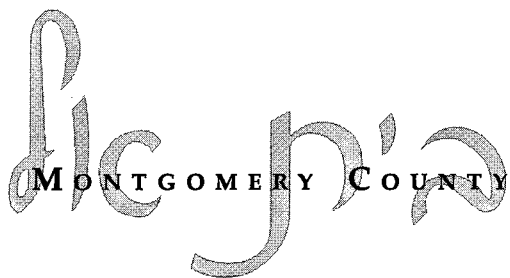




CONGREGATION BETH EL OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY



SHABBAT SHALOM AT HOME

The Shabbat Shalom at Home Kit has arrived at the homes of all Beth El congregants. From menus to motzei, from soups to songs, the kit contains all you need to be part of the Beth El-wide Shabbat evening observance on Friday, February 11. Whether you've never celebrated Shabbat before or you've never missed celebrating, you'll find encouragement and excitement in the kit's contents. Included in the kit is the refrigerator magnet to serve as a reminder. This year will be the last that we send out the guide, so we hope you will keep it to reuse often. It will be permanently available on the website at www.bethelmc.org.

If you would like to open your home celebration to another Beth El family, or if you would like an arranged invitation to a congregant's home, please contact Sarah Roark, 301-652-2606, ext. 320, by Thursday, February 3. Through Sarah you can also still obtain a copy of the audio tapes of Sally Heckelman singing the tunes for the Friday night service on one side and the Havdallah service on the other.

As part of the Shabbat Shalom at Home observance, Sisterhood is sponsoring a Challah Baking Workshop from 9:15 a.m.-12:00 p.m. on February 11. Michelle Hainbach is chairing the workshop and taking reservations at 301-229-8161. Experienced and inexperienced bakers alike are welcome and encouraged to get their hands doughy.

Special Shabbat candles prepared by USY will be distributed in the Rotunda on Sunday, February 6.

Whether you add a new ritual or meet a new friend, let's make a community effort towards a Shabbat like no other!

January 28, 2000

21 Shevat 5760

VOLUME 49

No. 11



Sisterhood Shabbat

Saturday, February 5, 2000

Members of Sisterhood will lead the Service

Golda Meir Award will be presented to **Suzanne Bronheim**

Dr. Pamela Nadel will speak on the topic

Women Who Would Be Rabbis

Shabbat Schedule

Friday, January 28

6:30 p.m. Friday Night Service

Saturday, January 29

7:30 and 9:15 a.m. Shabbat Services

Yitro: Exodus: 18:1-20:23

9:15 am Sophie Siegel Bat Mitzvah

10 am Jr. Congregation

10:30 am Nitzanim, APR

12:30 pm Perek Yomi, Chapel

Keruv, BR

Friday, February 4

6:30 p.m. Friday Night Service

7 pm Siyyum HaSefer Shabbat

Dinner (Gr. 4-5)

Saturday, February 5

7:30 and 9:15 a.m. Shabbat

Services

Mishpatim: Exodus: 21:1-24:18

9:15 am Sisterhood Shabbat

10 am Jr. Congregation

Worship and Study

Minyan, APR

12:30 pm Perek Yomi, Chapel

6 pm Nitzanim Havdallah, APR

Friday, February 11

6:30 p.m. Friday Night Service

Shabbat Shalom at Home

Saturday, February 12

7:30 and 9:15 a.m. Shabbat

Services

Terumah: Exodus: 25:1-27:19

9:15 am Jonathan Rubin Bar

Mitzvah

10 am Jr. Congregation

10:30 am Nitzanim, APR

11 am Shitufim Minyan, Room

209

12:30 pm Perek Yomi, Chapel

6:30 pm Gr.6-7 Havdallah

Program, Sanctuary, SH

Sisterhood News

Sisterhood Shabbat will be on Saturday, February 5. The entire service will be led by members of Sisterhood, and the Golda Meir Award will be presented to Suzanne Bronheim. The speaker that morning will be Dr. Pamela Nadell, who will deliver a talk entitled, "Women Who Would Be Rabbis."

