



# Bethesda Jewish Congregation News

**Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer**

September 2009 Elul 5769/Tishrei 5770

אלול תשס"ט\תשרי תש"צ

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## Hazzan's Call—Kriat HaHazzan

It's time for healing.

The High Holidays approach once again, and most Jews around the world will be making their New Year's resolutions ... and breaking those resolutions before next Rosh Hashanah. For some people this model of repentance from the secular New Year is the only model they have. It is sad that so many Jews don't understand the true intent and profound power of the Yamim Noraim—The Days of Awe.

The Days of Awe are about healing. It's about healing not only ourselves and our relationships but in a real sense it is about healing the cosmos itself. Each year we expend the energy of creation. But some of our actions (we call them sins) have a negative impact on this "God field." However, this energy is renewed, refreshed, and repaired each year on Rosh Hashanah. That is why the day is sometimes referred to as the Birth Day of the World. It is a day for the rebirth of potential and transformative power. This renewal for ourselves, our society, our planet, is what we pray for during the High Holidays. It isn't necessarily about supplicating before our Father our King, or emotionally flagellating ourselves for our misdeeds. It is about entering the "God field" and bringing our actions and intentions into synch with it.

The year now passing, 5769, has been a difficult one. The year to come, 5770, will probably be just as difficult. We will need to call on resources greater than our own for assistance and help. We need to recognize that there are some needs that cannot be fulfilled in the physical world. We also need to discover ways to satisfy our emotional needs with kindness, goodness, smiles, and warmth. We also need greater awareness, insight, intuition, and the clarity of vision to see things from a different point of view.

Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer

There is a wonderful story told by Reb Nachman of Bratslav about a king and his minister and a food supply that was contaminated by a hallucinatory fungus. Knowing that this was all they had to eat and that they would lose their minds in the coming year, the king and the minister made signs on their foreheads so that they would see them and remember that the world had gone mad, and that these were not normal times they lived in. Perhaps we also need to make for ourselves reminders of the difficulty of our current situation, and that a little extra kindness and caring for each other and the planet is what is required now.

May each of us be blessed in the coming year to perceive what is available to us as sustenance from all the worlds, receive it gratefully, and bring the offering of our hearts into the divine matrix.

L'Shanah Tovah Tikateivu  
v'Tikateimu

May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

### **BJC News**

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# A thought or two . . . from the President

Edward Stern

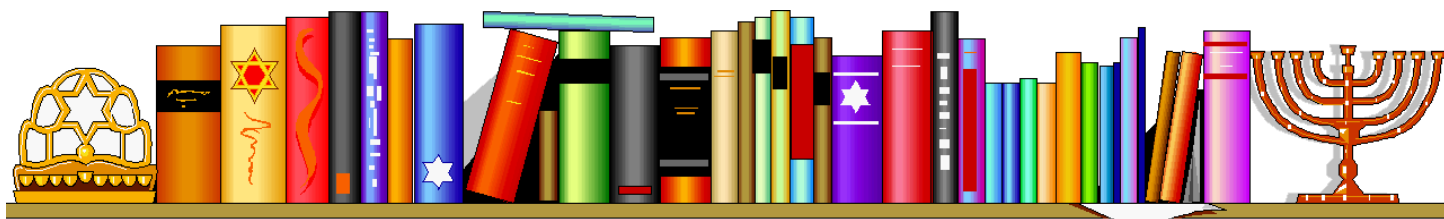
Much of Jewish law is sound and profound. Still, some aspects of old Jewish law seem bizarre, bewildering and/or troubling. Other aspects, while not bizarre or troubling can be bewildering by their subtlety. I would like your help in unraveling the meaning of one provision for which the plain meaning seems clear, but the broader meaning is not. It is Leviticus 19:14, "You shall not curse a deaf man, nor place a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall revere your God; I am the Lord."

I would like to have your thoughts as to how the prohibition against the stumbling block should apply or might apply today. Oh, the Rabbis in the Talmud and later commentators most

assuredly thought it had metaphoric meaning beyond the literal meaning. (Some thought the literal meaning was so obvious that it was not necessary to state it, so it must have only figurative meaning!) I would also like to have your thoughts on the meaning of the prohibition against cursing the deaf.

For both issues, please invite comments from children. I have seen eight-year-olds come up with good insights on such things. I look forward to your participation, and I promise not to keep your insights to myself. (Tell me if I can keep your name on your thoughts.)

Now, you may well wonder whether this has anything to do with the upcoming High Holidays. I think it does. We will see. As to the Holidays, I hope they will be meaningful to each of you. I thank each of you in advance for doing your part to help BJC continue to have beautiful, joyous, profound Holidays. I hope they will be that for you. And I must add a special thanks to Warren Farb, the High Holiday Chairman. Happy New Year. L'Shana Tova.



