



# BAT YAM MATTERS



Number 116

September, October, November 2021

Elul / Tishri / Heshvan / Kislev / Tevet 5782



A REFORM JEWISH CONGREGATION SERVING SANIBEL, CAPTIVA,  
FORT MYERS & SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES



*Bat Yam Temple of the Islands*

**2021 - HIGH HOLY DAYS WORSHIP - 5782**

**RABBI STEPHEN FUCHS - CANTOR MURRAY SIMON  
ABIGAIL ALLISON, piano accompanist - SUSANNAH KELLY, cellist**

## *Selichot*

Saturday, AUGUST 28 at 7:00pm EDT - SELICHOT Discussion  
at Rabbi and Vickie Fuchs' home - 1839 Farm Trail, Sanibel

## *Rosh Hashanah*

Monday, SEPTEMBER 6 at 7:00pm EDT - EVENING SERVICE  
Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 7  
10:00am EDT - MORNING SERVICE  
12:45pm EDT - TASHLICH SERVICE on Sanibel Beach

## *Yom Kippur*

Wednesday, SEPTEMBER 15 at 7:00pm EDT - KOL NIDRE  
Thursday, SEPTEMBER 16  
10:00am EDT - MORNING SERVICE  
Noon EDT - CONGREGANTS' HOUR  
3pm EDT - AFTERNOON DISCUSSION OF JONAH  
3:45pm EDT - MUSICAL INTERLUDE  
4:30pm EDT - YIZKHOR and NEILAH SERVICE

Services will be held in Fellowship Hall of Sanibel Congregational United Church of Christ.  
They also can be joined virtually via Zoom. Details to follow in emails to congregants.  
We welcome all to join us - please email [batyamsanibel@gmail.com](mailto:batyamsanibel@gmail.com) for information.  
To make a donation, please visit [www.batyam.org](http://www.batyam.org)

# LETTER TO BAT YAM CONGREGANTS

Dear Bat Yam Congregants,

As we begin a new year of worship and community at our Temple, you will notice we have a streamlined version of our bulletin. During the pandemic, when we were isolated in lockdown, we wanted to bring you a fuller, entertaining newsletter - and we did! Times have thankfully changed and so have we. Eblasts will be sent out when necessary. Enjoy the slimmer version of Bat Yam Matters.

Tanya Hochschild & Sally Sacks

## BAT YAM HOSTS FIRST B'NAI MITZVOT

Twins Violet and Paul Schwartz, children of Jason and Therese Schwartz, new members at Bat Yam, celebrated their B'nai Mitzvot on June 14 in Fellowship Hall. Edina and Alan Lessack were guests. Edina writes of the Schwartz's interesting path that led them to Bat Yam:

"Jason and Therese Schwartz were living in Japan in the early 2000's and became friendly with Rabbi Henri Noach, who led their congregation. When Therese became pregnant with twins, they came back to the USA for the birth, after which they returned to Japan. Rabbi Noach became the twins' teacher.

"Even after they moved to Fort Myers they studied virtually with him (he had moved to Korea.) The

family had planned to travel to Israel to celebrate their B'nai Mitzvot, where Rabbi Noach would meet them, but the pandemic put an end to their plans and they decided to find a local synagogue.

"They chose Bat Yam and met with Rabbi Stephen Fuchs and President Alan Lessack, who took care of the arrangements for the big day. Rabbi Noach Zoomed the service from Korea. Violet and Paul did their parents proud as they read from the Torah and recited the other Hebrew prayers perfectly. It was a wonderful morning and Bat Yam was proud to host our first B'nai Mitzvot and to welcome our new members, the Schwartz family."



# RABBI FUCHS' HIGH HOLY DAY SERMON TOPICS

## **Rosh Hashanah Eve:**

Remember the Covenant

## **Rosh Hashanah Morning:**

Ten Reasons for Sounding the Shofar

## **Shabbat Shuvah:**

"Mah Nishtanah?" What Makes Our New Year Celebration Different From All Others?

## **Kol Nidre:**

Piercing the Walls

## **Yom Kippur Morning:**

In Defense of Zionism

## **Yiskor Reflection:**

Remembering the Good.

