



Photo by Rachel Schaffer, c. 2006

Calendar of Events

DECEMBER

December 2-4, 16-18
Rabbi Joanne in Billings

Friday, December 30
6:00 p.m.: Chanukkah celebration at CBA (see flyer on p. 4)

January 20-22
Rabbi Joanne in Billings

February 10-12
Rabbi Joanne in Billings

March 3-5, 17-19
Rabbi Joanne in Billings

March 31-April 2
Rabbi Joanne in Billings

The Miracle Makers, by Student Rabbi Joanne Loiben

As the calendar moves towards the winter months, and darkness creeps up on us earlier each day, we bring light back into our world with the holiday of Hanukkah. The Jewish Festival of Lights teaches us about miracles in a period of tragedy, when the Greeks tried to destroy and conquer the Temple in Jerusalem in the second century B.C.E. The Jewish people had only a small vial of oil left to light the menorah, just enough for one day, and the great miracle that we pass down from generation to generation is that the oil lasted for eight full days. While this is certainly enough of a reason to celebrate, there might be more than this one miracle embedded in this story and the glowing flames of the menorah.

I recently learned a compelling theory that there were actually two separate miracles pertaining to the oil. The well-known miracle is that the oil lasted for seven days longer than it was meant to, according to the amount of oil that the Jewish people had left. This miracle is attributed to God, which is the central reason for our celebration. God saved the Jewish people in the story, and God provided them with enough light to clean and purify the Temple. We have God to thank for several of the miracles that God has performed for the Jewish people throughout our tradition and history.

However, the second miracle is seemingly less obvious, as it is the miracle performed by the people in this story. The Jewish people who rededicated the Temple after the

Greeks attempted to destroy it had to physically light the menorah in the first place. It was entirely their choice to rededicate the Temple, which is what the holiday was named for, as Hanukkah means dedication in Hebrew.

Therefore, the first miracle was actually the Jewish people deciding to consecrate the Temple once again, after it was defiled by the enemy. They were strongly committed to their beliefs and their heritage. They did not give in to the despair that they must have felt watching their most sacred of places desecrated by a foreign nation. Their miracle symbolizes the triumph of the human spirit over adversity. Their actions to bring light back into their world and their Temple made their own miracle. This was the human miracle that provided the opportunity for God to perform God's miracle, which made the menorah burn brightly for the extra seven days.

This Hanukkah, I hope that we can take the time to pay extra attention to the miracles around us. There are miracles that happen every day that we may take for granted. Despite its being the time of year with the fewest sunlight hours, Hanukkah gives us the opportunity to open our eyes to the light shining around us. With our eyes wide, this holiday can inspire us all to add to the brightness of this season, as we focus on bringing more light into our world. My blessing for us this Hanukkah is that the story of our brave and faithful ancestors empowers us to make our miracles.

Rabbi Joanne's Schedule of Visits

Rabbi Joanne will be in Billings during the following weekends:

December 2-4
December 16-18

January 20-22
February 10-12
March 3-5
March 17-19
March 31-April 2

Volunteers for Chanukkah Party Needed!

Our Chanukkah party is Friday, December 30, at 6:00 p.m. All families should bring a menorah for our special service. See flyer on page 4 for more details. This year the **Latke Boys** are returning for a great latke fest, but we need a few more volunteers. A **Latke Boy** is a male member or friend of our congregation who enjoys having crazy

fun, making the latkes in the CBA kitchen prior and during the party. If you are interested please let me or Don Alweis know (H 252-4845, jasonsclothing@msn.com). As well, clean-up volunteers are also appreciated.

Diane Kersten 697-7992,
mtdiane@bresnan.net





Photo by Rachel Schaffer, c. 2006

The deadline for submitting items for the January Temple Tablet is **Friday, December 23**. Send items to the editor, Rachel Schaffer.

Candle-Lighting Times

Friday, Dec 2	4:13 p.m.
Friday, Dec 9	4:11 p.m.
Friday, Dec 16	4:12 p.m.
Friday, Dec 23	4:16 p.m.
Friday, Dec 30	4:21 p.m.
Friday, Jan 6	4:28 p.m.
Friday, Jan 13	4:36 p.m.
Friday, Jan 20	4:45 p.m.
Friday, Jan 27	4:55 p.m.
Friday, Feb 3	5:05 p.m.
Friday, Feb 10	5:16 p.m.
Friday, Feb 17	5:26 p.m.
Friday, Feb 24	5:36 p.m.
Friday, March 3	5:46 p.m.
Friday, March 10	5:56 p.m.
Friday, March 17	7:05 p.m.
Friday, March 24	7:14 p.m.
Friday, March 31	7:23 p.m.