## Sh'ma Koli—Hear My Voice

Chava Gal-Or, Director of Congregation Education

Over the summer, I have been rethinking much of our children's Jewish Education. Honoring our students and their families wherever they are has become a key element in creating inspirational Jewish Education within our community. Working with Hazzan Schnitzer, Roz Young, our teachers, and the entire Education Committee has been an enormous gift. All of them have embraced my thoughts with

open minds and open hearts; all of the above individuals have led me to insight that will continue to strengthen our programs.

Considering how to touch each person within our school community (and also our larger community) is of profound importance. The terminology that has come into my thoughts is "Dance of Differences." Honoring our Jewish journeys, as well as that of our family members, our BJC community, and the larger Jewish community is of basic importance as each of us grows from wherever we are. Moving through these relationships is what I call the "Dance of Differences."

Listening to both spoken as well as unspoken words is helpful in

order to look honestly at our BJC programs. As the year progresses, please consider joining me as we continually work towards making our school the best that it can be. Honoring the 'Dance of Differences' can only happen if we work together. Your input into our programs as both parents and congregants can make a difference. Supposedly, an African proverb says that 'it takes a village to raise a child'. You do not have to be a parent to help grow our religious school program. Consider doing your part to growing a stronger Religious School program.

This year, our BJC program will need volunteers to help lead songs for our students, art and crafts lessons that support the classroom learning, social action projects, human education learning opportunities, grade-wide family education programs, and school-wide holiday programming. You can volunteer for an hour or a school day. We can use your creativity and we can use your hands. Think about giving your time to make our school what it can be.

Religious school will begin for all students on Saturday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> at 9 a.m.; I hope that each family will come to opening day. Parents will have the opportunity to visit each of their children's classrooms briefly while learning about the curriculum and their

child's teacher. During the time that parents are visiting the classrooms, students will have a chance to connect with Hazzan Sunny Schnitzer.

On Shabbat, Oct. 24<sup>th</sup>, parents will again be welcomed into the classrooms for open house. Make every effort to be there, so that you know what is happening in your child's class.

The BJC Religious School calendar can be found at [www.bethesda-jewish.org](http://www.bethesda-jewish.org).

I look forward to moving through next year and honoring where each of us stands. As we develop time and space to honor the 'Dance of Differences', know that I want your input always!

I'Shalom, Chava

## From Hazzan Schnitzer

Please be in touch with me in times of joy, sadness or illness in your life or in the lives of a loved one or another member of the congregation. This is particularly necessary now that the HIPAA regulations have

made getting any kind of information from the hospitals extremely difficult. I greatly appreciate your help in keeping me informed of the health needs of our congregation. Office Number: 301-469-8636, #3.

## Congregation News

### **Prospective Member Open House**

We reach out to strangers. We share the fact that we are a community and we encourage others to join us. We talk; we welcome; we include.

Don't keep us a secret. Share your commitment to BJC with friends and strangers. Bring them to the Open House Reception on Friday, Sept. 11 at 7 p.m. followed by Shabbat services. You are our best advertising!

### **S'lichot - Movie and Service**

Join us Saturday, Sept. 12<sup>th</sup> at 9 p.m. in Covenant Hall to view *Praying with Lior*, an engrossing, wrenching and tender documentary film. Lior has Down syndrome and has spent his entire life praying with utter abandon. Is he a "spiritual genius" as many around him say, or simply the vessel that contains everyone's unfulfilled wishes and expectations? While everyone agrees Lior is closer to God, he's also a burden, a best friend, an inspiration, and an embarrassment, depending on which family member is speaking. The movie poses

difficult questions such as what is "disability" and who really talks to God. Told with intimacy and humor, *the film* is a family story, a triumph story, a grief story, a divinely inspired story.

The film will be followed by dessert and a Selichot service. The final hour of the Shabbat before Rosh Hashanah was deemed by our rabbis to be a time of special power. Around the world Jews gather at midnight to begin the process of repentance with special prayers and songs. Join us and experience the "hush at midnight."

### **Participants Needed for Yom Kippur Musical Program**

The Musical Interlude on Yom Kippur

*Continued on page 4*

afternoon is a period of quiet contemplation against a background of beautiful music. We are looking for people who sing or play a musical instrument to participate in the program, which this year will take place on Monday, Sept. 28, from 3:30 till 5 p.m. We would especially like to include people who have not yet participated. Each performance is limited to 10 minutes. We are not expecting a professional performance, but the piece you play or sing should be at a level to perform for an audience. Music with a Jewish theme would be nice, but not necessary.

