



The

Shofar

Congregation Beth Evergreen of Evergreen, Colorado

At Fifty: Counsel

By Rabbi Jamie Arnold

"[Judah ben Tema] used to say: At 5 years of age the study of written scripture; At 10 the study of oral tradition (*Mishnah*); At 13 responsibilities (*Mitzvot*); At 15 the art of dialogue and debate (*Talmud*); At 18, family; At twenty pursuit [of livelihood]; At thirty the peak of strength; At forty wisdom; **At fifty, counsel...**"
(*Pirkei Avot* 5:20)



When I applied to rabbinical school in my twenties, I had more experience and fluency with Buddhism and Nepalese than I did with Judaism and Hebrew. Though a young and green student at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Philadelphia, I was still invited to help organize and facilitate a national conference on Judaism and Buddhism. That is how I first met journalist, poet, and professor, **Rodger Kamenetz**.

Rodger had recently authored a book called "**The Jew in the Lotus**" (a pun on a common translation of the Buddhist mantra, *Om mani padme hum*, the "jewel in the lotus"). The book documents his experience accompanying an esteemed group of rabbis and other Jewish scholars on a trip to Dharamsala at the invitation of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. As the leader of a spiritual community forced into exile from their homeland in Tibet, the Dalai Lama had reached out to Jewish leaders for **advice (or aytza)**. Doing so may seem unremarkable. After all, Jews are arguably the world's expert on how to survive and thrive through the experience of exile. But seeking counsel from outsiders is an increasingly rare act of humble and courageous leadership.

Like Rodger, I was awed by this seemingly simple act of interfaith outreach. Ironically, his 'return' to
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Co-President's Desk March 2024

By Kat Connelly

Dear Friends,
My grateful list today starts by thanking two incredible women as they leave their posts.

Thank you to Susan Marcus for her incredible stewardship of our wonderful Mitzvah Committee. This committee is tireless in its successful efforts to bring food and comfort to our members in need. I am simply amazed at this powerhouse of mostly women.

Thank you to Jane Weinfeld who has graciously accepted the position of Mitzvah Committee Chair. She has big shoes to fill, but I am confident in her abilities. She has quietly and confidently kept pace with the demands of this position.

Thank you to Irene Clurman for leading our Adult Education Committee. She is stepping down and handing the reigns to Ginny Sims and Janet Christensen who have accepted the positions of co-Chairs. This amazing group of women bring us many opportunities for learning.

In January, we heard from Rich Levine on the topic of gender identity through a Jewish lens and American law. In February, we heard from JoAnne Greenburg on the beginnings of our unique community. In April, they are bringing us Roger Kamenetz, a poet and writer. This committee brings us our Taboo Topic forums and so much more.

Please join me in thanking all these wonderful women for all they do.

Days are getting longer and spring is nearing which means, it's Purim Time!! Did you ever want to be on stage? Did you ever want to be the King or Queen of Persia? Do you wish people would

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Letter To The Editor:

We met the CBE community two years ago at our granddaughter, Josie Hess's, Bat Mitzvah. We became congregants and still marvel at the many ways that has worked for us. We are Music Lovers, from New Orleans, so we enjoy Rabbi Jamie and Laura's skills. We are Sarah Hess's family so we enjoy her multiple roles at CBE. We are fans of Josh Hess's catering and love that connection. We joined the Legacy Society and are proud of that. Most recently we benefitted from the cooking skills of Marilyn Franklin et al in the form of a fantastic delivery of Get Well Soup.

Thank you to this amazing, supportive community.

Susan Kierr and David Curley

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Calendar

March & April At Beth Evergreen! *Be Part of What's Happening at CBE this Winter!*

Friday, March 1 - Shabbat Ki Tisa

No Music & Meditation this week.

6PM Potluck Dinner.

7PM Acoustic Kabbalat Shabbat service led by Laura Berman.

Sunday, March 3

5PM Adult Hebrew.

5PM Purim Rehearsal.

Monday, March 4

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Tuesday, March 5

7PM Education Committee Meeting.

Wednesday, March 6

4:30PM HaMercaz in session.

6:30PM Purim Rehearsal.

Thursday, March 7

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Becoming. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

6PM Purim Rehearsal.

Friday, March 8

9AM Hiking Havurah at Roxborough State Park.

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

Saturday, March 9 - Shabbat Vayakhel

9AM Family Shabbat.

9:30AM GAN Preschool Class.

Sunday, March 10

5PM Adult Hebrew.

5PM Purim Rehearsal.

Monday, March 11

1PM Men's Torah Study. Contact Charles Buckman-Ellis (charlesbellis@gmail.com) for more details.

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Tuesday, March 12

7PM SLT/Chevra Kadisha Meeting.

Wednesday, March 13

9AM Needlework Group.

4:30PM HaMercaz in session: Purim Carnival.

6:30PM Purim Rehearsal.

Thursday, March 14

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Becoming. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

6PM Purim Rehearsal.

Friday, March 15

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

7PM Mostly Music James Taylor/Carole King Service with Laura Berman.

Saturday, March 16- Shabbat Pekudei

9AM From Word to Deed: The Architecture of the Morning Service.

Sunday, March 17

5PM Adult Hebrew.

