



beth am commentator

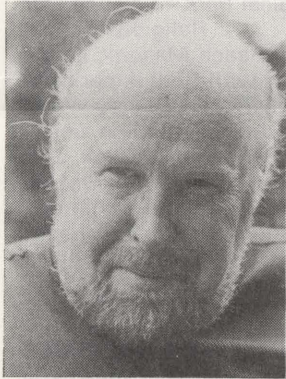
February 2, 1979

Miami, Florida

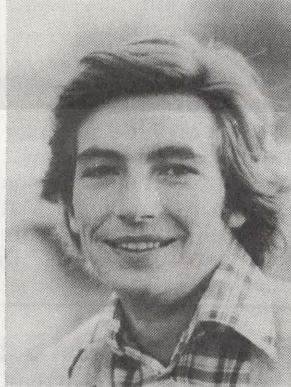
Rabbi Mitchell Chefitz

"RABBI VALENTINE AND OTHER JEWISH SAINTS"
Friday, February 2, 1979, 7:30 p.m., FAMILY SERVICE
Saturday, February 3, 1979, 11:15 a.m., TORAH SERVICE

MUSICAL TALK AT BETH AM SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 4 3:30 P.M. IN SANCTUARY



PRIESTMAN



COLLARD

On Sunday, February 4th, Temple Beth Am joins the Florida Philharmonic Guild in presenting a "musical talk", an educational seminar featuring Brian Priestman, Music Director, and Jean-Philippe Collard, guest pianist of the Florida Philharmonic. The seminar will be held at 3:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

The musical program will highlight Concert #5 in the Philharmonic Series—with the witty and engaging Mr. Priestman playing and discussing themes from Brahms Symphony No. 4, and Mr. Collard matching him with themes from Gershwin's Concerto in F.

Jean-Philippe Collard, who at the age of 30 has already been compared to such pianistic greats as Sergei Rachmaninoff and Vladimir Horowitz, is currently making a coast-to-coast American tour. Winner of a first prize at the Paris Conservatory by unanimous vote at the early age of 16, Mr. Collard has gone on to achieve a stunning reputation for so young a performer. As one review proclaimed after his 1973 American debut with the San Francisco Symphony, "Collard is quite simply one of the most exciting young pianists to come along."

"A Musical Talk" promises to be a delightful duet between two unusually talented and charming personalities of the music community. Join us in the Sanctuary, Sunday, February 4th, at 3:30 p.m.

In addition, tickets to the performance of the Florida Philharmonic Concert #5 on Monday, February 5th, at Miami Beach will be available to members of the Beth Am Congregation at a 25% discount.

RABBI BAUMGARD REAPPOINTED TO EDUCATION COMMISSION SERVES ON NATIONAL BOARD FOR JEWISH EDUCATION

Rabbi Baumgard has been invited to a new three year year on the National Commission for Jewish Education which includes representatives of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. The Commission is currently preparing a new curriculum for Reform Religious Schools and Rabbi Baumgard chairs the national task force in preparing the curriculum concerning the teaching of holidays and rituals. Sima Lesser, Director of our Day School, is on this task.

aumgard also serves on the Committee on Reform Jewish Practice which is preparing a series of books on recommended practice for Reform Jews. That Committee has just published a "Sabbath Manual", available through the Judaica Shop, and "Gates of Mitzvah", which will be available to the public soon. The Committee on RJP is part of the Central Conference of American Rabbis. Rabbi Baumgard also serves on the Rabbinical Placement Committee of the CCAR which helps congregations in their search for Rabbis.

RABBI CHEFITZ' SEX ETHICS COURSE BEGINS TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 6

Rabbi Chefitz will offer his Sex Ethics and the Jewish Framework course one final time on four Tuesday evenings, beginning February 6, 8:00-10:00 PM, in Room 27. We will trace the development of Jewish laws and custom concerning sexual relations from the earliest times, through the Torah to the Midrash and Commentaries, from the Mishnah through the Talmud and the Codes to the present day. If you are not familiar with all of these terms, the course is for you! If you would like to hammer out a sex ethic in relation to a framework that has proven its worth through centuries of experience, this course is for you! There is no fee. Call the Temple office to register.

GROUND BREAKING AT HAND FOR THE BETH AM LEARNING CENTER

The County Commission has given its final approval to the building of the Learning Center. Our architectural plans are complete and on file with the Dade County Building Department. We are waiting for approval of our building permit, which should be forthcoming in the next four or five weeks. Final estimates are being compiled by our contractors.

Bernard Goodman, Chairman of our Building Committee estimates that construction should start about March 15th and that it should take from six to eight months for completion of this much needed building. Barring any unforeseen problems, the building should be occupied with young and old Beth Amites by the end of November of 1979.

Watch the parking lot just east of the Teenage Building for progress on this building. We can all be proud of this new addition.



The Committee of 100

The Committee of 100 is happy to welcome to their ranks the following new member families:

Norman and Diana Elson
Alan and Jo Ann Lederman



From the Rabbi's Desk

DO WE NEED RITUALS?

Several years ago, I published a little brochure entitled, "Taking On a New Soul—A Recipe for Young Lovers". Copies were distributed to all member families. (Did you get yours? They are still available). The brochure is something I give to all newly married couples, and I ask them to promise me that they will perform at least one Jewish ritual regularly—the kindling of the Sabbath eve lights. The brochure explains how important this ritual can be, IF the couple chooses to make it important.

