

# **CENTERPOST**

South Baldwin Jewish Center—Shaarei Shalom

December 2024 חשון—כסלו 5785 תשפ"ה

South Baldwin Jewish Center is affiliated with The United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism.

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# Hanukkah Meaning for Us Today

Noting that one should spend time in close proximity to the Chanukah lights, the Rebbe would say, "We must listen carefully to what the candles are saying." So what are the flickering flames telling us? Here are some messages:

- a. Never be afraid to stand up for what's right. Judah Maccabee and his band faced daunting odds, but that didn't stop them. With a prayer on their lips and faith in their heart, they entered the battle of their lives—and won. We can do the same.
- b. Always increase in matters of goodness and Torah observance. Sure, a single flame was good enough for yesterday, but today needs to be even better.
- c. A little light goes a long way. The Chanukah candles are lit when dusk is falling. Perched in the doorway, they serve as a beacon for the darkening streets.
- d. Take it to the streets. Chanukah is unique in that its primary mitzvah is observed in public. It's not enough to be a Jew at heart, or even at home. Chanukah teaches us to shine outwards into our surroundings with the G□dly glow of mitzvahs.

  From the Chabad website

# December 2024 Cheshvan-Kislev 5785 candle lighting times come from the Chabad website and are calculated for Baldwin Check with office to confirm mid-week events

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Cheshvan	2 1 Kislev	3 2 Kislev	4 3 Kislev	5 4 Kislev	6 5 Kislev	7 6 Kislev
Rosh Chodesh	Rosh Chodesh Nat's Group 2 pm Board Meeting	Mahjong 6 pm	Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm	Rabbi's class 7:30 pm library and zoom	Simchat Shabbat Services 8:00 pm Candle lighting 4:09 pm	Services 9:30 am Parshat Vayetze Shabbat ends 5:12 pm
7 Kislev	9 8 Kislev Nat's Group 2 pm	10 9 Kislev Mahjong 6 pm	11 10 Kislev Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm	12 11 Kislev Rabbi's class 7:30 pm library and zoom	13 12 Kislev Shabbat services 8 pm Candle lighting 4:10 pm	14 13 Kislev Services 9:30 am Parshat Vayishlasch Shabbat ends 5:13 pm
15 14 Kislev	16 15 Kislev Nat's Group 2 pm	17 16 Kislev Mahjong 6 pm	18 17 Kislev Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm	19 18 Kislev Rabbi's class 7:30 pm Library and zoom	20 19 Kislev Shabbat services 8 pm Candle lighting 4:12 pm	21 20 Kislev Services 9:30 am Parshat Vayeshev Shabbat ends 5:16 pm
22 21 Kislev	23 22 Kislev Nat's Group 2 pm	24 23 Kislev Mahjong 6 pm	25 24 Kislev Erev Chanukah Light first candle	26 25 Kislev Rabbi's class 7:30 pm Library and zoom Chanukah Light second candle	27 26 Kislev Chanukah—third Candle Shabbat services 8 pm Candle lighting 4:16 pm	28 27 Kislev Services 9:30 am Parshat Miketz Shabbat ends 5:20 pm Birkat Rosh Chodesh Chanukah—fourth candle
29 28 Kislev Chanukah - light fifth candle	30 29 Kislev Nat's Group 2 pm Chanukah—light sixth candle	31 30 Kislev Rosh Chodesh Chanukah—light seventh candle				

# January 2025 Kislev—Tevet 5785 candle lighting times come from the Chabad website and are calculated for Baldwin Check with office to confirm mid-week events

