

Rabbi's Message

January 2012

We started the year 2012! In our Jewish tradition there are four New Years ("Rosh Hashanah"):

The First of Nisan is the New Year for Kings and for festivals.

The First of Elul is the New Year for tithing animals.

The First of Tishrei is the New Year for Sabbatical (Shemitta) Years and Jubilee (Yovel) Years, for planting and for vegetation.

The First of Shevat is the New Year for the Trees, according to the School of Shammai. The School of Hillel says: It is on the fifteenth of Shevat.

(Mishnah, Rosh Hashanah 1:1)

Last month, I attended the Biennial of the Union for Reform Judaism in Washington DC. This was the largest gathering in the history of the Reform movement. A new chapter in the Reform movement has started. I had the pleasure of hearing great speeches. President Barack Obama, Israel's Minister of Defense Ehud Barak, House Majority leader Rep. Eric Cantor, and Jewish Agency President Nathan Sharansky all spoke. I encourage all of you to listen to them at <http://urj.org/biennial11/webcast>

A new era has started. The new president of the URJ is Rabbi Rick Jacobs. At the Biennial Rabbi Jacobs started to share his vision. He does not want to tell the congregations what they should do, but he would like to improve how Jewish congregations work. He is worried about some issues that concern all of us:

1. The percentage of unaffiliated Jews or as he called them, "uninspired Jews," is more than 50%.
2. The percentage of students who drop out after bar/bat mitzvah is higher than 50%, and 80% of our youth have disappeared by 12th grade. That is why we need to start 2012 by being proactive and not reactive; we need to be active and not passive.

Rabbi Jacobs had three important tasks that he encourages Reform congregations to join in. In his words, those are:

1. To catalyze the congregational change.
2. To engage the next generation of Reform Jewish people.
3. To extend responsibility.

To accomplish his first task, he envisions visiting and listening carefully to all the URJ congregations and helping them to be better. His second task will be accomplished by creating the Youth Engagement Campaign. Its goal will be to provide all of our youth with meaning, programs and resources to participate in Jewish life and to build our future. He will try to accomplish his last goal by encouraging us to understand that being Jewish is being part of Klal Israel, the people of Israel; to realize what we have in common with other Reform Jewish people instead of what separates us.

This Biennial was very powerful for me. I prayed with around 6,000 Jewish people and I sang at the URJ Biennial Choir. I heard speeches from people whom I never dreamt to hear. I learned what is going on in other congregations, what their challenges and successes are. I studied with the most prominent rabbis and professors who are drawing the picture of the Reform Movement today. But most importantly, I realized the important place that Reform Judaism has in America, and this unique historical moment makes me feel proud, and appreciate how wonderful it is to be a Jew in the 21st century.

B'vracha,
Rabbi Claudio J. Kogan, MD, MBE, MEd

Torah Tots

Torah Tots meets on **Sunday, January 8th**, 11:00 to noon. Come join us for an interactive parent-grandparent-child oriented session. This month the theme is Tzedakah. Open to congregants and interested community members of pre-school aged children. There will be a craft and snack. Meet the Rabbi, our school principal, Ms. Geringer, our librarian, Linda DeRusha, and our cantorial soloist and music teacher, Rick Calvert. RSVP to Sandy in the temple office.

SHABBAT SERVICES

January 6 (6:00 pm)
Kabbalat Shabbat Service
(followed by carry-in dairy dinner)

January 13 (7:00 pm)
Family Shabbat Service

January 20 (7:30 pm)
Men's Club Shabbat Service

January 27 (7:30 pm)
Erev Shabbat Service

Chai from the President

Why Change?

The story is told of the woman who proudly hung on her mantelpiece a needlework plaque that read, "Prayer Changes Things." A few days later, the plaque was missing. She asked her husband if he had seen it.

"I took it down," he said. "I didn't like it."

"But why?" the woman asked. "Don't you believe that prayer changes things?"

"Yes. I honestly do," he answered. "But it just so happens that I threw it away because I do not like to change."

We say the prayers, but do we really want to change? Some of us are happy with our lives and see no need to change. Some of us are unhappy, but do not have the courage to change.

We live in a time where many are disconnected to the source of enduring values. During these High Holy Days, we need to muster the courage to face our lives honestly. We need to reconnect to the moorings of Jewish tradition. Let our prayers help us to return to God, challenge us to resolve to be better, and help us not repeat our mistakes.

For, it is never too late to change.
The last word has not been spoken,
The last sentence has not been written,
The final verdict has not been recorded.

It is never too late
To change our minds, our direction
To say no to the past and yes to the future
To offer remorse and ask forgiveness.

