

Scroll

January 2017

Tevet / Shevat 5777



Temple Beth Shalom - Needham, Massachusetts

Scholar-in-Residence Weekend: The Jewish Experience in America

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From the Editorial Board

Enjoying Life

As we saw in the December issue of the *Scroll*, our TBS community takes an active and widespread role in volunteering time and energy in local, regional, national, and even international charitable and social action organizations. At the same time, as we keep up our active involvement in personal and family relationships, we may lose track of how much these relationships are valued by others. As the new secular year begins, the Editorial Board invites congregants to share the activities they enjoy, in the spirit of Rabbi Markley's enthusiasm for the Star Wars episodes that he describes in this issue. To get you thinking, contributions on the following topics are particularly welcome!

A little levity for when we can't have leavening?!

Yes, we welcome your Jewish humor for inclusion in our April issue of the *Scroll*, for your reading pleasure beginning April 1st! If you have a story or joke that will make others smile, please send it along to scroll@tbsneedham.org. Deadline: February 15th.

Has your son or daughter been on Birthright Israel recently?

If s/he is willing to say a few words for inclusion in a *Scroll* article, please contact us at scroll@tbsneedham.org by January 15.

Do you have a budding artist in grades 7-12?

The *Scroll* plans to publish a limited number of works of art in an upcoming issue. If your child would like to submit a photo of his/her work, please email it to scroll@tbsneedham.org and include the title of the piece as well as the child's name, grade, and school. Deadline: January 15.

Have you found a spark through TBS?

With a new friend or old acquaintance, a mitzvah opportunity, a passage from a sermon, a book from the Temple library, or a song at a service? If so, we'd like to include your story as a TBS Connection. Please email scroll@tbsneedham.org. You don't have to be a writer – we can help with that. Ongoing – no deadline.

- *The Editorial Board*

Please join the TBS community for

Minyan

Monday and Thursday mornings at 7:00 AM
Monday through Thursday evenings at 6:45 PM
Sundays at 9:00 AM when Mayim is in session
all at TBS

From the Clergy

Standing Against Bigotry

By Rabbi Jay Perlman



The handwritten letter that arrived recently at the Islamic Center of Boston in Wayland is cause for concern for all of us. It began by referring to the members of that community as the “children of satan” and worshippers of the devil. It proclaimed a “day of reckoning” in this country, when our leaders will “cleanse” America and do to Muslims what Hitler did to the Jews. The letter is similar to many others that have been received by mosques and Muslim organizations across the country. It is in line with the ADL’s recent report that, since the presidential election, there has been a threefold increase in reports of bias incidents in our area, while nationally the Southern Poverty Law Center has tracked several hundred incidents of bigotry, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and anti-Semitism since the election.

Regardless of one’s political affiliation, we are facing a critical moral question in our country. Hatred and intolerance - and those who peddle them - are attempting to become more mainstream. A number of our neighbors and friends – and I have spoken with many – are deeply concerned and afraid. They are afraid for their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being. They are afraid for their children and for their future. They are afraid that this country that they have proudly called home is changing.

Our TBS community is stepping forward. We have reached out to our friends at the Islamic Center – which has welcomed our community on several occasions over the years, as we have welcomed them at TBS. And, we will continue to do so. Many of us attended the recent rallies sponsored by the ADL at the State House and by the Greater Boston Interfaith Organization (GBIO) at the Islamic Center of Boston Cultural Center in Roxbury. Both were inspiringly attended, with the GBIO rally bringing together over 2,600 people from across the faith community spectrum – including leadership voices from both sides of the aisle: Senator Elizabeth Warren, Mayor Marty Walsh, and with words shared by Governor Charlie Baker.

At a time when human rights and the dignity of every human being are being questioned, it is incumbent upon

JANUARY 2017 SERVICES

FRIDAY, JANUARY 6 (9 TEVET 5777)

6:15 PM — Tot *Shabbat* Service (Sanctuary)
7:15 PM — Contemplative *Shabbat* Service (*Beit Midrash*)
7:15 PM — *Simchat Shabbat* Service (Sanctuary)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 7 (9 TEVET 5777)

Torah: VaYigash, Gen. 44:18 — 47:27
8:30 AM — *Shabbat Morning Minyan* (*Beit Midrash*)
9:00 AM — *Torah Study* (*Beit Midrash*)
11:00 AM — *Shabbat Morning Service* (Sanctuary)
B’not Mitzvah: Rebecca Shaff and Emily Allman