Sat	4 4 Tevet Services 9:30 am Parshat Vayigash Shabbat ends 5:26 pm	11 11 Tevet Services 9:30 am Parshat Vayechi Shabbat ends 5:32 pm	18 18 Tevet Services 9:30 am Parshat Shemot Shabbat ends 5:40 pm	25 25 Tevet Services 9:30 am Parshat Va'era Birkat Hachodesh Shabbat ends 5:47	
Fri	3 3 Tevet 4 Simchat Shabbat Serverices 8 pm Candle lighting 4:22 Shappm	Shabbat Service 8 Servine 8 Par. Candle lighting 4:29 Shapm	17 17 Tevet 18 Shabbat Service 8 Servine 8 Par. Candle lighting 4:37 Shapm	24 24 Tevet 25 Shabbat Service 8 Service Brandle lighting 4:45 Span Par	31 2 Shevat Shabbat Service 8 pm Candle lighting 4:53 pm
Thu	2 2 Tevet Chanukah Rabbi's Class 7:30 pm Library and Zoom	9 9 Tevet Rabbi's Class 7:30 pm Library and Zoom	Rabbi's class 7:30 pm Library and Zoom	23 23 Tevet Rabbi's Class 7:30 pm Library and Zoom	30 1 Shevat Rosh Chodesh Rabbi's Class 7:30 pm Library and Zoom
Wed	1 1 Tevet Chanukah 8th candle Rosh Chodesh New Year's Day	8 8 Tevet Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm	15 15 Tevet Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm	22 22 Tevet Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm	29 29 Tevet Folk Dancing 10:30 am Canasta 1 pm
Tue		7 7 Tevet Mahjong 6 pm	14 14 Tevet Mahjong 6 pm	21 21 Tevet Mahjong 6 pm	28 28 Tevet Mahjong 6 pm
Mon		6 6 Tevet Nat's Group 2 pm Board Meeting	13 13 Tevet Nat's Group 2 pm	20 20 Tevet Nat's Group 2 pm	27 27 Tevet Nat's Group 2 pm
Sun		5 5 Tevet	12 12 Tevet	19 19 Tevet	26 26 Tevet



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# Co-Presidents Message

IT SEEMS THAT THE MONTHS ARE FLYING BY. THE SECULAR THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY LEFT US STUFFED AND THANKFUL FOR ALL WE HAVE, AND A RENEWED SENSE OF BEING. SADELY WE MORN THE LOSS OF SHEILA GOLDSMITH, THE LAST OF OUR FOUNDING MEMBERS. WE WISH TO THANK ALL THOSE THAT HAVE SPONSORED A SHABBAT KIDUSH, AND LOOK FORWARD TO CELEBRATING ONE OF YOUR SPECIAL MOMENTS IN THE FUTURE.

LOOKING AHEAD, THE CHUNAKKAH CANDLE LIGHTING WILL BE ON THE FIRST NIGHT, 12/25 AT 5:30. YES THAT IS CHRISTMAS NIGHT, HOWEVER THE BOARD DECIDED THAT WE KEEP THE TRADITION OF LIGHTING ON THE FIRST NIGHT. THE FOLLOWING SHABBAT 12/28 SISTERHOOD IS INVITING YOU TO A CHANUKKAH PARTY FOLLOWING SERVICES. WISHING YOU AND YOUR FAMILIES A VERY HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR.

Stay warn and healthy,



Evelyn & Jeff

# FROM THE RABBI'S DESK Rabbi Jacob Rosner

Dear Friends,

It has become stylish to say that Hanukkah is the least important of our festive days. I would argue that, if observed properly, Hanukkah is thematically a very important holiday to American Jews in the 21st century.

As children we learn about Hanukkah as a military victory against the Greeks who tried to deny us our religious freedom.

The reality is that Hanukkah began as a civil war between pious and assimilated Jews. In the Book of Maccabees we are given this example of radical assimilation: "At that time, lawless men arose in Israel and seduced many with their plea, 'come, let us make a covenant with the idolaters around us, because ever since we have kept each other separated from them we have suffered many evils.' Thereupon, they built a gymnasium in Jerusalem and underwent operations to disguise their circumcision, rebelling against the sacred covenant." (1 Maccabees 1:11-15)

Even today's most distant Jews, the superstars of assimilation, don't go quite that far.

The story of Hanukah should be taught as the victory of the Maccabees as defenders of the faith over the forces of assimilation in their time.

We all know that, in addition to antisemitism, assimilation and disinterest are plagues that threaten the future of Diaspora Jewry. Hanukkah is a season tailor made to confront those issues. (continued...)



How ironic that because of its proximity in time to Christmas, instead of becoming a tool to fight assimilation, Hanukkah has devolved into an instrument of assimilation.

Gift giving, decorations and parties are not part of the tradition. They are all attempts to make ourselves and our children feel good during the Christmas season.