5PM Purim Rehearsal.

Monday, March 18

10AM Ski Day with Rabbi Jamie at Loveland.

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Tuesday, March 19

6:30PM Monthly Board Meeting. Please contact Kat Connelly for more information.

Wednesday, March 20

6:30 Purim Rehearsal.

7PM Taboo Topics: History of Housing Discrimination in Evergreen.

Thursday, March 21

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Wonder. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

6:30PM Purim Rehearsal.

Friday, March 22 - Shabbat Vayikra

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

10AM Ski Day with Rabbi Jamie at Winter Park.

10AM Vitalent Blood Drive.

Saturday, March 23 - Purim

3PM Rosh Hodesh Girls II. Contact Alex Woosley (aswoosley@gmail.com) for more information.

3PM Purim Rehearsal.

6PM Megillah Reading

7PM Purim Shpiel and open bar!

Sunday, March 24

5PM Adult Hebrew.

Monday, March 25

1PM Men's Torah Study. Contact Charles Buckman-Ellis (charlesbellis@gmail.com) for more details.

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Wednesday, March 27

4:30PM HaMercaz in session.

7PM Women's Torah Study.

Thursday, March 28

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Wonder. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

March & April At Beth Evergreen!

Friday, March 29 - Shabbat Tzav

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

6PM Potluck & Game Night Shabbat.

Monday, April 1

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Tuesday, April 2

6PM CBE Book Club: Family Papers: A Sephardic Journey Through the Twentieth Century by Sarah Abrevaya Stein.

7PM Education Committee Meeting.

Wednesday, April 3

4:30PM HaMercatz in session.

Thursday, April 4

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Choice/Community. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

Friday, April 5 - Shabbat Shmini

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

6PM Potluck Dinner.

7PM Acoustic Country Music Shabbat with Laura Berman.

Sunday, April 7

9AM Adopt-A-Road - Volunteers needed!

5PM Adult Hebrew.

Monday, April 8

1PM Men's Torah Study. Contact Charles Buckman-Ellis (charlesbellis@gmail.com) for more details.

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Tuesday, April 9

7PM SLT/Chevre Kadisha meeting.

Wednesday, April 10 - Ellen Diesenhof Scholar In Residence Rodger Kamenetz

9AM Needlework Group.

4:30PM HaMercatz in session.

5PM Who is Elijah? A Writing Workshop with Author/Poet Rodger Kamenetz.

7PM Poetry in a Time of Crisis with Rodger Kamenetz.

Thursday, April 11 - Ellen Diesenhof Scholar In Residence Rodger Kamenetz

1PM Midday Mussar: The Power of Metaphor / Expanding Metaphors for God with special guest Rodger Kamenetz. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

7PM The History of Last Night's Dream: Dream Workshop with Rodger Kamenetz and Irene Clurman.

Friday, April 12

9AM Hiking Havurah at Corwina Park.

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

Saturday, April 13 - Shabbat Tazria

9AM Family Shabbat.

9:30AM GAN Preschool Class.

Sunday, April 14

5PM Adult Hebrew.

6:30PM Music and Meaning Workshop with Rabbi Jamie.

Monday, April 15

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

Tuesday, April 16

6:30PM Monthly Board Meeting. Please contact Kat Connelly for more information.

Wednesday, April 17

4:30PM HaMercatz in session.

Thursday, April 18

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Choice/Community. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

Friday, April 19

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

7PM Mostly Music Reggae Shabbat service at Temple Micah, Denver.

Saturday, April 20

9AM From Word to Deed: Architecture of the Morning Service.

10AM Traditional Shabbat service with Rabbi Jamie.

Sunday, April 21

5PM Adult Hebrew.

6:30PM Music and Meaning Workshop with Rabbi Jamie.

Monday, April 22- Erev Pesach

1PM Men's Torah Study. Contact Charles Buckman-Ellis (charlesbellis@gmail.com) for more details.

Tuesday, April 23 - Pesach I

5:30PM Community Passover Seder.

Wednesday, April 24 - Pesach II

4:30PM HaMercatz in session.

Thursday, April 25 - Pesach III

1PM Midday Mussar. Topic: Choice/Community. All are welcome! See website for Zoom link.

4:30PM HaMakom in session.

Friday, April 26 - Pesach IV

9AM Music & Meditation with Rabbi Jamie via ZOOM.

Sunday, April 28 - Pesach VI

5PM Adult Hebrew.

6:30PM Music and Meaning Workshop with Rabbi Jamie.

Monday, April 29 - Pesach VII

5:30PM Tai Chi with Charles Holman at CBE.

These Dreams That Go On When I Close My Eyes

By Elizabeth Moore

Have you ever had a recurring dream? For some people, it involves flying, or being back in high school. For others, it's falling, or losing teeth. Scientists aren't really sure why we have recurring dreams, other than perhaps a relation to waking anxiety and stress.

I have a dream that occurs about once or twice a month, and has been recurring for many years. In my dream, my family moves to another state. I am stressed about finding a local Jewish community, and I am trying to negotiate with the Board of Directors to let me keep my CBE job even though I'm many hours away. I always wake before there's a resolution, and once awake I realize how impossible it would be to keep my job through a move!

