



Chadashot Ha'am

December 2012

Kislev/Tevet

A Message from Rabbi Saks

Growing up, my brother and I lit *Chanukah menorahs* that once belonged to both sets of grandparents. In college, my roommate and I displayed my *menorah* in the window of our dorm room, in spite of candles being prohibited in our student residences. More recently, I still wanted to display a *menorah* in the window, but without the risk of fire. Eventually, I gave in and bought an electric *menorah* that Kirk and I put on display in the window, in addition to the candles burning in the living room.



Part of why that public display of *Chanukah* is so important to me connects with the central theme of *Chanukah*. Even more important than the miracle of the oil was the public declaration of the Maccabees about their right to express their Jewish identities, to engage with Jewish tradition, and to study Jewish text. The atmosphere that launched the Maccabees' reclamation of their Jewish traditions began when Antiochus Epiphanes IV, the ruler of the Syrian kingdom, outlawed Jewish observance, decreeing that studying Torah was a crime punishable by death.

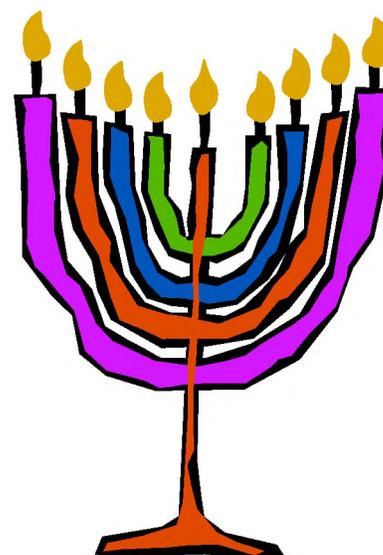
When the Maccabees reclaimed and rededicated the Temple – the word *chanukah* means dedication – they also rededicated themselves to Jewish life and study. At a time of

the year when the days are at their shortest and there seems to be more darkness than light, we increase light each night on the *Chanukah menorah*, displaying it proudly. We remind ourselves that we are free to practice Judaism.

We are fortunate to live in a time and place where we can publicly celebrate our Judaism and proudly engage in Jewish study. To that end, I am pleased to share with you an opportunity to deepen your Jewish study and publicly celebrate your accomplishments. Our own Rachel Stamieszkin will begin offering an Adult *B'nai Mitzvah* class later this winter, and after a course of study, a group of adults in our congregation will celebrate their accomplishments publicly. Perhaps you grew up in a congregation that didn't include *Bar Mitzvah* among its rituals. Maybe you were raised in a community that didn't allow girls to be called to the Torah as a *Bat Mitzvah*. Or possibly, you chose Judaism later in life and haven't yet taken the opportunity to publicly celebrate your accomplishments.

If you are interested in joining the Adult *B'nai Mitzvah* class, please contact the office for more information. We look forward to your celebrating your rededication to your Jewish learning.

If the Adult *B'nai Mitzvah* class seems like too much for you, there are other options. Come to Torah Study each Shabbat morning, Saturdays at 9:00 AM. Plan on attending the array of adult Jewish learning opportunities that will be held between now and the spring. Or, if you're interested in learning to chant Torah, let me know and we will begin a Torah *Trope* class. This time of the year is a time to rededicate ourselves to our Jewish identities and the privilege of learning and living Judaism.



President's Message - Lisa Pierce

Go ahead, get personal.

I have noticed an interesting phenomenon in our congregation. It's probably a universal group dynamic, but I don't get out much. When we are sitting in a larger group, like 25 or 30 people at Torah Study, and Rabbi Saks asks for a volunteer to read a passage aloud, there is almost always an initial awkward silence. With a few exceptions, nearly everyone around the circle waits for someone else to take the lead. However, when we are sitting in a smaller group, each person willingly takes a paragraph with little prompting.

This discrepancy in our participation also seems to hold true in other situations, and I'm just as guilty as everyone else. When we are cleaning up after an event, if there are just a few people in the room, everyone helps. When there are more people there, people seem to feel it is okay to leave. Similarly, when we read an announcement in the newsletter that says, "Help wanted!" or "Please join us," we seem to assume that other people will be involved and that we don't have to show up. On the other hand, if we are asked individually to do something, we almost always say yes.

