



Beth Emeth Observer

BETH EMETH CONGREGATION

13702 W. Meeker Blvd.,
Sun City West, AZ 85375
623-584-7210

bethemethaz@gmail.com www.bethemethaz.org
Office hours Mon-Fri - 9 AM - 12 PM
Hazzan Lev Ettelson
Spiritual Leader & Director of Education

**Adar II - Nissan 5784
April 2024**

"More Than Just The Conservative Congregation of the West Valley, We Are A Community"



1st Seder: Monday April 22 (candle lighting 6:47)

2nd Seder: Tuesday April 23 (candle lighting after 7:44)

If you need a place for seder or if you can host guests at your seder please contact the office.

Passover Services

Tuesday, April 23	9:30 am
Wednesday, April 24	9:30 am
Friday, April 26	NO Kabbalat Shabbat service
Saturday, April 27	9:30 am
Monday, April 29	9:30 am
Tuesday, April 30	9:30 am (Yizkor after Shacharit)

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SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING

April

04/05	6:34
04/12	6:39
04/19	6:44
04/26	6:49

**Volume 2024
Number 4**



FROM THE DESK OF TOM BEHRENDT, PRESIDENT



Chag Sameach Purim Ketzi and her extraordinary helpers made almost 3,000 Hamantaschen that were so delicious. This is the major fund raiser for Sisterhood for the year. Thank You to all who helped support the great effort.

Pesach is coming, almost too soon, Very happy to see that Fry's and Safeway/Albertson's have a large display of Kosher L'Pesach goods.

The Men's Club, with a major boost from Sisterhood, is hosting Hot Dog Sunday on April 7th. We will be serving Jack's Stadium Hot Dogs as they have a hecksher that meets the criteria for a Conservative Synagogue. Volunteers are needed to make this a success. We would like to make Men's Club viable and have some fun programs and trips. There will be a Yard Sale as well on the 7th.

B'Nai Mitzvah lessons and tutoring will be available upon request by contacting the office, We will be making a big push to reach the large number of unaffiliated Jews in the West Valley. According to the last Census, that number is over 30,000.

Again, I must send Kudos to Rev Lev for all of his hard work in teaching classes, conducting services and his outreach to the Community. Services on Friday are at 6 PM and have a great deal of English readings. Transliteration of the Hebrew is available. Our Shabbat Service is at 9:30 a.m., followed by a lovely lunch. Shabbat Services are on Zoom , so check it out and join us.

Services

Thursday	9:00am
Friday	6:00pm - <i>New time started March 1</i>
Saturday	9:30am



Words from the Heart: Reflections on Torah and Tradition by Hazzan Lev Ettelson

From Exile to Liberation

גלות ← גאולה

The idea of exile, **גלות** (*Galut*), is woven throughout the narrative of the Torah, beginning with the exile from the Garden of Eden to the exile of Cain for murdering his brother. This symbolizes a shift in our relationship with Hashem and one another: a loss of faith and trust, moving from a state of tranquility and harmony to that of suffering and alienation.

Abraham and Sarah went into exile, first from their birth place and then from the land which had been promised to them and to their descendants. This pattern of exile and return was repeated by successive generations until the exile of the twelve tribes in Egypt, during which we reached the lowest level of spiritual darkness. We were led out by a “strong hand and an outstretched arm” returning to the Land of Israel as a nation. This was the precursor of the four periods of exile prophesied by Daniel.

On Purim we read Megillat Esther which takes place during the final years of the Babylonian and Persian exiles in which the Jews are faced with genocide. A few years after the harsh decree is averted we return to Jerusalem and rebuild the Temple.

The Greek exile, even though we were not physically displaced, was characterized by alienation from Torah values and desecration of the Temple. Hanukkah symbolizes the triumph of light over darkness and a return to wholeness. Just two hundred years later, the Roman exile began. This was punctuated by the loss of autonomy and the destruction of the Second Temple. This is the fourth and final period of exile from which we are emerging.

