

*your downtown shul*

# BETH SHALOM

שְׁלוֹם      בֵּית

Ottawa, ON

Volume 23, Number 3

Nisan 5765

April 2005

*"And you shall tell your children..."*



**November 7, 2004    Remembrance Day Parade at SJCC Campus**

(See Ottawa Post Jewish War Veterans of Canada, p. 10)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

1 <sup>st</sup> Seder .....	Saturday, April 23
2 <sup>nd</sup> Seder .....	Sunday, April 24
Last day of Passover .....	Sunday, May 1
Yom Ha'Shoah.....	Thursday, May 5
Yom Ha'Zikaron.....	Wednesday, May 11
Yom Ha'Atzmaut .....	Thursday, May 12
Lag Ba'Omer .....	Friday, May 27
Yom Yerushalayim.....	Monday, June 6
Shavuot (1 <sup>st</sup> Day).....	Monday, June 13
Fast of 17 <sup>th</sup> of Tammuz....	Sunday, July 24
Fast of 9 <sup>th</sup> of Av .....	Sunday, August 14
Erev Rosh Hashanah .....	Monday, Oct. 3

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## ***A Message From Our President***

After a long and very difficult Winter it is nice to see that Spring is on the way. If your household is anything like mine, everyone is getting ready for Pesach. Cleaning has already begun and menu planning is well on the way.

As I sit down to write this column, the festival of Purim has been celebrated for another year. This year, Beth Shalom held a most successful Purim party and a hearty *yasher koach* must go out to our office staff, volunteers and donors. Everyone got into the spirit of the holiday dressing up for the occasion. Under the guidance of a very energetic Rabbi Fine, the *Megillah* was read by Howard Dover, with commentary by our B'nai Mitzvah students. Stephanie Moore was our Vanna White, operating a stoplight so that the children knew when to express themselves as Haman's name was mentioned. After the service, there were lots of games, prizes for the children and great food for everyone.

The Synagogue office also has a new look. The beginning of 2005 found new office staff in place. Following a competition, Stephanie Moore returned to Beth Shalom as Executive Director while Nikki Shapiro was appointed Office Manager. This has proven to be a perfect fit and the comments from you, our congregants, have been most positive. Under Jay Amdur's efforts, the office is now fully computerized and connected and is operating at 100% efficiency. Our Finance Committee made up of Ralph Paroli and David Kardish introduced Lawrence "Butch" Zinman as the Synagogue's new Auditor at our last Board Meeting. I am confident that Butch and his associates will be an invaluable source of financial expertise to our shul.

*(continued on p. 7 – President's Message)*

## ***A Message From Our Rabbi***

I am part of the generation that decided that "cool" is really very "hot." That a word can mean one thing and its opposite is a part of Rabbinic Hebrew and so why not in English? A more recent interpretation of an English word, "wicked", means "good", even "fantastically wonderful", and I have heard that something or someone is "wicked good." Interesting syntax!

As I begin my preparation for Pesach, I am reading the *Haggadah*. I often puzzle the intent of the *Midrash* of the Four Sons or four children. The second one, who is mentioned, is characterized as the *Rasha*, usually translated as the "wicked son." Applying the new meaning of "wicked", someone or something that is very much "in," we come to understand why the tradition is troubled about him. Speaking to those around him, he asks, "What is all this work or worship (they are both the same word in Hebrew) to you?"

He sees everyone preparing, and never leisurely when it comes to Pesach. He knows that is labour-intensive with all of the intensive cleaning, cooking and so many people at the table. Who needs all of the toil and trouble?

I am sure that many are agreeing with this sentiment. Indeed, many will hail him as truly "wicked," in the sense that it is used in slang today. We all like the festive atmosphere at the *seder* table, enjoy the food, especially if someone else has prepared it and hope and pray that we come to the *kneidlach* quickly. Indeed, surveys in the North American Jewish communities report that the *seder* is the most important Jewish ritual after lighting candles. It's "wicked good" and I think we would concur.