Enjoy Shabbat with a home-made challah; everyone is welcome to participate in a Challah Baking Workshop on Friday, February 11 at 9:15 a.m. in the synagogue kitchen. The workshop is being held in conjunction with the synagogue-wide Shabbat Shalom at Home program. Please call Michelle Hainbach, (301) 229-8161, if interested in participating or with any questions.

Have you shopped at the Sisterhood Judaica Shop? Stop in to see the lovely new items in stock. The Judaica Shop is open on Thursdays and Sundays from 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. or by special appointment.

Sisterhood has beautiful, special greeting cards available for all occasions. Proceeds from the cards benefit the Jewish Theological Seminary. Call Rita Kahn, (301) 654-7716, to purchase cards.

A special word of thanks to Janice Liebowitz for organizing Sisterhood's participation in the Community Based Shelter program. Under Janice's leadership, several Sisterhood members prepared a complete cooked dinner in the synagogue kitchen. The dinner was delivered personally by Janice to the Shelter.

The next Rosh Hodesh Study Group meeting will be on Tuesday, February 15. Rabbi Janet Ozur Bass will lead the discussion on "Women and Prayer."

Ann Roiphe's *1185 Park Avenue* is the next selection for the Book Discussion Group which will meet on Sunday, February 20 at 9:30 a.m. Please call Annette Moshman, (301) 229-4040, or Andrea Golden, (301) 294-2375, for more information.

The Women's League Institute, in conjunction with the Jewish Theological Seminary, Seaboard Branch, is pleased to announce that Rabbi Jacob Blumenthal will teach its Spring Semester 2000 course: "I'm Not Reform, I'm Not Orthodox: The Challenge of Being a Conservative Jew." Classes will be held on six Monday evenings from 8-9:30 p.m. starting February 28 through April 4, (excluding Purim, 3/20) at Beth El. The registration deadline is February 14; fee is \$60. For more

information, call Matlee Yadin, (301) 493-4611, or Paula Horowitz, (301) 365-7930. Look for Institute flyers in the display case outside the office.

An easy way to get information about Sisterhood or to leave messages, is to call the Sisterhood hotline number (301) 652-2606, ext. 333. Calls will be answered as quickly as possible.

Save the Date

Sunday, March 5

CELEBRATE ISRAEL

**All adults are welcome to join Sisterhood
for an afternoon of food, art, song and dance.
Watch the *Scroll* for details.**

Men's Club News

You are invited to attend the Beth El Men's Club's regular Sunday breakfast programs and to join the Men's Club. The Men's Club supports programs including the renowned Perspectives in Dialogue series, political forums, awards and other events.

The Men's Club also sponsors youth programs including scouting, the Purim Carnival, the annual Magic Show, Israeli scholarships, school books, Bar Mitzvah kiddush cups, and other important activities. Your participation makes it possible! For membership information, please call Marvin Yudkowitz at (301) 564-4580.

You may wish to mark your calendars for the Perspectives in Dialogue series of talks on March 26, April 9, 16, 30 and May 7. More details later!

Regular Sunday Morning Breakfast Programs: Lox and bagel breakfasts at 9:30 (after the 9:00 minyan), with program from 10:00 to 11:00. All congregants are welcome. Check the Men's Club poster in the Rotunda for updated details.

Upcoming programs:

Jan. 30: Louis Nagel, "Jewish Education in the New Millenium"

Feb. 6: Business Meeting (Note: due to Rosh Hodesh, breakfast will start at approximately 9:45)

Feb. 13: Sen. P.J. Hogan, "A Maryland Legislator Visits Israel"

Feb. 20: Alisa Goetz, Washington Jewish Historical Society, "Family History and Preservation Techniques"

In Search Of REUVEN? Robert? Richard? Ronald? Randolph???

Desperately seeking one of the above who may be the owner of a handwoven woolen tallit striped in broad bands of color. Loving hands created the needlepoint tallit bag, a true family heirloom, and they are eager to see it reunited with the family.