It is never too late
To start over again
To feel again, to love again, to hope again.

TBT Professional Staff
Rabbi Claudio J. Kogan
 Dr. Howard F. Sommer, Rabbi Emeritus
cantorial staff
Rick Calvert, Cantorial Soloist
educational staff
Marcia Geringer, Religious School Principal
Bernadette Stak, Nursery School Director
Linda DeRusha, Librarian
administrative staff
Jane Luyckx, Temple Administrator
Sandy Walsh, Temple Secretary
custodial staff
Don Bernat and Al Davenport



Kollel Jewish Bioethics
Monday, January 30
7:30-9:00 pm
Medical Transplantation

This session is timely as the waiting lists for organ transplants continue to be longer than the available organ donations. The issues of organ donation, scarcity, and need are relevant to many of us. As a physician and a rabbi, Rabbi Kogan has knowledge of both the medical and religious questions that can be raised about medical transplants. Come and learn together. No prior attendance is necessary. A recommended reading is available from TBT.

NOTICE

TO: All Members of Temple Beth Tikvah
 FROM: Wendy Bluemling, Nominating Committee Chair

SUBJECT: Nominations for the Board of Directors

DATE: January 2012

According to our Temple Bylaws, the Nominating Committee begins meeting no later than March 1st in order to develop a slate of officers for presentation and consideration at our Annual Congregational Meeting. The list of vacant positions for the fiscal year 2012-2013 is as follows:

Office

Executive Board

President
 First Vice President
 Second Vice President
 Financial Vice President
 Treasurer
 Secretary

Director (or Co-Directors)

Religious Activities
 Education
 Facilities
 Youth Activities
 At-Large

Auxiliary Roles

Sisterhood
 Men's Club

Development

Jewish Meditation
Sunday, January 29, 2012
10:30-12:00 noon

Cantor Nancy Ginsberg will present
a special program on Jewish meditation.

What is meditation? What is mindfulness? What is spiritual practice? What is prayer? What are mitzvot? What is authentically Jewish and what is not? And, of course, what is the relationship between any of these things and the others.

There are two fundamental ways to approach these questions. The first is "What do we do?" and the second is "Why do we do it?" I find the "what" question a question that opens into multiplicity and the "why" question one that leads to unity. In other words, there are multiple forms of meditation, prayer and spiritual practice but ultimately they tend toward the same or similar aims.

What do we hope will be accomplished by spiritual practice? Here is a list of aims or intentions that may be all pointing at the same center:

- o Establishing and expanding our relationship with God
- o Expanding our awareness, becoming more awake in our lives
- o Expanding into a higher consciousness, perspective, understanding
- o Living with Divine qualities of openheartedness, compassion, patience, tolerance, loving kindness, generosity, humility, trust, reverence, gratitude, etc. (middot)
- o Being more responsive in relation to oneself and others, rather than acting out of habit and reactivity
- o Being more peaceful not because one is withdrawn or indifferent but because one has an understanding of what contributes to aggression & violence and what alleviates it

Developing a spiritual practice such as meditation and mindfulness can create in us an openness and consciousness that can lead to other spiritual practices, i.e. lighting candles on Shabbat, Torah study and many more. The kinds of spiritual practices we can undertake are limitless. However, ultimately the form is less important than these factors: the commitment to practice, the ability to keep returning to the intention, the attitude one brings to the uncontrollable and the ability to transfer the benefits of the practice into how we live our lives, how we relate to ourselves and others, how free we become to embody the values and ideals we embrace in our minds, how we deal with temptations of all sorts. In other words we practice to live with the wisdom and compassion, which we already possess. We practice to actualize the pure soul, which God has planted with us.

Come try a taste of the spiritual practice of meditation. Feel free to bring pillow, blankets, anything that will make you feel more comfortable and supported as we try this practice together.

Movie & Carry-In Dinner
The Klezmatics on Holy Ground
Saturday, January 21st @ 5:30 PM



Klezmer music is experiencing a renaissance and the Klezmatics, a Grammy winning sextet from New York, are at the forefront. ***The Klezmatics On Holy Ground*** follows the journey of a Quaker bassist and a Reform Jewish trumpeter during a four-year period. Time Out, New York magazine said, "The Klezmatics aren't just the best band in the klezmer vanguard; on a good night, they rank among the greatest bands on the planet. And this film shows why."

The music is toe tapping, upbeat and appeals to people of all ages and musical tastes. So even if you've never found yourself clambering for Klezmer, mark January 21st on your calendar and check out the music and experience people around the world have been enjoying for 20 years.

