



THE SCRIBE

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

127 EAST MAIN STREET
MERIDEN, CT 06450

203-235-2581 FAX 203-235-2582

February, 2017

Shevat - Adar 5777

From Rabbi Michael G. Kohn

Pluralism in Israel

As Conservative Jews, we here in the United States and our Masorti colleagues in Israel have joined with the Reform Movement in seeking to have equal access to prayer in an egalitarian fashion at the Kotel — the Western, or Wailing Wall — as well as equal access to government funding for its Israeli rabbis and congregations. A recent decision by Israel's Supreme Court may have brought that day closer to reality.

After three years of negotiations, an agreement was reached last January 31, which provided that there is to be "One Kotel for one people", with a single entryway; two prayer plazas, one northern (about 1,800 square meters, in the Orthodox tradition) and a southern plaza (about 900 square meters in the egalitarian tradition); a governing commission will be chaired by the Jewish Agency Chairperson under the appointment of the Prime Minister, with representatives of the Conservative Movement, the Reform Movement, and the "Women of the Wall", alongside representatives from the Israeli government; and Government budgets earmarked for the establishment and administration of an egalitarian prayer plaza are designated and managed through the governing commission.

Although he was expected to do so the following day, the Minister of Religious Affairs refused to sign the new regulations to the Law of Holy Sites. Since then, Prime Minister Netanyahu has dragged his feet in ordering implementation of the agreement, due to opposition from haredi rabbis and their political parties. After their patience was exhausted, several parties filed suit.

In an interim injunction announced January 11, 2017, the Israel Supreme Court, sitting as the High Court of Justice, gave Western Wall administrator Rabbi Shmuel Rabinowitz, the Western Wall Heritage Foundation and state agencies — including the Prime Minister's Office and the Religious Services Ministry — 30 days to "explain why the petitioners should not be allowed to pray in accordance with their custom at the traditional plaza, or alternatively allow them to pray in accordance with their custom at a place which has access to the Western Wall similar to [the access] at the traditional site." The Court also declared that women should not be subjected to body searches before entering the plaza, voiding the prior authorization for such searches, which sought to prevent worshipers from entering the women's side with Torah scrolls, tallitot, tefillin and other religious objects. It remains to be seen what those responses, due by February 11, will say, but it appears that even with a compromise, the Rabbinate's power over the Kotel and the Plaza will be curtailed.

In another decision, the Court ordered that those undergoing conversion in the Masorti or Reform movements in Israel have access to state-funded mikva'ot. Although Haredi lawmakers in the Knesset passed a law to bar those prospective converts from using those mikva'ot, the Jewish Agency agreed to build additional mikva'ot for their use.

Pluralism in Israel is not limited only to the liberal movements. Two initiatives in the Israeli Orthodox community have also made headway. Rabbi Seth Farber, a Modern Orthodox rabbi, founded an

alternative Orthodox conversion program and court system to help non-Jewish Israelis with Jewish ancestry convert to Judaism. The High Court of Justice has since ruled that Israel must recognize all Orthodox conversion programs, both in Israel and abroad. And Tzohar, another Modern Orthodox rabbinical organization, offers a somewhat more liberal brand of Orthodoxy than the Rabbinat to Israelis wishing to get married.

A final decision from Israel's Supreme Court in the Kotel case is expected in the coming months. In the meantime, we need to be vigilant because the Haredi members of the Keneset might force legislation to overturn the decision, as they did with the mikvah ruling. Nevertheless, the winds appear to be blowing in a different direction. In an opinion poll, Hiddush, a liberal organization that advocates for "religious freedom and equality" in Israel, found that 75 percent want marriage to be under the authority of the secular family court and not the Rabbinat. Stay tuned.

B'Shalom,
Rabbi Michael Kohn

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Purim Celebration

Saturday, March 11th

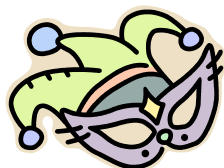
7:00 PM

Megillah Reading and Purim Celebration

Come in Costume --- both adults and children

Bring a grogger or use ours

Enjoy Hamentaschen





Federal Holidays 2017

Date	Federal holiday	Day of the week
January 1, 2017	New Year's Day	Sunday
January 2, 2017	New Year's Day (observed)	Monday
January 16, 2017	Martin Luther King Day	Monday
February 20, 2017	Presidents' Day	Monday
May 29, 2017	Memorial Day	Monday
July 4, 2017	Independence Day	Tuesday
September 4, 2017	Labor Day	Monday
October 9, 2017	Columbus Day	Monday
November 10, 2017	Veterans Day (observed)	Friday
November 11, 2017	Veterans Day	Saturday
November 23, 2017	Thanksgiving Day	Thursday
December 25, 2017	Christmas Day	Monday

