

The Shofar



Temple Beth El Israel

551 SW Bethany Drive
Port St Lucie, FL 34986
phone 772-336-2424

February 2021
TEVET / SHEVAT 5781

Please Note:
All of our future indoor
activities, events
and meetings hinge on
whether we are able to hold
them due to the
Coronavirus pandemic

Rabbi

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From the Desk of Rabbi Bruce Benson

I'm beginning to know what a 40-year trek feels like. Our ancestors, according to this week's Torah portion, are just about at the shores of the Sea of Reeds, with the Egyptians closing in fast. Our ancestors ran as fast as they could to be boxed in on front and back sides ending with virtually no escape routes that seemed viable.

All looked pretty grim as they defined their options, none of which were either wise or, in any form of probability, realistic to create success. They ultimately chose wisely and determined the answer was to look forward - looking back brings with it baggage. Forward? Hope and dreams.

We are the inheritors of our ancestor's dreams. I'm quite sure they never imagined it would be easy and, by any stretch of the imagination, it surely wasn't and hasn't been. The touchstone of our pride is how we have always succeeded by our Chalom (our dreams).

It is our time now - to look forward and dream. The last year hasn't been easy, nor will the near future. But, in looking just a little bit further than that, we can see the crest of our hopes, the vision of our values and the strength of our foresight.

Watch for notifications regarding our updated service schedule. We are looking at both indoor and outdoor services, how to hold them safely and comfortably, as are synagogues and churches around the country and, in fact, the world. We have our challenges, and we will overcome each and every one of them - together.

Purim is coming the end of the month and we are looking at the possibility of an outdoor ADULT Purim event on the last Friday in February. But - we NEED YOUR HELP!!

You've had a break now for a number of months - Who wants to help create a wonderful fun and JEWnique event for us? Call the office and let us know you're in... Whatever your skills or thoughts - we can use them. Now's the time to walk forward, as did Nachshon ben Aminadav, the first Jew to step into the Sea (nope - it wasn't Moses) and help us begin the process of safely and appropriately coming out of the darkness into the light. Let's look at the virus as a really teeny Haman, trying to keep us down.

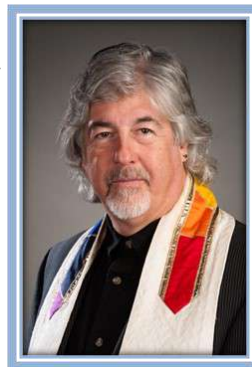
Let's do it - together

So much more to come. Remember, as I often say:

You'll see what you seek. Look ahead at a stronger Jewish community, strengthened by a test of massive proportions. We are winning a step at a time and will continue to do so - Let's make it happen...

בשלווה

Rabbi Bruce



פורים



A very grateful thank you to everyone that has already made very generous donations to our Temple. Your devotion to TBEI is so heartwarming. We truly are a family that cares.

We are hopeful that we will all be vaccinated in the near future and that will enable us to return to a somewhat normal existence. That we can hold services safely – although we will have to continue to wear masks and socially distance for the foreseeable future.

Until then, join us on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays for a variety of online Zoom classes and discussions afterward. The Monday (7 p.m.) & Thursday (10 a.m.) classes are connected, Thursday (10 a.m.) is a different topic and Saturday Torah study (10 a.m.) includes a brief morning service. We had a surprise (Zoom) visit from Amy Jill Levine, the instructor on our newest Zoom presentation, arranged by Rabbi Benson. She is extremely knowledgeable, is a very interesting speaker and we all enjoyed listening to her and meeting her.

Watch for the email about our next "Shabbat in the Lot" Purim service – weather permitting – at the end of this month, on February 25th.

Faith

Rabbi Benson's Cell Phone Number is: 561-601-8294

Our officer's phone numbers:

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Faith Krumenacker ~ President | 343-7639 |
| Ellis Bromberg ~ First Vice President | 414-218-2535 |
| Bill Weber ~ Second Vice President | 344-0965 |
| Sue Klatch ~ Treasurer | 336-7175 |
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| Lydia Bauman ~ Corresponding Secretary | 807-9978 |
| Evelyn Poulter & Eve Epstein ~ Sisterhood Co-Presidents | 812-1124/ 807-4713 |
| Len Epstein ~ Brotherhood President | 807-4713 |

Help support the Temple.....

