

Temple Beth El

STAMFORD'S CONSERVATIVE SYNAGOGUE
Affiliated With the United Synagogue of America

Volume 17 – Issue 10

October, 1992 — Tishrei/Heshvan, 5753

על רגל אחת ON ONE FOOT

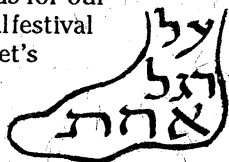
Many years ago, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel appeared on the NBC's "Meet the Press." Since Rabbi Heschel is considered to be the greatest Jewish philosopher/theologian of this century, I humbly step aside to insert his powerful message to young people into this space. These final words spoken to the panel speak directly to our community immersed as we are in the Month of Festivals, Tishrei.

"I would say to young people a number of things. And we only have one minute. I would say let them remember that there is meaning beyond absurdity. Let them be sure that every little deed counts, that every word has power, and that we can, everyone, do our share to redeem the world in spite of all absurdities and all the frustrations and disappointments. And above all remember that the meaning of life is to build a life as if it were a work of art. Remember that life is a celebration."

Note the emphasis on celebration, because, while Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur contain many moments of sanctity and joy, for pure celebration nothing holds a candle to Sukkot and Simhat Torah. It always saddens me that so many of our children carry with them the impression that Judaism is by definition solemn and dour. They never discover that constructing a Sukkah is much more fun than decorating a Christmas tree (and far more ecologically sound) or that spontaneity and unbridled joy are the order of the day on Simhat Torah. Yes, Jews can actually dance at services.

Our challenge is to create those lasting memories. But we need people here to do it. Join us for our Sukkah decorating party and all our special festival programs and services, and together, let's create moments of celebration. Which is my way of wishing you a happy Sukkot...on one foot.

— Rabbi Joshua Hammerman



SUKKOT SERVICES

First Night Family Service	Sun. Oct. 11, 7 PM
First Day Festival Service	Mon. Oct. 12, 9:30 AM
Second Day Festival Service	Tues. Oct. 13, 9:30 AM
Shmini Atzeret (Yizkor) Services	Mon. Oct. 19, 7:30 & 9:30 AM
Simhat Torah Celebration/Service	Mon. Oct. 19, 7:30 PM
Simhat Torah Morning Service	Tues. Oct. 20, 9:30 AM

SHABBAT MORNING

We're off and running. The year has begun. Join us in October for Shabbat and Sukkot Festival Services. With three Bar Mitzvah services, three weeks of children's services, baby sitting every week, and our first Learner's Shabbat, October is packed with activity.

On October 10, Rabbi Hammerman will teach about Sukkot, "The Jewish Earth-Week." In a time of environmental concern, people of all ages will be interested in learning about the timeless lessons of this ancient harvest holiday. This will be the first of four Learner's Sabbaths on our schedule for the year.

Thanks to all our September baby sitters, and to all the volunteers who have gotten us off to a flying start.

See you in synagogue.

— The Shabbat Committee



Powdered Milk in Envelopes,
Evaporated Milk, Fruit Juice or Tang,
Hot or Cold Cereals, Bread, Crackers,
Pancake Mixes, Peanut Butter & Jelly,
Canned Fruit & Vegetables, Packaged
& Canned Soups, Canned Fish &
Meat, Pasta & Canned Sauce, Rice &
Dried Beans Jello & Instant Puddings,
Tea, Coffee, Hot Chocolate

JEWISH COMMUNITY WIDE YOM KIPPUR FOOD DRIVE

**PICK UP A GROCERY BAG
WITH INSTRUCTIONS AT BETH EL**

RETURN FILLED BAGS BY OCTOBER 8TH
SORTING AND STOCKING WILL BE ON OCT 8 & 9

AT PERSON-TO-PERSON

Call Temple Beth El office 322-6901 for further information

FIRST FAMILY SERVICE - FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23

A new tradition of monthly family services on Friday nights begins on October 23. The service, which will be our only Shabbat service for that evening, begins at the early time of 7:30 p. m. All ages are invited, with our guests of honor that night to be our third graders who will be celebrating their consecration.

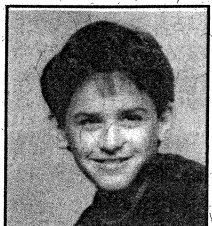
All family services will feature student participation in prayers, as well as stories, games, and lots of Shabbat singing, all within the framework of a traditional service.