What should be so wonderful are not just the final results, but also the preparation, the "work" and the worship that are really the foundations of the evenings. Judaism

*(continued on page 6 – Rabbi's Message)*

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## ***A Message From Our Chazzan***

Why is this year different from all other years?

This year, more than ever, I cannot help but feel mixed emotions when approaching one of the most meaningful holidays of the year. This year marks the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of my Mother's passing. This year again, we will not be able to hear her delicate and soothing voice around the *seder* table.

With her kindheartedness and peacefulness she was able to unite her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren around her table in harmony and in return we chanted her praise.

This year, more than ever, it is time to remember and restate the account of our redemption as a people and as individuals. This year, more than ever, it is time to value and appreciate what is truly important - family. They, in return, will perpetuate our name to their children that we may never be forgotten.

Because of our dedication to Hashem, the story of our exodus from bondage will never become just a figment of our imagination. It is, and will remain, a constant reminder of who we really are and where we came from.

It is my hope that my family and I re-tell not only the story of our freedom around the *seder* table but also the amazing woman who gave us life and graced us with her presence, the mother that touched our hearts and souls more than words can communicate.

My wife Muriel, children Jonathan, Eve, Shira, Michael and myself unite in wishing all of our extended family at Beth Shalom a *Chag Kasher V'sameach*.

***Cantor Daniel Benlolo***<sup>☆</sup>

***YOM HA'SHOAH***  
**Thursday, May 5, 2005**

Established to remember the Holocaust and the six million Jews who perished. It is also the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising.

***LAG BA'OMER***

**33rd day of the counting of the Omer  
will occur on Friday, May 27**

## ***A Message From Our Executive Director and Office Manager***

We wanted to take this opportunity to thank everyone who joined in the celebration of Purim. Congregation Beth Shalom was alive and rejuvenated Thursday, March 24, 2005. Close to 200 people came to see the theatrics by our clergy as Howard Dover read the *Megillah*. The noise that was made by our congregants and the costumes that were worn by young and old alike was fantastic!

The evening continued with a youthful carnival and good old-fashioned fun. It was so refreshing to see the 125 congregants who took part laughing, smiling, and creating memories together. It made us extremely proud to call Congregation Beth Shalom a part of our lives.

On Sunday, May 29, 2005 from 10 am to 2 pm, there will be a huge Spring Clean-up Sale in the auditorium. Many items from our gift shop will be half-price. As well, we have some artwork, books, and other goodies that could use a new home. Our next phase of renovations is underway and we need to tidy up. Save your shekels for all the other great deals to be had! If you wish to have your own table or would like to volunteer, please give us a call.

Our hope is that this will be the start of many more memories and wonderful *simchas* planned here at *our* shul. If you are interested in helping plan and organize upcoming events please contact us at the office anytime at 613-789-3501. We would love your input and ideas!

All the best for a happy and healthy Pesach and Spring!

**Stephanie Moore** & **Nikki Shapiro**  
Executive Director      Office Manager



## PESACH WORD FIND

ALL THESE WORDS APPEAR IN THE HAGGADAH. CAN YOU FIND AND CIRCLE THEM? (CAN APPEAR FORWARDS, BACKWARDS, ANGLED...)

H	C	E	R	O	K	E	S	A	Z	S
W	S	M	R	R	R	L	E	L	A	H
T	L	B	W	E	T	W	Y	H	C	G
E	A	V	R	R	D	S	R	O	B	J
L	V	C	S	O	Y	S	F	Z	O	S
I	E	R	E	R	U	D	E	T	U	A
Y	S	D	T	A	O	G	Z	A	T	P
A	X	S	I	M	P	W	X	M	R	R
H	P	H	A	R	O	H	C	D	E	A
U	V	J	E	N	I	W	M	F	Z	K

<b>SLAVES</b>	<b>HALEL</b>
<b>PHAROH</b>	<b>KORECH</b>
<b>MATZOH</b>	<b>KARPAS</b>
<b>RED SEA</b>	<b>ELIYAHU</b>
<b>MAROR</b>	<b>WINE</b>

### Passover Jeopardy

First the answers and then the questions.

