

TEMPLE BETH EL

FALL RIVER, MASSACHUSETTS



91st Year

March 2019

Adar I/Adar II 5779

No. 7

Regular Service Schedule

Morning Minyan (Monday & Thursday).....	8:00 am
Friday Evening Services	5:30 pm
Shabbat Morning Services.....	10:00 am



Don't miss our Purim celebration! Wednesday, March 20th

Service and Megillah reading begin at 5:30 pm,
followed by supper and after-dinner viewing of
the 2013 documentary "When Jews Were Funny,"
exploring the role of Jewish comedians in the history of North American
comedy and humor from the Borscht Belt to the present day.

Please RSVP to the TBE office by Monday, March 11th



Looking forward to Passover...Thursday, April 25th

Due to the timing of the Sabbath, Temple Beth El's communal Pesach celebration will not be on one of the traditional Seder nights of Pesach, but near the end of the Passover period, on Thursday, April 25th (the evening marking the beginning of the 7th day).

Save the date and plan to join us for this highlight of our year at Temple Beth El!

A message from our Spiritual Leader, Rabbi Mark Elber

When Adar Arrives, Joy Increases (Babylonian Talmud, *Ta'anit* 29a)

The Jewish calendar is a complicated one because it is essentially a lunar calendar adjusted for the solar year. What that ends up meaning is that over the course of nineteen years there are seven leap years. A leap year consists of an extra lunar month, Adar II, which precedes the month of Nissan (in the middle of which Passover begins). The reason for this is that Passover has to occur during the spring time, which was the season during which the original Passover and Exodus from Egypt took place. This year is a leap year and this month on the evening of March 7, Adar II begins. Purim falls on the 14th of Adar or the 14th of Adar II (if it's a leap year), which this year begins on the evening of March 20. If you look up in the sky that evening and the moon is visible, you will see a full moon. Two other complicating elements in our calendar are that Purim can never fall on a Shabbat nor can Yom Kippur ever end on Friday night (i.e. Shabbat).

The Book of Esther or the *Megillah*, as it's often called, is unique in certain ways. There is quite a comic element in it and there's a caricature-like component in some of the main characters. There's a lot of eating and drinking with no indication that Esther's dietary habits are different from the non-Jews among whom she lived. Does this mean that she was very assimilated into the Persian culture? She was embarrassed by her first cousin Mordechai's donning of mourning clothing upon hearing of Haman's decree to annihilate the Jewish people. Mordechai does not seem to be assimilated in the way that Esther is. Strikingly, he tells Esther that she is gravely mistaken if she thinks that her fate will be different from the fate of her people and adds that if she does not intercede on their behalf, their salvation will come from elsewhere.

So many themes in the story seem characteristic of Jewish life in the Diaspora for the last two thousand years. One element is the dependence of the Jewish people on the protection of Gentile rulers for their survival. If you look at Jewish history in Russia and Eastern Europe, the Czars and other rulers would allow the more downtrodden people in their countries to vent their anger, hatred, and frustration on the Jewish population rather than on the rulers themselves. Similarly in Europe during the Middle Ages, and later, whether it was blaming the plague or other misfortunes on the Jews, or simply always having a convenient scapegoat – the pattern is consistent. It's particularly striking that just as Mordechai warns Esther not to fool herself into believing that her fate will be different from that of her people's fate, many assimilated Jews particularly in Germany often saw themselves as German before they saw themselves as Jews (many of whom had fought valiantly in Germany's or

Austria's armies during World War I) and couldn't imagine that they would be the victims of so much hatred.

Unlike the vast majority of biblical literature, the story of the Book of Esther takes place in the Diaspora. In the Book of Daniel, which also takes place in the Diaspora, in Babylon, a point is made that Daniel will not eat of the king's food or drink his wine because of his dietary restrictions. This doesn't occur in the Book of Esther. Interestingly, in the ancient Greek translation of the Book of Esther, Esther does refrain from eating the forbidden food and wine of the Persians. In the Hebrew version of the *Megillah*, G'd is never mentioned, but in the Greek translation, G'd is mentioned and prayers (that don't appear in our *Megillah*) are said. The Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered beginning in 1947 in Qumran, contain at least fragments of all the canonical texts of the Bible with one exception: The Book of Esther.

