



Rabbi Peter Knobel  
President Rob Bernstein  
and the Board of Management of Beth Shalom

wish you, your families and fellow congregants  
**a Happy, Healthy and Peaceful New Year.**

*L'Shanah Tova Tikatevu*

September 2011 / Elul 5771

## Welcome to Rabbi Peter and Elaine Knobel



Rabbi Peter and Elaine Knobel have arrived in Auckland for the High Holydays. A leader in the American Reform movement, he is past-president of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and co-chaired the committee responsible for Mishkan T'filah, the first Reform prayer book for 30 years.

He sees Mishkan T'filah as his greatest accomplishment, along with his advocacy for the full inclusion of gay-lesbian-bisexual and transgendered Jews within the community. Read his column below about the personal change he has experienced from homophobic to an advocate for gay rights and same sex marriage.

### From homophobic to gay advocate

Visiting rabbi Peter Knobel contributes this column on change, describing his belief that every position can be questioned and writes of his personal experience of this.

One central theme of the *Yamim Noraim* (Days of Awe) is the ability of individuals and communities to change. The *Machzor* reminds us that it is easy to speak about making changes, but real change is very hard. Over the years, I have become committed to the principle that every position or belief no matter how long held is open to question, revision and rejection. I want to share one example.

In the 1990s the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) was asked by some of its members to support the

admission and ordination of openly gays and lesbians to the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) and support non-discrimination in hiring.

This was extremely controversial at the time. In fact, it was clear when I entered the college-institute in 1964 that the pre-admission interview with the psychiatrist was solely for the purpose of excluding homosexuals.

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# The Beth Shalom Buzz

As this month's Buzz is being written, there is quite a buzz around Auckland and, no doubt, all over New Zealand. With the World Cup finally here, our beautiful country is on display for the whole world.

We start with a warm welcome to all of those visitors who will be joining us at Beth Shalom over the course of the next six weeks. In particular, we welcome Rabbi **Peter Knobel** and his wife **Elaine** who have come from the United States to help us celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. We are very excited to have you with us and hope you enjoy your stay.

We would also like to extend a warm welcome to the **Apfel** family who have recently joined the congregation. Hopefully they will be able to cheer for the All Blacks when they aren't playing England or South Africa!

Rather late – but nevertheless an enthusiastic mazel tov to **Mary Hanson** on the birth of a new great granddaughter, **Natalie Robyn**. **Mary** travelled to Melbourne after the birth of the baby and enjoyed being with her granddaughter, **Danielle**, who is the daughter of **David** and **Maureen Robinson**.

For our older members, news of the **Fain** family, in particular the achievements of son **Jacob**. The **Fains** were in Auckland in the early 1990s when **Jacob** had his bar mitzvah at Beth Shalom and his mother, **Susan** ran the Hebrew School. News comes from an article in the Washington Examiner about **Jacob Feinspan** (he and his wife combined their names) who, now aged 31, is the executive director of Jews United for Justice, a Washington group advocating for social justice on local issues.

**Jacob** who lives in Wheaton with his wife and young son, has spent his career in non-profit Jewish advocacy working on global poverty, AIDs relief and much more. He also helped create Tikkun Leil Shabbat, a Jewish congregation which meets to sing, eat and learn about social justice, providing a living example of tzedakah and an example to follow.



**Jacob Feinspan,**  
**executive director**  
**of Jews United**  
**for Justice.**  
**Photo: courtesy**  
*Washington*  
*Examiner.*

Debbie Swiatek would like to hear your news about births, weddings, members who are travelling and other bits and pieces. Please contact her at swiatek @xtra.co.nz

On a much sadder note, our deepest sympathies are with the **Dekel** family after the loss of father and husband **Gabriel** last month. He will be missed by the Beth Shalom congregation in addition to the Waikato Jewish Association.

We also send our condolences to the family of **Sonia Etzine** as well to **Shane Sampson** and his family on the loss of **Shane's** grandmother in Taupo.

Get well wishes are sent out to **Sylvia Watson** who is on the mend.

The kudos keep rolling in for **Ilan Wittenberg**! First he received notice that the 2011 National Salon of Photography had awarded a silver medal for his image The Tower. Then just this month **Ilan** went to Rotorua to receive five bronze awards bestowed upon his pictures by the New Zealand Institute of Professional Photography! Mazel tov, Ilan!