Torah Portions for December

- 12/3: Toledot** Pent. Gen. 25:19-28:9; Pr. Malachi 1:1-2:7
- 12/10: Vayetze** Pent. Gen. 28:10-32:3; Pr. Hos. 12:13-14:10
- 12/17: Vayishlach** Pent. Gen. 32:4-36:43; Pr. Obadiah 1:1-21
- 12/24: Vayeshev** Pent. Gen. 37:1-40:23; Pr. Amos 2:6-3:8
- 12/31: Miketz** Pent. Gen. 41:1-44:17; Num. 7:48-59; Pr. Zech. 2:14-4:7

Donations

Endowment Fund

Alan & Nyd Kraushaar

Building Fund

Saralee Melnick



Welcome to New Members

CBA offers a warm welcome to new members Tammy Dayton, Dr. William

and Robin Knopf, Daniel and Jelvyn Jobrack, and Elyse Monat.

The Legend of the Dreidel

The dreidel game is a Chanukkah tradition played in Jewish homes all over the world. However, the game originally had nothing to do with Chanukkah. Teetotum (“tops”) had been played worldwide for many centuries before the holiday was observed. The first dreidel players were Yiddish speakers in medieval Europe. The Yiddish/Hebrew letters decorating the four sides—nun, gimel, hay, and shin—originally represented the game’s instructions, just as they do today.

The dreidel became a symbol associated with Chanukkah after its four letters were used in the Hebrew expression “nes gadol hayah sham,” meaning “a great miracle happened there,” referring to the miraculous events of the Chanukkah story in ancient Israel. To some scholars, the dreidel is a microcosmic representation of the four kingdoms—Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome—spinning around the center, the Jewish people.

Throughout time, many other dreidel legends surfaced. One story is that Jewish students started playing dreidel to fool the Greeks when they were caught studying Torah, which had been outlawed. Another story is based on the belief that every Hebrew letter has a numerical equivalent. The sum of nun, gimel, hay, and shin is 358, which is believed to correspond with the messiah.

It is unclear exactly when or why the dreidel took on Chanukkah-related significance. Still, the dreidel is a mainstay of the modern celebration. Maybe part of the tradition is actually to pass time and refrain from working while the Chanukkah candles burn.



Yahrzeits

In Jewish custom, the yahrzeit is the anniversary of a loved one’s death according to the Hebrew calendar. The Hebrew date comes first; the civil date follows (and varies by year).

Kislev

9 (Dec 9): Evelyn Jaffe Miller, mother of Heather Rio, grandmother of Jonathan Edward Rio
Bernice Samuels Schaffer, mother of Rachel and Deborah Schaffer

11 (Dec 11): Norman Alweis, uncle of Don Alweis

12 (Dec 12): Juanita L. Rio, mother of Andy Rio, grandmother of Jonathan Edward Rio

Vivian Civin, mother of Donna Healy

14 (Dec 14): Sherwood Schnitzer Kopelove, mother of Brian Schnitzer

15 (Dec 15): Morris Niss, founding member of CBA

17 (Dec 17): Rose Yoelin, grandmother of Sandy Sukin

18 (Dec 18): Bessie Schnitzer, grandmother of Brian Schnitzer

22 (Dec 22): Sol Cohen, grandfather of Ellen Alweis

Jenny Nemer Sibinger,

daughter of Linda and Bob Nemer; sister of David Nemer; granddaughter of Zella and Maury Nemer

Adam Sibinger, son-in-law of Linda and Bob Nemer

24 (Dec 24): Aaron Small, longtime member of CBA

25 (Dec 25): Goldie Sukin, mother of Jack and Bob Sukin, grandmother of Dean Sukin

Tevet

1 (Dec 30): Charles Elton Lund, father of Liz Barnea

11 (Jan 9): Ida Page, mother of Al Page

14 (Jan 12): Harvey Jaffe, uncle of Heather Rio

16 (Jan 14): Rose Silver, grandmother of Jack and Bob Sukin
Harold G. Fink, father of Arthur Fink

17 (Jan 15): Zella Nemer, mother of Robert Nemer

December 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27	28	29	30	31	2	3
					Rabbi Joanne in town.	
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
					Rabbi Joanne in town.	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
		Winter begins.				First night of Chanukkah
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
Christmas Day (And for those who care...)					1st Chanukkah celebration	

The Jewish Religious Service, by Uri Barnea

In the October issue, I launched a new column that attempts to provide historical and liturgical background, explanations for customs, and practical tips for the performance of rituals in the Jewish religious service. This is the second part that deals with **The Origins of the Prayer Book** (Siddur). The previous column dealt with the origins and gradual shift from animal sacrifices to prayer as an alternative to communication with God.