The Tashlich Service will be held, as it has been for the last few years, at the beach in front of Elissa Karasin-Samet and Michael Samet's apartment, at 1605 Middle Gulf Drive. We will meet there after the Rosh Hashanah morning service has concluded. The clubhouse is closed due to Covid-19 restrictions, so there will not be a lunch this year. Water will be provided on the beach as well as shells (our sins) to throw into the ocean.

Yom Kippur Break-Fast is being planned to be held at the Temple. Annette Pacyga will be talking

to Baileys, who will be catering. Nearer the time an eblast will be sent to the congregants informing them of all the necessary details.

Thanks to all the hosts of the summer shabbat services, the Block-Chaddocks and the Lessacks in May, Mike Raab, Alan Fisher and Riv Swartz in June, the Samets and the Hochschilds in July and Annette Pacyga, Sheila Sklar and Howard Lorsch in August.

## CONGREGANTS' HOUR

**ALAN FISHER**, his wife Mila and their teenage sons, David and Kiril, moved to Sanibel Island in 2012 from New Orleans. Alan is a realtor in the Sanibel/Captiva/Fort Myers area. In addition to serving as a Bat Yam trustee, Alan serves as treasurer to The French Market Corporation, is VP of Grace House and is on the boards of Big Brothers/Big Sisters and the Nature Restoration Foundation in Costa Rica.

**SHEILA SKLAR** has been married for 63 years, is the mother of five and grandmother of eight. Married at 18, she went to college and graduate school while her children went through K-12. Her Ph.D was in clinical psychology, which she practiced until her retirement. Since then she's volunteered at temples and at Shell Point and as a mediator for Lee County.

**RIV SWARTZ** has been on the board of Bat Yam over the past year. Previously, she served on various boards including synagogues and/or sisterhoods in Pennsylvania and Maryland. Throughout her career, Riv has placed a priority of working with children. She worked in education as a middle school English teacher and department chair, guidance counselor, gifted student coordinator, school psychologist and Head Start consultant. She has resided at Shell Point for the last six years after moving from the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, area. Riv proudly boasts of her son, Mark, and daughter, Sally, who live in Philadelphia and Boston, respectively. Additional highlights of her life are her six grandchildren, with whom Riv remains in close contact.

# JUST BEFORE THE NEW YEAR - RABBI FUCHS REFLECTS

**Rosh Hashanah arrives very early this year, at sundown on Monday, September 6.**

For me the Hebrew month of Elul that precedes Rosh Hashanah is the most important time in the year to remember the teaching of Rabbi Simcha Bunam, an 18th-19th century Hasidic leader in Poland.

He taught: Each of us should have two pockets. In each pocket we should carry a different quotation.

**In one, for when we feel puffed up and full of pride, let there be the reminder, "I am but dust and ashes!" In the other pocket, when we feel that our efforts are futile and have no consequence, let us read: "For my sake the world was created."**

During this month of Elul we have, hopefully, dedicated our thoughts to examining our actions and thoughts during the past year with the goal of becoming kinder and more caring in the year ahead. If our self-scrutiny is honest, we know that there are many times we have fallen short of our own ideals and God's hopes for us. At such times it is easy to fall into despair and see ourselves as without merit, or as little more than dust and ashes. At such time it is good to remember that our tradition teaches us that this world is no accident and that our lives are not accidents either. They can have purpose and meaning!

**We celebrate Rosh Hashanah as the anniversary of the creation of the world.**

God charged us at creation to use our talents to make the world a better place. Few of us will find the cure for cancer or bring about world peace, but that should not stop each of us from doing something. We each can teach a child to read, help an elderly person cross the street, cook and serve a meal at homeless shelter. The possibilities are endless. But when we become puffed up in the pride of our accomplishments or even in our

acts of kindness, it is good to remind ourselves that, as Abraham realized when he addressed the Almighty (Genesis 18:27), we are "but dust and ashes."