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CALENDAR EVENTS

2 Thursday

8:00 am Morning Minyan

3 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

4 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services followed by Adult Education luncheon

5 Sunday

9:30 am Jewry Duty

9 Thursday

8:00 am Morning Minyan
7:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting

10 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

11 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

12 Sunday

9:30 am Jewry Duty

16 Thursday

8:00 am Morning Minyan

17 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

FEBRUARY 2017

18 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

19 Sunday

No Jewry Duty

23 Thursday

8:00 am Morning Minyan
7:30 pm Board of Directors' Meeting

24 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

25 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

26 Sunday

No Jewry Duty

Up-Coming Events in March

Saturday, March 11

7:00 pm Purim - Megillah Reading
Turn clocks ahead one hour

Saturday, March 18

8:15 pm Military Whist Card Party

From the President's Corner:

I hope everyone is having a happy and healthy year so far. I want to briefly bring you up to date on what we are doing in regard to the Temple's future. As I have previously said, we have established a Temple Future Committee, chaired by Dave Kaye, which has begun to explore where we would like to be, and where we need to be, in the years to come. My directive to this committee is to make decisions based not just on one or two years from now, but on what we see for ourselves twenty years from now to ensure a continued Jewish presence in south central Connecticut. The committee is now in the process of gathering information about our financial resources, and is developing a five-year budget projection. We will use this information to develop proposals which will be presented to the Board of Directors and the membership of the synagogue.

We are also continuing to meet with the leadership of Beth Israel Synagogue in Wallingford. We are not, at least for now, discussing any form of merger with Wallingford, but we, and they, are keeping all options for our future on the table. Both our temples completely agree that we have the responsibility to maintain a Jewish presence in this area. At some point we may mutually decide that it is in the best interests of both our organizations to join with each other in order to achieve this goal, whether in one of our existing sites, or in a new location. For now, we are planning a number of joint events. The first one this year will be a Purim celebration, and we will go on from there with more. I don't mean to quote Hillary Clinton, but we are stronger together.

I hope to see everyone at all these events, and at services, as well .

Bob

Mazal Tov - מזל טוב

To **Stacey and Bruce Rovinsky** on the birth of their granddaughter, **Ilana Sadie Rogers**, on Dec. 24th.

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

2nd - Bea Gerstenblatt
3rd - Eleanor Denenberg
9th - Linda Caplan
17th - Allen Caplan
22nd - Sherry Stekloff
25th - Lesley Chidekel

Happy Birthday to our next generation:

2nd - Ben Steele
8th - Robert Massicott



Jonathan Goodman, back row center, boys cross country took care of his business on the course and in the classroom. In cross country, the senior captain saved his best 5K time of the dual-meet season for last: an 18:30 that won the City Championship Meet at Hubbard Park. Academically, the Distinguished Honors student ranks No. 1 in Maloney's Class of 2017 with a 4.6 GPA. Along with running winter and spring track, he is a musician active in the Maloney band, jazz band and orchestra pit.

New Books in the Harris Library

Adult:

The One Man by Andrew Gross

The Deadliest Hate by June Trop

Let There Be Laughter by Michael Krasny

Children:

The Cricket and the Ant by Naomi Ben-Gur

A Hat for Mrs. Goldman by Michelle Edwards
and G. Brian Karas

A Hanukkah with Mazel by Joel Edward Stein

Maya Prays for Rain by Susan Tarcov

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: ejs@ejshorrlaw.com

www.ejshorrlaw.com

רפואה שלימה

Wishing a Complete and Speedy Recovery to:

Jean Lawrence

With sorrow we inform you of the passing of:

Frances Dubrow

המקום ינחם אתכם בתוך שאר אבילי ציון וירושלים.

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

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Lisa Highbridge
Manager

210 Pomeroy Ave. (rear)

Meriden, CT 06450

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

sales@meridenselfstorage.com

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qualitygarden@sbcglobal.net

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Meriden, CT 06450-2323

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Military Whist Card Party
Saturday, March 18, 2017 - new date
7:45 PM - doors open
8:15 PM - start playing

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, March 15th 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