FRIDAY, JANUARY 13 (16 TEVET 5777)

6:15 PM — *Kehillah Kids Shabbat* Service (*Beit Midrash*)
7:15 PM — *Shabbat Evening Service* (Sanctuary)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 14 (16 TEVET 5777)

Torah: VaYechi, Gen. 47:28 — 50:26
8:30 AM — *Shabbat Morning Minyan* (*Beit Midrash*)
9:00 AM — *Torah Study* (*Beit Midrash*)
11:00 AM — *Shabbat Morning Service* (Sanctuary)
Bar Mitzvah: Jacob Shulman

FRIDAY, JANUARY 20 (23 TEVET 5777)

7:15 PM* — *Shabbat Evening Service* (Sanctuary)
Gersten-Hoisington Presentation

SATURDAY, JANUARY 21 (23 TEVET 5777)

Torah: Shmot, Ex. 1:1 — 6:1
8:30 AM — *Shabbat Morning Minyan* (*First Parish*)
9:00 AM — *Torah Study* (*First Parish*) See page 12.
11:00 AM — *Shabbat Morning Service* (Sanctuary)
Bat Mitzvah: Kayla Diamond

FRIDAY, JANUARY 27 (1 SHEVAT 5777)

6:15 PM — *Shabbat Evening Service* (Sanctuary)

SATURDAY, JANUARY 28 (1 SHEVAT 5777)

Shabbat VaEra, Ex. 6:2 – 9:35
8:30 AM — *Shabbat Morning Minyan* (*Beit Midrash*)
9:00 AM — *Torah Study* (*Beit Midrash*)
11:00 AM — *Shabbat Morning Service* (Sanctuary)
Bat Mitzvah: Ruby Bakal

* Please note new service time for this week!

all of us to loudly and decisively proclaim the values upon which we stand....and then to act to protect them.

The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. once wrote: “An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individual concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity.” May we be motivated by Dr. King’s legacy and may we honor his memory by diligently and decisively carrying forward his most essential work.

Martin Luther King and Our Post-Election World

By Bernice Sue Behar, President



As I begin this article in November I see red and yellow leaves still clinging to the trees, but I know that I should write as though it is January, the trees are bare, and I'm looking out onto a snowy landscape. The truth is, the election is just past, and yet I am trying to leap ahead to the month of Martin Luther King, to feel the inspiration of his life and his achievements on behalf of the oppressed in our nation.

Martin Luther King spoke of the "Beloved Community," a society in which "people could decide disputes peacefully, share the world's resources, and maintain a high standard of human decency" (King Center). For the past fifty years, this vision has inspired us, as Americans, to transform our own nation and to hold ourselves up as a model to other nations. The achievements of the civil rights movement opened the door to a new way of thinking that led, over the course of time, to fairer treatment for other groups of people, including religious minorities, those with disabilities, and the LGBTQ community. Few would say that perfect equality has been achieved in America, but we can take pride that we have created a legal structure to protect those who might otherwise be marginalized.

Given our democratic process, we are assured that these formal protections reflect a general societal "buy in," and we know that the changes in legal practice and rules that govern everything from voting to access to educational opportunities are truly accepted by most of our neighbors. However, this election cycle exposed rifts in our society, demonstrating that there are some people, perhaps a growing number, who question these changes and may even feel threatened by them. I read with sadness on Facebook this morning a post from a childhood friend who said quite frankly that she believes herself to be a good and

thoughtful person, but that she simply can't support the notion of spending tax dollars on Syrian refugees when her own health care bills are unmanageable. In her words I hear genuine economic frustration, but I also worry that such arguments will constrain our ability as a society to embrace people from different backgrounds, particularly those in need.

I remain confident that we are a country of big-hearted people who believe in equality and fairness. The past two decades have been difficult: the deadliest terror attack on U.S. territory, and then a prolonged economic downturn. The divisiveness of this presidential election gave voice to those who blame the economic misfortunes of some Americans on immigrants, migrants, and refugees. Regardless of the legal and policy issues that need to be dealt with legislatively, such hate mongering is abhorrent. It is critical at this time of great division to continue to empower the vulnerable amongst us while trying even harder to understand the difficulties faced by those who feel angry, frustrated, and unheard.

"Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle."

Martin Luther King

When he said "Change does not roll in on the wheels of inevitability, but comes through continuous struggle," Martin Luther King knew that the quest for a better, more fair world was a continual one. During the past decade we have witnessed tremendous changes that have promoted equality for all people. As we enter the month in which we honor the legacy of this inspirational man, I hope that we will continue the struggle with new energy and with a determination to make sure that no one is left behind.

