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BETH SHIR SHALOM

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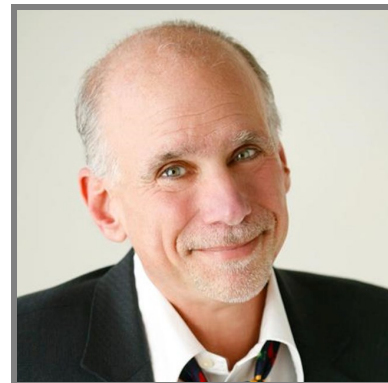
Brennan Schulweis

Office Admin

Dear Friends,

A curious thing about the Book of Esther (we'll do our Purim Shabbat on March 6th!!!! and our Purim Shpiel and Carnival on March 8th!!!!) is that it doesn't mention God. Not once. This, of course, places this tale of salvation in stark contrast to most other stories of rescue in our history (i.e., "We were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt, and the Eternal, our God, took us out from there with a strong hand and with an outstretched arm." – The Passover Haggadah). There is no such proclamation or perspective in the Book of Esther. In fact, the salvation in the story hinges on two of the major characters, Esther herself and her familial guardian, Mordechai. As you may know, the story takes place in ancient Persia in a city-state called Shushan whose king is Achashveirosh. At the beginning of the tale, the king executes his most favored wife in his haram, Vashti, because she refused to "entertain" royal guests at a feast. The new wife he chooses is Esther, a Jew. Later in the story, the Jews of Shushan are threatened with genocide by a renegade advisor to the king, Haman. Mordechai gets wind of this genocidal plot and sends a message to Esther, telling her that she must convince the king to intervene, which includes revealing her Jewish identity to him. She is frightened and reluctant. Mordechai tries to convince her by saying this, "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise for the Jews from **another place**, and you and your father's house will go lost..." Some commentators exclaim, almost with glee, "Look! God **IS** in the Book of Esther! There it is, 'another place'. That's a very subtle epithet for God!"

Or not. "Or not" because perhaps "another place" isn't referring to divine intervention at all. Perhaps it's referring to exactly the kind of courage, risk and strength that Mordechai hoped Esther would display (and she ultimately did) coming from somewhere and someone else in the community. Perhaps Mordechai himself. Perhaps some other person or persons. Perhaps the story, looked upon scholastically as a fantasy not locked within the era and geographic location it describes, is about us – in our own time. Perhaps Mordechai speaks to us when he says, "For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance will arise...from another place." Perhaps he is telling us that when we vote on March 3 and November 3, we are not voting for a savior. We are not voting to hope that someone else is strong enough to do what needs doing. Mordechai is charging us, saying that the "other place", the other source of freedom and justice, is us. Happy Purim! Have fun...and vote!



Rabbi Neil Comess-Daniels

Mitzvah of the Month— Matanot l'Evyonim – Sending Presents to the Poor

There are several mitzvot emanating from the Book of Esther and our celebration of Purim. Some of the mitzvot were later instituted in the Talmud and the Book of Esther (9:20-22) itself says:

Mordecai...sent dispatches to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus near and far, charging them to observe the fourteenth and fifteenth days of Adar every year; the same days on which the Jews enjoyed relief from their foes and the same month which had been transformed for them from one of grief and mourning to one of festive joy. They were to observe them as days of feasting and merrymaking, and as an occasion for sending gifts to one another and matanot la-eyyonim, presents to the poor.

I've always found it wonderful that one of the "mitzvah outcomes" of the Purim story is matanot la-eyyonim, to give gifts to the poor. The Book of Esther does not focus on the poor at all. Still, a basic way that we decided to celebrate our people's joy is by sharing it with those who are in need...and calling it "gifts". Fabulous. Some commentators, like the Rambam (Rabbi Moshe ben Mamon - a medieval Sephardic Jewish philosopher and physician), (Hilkhos Megillah 2:17), say that the mitzvah of matanot la-eyyonim takes priority over the other Purim mitzvot:

It is better for a person to increase his gifts to the poor than to increase the size of his Purim meal or mishlo'ach manot (gifts to one another). For there is no greater and more admirable joy than to gladden the hearts of the destitute, orphans, widows and strangers. One who gladdens the hearts of the unfortunate is likened unto the Divine Presence.

