



THE SCRIBE

Monthly Newsletter of Temple B'nai Abraham
Now Celebrating its 128th Year
Affiliated with the United Synagogue
Of Conservative Judaism

127 EAST MAIN STREET
MERIDEN, CT 06450

PHONE 203-235-2581 FAX 203-235-2582

September, 2018

Elul – Tishrei 5778-79

From Rabbi Michael G. Kohn

Israel and Democracy

While I was away this summer, the Israeli Keneset passed a new Basic Law — laws which might eventually be rolled into a constitution. This Basic Law, known as the “Nation State Law” caused an uproar here in the United States, with many suggesting Israel has abandoned its democratic foundation. I believe that the uproar over this law is largely a product of our highly political, and fractured society.

Israel is a democracy; however, it is not the 51st state and the ideas and values of American Jews are not 100% aligned with those of Israel’s citizens. Israel has a democratically elected government, with which we are free to disagree and criticize, but whose actions and decisions we are not free to control.

Most of that law contains provisions that should be unobjectionable to any fair-thinking American Jew. Almost all of the provisions simply codify what has been accepted fact for decades — “[t]he land of Israel is the historical homeland of the Jewish people, in which the State of Israel was established. The State of Israel is the national home of the Jewish people, in which it fulfills its natural, cultural, religious and historical right to self-determination. The right to exercise national self-determination in the State of Israel is unique to the Jewish people.”

The law describes the flag, identifies the national anthem, the official calendar — both Hebrew and Gregorian, the official day of rest, state holidays, the official language — Hebrew, and the state emblem.. It provides that non-Jews have a right to maintain days of rest on their Sabbaths and festivals.

So what is so controversial? First, the law describes Jerusalem, complete and united, is the capital of Israel. Jerusalem, complete and undivided, has been Israel’s position from the state’s creation and only a final status agreement with the Palestinians will result in a change.

That leaves only three provisions of the Law:

1. Arabic language has a special status in the state; Regulating the use of Arabic in state institutions or by them will be set in law.”

2. “The state shall act to preserve the cultural, historical and religious heritage of the Jewish people among Jews in the Diaspora.”

3. “The state views the development of Jewish settlement as a national value and will act to encourage and promote its establishment and consolidation.

Each of those provisions has been asserted to be undemocratic. Taking them one at a time, I begin with the issue of Arabic language. Arabic has never been an official language, although many government offices use it along with Hebrew. It is a holdover from the British Mandate. Additionally, the law specifically states that it “does not harm the status given to the Arabic language before this law came into effect.” This provision, though it may appear to be insulting to Israel’s Arab citizens, will have little or no practical effect.

The second point of controversy is believed to strike at the issue of religious pluralism in Israel, but the law refers to peoplehood, not to religion. Religious pluralism in Israel is complex. On the one hand, non-Jews are free to worship as they please and there is no law prohibiting the establishment of Reform and Masorti (Conservative) synagogues. On the other hand, the Ultraorthodox hold on certain religious matters, including prayer at the Kotel — the Western Wall, is a product of Israel’s democratic parliamentary system, where religious and other right-wing parties join a coalition to keep the current government in power.

Finally, there has always been a strategic policy of allowing Jews to live anywhere in the country, but the law does not permit any settlements to exclude anyone from living there based on ethnic or religious grounds.

That the law doesn't refer to equality or democracy is a shame, but there are other Basic Laws, such as Basic Human Dignity and Decency — there are 13 Basic Laws in total — which deal with that subject and the Israel Supreme Court repeatedly talks about equality.

In sum, I believe that Israel remains a strong democracy, albeit a flawed one, much as our own here in the United States. Does it mirror what liberal American Jews would like to see? It does not. But that doesn't make Israel undemocratic. It just makes it different. And if we can learn to appreciate, if not accept, those differences, we all will be better off.

S'lihot – Tashlikh

As the month of Elul draws to a close, the mood of repentance becomes more urgent. Prayers for forgiveness called *s'lihot* are recited in the early morning, before normal daily *shaharit* service. These prayers are recited for at least three days before Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur. A fundamental part of the *s'lihot* service is the repeated recitation of the "Thirteen Attributes," a list of God's thirteen attributes of mercy that were revealed to Moses after the sin of the golden calf. The first *s'lihot* service is usually held around midnight on *Motza'ei* Shabbat — right after Shabbat ends (after nightfall on Saturday night). This year it will be held on September 1, 2018, at 8:30 p.m. This year, our *S'lihot* observance, as last year, will begin with two short animations related to the themes of the season, each to be followed by discussion. Following a refreshment break, we will hold our *S'lihot* service.

