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# March/April 2010

Nissan, Iyar 5770

ניסן איר

## **Purim Review: Food, Fun, and Hilarity!**



What kind of a religious community puts on a service that promises fun for all, an invitation to heck and howl during the service, plenty of good food and libations, a performance directed by professional comedienne, and a kids carnival with prizes to boot? Well, that would be the community of Beth Shalom, of course.

If you were there to celebrate the Purim festivities on Saturday, February 27th, you know what I'm talking about. If you missed it, pull out your lunar calendar and make a note for the celebration of Purim 2011 - you won't want to miss it again!



Professional comedy? YES! Our own Rabbi Kreplach from Russia (aka Rabbi Ed) collaborated with Broad Comedy writers Sally Sills and Stephani Lourie to revise the beautiful songs and script of West Side Story. They changed lyrics, added some interesting costumes, directed the talent (including themselves—thanks Sally and Stephanie!), and then blew us all away with the story of fighting back against hate in Bozeman—a la the Purim Story.

The highlight: Alan Rassaby, Mike Zell, Maddy Rassaby, Danny Hicks, Catherine Buser, and Steph Lourie acting as a gang of bullies dressed in white bathrobes, skinhead wigs, and tattoos belting out their version of "I Feel Pretty". Please, it was beyond. . .



Thanks goes out to Amy Keefer who led another gang of volunteers in a hugely successful kids carnival which featured at least twenty games and even more surprising: an orderly prize picking system that left all the carnival-goers happy and loaded up with goodies to play with the rest of the evening.

One of the really nice things about this Purim festival was the theme of tolerance that wove itself throughout the night. We booed the bad guy, Haman who wanted to suppress the worship of the Jewish people, ate amazing food prepared by our Korean neighbor, I-Ho Pomeroy, who herself has been a target of hate, and then we enjoyed our own version of a musical which left us with the message: We are all brothers and sisters!

~Jackie Robin



### **Rabbi**

Ed Stafman

### **Board of Directors**

Jake Werner - President  
Alan Rassaby - Vice President  
Diane Yankelevitz - Treasurer  
Elizabeth Burnim - Secretary  
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Gail Gettler  
Amy Keefer  
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Ron Gompertz  
Bob Rasmus  
Franke Wilmer

### **Committee Chairs**

Adult Education, Open  
Building & Grounds, Bob Rasmus  
Caring, DeeDee Rasmus  
Communications, Romi Neustad  
Family and Children, Amy Keefer  
Fundraising, Jake Werner  
Interfaith, Open  
Membership, Alan Rassaby  
Programming, Paul & Barbara  
Rosenthal  
Ritual, Josh Burnim  
Shalom Kids & Tots, Jenny Ryan  
Sweet Pea, Franke Wilmer

### **Office Administrator**

Lisa Roots

### **Rabbinic Aide**

Stanley Rosenberg

### **Volunteer Teachers**

#### **Shalom Kids**

Alan Rassaby  
Irene Grimberg  
Jim Nallick  
Josh Burnim  
Zohar Hicks

#### **Shalom Tots**

Amy Keefer  
Danny Hicks  
Maddy Rassaby

### **Webmasters**

Ron and Michelle Gompertz  
Ryan Forbes

### **Newsletter Editors**

Jim Nallick, Anika Hanisch

## **Pesach: The Birth of Our People as a Holy Community**

*Dear Holy Friends,*

When I interviewed for the Rabbi position in Bozeman, I said that a primary goal would be to build holy Jewish community here. I later learned that this comment set off a lively discussion, as members of the committee interviewing me were unsure as to what I meant by "holy community."

When I arrived in Bozeman just nine months ago and began writing weekly e-mails, I usually addressed them to "Dear Holy Friends," until several of you chuckled and said to me "what's with the 'holy friends' thing?" So, I dropped the appellation for the time being.

In the time I've been here, though, I've seen us make serious strides towards becoming friends in a holy community. For instance, we recently celebrated Purim, during which we not only had a fabulous celebration, but more important, over 40 of YOU participated in an active way to make it happen. One Tuesday evening, as the dozen actors in the schpiel assembled to rehearse, children were playing in another room, and there were meetings and socializing in still other rooms. Alan Rassaby turned to me and said, "this is the way the Temple ought to be all the time." Once Purim arrived, with over 120 people—mostly costumed—at the celebration, we ate together, laughed together, engaged in centuries' old Jewish traditions together, and watched the kids play and the adults party, while warm feelings filled the space. This, my holy friends, IS what holy community looks like.

Shortly after Purim, our beloved Diane Yankelevitz was stricken with a serious illness. Literally dozens of YOU contacted her husband Ken or called me for updates, signed Diane's guestbook on-line, expressed a desire to visit her in Billings, and have offered to help when she returns. There have been over 1,000 visits to the web page I set up for her, the great majority from our congregation. This follows six monthly Shabbat dinners at my home (so far) where over 80 of you have gathered (so far) out of the desire to do the caring work of our community, and we're only halfway through the year. In fact, many of us have done that caring work in the first six months. This, my holy friends, IS what holy community feels like.