I'm not sure what anxiety this dream addresses - I've no intentions of moving anywhere any time soon, and I consciously feel comfortable in my position here at CBE. I suppose it's just an unconscious fear that goes to show how much CBE means to me. It's been 8 ½ years since I first started here, and I hope I will be here for many years to come.

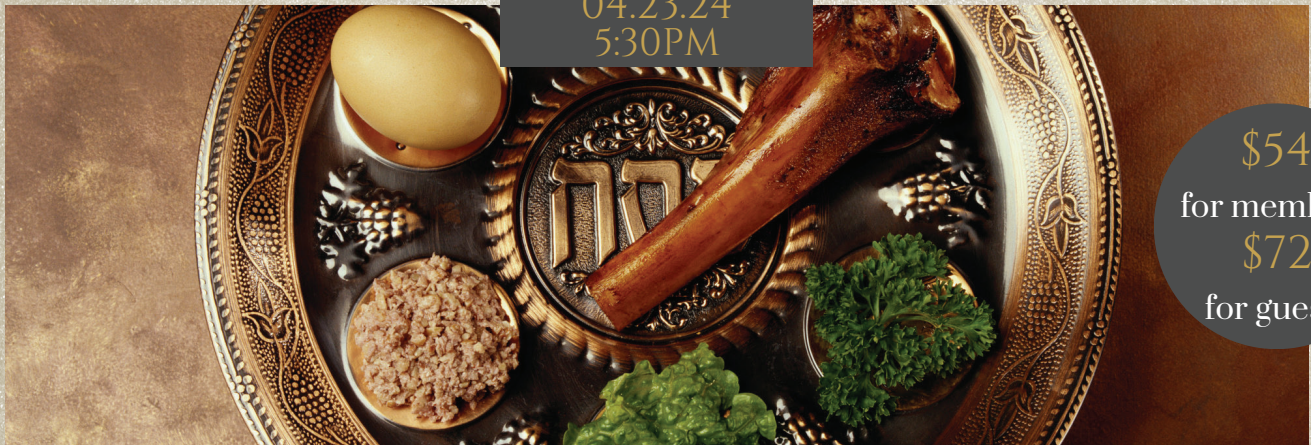
As it turns out, we've got dream experts in our midst! Irene Clurman runs a dream workshop once a month, and in April Rodger Kamenetz will be our Ellen Diesenhof scholar in residence. Mr. Kamenetz is an expert on dream work and will be running a special workshop with Irene on Thursday, April 11. I'm looking

forward to attending and dissecting what my recurring dream really means, and what I can take from it.

In addition to the dream workshop, Mr. Kamenetz will be teaching a writing workshop, and presenting his poetry. He will also be visiting the Mussar class to explore metaphors for God. Overall, it should be an exciting and rewarding visit! I hope you'll take the opportunity to attend at least one of the workshops he is offering. I look forward to seeing you there!

PASSOVER BETH EVERGREEN COMMUNITY SEDER

04.23.24
5:30PM



\$54
for members
\$72
for guests

Beth Evergreen
2981 Bergen Peak Dr
Evergreen, CO 80439

REGISTER:
PHONE 303-670-4294
[WWW.BETHEVERGREEN.ORG/
PASSOVER](http://WWW.BETHEVERGREEN.ORG/PASSOVER)

Enjoy a family-style seder right here at Beth Evergreen complete with a catered dinner. Free Zoom streaming available for those unable to attend.

Midot of the Month

March: Yirah (fear...awe...)

See <https://unorthoboxed.com/2022/01/01/awe-is-the-most-healing-emotion-and-yirah-may-not-be-what-you-think/>

Awe is an altered state of consciousness that shifts one's focus away from the self and towards universality and connectedness. We experience awe when we notice something vast and we're in some way surprised by this. Awe takes us out of our regular way of understanding. When we're awed, something makes us stop in our tracks and say "Whoa!". We're aware of something that we can't understand, that feels beyond us.

Psychologist Anna Mikulak writes that the experience of awe leads us to evaluate ideas more rigorously. Other researchers found that the experience of awe leads us to be less focused on ourselves and so feel ourselves part of a greater whole. Perhaps because of this, awe has been found to be a powerful catalyst for kindness, patience and generosity, as well as enhancing a greater sense of wellbeing.

As Jews, awe is a familiar concept to us. Judaism speaks of two pillars of connection to God and to the commandments. *Ahava* which is love, and *Yirah* [which can be translated as fear or as awe]...Judaism encourages us to fear God. Or does it? ...Awe of God, rather than fear of God's punishment, takes us beyond ourselves. ..We forget ourselves at that moment. You can bring more moments of awe into your day simply by briefly contemplating something that you admire but don't understand. Not unlike gratitude practice, you can practice awe.

Practice: The Hebrew "*Baruch*" is an awe practice in one word. *Baruch* is the first word of most blessings. Typically understood as "blessed", it is derived from the word **Berech, knee**, which is part of the Hebrew phrase **to kneel** (*Lichro'a berech*). **When we experience awe, we are metaphorically brought to our knees.** Daily practice of bowing internally before the countless wonders around us, whether by opening our eyes to wonder or by connecting to reverence when we say "*Baruch*", is a pathway to profound wellbeing.

