

LAWS AND CUSTOMS OF CHANUKAH
Prepared by Rabbi Saul J. Berman

1. The Holiday of Chanukah is celebrated for 8 days.

Comment: We Jews of the Diaspora do not add an additional day as we do in the cases of Pesach, Succot and Shavuot because the holiday of Chunukah is of Rabbinic origin, while the others are of Biblical origin. The doubt as to the accuracy of the transmission of the date of the New Moon is sufficient basis for us to create the extra burden of an additional day only where violation of a Biblical command might result.

2. The holiday is commemorated by the kindling of candles or oil menorah.

Comment: It is preferable that all eight of the candles or wicks be on same level, with no preference given to any one by virtue of its being substantially higher or set apart from the others.

3. The candles should be placed in the menorah from right to left of person lighting them and should be lit from left to right.

Comment: In some communities the reverse was the practice, but the above is the generally accepted custom today.

4. On the first night a single candle should be lit, and on each subsequent night one candle added until on the eighth evening eight candles are lit.

Comment: The Talmud records a dispute between the School of Shammai and the School of Hillel as to the number of candles to be lit on each evening. Beit Shammai maintained that on the first night of Chanukah eight candles should be lit and that the number should be reduced on each succeeding evening. Beit Hillel asserted that only one candle should be lit on the first evening and the number should be progressively increased. Our practice follows the option of Beis Hillel, so that we simulate the occurrence in the Temple where each day the oil continued to burn was an additional miraculous event. Beit Shammai seemed to feel that we should indicate with our candles the number of days remaining to the holiday.

5. A Shamash (servant candle) should be used to light the Chanukah candles and should then be left near the others but at a distinctly different height.

Comment: The need for the Shamash is predicated on the fact that the sole function of the Chanukah candles should be the announcement of the holiday.

Continued, p.

L S S T O Y D R I V E will take place on December 13. Please bring by toys and gifts, wrapped, to LSS between 10 and 4pm. These will be used for children who are homeless, are in hospitals, or are otherwise in need. Also, we'll need volunteers to help sort and distribute the toys!

The light of the candles may therefore not be used for any other purpose, such as to read by. In order to avoid the possibility of someone's using the light in error, or using one candle to light another, the Shamash which may be used is added. It must, however, be set apart from the others in order to avoid the impression that it is an additional candle signifying an additional day of the celebration.

6. The Menorah should be placed in an open doorway, or in a window where it can be viewed from the street.

Comment: An essential part of the reason for lighting candles is to publicize the miraculous events of Chanukah. Some, in fact, analyze the Mitzvah of lighting the candles as two separate commandments: (1) to commemorate the miracle of the oil, and (2) to publicize the events of Chanukah. They assert that the two blessings recited on every evening (a third is recited only on the first evening) refer to these two separate commandments.

7. The candles should be lit as soon as possible after dark and should burn for at least one-half hour.

Comment: Candles should be lit initially only during hours when there is still traffic in the streets, so that the element of publicity may be accomplished. However, if one was unforeseeably delayed, or forgot, he may light the candles at any time during the night. (Some maintain that he should not recite the second blessing if the publicity cannot be accomplished due to the lateness of the hour.)

8. Women as well as men are required to light candles or to have candles lit for them in their presence.

Comment: Women are not relieved from this obligation as they are relieved from other commandments which must be performed at a specific time of the day, since the activities of great Jewish women are closely associated with the events of Chanukah. Two such women were Channa, mother of seven sons, all of whom gave up their lives rather than serve idolatry; and Yehudit (Judith) who, by killing the General Cholofermus, saved her community.

9. On Friday evening, Chanukah candles should be lit before the Sabbath candles, and on Saturday evening, after the Havdalah.

Comment: Once the Sabbath is inaugurated by the lighting of the Sabbath candles, and prior to its termination by the Havdalah, no fire may be created and so the above regulations are necessary. It may be necessary to use larger candles or more oil on Friday evening to be certain that the flame continues for the required half-hour after darkness.

10. During each of the eight days of Chanukah certain prayers are added to the normal services.

- (a) The paragraph "Al Hanisim" is added to every Shmoneh Esreh said during Chanukah, and also to the Grace After Meals.
- (b) Immediately after the Shmoneh Esreh of the Morning Service, the complete Hallel is said.
- (c) Although there is no basis in the written Torah for the holiday or for any of its ceremonies, during the Morning Services on each day of Chanukah we read from the Torah telling of the commemoration of the Tabernacle by the Israelites in the desert. On Shabbat this special Torah reading is the Maftir.

