

TEMPLE BETH EMETH OF MT. SINAI



WINTER 2017

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KISLEV-TEVET 5778



An Americana Shabbat and Hanukkah

**JOIN US FOR AN AMAZING WEEKEND AS
SINGER JOE BUCHANAN COMES TO TBE**

Joe Buchanan's music, which the Houston-based singer-songwriter describes as "Americana with a Jewish soul," has taken him on a remarkable spiritual journey whose next stop will be Temple Beth Emeth of Mount Sinai.

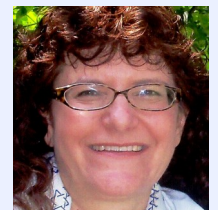
Although Joe Buchanan is widely viewed as one of the Jewish music world's rising stars, this will be his New York area debut, and we will have two opportunities to enjoy his songs.

Joe will be sharing his "Americana Shabbat" in a special 7:30 p.m. service on Friday, Dec. 15, preceded by a southern-fried Hanukkah dinner at 6:30 p.m. sponsored by Rabbi Shalhevet, complete with fried chicken, latkes and other treats. Dinner is free but please RSVP to Leslie Millrod, who is coordinating the event, at leslie.millrod@gmail.com.

If you come for the service, I promise that you'll want to come back for more music on Sunday, Dec. 17, when Joe returns for a 5 p.m. concert. And, of course, there will be more food! I'll be cooking my usual annual buffet dinner for the congregation – pasta,

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MUSICAL NOTES



Cantor Lisa Ann Green



**REMEMBER TO BRING
YOUR MENORAH
on Dec. 15 to our
special Hanukkah
Shabbat service.**

HANUKKAH FUN!

TUESDAY, DEC. 12, 7 PM

Welcome Hanukkah by lighting the big menorah at the temple.

FRIDAY, DEC. 15, 6:30 PM

A Southern-fried Hanukkah Shabbat dinner before a special service with Joe Buchanan

SATURDAY, DEC. 16, 4-6 PM

Sing, enjoy hot cocoa and light the big menorah at Heritage Park in Mount Sinai.

SUNDAY, DEC. 17, 10-NOON

It's latke time! Join us for our annual Hanukkah party. And come back at 5 for the concert and dinner.

TEMPLE BETH EMETH OF MT. SINAI

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Rabbi

Helayne Shalhevet

Cantor

Lisa Ann Green

Rabbi Emeritus

Alan Abraham Kay z"l

Cantor Emerita

Ellen Silverman

FROM THE PULPIT / Rabbi Helayne Shalhevet

Hanukkah, a festival of lightheartedness



WHEN I'M WATCHING THE NEWS, THE LAST WORD THAT COMES TO MY MIND IS "FUN."

We are riddled with terrorism, navigate our way through government factions and see homelessness and hunger abound. We run through life as if tomorrow will not come if we don't rush to the finish line of today. Or worse — it will come, and we will not be prepared; today's "to do" list will be left incomplete, copied and pasted to tomorrow.

Judaism may seem similar. We are commanded to fast on Yom Kippur, abstain from bread on Passover and refrain from work on Shabbat. We are taught to study and follow law upon law, commandment after commandment. To the outsider, it may seem pretty heavy.

Except for Hanukkah. Hanukkah carries with it an entirely different dynamic. We light a beautiful menorah and sing Hanukkah songs for eight nights — if we can find the time. We play dreidel and give our children (and ourselves!) chocolate Hanukkah gelt — if we remember to. We eat latkes and other fried foods — if our diet so allows. We exchange gifts with family and friends as long as we made it to the stores before the holiday. Menorahs, songs, dreidel, chocolate gelt, latkes and other fried foods, presents, getting together with family and friends — it all sounds pretty wonderful, doesn't it? Fun, even?

But who has time for fun? How many of us somehow do not find the time to partake in the

many opportunities offered to us during Hanukkah? Quite frankly, how many of us view it as a waste of time? How many of us just can't handle that much "fun"? Eight days of playing, singing, and letting ourselves go. It doesn't seem to fit in with our busy lifestyle. In fact, it seems outside the realm of Judaism.

