

The Temple Beth Torah Times

February 2024

Shevat / Adar I 5784

Volume LV No. 56



Join us as we take a look back at 2023! We hope that this coming year brings blessings into your lives and into the life of our community, and we wish everyone a very happy and healthy start to the secular new year!



Off the Bimah

We Are Here for You! by Rabbi Jack Dermer



Dear Friends,
One of the cornerstones of our nightly evening Minyanim and Shabbat services is our Mi Sheberach prayer for those who are ill and in need of physical, spiritual, or emotional healing. Throughout the course of the year, each and every day, we lend our voices and our hearts in prayer to

those in our families and community that are in need of extra strength and support from us, and from G-d.

As we begin this new secular year, I want to make certain that the names of all those who are in need are included in our Mi Sheberach, and the names of those who no longer need to be on our list are respectfully removed. If you have a loved one or a friend who you would like us to mention by name in our prayers in the coming year, please send me an email sharing their full Hebrew name if you have it, and English name if you do not, as well as your relationship to the person you want us to include.

From Moses praying fervently for the healing of his sister Miriam in our Torah, to us, we strive as a community to come together as a source of unwavering support for those facing life's many challenges.

Let me also remind everyone, in particular during these winter months with so many of our Temple members out of town, that we need **your** help to ensure a robust Minyan each night and on Sunday mornings. In addition to our prayers for healing, we join together to support those who are saying Kaddish and remembering a loved one, offer prayers on behalf of the state of Israel, and take moments simply to check in with ourselves spiritually, as a much needed break from the busyness of life.

Our daily Minyan group is an extended family of Temple members who truly value the camaraderie and support that our Minyan provides. Please consider joining us for even one extra Minyan a week as a personal spiritual mission in this coming year. Share your presence with us as a sign of your support for Temple Beth Torah and an affirmation of your Jewish pride. We would love to see you!

All those who have questions about our prayer

Continued on Page 3

The Song of Miriam by Cantor Scott Sokol



This month, we come to the Torah text that is among the most meaningful to me, the *Shirat haYam*, the Song of the Sea first sung by Moses and then Miriam in gratitude for the divine intervention that brought the Children of Israel out from Egypt and across the Sea of Reeds.

Although there are many ways in which one could “read” the Shirah, I have found a feminist reading to be one of the most interesting personally. Part of the reason that I find feminist issues of the Shirah so intriguing is that the Shirah is itself the Toraitic justification cited for the separation of men and women in the synagogue (i.e., the *ezrat nashim*), as well as the prohibition of listening to *kol isha*, women’s voices. Thus, one could argue that the Shirah (or at least its interpretation) is partially responsible for the repression of women in Jewish ritual. To my mind, though, such a construal would be unfair, or at least incomplete. Indeed, I believe the Shirah to be among the most important texts teaching us about the unique roles of women’s voices to Jewish thought and tradition.

The fact that Miriam led the daughters of Israel in a distinct, though related, song holds an important lesson which may in fact run counter to the Orthodox claim that it indicates an halachic separation of men and women’s voices. Indeed, I believe that the text clearly indicates that Miriam’s song was intended for the men as well as the women. The relevant sentence states that Miriam answered or replied to “them,” and the Hebrew word used is *lahem*, which is the masculine (or general) form. If the text intended “them” to only mean the women, then it should have been written as *lahen*, which is the feminine form.

Whether or not you grant this to be the case, we still don’t know why Miriam’s leading of song was necessary. Certainly, *Moshe Rabenu* spoke for and led the entire Jewish people on many other occasions. Were his words somehow insufficient in this case? Perhaps so. Apparently the voice of Miriam and her cohorts were necessary to complete the circle of

Continued on Page 4

Press from Our Leaders

Press from the Executive Board, by Ken Maltz, Executive Vice President



In attempting to make sense of the outbreak of anti-Semitism that has been sweeping through the world since last October, it's useful to recall the words of Kohelet: "That which has been, is what shall be; that which has been done, is what shall be done; there is nothing new under the sun." This latest iteration of

the world's oldest disease is the product of two thousand plus years of the persecution of our people. It is the descendant of a lineage that includes numerous expulsions from European and Middle Eastern countries; wholesale slaughter during the Crusades; thousands lost during the hundreds of pogroms in Eastern Europe and Russia; the Shoah; and on-and-on. Its spread has been both enabled and amplified by social media and regurgitated in the streets by the multitudes who are eager to demonstrate their willful ignorance. As always, the vile charges inveighed against us are totally without any basis in fact; but that has not stopped the hatred directed at a People who have given the world so much. The cycle of violence bears little variation over the years.

Here's an excerpt from a report in The New York Times: "*The anti-Jewish riots are worse than the censor will permit to publish. There was a well laid-out plan for the general massacre of Jews...the general cry, "Kill the Jews", was taken up all over the city. The Jews were taken wholly unaware and were slaughtered like sheep...The scenes of horror attending this massacre are beyond description. Babies were literally torn to pieces by the frenzied and bloodthirsty mob...At sunset the streets were piled with corpses and wounded.*" The Times October 7th's issue? No. The above is from April 1903 and refers to the Kishinev pogrom. During these pogroms, 120 years ago, there were sexual assaults against women and fatal violence against babies carried out in front of their parents.