**One of life's most difficult challenges is to find the balance between conceit and despair.**

Henry David Thoreau reminded us: "We are double-edged blades, and every time we whet our virtue the return stroke straps our vice." I think that it is no accident that, as Bahya ben Asher of Saragossa (13-14th century) noted, the zodiacal symbol for Tishri and the Jewish New year is usually (although not this year because the Holy Days are so early) a balance scale. As we count down the weeks toward Rosh Hashanah, our tradition (Babylonian Talmud, Kiddushin 40 B) enjoins us to think of our good and evil deeds as weighing equally on the scale of merit, and that our next act will tip the scale of judgment for good or for ill.

**Think of the power the image of the balance scale can have.**

If each of us wakes up feeling an urgent need to do a good deed, what an amazingly positive impact our collective actions will have on our families, our Bat Yam community and our world.

May we all be blessed with a year of health and fulfillment and an ample measure of good deeds that make a positive difference in the lives of others!

# HIGH HOLY DAY THOUGHTS - CANTOR'S MESSAGE

It's mid-summer and warm, lazy days abound. However, the dictates of the editors' request in May for my article for September's Bat Yam Matters demand that I begin to direct my thoughts away from the lethargy of summer toward the "hectic" holiness of the Yamim N'ra-im (Days of Awe). Looking at this year's liturgical calendar, Rosh HaShanah will commence on the evening of Labor Day, the first Monday in September! You might say that the High Holy Days come very "early" this year. However, as I have stated in a previous HHD article, the Jewish New Year is never "early" or "late". It is always right on time - exactly where it belongs - the first day of the seventh Hebrew month of Tishri as ordained in the Torah (Lev. 23:24). Since our Jewish liturgical calendar is a lunar - not a solar - calendar, the dates for our Jewish holidays and festivals fluctuate from our Gregorian calendar from year to year. However, this year's date for the beginning of Rosh HaShanah does pose for me an interesting thought. The Hebrew word for "work" or "labor" is AVODAH. This goes with our concept of Labor Day. In 1894, President Grover Cleveland signed into law the observance on the first Monday in September as Labor Day - a federal holiday in the

United States celebrated to honor and recognize the American labor movement and the works and contributions of laborers to the development and achievements of the United States. Interestingly, the same Hebrew word, AVODAH, also means "worship". So, this connects with the concept of Rosh HaShanah as a special day of worship reflecting on the cycle of life as we celebrate a religious New Year. New beginnings, fresh starts - a day of worship (AVODAH). See, Labor Day and Rosh HaShanah really do go together!

Our daughter, Rebecca, came up with this original "midrash." She correctly notes that Rosh HaShanah is called (among other names) "The Birthday of the World" (in our liturgy, "HaYom Harat Olam"). And so, to give birth, one has to go into "Labor." Wow, another connection between Rosh HaShanah and Labor Day. Way to go, Rebecca!

Toby joins with me in wishing all of you a meaningful and healthy New Year of 5782.  
Shanah Tovah uM'tukah!

Cantor Murray E. Simon

# WHAT A CHALLENGING YEAR! - PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On September 6, we usher in the beginning of our new year 5782. Who could have forecasted the catastrophe that turned our world upside down, and caused us to become isolated in our homes for almost a year?

In spite of this calamity, houses of worship, schools and businesses had to find alternative ways to function. For Bat Yam, like so many entities, the new reality was Zoom. Using this medium we were able to connect with our members, providing weekly services and numerous exciting and educational programs. I was astounded when the count of these interactions totaled 160! We could not have achieved any of these amazing goals without the incredible leadership of our officers and dedicated members.

All of the above is now history, and I suspect you are more interested in our plans for the New Year. Our first and top priority is Membership. No organization can survive without the constant replenishing of its ranks, and no organization can truly thrive unless its members share their skills and talents. The tech committee is a perfect example. They created and managed a structure to Zoom our services, which were enhanced by the leadership of our Rabbi and Cantor. We need more people to help going forward

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and will be looking for members who might be interested in learning how to continue Zooming services and events as needed. Contact me for more information.