We know it is not considered a "major" Jewish holiday; it certainly doesn't come near the ranks of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Passover or Shabbat. It's a minor festival that brings with it an aura of joy and lightheartedness. But it's there for a reason. Its purpose goes beyond its themes. They are not to be overlooked or diminished — celebrating miracles, seeking the light within the darkness, or standing up for what you believe.

We know that Shabbat comes every week to remind us to take a breather, to take time from our busy lives to spend a day of rest and introspection. And Hanukkah in its modern iteration is no different. Amid our busy lives the challenge of Hanukkah is simply to take time for fun. To take time away from work, from our daily chores, from the horrors we see on the news. To take time to dedicate ourselves to singing songs, playing dreidel and to celebrating with friends as we participate in the modern tradition of exchanging gifts.

May this Hanukkah be one in which we make the time to light the candles and sing songs, play dreidel and snack on latkes and gelt, and to exchange gifts for no other reason than the smiles it brings. May this Hanukkah be for you a season of joy, celebration, and just plain fun.

Changing of the guard at TBE



WHAT AN HONOR IT HAS BEEN FOR ME TO SERVE AS THE PRESIDENT OF THIS CONGREGATION FOR THE LAST TWO YEARS.

This is truly a dynamic group. We have families from so many walks of life, and it has enhanced my life to be a part of them all.

On Sunday, Dec. 17, at 7 p.m., our congregation will gather to vote on bylaws changes, financial matters and the election of new officers and Governing Board members. It will mark new beginnings for some and, for me, the end of my two-year term as temple president.

The job is not an easy one. Each day brings up a new set of challenges and great support as well. In fact, there is no way that I could have done this job without the support and guidance of my temple family.

First, I want to thank the temple board, beginning with the vice presidents. Amy Schneider really stepped up this year with her willingness to serve not only as senior vice president but also as co-chair of the Education Committee. Her commitment and professionalism are evident in everything that she does, and she always has my back. I'm pleased she has chosen to remain an officer, accepting the temple's nomination as our next corresponding secretary. Bob Sandak has been like a father to me and so many in this congregation. His efforts as vice president

came in addition to chairing the Ritual Committee and organizing our very successful temple trip to Israel. If you see anything good at the temple, Bob very likely had something to do with it! Jay Zuckerman is not only a vice president but also our Governing Board's parliamentarian. Jay led the effort to rewrite our temple bylaws and takes the lead on so many important issues. These three volunteers have made me look much smarter than I am, and I will be forever grateful.

But none of this would be possible without the support of the board. Brad Feldman has done extraordinary work as our treasurer. Alice Klein has the thankless job of financial secretary, and no one does it better. Together with the vice presidents and myself, they also sit on the Financial Committee. Managing our budget and our money is so important, and I thank them for the outstanding work they have done.

Sy Roth has served as our recording secretary, keeping the minutes of board meetings with accuracy and integrity. Debbie Giordano is our recording secretary and volunteer extraordinaire! I don't think there is any committee on which she has not served and made a

difference. With your support, she will have an even greater opportunity to make a difference over the next two years as our next temple president.

Jason Kraus, Jay Matuk, Mickey Stein, Jon Wilder, Kevin Hymms, Marty Kaplan and Phil Paskowitz have all served as trustees. These are the people who cast votes at board meetings and make decisions that affect all of us. It takes time and dedication and I really appreciate what each of them has done. I also want to thank David Molow, who served as our treasurer last year. We can't forget our many committee chairs. Donna Sandak, Stephanie Gorman, Charlie Todaro, Phil and Sima Paskowitz, Michael and Margie Kandel, Janice Fleischman-Eaton, Beth Laine, Marty Kaplan, Leslie Millrod, Diane Schwindt and Raquel Smoller have led the army of volunteers that really make this temple run.