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

For the most current and complete event notices, please see the TBS calendar (<http://tbsneedham.org/calendar>), the website, and the weekly email. Planning an event? Submit it here: <https://www.tfaforms.com/407994>

6

Tot Shabbat Dinner and Tot Shabbat Services

Friday, January 6, 2017 (and February 3, 2017)

Shabbat Dinner: 5:30 PM, at TBS Simon Hall. Join us for a child-friendly dinner before Tot Shabbat services. \$30 per family.

Shabbat Services: 6:15 PM at TBS Sanctuary. Whether or not your family will come for dinner, join us to celebrate Shabbat with songs and prayers in this 30 minute service designed especially for young children and their family. Stay afterwards and join us for cookies and challah! Free.

RSVP and register online for one or more dinners at: bit.ly/totshabbatdinner

Questions? Contact: Ellen Dietrick, Director of Early Childhood Learning (edietrick@tbsneedham.org, 781-444-0077)

7

Shabbat Story Time

Saturday, January 7, 2017, 9:30 AM - 10:30 AM at TBS

Come for story time, challah baking, and playtime geared towards children ages 7 and under and their whole families.

Questions? Contact: Ellen Dietrick, Director of Early Childhood Learning (781-444-0077, edietrick@tbsneedham.org)

8

The Torah of Star Wars: Episode VII - The Force Awakens

Sunday, January 8, 2017: 2:15 PM - 5:15 PM

See the Feature Story of this issue for more information. We will view Star Wars Episode VII - The Force Awakens in its entirety with Rabbi Todd. Please be sure to register and secure a spot for everyone in your family who will be participating so we are sure to have enough seats... and movie snacks!

Register: <http://bit.do/tbsstarwars>

Questions? Contact: Marguerite Dowd (mdowd@tbsneedham.org, 781-444-0077)



20

2017 Scholar-in-Residence/Gersten Hoisington Weekend

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, January 20-22, 2017

Join us as Professor Stephen Berk from Union College addresses topics of importance to American Jews: the history of Jews in America, American Jews and the Holocaust, Jewish involvement in the civil rights movement, and the Israeli-Palestinian divide. **See page 12 for details and registration information.**

JANUARY HIGHLIGHTS

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Shabbat Fair

Saturday, January 21, 2017, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM at TBS

Come for a morning of Shabbat crafts, challah baking and games geared towards children ages 7 and under and their whole families.

Questions? Contact: Ellen Dietrick, Director of Early Childhood Learning (781-444-0077, edietrick@tbsneedham.org)

22

Jewish Jingle and Jam (1-4 years)

Sunday, January 22, 2017 (and April 2, 2017) 9:15 AM - 9:45 AM at TBS

Celebrate with joyful music with your child! Join Cantorial Intern DJ Fortine to sing, dance, and play instruments together as we explore each season through song. Stay after class to play on the playground. The whole family is welcome, including older and younger siblings. Pick and choose the sessions that work for you. \$10.00 per session.

Questions? Contact: Liz Berkman or Dawn Ellis, Child Development and Parenting Specialists (tbsfamily.org; bbb@tbsneedham.org; 781-444-0077)

25

TBS Sisterhood Presents: College Night

Wednesday January 25, 2017, 7:30 PM in TBS Simon Hall and Beit Midrash

Do you have a teenager in high school looking to steer through the college maze? Join us for college night. TBS members Eric Stutman and Cheryl Weisman-Cohen will be on hand to navigate the college selection and testing process. Watch your emails for more information.

Questions? Contact: Sisterhood@tbsneedham.org or janeblauvelt@verizon.net



Join one of these groups meeting in January 2017...

