

השופר haShofar

of DeKalb and Sycamore

Congregation Beth Shalom
820 Russell Road
DeKalb, IL 60115



CALENDAR

Saturday, November 17	Thanksgiving Food Bag Assembly	10 AM
Sunday, November 18	Hanukkah Shop	10 AM-12 noon
Tuesday, November 20	Board meeting	7 PM
Sunday, December 2 <i>[new date]</i>	Hanukkah Party	5 PM
Thursday, December 13	Book Group	7 PM
Friday, December 14 <i>[new date]</i>	Shabbat potluck (meat)	6:30 PM
Tuesday, December 18	Board meeting	7 PM
Friday, December 21	Shabbat Service	7:30 PM

November-December 2018 Kislev-Tevet 5779

Jackie Laks Gorman, editor

From the President

To the members of Congregation Beth Shalom,

I hope that this missive finds you and yours in good health and well fortified for the cold months now fast approaching. I know for many of you, and for my family and me as well, these last few weeks have been difficult. The murders at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh brought feelings of sorrow, anger, and fear each in their measure along with a feeling of helplessness in the face of such a senseless act of hatred.

Yet at such times I am glad to report that the response of the DeKalb community was a light in the darkness. As always, the members of our congregation were responsive, with care, concern, and wise words of advice for me in response to my messages. At our Shabbat service on November 9, we said a special Kaddish for those murdered at the Tree of Life. And the greater DeKalb community responded with many acts and expressions of kindness and support. We received calls from the St. Mary Catholic Church, and an invitation to a memorial service from the Grace Place Campus Ministry at NIU. We also received offers of support and assistance from NIU President Lisa Freeman, NIU Chief Diversity Officer Vernese Edghill-Walden, Shiraz Tata of the NIU Counseling and Consultation Services, and many others.

I was also very proud of the members of the AEPi fraternity who, with support from NIU, organized a moving candlelight vigil on the NIU campus. I was very grateful to the large numbers of NIU students, faculty, and community members who braved the cold to stand with our congregation. In our time of trouble, we are blessed to be among such a supportive community.

I am glad now that the season of Hanukkah is almost upon us. Hanukkah reminds us that the Jewish community has faced dangerous foes before and triumphed both because of our own deeds and by God's help. I will let the candles' flame remind me of the great miracles wrought for our ancestors in this season in those days.

A reminder that the Hanukkah Shop will be open on Sunday, November 18, from 10 AM to 12 noon. And we will have our congregational Hanukkah celebration on Sunday, December 2! Come and join us for the Hanukkah party and dairy potluck. Decorating and other preparations will start at 3 PM. Games for the children will start at 4, with the party and potluck beginning at 5. In addition to good food and games, the Hanukkah Shop will be open briefly during the party as well.

Among other upcoming activities:

- The Book Group will meet Thursday, December 13 at 7 PM.
- Our next Shabbat potluck (meat) will be Friday, December 14 at 6:30 PM. (Note that this is a new date.)
- Our next Shabbat Service (the last of the calendar year) will be Friday, December 21 at 7:30 PM.

For questions about our activities, you can consult the congregation website at <http://bethshalomdekalb.org>. If you have any questions or concerns not addressed on the website, email me at President@BethShalomDeKalb.org or rfeldacker1@gmail.com or call me at (815) 762-0204.

Shalom,
Rob Feldacker, President

From Rabbi Gordon

Dear friends,

In Jewish life, our days are meant to be marked by blessings. Blessings for waking up in the morning. Blessings for food. Blessings for beauty in nature. Blessings for health and blessings for healing. Blessings for learning. In the face of sorrow or anger, taking a moment to recognize that we are blessed puts us in a more positive mood. Taking a moment to recognize that we are blessed makes us more likely to share those blessings with others.

We are entering our American season of Thanksgiving, when gratitude for our blessings comes to the fore, characterized by gathering with family and friends and eating good food together. It's our autumnal Passover. This year, in our community as in so many around the country, we add our gratitude for living in a place where our neighbors step forward with consolation and outrage when acts of hatred affect us, just as we do in response to hatred toward others.