During the recent election, we saw first-hand how grassroots campaigns and successful community organizing can truly make a difference. Throughout the campaign, we heard again and again about the importance of personal conversations and that talking with people one-on-one is what has the most impact. Over



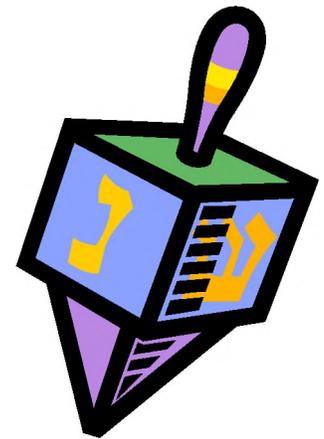
the last few months at Bet Ha'am, I have heard statements like, "This is such a great program! How do we get more of our members to participate?" I think the answer may just be a grassroots effort - getting the word out, person by person.

I decided to test this theory out recently. I sent out, one at a time, personal requests to folks whom I thought might be able to help with a particular task. The response so far has warmed my soul. Just about everyone, no matter how busy, has said, "Sure! I can help!" and even better, "Thanks for asking!"

I am convinced this approach will be just as effective with adult learning classes, services, and social action opportunities. What if you sent an email to a handful of people saying, "Hey - this looks interesting. I'm going. Will you join me?" If one or more people join you, you are likely to have a good time. Your efforts might also lead to a well-attended program, teachers and committees who are energized to provide more programming in the future, a richer and more meaningful experience for everyone who attends, and a vibrant community of people engaged with Jewish life.

I'll leave us each with this challenge: over the next few months, take a look at the Bet Ha'am calendar (now fully available on our website at

www.bethaam.org). Find one thing you might like to do - a service you can attend, a class you'd like to take, a volunteer opportunity waiting to be filled. Call or email a friend or two to join you. Make it personal. Enjoy the connections that you will help to foster and the stronger congregation that you are helping to build.



Chadashot Chai-lights

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December

Congregation Bet Ha'am

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www.bethaam.org

Rabbi Jared Saks

Orly Mendelson Biggie, Religious School Director
 Kris Dorer, Synagogue Administrator
 Teri Berenson, Bookkeeper
 Karen Hindall, Administrative Assistant
 Chris Skidgel, Custodian

Executive Committee

Lisa Pierce, President
 Lisa Munderback, Vice President
 Tom Rosen, Treasurer
 Mylan Cohen, Secretary
 Tim Boulette, Past President

Board of Directors

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 Emily Brocks
 Jay Geller
 Howard Glass
 Ben Grant
 Ken Lehman
 Michael Messerschmidt
 Jeremy Moser
 Perry Newman
 Jane Snerson
 Steve Steinbock
 Nathan Szanton
 Deborah Tillman Stone

Office Hours:

Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM
 The office is closed on Mondays.
 Building Use: All meetings, events or gatherings must be scheduled with the office.

Office extensions and email addresses:

Rabbi Saks, Ext. 100
ravsaks@bethaam.org
 Orly Biggie, Religious School Director, Ext. 102
orly@bethaam.org
 Kris Dorer, Synagogue Administrator, Ext. 104
kris@bethaam.org
 Teri Berenson, Bookkeeper, Ext. 103
teri@bethaam.org
 Karen Hindall, Administrative Assistant
karen@bethaam.org
office@bethaam.org

Security Update

by Kris Dorer, Synagogue Administrator

As many of you are aware, we experienced a break-in at Bet Ha'am during the High Holidays. Our tzedakah box was broken and a small amount of cash was taken. Staff and leadership quickly implemented additional security guidelines to protect ourselves while we develop a more effective security and safety plan.

A key component in the break-in was the unfortunate failure of our existing security company to respond adequately to the alarm process. We are negotiating bids from other companies and hope to have a new response service in place in December. This experience is also an opportunity for us to upgrade our internal processes. We are developing more stringent checklists for opening and closing the building, replacing door locks and security codes, adding moderate security camera coverage in the lobby, added motion detectors, and adding phone lines in the school building, library and kitchen. We feel confident that our building and people will remain safe and secure.

Our new security plan will be part of a new Risk Management Manual that will address security and basic building practices for safety and well-being of all staff, members, and guests. For example, our new initiatives will include signage in the courtyard requesting that individuals respect our property by refraining from skateboarding or climbing on the fire escape. Our goal is a security plan that is comprehensive while maintaining our Bet Ha'am climate of being open and welcoming to all.

Please contact Kris Dorer, synagogue administrator, at any time with your questions or concerns.