A ritual has no more meaning than the performer gives to it. If he brings a great deal to it, if he projects meaning into it, if he accepts the historic meaning associated with it, it can be a dynamic experience in his life. On the other hand, if the performer does the ritual matter of factly, without thinking, if he is ignorant of the historic import of the ritual, if he invests nothing in it emotionally, it loses its meaning.

I believe that the meaningful performance of certain key rituals is essential to the survival of the Jewish people. They are what bind us to the past, and they are what will hold us together, if we are to be a creative group in the future. Consider now, this one ritual, the kindling of the Sabbath eve lights (Friday night). In the tradition, the mother lit the candles at the dinner table, as the father came home from the synagogue. His was the mitzvah (required religious act) of attending worship. Her mitzvah was to light the candles, but her act was not discussed from his prior or subsequent acts.

When the father saw the gleaming Sabbath candles, lit by his wife, he then sang her a love song. He was required to sing "Ashit Chayil Mi Yimzah . . . A woman of valor who can find, for she is worth more than rubies . . ." The tradition required the husband to profess his love for his wife in the glow of the Sabbath candles. The candles set the mood for love.

Following the song, the father was required to touch his children and to bless them. (Remember Fiddler on the Roof . . . "May the lord protect and defend you . . .") Especially if he was away all day, it was the more important for him to caress his children and to let them know that he loved them. All of this in the shadow of the gleaming candles.

IN OTHER WORDS, THE LIGHT OF THE SABBATH CANDLES IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF ACTIONS DESIGNED TO GIVE THE FAMILY THE BACKDROP FOR THE MUTUAL EXPRESSION OF LOVE.

The family that lights the candles in this mood is thereby blessed of God.

Now I am not saying that the modern father must go to the synagogue before he comes home on Friday night (what's bad?). Nor am I saying that he must learn and sing the traditional song, "Ashit Chayil"; nor am I saying that he must learn the traditional blessing for the children (all of which are in my little brochure). I am saying that the family that lights the candles TOGETHER with the understanding that this is the LOVE MOMENT, and with the understanding that all irritations of the week are to be absorbed in this love, this family is bound to experience the deeper aspects of Judaism in this sunlight introducing the Sabbath.

Of course, one can light the candles in a perfunctory manner. In many homes (as in my childhood) the father is not even present when the candles are lit. Such mechanical lighting is not what I am talking about. All concerned have to get into this mood. All concerned have to say to themselves, "We are creating something together here, something that is meaningful in the present and which binds all Jews together now and in the past and future."

A ritual means no more than you let it mean. It means no more than what you bring to it. Are you cheating yourself by not sharing this mitzvah?

B.A.F.T.Y. TO MAKE A SPLASH

The B.A.F.T.Y. youth program has planned a wet and exciting outing for Saturday, February 17th. The youngsters will meet at 6:30 p.m., in the parking lot to take a bus to go WATER-BOGGING. This will be followed by a visit to FARREL'S ice cream parlor. It is expected that we will arrive back at 11:30 p.m.

If you like fun and delicious ice cream, this trip is for you!

TROUBADOURS SING AT MUSEUM OF SCIENCE FAIR

The Troubadours' schedule once gain includes a performance at Tropical Park on February 4th at 3 p.m., at the Museum of Science Fair. In November, they were invited by Rodef Shalom Temple in Pittsburgh and they were well received by the congregation. Their remaining schedule is:

- February 4th Tropical Park - Science Fair
- March Religious School
- April 1st North Miami Beach Masonic Lodge
- April 22nd Havdalah Dinner with Beth Americans
- May 26th Fantasy Faire - Disney World

Members of the group for 1978/79 include: Jani Kline, Leslie Kraft, Hope Tieman, Amy Litt, Eddie Levine, Jan Darlow, Jeff Schwartz, Michael Levinson, Karen Block, Glenn Widow, Debbie Fishman, Karen Cohen, Matthew Silverstein, Michael Hellinger, Lily Beth Biele, Susan Shane, Beth Berkowitz, Elissa Lieberman, Jan Weiss, David Zlatkin, and Director Harriet Potlock.

JOAN'S GEMS by Joan Schwartzman

We were so proud to read about Robbie, son of Alan and Esther Kessler in a recent issue of the Miami Herald's Neighbor's section. Robbie who is a sophomore at Northwestern University is a college voice and music theory major has written songs for student shows and writes jingles for radio and television commercials. Good luck on your future efforts, Robbie!! Mazel to Herb and Sylvia Dubbin who announce the engagement of their daughter Susan to Paul Broude of Boston, Mass. The young couple will graduate Brandeis and attend Law School in the fall; . . . Kudos to Lee, son of Dr. Robert and Nancy Sterline who was selected for the Miami News AAA-AA-A 1978 All-Dade and Monroe County Football Team. Lee Quarterbacked his school (Palmer Prep) to a championship season. Lee was also chosen "punter of the week" among 4A schools by the Miami News . . . Be sure to attend the "free" concert on Sunday afternoon, February 4th. Brian Peterman and Jean-Pierre Collard are featured . . . "The After School House" program in South Miami is desperately in need of volunteers—both high school students or college students in credit programs. This program is concerned with success experiences, basic school skills and is a non-profit corporation whose early purpose was to help children adjust to the demands of their newly integrated schools. If you have the time, call Mary Louise McDevitt, Supervisor at 667-0555 . . .

B'Nai Mitzvah

Saturday, February 3 11:15 a.m.



Michael, son of Dr. and Mrs. Henry Glick

David, son of Dr. and Mrs. Joe Levi