This film is part of TBT's resident movie aficionados, Ken and Martha Gamerman's film series and they will lead a discussion following the movie. In the spirit of the upbeat movie, there will be a cocktail hour prior. Please join the fun and bring your favorite vintage of Manischewitz as well as something delicious to share. For more information contact Amy Lee @ amyjolee@comcast.net or 203-314-6763.

Religious School

Last year, each Religious School class had a class dinner prior to a Friday night service. We are continuing these dinners this year because they are such a nice way for families to celebrate Shabbat together with the Rabbi and Principal Geringer and to get to know one another better. The upcoming dates for the class dinners are as follows: 5th and 4th Grades (Feb. 10, 2012); 3rd Grade (March 9, 2012); and 9th Grade (June 1, 2012). **Please note that the 4th grade dinner has been moved to Feb. 10th from April 27th.** All dinners start at 6:00 pm. Parents will be contacted by the class parent(s) with more details about the dinners.

This year, the 4th - 7th grades will each lead one of the Sunday morning Religious School Tefillah services. All parents are welcome to attend any Sunday morning Religious School Tefillah service and are particularly encouraged to attend the Tefillah service that their children are leading. The dates for the class-led Tefillah services are as follows: 7th Grade (Jan. 22, 2012); 6th Grade (Feb. 12, 2012); 5th Grade (March 18, 2012); and 4th Grade (May 13, 2012). Tefillah service starts at 11:40 a.m.



Food Drive

Food supplies at the Guilford Good Pantry are extremely low this season. Donations are down significantly and the shelves need replenishing in order to assist those in need. Please bring UNEXPIRED

canned and packaged goods to the Temple and leave them in the baskets in the foyer. We will deliver food to Guilford as well as to other local pantries. Recently, we donated groceries to the food pantry at Jewish Family Services as well.

There is a constant and growing need for food on the shoreline. Madison serves close to 100 families, Guilford and Branford add families weekly. Please give what you can, whenever you can.

Holiday Donations and Collection

We recently made donations to Warm the Children and Neighbor to Neighbor (N2N). Additionally, we are again collecting warm clothing this year and have already made our first distribution to victims of domestic violence in New Haven. Please continue to donate NEW hats, mittens, socks, and CLEAN gently used coats for us to distribute to those in our local area.

Habitat for Humanity – Madison Cares

Plans for house #8 are in the works. The new house will be built on Winthrop Street in New Haven. Ground breaking is planned for March and we are tentatively scheduled for build dates on March 25, April 22, and June 10. Please contact Linda Brody Srebnik for more information.

Also, after many years of dedicated service, Roger Winer has recently stepped down from his position as a member of the Madison Cares Board of Directors. While Roger continues to be deeply involved, we are looking for a TBT member to fill this important role. To learn more or volunteer, please contact Roger (rswiner@usinter.net), Bette or Laury for more information.

Book Fair

We hope you had the opportunity to visit our recent Book Fair in the library. Thank you to those who supported the sale as well as to our dedicated volunteers: Julie Fraenkel, Phyllis Kaufman, Ronni Berman, Kate Lee and Ron Zollshan. Thank you to RJ Julia as well, for providing some wonderful books for the sale.

Committee Meetings and Membership

We welcome all TBT members to join our committee. We meet the second Tuesday of every month. The next meeting will be January 10th at 7:15 pm. Please consider joining us. We are always looking for new ideas and suggestions as to how to be of help to our communities.

And finally, if your children are looking for assistance in

planning for their Bar/Bat Mitzvah projects, they are welcome to brainstorm with us. There are many ways for them to be of service in the community including food, clothing and book drives as well as service work for the elderly and infirm (raking leaves, etc.).

Laury Walker (riga620@aol.com) and Bette Zollshan (rzbz1@aol.com)

Madison Community Services Food Pantry

Madison Community Services Food Pantry will be starting a pilot program in April 2012. The pantry is located at 50 Mungertown Road, Units 3 & 4. MCS, Youth & Family Services and the Municipal Agent for the Elderly have polled their clients to see if there would be a need to have the MCS Food Pantry open for evening hours. The survey showed that there were residents that were unable to shop during day time hours. The Food Pantry coordinators and supervisors are in the process of trying to staff the pantry. The pantry would be open on Tuesday evenings from 6:00-7:30 p.m. Currently, we do not have enough volunteers to work the evening hours.

If you are interested in volunteering for MCS Food Pantry Tuesday evenings from 6:00-7:30 p.m., please contact either Margaret or Vinny Diglio. (margaretdiglio@snet.net or Vincent.diglio@snet.net)



The TBT Book Club meets the 3rd Thursday of the month at the Shoreline Diner in Guilford at 7:30 p.m. We will be reading the Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks by R. Skloot in January and Sacred Trash by Hoffman and Cole in February.

