



Beth Am COMMENTATOR

MIAMI, FLORIDA

FEBRUARY 7, 1975

Guardians Of Our Youth

Dr. Philip and Helen Gassman

The families listed above have made their commitment to Temple Beth Am by joining the growing list of Guardians of Our Youth.

Mental Health Topic For Breakfast February 9

In conjunction with the Mental Health Association, the Brotherhood will have at its next Congregational Breakfast Forum Dr. Stephen A. Mack, well-known psychotherapist, as guest speaker. His topic of discussion will be "Mental Health in Today's Society." Admission is \$1.00 for Brotherhood members and \$1.50 for non-members. The forum will be held on Sunday, February 9, at 9:30 a.m., in the Youth Lounge.

Mental health is the overall way people get along with one another. One of the multitude of problems involved is the public attitude towards mental health and its myriad of questions. This was very vividly seen in the public reaction in the Senator Eagleton affair.

The March 9th Breakfast Forum will have as its speaker Mrs. Audrey Finkelstein, chairperson of the Dade County Community Relations Board. Her topic of discussion will be "The Changing Problems of Community Relations in Dade County."

Purim Carnival Sunday, Feb. 16

Clowns! Prizes! Games! Side Shows! Fun House!

Goldfish, Cake Walk, Movies, Costume Parade, Pony Rides

FOOD HOT DOGS BAR-B-Q BURGERS

Boulevard Of Creative Arts And Crafts

Jewelry, Ceramics, Paintings and Prints, Leather and Macrame

USED BOOKS FOR SALE

Purim Costume Contest--Kindergarten to Third Grade

BABY SITTING AVAILABLE

2 weeks notice required--call Lori Miller, 665-3581

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Let's Talk Divorce

(The Bible discussion will reappear next week.)

There is a plague stalking the American community. It is not a physical disease. It is a sociological virus. It is named--divorce.

I am compelled to write this article at this time because it seems to me that our Miami community is exploding like a cluster of Chinese firecrackers. The explosion is not much fun, however, because what is exploding is the life-stuff of human beings, the fabric of family life, the hopes and dreams of innocent children. It seems that I cannot talk to anyone about one kind of problem without hearing that person say, "Incidentally, I'm getting a divorce."

Now, please understand me. I am not opposed to divorce when it is overwhelmingly indicated. My alarm at the present situation is that divorce has become a game, a viable alternative like, "Where shall we go tonight?", or "What shall we do?" People are getting divorced because "Everyone else is doing it," because "I'm tired of all this responsibility," because "I'll show him (her) he (she) can't yell at me," because of all sorts of secondary and incidental reasons.

Judaism has always permitted divorce, but it seldom happened in the traditional Jewish community. It didn't happen because individuals looked on the family as a deeply meaningful institution through which one could realize the highest things in life, like love, children, comfort, calm. In Judaism, marriage is considered "the process of making holy, kiddushin," because it is the way in which a person most fulfills himself, but the lifestyle of the America of the 1970's does not allow for serious undertakings. The emphasis is on episodic pleasure. The question today is not, "How can I best direct my life?", but "Where can I best spend the night?" We have become like fireflies in the night, lighting up a solitary moment in space for a brief interlude, and then passing on to another spot, which has no connection to the first placement.

THE PURSUIT OF LONELINESS

The result of all of this pushing and churning to find the greatest pleasure in the present moment is an increasing number of isolated individuals competing with other isolated

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FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7
7:30 p.m.

FAMILY SERVICE

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Mrs. Pielets' 1st Year Class
and Mrs. Loss' 2nd Year Class
will participate

'Captain Noah And His Floating Zoo'

By the Intermediate Bloc
of Beth Am's Day School



Henry LeClair, Cantorial Soloist

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 8
11:15 a.m.

TORAH SERVICE

Dedication Of TEENAGE BUILDING Sunday Evening, March 9, 1975

Let's Talk Divorce

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individuals for the briefest and shallowest kind of affection. The result is "anomie," abject loneliness, aimless wandering, rootlessness, soul-anguish. Freedom is the new god and pleasure is his (her) priest. Our world is becoming increasingly filled with unhappy ex-mates, a little less trusting, more demanding, less able to compromise and adjust. And, of course, there are the increasing hordes of children, caught in the battle between sniping parents, deserted and over-pampered, pulled and clutched at, exposed and shielded, taught, by example, that mates are for leaving and for fighting.

Oh, the waste of human potential! The waste of hopes and efforts! Oh, the twisting of dreams and trust!