*Until we return to
normal programming*

**For more information about
what's happening
in the Temple
go to our Website at:**

TBEI.org

SISTERHOOD NEWS

Dear Sisterhood Ladies,

Let's hope we can return to our regular routine at TBEI soon.

Don't forget our new fun-raiser. For \$10.00 (for the whole year) we will print in the Shofar your Simcha; Births, anniversaries, graduations, etc. any good news or any positive or happy news you want to share. Please send checks to TBEI and mark it Sisterhood, then E-mail Evelyn Poulter at evelinap_11@yahoo.com with your greeting or announcement.

We would like to thank everyone who purchased an Enjoyment book. Here's hoping that 2021 is a better year for all of us.

Evelyn and Eve



OUR NEW SIMCHA CAKE

UNTIL WE ARE ONCE AGAIN ABLE TO HAVE MEETINGS AND CELEBRATE OUR HAPPY OCCASIONS IN PERSON, WE WILL BE CELEBRATING IN THE SHOFAR EACH MONTH.

FOR \$10 FOR THE YEAR, YOU CAN SHARE YOUR HAPPY NEWS.

SIMCHAS & GREETINGS TO SHARE:

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FRANCINE TAMA
FROM YOUR SUNDAY
BUDDIES AND FRIENDS

BELLE, DORIS, MARYANN

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO
JACKIE WARD
FROM LILLY AND MOM



WELCOME TO ARLENE SCHWEITZER'S
NEW GRANDCHILD
LILAH MORGANN
BORN ON 1/3/21

לחיים!
To life!

*Let's hope and pray that this
year is a better year
for all of us
and let's look forward
to being together soon.*

BROTHERHOOD NEWS :

As I mentioned last month the light is getting brighter. We are getting closer to the end of the tunnel, but we're not there yet. Some of us have already had the COVID vaccine and we can also get onto a list for a vaccination. We just have to be patient.

We recently held our second outdoor Friday night service led by Rabbi Benson. We are considering another "Shabbat in the Lot" this month. Check your Shofar or E-Mail for further information. Special thanks to Les Schwartz, Richard Levine and Ben Goldberg for setting up & breaking down all the equipment it took to have this service.

Brotherhood wants to remind everyone to wear your masks and be safe.

Leonard Epstein, Brotherhood President

WEATHER PERMITTING

WE ARE PLANNING ANOTHER "SHABBAT IN THE LOT" SERVICE

On THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 25th at 5:36 p.m.

To celebrate PURIM

COME HEAR THE WHOLE MEGILLAH!!

Join us for
Shabbat.



For more information about
what's happening in the Temple
go to TBEI.org

Lately we have all been ordering
from Amazon -
particularly now that we are
trying to stay safe
and shop only when necessary.
If you don't already have it set up
please see the directions for TBEI
being your designated charity (on
page 20) so that we receive \$\$
from Amazon for each purchase
we make.

Every little bit helps!!



Rob Sharot, Owner

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February Birthdays



February Anniversaries



1 Deborah Brateman
9 Ethan Anderson Schultz
12 Zachary M. Birch Farragut
12 Justin Glickman
12 Joseph Greenwald
13 Jacqueline Ward
14 Traci Glickman
22 Sara Maggin
23 Liana R. Rosichan-Nader
27 Lester Schwartz
27 Francine Tama

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8 Karol & Richard Levine
14 Judith & Douglas Logue
19 Karen & Arnold Stillman

חג שמחה

מזל טוב

If you don't see your birthday or anniversary listed in the Shofar contact the Temple office and ask to have your special day included on our list.

Dear TBEI Member;

We are on a journey, sometimes it feels like the 40 years of the Exodus, sometimes less, sometimes longer, but we are nonetheless on a journey. As our prayerbook tells us, journeys are made stage by stage and we are at another stage. A semi-middle ground is being considered and will be discussed by the temple board at a meeting to be held shortly.

Please be aware none of the steps we are investigating are being taken either lightly or without deep discussion and a very close adherence to the CDC in a non-political way. The board and I have only mutual concern: the welfare and health of each and every member of this temple and will not be dissuaded by unsafe responses to the health crisis of our lifetimes. I believe we are, and will continue to be, driven by what is safe for all of us based on facts- definable facts-not feelings, not political diatribe and non-facts meant to stir up the masses not on politicized NON FACTS.