Finally, we would like to wish the very best of luck to all of the students who are starting preparations for exams. We know you will make us all proud. Hopefully the All Blacks will do the same!

## Remember the Bequest Fund

Bequests to Beth Shalom have made the Educational Bequest Fund possible. You too could help Beth Shalom in the future for all kinds of projects by remembering it in your will.

Contact Rob Bernstein or Neil Rothbart to discuss it.

## Discussions held about use of Stewart Centre

Discussions have been held between the Stewart Centre and Beth Shalom with the possibility of the Hebrew School or Habonim using their premises on a Sunday.

Situated at 207 Manukau Road, the centre is planning to refurbish and create a small flat.

Stewart Centres are social day-stay places run by registered nurses and life skills teachers where people with brain injuries learn cooking, carpentry, computer skills and arts and crafts to get them back into life as much as possible. There are seven throughout New Zealand.

The Beth Shalom board heard at a recent meeting that the centre needs to justify use of the building for more than five days a week and are willing to discuss the possibility of Beth Shalom's use of their space.

# Honey cake is a special Rosh Hashanah treat

Shelly Tenenbaum (pictured below) learnt how to cook traditional Jewish food the way many women have – from her mother.

Her mother is East European, from Moldavia, Romania. Her mother-in-law is also from Romania but from Transylvania. Shelly, who worked previously as an IT instructor, banker and auditor, now combines the two regional varieties of sweet and sour in teaching others how to cook.

"I love to cook and bake," says Shelly who came to New Zealand from Israel with her husband Shlomo three years ago.  
"And I have 80 recipe books."

Her cake decorating is definitely an art form as her website attests. See it at [http://www.photoshop.com/users/cakes\\_and\\_parties](http://www.photoshop.com/users/cakes_and_parties)

"It's a challenge," she says. "And I love to challenge myself. Perhaps later I would like to teach cooking and cake decorating."

However if she has a problem with her cooking, her first port of call is her mother.

"I call her on the phone," she says.

Twelve fortunate men and women from Beth Shalom attended her cooking class

recently and learnt about cooking for the High Holydays. Fish soup, gefilte fish, chrein (horse radish) and honey cake were on the menu. She provides this simple recipe for honey cake for Rosh Hashanah for others to share. Shelly who also teaches at Beth Shalom's Hebrew School has two children, Snir, 12, and Arbel, 10, who attend. She herself is learning English and providing her mother's recipe for honey cake is a labour of love. It needed to be translated – from Romanian into Hebrew into English.

And below is the recipe from Shelly's mother, Suzi Croitoru, from about 50 years ago:

## Honey cake (Honig Leicheh)

### Ingredients:

- 1 kg flour
- 10 eggs
- 10 tablespoons sugar
- 1 ½ cups oil
- 4 tablespoon vanilla sugar (from shul shop)
- 30 gram baking powder
- Zest from 2 lemons and the juice from them
- 1 kg honey
- 10-12 pieces of walnuts to decorate the cakes

### Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 140- 150 degrees, depending on the oven (because this kind of cake needs a lower temperature to bake).

Put the whole eggs in a mixer bowl and mix them for a few minutes. Add the baking powder, vanilla sugar and the oil, the lemon zest, the lemon juice and continue to mix.

Continue to mix on low. Add the sugar, the honey and at the end add the flour, slowly.

Continue to mix until you see some bubbling. This quantity is enough for 3 standard loaf tins or two 30 cm tins.

Lightly grease and line them with baking paper. Pour equal amounts of the mixture in to each tin and decorate with the walnuts on both sides and the middle of the cake.

Bake for one hour until you get a dark brown colour. Check with a toothpick if it's dry then the cakes are ready.



You can freeze it or keep it in a closed container for up to one month.

Beateavon! Enjoy it!

## New enrolments for Hebrew School

The Hebrew School has had a number of enrolments of new students in the younger classes, Debbie Swiatek told the Beth Shalom board at its August meeting.

She said only one application for b'nai mitzvot had been received during 2012 because there were no students reaching that age.

The Hebrew School students have also taken part in a trial evacuation of the building so that they are prepared for an emergency. This was planned and organised by Izzy Duggan. The board sent a letter thanking him for his help.