When Tziporah gave birth to their son, Moses named him “Gershom; for he said: ‘I have been a stranger in a strange land’” (*Exodus 18:3*). *Galut (exile) is a state of estrangement from our true selves, both individually and collectively. Since October 7, 2023 Jews all over the world feel like strangers in strange lands as we witness the rise of antisemitism and an existential threat to our homeland. The explosion of violence and hatred which poured over the border of Gaza was unlike anything we have seen since the Holocaust. Israelis too feel a sense of estrangement as their sense of safety and security was shattered in a horrible way.*

When our ancestors arrived at the shore of the Sea of Reeds it seemed like a dead end. All night long Moses held out his arms over the sea praying the deepest prayer of his life. According to the Midrash, it was not until a simple Jew, Nachshon ben Amidav, walked into the water up to his nostrils and the sea parted. This simple act of faith was the necessary component before the miracle could occur. These days it often seems that we are between a rock and a hard place without any possible way forward. Yet, if we maintain our faith in Hashem and each other we too can experience an opening through which we can walk to the other side.

When our ancestors stood on the opposite shore after the sea closed upon their enemies they sang the “Song of the Sea.” The Talmud teaches us that in the upper world the host of angels started singing as well. Hashem silenced them saying, “How dare you sing for joy when My creatures are dying?!” It is not the Jewish way to rejoice at the downfall of our enemies, yet sometimes we are faced with difficult choices. It is taught in Midrash Tanchuma: “Anyone who is merciful to the cruel will end up being cruel to the merciful.”

I am neither a diplomat nor a military tactician, I am just a simple Jew and a student of our Sages of blessed memory. There is much suffering in the world and since the causes are complex, the solutions are not simple. We do what we can to maintain our humanity and to recognize the Divine Spark in one another. Through acts of kindness and *tzedakah* we can help relieve suffering. *With each mitzvah, we are manifesting the outstretched arm and the mighty hand in partnership with the Omnipresent so that we may live to see the ultimate liberation/redemption of all beings, Geulah Shleimah, heralding a new era of peace and justice for all.*

Questions or comments can be addressed to Hazzan@bethemethaz.org

From the Editor's Desk

There are no secular holidays in April on my calendar, and the subject of Purim, I hope, will be covered by Reb Lev on these pages.

Do you remember the song "Blowing in the Wind?"

I do and can think only about what's going on in Israel. One of the lines of the song is: "How many deaths will it take 'til we know that too many people have died. The answer, my friend, is blowing in the wind..."

I, for one, am disappointed in Prime Minister Netanyahu's disregard for the lives being lost, regardless of whether they belong to Jews or Arabs, Israelis or Palestinians. Surely there are others who feel the same.

Netanyahu has stressed that Israelis support the war – and the plan to storm the city of Rafah to destroy what the Israeli military says are the last remaining Hamas battalions.

Former President Donald Trump has chastised Both President Biden and Senator Schumer, saying they and other critics of the Israeli offensive are diminishing the beating Israel took October 7.

Airdrops by the United States and other nations continue in Gaza, while deliveries on a new sea route have begun, but aid groups say more ground routes and fewer Israeli restrictions on them are needed to meet humanitarian needs in any significant way.

The Gaza Health Ministry said at least 31,645 have been killed in the war. The ministry doesn't differentiate between civilians and combatants in its count, but says women and children make up two-thirds of the dead.

All we can do, as a congregation, is pray for a peaceful resolution.

Morrie Hesch, Editor





Brenda Kleinman	04/07/24
James Toney	04/13/24
Arthur Bennett	04/14/24
Diane Shapiro	04/14/24
Hazzan Lev Ettelson	04/17/24
Debra Gariepy	04/17/24
Saul Rothzeid	04/17/24
Bruce Cohen	04/19/24
Rochelle Bailey	04/24/24



Saul & Sharon Rothzeid **04/09/24**

Wine *Tasting*

Join us for an exquisite wine tasting experience...an afternoon filled with the finest Israeli Kosher wines, some delectable bites, and heartwarming cheer!