What is the minimum to fulfill this mitzvah? The Talmud (Megilla 7a) concludes that a person should give two "gifts" (because the mitzvah says gifts, in the plural. Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki, a medieval French rabbi and author of a comprehensive commentary on the Talmud and commentary on the Tanakh, Hebrew Bible) spells it out, two gifts, one each to two individuals. Rashi (Responsa 293, Shibolei Ha-leket 202) further notes that there is no minimum amount for matanot la-eyyonim, as it is a form of tzedakah, righteous giving, for which there are no minimums or maximums because it is a matter of bringing justice where it is lacking. Some, however, require a more specific gift, since it's purpose is to address person living in poverty. The Sha'arei Teshuva (An ethical work authored by Yonah Gerondi and first published in 1505), (695:1), referring to a standard of the Zera Ya'akov (was a seventeenth-century Ethiopian philosopher) maintains that a person should give a minimum of "three eggs," i.e., a small meal.

Finally, the Rambam (Hilkhos Megilla 2:16) and Shulchan Arukh (694:3) (the most widely consulted code of Jewish law written in by Joseph Caro in 1563) admonish us not to be exacting with people asking for charity on Purim. All who "extend their hand" are given matanot la-eyyonim on Purim. The Ramban (cited by Nimukei Yosef, Bava Metzia 48b), as well as the Tur (it's full name being the Arba'ah Turim, an important legal code composed by Jacob ben Asher 12-14th c.), (694) and Shulchan Arukh (694:3), write that one may give matanot la-eyyonim to Jews and non-Jews alike, in order to avoid "eiva" (enmity or animosity).

So, are you informed and ready to give gifts to the poor, matanot la-eyyonim, on Purim and beyond?! Do it because you can. Do it because it's the right thing to do. Do it because it needs doing. Thanks for praying with your legs.

A Message From Our Board Of Directors — Written by Natalie Rothenberg

Running into people I know (or almost know) is one of my favorite things. That kind of impromptu encounter, whether it's a wave or a conversation, elevates the activity from errand or event into community. Being recognized at the doctor's office as the Beth Shir Shalom Lobby Lady, or coming home from the grocery store with milk AND an update on an old friend's life is a dividend of living in the same place a long time, but that feeling doesn't have to be left entirely to chance.

Community – congregation – is built of encounters both intentional and accidental. We show up at Beth Shir Shalom on purpose ... for pre-school drop off, for JELLI pick-up, for Shabbat services, for holiday celebrations, life cycle events or to support fundraisers, maybe even to drop off paper work or volunteer. But once we put ourselves in that welcoming space, we are open to surprises! We see friends we didn't know would be there, and people there we didn't know would be friends. After all, everyone else there has at least one thing in common with us... but how many more? Maybe the other volunteer is from our hometown; the people at the next table saw the same movie last night; someone in the lobby has a kid at the same school as ours. Music, food, books, teams... if we ask and listen and talk and share, how many more things do we have in common with the other folks who show up at Beth Shir Shalom?

We can find these points of connection and build on them, if we are there without hurry or distraction. If we can present ourselves a little early, if we can stay present, and if we can let ourselves linger a little later, we have even more chances to give and receive the gift of connection. Helping to set up for an event; eating cookies during Oneg; having time after something to get coffee or take the kids to the park -- these may not be the moments we showed up for, but they may be the moments that become our favorites, the moments that make us feel we're in a community of people we know and who know us.

INVITATIONS FROM THE RABBI



Exploring the Gift of Failure:

A Wellness Gathering for Parents and Educators



Who: The Jewish Federation's Los Angeles Jewish Teen Initiative

What: Exploring the Gift of Failure: A Wellness Gathering for Parents and Educators

When: Sunday, May 3, 2020; 9:00 AM–12:30 PM

Where: Luxe Sunset Boulevard Hotel, 11461 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 90049

Cost: \$25 per person; includes kosher breakfast and valet parking.

For more information, please contact LAJTI@JewishLA.org.

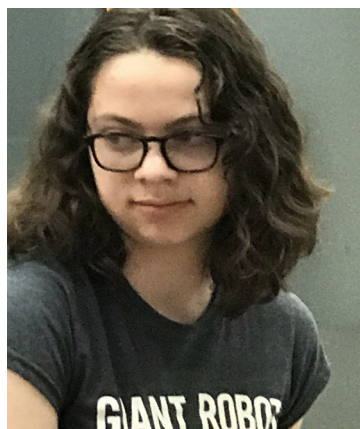


The Los Angeles Jewish Teen Initiative is co-funded by The Jewish Federation of Greater Los Angeles and the Jim Joseph Foundation, with seed funding provided by the Jewish Community Foundation of Los Angeles.

Beth Shir Shalom Congregational Day Retreat Camp Tumbleweed MAY 9, 2020

All the best of our annual weekend retreat activities
PLUS MORE: food, tfillah, gaga, ropes course, archery, arts & crafts, more food, hiking, inflatable obstacle course, s'mores . . .

