

Congregation Sha'arey Ha-Yam

Newsletter for Month of January 2012

www.shaarehayam.org

Message from the Rabbi:

Dear Friends,

Although you won't read this message until the beginning of January, I'm writing it a few days before the beginning of Chanukah, which falls this year on December 20. I'd like to share a Chanukah thought which I learned from a wonderful colleague, Rabbi David Wolpe. I believe that this is a message that can sustain us long after Chanukah is over. Rabbi Wolpe begins by reminding us that it is easy to idealize and romanticize our heroes, imagining them to be have super-human qualities far beyond any that we ourselves could possibly ever possess. In Western history, for instance, leaders like Winston Churchill, George Washington and Abraham Lincoln often fall into this category. Yet a careful biographical reading of any of these individuals quickly dispels the myth of their perfection or infallibility. Washington was considered the intellectual inferior of other military generals, for instance. Lincoln struggled mightily with personal demons. Churchill, by all accounts, had trouble controlling his intake of alcohol.

As you know, we have no saints in Judaism. All of our heroes – Abraham, Isaac, Rebecca, Jacob, Moses, Miriam and Aaron, to name just a few – are portrayed as a mix of the heroic and the flawed. Although at this season, we tend to valorize the Maccabees who successfully resisted assimilation into Greek-Syrian culture, later rabbinic commentators were not so comfortable with their zealotry.

For eight nights during Chanukah, we use a shamash (“helper”) candle to light each of the other lights on our Chanukah/menorah. As you know, the shamash stands just above the other candles. Why? Rabbi Wolpe teaches: “Thus, the shamash candle is a symbolic reminder that we are given an opportunity to stand a little higher at a given moment and bring light and love to other human beings. We all have our imperfections, but we can still exhibit greatness by being the “shamash” when the opportunity presents itself. Someone once said, ‘Heroes are no braver than the ordinary person, but they are braver five minutes longer.’”

May each one of us use our “five minutes” wisely.

Wishing you a light-filled and joyous holiday and a peaceful and healthy secular new year.

Have a good month, Rabbi Kim Geringer

Message from the President:

Volunteers don't necessarily have the time – They have the heart!

Many members have come together to make this the year of participating in expanding the camaraderie of our group. As we continue to grow and publicize our doings, there is an awareness developing in the Ocean County area that there is a place of worship and socializing for them. I must confess that it has been a learning process for me to try to organize and coordinate our affairs. As our committees and volunteers proceed with the mitzvahs they do, so does our progress. I, and the Executive Board, will continue on this track and hope that all members of our congregation will get involved, whether it is for 15 hours or for 1 hour in the week, whether it is developing an idea for the school, whether it is developing a new learning program, whether it is dining out for a Dine A Round, whether suggesting a fund raiser or

showing up at a community event as a representative of the temple. This is the holiday season for all. Many of us volunteer to do good things to advance the giving to make others cheerful.

The choir did an outstanding performance at the hospital on December 1st. On December 20th, the lighting of the MENORAH was done in Barnegat. We are now going to advertise in the Jewish Journal. This paper is our voice and we hope that every one interested in their Jewish heritage will realize that we are the congregation that they should belong.

May each and every one of you enjoy the coming of this new year.

HAVE A HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

With the Warmest Regards,

Aaron Shapiro, President.

ADULT EDUCATION....

Iris Harari our new Hebrew Teacher is available to start Adult Education Classes for us. We need to know what you are interested in; Hebrew 101, basics and some conversational Hebrew, Life in Israel, What it was like to be in the Yom Kippur War, and whatever you would like to learn about! Please email Cyndy Friedland at Cfriedland119@comcast.net with your wish list. There will be a fee for the course, and we will also open these classes to non-members.

From Philip Altland

As everyone who attended High Holiday services discovered, our new choir is a great asset to the Congregation and really enhances our services. We will be performing periodically at Shabbat services throughout the year. Only membership requirement is a desire to sing and ability to attend an occasional Thursday night rehearsal. Anyone interested, please feel free to email or call me or see me at services.

A Taste of Judaism

This is a six-session course for Jews and non-Jews interested in an introduction to key aspects of Jewish life. The course will introduce students to the following concepts: principles of Judaism, basic Jewish texts (Torah, Bible, Talmud, Midrash), Shabbat, the major Jewish holidays, Jewish liturgy, the Jewish lifecycle, and the history of the Reform Movement. The course will meet monthly, January □ June 2012 from 5:15 □ 6:45 pm starting on January 20, February 17, March 23, April 27, May 18 and June 15. The cost of the course is \$300. Students will need to purchase one basic textbook; I would provide articles and other supplemental material.