For further information or confirmation of the exact date we will be meeting, please contact Myra Josephson at 203-488-3350 or standj_992003@yahoo.com



BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO:

Charlotte Babbín, Molly Babbín, Paige Baser, Joshua Czaczkes, Sarah Eppler-Epstein, Jennifer Fedus, Jordan Fitzgerald, Alice Gadon, Shayla Goldberg, Hana Greif, Shayna Klaskin, Ezekiel Kogan, Sara Lesage, Zachary Moskow, Sarah Muskin, Rebecca Patrizio, Ellie Pinchbeck, Brendan SanMarco, Madeline SanMarco, Katy Schneider, Drew Shelton, Joshua Sokoloff, Julia Vlock, Theodore Vlock, Rachel Zimmerman

Schedule of Services



Friday, January 6

6:00 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service
Torah portion: Vayachi (Genesis 47:28 – 50:26)
TAMC, rev. ed., p.304.; TAMC, 1st ed.,
p. 302; Hertz, p. 180

Saturday, January 7

9:00 a.m. Torah Study
10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Minyan

Friday, January 13

7:00 p.m. Family Shabbat Service
Torah portion: Shemot (Exodus 1:1-6:1)
TAMC, rev. ed., p.346; TAMC, 1st ed.,
p. 382; Hertz, p. 206

Saturday, January 14

9:00 a.m. Torah Study
10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Minyan

Friday, January 20

7:30 p.m. Men's Club Shabbat
Torah portion: Vaera (Exodus 6:2-9:35)
TAMC, rev. ed., p.382; TAMC, 1st ed.,
p. 420; Hertz, p. 232

Saturday, January 21

9:00 a.m. Torah Study
10:00 a.m. Shabbat Morning Minyan

Friday, January 27

7:30 p.m. Erev Shabbat Services
Torah portion: Bo (Exodus 10:1-13:16)
TAMC, rev. ed., p.406; TAMC, 1st ed.,
p. 448; Hertz, p. 248

Saturday, January 28

9:00 a.m. Torah Study
10:00 am. Bar mitzvah of Joshua Stern, son of
Elizabeth Shore and David Stern

The *Chumash* (Torah Commentary) contains the Hebrew text of the Torah (the first section of the Bible) with vocalization and punctuation. The *Chumashim* we use at TBT also contain English translations and commentaries. In addition, they carry the text of each Haftarah, a portion from the Prophets (the second section of the Bible). The three *Chumashim* referred to above are:

TAMC, rev. ed. = The Torah: A Modern Commentary, revised edition (2005)

TAMC, 1st ed. = The Torah: A Modern Commentary, 1st edition (W. Gunther Plaut, ed.) (1981) Hertz = The Pentateuch and Haftorahs (J.H. Hertz, ed.) (1937)

LAST CALL!

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY FOR COLLEGE APPLICANTS

Thanks to a generous grant from the Stutzman Family Foundation, Temple Beth Tikvah is pleased to invite applications for the Beatrice and David Friesner Memorial Scholarship. This scholarship will provide \$10,000 to help defray the cost of freshman year expenses to one member of the Temple community. To apply, you must be in your final year of high school and be in the process of applying to an accredited four-year college or university. The award is conditional upon your ultimately being accepted by and enrolling in college for the academic year 2012-2013. The award is merit-based; no showing of financial need is required. The successful candidate will have demonstrated excellence in scholarship and character.

The Scholarship was established in 2008 to honor the memories of the parents of Esther Friesner-Stutzman. Both Bea and David Friesner taught for many years in the New York City school system. They had a life-long devotion to both secular and religious education and always sought to reward academic achievement.

Anyone interested in obtaining an application and more details should contact Sandy Walsh in the Temple office. Completed applications, and all letters of recommendation, must be submitted to the Temple office by 3:00 p.m. by Friday, January 27, 2012.

News from the Besso *Sefriah*

Happy New Year!! I hope everyone had time to relax and have some fun over the holidays. A new year, and time to bring back "Tidbits," the did-you-know snapshot of materials represented in our library collections.

Did you know...

The library subscribes to two quarterly magazines: Reform Judaism and The Jewish Bible quarterly. Articles in Reform Judaism run the gamut, from book reviews to how to expand and improve synagogue life; cooking to voting issues; personal narratives to conversational interviews; health issues to Bar/Bat Mitzvah; college life to spiritual growth. Back issues (currently to the year 2000) are also available.

