

TEMPLE BETH EMETH OF MT. SINAI



FALL 2018

tbemtsinai.org

TISHREI 5779



PHOTO BY JAY ZUCKERMAN

HELLO, 5779

As we greet the Days of Awe,
Temple Beth Emeth looks ahead
to an exciting year of Jewish
learning, fun and so much music



**TEMPLE
BETH EMETH
OF MT. SINAI**

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FROM THE PULPIT / Rabbi Helayne Shalhevet

A season to turn, turn, turn the page



“WHO SHALL LIVE AND WHO SHALL DIE, WHO BY FIRE AND WHO BY WATER, WHO BY SWORD AND WHO BY BEAST...”

The words of the U'netaneh Tokef prayer haunt us, shake us to our very core. Many find them disturbing, even offensive. I used to be among them. But today it is one of my favorites from our High Holiday liturgy.

Is this the God we believe in? The God who judges, based on our actions, whether we merit life or death, and by what means? A God who judges us, writing our fate on Rosh Hashanah and sealing it on Yom Kippur? We talk about our God being a forgiving God, a God of love, a God of compassion. Yet this is not the God described right here.

I used to find myself perplexed by this vision of God. And more than that, perplexed as to what this prayer was doing there, in my prayer book. Perplexed as to why Rabbi Amnon of Mainz, Germany, would have composed its words almost one thousand years ago. Perplexed as to how it made its way into the Jewish liturgy. And perplexed as to why the authors of our Reform Machzor preserved the prayer in the very prayer book from which we read today.

But then I turned the page.

And the call of the next section hit me. “It is NOT the death of sinners You seek, but that they should turn from their ways and live.” It turns out that after all this, God is not some almighty being who decrees who shall live and who shall die based on a recollection of our actions of the past year. It turns out that God IS on our side.

Turning that page gave me an entirely new picture of the High Holiday season. During this time of year, we speak about t'shuvah, repentance, saying we are sorry to each other. And as the prayer says, God wants that sinners should “turn from their ways.” It's the principle of the Hashiveinu prayer as well as Maimonides' last step to the completion of the process of t'shuvah. Maimonides outlines the stages of t'shuvah, ending with the “t'shuvah gamurah,” the “complete return.” This occurs when you find yourself in the same position as when you originally made your mistake and yet, you do not repeat it.

In this season we learn that God wants us to apologize for our mistakes, to make amends with one another, and also to come to a reconciliation with ourselves. And, we remember that God will decree “who by fire and who by water.” But if we forget to turn the page we miss the point completely. God is not punitive, God does NOT



PHOTO BY GREG CATALANO

The call of the shofar from Brendan Catalano

seek the death of those who have erred in their ways. When we turn the page, we learn that God is our partner in the entire process of t'shuvah, that God is rooting for us, that God is on our team.

My charge to each of us in this new year is that we come to realize, as the rabbis teach, that our purpose is to be “partners with God.” And that if we read the text closely enough, it's written right there, clear as day. All we have to do is turn the page.



THE HOLIDAYS AT A GLANCE

ROSH HASHANAH

SEPT. 9, 8 PM

SEPT. 10, 10 AM

We return to our High Holiday home away from home, Newfield High School in Selden, to welcome the New Year. We will have a children's program during daytime High Holiday services.

TASHLICH

SEPT. 10, AFTER SERVICE

Once Rosh Hashanah services conclude, bring some bread to Knapp Beach in Belle Terre for our tradition of symbolically casting away our sins (to the delight of the gulls).

YOM KIPPUR

SEPT. 18, 8 PM

SEPT. 19, 10 AM & 3 PM

We're back at Newfield for Kol Nidre and our morning and afternoon Yom Kippur services the next day, including Yizkor. At the conclusion, join us for a break-the-fast meal at Temple Beth Emeth.

SUKKOT SHABBAT

SEPT. 28, 7:30 PM

We return to Mount Sinai for our Sukkot Shabbat, complete with a nosh in our temple sukkah.

SIMCHAT TORAH SHABBAT

OCT. 5, 7:30 PM

Our October family service celebrates Simchat Torah and includes the consecration of our new Religious School students.

There's always

MORE MUSIC

At Temple Beth Emeth of Mt. Sinai

FRIDAY, SEPT. 21, 7:30 PM

Musical Shabbat with Akiva the Believer

Bring your banjos, guitars, trumpets and ukuleles!

FRIDAY, OCT. 5, 7:30 PM

Simchat Torah celebration

Klezmer violin, piano and percussion with Rachel Goldstein, Rochelle Potak and Akiva!

FRIDAY, OCT. 12, 7:30 PM

Folk Shabbat with Gathering Time

Don't miss this special service or the singalong at the oneg as our favorite folk trio returns.

FRIDAY, NOV. 16, 7:30 PM

Musical Shabbat with RebbeSoul

Bruce Burger blends the sounds of Eastern Europe, Africa, the Mideast, rock, pop and jazz.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 12, 7 PM

The music and wisdom of Shlomo Carlebach

Akiva the Believer explores the songs and teachings of the rabbi, teacher, composer and performer known as "the Singing Rabbi."

SUNDAY, DEC. 16, 5 PM

Annual congregational concert featuring Chana Rothman

This year's congregational meeting will be preceded by a concert by Chana Rothman, a Philadelphia-based singer-songwriter offering a blend of folk, world beat and hip-hop. Then stay for the free dinner before the temple's annual meeting.



Akiva the Believer, Rochelle Potak and Rachel Goldstein



Cantor Lisa Ann Wharton with Gathering Time



RebbeSoul



Chana Rothman

TBE goes back to school!

SUNDAY, SEPT. 16 @ 5 PM: Pizza, bingo and Hebrew School orientation for kids and parents.

TUESDAY, SEPT. 25: First day for Alef to Gimme! 6 PM Chili-in-the-Sukkah party!



PHOTO BY JAY ZUCKERMAN

ROOT, ROOT, ROOT FOR THE RABBIS?

Yes, that's Rabbi Helayne and Rabbi Jamie Shalhevet running a Long Island Ducks beer concession, along with temple president Debbie Giordano and son Ben. The fundraiser led by Jay Zuckerman turned about to be a real homerun for the temple. About 40 congregants helped raise more than \$2,200 by working selling popcorn, nachos, beer and wine during six Long Island Ducks games.

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GOING TO ISRAEL?

No? It's not too late to join the TBE congregants going to Israel in February. Learn how at tbemtsinai.org

DID YOU KNOW?

Nick Sachs of the Toledo Group prints our newsletter at no cost. Please keep him in mind if you need a printer.