Email Contact for More Information	Upcoming Meeting Date	Committee Name
sisterhood@tbsneedham.org	Thursday, January 12 @ 7:30 PM	Sisterhood
brotherhood@tbsneedham.org	Tuesday, January 3 @ 7:15 PM	Brotherhood
communications@tbsneedham.org	Thursday, January 19 @ 7:00 PM	Communications
gardenclub@tbsneedham.org	Wednesday, January 11 @ 7:00 PM	Garden Club
threescoreandmore@tbsneedham.org	Monday, January 23 @ 7:30 PM	Three Score and More
adult_learning@tbsneedham.org	Wednesday, January 11 @ 7:30 PM	Adult Learning
childrens_center_learning@tbsneedham.org	Tuesday, January 10 @ 7:30 PM	Children's Center Learning
library@tbsneedham.org	Wednesdays in January @ 10:00 AM	Library

SAVE THE DATE

For the most current and complete event notices, please see the TBS calendar (<http://tbsneedham.org/calendar>), the website, and the weekly email. Planning an event? Submit it here: <https://www.tfaforms.com/407994>

MARCH
19

Three Score, Sisterhood, and Brotherhood Present “Raise the Roof”

Sunday, March 19, 2017, in TBS Social Hall - 2:30 PM

Come join us for a screening of the documentary “Raise the Roof.” According to the press release, “this uplifting film captures the journey of Rick and Laura Brown of Handhouse Studio as they reconstruct the elaborate roof and painted ceiling of the Gwoździec synagogue, an 18th century structure that rivals the greatest wooden architecture in history.”



Copyright 2014 Trillium Studios.

See the trailer: <http://www.polishsynagogue.com/movietrailer/>. This event is open to the entire TBS community.

Cost per person: \$10.00. Please send your check payable to Temple Beth Shalom to Millie Cohen, 100 Rosemary Way #226, Needham, MA 02494 no later than March 6, 2017.

Questions? Contact: Jean Sands (781-449-1817, joensands@gmail.com)



Are you looking for an event that is missing here? Are you planning a future event? Submit your event information using this form: <https://www.tfaforms.com/407994>, **45 days before publication date to make sure it appears in the next Scroll.**

RECENT EVENTS

Elvis Did Not Leave the Building!

Three Score / More or Less (our new name) had a wonderful gathering at Margie and Alan Glou's home on the evening of November 12th. We had pizza and ice cream sundaes and played charades. But, most importantly of all, we had Elvis! An Elvis impersonator who was supposed to entertain us for forty-five minutes stayed three hours! He was great - entertaining and chatting with us until we all bid goodnight.



Scenes from the TBS Brotherhood Blood Drive



Photos by
Alan Novick

LEARNING

On Shabbat mornings we often have more than one enriching opportunity for Torah learning. You can visit one or both, and choose the learning that is right for you. "Finding Our Jewish Values in Torah" with Rabbi Orkand will not meet during the month of January 2017.

Shabbat Morning Torah Study - Led by Rabbi Perlman and Rabbi Markley

Every Saturday morning at TBS, 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM, in the Beit Midrash.

Join us for our very popular weekly discussion of the week's Torah portion. Each week, dozens of members of our community gather to share, question, laugh, eat and encounter the stories of the Torah in ways that help shape how we see the world, each other, our lives! No experience necessary! No RSVP needed! All are welcome!

"What's Nu?" - A Monthly Conversation with Rabbi Lenke

First Wednesday mornings of the month at TBS, 10:00 AM - 11:30 AM: January 4, February 1, March 1, April 5, May 3, June 7, 2017. No RSVP necessary.

Join with Rabbi Lenke on the first Wednesday of each month and engage in discussion regarding a current event impacting the Jewish community. Conversations will explore meaningful issues as well as their implications, impact, and influence on our lives as Jews or as part of a Jewish family. Feel free to attend one or more of the sessions, as each month will focus on a different topic.

Questions? Contact: Rabbi Lenke (rabbilenke@tbsneedham.org)

Intermediate Israeli Dancing - Taught by Emily Perlman

Monday evenings 7:15 PM - 9:00 PM at TBS, continuing through the spring.

Love to Israeli dance? Come and join us for one or many fun evenings of music, movement, Israeli culture, and great company!

COST: \$5.00 per session, payable at the door.

Friday Morning "Pre-Shabbat" Yoga

Every Friday morning at TBS, 8:45 AM - 9:45 AM through the winter and spring.

Join Stephanie Javaheri for a mindful and invigorating yoga flow to build strength and flexibility of body and mind. This is the perfect way to get ready for Shabbat! This class is for beginners or veterans of yoga. Come with an open mind and experience what yoga can do for you! Please bring your own mat, if you have one. We will have a few available. Participants may come to one, some, or every Friday morning session. No RSVP necessary.