Editor	Rissi Zweig
Assistant Editor	Arlene Abraham

The MITZVAH Supermarket

טבילת כלים TEVILAT KELIM

New dishes, pots and utensils must be immersed in the mikveh before use. Buses will take you and your load from LSS to the mikveh and back, every hour on the hour until 4:00 p.m.

מתנות עניים HOLIDAY TOY DRIVE

Bring new toys, or clean, usable old ones in good condition, to be distributed to kids in hospitals, to homeless children in welfare hotels, and at a Jewish Children's Home. (No charge)

מצוות לילדים MITZVAH DAY FOR CHILDREN

Under the direction of Elayne and Jerry Koller (of Camp Morasha), youngsters aged 6-11 (or younger if accompanied by an adult) can make a havdalah candle or a Jewish figurine or wall-hanging for themselves or as a gift. Or they can make a toy to give to the needy through the Toy Drive. (\$5 per project, pre-registration required.)

הגעלת כלים KASHERING UTENSILS

Any pots or flatware whose kosher status may be doubtful through previous use or error will be made kosher on the spot (wherever possible). See a 22-minute video, "How to Kasher a Kitchen and Why." (No charge)

פדיון שבויים RESCUING JEWISH CAPTIVES

See and write a letter to a Soviet refusenik. See a photo exhibit on Ethiopian Jews. Speak with experts about the situations in Russia, Ethiopia, Iran and other places, and about what you personally can do to help your fellow Jews around the world. (No charge)

TEFILLIN & MEZUZAH CHECK

Yes, it's time to have them checked again (it must be done twice in every seven years). All mezzuzot will be checked on the spot, reservations preferred, tefillin only by prior reservation (use the form below). You'll be able to buy new mezzuzot and tefillin parts if you need them. (Mezzuzot: members \$1, non-members \$2. Tefillin: members \$25, non-members \$30)

צדקה TZEDEKAH IDEAS AND MATERIALS

It's a mitzvah (literally) to give at least one-tenth of your net income as Tzedakah. Come and ask about how and where to give, and get lists and literature about some worthy destinations for your money. (No charge)

גמילות חסדים VOLUNTEER CHESD OPPORTUNITIES

Find out how you can regularly involve yourself in visiting a homebound elderly person, recording books for the Jewish blind, teaching an adult to read, helping people with AIDS or Alzheimer's disease, and other ways to give time and care. (No charge)

שעטנ SHAATNES TESTING

Bring any new (or not-so-new) clothes that have not yet been tested for shaatnes (wool and linen) to be sure they do not contain this Biblically prohibited mixture. (No clothing accepted after 2:30 p.m. Members \$5 per item or suit, non-members \$7)

עירוב ERUV INFORMATION

Up-to-date information and demonstrations on the projected West Side Eruv. See how an Eruv Hatzerot (a boundary device to permit carrying on Shabbat) is constructed, and learn some of the laws of Eruvin. (No charge)

תמחוי HELPING THE POOR, HUNGRY AND HOMELESS

Leftover food from parties and simchot can be recycled to feed hungry people. Get the story on how to contribute food; help the LSS Food Funnel transport food from caterers and bakeries to the needy; donate clothing to the homeless; and volunteer at homeless shelters and at soup kitchens. (No charge)

KASHRUT INQUIRY DESK

Get on-the-spot answers from our Rabbis on what's kosher and what's not, and how to deal with kitchen mix-ups. (No charge)

SHEMOT DEPOSITORY

Gather those tattered siddurim, odd pages printed with the Divine name, etc., and bring them in so that they can be properly disposed of according to halachah. (No charge)

A TASTE OF ISRAEL by Bina Presser

In honor of Israel's 40th year, the Israel Affairs Committee of LSS has invited some of today's foremost intellectual and political leaders to speak about issues central to the State of Israel. This will be one of the most exciting forums in our City marking this year's anniversary.

Coffee, cake and discussions follow each session. Admission is \$3 for members; \$5 for non-members.

Thursday, December 17, 8pm--"Minority Groups in Israel"

Col. Asaad Asaad, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Israel to the UN. Born in 1944 in a Druze village in the Galilee in which his family has been settled for several centuries.

Tuesday, January 19, 8pm--"The Ideology and Rhetoric of Meir Kahane"

Prof. Gerald Cromer, Senior Lecturer and former Head of the Dept. of Sociology, Bar Ilan University; visiting scholar, Univ. of Pennsylvania; as a specialist in the sociology of deviance, he has analyzed the content of Meir Kahane's writings and rhetoric and of the conflicts they have aroused in the Israeli public.