April: Behira (choice) Kehillah (community)

Traditional Jewish belief profoundly embraces free will, acknowledging that the course of our lives is not predestined by God or limited by past decisions, upbringing, or current circumstances. Rabbi Eliyahu Dessler (20th century Mussar teacher) specifies however that all humans have complete free will only at the **Bechirah or Choice point** and that prior to or after that point, due to conditioning or habit, are beyond a conscious, **mindful**, free choice.

"We are in a *Bechirah* point when we sense a struggle between what we know is the right thing to do and what we feel we want to do... The *Bechirah* point is that place where our habits of mind and heart or irrational cravings for everything from food to sex meet with what we know is the right thing to do." <https://images.shulcloud.com/428/uploads/PDFs/the-bechirah-point-rabbi-e-dessler.pdf>

Chapter 28 of Cultural Competence and Spirituality in Community Building in the Community Toolbox website emphasizes the significance of **mindfulness** in community building and defines mindfulness as "living in the moment".

Could a heightened sense of presence and awareness in the moment better help us navigate through those "**bechirah points**" for the benefit of healthier communities? Rabbi Sandra Lawson defines **Kehillah**, the Hebrew word for community "...as embodying a deep-seated commitment to collective responsibility, support, and inclusivity."

Perhaps unlike Eastern religions that promote mindfulness practice as a way of seeking tranquility and peace of mind as a goal, a Jewish lens might offer that we will always and necessarily live with challenge. The purpose then of Jewish mindfulness is to be "cognitively and emotionally engaged in that moment. By so doing, we will be better prepared to confront and grow from challenges, improve ourselves and actively work towards the betterment of society." <https://aish.com/jewish-mindfulness/>

Practice: *Bechira* points occur only when one has **awareness** that one has a choice.

Record any *Bechira* (choice) points you notice during the day. Try to flesh out the issues that pulled at you in this *Bechira*/ choice point.



What makes family family? What makes CBE CBE? What Makes Home Home?

By Sarah Hess

At first, the answers all feel 'people' driven in such a way that the people we hold dear in each context could be the answer. After all, 'home is where the heart is.' But then, it could be place driven. I know that 'home is where the hearth is' also holds true. And Joanne has a whole bunch of reasons CBE is CBE, and it has become a place. We all know there is a feeling of arriving home, a smell, a touch, and comfort - all place specific.

For guidance, Rabbi Jamie points me to the metaphor of God as fire. True, there is an alignment of fire as anger and we all have anger and so does God, but fire can also be nurtured and controlled by human hands. It is used in indigenous farming methods, it opens the pine cones, it heats the food that warms our bellies. Fire is essential to life.

I know this is true because when all our furnaces had to be replaced in February, there wasn't a lot of wiggle room. Not for the kiddos at TLC, and not for CBE. So the Board got ingenuitive, came up with solutions, and made it happen. So the fire in our communal hearth continues to burn.

Family too relates to fire - how close we sit is how warm we are. Roger Kamanentz is one of those cousins of mine that could be

distant, but instead I hold him dear because, when I was little, Roger saw me. As the youngest of five kids that didn't happen all the time, and when my mom told me he didn't have as many family members as I did and that he needed us, that stuck with me, too. The path to my family hearth opened a whole lot that day.

Could the warmth of the hearth be my answer to all three questions? Family, to me, is defined by all the people that draw near my hearth and need its warmth. CBE has, at its core, seven furnaces that burn to give us a place to gather. The center of home is the kitchen, the hearth at which we all gather, where family clusters - here I am trying to feed everyone who comes into CBE and my home alike.

I am so excited we invited cousin Rodger to our hearth and I hope that you'll come meet him - he's kind of a rock star, though I didn't know that when I fell for him in the sukkah at his house when I was little. (Hey, the sukkah is further proof that a home is where the heart/hearth is.) Whether you come to feel our furnace heat, feel the warmth of all we have to offer from our kitchen, or to feel like part of our family, you help make our community a family of families and keep the fire burning. Because home, CBE and family is where the warmth is.



Acoustic Shabbat,
March 1



James Taylor/Carole King
Shabbat, March 17



Acoustic Country Music
Shabbat, April 5



Reggae Shabbat,
April 19

Rabbi's Article from page 1.

Judaism was prompted by this encounter with Buddhism. I myself experienced a similar return home to my roots, one that can be mapped with the three *midot* that we have assigned for these next few months: **Yirah**/AWE, **behirah**/CHOICE, and **kehillah** /COMMUNAL BELONGING - the experience of awe prompting a choice and a yearning to find a community of spiritual kinfolk.

Here at CBE, we are preparing to mark the 50th anniversary of the founding of a **community** united around **awe** and **choice**. Fifty years! Wow. Such a milestone prompts us individually and collectively to contemplate legacy. *What are we to do with the accumulation of five decades of study and seeking counsel, of responsibilities and debates, weddings and divorces, births and deaths, consecrations and bonei mitzvah ceremonies, creating moving music, building a beautiful building, and most recently updating our HV system to improve the heating and add air conditioning?*

As we ponder this rich history and imagine a promising legacy, our tradition suggests that the coming decade should be devoted to **seeing ourselves** as both a recipient AND **a source of aytza**, wise counsel. "At fifty, [able to give] counsel. Aytza."