Questions? Contact: Stephanie Javaheri (sjavaheri@me.com)

LEARNING (CONTINUED)



The Torah of Star Wars with Rabbi Todd Markley

Sunday, January 8, 2017: 2:15 PM - 5:15 PM and January 22, 29, and Feb 5, 2017: 2:15 PM - 3:45 PM

See the Feature Story of this issue for more information. The first session will include a viewing of Star Wars Episode VII - The Force Awakens in its entirety. The subsequent sessions will include opportunities for engaging Jewish text, watching clips from the film series, and plenty of time for discussion as well. Please be sure to register and secure a spot for everyone in your family who will be participating so we are sure to have enough seats... and movie snacks!

Register: <http://bit.do/tbsstarwars>

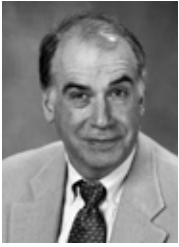
Questions? Contact: Marguerite Dowd (mdowd@tbsneedham.org, 781-444-0077)

Wee Weekenders (0 - 3yrs)

**Various Sunday mornings, January 22, February 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4, 2017.
10:15 AM - 11:00 AM, at TBS**

Come meet and mingle with other families of young children. This class will meet one Sunday morning each month, and will offer the opportunity for your little ones to participate in circle-time with songs and parachute play, developmentally appropriate activities, and finish with bubbles and a book. The whole family is welcome, including older and younger siblings. Choose one or sign up for the whole series! \$30.00 per individual class, \$240.00 for all classes.

Questions? Contact: Liz Berkman or Dawn Ellis, Child Development and Parenting Specialists (tbsfamily.org; bbb@tbsneedham.org; 781-444-0077)



The Jewish Experience in America

Featuring Professor Stephen M. Berk - Union College
Friday, January 20, through Sunday, January 22, 2017

During this year's annual Scholar-in-Residence Weekend, TBS welcomes Professor Stephen M. Berk, a renowned scholar, author, educator, and eloquent lecturer.

Professor Berk is Professor of History at Union College in Schenectady, New York; former Chair of the Department of History; Director of the Program in Russian and Eastern European Studies; and Faculty Advisor to the Jewish Student Organization. He is the author of "Year of Crisis, Year of Hope: Russian Jewry and the Pogroms of 1881-1882" (Greenwood Press, 1985), which deals with anti-Semitism in Russia and eastern Europe and is an important contribution to the understanding of events that preceded the Holocaust. He has written articles on Russian and Jewish history, anti-Semitism, the Middle East, and the Holocaust in Yugoslavia. Professor Berk is now preparing a new book, "Our People Are Your People: American Jewry and the Struggle for Civil Rights 1954-1965," which will discuss an important chapter in the history of the civil rights movement, and will seek to dispel the myths and misunderstandings surrounding the Black-Jewish relationship.

Professor Berk has lectured on the Holocaust throughout the United States and Canada, has been a consultant to the Wiesenthal Holocaust Center in Los Angeles, and in 1992 made a set of six widely-distributed hour-long audio-taped lectures on the Holocaust. He is considered to be a superb lecturer and teacher, and the "Fiske Guide to Colleges" notes that Berk's course on the Holocaust is the most popular class offered at Union College. Berk has spoken in countless cities and towns in the United States and Canada, and is frequently invited to return. Berk is

equally proficient as a lecturer in scholarly, popular, and fundraising venues.



In 1996 Professor Berk received the prestigious Holocaust Memorial Award from the Holocaust Survivors and Friends Education Center. The citation states, "On the 50th Anniversary of the end of the Nuremberg trials, the Holocaust Memorial Award honors Dr. Berk's years of dedication to understanding and education as a world-wide lecturer and spellbinding speaker on the lessons of the Holocaust and its meaning for today." In 2010 Professor Berk was designated an Israel Hero by the Jewish Educational Resources of New York for his defense and advocacy of the State of Israel.

Join us during the Scholar-in-Residence weekend as Professor Berk addresses the TBS congregation on topics of importance to American Jews: the history of Jews in America, American Jews and the Holocaust, Jewish involvement in the civil rights movement, and the Israeli-Palestinian divide.

Please RSVP

To RSVP for the Saturday evening and/or Sunday morning program and/or to register for childcare on Shabbat morning please go to:

<http://www.tfaforms.com/457235>

2017 SCHOLAR-IN-RESIDENCE/GERSTEN HOISINGTON WEEKEND

FRIDAY

20

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 20th at Temple Beth Shalom
Shabbat Evening Services and "Gersten-Hoisington Presentation," 7:15 PM**

The Jewish Experience in America: An Introduction

The kickoff for our informative weekend will be our community's warm welcome to Dr. Berk during Shabbat Evening Services. As our "Gersten-Hoisington Speaker," Dr. Berk will frame our weekend's presentation with a broad introduction to the historical experience of Jews in the United States. A festive Oneg will follow the service. Please join us!