For more Info contact Cynthia Barzilai at
310-453-3361 or cynthia@bethshirshalom.org



Rebecca Berliner
Becomes a
Bat Mitzvah
Saturday,
April 25th
at 4:00 P.M.



Mazel Tov to the
Newman—Berliner Family!

BOOK CLUB CHAVURAH

Come join the Beth Shir Shalom Book Chavurah! It's free and it's a lot of fun. And there's even no requirement to have read the book being discussed. All are welcome! We meet on the 3rd Thursday of each month.

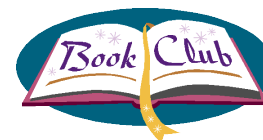
Thursday, March 19: "Frankenstein" by Mary Shelley. Moderated by Ken Kofman.

Thursday, April 16: "The Roundhouse" by Harper Collins. Moderated by Gloria Heller.

The Chavurah will meet at:

Ken and Andrea's Home
944 18th Street, Unit 3
Santa Monica, CA

6:30 pot-luck,
Discussion begins at 7:15 pm



Save the Date
Beth Shir Shalom's Annual Fundraiser
"Night of Light"
Saturday,
May 30, 2020
6:00 to 10:00 PM
Come join as we celebrate
Rabbi Neil and the
Comess-Daniels Family

The Santa Monica Synagogue
present:
THE SANTA MONICA COMMUNITY
PURIM CARNIVAL
2020
Attractions
Game Booths
Unique Vendors
Bake Sale
Raffle Contest
Entertainment
Rides
And More!
SUNDAY MARCH 8TH
11 AM-3PM
1448 18th St.
Santa Monica, CA
(Between Broadway and Santa Monica Blvd.)

Robin Masnicoff, ECC Director

Our ECC is not just a location filled with caring adults that take care of and educate young children. Yes our primary responsibility is to provide a safe and nurturing environment for children to grow and flourish. We strive to be a place where parents feel at ease leaving their children so they are able to work or go about their day knowing their children are thriving and being well taken care of. With this in mind our ECC is also place where families meet and develop lasting friendships. Our ECC is the foundation for our Synagogue and a lifelong connection to Judaism. It is the place where our children will meet their first friends. A place where we build a community of support and **family*****.

This year we have been focusing on having more events that help foster and build this relationship within our community. We are uniting more of our events with our JELLI families and it is the hope that as we evolve we will become a stronger and active community. We want to be the place where you feel at home and your children grow up feeling a connection to the Beth Shir Shalom community.

***** family - Urban Dictionary**

when friends become like family, they're **family...** closer than close, they may know you better than your own family.

Elana Mabashov, Religious Education Director

We've had a very busy couple months here at JELLI. Upon returning from Winter break, one of our Kindergarteners, Itamar, mentioned he was concerned about the wildfires in Australia and wanted to help out. The rest of our Kindergarten class sprang into action! Under teacher Stacy's guidance, they decided to put on a bake sale to support recovery efforts in Australia. Their Mitzvah project raised \$400, and the proceeds are being donated to Wildlife Victoria - way to go Kindergarten!

Our Second and Third Grade class did an incredible job leading Family Shabbat services this month. We had a huge turnout of both JELLI and ECC families, which made for a very joyous event. JELLI and ECC also collaborated on a special Tu B'Shevat celebration. The rain didn't stop us from having fun! Kids created bird feeders, painted garden rocks, and snacked on Tu B'Shevat goodies, among other activities during this fun-filled morning. Finally, our Fourth Graders' sock babies participated in a B'nai Mitzvah service, accompanied by their class-made tallitot. They grow up so fast...Come check out the hands on learning at JELLI every Sunday morning from 9-12.



JELLI, Club 78 and BeSHTY Highlights

JELLI

- Grades 2/3 led Family Shabbat services
- Joint ECC/JELLI Tu B'Shevat celebration
- Kindergarten Mitzvah project—bake sale to raise funds for Australia
- 4th Grade sock baby B'nai Mitzvah

BeSHTY

- BeSHTY and Club 78 played various team building games together
- We had so much fun baking cookies and pizzas
- We are currently working on a short shpiel to perform on Sunday, March 8th at 10:00 AM. Hope to see you there!



