

HaShomer

JUNE 2009

Congregation Beth Shalom

SIVAN/TAMMUZ 5769

Schedule of Services

June 2009

Sivan/Tammuz 5769

Friday, June 5, 8:00 pm

Simcha Service

Saturday, June 6

Torah Study 9:00 am

Shabbat Service 10:00 am

Torah: Nasso

Friday, June 12, 8:00 pm

Saturday, June 13

Torah Study 9:00 am

Shabbat Service 10:00 am

Torah: Beha'alotcha

Friday, June 19

Tot Shabbat 6:00 pm

Shabbat Service 7:30 pm

Saturday, June 20

Torah Study 9:00 am

Shabbat Service 10:00 am

Torah: Sh'lach

Sunday, June 21, 6:00 pm

Rabbi and Mary Soltz's

Farewell Dinner

Tuesday, June 23, 7:00 am

Rosh Chodesh Tamuz Minyan

Rabbi Soltz' Last Services at CBS

Friday, June 26, 8:00 pm

Saturday, June 27

Torah Study 9:00 am

Shabbat Service 10:00 am

Torah: Korach

Note: Beginning July 3, and until further notice, all services will move to the assembly room in the religious school building and Friday night services will begin at 6:30 p.m. Also, effective July 6, and continuing until further notice, the Congregation Beth Shalom office will be closed on Mondays.

From the Rabbi

What's a Rabbi Emeritus?

On June 30, I become Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation Beth Shalom. I just wanted to use this opportunity to define my new relationship with the congregation.

When I announced my retirement two years ago, I was also conferred the title Rabbi Emeritus. Essentially, that does not mean that I am leaving Congregation Beth Shalom. The nature of the relationship changes from that of full-time rabbi to one of an ongoing, almost "senior-statesman"-like role.

As Rabbi Emeritus, I will be writing a message for the High Holy Days, and no doubt other times during the year. As Rabbi Emeritus, my name and title are included on the congregation's letterhead and all publications of the congregation.

There is one major difference - I am not here physically, but always with you emotionally and spiritually. The Rabbi Emeritus is often asked by families to partake in life-cycle events, as I will be doing this fall at the wedding of a child of our congregation.

The Rabbi Emeritus is available even at long distances for whatever needs congregants may have. Where the Rabbi Emeritus is being succeeded by another rabbi, it is my responsibility to be supportive of the new rabbi, and not to interfere in any way with that rabbi's development of relationships with members.

As I retire and anticipate a very different future, so do I wish Congregation Beth Shalom the strength and determination to chart your future, knowing that it is very much within your own hands.

May your families be blessed with health and prosperity even as we move into the future.

– Rabbi Ned J. Soltz



Views from Kabbalah:

The History of Kabbalah and The Zohar - Part II

The second major development in Kabbalah occurred in 16th-century Safed during the time of Rabbi Yitzhak Luria, known as "the Ari". The Ari (lion in Hebrew) created the transition between the first stage of Kabbalah's development (discussed in last month's column) represented in The Zohar, and the third stage Kabbalah of modern times. The pure language of Kabbalah appeared for the first time in the writings based on the teachings of the Ari.

The Ari was born in Jerusalem in 1534. As a child, after the death of his father, he was taken by his mother to live with his uncle in Egypt. In Egypt, he became a successful young merchant,

but devoted most of his time to the study of Kabbalah.

A legend (as you know by now, the history of Kabbalah includes quite a few of those) tells that the Ari spent seven years in isolation on the island of Roda in the Nile, where he studied The Zohar and other books by the early Kabbalists, as well as the writings of Rabbi Moshe Cordovero, known as "the Ramak", (a Rabbi of the Ari's generation).

In 1570, the Ari arrived in Safed as a young man. Despite his youth, he had already achieved a reputation for his knowledge of Kabbalah. He was accepted as a leader and a teacher in this

Continued on page 2 . . .

From the President

It's now summertime and the livin' is easy. Seasons help us mark the passage of time with their own particular rhythms. With Congregation Beth Shalom, the seasonal change unfolds as religious school closes out another successful year, adult education concludes for the semester, Camp Impact gets underway, and services move to the religious school assembly room for the summer.

However, this summer will be unlike summers past. For, while we are normally without Rabbi Soltz for the month of July (as he studies in Israel), this July marks the end of his eight-year tenure with our congregation and the Tarrant County Jewish community at large.



While I do not know the Rabbi and Mary's future plans as of this writing, I do know this: Rabbi Soltz will become Rabbi Emeritus upon retiring, the Soltz's will be relocating somewhere in the Northeast, and the reality of their imminent departure is starting to sink in.