SATURDAY

21

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 21st at First Parish Congregation, 23 Dedham Avenue in Needham
Shabbat Morning Minyan Service, 8:30 AM – 9:00 AM**

The Holocaust Revisited 9:00 AM – 10:15 AM

Jewish Involvement in the American Civil Rights Movement 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Our outstanding Shabbat morning sessions will focus on two of the twentieth century's most impactful episodes: the Holocaust and the Civil Rights Movement.

During our exploration of the Holocaust, Dr. Berk will consider the causes of this dark chapter in human history, the role of the first World War, Jewish resistance and collaboration, as well as the American Jewish response.

Through our consideration of the Civil Rights Movement, Dr. Berk will help us to understand the early involvement of the Jewish community, the role of Jewish leadership in the establishment of the NAACP, as well as the most important legal cases of the time and the impact of Jewish engagement. All are welcome! As always, a delicious buffet breakfast will be provided! Childcare is available for these sessions. Please register: <http://www.tfaforms.com/457235>



SATURDAY, JANUARY 21st at Temple Beth Shalom, Community Court

An Enjoyable Evening of Wine, Cheese, Hors D'oeuvres, and Live Music 7:30 PM – 9:30 PM

Our weekend will continue with a fun, casual, social evening of great live music, delicious food, and conversation. In this relaxed setting, we will enjoy an evening together with friends and with our scholar. (There is no charge for this program, but RSVP is required: <http://www.tfaforms.com/457235>).

SUNDAY

22

SUNDAY, JANUARY 22nd at Temple Beth Shalom

Israel & the Palestinians: Past, Present, and Future 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

A Delicious Breakfast, hosted by Brotherhood will be served! Join us as Dr. Berk helps us to better understand the complexities of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and its importance for the American Jewish community. Dr. Berk will explore Israel's achievements and challenges, the core questions Israel has confronted over the decades, and the dynamics of a region that is continually in motion.

Breakfast is complimentary. However, we do ask that you RSVP: <http://www.tfaforms.com/457235>

The Torah of Star Wars

By Rabbi Todd Markley

I was three years old when the original Star Wars movie was released, and it was the very first film I ever saw in a theater. Instantly, the story seemed to embed itself within me. After just one viewing, the heroes inspired me to want to pursue justice, good, and light. I reenacted scenes with friends and family. I collected the action figures and plastic ships, and I played with them constantly, creating new action sequences and reliving my favorite moments from the film. I remember counting down to the release of The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi... both were major events with family and friends.



Chewbacca costume for Halloween circa 1979/1980

Yet, it was only later in my life - as I became more immersed in Jewish studies - that I began to see parallels between the story of Luke Skywalker and his friends and the legends of our people's matriarchs and patriarchs. I discovered that both were rooted in the mythical archetype of "the hero's journey," and I realized that the connections between my favorite film series and my beloved Jewish tradition did not end there.

As a new generation of children (and adults!) are getting hooked on the Star Wars franchise, I thought that it



was time to bring these connections to our TBS community during a four-part learning series on Sunday afternoons in



January and February. During this learning series, intended for adults on their own or for parents and grandparents along with children, we will explore some of the thoroughly Jewish themes that emerge from the films, including

the freedom to choose between good and evil, the hero's journey, redemption, and The Force as modern theology.

The learning sessions will be held at TBS on Sundays, January 8, from 2:15 PM - 5:15 PM, and January 22, 29, and February 5 from 2:15 PM - 3:45 PM. If you are unable to make one... register anyway, and we'll miss you the week you're not able to be with us!

Our first session will include a viewing of Star Wars Episode VII - The Force Awakens in its entirety (hence a longer session). The subsequent sessions will include opportunities for engaging Jewish text, watching clips from the film series, and plenty of time for discussion as well.

Because film clips will be shown, please be sure that children who attend have either already seen the films or are old enough to view whatever clips may be used. Please be sure to register and secure a spot for everyone in your family who will be participating so we are sure to have enough seats... and movie snacks.

I hope that you can join us on this journey to a galaxy far, far away, and may the force be with you!

