



This Purim, Be Young at Heart

by Elsa Conrad

PURIM offers a chance to kick back and enjoy yourself. This year's celebrations are sure to appeal to both the young and the young at heart, with a fun-filled Purim service led by Rav **Nate DeGroot** on Friday, March 14 at 7:30 pm. It will feature highlights from the *Megillat Esther*, jokes, noise and LOTS of hamantaschen. And remember, costumes aren't just for children!

Those hamantaschen will be the center of our other celebration, too. Food is always a topic of Jewish holidays,

Purim being no exception. Do you favor



cookie style, or a bread-like dough? Poppy seeds or no poppy seeds? Favorite filling? How big? And if you've lived in a community with multiple Jewish bakeries (what a luxury), then who makes the best ones?



PURIM EVENTS AT BETENU

Friday, March 14 – 7:30 pm

A lighthearted Purim service led by Rav Nate DeGroot—costumes optional

Sunday, March 16 – 11:30 pm

Hamentaschen workshop led by Roberta Pavoll—RSVP by March 13

If baking hamantaschen isn't part of your family tradition, this is the year to bring that fresh-from-the-oven goodness to your home. **Roberta Pavoll** will offer a how-to session on Sunday, March 16 at 11:30 am. Come with a rolling pin, mixing bowl, cookie sheet and waxed paper—you'll leave with ready-to-bake goodies. Rav Nate will even be on hand to show off his baking talents! The time is convenient for Sunday-school families, but all members are welcome. Please RSVP the office by March 13, so we know how much material we need.

This is a great month to see old friends and discover new ones. So make a point of taking part in Purim at Betenu!

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CONGREGATION BETENU

A Member of the Union for Reform Judaism

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betenu@nii.net



Jenna Goldstein's Bat Mitzvah Service on March 22

Join us in celebration as **Jenna Goldstein** is called to the Torah at Congregation Betenu on **Saturday, March 22 at 10:30 am.** There's also a **March 21 bat mitzvah Shabbat service** with Jenna, so please consider attending one or both of these events to show your support!

NEWS & NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank You!

- ◆ **Ariel Crotty and Allison Leary** for serving as school monitors this month
- ◆ **The Dube family** for their February oneg
- ◆ **Dave Spokane** for serving as monitor in February and joining Betenu's Education Committee
- ◆ **All parents** attending our student presentations on Feb. 16 (details on page 3)

BIRTHDAYS

- ◆ **Nathaniel MacGregor**
- ◆ **Rebecca Savage**



YHRZEITS

In Loving Memory

- ◆ **Charlotte Mendoza**
mother of Sheryl Liberman March 1
- ◆ **Avraham Slifer**
father of Bety Dar March 1
- ◆ **Murray Cooper**
father of Roberta Pavoll March 3
- ◆ **Elizabeth Krohn "Betty" Keiser** March 3
- ◆ **Dorothy Franks**
mother of Paul Franks March 3
- ◆ **Abraham Applebaum**
grandfather of Elyse Wasserman March 7
- ◆ **Joel Mendoza**
father of Sheryl Liberman March 7
- ◆ **Marion Krohn "Jane" Harris** March 16
- ◆ **Etta Schuldwach**
grandmother of Lenny Wasserman March 16
- ◆ **Martha Sandhaus** March 16
- ◆ **Shaun McGuire**
son of Vivian McGuire March 18
- ◆ **Jacob Flagler**
father of Susan Rodil March 19
- ◆ **Robin Kulm**
friend of Roberta Pavoll March 20
- ◆ **Lillian Sidransky**
grandmother of Daniel Becker March 22
- ◆ **Lillian Sigel**
mother of Martha Sandhaus March 23
- ◆ **Louis Arthur Gross** March 24
- ◆ **Hannah Wasserman**
grandmother of Lenny Wasserman March 25
- ◆ **Clifford Simonds**
brother-in-law of Sheryl Liberman March 25

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Trustees At-Large: Sara Murphy 603-465-7119, Joel Silberberg 603-472-8143
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Rabbinical Intern: Nate DeGroot rabbi@betenu.org
Rabbi Emeritus: Joshua Segal emeritus@betenu.org

Growing Up Jewish

HOW DOES Torah study help us grow up and make our world *kadosh*? Betenu's Level I students offered their own unique answers in a lively presentation on Feb. 16, based on lessons from their study of Genesis (*B're'sheet*).