There are some couples who ought to be divorced, and there is a way to end a marriage with mutual understanding and with both partners helping the children to face what has to be a traumatic experience. Unfortunately, most marriages end today because one or both parties are unwilling to compromise or to adjust or to seek solutions. "Take me the way I am" is the slogan of an immature person unwilling to work at growing. People can learn to talk to each other, without torturing one another, without taking advantage of one another's weakness. There are professionals who are able to teach marriage partners how to work out their problems, if the partners are not too proud to learn. (We study everything in college except the most important things, how to get along with another human being, and how to raise children.)

TWO KINDS OF MARRIAGE

No marriage is perfect. Every marriage has its problems. There are only two kinds of marriage, those where the partners are determined to work out their problems, and those where one or both partners are not willing to adjust and work. Surely, the latter are guilty of childishness and irresponsibility.

One has no right to get married if he is not willing to work at it.

One has no right to get married and have children if he is not willing to show both justice and mercy to his partner. Sometimes, we are sacrificial to our children, but we withhold feeling and forgiveness to our adult partner. An adult, too, needs warmth. A spouse is not to be seen merely as a competitor, he (she) is also a victim of life, as we are. He is what he is because of his life experiences, and he needs help to change; help from you.

Jewish wives and husbands, look at yourselves! You are not supposed to be like everyone else. You are supposed to be capable of more compassion and understanding. Before you walk out on your spouse, try one more dose of openness, confession, humility, forgiveness. Before you walk out, try to give to your first love some of the warmth you hope to give to your second love.

When all the alternatives have been tested, then, and then only, is it time to think of divorce. Anyone can walk away from a fire; it is only the courageous who stay and attempt to put it out. Marriage is a holy responsibility; it is a commitment of trust; it is a commitment to work with an imperfect partner as hard as one works in one's business, as hard as one works with one's child, harder than one works to get a generous divorce settlement.

There is no marriage as beautiful and as deep as that in which the partners have worked to resolve their problems. It is not true that, "Love means never having to say, 'I'm sorry.'" The true lover understands the soul-filling joy he brings to his partner when he says, "You know, I've been somewhat at fault myself. I didn't mean to bring you pain. I know I've hurt you. How can I change that?"

There is a plague stalking the American community . . .

Coffee House In Youth Lounge February 15

The long-awaited Teenage Coffee House is here for high school students. There is free, live entertainment. Drop in any time between 8:30 p.m., every Saturday, beginning February 15, in the Youth Lounge.

This is sponsored jointly by Temple Beth Am and the Central Agency of Jewish Education, and supervised by David Burger and a qualified staff. Please watch your mail for the required membership cards.

Beth Americans At Park February 2

The Beth Americans, under the direction of Harriet Potlock, will perform for the Jewish War Veterans at Bay Front Park Bandshell on February 2, at 2:15 p.m. They will also represent Temple at the Interfaith Musicale on February 18 at the First Baptist Church of South Miami, at 7:30 p.m.

Interfaith Musicale Feb. 18

Mark Tuesday, February 18, at 7:30 p.m., on your calendar. The eighth annual Interfaith Musicale will be presented at the First Baptist Church of South Miami, 6767 Sunset Drive, Miami.

Seven churches and synagogues will join together to present a memorable program of music. Temple Beth Am's Beth Americans will be participating.

Sponsored by the Women's Combined Interfaith Committee this year's evening of music promises to be most pleasant and joyful.

Friendship Circle Meets February 11 For Brunch

We are planning a first steering meeting for interested and active people. Why not bring a friend to complete our circle? Join us for brunch (complimentary) on Tuesday, February 11, 1975, at 10:30 a.m., in room 22, in the new Teenage Building of Temple Beth Am, 5950 North Kendall Drive. Call for reservations in order to help us plan--667-5587.

Joan's Gems

By JOAN SCHWARTZMAN

Kenny, 15 year old son of Shirley and Gus Karger, was elected president of the Palmetto Senior High chess club. Among Kenny's interests is the art of magic, and upon occasion he has shown his talents to our students in the Day School. . . . Congrats to Edward Hirsh who has been elected president of Operation Re-Entry Auxiliary Program, one of our community's most popular rehabilitation centers for young people with social adjustment problems.

B. nai

Mitzvah

Saturday
February 8
11:15 a.m.



David son of
Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Hellman
George, son of
Mrs. Sophia Markovich
and Dr. Simon Markovich