This extraordinary tallit was left at Beth El sometime last spring. Is this your tallit? If someone in your family celebrated a bar or bat mitzvah last year, it is possible a family member or friend left it behind. Please check with your guests. If you have any information, please contact Toby Moss (301-530-0861) who is determined to find the owner of this most special tallit. Thank you.

**Please Come to Our
Book Fair
sponsored by the Beth El Religious
School
February 27
8:45 a.m. to 5 p.m.
in the Beth El Board Room**

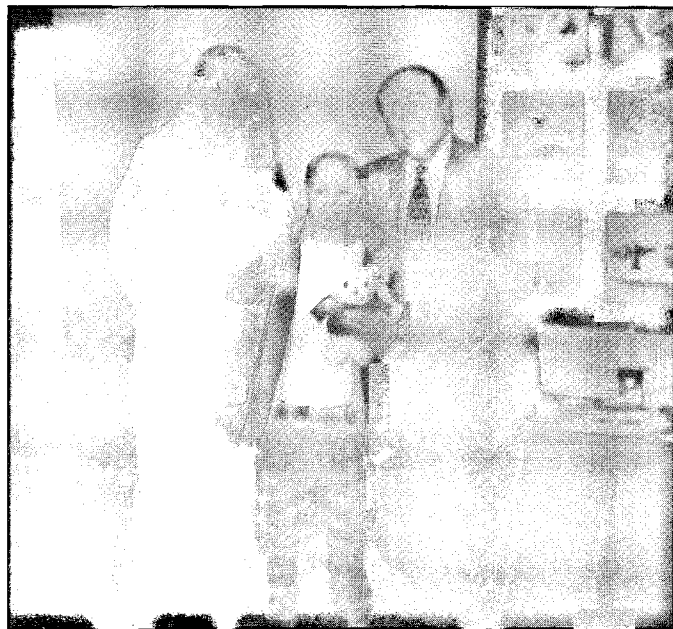
About 300 titles will be displayed and available for purchase, plus a forWords catalog from which additional titles may be ordered. A selection of Rabbi Lawrence Kushner's books will also be available.

Rabbi Kushner will be one of the speakers at the Torah Institute. Books on topics such as Jewish holidays, history, cooking, spirituality, women's studies, and arts and crafts will be available, plus many more.

We are also seeking to have a special display table of "Beth El Authors." Please contact Ellen Kappel Berman at 301-229-5848 or ekappel@geoprose.com if you have a book that you would like to be part of this display.

Hazzan Lubin Brings Bear Hugs to Children's Inn

Concurrent with Mitzvah Day observance and the observance of Hanukkah, Hazzan Lubin, together with Abbie Eckland, Social Action Chairperson, presented the patients at Children's Inn with a gift of 50 adorable teddy bears, some wearing sweaters adorned with hanukkiot. The bears were procured through a social action program sponsored by the Cantors Assembly, of which Hazzan Lubin is a past president. Over the 50 years of its existence, the Cantors Assembly has served as the official placement agency for Hazzanim in the Conservative Movement and as a repository for over 70 volumes of liturgical and educational works of music. The Children's Inn at NIH is a private, non-profit, family-centered residence for pediatric outpatients at the National Institutes of Health, and for their families. Its purposes are to keep children together with their families during serious illness, to reduce their stress, and to facilitate their healing through mutual support.



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AFFILIATED WITH UNITED
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Evening Minyan

The following people are asked to help us with our daily Evening Minyan for the next two weeks. On Sunday through Thursday, the Minyan begins at 8 p.m. and concludes at 8:15 p.m. During the week of your assignment, we would appreciate your attending as many evenings as possible, so that those who are saying Kaddish will have a minyan that they can attend at Beth El.