Let's all take a moment to thank our teachers: Harriet Willing, our principal, Joan Perrin, Mark Hersh, Drew Smoller, Leslie Millrod, Diane Schwindt and, of course, Rabbi Helayne Shalhevet. Together with Cantor Lisa Ann Green, bar/bat mitzvah coordinator Joan Zuckerman and the dedicated team of tutors she leads, they educate and inspire our kids to live joyously and Jewishly.

Finally, I want to thank my friend, my mentor, immediate past president Jack Millrod. He taught me the value and reward of giving back to this community that we both love so much. Thank you to Lori and Julian Fox for supporting me and giving up your time with me to make this possible. I love you both.

In just a few short weeks I will leave you in the capable hands of a new leader. I wish her the best of luck and hope she finds the fulfillment that I did in the endeavor to serve this congregation. Thank you all for the last two years.

In peace love and friendship,
Matt Fox



GATHERING TIME gave us a Music Shabbat to remember Oct. 20 on the evening before the bar mitzvah of Julian Fox.



MAZEL TOV!

Akiva Wharton, better known as Akiva the Believer, was the featured musician at the Nov. 19 house concert hosted by Cantor Lisa Ann Green. He concluded his set with a surprise — a final song that contained a marriage proposal. As you might guess from this photo, taken moments later, Cantor Green said, “yes!”

Temple Beth Emeth welcomes 7 new families

How happy is Temple Beth Emeth to officially welcome seven new families to the congregation?

Maybe Joan Perrin, who is interviewing members of each new family for our next newsletter, put it best. She calls them “the magnificent seven.”

“*Chazak chazak v'nitchazek*,” said Rabbi Helayne Shalhevet at our Nov. 17 new family Shabbat. “From one generation of Temple Beth Emeth to the next, may we grow stronger in our Judaism, stronger in our commitment, and may we grow stronger together.” Her words echoed that Shabbat’s Torah portion, *Toldot* — generations. This new generation of temple families includes:

- ♦ Joseph and Karen Davis of Port Jefferson Station
- ♦ Nadine and Scott Greenberg of Coram
- ♦ Randall and Alyson Grossman of Ridge
- ♦ Klara and Harry Grozinger
- ♦ Vanessa and Larry Horowitz of Miller Place
- ♦ Robin Mertz
- ♦ Warren and Carol Sanderson of Poquott

Carol Sanderson told Joan that Temple Beth Emeth “was exactly what we were looking for, and we decided to join within the first hour here. We had a very warm welcome.”

“We love the joy here,” Warren added. “Sometimes you know when something is just right, and that’s what it was for us. Love at first song.”

An Americana Shabbat

— Continued from front page
veggies, beans, along with some added treats from the rabbi’s kitchen. Again, no charge for the dinner, but please bring nonperishable contributions for local food pantries.

You are welcome to bring friends and neighbors for the concert and dinner; they can stay until the temple’s annual congregational meeting starts at 7 p.m. RSVPs to cantorgreen@tbemtsinai.org are encouraged, but there will be plenty — don’t stay away if you’ve forgotten to RSVP.

Joe Buchanan’s musical identity emerged during years of spiritual searching. Dissatisfied with messages of brokenness and human imperfection, he remained spiritually adrift for years. Everything changed when his wife introduced him to the Hebrew faith. Seeking to share the

inspiration he found in Judaism with others through music, Joe began writing songs that weave together the sounds of Americana with lyrics that express spiritual messages and teachings of the Jewish tradition. His lyrics emphasize universal themes of joy and belief that everyone can embrace.

You can get a preview of Joe’s music at his website, joebuchananmusic.com, or through links in upcoming Weekly Word emails. Your children have been hearing his music during religious school. Please bring them to services and to the concert so they can meet him and share in his wonderful spirit and uplifting message in person!

I am so very thrilled to share this wonderful weekend of music, spirit, food, more music and more food with my temple family as our Hanukkah overflows with sustenance for the body and soul.

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LAST BARN SALE BEFORE SPRING

Come out on Sunday, Dec. 10, to get some bargains before the barn closes for winter.

DID YOU KNOW?

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