In order to put vision to the names of those lost,

Here's a fact:

Reading the yahrzeit list for this week, I timed myself.

I actually read those names at a rate of 22 per minute.

Let's build that out a bit.

400,000 deaths so far

Divided by 22 read names per minute = 18,181 minutes.

Divided by 60 minutes in an hour

In order to read the names of the first 400,000 who have died, would take 303 hours of straight reading with no break.

Divide that by a 24-hour day, and the result is:
over 12 and a half days.

We are losing in the area of 4,000 people a day.

To read each name of a person lost each day would add:

3 hours a day. (181 minutes for 4,000)

We therefore add 12 hours of reading names every 4 days.

I spent the time to do this to make a point:

We are going to carefully - CAREFULLY - to the best of our abilities review all the known quantifiable information, minus any personal feelings, and come to a best scenario vision of how to slowly reopen as we define a new normal. We truly hope you will understand these choices and decisions are not alterable, not because we're being meanspirited, holding to one political bent or another, but as a result of looking at reality as it stands before us, not one imagined about what will happen, based on nothing but feelings.

Rabbi Bruce Benson

This past month:



*Rabbi Benson conducting our
Shabbat in the Lot
outdoor service last month.*



If you take pictures at any of our functions,
please send them to me
so we can all share your photos.
Send them to: faithkrumenacker@comcast.net

**Mosaic is back on NBC on
Sunday mornings at 10:30 a.m.**

**It is a very interesting and
informative program
about Jewish topics and issues,
with a wide variety of guests.**

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**Join us on THURSDAY, February 25th
for our outdoor Purim Service at 5:36 p.m.**



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LIC. #CAC1816767

We are considering beginning a slow roll out of live indoor services and to keep you all apprised of the decisions we have made, I'd like to share the following:

Everyone entering the building must comply with the masking guidelines and keep their mask over their face at all times while in the building. Non-compliance will result in you being asked to leave the building immediately.

Temperatures will be taken at the door. Upon signing in, we will ask for name, phone number and email address, in case of contact tracing needs, and we must insist on 100% compliance with this. Once there is no tracing need for that information (usually several weeks), the list will be destroyed. It will NOT be used for any other purpose nor will it be shared with anyone. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

Any live service will have a maximum of 40 defined seats in the sanctuary. They cannot be moved or shifted. They are measured at socially appropriate distances and will remain in those marked places. There will be a number of single seats and a number of 2 seats together for couples who live in the same house. They are placed according to CDC spacing guidelines and may not be moved.

Once the maximum number of seats have been taken, the service doors will be closed to further entry.

Your mask must stay in place during the service, especially during singing.

There will be no kiddush or oneg, or after service socializing until such time as it is safe to do so, If you want to see your friends outside in the parking lot, please do so responsibly. (masks, distancing, etc.)

There will be no Aliyot at this time and the Rabbi will be the only one on the Bimah.

The schedule of services will be sent out via email and will be listed in the Shofar. Phone calls will be made to our members that do not have access to email.

For now, live services are only being considered for Friday nights. There will be no online (YouTube) service when we have a service in our building. Shabbat morning services will be determined shortly as we see how Shabbat evening services work.

We are hopeful that everyone will work together to create a successful experience at this challenging time and look forward to seeing you all soon.

B'shalom,

Rabbi Bruce



Tu B'Shvat is the Jewish holiday that is considered the New Year for Trees. *Tu* stands for the number 15, and *Shvat* is the name of the month in which the holiday falls. The fifteenth of *Shvat*, which falls in the winter, is the official date of this New Year.

Why is this particular time in the dead of the winter designated the New Year for Trees? It would seem that the spring, when the trees blossom and bloom, would be a much more appropriate time. Or perhaps even autumn, when the trees display their brilliant colors as one season comes to an end and the next begins.

Winter, however, when we celebrate the life of the trees, is a time when the trees seem least alive. Many are completely bare and look all but dead.

To understand why the 15th of Shvat is the New Year for Trees, we have to look beneath the surface. Literally. It takes about four months for the rains of the Jewish New Year to saturate the soil and enter the trees. In Israel, the rainy season begins just after *Rosh Hashanah*. Any fruit that is produced between *Rosh Hashanah* and *Tu B'Shvat* is considered last year's fruit since it was created by the rains of the past year. Anything produced four months later, after *Tu B'Shvat*, is considered fruit of the New Year.