Wednesday, February 4, 8pm--"Church-State Relations in Israel--The Official Places of Judaism in the State of Israel"

Prof. Aaron Kirschenbaum, Prof. and Chairman of the Dept. of Jewish Law at Tel Aviv University, Faculty of Law. Specializes in Jewish Law for lawyers and problems of church and state in modern Israel.

Tuesday, February 23, 8pm--"Life in an Israeli Development Town"

Leah Shakdiel and Moshe Landsman (now touring Israel under the auspices of the New Israel Fund); Leah and her American-born husband Moshe are active residents of Yeruham. Her recent election to the Religious Council (Moatza Datit) of that Negev town created controversy over the role of women within the religious establishment.

Sunday, December 13, 1987 • 10:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

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RABBI JAY SHOULSON—DIRECTOR OF FUNERALS

All lectures begin at 8:00 pm. Ma'ariv and collation immediately following lecture.
A translator will be available for the hearing impaired.
Admission is \$5.00 for members and \$6.00 for non-members

GUEST SPEAKERS

December 9th
Rabbi Binyamin Walfish
The RCA: At the heart of Orthodoxy

December 16th
Professor William Helmreich
*The Yeshiva movement: Advances and changes
in the Orthodox community*

December 23rd
Mr. Malcolm Hoenlein
The Orthodox participation in political change

December 30th
Rabbi Pinchas Stolper
The NCSY movement and Orthodoxy

RELIGION ON THE JOB Lecture Series

Medicine
Mondays--Jan. 4,11,18 7:00- 8:30pm

Law & Communication
Mondays--Jan. 4,11,18 8:45-10:15pm

Mental Health
Wednesdays--Jan. 6,13,20 7:00- 8:30pm

Business
Wednesdays--Jan. 6,13,20 8:45-10:15pm

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JUST A REMINDER

WE WILL BE CELEBRATING OUR ANNUAL CHANUKAH
DINNER & SHABBATON ON DECEMBER 18.
Reservations will be taken on a first come,
first served basis. Program includes
festive meals, the debut of Cantor Goffin's
choral group, Shabbat and Chanukah Z'mirot,
D'verei Torah, refreshments after Shiurim,
and entertainment at a Melave Malka.

Cost:	LSS Members	Non-Members
Full Weekend:		
Adults	\$45.00	\$55.00
Children	39.00	48.00
Friday Night Only:		
Adults	\$23.00	\$28.00
Children	17.00	17.00

RESERVATION FORM

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone No. _____
of Reservations: _____
Weekend: Children _____ Adults _____
Friday Night
Only: Children _____ Adults _____
Total \$ _____
Return LSS
form to: 200 Amsterdam Ave.
New York, NY 10023

SENIORS!!!

Free Flu Injections will be given for
those 65 or older at the West Park Medical
Group, 50 W. 77th St. (across from the
Museum of Natural History) through
December 15. Please call the Group for an
appointment (877-8100).

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

The passing of two of our most devoted members was eloquently noted by Joel Wachs in the last Echod. This month has seen the loss of yet another, one of our founders and most devoted supporters, Mr. Irving Chesnin. Mr. Chesnin, along with his wife, Sonia, was a leader of the group of visionaries who established this synagogue 25 years ago with foresight, heart and sweat. Paying these shiva calls was like attending a seminar in the history of our shul and how it was willed into being.

Times may have changed, but LSS still stands or falls on the dedication of hundreds of its members who daily assume the responsibility for its myriad tasks. As we lose our founding generation, we must rededicate ourselves to their standards of communal service we now stand at the second phase of the "Buy the Bank" campaign. The committee that I appointed to evaluate the alternative uses of the bank site has concluded its work. As those who attended the General Membership Meeting are aware, the Committee has recommended the sale of the site to Touro College. Touro would build a new building on the property which would include a separate 8,000 square foot section to which LSS would retain ownership. In addition to providing us with this space, designed and finished to our specifications, Touro would pay LSS \$2,500,000.

The advantage of this transaction to us is that we would address our long-term space and endowment needs without the need for a major fundraising campaign, and, if all goes according to plan, the new space could be available as early as September of 1989.

An alternative is to mount a "Build the Bank" drive and attempt to raise one to three million dollars to refurbish the existing space and add one or two additional floors. In the near future we hope to hold a series of parlor meetings to lay out our options prior to a congregational vote one of the year's most exciting developments has been our new program "The Company of Friends." I want to take this opportunity to urge all of you to take advantage of

these intimate events by reprinting the text of the original mailing:

"The Company of Friends, a year-long series of novel, informative and just plain fun events, is designed simply for Lincoln Square Synagogue members to meet new friends and greet old ones. Each event will be open to shul members only, with attendance limited, to encourage participation and conversation among those present. Many of the events will take place in the intimacy of members' homes, and refreshments will be prepared by members as well.

