



Sinai Temple Bulletin

Take Back Your Time:
Rediscover Shabbat

January/February 2017
Tevet 5777-2 Adar 5777

Yelamdeinu Rabbeinu, Let Our Rabbi Teach Us...

Rabbi Howard Kosovske

Mishnah Rosh Hashanah mentions and cites Hebrew dates for not one but four new years that occur during the year. However, January 1st is not among them. In fact, December 31st-January 1st New Year's celebrations have absolutely no basis in the Jewish tradition at all.

I'm not a fan of New Year's celebrations. Except for Boston's First Night celebrations (which I used to love because of all the great cultural offerings and the magnificent fireworks), and except for an occasional Boston Baroque New Year's concert, and except for one Mummer's Day Parade I went to in Philadelphia years ago, I've typically found myself rather uncomfortable at most New Year's celebrations. To me they seemed contrived, overblown, and artificial. As to the attendees, the people never seemed spontaneous. Most of the time, I sensed, if anything they were *working* at having fun. Even the typical greeting that passed from one person to the next, i. e., "A happy and a healthy..." (as against "A happy and a healthy New Year" which I'd imagine a person ought to say at that moment), made me think that what I was being wished was nothing more than a string of empty words.

Lest you think that I am about to unleash a diatribe against celebrating the New Year, I'm not. In fact, except for issuing yet another strong caveat against drinking and driving, I say, "Go celebrate!" Why? Well, strangely enough, it's because for me there is a Jewish hook to it all.

January: some say the name derives from the name of a Roman god, Janus. In the religion of the Romans, Janus was the god of transitions and beginnings. As typically portrayed, Janus had two faces, one facing forward and another facing backward. In that I see a Jewish message.

While conventional wisdom says we ought always to look ahead, Judaism has a different take. Judaism says, yes, look ahead, but always keep in mind where you are coming from too. Don't just do the count-down for the last ten seconds as the ball drops on Times Square, signaling with great anticipation the start of something new as the old vanishes (Besides, we Jews don't count down; we count up!). Rather, keep a firm grounding first in what you experienced in the year ending. In other words, don't just sweep away the past in an attempt, at least for the bad parts, to forget it all.

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Friday Evenings

All Friday night services will be at 6PM

Fridays: January 6, 13, 20, and 27.

Fridays: February 3 ("A Shabbat for all Ages"), 10, 17, and 24

Saturday Mornings

Torah Study: Every Saturday morning at 9 A.M.

Saturday Morning Services

All services will be at 10:15 AM!

Saturday morning: January 7, 14, 21, and 28

Saturday morning: February 4, 11, 18, and 25

MICAH Award Dinner

Sinai Temple is pleased to join forces with the Pioneer Valley Project for a community dinner honoring Springfield citizens who exemplify the words of the Prophet Micah: "What does the Lord require of you: to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with God." The MICAH Award Dinner is honoring our Sinai Temple member, Robin Dunn-McDonagh on Saturday, February 4th at 6 p.m. Details to follow.

NOTE...SINAI IS PRINTING ONLY SIX BULLETINS THIS YEAR.

COMING BULLETINS WILL BE MARCH/APRIL, MAY/JUNE. THIS IS A VERY STRONG REASON FOR OUR WANTING TO STAY IN TOUCH VIA E-MAIL. PLEASE SEND US YOUR E-MAIL.

Message from Bruce Leshine

Temple President

My Friends,

"My people were brought to America in chains. Your people were driven here to escape the chains fashioned for them in Europe. Our unity is born of our common struggle for centuries, not only to rid ourselves of bondage, but to make oppression of any people by others an impossibility. The story of freedom's struggle to emerge and root itself in our nation began not in one place, but in several. I would like to mention one of these early incidents quite familiar to you, but not known to many Americans. In the first week of September 1654, 23 Jewish refugees from the Portuguese inquisition arrived in New Amsterdam on board the sailing ship, the St. Charles. This was the first ship of Jews to reach the new world as a community. Peter Stuyvesant, the Dutch governor of New Amsterdam, asked that these "hateful enemies and blasphemers" get out of the new world. The history of America might have been different had these 23 Jews retreated with a beaten spirit. Instead, they peacefully and in dignity asserted their moral and political right to remain to settle as equals and to contribute to the building of a new society. As the history of all ages teaches us, no autocrat can dismember or destroy an unfolding truth; and Peter Stuyvesant, with his powerful authority, was ultimately defeated by these 23 determined Jews, who remained and became a responsible part of New Amsterdam."