So, *Tu B'Shvat* is literally the New Year for the Trees because it is only from that point forward that the trees are infused with the water from the New Year.

This actually has a lot of practical implications in biblical law. It affected the laws of tithing fruit when the Temple stood (Deuteronomy 26), it has implications on the Sabbatical year which is still observed in the land of Israel today (Leviticus 25), and it determines the biblical prohibition of eating fruits of new trees for the first three years (Leviticus 19:23).

Moreover, while we can't see it in the winter, beneath the surface the trees are very much alive. It is now that they begin their cycle of life. Underneath the cold and sometimes frozen ground, the new sap in the trees begins to flow. This is the beginning of the process that will produce the buds, blossoms, and flowers that we enjoy in the springtime.

To celebrate the trees and their fruit on *Tu B'Shvat* it is customary to have a festive meal with fruits, preferably those included among the seven species of the Holy Land: grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates (Deuteronomy 8:8). Some people even have a *Tu B'Shvat seder*, which like a Passover meal has four cups of wine, a text that is recited together, and special foods – in this case 10–15 specified fruits – to be eaten in service of God.

In contemporary Israel, *Tu B'Shvat* has also become a kind of Arbor Day, when trees are planted all over the country in celebration and joy.



Here's another opportunity to support the temple while honoring or remembering a family member at the same time.

As the pandemic has dragged on, Rabbi Benson has been recording services to be watched online. In order to do it at the quality level we have all gotten used to, it comes at a small price to have someone there to "produce the recording". Here's where you can help create a win-win; for you, your family and the Temple. This request must be received 2 weeks prior to the date of the service you want to sponsor to guarantee insertion.

For \$100.00, you can create, at both the beginning and the end of either a Friday or Shabbat morning service, any of the following:

In honor of:

In memory of:

To remember the *yahrzeit* of:

or anything else you'd like to say, honor or memorialize.

If you can, for \$150.00 you can have the same screens run at both services for that weekend.

To secure your service or weekend, please email to: TBEI34986@gmail.com

I/We would like to support our online services at TBEI.

Please accept our donation of:

\$100. For a Friday/Saturday am service. Date: _____

\$150. For the weekend of: _____

In honor of/memory of: _____

Remembered by: _____

This donation may be made by either check, cash or Credit card to:
TBEI or sent into the temple office. Many thanks for your support.

Adult Education Classes

While we have been away from the temple building due to the Coronavirus, we have been studying online. We have been running 2 classes during the week as well as Torah study on Shabbat morning.

We are getting ready to finish our 2 “winter” classes and are locking in the dates for our Spring sessions. Below are our 2 upcoming classes.

Every class begins with a brief opening to the topic, and then we watch a 30-minute lecture delivered through the auspices of “The Great Courses.”

We then delve deeper into that session’s topic.

Synagogues across the country are beginning to use this method to expand not only the offerings presented, but it becomes a way for the synagogue to become more accessible during these trying times.

As a member you are invited to join these free classes and join in the chavruta (friendship) as well as the learning to be found in these classes.

Rabbi Bruce



Class Schedule:

The Old Testament

Professor Amy-Jill Levine

Monday evenings 7:00-8:30 ~ Thursday mornings 10:30-12:00

*This class begins THURSDAY morning, January 28.

Please sign on (directions below) by 10:15 a.m.

And Mondays beginning February 1. Please sign on by 6:45 p.m.

Class Schedule:

Between Cross and Crescent

Jewish Civilization from Mohammed to Spinoza

Professor David B. Ruderman

Tuesday mornings 10:30-12:00

** PLEASE NOTE: This class begins Tuesday morning, February 9 @ 10:30.



How to sign on:

Type this web address into your Google browser so it looks like the link below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89499008743>

This will take you to our “waiting room” where you will be “let in.”

ALL Adult Ed Classes & Saturday Torah Study/services use this same address.



The New Enjoyment Books are here
They are on sale in the Judaica Shop

\$35

Friday night Candle Lighting Schedule:



February:

| | |
|----|---------|
| 5 | 5:50 pm |
| 12 | 5:54 pm |
| 19 | 5:59 pm |
| 26 | 6:03 pm |



Lighting the Shabbat Candles:

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם
אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו
להדליק נר של שבת: (אמן)

Baruch ata Adonay, Eloheynu melech ha-olam, asher kid-shanu b'mitz-votuv, v'tzivanu l'hadlik nayr shel Shabbat.