The name Esther itself, if read as a Hebrew name, contains within it the Hebrew word "secret" or "hidden" (*sefer*) – and, of course, it is both G'd and Esther's true identity which are hidden. One of the morals of the story is that when Esther reveals who she truly is to her husband, King Akhashverosh, salvation comes. There is a Jewish tradition that contains within it the conundrum of the connection of Purim with Yom Kippur which is also occasionally called Yom HaKippurim. "Kippurim" could mean either "atonements" (the plural of Kippur) or "like Purim," so that Yom HaKippurim could be understood as meaning a day like Purim. That's quite a statement since on the surface the two days seem like diametric opposites – Purim is the most frivolous-seeming of holidays while Yom Kippur is the most somber. There is also a rabbinic tradition that says that when the *mashiakh*, the messiah, finally comes only one holiday that we currently keep will continue to be kept: Purim.

It is a *minhag*, a custom, to dress up in costumes on Purim and the central Mitzvot of the holiday are to listen to the reading of the *Megillah*, to give charity to the poor, and to give gifts of foods to friends and neighbors (*shalakh manos* in Yiddish or *mishloakh manot* in Hebrew) We always collect *tzedakah* on Purim at the *Megillah* reading.

I look forward to celebrating Purim with you, including the *se'udah* (festive meal) that Sisterhood will be preparing for us. One recent memory I have from a few years ago... I was sitting at a table with a few people noshing *hamen-tashen* after the *Megillah* reading, and it turned out that my costume was apparently so convincing that some people at the table didn't know who I was!

Wishing you all a happy and healthy Adar (I & II) and a very *freilikh* Purim!

Please join us on Wednesday evening, March 20.

Rabbi Mark Elber

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Things have been pretty quiet around here this month, almost as though the Temple is hibernating! Of course we continue to hold regular services and classes, and for the most part the weather has been pretty cooperative. Let's hope that trend continues as we finish out the winter here in New England.

We have quite a few people on our *Mi Shebeirakh* list right now, and while they are always prayed for during our services, I thought it would be nice if we could all take a moment during our busy week to say a prayer for them from home. Never underestimate the power of prayer! Below is a simplified version of the *Mi Shebeirakh* prayer.

May the One who blessed our ancestors —
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob,
Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah —
bless and heal those who are ill:
May the Holy Blessed One
overflow with compassion upon them,
to restore them, to heal them,
to strengthen them, to enliven them.
May the Holy One send them, speedily,
a complete healing —healing of the soul
and healing of the body —
along with all who are ill,
among the people of Israel and all humankind,
soon, speedily, without delay,
and let us all say: Amen!

Steve Silverman
President

Sisterhood President's Message

March is finally here, coming in like the "proverbial lion", and hopefully leaving like a lamb. Today, as I sit here writing this it is snowing and sleeting. Enough already, 31 plus days until Spring. Yes!

We are now in the process of getting ready to celebrate Purim, which we will celebrate on Wednesday evening, March 20th at 5:30 pm. Please plan to join us for this lively celebration. Don't forget to make a reservation, so we can prepare for the correct number of party goers.

Next up is our annual Passover dinner. We will be celebrating on Thursday evening, April 25th at 5:30 pm. We will be enjoying a traditional holiday, full course meal. That means soup to nuts. Reservations are a must. So, mark the date and plan to join us. Watch your e-mail and U.S. mail for the latest information and updates.

So until next month, keep warm and stay safe.

Libby Cohen
Sisterhood President



PURIM:
Wednesday, March 20th at 5:30 pm

Passover:
Thursday, April 25th at 5:30 pm

LEADERSHIP

Mark Elber.....Rabbi
Shoshana Brown.....Cantor
Stephen Silverman.....President
Daniel Schafler.....Vice President
Libby Cohen.....Secretary
William Chebot.....Treasurer
Libby Cohen.....Sisterhood Pres.
William E. Kaufman.....Rabbi Emeritus

Sisterhood Gift Shop

It might seem early to be thinking about Passover which begins on Friday evening, April 19. However the gift shop has to place its order by March 25.

I am doing an inventory on our Passover merchandise. Presently, we have a selection of lovely seder plates, silk matzo covers, engraved lucite matzo boxes (always in demand), folding fabric matzo baskets, and cookbooks. Is there something you would like that is not available in our gift shop?