"Please join the Company of Friends and help shatter the myth that Lincoln Square Synagogue has become too big and too impersonal. Watch your mail for details of times and places."

. . . The beautiful new sukkah we built this year was a great success, for those who were able to walk into it. Unfortunately, the access for those with handicaps left much to be desired. I want to take this opportunity to apologize to those who were unable to use the sukkah due to this unfortunate oversight, and promise that the mistake will be corrected next year I want to thank Shari Gluckstadt and Kim Gantz for the work they did in November to personalize Lincoln Square to over 200 members and potential members by hosting receptions for couples and singles Finally, next year we will commemorate our 25th anniversary. At that time it would be most appropriate to publish a book documenting the history and impact of Lincoln Square Synagogue. I would love to hear from people who would be interested in working on this project and would ask anyone with photographs and recollections of significant events in our history to begin to prepare submissions. More to come, meanwhile, have a wonderful Chanukah.

-Morton Landowne

EARLY PAYMENT REQUESTED

We are currently facing a cash-flow problem and have taken the liberty of billing the 1988 dues in December and hope that you will pay your dues and any unpaid items as soon as possible. Note: Look for your next LSS statement. There are still tax advantages for making charitable contributions in calendar year 1987.

Thank you,
Martin Katz, Executive Director

MITZVAH DAY FOR CHILDREN!

Sunday, Dec. 13, 1987 from
10-4pm

Children ages 6-11' (or younger if accompanied by an adult) can participate in one or all of the following projects:

- make a havdalah candle
- make a figurine with a Jewish theme
- make a wallhanging with a Jewish theme
- make toys for the holiday toy drive

The program will be directed by Elayne and Jerry Koller (of Camp Morasha) and the cost is \$5 per child per project (discount for 3 or more projects). You may drop your child by anytime from 10-3pm. Pre-registration is required.

PLEASE NOTE: West Side Kollel has two late minyanim during the week: 9:00 and 9:45.

Yasher Koach!

A very special appreciation and thanks to Brian Thau and the Youth Department for being a real asset to LSS. It's wonderful for our Youth to be a visible part of Synagogue activities.

NURSERY NOTES:

The LSS nursery school has been preparing for Chanukah. We are making chanukiot out of wood and tiles, candles out of paraffin and old crayons, and gifts too. When Chanukah comes we will make latkes and sufganiot, and the dreidel will come down every day with surprises in it.



**YOU ARE INVITED TO JOIN US
AT A PUBLIC CANDLE LIGHTING
CEREMONY EACH CHANUKA NITE
AT BROADWAY & 72nd ST.**

TUESDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 15	5:20 P.M.
WEDNESDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 16	5:20 P.M.
THURSDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 17	5:20 P.M.
FRIDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 18	NO PUBLIC CEREMONY
SATURDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 19	5:45 P.M.
SUNDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 20	5:20 P.M.
MONDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 21	5:20 P.M.
TUESDAY NIGHT DECEMBER 22	5:20 P.M.

A LINCOLN SQUARE SYNAGOGUE OUTREACH DEPARTMENT PROJECT

PROJECT DOROT NEEDS YOUR HELP!

Project DOROT needs volunteers to deliver holiday gift packages filled with Kosher foods and gifts, including latkes, menorahs and dreidels, and to visit with an older person for an hour.

YOU can help isolated Jewish elders on the Upper West Side to have a warm and bright Chanukah.

Please contact DOROT at (212) 769-2850 to let them know if they can count on you for this mitzvah.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Friday, December 4

Kindle Shabbat Candles.....4:10 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....4:20 P.M.

Saturday, December 5 (VAYISHLACH)

Shabbat Morning Service.....8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes.....3:25 P.M.
Mincha.....4:10 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....4:25 P.M.

Friday, December 11

Kindle Shabbat Candles.....4:10 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....4:20 P.M.

Saturday, December 12 (VAYAYSHEV)

Shabbat Morning Service.....8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes.....3:25 P.M.
Mincha.....4:10 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....4:25 P.M.

Tuesday Evening, December 15

Kindle First Chanuka Candle

Daily Morning Chanuka

Services.....7:00 and 7:50 A.M.

Friday, December 18

Kindle Four Chanuka Candles.....4:05 P.M.
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....4:11 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....4:20 P.M.

