



Beth Am COMMENTATOR

April 30, 1976

Miami, Florida

RELIGIOUS SERVICE

FRIDAY, APRIL 30, 8:30 p.m., RABBI BAUMGARD

"Golda"--A Life Story

Henry LeClair, Cantorial Soloist

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 11:15 a.m., TORAH SERVICE

B. Goodman Elected

President For 76-77



At the annual meeting of Temple Beth Am on Monday, April 26, Bernard Goodman was elected to serve as president of the congregation for the fiscal year 1976-77. The rest of the slate of officers as listed in the COMMENTATOR last week was also elected for the coming year.

Reports of committee activities for the year were given by our vice presidents and our financial secretary at the meeting. This will be the second year as president for Bernie who caps off many years of service to the Temple as a board member and officer. Bernie is the first past president of Brotherhood to serve as president of the Temple.

Bernie has been active in all facets of Temple life and attributes his success to the cooperation of his lovely, hard-working, dedicated wife, Evelyn, who is ever helpful.

Registration Forms To Be Mailed June 1

In about four weeks, we will be mailing membership registration forms for the fiscal year 1976-77. This year the membership registration and Religious and Hebrew School registration forms have been incorporated into one form.

Temple fiscal policy will not allow us to mail forms for new registration to members in arrears on their current year's fees or pledges. Everyone owing monies to the Temple has received a statement within the last two weeks. The last statement before our re-registration on June 1 will be sent on or about May 1. Watch for our last statement if you have a past due balance.

About Jews

If the statistics are right, the Jews constitute but one percent of the human race. It suggests a nebulous dim puff of star dust lost in the blaze of the Milky Way. Properly, the Jew ought hardly to be heard of, but he is heard of, has always been heard of. He is as prominent on the planet as any other people, and his commercial importance is extravagantly out of proportion to the smallness of his bulk. His contributions to the world's list of great names in literature, science, art, music, finance, medicine, and abstract learning are also way out of proportion to the weakness of his numbers. He has made a marvelous fight in this world in all the ages; and has done it with his hands tied behind him. He could be vain of himself and be excused for it. The Egyptians, the Babylonians, the Persians rose, filled the planet with sound and splendour, then faded to dream-stuff and passed away; the Greek and the Roman followed, and made a vast noise, and they are gone; other peoples have sprung up and held their torch high for a time, but it burned out, and they sit in twilight now, or have vanished. The Jew saw them all, beat them all, and is now what he always was, exhibiting no decadence, no infirmities of age, no weakening of his parts, no slowing of his energies, no dulling of his alert and aggressive mind. All things are mortal but the Jew; all other forces pass, but he remains. What is the secret of his immortality?

--Mark Twain in Harper's, September, 1899

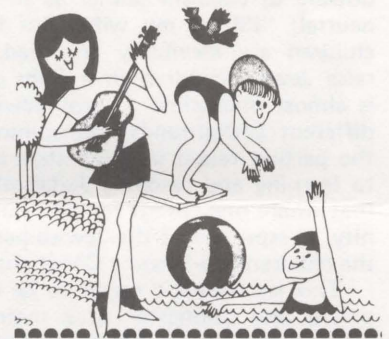
Confirmation Time Nears Confirmands Busy Preparing

The first Sunday in June is the date of Confirmation Exercises. The Friday evening before, the confirmands will present an original service which they are now writing. At the exercise itself, the confirmands will present an original cantata with the theme of the Jewish contribution to America. The young people are doing the research in areas like the Jewish contribution to the American Revolution, to American goals and ideals, to Broadway (drama and musicals), to music, to movies and T.V., to the civil rights movement, labor unions, industry, etc. Their narration will be interspersed with songs by American Jews on related themes.

Other young people in the confirmation class are busy preparing huge art columns for display at the service; still others are preparing an interpretative dance. All told, over 100 young people are involved. All of the youngsters have completed the eighth through tenth grade, minimum requirement for confirmation, but most of them have come all the way through the Beth Am school. Rabbi Julian Cook is supervising the confirmation program; all of our Rabbis are involved as well as the full retinue of tenth grade teachers.

The Confirmation Service (Friday, June 4) and Exercise (Sunday, June 6) will be exciting moments in our history, for this is our 20th confirmation class.

Summer Program Starts In Six Weeks



The summer program at Beth Am starts in a little over six weeks on Monday, June 14. Registration in all groups is up over last year.

Our camp directors, Rose Ashbes and Al Schlazer, have a fun-filled educational program in store for our campers this year. As usual, sports of all sorts will be featured with swimming offered every day. Red Cross swimming instruction will be given to all campers.

Tennis, softball, basketball, volleyball and all other sports are supervised by qualified counsellors. Arts and crafts, music, folk dancing, field trips and other special events round out our program. All camp personnel have been selected for their camping skills and abilities in working with pre-teen youngsters assuring your youngster of a fulfilling summer.

You can send your child for the full eight weeks or for either of two four week sessions. Call Rhoda Bernheimer in the office at 667-5587 for application and information.