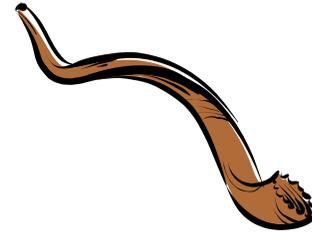
Following our custom, the *Tashlikh* ceremony will be held on Sunday, September 16, at Hubbard Park, by the duck pond.

5779

As the year 5778 draws to a close, I am once again reminded of the challenges facing our world. Here at home, the increased hate and violence against people of color and other cultural and religious minorities, as well as those sworn to protect us. Both here at home and in Europe, we see the growing tide of antisemitic words and violence. In Israel, as in other places around the world, the risk of terror. And not the least, the constant battles among Jews, both here and in Israel, over Israel and who is a Jew. We cannot wait for someone else to fix these challenges. We each must do our part — with our money and our vocal support.

May this upcoming year, 5779, be one of health, happiness, love and peace for us, for our families, for our community, our country, for Israel, and for the world.

B'Shalom,
Rabbi Michael G. Kohn



CALENDAR EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 2018

1 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

8:30 pm Leil Selichot

6 Thursday

7:30 pm Auxiliary Committee Meeting

7 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

8 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

9 Sunday

6:45 pm Erev Rosh Hashanah Dinner

8:00 pm Erev Rosh HaShanah Services

10 Monday

8:30 am Rosh HaShanah Services (Day 1)

11 Tuesday

8:30 am Rosh Hashanah Services (Day 2)

14 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

15 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

16 Sunday

10:00 am Tashlich at Hubbard Park Duck Pond

18 Tuesday

6:30 pm Kol Nidre Services

19 Wednesday

8:30 am Yom Kippur Services

5:00 pm Mincha

6:10 pm Neilah

7:34 pm Shofar Sounds

20 Thursday

7:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting

21 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

22 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

23 Sunday

9:30 am Put up Temple Sukkah

24 Monday

9:30 am Sukkot Services

25 Tuesday

9:30 am Sukkot Services

27 Thursday

7:30 pm Board of Directors' Meeting

28 Friday

6:30 pm Shabbat Evening Services

29 Saturday

9:30 am Shabbat Morning Services

Heads Up - Here Come the Holidays



Schedule of Holiday Services

Mark your calendar

Rosh Hashanah

Sunday, Sept. 9	Dinner	6:45 PM
	Services	8:00 PM
Monday, Sept. 10		8:30 AM
Tuesday, Sept. 11		8:30 AM
Sunday, Sept. 16		10:00 AM
	Tashlich at Hubbard Park	

Kol Nidre

Tuesday, Sept. 18		6:30 PM
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Yom Kippur

Wednesday, Sept. 19		8:30 AM
	Minhah Services	5:00 PM
	Ne'ilah Services	6:10 PM
	Shofar Sounds	7:34 PM

Sukkot

Sunday, Sept. 23		9:30 AM
	Build Temple Sukkah	
Monday, Sept. 24		9:30 AM
Tuesday, Sept. 25		9:30 AM
Monday, October 1		9:30 AM
	Shemini Atzeret with Yizkor	
	Simhat Torah Celebration	7:30 PM
Tuesday, October 2		9:30 AM
	Simhat Torah Services	
Sunday, October 7		9:30 AM
	Take down Temple Sukkah	

TASHLICH IN THE PARK

Tashlich is a remarkable ceremony which this year will be held on **Sunday, September 16**, at **10:00 AM** in Hubbard Park near the duck pond. All members, family and friends are invited to participate in this service. Hubbard Park is located on West Main Street.

Through the ritual of Tashlich, we express not only our desire to be free from future sin, but our continuing hope that we will be forgiven for past misdeeds. It is customary to go to a flowing body of water and recite prayers while "casting" our sins (represented by pieces of bread) into the water.

So please join us for this meaningful ceremony at the **Hubbard Park Duck Pond on Sept. 16**.

Don't forget to bring bread (any type of bread or crackers). Leftover challah from your Rosh Hashanah dinners is perfect.

Additional Important High Holiday Notes:

1. Silent Meditation – the Cantor chants the beginning of the *Musaf Amidah* on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur; we will pause for a few moments of silent reflection and prayer before the *Unetaneh Tokef* prayer.
2. Gratitude for Recovery – Anyone who has undergone surgery, had a serious illness or an accident is invited to participate in the reciting of the *Gomel* blessing on 1st Day of Rosh Hashanah. Please contact the Temple office and we will send you a copy beforehand.
3. Ne'ilah Meditation – During the Ne'ilah service on Sept. 19th, we will once again offer individuals or families time to meditate and pray before the open ark.

Dear Members of Temple B'nai Abraham,

I wish you all a Happy New Year for Rosh Hashanah and an Easy Fast for Yom Kippur.