Some of you may be aware that in January, 2021, Bat Yam celebrated its 30th Anniversary. My wife, Edina, and I were in Sanibel at the time it was founded and attended the very first service in Fellowship Hall. Almost 100 persons were there. One of the statements I remember hearing that evening, which motivated me then and now, was: "We are creating the Jewish presence on Sanibel-Captiva and nearby Fort Myers."

This congregation cannot survive without your support and willingness to help us provide uplifting and inspiring services, educational programs and social action initiatives.

As your president, I am reaching out to ask you to contact me at the numbers and/or email below. I invite you to share your thoughts, concerns, suggestions and willingness to help to the extent you are able. Bat Yam is truly a family.

My best wishes to you and your families for a sweet, safe and healthy New Year.

Shalom,

*Alan Lessack, President*

allessack@sbcglobal.net

773 251-8862

## **VICKIE FUCHS BRINGS US UP TO DATE WITH ADULT EDUCATION**

What an amazing Adult Education year we had, despite the Covid pandemic! Normally we have speakers in person; this year we Zoomed and could take advantage of speakers from all over the world. Interspersed with the adult ed. Zooms were coffees with Rabbi Fuchs, who encouraged lively discussions with congregants.

In November we traced Jewish DNA with the Lemba tribe in South Africa back 1,000 years. A special thank you to Alan Lessack for inviting professor Tudor Parfitt to speak to us about his discovery of the Lemba tribe and its Jewish roots in Africa. We journeyed down the Patagonian fjords in April, with the Hochschilds' cousin, Paul Lee. Another person the Hochschilds recruited to speak to us was Stuart Krohn. Stuart spoke

about rugby and in particular his rugby program which inspires vulnerable children to stay out of gangs and stay in high school. Many of them go on to college. Two of the younger generation of the Hochschild family also contributed. Len Hochschild spoke about Environmental Commodities and Jamie Bouloux, son of Maria Hochschild, educated us on Cybercrime.

Thanks also go to the Adler and Block-Chaddock families, including an aunt, Dr. Sallyann Sack, whose subject was, "What the Family Historian Needs to Know about Jewish Family Names," siblings and a daughter for stepping up to the plate to help out and to Lew Schneider who led two study sessions, one about Haftarah Obadiah and another about an encounter with Christology.

# COMMITTEE NEWS

## Tzedakah - Vickie Fuchs

This year's Tzedakah Committee donated to a number of institutions that help people cope with hunger, mental illness and antisemitism. These include Yad LaKashish, Holocaust Museum and Cohen Education Center, American Friends of Leket Israel, RMCA (Redlands Christian Migrant Association), NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) and Jewish War Veterans (Victor Paul Tuchman) Post 400.

## Tech Committee - Sandy Teger

We hope you have all had a good respite from the intensive schedule we maintained last year. Alan Lessack and I are both aware that some of you made significant efforts on behalf of our congregation and that such a pace was neither sustainable nor desirable. For our summer lay-led services we were able to remotely support members who wished to join us from wherever they were. Our goal moving into this upcoming year is to continue support of both in-person and remote members, while not making unreasonable calls on our volunteers' time and energies.

During the summer, Dave Waks learned that SCUCC was underway with an extensive project to upgrade the equipment in both the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall to support congregants unable to attend in-person. We have been fortunate to integrate our specific needs into the church's plans. Once the new system is installed, we anticipate it will be significantly easier to use than our old set-up. We are hoping to all on some of those who

The Tzedakah Committee does not receive any money out of the synagogue's budget, but raises money separately. While we have a "Tzedakah Shabbat" in December (and even had one on Zoom during the covid crisis) please remember that you can donate to the Tzedakah Committee at any time during the year. We are grateful for your generosity to this committee because our synagogue can, as a synagogue, donate to organizations that help make our world a healthier and happier place.

previously volunteered to be trained in the new system, so we can continue to support both in-person and off-site congregants.

## Membership Committee - Judy Adler and Caren Schoen

If you know of any Jewish families who are new to our area and who are planning to winter in our area, please let Caren Schoen [chschoen@yahoo.com](mailto:chschoen@yahoo.com) or Judy Adler [jfadler@aol.com](mailto:jfadler@aol.com), know so that we may reach out to them.