It is a sad commentary of our times that we feel the need to turn Hanukkah into the Jewish answer for Christmas. A child who experiences Shabbat every week complete with guests, special meals, decorated tables and blessings (Thanksgiving every week sans football), a family that builds a sukkah in the back yard more pretty than any Christmas tree, and eats, plays and even sleeps in it, a family that makes the seder child friendly as it is supposed to be, telling the story and giving afikomen gifts, will not have children jealous of their Christian friends.

On Hanukkah we should remind our children and ourselves of our uniqueness as Jews and of the importance of waging war on the forces of assimilation in our times.

\*

Life is made of precious moments!



# Notes From Sisterhood

Betty Arzt

Each night of Hanukkah the Shamash on our hanukkiah shares its flame to light the other candles. The Shamash eagerly participates in this practice, night after night. After it finishes its job, we place the Shamash in its proper place higher than the rest of the candles.

Perhaps, like the Shamash, each of us is capable of passing on the light to inspire others. Let's allow this holiday to energize us to serve as a Shamash to those around us. How can we give others the spark that they need? How can we, in our own way, help illuminate the world? We have the potential to shine.

Let's be strong and strengthen each other.

# Reflections:

Thank you to all who have responded to our **Membership Invitation**. As always, we appreciate your support. Forgot to respond? There is still time. Dues are \$40.00, basic dues or \$54.00, triple chai.

We are delighted to introduce to you the managers of our Gift Shop:

Carol Burker, Susan Lifshitz, and Rachel Rudich. We thank them for their commitment and diligence. They look forward to helping you with your holiday and personal needs.

With deep sadness, we mourn the passing of our dear friend, Sheila Goldsmith. Her dedication and devotion to our synagogue are well recognized. Our sincere condolences to her family. She will be missed.

# Looking Ahead:

The Rosh Hodesh Study Group will be meeting on Sunday morning, December 8, at 10:30, via Zoom. The link will be sent out when we get closer to the event. We have created a comfortable, safe place to share our thoughts.

Comedy Night: We will be participating in a "joint program" with neighboring synagogues. On Thursday evening, December 12, at 8:00 PM, we will be enjoying a program featuring Allan Fuks. This promises to be an entertaining and delightful evening. This will be an in person event as well as a Zoom event. Please find information elsewhere in this Centerpost. Registration is required. Please note that there is no charge for members of Sisterhood. Not a member of Sisterhood? We ask for a \$20.00 donations. Thank you to Marilyn Cohen for facilitating this event.

Please join us for our Hanukkah Party on Saturday, December 28, after services. Please find details in this Centerpost.

Join us for Canasta on Wednesday afternoons at 1:00 and for Mah Jongg on Tuesday evenings at 6:30, in the synagogue. New participants are welcome.

**Torah Fund Cards** are available for all occasions. Torah Fund strengthens Jewish education by supporting scholarships and programming at Conservative/Masorti institutes of higher Jewish learning.

Happy Hanukkah! Our prayers on Hanukkah express our gratitude—gratitude for times past and for times present. Let's remember to be thankful for everyday blessings.



# MEN'S CLUB PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Arnie Gewirtz



# Segment three follows:

This year, may there be peace between the Jews of Israel and the Arabs...and may there also be peace between the Jews of Israel, which, sometimes, seems more difficult to achieve.

May your bank statement and your budget both balance and may they include generous charitable amounts for our SBJC Synagogue.

May you have enough to give you contentment and enough left over so that you can be generous.

May we learn in this new year that what really counts the most is, not the days, not the machines we have in our lives, but the people we have in our lives; not how much we can accumulate, but how much we can share and with whom.

And may we have peace in the world for all to enjoy.

And may Hashem always be with you and may you always know it.

# Would you like to sponsor a kiddush or an oneg on Shabbat?

If you would like to acknowledge a special occasion or observe a yahrzeit, you may want to consider sponsoring a kiddush on Saturday afternoon or an oneg on Friday evening.

We invite a few families to join together to help defray the cost. Please call the office if you are interested.

### Shalom From The Ritual Committee.

We frequently quote from Pirkei Avot reminding us to not "separate ourselves from the community."

According to Rabbi Jonathan Sacks, "Community is society with a human face – the place where we know we're not alone." He continues to say, "We are not made to live alone."