Praised are You, Lord our G-d, King of the universe, who has taught us the way of holiness through the Mitzvot, and enjoined upon us the kindling of the Shabbat lights.



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Our new Shofar advertising year begins with the September issue.

If you or anyone you know would like to advertise in our monthly newsletter please contact the Temple office for details.

Rates are as follows per year:

| | |
|-------------------------|------------------|
| FULL PAGE..... | \$325.00 |
| HALF PAGE..... | \$200.00 |
| QUARTER PAGE..... | \$145.00 |
| BUSINESS CARD..... | 95.00 |
| ONE-TIME FULL PAGE..... | \$ 40.00 / ISSUE |

Print-ready ads must be submitted no later than August 10th for the September issue. Please send your ad to:

faithkrumenacker@comcast.net

TREE OF LIFE AND MEMORIAL PLAQUES

Bronze - \$100
Silver - \$150
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NOTE:

Above donations were received in December

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Ethyl Silverman
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Robert Bloom
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Steven Redman

NOTE:

Above donations were received in December



PLEASE.....

Notify the Temple office or call the Rabbi if you are aware a fellow congregant is ill, or if a family member is ill, or has had an accident, or is in need of the Rabbi's services. The Rabbi can only help if he is informed that he is needed.



Michael Cook, DMD
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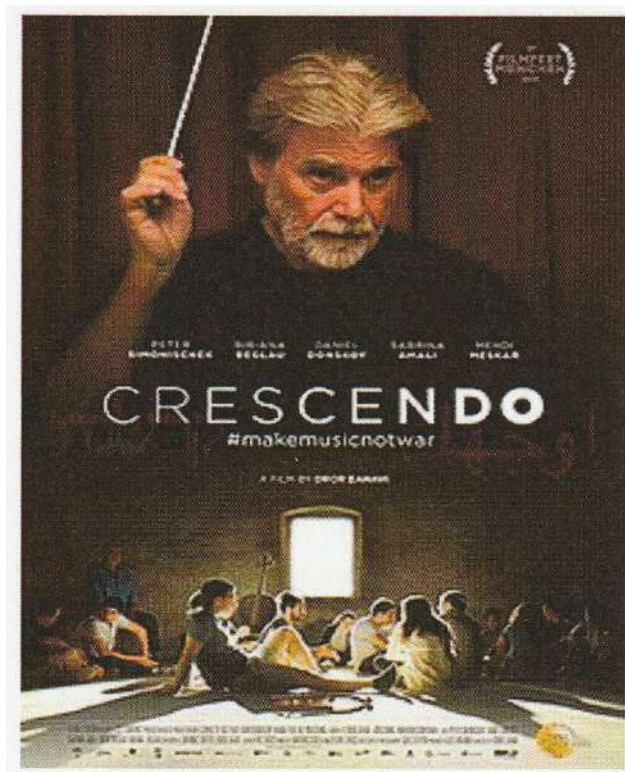


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Israel no. 1416

Post-Communist Stamps Featuring Synagogues

THE STAMPS

The German Democratic Republic began the trend in 1990 with a stamp (Scott 2846) depicting a 19th century view of an East Berlin landmark, the New Synagogue on Oranienburger Strasse, the largest synagogue in Germany when it opened in 1866. Desecrated on *Kristallnacht*, the building was reconstructed in the 1990s and today houses a permanent exhibition on Berlin's Jewish life before the Nazis.

In 1992, an issue marking the 500th anniversary of the settlement of Jews in Bulgaria (Scott 3671) depicted the Sofia Synagogue, one of the largest Sephardic synagogue buildings in the world. In 1996, the Bulgarian government approved its rebuilding with contributions from Jewish foundations.

Hungary has featured more of its synagogues on stamps than any other country in the world, except for Israel. It started in 2000 with the Dohany Street Synagogue in Budapest (Scott catalog 3710), a joint issue with Israel (Scott 1416): the Hungarian stamp showed the famous synagogue's exterior, while the Israeli issue showed interior features. Since then, synagogues in Szeged (Scott 4094), Budapest (the Jewish Theological Seminary Synagogue, Scott 4095), Pecs (Scott 4135g and 4145f), Nagykoros (Scott 4173), and Szolnok (Scott 4174) have been featured on Hungarian stamps.

