

Congregation Knesseth Israel Newsletter



June 2008/5768

Services

Friday Nights
8:00 PM

Meetings

Ritual
June 16—7:30 PM
July 14—7:30 PM

Men's Club
July 16—7:30 PM

Bar/Bat Family
June 1—10:00 AM

Special Events

Bat Mitzvah
Jennifer Gordan
June 4

Bat Mitzvah
Rachel Saltzman
June 21—9:15 AM

Membership Open
House 6/1
10:30—12:30

Sisterhood Dinner
June 12—6:30 PM

Patriot's Ball Game
July 6—6:00 PM

CKI Picnic
July 27

WEB SITE
www.ckibnj.org

The Rabbi's Forum

by

Rabbi Jack Kramer



Periodically someone will say to me, "If I were really serious about being Jewish..." and then tell me about some aspect of Jewish practice that "real Jews" would do. Somewhere in the back of their minds is a picture of a real Jew, wearing a black coat, a fur hat and with a long gray beard.

Forget that this image describes no one in our congregation, nor does it describe the real aspirations of any member of CKI. Forget that this image excludes the full participation of women and totally years. Jewish artwork is replete with images of black coated Jews, and many of our folk tales eliminates the participation of many of our most active members. We have been programmed over the – including the popular Broadway show, *Fiddler on the Roof* - immortalize the image of shtetl East Europe as the true home of authentic Judaism. Our fear of insulting "real Jews" has given them a destructive power in Israel that forces a huge segment of Israelis to reject religion entirely.

It is critical for us to realize that what we are doing at CKI is as authentic and important to the future of Judaism as anything being done by the residents of Crown Heights, Monsey, or Mea Shearim – more so. When we cede authenticity to the minority, we undercut the legitimacy of our own journeys and efforts. I find that the majority of our members are truly searching for a way to make their Jewish identity meaningful and essential to their lives. Additionally, they are looking for ways to pass this meaning on to the next generations in a significant, meaningful way.

Our ancestor Jacob took on the name Yisrael (Israel). Our people have assumed this name to describe ourselves as a group. At its core, this name means "God wrestler" and it has always been the character of Judaism to wrestle with the changing nature of what it means to be Jewish. The Rabbis of 2,000 years ago had to wrestle with these changes when the Temple in Jerusalem was destroyed and the majority of Jews lived outside of the land of Israel. The nature of responsa literature that developed over the centuries was aimed at confronting the changes of history and geography.

As long as we are struggling with our identity and our practice, we are involved with our Jewish mission of coming to terms with living an ethical meaningful life based on Jewish truths. It is only when we give up, don't care, or make a decision simply because it is "the easy way" that we cede our Jewish choices to others. CKI and its membership are involved in a holy task. We must find that path that defines a thriving Jewish congregation that resonates with spirit, meaning and authenticity to its members. There is no greater Jewish task. Don't let others define us. Let us create an identity that is as uniquely CKI's and in tune with our membership as it is authentic and rooted in our Jewish past.

Shalom,

Jack Kramer

**WHOLE HEARTED THANK YOU TO
ALL CKI'S MENTORS**

The mentoring program has really picked up momentum this year. We have had a lot of wonderful congregants offer their valuable time to help students receive a Jewish education inside and outside the classroom setting. Our mentors have helped to improve the self esteem of students, helped to build a desire to want to learn about being Jewish, as well as helped to build a feeling of being proud to be Jewish. The following three mentors gave numerous hours of their own time this past school year to help a Religious/Hebrew school student:

Jazlanna Gerber
Sarah Halper
Marla Lecin

Thank you to all the congregants who so willingly put their names on the mentor volunteer list. You might not have been called this year, but that doesn't mean you won't be called next year. Students' needs change year to year and different mentors have different strengths and knowledge to offer the students. One mentor may be perfect for one year, but as a student progresses through the curriculum a new skill set may be needed from an alternative volunteer.

Everyone who volunteers to be a mentor is helping to educate our future Jewish leaders. High school students who mentor are able to use the hours toward their required community service hours. If you would like to have your name added to the mentor volunteer list, contact Carolyn Katz at 908-704-1252. Looking forward to another great year next year. Have a fun summer! :-)

Get Well Wishes

The Congregation wishes a speedy recovery to
Ruth Pariso
Audrey Kemelor
Betty Yuchnovitz
Bernie Singer

Mazel Tov!