Last week, thanks to Paul & Barbara Rosenthal, and DeeDee and Bob Rasmus, we held a delightful wine tasting, at which many of us gathered not for prayer or learning, but just to be with each other. This, my holy friends, IS what happens in holy community.

We now have Torah study most every Shabbat and I have taught five different adult education classes since I arrived. All together, more than 70 of you have participated in at least one class, where we learned about Judaism and our sacred texts together. This, my holy friends, IS the growth that can happen in holy community.

We continue to hold Friday night services at least twice a month, and we now hold a Saturday morning service once a month. One Friday night a month, we have a catered dinner following our service, which has been very popular. Ethan and Josh's music has been supplemented by Avery Swarthout on the drums and Louis Rassaby on the cello. Our services have been joyful and, I

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hope, meaningful, as we have prayed together, acknowledging and expressing our thanks for all that we have, using the ancient words of our tradition. These, my holy friends, ARE the words of holy community.

In this short time, along with other members of our community, I have been with some of you during major life changes. We celebrated when some of you named babies, some got married, some became Jews by Choice, and some celebrated b'nai mitzvah. I currently have six students studying for b'nai mitzvah and eight studying for conversion. There were others who lost loved ones and some who were sick. We stand with each other during all these times. These, my holy friends, ARE the joys and sorrows of holy community.

I have watched members of your leadership group spend amazing amounts of their time serving this community, and I've seen new leaders emerging. This selfless giving, my holy friends, IS how holy community works.

I am a part of several interfaith groups and have participated on several interfaith panels, with another one scheduled soon, as Beth Shalom has taken our place among the other holy communities in our city.

My holy friends, celebrating and sharing our traditions with others, is also holy community.

And now, Pesach is around the corner. We will gather together for a seder, and tell the story of how we left a place called Mitzrayim, referring to Egypt but meaning "narrow places," and how the Red Sea split, so that we emerged as a people—a people who would soon receive Torah and become a holy people. This is not some obscure piece of history, but the sacred story of each of our lives and the life of our community. At Passover, we each have the opportunity to examine our paths and leave our narrow places, as does our community, moving towards re-birth and more holiness in our lives and in the life of our holy community. With that freedom, may we each also find the responsibility to work even harder to increase the holiness within our community. May it continue to grow as a place where we "love the stranger because we were strangers in Egypt," and where we love to be together, basking in the glow of one another.

*~Rabbi Ed*

## **Donations**

*Donations in addition to membership dues are an important part of what makes Beth Shalom run and are a great way to commemorate a simcha or other event. Please notify the temple if you would rather remain anonymous.*

Laurie Franklin, donation to Rabbi's Discretionary Fund  
Josh Taitelbaum and Sarah Skofield, in honor of Caring Committee  
Gale Chapman, misc. donation  
Steven Eiger and Frances Lefcort, craft fair contribution  
Beth Lee, craft fair contribution  
Pariser, prayer book donation  
Stars'n Stripes, misc. donation  
Jake and Kama Werner, shabbat dinner sponsorship in honor of Quinn and Lauren's baby naming  
Robert and Sally Uhlmann, wishing Diane Yankelevitz a speedy recovery and prayers

### **Updates on Diane**

As most of you know, Diane Yankelevitz suffered a brain hemorrhage on Tuesday morning, March 2.

Updates on Diane are available at: <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/dianeyankelevitz>

**Let my people go...**

**to the COMMUNITY SEDER!**

**March 30 at Riverside  
Country Club. Register now  
at [http://](http://www.bethshalombozeman.org/)**

**[www.bethshalombozeman.org/](http://www.bethshalombozeman.org/)**

### **Purim Shpiel Online!**

Just in case you missed it the first time - or if you just can't get enough - here is the Purim Shpiel video in its entire glorious undedited entirety:

<http://www.bethshalombozeman.org/purimshpiel2010.php>



## **Important Member Dates**

*These dates come from your membership forms. Please let us know birthdays, anniversaries, and yahrzeiten by filling out your membership form or contacting the temple.*