Please contact Aaron if you are attending course. 242-2390 or shap1010@comcast.net

Yahrzeit January 2012

January 11	Bill Armstrong	Husband of Arlene Armstrong
January 13	Mary Ellen Taub	Mother of Cyndy Friedland
January 21	Alan Gardiner	Father of Hope Gardiner
January 22	George Harmon	Father of Inez Levine
January 30	Celia Miller	Mother of Philip Miller

To have the name of your loved one listed in The Bulletin and announced at Services by the Rabbi on the anniversary of their Yahrzeit, contact Phyllis Feather at PO Box 624, Barnegat, NJ 08005 or call **(609) 978-5500**.

Please forward ALL birthday and anniversary dates to Fran at nanny1141@comcast.net as our files must be re-done. Thank you.

January Birthdays

Daley Alexa 02
Dunn Marc 17
Belitz Cary 30

January Anniversaries(none)

Jewish Heroes (Inspiring piece of WWII history “Jewish”) (sent in by Inez Levine)

An interesting fact that many are unaware of is the historic events that surrounded a Jewish chaplain on Iwo Jima, where, of 70,000 American Marines, 1,500 were Jewish.

Rabbi Roland B. Gittelsohn, assigned to the Fifth Marine Division, was the first Jewish chaplain the Marine Corps ever appointed. Rabbi Gittelsohn was in the thick of the fray, ministering to Marines of all faiths in the combat zone. His tireless efforts to comfort the wounded and encourage the fearful won him three service ribbons. When the fighting was over, Rabbi Gittelsohn was asked to deliver the memorial sermon at a combined religious service dedicating the Marine Cemetery.

Unfortunately, racial and religious prejudice led to problems with the ceremony. What happened next immortalized Rabbi Gittelsohn and his sermon forever.

It was Division Chaplain Warren Cuthriell, a Protestant minister, who originally asked Rabbi Gittelsohn to deliver the memorial sermon. Cuthriell wanted all the fallen Marines (black and white, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish) honored in a single, nondenominational ceremony. However, according to Rabbi Gittelsohn's autobiography, the majority of Christian chaplains objected to having a rabbi preach over predominantly Christian graves.

To his credit, Cuthriell refused to alter his plans. Gittelsohn, on the other hand, wanted to save his friend Cuthriell further embarrassment and so decided it was best not to deliver his sermon. Instead, three separate religious services were held. At the Jewish service, to a congregation of 70 or so who attended, Rabbi Gittelsohn delivered the powerful eulogy he originally wrote for the combined service:

Here lie men who loved America because their ancestors, generations ago, helped in her founding. And other men who loved her with equal passion because they themselves, or their own fathers, escaped from oppression to her blessed shores. Here lie officers and men, Negroes and Whites, rich men and poor, together. Here are Protestants, Catholics, and Jews together. Here no man prefers another because of his faith or despises him because of his color. Here there are no quotas of how many from each group are admitted or allowed.

Among these men there is no discrimination. No prejudices. No hatred. There is the highest and purest democracy! Whosoever of us lifts his hand in hate against a brother, or who thinks himself superior to those who happen to be in the minority, makes of this ceremony and the bloody sacrifice it commemorates, an empty, hollow mockery. To this then, as our solemn sacred duty, do we, the living, now dedicate ourselves: To the right of Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, of White men and Negroes alike, to enjoy the democracy for which all of them have here paid the price.

We here solemnly swear this shall not be in vain. Out of this, and from the suffering and sorrow of those who mourn this, will come, we promise, the birth of a new freedom for the sons of men everywhere.

Among Gittelsohn's listeners were three Protestant chaplains so incensed by the prejudice voiced by their colleagues that they boycotted their own service to attend Gittelsohn's. One of them borrowed the manuscript and, unknown to Gittelsohn, circulated several thousand copies to his regiment. Some Marines enclosed the copies in letters to their families.

An avalanche of coverage resulted. Time magazine published excerpts, which wire services spread even further. The entire sermon was inserted into the Congressional Record, the Army released the eulogy for short-wave broadcast to American troops throughout the world and radio commentator Robert St. John read it on his program and on many succeeding Memorial Days.

