



# THE SCRIBE

Monthly Newsletter of Temple B'nai Abraham  
Now Celebrating its 127<sup>th</sup> Year  
Affiliated with the United Synagogue  
Of Conservative Judaism

127 EAST MAIN STREET  
MERIDEN, CT 06450

203-235-2581 FAX 203-235-2582

November, 2016

Tishri - Cheshvan 5777

---

## From Rabbi Michael G. Kohn

### Tikkun HaOlam

During our Shabbat service between Yom Kippur and Sukkot, I had a conversation with those in attendance about Tikkun HaOlam, Hebrew for “repairing the world”. I decided to hold this conversation because I had read two sermons — both written by Conservative Rabbis — which viewed this subject from opposing points of view.

Rabbi Aaron Starr delivered a sermon to his congregation on Rosh HaShannah in which he expressed the opinion that it was time to say Kaddish for Tikkun HaOlam. His rationale began with his understanding that Tikkun HaOlam is a commanded act — one we are required to perform. He explained that over the past several decades, the term Tikkun HaOlam and the word Mitzvah have strayed too far from that original meaning. A Mitzvah is a commanded act, from the verb tzav — “command”; yet many liberal Jews, including those in Conservative congregations, take that word simply to mean a “good deed”. It is often a good deed, but that is because we are doing what God has commanded us to do. Similarly, Tikkun HaOlam, for many Jews, has become the sole expression of their Judaism. They believe that doing a good deed and being a good person are all one needs to do. In that way, God, prayer, kashrut, etc. either are of less importance, or not important at all to their lives.

By contrast, Rabbi Michael Simon, in his sermon for that Shabbat, promoted the title idea from Rabbi Donnel Hartman’s Book, titled, “Putting God Second”. His rationale was that overemphasis on the ritual aspects of Judaism, at the expense of being a good person and helping others, leads to fundamentalism and the bad things that flow from that. Rabbi Simon suggests that “by putting others first, and by putting God second, we are being authentically religious. We are being Godlike in the way He wants us to really be, which is by acting in His image”.

I do believe that both rabbis make valid points. Rabbi Simon admits that when we act ethically as though we are putting God second, we actually are putting God first. I am sure Rabbi Starr does not want us to ignore the ethical commandments which are part of the Halakhah that Conservative Judaism embraces. That said, I believe that Rabbi Starr has the sounder position and that it is crucial for the survival of Conservative Judaism.

Conservative Judaism sees the mitzvot — the commanded acts — as required. We are required to keep Kosher; we are required to pray three times a day; we are required to lay tefillin and to bench lulav in the sukkah; we are required visit the sick, bury the dead and comfort the mourners, etc. Those parts of a Jewish life are not optional, to be performed or not at our choosing, if we are to be Conservative Jews.

Similarly, repairing the world and other ethical mitzvot, such as how we treat strangers, animals, the environment, etc., are also required of us as Conservative Jews. However, if those are all we do, we may well be authentically religious and acting Godlike, but we are not acting as Conservative Jews.

It's time to reclaim our Conservative heritage. It's time to attend services, and to follow, but not be enslaved by, the other ritual commandments, such as keeping kosher, keeping Shabbat, etc. It's time we started acting as Conservative Jews, before we all disappear.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Michael G. Kohn