Our tradition values community. When we come to shul to pray, we pray together, as a community. We pray for our families and our friends. When we are praying for some personal concerns, we realize that we are not alone. The person next to us or someone cross the room will reach out to offer comfort.

We enjoy Shabbat and Holy Days together. We celebrate happy occasions. We acknowledge sad events. We enjoy having meals together. We may choose to share our observances of personal events with the community.

Rabbi Rosner's teachings have been meaningful and inspiring. We have been enjoying intellectual study and spiritual growth. In addition to teaching a class on Thursday evenings, Rabbi has initiated a Shabbat Study Session after the Shabbat Kiddish. Rabbi has not hesitated to visit our sick congregants or attend shiva minyons. Rabbi and Sari have radiated warmth and concern for our congregation.

We invite everyone to join us as we journey ahead. Let's continue to be a supportive congregation. Our synagogue will grow when we gather together to provide friendship and encouragement to each other. Show up for Shabbat! Join us for our synagogue events. We all have talents and skills to share. We welcome your involvement.

Don't separate yourself from the community.

### Reflections:

To be a Jew means to wake up and to keep your eyes open to the many beautiful, mysterious, and holy things that happen all around us every day. Many of them are like little miracles: when we wake up and see the morning light, when we taste food and grow strong, when we learn from others and grow wise, when we hug the people we love and feel warm, when we help those around us and feel good. All these and more are there for us every day, but we must open our eyes to see them. -Rabbi Lawrence Kushner

# **Condolences**

With sadness, we mourn the passing of Sheila Goldsmith, our dear friend and beloved congregant. Our deepest condolences and love to Ron, Leslie, grandsons Matthew and Joshua and the Goldsmith Family.

May G-d comfort you together with all the other mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

May her memory be a blessing.

# Don't separate yourself from the community

12/7/24: Cheryl Cheron will chant the Haftarah 12/14/24: Nat Greenfeld will chant the Haftarah 12/21/24: Mike Eisman will chant the Haftarah 12/28/24: Ellen Shriki will chant the Haftarah 1/4/25: Mike Eisman will chant the Haftarah 1/11/25: Cheryl Cheron will chant the Haftarah 1/18/25: Ellen Shriki will chant the Haftarah 1/25/25: Cheryl Cheron will chant the Haftarah

# Hanukkah Message

We value kindness. Give the gift of kindness.

As we light our candles, our hope is for kindness, simple acts of kindness. Simple acts of kindness are not small ones. It is our hope that individuals will embrace kind words and actions. Kindness implies showing respect for family, friends, acquaintances, and, yes, strangers. Kindness suggests concern at the workplace, in the supermarket, even in the parking lot. It is certainly easier to be kind than not to be. We only need to think about it, welcome it, and allow kindness to be part of our lives.

A warm smile or a friendly "hello" will make the day brighter for the recipient as well as for the giver. Simply holding the door for the person behind us shows that we care. Allowing someone to feel comfortable sharing an opinion will allow that person to feel that his/her thoughts matter. Focusing on the person with whom you are speaking, as if you were the only two individuals in the room, will make such a difference. And, of course, not speaking ill of someone is paramount. We could go on and on.

There is so much talk about violence and terror and bullying. Perhaps we could focus on words that heal and not words that hurt. Perhaps we could focus on actions that show selflessness, compassion, and concern.

When does kindness begin? Is it in the womb? Is it learned from parents, family and friends? Wherever it begins, we need to make certain that we are the aides, not the inhibitors.

It is our belief that every act of kindness creates a ripple effect. It is our hope that simple acts of kindness will generate tranquility and peacefulness.

May our Hanukkah celebration be joyful and meaningful.





# What is the Hanukkiah?

Although most people use the word **menorah** in the context of **Hanukkah**, what observers are actually lighting is called a **hanukkiah** (ha-noo-kee-ah). It looks very similar to a **menorah**, but has eight prongs and has a ninth candle, the Shamash, used to light the other candles.

# When you light the Hanukkiah...

On the first night of **Hanukkah**, place a candle in the holder on the far right, and light it with the shamash. Then put the shamash back in its spot. On the second night, light the candle second from the right, then the candle on the far right, and replace the lit shamash. Continue lighting a new candle each night, in the same manner.

