



# Beth Israel Congregation

1625 RESERVOIR ROAD  
GREELEY, COLORADO 80631  
970/353-0869  
<http://www.bethisraelcolorado.org>

**March/April 2010, No. 210**

## Calendar *(location is the synagogue for all events)*

### March 2010

- 13 Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
Shabbat Services, Rabbi Sara Gilbert  
Dairy potluck\* luncheon and adult education
- 14 Sunday, 10:00 - 11:45 a.m.  
Timely Topics in Talmud  
Rabbi Sara Gilbert
- 30 Tuesday, 5:00 p.m.  
Community Passover Seder  
Rabbi Sara Gilbert will lead the seder  
(see enclosed reservation form)

### April 2010

- 11 Sunday, 7:30 p.m.  
Yom Hashoah Services, Rabbi Sara Gilbert
- 11- Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observances  
15 (See enclosed information)
- 18 Sunday, 10:00 - 11:45 a.m.  
Timely Topics in Talmud  
Rabbi Sara Gilbert
- 24 Saturday, 10:00 a.m.  
Shabbat Services, Rabbi Sara Gilbert  
Dairy potluck\* luncheon and adult education

### April 2010 *(continued)*

- 26 Monday, 7:00 p.m.  
HP Sisterhood

### Looking ahead

- Sat, May 8, 10:00 a.m., Shabbat services  
Sun, May 16, 10:00 a.m., Timely Topics in  
Talmud  
Tues, May 18, 7:30 p.m., Erev Shavuot  
Sun, June 6, 10:00 a.m., Timely Topics in  
Talmud  
Sat, June 26, 10:00 a.m., Rachel Arnold  
Bat Mitzvah  
Fri, July 16, 7:30 p.m., Erev Shabbat services  
Sat, Aug 14, 10:00 a.m., Shabbat services

### High Holy Days

- Wed, Sep 8, Erev Rosh Hashanah  
Thurs, Sep 9, 9:00 a.m., Rosh Hashanah Day 1  
Fri, Sep 10, 9:00 a.m., Rosh Hashanah Day 2  
Fri, Sep 17, Erev Yom Kippur  
Sat, Sep 18, 9:00 a.m., Yom Kippur

\*Please bring a dairy dish to share



## *From Rabbi Sara's Desk* **Jewish by Choice**

RABBI SARA GILBERT



*As we engage in our preparation for Passover, the uplifting spiritual contemplation, as well as the tiresome housecleaning, we reflect on the meaning of the freedom that Pesach represents for us in our modern world.*

For us, as Jews and as Americans, our freedoms are broad and challenging. The concepts of choice and of responsibility, in our spirituality, attitudes and actions, underlie the meaning of freedom for us. I recently read an inspiring passage by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, who beautifully describes the choices we Jews face in his recent book, *Jewish With Feeling*.

*Today we are all Jews by choice. Usually we say this of those who undertake the great transformative journey of converting. But if we look a little bit deeper, in an open society we all are Jews by choice. We no longer live in the shtetl, where everyone knew how often we went to synagogue and the pressure to conform to a certain level of piety was enormous. We no longer subscribe to the classic model of divine reward and punishment. Nobody is looking over our shoulders; we are completely free to decide whether and to what extent we want to make Judaism a part of our lives.*

*On the other hand, this freedom puts the ball in our court. No one – no rabbi, no therapist, no guru – can take responsibility for our*

**“perform one holy deed, and another will quickly come in its wake.”**

*spiritual lives. We have to do that ourselves. If I want to feel a spiritual presence in my life, I can't wait until all the evidence is in about whether God exists or not. I have to begin with an affirmation – a declaration as it were, of what's important to me. I have to make a leap. The promise of Judaism . . . is that if we make that leap, things will begin to open up for us. . . . [And] the leap that Judaism asks us to make is not a leap of faith, but a leap of action. Do you hunger for spirituality? Take on some form of spiritual practice and you will begin to satisfy that hunger. . . . Our tradition has a saying “perform one holy deed, and another will quickly come in its wake.”*

Reb Zalman is the founder of the Jewish Renewal Movement, whose innovations in Jewish philosophy, law, and worship include new approaches to halacha, eco-kashrut, and the introduction of meditation and spontaneous movement in worship services. He lives in Boulder and sometimes teaches publically there. If you have an opportunity to hear him speak, I strongly encourage you to go. Reb Zalman's insight, wisdom and compassion are an inspiration every season of the year.