It feels appropriate when Chanukah follows so closely after Thanksgiving (when "the holidays are early this year"). At Chanukah we celebrate religious freedom, that is, our freedom to worship Jewishly in our own house of worship. More gratitude and good food and celebrations with friends and family.

I hope your celebrations are full of laughter and love, good food and sharing blessings with those in need.

Shalom uvracha,
Peace and blessing,

Rabbi Maralee Gordon

Upcoming Shabbat Services and Potlucks

- Friday, December 14 (*new date*): Shabbat potluck dinner at 6:30 PM. This is a meat meal.
- Friday, December 21: Shabbat Service at 7:30 PM, followed by an oneg.

Hanukkah Party and the Great Menorah Contest



Congregation Beth Shalom's annual Hanukkah party will take place on Sunday, December 2—the first night of Hanukkah. Children's crafts and games will begin around 4 PM, with the potluck meal beginning at 5. Please bring a dairy dish (no meat) to share. Homemade latkes, applesauce, sour cream, and drinks will be provided. Please RSVP to Jason Hanna with the number of people attending (at jasonkhanna@yahoo.com) by Monday, November 26 so that we can be sure to have enough latkes. We will begin setting up and decorating at 3.

Be sure to bring your own menorah so we can light candles together. (Candles will be provided.)

Continuing a tradition begun by the late Rabbi Barb Moskow, we will once again hold the Great Menorah Contest. The rules:

1. Build a menorah (a hanukkiah) out of any materials you can find. The more unusual, the better! You can enter as an individual, a family, or both.
2. The hanukkiah must be kosher. A kosher hanukkiah must have eight branches with the candle or oil holders on one level in a straight line. The shamash—the candle used to light the others—should either be out of line or on a different level from the other eight candles.
3. Most importantly, you must be able to light the hanukkiah without starting it, or the synagogue, on fire.

The Hanukkah gift shop will be open briefly during the party if you need last-minute gifts, candles, and so on.

Finally, we will again be collecting toys for the Children's Learning Center. Please bring a new, unwrapped toy for children from birth to age 10.



Hanukkah Shop

Congregation Beth Shalom's Hanukkah Shop will be open on Sunday, November 18, from 10 AM to 12 noon. We'll be fully stocked with dreidels, gelt, menorahs, and candles, as well as general Judaic items. If you can't make it to the shop that day, we'll also be open for business briefly during the Hanukkah Party on December 2.

If you have any questions, contact Jackie Gorman at jgorman7@juno.com.



Thanksgiving Food Bag Assembly



The members of Congregation Beth Shalom have come through again with their donations to our annual Thanksgiving Baskets drive. Assembly of the Thanksgiving food bags will take place Saturday, November 17, at 10 AM at 1530 Crayton Circle West in DeKalb (the home of the Sinasons). Dress warmly if it is cold outside, and plan on two hours, a little bit of bending, and maybe using your car to transport the filled bags to the Salvation Army building.

Social Action

The Social Action Committee always appreciates volunteers. Thank you to Carol and Jerry Zar for providing a delicious and nutritious dinner for the residents of the Hope Haven homeless shelter last month and to Steve Greenfield who, on short notice, worked at the Salvation Army Food Pantry filling bags with groceries and helping those in need.

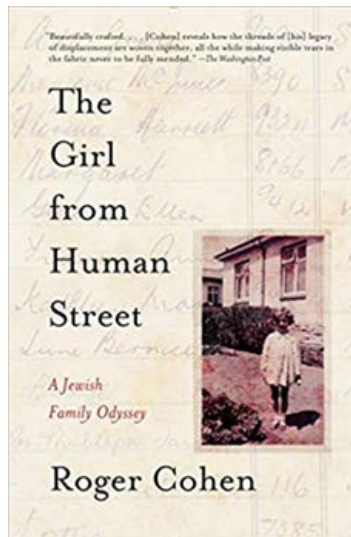
— Karen Sinason, Social Action Chair

Onegs and Potlucks

Thank you to Derryl Block and Steve Greenfield for hosting our October oneg and to Rob Feldacker for handling the October potluck. These events are enhanced by the willingness of congregants to step up and do their bit.