Religious School News

December 2:

Grades 11-12 will meet from 5:00-6:30 PM. If you are a high school junior or senior, we would love to have you join us. Call Orly FMI.

December 9:

Grades 7-10 will meet from 1:00-2:30 PM. Our special guest speaker will be Edith Pagelson, a Holocaust survivor, who wrote the book, *Against All Odds*. Edith will share her story with our students. We welcome all parents to join us.

December 16:

Chanukah celebrations. We will celebrate *Chanukah* at morning Religious School on the last day of the holiday. If you can help with activities related to *Chanukah* during morning assembly and/or class time, please call Orly.

Thank you to last month's substitute teachers: Shana Blotner, Jill Rosenthal, Jeffrey Schwartz, Michelle Perry and Jane Snerson.

Schedule of Services

Saturday, December 1

Torah Study 9:00 AM
Worship Service 10:00 AM
Parsha Vayishlach

Friday, December 7

Kabbalat Shabbat Service 7:30 PM

Saturday, December 8

Torah Study 9:00 AM
Worship Service 10:00 AM
Parsha Vayeishev

Friday, December 14

Family Kabbalat Shabbat 6:30 PM

Saturday, December 15

Torah Study 9:00 AM
Worship Service 10:00 AM
Parsha Mikeitz - Shabbat Chanukah

Friday, December 21

Kabbalat Shabbat Service 7:30 PM

Saturday, December 22

Torah Study 9:00 AM
Worship Service 10:00 AM
Parsha Vayigash

Friday, December 28

Kabbalat Shabbat Service 7:30 PM

Saturday, December 29

Torah Study 9:00 AM
Worship Service 10:00 AM
Parsha Va-y'chi

Rita's Farewell

Rita Kissen recently sent a contribution and the following letter to Bet Ha'am. Nathan Szanton asked Rita if she would be willing to share her thoughts in *Chadashot*. She replied that she would be honored to do so.

Dear Friends,

This contribution will also be our farewell to Bet Ha'am, as we are relocating to Colorado in early 2013 to be near our children and grandchildren.

I discovered Bet Ha'am soon after we moved to Maine in 1990. Since then, our Congregation has been a place for me to feel at home with my spiritual, ethical, and even political beliefs. From my *Bat Mitzvah* in 2004 with Bet Ha'am's first adult *Bat Mitzvah* class to the beautiful memorial service for my mother in 2010, from the naming ceremony for my first grandchild, Benjamin (who celebrated his *Bar Mitzvah* this summer), to the honor of chanting Torah on *Yom Kippur*, Bet Ha'am has given me the opportunity to grow as a Jew, as a woman, as a spouse, as a parent and grandparent, and as a member of the human community.

So... thank you to all those who make Bet Ha'am the special place it is. I look forward to my new life as a member of *Har Shalom* in Fort Collins, but I will never forget Bet Ha'am and what you all have meant to me and my family.

Shalom,

Rita Kissen

The Social Action Committee will meet on December 12 at 7:00 PM at Bet Ha'am.

All are welcome.

Adult Library News

With Religious School and adult learning classes well underway, there has been a lot of activity in the library. Since the last newsletter, 19 families have become library cardholders, and both borrowing and browsing of books have increased.

Thanks to:

Jeremy Moser for donating the LED lamp that attaches to the laptop for easier reading when looking up information on Patron Search.

Katherine Otterson for digitizing the early congregational newsletters for our archives.

Michelle Drucker for donating *Judaism, Religion and Ethics* by Meyer Waxman, *Israel, the View from Masada* by Ronald Sanders, *The Bar Mitzvah Book*, Moira Paterson, editor, and a folktale book for the children's basket.

Attention adult Hebrew students:

The library has three different sets of Hebrew language learning cds/tapes that you can borrow. You can find them on the shelves in the PJ section.

What congregants are reading:

1. *In One Era & Out the Other* by Sam Levenson (call # PN 2287 Lev)
2. *Three Centuries of Jewish Life in America* by Carl Lowe (call # E 184 Low)
3. *One Destiny, an Epistle to the Christians* by Sholem Asch (call # BM 535 Asc)
4. *Judaism and Christianity, the Differences* by Trude Weiss-Rosmarin (call # BM 535 Wei)

Please consider a donation to the Adult Library when celebrating a *simcha* or remembering a loved one's *yahrzeit*. Your contribution will be used to purchase new books for the collection.