MARCH/APRIL PROGRAMMING CALENDAR

ADULT EDUCATION

Saturday	March 7, 14, 21, 28	9:00 AM	Torah Study
Saturday	April 4, 18, 25	9:00 AM	Torah Study

COMMUNITY

Monday	March 2, 9, 16, 23, 30	7:30 PM	Israeli Dancing
Thursday	Mar. 19 & Apr. 16	6:30 PM	Book Club Chavurah *
Monday	April 6, 13, 20, 27	7:30 PM	Israeli Dancing

EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Wednesday	March 3 & 31	8:00 AM	Parent Board Meeting
Friday	March 6, 13, 20, 27	9:30 AM	Baby & Me
Friday	March 6, 13, 20, 27	10:45 AM	Tot Shabbat
Sunday	March 8	11:00 AM	Purim Carnival *
Sunday	March 29	9:30 AM	Matzah Factory Passover Funday
Wednesday	April 1	11:00 AM	ECC Seder
Friday	April 3, 24	9:30 AM	Baby & Me
Friday	April 3, 24	10:45 AM	Tot Shabbat
April 6 – 17		ECC Closed for Spring Break	

JELLI & YOUTH GROUP

Sunday	March 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	9:00 AM	JELLI
Tuesday	March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	4:00 PM	Hebrew Enrichment
Tuesday	March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31	5:45 PM	Club 78
Friday	March 6	5:30 PM	K/1 st Grade Dinner & Shabbat Celebration
Sunday	March 8	10:00 AM	Purim Shpiel led by Club 78 & BeSHTY
Sunday	March 8	11:00 AM	Purim Carnival *
Tuesday	March 10, 24	6:00 PM	BeSHTY
Sunday	March 29	9:30 AM	Matzah Factory Passover Funday
Sunday	April 19, 26	9:00 AM	JELLI
Tuesday	April 21, 28	4:00 PM	Hebrew Enrichment
Tuesday	April 21, 28	5:45 PM	Club 78
Tuesday	April 28	6:00 PM	BeSHTY
April 5 – 14		JELLI/Club 78/BeSHTY Closed for Spring Break	

SHABBAT & HOLIDAYS

Friday	March 6	5:30 PM	Families w/Young Children Shabbat Celebration led by the ECC Shemesh Class and JELLI K/1 st Grade.
Friday	March 6	6:30 PM	Purim Shabbat Celebration
Friday	March 13, 20	6:30 PM	Shabbat Celebration
Friday	March 27	5:30 PM	Community Seder followed by Shabbat Celebration
Friday	April 3	6:30 PM	Passover Coffeehouse Shabbat
Thursday/Friday April 8 & 9		Temple Office Closed for Passover	
Friday	April 10	Shabbat At Home *	
Friday	April 17, 25	6:30 PM	Shabbat Celebration

SPECIAL EVENTS

Sunday	March 8	Daylight Savings Time	
Sunday	March 8	11:00 AM	Purim Carnival *
Saturday	April 25	4:00 PM	Rebecca Berliner becomes a Bat Mitzvah

WEEKLY/MONTHLY EVENTS

Thursday	March 12 & April 16	7:00 PM	Board Meeting
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* Denotes Event is Held Offsite

MARCH

YAHREZEITS

March 6th

Irene Avidon
Georgia Kate Ellis
Max Ganstwig
Kitty Heller
Sam Kanofsky
Sara Marmul
Richard Reznick
Leon Segall
Morris Taylor
Justin Verdiel

March 13th

Herbert Ansell
Celia Cole
Irv Harris
Mary Prager
Vilma Quentin
Herta Riegler
Wilma Schneider
Doris Stegall
Doris Stegall
Jack Welinsky

March 20th

Eli Block
Margot Guttmann
James Lam
Madeline Laskin
Anne Liff
Joshua Newstat
Sydel Feinzig Rothman
Sylvia Seifert
Rosalind Silberman
Sally Stanley
Helen Wiener

March 27th

Morris Avidon
Sidney Bacon
Barbara Berliner
Wolf Blustajn
Bertha Cornfeld
Albert Ellis
Eli Kaplan
Isabella Kogan
Fred Landecker
Sylvia Nolish
Minna Sonshine
Pearl Wassell

BIRTHDAYS

Gabriella Afar	Arthur Friedman	Deborah Novak
Danielle Alkov	Lara Gabirch	Audrey Oliva
Georgia Alkov	John Godfrey	Marty Ollstein
Sarah Barzilai	Bonnie Grey	Jody Reichel
Evan Bird-Fremont	Eli Kadish	Asher Sackman
Stephan Blustajn	Rosalie Sara Laufer	Nancy Schneider
LuAnne Center	Javier Masnicoff	Brennan Schulweis
Rex Cohen	Joel Miller	Lora Silverman
Hilary Dubin	Leah Mollner	Rose Solomon
Owen Feldman	Nate Netter	Carla Tulchin
Benny Findler-Buchalter		Blake Vogler