Rabbi Ned and Mary have laughed, cried, prayed, celebrated, visited, fundraised, taught and learned from and with our community from day one, and have left an indelible impression that will not be soon forgotten. I hope that the community will join Andrea and me on **Sunday, June 21**, as we honor Rabbi and Mary as a congregation for their many years of dedicated service.

And yet, while we are saddened and bid the Soltzs a fond farewell and best wishes for their future, we are equally excited about our future and the possibilities that it brings. Cantoral intern Sheri Allen brings her own skill set, ideas, and energy to the table as she works in concert (pun intended!) with the Ritual Committee to evolve our service structure.

Programs and classes are being discussed and planned as we define and refine the three components of our synagogue: Beit Tefillah (House of Prayer), Beit Midrash (House of Study), and Beit Knesset (House of Assembly). Congregation Beth Shalom will continue to inspire and elevate our community, spreading the light of Yiddishkeit throughout the mid-cities area.

In closing, while we are saddened and nervous by the closing of the Rabbi Soltz chapter of Beth Shalom's history, we are equally excited and optimistic as we turn the page...
B'Shalom,

– *Stuart Snow, President
Congregation Beth Shalom*



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Views from Kabbalah

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highly developed community of Kabbalists. During the time of the Ari in Safed, the study of the Zohar started openly for the first time; it continued and prospered for the following 200 years.

The Ari did not document any of his teachings. His disciple, Rabbi Chaim Vital documented the answers to many of the questions raised during his one-and-a-half years of studies with the Ari. Rabbi Chaim Vital was the only one the Ari considered qualified to document his teachings.

Some of the writings based on the Ari's teachings include *Etz Hachayim* (The Tree of Life), *Sha'ar HaKavanot* (The Gateway of Intentions), and *Sha'ar Ha'Gilgulim* (The Gateway of Reincarnations).

The Ari died in 1572 at the young age of 38. The writings based on his teaching were archived and kept with restricted access (according to his last wish) in order not to reveal the method before the time was ripe. Up to the end of the Ari's time, the great Kabbalists developed and taught Kabbalah only to the selected few. (We will address the topic of who can study Kabbalah in the next column.)

Therefore, Kabbalists often hid or even burned some of their writings which they considered premature for their times. Consequently, it was not surprising that Rabbi Chaim Vital ordered some of his writings of the Ari's method to be hidden or buried with him.

A portion was handed down to Rabbi Vital's son who edited *The Eight Gates*. Later, a group of scholars headed by Rabbi Vital's grandson removed another portion of writings from Rabbi Vital's grave.

During the period of the Hassidim (1750 CE - 1850 CE), almost every great rabbi was a Kabbalist regardless of their affiliations, among them the leader of the Mitnagdim, the Vilna Gaon, as well as the leader of the Hassidim, the Baal Shem Tov.

The subsequent 50-year period until the early 20th century was a time of significant decline for Kabbalah, almost to the point of extinction. This was a result of the significant changes that took place all over Europe and the severe impacts they had on the Jewish community.

In Western Europe, the emancipation of Jews led to either assimilation or at least to an attempt by Jews to distance themselves from anything that could be viewed as less than totally rationalist. At the same time, the Jews of Eastern Eu-

Continued on next page . . .

CBS Mission Statement:

Congregation Beth Shalom is a Reform Jewish community; warm and caring, welcoming of all, rich in tradition, committed to G-d and Israel, devoted to life-long learning, Jewish programs and spiritual growth.

CBS Vision Statement:

Congregation Beth Shalom strives to be the center for strong Jewish spiritual growth in the Mid-Cities community, where our members engage in the study of Torah, the warmth and friendship that evolves through our Jewish way of life, and our commitment to Tikkun Olam.

Views from Kabbalah

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rope, for the first time, suffered harsh persecutions and significant dislocations.

The third period in the development of Kabbalah started in the early 20th century with Rabbi Yehuda Ashlag. His commentaries on The Zohar, called *Sulam* (ladder in Hebrew) of *The Zohar*, gave him the name Baal HaSulam. His interpretations/translations of the writings from the Ari were written to meet the needs of the modern era.

Baal HaSulam was born in 1885 in Lodz, Poland. In his youth, he gained not only a deep knowledge of the Talmud, but also studied Kabbalah with a rabbi from the nearby town of Purzov. His deep knowledge and intellect as a young man were recognized and he was appointed a judge and a teacher by the highly developed Jewish community of Warsaw.