"Jews cannot ensure equality for themselves until and unless it is assured for all." This is a founding statement of the American Jewish Committee, and referenced in an address to that group, the American Jewish Congress, and others in May, 1965, at the Americana Hotel in New York City. In closing, the speaker finished with these thoughts: "I have tried to show that in our struggle, the civil rights forces, black and white, have contributed not only to revealing the contradictions of this society but, acting as a catalyst, have set in motion forces to effect creative change. If this be so, it is also clear that the progress we have made has depended on the support we have received from vocal and well-organized allies—the major religious groups and various elements of the liberal community. It is my fervent hope that in the long and stormy road ahead this coalition will be strengthened. For in this great force lies the consensus of American power capable not only of removing injustice and fear but of establishing freedom and social peace."

The speaker, of course, was the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. In the month of his birth, and as we approach the inauguration of another American president, I thought it important for all of us to reflect upon the words and deeds of Reverend King, and to keep these principles foremost in our minds and in our hearts as we embark upon the next chapter of our lives and of our Nation's history.

Be well, Bruce

I have children in college...No longer at home

Learning...changing...Asking great questions

The Temple would like to stay in touch with our youngest alumni. They've grown up under our roof. They've begun to learn what being Jewish means. Now – in the crucial college years - we don't want to lose contact.

Students on the ALUMNI LIST will receive "care" packages and occasional messages from the Temple and the Rabbi. We want to reach out to students in their college years. Please send your child's snail mail college address to the office c/o rblanchette-gage@sinai-temple.org

Message from Heather Sullivan

Director of Education

Shalom, Chaverim! Happy 5777!

Shalom Chaverim! We are busy learning about Israel and would love to invite you to see our Israel presentations by grade on Sunday, January 29 at 10:30 in the Sanctuary. The presentations will be followed by an informational session on the URJ camps and all that they have to offer. We hope you can join us.

February 3rd, join us for our first ever L'dor V Dor Shabbat for all ages. Pizza and soup, followed by make your own (Super bowl) sundae, for all ages. The service will begin at 6:00.

Reminders:

Social Justice Classes, with Morah Katz, begin on Tuesday, January 3rd, in preparation for the trip to the Religious Action Center on March 3-6 in Washington, DC.

The Jewish Lens course begins on February 28th for all 7th graders at 5:30 with Cantor Levson.

L'Shalom, Heather

NOTES FROM THE CANTOR

Oops! Cantor Levson's article seems to have been lost in cyberspace! Check upcoming e-vents and the Temple website for his article.

A SHABBAT FOR ALL AGES!!!

Celebrate Shabbat, "Soup-er Bowl Sundae" and Tu B'shevat all at the same time on Friday, February 3rd!

Our adult Shabbat service, along with our kid-friendly Tu B'sh'vat activities running simultaneously, will start at 6:00 PM (with our usual 5:45 Nosh Hour preceding everything).

Following all of that, we will all join together for our 7:00 PM congregational dinner, where a buffet of delicious soups will be provided by our Religious School Committee. (Please bring a bread or salad side to share). Then, to top it all off, we will have the fun of making our own sundaes for dessert!

This is not to be missed. Support your favorite team, sport your football gear, and be part of our great Sinai February Shabbat extravaganza!

Do you know someone who might enjoy being at Sinai Temple?

Maybe they are looking for a welcoming and vibrant Jewish spiritual home. Maybe they don't know what they are seeking. Maybe they don't feel they are seeking at all. Maybe they would be surprised by what they would find.

You, the members of Sinai Temple, are the best ambassadors for our congregation.

Think of co-workers, students and teachers and colleagues, fellow yoga attendees, parents of kids' friends, people in their 20s and 30s, and more! There are many ways to connect at Sinai Temple.

Sometimes all it takes is an invitation.

