



BETH EL NEWSLETTER

The Heights Synagogue

January 2014
5774 שבט / טבת



Rabbi Moshe Adler

But is it Good for the Jews?

Reading a column by Frank Bruni in the New York Times, in which he warns against using the Bible as a bludgeon (December 7, 2013, <http://tinyurl.com/kohtyeb>), put me in mind of something I once wrote about using the Bible (along with other scriptures) as a motivator for *tikkun ha-olam*, repairing the world:

January, the month in which we honor the memory of Martin Luther King, is a good time for us to review our social values:

- Maintaining the separation of church and state is indispensable to true democracy.
- National security and the right to privacy are not mutually exclusive; they must be continually brought into alignment.
- Compassion is a moral obligation not only on faith groups but also on government.
- Saving the planet, its resources and its atmosphere is good for the Jews and for everyone else.
- Genocide is wrong whether its victims are Jews or gentiles.
- Israel's sovereignty, security, and right of self-defense are non-negotiable in the search for Middle East peace.

We Believe Ohio is a coalition of Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders for whom religion in politics means, not furthering a sectarian agenda, but bringing justice, compassion, and human rights to bear on public policy. Its values dovetail with ours. In describing the organization's mission, Rev. Tim Ahrens of the First Congregational Church in Columbus states:

We love God with our whole hearts, minds, and souls. We love our neighbors as ourselves. We are multi-cultural and multiracial. We are bridge builders. We love humanity and don't seek to demonize others. We are faithful and moral to the core of our souls. But we will not impose our faith and morality on others.

Rev. Ahrens speaks not only for Christian members of *We Believe Ohio* but also for Jewish and Muslim members, whose respective faith traditions teach the same values. These values were first taught by Moses and the later prophets, reaffirmed by Jesus, and reaffirmed yet again by Muhammad.

I think of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, just returned from marching with Dr. King in Selma, saying to his daughter Susannah "I felt as if my feet were praying."

I think of Cesar Chavez, leader of the embattled United Farm Workers, speaking in support of Soviet Jewry, (*continued on p.3*)

Injustice
anywhere is
a threat
to justice
everywhere.

Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.,
"Letter from Birmingham Jail,"
16 April 1963

Beth El - The Heights Synagogue builds vibrant Jewish community.
We welcome all in participatory, traditional, egalitarian worship and learning.

Rabbi Moshe Adler ♦ Saturday Morning Services at 9:15, 3246 Desota Ave., Cleveland Hts., OH 44118 ♦ ☎216-320-9667



**Sherry Ball,
President**

President's Perspectives, January 2014

The Power of One

Unanimous support was recently received for the nomination of two new Beth El – The Heights Synagogue board members: Joe Buchwald Gelles, as Membership Chair and Mick Miller to an At-Large position. The vacancies were created by the departures of Mike Belusko and Janice Carrick from our board. While we will certainly miss the unique creativity and energy that both Mike and Janice brought to our board, we congratulate them both on the new opportunities that each will be pursuing, and we are grateful to them both for their past service. Both Mike and Janice contributed immensely to our community; we hope to maintain a connection with them both.

The board vacancies gave us the opportunity to shift our current positions around in ways that we believe create the best possible matches for each of our board members. Thus, Joe is now our Membership Chairperson and Ilene Gertman, formerly Secretary, is now our Development Chair. Becky Schur moved from an At-Large position to Secretary, leaving an open At-Large position, which is now filled by Mick Miller. Additionally, our Adult Education chairperson, Menachem Shoham, will be away on sabbatical in Israel beginning in mid-January; Joel Genuth, an At-Large member and a member of the Adult Education committee will assume responsibility for this committee.

Our small community is strongly connected and changes in our community are felt by each of us when any one member leaves. The presence or absence of each and every individual person is noted and felt by our entire community.

Each of us attends services on any given Shabbat not solely to daven, and certainly not to daven alone, but to be an engaged part of our community. The power of each one of us is well illustrated in the commandment that certain prayers can only be read with a minyan. We can't do it alone, or even with nine of the most pious and learned individuals. Yet add to the most worthy nine any one additional adult Jew, regardless of knowledge, and what was a group of nine is instantly a minyan.

Despite how each of us know the potential value of a single interaction with a single individual we may often feel small and overwhelmed by life. As we commemorated the loss of President John F. Kennedy on November 22, I was reminded of the Breton Fisherman's Prayer, "Lord help me because my boat is so small and your sea is so immense." I believe that J.F.K. offered this daily prayer, as do the fisherman of Brittany, not to dismiss his power but to lean into it, to walk through it, to keep trying, and to recognize that each one of us does have an effect.