Saturday, December 19 (MIKETZ)

SHABBAT CHANUKA

Shabbat Morning Service.....8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes.....3:25 P.M.
Mincha.....4:10 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....4:25 P.M.

Sunday, December 20

Chanuka Morning Services...7:00 and 8:30 A.M.

Monday, December 21 & Tuesday, December 22

ROSH CHODESH TEVET

Morning Services.....7:00 and 7:40 A.M.

Friday, December 25

Morning Services.....7:15 and 8:30 A.M.
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....4:15 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....4:25 P.M.

Saturday, December 26 (VAYIGASH)

Shabbat Morning Service.....8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes.....3:30 P.M.
Mincha.....4:15 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....4:25 P.M.

Thursday, December 31

ASARA B' TEVET (FAST DAY)

Morning Services.....7:00 and 7:30 A.M.
Mincha.....4:15 P.M.

Friday, January 1 (NEW YEAR'S DAY)

Morning Services.....7:15 and 8:30 A.M.
Kindle Shabbat Candles.....4:20 P.M.
Mincha and Kabbalat Shabbat.....4:30 P.M.

Saturday, January 2 (VAYECHI)

Shabbat Morning Service.....8:45 A.M.
Talmud and Bible Classes.....3:35 P.M.
Mincha.....4:20 P.M.
Daily Mincha and Maariv.....4:35 P.M.

WITHIN OUR FAMILY

CONDOLENCES:

Leon Eisenmann, our devoted trustee, upon the passing of his beloved father, Mr. Samuel Eisenmann.

Monica Fishof upon the passing of her beloved father, Irving Schoenberg.

Dr. Merritt Hubsher upon the passing of his beloved father, Sydney Hubsher.

Gerald Kahn upon the passing of his beloved mother, Martha Kahn Wechsler.

Martin Weinberger upon the passing of his beloved mother, Mrs. Rachel Gouner.

BIRTHS:

Judy and Martin Braun upon the birth of a son, Daniel Moshe.

Miriam and Alan Goldberg upon the birth of a son, David.

Renee and Alan Leicht upon the birth of a son, Raphael Eliezer.

Beverly Luchfeld and Jack Flamholtz upon the birth of a daughter.

Navah and Rabbi Yoni Mozeson upon the birth of a son, Ariel Shalom.

Rose and Simeon Schreiber upon the birth of a grandson, Alexander Lew.

ENGAGEMENTS:

Debby Balaban and Barry Childress
Beth Eisenman and Rabbi Steven Cohen
Rachel Goldstein and Jay Jubas
Paula Knoll and Jonathan Gold
Dr. Bonnie Yellin and Dr. Brian Gilman
Esther Zelmanovici and Danny Jesselson

MARRIAGES:

Charlotte Naus and George Gold

BAT MITZVAH:

Mazel Tov to Shulamith and Rabbi Herschel Cohen on the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Devora Gisela. Mazel Tov to the grandmothers Mrs. Froomie Cohen and Mrs. Chana Lifshitz. Mazel Tov to her brother, Yehuda.

MATCHMAKER! MATCHMAKER!

The LSS Shadchen service will be meeting Monday and Tuesday evenings beginning in December. Please call Janet to set up an appointment (874-6100).

ACHIEVEMENTS:

Mazel Tov to our member Chavi Willig Levy upon the publication of her short fiction story "What's In a Name", which was just released in the December 1 issue of Family Circle magazine.

Mazel Tov to our member Amy Wolf upon her recent partnership with the law firm Wachtell, Lipton, Rosen & Katz.

NEW MEMBERS:

Ashley Bierman
Shimon Fulop
Barbara Goldstein
Daniel Haber
Elisa Kaplan
Margo Lee Kosoff
Michael Kranzler
Ida Langsam
Elliot Larner
Elliot Lasky
Michael Lewittes
Michael Liebert
Mali Lipener
Esther Alta Macner
Jules Ritholz
Mr. and Mrs. Sheldon Rudoff
Dr. Debbie Saltzberg
Rudy Schachne
Bruce Serkez
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Sholom
Baruch Weiss

