



One Last Trip to Washington

Rabbi Prosnit reflects on chaperoning his final Confirmation Class trip to Washington, D.C., for the Religious Action Center's L'Taken Social Justice Seminar. Page 3.

Purim and Giving

Purim is not just about celebration and revelry. Rabbi Schultz tells us it is also a time of year when we are obliged to think beyond ourselves, to give charity and tzedakah to those in need. Purim, he adds, is the Jewish #GivingTuesday. Page 5.

The Importance of Shabbat

Looking for ways to make Shabbat more central in the life of your family? Ira Wise suggests things you can do at home, as well events you might want to attend. Page 7.

When to Start Kindergarten

Alexa Cohen, the director of the Bonim Preschool, offers some thoughts on deciding when to send your child to kindergarten and on the practice of "redshirting." She also describes Bonim's Pre-K/Transitional Kindergarten program, taught by Marci Pearlberg. Page 6.

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HOW B'NAI ISRAEL CHOSE RABBI PROSNIT

By George Markley

It all began some 30 years ago at Penny's Diner on Black Rock Turnpike in Fairfield. It was early in 1989 and Rabbi Arnold Sher, who was then B'nai Israel's rabbi, invited Willi Berkowitz, the president of the Congregation, and George Markley, the immediate past president, to meet him there for breakfast.

He did not disclose his purpose until Willi and George arrived. It was then that Rabbi Sher announced that he had been nominated to become the next Director of Rabbinic Placement for the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) – a tremendously prestigious position within the Reform Jewish Movement. At that point, Rabbi Sher had already been the Congregation's rabbi for 21 years, and it was to be over a year before he would be leaving for his new position. It was then that the Congregation's search for a new rabbi began – the search that would lead us to Rabbi James Prosnit.



In April 1989, Willi appointed a 16-member search committee to undertake the task. As she noted at the time in her Bulletin article, the committee represented "the rich diversity which is so much a part of our wonderful congregation."

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IT'S TIME FOR PURIM FUN

Please join us as we celebrate Purim and honor Queen Esther's heroism in saving the Jews from the evil plans of Haman.

The festivities begin on Sunday, March 17, at the annual Purim Carnival from noon to 2 p.m.

There will be games galore, a cakewalk, a fabulous moonbounce, and plenty of Hamentaschen to nosh on!

Dress to impress in your favorite costume. Pizza, snacks and drinks will also be available for additional purchase from the Brotherhood.

If you have questions, or are interested in volunteering, please email Jonathan Dizney at jdizney@cbibpt.org.

On Wednesday, March 20, the Bonim Preschool will celebrate Purim. Children will come to school in costume and will participate in carnival activities. For Tuesday/Thursday 2's, the celebration will be on Thursday, March 21.

But the fun doesn't stop there. On Wednesday, March 20 at 5 p.m., there will be a pizza dinner for children and grogger making and Purim crafts in the Social Hall.

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SHARING OUR JOY

Bob and Judy Chessin, in celebration of the birth of grandson, Isadore (Izzy), son of Juliana and Doug.

Bruce and Laura Braverman, in celebration of the birth of grandson, Brody Michael Gibbons, born to Amy and Brian Gibbons.

Stew and Dale Barcham, in celebration of the engagement of daughter, Lindsay Barcham, to Adam Gottfried.

Beth and Jordan Posner, in celebration of the engagement of daughter, Molly, to Justin LaMont.

Zack and Becky Halpern, in celebration of the birth of son, Jonah, brother of Emilia.

Bruce and Alicia Wettenstein, in celebration of the engagement of son, Steven Wettenstein, to Alyson Spennacchio.

SINCERE SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to the bereaved families of:

Daniel Shichman, husband of Rita Shichman

Elliot Masch, grandfather of Jonathan Dizney

WELCOME! WELCOME!

A warm welcome to our newest members. We look forward to their participation in our many programs and hope their affiliation will not only enrich their lives, but that of our congregation.

Adam & Meryl Gold, Dylan and Henry
Matilda Place, Fairfield

BULLETIN BOARD

Ask the Rabbis

Join us for an unforgettable evening on Friday, March 1, where you'll have an opportunity to ask all the burning questions to three generations of B'nai Israel Rabbis: Sher, Prosnit, and Schultz! This evening kicks off our spring of honoring Rabbi Prosnit and will be a great opportunity to learn from him.

Carol Lubin at cclubz@gmail.com if you have questions.