# Three b'nai mitzvot for Beth Shalom

**Beth Shalom will celebrate three b'nai mitzvot in the next three months. The girls introduce themselves.**



**Bella Berman**

Hi, I'm Bella Berman. I'm becoming bat mitzvah on 12 November. My portion is Vayeira. I am reading the chapter about hospitality and about Abraham bargaining with God about Sodom and Gomorrah. The portion also tells the story of Isaac's sacrifice.

My main interests are playing music, reading, acting and swimming (in summer).

For my tzedakah project I am going to be making an information board about the *Women of the Wall* to educate people about their unfortunate and completely unfair situation. I will also be writing a letter, that people can sign, to the Israeli Government to state my opinion and ask them to address this issue of injustice. You can look at [womenofthewall.org.il](http://womenofthewall.org.il) to check it out.

My family and I would love it if you could join us on November 12 and stay for a kiddush lunch to follow. Please R.S.V.P by the 28 October to [paulsue@hyper.net.nz](mailto:paulsue@hyper.net.nz) or ring us on 833-3421.

**Ella Jaspers**

Hi, my name is Ella Jaspers. I am 12 years old and in November I will be celebrating my bat mitzvah at Beth Shalom by reading parashat Toldot.

I live with my mother Leora Hirsh, father Pete Jaspers and brother Ben near Clevedon. I go to Somerville Intermediate. I love animals and we share our home with a wide variety of species. For my tzedakah project I am planning to do some volunteer work for the Humane Society and to collect donations to help them look after the homeless dogs they foster.

I hope you will join me and my family to help us celebrate my bat mitzvah on Saturday 26 November.

**Sophie Kranz**



My name is Sophie Kranz and I am very excited that my bat mitzvah is coming up in three months on 10 December. I have attended Beth Shalom Sunday school since I was six and have recently been studying hard with Chris and Udi for my big day.

As part of the preparation for my bat mitzvah for my tzedakah project I have decided to collect sports

equipment for Wymondley Road School which is in Otara. This is a decile one school which Beth Shalom has already built a relationship with and through Habitat NZ, Beth Shalom members have helped build houses in the area.

Please if you have good sports equipment at home that is not being used bring it along to Beth Shalom or contact me at [sophiemkranz@gmail.com](mailto:sophiemkranz@gmail.com) and I will arrange for collection.

My family and I look forward to you joining us on my special day: 10 December.

## Jewish folk singer dies in California

Debbie Friedman, a folk singer who set Jewish prayers to contemporary music and created songs that are sung in synagogues throughout the world, has died. She was 59.

Friedman began composing songs in high school, and her first albums came out in the 1970s. She combined traditional Jewish liturgies with folk music style, using lyrics in Hebrew and English. One of her songs, *Elohai N'Shamah*, is sung regularly at Beth Shalom and several of her other songs are used from time to time.

"Twenty-five years ago, North American Jews had forgotten how to sing," Rabbi Eric Yoffie, president of the Union for Reform Judaism, said.

"Debbie reminded us how to sing, she taught us how to sing. She gave us the vehicles that enabled us to sing."

Friedman made some 20 albums and performed at Carnegie Hall and around the world.

# Rosh Hashanah greetings:

## Join us on the journey of transformation

When I ponder the incredible opportunity we as a community have undertaken with the Sanctuary Refurbishment Project, I often think of the midrash about a man who carried a slip of paper in each of his pockets. In one pocket the paper states, "I am created in the image of God." In the other pocket, the paper reads: "I am but a particle of dust." These lines remind him each day of his place in the bigger picture of life.

Today our collective place in the 'bigger picture of life' is to bring this project from concept through to concrete.

When we as a community pledged our commitment to this project, I felt that we were creating something divine. On a personal note I was participating in a project with three generations of my family at my side. We were a living embodiment of *l'dor v'dor* - from generation to generation. The pleasure of fulfilling a mitzvah and immersing ourselves into the history and future of Temple Beth

Shalom was thrilling.

As you are all well aware, for over 50 years Beth Shalom has stood as an icon to Progressive Judaism. It has done so due to its wonderful leadership through the years, its commitment to maintain sound fiscal policies but most importantly because of its congregational involvement in every facet of its wellbeing. This encompasses the entire spectrum, from rolling up our sleeves to dig in the dirt, to digging deep into our individual pockets.

