

TEMPLE EMANU-EL Bulletin

Volume 79, Number 33

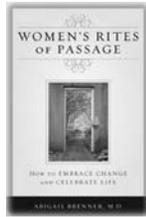
April 13, 2007

UPCOMING EVENTS

WOMEN'S RITES of PASSAGE How to Embrace Change and Celebrate Life

Tuesday, April 17 6 p.m.

A final reminder about the Women's Auxiliary-sponsored lecture featuring **Dr. Abigail Brenner**, who will discuss the importance of marking major milestones in one's life and using ritual as a way to heal, grow and celebrate. Cost is \$10 for Women's Auxiliary members, \$15 for nonmembers (Make checks payable to the Women's Auxiliary.) Light refreshments will be served. (212) 744-1400, ext. 235



SABBATH SERVICES

Friday evening, April 20 Main Sanctuary

Organ Recital—5 p.m.
Sabbath Eve Service—5:15 p.m.
WQXR Radio (96.3 FM) and Internet
(www.wqxr.com) broadcasts—5:30 p.m.

Saturday morning, April 21 Women's Auxiliary Lounge

Torah Study—9:15 a.m.
Main Sanctuary
Service—10:30 a.m.
Torah Portion—Tazria-Metzora
Readings—Leviticus 12:1-15:33
II Kings 7:3-20
Sermon: Rabbi David M. Posner

MUSIC at
EMANU-EL

YOUNG ARTISTS CONCERT

Sunday, April 22 3 p.m.

Larry Weng, 19, is the featured performer at our final piano recital for the season presented by the Stecher & Horowitz Foundation. Studying since age 7, Larry was awarded first prize in the ensemble category and second prize in the solo category at the 2006 New York Piano Competition. Admission to **Greenwald Hall** is free and open to the public. Enter at the Marvin and Elisabeth Cassell Community House, One East 65th Street.



OPERA GALA 2007

Tuesday, April 24 6 p.m.

Temple Emanu-El, in conjunction with the Richard Tucker Music Foundation, is proud to present a wonderful evening featuring six of the **Metropolitan Opera's** brightest stars performing popular arias by Verdi, Puccini and Rossi in our **Main Sanctuary**. Admission is free and open to the public.



A hearing loop is installed in the Main Sanctuary; switch hearing aid to T-coil. Headsets or neck loops also are available for use in both the Main Sanctuary and Greenwald Hall.



B'NEI MITZVAH

**The following students of our Religious School
will become B'nei Mitzvah this weekend:**

Samantha Rose Klein, daughter of
Ms. Elisa Harris and Mr. Steven Klein

Nicole Kramer, daughter of
Stephanie and Ronald Kramer

Alexander Clayton Raiff,
son of Harley and Robert Raiff

Amanda Rachel Temes,
daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen M. Budd
and Mr. and Mrs. Steve J. Temes

We are grateful for their sponsorship of Friday evening's Oneg Shabbat.

PULPIT FLOWERS

**Pulpit flowers at Sabbath worship services this weekend
are the generous donation of our congregants:**

Karen and Stephen Budd
in honor of *Amanda Temes*
becoming a bas mitzvah

Stephanie and Ronald Kramer
in honor of *Nicole Kramer*
becoming a bas mitzvah

Harley and Robert Raiff
in honor of *Clay Raiff*
becoming a bar mitzvah

Herbert C. Bernard
in loving memory of my parents,
Essie and Louis Bernard

Suzanne Sloan Doyle
in loving memory of
Peter Moore

Robert, Ann and Jessica Freedman
in loving memory of
Felix C. Fertig

Joan C. and David Helpern
in loving memory of *Mildred Capelin*

Robin M. Laden in loving memory
of her father, *Leonard Laden*

John, Laurie, Matthew,
Spencer and Amanda Rudey and
Liz, Kirk and Kate Rudey Ruebenson
in loving memory of *Samuel Richard Rudey*

TO BE NOTED

SUMMER CLOTHING DRIVE

Reminder: Our Tikkun Olam clothing
drive continues through **April 30**.