Young Emissaries

On Friday, March 8, at 6 p.m., our Israeli Young Emissaries -- Rotem, Yuval, Shay and Eyal, will help lead services and, following dinner, they will lead conversations on The Israeli Electoral System and its impact on



Join the rabbis for dinner and afterwards a fun and engaging "Ask the Rabbis" conversation, led by Jeff Ackerman. The dinner will follow the conclusion of 6 p.m. services, and the discussion is scheduled to start at 8:15.

country/policy; IDF service and its impact on Israeli society; and Israel as a Jewish State/Democratic state.

Dinner is \$20/person. To RSVP contact Chris at chris@cbibpt.org or go to our website and click Shabbat Registrations.

Bite-Size Torah!

Join Rabbi Schultz for mini sessions of Torah (Really!) Sunday mornings, 9:35-9:55 a.m. in the Natt Family Library. March 3 – A Quick Look at God; March 31 – A Primer on Jewish Texts; April 28 – The Basics of Jewish Prayer.

Save the Dates

On April 12 and 13, our former associates rabbis – Rabbi Fred Greene and Rabbi Rachel Gurevitz -- will join us to honor Rabbi Prosnit at Shabbat services, dinner/breakfast, learning and discussion.



FROM THE RABBI'S DESK/RABBI JAMES PROSNIT

MY FINAL ONE: 28 YEARS OF L'TAKEN SOCIAL JUSTICE SEMINARS

In this season of “lasts” for me, one thing that stands out is chaperoning my final Confirmation Class trip to Washington, D.C. For 28 years our tenth grade students from B’nai Israel have participated in the Religious Action Center’s L’Taken Social Justice Seminar. It is a remarkable opportunity for our students to be introduced to some of the key issues facing our nation and to the legislative process.

Our students miss a couple of days of school, but most agree that they shouldn’t let high school classes get in the way of their education!

Five or six times a year the RAC hosts upwards of 200 students from around the country and introduces them to political topics about which the Reform movement has long been concerned. After spending an intense issue-oriented weekend (far more time spent on the issues than on being a D.C. tourist) the students spend Sunday evening focused on the particular legislation that they would like to discuss with our representatives. They prepare detailed papers that tackle the issues on three levels: Why is it important to our country? Why is it important to me as a Jew? And why am I as a teenager concerned with the topic?

Among the most important lessons for young and old alike is not to squander our voices.

Their topics can include everything from climate change and economic justice to LGBTQ rights, immigration reform and support of Israel.

As a chaperone and observer, it is always impressive to watch our students speak



Rabbi Prosnit with students at this year's Confirmation Class trip to Washington, D.C.

persuasively and passionately about the issues they studied. The legislative assistants of our representatives who listen to their presentations invariably comment on our students’ preparation and sophistication in the issues they address. The assistants take notes and make it clear that they will inform their bosses of the students’ points of view.

One of the things that our kids take away from the experience is the importance (and relative ease) of adding their voice to the political process. We learn that representatives are influenced by their constituents, and it doesn’t take a lot to get a perspective heard.

the hook?” The answer -- “a couple of dozen.” So among the most important lessons for young and old alike is not to squander our voices.

Public service is also a theme of the weekend. Our students meet young adults who are either working on the Hill or working for an advocacy group in D.C. Several of our former Confirmants who now live in Washington tell me that it was the L’taken seminar that they took during their Confirmation year that first planted the seed for their current work.

By the way – the Religious Action Center is for adults too! Registration is now open for the Consultation on Conscience May 19-21, 2019.

Every two years a delegation from B’nai Israel attends this remarkable program and hears directly from some of the most influential Senators, Congressman and public leaders of the day. It is a unique opportunity – for more information go to RAC.org or contact Rabbi Schultz.

One of the RAC’s leaders tells the story of speaking to a legislative assistant and learning that “the phone was ringing off the hook” on a particular piece of legislation. He asked, “How many calls does it take for your member of Congress to feel that the phones are ringing off

CHOOSING RABBI PROSNIT FROM PAGE 1

The committee was chaired by Richard Saletan, of blessed memory. A great irony was that, early in the process, the committee was addressed by Rabbi Stanley Dreyfus, then the CCAR's Director of Rabbinic Placement, who came to Bridgeport to assist the committee in the search necessitated by the fact that he was retiring and that Rabbi Sher had been selected to become his successor. The committee, therefore, had the benefit of guidance from both the current Director of Rabbinic Placement and the future Director of Rabbinic Placement.

The committee began its work by reviewing the process which would be followed. Richard Saletan was remarkably wise and well-organized and so the process was spelled out from the very beginning. The CCAR Placement Office initially provided the committee with a "panel" of approximately 15 rabbis who had expressed interest in the position at B'nai Israel. After reviewing résumés, the committee narrowed the field to some 10 candidates.

