



Beth Shalom Weekly Update

Thursday, December 19, 2024 to Wednesday, December 25 2024
Hazzan Lance H. Tapper, Hon DMus Torah Portion Vayeshev

Shabbat Service - December 20, 2024 - 7:30 p.m.

SHABBAT SERVICES

Friday Evening 7:30 pm

SYNAGOGUE OFFICE HOURS

Erica will work from home Tuesday - Friday, 10:00a-4:00p. The Beth Shalom office will now be open by appointment only. Our office phone and email will continue to be attended to during office hours.

10:00a-4:00p Tuesday-Friday
562.941.8744
bswoffice@verizon.net

Yahrzeit

Jay Devore
in memory of mother
Edna Devore

Morton Goldberg
in memory of father
Max Goldberg

Michelle Hess
in memory of uncle
Emmanuel Morzinsky

Ada Kless-Gilbert
in memory of
Shirley Gilbert

Myra Becker
in memory of grandmother
Bella Bell

Mark Singer
in memory of father
John Singer

Happy Birthday

Ande Mass - Dec 21
Ryan Wein - Dec 24

Anniversary

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Clergy Schedule

Virtual Services: www.facebook.com/bethshalomofwhittier

**Services and events are once again open to in person. Services will continue to broadcast on Facebook simultaneously for those who cannot attend in person.*

December 20--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty
December 27--Shabbat Hanukkah--6:00 Festive Dinner in the Fellowship Hall (By reservation only--see flyer for details); **7:25 pm--Prelude; 7:30 pm Service** in the Sanctuary--Hazzan Lance and Ty
January 3--7:30 pm Service--Rabbi Ken
January 10--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty
January 17--7:25 pm Prelude; 7:30 pm Service--Hazzan Lance and Ty

Open Your Eyes

Torah Reading: Genesis 37:1 - 40:23
Haftarah Reading: Amos 2:6 - 3:8
Torah Portion: Vayeshev

By Rose Prevezer, posted on November 26, 2018

The Jerusalem Talmud tells us that Tamar would earnestly pray: "Master of the Universe, let me not go empty from this house!" With Judah withholding that which is owed to her - marriage to his remaining son and the security and children that would flow from that - she is in a state of despair. Overwhelmed with fear and with a longing to fill the emptiness in her heart and womb, she is compelled to enact a risky and potentially fatal plan by disguising herself as a sex worker in order to lie with Judah and conceive the promised child from the House of Jacob.

The narrative arcs of this story are echoed in the Talmudic tale of Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi, a man so pious he denies himself intimate relations with his wife. One day, his wife returns home and unbeknownst to him, finds him praying for relief from the evil impulse of his sexual yearnings. Believing his abstemious behavior indicative of a lack of interest in marital relations, she has long suppressed her own desire for intimacy. Yet it now transpires that he too craves relations; just not, she concludes, with her! Upset by this betrayal, the wife seeks to test his fidelity and awaken his desire for her by disguising herself as the famously beautiful sex worker, Heruta. The moment Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi sets eyes on Heruta, he is so overcome with desire that he immediately propositions and lies with her.

Service Attendance

If you are not a member, coming with a member or known to someone who will be at the service, please call the office before coming to any of our services. We do have security guards at all of our services and events.

Beth Shalom Services: We are open for in person services. If you are not yet comfortable coming to services in person, please tune in virtually by visiting our Facebook page, **Beth Shalom of Whittier**. When there is a livestream taking place, you can click on it and watch.

Book Club: This month's discussion about the Briar Club was very interesting. Our next book club meeting will be Tuesday, January 21, 2025, at 1:00pm. The book will be, "Making it So". It is an autobiography by Patrick Stewart, otherwise known as Captain Picard on Star Trek. For more information contact Michelle

Simcha Sharing Let the office know of your good news and we will share it in the next weekly. Weddings ★ Births

Tribute Cards To send a Tribute Card, please contact Michelle Hess. Her e-mail is: michelleh3532@gmail.com

PayPal Donations: Paypal donations welcome: bswoffice@verizon.net

Upcoming Events

Lunch and Learn
December 21 - 12:00 p.m.
See flyer on page 3.

Hanukkah Celebration
December 27 - 6:00 p.m.
See flyer on page 4.

Like Tamar, the wife of Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi has been denied so much by the man in her life. Like Tamar, she is confronting the emptiness and longing that comes from a lack of physical and emotional intimacy. Like Tamar, she is willing to step outside the bounds of what society deems to be acceptable behavior for a woman, going to extraordinary lengths to seize control of her own destiny and challenge the power of a patriarchal system that has denied her voice.