Who me? Like myself (and probably many of you), Rodger Kamenetz did not have the benefit of substantive formal Jewish learning growing up. We weren't taught Scripture at five or Mishnah at ten, much less Talmud at 15. Still, each of us has indispensable wisdom to offer, some gems inherent to our *neshamah* / buddha nature that we've spent a lifetime hearing and honing. We need only to bring it into the light and let it shine, give it a voice. Having devoted his life to finding his own voice as an author and poet, and helping others find theirs as a professor of Literature and Religious Studies at LSU, **Kamenetz** will be our esteemed **Ellen Diefenbach z"l Poet-Scholar in residence this year, April 10-11**.

I hope you will choose to join us at some of the many inspired gatherings to bring an end to this extended lunar year (a 13-month leap year) with our celebrations of Purim and Passover and so many fabulous seasonal events, as we begin our well-earned celebrations of a communal Jubilee year, may we articulate and pass on this noble legacy by making the shift from recipient to deliverer of wise counsel.

A happy Purim, a joyous Passover, and a jubilant anniversary to one and all.

Rabbi Jamie Arnold

President's Article from page 1.

ask for your autograph every time you walked into Beth Evergreen? Now is your chance! We will be doing a Motown Megillah with a special guest star appearance from Barbie. Don't miss the fun!

In other news, the Board approved the replacement of 6 of our 20-year-old furnaces. But wait! There's more! We are also getting 4 condensers. Yes! For the first time ever, we will have air-conditioning this summer for our staff in their offices and for our b'nei mitzvah celebrations. Not only will it be nice to have cool air in the building, but now we can keep our doors closed which had become a security concern.

Please welcome Bill Huron as our new Board member. I am looking forward to his input and participation.

Thank you to Allison Gustavson for all her hard work as our Board Secretary. Her calm compassion has led us through some choppy waters and she will be sorely missed. More big shoes to fill, but if you would like to know what goes on behind the scenes, now is your chance! Please contact me if you are interested. We meet once a month for 2 hours.

Thank you to all of you who make this community a warm and welcoming place. Help us make it even better. Please take our survey if you have not already.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly should you have any questions or concerns. kat@bethevergreen.org.

May all the hostages come home safe and sound and soon. Forever in our hearts.

L'Shalom,
Kat



MOTOWN
Purim Shpiel

 **March 23, 7PM**
bethevergreen.org/purim



CONGREGATION
BETH EVERGREEN

SKI DAY
WITH RABBI JAMIE
MAR 18 & 22

Tzedakah & Tributes

General Fund

Elaine Page
Ginny Sims & Janice Lines
Kim Carveth
Karin Stork-Whitson
Kat Connelly

In honor of Charlie and Rich Levine's general niftiness
Joanne Greenberg

In appreciation of the Friday morning meditation and investigation of the word
Steve Volin

In honor of Ellen Arnold's Big Birthday

In honor of Dick Arnold's Birthday

In honor of Joanne Greenberg and CBE's Fellow

Flounders [sic] and Pioneers

Rabbi Jamie Arnold

Music Fund

In honor of Val Robinson and the Combined Gospel Choir

In honor of the CBE Musicians

In honor of Kat Connelly and Veronica Gruning and the CBE Purim Players

Rabbi Jamie Arnold

Ritual Fund

In memory of Corey Baron z"l

In memory of Jim's Father and Susan Wartchow's father-in-law

Rabbi Jamie Arnold

Amphitheater Donations

Bonnie Houghton

Israel Aid Fund

Nate & Cindy Fineberg

Stephen & Susan Lehman

Caren Phillips

Justin Hovey & Zachary Hudson

Church of the Hills

Religious School Fund

Thanks for including Asher tonight!

Traci Lato-Smith and Rob Smith

In honor of my ancestors and fellow beings on the path of Judaism

In honor of my naming ceremony

Julie / Raaya Freshman

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

Serri Miller

It is such a pleasure to call you friends of our church. I am from For His Glory Christian Fellowship in Aurora, Co our visit to Beth Evergreen was a wonderful time of fellowship. Thank you again.

Janice Mathes

In memory of Alvin Lehman

Stephen & Susan Lehman

About Intelligent Design

By Rabbi Netanyahu Shlepper

Bim Bom's been on a tear lately about Intelligent Design. I've been waving her off, but tonight I ate bad *cholent*, and am finally gassy enough to address Intelligent Design. So, I.D., sit, relax, and put a sock in it. I'm talking to Jews now, and Bim Bom in particular, because who else will listen? Bim Bom and you can have your say later.

Maybe there's Design, maybe not. But Intelligent?

Look—Bim Bom says—at all the mathematical constants that have to be *just so* for life to exist: Take the weight of a neutrino. Neutrinos are fundamental particles of the universe. They're tiny. Each weighs just 5×10^{-35} kilograms—35 zeros after the decimal point—and that's *exactly* the size it has to be. One zero less, and the universe will collapse under its own weight. Only Intelligent Design could mandate such a precise number. But come on, Bim Bom, where's your *yiddische kopf*? We use kilograms to weigh fat old Jews like you and me. We use electron volts to weigh neutrinos. Do that, and all of a sudden a neutrino's weight doesn't have to be so exact. It can weigh .8 electron volts, or .9, and the world won't end. Like when you order a pound of pastrami: A slice short it's no big deal, and if you get an extra slice it's a bonus.