Bat Yam's Honey from the Heart Program - Elissa Karasin-Samet and Janice Block Chaddock.

Thank you for your support! The hundreds of jars of delicious kosher honey sent to friends and family raised \$4,850 in profit. May this New Year and the year ahead be filled with Health, Happiness and Love!

# DONATIONS TO BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS

March 2021 - August 2021

## ▪ General Fund ▪

Anne Altshuler & David Sulman

Lilli Gattegno

Stanley & Emily Kotler

Nancy Morrison – Thankful for the support and comfort you provided during Billy's illness.

Gayle Omansky

Therese & Jason Schwartz

Nancy Morrison

Enid & Marty Packard

Lon Paglio

Margie & Mark Peppercorn

Violet (Lucy) Pickel

Sharri Posen

Paula Raboy

Dale Reiss & Jerry King

Ellen Saltzman

Katherine Shepard

Rebecca Smith

Martin Sonkin

Susan Spohr

Riv Swartz

Judith Wald

Julie Wayman

Charles Weiner

## a Cantor, a Pastor, & a Bluegrass Band Concert

### ▪ Additional Sponsors ▪

Mel Bleiberg

Daniela & Friedrich Jaeger

Edina & Alan Lessack

Barbara & Ron Lipman

### ▪ Additional Donors ▪

Carla Benning

Meryl Bisberg

Julie Chernok

Mary Buck & Patricia R Dileo

Gayle & Hilary Drucker

Robin & Ray Fidler

Nancy Furtin

Carl Graf

Alice & Alan Greenspan

Pat & Wayne Halper

Barbara Hermann

Sandra Jordan

Rosalie Lopopolo

Deborah Mackelcan

Eleanor & Jack Meade

Stacy Mitgang



## ▪ Donations Continued ▪

### ▪ In Honor Of ▪

Judy & Barry Bronstein – In honor of Jack Cohen's milestone birthday

Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock in honor of Drs. Don Bachman & Karen Black's 50th Wedding Anniversary

Sue & Peter Danford – in honor of Rabbi Stephen Fuchs' milestone birthday

Alice & Alan Greenspan in honor of Alan's 90th birthday

Ellen Krivchenia in honor of Edina & Alan Lessack/ Mazel Tov on your new home. Wishing you many years of happiness in your current and future apartments.

Edina & Alan Lessack – In honor of Rabbi Stephen Fuchs' 75th birthday and Scot & Melissa Congress for their kindness & generosity

Edina & Alan Lessack – In honor of Vickie's mother's (Stephanie Steinberg) 100th birthday and June Rosner's birthday on 6/25

Jocelyn & Peter Saltz in honor of Amy Lessack, niece of Alan & Edina Lessack

Charles Weiner – in honor of Lois Lorsch

Jo & Stan Katz in honor of Edina Lessack

### ▪ Yahrzeit Rememberances ▪

Nessa Adelson in memory of Evelyn Wasserman

Judy Adler in memory of her mother Francis Amdur and in memory of her husband Dr. Fred Adler

Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock in memory of grandmother Frances Amdur, in memory of their stepfather Dr. Fred Adler, and in memory of Ron's mother Gwendolyn Chaddock

Linda & Joel Edinburg in memory of Lee Bergstein

Myra & Don Fisher in memory of Beatrice Fisher, Samuel Fisher and Dorothy Michaels

Pat & Wayne Halper in memory of Majorie Nelson and Robert Nelson

Maria & Peter Hochschild in memory of Simon Hochschild

Tanya & Michael Hochschild in memory of Tanya's mother Hazel Polonsky and Peter & Michael's brother Simon Hochschild

Cindy & Dr. David Jacob in memory of our mothers Velma Miller & Ella Jacob and in memory of Cindy's father Rex Miller