The committee, broken into sub-groups, conducted telephone interviews with those remaining candidates. There followed a further "whittling down" process, and four finalists were then invited to Bridgeport for in-person interviews with the entire committee.

rank the candidates on numerous factors that the committee deemed important, such as their ability to speak well, the depth of their knowledge about Judaism, their personality, their ability to relate to congregants, and their vision for the future. Those grids were critical to the ability of a large committee to compare notes and evaluate so many candidates.

As today, B'nai Israel was a prestigious "plum" congregation, attractive in many respects, and so it was not surprising that all four candidates who came to the Temple for personal interviews were outstanding in many ways. They were all approximately the same age (mid-30's to early 40's) and, alas, they were all men.

While women were already established in the Reform rabbinate, having been ordained since 1972, there were not nearly as many female rabbis in 1989 as there are today.

Each of the four candidates interviewed by the committee had unique talents to offer. But one candidate stood out above the others – a young rabbi who was then serving as an associate at Congregation Rodeph Sholom in New York City and who had previously served at Holy Blossom Temple in Toronto. The committee was taken not only by his seriousness of purpose but also by his engaging sense of optimism and his

SERVICE OF INSTALLATION

for

Rabbi James Prosnit

as Rabbi of
CONGREGATION B' NAI ISRAEL
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT



October 19, 1990

30 Tishrei 5751

sermon. They reported back that they were favorably impressed. Rabbi Prosnit and his wife Wendy were then invited to Bridgeport, affording the committee an opportunity to conduct one final interview with its leading candidate.

Rabbi Prosnit impressed the committee not only with his extensive experience and his thoughtful writings, but also with his wisdom, his insight, his maturity, his warmth, his devotion to social justice, his dedication to serving the Jewish people, and, of course, his wonderful sense of humor. As Willi Berkowitz has said, Rabbi Prosnit was – in one word – a mensch.

And so, despite differing opinions that had emerged earlier in the process, ultimately the committee's decision was an easy one. The scoring grids told the tale – and Rabbi James Prosnit became the unanimous recommendation of the committee to serve as the next rabbi of Congregation B'nai Israel. The past 29 years have undoubtedly proven the wisdom of that choice.

One candidate stood out above the others – a young rabbi who was then serving as an associate at Congregation Rodeph Sholom in New York City.

Throughout the process, from the initial résumé reviews to the interviews with the final candidates, the committee used detailed "scoring grids" developed by the chairman that enabled each member to

humor. That rabbi, of course, was our beloved Jim Prosnit.

Richard Saletan and Willi Berkowitz then went into New York to hear Rabbi Prosnit lead a service and deliver a



FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY/RABBI EVAN SCHULTZ

PURIM IS THE JEWISH #GIVINGTUESDAY

It is the month of March, and in the Jewish calendar we enter the month of Adar. While some Jewish months have more of a somber tone, Adar is intended to be a joyous time in the calendar. The Adar tagline is "Be Happy, It's Adar!"

Adar's joyous nature is, of course, because during this month we celebrate the festival of Purim. The celebration of Purim is filled with noisemakers, costumes, Megillah readings, hamantaschen, and of course Purim carnivals; all designed to foster an atmosphere of celebration, as we commemorate Queen Esther's bravery over Haman's hate-filled plans.

Purim, however, is about more than just celebration and revelry. In fact, it is a time of year when we are obliged to think beyond ourselves, to give charity and tzedakah to those in need. Purim is the Jewish #GivingTuesday. (#GivingTuesday is a global day of giving. Celebrated on the Tuesday following Thanksgiving in the U.S.) and the widely recognized shopping events Black Friday and Cyber Monday, #GivingTuesday kicks off the charitable

season, when many focus on their holiday and end-of-year giving.)

As Maimonides writes in his compendium of Jewish law, the Mishneh Torah, "*One is duty bound on the day of Purim to distribute (gifts) to the poor. One must not give to less than two poor people, giving to each one a present or money or a cooked dish or some other kind of food... It is better to increase the gifts to the poor than to make for oneself a big meal or to send more portions to friends, for there is no greater or nobler joy than to gladden the hearts of the poor... The one who makes the heart of the one in need to rejoice resembles the Divine Presence.*"

On Purim we have an obligation to help others, even in our days of joy and revelry.

Purim is a time when we strive to create a world where those who are hungry are

able to secure a good meal, when those who seek shelter can be taken in, when those who seek spiritual nourishment can find it. The power of this festival is not only our celebration of victory over Haman and evil, but that amidst those festivities, we pause to ensure that others can be elevated as well. On Purim we have an obligation to help others, even in our days of joy and revelry.