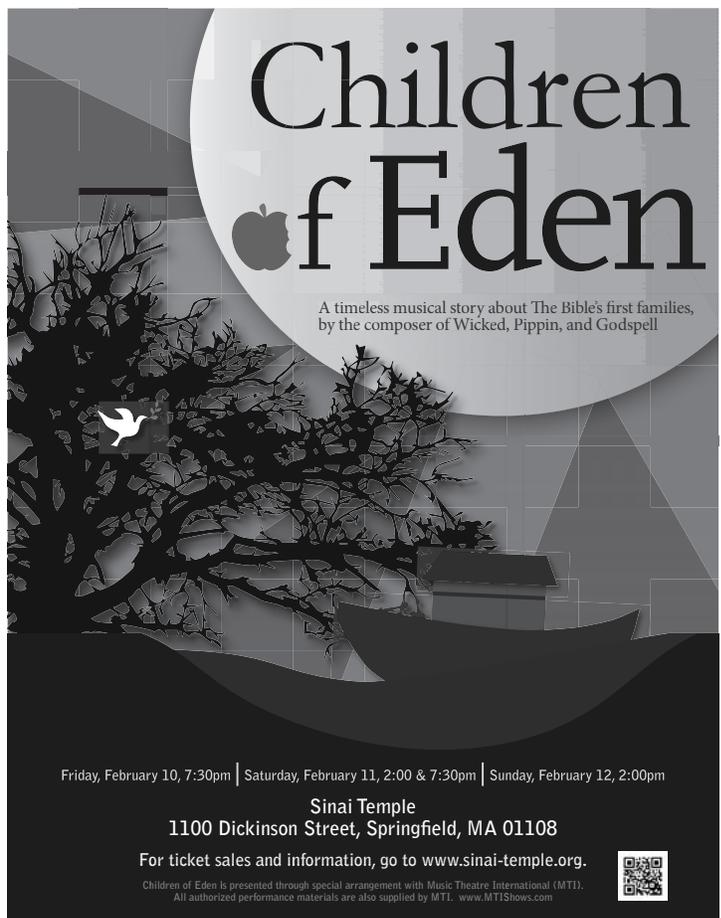
Invite someone to consider connecting with Sinai Temple. Call the Temple and let us know if we can be of any support.

Rabbi message continued from page 1

Janus never only looked ahead. Janus, while looking ahead, always looked back too. Roman or not, that's Jewish. Judaism says, don't forget what is behind you. Good or bad, it is part of who and what you are. As long as you are aware of that, as long as you keep it in mind, then you are prepared to move into whatever lies before you. That's the Jewish way. It's what Rosh Hashanah is about. It's what New Year's should be about.

So as Gregorian year 2017 begins, I wish you every goodness. May you know full health in the year ahead, and at the same time may you know happiness and contentment. Finally, may it be that whatever from the past you bring into the New Year, may that serve as the springboard only to good things in the future; and in them, in the year coming, may you see your fondest hopes and dreams realized and fulfilled.

L'shalom,
Howard A. Kosovske



Children of Eden

A timeless musical story about The Bible's first families, by the composer of *Wicked*, *Pippin*, and *Godspell*

Friday, February 10, 7:30pm | Saturday, February 11, 2:00 & 7:30pm | Sunday, February 12, 2:00pm

Sinai Temple
1100 Dickinson Street, Springfield, MA 01108

For ticket sales and information, go to www.sinai-temple.org.

Children of Eden is presented through special arrangement with Music Theatre International (MTI). All authorized performance materials are also supplied by MTI. www.MTIShows.com



THE MEN AND WOMEN OF SINAI (MWOS)

I am writing this after our breakfast on Sunday, December 11th that featured Evie Litwok speaking on "Queer, Jew, and Jailed". She told her very personal and passionate story about being a Jewish lesbian in two national women's penitentiaries, and as an outspoken advocate for criminal reform and justice. It was very well-attended.

Please mark your calendars for upcoming Sunday morning breakfasts on January 22nd, March 26th, and May 7th with speakers to be announced working in conjunction with Laurie Weinberg and the Adult Education Committee. If you have suggestions for speakers pass those on to me or to Laurie.

I hope that you will take some time to consider who would qualify for nomination to the Snyder Award and complete the form in this bulletin. Your input is needed and greatly appreciated.

Many thanks again to all who have joined the Men and Women of Sinai and to all who have pitched in to help us in any way. If you have not joined MWOS or participated in our events, we would love to have you do so (dues for single adults or couples are reduced to \$40 this year); please assist in our support of the Sinai community. Just send it with your dues marked for Men and Women of Sinai to the Temple office.

Jack Henrie
MWOS President

JUDAICA GIFT SHOP CORNER

We are ready for all the celebrations coming up: B'nai Mitzvah, engagements, weddings and more. The shop has a beautiful selection of talises, Kiddush cups, candle holders, jewelry and so very much more. Do come by and browse.