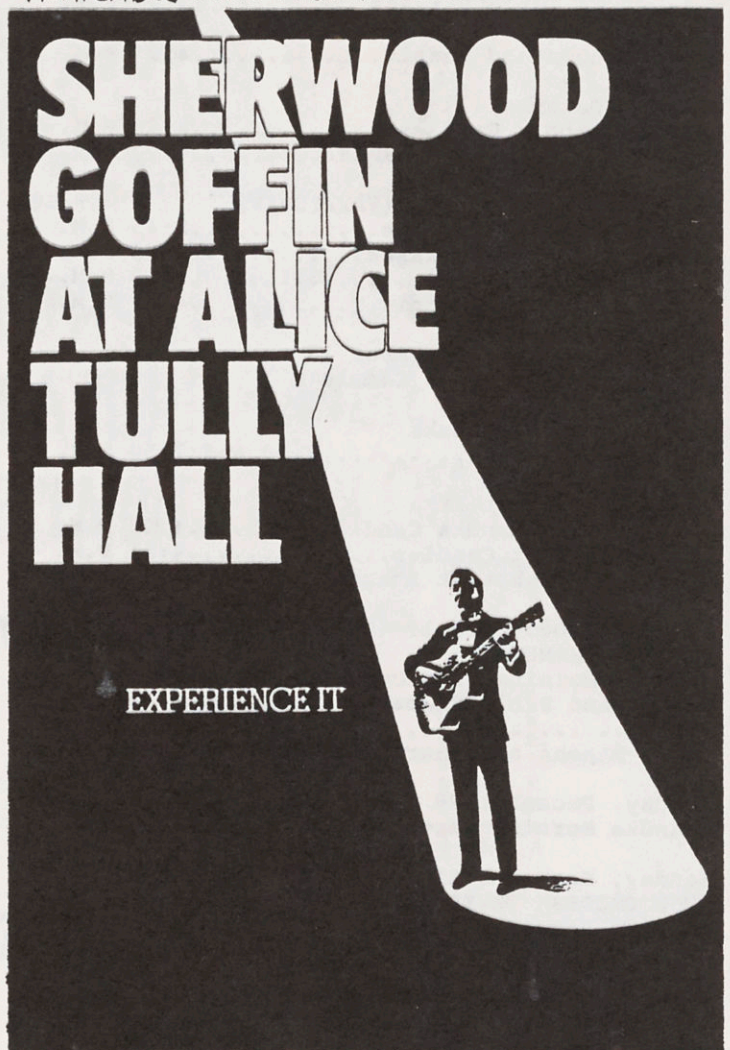
CHANGE OF DATE AND LOCATION--- SECOND ANNUAL MIDTOWN JEWISH COMMUNITY BENEFIT CONCERT

Rescheduled to Chanukah, Sunday,
Dec. 20, at 2:00-4:00 pm at the West Side
Inst'l Synagogue, 122 W. 76th St., NYC
Featuring: Cantor Peter Barron,
Cantor Mayer Davis, Cantor Moshe Geffen,
Cantor Sherwood Goffin, Cantor Shimon
Kugel, Cantor Joseph Malovany, Cantor
Philip Sherman, Cantor David Tevlovits

General Admission: \$20

Sponsor: \$100

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Address: _____

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form to: 200 Amsterdam Avenue
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The High Holidays seem far behind us, but we are still receiving letters from those who participated in our services. One very poignant letter follows:

A LETTER FROM JOEL BRAUSER
to RABBI KENNETH BRANDER

I'd heard about Lincoln Square Synagogue. I think my mother in Florida was the first one to tell me about it. Then there were articles in the Village Voice and New York magazine. Frankly, I felt an innate distrust about a shul that got so much publicity. I've heard about a lot of good restaurants on the Upper West Side also, and I've been disappointed too often.

But this year, as always, September snuck up on me. Suddenly it was cool outside for the first time and I realized it would be Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur soon. Now, I'm not religious, hardly even observant, but I do have some background: Hebrew School, Camp Ramah for a few years, then USY-On-Wheels. As a child and a young man, I found myself attracted to Judaism, and for a few years I was kosher on my own initiative.

Then I went to college (ironically, Brandeis University). I had my first unkosher morsel on the plane to Boston. Soon I was reading Moses and Monotheism and learning about "existentialism," and suddenly I began to call myself an atheist. I still identified culturally with my Jewish roots, and I always had a special affection for Israel, but around the time I turned eighteen it stopped seeming possible to me that there could be a G-d in this world.

It stayed like that for almost ten years. I just never gave the questions of G-d or my own Judaism another thought. Anyway, life was hard. I struggled with a career, living in New York City, being single. When the High Holidays came around, I always felt an inexplicable urge to go to temple. It was guilt, but also nostalgia I think, and even a kind of yearning that I hadn't yet begun to understand. I'd try to find a place in New York where I could go without a ticket, but in the end I usually had to take my chances sneaking in someplace.