Actions in our daily lives have an undeniable ripple effect. Each hour of our daily lives we, as Jews, interact with and affect our world, our society, our community, our families, and each other. Beth El – The Heights Synagogue is a community that relies on each other; no one can get lost in the crowd at our synagogue. No new face goes unnoticed. And that means that we are all joyfully obligated to each other and that each of us is obligated to building and sustaining our community. *(continued on p.3)*

**QUESTIONS? CONCERNS?
COMMENTS?
COMPLAINTS?**
Please do not hesitate to contact the President by e-mail president@bethelheights.org or home telephone (216) 371-8827

**HELP US
STAY IN TOUCH!**
Please be sure we have your current contact information. Send changes to info@bethelheights.org or call (216) 320-9667

**KEEP UP WITH THE NEWS!
JOIN THE
BE-THS LISTS!**
Send an e-mail to Mick Miller, mick@mickmill.com, if you need help with signing up.

E-MAIL NEWSLETTER:
If you'd like to get the pdf e-mail version, contact news@bethelheights.org

Lunch and Learn with BE –THS

The Scourge of Human Trafficking

On January 11, U.S. Attorney Steven M. Dettelbach will talk to us about “The Scourge of Human Trafficking.” Mr. Dettelbach was nominated by President Obama on July 10, 2009 and unanimously confirmed by the U.S. Senate on September 15, 2009 as United States Attorney for the Northern District of Ohio, the chief federal law enforcement officer for the northern forty counties of Ohio. Before that, he spent twelve years as a career federal prosecutor who won convictions against organized crime and corrupt public officials in Cleveland, Houston, and New Orleans. He also won convictions in California in what was, at the time, the largest human trafficking case ever brought in the United States; in that case, approximately seventy Thai women were held against their will and forced to work in El Monte, CA. Mr. Dettelbach graduated from Dartmouth College in 1988 and from Harvard Law School in 1991. He lives in Solon with his wife and two children.

Come back on February 8 for another interesting program: Isaac Yomtovian will present “Iran: A Glimpse into the Persian Mind.”

(The Power of One, continued from page 2)

No one can leave that to his or her neighbor. Yet what is important and what can sustain us is not a feeling that we have to achieve greatness but, as Rabbi Adler has

been teaching us, our Kavannah, our intention. Not our endgame but the wholehearted intention of each one of us at each moment. That one and that power is you!

(But Is It Good for the Jews? continued from page 1)
and Rabbi Leonard Beerman speaking in support of migrant farm workers.

I think of students at the University of Minnesota cheering as an Egyptian professor and I embraced after reciting a joint prayer to the one God in celebration of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.

While writing these words, I learned that a group of evangelical leaders has mounted a drive for environmental responsibility called “The Great Warming: A Call to Action.” It seems that the zeal usually put into the service of proselytizing is now being put into the service of stewardship. It is

encouraging, though a group with such a long history of deceptive packaging needs further observation.

The biblical goal of creating an earthly society that embodies divine ideals can seem impossible. Attempts to achieve the goal advance with difficulty and often fail, yet achieving it is not beyond human ability. Our Sages teach us, “The work is not yours to complete, but neither are you free to desist from it” (*Mishnah Avot 2:16*).

Every generation must take up the work anew and add to it, in the faith that some day it will be complete. Our job is to wade into the sea; God’s job is to open the sea.

When we let
freedom ring,
when we let it
ring from every
tenement and
every hamlet,
from every state
and every city,
we will be able
to speed up that
day when all of
God’s children,
black men and
white men, Jews
and Gentiles,
Protestants and
Catholics, will
be able to join
hands and sing
in the words of
the old spiritual,
“Free at last,
free at last.
Thank God
Almighty,
we are free
at last.”

Rev. Martin Luther
King, Jr.,
“I Have a Dream”
speech, August 28,
1963



Share your thoughts:

Deliver a d'var on an upcoming Shabbat.

Contact Nina Sobel, 216-258-3104 or via e-mail at nrsol1223@lycos.com (phone is preferred), to learn which parshas are available.

If you're interested in doing a D'var but haven't done so before, contact Nina, and she will be happy to fill you in about the specifics, such as resources, timing, etc.

Learners' Torah Discussions

Join us to study and discuss selections from the weekly Torah portion. We consider commentaries, raise questions and share tips for using the Chumash. Each week's lesson is self-contained so come as your schedule permits. The sessions are accessible for non-Hebrew speakers or readers and open to all.

We meet after the Torah is taken out and the portion is introduced (about 10:20 AM to 10:30 AM) and rejoin the service in time for the d'var Torah.