"There is nothing new under the sun."

So what can we do? We are told to sign on to a "two state solution" in order to end this war, well... there was a two state solution created by the UN in 1947 and Israel's neighbors immediately rejected it, declaring war against the Jewish state and invading it from every border. We are asked to declare a cease fire; but Hamas has indicated, in so many words, that

they will repeat their attacks again and again until no Jew is left alive. We are cautioned to hide our identity; eschew the wearing of religious clothing and symbols and to avoid the display of our Hanukkah candles in our windows. And let's not forget that our Jewish institutions and international NGOs have finally adopted a definition of anti-Semitism.

You want a definition of anti-Semitism? Watch the body camera video from October 7th. Visit Yad Vashem. Yet, in spite of this continuously evolving hatred, there are some encouraging developments. Our political leadership remains committed to supporting Israel and the Jewish people. And this people, our people, are closing ranks despite the extreme positions previously held.

Here at Temple Beth Torah, I am witnessing an outpouring of meaningful actions in the service of the IDF. One day after the October 7 outrage, it was suggested to Rabbi Dermer that we needed a way to contribute to the defense of Eretz Yisrael; a way that not only provides support to Israel's troops but that enables all of us to actively become involved in the fight against our enemies. Our Rabbi immediately began the procurement of the Leatherman tools sorely needed by our soldiers. The shul telephones were constantly engaged as our congregants called wanting to know what they could do to help and we raised the necessary funds within hours. Thanks to the efforts of our own members and a few Israelis in New York, we had those tools in the hands of two high-level units within 72 hours.

Our Board of Trustees illustrated their dedication to Am Yisrael in every way possible and continues to work diligently for the betterment and success of everything we do at Temple Beth Torah. There is energy in this congregation and that energy is being put to good use. We must not allow ourselves to become despondent during these times. The Jewish People are survivors, not by chance, but by hard work, perseverance and dedication. I have never been more proud of a group than I am about our Temple Beth Torah people. Am Yisrael Chai.

Rabbi (Continued from Page 2)

services, or who simply want to learn more about why it is so meaningful and life changing to begin a Jewish prayer practice, should never hesitate to reach out to Cantor Sokol and me. At Minyan times, and all the time, we are here for you!

Around the Congregation

Recipe from Our Sisterhood:
Deep Dish Chocolate Chip Cookies

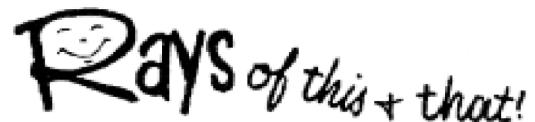
Submitted by Allison Rothstein

Taken from the *Kosher By Design* cookbooks
Yields 10-12 servings depending on size

Ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon fine sea salt
- 1 cup butter or margarine, at room temperature
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 1 (12-ounce) bag of chocolate chips (2 cups)
- Cooking spray (or tin liners)
- 1 (4-ounce) semisweet chocolate bar, broken into pieces on the score marks

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk the flour, baking soda, and salt. Set aside.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer, at medium-low speed, mix the butter or margarine with the sugar and brown sugar. Raise the speed to medium-high and mix until creamy, light, and fluffy. Turn the speed down a little. Add the vanilla and eggs. Mix to incorporate.
4. Add half the flour mixture. Mix. Add the remaining flour mixture and mix until just combined. Mix in the chocolate chips.
5. Spray the aluminum tins with nonstick cooking spray if not using liners.
6. Fill each muffin cup or ramekin a quarter of the way with a large, ping pong-ball-size ball of cookie dough. Flatten slightly to cover the bottom. Stack 2 chocolate squares in the center. Cover with a second walnut-sized ball of cookie dough, flattening it to completely cover the chocolate.
7. Place onto a cookie sheet and bake until tops are golden brown. Do not overbake or the end result will be doughy, not gooey. The baking time will vary from 20-25 minutes depending on the size of the tin or ramekin and the amount of dough you needed to fill it. You are looking for the tops to be golden and not wet-looking.
8. If using aluminum tins, turn each cookie out onto a plate. Serve warm.

RAYS of this + that!

Our condolences to the **Simhon** family on the passing of **Ann Simhon**, beloved mother of **Ronald, Mitchell**, and **Robin**, mother-in-law of **Gail**, grandmother of **Matthew** and **Ilana**.

Our condolences to the **Calderon** family on the passing of **Linda Calderon**, beloved wife of **Myron**, mother of **Alan** and **David**, sister of **Steven**.

Cantor (Continued from Page 2)

praise. Shimson Raphael Hirsch states on this point “although the women followed the men in their inspired song, they were fully their equals in expressing the whole deep meaning of the Song, and in realizing the high mission of the nation which is expressed therein.” The haftorah of Shabbat Shirah hearkens the same implicit message; we read the book of Devorah and understand from it that prophecy is as much the province of the great women of our faith as the men.