Yahrzeit lists will be read as usual. Those with Yahrzeits should be aware, however, that the list is now read both on Friday night and again on Shabbat morning, should the latter be more convenient.

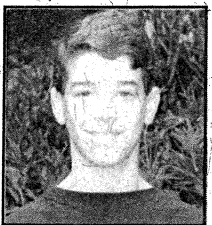
BAR/BAT MITZVAH



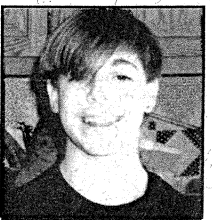
MEREDITH NAIDORF...daughter of Dr. Ellen Naidorf and Marc Glass...will become a Bat Mitzvah on October 10...sister of Matthew Naidorf...8th grader at Turn of River Middle School...likes softball, basketball, art, lacrosse...for Meredith: *"My Bat Mitzvah means I am becoming older and maturing."*



ADAM KORN...resides with parents, Steven & Debbi, brother, Justin, and sister, Emily...attends Cloonan Middle School...enjoys Karate, baseball cards, baseball, basketball...will become a Bar Mitzvah on October 17...Adam writes: *"This is one of the biggest steps in a Jewish man's life, and I am honored to have this privilege."*



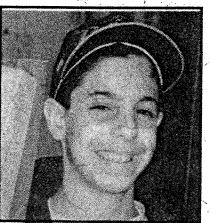
STEVEN LASH...son of Jerry and Jill...brother of Cindy...8th grader at Turn of River...will become a Bar Mitzvah on October 24, the day of his 13th birthday...likes all sports, including baseball, tennis, football...for Steven: *"I'm glad I'm able to share this day with my family and friends."*



PETER & JED LUKSIN...twin sons of JoAnn & Kenneth...brothers of Perry...residing in Pound Ridge, NY...will be called to the Torah as B'nai Mitzvah on the morning of October 31...eighth graders at Fox Lane Middle School

...Jed enjoys skiing, sailing, fishing, Fox Lane High School P.R.I.D.E....Jed writes: *"I am looking forward to becoming an adult in the eyes of the Jewish community"*

...And Peter's special activities include tennis, lacrosse, roller blading, as well as skiing and fishing...Peter says: *"I've worked very hard to get to this point in my life, and I look forward to becoming a Bar Mitzvah."*



Auditions for Entrance into the TEMPLE BETH EL JUNIOR CHOIR

will be held during October
All members of our congregation in
GRADES 4 - 12

are eligible to request an audition.

Be part of a group with an established tradition and exciting future. Partake in:

**SABBATH EVE SERVICES • CONCERTS
SPECIAL OCCASIONS • CHORAL FESTIVALS**

For further information, or to request an audition form, contact Hazzan Rabinowitz.

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL NEWS NEW FACULTY

As noted in the last Temple Bulletin, fourteen of the seventeen Religious School staff are returning for the 1992/93 school year. Among the new staff are the following three teachers:

Rabbi Shoshana Hantman, Beth El's new Youth Director will be teaching sixth grade once a week (customs and ceremonies) and seventh grade Hebrew once a week. In addition, she will lead the eighth grade class on Tuesday evenings.

Rabbi Hantman has a B.A. degree from the University of Pennsylvania, and M.Ed. from Temple University in Philadelphia. She was ordained a Rabbi in 1989 from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College. Between 1982 and 1990, she has worked as a religious school teacher in many grades, as a Youth Director, or as a Rabbi/Education Director in a number of Temples in the Philadelphia area. Rabbi Hantman will lead the bi-weekly student Shabbat services at Beth El as well as leading one of the youth services during the High Holidays.

Mrs. Alino Daviko, an Israeli living in Westport, will teach fifth grade Hebrew on Tuesdays. Mrs. Daviko, a mother of two children, is a professional teacher who taught elementary school near Tel Aviv for over a decade. She plans to return to Israel in the next two years.

Mrs. Uzit Dagan, an Israeli living in Stamford, will teach seventh grade Hebrew on Sundays. Mrs. Dagan led teen age groups in Israel where she also plans to return in the next two years.

MERKAZ TORAH

Dear Teen, Parents and Friends:

It is an exciting time for Merkaz Torah! September 16 began a thrilling year, a year which should offer something for everyone. We want all of Stamford's Jewish teens to be part of Merkaz Torah, the Community High School of Jewish Studies. We have some Bible, some history, some modern issues/contemporary skills and some culture. We need some of you!

