

TEMPLE EMANU-EL Bulletin

Volume 80, Number 18

December 28, 2007

WORSHIP SERVICES

**Friday evening, January 4
Temple 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, January 5
Women's Auxiliary Lounge**

Torah Study—9:15 A.M.

Temple Sanctuary

Service—10:30 A.M.

Torah Portion—*Vayeira*

Readings—Exodus 6:2-9:35

Ezekiel 28:25-29:21

Sermon: Rabbi Howard Goldsmith

SHABBAT SHALOM

Friday, January 11 — 6:30 P.M.

TOT SHABBAT

Friday, January 25 — 6:15 P.M.

SHABBAT KODESH

Friday, January 25 — 6:30 P.M.

Sabbath and holiday services are available for downloading from the Temple Web site (www.emanuelnyc.org) generally within one hour of the conclusion of the live service and for up to one week.

And...Read our weekly Torah Commentary available online. Click "Learning: Adult Education."



Hearing Loop installed in Temple Sanctuary and Beth-El Chapel; switch aid to T-coil. Headsets or neck loops also available for use.

**BRUNCH
& LECTURE**

**Calling Things by
Their Real Name and
Fighting to Win**

With Edward A. Turzanski

Sunday, January 6 10 A.M.

**Edward A.
Turzanski**

is a senior fellow with the Center for Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism and Homeland Security at the Foreign Policy



Research Institute in Philadelphia. He also serves as a national security analyst at La Salle University (Philadelphia), where he teaches in the department of political science. Prior to his university appointment, Mr. Turzanski served with the U.S. government in the field of intelligence throughout the Middle East, Central Asia and Eastern Europe. He is a life member of the Association of Former Intelligence Officers.

Mr. Turzanski received bachelor's degrees in Russian and political science from La Salle University and a master's degree in political science from Villanova University. He also has completed courses of study with the U.S. Army War College and the Joint Military Intelligence College.

The cost for this event is \$30 for Men's Club members (\$40 for nonmembers), which includes brunch. Make checks payable to the Men's Club. RSVP by phone to (212) 744-1400, ext. 250 or mensclub@emanuelnyc.org.

PULPIT FLOWERS

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

In commemoration of
Vivian Schulte's birthday

Marne Obernauer Jr. and
Matthew and Michael Obernauer
in loving memory of
Marion Gislason Obernauer

TO BE NOTED

The Men's Club Reading Group will meet on **Tuesday, January 8 at 9 A.M.** to discuss *Barney Ross*, a biography of the Jewish champion boxer and World War II hero written by journalist Douglas Century. The February selection will be *The Lost: The Search for Six Million* by Daniel Mendelsohn. **All Temple members are invited to join in the discussion.** Enter at the Marvin and Elisabeth Cassell Community House, One East 65th Street.

Are you an experienced knitter, or have you always wanted to try? Then don't miss the next session of **Stitch'n Time**, our *Tikkun Olam* knitting group, which meets on **Sunday, January 13**. *Stitch'n Time* meets periodically to work on projects that are donated to Beth Israel Hospital and the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services. Sessions run from **11 A.M. to 2 P.M.** Prior experience is not required, and people of all ages are welcome to join us. However, participation is limited to Temple members. Questions? Call (212) 744-1400, ext. 452.

ADULT EDUCATION CLASSES:

- "Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes" with Saul Kaiserman begins Tuesday, January 15.
 - "The Life of David" with Rabbi Amy B. Ehrlich begins Wednesday, January 16.
- View the Temple Web site for full information.

Charles S. Salomon
The Universal Funeral Chapel
1076 Madison Avenue (212) 753-5300
Our service is available in the Temple, home, or our Chapel.

WINTER
at SKIRBALL

The Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning at Temple Emanu-El links liberal Jews to the richness of Jewish study that is relevant and meaningful. At Skirball, Jewish learning is infused with excitement and depth, complexity and diversity. Skirball enhances the search for what it means to be a human being and a Jew. For more information, call (212) 507-9580 or log on to www.adultjewishlearning.org.

Winter classes begin Sunday, January 27, with more than 40 offerings covering all areas of Jewish study. Highlights include the *Sundays at Skirball* lecture series, Hebrew language courses and *Jews in American Cinema*, a film festival taking place on Wednesdays at 7 P.M. In addition, the monthly *Openings* program continues with its two discussion subjects ("What is the Relevance of Judaism Today?" and "Jews and Politics"), as does *After Words: New Perspectives on the Weekly Torah Portion*, an exciting lecture series led by a diverse group of intellectuals, writers, artists and scholars (Thursdays at 7 P.M., starting January 10).