### **Yahrzeiten**

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3/6/1969, Jennie Pia Yochalas, Grandmother of Jack Ostrovsky  
3/12/1980, Shirley Ostrovsky, Mother of Jack Ostrovsky  
3/13/1916, William Stoller Father of Elizabeth Burnim, Son of William & Mary Stoller  
3/13/1989, Marcus Frank DeRuyter, Father of Carol Belgrad  
3/13/2002, Herbert Prussack, Husband of Kristine Prussack  
3/14/1996, Bernard David Grossman, Father of Betsy de Leiris  
3/14/2009, Eugene Gettelman, Father of Michael Gettelman  
3/16/1978, Elizabeth Diamond, Mother of Joan Diamond  
3/22/1988, Delbert Lee, Father of Kristine Prussack  
3/26/1961, Harold Belgrad, Father of Richard Belgrad  
4/6/1972, Irving Smith, Grandfather of Ian Handley  
4/7/1983, Rena Gettelman, Mother of Michael Gettelman  
4/9/2009, Kathryn P. Sloane, Mother of Charles & Stewart Sloane  
4/10/1974, Ernst Mueller, Father of Lisa Mueller  
4/10/1988, Susan Stein, Mother of Alyssa Davis  
4/12/2009, Toby Smith, Grandmother of Ian Handley  
4/18/2009, Florence Grossenbacher, Grandmother of Jake Werner  
4/19/1995, Manuel Reider, Father of Jeff Reider  
4/25/1996, Marlene Ruth Aig, Sister of Dennis Aig  
4/29/2004, Fred Gompertz, Father of Ron Gompertz, Grandfather of Minna Gompertz

### **Anniversaries**

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Barbara do Amaral, 3/27/2001  
Bruce Wendt & Jennifer Bordy, 4/29  
Jacob & Kama Werner, 4/29

### **Birthdays**

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Richard Bessen, 3/1/1962  
Layla Eby, 3/4/2005  
Larry Shotland, 3/7  
Pam McCutcheon, 3/9/1958  
Gail Gettler, 3/10/1960  
Betsy de Leiris, 3/11/1948  
Susan Sloane, 3/16/1950  
Jacob Werner, 3/18  
Taylor Jacobs, 3/20/2000  
Jinny Goodman, 4/6  
Elianna Burnim, 4/11/1999  
Gidal Kaiser, 4/16/1980  
Leah Aig-Bertagnolli, 4/26/1995  
Richard Prugh, 4/28

**Purim**



# Upcoming Events

*Please see email updates for possible schedule changes.*

Online calendar at: <http://www.bethshalombozeman.org/calendar.php>

## March

- 3/19, 6:00p Caring Committee Dinner
- 3/20, 9:30a Torah Study
- 3/21, 6:30p Introduction to Judaism: Holocaust and Israel
- 3/22, 5:30p Shalom Kids & Tots, Passover Lesson
- 3/22, 5:45p Jewish Parenting Group
- 3/24, 12:00p -5:00p Artist Workshop
- 3/24, 4:00p Hebrew Class
- 3/25, 5:30p Ritual Committee Meeting
- 3/26, 7:00p Kabbalat Shabbat
- 3/27, 9:30a Torah Study
- 3/28, 6:30p Introduction to Judaism: Interfaith Issues & Conclusions
- 3/29, First Seder
- 3/30, 5:00p Second Night Community Seder at Country Club (doors open at 5, Seder at 6)
- 3/31, 12:00p -5:00p Artist Workshop
- 3/31, 4:00p Hebrew Class

## April

- 4/1, 5:30p Board Meeting
- 4/2, 6:00p Service & Potluck in Dining Room (within Pesach)
- 4/3, 9:30a Torah Study
- 4/5, 5:30p Shalom Kids & Tots, Holocaust Lesson
- 4/5, 5:45p Jewish Parenting Group
- 4/7, 12:00p -5:00p Artist Workshop
- 4/7, 4:00p Hebrew Class
- 4/10, 9:00a First Shabbat morning service & Torah Study
- 4/10, 1:00p Rabbi Ed participating in a panel on "End of Life Decisions" by the ACLU in Helena
- 4/11, Holocaust Memorial Day: 3:00 Holocaust Exhibit opens at MSU Ballroom, 5:30 Reception; 6:45 Blessings & Key Note Speaker: Renee Firestone
- 4/12, 5:30p Shalom Kids, Holocaust Lesson
- 4/13, 7:00p Holocaust Memorial Service in Helena, led by Rabbi Ed & Father Marc Lenneman
- 4/14, 12:00p -5:00p Artist Workshop
- 4/14, 4:00p Hebrew Class
- 4/16, 5:30p Kabbalat Shabbat & catered dinner (doors open at 5:30, dinner at 6, service at 7)
- 4/17, 9:30a Torah Study
- 4/18, Celebrate Israel Independence Day
- 4/19, 5:30p Shalom Kids & Tots, Jews of Israel (Masada & Roman Conquest)
- 4/19, 5:45p Jewish Parenting Group
- 4/21, 4:00p Hebrew Class
- 4/22, 12:00p Interfaith Panel
- 4/24, 9:30a Torah Study
- 4/26, 5:30p Shalom Kids, Jews of Israel (70 AD - 1948 AD)
- 4/28, 4:00p Hebrew Class
- 4/29, 5:30p Ritual Committee
- 4/30, 6:00p Caring Committee Dinner for the May group