Edina & Alan Lessack in memory of Alan's brother Jordan Lessack

Elissa Karasin-Samet & Michael Samet in memory of Elissa's father Ken Karasin

Caren & Bob Schoen in memory of Rosalie Roberta Moskowitz

## ▪ Donations Continued ▪

### ▪ Social Action Fund ▪

Emilie Alfino  
Pat & Wayne Halper  
Peter Jarka-Sellars

### ▪ In Memory of Helane Smith ▪

Emilie Alfino  
Adele & Stephen Anish  
Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock  
Sue & Peter Danford  
Roselyne & Michael Horowitz  
Peter Jarka-Sellars  
Edina & Alan Lessack  
Sally & Allan Sacks

### ▪ In Memory of Jeanette Kaiser ▪

Adele & Stephen Anish  
Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock  
Edina & Alan Lessack  
Enid & Marty Packard  
Jay L & Barry Solomon

### ▪ In Memory of Marvin Berk ▪

Edina & Alan Lessack  
Freema Nichols  
Enid & Marty Packard  
Jay L & Barry Solomon

### In Memory of Joan Schlackman

Jay L & Barry Solomon

### In Memory of Arlyn Stein

Edina & Alan Lessack

### ▪ Rabbi's Discretionary Fund ▪

Iris & Gary Atkins  
Jonatha & Jim Castle/Grampy's Charities  
Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock in honor of Rabbi Stephen Fuchs' 75th Birthday  
Sally & Allan Sacks  
Riv Swartz in appreciation of Rabbi Fuch's remembrance of my family members during Yahrzeit services and prayers for my son  
Temple Adath Yeshurum

### ▪ Scholarship & Programming Fund ▪

Tanya & Michael Hochschild

### ▪ Sending Condolences ▪

Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock sending condolences to Elissa Karasin-Samet & Michael Samet on the loss of Michael's Aunt Shirley Marlowe

Edina & Alan Lessack send condolences to Michael Samet on the loss of his Aunt Shirley Marlowe

Sandy Teger & Dave Waks sending condolences to Elissa Karasin-Samet & Michael Samet on the loss of Michael's Aunt Shirley Marlowe

### ▪ Tzedakah Fund ▪

Nessa Adelson in memory of Evelyn Wasserman

Caren & Bob Schoen in memory of Rosalie Roberta Moskowitz

Edina & Alan Lessack for Yad Lakashish

Annette & Dan Pacyga in memory of Clare Gorelick

**▪ Sending Healing Prayers ▪**

Edina & Alan Lessack wish quick healing to  
Dave Waks, Judy Adler & Ron Chaddock

Elissa Karasin-Samet & Michael Samet wish  
quick healing and strength to Dave Waks, Peter  
Saltz, Judy Adler & Ron Chaddock

**▪ Honey From the Heart Fundraiser ▪**

Judy Adler

Betsy & Marc Brown

Janice Block Chaddock & Ron Chaddock

Julie Chernok

Robyn & David Cook

Linda & Joel Edinburg

Vickie & Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

Nancy & Ed Greenberg

Susan Greenberg

Elinor & Thomas Gregor

Tanya & Michael Hochschild

Edina & Alan Lessack

Howard Lorsch

Annette Pacyga

Dale Reiss & Jerome King

Jocelyn & Peter Saltz

Elissa Karasin-Samet & Michael Samet

Carol & Philip Scheiber

Caren & Bob Schoen

Toby & Cantor Murray Simon

Dr. Sheila & Herbert Sklar

Jay L & Barry Solomon

Sandy Teger & Dave Waks

**BAT YAM TEMPLE OF THE ISLANDS**  
**PO Box 84 ▪ Sanibel, FL 33957**

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www.batyam.com

**Rabbi**

Stephen Lewis Fuchs

**Cantor**

Murray E. Simon

**Officers**

**President:** Alan Lessack

**First VP:** Sandy Teger

**Second VP:** Bob Schoen

**Treasurer:** Elissa Karasin-Samet

**Corresponding Secretary:** Sheila Sklar

**Recording Secretary:** Nancy Greenberg

**Past President:** Michael Hochschild

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Alan Fisher, Howard Lorsch, Annette Pacyga, Garry Weiss, Janice Block  
Chaddock, Allan Sacks, Mel Bleiberg, Riv Swartz, Peter Saltz

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Fulmer, Michael Hochschild

*\*Deceased*