I enthusiastically look forward to celebrating the second Passover seder with our community on Tuesday evening, March 30. Being together with you for this wonderful meal is now a special tradition for me.

Meantime, as you prepare for the holiday, please call me (303/832-4051) or e-mail (sgilbert772@msn.com) if you have questions about Passover preparation, food choices or your seder plans.

*Michael and I wish you  
a Happy and Meaningful Passover!*

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## Rabbi's Office Hours –

Anyone wishing to counsel, consult, study or just chat with Rabbi Sara is very welcome. It is helpful to make an appointment in advance by e-mailing (sgilbert772@msn.com) or calling (303/832-4051).

Of course, Rabbi Sara is available by phone or e-mail whenever you need to contact her, and other appointment times can be arranged.



### Office Hours at the Synagogue

Sunday, March 7  
10:00 a.m. - Noon

Sunday, April 18  
Noon - 3:00 p.m.



*From the President*

## Annual Membership Meeting

BARRY SHELOFSKY



**I** would like to *THANK* the many members of Beth Israel Congregation who were able to attend the Annual Meeting on January 31. Your participation is crucial to the continued efficacy of the congregation.

### **Mission Statement**

At the Annual Meeting, Beth Israel's Mission Statement was presented to members. It describes who we are and what we value as a congregation. It reads:

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**Beth Israel Congregation is an inclusive Jewish congregation that offers a welcoming, nurturing and enriching home to those who seek a meaningful and enduring connection to Judaism. Mindful of its heritage and participation in the greater community, the Congregation supports the diverse spiritual, educational, and social needs of its members.**

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The mission statement is the first step toward completing our long-term planning project. The next step will be to review results from a survey that members completed at the meeting.

Once this is completed, we (the Board, Rabbi Gilbert, and congregation at-large) will envision what we want Beth Israel to look like, sound like, and be like 3 to 5 years from now. Then we (the Board, Rabbi Gilbert, and congregation at-large) will begin action planning around areas critical to Beth Israel's success.

*(continued on p. 5)*

## **Elections**

The majority of the annual meeting centered on electing officers/board members and the accomplishments of committees and organizations affiliated with Beth Israel.

The following individuals will be leaving the Board:



Jeff Goodman, Treasurer  
Nomi Johnson, Secretary  
Lorrie Dinner, Board Member  
Don Janklow, Board Member

These individuals have given their energy, passion, and commitment to Beth Israel over many years and are to be applauded for their contributions.

The following individuals will be joining the Board:

Julie Givan-Wittow/Glen Dinner, Treasurers  
Monica Kahn/Lucie Shelofsky, Secretaries  
Laura Manuel, Board Member  
Marshall Flug, Board Member

I look forward to working with these individuals over the coming year.

## **Rabbi Gilbert's Report**

Finally, Rabbi's Gilbert's yearly report was presented. Her report provided attendees with a comprehensive view of accomplishments. The report was very well received by members.

A word of thanks will be included in the meeting minutes that recognize Rabbi Gilbert's contributions to Beth Israel and the greater community.

## Committees

IMPORTANT: If you have not signed up to be on a committee, I encourage you to do so.