Evolutionary arguments for Intelligent Design are no better. Bim Bom says look how magnificent life is: Designing it took Intelligence. But consider life as a shrew. You wake up in the desert, like Jews have done forever. You go out for dinner. You're not kosher, you eat spiders and scorpions, although like Jews, you're mostly immune to their stings. But you're always scared some snake might kill you before you finish your meal. Such a short miserable life, and one of the few things worse than being a shrew is marriage to one. This is an Intelligently Designed creature?

Why argue the Designer is Intelligent, anyway? What is *Hashem* all about? Smiting! Smiting, smiting, smiting! And us, made in His image, have we learned better? Fifty years ago, when the terrorists smote our Olympic athletes, we said we'd smite the terrorist leadership once and for all. Last October, after terrorists smote us again, we also said we'd smite their leadership once and for all. We've learned *bupkis*. How can you say we're Intelligently Designed?

If I were Intelligently Designed, I would not eat *cholent*, and I would not now have gas.

Rabbi BimBom answers:

Shlepper and his neutrinos! Shlepper can't tell neutrinos from any other cold cereal. His argument is so weak that he has to drag shrews into it. What have shrews done to him? I interviewed six of them, and they spoke well of him, which he brushes off because he thinks that Nature is beneath him. Who made shrews want to better themselves? Who makes Jews want to be better? Is he saying shrews when he means Jews? When he or anyone truly finds out what intelligence is, people's ideas may change. He can't truly define life, consciousness, or a decent kugel. He's angry at God because he had to go through a bar mitzveh ceremony and God didn't. It's simply envy. Shlepper thinks that if he had created the Universe, he would have done a better job. Maybe he would have given humans more brains and fewer fat cells and no hangovers. Trust me, Unappreciated Intelligent Design is better than no design at all, which is why the Yiddish curse, the one about a lung and a liver growing out of your face doesn't often happen.

Ask Shlepper what laughter is or why it is. He thinks it's only a spasm of the diaphragm. How come it does us good and a little lower it turns into a cramp? Speaking of smiting, people smite a hell of a lot more than God does¹, and we make hit movies about smiting² and lots of people go to them, upping the economy³.

Whoever said that the Design-maker gives discreet wisdom to every thread in the design? Free will, kiddo. Without it you would be AI without the I.

1 3rd Samuel, the one with the yard goods store 16.16

2 3rd Kings. A bargain at twice the price 3.11

3 Ezra Feinstein 6.6



Bar Mitzvah Events

Helga Silver has called on the Congregation to forgive her and her brother, Watson, for throwing things at each other during the service that signaled her Bat Mitzveh. The Rabbi explained that the raisins and almonds were to be thrown after the reading of the Torah portion and the rest of the service and not before that. There was also corrective advice on what should be thrown: sweets, yes, sour balls, no. Three members of the congregation had to be treated for bruises and the mother of the bat mitzveh for hysteria at the walk-in clinic nearby. The clinic's address is KrenkandSchmertz.com.

Congratulations to Sean Goldman, finally, for his Bar Mitzveh. Sean was able to hit his stride with a particularly difficult trope by sucking on an oxygen tube that rendered his voice two octaves higher, enabling him to chant his maftir's final sof pasuk in fine style. Way to go, Sean!

Running Blackout Goldberg moved the Congregation last Shabbat at his D'var Torah by telling the gathered worshippers why he had changed his name from Abner and declared himself a citizen of the world. Some of the members of the congregation were puzzled by the assemblage on the bima of gods from other cultures, including replicas of the stone statues of Easter Island and a statue of the goddess Kali. Running's Bat Mitzveh ceremony included a Tongan war chant and a short ceremony of Vestal Virgins. The oneg carried out the cross-cultural motif with servings of squid in its ink, mashed mole, and blowfish. An accredited Japanese Chef was in attendance. Find the Chef at PtomaineKing.com.

Drawn from one of Moses' more active moments, Cuthbert Schwartz's D'var Torah struck an activist note. There has been a Jewish presence in Colorado from the earliest times, well before the State was named. Cuthbert wants the present Mount Blue Sky to be re-named Mt. Schwarz, in honor of his grandfather, who never had anything named after him, not even his grandson. Unfortunately, the elder Schwartz was still alive when Cuthbert was born. Pictures of the prospective plaque on Mt. Schwartz are available online at kish-mir.com. Lovers of Yiddish will know the rest of this address.

Charities:

Instead of the more traditional charities – think United Way or UJA, why not branch out a little and try something with a bigger bang? For reviews of the following, go to Zitsfleisch.com.

1. People whose clothes have gone out of style: (@Fardarte.com)

The clothes-less have their own issues, but imagine the trauma of those who, through no fault of their own, walk into a group of people who point and laugh. The Out-of-Date are appearing at parties and events in increasing numbers, moving the sympathies of all compassionate people. Help these sufferers who are too old to wait for the style in question to come around again. Send your contribution to pantsonfire.com.