A 50/50 raffle will be held



Yahrzeits Observed in the Month of February

Feb. 1	Elizabeth Simonowsky Rose Ernstoff	Feb. 12	Gayle Shibetta	Irving Godfried	
Feb. 2	Dr. Louis Pierson Aaron Brown Philip Grossman Alexander Johnson	Feb. 13	Harris Glasser Bessie Zietz Perla Dickter	Sadie Lenzner Bertha Goldring	
Feb. 3	Harry Hurwitz May D. McCaffrey	Feb. 14	Lori Shapiro James Uvino Mamie Melton Morris Fightlin	Feb. 23	Oscar Muravnick Simon Friedman David Levine Tillie Fine Robert Schupack
Feb. 4	Esther Derecktor Herman Dressler	Feb. 15	Anna Levy Lawrence Roden	Feb. 24	Gerald Resnick Charles Muravnick
Feb. 5	Rebecca Gottlieb	Feb. 16	Philip Orentlich Lena Jacobson Henry Bishinsky Leon Wasserman	Feb. 25	Samuel Miller Bernard Levitt Hannah Klamkin Avraham Kirchheimer
Feb. 6	Judith Hirsch Milton Sodel Fannie Cohen	Feb. 17	Ephriam Troy Bertha Harris Rose Pierson Seymour Woien	Feb. 26	Rachel Horn Pauline Gerstenblatt Sarah T. Friedman Shirley Lee
Feb. 7	Anita Bernstein Albert Katz Joseph Dressler Joseph Gittleman Leon Wolk	Feb. 18	Nathan Levine Sanford Shorr Rebecca Sheftel Hazel Cherniack Ruth Young	Feb. 27	Lucy White Rose Gold Fannie Levine Harry Zaiantz Benjamin Hozer Joseph Barker
Feb. 8	Sol Cheerman Ilse Jacobs Louis Ziskis Maude Pick Anita Chausky	Feb. 19	Benjamin Rosenthal	Feb. 28	Harry Grossman Abraham White Milton Kalmanowitz Isaac Dressler Jennie Opinsky
Feb. 9	Frances Lable Max Zietz Jean Feinberg Jules Greenzweig	Feb. 20	Lena Friedman Paul Bishins Nathan Mautner Adelaide Zellman		
Feb. 10	Etta Hozer David Mekies George Shapiro Roza Tennenberg	Feb. 21	Muriel Berson Samuel Bittman Dina Perlroth Esther Apfelbaum		
Feb. 11	Lena Becker Harold Simons Sarah H. White	Feb. 22	Joseph Fine Samson Gordon		



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:

Abraham Cooperstein by Barbara Roller

Ethel Cooperstein by Barbara Roller

Jerry Kosofsky by Jane Weisberg

Morris Sheftel by Sanford & Rebecca Sheftel

Herman Sheftel by Sanford & Rebecca Sheftel

Stephen Sheftel by Sanford & Rebecca Sheftel

Rivke Perecman by Shirley & Jay Brodach

Minnie Gordon Levitt by Arlene Weyler

Bernard Levitt by Arlene Weyler

General Temple Fund

A donation to the Temple by Mark Pasik.

In Honor of **Marc & Jean Nemeth and family**
by William Wadsworth.

In Memory of **Fran Dubrow** by Susan Croog.

In Memory of **Fran Dubrow** by Natalie &
Lenny Cheerman.

Get Well wishes to **Michelle Grossman** by
Natalie & Lenny Cheerman.

Congratulations to **Risa Zierler**, on her
retirement, by Natalie & Lenny Cheerman.

Barry Koslow Torah Restoration Fund

In Memory of **Fran Dubrow** by Flora shorr.

Sophie & Julius Barker Scholarship Fund

In Memory of **Joseph & Edith Barker** by
Michael & Shelley Barker.

In Memory of **Julius & Sophie Barker** by
Michael & Shelley Barker.

Sarah Zietz Pierson Scholarship Fund

In Memory of beloved grandfather, **Max Zietz**
by Judy (Zietz) & Ed Siegel & family.

In Memory of **Barbara Jeanette** by The
DeFrancesco Family.

DONATIONS FOR THE SOUP KITCHEN

We are again collecting supplies for the Soup Kitchen. This year we are collecting dish detergent and hand soap. The Soup Kitchen has requested: "Regular size dish detergent (e.g. Dawn) and liquid hand soap (e.g. Dial)". We would like to collect several cases of each.

There will be a box in the Temple lobby for your donations. All donations must be in the Temple by Thursday February 2nd as we are delivering them at 9:30 am February 3rd.

If you prefer to make a financial donation, checks may be sent to: Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, 127 East Main Street, Meriden, CT 06450. Please mark your check "Soup Kitchen". We will purchase the detergent and soap the afternoon of February 2nd.



Thank you to everyone who was very generous with their donations
of sugar and money last year for the Soup Kitchen.

We hope we can count on you again this year.