### CALENDAR EVENTS

#### **3 Thursday**

**8:00 am** Morning Minyan

**7:30 pm** Auxiliary Meeting

#### **4 Friday**

**6:30 pm** Shabbat Evening Services

#### **5 Saturday**

**9:30 am** Shabbat Morning Services

#### **6 Sunday**

**9:30 am** Jewry Duty

#### **10 Thursday**

**8:00 am** Morning Minyan

**7:30 pm** Ritual Committee Meeting

#### **11 Friday**

**6:30 pm** Shabbat Evening Services

#### **12 Saturday**

**9:30 am** Shabbat Morning Services

**7:30 pm** Military Whist Card Party

#### **13 Sunday**

**9:30 am** Jewry Duty



### NOVEMBER 2016

#### **17 Thursday**

**8:00 am** Morning Minyan

**7:30 pm** Board of Directors' Meeting

#### **18 Friday**

**6:30 pm** Shabbat Evening Services

#### **19 Saturday**

**9:30 am** Shabbat Morning Services

#### **20 Sunday**

**9:30 am** Jewry Duty

#### **24 Thursday**

**8:00 am** Morning Minyan

**Happy Thanksgiving**

#### **25 Friday**

**6:30 pm** Shabbat Evening Services

#### **26 Saturday**

**9:30 am** Shabbat Morning Services

#### **27 Sunday**

**No Jewry Duty**

## From the President's Corner:

I hope everyone has sufficiently recovered from the rigors of a late High Holiday season. I want to let you know of an initiative that I am starting this month. I have organized a new committee called the Temple Future Committee, which will be made up of a cross-section of our membership, with what I hope is a wide variety of views on what we should be doing and where we should be going as a synagogue. I anticipate that our first meeting will be in early to middle November, and my goal is to have a report to the Board of Directors by the springtime.

Whether you are on this committee or not, I hope that every one of you will share your opinions with us. Committees get formed because smaller groups are more workable, but that does not mean that everyone else is shut out of the process. Please let us know what you think and what you would like us to hear.

You heard me say during Yom Kippur that the synagogue needs two things from you — participation and financial support. If you have made a Yom Kippur Appeal pledge, please fulfill it as soon as possible. If you did not make a pledge that day, it is of course not too late. Write a check and mail it in. It will still count. If you have not yet made a commitment to come to services more often, make that commitment now. We, of course, won't know, but if we suddenly have minyanim at more services, you will have our thanks and you will be performing a great mitzvah.

I wish you all a happy November, and a joyous hour of extra sleep when the clocks change.

Bob

## High Holiday Pledge

Were you visiting your family on Yom Kippur? Did you attend services at their synagogue? Were you at our wonderful services but forgot to bring your ticket/pledge card with you? It is never too late to make a pledge for the Yom Kippur Appeal. You may send in your check

with a note on the memo line stating this is your Yom Kippur pledge. We thank you in advance for your generous donation.

It is still not too late to help subsidize the cantor's salary. As many of you know, Cantor Gruenwald had major problems with her throat prior to the holidays and we needed to hire a new cantor at the last minute for the services. Cantor Benyomin Shechter came to us from Israel. Those who attended at least some part of the services, heard his beautiful voice. His pay was a little over what we had originally budgeted for this year. If you came to services and enjoyed Cantor Shechter, please think about making a donation. On the memo line of your check just write "cantor".

With Sorrow we inform you of the passing of:

**Norma Fenzel**

Step-mother of Joan Goodman  
and

**Al Lowell**

Step-father of Rick Grossman

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבילי ציון וירושלים.

May the Lord comfort and sustain  
all the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

*John J. Ferry*  
*& Sons Funeral Home*  
Over 125 Years and 5 Generations  
of Compassionate & Professional Service

88 East Main Street  
Meriden, CT 06450  
Phone: (203) 235-3338  
Email: [John.J.Ferry@snet.net](mailto:John.J.Ferry@snet.net)  
<http://www.jferryfh.com/>

מזל טוב Mazal Tov

To **Ruth and Sherwin Borsuk** on the birth of their granddaughter, **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk**. Rosalind was born September 26, 2016 to her parents Maritza and Ethan Borsuk.

**Happy Anniversary** to our couples celebrating an anniversary during the month of November:  
7th - Etoile & Edward Shemkovitz (65th)  
7th - Laurie & Roger Arnold

**Happy Birthday** to our members celebrating a birthday during the month of November:

- 8th - Howard Levine
- 9th - Hollye Lew
- 10th - Alyn Adams
- 14th - Joe Fine
- 15th - Marilyn Mazanek
- 16th - Mark Burwick
- 18th - Michael Barker
- 19th - Beth Eisner
- 24th - Sandy Sheftel
- 28th - Jean Nemeth
- 29th - Elayne Koslow
- 29th - Valerie Klei

רפואה שלימה

Wishes for a Complete and Speedy Recovery to:

Rebecca Sheftel

**E. JACK SHORR**  
Attorney & Counselor at Law

**E. JACK SHORR LAW OFFICES, LLC**  
1501 East Main Street, Suite 301  
Meriden, CT 06450

Phone: 203-238-3600

Fax: 203-235-6945

Email: [ejshorrlaw.com](mailto:ejshorrlaw.com)