2. Poets who are in it for the money:

Having flunked every IQ test made, these wretched beings have experienced Existential Diminution (I.D.). The disgusting symptoms of I.D. include spasms that make interaction with normal people difficult if not impossible. The worst cases will not refrain from reciting their work loudly at every opportunity. Send help to Buglekugle.com.

3. My Aunt Hattie:

Who lost a bundle at bridge. I know you don't like this but what can you do? The woman is a plague-sore and this isn't the first time she bid hearts when no one living could make it in hearts with a hand like that. Send your contribution to BustedinBrooklyn.com.

4. Saving the Endangered Gefulte:

This precious lump will soon be extinct if we don't take action immediately. Don't be put off by its looks or smell or the revolting jelly it seems to produce. Send your righteous gift before the last one swims by just before Pesach. Send to Horseradish-recovery.com.

5. Perth Amboy, N.J.:

Funds are being solicited in a futile attempt to rescue this city, which is in full view of Manhattan, but is too smoggy to et that happen. People are leaving this place in droves, enriching the rest of the country, which can never repay the debt. Help lower the debt you ingrates owe. Donate now to Amboy.noxious.com.

6. Barbie and Ken:

Barbie and Ken are becoming Hasidic Jews. A DNA test has proven what Barbie always suspected – that she is Jewish. Ken is planning to convert as soon as he has finished his Parole (vacuity in the third degree). He will take classes. He is growing Peyot and a beard. Congregation Chey Shulamit is raising money for proper outfits for both Barbie and Ken: white shirts and black suits, one plain, one for Shabbos. Barbie needs a Shabbos outfit also. You're getting off cheap = she could turn Hindu and would need sweaters that have six arms! Ken also needs tsitsit. Send multiples of 18 to Barbeleh@yennevelt.com

Bad News:

For many years, our beloved Sage, Rabbi BimBom has suffered overwhelming handicaps. This sage has repeatedly refused to get rid of an Ashkeniz accent, pronouncing Shabbat as Shabbes and Simchat Torah as Simchas Torah. Congregants have reacted by slipping notes under the Sage's door and dropping water bombs from heights. These have had no effect on the low class accent and misplaced word emphasis. BimBom continued (Shabbos rather than Shabat) Our synagogue aspires to rise socially and this will be impossible with a hopelessly recherché sage. As if that wasn't enough, BimBom persists in singing a trope that no one ever heard. If this goes on, the congregation might try to vote her out of the Jews.

Good News: —

Al and Naomi Tishlach report that the two camels they won during their trip to Israel two years ago are doing well on the ranch they found to dump, drop, rehabilitate, stash them. Soon after their arrival at the ranch, the camels were attacked by the wolves recently introduced into the area. The wolves were quickly breathed on by the camels, and expired from the fumes. The State is now suing the ranch owners and the Tishlachs for damages to the new wildlife, the cost of which was all but prohibitive. Our own Breaker Blaustein is scheduled to defend the camels in court, if it comes to that. A Go Fund Me is planned.

More Good News: —

At last, Pearl Fisher and her fiancé Dyan Emmet are celebrating their engagement. Their wedding plans include a trip to the Caribbean where they will go scuba diving in an attempt to find the ring thrown overboard by the future Mrs. Emmet, ending a previous engagement. Their grand- and great grand-children will share their joy on the voyage.

The Real Reason Mordechai Didn't Bow to Haman By Beat Reporter Miss Shugena

After millennia, the mystery of why Mordechai refused to bow before Haman has been solved. While it's true he didn't respect the bigot, there may well be another factor that contributed to his rebellion and, ultimately, to the redemption of the Jewish people.

The reason? Mordechai had bad knees.

According to Dr. Maximo Muzar, a local osteopath specializing in joint replacement, "Mordechai must have had some damage to his tibia--probably extra cartilage in the meniscus region."

The doctor, also a big machar in his Toronto synagogue, relayed his theory to a local news anchor who passed it along on the 6p.m. broadcast. In exchange, the anchor received a 25% voucher for a new left knee.

The Israeli rabbinical council, who caught wind of Muzar's bombshell declaration, was quick to discount the doctor's diagnosis, especially since Mordechai was never a patient at Dr. Max's clinic. However, the doctor stood firm.

"Listen," he said, "I don't have to personally serve a patient to know when someone has joint problems. Not bowing to the king's right-hand man was Mordechai's cry for help. I mean, it made for a great story and ended really well for the Jews, but still--the poor guy could have used a couple of 316-L Stainless implants. And I would have given him the family discount!"

Dr. Max went on to suggest that Moses dropped the stone tablets due to an arthritic seizure, for which he would have suggested a cortisone shot and a possible rotator cuff surgery. Dr. Max's book, *Biblical Injuries and Treatments--Coupons Included!* is now available on Amazon or at his office. Anyone who mentions "Moses" can enter the drawing for a 2- for 1 kneecap bundle.

However, since the king was played by former Broncos quarterback John Elway--filling in for his Covid-bound friend Morty Klopstein--several women in the audience decided they, too, deserved their Taylor Swift moment.