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### Beth Israel Congregation Committee/Organizations

- BIMA  
(Beth Israel Mid-Week Activity)
- Building/Grounds
- Cemetery
- Finance
- Greeley Interfaith
- Holocaust Memorial Observance  
Committee  
(volunteers to assist the committee)
- Hospitality/Membership
- Library
- Newsletter
- Oneg
- Religious School
- Ritual

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To sign up for a committee, please email me at [bipresgreeley@gmail.com](mailto:bipresgreeley@gmail.com)

If you are not sure which committee you are on, the committee membership list will be posted on the bulletin boards at Beth Israel Synagogue, or you may contact me at [bipresgreeley@gmail.com](mailto:bipresgreeley@gmail.com)

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*March 13 and April 24*

## Shabbat Afternoon Study

RABBI SARA GILBERT

Everyone is always welcome! Shabbat afternoon adult education will continue in the afternoon following morning services and lunch on March 13 and April 24. We continue our reading and discussion of the wonderful and inspiring stories of Shai Agnon.

All adults and teens are encouraged to attend. No previous background or attendance is required.

*Come and Learn!*

## Sunday Morning Adult Education Continues

RABBI SARA GILBERT

*Come enjoy Sunday morning coffee with friends as we delve into text-based conversations from our sacred books.*

Our topic is “Timely Topics in Talmud,” discussion about a variety of *sugiot* (thematic sections) from the Talmud. All readings and discussion are in English!

Come to every remaining session or just one. Participants may choose the number of classes to attend, based on your schedules and interest.

Purchase your “pass” and come when you are able. Payment is requested at the first and/or second class attended, with checks made payable to Beth Israel.

PLEASE NOTE: It is very important that everyone participate in Torah study!

No one will be turned away due to financial concerns. Please just speak to Rabbi Sara for a fee waiver.

Write or call Rabbi Sara ([sgilbert772@msn.com](mailto:sgilbert772@msn.com) / 303-832-4051) if you have any questions. I look forward to study with you!

### Timely Topics in Talmud

Class dates:

March 14

April 18

May 16

June 6

Class fees:

\$36 - 3 classes

\$15 - 1 class

*April 11 - 15, 2010*

## Holocaust Memorial Observance

RABBI SARA GILBERT

*The history of the Holocaust, the Shoah, is our story.*

**W**e Jews live with its effects every day – in the stories of the survivors who are among us, in the personal losses in our own extended families, and in the huge number of missing members of our communities. As the decades go by and the number of survivors sadly dwindles, we must not forget.

Thank you so much to the members of Beth Israel and the members of the Greeley community who work so hard to plan and implement the outstanding Greeley Holocaust Memorial Observance programs (see insert) that will be held this year.

We all are very fortunate that right in our home community we can see and learn from respected speakers, films and presentations. I encourage everyone to attend these wonderful offerings, beginning with our synagogue service on **Sunday evening, April 11.**

We deeply *appreciate* the efforts of the members of the Holocaust Memorial Observance Committee to bring the important and lasting messages found in our history to all in our community.

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## Counting the Omer

RABBI SARA GILBERT

**T**he people of Israel departed Egypt on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the Hebrew month of Nisan (the first day of Passover); on the 6<sup>th</sup> of Sivan, celebrated ever since as the festival of Shavuot, they assembled at the foot of Mount Sinai and received the

Torah from God. It took seven weeks to reach the mountain.

Each year, we retrace this journey with our “Counting of the Omer.” Beginning on the second night of Passover, March 30, we will count the days and weeks:

*(continued on p. 9)*

“Today is one day to the Omer”; “Today is two days to the Omer”; and so on, till “Today is 49 days, which are seven weeks to the Omer.” Shavuot, the “Festival of Weeks” is the product of this count.

Historically, an omer was a measurement of a sheaf of grain. These were counted and brought to the Temple. Mystically, however, the Kabbalists explain that the

49 days of the omer that connect Passover with Shavuot correspond to the 49 drives and traits of the human heart.

Each day can see the refinement of one of these characteristics within everyone’s soul, bringing the people of Israel one step closer to their receiving of the Torah, God’s communication to humanity.