More than just the simple fact that Miriam is an exalted prophetess, I think there is another message in her *shirah* that is equally instructive. The majority of the original Shirat haYam offered by Moses speaks of God’s glory in very militaristic terms (e.g., “God is a man of war.”). Miriam also acknowledges the militaristic importance of God’s *g’vurah*; salvation from the Egyptians is after all the proximal event that the Song of the Sea is responding to. But, Miriam does not dwell on those aspects in her *shirah*. Her song is brief and to the point, and though the words perhaps hold the same explicit message, their method of expression suggests a different implicit one. The women’s approach to the *shirah* exemplifies the concept of *Hidur Mitzvah*, adornment of a mitzvah with added beauty. This is why the women picked up their instruments, and embellished their song: to glorify God by focusing on the beauty that God engenders, not simply the terror that God may inspire in our enemies.

In this second song of Miriam, then, is perhaps the parsha’s most important lesson: namely, that through shared experience, prayer and song, each of us has the potential to emulate the beauty and majesty of God. May we always continue to do so.

A Look Back at 2023



A Look Back at 2023



A Look Back at 2023



Upcoming Events for February 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
4	5	6	7
Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Table Talk, 7:00 p.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.
11	12	13	14
Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.
18	19	20	21
Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	President's Day	Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.
25	26	27	28
Morning Minyan, 9:00 a.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Rabbi's Class, 7:30 p.m. Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.

Upcoming Events for February 2024

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	2 Candle Lighting, 4:56 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	3 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 4:55 p.m.
8 Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	Rosh Chodesh Adar I 9 Candle Lighting, 5:04 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	Rosh Chodesh Adar I 10 Super Bowl Shabbat Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 5:05 p.m.
15 Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	16 Candle Lighting, 5:13 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	17 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 5:10 p.m.
22 Evening Minyan, 7:30 p.m.	23 Candle Lighting, 5:21 p.m. Shabbat Services, 6:30 p.m.	24 Shabbat Services, 9:30 a.m. Minha Services, 5:20 p.m.
29		

Upcoming Event Spotlight

Our leadership and clergy work tirelessly to craft experiences which will be inspirational, meaningful and safe for all involved.

Temple Beth Torah is still active and thriving. If you haven't come by lately, please do! There's always something going on here at Temple Beth Torah!

We value our members and your opinions.

If you have ideas for future programs or events, or if you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to our office, our co-presidents and/or our clergy.

Upcoming Events

TEMPLE BETH TORAH FEBRUARY EVENTS

Friday, 2/2 - Groundhog Day
Tuesday, 2/6 - Table Talk
Wednesday, 2/7 - Rabbi's Torah Study
Saturday, 2/10 - Superbowl Shabbat
Wednesday, 2/14 - Rabbi's Torah Study
Monday, 2/19 - President's Day - Office Closed
Wednesday, 2/21 - Rabbi's Torah Study
Monday, 2/26 - Board of Trustees Meeting
Wednesday, 2/28 - Rabbi's Torah Study



Contact Lauren @ TBT for more information:
516-334-7979 or admin@templebethtorahli.org

Temple Beth Torah



TABLE TALK IS BACK! LIVE & IN PERSON

Tuesday, February 6th
7pm in the TBT Library

UPCOMING DATES: MARCH 5TH, APRIL 9TH AND MAY 7TH

**FAMILY, FRIENDS, FRUSTRATIONS,
WORRIES, STRESS, JOYS!**
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TEMPLE BETH TORAH

SUPER BOWL SHABBAT

SATURDAY, 2/10 9:45 AM

READY, SET, PRAY!

Wear your favorite team jersey or colors!
Themed Kiddush lunch!
Super Bowl themed sermon!
Join the Super Bowl Boxes!
Fun Surprises!

Contact Lauren @ TBT to RSVP or for more information:
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TEMPLE BETH TORAH'S SUPER BOWL POOL IS BACK!



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A Guide to Temple Beth Torah

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cantorsokoletemplebethtorahli.org

President
Nancy Marshall
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PURCHASE TORAH CARDS

Contact Linda Pochtar, Betty Weiss or the Temple office for additional information



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IF YOU ARE STRUGGLING OR KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS, WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU. ALL INFORMATION SHARED IS CONFIDENTIAL. CONTACT MICHELE LIPPMAN OR RABBI DERMER.

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SATURDAY MORNING, 9:30 A.M.

**SATURDAY MINHAH/HAVDALAH, SUNDOWN
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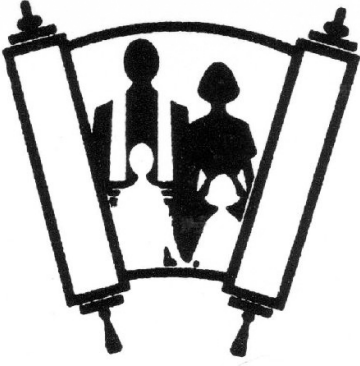
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