Our hours are back to Tuesday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:30 and Sunday mornings from 9:30 to noon, and we're always available for special appointments.

Thais Fischel 786-9577

MESSAGE FROM YOUTH ENGAGEMENT ADVISORS

*SINAI YOUTH CORNER....
FROM ELIZABETH AND JONATHAN*

There are some great events coming up in the next couple of months!

If you are in 6-8th grade, you are invited to come to NFTY's only regional event for middle schoolers!

JOSTY's Shul-in is January 21-22 in Brookline, Mass.

This is an overnight experience where you can see what NFTY is all about- the song sessions, the community, the activities!

We will be mailing more information and hosting an information session, so keep your eyes out on your mailbox.

It's not too early to be thinking about March: NFTY's Spring Conclavette. This is a NFTY regional event for high schoolers, plus 8th grade. This will be March 17-19th in Lexington, Mass.

And lastly, SPFTY has a new email address: spfty413@gmail.com If you already know that you are interested in either of these events, drop us a line to let us know and make sure we keep you in the loop.

Thanks,
Elizabeth (Cossin) Dubinsky and Jonathan Dubinsky

SINAI READING PARTNERS

January 26 – We will discuss **Bread Givers** by Anzia Yeziarska, a Jewish-American novelist born in Poland whose career brought her from the sweat shops of the Lower East Side to Hollywood. This 1925 novel is set in an immigrant Jewish household in the Lower East Side of New York City where many of our parents and grandparents grew up.

February 23 – We will discuss **The Seven Good Years: A Memoir**, by Etgar Keret, a contemporary and edgy Israeli writer. The New York Times called this a brilliant, life-affirming, and hilarious memoir from a "genius" and master storyteller.

Each session will meet at noon in the Temple Library.

CHECK OUT OUR SHELF IN THE KEHILLAH ROOM

New Jewish literature, largely fiction, to lend or borrow. Sign out sheet is on the clipboard for any of the random selection of books that people are willing to share.

ADULT OPPORTUNITIES

JANUARY AND FEBRUARY LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

We proudly announce that Rabbi Kosovske will offer two separate and unique adult-level classes in the months of January and February, each self-contained and each offered twice and at different times to accommodate as many people as possible.

Program #1 for January:

“What Really Is Jewish Time About?”

Forget everything you learned about telling time. Whatever you learned, that’s not how we Jews do it. Our method is totally different from the rest of the world’s. Jews have our own way of telling time, and it is totally fascinating. So do you want to understand what “Jewish time” is really about? Then don’t miss this presentation. You will never look at a clock the same way again.

The dates and times for program #1:

Tuesday evening, January 17th, 7:00 – 8:30 pm.

Wednesday afternoon, January 18th, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

Program #2 for February:

“What Are We Praying for Anyway?”

They say you should be careful what you pray for. But that’s not necessarily how we Jews view it. What we pray for reflects how we look at the world. And it isn’t random that Judaism says we are supposed to say 100 blessings every day! Well, what is this prayer bit all about anyway? And what are some of the seemingly odd-ball things we pray for? Join us and find out. Yes, we do have some strange quirks in what we pray about.

The dates and times for program #2:

Tuesday evening, February 7th, 7:00 – 8:30 pm.

Wednesday afternoon, February 8th, 1:00 – 2:30 pm

BE A PART OF SINAI, NEVER APART FROM SINAI!!!

OUR ONEG SHABBAT FUND NEEDS HELP!

Let’s share our joys, celebrations, honors, and remembrances and help grow our Oneg Shabbat Fund. There are two options: make a donation to the Oneg Shabbat Fund in honor, celebration, or memory of someone, or sponsor a Friday Oneg for a minimum of 4 chai- \$72- or, like NPR, at whatever level you choose. Both will be noted in a special section of the bulletin.

New Melton Classes

Exodus (Part One): From Slavery to Sinai (10 lessons) – Due to popular request, Rabbi Katz is teaching the same Melton class that ran in the fall. Now it will be taught in the morning. This course brings us the Egyptian narrative of our people from “Pharaoh’s Paranoia” and “Moshe’s CV” to the dramatic story of our rescue and survival in the wilderness during “Into the Sea” and “Manna from Heaven.” Leadership, bravery, faith, and doubt define some of the critical moments in these texts and offer us a rich backdrop for challenging our own assumptions.