"If Taylor can do it, so can I!" shouted Vivian Gross, slapping on some Revlon 'Tay-Tay Red' lipstick. Once Viv jumped the stage, at least eight women followed, barrel-of-monkeys-style. While those actually cast in the shpiel attempted to continue their rehearsed dances for the king, many were tripped, punched, or shoved aside by gyrating play-crashers vying for the quarterback "king's" eye.

To Elway's credit, he stuck with the script and announced 75-year-old Erma Katz (a.k.a. Esther) as his chosen bride. Sadly, he was too enmeshed in his character to intercept the throng of triggered, jealous husbands' full-on tackle of Elway. The offensive thrashed his throne, shattered his plastic crown, and knocked out one of Elway's rather substantial front teeth.

"This is a PLAY," the rabbi shouted over a hot mike. "Please return to your seats immediately! Oy gevult." By then knotted chunks of yanked-out hair, ripped costume remnants, tossed wigs, and stains from Eve Wolfe's bloody nose had sullied both the stage and the night--not to mention Elway's traumatized tooth, which punctuated the gasping silence as it bounced to the floor, rolled off the stage, and landed in Gus Weiner's whiskey glass with a loud "clink."

As of this report, all five patients were treated and released with an umbrella restraining order, per Elway's attorney. Although his tooth has been restored, Elway has declared that

for him, Congregation Loco--like his football career--is definitely *game over*.

Lamed Vavniks *By Chava the Shamas*

We all know the existence of the Lamed Vavnik, the 36 righteous individuals on whose holiness all of us stand, or sit depending on our age. Well, during my morning meditation I heard from the heavenly job board that there are openings. It seems that many of the 36 are ready to retire, and very few wish to pick up the burden of all our mishegas. Not to mention having to listen to all our oy veys and meshugeneh shandes

So, Hashem has no recourse but to place ads in the help wanted section. I hear that the ads will be displayed in every shul (well, maybe not every shul, but select shuls, like ours, or not) during the silent Amidah so that we will be able to focus on them without tuning out the congregation or the rabbi. Or at least not having to pretend that we are still listening to the rabbi (not our rabbi of course)

The requirements are simple, must be willing to live a holy life, follow the mitzvot that apply, and be a poor nobody in the world, living incognito in an unassuming way. Knowledge of Hebrew or Yiddish preferred, but not required. However, the holy books should be at the top of your reading list. Oh, you should also know that there is no payment or reward for this position, well maybe in the afterlife, but that is negotiable.

I am not sure how to fill applications, where to send them of what the interview process is. Though I did hear whispers that the great Elijah himself will be on the interview committee. Of course, that could have been him just bragging. More than likely the task will be given to one who truly understand what it means to sacrifice in secret. Yes, the one and only Esther, who we should cheer for rather than Mordechai. What did he do except send a young relative into danger?

Apparently, Esther Was Hiding More Than Her Religion *by Beat Reporter Miss Shugena*

Ancient Astronaut Theorists have long held that an alien presence has coexisted with humans for millennia. One such theorist posits that Queen Esther of Shushan hid not only her religion, but also her identity as an interstellar transplant from the planet Hebron.

LooLoo Flappenstein, a Boulder-based lay-astronomer who moonlights as a lay-rabbi to a congregation of one, insists that the scroll of Esther is full of "Easter eggs" (if you'll pardon the pun) pointing to Esther's cosmic origins.

"Why did Mordechai suddenly have to raise a random cousin?" she quips. "I'll tell you why--because she was a space alien who was either beamed over or whose craft had crashed near Shushan!"

LooLoo cites the mysterious lack of information regarding Esther's background as hard evidence, along with certain behaviors proving that Esther was clearly "not of this earth."

"I mean, come on, people--it's so obvious!" LooLoo insists. "Esther seemed awfully overzealous about prettying herself up to meet the King, don'tcha think?" LooLoo is convinced that this must have been due to Esther's intergalactic identity.

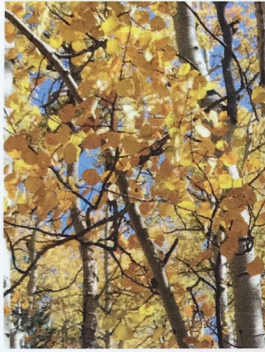
"Why would anyone glob on so much perfume and makeup?" she asks. "I'll tell you why! She was hiding something--probably green skin or a Martian stench, or maybe even a purple face-claw."

LooLoo says that her epiphany arrived when she happened across an image posted by Nasa on her YouTube feed. In it a faint blue orb floats against a sea of stars with the headline, "Another Goldilocks Planet Identified."

"Goldilocks, Schmoldilocks!" LooLoo says. "This planet has 'chosen people' written all over it: It's Jew-blue and, if you blur your eyes a little, you can see that its so-called moon is a giant matzoh ball!"

Neither Nasa nor the Rabbinical Council has offered confirmation on any of LooLoo's claims. Even so, LooLoo plans to dress as the REAL Esther--green skin, purple face-claw and all--at next week's Purim event.

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Set in the pines overlooking Elk Meadow, Congregation Beth Evergreen offers inclusive, warm, welcoming services and programs in an intimate atmosphere. We are committed to fostering community by offering opportunities for meaningful worship, the pursuit of spirituality and lifelong Jewish education. Our informal, egalitarian approach encourages inclusive participation in the celebration of religious, lifecycle and communal events.

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