These are stories of women crying out, acting out, to be seen by the men in their life. Indeed, the story of Tamar is filled with the language of seeing. The place where Tamar sits to await Judah's arrival is called petah enayim; "entrance to Enaim," or, more literally "eye-opener." When Tamar reveals to Judah that he is the father of her child it is with the words: "haker-na" "recognize," recognize that this staff is yours; please recognize me as the mother of your child. The Talmud ([Sotah 10b](#)) suggests that with these words she is calling to Judah, "I request of you: recognize the image of your Creator in every person, and do not avert your eyes from me."

For the wife of Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi, the attempt to be seen does not end well. Returning home, Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi finds his wife, now stripped of her Heruta finery, lighting the stove, the ultimate symbol of contented domesticity. Shamed by his actions, he climbs inside. His wife pulls him out, explaining that Heruta was really her in disguise. This fact, which should absolve her husband's guilt, only increases it and he cries out: "But in any case, my intention was to transgress." It is clear that Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi did not recognize his wife as Heruta, and cannot recognize her now as a person with needs that deserve to be met. He is concerned only with how her actions affected him, perceiving the encounter with his wife not as an extreme but necessary manifestation of her longing for intimacy, but instead as an indictment of his sexual desires.

In contrast, Tamar is seen. Judah, to his credit, not only comes to recognize Tamar, but also acknowledges and accepts full responsibility for her situation and the extreme measures to which she was driven. He accepts her demand for change and secures her rightful place in his family by announcing: "She is more in the right than I, for I did not give her to my son Shelah." As such, Tamar and Judah are rewarded and from their union arises a lineage leading to King David.

Both narratives speak to the pain that arises when women's desires are suppressed, and barely acknowledged, as well as to the strength, endurance, and courage women display in order to overcome the limitations society place on them. They also teach us that when confronted with the pain and trauma of the women in our lives, we must not be like Rabbi Hiya bar Ashi, but rather like Judah, willing to listen and understand, to open our eyes and recognize the call for change. To know that incredible healing and blessing can follow when the needs of women are no longer ignored and their stories told.

See flyers on pages 3 - 4.



Beth Shalom of Whittier Lunch and Learn

Hazzanics 101 - The Musical Prayer Themes (Nusah) of the Entire Year and Why They are Important in our Services

Based on questions/comments from Hazzan Lance's recitation of the *Yahres Kaddish* on *Sh'mini Atzeret/Simhat Torah*, Hazzan Lance and Aryell Cohen together will take us on a musical and intellectual tour of the entire year's prayer chants. They will explain why we use them, when we use them, and how we use them.



Saturday, December 21, 2024--12:00-2:00 pm

(in the FFC Fellowship Hall)

Lunch will be provided.

RSVP to the temple office by December 13,

by email: bswoffice@verizon.net or

by phone: 562-941-8744.

Join your shul friends for an afternoon of intriguing conversation and delicious nosh.

Please note: during these troubled times, in person services and events will only be open to members, former members, and anyone who is known to our Board of Directors.



BETH SHALOM OF WHITTIER

INVITES YOU TO OUR

SHABBAT HANUKKAH CELEBRATION

A FESTIVE DINNER AND SERVICE

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 27, 2024

First Friends

13205 Philadelphia St, Whittier, CA 90601

FELLOWSHIP HALL

**6:00 PM—SHABBAT HANUKKAH DINNER & GIFTS
LATKES, BRISKET, AND SUFGANIYOT--CATERED BY PANACHÉ**

MEETING HOUSE (SANCTUARY)

7:25 PM—PRELUDE

7:30 PM —SHABBAT HANUKKAH SERVICE WITH HANUKKIAH LIGHTING

OFFICIANTS:

**Hazzan Lance H Tapper, Hon DMus, Spiritual Leader
Ty Woodward, Organist**

DUE TO HEIGHTENED SECURITY

**ALL PERSONS ATTENDING THE DINNER AND/OR SERVICE WILL PASS
THROUGH OUR SECURITY TEAM FOR ADMITTANCE.**

**THOSE WISHING TO ATTEND THE COMPLEMENTARY (NO COST) DINNER MUST CALL
OUR SYNAGOGUE OFFICE AT 562-941-8744 TO MAKE RESERVATIONS.**

THE RESERVATION DEADLINE IS DECEMBER 19, 2024