This fall semester's courses include: The Jewish Women; Maimonides-Physician, Philosopher, Thinker; A Little Song and A Little Dance; Jewish Drama; Jewish Humor, Conversational Hebrew, Sparks of Glory-Jewish Life During the Holocaust. For our upper-classmen, we offer the ever popular Sup N' Rap where you come, have a little nahsh, maybe a little josh, with just a touch of drash (learning?). Merkaz offers College Prep, a course meant to augment the SAT prep courses and college placement behemoth that the Merkaz staff, board and all parents have conquered in our previous lives.

Merkaz Torah is establishing a Student Steering Committee through which students can be involved in course evaluation and development as well as planning social, community or any other activity of general student interest. The SSC is open to all Merkaz Torah students.

Classes are held Wednesday evenings from 7-9 p.m. at Temple Sinai. There is a break for refreshments between classes. The fall semester began September 16 and will end December 16. It is never too late to become part of the program! If you wish to enroll, please call me at 368-9502.

The staff and I look forward to learning with you this year!

—Jonathan H. Hausman, Director of Merkaz Torah

SISTERHOOD NEWS

October is a very busy month for Sisterhood. We begin with the Break-the-Fast which occurs immediately following Yom Kippur services on October 7th. We'll be setting the tables, cutting the cakes - no nibbling or finger licking allowed - pouring the wine during the afternoon break in services and just before the Shofar is blown. If you can help, come join us.

On October 11, immediately following Hebrew School at 12:00, we'll be organizing our annual Decorate the Sukkah. Bring food to hang on the Sukkah or a homemade decorative item. We'll provide some vegetables, fruits, yarn and construction paper as well as food for snacking. Let's see what a beautiful Sukkah we can create together.

On October 18, we'll be co-sponsoring a candidate's brunch with Men's Club. If you are not a registered voter in Stamford, you can register to vote, hear the candidate speak and have breakfast. If you are a registered voter, come and join us for an informative program and a hearty breakfast.

On October 22, Sisterhood will be having a New Member Tea at Jerri Buehler's home. This will give you a chance to meet Sisterhood members and find out more about our role at Beth El. All women who join Temple Beth El automatically receive a year's free membership in our organization.

On October 30, Men's Club and Sisterhood will be welcoming all the new members of our Temple Beth El family at a special New Member Shabbat service. You will meet the lay leaders of the Temple and experience the warmth of Shabbat at Beth El.

As you can see, there is a lot going on, and we welcome your participation. An additional reminder - if you haven't yet paid your dues, please do so now.

Again, we wish you and yours a happy, healthy New Year, and may you have an easy fast.

—Your Presidium, Belle Agronin, Jerri Buehler, Ronni Ginsberg, Lisa Rome, Eileen Rosner

SISTERHOOD CALENDAR 1992/1993

Oct. 7: Break-the-Fast	Evening
Oct. 11: Decorate Sukkah	Noon
Oct. 18: Candidates Brunch	10:30 a.m. (with Men's Club)
Oct. 22: New Member Tea	7:30 p.m.
Oct. 30: New Member Shabbat	8 p.m.
Nov. 8: Paid-Up Member Brunch	10 a.m.
Dec. 22: Blood Drive	12 to 6 p.m. (with Men's Club)
Jan. 8: Scholar in Residence	Weekend
Jan. 23: Sisterhood Sabbath	9:30 a.m.

Many Attractive Gifts

NEW ITEMS

Stickers, Magnets, Note Pads, Wrapping Paper, Mezuzot, Address Books, Candlesticks, Book Marks, Playing Cards, Bar & Bat Mitzvah Gifts.

Also a full line of invitations, informals, holiday cards, yarmulkes, tallitot, etc. Penny Horowitz or Mary C. Silberman will help you select your invitations and order them for your special occasions.

GIFT SHOP HOURS:

Sundays 9:30am - 12pm; Tuesdays 3:30pm - 5:45 pm.
Invitations and stationery by appointment, call Penny, 325-9143 or Mary C., 322-9533.

MEN'S CLUB NEWS

On behalf of all the Men's Club members and the entire Temple Beth El Congregation at large, we wish Rabbi Hammerman a hearty Mazal Tov on his recent installation as Senior Rabbi of the Temple. The large number who attended the event included not only our own congregation, but many well-wishers from the community. This speaks highly for our chosen spiritual leader from whom we as Temple Beth El members will be the direct recipients of his knowledge and direction.