**To Ben Weiss in celebration
of his Bar Mitzvah on
May 10th**

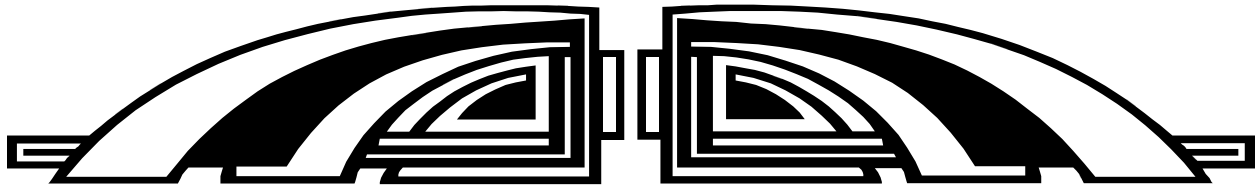
Congratulations

**On the upcoming
Bat Mitzvahs of
Jennifer Gordan, June 4th
and Rachel Saltzman on
June 21st.
We are proud of you!**

Tribute Cards

**Sisterhood tribute cards (Leagrams)
Are sent out for all occasions.
Cost is \$4.00 each**

**Call Harriet Hartman at 732-469-1834
to order**



President's Message By Phil Saltzman

For some of us, the year doesn't end around Rosh Hashana, or even Dec. 31. For some, the year ends around June 30. School's out. Summer vacation begins! To those in the corporate world, the fiscal calendar ends on June 30 for many companies. At CKI, there's a little truth to this calendar notion as well. We recently completed another exciting year in our Religious School, and CKI's fiscal calendar ends on June 30. While many of you are gearing up for a wonderful Summer vacation or a camping adventure, I wanted to remind everyone that there will still be weekly Shabbat services throughout the Summer. CKI has several activities coming up, including our June 1 Membership Drive Open House, and the annual Sisterhood dinner on June 12 (this is one event in which you don't have to be a CKI lady to attend!). There is the annual Patriots' baseball outing scheduled for July 6th, followed by fireworks. Also, our annual CKI Picnic is scheduled for July 27. If you haven't attended these events before, I encourage you to join us. They are a lot of fun!

I want to thank everyone who attended the annual Congregational Meeting on May 11, especially all you moms out there. I know Mother's Day is not the ideal date to schedule a meeting, but other calendar considerations limited our choices. There were a number of changes voted upon that you should be informed of:

Several families left CKI; several families joined CKI. There was no net gain in new membership. When you include the fact that Religious School enrollment had declined, there was a distinct loss of revenue compared to last year. This is an aspect of *ebb and flow* that many synagogues experience, especially in our current times of "economic duress". As such, a proposal to minimize our deficit spending and increase our dues structure was made and approved by a 32 to 1 margin. In doing so, however, a seniors' category was created which essentially locked in last year's dues (for the time being) for those 65 and older. Also, the 2008-2009 budget was approved. It reflects several cost cutting measures designed to minimize expense. We are making every effort to run as frugally and efficiently as possible.

Our Religious School Director, Susan Saltzman, is leaving the religious school, (but not CKI!), to pursue new educational avenues. Fortunately, after 5 years of innovating and restructuring CKI's Religious School, Susan has left us with a good curriculum and program intact. You will hear more about the coming school year from EdCom co-Chair Michelle Sherman and (new!) EdCom co-Chair Lisa Scherzer.

Fund Raising had its best year ever. The Fund Raising Committee raised over \$15K for the year through its many programs such as Shalach Manot (1st ever!), Megillah fund raiser, the recent Rummage Sale (another \$3500+ success story), and of course, our Gift Card program. Many thanks to everyone who participate in these worthwhile fund raisers, and a special thanks to Mark & Lisa Scherzer for spearheading these efforts.

Rabbi Kramer made a brief announcement on how happy he was to serve as our spiritual leader at CKI. He will strive to work towards increasing membership in 2008-2009, and to improving synagogue life. To this end, the Rabbi was recently offered a renewal of his contract for another year, which he graciously accepted. In addition, Cantor Joan Fuerstman made a verbal offer to serve as our Cantor through the High Holidays.