It is our entire wish to create a new sanctuary, one which brings us into the 21st century, makes us feel cosy in our spiritual home and causes our hearts to expand with pride. However, before this feeling can be attained we must make sure that it not only what we want, but that we can afford it. Then I thought of that midrash. I thought that without a community we are nothing. Without the participation of our congregation, of each congregant and their family, we cannot complete this goal. We need our community in order to survive, we

need our community in order to grow and we need our community in order to succeed.

I may be no more than a particle of dust, but I am one of the many created in the image of God who will participate in making a meaningful donation that will be a testimonial to the traditions of the Beth Shalom community. ***I am thrilled to be a part of this crowd.***

This year we will not be having a traditional Annual Appeal, but instead we will be seeking pledges from you when we make a final presentation of the designs and costs involved to see the project to its fruition later this year. Please join me on this journey. In so doing, you will demonstrate that you believe in us enough to be a part of something so much bigger than our individual selves. I know you will not be disappointed.

**L'Shalom,  
David Cukier  
On behalf of President and BOM**



## Rosh Hashanah: An opportunity to look ahead

Preparing for the High Holy days gives us an opportunity to really look ahead. At this most important time in our calendar each of us undertakes a *cheshbon nefesh* (audit of our soul), reflects on whether we have tried to make it a good year for those we love and those we know, whether we have contributed to trying to make the world a better place by providing financial and personal support to causes that we believe in and whether we have been prepared to take a stand in opposing unjust actions and statements by others.

If you can briefly consider your own personal "audit" and you can give yourself a gold star – *Yosher koach* – well done. If however, the scorecard is not as good as you might like it to be, just remember that you do have time to put it right. Seek forgiveness from people you may

have upset or harmed – whether it was intentional or not. Consider whether you have spoken up loudly and clearly in defending Israel's right to exist in peace and security while fighting for her to be more democratic and inclusive. And finally, consider whether you have done enough to help the charitable causes that bring hope and relief to disadvantaged members of the general community.

We hope you will take this opportunity to address the material side of the 'audit' and this carries you forward to a glowing account when you engage in the spiritual audit with God at Rosh Hashanah. Very best wishes for a *Shana Tova* (Good Year) – and the hope of a *G'mar Chatimah Tova* (a good inscription in the 'Book of Life') – from us all.  
**The team at the Union for Progressive Judaism**



# Shabbaton planned for December

A Shabbat morning service alongside a creek facing a wall of deep bush was just part of a weekend to experience, remember and cherish – a weekend of learning and eating and relaxing.

Everyone from the eldest to the youngest who went agreed – last year's family camp weekend at Carey Park in the Waitakere Ranges was truly awesome.

And this year, the Shabbaton is being planned for the same venue. Activities and presentations are already in the planning stage and with 170 beds and 15 cabins, there will be plenty of room. Save the date: December 2-4.



## Choir director for Shabbaton - weekend in December



Judy Campbell, choir director for the North Shore Temple Emanuel choir.

North Shore Temple Emanuel's choir director Judy Campbell is to visit Auckland.

She has been invited to the Shabbaton to be held in December and to assist Beth Shalom lay readers.

"My approach for individual congregations is to assess where things stand musically and to tailor programmes to pave the way both for those providing music and those hearing it to take the next steps in the development of musical activities," Judy Campbell says.

She was born in South Africa and her father was a jazz pianist and film

composer. In 1982 she migrated to Australia and joined the North Shore Temple Emanuel choir. As her interest in music grew, she started singing in bands and doing solo jazz residencies in Far North Queensland. She studied arranging at Sydney Conservatorium and after giving up her day job, she took over as choir director for Temple Emanuel.

She attended music events in the United States and brought back to Australia Jewish music for synagogue services and concerts.

Since 2003, she has been involved with UPJ and has convened conference choirs for this organisation.

## Pledges for sanctuary fund reach \$110,000

More than \$110,000 has been pledged towards the sanctuary refurbishment fund.

"This is heartening and we look forward to raising more to ensure a wonderful result," said Helen Schamroth, on behalf of the Interiors committee.

"Winter has been a time for members of the committee – Judith Hunt, Judith Marks, John Pezaro and myself – to recharge our batteries. Now we

are moving towards the reality of the major refurbishment of the sanctuary." Designs are being developed for all aspects of the project and experts are being consulted.