If you are interested in any Passover (or other Judaica) and would like to peruse our merchandise or browse my catalogs, *please feel free to contact me.*

Hannah R. Evans
Phone: 508-674-2505
Email: hannahbecky@comcast.net

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Director, Admissions & Marketing

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www.fallriverjewishhome.org

SERVICE SCHEDULE

March 2019
Adar I/Adar II 5779

Friday, March 1 (24 Adar I)

Candle Lighting 5:17 pm
 Shabbat Service 5:30 pm

Saturday, March 2 (25 Adar I)

Weekly Portion: Vayakhel 10:00 am
 Shabbat Shekalim

Thursday, March 7 (30 Adar I)

Rosh Chodesh Adar II

Friday, March 8 (I Adar II)

Rosh Chodesh Adar II
 Candle Lighting 5:25 pm
 Shabbat Service 5:30 pm

Saturday, March 9 (2 Adar II)

Weekly Portion: Pekudei 10:00 am

Friday, March 15 (8 Adar II)

Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
 Candle Lighting 6:33pm

Saturday, March 16 (9 Adar II)

Weekly Portion: Vayikra 10:00 am
 Shabbat Zachor

Wednesday, March 20 (13 Adar II)

Fast of Esther
 Erev Purim
 Reading of the Megillah (in evening) 5:30 pm

Thursday, March 21 (14 Adar II)

Purim

Friday, March 22 (15 Adar II)

Shushan Purim
 Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
 Candle Lighting 6:41 pm

Saturday, March 23 (16 Adar II)

Weekly Portion: Tzav 10:00 am

Friday, March 29 (22 Adar II)

Shabbat Service 5:30 pm
 Candle Lighting 6:49 pm

Saturday, March 30 (23 Adar II)

Weekly Portion: Shmini 10:00 am
 Shabbat Parah

TEMPLE OFFICE

385 High St, Fall River, MA 02720
 Tel: (508) 674-3529 Fax: (508) 678-6735
 E-Mail: templebethel@comcast.net
 Website: frtemplebethel.org

OFFICE HOURS:

Monday - Friday, 9 am to Noon

Another reminder to please indicate what your check is for in the memo field, on paper checks as well as online checks paid from your bank (there is a spot for that!). We don't want to guess wrong!

Fall River United Jewish Appeal, Inc.

385 High Street, Fall River, MA 02720
 Tel: (508) 673-7791 Fax: (508) 678-6735
 e-mail: fruja@comcast.net

Office Hours: Monday & Thursday, 9 am to Noon

Friendly Visitor: Arleen Bor is our "Friendly Visitor" and is ready, willing and able to visit the sick or shut-ins. Call the UJA office at (508) 673-7791 to schedule a visit.

Senior Center: (at the Fall River Jewish Home)
 Open 5 days a week for lunch...Kosher and delicious. For reservations/cancellations call the Nutrition Office at (508) 324-4619.



March Sunset behind old Brayton Point Power Station as seen from Locust Street, just downhill from TBE.

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TBE News & Notes

Happy Adar II! The days are getting lighter, the trees will be budding soon, and Purim is almost here (see announcement on page 1). If you have been to our Purim celebrations in the past, you may remember that we always strive to fulfill the **mitzvah of giving tzedakah to help the poor in our own community on Purim**. We do this by taking up a collection on Purim to be donated to **United Neighbors** of Fall River, which does so much good for the poor and less privileged families of our area. So please try to remember to bring a few dollars to throw into the pot when it comes around on that day (or a checkbook to write a check to "United Neighbors of Fall River").

As noted on the first page of this bulletin, our **Temple Passover celebration** will be on **April 25th**, and in next month's bulletin you will find more information on this annual event.

Since we will be enjoying the documentary, "When Jews Were Funny" as our after-dinner entertainment on Purim, we have pushed the Temple Sunday-afternoon movie to the end of the month. **"Life of Brian"** (to be shown on **March 31st**) is a hilarious farce about a case of mistaken identity during the days of Jesus. Adar is a month for laughter and humor...remember...laughter is the best medicine!

On a more serious note...Rabbi Mark and I (Cantor Shoshana) are launching a **new series of talks and conversations** open to the Fall River public at large, **"Exploring the Faith of our Neighbors."** The first speaker in this series will be **Mr. Martin Bentz**, who is the Muslim Outreach Worker for Southeastern Massachusetts. (He was one of the participants in our interfaith service in November.)

The title of Martin's talk will be: **"Everything You Always Wanted to Know about Islam but Were Afraid to Ask."** This event will take place on **Tuesday, March 26th, at 1 PM, in the vestry**. Coffee and cookies will be provided. Please come, and bring a Jewish or non-Jewish friend!

Stay tuned for future talks on other faith traditions in April, May and June...