If you would like to make a donation on this Purim to help those in need, here are a few local options for you to support:

Operation Hope - <http://www.operationhopect.org> A Fairfield-based organization dedicated to eliminating hunger and homelessness in Connecticut.

nOURish Bridgeport - <https://www.facebook.com/nOURishBridgeport/> A volunteer-driven organization in downtown Bridgeport bringing hope through service and support programs, in partnership with United Congregational Church.

BIFTY

Join BIFTY for our March programs! We meet every Thursday from 7:15-8:45pm in the BIFTY lounge! We look forward to seeing you there!

March 14- Take a break and practice mindfulness with BIFTY!

March 21- Celebrate Spring with BIFTY!

March 28- Test your strength at Survivor!

Alexa Sheiman and Becca Fink are two members of BIFTY's executive board. Alexa is BIFTY's sophomore representative and Becca is the NFTY representative. They enjoy coming to

BIFTY every week and being on board!

Why do you come to BIFTY?

BF: I like getting to see my friends every week and make new friends from other schools and grades!

AS: I like seeing my friends who are Jewish since not a lot of my friends at school are Jewish.

Why should new teens try BIFTY?

BF: As an 8th grader when I started, I thought the upperclassmen were a little intimidating. After coming for just one

program I learned they are the opposite and now we are friends!

AS: When I first came, I was really shy and didn't know anyone. I started coming more and more, got to know the other teens, and really started to like it.

Describe BIFTY as a simile.

BF: BIFTY is like switching from hot coffee to iced coffee -- it's a nice ending to my day, like switching from winter to spring!

AS: BIFTY is like the first sunny day of spring. You wait for it all day Thursday and then when it comes it's the perfect stress reliever.



BONIM BUZZ/ALEXA COHEN, EARLY CHILDHOOD DIRECTOR

THE GREAT KINDERGARTEN DEBATE

To delay or not to delay? Is academic redshirting the right decision for a 4-year-old with a fall birthday? Is it Connecticut's fault for having such a late (December 31st) kindergarten entrance cutoff? Are parents just trying to give their kids a competitive edge by delaying kindergarten? Is it a matter of the child's mental health? So many theories but which one do you listen to?

Malcolm Gladwell's book "Outliers" and another 2006 study found that cutoff dates can even affect whether a child ends up going to college. Both Gladwell and the study are credited "with putting redshirting back on the public's radar." Although other experts say this phenomenon "traces back to the 1980's amid increases to kindergarten-age requirements and shifts in parenting culture."

Before that time, kindergarten was seen as an easy-going, fun environment where kids enjoyed play and creative activities while being gradually introduced to academic topics such as shapes and

colors and skills such as holding a pencil and using glue. Unfortunately this is not the case in 2019.

One of my favorite terms coined about this subject has got to be "The Rug Rat Race." Those of you who did not have children in the late 90's may not find this as funny as I do. "The Rug Rat Race" describes how parents now are

the study, a one-year delay dramatically improves a child's self-regulation abilities, even into later childhood.

Many parents are opting to delay kindergarten enrollment for a year in the hope of giving their children a leg up in maturity and other social emotional skills. Professor Dee's conclusions explain why we at Bonim Preschool

Many parents are opting to delay kindergarten enrollment in the hope of giving their children a leg up.

employing a plethora of tactics aimed at giving their kids a competitive edge by the time they reach college. The fact that many states now require schools to conduct kindergarten-readiness exams forces parents to think that if they don't give their kids a competitive edge, they will not succeed in kindergarten.

A research study by Professor Thomas S. Dee of Stanford University found strong evidence of mental health benefits in delaying kindergarten. According to

have a play-based Pre-K/Transitional Kindergarten. His findings align with other research that has shown that an extended period of early childhood play – such as in preschools -- yields mental health developmental gains. Professor Dee says he hopes his research will lead to broader examinations of how kindergarten is taught. "It could be pedagogy pointed more toward play rather than structured academics."

I am hopeful that the new question won't be when to start kindergarten, but instead, what do you do in those kindergarten classes? Because, sadly, kindergarten has become the new "first grade," parents decide to delay entry, which is why Bonim has the Pre-K/Transitional Kindergarten program taught by Marci Pearlberg.

Marci is a certified teacher in Pre-K through 7th grade. She holds master's degrees in elementary education, literacy and curriculum design. Pre-K/Transitional Kindergarten is focused on not only academics but social/emotional intelligence. Our goal at Bonim is getting our children ready to tackle whatever lies ahead.





FROM THE EDUCATION CENTER/IRA J. WISE

2 SHABBATOT, 3 DINNERS, NO WAITING

"More than Jews have kept Shabbat, Shabbat has kept the Jews."