— Carol Zar, coordinator

A Transcontinental Family Odyssey: December Book Choice



The December choice for our reading group is *The Girl from Human Street: A Jewish Family Odyssey* by *New York Times* columnist Roger Cohen. The book traces four generations of his family, from the 19th century to today and from Lithuania to South Africa under apartheid where some remained, and then to England, the United States, and Israel.

He writes of the family prospering in South Africa. There, even though there was some anti-Semitism, Jews primarily were considered a part of the white majority, not as a minority. As an older relative said, “Thank God for the blacks. If not for them, it would be us.” Cohen travels to the town in Lithuania from which his grandparents came, back to South Africa where he was born and where some family still lives, to England where he grew up, and to Israel, where other relatives live.

Intertwined with the family saga is the story of Cohen’s mother, who suffered from depression, which Cohen attributes to her wanderings, just as Jews have wandered over the centuries. She is the girl who lived on Human Street in South Africa.

Read the book and join us on Thursday, December 13, at 7 PM, for a discussion.

Links to reviews:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/books/bookreviews/11376484/The-Girl-from-Human-Street-Ghosts-of-Memory-in-a-Jewish-Family-by-Roger-Cohen.html>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/02/01/books/review/the-girl-from-human-street-by-roger-cohen.html>

https://www.amazon.com/dp/B00LYXPYIA/ref=dp-kindle-redirect?_encoding=UTF8&btkr=1

— Elizabeth Bass, Adult Ed Chair

Movie Night

We had a good-sized group for our October viewing of the movie *Shalom Aleichem: Laughing in the Darkness*. Beforehand, we all enjoyed a bounteous buffet, catered by Jamrah. Special thanks for help with set-up and clean-up to Steve Greenfield, Derryl Block, Avi Bass, and Nahum Shemi. Watch *haShofar* and emails for news about our spring movie night.

— Elizabeth Bass, Adult Ed Chair

Dues Reminder

If you are paying your membership dues in installments, another payment is due on December 1. If you are paying by check, please send your payment to: **Congregation Beth Shalom, P.O. Box 1177, DeKalb, IL 60115**. You can also pay dues and make donations online using our congregation's website. Point your browser to: <http://bethshalomdekalb.org/donate-to-cbs/> and then click on the box (or boxes) you would like to use. Online payments are made through a secure link with PayPal, which accepts most any major credit card.

Jewish Baseball Trivia

For those interested in trivia—and baseball—the postseason this year featured a number of Jewish players. In fact, there was a Jewish player on each of the four last teams standing. The NLCS featured standout infielder Alex Bregman of the Houston Astros (whose great-grandfather emigrated from Russia to escape the pogroms) and outfielder Joc Pederson of the Los Angeles Dodgers (who has played for the Israeli team in the World Baseball Classic). The ALCS featured former MVP Ryan Braun of the Milwaukee Brewers (whose father lost family members in the Holocaust) and second baseman Ian Kinsler (who also qualified for the Israeli team in the World Baseball Classic but opted to play for Team USA instead) of the World Series-winning Boston Red Sox.

Chatter

Mazel tov to **Barbara Kaufmann** on the birth of her third grandchild, a little girl named Aria Gray, born to daughter Rachel and son-in-law Dan Katzmann, who recently relocated to the Twentynine Palms Marine Base in California.

Congratulations to **Harvey and Liz Blau**, who recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary.

Rivka Baker traveled to Jerusalem to attend the centennial celebration of the Henrietta Szold Hadassah-Hebrew University School of Nursing, from which she graduated in 1960. The school was founded in 1918 as the Hadassah Nursing School on Mount Scopus. Rivka notes that following the 1948 War of Independence, when Jerusalem was divided, the school moved to the Jewish sector of the city, and around 1960, a new hospital and nursing school were built in West Jerusalem. After the 1967 Six-Day War, the old hospital and nursing school in Mount Scopus were rebuilt. The centennial celebration was held on Mount Scopus. About 20 graduates from Rivka's class, who came from different cities and countries, were among those attending.

David Gorman has been named interim graduate director of the English Department at NIU for the spring semester.