The Jewish Bible quarterly is published by the Jewish Bible Association. It offers authoritative studies on Old Testament biblical themes from all points of view. Original articles, book reviews, a triennial calendar of Bible reading and correspondence comprise this journal. These magazines do circulate, and back issues may also be borrowed.

CONTRIBUTIONS

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

by Bobbie Bernstein in honor of Sandy Walsh, Jane Luyckx, Allison Barasz and Sandy Brand in appreciation of their help and support during her recent illness
 by Ken and Martha Gamerman in loving memory of Martha's father, Oscar Sapir
 by Ken and Martha Gamerman in loving memory of Ken's father, Max Gamerman
 by Len and Maureen Fried in memory of Len's mother, Beatrice Fried

GENERAL FUND

by Ami and Gary Israel in memory of Gary's beloved mother, Ronee Israel
 by Sandy and Myron Brand in honor of Drew and Jack Brand and Eli and William Portnoy, our lights at Chanukah
 by Ami and Gary Israel in memory of Marcia Alpert Thompson, beloved mother of Shaun Glazier

BUILDING FUND

by Myra Josephson in memory of Milton Heller, husband of Regina Heller

LAURENCE B. & ELAINE J. SOMMER MEMORIAL FUND FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE

by Charles and Judith Barr in memory of Marge Engel, long-time friend of Carol Miller
 by Rabbi Howard Sommer in memory of Elaine Sommer
 by Roberta Grossman in memory of her dear friend, Dr. Milton Godfried

ENDOWMENT FUND

by Sue Richman in memory of Elaine August Richman
 by the Spigelman family in memory of William Belfer

by Gloria and Ed Sack in memory of Rose Freedman Schwartz and Seymour Freedman, Gloria's mother and brother
 by Larry and Roberta Harris in memory of Abe Harris

THE RICHARD C. KAHRIMANIS MUSIC FUND

by Phyllis Kaufman in honor of Kumsitz, a musical delight, and those who participated
 by Seymour Cohen in memory of Selma's father, Richard Barsky

THE HELEN KATZ GOODKIND BEAUTIFICATION FUND

by the Mandel family in memory of Helen Mandel and Murray Lewis
 by David and Rosemary Baggish in memory of Rosemary's mother, Catherine Verdi
 by Arlene and Bennett Paul in memory of Saul Paul

SISTERHOOD CANTORIAL FUND

by the Kohn family in memory of Leonard Marcus

RABBI HOWARD F. SOMMER FUND FOR CONTINUING JEWISH EDUCATION

by Howard and Pat Berke in memory of Moe Berkowitz, Howard's father

PRAYERBOOK FUND

by Linda and Kenneth Chipkin in memory of their beloved mother, Anna Chipkin

LIBRARY FUND

by Faye Cramer in loving memory of Richard Cramer
 by Saul Gordon in memory of his mother, Rebecca Gordon

THE ISRAEL & MARY TICOTSKY EDUCATION ENRICHMENT FUND

by Esther Tiplitsky in memory of Sidney Tiplitsky

In Memoriam

Shmuel Hochberg, father of Michael Hochberg
 Milton Heller, husband of Regina Heller
 Jeremy Bixon, husband of Rebecca Bixon and father of David Bixon
 Patricia Alpert Thompson, mother of Shaun Glazier

Oneg Shabbat

We wish to thank the following members for sponsoring an Oneg Shabbat during December:

Dec. 9 sponsored by the Youth Group, their parents and advisors, in honor of the SALTY members and their meaningful, creative service

Dec. 16 sponsored by David and Jo-Ann Fleischman and Bill and Kate Lee

Dec. 23 Chanukah carry-in dinner/service — coordinated by Robin Baker


Caring Committee

TBT's Caring Committee is available to provide meals, rides, visits, and other services to members. If you or someone you know would benefit from these services, please call the temple office or email the Caring Committee at tbtcares@yahoo.com.

Mi Shebeirach list update

Our Mi Shebeirach list is an important way of recognizing and keeping in our prayers those struggling with illness. To prevent keeping people on the list who may not need to be there still, a monthly request, through e-mail and in the Shofar, will be sent out for names. After this request goes out, the old list will be discarded and the new will include those names sent to Sandy Walsh by e-mail, tbsandy@sbcglobal.net. You can also contact her by phone at 203-245-7028. Names will remain on the list for one month unless otherwise specified.

**Stop & Shop and Big Y cards available
 in the Temple office, Gift Shop
 or contact Barbara Agronov
 203-430-7647; ddagranov@snet.net**



**TEMPLE BETH TIKVAH
SHOFAR**

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