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY
The Second Commandment

The Jewish community in America is faced with greater dangers than the Jews of Israel. We are assimilating so rapidly into the general American community that it is entirely possible that American Jewry will go the way of those Israelites taken into captivity by Assyria in 721 B.C.E. It is possible that there will be only a remnant of Jews in America within a few generations. This is the stark reality which most American Jewish spokesmen are afraid to say out loud. What can we do about it?

First of all, we have to face the situation as it exists, without denying the facts. Secondly, we have to determine that we will reverse the current vigorous trend.

The basic fact is that the number of positively oriented Jewish children is fast decreasing. There are many reasons for this decline. First of all, young Jewish women are having fewer children. They are getting married later, and they don't see themselves in the basic role of mother. They see themselves increasingly as candidates for professional occupations primarily and as wives and mothers secondarily and thirdly. In Boston recently, I led a discussion with college students on the need for Jewish children and one young lady said with astonishment (and some resentment), "You seem to be saying that we owe it to the Jewish people to get married and have children." "You bet!" I said. Her statement was a frank one. Many young Jewish ladies are not at all sure they want to get married, much less have children. This means disaster for the continuation of our already minute Jewish community. What has been said here concerning women is all the more true of Jewish young men.

Another important trend in the diminution of the number of children trained warmly and positively to be Jews is the rate of intermarriage. We have said here many times that the Jewish community has gained some outstanding human beings through intermarriage, but, by and large, the children of an intermarriage have a rough time in learning to be Jews. If one of the parents is born of Christian parents and remains outside of Judaism (either as an observing Christian or as a neutral: "I'll let my wife raise the children as Jews"), the children are inevitably confused. It is difficult enough to raise Jewish children in a fully committed Jewish home. It is almost impossible to raise Jewish children in a home with different backgrounds and opinions (the exception is where the partner raised in a Christian home fully commits himself to learning and teaching Judaism). Sociological studies show that where one parent remains outside of the Jewish community, irrespective of the Jewish partner's efforts, 80 percent of the children will become Christians or give up their Judaism.

This last statistic ought to be memorized by every Jewish parent and youngster of a marriageable age. If you don't marry a person committed to Judaism, there is an 80 percent chance that your children, irrespective of what you do for them, will not be loyal to the Jewish community. On the other hand, the same study shows that where the non-Jewish partner sincerely converts to Judaism, the children are generally as positive in their Judaism as the children of Jewish (by birth) partners. The basic question here is the success of the marriage itself. If the marriage is successful, the conversion will hold, and the children will be Jews. If not, the children are up for grabs. The problem is clearly one of commitment. Children do not do well in a divided home. They take the path of least resistance. That path leads to the majority group! The majority group has a leverage, a gravitational pull, the minority doesn't have.

A young person today who marries someone who does not commit himself (herself) sincerely to the Jewish community is making for an end to Judaism and the Jewish community. It is that simple. Parents have to make this fact clear to their
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Getting It On! Where It's At!
What Beth Am Youth Are Doing!

SEFTY SUMMER SIGN-UPS

This is the time of year when teenagers should be giving thoughts to participating in this summer's SEFTY Institute. Each summer, Temple Beth Am sends one of the largest delegations in the southeast to this ten day program at Camp Coleman. It is open to all teens entering tenth grade and up. The dates are August 15 to 25, and the cost is \$175.00. The purpose of the program is to acquaint teenagers to the variety of youth programs available through the Reform movement, to stimulate interest in Jewish studies and activities, to build friendships, and to provide leadership skills. This is truly one of the most outstanding programs for teens, interested parties should contact Rabbi Cook for more information.

BRANDEIS CAMP INSTITUTE FOR COLLEGIANS

Applications for the Brandeis Summer Camp Institute program for college students are now available. Applicants must be attending college--from freshmen to post-graduate students--and should contact Rabbi Stanley A. Ringler, Hillel Jewish Student Center, 1100 Miller Drive, Coral Gables, Florida 33146. Phone 661-8549.

"Good Healthy Selfishness" Family Course Continues

Making It As A Family, our special course in family life, continues Wednesday evening, April 28, at 8:00 p.m., in room 28. Dr. Bernard Eingold will speak on the subject "Good Healthy Selfishness," concerning the family members' right and even obligation to express their own likes and dislikes.

Dr. Bernard Saper and Dr. Charles Kram will be the speakers on the following two Wednesday evenings. It is best, of course, to attend all sessions, but even a single session is worthwhile.

Bnai

Mitzvah

Saturday
May 1
11:15 a.m.



Amy, daughter of
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Josefsberg
Bernard, son of
Mr. and Mrs. Alden Ziemer

children the first day after their birth. Young people have to know the results of the choices they are making. We ought not to deceive them nor should we let them deceive themselves.

The second commandment which every Jew ought to assume, if he wants Judaism and the Jewish community to continue is, "THOU SHALT MARRY A PERSON WHO IS COMMITTED TO JUDAISM AND THE JEWISH COMMUNITY WHO WILL HELP YOU RAISE JEWISH CHILDREN." Discuss this commandment with your children. Let them know how fully committed you are to it. Then, you might begin to consider how you can regularly enrich their lives Jewishly, so that they can share your commitment in a world which is pulling them away from us.