Questions? Contact Mia Buchwald Gelles: miabgelles@gmail.com or 216-321-6717.

Upcoming Learners Torah Discussion Dates:

January 11 - *Beshalach*

January 25 - *Mishpatim*

Learn with the Rabbi 5774 (2013-2014)

Kavanah (devotion): A Guiding Principle of Jewish Life

Please join us, even if you have missed the first couple of sessions.

3rd session: January 18

Kavanah (devotion) in time of sickness: coping, healing, visiting and helping the sick

4th session: February 15

Kavanah (devotion) at the end of life: making peace with God and people, laying to rest, giving and finding comfort

5th Session: March 22

Kavanah (devotion) in caregiving: taking care in order to give care

Session 6 – Date TBA (*a session was postponed due to scheduling conflict in November*)

Kavanah (devotion) in building a life after divorce: grieving, forgiving, and recovering wholeness

Mishna Study Group

The second meeting of the Mishna Study Group convened after Kiddush on December 22. Alan Lerner facilitated the discussion on the tractate of *Bava Metzia* (according to the English translation in the Art Scroll Series). The group plans to meet again on February 1 to discuss *Bava Metzia* chapters 1 through chapter 3. Text may be found at www.emishnah.com; interested participants may purchase the book online or at a local Judaica store. [Note: This is not a lecture series but a participatory study group (*Chevruta* in Hebrew).]

Questions? Contact Alan Lerner, lerner44120@yahoo.com or 216-932-5950.

As we say in the morning prayers “*Talmud Torah keneged kulam*,” “The study of the Torah is equivalent to all the other Mitzvot combined.”

CALENDAR, JANUARY 2014

5774 שבת / טבת

Saturday, January 4, after services – **Bruce and Judie Amsel will sponsor Kiddush in honor of their 20th wedding anniversary**, including make-your-own ice cream sundaes! (They did this at their wedding reception, on a frigid -18° day!)

Saturday, January 11

About 10:20 am – **Lerner's Torah Discussion Group** will meet to discuss *parshat Beshalach*. The group will rejoin the main service in time for the d'var Torah.

After Services – Join us for Kiddush luncheon and a **Lunch and Learn presentation by U.S. Attorney Steven M. Dettelbach**, who will talk to us about *The Scourge of Human Trafficking*. See page 3, and flyer, for further details.

Saturday, January 18,

After services – **Bernard and Susan Sharfman will sponsor Kiddush in honor of their return to Cleveland and BE –THS.**

After Kiddush – **Rabbi's Class, session 3: "Kavanah (devotion) in time of sickness: coping, healing, visiting and helping the sick."**

Saturday, January 25, about 10:20 AM – **Lerner's Torah Discussion Group** will meet to discuss *parshat Mishpatim*. The group will rejoin the main service in time for the d'var Torah.



Watch your email for news of the Short Stories Group.

(Their meeting date for January had not yet been set when the newsletter went to press.)

Yahrzeits, January 2014

Tevet ~ טבת					
Henry Gelfand	29 Tevet	Blumi Zavelowitz	10 Sh'vat	Mathilda Mendelow	19 Sh'vat
Louis Jacobs	29 Tevet 5730	Louis Sobelman	11 Sh'vat	Rose Reiss	20 Sh'vat
		Dorothy Neuger	11 Sh'vat	Abraham Louis Brudnick	
		Fannie Levine	13 Sh'vat		21 Sh'vat 5747
		Jacob Wilkenfeld	13 Sh'vat	Edith Gelfand	21 Sh'vat 5737
		Pinkas Zavell	13 Sh'vat	Dora Kazdan	21 Sh'vat 5716
		Sonny Lerner	14 Sh'vat	Abe Lipoff	21 Sh'vat
		Marilyn Protus Fischer	16 Sh'vat 5748	Meyer Goldberg	22 Sh'vat 5765
		Mary Malkin	17 Sh'vat	Scott Mendel	22 Sh'vat 5771
		Charles Auerbach	17 Sh'vat	Helen Haskin	23 Sh'vat
		Isadore Fromson	17 Sh'vat	Sam Cohen	24 Sh'vat
		Julius Kammen	17 Sh'vat 5707	Leonard Glazer	24 Sh'vat
		Madelyn Palevsky	17 Sh'vat 5770	Irvin Lerner	25 Sh'vat
		David Muszynski	18 Sh'vat	Jules Pepper	25 Sh'vat
		Gayle Kuhr Sharpe	18 Sh'vat	Rae Beckenstein	27 Sh'vat
		Anna Genuth	18 Sh'vat	Irving Bloom	29 Sh'vat 5753
		Beatrice Schweickert	18 Sh'vat 5757	Emanuel Mills	29 Sh'vat
		William Berkman	19 Sh'vat	Phil Mishinsky	29 Sh'vat
		Abraham Margolis	19 Sh'vat	Edith Bertman	30 Sh'vat
		Howard B. Cohen	19 Sh'vat	Dorothy Samuels	30 Sh'vat

Take a moment, when you see them, to let our outstanding members know that you know about their accomplishments and honor them!

