



Chag Sameach!

by Elsa Conrad

WHEN my husband Dave began editing our newsletter, his writer's soul rebelled against irregularities: "High Holidays" in one submission, "High Holy Days" or "High Holydays" in others. Not to mention the whole matter of transliterated Hebrew, with *Rosh Hashana/HaShana/Hashanah* and now *Hanuk(k)a(b)/Chanuk(k)a(b)*.

Of course, this is a metaphor for modern Jewish life. Ancient traditions, modern approaches and merged versions of Judaism all vie for our attention. The editor's instinct is for consistency and neatness; but as Reform Jews, we tend to embrace the chaos of finding our own observances and beliefs, even if we have trouble giving them a tidy appearance.

So, I will always write Hanukah first, even while using "Chanukah" wrapping paper. You will find ways to write your own Judaism. And we will all come together to share them—and maybe adopt those ideas that offer something we may not have known was missing.



Our Nov. 29 service led by Rav Nate DeGroot (left) included a large number of celebrants ... and a very diverse array of menorahs (below).



IN THAT SPIRIT, I remind you that after lighting the eighth candle of Hanukah in our homes on Wednesday, Dec. 4, Betenu will host a ninth night (or, tenth, if you prefer) on Friday, Dec. 6. Join us at 6:30 pm for potluck dinner, games, songs and even a Yankee swap. The holiday might have come very early this year, but we'll make sure that no one wants to see it leave!

IN THIS ISSUE

President's Message

News & Notes

Education Update

Rav Nate DeGroot on Tradition

December/January Calendars

CONGREGATION BETENU

A Member of the Union for Reform Judaism

5 Northern Boulevard
Amherst, NH 03031
(603) 886-1633

On the Web:
www.betenu.org

To submit articles or information, email:
betenu@nii.net

FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE

By Sheryl Liberman

No School on Dec. 29

Sunday School will not be held on Dec. 29. Happy New Year!

Adult Education on Dec. 14

Share your thoughts or questions about Judaism at noon on Dec. 14 during a brownbag discussion with **Rav Nate**. Bring a sweet to share!

Snow Days/Cancellations

In case of severe weather, families will get a cancellation call that day, between 7:15 and 7:45 am. If you need more time, let us know. Please check with **Sheryl** or **Elsa** to verify that we have your correct number.

Parent Meetings in January

Next month we'll schedule times to discuss the rest of the school year. Parents, watch for announcements.

Attendance Requirements

To maximize learning opportunities, please follow these annual guidelines:

Sunday School classes

All ages: 27 sessions

Shabbat/Holiday services

Grades K-3: 4 or more services

Grades 4-5: 7 or more services

Grades 6-7: 15 or more services

Two-thirds of the service requirement should be met by the end of the second trimester, with more than half of services attended here at Betenu. To receive credit for services attended at other locations, please be sure to notify our school in writing.



Don't Miss Our Tu B'shevat Potluck Seder!

Jan. 17, 2014 • Rabbi-led • 6:30 pm (doors open at 6 pm)



Betenu's Tu B'shevat seder takes place a little earlier in 2014, so be sure to save the date! Attendees are asked to bring a seder item, plus a dish for potluck supper. Seder items can be selected by choosing a leaf from the Tu B'shevat wall hanging, placed in the front lobby. You'll also find a signup sheet there. Why not volunteer to bring a dish or help with tables, chairs or cleanup?

You can also sign up by contacting the Betenu office. Just call **(603) 886-1633**.

BETENU BITS

Ninth Night Celebration & Potluck

Extend the holiday season by joining us on Friday, Dec. 6 at 6:30 pm for a night of food, fun and services! Bring along your favorite number of candles and a menorah, plus a fun, inexpensive wrapped gift for our Yankee Swap. We hope to see you there! For further details, contact the Betenu office.

Needed: One Ray of Sunshine

From time to time, Betenu members and families need help after illness or accident. Can you be the go-to person to check on them with a phone call, or organize delivery of much-appreciated supplies? This task isn't required often, and it's not at all difficult—but it is a proud Betenu tradition that not only means a great deal to those in need, but also teaches our children to help take care of others within our community. If you are interested, please contact **Sheryl Liberman**.