**Sponsored by the Sisterhood of Beth Emeth
Congregation West Valley to be held at:
Total Wine & More
13440 N. Prasad Parkway
Surprise, AZ 85388**

Tuesday, April 2, 2024, 4:00 - 6:00 PM
\$25 pp for members; \$30 pp for non-members
SEATING IS LIMITED RSVP BY MARCH 25TH

*Send check to Sisterhood Beth Emeth Congregation
13702 West Meeker Blvd.
Sun City West, AZ, 85375 OR call 623-584-7210 to
use your Mastercard or Visa.*





Sunday, April 7

12:00 pm – 2:30 pm

GET YOURS WHILE THEY LAST!

Men's Club of Beth Emeth Congregation of the West Valley kickoff event!



Join us as we welcome back our Men's Club and a favorite event!



**ENJOY A KOSHER HOT DOG, A
BAG OF CHIPS AND A SODA -
\$5.00**



PAY AT THE DOOR!!

CASH OR CHECK ONLY!!!!

**Make Checks Payable to
Beth Emeth Congregation**



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EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT JEWISH GANGSTERS!

A presentation by

William S. Weiss, Historian

Sunday, April 14, 2024

2:00 pm



Join us as we learn about the roots of Jewish crime, starting with the immigrant Jewish pimps, arsonists, and horse-peddlers, through today's sophisticated gambling racketeers, tax swindlers, diamond smugglers, money launderers and drug distributors.

Jewish gangs took their place alongside their Irish predecessors and Italian contemporaries in mastering the rackets in immigrant ghettos. Jewish mobsters dominated the liquor trade, the labor rackets and gambling rackets.

Today's "Russian Mafia", which includes Jewish members, is the forefront of "frontier capitalism" in Russia and forging powerful ties with the remnants of Mafia in America.

William Weiss is a historian and lecturer specializing in modern American history. He has taught and lectured at colleges, synagogue groups, senior centers, and historical societies. He is a former trustee of the Jewish Historical Society of New Jersey.

Cost for the event is \$10 members/\$15 nonmembers.

Please send check to Sisterhood Beth Emeth Congregation

Call the office M-Fr between 9:00 am-noon for cash or credit card payments

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Special Service Projects



During Purim in conjunction with the Mitzvah of *Matanot La'evyonim*, giving to the needy, we raised \$280 to send to Israel. \$125 from our raffle and additional funds raised during the custom of lifting a 1/2 shekel. In our country a 1/2 dollar is used, and three are raised and lowered

prior making a donation. This costume is in memory of the half-shekel that was given by all Jews when the Temple still stood and whose collection was announced on the first of Adar. Three 1/2 dollars are used in this symbolic ritual, as the Mitzvah of the 1/2 shekel is mentioned 3 times in the Torah portion Ki-Tissa. Thank you to Hazzan Lev for teaching us about this Mitzvah, and for matching funds raised during the 1/2 shekel ceremony increasing the total going to Israel to \$435.



During the month of March individuals brought in Kosher food for Ezras Chaim's Kosher food pantry in Phoenix. We filled our Bin in the foyer and continued collecting food through the end of March.



For April we will be collecting Passover foods for their pantry. When shopping for your Pesach needs please try to pick up one additional Passover item for our bin to help the needy. Non perishable items only!

Foods that meet the Kosher dietary laws are labeled with one of many Kosher symbols, including: Circle U and Circle K. You can usually find these symbols in small type on the bottom front of the package. Kosher foods that contain dairy products usually contain a "D" or the word "Dairy" after the Kosher symbol. The letter P following the symbols denotes for Passover rather than Pareve. Thank you all for your generosity!



