



# Shabbat Shalom

27 Adar I 5776

March 7, 2016

Parashah Vayakhel

## This Week at Beth El Synagogue

### Saturday, March 5:

*Havdalah—6:57 pm*

Shabbat Mishnah Study	8:45 am
Orthodox Kehillah Services	9:00 am
B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring	9:00 am
Main Sanctuary Services	9:30 am
School Pride Shabbat	
Monthly Parashah Study	9:30 am
Shiur with Debra Band	1:30 pm

### Sunday, March 6:

Weekly Sunday Minyan	9:30 am
Talmud Torah (PreK-7)	9:30 am
Simchat Tot	9:45 am
Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein	10:00 am
Sulam Session #3	10:15 am
Artist In Residence, Debra Band	10:30 am
USY Spring Cleaning Fashion Show	1:00 pm
Torot Kehillateinu	2:00 pm

### Monday, March 7:

Passover Wine Tasting 2016	7:30 pm
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### Tuesday, March 8:

Hebrew Level II with Donna Goldstein	7:00 pm
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### Wednesday, March 9:

Weekly Wednesday Minyan	8:00 am
Talmud Torah (2-6)	4:15 pm
Board Meeting	7:00 pm

### Thursday, March 10:

Lunch and Learning with Rabbi Greyber	11:30 am
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### Friday, March 11:

*Candle Lighting—6:02 pm*

Sisterhood Shabbat	6:00 pm
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### Upcoming Events:

- ✧ Sat. 3/12 Shabbat Mishnah Study
- ✧ Sat. 3/12 Shabbat Morning Orthodox Kehillah Services
- ✧ Sat. 3/12 B'nei Mitzvah Peer Tutoring
- ✧ Sat. 3/12 Shabbat Morning Services
- ✧ Sat. 3/12 Healing Yoga
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Weekly Sunday Minyan
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Talmud Torah (PreK-7)
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Knitting Chevra
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Hebrew Level I with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Kitah Vav Parent B'nei Mitzvah Logistics Meeting
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Kitah Zayin Family Beit Midrash
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 AlephBet/Prekadima Hamentashen Wars
- ✧ Sun. 3/13 Sicha: Belonging to the Prayer Book
- ✧ Tue. 3/15 Hebrew Level II with Donna Goldstein
- ✧ Wed. 3/16 Weekly Wednesday Minyan
- ✧ Wed. 3/16 Talmud Torah (2-6)
- ✧ Wed. 3/16 Walking with Mitzvot
- ✧ Thu. 3/17 Sulam Session #4
- ✧ Fri. 3/18 Kabbalat Shabbat Services  
Bat Mitzvah of Sophie Breitzer

### Gabbai Schedule

Contact the scheduled gabbai if you'd like to request an *aliyah*, other honor, or to volunteer to lead a service in the Main Sanctuary. Gabbaim will try to accommodate requests made on Shabbat morning (by 10:15am, before the Torah service) but we ask for your understanding if all honors have been previously claimed during the week.



3/5 Vayakhel  
David Kirsch  
dkirsch@dm.duke.edu 919-286-4516

3/12 Pekudei  
David Rubin  
david\_rubin@unc.edu 919-967-7725

3/19 Vayikra Zachor  
Matt Diamond  
mattdiamond@mindspring.com 919-688-0377

3/26 Tzav  
Elise Goldwasser  
elise.goldwasser@duke.edu 919-956-8871

This weekend's Kiddush lunch is hosted by:  
Sonya Fischer, Sue Gidwitz, Norma Gindes, Donna Goldstein, Ricki Goldstein, Louis Sawyer, Laura Strauss, Libby Vaughn, Daniel Weinreb, Leslie Winner, and Tal Wittle

Beth El is a welcoming community of members with diverse backgrounds, ideas, levels of knowledge, and observance. We are an egalitarian Conservative congregation, and a member of the Southeast Seaboard district of United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ), and the Orthodox Union.