"Each student prepared a 'My Genesis Traveler' poster with three parts," said Betenu teacher **Sandra Whitman**. "Part 1 used photos showing how they have grown physically. Part 2 was a drawing with a sentence on the theme of each Torah portion we studied. Part 3 was a list of ways they're learning to grow up and make the world more *kadosh* (holy). After presenting their posters, students modeled T-shirts featuring their own designs and themes."

- ◆ Using the example of Adam & Eve, **Ben Conley** cited his mom as his helpmate and said he is learning to be responsible and hold his temper.
- ◆ **Sam Dube** used Noah as an example of caring, and said he is learning to speak politely even if he is mad.
- ◆ **Andrew Dube** discussed Abraham as a lesson in welcoming, and his own effort to befriend new students.
- ◆ **Amanda Leary** used the kindness of Rebekah as a lesson, inquiring when her sister isn't well and trying to keep peace in the home (*Shalom bayit*).

"Part of growing up," noted Sandra, "is learning how to get along better and change in a way that makes us and our world more *kadosh*. The students worked hard on their projects, and the posters will be a nice reminder of what we've studied. Thanks to all the parents for their attendance and support!"



Lessons from the Torah inspired student presentations on Feb. 16. Above: teacher Sandra Whitman, Amanda Leary, Andrew Dube, Ben Conley and Sam Dube. Not shown: Jonathan Crotty, Rachel Lessard.



A fashion show let students model their t-shirts and show off a few dance moves.

FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

by Sheryl Liberman

Adult Education Lunch, March 1

Continuing our recent brownbag lunch series, Rav **Nate DeGroot** will host a talk at noon on Saturday, March 1. Bring a lunch or a treat to share!

Parents' Meeting, March 23

Parents of religious school students are strongly encouraged to attend our meeting at 9:15 am on March 23. Your ideas and input are vital as we set next year's agenda and lesson plans.

New Events for Your Children

Are the kids getting cabin fever during the endless winter days? We need volunteers to plan and recruit members for children's events on Saturday afternoons and/or Sunday social times. Just contact **Shery Liberman** at sam-154@comcast.net or betenu@nii.net.

Rabbi-led Classes this Month

Rav Nate will be at Sunday school on March 2, March 16 and March 23.

NH Jewish Film Festival Starts March 27

STARVED FOR FILMS that aren't the usual multiplex blockbusters—films that speak to your heritage? The Jewish Federation of New Hampshire is presenting nine unique movies in March and April, at venues throughout the state.

“The 2014 selections feature an eclectic mix of films chosen to engage, educate and entertain you in the day-to-day realities of modern Jewish culture,” noted JFNH Festival Committee co-chairs, **Gail Ellis**, **Linda L. Gerson** and **Pat Kalik**. “This season’s film slate celebrates the Jewish American experience, including a children’s feature. We also present award-winning dramas from around the globe, including contemporary Israel, and from difficult days in our history, with an inspiring Holocaust film.”



The opening night movie on March 29, “The Jewish Cardinal,” includes a wine and dessert reception at the Currier Museum of Art in Manchester, plus a first-floor art tour. The animated children’s feature on March 30, “An American Tale,” takes place at the Federation building in Manchester and costs just \$10 per family. It will be followed by a free children’s musical program by our own **Rahel Limor**.

Here is the announced film schedule, subject to change:

FILM	DATE/TIME	LOCATION
AKA Doc Pomus	Thursday, March 27: 7 pm Saturday, April 5: 8 pm	JFNH, Manchester Redfern Arts Ctr, Keene
The Jewish Cardinal	Saturday, March 29: 8 pm	Currier, Manchester
An American Tail	Sunday, March 30: 11 am	JFNH, Manchester
Glickman	Sunday, March 30: 1:30 pm	Cinemagic, Merrimack
The American Jewish Story through Cinema	Sunday, March 30: 4 pm	Cinemagic, Merrimack
Aftermath (Poklosie)	Sunday, March 30: 1:30 pm Saturday, April 5: 8 pm	Music Hall, Portsmouth Red River Theatres, Portsmouth
Quality Balls: The David Steinberg Story	Sunday, March 30: 4 pm Thursday, April 3: 7 pm Sunday, April 6: 4 pm	Music Hall, Portsmouth Redfern Arts Ctr, Keene Red River Theatres, Concord
Lost Town	Thursday, April 3: 7 pm Sunday, April 6: 7 pm	Red River Theatres, Concord Redfern Arts Ctr, Keene
Zaytoun	Sunday, April 6: 1 pm	Red River Theatres, Concord

A season pass to all films is \$108 with Opening Night admission, or \$70 without. Pre-ordered tickets will be held at the door. Seating is not assigned, and seats are limited. Advance ticket purchase is highly recommended.