NEWS FROM BETH EL

חדשות

Condolences to: **ניחום אבלים**

➤ **Harvey and Karen Kugelman, Harvey's mother, Sylvia Kugelman, and their family**, on the recent death of Sandra Kugelman. Sandy was Harvey's sister, Sylvia's daughter, and Adam and Sonny Kugelman's aunt. For those who wish, donations may be made to METAvivor, a group devoted to research and advocacy in connection with Stage IV metastatic breast cancer, <<http://metavivor.org>>.

Refuah Sh'lema to: **רפואה שלימה**

➤ Nili Adler
➤ Fern Levy

Welcome back to: **ברוכים השבים**

➤ **Bernard and Susan Sharfman**, who have returned to Cleveland for the spring semester, and have rejoined us at BE –THS.

Mazel Tov to: **מזל טוב!**

➤ **Ilene Gertman**, whose son, Isaac Gertman, will marry his childhood friend, Yael Shinar, at the end of December in Des Moines, Iowa. Isaac is a graphic designer in New York, and an instructor at Maryland Institute College of Art and City University of New York's School of Architecture. Yael is a first year student at the University of Michigan School of Medicine. The couple will reside in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Isaac and Yael originally met at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, when they were ten years old, lost touch for a long while, and were reintroduced by a friend, a year ago.

Yasher Koah to: **ישר כוח!**

➤ **Bruce Amsel**, who played his string bass in the Duke Ellington arrangement of "Dance of the Floreadores" with the Cleveland Jazz Orchestra on December 8, 2013,

at the Hanna Theater. Bruce won this honor at the CJO benefit auction last May.

➤ **Robin Dubin**, who appeared on Channel 5's "Kaleidoscope" television show on December 22, to briefly explain her idea about using short, voluntary moves to recreate vibrant neighborhoods in areas which have been hit hard by the foreclosure crisis, such as the east side of the city of Cleveland.

➤ **Shani Gelles**, who has been appointed to the Cleveland Heights Youth Advisory Commission for the 2013-2014 school year. High school students who are Cleveland Heights residents were selected from public, private, and parochial schools. The Commission's goal is "to advise Council on matters relating to youth activities, youth programming and issues affecting youth." The Commission's first project for the year was a toy drive to benefit children in the community. For further information, see <<http://tinyurl.com/o8449zh>>.

➤ **Ari Klein**, who is retiring from the position of Scoutmaster for Boy Scout Troop 22, a position he held for 25 years. An article in the "Heights Observer" on December 1 (Vol. 6, Number 12, www.heightsobserver.org), stated that 51 boys have achieved the rank of Eagle Scout, since Ari became Scoutmaster of the troop in 1988, a strong attestation to his leadership style. It states, "He constantly pushed [boys] to become leaders, to be self-reliant, to develop a sense of integrity." Ari took Troop 22 camping every month, twelve months a year. They were so well acclimated to winter that they won the Greater Cleve-

land Boy Scouts' Klondike Award, year after year. His scouts' service projects have supported a wide variety of community institutions in a number of diverse ways. Ari modeled justice advocacy, "making Troop 22 a model of inclusivity and welcome for all boys," and has led an effort to protest the homophobic stance of the Boy Scouts of America. One parent stated that Ari's Boy Scout leadership is "behind a lot of her sons' success as men." What higher compliment can you receive?

➤ **Shulamit Magnus**, who has been promoted to Full Professor of Jewish Studies and History, upon recommendation of the Program in Jewish Studies and the Department of History of Oberlin College, and approval of Dean and Faculty Council. Shulamit is currently in Israel, working on the last publication issues for two new books currently in press: the second volume of her critical edition of the *Memoirs of a Grandmother* by Pauline Wengeroff (Stanford University Press), and a biography of Wengeroff and of her work, entitled, *A Woman's Life: Pauline Wengeroff and Memoirs of a Grandmother* (Littman Library of Jewish Civilization). Her edition of Wengeroff's first volume won the National Jewish Book Award. Her edition of the second volume won the Hadassah-Brandeis Institute Translation Prize. Shulamit also recently had a piece she wrote published in the "Times of Israel." The article may be read at < <http://blogs.timesofisrael.com/lighting-lights-an-open-letter/>>.