## Parashat Vayakhel

Adapted from <http://www.learn.jtsa.edu>

Anyone who has mounted a fund-raising campaign, or sought volunteers for an institution or organization, will immediately recognize the account of the Tabernacle's construction in this week's Torah portion as utopian in the extreme. "All the artisans . . . said to Moses, 'The people are bringing more than is needed for the task entailed in the work that the Lord has commanded to be done.' Moses thereupon had this proclamation made throughout the camp: 'Let no man or woman make further efforts toward gifts for the sanctuary!' Their efforts had been more than enough for all the tasks to be done" (Exod. 36:5-7).

Too many gifts! Too much volunteering! That's a problem we would all wish to have—and a clue to the relevance of Parashat Vayakhel to our times, when community in any form seems in short supply. How does one get people to want community—and to work for it?

The key word in the Torah's explanation, repeated some 25 times, by my count, in chapter 35 alone, is kol. The word means "all," "whole," "each," or "every." Not a single Israelite is left out of this sacred building project. "Everyone" whose heart so moves him or her shall bring gifts, Moses tells the people, and all of them do. "Let all among you who are skilled come and make all that the Lord has commanded" (35:10). The first "all" in the verse corresponds exactly with the second, the actors with the acts, the commanded with the commands. The people are commanded to give what cannot be commanded, even by God: movement of the heart. Fulfillment of the commandment for voluntary giving requires each and every Israelite to bring artistry and skill—i.e., the sort of creativity for which no blueprint will ever be adequate.

Both men and women come forward, the Torah emphasizes, encouraging us to imagine a procession that includes short and tall, old and young, rich and poor—an assembly as varied as the gifts they offer, the talents they deploy, the colors with which they fill the tabernacle ("blue, purple, and crimson") and the materials they supply ("yarns, fine linen, goats' hair, tanned ram skins," silver and copper, acacia wood, spices, and lapis lazuli) (35:23-27). When God singles out Bezalel by name to "make designs" (35:32) and "give directions" (35:34), the man stands out as well because he is one, supervising a diverse but harmonious whole. He has been endowed by God with skill to do "all" the work needed, assisted by Oholiab and "everyone" else to whom God has given skill.

Why has this call for funds and volunteers been so successful? Human beings always need to be needed, we know, and the Israelites have extra reason for that need in the immediate aftermath of the episode of the golden calf. They have thrown themselves (and their jewels) into the construction of a molten idol, the deed they were told at Sinai is most abhorrent to the God who so recently delivered them from Egypt and joined with them in covenant. Now, their lives spared thanks to Moses's intercession, and God's continuing presence among them assured, they are offered the chance to demonstrate their atonement by giving all of themselves to building YHWH a sanctuary "that I may dwell among them." For one brief moment, they act as one, driven by shared need and common aspiration. They desperately want to raise themselves higher and keep God close.

The Hasidic commentary by Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berdichev reads the report that the people's efforts were "more than enough" (36:7) to mean that a surplus remained for the "tzadikim of every generation." To the degree that the latter "occupy themselves with Torah, and renew its teachings, they create a new heaven and earth," carrying forward the construction of the Tabernacle. We might justifiably extend this notion to all who build holy Jewish communities, including those who do so in our time and place.

Contemporary readers nod knowingly at the Torah's many accounts of Israelite contention and rebellion during their wilderness wanderings. Might we also recognize in this week's report of unity clues to how the North American Jewish community and our people as a whole, the members of which often seem able to agree on absolutely nothing, might actually be induced to work together?

I celebrate the compromise agreement, reached a few weeks ago, on prayer at the Western Wall, in part because it sets a precedent of agreement that one hopes will be followed in other disputes. Both sides felt a strong need for a piece of the Kotel—and recognized themselves to be part of a larger whole. They were joined in the aspiration to experience the presence of God, however they define that which is most good and holy, along with the rest of the Jewish people and its diverse communities. Perhaps there are other things on which we Jews might agree as a worldwide people, or as a North American community.

Might we all resolve, for example, that every Jew will have enough food, clothing, and shelter to fully support life and bodily well-being?