John Pezaro has produced working drawings for a new ark and bimah in line with earlier ideas of how they might look. Provision has been made for the introduction of new technology.

The lighting plan will ensure there will

be a very different atmosphere in the sanctuary.

"The committee is excited about a raised cupola above the bimah with lighting suffusing it," Helen Schamroth said.

There will be no annual appeal this Rosh Hashanah. Instead, an appeal will be held later to raise further funds for the sanctuary refurbishment (see *Rosh Hashanah greetings*, page 5).

# Israelis are like cottage cheese

You know, everyone thinks that Israelis are like sabras – those prickly pear fruit that are spiky and hard on the outside, yet soft and sweet on the inside. But I think they're more like cottage cheese. The one food that has managed to top the current news headlines over even the most crucial issues like the failing peace process, cottage cheese is half solid, half liquid and an essential part of Israel. In my opinion, that is Israelis to a T.

There are lots of divisions in this country – Arabs and Jews, 'hawks' and 'doves', Jerusalemites and everyone else – but none of them feel quite as pertinent to our little New Zealand community as the great abyss that lies between the Orthodox and Secular camps. With one party controlling half of the laws in this country, and the other half controlling the remaining ones, there is constant feeling of separation and distance between these two groups. It's just like cottage cheese – half of it is chunky and solid, while the other half is milky and seems a bit pointless when you get to the bottom of the container. There is never any room for other ingredients in that tiny little container and no confusing the two halves either, because the whey never gets any harder and the curds never go gooey. So where does a late addition

like Reform Judaism fit into the religious map of Israel? I suppose it all depends on who you ask. There are little Reform communities beginning to spring up everywhere, although the ones I visited in Jerusalem were comprised almost exclusively of American tourists on vacation. But between the Orthodox half, who will openly state that Reform Judaism is the worst thing that has ever happened to us and is practically anti-Jewish, and the Secular half who sprint to tell of their disbelief in God and disdain for religiosity of any sort, there is often a feeling that the Reform movement doesn't have a real niche to fill here.

As disappointing as this may sound (especially to people like me who quite like the idea of a Jewish homeland and also enjoy things like hiking in some of the most beautiful scenery in the world or visiting historical sites that are thousands of years old, yet in perfect condition) there is hope. It all lies in how you define an Israeli – sabras, cottage cheese; who knows. Because on Shavuot evening, when it is customary to study all night, the study halls are just as bustling with engaged and lively "secular" Israelis as they are with black hats and payot. I've met countless Israelis who tell me that they don't follow any religious practices, but don't hesitate to light Shabbat candles

**Sarah Livschitz is presently in Israel on machon, assisted by the Beth Shalom Educational Bequest Fund. She writes about her experiences in Israel.**



and have a family dinner every week. They may not go to shul, but their identity is just as based on Judaism as yours or mine.

This ever-developing Jewish identity within the supposedly-secularised Israel sounds an awful lot like Reform Judaism to me. It is a vibrant and modern, yet still steeped in our age-old traditions in the most fun way possible. And unlike that lumpy-yet-watery cottage cheese that Israeli society seems to resemble so much, it doesn't have an expiry date for any time soon.

## Educational Bequest Fund

### Planning a course of Jewish Study?

**Applications to the Educational Bequest Fund close**

**October 31**

**Contact:**

**Jude Berman** [meirjude@orcon.net.nz](mailto:meirjude@orcon.net.nz)

**Claire Bruell** [claire@bruell.co.nz](mailto:claire@bruell.co.nz)

**Or the Beth Shalom office**

## LUV 2 DANCE?



Have fun learning contemporary and traditional Israeli Dance.

This is an Intermediate Class but keen beginners are welcome.

We meet at Beth Shalom on Wednesdays, 7.00 - 9.00pm. There is a small cost of \$5.00 per class.

For more information contact Jenni either by phone (480-4330) or email ([jennygo@complus.co.nz](mailto:jennygo@complus.co.nz))

# From homophobic to gay advocate



**Rabbi Peter Knobel**

*(Continued from page 1)*

While much had changed in intervening years especially the ordination of women in the rabbinate and our strong support for gender equality, our position on gays and lesbians had changed very little. The CCAR created an ad hoc committee on homosexuals and I was appointed to the committee

with the explicit notion that I was “rational” - meaning I would help prevent anything “bad” from happening.