We are seeking new and gently used summer
clothes for youth ages 7 to 16. Items will be
donated to **Camp Kiwago**, a sleep-away
camp at Harriman State Park for children from
shelters. Shirts, shorts, bathing suits, flip flops,
socks, sweats, sneakers and hats are requested.
Deliver your items to either the 65th Street or
66th Street lobby. (212) 744-1400, ext. 452

(See page 4 for more volunteer activities.)

Charles S. Salomon
The Universal Funeral Chapel

1076 Madison Avenue (212) 753-5300
Our service is available in the Temple, home, or our Chapel.

The Cemeteries of Congregation Emanu-El
Salem Fields and Beth-El

A limited number of above-ground crypts are available in
our community mausoleum. For information, please call
Dr. Mark W. Weisstuch at the Temple Office, (212) 744-1400.

As part of our Emanu-El Reads! program focusing on the life and labors of Moses Maimonides, Rabbi Posner delivered an opening lecture concentrating on the Aristotelian background of Maimonides' time and what was the essential "Maimonidean" problem.

Following is our final excerpt related to his lecture.

FINAL LECTURES!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS
FOR OUR FINAL TWO PROGRAMS...

**MAIMONIDES:
The MAN and HIS WORKS**
Thursday, April 19 6:30 p.m.

In addition to writing our Maimonides text, **Dr. Sherwin Nuland** is the author of nine previous works. His books include *Lost in America: A Journey With My Father*, *How We Die: Reflections on Life's Final Chapter* and *Doctors: The Biography of Medicine*. His writings have appeared in *The American Scholar*, *The New Republic*, *The New Yorker*, *The New York Review of Books*, *The New York Times* and *Time*. He is a clinical professor of surgery at Yale, where he also teaches bioethics and medical history.



**The CONGREGATION
STUDIES and DISCUSSES**
Wednesday, April 25 6:30 p.m.

Our year-long study culminates with small-group discussions, where we'll address our impressions of Maimonides' works, the group text and the various lectures from throughout the year. Light refreshments to be served. Reserve your space at this event—*Call (212) 744-1400, ext. 362 by Friday, April 20.*

Both of these events will be held in the Marvin and Elisabeth Cassell Community House. Enter at One East 65th Street.

ALTHOUGH MAIMONIDES WAS the supreme Aristotelian of all medieval Jewish philosophers, he and Aristotle parted ways on one major concept. Maimonides had tremendous difficulty with Aristotle's concept of the universe being of an eternal existence—something that always was and always would be. Neither Aristotle's cosmology (structure of the universe) nor his theology allowed for *creatio ex nihilo* (creation out of nothing), and for Maimonides—a Jew believing in the first chapter of Genesis—creation had to be a reality.

For Aristotle, God (the Deity) was eternal and pure intelligence, unrelated to anything physical. For God to be eternal, God could not be physical because all things physical were subject to change, decay and death. God could not be subject to change because change would imply the existence of an agent independent of God that could effectuate such change. This, in turn, would mean that the Deity was not all powerful—something that Aristotle did not believe.

As pure and unchanging intelligence, God could think of only one thing...and that would be God alone. This act of self-contemplation, according to Aristotle, is what animated the entire process of the universe...what gave the universe its "soul" (to animate...from *anima*...meaning "soul"). Thus, for Aristotle, God was not the source of being but rather the cause of setting the universe in motion. Furthermore, because God was eternal and unchanging, the universe and its process also were unchanging. For Aristotle, the movement of the stars, sun and moon would continue forever and always. (He also believed that species, as an overarching concept, likewise would remain eternal, but Aristotle was pre-Darwinian, to say the least.) However, as far as

EXAMINING MAIMONIDES: UNDERSTANDING JEWISH PHILOSOPHY



the sublunar world (our own planet) was concerned, individual elements in its existence were physical in nature and, thus, subject to change, decay and death.

Maimonides could accept almost everything posited by Aristotle—all except for his notion of a universe that did not include a process of creation. Maimonides took an ultimate stand on this issue in the following passage from the 25th chapter of the *Guide of the Perplexed*:

Know that our shunning of the affirmation of the eternity of the world is not due to a text figuring in the Torah according to which the world has been produced in time. For the texts indicating that the world has been produced in time are not more numerous than those indicating that the Deity is a body. Nor are the gates of figurative interpretation shut in our faces or impossible of access to us regarding the subject of the creation of the world in time, for we could interpret them as figurative, as we have done when denying His corporeality. Perhaps this would even be much easier to do.