In 2001, Russia joined in, depicting two of its most famous synagogues on a striking two-stamp diamond-shaped set. The Moscow Choral Synagogue – a rallying place for Jews under Tsarist and Communist rule – and the Grand Choral Synagogue of St. Petersburg are on Scott 6647-6648.

The former Soviet republic of Georgia, in the Caucasus region of western Asia, is the home to a 200-year-old Jewish community in its second largest city, Kutaisi. The city has three synagogues, and the largest of the three, constructed of yellow stone, is on a 2001 Georgian stamp (Scott 274), part of a joint issue with Israel.

During World War II, all but one of the 14 synagogues in the Latvian capital of Riga were destroyed. In July 1941, 300 Jews were locked in the city's Great Choral Synagogue by the Nazis, who then burned it to the ground. The less grand, but sole surviving, synagogue in the city is the Peitav Synagogue, now restored, which was featured on a Latvian stamp in 2001 (Scott 537).

Sarajevo, the capital and largest city in Bosnia and Herzegovina, was a major Jewish center in the Balkans in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, its Jewish community numbering 100,000 when the Nazis invaded in 1941. Most perished during the Holocaust, and survivors immigrated to Israel after World War II. Today the Jewish population is less than 1000, and the neo-Moorish Sarajevo Synagogue on the banks of the Miljacka River, serves the entire community. Bosnia and Herzegovina commemorated its centenary with a stamp in 2002 (Scott 422).

The steppes of the former Soviet state of Kazakhstan, bordered by snow-capped mountains in the south, offered safe harbor to Jews who fled Ukraine and Belarus during the Holocaust. Hundreds of them are buried in the Jewish section of a cemetery in Almaty, the largest city in the central Asian nation. Although plans exist to build synagogues in 12 Kazakh cities, until recently the only one was the Jewish Center in Almaty, run by the Lubavitch movement. It is depicted on a 2006 stamp (Scott 524).

Continued on next page....

Post-Communist Stamps Featuring Synagogues



Kazakhstan no. 524



Latvia no. 537



Lithuania no. 894



Poland no. 2662

Much grander, in the Moorish revival style with large stained glass windows, was the Zagreb Synagogue in Croatia, which was destroyed in 1941 by the country's Ustasha regime, an ally of the Nazis. Only three of Croatia's 41 synagogues survived World War II, none in the capital of Zagreb. Nevertheless, to commemorate the 200th anniversary of Zagreb's Jewish community, Croatia issued a stamp depicting the old synagogue (Scott 629). The good news is that a new Jewish community center and shul are planned for the same site, which is currently a parking lot.

Lithuania, similarly, chose a building that no longer stands for its first synagogue stamp: the Great Synagogue of Vilnius is shown on Scott 894. Dating to the 17th century, with an Italian Renaissance design, the synagogue was partly destroyed by the Nazis during World War II. The ruined structure was demolished by the Soviet authorities in the mid-1950s to make way for a kindergarten and basketball court.

So the memories associated with these houses of worship can sometimes be bittersweet. But it is remarkable that so many of the former Soviet-bloc nations have come so far as to feature these synagogues – over the years, places of gathering and



Russia no. 6647



Russia no. 6648

refuge, often symbols of their embattled Jewish communities – on their stamps during the past two decades. It is something that would have been unthinkable for their postal authorities under Communist rule.

Reference:

1. Gruber, Ruth E, *A Jewish Revival: Europeans Embrace Jewish Revival as a Symbol of Post-Communist Future*, The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles, November 11, 1999 •

If you have something that you would like to share with the rest of us, whether an article, a story or anything of interest to our Temple family, please send it to me at:

faithkrumenacker@comcast.net

and I will gladly put it into our monthly newsletter. The deadline for the following month is the 20th of the preceding month.

Additionally, if you would like to do a presentation at one of our Zoom classes like the very interesting one that Ellis Bromberg did on stamp-collecting, contact Rabbi Benson with your idea.