Even before the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE by the Romans, several prayers were already known in rabbinical circles. The rabbis' task was then not only to increase the number of prayers but also to organize them into one cohesive unit. To that end, Rabbi Gamaliel II (ca. 50-120 CE) authorized the establishment of the 18 Benedictions (a.k.a. *T'filat Shmoneh-esreh* or the *Amidah*).

Another important custom was established in the First Century CE. Although the sacrificial rituals ceased to be performed after the destruction of the Temple, the rabbis decided to keep – for their daily services – the tradition of the times of day when sacrifices were given: morning, afternoon, and evening. Hence, the names of the prayers we still uphold to this day, *Shacharit*, *Minchah*, and *Ma'ariv*.

Still, the service remained in a state of flux for a few centuries, with no single formula adopted by all. To a large extent, that situation changed in the 9th century. The Jewish community in Barcelona, Spain, was small and had no rabbi. The heads of that community sent a letter to Rav

(rabbi) Amaram (Amram *Gaon* or Amram bar Rav Sheshna, d. 875) of Sura (one of the most important Babylonian Jewish academies) with a question on how to conduct a Jewish religious service. In his answer (known as *Responsum*), Rav Amram outlined a complete service, commenting as well that every service must include one hundred blessings and/or praises to God. Historically, then, Rav Amram's service (*Sedder* or *Siddur Rav Amaram*) is considered to be the very first complete prayer book.

The next endeavor for a more extensive prayer book was made by Rav Saadiah ben Yosef (Saadiah *Gaon*, 882-942), also of the Babylonian Jewish community. This was followed by another prayer book by Simchah ben Samuel (11th and 12th centuries) of Vitry (Southeast of Paris, France), one of Rashi's pupils. He called his prayer book a *Machzor*, meaning a cycle, and it included prayers for the whole year. A few generations later, the name *Machzor* was given specifically to the High Holy Days services, while the prayer book for the rest of the year was named the *Siddur*.

It's important to point out that especially after the invention of print by Johannes Gutenberg (ca. 1398-1468), a great variety of prayer books has continued to be published in order to suit the needs of the various Jewish communities, e.g., Sephardi vs. Ashkenazi, Orthodox vs. Conservative or Reform, etc. Still, the most important prayers (e.g., *Barechu*, *Sh'ma Yisrael*, *Aleinu*, etc.) are included in every Jewish prayer book the world over.

**Congregation Beth
Aaron**

PO Box 187
Billings, MT 59103
2031 Broadwater Ave.

PHONE
406-248-6412

EMAIL
cbabillings@yahoo.com

President
Don Alweis
Vice President
Uri Barnea
Treasurer
Al Page
Past President
Tricia Williams
Editor

Rachel Schaffer
245-7811 (H), 657-2954
(W), fax 657-2187,

rschaffer@msubillings.edu

Production
Deborah Schaffer
Student Rabbi
Joanne Loiben

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See us at:

www.cbamt.org

Useful links on the Web:

URJ weekly Torah series
<http://urj.org/torah/#cprFor%20Webmasters>

Weekly newsletter of the
Reform movement
<http://urj.org/enews/jta/>

Weekly "Ten Minutes of
Torah"
<http://urj.org/torah/ten/>

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CELEBRATION**



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**SERVICES
HANUKKIAH LIGHTING
LATKE FEST
POTLUCK**

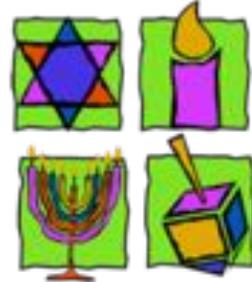
FRIDAY DECEMBER 30, 2016

6:00 PM Join us in the sanctuary to light our menorahs
Please bring a family hanukkiyah for our display
Candles provided by CBA

**Followed by: LATKE FEST, POTLUCK, GOOD COMPANY
AND HANUKKAH FUN**



**AND
ENJOY
HOLIDAY
SONGS LED BY
JILL
SALSBURY**



POTLUCK (Dairy compatible please)
If your last name ends with: A-M side dish or salad
N-Z dessert



CONGREGATION BETH AARON
PO Box 187
Billings, MT 59103

