

November 25, 1983
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RELIGIOUS SERVICE, Friday, November 25, 1983, 8:15 p.m.

RABBI JAMES L. SIMON

"LIVING WITH 'THE DAY AFTER'"

CONGREGATIONAL TORAH SERVICE, Sat. Nov. 26, 9:15 and 11:15 a.m.

Beth Am Commentator

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Officers and Board Members Return From U.A.H.C. Biennial in Houston

The Union of American Hebrew Congregations, the parent organization of the Reform movement, held its 57th Biennial Conference in Houston, Texas, from November 10th through 15th. Temple Beth Am has always played a very important part with the U.A.H.C. We currently have five members on the National Board, Rabbi Herbert Baumgard, Iris Franco, Alan Kessler, Jay Kislak and Sam Steen. In addition, several of our members serve on various committees formulating policy for the U.A.H.C.

At the Biennial, Rabbi Baumgard led a seminar on "New Directions of Synagogue Planning," and Iris Franco led a seminar on "Attracting New Members and Involving Them." In addition to those previously mentioned, the following members of our Temple attended the U.A.H.C. Biennial: Selma Baumgard, Michael and Janet Brown, Miriam Cohen, Daniel Franco, Les and Terri Freedman, Barry and Nancy Goldstein, Bernard and Evelyn Goodman, Al and Jean Leibert, Ira and Carol Pozen, Selma Rappaport, Joan Schwartzman, William and Marcia Silver, Sam and Shirley Steen, Michael and Sylvia Weisberg. Michael Goodman and Judy Albert attended as representatives of our Youth.

Choir Presents Chanukah Festival at Service, Friday, December 9, 8:15 p.m.

The Adult Choir of Temple Beth Am, directed by Selma Baumgard will present its annual Chanukah Song Festival at the Friday evening service, December 9th, at 8:15 p.m. As a vehicle for the music, Rabbi Baumgard has written an original Chanukah narration which tells the story of the first Chanukah.

Music to be sung includes seldom heard Chanukah music and special music chosen just for this service. For this service, the choir will appear on the Altar.

Do Your Chanukah Shopping

at

The Judaica Shop

Announcing the Beth Am MENORAH CONTEST

Open to families

(the child must do a significant part of the work)

Prizes awarded in categories:

Pre-school - Kindergarten 1st - 3rd Grade
4th - 6th Grade 9th - 10th Grade

(First, Second and Third prizes in each category)

Decision based on - Originality, Symbolism, Overall Quality, Neatness, Attractiveness

Phone - 666-2636 for information

Deadline - Nov. 29th

Chanukah Begins - Wednesday, November 30th Candle-Lite Services - Fri., Dec. 2, 7:30 p.m.

Chanukah Music Festival - Fri., Dec. 9 at 8:15 p.m.

Chanukah comes very early this year. The first candle will be lit on Wednesday evening, November 30th. The holiday will continue for eight days, terminating at sundown on December 8th. Beth Am will hold its Annual Candle-Lite Service on December 2nd, at 7:30 p.m. Each person should bring a Chanukah candle wrapped in tinfoil (so it won't drip). Candles may be purchased at the Judaica Shop along with Menorahs and other Chanukah gifts.

Also on the 2nd, David Schwartz will lead the Youth Choirs in a special program of Chanukah music. The following Friday, December 9th, the Adult Choir will present its Annual Chanukah Music Festival.

How To Observe Chanukah

There are five ways in which Chanukah is observed in the home. First, lighting of candles. Second, gifts. Many Jewish families give the children a gift on each night of Chanukah, after the candles are lit. Third, food. Chanukah has its own favorite foods, such as potato latkes and nuts. Fourth, songs. There are many extremely beautiful Chanukah songs which should be sung after the candle lighting. Fifth, stories and games. The game "Dreidle" (spin the top) is an essential feature of the Chanukah observance.

Shamash Is The Leader

Light the first candle with the shamash, or attendant, candle. The shamash may be permitted to burn or be put out. The second night, light two candles with the shamash, etc. The first two of the blessings are said on all nights. The third is said only on the first night. Sing the songs after the lighting each night. Have fun as a family.

Chanukah Candle Blessings

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ
בְּמִצְוֹתָיו, וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל חֲנֻכָּה.

1. Bah-rooch Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai, Eh-loh-hay-noo Meh-lech Hah-oh-lam; Ah-sheh Kid'-shah-noo B'mitz-voh-tahv, V'tzi-vah-noo L'Hahd-leek Nair Shel Chah-noo-kah.

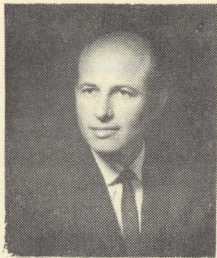
We thank You, O Lord, King of the Universe, who has asked us to teach the world that it is better to kindle lights than to curse the darkness.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁעָשָׂה נִסִּים לְאַבֹתֵינוּ
בְּיָמֵים הָהֵם בְּזְמַן הַזֶּה.