My own attitude toward homosexuals was at the time, to say the least, quite negative. I had been taught by my father that homosexuals preyed on young children. I described myself at that stage as being homophobic.

The next two years of my life were emotional hell. This was the height of the AIDS crisis. There was much fear and loathing. I read everything that I could on homosexuality, sexual identity and HIV-AIDS. I listened to the wrenching stories of my closeted gay and lesbian colleagues and closeted students at HUC-JIR. I participated in the very difficult and emotional debates in the committee. I did not sleep well for two years. I was angry at the heterosexual community and the homosexual committee.

Out of this experience, my attitude was transformed. I came to understand that we were not speaking about lifestyle choice but sexual identity. I had the responsibility of writing the committee report and had to satisfy both the majority and the minority. The report clearly called for the inclusion and support for ordination and admission of openly gay and lesbian Jews and seeing that they were not discriminated against in finding jobs. The one compromise was our position on same sex marriage. The majority required that the report affirm that monogamous, lifelong procreative heterosexual Jewish marriage was the Jewish norm. While speaking positively about same sex relationships, the majority was opposed

## One of the better congregations

Auckland is one of the better functioning Progressive congregations, Rob Bernstein told a recent meeting of the Beth Shalom board.

He has recently returned from attending the Union of Progressive Judaism presidents' conference in Surfers Paradise.

“Many Australian congregations struggle to raise their membership numbers, and outside the main centres few have full time rabbis,” he said.

The conference provided an excellent opportunity to connect with other presidents, he said.

to religious marriage or commitment ceremonies for same sex couples. The minority called for recognition and sanctification of same sex relationships.

The report was adopted by an overwhelming majority of our colleagues at a CCAR convention. This was a major positive achievement but the battle for equality and inclusion was incomplete. The issue of marriage was sent back to another committee where it languished for several years. During this period, I wrote two long papers describing what I understood to be Reform Jewish marriage and how gay and lesbian relationships were no different than heterosexual relationships and should be sanctified by Reform rabbis. Eventually the CCAR passed a resolution calling for the civil recognition of same sex relationships and assigned the task of writing ceremonies for same sex marriages to the reform practices committee of which I was then the chair.

I have become an active advocate for the legalisation of same sex marriage. I have performed several same sex weddings in the sanctuary of my congregation with the strong support of the other clergy and the lay leadership. However, it took me a while to move from a binary way of thinking about sexual identity. I now recognise the greater complexity of sexual identity. I am now an advocate for the GLBTQ (Gay, Lesbian Bisexual, Transgendered and Questioning) community. Change can be a long and arduous process.

There is much more about my journey that I would be happy to share when we are together in Auckland. For me the most important verse in the Torah is Genesis 1:27 which states that we were created in the Divine image (*betselem elohim*). Each of us is precious, unique and of inestimable value. The first principle of Jewish ethics is that we need to see the face of God in the face of every human being and then we will know how to treat them. We are God's partners in the ongoing creation and perfection of the world. Change and growth are part and parcel of what it means to be created in God's image. At this season of *teshuvah* (repentance) we have the opportunity, the ability and obligation to change. Remember God does not create bad stuff. God created you and me.

## Website usage doubles

Usage of the Beth Shalom website has more than doubled over the last year, from 24,728 to 49,851 unique visits.

“This indicates that web viewing is being well accepted by our community,” president Rob Bernstein says.

“There is also a very low bounce rate which indicates significant engagement with users and acceptance of the media.”

He says this gives the Beth Shalom board a pointer to the direction that communications should take to meet the needs of the community.



# It's only bread – challah or kitke?

**Chris Milton writes about challah – or as he describes it, kitke.**

When I was a student, a friend of mine, who was training to be a Methodist minister, would pop his head into my room and ask if I would like to take a walk and buy some *kitke*. I needed no further invitation. We headed off to what I vaguely recall was a Greek bakery to buy some loaves of this sweet and braided bread. We would walk the streets of the university town eating chunks of *kitke* and discussing all sorts of things. My regular weekly encounter with *kitke* was of course on Friday night after walking to the student beit from our little *shul* (built in 1903) where steaming loaves of it lay ready for us to bless and eat.