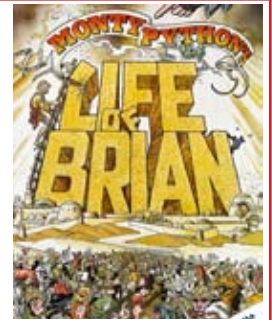
Looking ahead...our TBE nature outings will be starting up again in April. Look in next month's bulletin for details!

Temple Family

- A warm welcome to new members, Charron & Michael Holtzman.



In keeping with the humor of the month of Adar (and one day before April Fool's Day), please join us in viewing Monty Python's "Life of Brian" on Sunday March 31st, at 2 PM



Released in 1979, Monty Python's "Life of Brian" is the satirical story of an ordinary young Jewish man who just happened to be born at the same time – one cave over- as Jesus, and is constantly being mistaken for Jesus and hailed as the messiah. It has often been called the "funniest British film of all time." Rife with Monty Python's signature absurdity, the tale finds Brian's life paralleling New Testament lore, albeit with many more laughs. Rated R.



Might Esther have worn something like this? (From the Israel Museum collection, taken by Cantor Shoshana on last summer's trip to Israel).

Thank you for your donations received through February 21, 2019

Yahrzeits

For the yahrzeit of my beloved... Donated by:

Grandfather, Isaac Bolski	Norm Bolski
Father, Samuel Ehrenhaus	Abraham Ehrenhaus
Father, Seymour Filler	Mark Filler
Father, Louis Galitsky	Howard Galitsky
Father, Jacob Helfanbein	Barry Helfanbein
Father, Charles Kane	Peter Kane
Mother, Edith R. Kusinitz	Edith K. Getchell
Mother, Edith R. Kusinitz	Enid K. Lomax
Father, Sidney Lechan	Norma Jean Lechan
Father, Morris Levine	Julius Levine
Father, Morris Levine	Lila Matlin
Father, Louis Nulman	Sybil Michelson
Aunt, Lottie Sandler	Samuel Billard
Mother, Mildred Trieff	Richard Trieff
Mother, Adelle Wiener	Sharon Waxenbaum
Father in law, Morris Wilner	Marion Wilner
Mother in law, Fannie Woloshin	Charles Stampler
Mother, Ida Woltman	Atty. Leon Woltman
Father, Philip Zalkind	Lisa Remy

MAURICE ALPERT MEMORIAL ENDOWMENT FUND

In memory of Dr. Leonard Lechan
For the yahrzeit of my beloved grandfather, Nathan B.
Silverman

Sumner Alpert

RABBI MOSHE BABIN MEMORIAL FUND

For the yahrzeit of my beloved mother, Helen Babin
Miriam Babin

IDA & DAVID CHAVENSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Robert (Bob) Chavenson

Ruth Levin
Barry Helfanbein
Rick Schwartz

LIBRARY FUND

In memory of Dr. Leonard Lechan

Bill Chebot
Zukroff & Koppel Families

HYMAN & SCHWARTZ GOLDIE LEGACY FUND

In memory of my beloved parents, Dorothy & Lester
Schwartz

Rick Schwartz

In memory of my beloved mother, Tylda Schwartz

Virginia Lepow

CAPITAL FUND

In honor of Gloria & Jerry Baskin celebrating special
birthdays

Beverly Sokoll

In honor of Bill Chebot

Iris Katzman

In honor of Carl Feldman – Happy Birthday!

Anita & Norm Bolski

In honor of Elaine & Dr. Harvey Reback

Charles Reback & Melissa Walker

In honor of Marilyn Sokoll – much happiness in your
new home

Iris Katzman

In honor of Temple Beth El

Jon Strauss

In honor of Harvey Trieff

Ethel & Sid Winokoor

In memory of Robert (Bob) Chavenson

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In memory of Lorraine Kaplan

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In memory of Dr. Leonard Lechan

Judy & Bill David

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Dr. & Mrs. Ron Schwartz

Irma & Carl Feldman

In memory of Atty. Richard Levin

Iris Katzman

In memory of Herbert Solup

Richard Trieff

In memory of Dr. Barry Steinberg

Judy & Bill David

SHABBAT KIDDUSH LUNCHEON FUND

For the recovery of Marilyn Sokoll

Bill Chebot

WISH LIST FUND

For the yahrzeit of my beloved brother, Bernard Chebot

Bill Chebot



A photogenic snowy owl posing for photographers at the Sachuest Point National Wildlife Refuge in Middletown, RI

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

SUNDAY BREAKFAST SERIES AT TIFERETH ISRAEL

145 Brownell Ave, New Bedford, MA

Sunday March 3 at 9:30 am: **Robert Meeropol**

Activist, author and attorney Robert Meeropol, was six when his parents, Ethel and Julius Rosenberg, were executed by the US government. In this presentation, Robert will discuss how the public's understanding of the facts about his parents' case has evolved; and how previously secret evidence has emerged in recent years which led to a national campaign asking President Obama to exonerate his mother.