For tickets and information, visit www.jewishnh.org or call the Jewish Federation of New Hampshire at 627-7679.

IN BRIEF

Spring Yard Sale Needs Organizers

If you love yard sales, here’s a chance to plan one for Betenu! We need volunteers to help organize a spring fundraiser that will turn old goods into new cash for temple activities. Contact the office for details.



Channel Your Inner Office Worker

Betenu needs a little weekly or monthly office help, and all support is welcome, big or small. Hours are flexible, requiring only a few small “chores.” If you can help, contact **Sheryl Liberman**.

Shop at Amazon, Benefit Betenu

Buying online can benefit Betenu at no cost to you—just click the Amazon link at betenu.org, and we get part of the purchase price.

MC, Visa and Discover

Your credit card can now pay Betenu dues, tuition, gift purchases or donations! Just call the office or stop in today to arrange the charge details.

Help for the Hospitalized

National privacy laws keep hospitals from calling us when our members are admitted. If you need help or a little friendly support, ask for the hospital chaplain and request that Betenu be notified. We’re here for you!

April Newsletter Deadlines

Please email newsletter submissions to betenu@nii.net by Monday, March 24.

PURIM

P O I N T E R S

MARCH 14-16, Betenu celebrates Purim and its tale of Jewish survival against all odds. As recounted in the Book of Esther (*Megillat Esther*), the Persian royal advisor Haman once plotted to exterminate all the Jews in the kingdom—only to be foiled by Esther and her cousin Mordechai. Small wonder that Purim is a joyous, rowdy holiday ... complete with booing and noise-making during readings, whenever Haman's name is mentioned!

Purim's hallmarks include feasting, merrymaking, exchanging gifts and offering presents to the poor. There are costumes, parties and even plays. Here are a few traditional ways to celebrate, as outlined at reformjudaism.org.

Hamantaschen: 3-cornered pastries eaten on Purim, reminiscent of the villainous Haman's triangular hat. In Israel at this time of year, freshly baked hamantaschen can be smelled on every block.

Costumes: Esther initially "masked" her Jewish identity. Today some dress as characters from the story, as Jewish heroes in history, or whatever strikes their fancy.



Grager: the noisemaker used to drown out the name of Haman during the reading of the megillah.

Purimspiel: a humorous skit presented on Purim. Most parody the story of Esther, but it also is common to poke gentle fun at ourselves and our idiosyncrasies.



Mishloach manot: gifts of food exchanged on Purim, often in baskets, with a wide variety of foods and treats.

Matanot P'evyonim: gifts to the poor so they, too, can celebrate Purim with a special meal.

Shabbat Zachor: the Shabbat preceding Purim, named for the additional Torah portion (Deuteronomy 25:17-19) read that day, which begins with the word *zachor* (remember). To take part, join us at Betenu on March 14 for a 7:30 pm service led by Rav **Nate DeGroot!**



Grandma Macks' Hamantaschen (makes 2 dozen—courtesy Elsa Conrad)

1/2 cup butter
1 cup sugar
1 egg
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
2 tablespoons milk
1/2 teaspoon lemon or vanilla extract
Filling of your choice

Cream butter and sugar until well combined. Add egg and extract. Mix flour and baking powder in a 1-quart bowl, adding milk and extra flour alternately until desired texture.

Refrigerate dough for 15 minutes or longer before rolling out to 1/4" thickness on lightly floured board, and cut into circles.

Place 1 teaspoon of filling in center of each circle. Shape into triangles, pinching top seams to securely enclose filling. A little should peek through the opening.