A: A classroom, a Passover ceremony, and a latke

Q: What is a cheder, a seder, and a tater?

A: Sofer

Q: On what do Jews recline on Passover?

### PASSOVER WHITE SAUCE (pareve or meat)

- 3 tablespoons oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 1 oz. potato flour
- 1 1/2 cups pareve or real chicken stock
- salt and pepper
- 2 egg yolks, lightly beaten

In a skillet, heat the oil and then fry the garlic until it's clear, then remove it. In a bowl, mix the potato flour with the stock and then season to taste. With a whisk, blend in the yolks and add the mixture to the pan. Cook over low heat, whisking very gently until the mixture thickens. Stir constantly.

### LEMON PUDDING FOR PESACH (pareve)

- 4 eggs
- 5 1/2 cups sugar
- 3 tablespoon potato starch
- 6 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 2 cups water

In a 1.5-quart saucepan or the top of a double-boiler, beat the eggs well. In a small bowl, combine the sugar and potato starch and gradually whisk them into the beaten eggs. Stir in the lemon juice and water. Then, over low heat or simmering water in the bottom of the double-boiler, cook pudding mixture slowly, stirring constantly until the mixture is thickened and bubbles begin to appear. Remove from heat. Pour or spoon into a dessert cup or Pesach pie-shell. Set the pudding aside to cool slightly before serving. Or refrigerate until ready to serve.

### PASSOVER MACARONI AND CHEESE (dairy)

3 large eggs	1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese
3 1/2 cups matzo farfel (or 6 broken-up matzos)	1 pt. sour cream
1 cup milk	1/2 cup butter (use less if desired)
1 teaspoon salt	Parmesan cheese
1/4 teaspoon pepper	

Preheat oven to 350. Grease a 2-qt. casserole with butter. In a bowl, beat 2 of the eggs well and pour them over the farfel. In another bowl, beat the remaining egg and stir in the milk, salt and pepper. In the casserole, layer half the farfel, half the cheese, half the sour cream (in spoonfuls), and half the butter. Repeat the procedure and pour the milk mixture over the top. Lightly sprinkle the Parmesan over the top. Cover with foil and bake 30 minutes. Remove foil and bake another 10-15 minutes, until brown. Serves 6-8.



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## Pesach Substitutes

By Eileen Goltz

<http://www.ou.org/shabbat/recipes/5765/shemini65.htm>

At some point during Pesach preparations we've all tried to convert a mainstream recipe into a Pesach one only to discover that we don't have a clue as to what to substitute for a *chametz* ingredient. This panic moment is why I started compiling my "Complete List of Pesach Substitutes". I've added some great new substitutions this year, thanks to readers who've sent in their own ingenious creations. If anyone has any other substitutions that they would like to share, please send an email to [eztlog@hotmail.com](mailto:eztlog@hotmail.com)

1 oz. baking chocolate (unsweetened chocolate) = 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1 tablespoon oil or melted margarine

16 oz. semi-sweet chocolate = 6 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder plus 1/4 cup oil and 7 tablespoons granulated sugar

14 oz. sweet chocolate (German-type) = 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder plus 2 2/3 tablespoons oil and 4 1/2 tablespoons granulated sugar

1 cup confectioners' sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar minus 1 tablespoon sugar plus 1 tablespoon potato starch pulsed in a food processor or blender

1 cup sour milk or buttermilk for dairy baking = 1 tablespoon lemon juice in a 1 cup measure, then fill to 1 cup with Passover nondairy creamer. Stir and steep 5 minutes

For butter in baking or cooking, use *pareve* Passover margarine in equal amounts. Use a bit less salt

1 cup honey = 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/4 cup water

1 cup corn syrup = 1 1/4 cups granulated sugar plus 1/3 cup water, boiled until syrupy

1 cup vanilla sugar = 1 cup granulated sugar with 1 split vanilla bean left for at least 24 hours in a tightly covered jar