Dates: Thursday mornings, starting February 7

Time: 9:30 – 11:00 am

Location: Temple Beth El Katz Library

Cost: \$250 tuition + \$45 book fee (Financial assistance available upon request; please contact Rabbi Katz at rabbikatz@tbespringfield.org.)

Registration: Registration for this class will be handled directly through the Melton website. Please visit www.events.org/meltonspringfield to register. For questions about registration, please contact Jody Hyman at the Melton School at (847) 714-9843 x 308 or jhyman@meltonschool.org. Please note that there is a 15-student minimum for this class.

Exodus (Part Two): From Revelation to Revolution (10 lessons) – This course follows the development of the emerging Jewish nation from their awe-inspiring encounter at Mount Sinai through the building of the tabernacle in the wilderness. The high points of divine revelation in “Ten Commandments,” “Encountering God,” and “Face to Face with God” are sharply contrasted with the low points of the “Golden Calf: Revolt or Reversion.” The text addresses some of the specific laws and regulations that were to become part of Jewish living as well as the meaning, purpose, and relevance to our lives today.

Dates: Thursday evenings, February 9, 23, March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, May 11, 18, 25

Time: 7:00 – 8:30 pm

Location: Temple Beth El Katz Library

Cost: \$250 tuition + \$45 book fee (Financial assistance available upon request; please contact Rabbi Katz at rabbikatz@tbespringfield.org.)

Registration: Registration for this class will be handled directly through the Melton website. Please visit www.events.org/meltonspringfield to register. For questions about registration, please contact Jody Hyman at the Melton School at (847) 714-9843 x 308 or jhyman@meltonschool.org. Please note that there is a 15-student minimum for this class.

Adult Jewish Education Classes

Greatest Hits from the Talmud – Begin your morning with a taste of Talmud! This class is on hiatus in January & February, but will resume in March. In this class, taught by Rabbi Devorah Jacobson, we will encounter some of the most fascinating discussions of the ancient sages as recorded on various pages of the Babylonian Talmud. Join us in exploring these different “gems” of the Talmud and attempting to wrestle with their meanings in their time and in our own. This is a drop-in class; stop by if you’re available, and if you have to miss a week or two, that’s OK. This class is for beginners and beyond, seekers, and lovers of Jewish learning!

Dates: Thursdays, March 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30 (call JGS Lifecare at 567-3949 for weather or other cancellations)

Time: 9:30 – 10:45 am

Location: Michael’s Café, JGS Lifecare, 770 Converse Street, Longmeadow

Cost: No charge

Islam for Jews – An introduction to Islam for Jews who would like to have a deeper understanding of the core beliefs and practices of Islam. Passages from the Qu’ran and other Islamic texts will be explored and a trip to the local mosque and discussion with Muslim community leaders, perhaps the imam, will also be included. Please note there is a minimum of 12 students needed for this class.

Dates: Mondays, March 13, 20, 27, April 3, 24, May 8, 15; snow date: May 22

Time: 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Location: JGS Lifecare, 770 Converse Street, Longmeadow

Cost: \$200 tuition + \$25 material fee (Financial assistance available upon request; please contact Rabbi Katz at rabbikatz@tbespringfield.org.)

Registration: Contact Lisa in the TBE office at 733-4149 or llaudato@tbespringfield.org

NOTE: HELP US BE THERE FOR YOU!

Rabbi Kosovske wants to be present in your life both during happy moments and in times of need. But, alas (!), he is not clairvoyant. So if there is a joyous occasion in your life, or if, God forbid, you are in the hospital or in a convalescent facility, please let the office know (or make sure one of your family members or friends lets the office know) so our rabbi can be there for you.

Also, if you move to a new address, or change your email address, or get a new phone number, or get a new cell phone number, please let the office know that too so we can keep our records up to date.

ATTENTION!!!

ATTENTION!!!

ATTENTION!!!

HavDeli!!! continues.

That’s right, and it’s not a misspelling.

HavDeli!!! Say it again:

HavDeli!!!

And here is the schedule for our final **HavDeli!!!** gatherings and don’t-miss great movies:

The time? **Always at 6:00 PM**

Movie 3: Saturday, January 14st
“Hester Street”

Movie 4: Saturday, February 25th
“The Frisco Kid”

Remember: **HavDeli!!!** is

1) havdalah, followed by

2) a deli dinner followed by

3) a movie, all on a Saturday night,

and all for the modest cost of just \$12 per person!

Mark your calendars now!





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(413) 736-3619
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