Amazon.com and 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. At this time of year, it really adds up!



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.

January Newsletter Deadlines

Please email newsletter submissions to betenu@nii.net by Friday, Dec. 20.



*Please join us
in acknowledging
the generosity
and achievements
of these members
and friends!*

Happy Birthday:

Sophia Dube
Jenna Goldstein
Nevin Juscza

NEWS & NOTES

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank You!

- ◆ **Sheryl Liberman and Elsa Conrad** for Nov. 29 oneg
- ◆ **Sonia Campeanu** for taking goodies and needed supplies to **Sandra Whitman** while she convalesces—get well soon, Sandra!
- ◆ **Barbara Bailey** for helping with our Sunday school
- ◆ **Marcella Dube** for setting up Chanukah tables
- ◆ **Alex Dube** for creating our Chanukah sale flyer
- ◆ **Maureen MacGregor** for donating cases of water
- ◆ **Vivian McGuire** for hosting our Nov. 15 oneg

CONTRIBUTORS

- ◆ **Harry & Carol Applebaum**
- ◆ **Craig & Marcella Dube**, in honor of **Nate DeGroot**
- ◆ **Jewish Federation of New Hampshire**, for tuition support to our Religious School



Give life—participate in the Jewish Community Blood Drive on Dec. 4 in Manchester. Drop-ins are welcome at the Red Cross center on Reservoir Ave. between 11 am and 6 pm. For details, call 1-800-REDCROSS.

Y AHRZEITS

In Loving Memory

- ◆ **Sophie Starr**
mother of Jen Starr December
- ◆ **Fay Gladys Nichols**
mother of Suzanne Maine December 1
- ◆ **Shirley Sleight**
mother of Kim Rimalover December 3
- ◆ **Harry Rice**
father of Alan Rice December 8
- ◆ **Edith Friedman**
grandmother of Allison Leary December 15
- ◆ **George Orenberg**
father of Bob Orenberg December 17
- ◆ **John Marcuccio**
cousin of Elissa Kahn December 18
- ◆ **Peter Leslie Stewart**
brother of Jamie Stewart December 20
- ◆ **Ruth Mann**
mother of Frank Mann December 22
- ◆ **Sally Hurwitz**
great-grandmother of Amy Juscza December 22
- ◆ **Sophie Silver**
grandmother of Paula Silver December 25
- ◆ **Evelyn Lamminen**
mother of Lin Robinson December 25
- ◆ **Lois Goff**
mother of Steve Goff December 30
- ◆ **Eddie Lamminen**
father of Lin Robinson December 31

CONGREGATION BETENU OFFICERS

President: Elsa Conrad 603-879-9189
VP Finance: Bob Rimalover 603-672-5629
VP Education: Sheryl Liberman 603-424-4609
VP Administration (Acting): Barbara Bailey 603-880-9355
Secretary: Pam Blotcky 603-882-4029
Membership: Mark Starin 603-486-8083
Trustees: Steve Blotcky 603-882-4029, Vivian McGuire 603-882-3139, Roberta Pavoll 603-672-9820
Trustees At-Large: Sara Murphy 603-465-7119, Joel Silberberg 603-472-8143
Oneg/Interfaith Representative: Roberta Pavoll 603-672-9820
Publicity: Barbara Bailey 603-880-9355, Marcella Dube 603-673-9412
Rabbinical Intern: Nate DeGroot rabbid@betenu.org
Rabbi Emeritus: Joshua Segal emeritus@betenu.org

Tradition!

by Rav Nate DeGroot

A YOUNG CHILD is in the kitchen with her mom, helping to prepare the holiday meal. Carefully watching her every move, the child is perplexed when her mother cuts both ends off the pot roast before placing it in the roasting pan. “Mother,” she asks, “why do you cut the ends off the pot roast like that?” The mother responds, “Tradition, dear. That’s the way my mother taught me.”

Later the child approached her grandmother. She asked, “Grandma, why did you cut the ends off the pot roast?” Grandma replied: “Tradition, my dear. That’s the way my mother taught me.”