In 1921, he immigrated to Israel and became the rabbi of Givat Shaul in Jerusalem. In 1943 he was already in the

process of developing his own Kabbalah doctrine, when he started the *Sulam of The Zohar*, which he completed in 1953. He died the following year and was buried in Jerusalem.

Baal HaSulam is the recognized Kabbalist leader of our times. He is the only one in the modern era who wrote comprehensive and updated commentaries on The Zohar and of the writings of the Ari.

– Dr. Jossef Perl

Sources:

www.kabbalah.info: Interactive online classes in true Kabbalah (in English) based on the writings of Rabbi Shimeon Bar Yochai (Zohar), Ari, and Baal Hassulam.

www.kab.tv/eng/: A TV channel with English translation from Hebrew, which provides Kabbalah-related programs, including discussions, lessons, music, children's programs, women's programs, and more.

Why Do Good People Suffer?

I was reading a book review in a magazine last month and went straight to my computer and ordered two books from Amazon by Bart D. Ehrman. From the review, I could see that Mr. Ehrman shared my view of life. He was a born-again Christian who did his undergraduate studies at a fundamentalist bible college to train for the ministry.

He finished his bachelor's degree at an evangelical Christian college where he committed much of the New Testament to memory. Ehrman then went to Princeton for his Master of Divinity degree and also a Ph.D. in New Testament studies.

In his own words: "...for a year I was a pastor of the Princeton Baptist Church, preaching every Sunday morning, holding prayer groups and Bible studies, visiting the sick in the hospital, and performing the regular pastoral duties for the community."

You may wonder why a man with this background would interest a 77-year-old Jew who maintains memberships in three different synagogues. Of course, he builds his philosophy from his bible study in English, Hebrew, and Greek.

It is presumptuous of me to compare myself to him, but for some reason we both made a turn in our religious views because we both saw suffering in the world that was supposed to be watched over by an all-powerful, loving God. We both asked ourselves how a loving God would let innocent children suffer from hunger, disease, and war.

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Congregation Beth Shalom Sisterhood Gift Shop

*The Sisterhood Gift Shop
Will be Open by Appointment Only
During the Summer. To Make an
Appointment, Call the CBS Office.*

Kabbalah Class

We want to determine the level of interest in a Kabbalah class as part of next year's Adult Education program. Classes would be held on Saturday or Sunday afternoons. If you have a **strong** interest in attending such a class, contact Mark Schwartz at 817-788-8075, or idoc35@hotmail.com.

Thank You for Saving Box Tops for Education!

Your clippings have brought us \$172.20 in earnings for our school.
Keep up the good work!

Coming Events:

June 5 - Simcha Shabbat

June 6 - Sisterhood Installation

June 8-12 - Camp Impact

June 21 - Rabbi and Mary Soltz Farewell Dinner

June 26-27 - Rabbi Soltz's Last Shabbat Services

ADVANTAGE EYECARE

**MARK SCHWARTZ, O.D.
ARLENE SCHWARTZ, O.D**

MAYFAIR VILLAGE
724 GRAPEVINE HWY.
HURST, TEXAS 76054
817-788-2020

If you can't read this, you need to see us.

Yiddishkeit

Retaining a sense of Jewishness

As the announcer on *Sesame Street* says, this show has been brought to you by the letter "W", or more specifically, www. Here are some Jewish-oriented web sites I have found of interest.

Books: www.myjewishbooks.com. This is a terrific site with monthly updates on books, as well as quarterly lists of books being released, speciality books, and lists of blogs. www.jbooks.com, www.jewishbookcouncil.com.

Music: www.jewishmusicstore.com, www.jtunes.com, www.mostlymusic.com, www.cdbaby.com. Look under the categories "Jewish", or "klesmer", or "Spiritual". www.jewishjukebox.com, www.jewishmusic.com, www.shemspeed.com.

Culture: www.jvoices.com, progressive Jewish thought. www.jta.org, news and analysis. www.shma.com, independent dialogue on Jewish thought. www.myjewishlearning.com. www.jewishculture.org, supports artists/scholars who explore the fabric of Jewish life. www.jvibe.com, Jewish emag for teens. <http://forward.com/>.

Controversial: www.heebmagazine.com. Let's just say this magazine is like circumcision - uncomfortable, but very Jewish. www.jewey.com, hard to describe. www.jstreet.com, political.

Humor: www.jewlarious.com, www.jewlicious.com, www.harvth.com/humorlink.htm, www.littleblogofjewishhumor.org, www.jewishpath.org/reststop.html.

And my favorite web site, www.nextbook.com, which is having a redo of their web page.

– Dr. K
oygevalt@sbcglobal.net

CBS Sisterhood thanks Rabbi and Mary Soltz for all their hard work and active support for Sisterhood over the past nine years!