Could we agree to dedicate a certain amount of funds and skill to the provision of similar essentials to others in the world?

Could we go one step beyond such basics and agree that it is important there be Jews in the world, and Judaism, too (variously defined, of course; unity on that score is utterly beyond our reach)?

I wonder if we could also agree that Jewish education is indispensable to Jewish survival—and therefore pool resources to make such an education available to all.

The vast majority of Jews (though of course not all) would probably agree as well that an independent State of Israel is essential to Jewish survival and important to the thriving of Judaism. Argument would immediately break out over how best to ensure that survival and that thriving—which will be fine, as long as the argument contributes to the sense of "all" and elicits from "everyone" a gift in money, time, and talent.

The final lesson of the parashah, I think, is that community begins face to face: among children of Israel who see one another acting for the common good up close and benefit tangibly from each other's satisfaction of the need to be needed. There will be no "Jewish people" and no "North American Jewish community," I believe, unless Jews in San Francisco and Atlanta, in Haifa, Tel Aviv, and London, feel the need to come together to build things that take them higher and deeper. If they do, they will eagerly make offerings of self in exchange for fulfillment of self, a sense of wholeness, an experience of "all." Some of our current institutions provide some of that fulfillment to some of their participants some of the time—thereby proving that it can be done. Vayakhel clearly articulates the goal for which we should strive: all, each, every, the whole.

## Refuah Shleymah רפואה שלמה

Aharon ben David u'Miriam (Alan Goldman)	Miriam Shifra bat Issur (Margaret Sachs)	Cynthia Brown Elinor Fleishman
Aryeh ben Tziporah	M'cor Eyshel bat Esther Tzvia	Ilene Jacobson
Baracha bat Sarah	Ovadya ben Elinor (Ovadya Fleishman)	Jennifer Krunkosky
Bedonna Riva bat Sara		Inez McFarling
Ben-Zion ben Sarah	Reuven ben Chanoch v'Dinah (Robert Feurst)	Lorraine Morley
Chana bat Malkah	Rut bat Sarah (Suzanne Furst)	Ezra Rapport
Hannah Leah bat Sarah (Anna Crollman)		Jack Reich
Daron Esther bat Tuvia v'Leah (Jennifer Greyber)	Sara bat Hinda (Sylvia Dante)	Michael Rockman
	Sarah Gittel bat Rut (Sue Perlo)	Richard Roth
David ben Sarah (David Leitner)	Shira Batya bat Meirav	Carmen Sadowsky
		Lauren Schiro
David Yosef ben Avraham v'Hannah (Donald Goldstein)	Shmuel ben Shoshana	Susan Tolchin
	Springa Simcha bat Yehudah v'Chana (Susan Rosefiede)	Christine Walters
Eliyahu Chanan ben Sarah (Ed Gagnon)		Derick Williams
	Tuvia ben Shmuel v'Tziporah (Tovia Lebovich)	Orrie Wilner
Gershon Yonah ben Teyva haKohen v'Chanah Leah haLevi (Harlan Gradin)	Tziporah bat Esther	Amy Wolf
		<small>Please contact the synagogue office with any additions or changes to this list.</small>
Malkah bat Leah (Meg Anderson)	Yehudit bat Rachel	
	Sonia Berman	
Malka Hannah bat Basha Rachel	Anne Boyd	

## Yahrzeits יארצייט

William Borman	Joseph Klein
Donna Gindes	Eziel Lederman
William Goldberg	David Moskovitz
Harold Isaac Goodrich	Sandra Pasternak
Garvey Haynes	Robert Sager
Harry Hirsch	

## BE Mazel Tov

Mazel Tov to the following Beth El members on their birthdays!  
Susan Cohen, Julie Fishkin, Michael Frank, Harriet Lakin,  
Evelina Moulder, Valerie Schreiber, Annette Skoletsky,  
Renee Snyderman,

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Rabbi: Daniel Greyber  
Rabbi Emeritus: Steven Sager  
Synagogue President: Rachel Galanter