

Beth Israel Sinai News

The Monthly Newsletter of Beth Israel Sinai Congregation

Volume 95, Issue 8

JANUARY 2015 TEVET - SHEVAT 5775

Rabbi's Message

Alan Gross is a freed man. In 2009, The Jewish American contractor was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment for the "heinous crime" of bringing Internet access to Havana's small Jewish community. Convicted of espionage, without outside political assistance, there was little chance of a commutation or reduction of his sentence. Only the intervention of Pope Francis, the release of three incarcerated Cuban spies and President Obama's reestablishment of diplomatic relations with Cuba convinced President Raul Castro to release Mr. Gross.

But make no mistake. Alan Gross was not some political "nebbish" swept up in State Department intrigue. Having been to Cuba before, it would be highly unlikely that the American contractor was unaware that he was engaging in illegal activity. Fearing the influence of outside information on their captive population, the Cuban government has long maintained a policy of denying their citizens access to the Internet. Gross risked the possibility of imprisonment to bring a greater access of information to Havana's Jewish community. Previously, Gross had brought prayer books and other religious items badly needed by his coreli-

gionists. Mr. Gross was merely following, at his own potential peril, the Talmudic dictum: "Kol Yisroel Aravim Zeh la-Zeh."---"Every Jew is responsible for the welfare of all Jews."

Coincidentally, Gross was released on the the first day of Chanukah. Only a few months ago, it seemed that an early release from prison was virtually an impossibility. Visitors like Senators Udall and Flake reported that he had lost 100 lbs and was in ill health. Gross had reportedly said that he would either be released this year or NEVER released. His ultimate freedom was no less miraculous that the single

cruse of oil that burned for eight days. Like Gross, Judah Maccabeus (Yehudah ha-Maccabi) did not set out to be a hero. A Hellenized (Jews who incorporated aspects of Greek culture into their daily lives) Jew of the priestly class, Maccabeus and many of his coreligionists hoped for a positive synthesis of Jewish and Greek cultures. From the days of the world conquest of Alexander the Great, Jews became enamored with those aspects of Greek culture that did not conflict with the faith of their ancestors. Only after the Assyrian-Greek King Antiochus

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Board's Message

It is with profound sadness that we mark the death of Lucille Bloom, a fellow congregant. Our sincere condolences to Josh and Rebecca and the entire Bloom family. May her memory be a blessing.

Lucille attended our Chanukah celebration less than two weeks ago. On a Shabbat morning not many weeks before that, she was the tenth person to arrive and completed our minyan. Trained as a concert pianist, Lucille is remembered as a truly elegant person. She responded to kind words with words kinder still. Our sanctuary will feel the loss of her quiet and dignified presence.

It's cold outside, but it has been warm inside Beth Israel Sinai. We predict this microclimate will not change in the month of January. As the days lengthen, we will daven, schmooze and draw sustenance from our community and our history.

Who said *History is just one damned thing after another*? Who said *History is bunk*? Certainly, it was not the three rabbis who addressed a rapt audience at BIS on December 11th. The rabbis presented histories of the surviving local synagogues, which they

represent as spiritual leaders. The synagogues range from 90 to 105 years of age. The rabbis offered facts and artifacts, anecdotes and analyses, and enough personal history to place themselves within the context of their institutions.

The presence of Rabbis Feingold, Wilschanski and Adelberg, seated side by side, instilled a sense of pride and perhaps even astonishment at the tenacity of the small Jewish population of this region. It speaks to the richness and depth of our extended community that each congregation is representative of a distinct branch of Judaism. Although each synagogue's culture is unique, the sight of the three-congregation audience, happily socializing before and after the program, emphasized the reality that what we share is more profound than our differences.

Thank you to the Rabbis for their wonderful presentations! An additional thanks to Rabbi Wilschanski for his kind gifting of menorahs and candles. We were honored, also, by the presence of Rabbi Michael Remson. Thanks to Jeff Hansen for his creative floor plan and setup.

Our traditional Chanukah Dinner and Celebration of December 19th was a heart-warming and

stomach-pleasing event! Meaningful remarks from Rabbi Adelberg were followed by the lighting of family menorahs. The festive meal was festive indeed! BIG thanks to Rebecca and Josh Bloom for shopping, schlepping, cooking, supervising, serving. Thank you to sous-chefs Edie, Gene, Jim, Joannie, Joyce, Marion, Sandy and Brian.

On January 10th we will have a Kiddush in memory of Lucille Bloom, sponsored by Eileen Schroeder.

Our monthly Friday Evening Shabbat Service & Dinner will take place on January 16th at 6:00pm. The congregation can look forward to a classic chicken soup with matzo balls, courtesy of the culinary skills of Jim and Marion, that souper duo. What could be better on a winter's night? See you there!