Daytimers Presents:

**"Kids Who Care"
come to Daytimers**

**Wednesday, June 10, 12:00 noon
at Beth-El Congregation**

Kids Who Care fills any room with fresh energy and hope. Founding director Deborah Jung will join us with members (ages 6-18) of the current Kids Who Care Resident Company

Luncheon, catered by Boopa's Bagel Deli, \$9.00
Program only, \$4.00 per person

For information/reservations contact: Barbara Rubin, 817-927-2736, or Sylvia Wexler, 817-294-1129.
The Sylvia Wolens Jewish Daytimers is a program of Beth-El Congregation with support from the Jewish Federation.

Why Do Good People Suffer?

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I have thought of the Holocaust where people were tortured and murdered for being Jewish and asked, "Where was God?" Ehrman took it much further by including children in wars, the current turmoil in Darfur as well as Cambodia, Rawanda, and many other examples of needless suffering.

Speaking of the New Testament, Ehrman says that scholars have known for 200 years that the Christian bible is a compilation of stories by many different authors that were told for thousands of years to sell a particular brand of religion. Anti-Semitism is a part of this continuing story meant to discredit the Jews who could not believe in Jesus.

Christian ministers have been taught about the man-made source of the bible stories when they studied in college, but they fail to mention these theories when they preach to their congregations. He cites many examples, such as stories of Jesus' death that differ in separate Gospels.

Jews shouldn't be too smug about this, since computer analysis of the Torah shows changes of grammar and language that tell us that it was written in different times by different people. It is hard to believe the religious view that the world is only 6,000 years old when archeologists have proof that the world is millions of years old.

Many years ago, I read the book by Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*. Kushner says that God can not control bad things happening, and that he suffers with humans. This is used as consolation to people who have suffered tragedy. If this concept makes you feel better, it has some value, but I just can't believe it. It doesn't even agree with the picture of an all-powerful God that we have been taught in Sunday School.

What I believe is that Judaism has been a light to the world. Our religion has given the world a code of behavior that allows people to live together in modern society. It has given the world the first mandatory education for children, boys and girls.

Christianity and Islam draw much from Judaism. There is much to recommend that we raise our children as Jews and pass on the faith that started our modern civilization. There is much in Judaism that makes our lives better, and membership in a congregation offers much to life in this modern world. It is sure cheaper than a country club.

– Sherwin Rubin

Don't Miss:

**Rabbi and Mary Soltz's
Tribute Dinner - Sunday, June 21.**

After eight years as spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Shalom and 36 years as an ordained rabbi, Rabbi Ned Soltz will retire on June 30, and become Rabbi Emeritus of our congregation.

Contact the CBS office for more information, or to make reservations for this very special evening. Rabbi Soltz will conduct his last Friday evening service on June 26th, and his last Saturday morning service, June 27.

Donations

(Received prior to May 16)

BUILDING FUND

In memory of David Suissa
from Nora and Todd Bushlow

ONEG/KIDDUSH FUND

In memory of Sylvia Gray
from Randall Gray
In memory of Jerome Snow
from Andrea and Stuart Snow
In memory of Ralph Glickman
from Karen and John Blair

EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Ralph Glickman
from Karen and John Blair

MORTGAGE REDUCTION FUND

In memory of Sylvia Gray
from Randall Gray

RICHARD WENOKUR MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In memory of Jerome Snow
from Andrea and Stuart Snow

CAMP IMPACT FUND

In memory of Harvey Steinberg
from Cookie and Phil Kabakoff
In memory of David Poster
from Sheila Poster

Birthdays

June 1

Emily Plaistow
Phoebe San Antonio

June 3

Scott Sherwin

June 4

Sue Brezinsky
Shelley Jessup

June 5

Michael Kapin
Ean Robertson
Randy San Antonio
Chase Sondecker

June 6

Laurakai Cagan
Christy Rousch

June 7

Janet Aaronson
Toni Epstein

June 8

David Barr
Ryan Dickman

June 10

Alana Wallace

June 13

Frances Gratch
Miranda Paul

June 14

Alan Weiner

June 16

Rachel Cohen

June 19

Cookie Kabakoff
Arlene Schwartz

June 20

Janette Moyal
Sharon Wenokur

June 22

Mayli Heistein

June 25

Christopher Thomas

June 26

Larry Brunell
Amelia Walcek

June 27

Leah Kreindler

June 28

Nora Bushlow
Sarita Cabrero

Anniversaries

June 1

Klila & Brian Caplan (40)
Lynda & Jeffrey Friedensohn
Fran & Eric Kreindler

June 4

Terri & Jim Kravetz

June 9

Christy & Daniel Rousch

June 16

Ellen & Lewis Pincus

June 22

Billye & Steve Burke

June 23

Lee & Phil Landsberg

June 24

Karen & John Blair
Michelle & Jay Feinberg (30)
Randy & Jerry Paul (5)