1 cup of flour, substitute 5/8 cup matzo cake meal or potato starch, or a combination sifted together

1 tablespoon flour = 1/2 tablespoon potato starch

1 cup corn starch = 7/8 cup potato starch

1 teaspoon cream of tarter = 1 1/2 teaspoons lemon juice or 1 1/2 teaspoons vinegar

1 cup graham cracker crumbs = 1 cup ground cookies or soup nuts plus 1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 cup bread crumbs = 1 cup matzo meal

1 cup matzo meal = 3 matzos ground in a food processor

1 cup matzo cake meal = 1 cup plus 2 tablespoons matzo meal finely ground in a blender or food processor and sifted

3 crumbled matzo = 2 cups matzo farfel

1 cup (8 oz.) cream cheese = 1 cup cottage cheese pureed with 1/2 stick butter or margarine

Chicken fat or gribenes = 2 caramelized onions; Sauté 2 sliced onions in 2 tablespoons oil and 2 tablespoons sugar. Cook until the onions are soft. Purée the onions once they are golden

1 cup milk (for baking) = 1 cup water plus 2 tablespoons margarine, or 1/2 cup fruit juice plus 1/2 cup water

1 1/4 cup sweetened condensed milk = 1 cup instant nonfat dry milk, 2/3 cup sugar, 1/3 cup boiling water and 3 tablespoons margarine. Blend all the ingredients until

smooth. To thicken, let set in the refrigerator for 24 hours

1 cup wine= 13 tablespoons water, 3 tablespoons lemon juice and 1 tablespoon sugar. Mix together and let set for 10 min.

For frying: Instead of chicken fat, use combination of olive oil or vegetable oil and 1 to 2 tablespoons pareve Passover margarine

Eggs: Passover egg substitutes don't work quite as well as the chometz egg substitutes. For kugels, matzo balls, fried matzo and some cakes the recipes will probably be ok. However, if you want to avoid them (and I do) you can add one extra egg white and 1/2 teaspoon of vegetable oil for each yolk eliminated when baking. Use only egg whites as the dipping to coat and fry meats

Italian seasoning= 1/4 teaspoon EACH dried oregano leaves, dried marjoram leaves and dried basil leaves plus 1/8 teaspoon rubbed dried sage. This can be substituted for 1 1/2 teaspoons Italian seasoning

Curry powder= 2 tablespoons ground coriander, 1 tablespoon black pepper, 2 tablespoons red pepper, 2 tablespoons turmeric, 2 tablespoons ground ginger. Makes 2/3 cup

Pancake syrup = use fruit jelly, not jam, and add a little water to thin. I always like to combine the jelly and water in a microwave safe bowl and heat it gently before I serve it.

Seasoned rice wine VINEGAR = 3 tablespoons white vinegar, 1 tablespoon white wine, 1 tablespoon sugar, 1/2 teaspoon salt. Mix to combine. Makes 1/4 cup

Flavored vinegar= lemon juice in cooking or salad, grapefruit juice in salads, wine in marinades

#### ***Endowment Fund***

To make a contribution, please call any weekday at 613-789-3501. We accept Visa and MasterCard. All donations are acknowledged with an official receipt for income tax purposes.

Water chestnuts = substitute raw jicama

Orange liqueur = substitute an equal amount of frozen orange juice concentrate

**Eileen Goltz**, a professional chef and caterer, is the author of the new cookbook, *Perfectly Pareve*.

### **HOSPITALIZATION**

If you or anyone in your family is admitted to one of the local area hospitals for any reason, please make a point of informing our Synagogue Office by calling 789-3501, so that our Clergy and Visiting Committee may visit at the earliest convenience. This is necessary, as it frequently occurs that the hospital does not keep proper records, and it can be quite a while until we find out that someone is in the hospital. Hence, if you would like a visit to take place, please inform our office at the earliest opportunity.