[www.ejshorrlaw.com](http://www.ejshorrlaw.com)

**MERIDEN SELF-STORAGE, LLC.**

**Lisa Highbridge**  
Manager

210 Pomeroy Ave. (rear)  
Meriden, CT 06450

(203) 639-7335 Phone (203) 639-0759 Fax

[sales@meridenselfstorage.com](mailto:sales@meridenselfstorage.com)

[www.meridenselfstorage.com](http://www.meridenselfstorage.com)

**Quality Garden & Equipment Sales**

Sharon Kogut Vumbaco

President

203-237-0402

[qualitygarden@sbcglobal.net](mailto:qualitygarden@sbcglobal.net)

753 North Colony Road

Meriden, CT 06450-2323

[qualitygarden.ct.com](http://qualitygarden.ct.com)



# **Military Whist Card Party** **Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016** **7:30 PM**

Come and enjoy an evening of card playing, conversation, snacks and delicious desserts at Temple B'nai Abraham.

Bring your friends and family members to this Bi-Annual Event.

We will teach you this very easy and fun card game.

Win prizes (first and last place tables)

Come with a partner or a bring a full table or two  
(4 players to a table)

**Please call the Temple Office (203-235-2581) by  
Wednesday, November 4th to reserve a table.**

Also, please let us know if you can bring your own bridge table.

**Admission: \$10 per person for Auxiliary Members**

**\$12 for Non-Members**

**Babysitting will be provided at \$10 per child**

**A 50/50 raffle will be held**



***Time to restock your gift cards.  
The holidays are just around the corner.  
Think baby sitter, dog walker, paper person, etc.  
These make a nice gift to give to show someone you  
appreciate them (give to the military or police).  
Buy easy to give gifts (the size is always right)!***



### ***What Is Scrip?***

Scrip is a term that means "substitute money". When you purchase scrip, you're purchasing negotiable gift certificates and prepaid cards that are used just like cash. You can use scrip to purchase everyday expenses like food, clothing, and other essentials, and with every purchase, you earn revenue for Temple B'nai Abraham.

### ***How scrip generates revenue for us***

The Great Lakes Scrip Center acts on behalf of synagogues, schools and other non-profit organizations to purchase large amounts of scrip from restaurants, department stores, and other retailers. Because the scrip is purchased with cash up front, the participating retailers offer a substantial discount. Temple B'nai Abraham would buy the scrip from Great Lakes Scrip Center at a discount, and re-sell the certificates to families like yours for full face value. The discount - from two to fifteen percent or more – is Temple B'nai Abraham's revenue.

### ***Scrip is "shopping cart fundraising"***

Scrip is a popular fundraiser because families don't have to sell anything. Temple members produce revenue by making regular household purchases they would make anyway. Clothing, toys and gifts can be purchased with scrip. You can use the cards themselves as gifts. Your friends can buy them.

### ***Find Out More***

See the list of available Scrip on the reverse side of this flyer. Then put your shopping dollars to work for Temple B'nai Abraham. If there is a merchant whose name you do not see on the flyer, please ask.

### ***\*\*\* Note \*\*\****

All orders must be paid with a check made out to Temple B'nai Abraham and accompany the order form. **Please send them to the temple office before Friday, November 4th.** The gift cards will be available about late November and can be picked up at the temple office during regular office hours. You will be contacted by email or phone when the cards are in. Please call the office first to make sure someone will be there.