January 30 to February 3

Julia Maloney
Jonathan and Julie Maltzman
Rhoda Mancher
Steven and Barbara Mandel
Daniel and Elaine Mann
Lawrence and Linda Mann
Harry and Laura Mannheimer
Mollyann March and Gregory March
Arnold and Judith Marcus
Lawrence and Marlene Marcus
Ronald and Deborah Marcus
Robert and Elizabeth Margolis
Sam and Evelyn Margolis
Philip and Phyllis Margolius
David Margulies and Donna Vogel
David Marshall and Linda Marshall
Jonathan Martel and Lisa Flaxman
Claire Marwick
Gary Marx and Julie Rabinowitz
Marc and Laura Masurovsky

February 6 to February 10

Michael Mates and Lona Feldman
Robert and Kathy Matty
Dan Matz and Judith Matz
Edward Max and Jody Green
Garry and Ethel Mayer
Laura Mayer
Betty McDonald and James McDonald
Eileen Meier
Allan and Miriam Meltzer
Theodore Meltzer
Allan and Shereen Mendelowitz
Paul and Marcia Merlin
David and Carole Metzger
Roy Millenson
Frances Miller
Jay and Lillian Miller
Lee Miller and Sheryl Rosensky Miller
Philip Miller
Mark Milner and Hattie Ulan
Max and Betty Milner

In the Mail

Dear Rabbi Maltzman and Cantor Lubin,

Just a personal thank you to both of you for making our daughter, Dana's, bat mitzvah experience feel so very special for us. It's strange how that feeling of "belonging," pride in one's faith and family, and sense of heritage slowly creep into an occasion surrounded by so many financial decisions, logistics, and family dynamics. Fortunately, those deeper feelings manage to find their way and continue to linger in our hearts and home, and their strength is a tribute to the job you both do in fortifying the richness of our Jewish traditions and communicating a spirituality and bond which is contagious.

Our whole family, in our individual ways, was moved by the entire experience - the preparing religiously as well as socially. We appreciate the thoughtfulness and kindness, not to forget the humor, with which you conducted yourselves in advance and during our event; and we thank you for making us feel so special and providing such an elegant venue and such capable clergy to make Dana's bat mitzvah day as meaningful as it was.

May the New Year be full of professional and personal successes for both of you. Our family looks forward to more opportunities to share our simchas with you in our beautiful sanctuary, with two fine gentlemen up on the bimah, surrounded by a warm, vibrant congregation such as Beth El's.

Fondly,

Karen Dubin, Rob Litowitz, Dana, Drew and Reid

Learners' Minyan

The Learners' Minyan meets on the third Shabbat of each month in the All Purpose Room from 10 a.m. to noon. The service, conducted by Rabbi Rudolph, is designed for the novice worshipper. It moves much less quickly. It is very hands-on in orientation, from how to put on the talit, to knowing when to bow, to practicing how to have an aliyah. There is also a focus each time on a different major portion of the service. Questions and discussions are very much encouraged. No registration or advance sign-up required. Contact Rabbi Rudolph, (301) 652-2606, ext. 318, for more information.

BETH EL WEEKEND RETREAT 2000
MARCH 10-12, 2000
WITH GUEST SCHOLAR RABBI MARSHALL MALTZMAN!

Sign up TODAY for Beth El's WEEKEND RETREAT 2000, to be held at the beautiful Tidewater Inn in historic Easton, MD (a 90-minute drive from Bethesda). Share a relaxed Shabbat in a beautiful, family-friendly setting with Rabbi Maltzman, Cantor Lubin and your fellow congregants and friends. The Beth El Retreat will give you and your family a unique opportunity to enjoy a weekend of learning, camaraderie and just plain fun. Beth El Weekend Retreat 2000 will be held from Friday evening, March 10 through Sunday noon March 12.

We are honored to have as our special Scholar-in-Residence Rabbi Marshall J. Maltzman, Rabbi Emeritus of Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El of Wynnewood, PA. Rabbi Marshall Maltzman will share with us his great knowledge, insights and sense of humor on the topic "**Three Who Thumbed Their Noses at Us: Spinoza, Lindbergh, and Rockefeller**". Many of you have heard Rabbi Maltzman speak at our synagogue in the past, particularly at his son Rabbi Jonathan Maltzman's 10th anniversary celebration at Beth El.