#### **Rabbi's Message** *(continued from page 2)*

teaches that preparation for a mitzvah is as important, if not more important, than performing it. We gain insights through getting ready, through the cleaning, the searching for the *chametz*, the burning of the crumbs, and the ridding of the home, office and car of any *chametz*, the selling of what cannot be removed. Then we realize that what we are doing is not just a party, but is an opportunity to be part of a moment that happened thousands of years ago. Every generation ever since has brought its special insights, needs and realities to the Pesach holydays and we relive not only leaving Egypt but also how our forebears, be they our grandparents or their grandparents, celebrated this crucial occasion of our history. It is our opportunity to make history by what we each bring to it and that requires us to make the efforts, to do the "work" and to be part of the worship.

The "Wicked Son" in the *Haggadah* is really challenging us by the question he is asking. He is asking us to wake up to the reality that what is really "cool" or "hot" is the contribution each of us can make to the tradition of Pesach and to Judaism in

general, by standing on the shoulders of those who preceded us and bringing the insights and the concerns of our generation to the table. Then we grow and Judaism develops. Just as the Haggadah was and is a work in progress, our response to it should also reflect our constant growth as Jews.

Chevy, our family and I wish all of you a kosher, happy and "wicked good" Pesach!

**Rabbi Arnie Fine**★



## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Please check the Beth Shalom Calendar for times of weekday services and candle-lighting or call 613-789-3501 or visit [www.bethshalom.ca](http://www.bethshalom.ca).

Please note: Fast of First-born Siyum after Thursday morning service (7:15 a.m.).  
Fast of First-born is observed on Thursday, April 21 (14 Nisan).

Search for Chametz on Thursday night, April 21, after 8:17 p.m. (20:17).

Burning of Chametz on Friday, April 22, by 11:30 a.m.

**No eating of Chametz after Saturday, April 23, 10:40 a.m.**

Last day of Passover: *Sunday, May 1*  
*Eat Chametz after 9:58 p.m.*

make his/her contribution to the Building Campaign. With Phase 1 completed and paid for, Phase 2 will focus on the beautification of the building. The renovations this Summer will pay attention to the Sanctuary, Auditorium, the Kitchens, Lobby and Office. Of course, these plans cannot take place without our members taking ownership of the plans in ensuring that these renovations are successfully completed. So when Sol Shinder, Norm Lesh or one of the members of the Fundraising Committee calls, please give them your undivided attention and your cooperation. When all of these renovations are completed, our synagogue will once again be the showcase Synagogue of Canada's capital.

Our **Annual General Meeting** this year will be held on **Wednesday, June 1, 2005**. I have asked Barry Baker to head up the Nominating Committee which will select a new Executive and several new Board Members. If you are interested in sitting on the Board please contact Barry with your intentions. A strong *New Beth Shalom* needs vibrant members of the Board willing to give the Synagogue their time to ensure that the Synagogue continues to move forward.

Carol-Sue and I would like to take this opportunity to wish our members and our staff a very Happy Pesach.

**Jack Shapiro**

President★

## President's Message

*(continued from page 2)*

When one thinks of Pesach, the thought of "new additions" comes to mind. At the Board Meeting of March 23, 2005 our Renovation Committee, led by Jill Stern, reported that Phase 2 of our renovations will begin in May. The intention is that this will be completed by Rosh Hashanah. It has always been the Board's directive that every member will be contacted and solicited to

The Calendar Committee is preparing next year's Calendar and has already begun planning the issue. They hope to make it even better. Why not get in on the act? *If you would like to dedicate a page to a loved one or to friends, please contact Ralph at 613-733-4414.*

It's a great way to do a double mitzvah: honour someone, and, at the same time support your shul.★

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## Ottawa Post Jewish War Veterans of Canada Upcoming Events

*article and photos by Elly Bollegraaf*

The year 2005 is a very special year for the Ottawa Post Jewish War Veterans of Canada, and for the Jewish Community at large. It marks the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the end of WW II, the liberation of Europe from the Nazis, and an end to the systematic annihilation of the Jewish people.