This year was different. For some time already, an awareness of faith and my own deep connection to Jewish heritage had been growing within me. On Rosh Hashana I went with friends to their shul on Long Island--a nice conservative temple, but nothing clicked there. The only thing that came back to me was the memory of how we used to play football with our tieclips in the

lobby of my childhood synagogue. Then, as Yom Kippur approached, I made vague plans to try to sneak in someplace again. The day before Kol Nidre, one of my non-Jewish friends mentioned that he happened to have heard that there would be free services at Lincoln Square Synagogue. I found this hard to believe, but a telephone call confirmed the information. I had no idea of what to expect, but I thought: Why not?

I was a little nervous and arrived late for the Kol Nidre Service. I was surprised to see that the men and women were separated, and then remembered that it was an orthodox shul and I took a seat in the back (just in case) and looked around to see what other kinds of people had come that evening. There seemed to be at least a hundred others, and most of them were young. I thought that many of them must be just like me--with no place to go to pray on Yom Kippur, but with a desire to pray anyway. I looked up, and on the wall above the front of the room, where the Rabbi was conducting the service, I noticed the shadow of a Chase Manhattan logo that had been removed.

That wasn't the only surprising thing. I could tell at once that this wasn't a typical service. The Rabbi, who was young and unusually energetic, interrupted every few minutes or so to make comments about the service or perhaps even to ask questions of the startled congregation. His comments were so interesting and his questions so intriguing that there seemed almost to be a classroom atmosphere in the room. Naturally, however--this is New York, after all--people were reluctant to respond to the Rabbi's questions. Yet he persevered, even made some light remarks about the tension and our silence. As the evening wore on, the members of the makeshift congregation seemed to overcome some of their embarrassment, and the Rabbi was able to lead various discussions about prayer, the meaning of prayer, and why we were all there that night.

I found myself naturally drawn in by the intimate, unpretentious atmosphere, and I even squeezed forward several rows to be closer to the front. Then the Rabbi started calling upon people to read from the mahzor. I was shocked--I rubbed my eyes with disbelief: Was this an orthodox or a reform synagogue? Once again, my fellow congregants and I were reluctant and a little bit nervous about actually reading, speaking out or participating; and at first the Rabbi had to call on a few "volunteers." But others began to come forward on their own, and soon I found that I myself had volunteered. As I

read aloud, my heart was beating in my throat, but I was thrilled. Afterwards I sang out my prayers with renewed fervor.

When the service was over, I was reluctant to go home. I wandered up towards the main entrance to the synagogue. A crowd of men and women were talking outside. All of the men wore yarmulkes, and many wore their talit as well. It shocked me to see these people, these Jews, in their religious garb right there on Amsterdam Avenue. Young men and women! Children! Except for their religious dress, they looked like they should be sitting outside some trendy restaurant perhaps a few blocks further uptown. How strange! But then I also thought: How good to be one of them!

I was curious about what the main sanctuary was like, so I decided to risk an investigation without the benefit of a ticket. I pushed my way through the doors and into the crowded sanctuary, and what I saw astonished me. It was unlike any temple I had ever seen: The room was large and oval-shaped, and the congregation surrounded the Rabbi--or at least I assumed it was the Rabbi--who paced back and forth, and then around in circles, propelled, it seemed, by the enthusiasm and sincerity of his own prayer. The congregation swayed and sang, filling the room with some great, powerful emotion that didn't seem human--but at the same time seemed deeply human. For a moment I felt as if I had been transported back in time. My grandfather from Poland, who died in that land many years before I was born, might have worshipped in a place like this.

On Saturday I arrived at nine o'clock in the morning, a few moments before prayers began. I had never been to services that early in my life, but I thought that if they were as interesting as last night's, well, why not? I even took a seat near the front this time. I noticed the Rabbi from last night was there, and in particular as well two other men who seemed to be helping out quite a bit. The first wonderful thing that happened was when one of these men--who I learned later was Reb Bauman, a retired Rabbi and a member of the synagogue--offered me the first aliyah by asking me to open the ark. There weren't more than twenty people there so early, but I was nervous anyway. Afterwards, Reb Bauman shook my hand and said: "Yashi-co-ach! I hope this is the beginning of a new Jewish life for you." It seemed strange that he would say something like that, but suddenly I realized that I also hoped it was the beginning of a new Jewish life for me.

The morning service followed the pattern set the night before. Rabbi Brander--at last I had learned his name--continued to make his pithy interruptions. A couple of times he explained why a particular prayer was in the service, or how it had gotten there, or who had written it. As the congregation followed the prayers, he urged us to read the English, and when I did I found myself moved. At the same time, I discovered that my Hebrew was getting better with each passing hour. The strangely familiar black letters on the page came suddenly together in words that I knew how to pronounce, even sing. Prayers that I had learned years ago and then forgotten I now remembered.

