

# Lincolnwood Jewish Congregation AG Beth Israel Bulletin



May-June 2020 Issue 3

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## LJCAGBI Bulletin

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## Rabbi Biber's Message

### Shavuot: Why Moshe

“Rav Yossi said: It would have been appropriate had the Torah been given through Ezra, but Moshe preceded him... and even though the Torah was not given by him [Ezra] it was changed by him” (Sanhedrin 21b). The Talmud explains the change relates to the “font” of the Torah which was changed from *ketav Ivri*, the initial font which with the Torah was given, to *ketav Ashurit*, the “font” we have today in our Torah scrolls.

Moshe and Ezra were both confronted by a nation in exile, Moshe in Egypt and Ezra in Babylon. Assimilation was rampant and the future of the Jewish people was in jeopardy. It took great efforts and overt miracles to convince the Jewish people to leave Egypt. Nonetheless our rabbis claim four out of every five Jews stayed behind and were lost to Jewish history.

Absent such direct divine intervention, Ezra only managed to bring 42,360 Babylonian exiles (Ezra 2:64) to establish the second commonwealth. Faced with daunting assimilation and intermarriage – there really is nothing new under the sun – Ezra embarked on a campaign to reinvigorate Judaism for the Jews of his time. The allure of idolatry that was so powerful during the first Temple period had dissipated to be replaced by a new challenge, that of the “*minim*”, the heretics who rejected the nascent Oral Law.

Moshe gave the people the Torah but it was Ezra and the Men of the Great Assembly, of which he was one of the founding members,

*Rabbi Biber's Message—continued on page 2*

## President's Perspective

Dear Fellow Congregants,

This year, the arrival of Spring means that we can extend our limited horizons out the back (or front) door, taking walks and even cleaning out the barbeque in anticipation of warmer weather. Flowers are starting to bloom, and I hope that you will take some hope in that renewal—that life does go on.

It's hard to remember back to Purim, but for those who attended the Shul's break fast dinner after megillah reading, you WILL remember! Dinner was delicious and I'd like to thank Alex Goldstein for coordinating the efforts this year. Entertainment was provided by Kari and Dan Gutstein and the bravery of those who entered the toilet paper challenge, the rubber band race and the other crazy events of the evening. Rollicking would be the right word for this year's Purim event—so thanks to all the Gutsteins for making this happen.



Sadly, after Purim is when our long list of excellent programming was scrapped—or at least postponed for a few months. The home-delivered pre-Pesach Shabbat dinner, catered and delivered by Michael Kirshner (Starr Kosher), was delicious and much appreciated. Movie nights became “at home” only, but Rabbi Biber stepped up by making his daily minyan drasha available to everyone via Zoom Sunday-Thursdays at 7:00 pm.

This year's “Ask the Rabbi” was well attended (via Zoom) and went well over its expected hour of questions about Pesach. Speaking of Pesach...no, let's not. It was a time for reflection and remembrance and a hope that next year we will all NOT be at home!

Sadly, our excellent annual Yom HaShoah commemoration was postponed, but we will notify you when a new date is set. Instead, we had a shared Yom HaShoah commemoration hosted by Rabbi Biber, just as we commemorate Yom HaZikaron and celebrate Yom HaAtzma'ut, sharing in the community observance online.

Shavuot, which begins on Thursday night, May 28, will continue our virtual religious observance, though I'm certain that pre-Shavuot studies will be available.

It is my sincere hope and prayer that the next issue of the LJCAGBI will once again present an array of activities for the summer—along with a schedule of services for the week and for Shabbat together. Wishing everyone a safe and healthy hibernation.

Marcia Kramer  
President

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### *Rabbi Biber's Message—continued from page 1*

who put into practice the daily routine of Jewish life, establishing our daily prayers and blessings, and setting the groundwork for the flourishing of the oral law. Both in Egypt and in Bavel the future of the Jewish people stood in the balance and it was the leadership of Moshe and Ezra that ensured it. Moshe recorded the Torah but it is Ezra who is known as the scribe - he too was worthy to write the Torah.

Truth be told, not only did Ezra bring about a fundamental change in the development of Torah but throughout the generations, differing emphases were needed to ensure that the people actually observe the Torah. While we take it as a given that there are 613 mitzvot, no agreed upon list of these mitzvot exists and it was only in the Middle Ages that the enumeration of the mitzvot – and the controversy surrounding such – gained prominence. The Talmudic rabbis showed little interest in the subject. The notion of 613 mitzvot appears, to the best of my knowledge, only twice in the Talmud both in aggadic or non-legal discussions. Rav Simlai uses a most unusual method, that of the numerical count of the word Torah, to assert that there are 613 mitzvot. That is unusual enough but what follows is an almost unbelievable recasting of the essence of Torah. The Talmud continues that King David came and “stood them [the 613 mitzvot] on eleven”. Rashi explains that the later generations were not as righteous as the earlier ones and were unable to accept the full yoke of mitzvot and “if they came to observe them all no one would merit so”. Thus, King David emphasized only 11 mitzvot, that way many more could observe them.