*November 11, 2002  
Remembrance Day Parade, SJCC campus*



*November 11, 2002  
Remembrance Day Parade, SJCC campus*

Well over 450 Jews from Ottawa served in the forces in WW II, a fact that is of great pride to our Jewish Community. The Ottawa Post Jewish War Veterans of Canada is in its 15<sup>th</sup> year of existence, and has flourished under capable leadership of

its past and present Post Commanders, all who are listed in the following chronological order of their time in office: Nat Levitin, Phil Pinkus, Morton Taller, Mel Goldberg, Morton Taller, and Paul Bender.

In the past years, the Post has held and participated in numerous events. These include: regularly scheduled committee meetings; the annual provision of awards to deserving Jewish students; Veteran participation in Remembrance Day Parades and Commemorations; in attendance and on parade at Yom Ha'shoah Commemoration and other community events; an annually-held Banquet; and an annually-held General Meeting. Some of the Veterans periodically speak at schools about their wartime experiences, while others have spoken at their shuls. There is even a book: a highly successful and wonderful collection of personal vignettes, short stories, and reminiscences, by the Ottawa Jewish War Veterans, which was published about five years ago. This valuable resource book, *There I Was...A Collection of Reminiscences by Members of the Ottawa Jewish Community Who Served in WW II*, can be found in the library, and copies are also still available for purchase.



*November 11, 2002  
Remembrance Day Parade, SJCC campus*

The Post has worked diligently on still other projects. For example, in honour of those Jewish War Veterans "who paid the supreme sacrifice", a plaque was erected in

front of the SJCC and dedicated in May of 2003. The visibility of this plaque to passersby is soon to improve.



October 26, 2003  
*Annual General Meeting and Breakfast*

The year 2005 will be a very busy one for the Post. Some of the upcoming events are as follows:

- **May 4** – *Yom Ha'shoah Commemoration, at SJCC – 7 p.m.*
- **May 5** - *Holocaust Remembrance Day, on Parliament Hill*
- **May 8** - *The 60th Anniversary of VE Day*
- **May 12** - *Yom Ha'Atzmaut, at the Soloway Jewish Community Center (SJCC)*
- **June 1** - *The Annual Banquet, "A Tribute to the Ottawa Jewish War Veterans", at Agudath Israel Synagogue*
- **Sept. 18** - *Annual General Meeting and Breakfast, at Agudath Israel Synagogue*
- **Nov. 5** - *Remembrance Day Sabbath, at the different shuls*
- **Nov. 7** - *Remembrance Day Parade, outside the SJCC*
- **Nov. 11** - *Remembrance Day, at Confederation Square*



November 9, 2003  
*Socializing after the Remembrance Day Parade at SJCC*

The entire Ottawa Jewish Community is cordially invited to attend the scheduled events. The Jewish Community is being reminded of the sacrifices made by the Veterans, while at the same time allowing itself to rejoice and to take pride in the Veterans' achievements, and to recognize that the Veterans serve as role-models to today's young people.



April 18, 2004  
*Holocaust Memorial Day on Parliament Hill*

**Come out and show your respect, gratitude, admiration, and pride. Remember the average age of the Veterans alive today. This is no time for apathy. Express your respect and appreciation while there is still time to do so!** Record the above-listed events in your personal and community calendars now, so as to avoid other community-events still to be scheduled from competing for your



*June 23, 2004  
Annual Banquet*

attention. Join the Veterans, their families, relatives, and friends, and the rest of the

community, in these upcoming historical milestones. You are being counted on!

Any Jewish War Veteran who is not already a member of the Post but wants to become one, please contact the Adjutant, Sam Ages, at 613-728-5701.

*Some photos, of the many hundreds that have been taken over the years, were selected at random, to accompany this article. They show scenes of some of the types of activities held by the Post. Apologies to those who were left out of the photos.*



*December 13, 2004  
A few of the Veterans and their spouses, at Rideau Hall*

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## WILL SOMEBODY SAY KADDISH WITH ME?