In addition to study/discussion sessions with Rabbi M. Maltzman Friday evening and Sunday morning, our weekend will include Shabbat afternoon free time with informal activities available, including access to the local YMCA for a nominal fee. Saturday night, back by popular demand, will be an evening of ISRAELI FOLK DANCING led by Rocky Korr!

Per Person rates

Double occupancy	\$230
Single adult	\$325
Children, ages 2-16	\$ 80
Children (2 in separate room)	\$335
Children under 2	Free

Rooms are configured with king, queen, two double beds and two twin beds. Some adjoining rooms are available. Rollaway beds and cribs available on request. No pets allowed. Space is limited, registrations and room/bedding requests taken on first come, first served basis. Refunds available only if substitutions are made. All forms and payments are due in the synagogue office by FEBRUARY 1, 2000. If you have questions, call Sandy Elson (301) 469-6238 or Linda Liebowitz (301) 770-9597.

.....
 NAMES _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

DAY PHONE _____ EVENING PHONE _____

AGES OF CHILDREN _____ TYPE OF ROOM(S) REQUESTED _____

AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____ SPECIAL REQUESTS _____

We will need babysitting (fee to be determined) We would like a day pass to the YMCA (about \$5 each)

My _____ year old child can help with babysitting/children's activities We can organize a Havdalah service

We can provide a ride We need a ride We can help with transporting religious supplies

Thank You to Mitzvah Day Volunteers

Many thanks to all the volunteers who shared their time and talents to make our third Mitzvah Day a rich and rewarding success. With the participation of numerous families, Religious School students and teachers, Youth Groups, Boy Scouts, Sisterhood and the weather, Beth El's wonderful volunteers accomplished the following:

- Cleaned and planted flower beds and performed miscellaneous jobs at Glen Echo Park
- Trimmed trees and bushes and cleaned up the grounds around Beth El and the neighborhood
- Prepared dinner for patients and their families at Children's Inn at NIH
- Assembled greeting cards and mailbox treats and created adorable sock puppets and happy hats for residents of Children's Inn
- Raked countless leaves in the Beth El neighborhood and raised over \$500 to purchase winter coats for residents of the Baptist Home for Women and Children;
- Collected, sorted and delivered 150 bags of clothing and household goods for the Interfaith Clothing Center
- Prepared dinners and desserts for clients at the Rainbow Place Shelter and Shepherd's Table;
- Sorted several tons of food at the Capital Area Food Bank
- Organized two parties at local shelters, featuring creation of family photo albums
- Bowled with residents of Jewish Foundation for Group Homes
- Entertained our adopted family at the Hebrew Home with Beth El musicians, jugglers and dancers and home-baked refreshments
- Shared songs and smiles with residents of two retirement homes
- Canvassed the Beth El neighborhood on behalf of the Montgomery County Hunger Relief Drive
- Prepared brown bag lunches for clients of Bethesda Cares
- Baked dog biscuits for four-legged residents at the Montgomery County Humane Society
- Offered a donation from Mitzvah Day t-shirt sales to our sister congregation in Kostroma

The support and efforts of MANY individuals ensured our success. We would like to thank the project leaders for organizing their activities: Sam

Swersky; Jeff Annis and Family; Andrea Golden; Debbie Gottlieb; Diana Huffman; Leslie Dellon; Danielle Srouf; Barbara Klein; Beverly Goldsmith; Marcy and Ed Berger and Family; Alissa Horvitz and Havurah; Sarah Roark; Rabbi Bill Rudolph and Family; Ariele Hausner-Barach and the Youth Department; Janice Liebowitz; Fancine Lanar; and Beth Weisberg. Thanks also to Louis Nagel and our wonderful Religious School teachers and parent volunteers, to Esther Wilner and Sisterhood, to our terrific Beth El staff, and to Debbie Ross, the "Mother of Mitzvah Day." We regret that individual names of volunteers are too numerous to list, but we thank you all for your valuable contributions to a meaningful and memorable day.