These mitzvot are enumerated in Tehillim chapter 15 and include such aspects as acting justly, speaking truthfully from the heart, not hurting another, and honoring those who fear G-d. Even these 11 proved too

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*Rabbi Biber's Message—continued on page 3*

difficult for many, so Isaiah reduced them to six, Micah to three (justice, kindness and modesty) and finally Hababuk to one; “the righteous live through their faith”. It is not only our generation that can only focus on the thirty-second sound bite.

The leaders of each generation must be most sensitive to what is and what is not possible to achieve. Demand too little and we fail in our mission, demand too much and run the risk of turning many off from Judaism. No one demanded more from the people than Moshe Rabbeinu. He could tolerate no falsehood and pettiness. Yet he fully understood the limits and foibles of the Jewish people. This allowed him to beseech G-d time and time again to forgive them for their misdeeds.

Blessed is the generation whose leaders inspire people to great heights. Great leaders demand much from others and even more from themselves. They have the unique ability to match the people and the needs of the day. It is this ability which allows Torah to flourish through thick and thin, to be responsive to the world around us, emphasizing those aspects of Torah which allow it to flourish in their own particular situation.

***Chag Sameach!***

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## ***From the Catering Department***

It seems like a very long time since I wrote my last bulletin article but with all the talk about the coronavirus, everything is scary. I can't remember ever being afraid of weather, or of being scared, either. I must think pleasant thoughts, or jokes or even situations. Just the other day one of my grandkids asked me to relate a particular situation that made me laugh. And when I did, it made me laugh again. That's when I realized that I'm not laughing much any more. I'd like to blame it on the weather or on anything else. That's kinda sad. I used to laugh a lot and with a lot of people. Hopefully as the weather warms up, things will get back to what we used to call 'normal'.

I find I'm not listening to the news on television. It's enough I read stuff in the papers. What's happened? Has the world gone bonkers? Because I'm not driving anymore, I'm dependent on someone else. I don't like that feeling. I know that things happen, but now and then something funny should be happening.

The newspapers must have something to write about that isn't depressing. It's like we're living in a different world. We need a little love and a little line or two of something that's uplifting. I'd like to see happy faces and hear happy thoughts again. Even the cartoons don't seem to make me laugh anymore. We need a campaign to bring pleasant thoughts to everybody. People have to start laughing again. Maybe it's because when you go outside you don't see people anymore, only faces wrapped up. Everyone seems to be scared of a virus. We should all be aware of this and be careful, but my goodness, we have to stop being scared of everything and everyone. Maybe the Rabbi should talk about this on Shabbat. Being careful isn't new. But being scared sure is. Sooo, maybe a good joke would help.

Two Texans are sitting on a plane from Dallas & an old Jewish man is sitting between them. The first Texan says: My name is Roger. I own 250,000 acres. I have 1,000 head of cattle and they call my place the Jolly Roger. The second Texan says: my name is John and I own 350,000 acres. I have 5,000 head of cattle and they call my place Big John. They both look down at the little Jewish man who says, my name is Irving and I own only 300 acres. Roger looks down at him and says “300 acres? What do you raise? Nothing says Irving. Well then, John asks, what do you call it? “Downtown Dallas”.

Shirley Derdiger

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### ***Please get your articles in for the shul bulletin!***

If you have a program, announcement or event, please get your information to the Shul *Bulletin* so everyone will know about it! Please send your electronic submissions to the editor at [Bulletin@ljcagbi.org](mailto:Bulletin@ljcagbi.org) or submit a hard copy to the Shul office before the deadline (**July/August, 2020 issue Friday, June 19, 2020**). All material is subject to approval by the Shul office and may be edited for space or content. Inserts must also be approved by the Shul office before inclusion in the *Bulletin*. Please call the Shul office at 847.676.0491 for further details.