*By Avron Shore (Toronto)*  
(*Canadian Jewish News*, March 17, 2005)

My mother no longer comprehends what is going on around her. She is almost 100 years old. Until recently, she was a vibrant, bustling individual who not only enjoyed life but managed to gladden the hearts of the many who knew her. I can say without question that she has been a wonderful mother – in my eyes, the best, but now she is as helpless as a baby.

I doubt if she knows that I feed her lunch every day, but I do know at some deep level she understands I will perform the ultimate mitzvah for her. After she has gone on to the next world, I will say Kaddish for her. But I have to qualify that wish – because it would be more accurate to say, I hope I will be able to say Kaddish for her, because it might not be possible. It is getting harder and harder to find a minyan. Without a Bar or Bat Mitzvah celebrated, our synagogues are never full on Shabbat. What is heartbreaking is struggling to find a minyan for *mincha* or *ma'ariv* in the winter. Too many Jewish men no longer make it a practice to go to shul on a regular basis, or to make it part of their schedules to drop in to be part of a minyan.

In order for Kaddish to be said it requires a minyan, a group of 10 adult males. It is recited on behalf of all of the Jewish people, emphasizing our common responsibility and our interlinked fates. By saying Kaddish you are first honouring G-D, and then you are also honouring your father and your mother.

Over the years, I have often been part of a minyan so this sacred duty can be performed for a friend, a relative, a stranger. It has never been an imposition or a hardship. Rather, it has helped to strengthen me and to assist in my understanding of who I really am – a Jew. Our synagogues have wonderful members who have fulfilled their responsibilities and

have said Kaddish for their parents. But sadly, they now see their own children not fulfilling this obligation and having their children, the grandchildren, witness this lapse.

What this problem says to me is that somewhere along the way, we may have lost our sense of responsibility for one another. I know we have busy lives. Work demands a lot from us. Most of us consider our families more important than strangers. But in perspective, the Jewish people form such a miniscule percentage of the 6 billion people on this planet, in one way or another, we are all interconnected and are not really “strangers” after all.

### Yahrzeit Plates

Members are reminded that reservations are being accepted for individual Bronze Yahrzeit Plates located at the memorial corridor of the Synagogue.

The charge for individual plates is \$250, which includes the cost of inscription. Members interested in perpetuating the name of a deceased family member are asked to contact the Synagogue Office at 613-789-3501.

Yes, life we like to say, is “demanding” and “hard” but in the last 60 years life on the whole has been good for those of us fortunate to live in the Western World. We haven’t had to worry about pogroms or closed doors, except for the odd private club. Even that isn’t such a big deal because we have our own. So many times, we don’t feel a need or an urgency to do all the little things that define us Jews. For those of us who are not Orthodox, we don’t look identifiably Jewish. We no longer carry out the 613 commandments, let alone the big 10.

But you have to stop and ask yourself, how many commandments can we violate or not carry out before we are no longer Jews? Can we pick and choose? Maybe yes, maybe no. It seems to me that those

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commandments associated with the “life cycle” – birth to death – most importantly remind us of who we are: we hold a *bris* for our baby boys, we help our sons prepare for their Bar Mitzvahs, we get married under a *chupah* and when our parents die, we say Kaddish.

It is a sad day when a parent dies. But if a mourner cannot say Kaddish, imagine how this only adds, unnecessarily, to his distress. It doesn't have to be like this. To be part of a *minyan* only takes about 30 minutes out of your day. If you make a commitment to come to shul only one day a month – **one day** – it would make a big difference to your shul. First, you would be

doing a *mitzvah* by giving comfort to those who have to say Kaddish. Second, you would be teaching your children, by example, the importance of fulfilling the *mitzvah*. And third, it's like insurance – you will be increasing the likelihood of someone saying Kaddish for you.

Surely this is a *mitzvah* you can live with: 30 minutes one day a month, twelve times a year. Or maybe our synagogues will make it a part of your commitment; once becoming a member, you must perform “JEWRY DUTY” one week every year.

So help a fellow Jew perform his obligation. He can't do it alone.

# Congregation Beth Shalom

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