Mitzvah Day is not limited to one Sunday in November. Beth El members participate in a variety of community service projects year-round. A list of Social Action activities is available in the lucite holder outside the office, or call Abbie Eckland at (301) 320-9433.

Thanks!

Thank you to all those who volunteered to cook, shop, deliver and serve meals at the Community Based Shelter in December. This was a huge commitment during a very busy time of year and still so many called to say, "how can I help?" Your efforts were especially meaningful to the shelter residents during their holiday season.

Special thanks to the Sisterhood, Rabbi Bill Rudolph and Gail Fribush, Abbie Eckland, and Sarah Roark, who filled in during those times when there were gaps in the schedule.

Sincerely,
Karolyn Wallace

Feeding the Hungry

Please bring in non-perishable food items at every opportunity. A basket outside the Board Room is designated for Bethesda Helps. The volunteers of Bethesda Helps aid people who are house-bound by driving to doctors' appointments and bringing emergency food baskets. Bethesda Helps also supplies the food pantry in the church off Lone Oak Drive. It's easy to add an extra jar of peanut butter to your cart every time you shop or remember a can of tuna fish next time you come to the synagogue.

Welcome to New Members

Congregation Beth El extends a warm welcome to the following new members. If one or more of these families live in your neighborhood, please reach out and personally welcome them.

Steven and Marlene Aisenberg 6402 Kirby Road, Bethesda, MD 20817	301-320-5259
Morley and Lori Amsellem 10516 Farnham Drive, Bethesda, MD 20814	301-493-9243 morleya@cab.com
Leonard and Shirley Arnowitz 4701 Willard Avenue, #1236, Chevy Chase, MD 20815	301-652-3933
Patty and Jeffrey Baron 11209 Welland Street, North Potomac, MD 20878	301-279-9322
Larry and Diana Eisenstat 8100 Lilly Stone Drive, Bethesda, MD 20817	301-365-0117
Michael Feinstein and Melissa Kahn 1129 Halesworth Drive, Potomac, MD 20854	301-251-1840 mfeinstein@mrlabs.com
Eileen Meier 5614 Rockledge Court, Frederick, MD 21703	301-695-3230
David and Melissa Stern 5406 Whitley Park Terrace, Bethesda, MD 20814	301-571-5256
Jacqueline A. Stern 5225 Pooks Hill Road, Bethesda, MD 20814	301-530-6154
Stephen and Rosalind Stern 6921 Old Stage Road, Rockville, MD 20852	301-881-2543
Pauline Witkin 10401 Grosvenor Place, #1011, Rockville, MD 20852	301-493-5520

Mitzvah Mall

Thank you so much to all the generous people who made donations to the Mitzvah Mall in December, 1999. A special effort was made this year to donate much needed new underwear to the Interfaith Clothing Center. Mrs. Roark's fifth grade wrapped "family packs" of underwear which included four multipacks for a male child, a female child, a male adult and a female adult. As a result of the donations collected, we will be sending 22 multipacks, or 264 pairs, of underwear to the Interfaith Clothing Center!!!! We raised well over \$2000 for the following organizations: Bethesda Cares, Capital Area Food Banks, Interfaith Clothing Center, Magen David Adom, Shepherd's Table and Whitman Walker Clinic. Thank you to the volunteers, Janice Liebowitz, Danielle Srou, Carol Miller and Ellen Winter who took donations on Sundays in the Rotunda. The Mitzvah Mall is a combined effort of Sarah Roark as Family Education Director and Abbie Eckland as Social Action Chair.

Medicine for Kostroma

We were so fortunate, between April and September of this year, to have Beth El members going to Scandinavia (and St. Petersburg) who were willing to take medicine for our associated Russian Jewish community in Kostroma. We are deeply indebted to them! A severe "drought" is now expected until the weather is again hospitable to travelers.

