



beth am commentator

JUNE 2, 1978

MIAMI, FLORIDA

THE CONFIRMATION CLASS

"THE EXPERIENCE OF PRAYER"

Friday, June 2, 8:30 p.m., RELIGIOUS SERVICE

Saturday, June 3, 11:15 a.m., TORAH SERVICE



Check Your Mail

Fair Share

Is On The Way

This week, Temple Beth Am will be mailing new registration forms for membership and our schools to all those congregants who are current for the 1977-78 year. It is at this time that all members must assess themselves for their Fair Share dues.

Fair Share was adopted by Temple Beth Am several years ago, and has been the salvation of our existence. Fair Share is a philosophy of giving. It is a self-evaluating system which utilizes a range of yearly income under which each family pays dues according to their financial ability. Fair Share places equal responsibility on all families; it adjusts itself automatically to fluctuations in members' financial circumstances. It has proven to be the most equitable way of paying for the programs and operations of the Temple.

Fair Share represents over 75 percent of the funds needed to operate the Temple next year. Your adherence to the true Fair Share principal, namely that every family will pay according to its financial ability, will foster the operation of the Temple. Our operating cost per member family is \$547.00 so that even the so-called "minimum fair share" of \$450.00 does not sustain our budgetary needs.

The success of Fair Share depends on your attitude, emotion and integrity. Congregants should remember that Temple Beth Am cannot survive on basic dues alone. We have many members who cannot afford even a small part of the minimum dues. It is only through the generosity of those who truly believe in Fair Share that we can preserve Beth Am as we know it.

a summer place

Beth Am's

summer program



emphasizes sports and activities structured for different age groups . . . half day programs for three or four year olds . . . full day for four to 14 year olds . . . an atmosphere of Jewish identification through healthy peer group association . . . two four week sessions starting June 19.

Members Priority Through May 31

Confirmation This Weekend

Within a few days, 102 young people will be confirmed at Temple Beth Am, marking the culmination of their religious school education. This significant ceremony represents their desire to commit themselves to a Jewish life, having met the requirements of study and Temple participation.

We anticipate that many, having reached this plateau of Jewish study, will choose to go on to the Central Agency Judaica High School program taking courses for college credit.

FRIDAY EVENING EXPERIENTIAL SERVICE

The weekend activities will begin Friday evening, June 2, when members of the class will lead the congregation in a creative service on the theme of "The Experience of Prayer."

On Sunday morning, June 4, at 9:45 a.m., the Confirmation exercises will present an original work based on the story of Pippin, the quest for meaning in a confusing world. This program, including dramatic reading, music, dance and art work, is again the result of the creative efforts of the Confirmation class.

The weekend will draw to a close on Sunday evening when the class will celebrate their graduation with a traditional fun-filled boat party.

BETH AM CONFIRMATION CLASS

CONFIRMAND

Scott Alpert
Mark Alter
Jacqueline Amster
Scott Barkow
Neena Beber
Tracy Berezin
Beth Berkowitz
Ronnie Bieler
Eric Blank
Marnie Blumenthal
Kathy Brown
Brian Caesar
Holly Caesar
Tammy Chakoff
Risa Cherkas
Lori Cohen
Robert Cooper
Michael Cushen
Jan Darlow
Heather Davis
Rod Eisenberg
David Eisenman
Ronald Emanuel
Vicki Firtell
David Friedman
Frank Futernick
Susan Gassman
Jacqueline Genet
Margo Gilbert

PARENTS

Arnold and Marilyn Alpert
Bert and Suzanne Schild
Dr. Walter and Judith Amster
Robert and Diane Barkow
Dr. Charles and Joyce Beber
Myron and Jean Berezin
Dr. Samuel and Lynn Berkowitz
Arthur and Gloria Bieler
Sheldon and Marcia Blank
Edward and Sylvia Blumenthal
Gerald and Sandra Brown
Jay and Miriam Caesar
Jay and Miriam Caesar
Ben and Rita Chakoff
Byron and Miriam Cherkas
Saul and Myrna Cohen
Dr. William and Barbara Cooper
Lorraine Cushen
Martin and Adrienne Darlow
Jerry and Lorna Davis
Edward and Diane Eisenberg
Abraham and Leah Eisenman
Joseph Emanuel
Marvin and Barbara Firtell
Malcolm and Donna Friedman
Morris and Mikki Futernick
Dr. Philip and Helen Gassman
Saul and Barbara Genet
Stanley and Roberta Gilbert

(Continued on Page 3)

JUNE 2 FRIDAY NIGHT SERVICE STARTS AT 8:30 P.M. THIS IS NOT A FAMILY SERVICE.

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY
Jewish Resistance Against the Nazis
Why Didn't They Fight Back?

It has been of great interest to me that the first question a Jewish or Christian group tends to ask as part of a discussion on the holocaust is, "Why didn't they fight back?" I would imagine that the burning question ought to be how is it that the Germans came to have this low opinion of the Jews and how were they able to carry off this genocide without organized opposition from the rest of the world? This second question I shall consider in this column next week. For now, we discuss the first question.