➤ **Menachem Shoham**, who has earned a sabbatical leave, which he will spend at the Weizmann Institute in Israel, from January through June of 2014.

Thanks for Contributions to: !תודה!

- **Rabbi Moshe and Nili Adler**, in memory of Rabbi Adler's father, Max Adler Z"L.
- **Sherry Ball and Marty Gelfand**, in memory of Marty's uncle, Sanford Gelfand Z"L.
- **Michael and Shelley Bloomfield**, to the Kiddush Fund.
- **Bill and Carol Bruml**
- **Gisele and Michael Dover**
- **Joel Falck and Julie Rabin**
- **Ron Fersky**
- **Eric Fryxell**
- **Saul Genuth**
- **Adi and Judith Gerblich**, toward the December Lunch and Learn.
- **Ilene Gertman**
- **Howard Goldberg**

- **Alan Lerner and Erica New**
- **Gary and Marilyn Magden**
- **Gary and Marilyn Magden**, in memory of Gary's mother, Sadie Magden Z"L.
- **Maxine Margolis**, in appreciation of the Lunch and Learn programs.
- **Honey Massey and Bud Stern**, toward the December Lunch and Learn.
- **Stephen Pepper and Linda Tobin**, in memory of Carol Bruml's mother, Patti Cain Freed Z"L.
- **Gladys Reydman**
- **Rabbi Gerald Serotta**, in honor of Rabbi Moshe Adler.
- **Menachem Shoham**, in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of his grandson, Amit, in Israel.
- **Arnold Stone**
- **Frederick and Joyce Tavill**, in memory of Alex Goldman Z"L.
- **Blanche and Jack Valancy**, in memory of Carol Bruml's mother, Patti Cain Freed Z"L.
- **Beth and Scott Wachter**, in honor of their 22nd wedding anniversary, toward the December Lunch and Learn.
- **Jewish Community Federation of Cleveland: Judith and James A. Saks Philanthropic Fund**
- **Anonymous**

Thanks for the Donation to: !תודה!

- **Gladys Reydman**, who donated child-size chairs for the babysitting room.

Thanks for Kiddush sponsorship to: !תודה!

- January 18 – **Bernard and Susan Sharfman**, in honor of their return to Cleveland and to BE-THS for the spring semester.

Thanks for Simchah Kiddush Sponsorship to: !תודה!

- **Sherry Ball**, in honor of her birthday.
- **Jamie Saunt**, in honor of her birthday.

Thanks for December newsletter mailing help to:

- **Sherry Ball** !תודה!
- **Robin Dubin**
- **Eden Gelfand**
- **Marty Gelfand**
- **Richard Krueck**
- **Erica New**
- **Blanche Valancy**
- **Beth Wachter**
- **Scott Wachter**

Thanks for help with the (very successful!) Hanukkah party to: Rabbi Moshe Adler, Nili Adler, Sherry Ball, Molly Brudnick, Carol Bruml, Frank Buchwald, Jeanette Buchwald, Joe Buchwald Gelles, Mia Buchwald Gelles, Noam Gelles, Vicky Rosales, Eran Shiloh, Cheryl Stone, Beth Wachter, Scott Wachter, and Marcia Wachter.

Shani Gelles, Eden Gelfand, Stephanie Gordon, Shaul Janes, Ari Klein, Dalia Kutnick, Vicky Rosales, Eran Shiloh, Cheryl Stone, Beth Wachter, Scott Wachter, and Marcia Wachter. Your help was greatly appreciated and made the party quite a success.



Photo by Laura Gooch



Photo by Carol Bruml



Except as noted, photos are by Janet Century, Century Photography
www.janetcentury.com
janet@janetcentury.com

...with apologies to anyone who may have been left off.

The Scourge of Human Trafficking



3000 YEARS AGO, MOSES FREED THE HEBREW SLAVES.
150 YEARS AGO, ABRAHAM LINCOLN FREED THE AMERICAN SLAVES.
BUT TODAY THERE ARE STILL HUMAN SLAVES IN AMERICA.

**U.S. Attorney Steven Dettelbach
will address**

**Beth El -The Heights Synagogue
Saturday, January 11, 2014,
following a Kiddush luncheon.**



Free of charge, but non-members are requested to make reservations.
Contact Joel Genuth: 617-943-2076 or jgenuth@hotmail.com



Beth El –The Heights Synagogue
3246 Desota Avenue, Cleveland Heights, OH 44118
www.bethelheights.org – info@bethelheights.org – 216-320-9667