The Torah of Star Wars with Rabbi Todd
Four Sundays: January 8, 2017: 2:15 PM - 5:15 PM;
January 22, 29, and Feb 5, 2017: 2:15 PM - 3:45 PM
Register at: <http://bit.do/tbsstarwars>
Questions? Contact: Marguerite Dowd
 (mdowd@tbsneedham.org, 781-444-0077)

The Life of Rabbi Todd and the Star Wars Timeline

May 25, 1977 Episode IV – A New Hope

Rabbi Todd sees his very first movie in a movie theater...Star Wars! He would go on to watch it hundreds of more times throughout his childhood.

May 21, 1980 Episode V – The Empire Strikes Back

Rabbi Todd collects Kenner action figure proofs of purchase so he can mail away for the limited edition Boba Fett figure.

May 25, 1983 Episode VI – Return of the Jedi

Rabbi Todd - now in 3rd grade - marks up the family calendar with a countdown to the release of Return of the Jedi.

May 19, 1999 Episode I – The Phantom Menace

Rabbi Todd gains new understanding of the word “disappointment.”

May 16, 2002 Episode II – Attack of the Clones

Rabbi Todd makes sure to return to the U.S. from his first year of rabbinical school in Jerusalem in time for the newest Star Wars movie release.

May 19, 2005 Episode III – Revenge of the Sith

In spite of the fact that he would be receiving his Master’s Degree from the Hebrew Union College at a ceremony early the next morning, Rabbi Todd attends the midnight premiere of Revenge of the Sith in Manhattan.

Dec 18, 2015 Episode VII – The Force Awakens

Rabbi Todd pulls his kids out of school early to see an opening day matinee of the newest installment in the series.

Dec 16, 2016 Rogue One: A Star Wars Story

Rabbi Todd’s parents join him and his children at an opening day showing...three generations of Star Wars fandom.



December 14, 2015...
Rabbi Todd and Adam complete the 4,000+ piece Lego Death Star just in time for the release of Episode VII: The Force Awakens.



Families of all ages are invited to join us* as we watch the seventh Star Wars film together at TBS! Super fan or not, your first viewing or your third, you won’t want to miss this kick-off to Rabbi Todd’s four-session class.

Bring your favorite movie snacks or enjoy our free popcorn and candy!



* No droids allowed.
Light sabers permitted.

The Joy of Learning

By Marlene Greenstein, Children's Center Curriculum Director

“What children learn does not follow as an automatic result from what is taught, rather, it is in large part due to the children’s own doing, as a consequence of their activities and our resources.”

—Loris Malaguzzi,
The Hundred Languages of Children, Reggio Emilia

At Temple Beth Shalom Children’s Center we work with children at the stage in their lives when curiosity abounds and everything is interesting. The world is a source of constant inquiry and discovery for them. Their minds and bodies are incredibly active and they have a natural disposition to learn. It is our responsibility to engage them in purposeful activity that leads to meaningful learning.

When children build upon previous experiences, they construct knowledge by building new experiences and connecting them to prior knowledge. TBSCC teachers challenge children to make predictions, to explore, to discover, to question, to represent and to recognize their ways of thinking. The curriculum at TBSCC is rooted in our deep convictions that children learn best through active, engaged, hands-on activities. They are motivated to learn when the content of what they are learning is of interest. They gain a deeper and better understanding of the world as they revisit their ideas and learning experiences over time.

Learning at the Children’s Center is play with purpose. Observing the children navigate our new outdoor playscape is a perfect example. Rolling and sliding down the hill allow them to experience forces of movement. Caring for our plants in our garden connects them to nature. Using the water flume fosters science learning, as they predict whether objects sink or float, which objects move faster in flowing water, or how water changes materials such as sand or dirt. All happening in a fun-filled environment!

Most importantly, teachers and children embark on the learning experience together. By listening to children and observing their interests, teachers can change the curriculum to be short- or long-term, always evolving as children ask questions and discover new problems to solve.

A perfect example is the sunflower the children discovered growing next to the playscape. Their observations led to many inquiries and a starting point for further exploration.

The teachers share learning stories complete with vivid photos each day to help document the wide range of activities that take place in their classrooms. Take a peek at a few samples shared here. These concrete learning experiences also provide a way to work on the less apparent curriculum: nurturing friendships, developing cooperation and compassion, enhancing self-esteem, and the ability to be a life-long learner. The “joy of learning” is always filling the halls at Temple Beth Shalom!

Endless Possibilities with Playdough!