In 1995, in his last major public appearance before his death, Gittelsohn reread a portion of the eulogy at the 50th commemoration ceremony at the Iwo Jima statue in Washington, D.C. In his autobiography, Gittelsohn reflected, "I have often wondered whether anyone would ever have heard of my Iwo Jima sermon had it not been for the bigoted attempt to ban it." ***Semper Fi.***

BOOK CORNER: by Rosalie Donadio

An Island Called Home: Returning to Jewish Cuba by Ruth Behar (Photographs by Humberto Mayol)

A professor at the University of Michigan, Behar seeks a better understanding of her roots and of the Jewish experience in her native Cuba. Traversing the island, Behar becomes a confidante to myriad Jewish strangers. Through one-on-one interviews and black-and-white images taken by her photographer, Humberto Mayol, she uncovers the diasporic thread that connects Cuban Jews. Familial stories of wandering beginning in the 1920s tell of displaced Polish and German Jews—escapees from anti-Semitism and Auschwitz—opening mom-and-pop shops in La Habana Vieja, becoming peddlers, replacing Yiddish with Spanish and settling into Latino life only to be uprooted within decades. An estimated 16,500 Jews lived in Cuba in the late 1950s, when a mass exodus to Miami and New York took place—a reaction to Castro's budding communist revolution.

This diligent recounting and pictorial collage of interviews with adolescents, the aging, the impoverished and the political by Behar preserves in memory the people and places that make up Cuba's Jewish story. (Nov.: *Publishers' Weekly*)

Reviews:

This may be Behar's most personal work...she lovingly intertwines her own thoughts and feelings with the more analytical observations of her profession. The result: a narrative that tugs at the heart. --Miami Herald

This diligent recounting and pictorial collage of interviews with adolescents, the aging, the impoverished and the political by Behar preserves in memory the people and places that make up Cuba's Jewish story. --Publishers Weekly

Excerpts I chose:

p.41: "Jews are a people who won't let go of the dead. The dead are honored through the recitation of the Kaddish at religious services. When Jews build temples, they cover the walls with the names of the dead but before they build temples of worship, Jews build cemeteries. They want to be buried amid Stars of David. They want to be with members of the tribe when they return to dust."

p. 53: "The Kaddish is a portable prayer. It is brief, easy to remember, hypnotic. It doesn't speak of the afterlife, it speaks of the desire for peace. When Jews invented their prayer for the dead, they knew they were a wandering people, a people always searching for a home someplace, a people who might not always find a final resting place in a Jewish cemetery."

p. 255: "..... It's strange that there isn't a Kaddish a Jew can recite for a lost home. If there were, I'd utter that prayer. Without fear. Finally letting go in order to believe that the only true home is the one we have searched for inconsolably."

Jewish Tidbits Fran Breese (Gratitude Attitude)

For the greatest pleasure, we have to pay the greatest price. Gratitude.

In order to connect with God, you have to learn to appreciate all the good HE has done for you. That means giving up the illusion that you alone are responsible for your achievements. It's all a gift from God. Just as every stroke of Picasso's brush has his signature on it, everything in this world has God's signature on it.

We have to learn to appreciate it. If you make the effort to appreciate the gifts God has bestowed upon you, then you'll have such a keen awareness of God's presence that everything you do is accompanied by a sense of His love and guidance. You'll be overwhelmed above and beyond any other pleasure possible. (From: www.aish.com)

By Rabbi Noah Weinberg

January News from the Fundraising Committee

Oneg Sponsorship: Do you or your family have a simcha to share with our congregation? What better way to celebrate than sponsoring an Oneg! We offer several levels that can be sponsored, \$50, \$75, and \$100. Our Onegs include wine, juice, challah and other desserts. The upper levels include fruit and extras to enhance the Oneg. Kindly Madelyn Dunn at 609-660-1614 to reserve your date.

Help Wanted!

Congregation Sha'arey Ha-Yam has beautiful logo T-shirts available in all sizes for only \$10.00 apiece. "Recipes to Remember" our very own cookbook is a 3-ring binder with an included easel for free-standing on a countertop. Each cookbook is filled with over 180 recipes with lots of tips, hints and suggestions. The cookbook sells for \$18.00 and makes an excellent gift for friends or family, and is a wonderful keepsake as well. T-shirts and cookbooks are always available at services.

2012 SCHEDULE OF SERVICE 7:30 PM (DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE)

January 6	August 10
January 20	August 24
February 3	September 7
February 17	September 16 Erev Rosh Hashanah
March 9 (Purim on 3/8)	September 17 Rosh Hashanah
March 23	September 25 Erev Yom Kippur
April 7 (Seder) AT Captain's Inn	September 26 Yom Kippur; Break the Fast
April 13	October 2 (erect Succor-Tuesday)
April 27	October 5
May 4	October 19
May 18	November 2
June 1	November 16
June 15	November 30
July 13	December 14 Hanukkah
July 27	December 28