Some of the same energy that I had seen at work the night before in the main sanctuary seemed to be at work in our service as well. Rabbi Brander and his colleagues conjured an excitement and intensity that filled the room and drew vital, enthusiastic prayer out of a congregation of strangers--Jews at all levels of commitment and alienation. I looked around and thought that I could see in the faces of the others what I felt in my own heart: How wonderful it was to be a Jew, how wonderful it was to pray.

After the Musaf service we took a break, and I imagined that I would go home. But Reb Bauman had offered to stay and speak with anyone who had questions or just wanted to talk. There were less than two hours until the afternoon and concluding services would begin, so I thought: Why not?

To my surprise, about a dozen others thought the same thing (and this group grew to twenty or more during the course of an hour). Reb Bauman answered questions about the Kaddish prayer and about kashruth, among other things, and he gave informal, articulate, wise explanations for a variety of Jewish customs and traditions. In his own turn, he asked questions of us, and there arose another healthy dialogue, like the ones that Rabbi Brander had brought about during the services, but here on an even more intimate and personal level. Reb Bauman's very eyes seemed to shine with the wisdom of the ages. For more than an hour, he not only explained but personified for us the essence of Judaism, its deep moral and ethical roots, its humor and character, and the immeasurable spiritual benefits which it brought to those who sought them.

Just before we began the Ne'ilah service, Rabbi Brander paused to say a few words. It occurred to me that aside from his numerous brief explanations and digressions, he hadn't given a

sermon in roughly ten hours of prayer. I thought that this might be some kind of record. When he spoke now, however, it still wasn't a sermon. In just a few minutes, he explained about Lincoln Square Synagogue, its policy of outreach and its extensive educational programs. He invited all of us to consider coming back for Shabbos or maybe for Sukkot in a few days. And then he spoke unpretentiously and movingly about what it meant to be a Jew.

He began by making reference to the first and second covenants that G-d had made with Moses--simply put, how in the first covenant (which didn't last) G-d had done all of the work; but in the second covenant (which has lasted a long time), it was necessary for Moses to make a great deal of effort, and by the same token, for the Jewish people as a whole to undertake an awesome and wonderful responsibility. When we speak of being a "chosen people," it doesn't mean that we are superior to others, Rabbi Brander pointed out, it just means that we have more responsibilities.

I can't present the matter as articulately or forcefully as Rabbi Brander was able to at

that moment after a long day of prayer. Nor can I reproduce the subtlety and effectiveness with which he suggested that during the closing service we each examine our own commitments and responsibilities to Judaism and to G-d. Yet I know that a moment of clarity and even peace came to me shortly afterwards, as I fervently chanted the last prayers of the Day of Atonement ("at-one-ment," Reb Bauman had reminded us that afternoon). And I understood that I needed to do more, I wanted to do more.

After almost eleven hours in the temporary sanctuary, Danny Mars--who had been one of those I had noticed helping out all day, and whom the Rabbi had praised for the inspiration for these free services--blew the shofar. He tried without success a few times, but then he hit a clear, strong, loud note. The congregation was riveted. The shofar blast shot through the room and seemed to lift our prayers to heaven.

I turned to my neighbor, whom I did not know, and we smiled and shook hands vigorously.

"L'shana haba-ah bi Yerushalayim!" we cried.

I felt peaceful, calm, renewed. Next year in Jerusalem, I thought: Why not?



M.R.Y.C. CALENDAR



DECEMBER 1987

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4 H.S. SHABBATON WITH YACHAD AT THE JEWISH CENTER 7-8TH GRADE SHABBATON IN RIVERDALE!	5 SHABBATONS CONTINUE!
6 Rally in Washington D.C. for Soviet Jewry	7	8	9	10 Y.U.	11 SEMINAR	12 FOR
13 SENIORS! H.S. SKI TRIP!!! MORE INFO. TO FOLLOW	14	15	16 C Y.U. (GOOD LUCK CHAIM)	17 H SEMINAR	18 A FOR	19 N JUNIORS
20 U 5-6TH GRADE ICE SKATING! MORE INFO. TO FOLLOW 1-4TH GRADE CHANUKAH PARTY	21 K	22 A	23 TORAH (GOOD LUCK BRIAN)	24 LEADER-	25 SHIP	26 SEMINAR
27	28	29	30	31 FAST OF THE 10TH OF TEVET	GET INVOLVED!!!	

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