Sunday March 17th at 9:30 am; **Ilan Stavans**

Topic: Crypto-Jews, To be AND Not to Be



Ilan Stavans is the Lewis-Sebring Professor of Humanities, Latin American and Latino Culture at Amherst College. His books include *On Borrowed Words*, *Spanglish*, *Dictionary Days*, *The Disappearance*, and *A Critic's Journey*. He is the recipient of numerous awards, including a Guggenheim Fellowship, Chile's Presidential Medal, the

International Latino Book Award, and the Jewish Book Award.

BCC Holocaust Center at Bristol Community College

777 Elsbree Street, Fall River, MA

Thursday, March 7

4 p.m. | Jackson Art Center, H209-210

Marcia Ikonopoulou, on "The Plight of the Jewish Population in Greece during the Holocaust". Marsha Ikonopoulou is the Museum Director of Kehila Kedosha Janina Synagogue and Museum located on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. She has devoted her life to telling the story of Greek Jewry as an author, translator, editor and lecturer.

Thursday, April 4

4 p.m. | Jackson Art Center, H209-210

Carolyn Enger, Concert Pianist and Director of a multimedia program, *The Mischlinge Project*. Mischlinge are people considered part Jewish. The program contains stories of Mischlinge such as those of Engler's father and godmother, interwoven with the music and writing of prominent German Jewish converts and Mischlinge.

Friday, April 12

9 a.m. – 3 p.m. | Jackson Art Center

Conference on Women and the Holocaust, featuring keynote speaker **Sheri Sandler**, Managing Director, Agahozo-Shalom Youth Village, Rwanda and workshop leader from *Echoes and Reflections*, a resource center for the teaching of the Holocaust. This conference is co-sponsored by the Bristol Women's Center, Iva Brito, Director.

Any Questions Please Contact: Dr. Ron Weisberger, Director, BCC Holocaust Center, at 508.678.2811 ext 2444 or ron.weisberger@bristolcc.edu

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Our website is constantly changing, so be sure to check it out regularly. There are links to articles written by Rabbi Mark and Cantor Shoshana, updated service schedules and upcoming events. You can also see the bulletin there first, especially if you live outside the greater Fall River area!

Go to www.frtemplebethel.org

YAHREZEITS

3/1/2019 24 Adar I 5779

Manuel Hyman
Lillian Settlow
Eva Waksler

3/2/2019 25 Adar I 5779

Thelma Greenberg
Lillian Lepes

3/3/2019 26 Adar I 5779

Minnie Entin
Virginia Granovsky
Frederick Kaplan

3/5/2019 28 Adar I 5779

Miriam Reiser
Barry Schwartz
Samuel Stamper

3/6/2019 29 Adar I 5779

Hadley Wilkinson

3/7/2019 30 Adar I 5779

Dr. Harry Cooperstein
Nathaniel Dashoff

3/8/2019 1 Adar II 5779

Regina Elber
Richard Shore

3/10/2019 3 Adar II 5779

Max Jacob Packer

3/11/2019 4 Adar II 5779

Milton Sokoll

3/12/2019 5 Adar II 5779

Clara Freedman
Charles Meretsky
Ida Evelyn Starr

3/15/2019 8 Adar II 5779

Ida Glickman

3/16/2019 9 Adar II 5779

Rita Minkin

3/17/2019 10 Adar II 5779

Leona Finkel

3/19/2019 12 Adar II 5779

Minnie Somer

3/23/2019 16 Adar II 5779

Miriam Horvitz
Ethel Liebmann

3/24/2019 17 Adar II 5779

Fannie Keppler Halper
Alice Jean Horowitz

3/25/2019 18 Adar II 5779

Benjamin Cohen

3/26/2019 19 Adar II 5779

Israel Waksler

3/28/2019 21 Adar II 5779

William Meyerson
Elsie Pollock

3/30/2019 23 Adar II 5779

H. Charles Reiser



Owl photos courtesy of Paul Emerick

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