



Congregation Beth Mordecai

A Jewish Home for the Soul

June 2016

Iyar/Sivan 5776

Tikkun Leil Shavuot - Teachings on Leadership

Saturday, June 11 - 9:30pm - Congregation Beth Mordecai

Join us for an ALL NIGHT learning event in honor of the holiday of Shavuot, when the Jewish people received the Torah at Mount Sinai. This year's primary topic, just in time for the election:

Leadership ~ Responsibilities of Leaders and Society ~

What do Jewish sources have to say on the responsibilities that leaders have to the people they trying to lead? What responsibilities does society have to support its leaders?

Join us for this fascinating conversation on the nature of leadership in the Jewish tradition AND stay through the night for lots of learning opportunities on a host of great topics. CHEESECAKE and COFFEE will be offered throughout the night. RSVP to Rabbi Saks.

Shavuot Services (+Yizkor)

Sunday, June 12 - 10:00am - Congregation Beth Mordecai

Join us for the first day of Shavuot services including the reading of the 10 Commandments and the recitation of the YIZKOR service. RSVP to Rabbi Saks.

SHAVUOT

celebrate
shabbat
by the sea



Friday, June 24

6:30pm

The Gazebo at Bayside Park

Join us as we begin another summer of beautiful and inspiring Shabbat by the Sea services. Our first of 2016: Caring for One Another. We will explore how our tradition teaches us to care for one another as our member, Fred Bernhardt, shares stories of his experience as a caregiver.

Catered dinner included!

Please RSVP by June 22nd to the office.

To be a Season Supporter to offset the cost of Shabbat by the Sea events, please contact Rabbi Saks.

ANNUAL MEETING 2016

CONGREGATION BETH MORDECAI
SUNDAY, JUNE 26 10am



Congregation Beth Mordecai

Established 1897

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Committee Contacts

Caring	Sherry Weber	908.451.9708
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	David Bennett	732.494.9029
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	Jeremy Strauss	732.331.4049
Strategic Planning	Marc Fertik	732.390.3348
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Acknowledge the Occasion through Beth Mordecai

"Tzedaka is equal in importance to all other commandments combined."
-Talmud

**I am pleased to make a contribution of \$ _____
to the following fund...**

- ☐ **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**
Allows the rabbi to support special programs and individuals in need.
- ☐ **General Fund**
Applied to the operating budget of the congregation.
- ☐ **Friday Night Oneg Fund**
Used for cookies and other noshes following Friday night services.
A contribution of \$75 supports one oneg.
- ☐ **Shabbat Morning Kiddush Fund**
Used for luncheons and noshes following Saturday morning services.
A contribution of \$125 supports one Kiddush.

...in honor, memory or appreciation of:

My Information:

Name _____
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**Please send this contribution form and check directly to the synagogue office.
Checks should be made payable to "Congregation Beth Mordecai".**

DONATE NOW

Secure Donations
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**Contributions to the above listed funds may
also be made on the synagogue website
through our secure PayPal link.**

*Thank you for your generous and thoughtful support of our funds
which are used to enrich & invigorate our community.
Todah Rabbah - many thanks to you all!*

General Fund Donations

Barbara & Mitchel Berman, in honor of the anniversary
of Cheryl August's Haftarah
Bea Kriegsmann, in appreciation of buying chametz

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund Donations

Ann & Gary Blog
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Does a Ringing Telephone Have to be So Annoying?



If something is important, it contributes to your mission, your values, your high priority goals...if we don't have a clear idea of what is important, of the results we desire in our lives, we are easily diverted into responding to the urgent.

(Stephen Covey, Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, p. 151)

[The Sabbath] is a day on which hours do not oust one another...the seventh day is like a palace in time with a kingdom for all. It is not a date, but an atmosphere.

(Heschel, The Sabbath, p. 21)

Have you ever noticed that a telephone ring is really annoying? I don't know about you, but whether it's a traditional ring, a screaming ringtone, or a gentle buzz, it doesn't matter; there is something about a telephone ringing that forces me to have to answer it even if I'm in the middle of something very important. And that biological response to pick up a ringing telephone as if my life depended upon it, well I find it really annoying.