June 26

Seena & Barry Stevens

June 27

Linda & Spence Barasch
Pam & Alan Weiner

June 30

Boris Shtreyzman &
Faina Sandler (30)

Yahrzeits

May 29-30

Ralph Glickman
Richard Wenokur*
Mary Kulakoff*
Daniel Lucas*
Gertrude Oxman*
Bernard Loveman
Irving J. Shapiro*
Timi Rousch
Samuel Price*
Richard Easton
Herbert Freeman

June 5-6

Lea Guetta
Jan Stanton*
Rona Horton
Obbie Lewis*
Bennett Dorfman*
Paula Miskin
Cecil Gardner*

June 12-13

Eugene Egyes
Theodore Fernand
Lee Kornitzky*
Harvey Milton Millstone*
Isadore "Tim" Binder*
Samuel Kramer*
George Sondecker
Evelyn Theodora Dube*
Norman Bailin
Norman Al Sonenthal*
Ruth Weiss*
Rebecca Zamichow
Ruth Weiger
Sheldon Konigsberg

June 19-20

Shula Konigsberg
John San Antonio
Selma Waetzman
Bert Coller
Dan H. Ratner*
Fred Schubach
Mildred Aaronson*
Eleanor Schwartz*
Ellen Jane Milord*
Arthur Leon Rubin*
Bernard Adinoff
Lisa Lynn Gershkoff*
Alvin Goldberg*
Joe Goodman

June 26-27

Charles Aaronson*
P.D. Johnson*
Frances Weiner*
Helen Brunell
Sam Weiner*
Bruce Geller
Thomas Buckel
Erica Hochster*
Abraham Preisler*
Myer Shaw*
Goldie Kligman Binder*
Bernard Craden
Bailey Gardner*
Harry Wichter*
Joseph Zamichow
Fanny Kreisberg
Harold Morgan
Eleanor Posnock*

* Memorial Plaque in Sanctuary

We rely on you to let us know when a member of Beth Shalom has celebrated a simcha, endured a loss, or is ill.

Please call the office 817-860-5448, or email to janetaa@bethshalom.org.

The Congregation records with sorrow, the passing of:

David Suissa,
Beloved uncle of Iris Jeffreys

Ken Sasley,
Beloved father of Brent Sasley

Sisterhood

2008-2009 Report Card

These are the activities and events sponsored by Sisterhood this past year. Every single member helped Sisterhood make a difference in the life of Congregation Beth Shalom. Together, we can do what no one woman can do alone!

For Our Synagogue

- Refreshed family room
- Judaica Shop
- Rosh HaShana Oneg
- Yom Kippur Break-the-Fast
- Sisterhood/Brotherhood Shabbat
- Appetizers and Gift Shop donations for the Gala
- Parenting Classes with Dr. Carole Rogers
- Financial Gift to the Rabbi Endowment Fund
- A copy of *The Torah: A Woman's Commentary* for the library
- Addition of a Sisterhood page to the CBS website
- Rosh HaShana and Anniversary Cards

For Our Youth

- Transportation for ARFTY to attend meetings with other Jewish youth
- Financial Gift to Camp Impact
- Lunches made by ARFTY for the Life Shelter
- Tots Movie Night and Havdallah
- B'nai Mitzvah and Confirmation Gifts to celebrate religious milestones
- Latkes and candle-making supplies for the Religious School Chanukah Workshop
- The Jump House and Balloon Man for our children's Chanukah and Purim Celebrations
- Hamentaschen and Ice Cream for the Purim Carnival
- Traditional Pesach foods and supplies so our children can model the Seder meal

For Ourselves

- Chocolate Party
- Luncheon and review by Rabbi Ned Soltz of the book *The History of Love*
- Luncheon with Pat Blum, President, SW District WRJ
- Night at the Bass to see *Mamma Mia*
- Round challah baking workshop
- Card-making workshops
- WRJ National Leadership Training in New Orleans
- Such Fund-RAising projects as gift wrapping at the mall
- Installation Dinner

For Our Local Police

- "Thank You" cookies for High Holy Day protection of the CBS campus

For Our Worldwide Community through WRJ

- Support of rabbinical and cantorial education; NFTY; social justice programs for women and children; food for needy children; nursery schools in Israel