Response to the Men's Club membership survey by our congregants has provided us with a feel for the types of events which we want to have in the future. Guest speakers and local theater were mentioned most often. Since most respondents to the survey were over the age of forty, it is our intention to contact those under the age of forty to find out where their interest lie in relation to Temple events.

Both Men's Club and Sisterhood will be co-sponsoring the October 18th, Sunday morning, Candidate's Brunch featuring Chris Shays. A Red Cross Blood Drive at our Temple is scheduled for Tuesday, December 22nd, from the hours of 1 - 5 p.m. As a service to our community, we are providing a barbeque at the Pacific House for those who are less fortunate. Food and entertainment will be donated by those of us working on the project, as well as area food establishments.

We urge all of you to join with us in our planned activities and welcome your suggestions for future Men's Club sponsored events.

— Alec Perlson, Wil Brewer

YOUR TURN: A MONTHLY SURVEY OF BETH EL'S OPINIONS

As we enter a new Jewish year, it's a good time to evaluate where the Jewish community stands.

What is the greatest danger facing American Jewry as we enter 5753?

- 1) Anti-Semitism: The Religious Right
- 2) Anti-Semitism: David Duke and the fascist fringe.
- 3) Anti-Semitism: Louis Farrakhan and the radical left.
- 4) The perceived weakness of AIPAC following its showdown with President Bush over the loan guarantees.
- 5) The increasing rate of intermarriage.
- 6) The lack of quality Jewish Education.
- 7) Other _____
- 8) None of the above: Everything's wonderful.

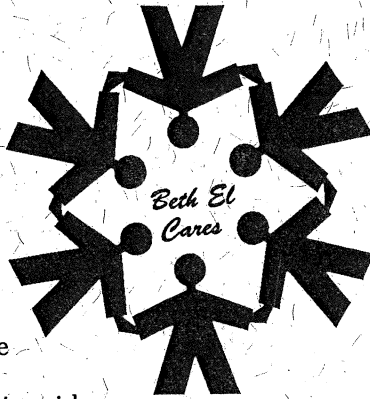
Comments: _____

SUNDAY SEMINARS

Sunday Seminars are returning! Last year, five sessions scattered throughout the year, covered subjects from The Dead Sea Scrolls to The Coming of the Messiah, to Black/Jewish Relations. The first Sunday Seminar of this season will take place on NOVEMBER 8, FROM 10:30 - 12:00 PM. The topic? TUNE IN NEXT MONTH!!

BETH EL CARES

The summer has given us a quiet time to renew our energy and prepare for the many activities we have scheduled for the New Year. We got off to a good start with Beth El Cares arranging for the Temple Men's Club to host. Lots of good hearty food, music and congeniality made for a successful event.



The Jewish Community-wide Food Drive is being held now. Please return your filled grocery bags by October 8th. We anticipate a tremendous response. Richard Fisher and Rabbi Hantman are engaging our youth to help in the handling of the groceries on the receiving end and with sorting and unpacking at Person-to-Person. Call the Temple Office and offer your assistance if you can drive some teenagers and/or are willing to help.

We also supported a Theater Party in September at the Stamford Theater Works sponsored by the Mayor's Multi-Cultural Council. This group is an outgrowth of the program on racism and intolerance, in which we were active. The play, "Cobb," dealt with a racial issue.

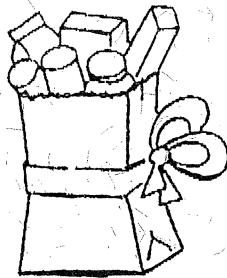
Once again, you are urged to register to vote. The deadline is October 20th to be eligible to vote in November.

As you prepare your closets for the new season of colder weather, please gather up outgrown children's warm outerwear for the poor. We will be collecting those most needed items in late October and November. For further information about Beth El Cares, call the Temple Office at 322-6901.

TO THE TEENS OF BETH EL

I have cleared out the consecrated portion from my house, and given it to the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow, just as You commanded me."

- Deuteronomy 26:13



This High Holiday period, Temple Beth El will ask your family to bring to the synagogue non-perishable foods for contribution to Person-To-Person, a large food bank in Darien, Connecticut. Person-To-Person feeds 10,000 needy people a month in the greater Stamford area.