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## People

Florence Winograd reports that she has a new great-grandson. Mellisa and Alex Winograd are proud parents of **Nathaniel Harold Winograd**. Alex is the son of Dan and Jenny Winograd.



**Dylan Shelofsky** will be hitting the stage as Gertrude in *Seussical*, a musical at Greeley Central High School, March 17 through 20. For tickets, call 970/348-5133. Break a leg, Dylan!

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## Calling For E-Addresses!

If you have an e-mail address and do not receive e-mails from Rabbi Sara and our president Barry Shelofsky once-in-a-while, please send Rabbi Sara ([sgilbert772@msn.com](mailto:sgilbert772@msn.com)) your address.



Those on the Beth Israel list receive helpful reminders about services and events and timely extra congregational notices. Thank you.

Let us know if you would like your newsletter e-mailed to you at the e-mail address you provide. Help save postage and paper costs if you can. Just let any member of the *Greeley Jewish News* publication board or any board member know.

## Contributions

### Mitzvah fund

A general donation, from:

Jeremy Aguirre  
 Marshall and Kathy Flug  
 Celeste Fried  
 Ken Hailpern  
 Hilda Moskowitz  
 Rick and Barbara Silverman

In thanks for welcoming our daughter,  
 Ariel Culbertson, from:

Mr. and Mrs. Culbertson

In memory of Gloria Levine (Joe  
 Bluestein's sister), from:

Joe and Carol Bluestein

### Building fund

A general donation, from:

Joe and Carol Bluestein  
 Marshall and Kathy Flug



### Leaf

For Naomi Johnson, from:

Lynn and Bev Karowsky



## *The Yiddish Corner*

### rachmones

SUBMITTED BY NANCY WEIL

**P**ronounces *rokh*-MAW-ness, to rhyme with “loch (as a Scot pronounces it) lawless.” Hebrew: “compassion,” “pity.”

This quintessential word lies at the heart of Jewish thought and feeling. All of Judaism's philosophy, ethics, ethos, learning, education, hierarchy of values,

are, saturated with a sense of, and heightened sensitivity to, *rachmones*.

God is often called the God of Mercy and Compassion: *Adonai El Rachum Ve-Chanum*.

From: *The Joys of Yiddish* by Leo Rosten. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.



## For your Information

March 11 at Temple Emanuel in Denver is the DNA Shoah Project. The project serves Holocaust survivors, including orphans and their descendants. The project also serves those displaced by the Shoah looking to locate relatives.

The purpose is two-fold:

- Use modern genomic technologies to reunite family members, identify missing relatives, and help Holocaust orphans and lost children reconnect with family
- Develop curricula For teaching and learning about the Holocaust

This testing normally costs over \$100, but through the organization it is free (donations accepted).

Please accept my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ for the indicated fund. (Check one)

In Honor of     In Memory of

\_\_\_\_\_

If yahrzeit, date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and address of person to be notified of contribution (if applicable):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Your name and address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Check here if you do not wish to have your contribution publicized in the *Greeley Jewish News*.

For any of the following funds, make checks payable to Beth Israel Congregation and mail along with this form to Jeff Goodman, P. O. Box 867, Greeley, CO 80632

- Mitzvah
- Aliyah/Youth Scholarship
- Dinner Memorial Torah Building
- Resnick Endowment
- Singer Memorial Garden
- Leaf (\$54)
- Stone (\$500) -- In Memory of
- Other

The *Greeley Jewish News* is published by Beth Israel Congregation as a service to the Jewish community of Northern Colorado.

Subscription costs:

Members of Beth Israel: free

All others: \$20.00 per year

For membership in Beth Israel Congregation, call (after 6:00 p. m. and before 9:00 p.m.):

President Julie Givan-Wittow (330-6598)

or

Treasurer Jeff Goodman (352-7229)

Or mail to: P.O. Box 867, Greeley, CO 80632

### Publication Board

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7521 Plateau Road

Greeley, CO 80634