My childhood rabbi shared that quote with my parents and their friends when I was in second grade. He was trying to convince the members of our congregation to make some kind of family Shabbat observance a goal line stance each week. My parents took it to heart. We began lighting candles and blessing wine and challah each week. As I entered high school and joined the youth group and the soccer team and the swim team, Mom said I could participate in whatever I wanted, but if I was in town on a Friday night, I was expected at the table to welcome Shabbat. Sure, I could go to the football game or the school dance on Friday, but after Dad came home and we lit the candles. I didn't have to stay for the meal.

I want to invite you to make Shabbat a little more central in the life of your family. I am not suggesting you come to services every Friday at 6:00 p.m. (preceded by an Oneg with snacks and socializing at 5:30), but *you could*. I am not suggesting you come to services on Saturday mornings at 8:00 a.m., perhaps staying for bagels, but *you could*. I am not suggesting you come to Havurah with your young children on Saturdays at 9:00 a.m. for bagels and a worship and play experience at 9:30, but *you could*.

I am suggesting you light some candles, bless some wine or juice and a challah at

dinner on Fridays. It is pretty easy. And it is often better with a large group. We have three opportunities for you to do that this month at Temple.

On Friday, March 1, you have two options.

a. Religious School Shabbat – Families with a student currently in Gan – Kitah Gimel (K-3) are invited to come together at 5:30 p.m. We will have a short, age-appropriate service with Rabbi Schultz. We will have a dinner organized by some of our parents. We will also have music with Mr. Cahr and a craft project for the kids with Rotem and Yuval – our Young Israeli emissaries. Details are in the religious school e-mail blast.

b. Meet the Rabbis – Join us for our regular Kabbalat Shabbat experience (Oneg at 5:30, Services at 6:00). Afterward, we will have a Shabbat dinner together, followed by a conversation with three generations of B'nai Israel clergy. Rabbis Sher, Prosnit and Schultz will speak and have a conversation with us as we continue to celebrate 160 years of B'nai Israel and Rabbi Prosnit's impending retirement.

A week later, on **Friday, March 8**, celebrate Shabbat with our wonderful Federation Israeli Young Emissaries – the *Shinshinim!* Rotem, Yuval, Shay and Eyal will help lead services and following

dinner they will lead conversations on four different issues surrounding Israel and our connection to the Jewish state.

My family continued to celebrate Shabbat after I moved out. My sister, who is nine years younger than me, came home from college one Friday. It was an impulse visit – a friend was driving back to Chicago and offered her a seat in the car. She came home late in the afternoon. Mom was thrilled to see her! And then Mom said, "We need to leave in an hour to meet your dad at the restaurant."

Leslie just stared at Mom. Then she said "What?! It's Shabbat! Why are you and Dad going out for Lo Mein?"

Grab your candles, a challah and a bottle of wine and get started.

I think Mom started to explain that since it was just the two of them now... and then she stopped. She called Dad at the office and told him to stop at the restaurant and pick up the order. Leslie was home and they were going to make Shabbat. She sent my sister to the store to pick up a challah and began to set the table. This was over 30 years ago. I have no reason to believe they went back to dining out on Fridays after that.

It is interesting to me that the quote about Shabbat was from a man named Ahad Ha'am, who was a cultural Zionist. He was someone we would not describe as at all religious. He did understand the idea of Shabbat serving as a touchstone in time, spiritually connecting us to one another as a people. He didn't focus on HOW we celebrate Shabbat, just that doing so has kept us connected. So grab your candles, a challah and a bottle of wine and get started. And join us for one or more of the dinners this month.

L'shalom,

Ira J. Wise, D.J.R.E.
Director of Education.





ADULT JEWISH LEARNING AT CONGREGATION B'NAI ISRAEL



One Temple One Book: Letters to My Palestinian Neighbor

Monday, March 4 at 7:00 p.m.

Join Rabbi Prosnit in a discussion on Yossi Klein Halevi's latest book – A forthright attempt to reach across the divide to Palestinians who share his homeland. Klein Halevi argues that the road to peace is understanding the two conflicting narratives and eventually splitting the land into two states. However, he is sober and fearful and confesses "I remain in limbo, affirming a two-state solution while clinging to the status quo. And yet I cannot accept our current state of seemingly endless conflict as the definitive verdict on our relationship."

Adult Round Table

Thursday, March 7 and April 4 at Noon

Gloria Katz facilitates a discussion about current events for anyone who wants to go beyond the headlines. Join us the first Thursday of every month, and bring a sandwich, your opinion and an open mind.