The urgency we feel in responding to a ringing telephone (or a crying baby, a shout from a loved one, or any sound that arrests our attention) is built into our DNA, as if our survival depended upon it. In fact, I wonder how many of us often use "urgency" - the pressing need to get something done - as a means for accomplishing our tasks. I know I'm guilty of needing to feel like my back is up against the wall in order to get my best work done. Whether it's an impending deadline or a call that needs an immediate response, feeling a sense of urgency triggers an extra spark of energy and clarity that helps me get things done well.

But it's so stressful.

You know those days when you feel like you're running from thing to thing without a chance to breathe? Those days may be exhilarating, but they're exhausting. You feel like you got a lot done, but by the end you're spent. How long can we keep it up? How far can we go if all we're doing is running without having time for thinking?

Religious wisdom, like the quote above from Heschel, has always taught us that there is great value in slowing life down. "Six days a week we seek to dominate the world, on the seventh day we try to dominate the self" (Heschel, 13). We may move quickly and forcefully when we respond to the urgent matters of the day, but do we allow the time and patience to proactively determine the important matters of life?

This past month a group of members came together as part of our Sulam project to further explore what it means to participate in and take a leadership role in the synagogue. One of the profound teachings from this lesson was that, with few exceptions like helping make a minyan for someone saying kaddish, most Jewish activities fall under the category of "important but not urgent." That is to say that when we are running through our day trying to get from thing to thing, we often don't engage with any meaningful Jewish practice or activity. But if we take a moment to think about what matters in our lives, Judaism usually comes up as something very important.

Yet because Judaism is often not very urgent, it requires time, patience, and preparation to make Judaism a meaningful part of our lives. That's the essence of the quotes above -- what matters most needs contemplation and in order to do that contemplation we need to find time when "time does not oust one another." For some of us this may be easier to consider doing as we retire and have more time on our hands. But no matter what stage we are in life, we can be easily pulled away by the annoying, biological need to respond to the telephone rings we encounter each day. Thus we all need to *make time* to turn off the ringer, to *proactively* remove our selves from responding to what's urgent in order to pursue what's important. That's what Shabbat can give us, that's what Judaism can offer us, and when we embrace those things that are important but not urgent, we'll discover that when the telephone rings again, it won't sound so annoying after all.

Kol Tuv,

Rabbi Ari Saks

got shabbat? now, shalom!



732.331.4049
straussjer@gmail.com



732.407.0821
bettymf@me.com

Friday Night Services - Open to All

Join us for spirited and lively participatory services. Each service includes elements of singing, storytelling and conversation with the community. Monthly themes:

Celebration Shabbat - May 6 - 8pm

Commemorate your birthday or anniversary in the upcoming month with a special celebration, to be followed by a Blowout Oneg Shabbat. (To sponsor an oneg contact Jeremy Strauss.)

Pardon the Interruption - June 10 - 8pm

A series of 3 conversations that interrupt the Jewish ritual service in order to understand different prayers and sections of the service on a deeper level. The conversations, each 5-7 minutes long, are thematically tied and interspersed throughout the service.

Traditional Service - June 17 - 8pm

Join us for a traditional, egalitarian service with Rabbi Saks.

Shabbat by the Sea - June 24 - 6:30pm

See description on front page.

LIGHT CANDLES		SHABBAT ENDS	
June 3	8:05pm	June 4	9:13pm
June 10	8:09pm	June 11	9:18pm
June 17	8:12pm	June 18	9:21pm
June 24	8:14pm	June 25	9:22pm

Times are specific to Perth Amboy; from Chabad.org.

Saturday Morning Services - Open to All

Connect to traditions while actively engaging in the service. There is opportunity for in-depth learning of the prayers and the Torah portion. Monthly themes:

Torah Talk - May 7 - 10am

Delve into the rich teachings of the week's Torah reading. In lieu of a formal sermon, we will pause the service after the Torah reading for a lively 10-15 minute discussion on how we can apply the wisdom of the Torah to the needs of our every day lives.

Pardon the Interruption - June 11 - 10am

See description to the left.

Current Events Sermon - June 18 - 10am

Rabbi Saks will deliver a formal sermon on a Jewish interpretation of a relevant current events topic.

Traditional Service - May 28 - 10am

Join us for a traditional, egalitarian service with Rabbi Saks.