Beth El's USY Program now asks you, our community's high school students, to volunteer a little time to help this food drive happen. Would you either...

A. On Erev Yom Kippur, Tuesday, October 6, or Yom Kippur day, Wednesday, October 7, accept bags of food from congregants and help load them into a van at Beth El, OR...

B. On Thursday, October 8, afternoon or evening, come to Person-To-Person on the Post Road in Darien, and help unload the van, sort the food and stock shelves?

To volunteer, please call Dick Fisher at 323-1449. He can also help arrange transportation if you choose (B).

THANK YOU from Beth El Cares and USY.

CONTRIBUTIONS

We gratefully acknowledge the following contributions:

From Patricia & Frank Galli, in memory of Eva Melmed;
To the Cantor's Discretionary Fund, from Ellen & Dave Raskin Holzberg;

In honor of the naming of Rachel, Jonathan & Ethan Spector, from Jay, Maxine, Gary & Brian Freilich;

To Rabbi Hammerman, Rabbi Goldman and Hazzan Rabinowitz, from the 1992 Confirmation Class;

In memory of Dr. Irving Dichter, from Mrs. Rosalind Fleischman;

In memory of Judith Freelund, from Mr. & Mrs. Morton Marvin, a book for the Heritage Museum;

From Dr. & Mrs. Warren J. Brandt, in honor of the special birthdays of Marian Reinhertz and Iris Bromberg;

To Rabbi Hammerman's Discretionary Fund, in gratitude, from Nancy Spector and David Caruso;

To the Cantor's Discretionary Fund, in honor of Rear Admiral Fred Golove's retirement from the United States Coast Guard, from Mary C. & Alan Silberman;

To the Cantor's Discretionary Fund, from Burton Hoffman, in memory of his sister, Charlotte Werner;

To Rabbi Hammerman's Discretionary Fund, in honor of Lauren Claire Sarner's naming, from Patty & George Sarner, Sharyn & Richard Sarner, and Gail & Jim Citrin;

To Rabbi Hammerman's Discretionary Fund, from Mrs. Mollie Farb, in honor of Eva Starkman's recovery;

From Mr. & Mrs. Stanley Ferber, for the recovery of Phyllis Kapiloff, to the Cantor's Discretionary Fund;

From Ed Golove in honor of Fred Golove's retirement as Rear Admiral and Senior Reserve Officer, U. S. Coast Guard, to the Cantor's Discretionary Fund;

From Susan Friedman, in gratitude for prayers on behalf of her family;

To the Cantor's Discretionary Fund, in honor of their daughter, Lori's graduation from Ithaca College, and their son, Adam, being elected President of Hillel at Colorado State College, from Sandy & Marc Teichman;

From Eloyse Gray, to Rabbi Hammerman's & the Cantor's Discretionary Funds;

To Rabbi Hammerman's & the Cantor's Discretionary Funds, from Carol & Robert Levine, in honor of Max Levine's 89th birthday, in honor of Muriel & Sol Siskind's 45th anniversary, & in memory of Harry Schlesinger, Carol's father;

To the Cantor's Discretionary Fund, from Carol & Robert Levine, in honor of Robert Levine, Jr. and Pegah Hendizadeh reading the Torah during the High Holidays, and in memory of Allen Weinstein's father.

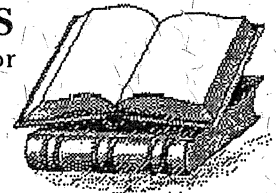
*NEW PRAYERBOOKS

We thank the following for contributing prayerbooks:

From Marlyn & Rich Agatstein, in fond memory of William Ackerman, Charlotte Ackerman and Lenore Gold, two prayerbooks;

From Harriet & Alan Ziperstein & family, in loving memory of Deborah Ziperstein and Mr. & Mrs. Philip Sklar, two prayerbooks.

*New prayerbooks may be donated and dedicated for \$18 per volume.



rites and reasons:

Ritual Committee Report,
by Rabbi Joshua Hammerman

THE TALLIT

Last month we classified the wearing of a kippah as a significant but rather modern custom among Jews. Such is not the case with the tallit, one of the most ancient and significant items in all of Judaism. The idea of a special garment with cut fringes predates even the Bible as a physical reminder of legal obligations among ancient semitic peoples. It is among the first articles of clothing known to civilization. The Bible commands Jews to wear fringes (called tzitzit) as a physical reminder of all 613 commandments found in the Torah. This passage from Numbers is so important that it is found as part of the Sh'ma and is read twice daily. The kippah is a custom. Jews are commanded to wear the fringes.