The subject of hardships came up at this meeting. Hardship cases are found in every sympathetic synagogue, and CKI is no exception. We will not turn away any family with legitimate financial and/or medical burdens. We do expect some level of contribution to CKI from a hardship eligible family, and in all circumstances, this has been the case. Also, percentagewise, our incidences of hardship are no higher than other synagogues. This is a delicate situation, one in which the greatest sensitivity and **confidentiality** is maintained. I'd like all congregants to be aware of this important community responsibility. I also want to thank Matt Lecin for suggesting the creation of the Hardship Fund, and for "seeding" it with a \$100 donation. This fund will be used to offset CKI's loss of revenue due to hardship cases and/or help those congregants in the direst of situations. In addition, there were various donations made at this meeting for flowers and the oneg for Rosh Hashana. The High Holidays will be here before long!

Lastly, final dues payments are due before the end of this month. You are most welcome to make dues payments, tuition payments, and even donations on your credit card. In this coming fiscal year, to better serve our accounting procedures and budget planning, dues payments will now be due no later than April 30.

I hope to see many of you over the Summer break. Please contact me with any questions or concerns pertaining to CKI synagogue life.

GIFT CARD UPDATE

The gift card program runs throughout the year and is a critical activity that helps bring in needed funds for the Temple. So PLEASE don't forget to continue buying cards during the summer for all your food and other shopping needs.

Since the start of the Fiscal Year, we have sold more than \$135,000 of cards and are on target to have a net profit of more than \$7500 this year.

The success of this program has enabled the Fundraising Committee to help support other areas at CKI including an expanded budget for the Membership Committee and support of the House Committee's efforts to keep CKI looking wonderful.

We also wanted to remind everyone that June 30, 2008 marks the end of the CKI Fiscal Year. As you all know, going into this fiscal year, the Board approved the Gift Card Program and also required that each full family purchase \$2000 in gift cards, and each single family purchase \$1000 in gift cards. This does not apply to new members (first year members).

Many of you have already purchased gift cards above and beyond what was required; for those that do not make the required level of purchases during the fiscal year, we will be sending invoices for a "Fund Raising Assessment" in July 2008.

Please contact Mark Scherzer via e-mail at markschezer@morganstanley.com or at 908-626-0305 (home) to check on your purchase totals for the fiscal year.

As a reminder, we offer gift cards for more than 1000 stores and keep many in stock for immediate purchase. Please also contact Mark for a list of all available stores including Groceries, Gasoline Stations, Clothing Stores, Department Stores, Restaurants, Toy Stores, Home Improvement, Movie Theaters, Hotels, etc...

PETSMART now participates in this program.

Again, thanks to all who have supported this program.
Lisa and Mark Scherzer
Fundraising

ADULT EDUCATION

Many different types of adult education have been offered this year.

We've had Sunday morning events that were led by Rabbi Kramer (e.g. Kashrut), by congregants (book clubs), and by non-members (Jewish Camps)

We've had a special Friday night service, where we focused on a more in-depth study of one section of the service.

We also had a forum led by the Rabbi on Tuesday evenings after Hebrew school on the topic of the divergence of Christianity and Judaism. We included a light meal along with study to accommodate people staying after Hebrew school ended.

For next year, we are planning a congregant led Hebrew study program to take place during Hebrew school hours. We will also continue many of the successful programs we have offered this year.

We are always looking for recommendations for forum topics, programs, books to discuss or other events of interest as well as volunteers to work on the committee. Please contact the temple office, or Abby Rutka at abby.rutka@gmail.com.

Newsletter Info

The newsletter will not be published in July or August. Please submit your September articles by August 15th. Thank you & have a great summer!

Sue Perrella

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 am Bar/Bat Family Mtg. 10:30- 12:30 Open House 42 L'O	27 Yom Yerushalayim 43 L'O	28 44 L'O	29 Rosh Chodesh Sivan 45 L'O	30 46 L'O	31 8:07pm 8:00 pm Service led by Jennifer Gordon 47 L'O	1 9:11pm Naso ***Mazel Tov*** 4:00 pm Bat Mitzvah of Jennifer Gordon Mincha Service 48 L'O
8 8:09pm Erev Shavuot 7:30 pm Shavuot Services 49 L'O	5 Shavuot #1 Shavuot - Day 1	6 Shavuot #2 Shavuot - Day 2	7 7:30 pm Sample Chai 5 class	8 6:30 pm Sisterhood Dinner	9 8:11pm 8:00 pm Service	10 9:14pm Behaaloteha
15 Father's Day	12 7:30 pm Ritual Comm. Mtg.	13 17	14 7:30 pm Men's Club Mtg.	15 19	16 8:13pm 8:00 pm Services led by Rachel Saltzman	17 9:16pm Shelah Leha ***Mazel Tov*** 9:15 am Bat Mitzvah of Rachel Saltzman
22 19	23 20	24 21	25 22	26 23	27 8:14pm 8:00 pm Service	24 9:17pm Korah
29 26	30 (Updated 6/5/08) 27					