A Schtickale of Yiddishkeit - June 25 - 9am

Learn about Jewish tradition, religion and history with an early morning sip of schnapps (optional!). In lieu of services. We'll schmooze with families from Tot Shabbat as they have a kiddie Kiddush, then learn something interesting together according to Tot Shabbat's theme for the month, and we'll wrap up with Kiddush. This program is for ALL members of Beth Mordecai, especially those who are more interested in learning & discussion than services.

Celebrate Shabbat through this fun and interactive service with songs, story time, an activity or craft (Shabbat friendly of course!), and a kiddie Kiddush.

A FREE program run by Nessa Madison, an accredited teacher, and Rabbi Saks; and designed for children ages 2-5 years old. Siblings and children of all ages are welcome.

Tot Shabbat
CONNECTING YOUNG FAMILIES TO JEWISH LIFE.



June 25 - 10:00am - Theme: Shavuot

**Ask the Rabbi**

12:00pm

Wednesdays - June 1, 8, 15, 22 & 29**Menlo Park Mall Food Court**

Have a question? Have a seat! Bring your lunch and ask the rabbi ANY question you like...seriously! First person there will get a free drink from the rabbi!

**Veterans Home Visit****Tuesdays - June 7 & 21****3:30pm**

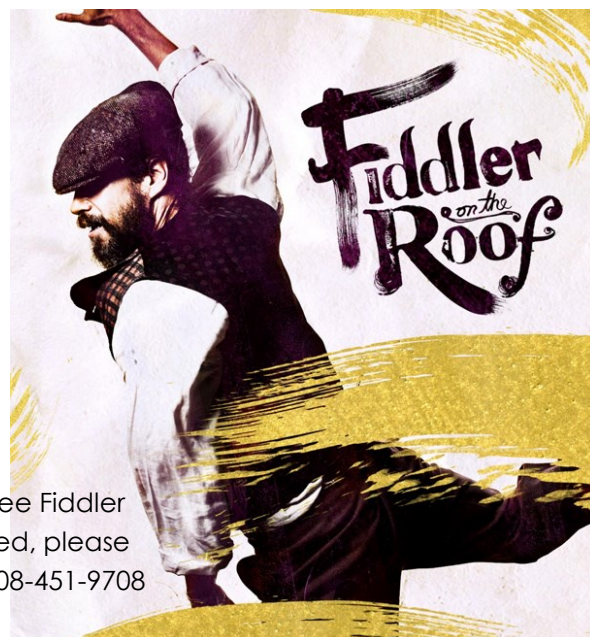
Join Rabbi Saks, the Caring Committee and other members from the Jewish Home for Your Soul to help care for Jewish veterans on Tuesday afternoons. Contact Sherry for details sweber7854@aol.com).

**Wednesdays - June 1, 15 & 29****9:30am at Panera Bread in Woodbridge**

At the suggestion of a member and in connection with our pillar of SHABBAT, Rabbi Saks will lead a book group on Abraham Joshua Heschel's "The Sabbath."

**Saturday, June 11****1pm****Location TBD****Fiddler on the Roof - on Broadway!****11:30am****Sunday - June 26****New York City**

A group of members are going to NYC to see Fiddler on the Roof on Broadway. If you're interested, please contact Sherry Weber for more details at 908-451-9708 or sweber7854@aol.com.





Aliens

A flash fiction story from the novel "People Stories in 600 Words, as Told by a Raconteur"

By Elliot Rubin

Somewhere in the Midwest the government has radio wave telescopes beaming signals into space looking for alien life.

This has been going on for decades with no luck in finding any. Then one day they received a signal back. They can't believe their eyes. They looked at the electrosopes and saw radio signals coming in.

A life-form is sending out radio signals to earth!

The supervisor called Washington and informed them of the signals.

They decide to try to decode what was beaming in.

Finally the Hubble telescope picked up visual signals.

The astronomers' figured it would take a few months before it arrived.

The electricity that was running through the halls of Washington could be felt.

What do they want? Where are they coming from? Where will they land? Are they peaceful?

Nobody knows the answers.

The president had meetings all day long with his national security advisors and with the heads of NASA.

Governments from all over the world are curious and are trying to find out more information from the United States.

Either people are panicking from fear of the unknown or are excited waiting to see what is coming.