My great grandfather spoke Yiddish as a first language, my grandmother understood it but did not speak it, my father had a choice selection of Yiddish expletives and I have almost nothing. So one sees the threads of knowledge and tradition slip away and moving to New Zealand it sometimes looks as if more of these threads are threatening to do so. Using the word *kitke* is one of these threads. I wonder if we could hold onto it rather than letting it slip into cultural oblivion?

*Kitke* is the *Litvish* word for what we all commonly call *challah*. Many, but not all, South African Jews are of *Litvak* extraction. To be *Litvak* means to be of Lithuanian (or some Latvian) Jewish descent. It is said the *Litvak* community of the world is like a torn blanket, one half in Lithuania and the other in South Africa. With the Nazis destroying most of the half in Lithuania, the traditions have been preserved in South Africa. *Litvaks* are a quite distinct group having formed up as the *Mitnaggidim* with the Vilna Gaon at their head. *Mitnaggidim* means 'opposers' as they vigorously opposed the emotional and



'irrational' *Chassidim* moving up from the 'wild' south. I'm not sure I believe it but it is said there is a particular *Litvak* character: sceptical and devout at the same time.

Most people naturally think that *challah*, being the Hebrew word, must be the 'correct' word. In biblical times, however, *challah* originally referred to flat bread cooked over coals. *Challah*, as we know it, is called *khale* in Yiddish and German and in the USA. The words *berches* (or *barkhes*) and *dacher* are also used in Germany and Central Europe. These two words derive from Proverbs: *Birkat adonai hi ta'ashir* ('The blessing of the Lord, it maketh rich'). *Kitke* refers particularly to a large *challah* used especially for weddings, derived from a word referring to decoration from the German *kitt* (which means 'putty') and the Slavic suffix *-ke*, found in many Yiddish words and names – for example, *latke*. In parts of Lithuania, *kitke* referred not to the whole *challah* but to the putty-like braids or decorations added to the bread before it was baked. However, in many places *kitke* came to mean the whole bread and in South Africa it replaced the word *challah*.

It was a strange experience when first joining Beth Shalom to hear braided bread referred to as *challah*, not *kitke*. Of course at some level I recognised this as the correct Hebrew term but something was missing, something of the heart. That something was *kitke* – I hope we find a way to remember and use it.



# BETH SHALOM

## בית שלום

The Progressive Jewish Congregation of Auckland

### Service Times for High Holy Days 5772 (2011)

*"Days are like scrolls: write on them only what you want remembered."*  
Bachya Ibn Pakuda, 11<sup>th</sup> Century

Friday September 23 <sup>rd</sup>	7:00pm	Erev Shabbat and Selichot
Wednesday September 28 <sup>th</sup>	6:00pm	Erev <b>Rosh HaShannah</b>
Thursday September 29 <sup>th</sup>	10:00am	Rosh HaShannah Service
	1:30pm	Family service
	3:00pm	Tashlich
Sunday October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	2:00pm	K'ver Avot
Friday October 7 <sup>th</sup>	7:30pm	<b>Yom Kippur</b> Kol Nidre
Saturday October 8 <sup>th</sup>	10:00am	Yom Kippur Family Service
	11:00am	Yom Kippur Morning Service
	3:00pm	Afternoon service
	5:15pm	Yizkor
	6:15pm	Neilah followed by Havdalah
Wednesday October 12 <sup>th</sup>	7:00pm	Erev <b>Sukkot</b> picnic tea
Saturday October 15 <sup>th</sup>	10:00am	<b>Sukkot</b> picnic lunch
Wednesday October 19 <sup>th</sup>	7:00pm	Erev <b>Simchat Torah</b> Pot luck dessert
Friday October 21 <sup>st</sup>		B'nei Mishnah Service
Saturday October 22 <sup>nd</sup>		Shabbat with Yizkor

**As always at this time of the year, please remember:**

**Parking restrictions** along Manukau Road (on both sides) between 4:00 pm and 6:00 pm on week days - cars are towed away promptly during these hours.

**Machzorim** - remember to bring your own machzor to services - the shul does not have spare copies. Copies of the Machzor

"Gates of Repentance" - may be purchased from the shul office for \$70.00 each. Please contact Christine during office hours on **524 4139** as soon as possible to secure your copy.