This coming year will be a period of transition for our congregation. We are in the process of selling our building and pursuing a merger with Congregation Adath Israel of Middletown. However, Temple B'nai Abraham is still here, we have a Rabbi, we will be holding services, and providing a center for Jewish life in Meriden. Your support is urgently needed during the coming year.

As approved by the congregation last year we are in the process of selling our building which is too big and too expensive for us to maintain given the size of our congregation. We have a buyer and are proceeding with the sale. We are currently looking at finalizing the sale at the end of November.

We are very lucky that Ruth and Sherwin Borsuk have offered the use of a house on their property which we will use for services and for offices for the Rabbi and office staff after we sell the building.

Rabbi Kohn will retire as our Rabbi at the end of the Temple year in July 2019. He is under contract until that time and will maintain office hours, provide pastoral care, lead services, and perform life cycle events until then.

We are currently in negotiations with Adath Israel and will continue to keep you updated on the progress of the merger. We are working to maintain a legacy of Temple B'nai Abraham in Meriden before and after a merger with Middletown.

Your support of Temple B'nai Abraham is extremely important both with your dues, donations, and assistance as we transition.

L'Shana Tova and G'mar Hatimah Tovah,

Jay D. Weiss

President
Temple B'nai Abraham

Selichot Services

Saturday, September 1st

8:30 pm

**Please RSVP to the Temple office by
Wednesday, August 29th.**

Can you spare an hour on **Sunday, Sept. 23rd**, to help construct the Temple Sukkah? We will begin construction at (9:30 AM). The help of 4 or 5 people will make the job go much faster. We will also need several helpers on **Sunday, Oct. 7th** (9:30 AM) to take down and put away the Sukkah. Please call the Temple office and let Linda or Naomi know that you are willing to help.



A message from the Future Committee:

We have been working hard over the past couple of years to work with the congregation and Board of Directors to decide what the best plan of action is for our congregation.

You, as a congregation, voted to sell our current building. The building was put on the market and we are now in negotiations to sell it. Our current closing date is set for one month after the buyer sells their current property, which means that if all the pieces fall into place, we will have to be out of the building on November 30th.

We are very happy to have sold the building so quickly. Now I am asking for your help. We need to clean the building out prior to November 30th and I would like some volunteers from the congregation to do this. We have two Sundays in October for this. October 7th and 21st. Would you be willing to help us on one or both dates? Please contact the Temple office and let them know. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

We are now in active negotiations to merge with Congregation Adath Israel in Middletown. We have been working with them for a couple of months and have negotiated what is best for our Temple. Adath Israel is a warm congregation that shares our beliefs. They have opened their doors to us and we have been invited to attend their monthly pray, eat and sing services, which are on the first Friday of every month. They have also attended our Shabbat under the Stars with us. We have reached agreement on most of the major terms and are expecting the first draft of a formal agreement early in September. We will continue to share information with you as we have it.

Thank you for your continued support,

David Kaye and the Temple future committee

5 IMPORTANT ITEMS TO READ:

1. Would anyone like to have the Temple sukkah after we take it down on October 7th. It is made up of a number of 4 X 8 boards for the walls and door, and bamboo for the roof. If you would like it - please call the Temple office - 203-235-2581 by September 28th and you can make arrangements to pick it up on Sunday, October 7th when we take it down. Work begins at 9:30 am so come around then.

2. We are going to begin cleaning out the Temple. We would like some volunteers to help with this huge job. We will be doing this on Sunday, October 7th and also on Sunday, October 21st. Please call the office 203-235-2581 if you can spare a few hours to help.

3. At this time we plan to move all of the Yahrzeit Memorial Plaques to Adath Israel in Middletown when we move out of 127 East Main Street, but if you would like to have the plaques for your family, please contact the Temple office 203-235-2581 and make arrangements to pick them up.

4. Please take a few minutes to look through your photo albums and send us one or two or your family simchas and holiday celebrations which were held here at the Temple. We are currently working on a slide show, to be run at the Gala on November 11th. Please help bring back those wonderful memories of members who have passed away and events long forgotten. We would like all pictures (scanned is preferable) by September 21st, as this will give our person time to organize before he goes on vacation in October.

5. The Gala committee would like to let you know that the invitations are in the mail (as of Aug. 29th). There is a response card and a deadline date. People will not be seated without a reservation, so be sure to fill in the card and return it by the date. If you extended the invitation for the Gala to your adult children or members of your Hebrew school class, be sure they RSVP or include them (and their name[s]) in your reply.

Be sure to stop into the Temple and purchase items from our gift shop. At the current time all items are 25% off. Shop now for Hanukkah and Passover.