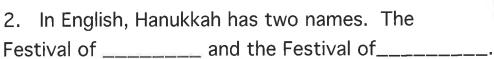
Lighting the Hanukkiah at the Baldwin LIRR Station

We will be meeting at the Baldwin LIRR Station on erev Hanukkah, Wednesday, December 25, at 5:30, to light the first candle on the Hanukkiah.

We welcome your participation.

# Hanukkah Quiz





- 3. During which Hebrew month do we begin to celebrate Hanukkah? On which day?
- 4. What historic event does Hanukkah commemorate?
- 5. Who was the Syrian-Greek ruler who tried to pull Jews away from Judaism?
- 6. What is the name of the jelly donuts we eat during Hanukkah?
- 7. What Hebrew letters are on the four sides of the dreidel? What do they mean in English?
- 8. The letter "paye" on an Israeli dreidel replaces which letter on an American dreidel?
- 9. What is the name of the money or chocolate candy given to children during Hanukkah?
- 10. What is the name of the candle used to light the others?
- 11. How many candles, including the shamash, do we need for all of Hanukkah?
- 12. On the first night of Hanukkah, how many blessings are said before the lights are kindled?
- 13. The sixth day of Hanukkah is the first day of which new Hebrew month?
- 14. In what year did the historical event of Hanukkah take place?
- 15. Why do we light Hanukkah lights?

(Answers appear elsewhere in this Centerpost. Keep asking questions!)



# **South Baldwin Jewish Center**



EVERYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND

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We can meet for dinner at 6 at the Baldwin Coach Diner before class



SAVE THE DATES and join us on DECEMBER 6th & 7th



# HATZILU EREV SHABBAT SERVICE Friday, December 6th @ 7:30 pm

Please join us for this **special service** to support the Hatzilu Rescue Organization, which helps Jewish people in need. **Alan Levine**, Member and President of Hatzilu, will be speaking at this Erev Shabbat Service.



# YIDDISH CONCERT



# Saturday, December 7th @ 4:00 pm

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Register by December 5 at:

https://bit.ly/Sisterhood-Joint-Program-2024

Questions? Contact Marilyn Cohen at Marilyn/1227@gmail.com The Zoom link will be emailed after you register.

Please tell Marilyn if you will attend in-person or on Zoom.













# Answers to Hanukkah Quiz

- 1. Dedication
- 2. The Festival of Lights and The Festival of Dedication.
- 3. Kislev, on the 25th day
- 4. The Israelites struggle for religious freedom against the Syrian-Greeks
- 5. Antiochus IV Epiphanes
- 6. Sufganiyot
- 7. Nun, gimmel, hey, and shin, meaning "A great miracle happened there."
- 8. Shin. The meaning becomes "A great miracle happened here."
- 9. Gelt
- 10.Shamash
- 11.44
- 12.Three
- 13.Tevet
- 14.165 B.C.E.
- 15.To recall the miracle of the oil that lasted for eight days when the Temple was rededicated.

\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*





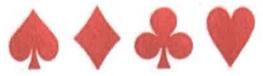
# It's a Hanukkah Party! Invitation From Sisterhood

Saturday, December 28, 2024 Service begins at 9:30 Lunch, songs, and games after the service



Don't separate yourself from the community.

# MAHJONG CARDS





It's time to order your 2025 cards

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Address		v
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Enclose check made payable to Sisterhood SBJC. Please date check for **January 1, 2025** and send to office by **December 23, 2024** 

\$ 14 regular card

\$ 15 large print

שערי שלום 🌱

# DECEMBER & JANUARY BIRTHDAYS & ANNIVERSARIES

Eugene Hecht, Birthday, December 2
Nat Greenfeld, Birthday, December 11
Gloria Okin, Birthday, December 12
Sherry & Barry Ascher, Anniversary, December 14
Jeff Barkan, Birthday, December 17
Joan & Marty Sider, Anniversary, December 17
Robert Chorne, Birthday, December 20
Barbara Harris, Birthday, December 31



Cheryl Cheron, Birthday, January 3 Ethel Zamurut, Birthday, January 17 Marty Sider, Birthday, January 24

מזל טוב

# Please join us: Simcha Shabbat

On the first Friday evening service of each month we celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and joyous occasions



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