Two causes are responsible for our not doing this or believing it. One of them is as follows: The eternity of the world has not been demonstrated. Consequently in this case the texts ought not to be rejected and figuratively interpreted in order to make prevail an opinion whose contrary can be made to prevail by means of various sorts of arguments. This is one cause.

The second cause is as follows. Our belief that the Deity is not a body destroys for us none of the foundations of the Law and does not give lie to the claims of any prophet. The only objection to it is constituted by the fact

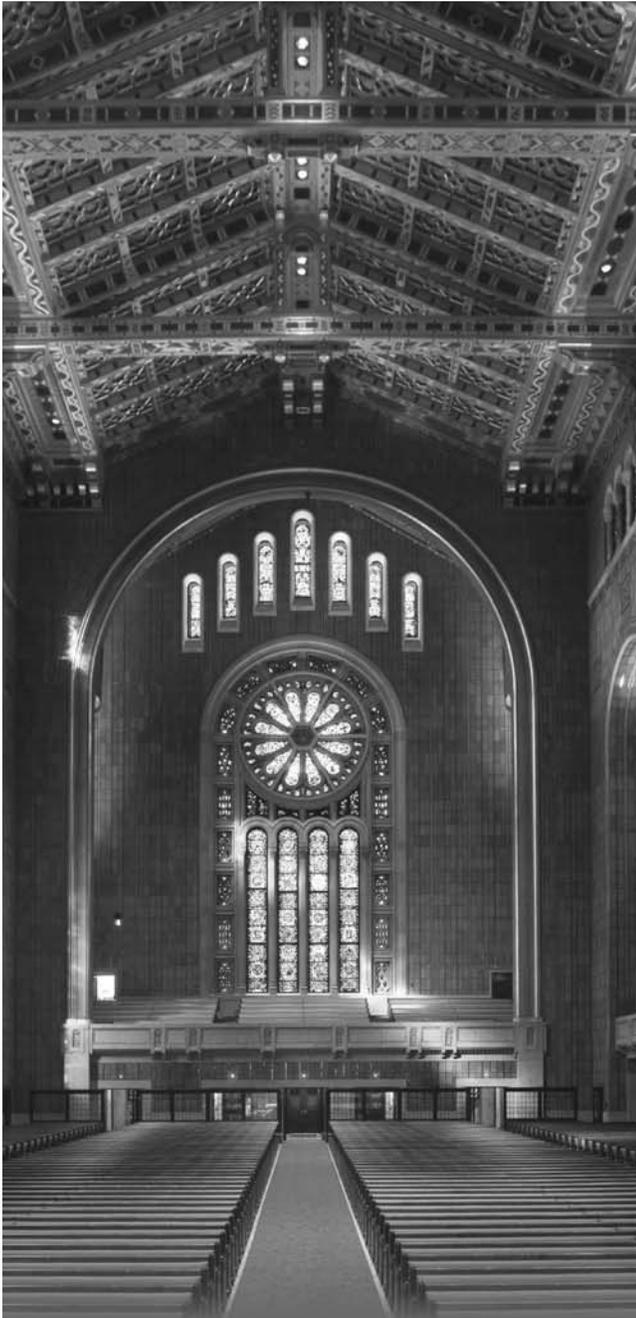
that the ignorant think that this belief is contrary to the text; yet it is not contrary to it, as we have explained, but is intended by the text. On the other hand, the belief in eternity the way Aristotle sees it—that is, the belief according to which the world exists by virtue of necessity, that no nature changes at all, and that the customary course of events cannot be modified with regard to anything—destroys the Law in its principle, necessarily gives lie to every miracle, and reduces to inanity all the hopes and threats that the Law has held out, unless—by God!—one interprets the miracles figuratively also, as was done by Islamic internalists; this, however, would result in some sort of crazy imaginings.