Reform Jews in a Library

Talking about God

Mondays, 7-8:30 p.m. March 25, April 1, 8, 15 Natt Family Library

Join with Rabbi Schultz for a four-week course exploring modern Jewish theology. We will look at some of the key 20th and 21st centuries Jewish thinkers and their unique notions of God, while at the same time creating space for each of you to share your questions and thoughts about the divine. All are welcome!

Musicians and Scholars in Residence

March 29 and 30



Rabbi Or Zohar and his wife Feliza, from the Galilee region of Israel, will lead a special musical Shabbat Service at 6 p.m. and, following dinner, teach on "Lecha Dodi: The Inner Language of the Awakening Soul." The stanzas of the poem "Lecha Dodi," which are sung in practically every Jewish synagogue in the world, show us a step-by-step journey of the soul, from its disarrayed condition during regular moments of the weekdays, into its awakened state known as "Shabbat." We will learn how its coded language may be useful to us as weekly spiritual practitioners of remembering and keeping Shabbat. Dinner following service (\$20 per person). RSVP to Chris at chris@cbipt.org or go to the Temple website and click on reservations.

At Torah study on Saturday morning at 9:30 a.m., they will teach about "Jacob's Ladders." The Zohar literature is a library of Jewish mystical traditions of the Middle Ages. It often portrays numerous angels of interpretations regarding a single issue. We will demonstrate these phenomena by looking at some complimentary interpretations of Jacob's ladder, all found in one page in the Zohar. We will see how different Kabbalists interpreted Jacob's ladder differently, linking it to the practice of meditation, or to the ability to face one's "inner demons", or to existential questions about finding God's presence in difficult times.

2019 Bennett Lecture in Judaic Studies

"U.S. – Israel Relations during the Obama and Trump Administrations: An Inside Look"

Tuesday, March 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Quick Center, Fairfield University



Daniel Shapiro, the United States Ambassador to Israel from 2011 to 2017 and a distinguished visiting fellow at Tel Aviv University's Institute of National Security Studies, will be the speaker.

Becoming Hitler: Lessons of the Making of Demagogues Past and Present

Tuesday, April 2, 7:30 p.m. Quick Center at Fairfield University



Thomas Weber, a German-born historian, asks how it was possible that Adolf Hitler, returning from World War I as an awkward loner with no clear political ideas, turned into a star propagandist of the nascent Nazi Party. He argues that Hitler's metamorphosis into fascist leader is the story of how demagogues are made when liberal democracy and globalism are in great crisis and when that crisis is translated into a yearning for strongmen and novel kinds of leaders.

B'nai Israel is one of the sponsors of this event. Tickets are \$20. Quick Center members pay \$15.

MARCH DONATIONS

(Please note that only contributions of \$10.00 or more will be acknowledged with a card and *Bulletin* listing.)

Rabbi Prosnit Discretionary Fund

Luise Mann Burger, in loving memory of Herbert Mann.

Fredell Cederbaum, in memory of Dr. Kenneth Epstein, son of Eloise Epstein; in memory of Sheila Klein.

Lori and Brad Chervin and Paul and Eliana Chervin, in memory of Jon-Alec Chervin, son of Brad and Lori Chervin; in appreciation of Rabbi Prosnit.

John and Ronnie Dubrowin, in gratitude.

Jack and Sandy Germain, in memory of Gwen Booklan.

Jim and Lisa Greenberg, in appreciation of Jay & Sharon Levy and Jon & Helaine Greenbaum.

Lynette Helman, in honor of Skyler Helman's Bar Mitzvah.

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of mother, Shirley Greenberg Lazar.

Nancy and Jeff Oberman, in memory of beloved father, Morris Alkon.

Bernice Rosch, in memory of dear father, Harry Miller.

The Silberman/Weisman Family, in memory of Warren Vogel.

Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund

Judi Stern and Deborah Goldstein, with thanks to Rabbi Prosnit for helping us through this difficult time and leading such a meaningful service.

Sheila and Burton Yaffie & Family, in loving memory of Sylvia Edelson, mother of Judi Stern and Deborah Goldstein.

Rabbi Schultz Discretionary Fund

Renee and Fredric Beitman, in memory of Wayne Meadowcroft.

Beth Lazar, in memory of Cecil Widdows, father of Karen Widdows; in appreciation of Rabbi Schultz's Mussar Class.

Jackie Madwed, in honor of David Bindelglass' special birthday.

Bob and Ellen Sheiman, in memory of Dr. Kenneth Epstein, son of Eloise Epstein.

Mark and Deena Spector, in appreciation for making the Memorial Service for Josh so very special.