Happy Chanukah from the Adult Library Committee!

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING SURVEY IS NOW AVAILABLE!

Watch your mailbox and email for details. The survey will take only 10-15 minutes of your time, so fill it out soon. Each person who completes a survey will be entered in a drawing to win a dinner for six cooked by Rabbi Saks!

Everyone in your household, age thirteen and older, Jewish or non-Jewish, is invited to complete a survey. LET US HEAR YOUR VOICES!

Welcome New Members

Aaron & Romy Weiss

Welcome Back

Wendy & Carlton Lewis

Kabbalat Panim

Kabbalat Panim 2.0: new improvements based on your feedback

Since late spring, the Membership Committee has been test-piloting a new initiative on Friday nights called *Kabbalat Panim*, which means "welcoming faces" in Hebrew. The intention is to create a space and time before services for congregants, visitors, and the rabbi to connect with one another - to chat and share light refreshments. *Kabbalat Panim* also allows people to release the pressures and stress they may be feeling from the week by connecting with friends and meeting new people. This time together before services builds an anticipation of welcoming Shabbat.

Of course, anyone who prefers to enter the sanctuary directly is welcome to do so; participation in *Kabbalat Panim* is strictly voluntary. For some, preparing for Shabbat means connecting with people, and for others, it is a time for quiet reflection at the end of the week. Our hope is to create ways for both needs to be respected and met.

As with all new things, we have had some logistical wrinkles to smooth out. We solicited feedback from *Kabbalat Panim* attendees and received some very thoughtful, insightful input. At our last Membership Committee meeting we discussed ways to make positive changes to incorporate the suggestions we heard.

One change is that *Kabbalat Panim* will take place in the Library instead of the Social Hall. We feel the Library provides a cozy, welcoming space to connect.

Also, *Kabbalat Panim* will occur monthly instead of weekly. We hope you will join us at our next *Kabbalat Panim* on December 14 at 6:00 PM, before the Family *Chanukah* service. After that, we will hold *Kabbalat Panim* on the fourth Friday of each month, beginning January 25 at 7:00 PM.

We hope these changes will strengthen the *Kabbalat Panim* experience and our community. We are looking forward to welcoming more Bet Ha'am faces throughout the winter!

Please mark your calendars

Congregation Bet Ha'am's Starry Night Silent Auction and Gala

Saturday, April 6, 2013
Cocktails, Catered Dinner, Dancing and Live Music

Honoring Ken Lehman for his many years of exemplary service to Bet Ha'am, including his long tenure as a Board member and officer, co-chair of the Capital Campaign, and being an all-around mensch.

Interested in volunteering for this event?
Please contact Deb Stone at deborah@LMStone.com or
Sherri Carignan at simcha@maine.rr.com

Starry Night 2013
Congregation Bet Ha'am

Join the Bet Ha'am Donor Gallery

We invite you to join the Bet Ha'am Donor Gallery today! We have many needs and many ways for you to contribute. If you have an event you would like to celebrate, a person you would like to honor, a *yahrzeit* to remember, or you just want to help support our programs, please fill out the form and send it along with your check to Bet Ha'am. Include an address if you would like an acknowledgement to be sent.

Our Donor Gallery listing should read:

Please acknowledge to: _____

Your name: _____

Check enclosed for \$ _____

Fund choice (please check one):

- Annual Fund
 General Fund
 Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
 Adult Library Fund
 Berkowitz Open Door Fund
 Building Capital Campaign
 Cohen Fund for Worship & Learning
 Goldfinger Fund for Israel Travel
 Religious School Library Fund
 Rosalyne S. & Sumner T. Bernstein
 Scholar in Residence Fund
 Sandmel Education Fund
 Tutor Fund
 Youth Fund

Bet Ha'am Donor Gallery

We thank our generous contributors

Annual Fund

- Maxine Sclar
- Sherrie Bergman & Donald Quaid
- Susan Horowitz & Gail Kass
- Randi Gelfman
- Kim Williams
- Albert & Christiane Shems
- Harry Todtman & Celie Althoff

Capital Campaign

- In memory of Sheila Ravitch Giltitz by Lee & Jamie Broder
- In appreciation of Sharon & Perry Newman for their beautiful music by Martha & Peter Ollove