If you would like to participate, if you know someone who might like to, or if you'd like more information, please call Lois Rose at 301.587.9774 or e-mail: loqrose@yahoo.com.

### **Annual Holiday Food Drive for MANNA**

Our local food banks are stretched to their limits. Let's live the message of the New Year and give generously to community members in need. On Rosh Hashanah, you will receive a bag to fill with non-perishable food.

Please fill the bag and drop it off when you come for Yom Kippur...or start filling your own bag(s) now in preparation for our collection. Suggested donations: (No glass please) Pasta, soup, rice, canned vegetables or fruits, dried fruits (raisins etc), mustard, ketchup, mayo, cereal, crackers etc.

Questions? Contact Gail Rothberg 301.840.5660; Maddy Killefer 301.229.6713

### **Help Us to Repair the World in 5770**

Help us to perform the mitzvah of "tikkun olam" this year by joining BJC's Social Action Committee in an activity to strengthen our community and better our world. This year we will again sponsor a number of projects and programs that connect BJC with those who need our help. Please support Thrive DC, The National Center for Children and Families, the American Red Cross, The Fannie Mae Foundation, Manna Inc., Martha's Table, or one of the other organizations with whom we partner by joining us in at least one social action activity this year.

Programs and projects will be advertised throughout the year, but please contact Steve Turow 301.469.0758 or sdturow@yahoo.com, if you would like to learn more about BJC volunteer opportunities or if you know of tzdakah projects that could benefit from BJC's energy and involvement.

### **This is What We Need to Build a Sukkah—YOU!**

Nothing says autumn like the sight of our beautiful

BJC sukkah. The flowers, fruit, and greenery all say to the eye, the time of repentance is over. Let's celebrate! We need volunteers on Wednesday, Sept. 30<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m. to set up the structure, and hang the branches, fruits, and vegetables that make the sukkah such a joy to the eye and the soul. This is one of those projects suitable for all ages. Call the BJC office to sign up by Sept. 26.

### **Mark Your Calendar High Holy Days**

#### **Selichot**

Saturday, Sept. 12, 9 p.m.

#### **Rosh Hashanah**

Friday, Sept. 18, Evening Service, 8 p.m.

Saturday, Sept. 19, Morning Service, 10 a.m.

Children's and Pre-K Service, 1:30 p.m.

Tashlich, Tilden Woods Park,

6800 Tilden Lane, Bethesda 3:30 p.m.

#### **Yom Kippur**

Sunday, Sept. 27, Kol Nidre, 8 p.m.

Monday, Sept. 28, Morning Service, 10 a.m.

Children's and Pre-K Service, 1:30 p.m.

Yom Kippur Discussion, 2:30 p.m.

Musical Interlude, 3:30 p.m.

Reading of the Book of Jonah, 5 p.m.

Yizkor and Neilah Services, 5:30 p.m.

#### **Sukkot**

Wednesday, Sept. 30, Build Indoor Sukkah, 5 p.m.

Saturday, Oct. 3, Sukkot Service, 10:30 a.m.

#### **Simcha Torah**

Friday, Oct. 9, Light Dinner, 6:30 p.m.

Service, 7:30 p.m.

*Tickets for non-members: \$195 per person for services are available in the BJC office now. Tickets for Children's and Pre-K Services are only \$75 for families. Baby sitting is available at no charge for all adult services (excluding Yizkor and Neilah)*

*Tickets will be available after July 15, 2009.*

BJC does not furnish the High Holy Day prayer books, but they are available for sale in the office now for \$25 per book.