# Schedule for Daily/Shabbat/Holiday Services

<b>May 2020/Iyar-Sivan 5780</b>						
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Shabbat</b>
					1 S: 7:00am CL: 7:30pm M/M:6:30pm Omer 22	2 <b>Acharei Mot Kedoshim</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:20pm Havdalah after 8:34pm Omer 23
3 S: 8:30am M/M:7:35pm Omer 24	4 S: 6:45am M/M:7:35pm Omer 25	5 S: 7:00am M/M:7:35pm Omer 26	6 S: 7:00am M/M:7:35pm Omer 27	7 S: 6:45am M/M:7:35pm Omer 28	8 <b>Pesach Sheni</b> S: 7:00am CL: 7:38pm M/M: 6:30pm Omer 29	9 <b>Emor</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:30pm Havdalah after 8:42pm Omer30
10 <b>Mother's Day</b> S: 8:30am M/M:7:40pm Omer 31	11 S: 6:45am M/M:7:40pm Omer 32	12 <b>Lag B'Omer</b> S: 7:00am M/M:7:40pm Omer 33	13 S: 7:00am M/M:7:40pm Omer 34	14 S: 6:45am M/M:7:40pm Omer 35	15 S: 7:00am CL: 7:45pm M/M: 6:30pm Omer 36	16 <b>Behar Bechukotai</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:35pm Havdalah after 8:49pm Omer 37
17 S: 8:30am M/M:7:50pm Omer 38	18 S: 6:45am M/M:7:50pm Omer 39	19 S: 7:00am M/M:7:50pm Omer 40	20 S: 7:00am M/M:7:50pm Omer 41	21 S: 6:45am M/M:7:50pm Omer 42	22 <b>Yom Yerushalayim</b> S: 7:00am CL: 7:52pm M/M: 6:30pm Omer 43	23 <b>Bamidbar Shabbat Mevorchim</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:40pm Havdalah after 8:55pm Omer 44
24 <b>Rosh Chodesh Sivan</b> S: 8:30am M/M:7:55pm Omer 45	25 <b>Memorial Day</b> S: 8:30am M/M: 7:55pm Omer 46	26 S: 7:00am M/M:7:55pm Omer 47	27 S: 7:00am M/M:7:55pm Omer 48	28 <b>Erev Shavuot</b> S: 6:45am CL: 7:57pm M/M: 8:00pm Omer 49	29 <b>Shavuot</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:55pm CL: 7:58pm <b>Leil Limmud</b>	30 <b>Shavuot</b> S: 9:00am <b>Megillat Ruth Yizkor Lunch n' Learn</b> M/M: 7:45pm Havdalah after 9:01pm

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S: 8:30am M/M: 8:00pm

# & Shabbat/Holiday Candlelighting



<b>June 2020/Sivan-Tammuz 5780</b>						
<b>Sunday</b>	<b>Monday</b>	<b>Tuesday</b>	<b>Wednesday</b>	<b>Thursday</b>	<b>Friday</b>	<b>Shabbat</b>
	1 S: 6:45am M/M:8:00pm	2 S: 7:00am M/M:8:00pm	3 S: 7:00am M/M:8:00pm	4 S: 6:45am M/M:8:00pm	5 S: 7:00am M/M:6:30pm CL: 8:03pm	6 <b>Naso</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:50pm Havdalah after 9:06pm
7 S: 8:30am M/M:8:00pm	8 S: 6:45am M/M:8:00pm	9 S: 7:00am M/M:8:00pm	10 S: 7:00am M/M:8:00pm	11 S: 6:45am M/M:8:00pm	12 S: 7:00am M/M: 6:30pm CL: 8:07pm	13 <b>Beha'alotecha</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 7:55pm Havdalah after 9:10pm
14 S: 8:30am M/M:8:05pm	15 S: 6:45am M/M: 8:05pm	16 S: 7:00am M/M: 8:05pm	17 S: 7:00am M/M: 8:05pm	18 S: 6:45am M/M: 8:05pm	19 S: 7:00am M/M: 6:30pm CL: 8:09pm	20 <b>Shelach Shabbat Mevorchim</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 8:00pm Havdalah after 9:12pm
21 <b>Father's Day</b> S: 8:30am M/M:8:05pm	22 <b>Rosh Chodesh Tammuz</b> S: 6:30am M/M:8:05pm	23 <b>Rosh Chodesh Tammuz</b> S: 6:30am M/M:8:05pm	24 S: 7:00am M/M:8:05pm	25 S: 6:45am M/M:8:05pm	26 S: 7:00am M/M: 6:30pm CL: 8:10pm	27 <b>Korach</b> S: 9:00am M/M: 8:00pm Havdalah after 9:13pm
28 S: 8:30am M/M:8:05pm	29 S: 6:45am M/M:8:05pm	30 S: 7:00am M/M:8:05pm				

***Stay well, take care of yourselves, we hope to see you soon!!***