On January 17th we will have a special Kiddush in honor of Rabbi Adelberg's tenure at BIS, as well as the anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah. The Kiddush is being sponsored by a grant from Dr. Michael and Wendy Jacobson. Our warmest thanks to the Jacobsons! We hope everyone will be present to recognize the Rabbi for his most extraordinary service and devotion to our temple.

On January 24th we have another special Kiddush. Max Gordon is sponsoring the meal in honor of his birthday. Max, a former two-time President, is currently our Treasurer and a member of the Board. He is a lifelong BIS member. Max is a pillar of our community, though he is far too modest to have such a thought about himself. Come and see about Max!

We are usually successful in assembling a minyan for our weekly Shabbat services at 9:45, though it's sometimes a close call. **All are warmly invited to attend.** Stay for the friendly and tasty Kiddush. Join the MIN crowd! As we are faced with intractable problems, a perfectly simple way to support and strengthen our congregation's future is to attend the weekly service. The Rabbi has regularly instructed us that there is no day of greater significance in the Jewish calendar than Shabbat. If there is one lesson above all to be learned from the recent Three Synagogues program, it is that we cannot escape being characters in our own history.

Shalom! and a very happy 2015,
Joyce, Jim, Max, Sandy, Brian

Rabbi’s Message Continued...

banned the observance of the Sabbath, ritual circumcision and the observance of Rosh Hodesh did some Jews begin to question their loyalty to Greek culture. The final straw leading to the Maccabean revolt came after Hellenized Jewish fanatics began to slaughter pigs in the Holy Temple. In 165 BCE, Judah and his followers led the first successful guerrilla war for religious freedom against the Greek Empire. (Ironically, many weapons for this fight were supplied by the ascending Roman state.) Judah's descendants would rule Israel until its subsequent annexation by the Roman Empire.

Indeed, some of the most extraordinary acts have been undertaken by "ordinary" people. Alan Gross was willing to sacrifice his personal freedom on behalf of those less fortunate. When rebuked by society, even the most assimilated Jew can discover his or her "Yiddishe neshama" (Jewish soul). In the last quarter of the 19th century, an unknown journalist from Budapest found his "Jewish soul" after a French Army captain, Alfred Dreyfus, was falsely imprisoned for selling military secrets to the German Army. Other Jews have prominently featured in democratic movements and the fight against racial discrimination. Jews, like Samuel Gompers, were in the forefront of the Labor movement. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel walked hand-in-hand with Dr. Martin Luther King in Selma, Alabama. Rabbi Stephen S. Wise was the first clergyman to warn the American government of the potential danger of National Socialism and Adolf Hitler. Alan Gross was willing to defy a dictator to bring freedom of information to his people.

May the quest for greater religious, social, political and cultural freedom as exemplified by the spirit of Chanukah be a source of inspiration to us all.

SEE YOU IN SHUL,
RABBI MARTY



Treasurer’s Message

Although meals are a large part of our budget, we charge members only for the Passover seder. Please consider sponsoring a Kiddush at least once a year. We suggest \$60 for a dairy meal and \$80 for a meat meal. Add to the simcha with your own donation.

We will be honoring Rabbi Adelberg at a special Kiddush on January 17th. We will commemorate both his tenure at Beth Israel Sinai, and the anniversary of his Bar Mitzvah. The Rabbi has requested no gifts of a personal nature, suggesting instead that contributions to the synagogue would be most thoughtful and appreciated.

Max Gordon

Sisterhood

What a great Chanukah dinner and celebration! Rebecca Bloom’s brisket and latkes were “par excellence.” And thanks to Josh for all his organizing and shopping! A wonderful time was had by all.

Our garbage disposal, which roared like a 747, has been replaced with a new machine. Little things mean a lot!

Much thanks to our “anonymous angel” for the gift card and coffee.

We so appreciate all donations and sponsorships. They help us to maintain a gracious and welcoming atmosphere that is a benefit to all!

Is someone in your family celebrating a birthday, anniversary, or other milestone? Consider sponsoring a Kiddush to commemorate a special day or honor a loved one. It's easy. Just speak to a board member and we'll take care of the details. We also welcome financial contributions, grocery gift cards, and donations of kosher grocery items or paper goods to help the Sisterhood fund the cost of the weekly Kiddush. We always seem to run short of bottled water, soda, and paper goods (especially cups, napkins, and forks) and items such as coffee, fresh fruit, cookies, and other kitchen basics are also needed on a regular basis. Please ensure that any packaged, canned, or otherwise processed foods are marked "kosher". You may drop these items off in the kitchen at any time.