Music Fund

Lynette Helman, in honor of Skyler Helman's Bar Mitzvah.

Beth Lazar, in appreciation of Cantor Sheri Blum and the Adult Choir, for an inspiring Shabbat Shira service.

Sylvia and Alan Neigher, in memory of Jon-Alec Chervin, son of Brad and Lori Chervin.

Mark and Deena Spector, in memory of son, Josh Spector; in appreciation to Cantor Blum.

Enhancement Fund

Jeffrey and Wendy Bender, in memory of father, Fred Bender.

Luise Mann Burger, in honor of Bruce and Laura Braverman, on the birth of grandson, Brody Michael Gibbons; in memory of Sylvia Edelson, mother of Judi Stern.

Beryl Kaufman, in honor of Ellen Hyde Phillips.

Alida and Al Kleban, in loving memory of mother, Elizabeth Shulkin.

Abigail Schine, in memory of Esther Elstein and Jacob Richman.

Bob and Twody Schless, in memory of Joshua Spector, son of Mark and Deena Spector; in memory of Kenneth Epstein, son of Eloise Epstein, husband of Amalia Epstein.

Ronnie and Elliot Zolin, in honor of Jon and Cleo Sonneborn.

Sylvia Prosnit Adult Education Fund

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of uncle, Robert Lazar.

Sylvia and Alan Neigher, in honor of Rabbi Prosnit and Wendy Bloch, on the birth of their first granddaughter, Zoe May Prosnit.

Rabbi Martin Library Fund

Susan Bauchner, in memory of husband, Burton Bauchner, and mother Bobby Kaplan.

Barbara Green and Jeffrey Orell, in memory of Ruth Green.

Samuel Miller and Family, in memory of Harriet Miller.

Barbara Rifkin, in memory of brother, Daniel Postol.

Mazon

Beth Lazar, in loving memory of aunts, Janet Greenberg and Roz Greenberg.

Laurie and Dan Schopick, in memory of Dr. Kenneth Epstein, son of Eloise Epstein.

Religious School Scholarship Fund

Marty and Alayne Burger, in memory of Dr. Kenneth Epstein, son of Eloise Epstein.

Dale and Jerry Demner, in memory of Bertha Greenfield, mother of Dale Demner; in memory of Lillian Slive, aunt of Dale Demner; in memory of Phyllis Goldstein, friend of Jerry and Dale Demner.

Rabbi Arnold Sher Social Action Fund

Beryl Kaufman, in memory of Elsbeth Zabin, wife of Joel Zabin.

Janet and Dennis Magid, in honor of Joni and Michael Greenspan, on the Bat Mitzvah of granddaughter, Sydney Azar.

Laurie and Daniel Schopick, in memory of Joshua Spector, son of Mark and Deena Spector.

Serena and Arnie Sher, in honor of Joni and Michael Greenspan, on the Bat Mitzvah of granddaughter, Sydney Azar.

Joan Skydel, Amy Pinette and Cheryl Skydel, with thankfulness to Dr. & Mrs. Robert Chessin for their friendship and generosity.

Vision Loan Reduction Fund

Jim and Lisa Greenberg, in appreciation of Sam Rosenberg.

Jim Abraham Education Fund for Jewish Leadership

William and Lorraine Smith, in memory of brother, Harry Smith, and step-mother, Fanny Smith.

Daniel Smith Cemetery Fund

Serena and Arnie Sher, in loving memory of Harriet Miller, wife of Samuel Miller.

Gillette Judaic Enrichment Fund

Serena and Arnie Sher, in honor of Jerry Pressman's milestone birthday.

A NEW MITZVAH ADVISOR

Marcy Begian, who grew up in Congregation B'nai Israel, is taking on a new role at the synagogue. She will be in charge of the B'nai Mitzvah Mitzvot program, succeeding Judy Blumenthal, who has run the program since 2013.

Marcy will help students preparing for their bar and bat mitzvahs find community service projects to participate in.

"I really want to empower them," she said. "I want their projects to be meaningful for them. I want it to be relevant to their lives."

"They are becoming adults," she added. "I want to light them up and spark them."



She anticipates meeting with each student individually and discussing their interests, whether it be animal rescue or feeding the hungry.

Marcy has a particular interest in the program for two reasons. First, her son, Brayden, is in the current bar and bat mitzvah class. And, second, Marcy works in the field of philanthropy as the associate director of community engagement and fund-raising for Save the Children.

"I'm excited about this program," she said, "so I wanted to make the time for it."



Congregation
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The Bulletin of Congregation B'nai Israel is published every month except July.