2. Bah-rooch-Ah-tah Ah-doh-nai, Eh-loh-hay-noo Meh-lech Hah-oh-lahm, Sheh-ah-sah Nih-seem Lah-voh-tay-noo, Bah yah-meem Hah-haym, Bah-z'-mahn Hah-zeh.

We thank You, O Lord, our God, for helping us to resist those who tried to destroy us at this season long ago. We pray that we will have the courage to affirm our Jewishness today also.

(Continued on Page 3)



FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

Americans and Religion

The founders of America were extremely religious people. The Protestants who founded America considered themselves the new Israelites and, in many cases, fashioned the colonial government after the Mosaic government in the wilderness. The first colleges in America were founded by religious groups (Harvard, for example). So strong was the religious orientation amongst the early settlers of America that our political organizers sought ways to control religious zeal and established laws separating church and state.

It is generally thought that we have seen a gradual deterioration of this zeal and that today religion has no significant effect on American lives. Not so, according to a recent Gallup Poll. It is true that only 67% of Americans now belong to a church or synagogue; it is true that only one half of the Catholics are in church on a given Sunday; but it is also true that 26% of Americans are actively participating in Bible study groups and 34 million adults are in religious-education classes. The percentage of college students who say that religion is important has grown from 39% to 50% in five years.

The poll does not give us any definitive evidence as to why we are having a swing back to religious feeling, but we can guess that part of it is due to the growing view that we cannot maneuver happiness and progress as easily as we had been led to believe that we could. There is an increase in the searching for a goal and purpose in life which transcends the mundane. Material riches have not brought us peace or security. They have brought us heartache and ruptured families.

The poll does not give us justification for saying simply that "religion is the answer to human problems". The poll tells us that once again, as humans have done for thousands of years, people are turning to religion. Of course there are so many approaches to religion that it is almost impossible to use the generalized word in any meaningful sense. Many people are turning to the kind of religion that Jerry Falwell presents on his weekly TV programs. A person like myself would hardly think that Falwell's "religion" provides any basic answers to people today.

All of this confirms my belief that liberal religion such as that presented by Reform Judaism, is a precious perspective. It involves that humanism which so captivates many scientifically oriented people but it also includes a respect for tradition and a search for transcendent meaning in our life. One need not surrender the important discoveries of science or psychology to be a Reform Jew. On the contrary our perspective encourages us to digest these discoveries and to work them into our open system. For modern well-educated humans, Reform Judaism provides a way to relate to both humans and God without surrendering one's intellectual integrity.

What is there to life besides economic success and a gourmet meal? Abraham, Moses, and the Prophets have the answer, and we have all of them as our teachers and inspiration.

Chanukah Candlelight Service

featuring

THE YOUTH CHOIR

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2nd, 7:30 P.M.

Chanukah Musical Festival

featuring

BETH AM ADULT CHOIR

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9th, 8:15 P.M.

Beth Am Twinning Program

The South Florida Conference on Soviet Jewry has a "twinning" program with children of Refusniks in the Soviet Union (children of the Jews in the Soviet Union who have made requests to emigrate and have been refused.) Many Beth Am children participate in this program. Following is a letter received by Jordan Reiss, who will be Bar Mitzvah on November 26:

Dear Jordan,

I received your letter (dute 15 May and dute 15 September). Thank you for memory about my Bar Mitzvah. I an my family receive permission on departure to Israel!! I am very glad! Write me on address my granfather to Israel.

I have grandmother, grandfather, uncle and other relative in Israel. I have mother, Luda, who has 36 years old, she is computer programmer. I have father Mark, he has 42 years old, he is computer engineer. I have sisters Genya (9 years) and Luba (5 years old). I will 13 years old on 5 December. I will Bar Mitzvah on 19 November. I like football, swimming, card, read books. Do you keep kosher? Do you have Hebrew holidays and Hebrew Saturday? Do you go to Synagogue? Many best to you and your family!

Your friend, Yakov

Attention All Beth Am Teenagers!

Would you like to fill a little child's life with a special love so that he or she can feel wanted and needed in a difficult world? Can you share an hour or two a week of your warmth and understanding?

The After School House program in South Miami works to improve the self-image of children and is in need of teen-aged volunteers. Volunteers work directly with children on a one-to-one basis, one afternoon a week from 2:30-4:45 p.m. You must be 15 or older to volunteer.

VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED RIGHT NOW! If interested, call the After School House at 667-0555.

Interfaith Service Wednesday, Nov. 23rd

The annual community Interfaith Thanksgiving Service will be held at the St. Louis Catholic Church, 120th Street near 72 Avenue. Beth Am's Adult Choir will participate, as will Rabbi Baumgard. Last year's service was held at Beth Am. The service rotates between the various faiths in our community. Beth Am is anxious to have a good turnout. Please calendar Wednesday, November 23rd at 8:00 p.m.

B'Nai Mitzvah

Saturday, November 26

9:15 a.m.



Jordan, son of
Dr. and Mrs. Ian Reiss

11:15 a.m.



Lee, son of
Mr. and Mrs. Seymour Karlinsky



Michael, son of
Mr. Harvey Lasky and
Ms. Susan Lasky