Simply put, Moses Maimonides—the Rambam—of whom we say, “From Moses to Moses—there has been none like Moses”—ultimately refused to disturb the foundation of Judaism on so basic a level and to ally himself with theories that he believed could not be proven.

TZEDAKAH BANKS

The time has come to return the “Tzedakah Banks” that were handed out on Mitzvah Day, in conjunction with our *Emanu-El Reads!* program, as an incentive to collect loose change. To honor Maimonides as physician and philosopher, our combined collection will be used to purchase medical equipment for **Schneider Children’s Medical Center of Israel**. Banks should be returned to the lobby of One East 65th Street between **April 4** and **April 30**. (Religious School families may return banks to 10 E. 66th Street.)





SANCTUARY REVEALED

THE RESTORATION OF AN
ARCHITECTURAL ICON

EXHIBIT EXTENDED!
On view at the Bernard Museum
through June 12, 2007
Museum hours: Sunday through
Thursday, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
(212) 744-1400, ext. 259

UPCOMING EVENTS

FAMILY SHABBAT: Worship Service & Dinner

Friday, April 20

6:15 p.m.

Don't miss our final family service of the season. Families with children through early school age will celebrate at a **Young Families Tot Shabbat**. Those with children who can read will celebrate with our **Junior Congregation**. After, we'll gather for dinner and an art project. (212) 744-1400, ext. 242 for Young Families, ext. 501 for Junior Congregation

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY: Book Discussion Group

Tuesday, April 24

12:30 p.m.

Reminder—**Rabbi Nadia Gold** will lead us in discussing ***Betraying Spinoza: The Renegade Jew Who Gave Us Modernity*** by Rebecca Goldstein (published by Schocken Books). Author Goldstein offers both a biography of the 17th century philosopher Baruch Spinoza (who grew up in a Jewish community that fled the Spanish-Portuguese Inquisition) and an analysis to understand his denial of the importance of Jewish identity (which ultimately led to a charge of heresy and his being expelled from Amsterdam's Jewish community). Feel free to bring your lunch. Coffee and cookies will be served. (212) 744-1400, ext. 235

CONSERVATIVE, ORTHODOX and REFORM: Understanding

Three Branches of Judaism

Sunday, April 29

10 a.m.

The Men's Club invites all Temple members to a not-to-be-missed discussion about Jewish interdenominational relations, featuring our own senior rabbi, **David M. Posner**; **Arthur Schneier**, senior rabbi of Park East Synagogue; and **David H. Lincoln**, senior rabbi of Park Avenue Synagogue. The panel will be moderated by Men's Club president **Ross Brady**. The cost for this event is \$15 per person, which includes a continental breakfast. (Make checks payable to the Men's Club.) (212) 744-1400, ext. 250

BEYOND THE TEMPLE

PROJECT BACKPACK

Students from **P.S. 112**—the school to which we donated backpacks full of school supplies (and will do so again this fall)—will be visiting Temple Emanu-El on **Wednesday, April 18** and **Monday, June 4** to view our sanctuaries, museum and library. The Women's Auxiliary, which oversees this project, is seeking chaperones to assist during their visits. This is a wonderful opportunity for all who so generously supported Project Backpack to interact with children from the school. (212) 744-1400, ext. 235

WANTED: CHAPERONES

We need five volunteers to be chaperones for a group of disabled youth (served by **New Alternatives for Children**), who will be touring the New York Hall of Science in Queens on

Saturday, April 21 from approximately **11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.** The Hall of Science is a hands-on science and technology center with more than 400 exhibits. (212) 744-1400, ext. 452

TEAM EMANU-EL

Tikkun Olam is seeking congregants who would like to participate as a group in walkathons for various charitable organizations. Tikkun Olam will organize the team and provide T-shirts; raising funds remains the responsibility of each walker. Our first event will be the 13th annual walkathon in support of the **Pediatric Cancer Foundation** on **Sunday, April 22**. Other upcoming events include the **Revlon Run/Walk for Women** on **Saturday, May 5** and the **AIDS Walk New York** on **Sunday, May 20**. (212) 744-1400, ext. 452

TEMPLE EMANU-EL BULLETIN



April 13, 2007
Volume 79, Number 33
Web site: www.emanuelnyc.org

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