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Our Monthly TBEI Library Book Review.....by Sheilah Korinow

Yiddish. What can I say about it? I know some words and can understand the gist of some statements made, mostly because my parents dropped a few sentences here and there so that I and my brother could not know what they were saying. But it put both of us in "survival mode" - pick up a little Yiddish, and your parents cannot hide anything important from you (or so we thought)! I'm sure that also pertains to many of you reading this article. But if you are interested in learning more Yiddish today, cyberspace has made it easier. Go to YouTube and you will find 15 minute classes in Yiddish - no experience necessary. You even might find Yiddish entertainment. I was sent notification of a Yiddish performance on-line. It arrived a bit too late, so I was only able to see a little of it, but what I did see I enjoyed! This entertainment show during Chanukah had many guest appearances by Jewish actors and singers such as Billy Crystal, Tovah Feldshuh, Joel Grey, Carol Kane, Mandy Patinkin, Itzhach Perlman, Neil Sedaka and more who shared memories of the past. Others performed and sang Broadway songs and songs from the Yiddish stage. All was enjoyable, even if I did not understand everything.

What is Yiddish? It is a language which perhaps went back to the 10th century used by the Jews in daily life, and of course, over the centuries, has accumulated many writings - plays and poems for instance. Usually they instruct and sometimes amuse, the best starting in the middle of the 19th century. To get an idea of the progression of Yiddish, I recommend the book I am now reviewing, Modern Jewish Verse, edited by Irving Howe, Ruth Wise, and Khone Shmeruk. It is really imperative that you read the Introduction of this book, getting an idea of the changes in Yiddish throughout the ages.

Take a look through the pages of this book, and what might catch your attention. You will see the works of 39 poets. Many others tried their hands in writing Yiddish Poetry, but the ones in this book are the best. Others are not included because it was nearly impossible to experience the atmosphere and context which were lacking in the translation of their poems.

The translations in this book are as faithful to the original Yiddish as possible. Even in English, they are enjoyable to read. The same poetic effect exists.

Also, the writers have information provided about them, familiarizing us with their lives, importance and style. The book is set up so that the Yiddish is on the right and the English translation is on the left. I think that after going through the pages of this book, you will find some poems that might mean a lot to you in one way or another. Here a few examples:

The first poem was written by Abraham Reisen, who came here via Russia after World War I. He was from a literary household and began to write poetry at the age of nine and his poems were published at the age of fifteen. His verses were set to music and became popular as folk songs. He edited numerous periodicals besides writing a book. His works dealt with the poor who were suffering.

A PRAYER (read left-hand verses, then those on the right)

Teach me, teach me how
To deal with the world, O Lord!
And how I may transform
Evil into good.

I've seen a trainer in
The circus tame a tiger;
Seen him de-fang a snake.
Lord, let me be wiser.

If a wild beast lurks
In our humanity,
Let me turn it toward
A mild humility.

Bless me with patience, too
And make me iron hard
That I may show mankind
At least such wonders, Lord.

Another poem was written by Abraham Sutzkver. He was originally from Siberia from which he and his parents fled, and later was "a forceful cultural presence" in the Vilna Ghetto where, in 1943, he escaped to the partisans and then to Moscow. He testified after the war at the Nuremberg trials. He then moved to Israel in 1947 from Paris. Here is one of his poems.

TOYS

My daughter, you must care for your toys,
Poor things, they're even smaller than you.
Every night, when the fire goes to sleep,
Cover them with the stars of the tree.

Tie a straw hat on your doll
And put a bell in her hand.
For not one of them has a mother,
And so they cry out to God.

Let the golden pony graze
The cloudy sweetness of the field.
Lace up the little boy's boots
When the sea-eagle blows cold.

Love them, your little princesses -
I remember a cursed night
When there were dolls left in all seven streets
Of the city. And not one child.

Continued on next page ~ ~



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Continued from previous page...

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The Introduction of the book stated that this book may "serve to mark not only the end of a rich literary tradition but of an entire phase of modern Jewish history, that in which Yiddish served as the dominant language in the weekday life of millions of Jews and then, for some of them, as the medium for a partially secularized culture."

But wait! I just received an email about "Folksbiene", a new addition of 15 minute Yiddish classes. Could it be that perhaps with people spending more time indoors during the pandemic, the offerings online of Yiddish will expand the number of people that decide, why not, let's learn a little Yiddish! With Modern Jewish Verse in your hands and some classes and entertainment online, Yiddish will last a little longer!

You can check out this book by contacting me at skorinow@gmail.com or call at 772 871-0030. I will gladly meet you at our temple or even bring it to your home.

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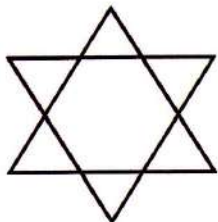
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