Celebrating the Miracles of This Time

by Rav Nate DeGroot

WHEN WE PRAY on Purim, we insert a special line into our amidah that reads: “God, who made miracles for our ancestors in those days—*bayamim habem*—and in this time—*bazman hazeh*.”

The Chassidic rabbi known as the Kedushat Levi asks why the language shifts from *yamim* (days) to *zman* (time). He reasons that the miracles that happened long ago during Biblical times (such as the flood, or leaving Egypt with the splitting of the sea, or the crossing of the Jordan into the land of Israel) were supernatural miracles that happened outside of time, transcending the world as we understand it and enacted by God alone. These were miracles that occurred beyond nature, beyond logic, beyond scientific explanation. These were the miracles that happened in those days.

The Purim story, on the other hand, is of people performing everyday actions. No superhuman force or science-fiction narrative is needed to explain what happened in Persia, when Esther and the Jews defeated Haman. Here the miracles are of wit, cunning, bravery and being in the right place at the right time.

GOD IS NOT mentioned even once in the Book of Esther, in fact. It is the only book of the Bible where this is the case. Interestingly, “Esther” literally



means “hidden,” perhaps a nod to God’s hidden presence in the story. This is a story, then, not of God’s explicit handiwork, but of everyday miracles that happen in this time.

These are the miracles that continue in our day, occurring around us in each moment: the budding of a flower, the butterfly emerging from the cocoon, the wondrous beauty of nature; the way that we metabolize a piece of fruit, the way it sounds when voices join together, the way it feels to be in relationship. When we open our eyes wide, we have the chance to experience the miracles of this time.

ON PURIM there are practices to help us experience these everyday miracles:

- ◆ We assemble to hear the reading of the megillah
- ◆ We send gifts of food—*mishloach manot*—to friends
- ◆ We give to the poor
- ◆ We eat a festive meal

Being together, giving to those dear to us, recognizing our just obligations to a broader community, feeding body and soul—these are miracles we enact and celebrate on Purim.

IT’S NOT that God is absent. Rather, God is hidden deep within this time, garbed in the garments of the natural world.

On Purim we do not need to rely on God to deliver us some great miracle. We are not waiting for the sea to part or the sun to stand still. On Purim we get to live fully in this world, in this life—our senses, our relationships, our sense of justice, our bodies—and celebrate the miracle that is life.

Come experience the miracles within this time at Betenu. Join us on Friday night, March 14 for family-friendly Purim services and a party, and then on Sunday March 16 for all-age *bamantaschen* baking!

Do you have questions or comments on this article? Contact Rav Nate by email, at rabbi@betenu.org.

The Purim story is not about God’s explicit handiwork, but everyday miracles we can enact and celebrate today.

March at Betenu

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 <i>Pekude</i> Brownbag Discussion, Noon
2 School (Rav Nate), 9 am Teachers' Mtg, 11 am	3	4	5	6	7 Lay-led Service, 7:30 pm	8 <i>Vayikra</i>
9 School, 9 am	10	11	12	13	14 Rabbi-led Purim Service, 7:30 pm	15 <i>Tzav</i>
16 School (Rav Nate), 9 am Hamantaschen Workshop, 11:30 am	17	18	19	20	21 Rabbi-led Service with Jenna Goldstein, 7:30 pm	22 <i>Shemini</i> Jenna Goldstein Bat Mitzvah, 10:30 am
23 School (Rav Nate), 9 am Parents' Mtg, 9:15 am	24	25	26	27 NH Jewish Film Festival Begins	28 Lay-Led Service, 7:30 pm	29 <i>Tazria</i>
30 School, 9 am	31					

April at Betenu

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4 Lay-led Service, 7:30 pm	5 <i>Metzora</i>
6 School, 9 am NH Jewish Film Festival Ends	7	8	9	10	11 Rabbi-led Service, 7:30 pm	12 <i>Acharei Mot</i> Havdalah Event, TBD
13 School (Rav Nate), 9 am	14 Passover Begins at Sunset	15 Lay-led 2nd Seder, 6:15 pm	16	17	18 Lay-led Service, 7:30 pm	19 <i>Chol Hamoed</i>
20 School, 9 am	21	22 Yizkor	23	24	25 Rabbi-led Service, 7:30 pm	26 <i>Kedoshim</i>
27 School, 9 am <i>Yom Hashoah</i>	28	29	30			