ANNIVERSARIES

20th	Jim Jusko & Susan Abrams
25th	David Sackman & Jerolyn Crute-Sackman
28th	David Lee & Margo Wain Lee
30th	Dima Volovik & Ellen Volovik-Gurevich
30th	Michael Dubin & Shari Davis
48th	Steven & Nancy Schneider
52nd	Alan Solomon & Charlene Solomon

TRIBUTES

Judy Stearn Fund

Wiener, Marilyn & Steve in Memory of Anita Taylor

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Grossman, Joseph - Thank You

Katz, David in Memory of Debbie Friedman

Pick, Alan & Kimra in Memory of Ludwig Pick

Roth, Ted & Lillian in Memory of Ethel Shulman

Stegall, Benjamin in Memory of Abraham Schoenberg

Tributes/Yahrzeits

Ginsburg, Robert in Memory of Carol Rosenblum

Hakim, Alex & Niaz in Memory of Ghodsieh Hakim

Heller, Gloria in Memory of Ethel Ceil Hller

Katz, David in Memory of Rebeca Katz Seldman

Kuperberg, Howard & Arlene in Memory of Amanda Entes

Rosenberg, Pam in Memory of Alan Rosenberg

Stavchanskiy, Alex & Irina in Memory of Mira Stavchnakaya

Susser, Jack & Preston, Marlene in Memory of

Baudin Preston & Ida Goldstein-Kabakow

Bima Flowers

Mezza, Peter & Schneir, Ellie in Memory of Matthew Mezza

Oblath, Patti & Miller, Michael

IELLI Donations

Clark, Robert & Susan

Ellis, Seth & Sbeglia, Josetta

Greenfeld, Eric & Kim, Lahn S.



APRIL

YAHREZEITS

<u>April 3rd</u>	<u>April 10th</u>	<u>April 17th</u>	<u>April 24th</u>	<u>May 1st</u>
Morris Gross	Mary Ann Galizi	Leah Bauman	Rouholah Aframian	Richard Gabrich
Brakha Horn	Sharon Goodman	Edith Gebbia	Ramon Lloyd Ashley	Shirley E Moskowitz Gruber
John Franklin Johnson	Allen Jacobs	Alfred Kass	Forrest Cole	Eric Guttman
David Menkin	Molly Oppenheim	Salomon Katz	Richard Comess	Barbara Lynn Hoffman
Clara Reznick	Norman Phillips	Joseph Michaels	Art Fajardo	Louis Newman
Meir Rosenshtrom	Shirley Solomon	Shirley C. Resnick	Minnie Hirsch	Tam Spiva
	Meyer Price Stern	Mel Richman	Arthur Newman	Stanley Weiss
	Sophia Willens	Irene Sender	Stephen Pick	
		David Tulchin	Goldie Slutzky	
			Hilda S. Stegall	
			Frieda Taylor	
			Sydelle Willis	

BIRTHDAYS

Susan Abrams	Karen Graham	Irene Shteynberg
Kimiya Aframian	David Hinkes	Nathan Singer
Mattin Aframian	Gilon Kaner	Alan Solomon
David Axilbund	Chloe Lepes	Elizabeth Solomon
Jeremy Bird-Fremont	Layne Lepes	Ellen Volovik-Gurevich
Ashley Blustajn	Danika Lewitzke	Shira Yaghoubian
Janine Bush	Peter Quentin	Beau Zaczepinski
Emily Cavell	Lillian Roth	Maura Zagor
Neil Comess-Daniels	John Schneider	Ilya Zak
Ari Gordon Fienberg	Oona Schulweis	Alexandra Zuckerbraun
Brian Gabrich	Allen Segall	Bailey Zuckerbraun
Jessica Golden		

ANNIVERSARIES

3rd	Dave Lowther & Dani Durkin
9th	Irene & Lenny Shteynberg
14th	Josh Title & Carolyn Newman
17th	Eron Ben-Yehuda & Marlene Cole
18th	Candyce Kornblum & Adam Rosenstein
22nd	Cynthia & Steve Barzilai
25th	Nancy & Richard Golden
32nd	Stan Brooks & Tanya Lopez Brooks

TRIBUTES

Judy Stearn Fund

King, Andrea in Memory of Virginia King

Prell, Ellen in Memory of Irving Prell

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Sher, Darrin & Sandy

Stegall, Benjamin in Memory of Robin Michele Stegall

Tributes/Yahrzeits

Epstein, Daniel in Memory of Ruth Epstein

Heller, Gloria in Memory of Kitty Heller

Hoffman, Linda & Lauren in Appreciation of Rabbi Neil

Susser, Jack & Preston, Marlene



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