There were, of course, Jewish resistance movements against the Nazis just as there were Jewish partisans fighting in the resistance movements of every country overrun by the Nazis. The details of this part of the story are just beginning to be told to take their place alongside the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto. Jews have always fought when fighting has become a necessary technique of survival, but what both modern Jews and Christians don't seem to understand is that for over two thousand years the best Jewish technique for survival was a cultivated policy of non-resistance. The history of Jewish non-resistance in Judea, in Europe, and in the Arab countries is truly one of the world's great experiments in pacifism, which, until the advent of Hitler, paid off. It worked for 2,000 years.

After the fall of the original Temple in 586 BCE, Judea was conquered by a series of foreign overlords. Except for a brief period under the Hasmonean dynasty, Jews in Judea served under Babylonians, Persians, Greeks and Romans. To be sure, there were many revolts against the overlord, but all of them, with the exception of the Maccabean-Hasmonean revolt of the second century BCE, led to the slaughter of many Jews and to the tightening of military control. Accordingly, there developed in the Judean community a doctrine of pacifism as a survival technique. The prophet Zechariah taught, "Not by military power nor by force, but by My spirit," saith the Lord." The Pharisees, the dominant Judean party during the Roman conquest, advised their followers to have as little to do with the reigning power as possible and to dedicate themselves to following the Torah. This Pharisean doctrine was echoed by Jesus who taught, "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's." When that same Jewish teacher taught, "Turn the other cheek," he was verbalizing that survival technique by which Jews were able to remain together as a viable community within the cruel Roman dominated society.

Twice the Judeans rose against the Romans, in 70 CE and in 135 CE. In the first instance, the second Temple was destroyed (and never rebuilt) and in the second instance hundreds of thousands of Judeans were slaughtered to compensate for the audacity of those who challenged the Roman armies. The uprisings not only failed miserably, they placed the nails in the coffin of organized Jewish religious and national life. These revolts, led by a minority of zealots, proved clearly that against a highly superior military power, resistance is absurd.

Talmudic Judaism, the successor to Pharisaism, stressed the doctrine of non-resistance as a survival technique. It enabled the Jews to survive as a minority scattered through the many lands of Europe and the Arab world. Even though the Jews were constantly persecuted, and even though repeated pogroms robbed them of many lives, the kind of decimation that followed the Bar Kochba revolt against the Romans in 135 CE was avoided. The theory was that if you did not resist the potential murderer, his anger might be assuaged, and lives would be saved. (The Talmud teaches, "A soft answer turns away anger.") It is true that the Jews had to wander from country to country; it is true that they lost millions to persecution over the two thousand years between Jesus and Hitler (see Father Flannery, "The Anguish of the Jews," in paper

SOME THOUGHTS ON SCHOOL REGISTRATION

THE WEEKEND SCHOOL registration for kindergarden through eighth grades both Saturday and Sunday is on a first-come, first-served basis. Our evaluations show that children enjoy the Saturday session better than the Sunday sessions. If you want your child to learn more and have a better attitude, send him on Saturday. (Children are more resistant to Sunday School for diverse reasons.)

Eighth grade is required for Confirmation, and is the first year of the Confirmation program. At Beth Am, Bar Mitzvah does not rank in the same league with Confirmation as the higher honor and more desirable experience.

MONDAY NIGHT SCHOOL is presently only for ninth and tenth graders. These grades plus the eighth grade are required for confirmation. Parents and students should understand that in addition to attending classes, students are required to attend one religious service a month and to participate cooperatively in all projects. Confirmation is not awarded automatically. It is earned.

BAR MITZVAH PREPARATION — Parents and students should understand that in order to participate in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony, they must complete a minimum of three years in the Hebrew School prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah and a minimum of four years in the week-end school including the eighth grade. The young people are encouraged but not required to continue in the Hebrew School after their ceremony. They are required to continue in the eighth grade of the week-end school to its completion. Parents who sign their children into the Bar Mitzvah program are obligated to inform children of this requirement and to see that it is completed. The overwhelming majority of our young people who are Bar/Bat Mitzvah voluntarily complete the 9th and 10th grades and are confirmed. This is the higher goal for a modern synagogue and for informed parents.

HEBREW SCHOOL meets on Monday and Wednesday afternoons. Generally, the beginning students and lower grades meet at 3:45 p.m., and the upper grades at 4:45 p.m. It is most desirable that the student spend four years in the Hebrew School if he is to get some significant knowledge of translation.

Bnai
Mitzvah

Saturday
June 3
11:15 a.m.




David, son of
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Albert

Heidi, daughter of
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Davis

back), but the Jews survived, and in large numbers. Their accomplishment through these dark prejudiced centuries is one of the miracles of human history.

Unfortunately, what was good as a general technique against merely ignorant and prejudiced people was no longer good against a maniac devoted to extinguishing the Jewish people. The doctrine of non-resistance was devised for semi-civilized opponents, not for a madman. It took the Jews, trained for two thousand years in a certain technique, a long time to learn that their new foe was a different kind of species. When they learned this, they took up arms and did what they could. Yes, it is possible for a Jew to take up a gun and kill another human being. How sad that we have been made to do so.