

TEMPLE EMANU-EL Bulletin

Volume 78, Number 14

December 9, 2005

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sunday, December 11 2 p.m.
**Scattered Among the Nations:
Guest Lecture With Bryan Schwartz**

In conjunction with its new exhibit, "Scattered Among the Nations: Jewish Communities of India, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Peru and Uzbekistan," the Herbert & Eileen Bernard Museum of Judaica is sponsoring a special lecture with photographer Bryan Schwartz. A Washington, D.C.-based civil rights attorney, Mr. Schwartz also is president of the nonprofit organization Scattered Among the Nations as well as a widely published writer/photographer, who has documented some of the world's most far-flung Jewish communities in 28 countries on five continents.



SABBATH SERVICES

**Friday evening, December 16
Lowenstein 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, December 17
Women's Auxiliary Lounge**
Torah Study—9:15 a.m.
Lowenstein Sanctuary
Service—10:30 a.m.
Torah Portion—Vayishlach
Readings—Genesis 32:4-36:43
Obadiah 1:1-21
Sermon: Rabbi Amy B. Ehrlich

AROUND
THE TEMPLE

Tuesday, December 13
6 p.m.
King David & His Harp

Temple members are invited to an evening of music, song and discussion featuring Dr. Jasmin Cowin and Cantor Lori Corrsin. A wine-and-cheese reception will precede the concert. Enter at the Marvin and Elisabeth Cassell Community House, One East 65th Street.



This event is sponsored by the Women's Auxiliary of Temple Emanu-El. For information, about becoming a member, call (212) 744-1400, ext. 235.

Friday, December 16 7 p.m.
**Sabbath Dinner
With Rabbi Posner**

The Men's Club invites Temple members to celebrate the Sabbath with merriment, fine dining and superb company!



We will gather at Palm Too, 840 Second Avenue (between 44th and 45th streets). The cost



for this event is \$135 per person. Checks made payable to Men's Club of Congregation Emanu-El must be received by Monday, December 12. Questions? Call (212) 744-1400, ext. 250.

TO BE NOTED

Change of Program Dates

Students participating in our Eighth Grade Leadership Academy should note that our remaining sessions have been moved from Monday evenings to Sunday evenings. We will meet from 5 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.; dinner will be served. *For more information, send an e-mail to Rabbini Intern David Young at ravpapa@hotmail.com or call (212) 744-1400, ext. 501.*

Gilbert & Sullivan's "Mikado"

The Women's Auxiliary invites you to escape the January blues with a "visit" to the town of Titipu for a Sunday matinee performance of "The Mikado" on January 8, 2006, at NY City Center. Cost is \$85 per person; proceeds will benefit the senior citizens program sponsored by the Women's Auxiliary. Checks must be received by December 30. *For more information about Women's Auxiliary programs or how to become a member, call (212) 744-1400, ext. 235.*

"The Odd Couple" on Broadway

The Men's Club has a few remaining tickets for their February 1, 2006, outing to see "The Odd Couple," starring Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick. Cost is \$175 per ticket for Men's Club members, \$190 for nonmembers. Checks made payable to the Men's Club must be received ASAP. *For more information, call the Men's Club office at (212) 744-1400, ext. 250.*

CHANUKAH
MITZVAH

DOROT Chanukah Package Delivery

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18
10 AM to 12 PM

Looking for a great way to celebrate Chanukah this season? Then consider volunteering "Family Style." As part of DOROT's Family Circle Program, families with children aged 4 to 12 are invited to participate in the group's annual Chanukah Package Delivery. Families will receive a Chanukah food package and a bag filled with age-appropriate holiday activities for use during a visit with a senior citizen. Visits should last approximately 45 minutes.



New volunteers will first participate in a 20-minute family orientation at which they will role-play what it might be like on their visit to an older friend.

Families must register as space is limited; call (212) 769-2850. All families will meet at DOROT, 171 West 85th Street (just east of Amsterdam Avenue). To help offset costs, volunteers are asked to make a suggested donation of \$10 per family.

PULPIT FLOWERS

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

Sally F. Broido in memory of her beloved sister, *Ellin F. Ente*

Mrs. A. Coleman Poll in loving memory of her parents, *Mildred and Jacques G. Coleman*, and her grandmother, *Sophie Brock*

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.