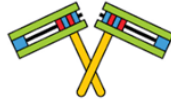


Purim Lunch and Learn with Reb Lev!

On Sunday, March 17, we had 29 people attend the Purim Lunch and Learn with Reb Lev. They discussed and compared Purim to Yom Kippur, enjoyed the meal of appetizers and soup and salad and shared in conversation. Thank you to Marlene and Brad Friedlander for table decorations, Carol Madvig, Andrea Cohen, and Natalie Morrison, for helping with food preparation and to Bruce Cohen, Morrie Hesch, and Marilyn Newberg for helping with set up and clean up.



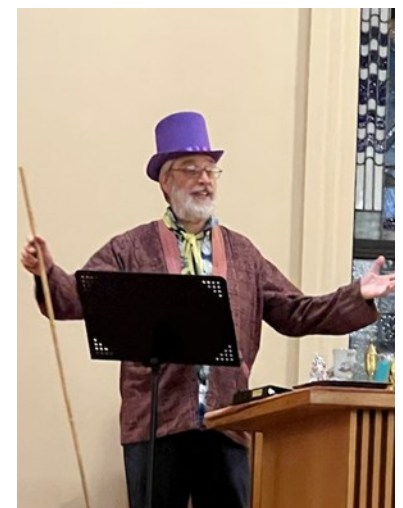
Purim Festivities 2024



It was an amazing evening of fun! Hazzan Lev was full of tricks as he changed from character to character as he read the Megillah. He carefully sequenced his costumes from the King to Haman, from peasant to a rabbinic sage, to the stage master. There were musical interludes, with Lev breaking out into song. It was delightful! Rosemary Abrami was on hand to give a quick English synopsis of each chapter prior to Lev reading the Hebrew from the scroll.

Following Havdalah we had door prizes, a raffle for hand made jewelry designed by Mark Friedman, and we completed the custom of the 1/2 shekel. Funds raised went to Israel to feed the needy to fulfill the Mitzvah of Matanot La'evyonim

Everyone enjoyed Hamantaschen following the service and took home a Mishloach Manot bag from the congregation. Thank you to Marlene and Brad Friedlander for donating table decorations! For more photos visit our web site. bethemethaz.org





We made 2400 Hamantaschen and raised over \$4,200 for Sisterhood programming, Wow!

What did it take? It took over 10 weeks of working 3-4 days a week to complete the shopping, the zesting, the juicing, the mixing of the dough, the rolling and cutting, the filling, the shaping, the egg washing, the baking, the packaging for freezing, then the bagging and tagging...time intensive but made with love!

Thank you to all who helped make this possible! Our appreciation extends to our supporters who purchased, sent wishes to friends, and who made donations! Our appreciation especially extends to the 30 senders who chose to send their wishes to all the congregants! Your generosity will help us provide programming and support the congregation in the coming year!

A special thank you goes to Mari Erichsen & Hacienda de Sarah for their understanding as their name got omitted from all the tags in error.

Not seen in the photos but also deserving of thanks are Sharon Rothzeit and Irene Lehrer who also helped bag and tag. Thank you ALL!!





In Loving Memory

The following Yahrzeits will be observed during Adar II - Nissan -5784

Kaddish may be said on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings.

El Malei Rachamim, the memorial prayer, may be said on the Thursday preceding the Yahrzeit
at 9:00 a.m. Minyan.