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

- In deep appreciation to Rabbi Saks and Bet Ha'am by Asherah Cinnamon & Ron Breazeale
- In memory of Eveyn Rosenthal on her *yahrzeit* by Robert & Rona Rosenthal
- In memory of Ronald Moritz on his *yahrzeit* by Faith Moritz & Janet Jones
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks during a difficult time by Steve & Elaine Smith
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks by the Zack family
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks as Emma became *Bat Mitzvah* by Lee & Lisa Tabenken
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks for all his help as Amy became *Bat Mitzvah* by Martha & Peter Ollove

General Fund

- In appreciation of High Holy Day services by Lauren Dietlin
- In appreciation of High Holy Day services by Linda Ciborowski
- In memory of Saul Polisner on his *yahrzeit* by Duane & Evie Polisner
- In memory of Sonja Messerschmidt on her *yahrzeit* by Evie & Duane Polisner
- In appreciation of High Holy Day services by Marc Lerman
- In appreciation of High Holy Day services by Judi & Stephen Clifford
- In honor of Zack, Noah & Ethan Stern Hayes by Alfred & Eileen Stern

- In appreciation by anonymous
- In memory of grandfather, Max Weinberg, on his *yahrzeit* by Ginger & Ray Spiro
- In memory of aunt, Ruth Klein, on her *yahrzeit* by Ginger & Ray Spiro
- In memory of Ben Romanow by Carl Lerman & family
- In memory of Russ Bornstein by Carl Lerman & family
- In appreciation of the Caring Committee for their support on the loss of Roger Smith by Stephen & Elaine Smith
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks by the Zack family
- In appreciation of High Holy Day services by Robert & Sylvia Kaufman
- In appreciation of Avis Smith for her help as Emma became *Bat Mitzvah* by Lee & Lisa Tabenken
- In appreciation of Toby Rosenberg for Emma's beautiful *Kiddush* cup by Lee & Lisa Tabenken
- In appreciation of Perry & Sharon Newman for their beautiful music by Lee & Lisa Tabenken
- In appreciation of Jane Snerson for all she does by Lee & Lisa Tabenken
- In appreciation of Toby Rosenberg for Amy's beautiful *Kiddush* cup by Martha & Peter Ollove
- In appreciation of Jane Snerson, Chris Skidgel & Kris Dorer for keeping our synagogue running smoothly by Martha & Peter Ollove

Goldfinger Fund for Israel Travel

- In memory of Jerry Schneit, Alan's father, by Lois Kaplan
- In memory of Alan Schneit's father, Jerry, by Mark & Norma Filler
- In memory of Howard Glass's mother by Jeremy Moser & Laura Kittle
- In memory of Barbara Riegelhaupt's father by Jeremy Moser & Laura Kittle

Religious School Library Fund

- To honor Orly Biggie and all the Religious School teachers by Martha & Peter Ollove

Sandmel Education Fund

- In memory of Howard Glass's mother by Orly Biggie
- In memory of Barbara Riegelhaupt's father by Orly Biggie

DECEMBER 2012

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM
2 Grades 1-6 Religious School 9-12:00 Noon Grade 11-12 meeting 5:00-6:30 PM Grades 7-10 Religious School	3 Office Closed	4	5 Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM	6	7 <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Service 7:30 PM	8 Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM <i>Erev Chanukah</i>
9 Grades 1-6 Religious School 9-12:00 Noon Adult Beginning Hebrew 9:40 AM Knitting/Crocheting 10:00 AM <i>Chanukah</i> candle 2	10 Office Closed <i>Chanukah</i> candle 3	11 <i>Chanukah</i> candle 4	12 Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM Social Action Committee 7:00 PM <i>Chanukah</i> candle 5	13 <i>Chanukah</i> candle 6	14 <i>Kabbalat Panim</i> 6:00 PM Family <i>Kabbalat</i> <i>Shabbat</i> Service 6:30 PM <i>Chanukah</i> candle 7	15 Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM <i>Chanukah</i> candle 8
16 Grades 1-6 Religious School 9-12:00 Noon Grades 7-10 Religious School 5-7:30 PM	17 Office Closed	18 Board Meeting 6:30 PM	19 Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM	20	21 <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Service 7:30 PM	22 Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM
23 No Religious School	24 Office Closed	25	26 Morning <i>Minyan</i> 7:00 AM	27	28 <i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Service 7:30 PM	29 Torah Study 9:00 AM Worship Service 10:00 AM
30 No Religious School	31 Office Closed					