**Security** - in order to assist the security teams in their work, High Holy Day Security Passes will be issued to all members as in previous years. If you have relations or visitors who would

like to attend the services, please contact the office to ensure that they too are issued with security passes. **No-one will be granted entry without a High Holy Day Security Pass.**

Security Passes are free for members and available with charge for non-members. **No one will be turned away for lack of funds.**

(Continued on page 11)

## Next issue of Teruah Deadline: 7<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011

### Rosh Hashanah greetings

To all my friends at Beth Shalom,  
Shana Tovah and well over the fast.  
Rachel Rich-Dennyss

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## Remember the Bequest Fund

Bequests to Beth Shalom have  
made the Educational Bequest  
Fund possible. You too could help  
Beth Shalom in the future for all  
kinds of projects by remembering  
it in your will.

Contact President: Rob Bernstein  
or Treasurer: Neil Rothbart to  
discuss it.

**BETH SHALOM—AUCKLAND**  
**180 MANUKAU ROAD, EPSOM, AUCKLAND 1344**  
**Affiliated with the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ)**

(Mailing address: P.O. Box 26 052, Epsom, Auckland 1344, New Zealand).

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TITLE	NAME	EMAIL
<b>Rabbi</b>	Peter Knobel	<a href="mailto:office@bethshalom.org.nz">office@bethshalom.org.nz</a>
<b>President</b>	Rob Bernstein	<a href="mailto:president@bethshalom.org.nz">president@bethshalom.org.nz</a>
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<b>Treasurer</b>	Neil Rothbart	<a href="mailto:treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz">treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz</a>
<b>Ritual</b>	Leon Goldwater	<a href="mailto:auh2o5@orcon.net.nz">auh2o5@orcon.net.nz</a>

### Board members

David Cukier	<a href="mailto:cukier5@msn.com">cukier5@msn.com</a>
Danny Gelb	<a href="mailto:dannygelb@mediate.co.nz">dannygelb@mediate.co.nz</a>
Terry Haffern	<a href="mailto:haffern@ihug.co.nz">haffern@ihug.co.nz</a>
Jenny Livschitz	<a href="mailto:jennylivschitz@gmail.com">jennylivschitz@gmail.com</a>
Shane Sampson	<a href="mailto:shane.sampson@vector.co.nz">shane.sampson@vector.co.nz</a>
Ruth Thomas	<a href="mailto:ruththomas@xtra.co.nz">ruththomas@xtra.co.nz</a>
Paul Wilton	<a href="mailto:paul@pl.net">paul@pl.net</a>

### Office

**Administrator** Christine O'Brien [office@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:office@bethshalom.org.nz)

### Burial & Benevolent Society

President, Stuart Reuben, email: [s.k.reuben@paradise.net.nz](mailto:s.k.reuben@paradise.net.nz)  
Vice President, Stephanie Markson, email: [stephanie@markson.co.nz](mailto:stephanie@markson.co.nz)  
Secretary, Leonie Ariel, email: [leonieariel@hotmail.com](mailto:leonieariel@hotmail.com)  
Treasurer, Stephen Cohen, email: [narste@xtra.co.nz](mailto:narste@xtra.co.nz)

### For burial or benevolent emergencies, please call -

Stephanie Markson (524 5647 or 021 106 5302) or  
Stuart Reuben (372 4110, 021 067 4576).

## High Holy Days

(Continued from page 10)

**Yizkor service** - should you wish  
to add the name of a loved one  
or check the existing Yahrzeit list,  
please contact the office.

**Crèche facilities** available during  
High Holy Day Services

Rosh Hashanah Day  
Thurs 29 Sept: 10am - 1pm

Yom Kippur Day:  
Sat 8 October: 11am -1:30pm

RSVP Required to Christine at  
[office@bethshalom.org.nz](mailto:office@bethshalom.org.nz)

### Tzedakah ... Tefillah ... Teshuva

.. In the spirit of the Holy Days  
bring your donations of non-  
perishable food items to shul for  
distribution to those in need.

We ask that you please continue  
the tradition and bring food  
donations comparable in  
quantity to that which you would

have eaten had you not been  
fasting.

On behalf of the Ritual  
Committee, I would like to wish  
you all Shana Tovah and well  
over the Fast and a very special  
Todah Rabah to all the lay  
readers and shammashim who  
give so generously of their time  
week after week.

– **Leon Goldwater**



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