TZEDEK, TZEDEK TIRDOF: JUSTICE, JUSTICE SHALL YOU PURSUE

By Rabbi Rachel Sabath Beit-Halachmi

BEYOND ALL issues of faith and practice, one concept that has unified Jews and guided Jewish practice throughout time is that of justice. From Abraham's first arguments with God in Genesis, to the text of Deuteronomy 16:18-20, and throughout all of our sacred texts and prayers is an emphasis on preserving justice and preventing injustice.

For the Deuteronomists (the authors of the ancient book of the Torah), the establishment of a justice system is not enough. More so, the judges must judge justly, and all efforts must be made to prevent the perversion of justice—a concept familiar enough in every human society. Specifically, the text warns against the preferential treatment for some people over others. It also warns against the perversion of justice that occurs when bribery is at play because once we know that someone has been bribed, we know that the system itself stands on shaky foundations. At the same time, the Bible seems keenly aware of human weakness for bribery, which can even “blind the eyes of the wise” and pervert the speech of those who are otherwise righteous.

Much has been made of the unusual repetition in the line “Justice, justice shall you pursue...” of the Deuteronomy text. Linguistic experts assert that such a repetition indicates the singularity of the idea “justice alone” and that in establishing the human justice system, replete with its limitations, it should be made of people seeking justice and not control...nor victory, nor fame, nor power.

¹ Rabbi Bunum of P'shischa

² Ramban, Deuteronomy 16:20

A Hasidic commentator more simply explains that the repetition indicates that justice must be executed in only just ways. Justice achieved by unrighteous means is not justice.¹

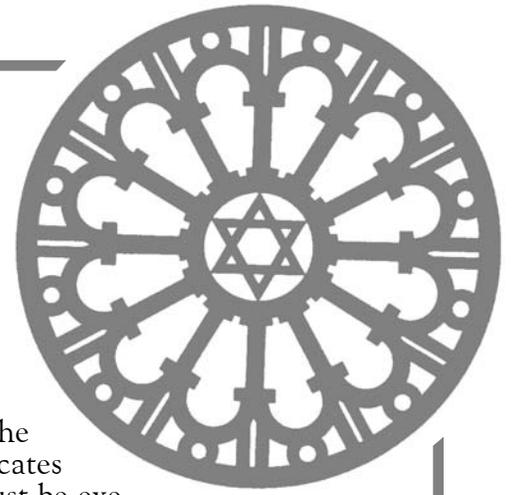
A more complex—and lengthy—explanation is offered by the great medieval commentator Nachmanides, who makes distinctions between types of justice. One is the pure justice of the human world in which we live—a justice that demands an

integration of the elements of peace and truth. The second refers to a higher justice—the justice the judges must seek with awesome awareness of their power and an awareness that they will be judged by God. From this perspective, then, the word “justice” is not repeated but rather is used as two distinct words—one referring to the dwelling of God's pres-

ence on earth, the other as the powerful light that righteous judges can expect to encounter in the next world, representing the sheer power of God.²

This idea of complete justice, which transcends time and which represents God, is so vulnerable that it demands constant vigilance. In a democratic society, where we all are responsible for the justice system, we all must be vigilant in protecting this most precious foundation of human existence.

Rabbi Rachel Sabath Beit-Halachmi, a founding faculty member of the Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning at Temple Emanu-El, is a member of the faculty at the Shalom Hartman Institute and HUC-JIR in Jerusalem.



**JUSTICE, JUSTICE
SHALL YOU PURSUE,
THAT YOU MAY LIVE AND
INHERIT THE LAND
WHICH THE LORD YOUR
GOD GIVES YOU.
— DEUTERONOMY 16:20**

TREASURES UNCOVERED

“**D**iscovered” during Phase II of our Sanctuary Restoration is the beautiful wood-inlay and veneered base on the underside of the canopies above the rabbis’ and cantor’s pulpits. Sometime after the opening of the Sanctuary in 1929, the then “modern” sound system competed with the hard surface of the wood finish. To enhance acoustical effectiveness and to eliminate feedback, cloth-covered padding was installed in each canopy—hiding one of the many treasured features of the Sanctuary.



Photo by Kathryn Rospond

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Web site: www.emanuelnyc.org

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Published weekly September 9 through
June 9 by Congregation Emanu-El of the
City of New York, formed by the
consolidation of Emanu-El Congregation
(founded 1845) and Temple Beth-El.

Postmaster, send address changes to:
Temple Emanu-El Bulletin, One East 65th Street
New York, NY 10021 (212) 744-1400
Periodicals Postage Paid at New York, NY
USPS 891-160.

PERIODICALS POSTAGE
PAID AT NEW YORK, NY