

# *Beth Israel Sinai News*

The Monthly Newsletter of Beth Israel Sinai Congregation

May 2023     Iyar Sivan 5783

## **Rabbi's Message**

Our Rabbis tell us that while we became physically free after the exodus from Egypt, we would only come spiritually free on Shavuot. On that holiday, G-d presented us with the greatest gift bequeathed to mankind—THE TORAH. To start our journey towards spiritual freedom, during the night of the second Pesach seder, we begin counting the Omer (S'firat ha-Omer). We are instructed by our ancient Rabbis to count each of the 49 days in between these two festivals. By doing so, the Jewish nation established a link between these two holiday. This connection is both agricultural and spiritual. Beginning on the second day of Passover, a daily Omer (approximately one-eighth of a bushel) of grain was offered in the Temple. Barley was offered since it was the first grain made ready for harvest. Anticipating the full spring harvest approximately seven weeks later, our ancestors counted the days between Passover and Shavuot. On Shavuot, the first fruits were offered celebrating a successful and bountiful growing season.

The counting of the Omer also commemorates the historic journey from slavery in Egypt to meeting G-d at Mt. Sinai. On Passover, we celebrate our physical liberation from bondage. With the giving of the Torah and Ten Commandments, we complete our evolution as G-d's Chosen People. The Exodus became truly complete when we received the instruction provided in the Torah on how to live with that "freedom" on Shavuot.

On a more somber note, the counting of the Omer also represents a time of semi mourning. Weddings and other simchas are not held during this period in memory of the 24,000 students of the saintly Rabbi Akiva who died during a strange plague. What "sin" did these scholars commit to warrant such an extreme punishment?

For all their knowledge, they lacked the wisdom to show respect for each other. While perhaps a harsh punishment, our Rabbis stressed that one has not truly learned Torah if it did not result in them becoming decent and kind human beings. On Lag B'Omer, the 33rd day of the Omer, the plague ceased and festive celebrations resumed.

Other important events occurred on Lag B'Omer. Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, the author of the book of Kabbalah known as the Zohar, died on this day. Rabbi Shimon decreed that his death be celebrated as a festive occasion. Many Jews celebrate his life with picnics and barbecues. In Israel, people visit the saintly Rabbi's graveside at Meron. Marriages, which ceased during the 33 days of mourning, are conducted. Yom haShaoah, Holocaust Memorial Day commemorating the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, Yom ha-Zikaron honoring Israel's fallen soldiers and Yom ha-Atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day, are also celebrated during the Counting of the Omer.

I would like to thank all of our Temple members who participated in our Passover seder. We were honored by the presence of both old members and new faces—including our elder stateswoman, Sarah Levin. Special thanks to Joyce, Marion, Jim and all of you who guaranteed a very special evening. May we continue to grow from strength to strength.

SEE YOU IN SHUL,  
RABBI MARTY

If you have a member of family or a friend who was a member of Beth Israel Sinai and you have a short story about them that you would like to write I will put that story in the Yahrzeit section of the newsletter. You can send me the articles whenever you have time and I will keep them in a file to use on the month of their yahrzeit. Please either send in mail to our address or email to [president@bethisraelsinai.org](mailto:president@bethisraelsinai.org).

### **Cemetery Notes**

The Racine Jewish Cemetery is five acres located at 612 Lathrop Ave. It 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 Marc Greenberg 702-465-4805

### **ZOOM LINK INFO**

**ID Number 811 5151 1468**

**Passcode 833720**

**Phone number**

**1-312-626-6799**

### **The Presidents Message**

You can easily join our synagogue family we have affordable full memberships and we have associate memberships for those who may live too far from us to become an active member. Whether you want to attend weekly or just when you have time please consider joining with a membership. Your membership helps to keep our synagogue open and vital.

If there are any programs you think would be interesting and they are on zoom let us know and we can try to have the program on zoom for you to enjoy at the synagogue. We just watched an interesting program on the Architects of Auschwitz.

You can reach me by phone 262-945-7675

Joyce Placzkowski President

Rabbi Adelberg is offering free Hebrew classes to children. Please call Rabbi Adelberg 847-529-1609 to setup appointments. Donations to the Rabbi's discretionary account are always welcome, and tax deductible.

Joyce Esther Bishop

May 20, 1950—May 14, 2017

My wife Joyce Esther Bishop was born a Lutheran, one of eight children, on May 20, 1950, three weeks after I was born on the South Side of Chicago. My neighborhood was Irish and Jewish, hers mostly Lutheran. A lower middle class area not many miles from me, but a whole world away culturally. Our childhoods were very different it was so unlikely that we eventually met in Hyde Park—where I had owned a newsstand for ten years—in a Unitarian Church which was having a dinner dance for members of the Hyde Park Chamber of Commerce.

I was there alone, didn't want to dance and was uncomfortable in my dress-up clothes. She was introduced to me by her friend who was also my customer. That innocent act eventually was responsible for three more children in addition to my existing daughter. All four were raised as a single family.

Joy and I went through many tumultuous times, and battles with major entities in Chicago. She was a tough woman who could take whatever life threw at her, including my own many illnesses.

Joy chose to convert to Judaism and took one year to do that. After that, like many converts, she was fervent about her new faith and we sent our children to a Jewish Day school. She also became the best cook of Jewish food in my family, after learning my Grandmother Rose's recipes.

She became involved with Beth Israel Sinai after we bought a house in Racine, Wisconsin in 2015. Eventually she also joined the Board of Directors and worked closely with President Joyce Placzkowski trying to make a new smaller temple a more effective place of worship.

To the amazement of all, and so soon after we moved here in June, 2015, Joyce was found to have developed three cancers which eventually incapacitated her and despite the involvement of many hospitals and doctors, she died on May 14, 2017, Mother's Day and 5 days from her 67th birthday. We were together for 42 years and she was a gift I was allowed to have for far too short of a time. But she loved working with Joyce P. and also cared much for the Temple itself.

Shalom

Robert Katzman

#### **Sisterhood**

If anyone is interested in sponsoring a Kiddush just let Joyce Placzkowski know, 1-262-945-7675. The charge for a dairy Kiddush is \$50, meat Kiddush is \$100. The kitchen can always use paper goods. If you are interested in helping to make food for the Kiddush or a Shabbat dinner just let Joyce Placzkowski know.

**Anonymous general donation**

**Joyce Placzkowski general donation**

**Anonymous general donation**

**Neil and Jane Zimmerman for kiddush**

**Laura Hulbert-Goldmeier in memory of her grandfather Nathan Hulbert**

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**BETH ISRAEL SINAI**  
**May 2023**  
**Iyar / Sivan 5783**

### Shabbat & Holiday Candle Lighting Times

May 5 7:39  
May 12 7:46  
May 19 7:54  
May 26 8:01



## May 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6 10 am service in person and zoom
7	8	9 Lag B-Omer	10	11	12	13 10 am service in person and zoom
14 Mothers Day	15	16	17	18	19	20 10 am service in person and zoom
21	22	23	24	25 Eve of Shavuot	26 First Day of Shavuot	27 10 am service in person and zoom
28	29 Memorial Day	30	31			