Contact the temple office at 203-235-2581 or Janice Weiss at 203-237-0200

## Yahrzeits Observed in the Month of November

Nov. 1	Sadelle Chain Esther Weinstein Albin Hirsch Thomas Simonetta Samuel Kaufman	Nov. 11	Bennett Dunn Natalie Friedman		Dr. Simeon Cohen Emma Port
		Nov. 12	Anna Rose Resident Sadie Kaplan		Mary Fleischer Rose Roden Sylvia Lew
Nov. 2	Abraham Goodstein Irwin Bernstein Stanton Sirkin Harry Groobert	Nov. 13	Vita Cherniack	Nov. 23	Bessie Hurwitz Bessie Levine William Israel
		Nov. 14	Goldie Goldstein Martha Wax Lena Grossman	Nov. 24	Casper Helper Frances Loitz Pearl Dembowitz Arthur Limon Max Shulkin Barbara Rubin
Nov. 3	Harry Israel Samuel Moslowitz Ethel Friedman Frances Schwartz	Nov. 15	Anna Bichunsky Mary Katz Jean Koster Daniel Kahn		
		Nov. 16	I. Albert Lipman	Nov. 25	Abe Hurwitz Rebecca Goldstein Annie Becker Kolbin Joseph Dobris Samuel Novak Ida Lapides
Nov. 4	Hyman Kaplan Pearl Tonkonow Irving Weiner David Goldstein	Nov. 17	Jonah Umansky Abraham Denoff Lejzor Telis		
		Nov. 18	Leah Jacobs Benjamin Krentzman Louis Kaplan Asher Katz Anna Dvora Muravnick Sadie Kleban	Nov. 26	Esther Rubenstein Morris Bittman
Nov. 5	Gerald Turover Lucille Cherniack Eric Pick Helen Zempsky Dr. Arthur Weiss			Nov. 27	Isidore Friedman
		Nov. 19	Frances Rothfarb Emma Cohen Vellya Israel Paul Kaplan	Nov. 28	Sally Aron Anna Muravnick Jack Koslow Hattie Novak
Nov. 6	Samuel Beloff Marian Loitz			Nov. 30	Betty Bichunsky Elinor Zakin Natalie Greenzweig Ida Chausky
Nov. 7	Pauline Shemkovitz				
Nov. 8	Anna White Howard Prince	Nov. 20	Bertha Sklar Rose Shoag Rose Seligman Peter Weiss Jerome Johnson		
Nov. 9	William Povlotsky Rachel Leah Kolbin Michael Sochin Brian Ash Jean Resident Ester Ben-Dov	Nov. 21	Myer Edelson		



A Candle or Yahrzeit Light should be lit at sundown the night before these dates.

Tzdakah to perpetuate the memory of a loved one is a Mitzvah.

Your contribution to the Yahrzeit Fund would be greatly appreciated.

## **תודה רבה - THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS TO OUR VARIOUS FUNDS**

### **Yahrzeit Fund: In Memory of:**

**Berte Kessler** by Linda Fishman

**Beatrice Katz** by Richard A. Katz

**Max Grossman** by H. Robert & Glenda Grossman

### **Barry Koslow Torah Restoration Fund**

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Marilyn Petroff.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Marge Kirchheimer & family.

In Memory of **Norma Fenzel** by Marge Kirchheimer & family.

Mazal Tov to the **Borsuks** on the birth of **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk** by Marilyn Petroff.

Mazal Tov to the **Borsuks** on the birth of **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk** by Debbie Broadley.

### **General Temple Fund**

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Hilda Trueheart.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Sarit & Ed DeFrancesco & family.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Ruth & Sherwin Borsuk.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Jo Robin & Michael Gould.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Jan & Jay Weiss.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Cathy & Fred Morro.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Jean & Marc Nemeth.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Debbie & David Kaye.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Ruth Kahn.

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Helene & Howard Koenig.

Mazal Tov to the **Borsuks** on the birth of **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk** by Helene & Howard Koenig.

Mazal Tov to the **Borsuks** on the birth of **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk** by Jean & Marc Nemeth.

In Memory of **Norma Fenzel** by Jean & Marc Nemeth.

Mazal Tov to the **Borsuks** on the birth of **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk** by Debbie & David Kaye.

Get Well Wishes to **Donna & Mark Grossman** by Bea & Ines Gerstenblatt.

### **Cemetery Fund**

In Memory of **Judi Schwartz Barrett** by Flora Shorr and Jack Shorr.

In Memory of all our loved ones, **Ida & Joseph Levy, Ethel Levy, Evelyn (Levy) & Abraham Grossman** by Joanne & Saul Pasternack.

In Memory of **Mike Eisner** by the Eisner Family.

### **Sarah Zietz Pierson Scholarship Fund**

Mazal Tov to the **Borsuks** on the birth of **Rosalind Juniper Borsuk** by Risa & Fred Zierler.

In Memory of **Norma Fenzel** by Risa & Fred Zierler.

In Memory of **Al Lowell**, by Risa & Fred Zierler.