Michelle Kosow, Teacher, 3- to 4-Year Olds

With playdough, the possibilities are endless as children have so many creative ideas! Teddy decided to invent a game with our playdough and sea creatures. First, he hid a sea creature inside his ball of playdough. Then he challenged his peers, “Guess what’s inside?” As the children tried to guess, Teddy gave clues. Sometimes he showed children the print the sea animal made on the



playdough and other times he began to reveal parts of the sea creature as he said, “You can see its eyes!” Then it was time to see what animal was hiding inside the playdough. We look forward to finding out what other interesting ideas children have with the playdough.

Little Beans, Big Ideas

Ali Yaker, Teacher, 3- to 4-Year Olds

When we replanted our corn, many of the children had questions about seeds, roots, and plants. It's hard to see what's happening under the dirt! In order to really see what happens to a seed as it begins to grow into a plant, we created little bean germination bags to hang in our windows. We looked at a picture of a seedling and talked about how a bean would begin to grow with water and sunshine in the bag. Our scientists studied the beans, made observations and predictions, then created individual germination bags. They each looked around the room for a sunny window spot, and we hung the bags up. We couldn't wait to observe them over the coming weeks!

Some of our observations were:

Tali: This one has spots; this one has lines.

Spencer: One has a hole. One cracked open.

Maya: My mommy makes black beans that I like to eat. I see a little white on them.

Isaac: Seeds. Looks like the pomegranate seeds because they are also straight.

Ella: This one looks red.

Sam: I see spots. I don't like them, but Jojo likes them.

Gray: [The magnifying glass] makes them big. It has stripes.

Some of our predictions were:

Bella: I know there is something inside. I think it is green. I think a yolk will come out.

Juliet: There is a bean inside.

Isaac: A bean will grow.



Exploring the Torah

Sam Lundeen, Teacher, 4- to 5-Year Olds

One day we visited the sanctuary, where Rabbi Todd unrolled the Torah for all the Children's Center to see. Back in the classroom, it was clear many of the children were still curious about what is inside the Torah. Noah wanted a closer look and after asking a teacher for help, invited a few



of his classmates to join him in unrolling the small Torah we have in our classroom. They placed a tablecloth down, so the Torah had something nice to rest on, before carefully taking the jacket off the scroll. Noah reminded everyone to keep their hands underneath the paper because fingers should not touch the lettering. The children peered closely at the text and rolled and rerolled to different sections to search for different Hebrew letters. Leslie shared with the group that we could even find Noah's name in the story of Noah's Ark if we unrolled all the way to the beginning of the Torah! After they had finished examining the Torah, Jake and Ilan carefully re-rolled the Torah, making sure that it never touched the ground. Carsyn asked if she could help and Noah handed her the Torah cover, instructing her how to match the holes with the Torah's handles. Though we spent much of the week examining and thinking about the Torah, the Ruach class still has many questions. We look forward to seeing where this curiosity will lead us!

EVENT HIGHLIGHT

The Great Menorah Build 2016

Four hundred eager Lego builders gathered on Sunday, December 4th, to form two groups and to collaborate in building two gigantic menorahs that reached to the ceiling of Simon Hall. Directed by Stephen Schwartz of New Jersey-based Building Blocks Workshops, each group of builders worked in family teams to create columns of all colors and designs that were then joined together to create the menorahs. Some teams created intricate patterns: menorahs, Stars of David, an American flag, and more, while others chose colorful patterns. It was a sight to behold as each group lit its menorah and sang the blessings together. Thank you to the Brotherhood and their catering team for preparing an ample bagel spread for the first round of hungry builders, while the second group enjoyed lots of pizza.





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Temple Beth Shalom for the community's warm hospitality & service for Bennett & our family
Rabbi Perlman for his comfort & kindness following the passing of our beloved grandson, Eli Pilat
Rabbi Perlman for his supportive presence & thoughtful remarks at my mother's funeral
Our friend Marcy Cheifetz sharing her Jewish Journey on Yom Kippur
Rabbi Perlman for officiating at the unveiling for Norman Slawsby
Rabbi Perlman's officiating & support during Stuart's funeral
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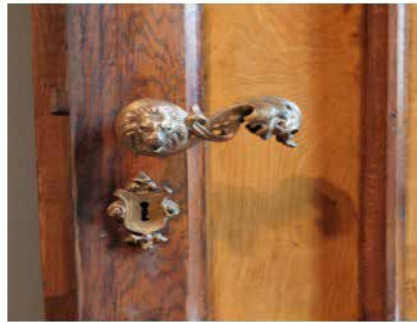
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