SKIRBALL



The Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning at Temple Emanu-El

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.

FOLKWAYS, LEGEND, LORE: CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS OF OUR PEOPLE

By Rabbi David M. Posner

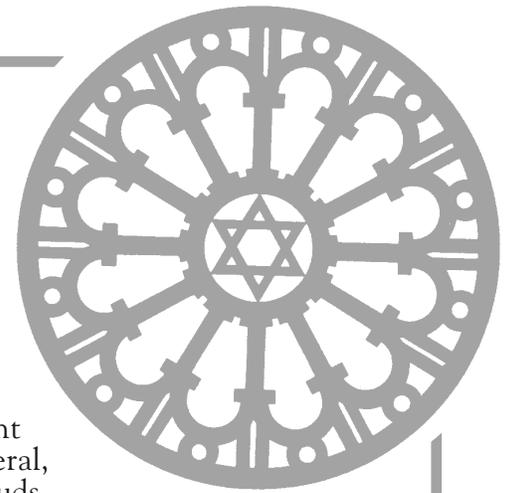
ONE OF THE MOST important institutions in the Jewish community throughout the ages was the *Chevra Kadisha*, the Burial Society. Jewish tradition always has stressed the importance of the proper preparation of the dead for burial, and this responsibility originally fell upon the relatives and friends of the deceased. By the 16th century, however, the ritual laws and procedures relating to funeral practices had become so complex that this sacred duty was transferred to those who had been specially trained in the proper manner of burial.

The *Chevra Kadisha* was composed of leading men and women of the community, respected for their piety and integrity. It was a highly exclusive group and membership was considered a great honor.

Two degrees of status existed in the *Chevra* — the *Mitasekim*, older long-time members, who prepared the body in the shroud for burial, and the *Shamashim*, the younger assistants who carried the body and prepared the grave. In addition, member duties included tending the sick, reciting the prescribed prayers immediately preceding and following death, “sitting up” with the body

during the night before the funeral, preparing shrouds, digging the grave, maintaining the cemetery and consoling mourners during the *shivah* period. Some congregations maintain their own *Chevra Kadisha* to this day.

Judaism is rife with many other customs related to death. It should be noted, however, that the Rabbis of old had ab-



solutely no understanding of the nature of death and its finality, as evidenced through even a casual reading of the medieval Jewish codes relating to death and burial.

That is why they forbade eating within view of a corpse (the dead would want to eat but cannot) or the laying of phylacteries in front of the deceased. (Why cause the departed anguish when he or she is in no state to fulfill this precept?) Other customs included the writing of notes to the deceased, using a small stone to keep them in place on the gravestone. People today no longer write the notes, but many

continue to place the small stones, for reasons that few really understand. But, as far as medieval Jewish law is concerned, death is shrouded in mystery and in fear.

Houses of Life JEWISH CEMETERIES OF EUROPE



Faro, Portugal. Interior of Jewish Cemetery, established circa 1838. Photo by Hans D. Beyer.

**On view now at the
Bernard Museum of Judaica
Sunday — Thursday,
10 A.M. — 4:30 P.M.
(212) 744-1400, ext. 259**

BEYOND THE TEMPLE

**GUIDED TOUR:
Morgan Library & Museum**
Tuesday, January 8 12:30 P.M.

The Women's Auxiliary of Congregation Emanu-El cordially invites its members to a docent-led tour of the newly renovated **Morgan Library & Museum**, including exhibits currently on display. After, we will gather for tea. Cost is \$50 per person, and capacity is limited to 30 people per tour. Checks, made payable to the Women's Auxiliary, must be received by January 3. On the day of the event, we will meet at the museum (Madison Avenue at 36th Street). Questions? Call (212) 744-1400, ext. 235.

A complex of buildings located in the heart of New York, the Morgan began as the private library of financier Pierpont Morgan. In 1924, 11 years after Morgan's death, his son (J.P. Morgan Jr.) realized that the library



Photo by John Calabrese

had become too important to remain in private hands. In what constituted one of the most momentous cultural gifts in U.S. history, he fulfilled his father's dream of making the library and its treasures available to scholars and the public alike. The largest expansion in the Morgan's history was completed in 2006 and designed by Pritzker Prize-winning architect Renzo Piano.

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