July 2008

28 Sivan 5768 - 28 Tammuz 5768

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1	2	3	4	5
					8.13pm No Services	9.15pm Hukath
6 6:00 pm Patriot's Ball Game	7	8	9	10	11 8:00 pm Lay Services	12 9.12pm Balak
13	10 7:30 pm Ritual Comm. Mtg.	11	12	13 7:30 pm Men's Club Mtg.	14 8:00 pm Lay Services	15 8.05pm
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 9.08pm Pinhas
20 Tzom Tammuz	21	22	23	24	25 8:00pm 8:00 pm Lay Services	26 9.02pm Matoth
27 CKI Picnic 11:00- 5:00 at Possumtown Park	28	29	30	31 (Updated 6/5/08)	28	

JUNE/JULY YAHRZEITS

<u>Date</u>	<u>In Memory Of</u>	<u>Relationship/Observed by</u>
6/1/08	Essie Citrenbaum	Sister-in-Law of Philip Kaplan
6/3/08	Michael Himmelstein	Father-in-Law of Ida Himmelstein
6/6/08	Irving Carroll	Husband of Gail Carroll
6/6/08	Sybina Pless	Sister of Frances Cherwin
6/6/08	Peter Rutka	Brother of Tim Rutka
6/9/08	Joseph Rutka	Father of Tim Rutka
6/11/08	Joseph Epstein	Grandfather of Joseph Epstein Father of Alan Epstein
6/11/08	Fanny Laroff	Mother of Martin Laroff
6/17/08	Esther Z. Goldstein	Mother of David Goldstein
6/18/08	Bernice Unger Glasofer	Mother of David Glasofer
6/18/08	Mathilda Mersay	Mother-in-Law of Barbara Mersay
6/20/08	Esther Weinstein	Mother of Deborah Grammer
6/21/08	Thelma Lassman	Mother of Howard Lassman Mother-in-Law of Judy Heffron
6/24/08	Louis Sudzin	Husband of Goldie Sudzin
6/25/08	Ida Auerbach	Mother of Betty Yuchnovitz
6/26/08	Philip Levine	Uncle of Sandra Mirhige-Weiss Great-uncle of Jonathan
6/27/08	Isidore Zysman	Father of Barbara Zilberberg
6/28/08	Sidney Cohen	Uncle of Jill Jacques
6/30/08	Richard Hebert	Step-Grandson of Dorothy Indeck
6/30/08	Joseph Peisecki	Husband of Joann Peisecki
7/5/08	Jean Kass	Mother of Heidi Kass
7/7/08	Nathan Steur	Grandfather of Michelle Sherman Great-grandfather of Justin and Dylan (Not listed)
7/8/08	Steven Albaum	(Not listed)
7/12/08	Seena Bazerman	Mother of Toby Kemelor
7/12/08	Frieda Cohen	Grandmother of Stephen Weiss
7/14/08	Fannie Zeidman	Mother of Dorothy Indeck
7/16/08	Jennie Ackerman	Mother of Frances Cherwin
7/16/08	Rose Shapiro	Mother of Florence Wender
7/17/08	Arnold Rosoff	Brother of Harriet Hartman
7/18/08	Irving Getter	Brother-in-law of Frances Cherwin
7/19/08	Sarah Lemchen	Grandmother of Andrew Granett
7/20/08	Frieda Ackerman	Mother of Roslyn Sherman
7/20/08	Anna Liebowitz	Grandmother of Eleanor Gerber
7/22/08	Jay J. Rodkin	Father of Dennis Rodkin
7/23/08	Moses Fruchter	Father of Rena Fruchter
7/26/08	David Eisdorfer	Brother-in-law of Sue Eisdorfer
7/30/08	Isadore Negreann	Father of Meyer Negreann
7/31/08	Jacob Baskin	Father of Ruth Pariso
7/31/08	Martin Jenkins	Brother of Steve Jenkins