Because it is important to the welfare of the community, we will try again to ship, but this time with the assistance of a Beth El member who has successfully used the services of an identified firm. It is expensive, but our method of consolidation assures that a significant quantity - worth many times more than the shipping cost - will reach our people in need. Contributions to the World Jewry Committee, earmarked for "shipping" will be greatly appreciated.

Keruv

KERUV SHABBAT DISCUSSION

Saturday, January 29, 2000

Death in the Family:

Special Concerns for Converts and Interfaith

Families

What happens when a non-Jewish parent or spouse dies? Should you recite Kaddish or sit shiva? Does your non-Jewish family member know Jewish customs regarding death and mourning? (Do you?) Where can your family members be buried? What can we do now to prepare for the inevitable?

Join Keruv and Rabbi Bill Rudolph as we discuss this sensitive topic following Shabbat kiddush in the Board Room.

Keruv welcomes your questions, comments and concerns about intermarriage, conversion and living in an interfaith family. These types of questions often arise during life cycle events. We have all types of families and have experience that may be able to help you deal with your particular situation. Call Terri Annis or leave a message in the synagogue office.

Keruv ("outreach") addresses the issues of intermarriage and conversion at Beth El. We hold drop-in Shabbat discussions, talk to Havurot, and have family-based holiday parties. For more information about Keruv and its activities, call Terri Annis at (301) 656-5219.

Beth El Adult Academy

It is a pleasure to announce that our Congregation has been awarded a grant from the Jewish Federation to begin a Sunday morning parent education program. We plan to offer courses that parallel the classes offered to our Religious School students. Courses will run for seven weeks, and will begin on Sunday, February 6. Course offerings will include: How To Do - The Spring Holidays, Tefillah Hebrew: The Shabbat Morning Service, The Jewish Celebration Cycle, Israel Studies: The Current Situation in the Historical Perspective and a class in Torah Studies, and One Step Ahead of Your Child: Beginners Hebrew. Classes will be held from 9-10, 10-11 and 11:15-12:15. Final course offerings and time will depend on enrollment. The only charge will be a textbook fee. For more information, please contact the Religious School Office, (301) 652-2606, ext. 309.

Second Annual Community Torah Institute

Is the Torah a guide to spirituality? Or not? Explore the possibilities at the Second Annual Community Torah Institute at Beth El, Sunday, February 27, 1 to 4:45 p.m. Continuing the successful format of last year's Institute, three scholars from three branches of Judaism will examine the link between the Torah and spirituality, join in a panel discussion with Rabbi Jonathan Maltzman and Rabbi William Rudolph, and then meet with small groups of attendees to study texts and elaborate on their views.

This year's outstanding scholars, who will offer their distinctive definitions of spirituality, are:

Rabbi Lawrence Kushner (Reform), rabbi at Congregation Beth El in Sudbury, Massachusetts, and author of several books on spirituality, including *Honey from the Rock*.

Rabbi Nina Beth Cardin (Conservative), director of the Center for Jewish Life at the Jewish Community Center in Baltimore and former editor of *Sh'ma*.

Rabbi Barry Freundel (Orthodox), rabbi at Keshet Israel in Georgetown

The Community Torah Institute is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be served. Babysitting will be available, by prior arrangement, for the plenary session and panel discussion (1 to 2:45 p.m.). Reservations, while not mandatory, are encouraged. For information and reservations, call Rabbi Rudolph at 301-652-2606, ext. 318.

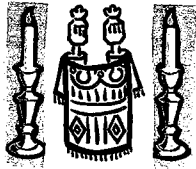
Spiritual Support Group for Healthcare Professionals

The Washington Jewish Healing Network is offering a new Spiritual Support Group for Healthcare Professionals. This is the third time such a group is being offered. It will meet at Beth El for five consecutive Tuesdays starting February 1 at noon. Rabbi David Kaye and Dr. Carol Hausman will be leading the group. Please call Dr. Hausman at (202) 966-7851 for information and registration.

Beth El Cemetery Section at Judean Gardens

Cemetery sites are currently being sold at Judean Gardens in Olney, Maryland. Beth El's first section is full and a new section is now available. The charge is \$1,250. Please contact Carole Wellner at (301) 652-2606, ext. 316 to receive our brochure.