<u>Date Observed</u>	<u>Deceased</u>	<u>Observer</u>	<u>Relationship</u>
4/1/2024	Adar-II 22 Samuel Jamison	Phyllis Marcus	Father
4/2/2024	Adar-II 23 Ruth Epstein	Peter Epstein	Mother
4/2/2024	Adar-II 23 Allison Hesch	Morrie Hesch	Spouse
4/6/2024	Adar-II 27 Saul Punyon	Gail Punyon-Kuhns	Father
4/9/2024	Nissan 1 Edith Hesch	Morrie Hesch	Mother
4/10/2024	Nissan 2 Judith Koven	Sheldon Koven	Wife
4/11/2024	Nissan 3 Leo Abrami	Rosemary Abrami	Husband
4/13/2024	Nissan 5 Edna Koshar	Louis Koshar	Mother
4/14/2024	Nissan 6 Beverly Casper	Sheldon Koven	Cousin
4/15/2024	Nissan 7 Marcia Friedman	Esther Toney	Sister
4/17/2024	Nissan 9 Matilda Friedman	Mark Friedman	Mother
4/17/2024	Nissan 9 Mendel Isaacson	Barbara Bennett	Brother
4/17/2024	Nissan 9 Dorothy Miller	Iris Silverman	Mother
4/20/2024	Nissan 12 Ida Koven	Sheldon Koven	Grandmother
4/20/2024	Nissan 12 Claire Naidorf	Madelaine Friedman	Mother
4/21/2024	Nissan 13 William Leibovitz	Leah Tarnor	Father
4/24/2024	Nissan 16 Martin Morrison	Natalie Morrison	Husband
4/27/2024	Nissan 19 Herbert Mason	Alice Mason	Husband
4/28/2024	Nissan 20 Benjamin Sussman	Jamie Rothschild	Grandfather
4/29/2024	Nissan 21 Carl Sherman	Rochelle Bailey	Father

Our sincere thanks for the following donations

Yahrzeit Fund

In Memory of Gabriella Farkas

Gyorgyi Rosenthal

In Memory of Julia Salmirs

Brad & Marlene Friedlander

In Memory of Mary Friedlander

Brad & Marlene Friedlander

In Memory of William Shapiro

Diane Shapiro and Bill Kram

In Memory of Eleanor Shapiro

Diane Shapiro, and Bill Kram

In Memory of Lillian Friedman

Sual & Sharon Rothzeid

In Memory of Ruth Heidecker

Andrew and Jan Heidecker

Kiddush Fund

Susan Hersch

Morrie Hesch

Brad & Marlene Friedlander

Mark & Madelaine Friedman

Sheldon Koven

Hadassah West

General Donations

Marilyn Newberg

Jim and Phyllis Frank

Marisela Erichsen

Rosie Colbert

Ron Paul

Cards

Natalie Morrison

Joan Rothfeld

Ketzi and Jim Toney

Donations Received

2/22 through 3/20/24



New Classes!

Free for members, \$5 per session for non members. Classes are held in the library and will be Livestreamed on Facebook.

Wednesday March 27 @ 4:00 p.m.

Preparing for Passover. Three sessions, ending on April 10th. We will learn about the laws and customs of Pesach with an emphasis on the Seder and Haggadah. Please bring Haggadah(s) which you use at your Seder. Register with the office by email including your name and phone number.

Thursday March 28 @ 4:00 p.m.

Torah Class: Weekly Parsha Study. Every week we will take a deep dive into the Torah portion for the week. Please bring a Chumash with commentary if you have one and read through at least part of the weekly portion. All are welcome.



Our logo is a Shield of David made up of a calligraphic interpretation of the Hebrew initials of the Congregation, BETH EMETH, which means House of Truth.



Thank You 

To all those dedicated and loving people who stepped up and committed their time to be board members, directors, and club presidents. You are so appreciated!

Beth Emeth Congregation **Board**

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Marilyn Newberg
Ketzi Toney
Natalie Morrison
Jordan Colbert
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President

PICK UP A GIFT AT THE JUDAICA SHOP



Do you have a tzedakah box? Get one at the Judaica shop, fill it up and donate your savings to the Synagogue as a gesture of kindness and faith.

Yahrzeit Candles
\$1.50 each



Also Shabbat Candles on sale - Box of 72 for \$8.00

We also now have several fine art pieces for sale.

Stop in anytime Monday - Friday 9am to 12pm

(Payment accepted by check or cash or credit card)