We need physical, visual reminders for important thoughts, especially ideas that are complex and abstract. It's like watching the news, when we decode the words of the announcer with the help of those visual aids known as graphics. The tallit plays a similar role. Wearing a tallit while praying is analogous to tying a string around your finger. If it's on, we can't possibly forget what we're doing, and why. Not only is it a visual aid, it serves as a useful tool in the act of praying, enabling the wearer to create a sense of separation, "sacred space," around him by wrapping himself within its warmth. And in the "old country," before the invention of central heating, let's not discount the garment's more practical advantages.

The tallit, to which the four tzitzit are tied, was worn all the time in the days of the Talmud, mostly by the wealthy and by distinguished rabbis. Eventually it came to be worn only during prayer, although some Jews wear a smaller version all day long, known as the tallit katan, underneath their outer clothing. Even they must wear the normal tallit when praying. Ironically, the tallit, once a sign of status, has become a great equalizer at services. No matter whether the suit was made by Brooks Brothers, Armani or the tailor Motel Kamzoil, the tallit worn over it makes everyone look the same. Although we pray as individuals, we are unified by the fact that we wear the same thing Jews everywhere are wearing. It is a great equalizer, a great unifier, and a tool for inspired praying. To daven without a tallit is to daven naked.

At which services is it worn? By congregants, every morning, (except for the fast of Tisha B'Av), and at night only on Yom Kippur, and by the hazzan during some afternoon and evening services.

By whom? The Shulchan Aruch, the authoritative code of law dating back to the 16th century, states that a person called up for an aliyah should wear a tallit. Based on this premise, our policy is to request that those who open the ark and those sitting on the pulpit also wear one, even if it is not otherwise required. Because the purpose of this garment is to remind a person of his Jewish obligations, and because the act of putting it on requires the saying of the blessing, "We praise you God, who has commanded us to wear the tzitzit, to ask a non-Jew to wear it would both compromise his beliefs and distort the meaning of ours. This is a sacred act, nothing less. During a political season, one might often see a politician slap on a yarmulke when speaking to Jewish audiences in a

synagogue, but he puts on the tallit only if he intends to pray with it.

How old? There are three customs, all perfectly legitimate. Some encourage children to wear one from early childhood. Others begin at Bar/Bat Mitzvah, still others at marriage. We tend to go for the middle practice here, but not at the expense of the others. For that reason, no one is required to wear a tallit at our services, unless he is on the bima. Now, for the most difficult, and most important issue:

What about women? Women have never been prohibited from wearing the tallit in Jewish law, nor were they obligated to do so. This commandment was considered "limited by time," a category of mitzvot from which women were exempted because of their child rearing obligations in traditional societies. Most of the great authorities permit it (including the Shulchan Aruch, the source of Orthodox Jewish law) but they are divided over whether a woman should say the blessings. One respected authority believes that women are actually duty-bound to wear it.

For us, the question of "limited by time," is moot, because in our practice, women have long been considered to have the same religious privileges — and obligations — as men. Technically, then, women should be required to wear the tallit, whether or not they choose to wear a kippah, at least on our bima. Clearly, however, women who have never worn this garment can't be expected to change their practices overnight. Just as we respect those men who choose not to wear one until they marry, we respect those women who just aren't ready to take on that particular mitzvah, not just yet.

Women must be aware that the option is available. It always has been, in fact, but now we'll do even more to make it easier to choose to wear one, at least on the pulpit. A special feminine tallit will be made available on the reader's stand for those who choose to wear one while reciting the Torah blessings. For our younger girls, a more vigorous effort will be made to encourage them to consider purchasing a tallit of their own. I look forward to reporting to you in the near future that our Bat Mitzvah girls have taken to wearing them on their big day. It hasn't happened yet, but soon, some courageous soul will break the ice. That's my challenge to the Bat Mitzvah class of 5753.

This change will occur slowly, over a long period of time, and it will not be forced. But, sooner or later, the girls and women of this congregation will discover the little secret we men have kept to ourselves for so long: that warm, peaceful feeling of wrapping oneself in a garment our people have worn since time immemorial. It's one fashion that will never go out of style.

Next month: The Mourner's Kaddish