Set the Table



with Torah

Set the Table with Torah

by Hazzan Abraham Lubin

Introductory word: a discussion about the week's Torah portion is a good Shabbat dinner custom. Make the discussion as long or short, as simple or complicated, as your dinner crowd can handle.

Parshat Yitro (for the week ending January 29)

Moses' father-in-law was an unusual man. His words of encouragement and timely advice to Moses at the outset of the journey through the wilderness set him apart as the only Gentile friend of Israel after the Exodus. According to one rabbinic school, Jethro became a convert to Judaism and thus serves as the prototype of the *ger zedek*, the righteous proselyte.

The Rabbis explain Jethro's name as follows: "At first he was called *Yeter*, but when he accomplished good deeds, the letter *vav* was added to his name, and he was called *Yitro* (*Mekilta* to Exodus 18:1). Thus Jethro joins Abraham whose name was changed from Abram, Sarah whose name was changed from Sarai, Joshua whose name was changed from Hoshea, and Israel whose name was changed from Jacob, in keeping with the biblical tradition of changing an individual's name after the performance of meritorious deeds.

Why was the letter *vav* added to Jethro's name? Obviously, because the letter *vav* is associated with G-d's name. But also because the function of the letter *vav* in Hebrew grammar sheds light on the nature of Jethro's good deeds. The function of the *vav* in Hebrew grammar, as Rashi notes in his commentary to Exodus 21:1, is *mosif al harishonim*, it adds to the past. Jethro not only provided a refuge for Moses when he fled from Pharaoh, but he took him into his home and made Moses his son-in-law. Now Jethro was adding to his original hospitality and warmth by coming to encourage Moses and the Israelites.

The concept of adding, step by step, to our religious activities is worthy of consideration. At whatever stage of observance we presently are, we can make a resolution to add a new activity in the year ahead.

Parshat Mishpatim (for the week ending February 5)

As its name suggests, *Mishpatim* (justice) deals mainly with civil law. The first law concerns a person who either sells himself or is sold by the

Beth Din as a servant. The former results from lack of money; the latter befalls a person who is unable to repay stolen money. In either event, he serves his master for six years or until the beginning of the jubilee year. During this time the master has to provide him, his wife and young children with board and lodging. He must treat his servant as a hired worker and may not ask him to perform any menial task. When he leaves, the master must give him various gifts. If the servant wishes to remain with his master when his six years have ended, he must have his right ear pierced. If he agrees to this, he remains until jubilee.

Discuss the implication of this biblical law to our present day. What about the idea of not allowing ourselves to become slaves to our work? Please cut out this article and save it for your Friday Shabbat dinner discussion. For further discussions of Parshat Hashavua geared toward families, get on the web at www.jewishfamily.com "Portion of the Week" and www.uahc.org "Shabbat Table Talk". You may also want to try these two websites: <http://learn.jtsa.edu/topics/parashah/archive.shtml> <http://www.torah.org>

Mark Your Calendars!!!

Sunday, June 4, 2000

7:00 p.m.

Hazzan Abraham Lubin's 10th Anniversary: A Musical Celebration

This coming year our congregation will celebrate Hazzan Lubin's 10th anniversary at Beth El. Plans are underway to honor our Hazzan for his decade of service with a special evening of music and tributes. We are privileged to have joining us Hazzanim from around the country: Hazzan Melvin Luterman, Temple Oheb Shalom of Baltimore; Hazzan Jacob Mendelson, Temple Israel Center, White Plains, NY; Hazzan David Perper, Temple Judea of Bucks County, Doylestown, PA; and Hazzan Faith Steinsnyder, Temple Beth El of Spring Valley, NY. Also performing will be a marvelous klezmer band from Connecticut, "The Klezical Tradition." You won't want to miss this night of songs and salutes!

All in the Family

Mazal Tov to **Benson and Natalie Adams** on the occasion of their 35th anniversary on December 27, 1999.