# September 2009 Calendar

Day	Date	Time	Event	Location
Wednesday	Sept. 2	6:30 p.m.	Kemach and Torah	Library
Friday	Sept. 4	8:00 p.m.	N'tivim L'Shabbat-Music Service	Covenant Hall
Wednesday	Sept. 9	6:30 p.m.	Kemach and Torah	Library
Friday	Sept. 11	7:00 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Prospective Member Open House Shabbat Worship	Gathering Space Covenant Hall
Saturday	Sept. 12	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 9:00 p.m.	Adult Hebrew <i>First Day of Religious School!</i> Shabbat Worship Selichot Movie and Service	Lounge Classrooms Covenant Hall Covenant Hall
Wednesday	Sept. 16	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	First Day of Hebrew School Kemach and Torah	Classrooms Library
Friday	Sept. 18	8:00 p.m.	Erev Rosh Hashanah Service	Sanctuary
Saturday	Sept. 19	10:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m. 1:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m.	Rosh Hashanah Service Family Service PreSchool Service Tashlich	Sanctuary Sanctuary RM 109 Tilden Woods Park
Wednesday	Sept. 23	4:15 p.m. 6:30 p.m.	Religious school Kemach and Torah	Classrooms Library
Friday	Sept. 25	6:30 p.m. 8:00 p.m.	Tot Shabbat Shabbat Worship	Lounge Covenant Hall
Saturday	Sept. 26	8:45 a.m. 9:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m.	Adult Hebrew Religious school Shabbat Worship	Library Classrooms Covenant Hall
Sunday	Sept. 27	8:00 p.m.	Kol Nidre	Sanctuary
Monday	Sept. 28	10:00 a.m. 1:30 p.m. 1:30 p.m. 2:30 p.m. 3:30 p.m. 5:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m.	Yom Kippur Service Family Service PreSchool Service Yom Kippur Discussion Musical Meditations Reading of the Book of Jonah Yizkor and Neilah Service	Sanctuary Sanctuary RM 109 Covenant Hall Sanctuary Sanctuary Sanctuary
Tuesday	Sept. 29		BJC OFFICE CLOSED	
Wednesday	Sept. 30	4:15 p.m. 4:15 p.m.	Religious school Build Sukkah	Classrooms Covenant Hall
Friday	Oct. 2	8:00 p.m.	N'tivim L' Shabbat-Music Service	Covenant Hall
Saturday	Oct. 3	10:30 a.m.	Sukkot Service w/ School	Covenant Hall

For the latest updates and weekly E-news, please refer to the BJC website.

### Open Book Discussion

The BJC book club will not meet in Sept. The next meeting will be on Oct. 28 when we will discuss Jared Diamond's *Guns, Germs and Steel*. For more information, please contact Evelyn Ganzglass 202.966.7037 or Ruth Rosenberg 703.560.9525.

### Enhancing the Flame

As we bid adieu to the summer siesta and our thoughts turn to the new year, the Enhancing the Flame (ETF) campaign team will once again set in motion. You can look forward to a hearing from a volunteer representing Enhancing the Flame, our campaign to raise funds for improving the Congregation's fiscal strength, upgrading the physical plant, enhancing our worship, and facilitating learning.

Thanks to all who have made donations and pledges! We are excited that soon we will be able to share our plans for our use of these funds for improvements and enhancements. Stay tuned!

In the meantime, please celebrate your successes with a donation to the ETF Campaign. Or follow through on a previously made pledge without getting a reminder. We look forward to getting re-energized to support BJC and are counting on you to be a part of that effort.

### Yahrzeits

### יארצייט

Jacob Aronson, Father of Joel Aronson  
Stephen David Berkowitz, Brother of Susan Berkowitz  
Joy Budowsky, Mother of Don Budowsky  
Julius Budowsky, Father of Don Budowsky  
Edward Campiglia, Father of John Camp  
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Shirley Poogach, Mother of Robert Poogach  
Benjamin Rosenberg, Father of Phyliss Hoffman  
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Mark Sosnick, Brother of Barbara Sosnick  
Daniel Aaron Sotnick, Son of Cliff Sotnick  
Rhoda Turow, Grandmother of Stephen Turow  
Alvin Weinberg, Father of Sheldon Weinberg  
Joseph Weiss, Father of David Weiss  
Rose Wolk, Mother of Judy Feldman

### Thank you to...

### תודה רבה

Dee and Joel Aronson for their generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund in honor of the Yahrzeits of Joel's mother, Pearl Aronson and Dee's father, Charles Salkind.

Shirley Freeman for her generous donation to BJC.

Lorrie Van Akkeren for her generous donation to the Hazzan's Discretionary Fund.

A very special thank you to all of those who "rounded up" in their synagogue support payments.

### For their generous donations to Enhancing the Flame:

Bruce and Wynne Busman  
Barry Dwork  
Larry Slifman and Barbara Ranagan  
Lorrie Van Akkeren



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so you don't have to

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*The Jewish Federation  
of Greater Washington  
wishes you a sweet, healthy  
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*Shana Tovah!*



www.ShalomDC.org



*What will your legacy be?*

It's the time of year when we reflect on our actions and accomplishments, and we wonder what the future will bring. What challenges will my family face? What is Israel's fate? What is the fate of Jews around the world?



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**Newsletter Editor: Anita Farb—[anita.farb@gmail.com](mailto:anita.farb@gmail.com)**

**Design Layout and Desktop Publishing:  
Yvonne Bryant**

The deadline for submitting articles for the Oct. newsletter is Sept. 4.

Please email your article in an MS Word attachment.

**Put your ad in the BJC Newsletter**

To place your card or other-sized ad in the Oct. newsletter, mail it to the BJC office with your check made payable to BJC.

Deadline: Sept. 4. Rate structure for a business card: \$20.00 per month, 3-month minimum. Rates are slightly higher for cards that are not camera-ready art.