Mazal Tov - מזל טוב

To **Debbie and David Kaye** on the birth of their **grandson Reed Austin Rosin**, born August 4th, to Rachel and Allan Rosin.

To **Jay and Shirley Brodach** on the engagement of their daughter **Nicole and finance Keith Nusblatt**.

Happy Anniversary to our couples celebrating an anniversary during the month of September:

- 1 - Jon & Marty Ernstoff
- 1 - Ruth & Sherwin Borsuk
- 6 - David & Debbie Kaye
- 9 - Susan Croog & Ken Steele
- 10 - Harvey & Estelle Limon
- 17 - Jean & Jim Lawrence

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

- 1 - Judith Sochin
- 1 - Michael Ash
- 7 - Julie Liseo
- 11 - Howard Koenig
- 17 - Larry Lew
- 21 - Natalie Langner
- 21 - Yakov Filler
- 26 - Anita Hillman
- 27 - Lenny Cheerman

Happy Birthday to our next generation:

- 12 - Dallas DeFrancesco

Gift Cards for Stop & Shop and Shop Rite are available through the Temple office.

Stop and Shop -

- _____ \$100
- _____ \$ 50
- _____ \$ 25

Shop Rite -

- _____ \$ 50
- _____ \$ 25

Come in to get them or mail your check to the office and we will mail you the cards.

Attorney E. Jack Shorr
of Counsel Ceneviva
Law Firm

721 Broad Street
Meriden, CT 06450
Tel: 203-238-3600
Fax: 203-235-6945
Email: ejack@cenevivalaw.com

Yahrzeits Observed During the Month of September

Sept. 1	Ethel Cooperstein Edith Letendre Henry Krochmal Gertrude Hasburg Bernard Sigmond Rachel Goldner		Yenty Hertzmark Sept. 12 Charles Young Rebecca Gross Esther Groobert Harold Rischall		Ruth Levine Sept. 23 Rabbi Albert Troy Beatrice Katz Al Lowell Ilka Krochmal Pearl Weinstein
Sept. 2	Irving Rosenthal Gertrude S. Goldberg	Sept. 13 Ruth Krentzman Sept. 14 Lewis Palley Jennie Wolk		Sept. 24 Harry Silverman Jonah Umansky Reuben Lable Frances Palley Julia Loitz	
Sept. 3	Klari Schwartz David S. Miller Abraham Stein Esther Rosen Murray N. Friedman	Sept. 15 Nathan Schiesel Maurice Harris Sept. 16 Doris Brown Mary Kosofsky Robert B. Weiss		Sept. 25 Elizabeth Umansky Jean Krakower Sept. 26 Lena Daniels Louis Caplan Mary Epstein Steinman	
Sept. 4	Mark Greenberg	Sept. 17 Lillian Cohen Betty Goodman Evelyn Greenblatt Esther Hertzmark		Sept. 27 Hyman Fox Anna Libou Edward Koster	
Sept. 5	Dr. Jesse Leban Enid Avizov Bessie Katz	Sept. 18 Saul Alderman Jack Friedman Hermine Stern		Sept. 28 Ida Glasser Florence Skigen William Smith Lillian Levine	
Sept. 6	Harold Johnson	Sept. 19 Isaiah Sirota Anna Sirota Marton Schwartz Marvin Gordon Berte Kessler		Sept. 29 Michael B. Cohen Robert Dunn Simeon Spear	
Sept. 7	Bertha Davidson Rosalind Normandy Herman Gross Isaac Kaplan	Sept. 20 Rose Kalmanowitz Mae Reger		Sept. 30 William Kogen Max Grossman Justine Risen	
Sept. 8	Esther White Harry Semack Dorothy Rischall Bessie Hertzmark	Sept. 21 Saul Zietz Reuben White			
Sept. 9	Paul Skigen	Sept. 22 Clara Schiesel			
Sept. 10	Gershon Perecman				
Sept. 11	Penina Avizov Bernice Zietz Anna Gallin				



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:

The Limon and Cerrotti Family by Abby & Gene Cerrotti

Bea Gerstenblatt by Ines Gerstenblatt

Sylvia Brodach by Shirley & Jay Brodach

Louis Caplan by Marcia Caplan

Beatrice Katz by Richard A. Katz

General Temple Fund

In Memory of **Jon Harris** by Kathie Harris.

From the William A. & Shirley P. Yolles Foundation

Barry Koslow Torah Restoration Fund

Mazel Tov to **Debbie & David Kaye** and **Rachel & Allan Rosin** on the birth of **Reed Austin Rosin**, by Debbie Broadley.

Sarah Zietz Pierson Scholarship Fund

Complete Recovery Wishes to **Jon Palley**, by Risa & Fred Zierler.

Cemetery Fund

In Memory of **Jon Harris** by Kathie Harris.