A Rock: In Memory of Ruth Hulbert Gertrude Hulbert		A Leaf: In Memory of Elaine Kaufman The Kaufman Family
In Honor of all Those Who Offered Support During My Recent Illness Max Gordon	General Support William and Fran Gold Gertrude Hulbert Mary Vite Mary McIntyre Perry and Sara Kivolowitz Michael and Myriam Rotenberg Anonymous	A Leaf: In Memory of Elaine Kaufman Cheryl, Hanoach, Danya and Yael Livneh
In Honor of Max Gordon’s Recovery Rabbi and Marsha Adelberg		In Memory of Lucille Bloom Sandra Levin and Brian Rose



Yahrzeits

Week of December 26 to January 1

Abe Goodman	26
Jacob Slobodkin	26
Elvin Wolfman	26
Sarah Woolf	26
Herman Sunshine	27
Jacob Levin	27
Rose Blitstein	28
Abe Goldberg	28
Abraham Krasnow	28
Rudolph Kahn	29
Abraham Karlitzky	29
Ruth L. Meyer	29
Mary Shapiro	29
Ida Tabaksman	29
Celia Woolf Westphall	30
Jean Dorman	31
Ida Blume Weisman	31
Harry M. Blitstein	1

Week of January 2 to January 8

Alice Letsche	2
Herman Kaplan	2
Abraham Grant	2
Paula Shovers	3
Hans Sternheim	3

Evelyn Goldberg Kupperman	4
Jeanne Brown	4
Herman Levin	5
Sadie Kaufman	6
Harry Gordon	7

Week of January 9 to January 15

Toby B. Gorsky	9
Morris Mitler	9
Irving Schulman	9
Bessie Levin	10
Ben Mitler	11
Solomon Reder	12
Dan B. Levit	12
Don Gordon	13
Marcia Grant	13
Rose Hulbert	13
Nathan I. Silver	14
Elaine Adelberg	15
Geraldine Shovers	15
Hyman Draft	15

Week of January 16 to January 22

Meyer Levin	16
David Gottlieb	17
Martha Kleffmann	17
Beverly Lichterman	17
Philip D. Cohen	17
Minnie Goodman	18
Bertha Julian	18
Ida Ruffalo	18
David Schaefer	19

Sidney Ganz	19
Edith Kronson	20
Anna L. Marks	21
Dora Solomon	21
Norman Richard Grant	22
Edward E. Rosenzweig	22

Week of January 23 to January 29

Joseph I. Levin	23
Boroch Hirsh Sidran	23
Julius Alperovitz	24
Morris Wolf	25
Harris Domsy	26
Maurice Davis	28

Week of January 30 to February 5

Sidney Glickstein	30
Hilda Popkoff	30
Ethel Shovers	30
Dorothy Glickstein	31
George A. Lang	31
Hazel Watt	31
Phil Blitstein	1
Meyer Gottlieb	1
Fanny Kluk	1
Idah Schwartz	2
Sophie Shovers	2
Sgt. Leonard Hulbert	3
Ruth Grant Gordon	3
Samuel G. Laufman	4
Tillie Sideman	4
Elizabeth Goldberg	5

Shabbat Candle Lighting

January	2 - 4:11 PM
January	9 - 4:18 PM
January	16 - 4:26 PM
January	23 - 4:35 PM
January	30 - 4:44 PM



Cemetery Notes

The Racine Jewish Cemetery is five acres located at 612 Lathrop Avenue and is a well maintained, park-like setting. A resting place for all Jews.

There is a Reform section of the cemetery where Jews and their non-Jewish family members can be buried together.

For more information about the purchase of cemetery plots or perpetual care, please call Jim Barten at 262.412.8457.

Hadassah

Hadassah gratefully accepts any donations. Please remember Hadassah and its many good works and projects when considering making your charitable contributions.

Cards \$5; Shares \$10; Children's Pavilion Certificates \$5 & \$10; Trees (JNF) Certificates \$18.

For more information call Sarah Levin, 886-9331

Needlepoints from the Sanctuary • Done by Congregation Members



S. Schleicher 1984



E. Lowe 1981



M. Shapiro 1978



M. Shapiro 1978



M. Shapiro 1978



Beth Israel Sinai
Congregation

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***Please join us for Shabbat Dinner & Services
on Friday January 16 at 6:00!***

January 2015 TEVET - SHEVAT 5775

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3 Shabbat Services 9:45 AM
4	5	6	7	8 Hebrew & Adult Ed. Classes	9	10 Shabbat Services 9:45 AM <i>Kiddush in Memory of Lucille Bloom</i>
11	12	13	14	15	16 <i>Shabbat Service and Dinner</i> 6:00 PM	17 Shabbat Services 9:45 AM <i>Kiddush in Honor of Rabbi Adelberg</i>
18	19	20	21	22 Hebrew & Adult Ed. Classes	23	24 Shabbat Services 9:45 AM <i>Kiddush in Honor of Max Gordon</i>
25	26	27	28	29 Hebrew & Adult Ed. Classes	30	31 Shabbat Services 9:45 AM