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Congregation B'nai Israel, founded in 1858, seeks to be a vibrant Reform synagogue dedicated to the perpetuation of Jewish life and values within the framework of contemporary American Judaism. We are a gateway to Judaism for all. The Congregation B'nai Israel Bulletin publishes monthly 11 times a year (except July). To submit an article, announcement or ad to the Bulletin, please contact Editor Jack Kadden at jkadden@cbibpt.org. Submissions are due by the first day of the month preceding the publication month. We reserve the right to edit all submissions for length or style.



Honoring Rabbi James Prosnit Twenty-Nine Years

We greatly appreciate the generosity of the following congregants who honor Rabbi Prosnit by helping establish the Rabbi James Prosnit Legacy Fund.

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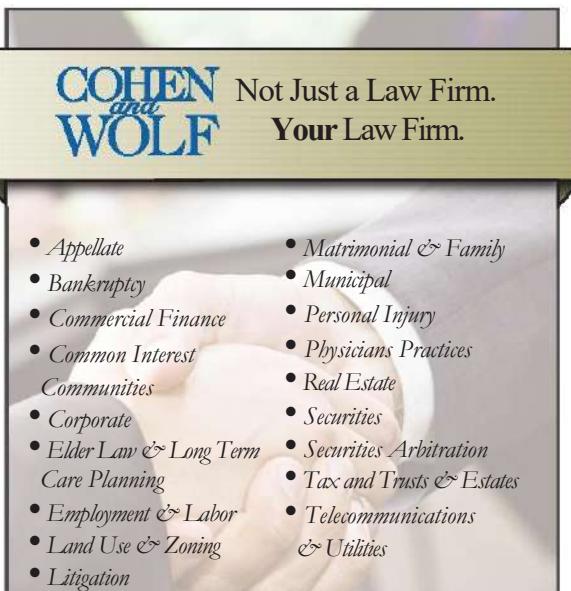
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PURIM FUN FROM PAGE 1



That will be followed at 6 p.m. by the Purim service, featuring the Junior Choir and our Purim show. All ages are encouraged to attend and boo Haman!

For more on the meaning of Purim, see Rabbi Schultz's monthly column on Page 5.



SHABBAT SERVICE SCHEDULE

(Fridays at 6:00 p.m. where indicated, preceded by an Oneg Shabbat at 5:30 p.m.)

Friday, March 1

- 6:00 p.m. Service – followed by
“Ask the Rabbi”
Shabbat Dinner
See Page 2
Torah Portion –
Vayakhel, Exod. 35:1-
38:20
Haftarah – 1 Kings 7:40-
50

Saturday, March 2

- 8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
9:30 a.m. Havurah for Families
with Young Children with
the Electric Sanctuary
Band
11:00 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Vivian
Sweedler, daughter
of David and Elora
Sweedler

Friday, March 8

- 6:00 p.m. Service – Led by our
Israeli Emissaries,
followed by a Shabbat
Dinner with the
Emissaries.
See Page 2
Torah Portion – Pekude,
Exod. 38:21-40:38
Haftarah – 1 Kings 7:51-
8:21

Saturday, March 9

- 8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
9:30 a.m. Havurah for Families
with Young Children
11:00 a.m. B’na’i Mitzvah of Ethan
Landsman, son of David
and Eileen Landsman,
and Alison Markus,
daughter of Ilan and
Laurie Markus

Saturday, March 23

- 8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
9:30 a.m. Havurah for Families
with Young Children
11:00 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Hannah
Pressman, daughter
of Jeffrey and Amy
Pressman

Friday, March 29

- 6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion – Shemini,
Lev. 9:1-11:47
Haftarah – 11 Samuel
6:1-7:17

Saturday, March 30

- 8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
9:30 a.m. Havurah for Families
with Young Children
11:00 a.m. B’not Mitzvah of
Gabrielle and Samantha
Wiggetman, daughters
of Joseph and Michelle
Wiggetman

Friday, March 15

- 6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion – Vayikra,
Lev. 1:1-5:26
Haftarah – Isaiah 43:21-
44:23

Saturday, March 16

- 8:00 a.m. Service
9:00 a.m. Brotherhood Breakfast
9:30 a.m. Torah Study
11:00 a.m. Bat Mitzvah of Abigail
Righter, daughter of
Wayne and Robin Righter

Friday, March 22

- 6:00 p.m. Service
Torah Portion – Tzav,
Lev. 6:1-8:36
Haftarah – Jeremiah
7:21-8:3; 9:22-23



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Kiddush at the Shabbat Shirah service in January at the site of the Temple's home from 1911 to 1958, now the New Hope Missionary Baptist Church. On stage were several members who attended the synagogue at that time.