Sidewalk preachers are forecasting the end of the world. The human race could be food for the aliens, some are saying. Just as we eat cattle, they will eat us.

Rumors flowed from people who knew nothing.

Finally the President of the United States went on television and spoke to the world.

He told everyone that we were able to decipher some of the signals from the object hurtling towards Earth.

The scientists were able to make out an object and that signals were being sent to us.

It appeared to be a white dove holding a branch.

The president said that the scientists he consulted with feel that the space craft is not hostile.

He also spoke with Russian, French, and British scientists and they all felt the same way.

As he spoke more signals were coming in and they were learning how to decipher them.

It was not an easy thing to do.

The signals were being sent in code. Dots and dashes very similar to Morse code but yet different.

The main frame computers at the Pentagon were trying to understand them. They were working twenty-four hours a day on this project. The scientists had to make sure there was a peaceful intent.

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This was going to be a first meeting with an alien life-form. There was no knowledge of how they looked or exactly what they wanted.

Finally they made a breakthrough and were able to understand everything that was being sent to Earth. They were writing in a variable of an extremely ancient language.

It seems they were here before. Many times, and many eons ago, and had left some signs behind them. But they were not found.

They said that they had even left some of their species on earth to populate and colonize the planet for future settlement.

But no one knew what they looked like.

Finally they landed in a desert area of New Mexico.

The military were there waiting as well as scientists.

Their craft had a small door that opened and a few of the space creatures walked out.

They appeared to have a humanoid form.

Dressed in reflective black clothes they also had short hair but wore long beards.

The Vice President of the United States approached to welcome them to Earth.

He extended his hand in a peaceful motion.

The alien looked him in the eye.

They stood only a few feet apart, motionless, for a moment.

Finally the space visitor opened his mouth and said... "Shalom."



Can you lend a hand?

Volunteers are needed for:

- Office Assistance
- Writing for the Bulletin
- Caring Committee Visitors
- Opening Up for Services & Events
- Shabbat Morning Coffee Set-Up
- Organizing & Sponsoring Kiddush

To help, please contact the office!

מזל טוב Mazel Tov

Birthdays	Anniversaries
Larry Deutchman	Barbara & Benjamin Block
Alyson Roy	Felice & Larry Gruber
Sandra Sher	Anita & Bob Krentar
Norma Witkin	Kari & Scott Gursky

Next Bulletin
Deadline
June 20

submit your
NEWS
or
EVENT



A DONATION HAS BEEN MADE TO THE SYNAGOGUE BY:

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MAY THEIR MEMORY BE FOR A BLESSING.

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Who Do I Call?

In the case of a death, call a medical authority, the funeral home and then the synagogue: **Rabbi Ari Saks | 732.442.2431 or 732.442.1373 | ari.saks@gmail.com**

Scholar~in~Residence Weekend

Thank You for Your Support!

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Cheryl August

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JUNE

- | | |
|--|---|
| 01 9:30am - Book Group | 22 12:00pm - Ask the Rabbi |
| 01 12:00pm - Ask the Rabbi | 24 6:30pm - Shabbat by the Sea (with Fred's story) |
| 03 8:00pm - Shabbat Services | 25 9:00am - Shabbat Services - Shtickale of Yiddshkeit |
| 07 3:30pm - Veteran's Home Visit | 25 10:00am - Tot Shabbat Services |
| 08 12:00pm - Ask the Rabbi | 26 10:00am - Annual Synagogue Meeting |
| 10 8:00pm - Shabbat Services - Pardon the Interruption | 26 11:30am - Fiddler on the Roof (NYC) |
| 11 10:00am - Shabbat Services - Pardon the Interruption | 29 9:30am - Book Group |
| 11 1:00pm - Faithful Families | 29 12:00pm - Ask the Rabbi |
| 11 8:00pm - YJPA Game Night & Desserts | |
| 11 9:30pm - Tikkun Leil Shavuot | |
| 12 10:00am - Shavuot Services (Yizkor) | |
| 15 9:30am - Book Group | |
| 15 12:00pm - Ask the Rabbi | |
| 17 8:00pm - Shabbat Services | |
| 18 10:00am - Shabbat Services - Current Events Sermon | |
| 21 3:30pm - Veteran's Home Visit | |