After dessert, still not satisfied, the child sat down beside her great-grandmother and asked: “Great grandma, why did you cut the ends off the pot roast when you made the holiday meal?” The old woman replied, simply, “The pot roast was too big for the roasting pan. I had to cut off the ends so it would fit!”

REGARDLESS of where they come from or how they begin, traditions serve an important function in our lives, grounding us in the present, connecting us to the past, and acting as a sort of receptacle for meaning-making. Especially this time of year, as we gather for various celebrations and family gatherings, we have a chance to reflect on the traditions we’ve received, the ones we may pass on, and the ones we wish to change.

In religious school this year, the students and I have been using *Fiddler on the Roof* as a



starting point for a wonderful conversation about ancestry, tradition, and what Judaism means for us today. The play-turned-film depicts a Jewish family navigating between ancient tradition and modernity. As the children begin to rebel against the strict and outdated norms of the community, the father grasps for the past, grudgingly accepting this new reality. He lets out a bellowing yell of frustration—“Tradition!”—while giving his daughter his blessing in his very next breath.

Of course, there is value in tradition, just as there is value in change. Without a right answer when it comes to rootedness versus evolution, each individual, each family, and each community, must wrestle with this tension. Is there a vivid memory from your childhood of a ritual you would like to reclaim? Are there traditions that, with more modern eyes, you still do but would like to discard? Do you feel empowered to do so? And if you now have a bigger roasting pan, does it still make sense to cut the ends of your pot roast just because? Or are you ready to create a new tradition?

As a family, you have these same opportunities: you have a chance to create memories and meaning, to pass on a legacy, and to connect to your elders. What choices are you making as a family when it comes to traditions?

AS A BETENU community, we too have a chance to review our traditions. As a congregation, it is imperative that we are asking ourselves these questions.

Are there traditions—old melodies, programs, or events—that you remember from earlier days that you would like to see again? Speak up and we will listen! Are there stale habits that we’ve fallen into? Be in touch and let’s evolve! Are there new traditions you’re excited about starting? Get involved and let’s make them happen! We’re here to support you! We rededicate the ancient Temple in our Hanukkah story; now is a great time to rededicate ourselves to the traditions in our own lives, to those of our family, and to Betenu... committing to the healthy struggle of past and future.

Questions or comments on this article? Email Rav Nate at rabbi@betenu.org.

“

The students and I have been using *Fiddler on the Roof* as a starting point for a wonderful conversation about ancestry, tradition, and what Judaism means for us today.

”

December at Betenu

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Chanukah NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	2 Chanukah	3 Chanukah Rosh Chodesh	4 Chanukah Rosh Chodesh Blood Drive— Manchester Red Cross	5 Chanukah	6 Chanukah Celebration, 6:30 pm; Lay Service, 7:30 pm	7 <i>Vayigash</i>
8 Religious School, 9 am	9	10	11	12	13 Rabbi-led Service, 7:30 pm	14 <i>Veyechi</i> Brown Bag Adult Ed. with Rav Nate, Noon
15 Religious School (Rav Nate), 9 am	16	17	18	19	20 Lay-led Service, 7:30 pm	21 <i>Shemot</i>
22 Religious School, 9 am	23	24	25 You-Know- What	26	27 Lay-led Family Service, 7 pm	28 <i>Va'era</i>
29 NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	30	31	Jan 1 New Year's Day	Jan 2 <i>Rosh Chodesh</i>	Jan 3 Rabbi-Led Service, 7:30 pm	Jan 4 <i>Bo</i>

January at Betenu

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1 New Year's Day	2 <i>Rosh Chodesh</i>	3 Rabbi-Led Service, 7:30 pm	4 <i>Bo</i>
5 Religious School (Rav Nate), 9 am	6	7	8	9	10 Lay-led Service, 7:30 pm	11 <i>Beshallah</i>
12 Religious School, 9 am	13	14	15	16	17 Tu B'Shevat Potluck Seder (Rabbi-led), 6:30 pm	18 <i>Yitro</i>
19 Religious School (Rav Nate), 9 am	20	21	22	23	24 Lay-led Service, 7:30 pm	25 <i>Mishpatim</i>
26 Religious School, 9 am	27	28	29	30	31 <i>Rosh Chodesh</i> Lay-Led Service, 7:30 pm	