruch
Mother of Esther Baruch
- Jan. 22 Verne Paule
Husband of Raynora Paule
- Jan. 23 Sylvia Bernstein, Aunt of
Marc Bernstein
- Jan. 24 Kelso Thomas
Husband of Myra Thomas
- Jan. 25 Sara Feinstein
Mother of Paul Feinstein
- Jan. 26 Henry Mazur
Father of Martha Lane

Announced on January 27 & 28

- Jan. 28 Lewis Magnus
Grandfather of
Howard Glickman
- Jan. 28 David Myerfeld
Grandfather of
Patty Bernstein
- Jan. 29 Erna Biberstein
Mother of
Susanne Batzdorff
- Jan. 31 Irving Decker
Father of Mel Decker
- Jan. 31 Ralph Swanson
Father-in-law of
Carol Swanson
- Jan. 31 George Waldman
Grandfather of
Barbara Whitaker
- Feb. 1 Warren Davis
Husband of Judith Helman
- Feb. 2 Nomi Lev-Yahm
Mother of Vivian Klein

January Birthdays

If you do *not* wish to have your birthday listed in the Shofar, please contact the office

- 3 Marge Ballo
4 Evan Zelig
6 Abe Alexander
6 Mienieke Drake
9 Tish Levee
10 Dan Weiss
15 Richard Feldman
16 Lenore Holloway
17 Paula Schlesinger
23 Rachel Girouard
28 Bill Friedman
31 Stephen Nett

January Anniversaries

- 2 Laura & Abe Alexander
3 Joyce & Paul Kobetz

Simcha Board Tree of Life

Honor thy mother...also thy aunt, uncle, cousin, child, best friend, teacher with an engraved leaf on our Simcha Board, commemorating any joyous occasion, bestowal of an honor, or cause for thanksgiving.

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We also provide the opportunity for you to memorialize loved ones.

Yahrzeit Board

Plaque—\$450



February Yahrzeits

Secular dates correspond to Hebrew date of death.

Observance of yahrzeit begins at sundown the previous day.

All yahrzeits observed at Beth Ami.

Announced on February 3 & 4

Feb. 5 Beverly Sherman
Mother of Nancy Sherman

Feb. 5 Michelle Stein
Mother of
Janet Stein-Larson

Feb. 5 Lillian Margolese
Grandmother of
Michelle Zygielbaum

Feb. 5 Isac Rijnveld
Stepfather of
Mieneke Drake

Feb. 6 Florence Alexander
Grandmother of
Abe Alexander

Feb. 6 Marguerite Connors
Mother of
Tish Levee

Feb. 8 Fannie Miller
Grandmother of
Rabbi Mordecai Miller

Feb. 8 Harry Schneider
Father of
Evelyn Gurevitch

Feb. 8 Marilyn Brunstein
Mother of
David Brunstein

Feb. 9 Mark Gurevitch
Brother-in-law of
Evelyn Gurevitch

Feb. 10 Quentin Brown
Father of
Anne Brown

Feb. 10 Irwin Margolese
Uncle of
Michelle Zygielbaum

Feb. 10 Paul Zygielbaum
Husband of
Michelle Zygielbaum

Announced on February 10 & 11

Feb. 11 Sheyna Morse
Mother-in-law of
Myrna Morse

Feb. 13 Freda Weiss
Grandmother of Dan Weiss

Feb. 14 Erwin Batzdorf
Father-in-law of
Susanne Batzdorff

Feb. 14 Gerson Kahn
Father of David Kahn

Feb. 16 Rayfield Helman
Father of Judith Helman

Feb. 17 Zislye bas Mendel Laib
Mother-in-law of
Evelyn Gurevitch

Feb. 17 Sophie Shapiro
Mother-in-law of
Phyllis Shapiro

Announced on February 17 & 18

Feb. 21 Mort Sherman
Father of Nancy Sherman

Feb. 22 Irwin Inman
Father of Lee Feinstein

Feb. 23 Jack Iskin
Father of Lisa Iskin

Feb. 24 Charles Yelin
Grandfather of
Francie Rogovin

Announced on February 24 & 25

Feb. 25 Mae Bernstein
Grandmother of
Marc Bernstein

Feb. 25 Stan Frommer
Husband of Roz Frommer

Feb. 25 Aaron Speigelman
Uncle of
Ronit Glickman

Feb. 26 Lillian Garson
Mother of Andrea Nett

Feb. 26 Shulamith Miller
Mother of
Rabbi Mordecai Miller

Feb. 27 Jeremy Jason Kahn
Son of David Kahn

Feb. 27 Anna Branagan
Mother of
Branagan Branagan

Feb. 28 Sadie Selowitz
Aunt of Susan Miller

February Birthdays

2 Sybille Anbar
2 Debbie Shapiro
3 Ellen Mundell
5 Dr. Eli Cohen
7 Rayme Shapiro
8 Ed Harman
10 Edith Friedman
11 David Ballo
11 Andy Fleming
14 Daryl Schloss
15 Branagan Branagan
21 Betty Boyd
23 Bernice Fox
23 Barb McGee
24 Arnold Herskovic
25 Boyd Lane
26 Priscilla Lowell
26 Christopher Press
27 Michael Newman

February Anniversaries

2 Janice & Alan Shotkin
9 Dan & Sybille Anbar
19 Janice & Jeff Sternfeld
20 Patty & Marc Bernstein
23 Vivian & Irvin Klein

March 1 Dorise Naidorf
Wife of Louis Naidorf

March 1 Arthur Margolese
Father of
Michelle Zygielbaum

March 1 Mardelle Rome
Mother of Robin Cooper

March 1 Lydia Ross
Sister of Henry Cohn

March 2 Martin Boimoil
Father of
Susy Boimoil Starr

March 3 Sylvia Feingold
Grandmother of
Vivian Klein

March 3 Elinor G. Herman
Aunt of David Brunstein



Congregation Beth Ami

4676 MAYETTE AVENUE, SANTA ROSA, CA 95405

Address service requested

January and February Candlelighting

January 6 - 7

Vayhi

Candle Lighting—4:46 pm

Havdalah—5:51 pm

January 13 - 14

Shemot

Candle Lighting—4:53 pm

Havdalah—5:58 pm

January 20 - 21

Va'era

Candle Lighting—5:01 pm

Havdalah—6:05 pm

January 27 - 28

Bo

Candle Lighting—5:09 pm

Havdalah—6:13 pm

February 3 - 4

Besballah

Shabbat Shirah

Candle Lighting—5:17 pm

Havdalah—6:21 pm

February 10 - 11

Yitro

Candle Lighting—5:25 pm

Havdalah—6:29 pm

February 17 - 18

Mishpatim

Shabbat Shekelim

Candle Lighting—5:32 pm

Havdalah—6:37 pm

February 24 - 25

Terumah

Candle Lighting—5:40 pm

Havdalah—6:44 pm

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