



Bulletin

December 4, 2018 | 26 Kislev 5779

VOLUME 73 NUMBER 3

FROM RABBI HAYON



This week, the worldwide Jewish community welcomes the brightness of Chanukah into our homes. As we all know, since the Jewish calendar is based on a modified lunar schedule, the dates of Chanukah shift from year to year. And as it shifts, we may notice that our perspective on the Festival of Lights changes along with it.

Difficult times remind us to count our blessings – to remain grateful for the countless gifts we enjoy every day. And they also invite us to recommit ourselves to the core Jewish principles of hospitality and tzedakah at this season of the year.

At times, when our celebrations fall closer to our Christian neighbors' celebration of Christmas, the festive gift-giving aspects of Hanukkah may feel more prominent to us; when Chanukah includes the night of the winter solstice, December 21st, we may experience even more powerfully its symbolic themes of bringing light into dark places. This year, however, **Chanukah begins on December 2nd** – closer to Thanksgiving than to Christmas – and as a result, I find myself reflecting on the ways in which Hanukkah can be experienced as an extension of our practice of gratitude.

Over the past month, we have had many opportunities to think about the plentiful comforts and privileges we

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A Message from Cantor Simmons



Please join me on **Sunday, January 27th at 4:00 p.m.** for *Ever Open: A Musical Celebration*, a concert in our Barish Sanctuary to welcome in our 75th year. I will be performing

alongside my friends Elana Arian and Noah Aronson, as we reflect on the words on the wall of our sanctuary: Do justly, love mercy, walk humbly with your God (Micah 6:8). I will also have the honor of sharing the stage with our jubilant youth choir and our joyful volunteer choir, as well as our esteemed rabbis. The concert will be an intergenerational celebration with a reception following.

Prominently featured will be the world premiere of a new song commission

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Light the Lights, Celebrate Chanukah with Congregation Emanu El

Friday, December 7th

Latke Supper at 6:00 p.m., followed by Chanukah Service & Shabbat at 7:00 p.m.

On **Friday, December 7th at 6:00 p.m.**, our annual Chanukah tradition resumes with the congregation's Chanukah Latke Supper.

A brisket dinner in Feld Hall including the popular latkes made by our Religious School Community will lead off our night with a special Chanukah service featuring our clergy and youth choir in the Barish Sanctuary to follow.

Congregants and community members are encouraged to BYOM (Bring Your Own Menorah) with candles as we come together during the Chanukah service to light our menorahs to brighten the Sanctuary on this special night.

RSVPs are a must for the Chanukah Supper with costs of \$6 for a child, \$12 for an adult or \$36 for a family of four. Registrations can be handled on the www.EmanuElHouston.org website.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Shabbat Mikeitz, Genesis 41:1 – 44:17

Friday, December 7th

6:00 p.m., Chanukah Latke Supper, Feld Hall

7:00 p.m., Chanukah Service, Barish Sanctuary

Saturday, December 8th

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

Shabbat Viyagash – Genesis 44:18 – 47:2

Friday, December 14th

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Proler Chapel

Saturday, December 15th

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

Shabbat Va-y'chi, Genesis 47:28-50:26

Friday, December 21st

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Proler Chapel

7:15 p.m., Egg Foo Shabbos, Oshman Multi-Purpose Room

Saturday, December 22nd

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

Shabbat Sh'mot, Exodus 1:1 – 6:1

Friday, December 28th

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Proler Chapel

Saturday, December 29th

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

Shabbat Va-eira, Exodus 6:2 – 9:35

Friday, January 4th

5:45 p.m., Tot Shabbat Dinner, Feld Hall

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Proler Chapel

6:30 p.m., Tot Shabbat, Oshman Multi-Purpose Room

Saturday, January 5th

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

Shabbat Bo, Exodus 10:1 – 13:16

Friday, January 11th

6:00 p.m., Kabbalat Shabbat, Proler Chapel

Saturday, January 12th

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Proler Chapel

10:30 a.m., Morning Service, Barish Sanctuary

Bat Mitzvah of **Hannah Marmo**, daughter of Sasha

Vaikman & Peter Marmo and **Mia Septimus**, daughter

of Alison & Josh Septimus

REMINDER: All Friday night Shabbat services are video streamed on EmanuElHouston.org in addition to our Emanu El Facebook page and Roku channel. Saturday morning services featuring a B'nai Mitzvah are streamed on the Emanu El website and Roku channel.

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FROM RABBI HAYON *continued from page 1*

enjoy. For some of us, Thanksgiving gave us the chance to be grateful for warm homes and plentiful food; for others, it was an opportunity to spend time with family, friends, and loved ones. And yet the past few weeks have been challenging ones in our country. Together we have faced the heartbreak of anti-Semitic violence, school shootings, and the devastating fires in California whose death toll remains uncertain as I write these words.

Difficult times remind us to count our blessings – to remain grateful for the countless gifts we enjoy every day. And they also invite us to recommit ourselves to the core Jewish principles of hospitality and tzedakah at this season of the year. (If you are interested in helping to assist the recovery efforts for the victims of the California fires, please visit www.tinyurl.com/URJ-fire-relief for charitable options provided through the Union for Reform Judaism website.)

As these winter days grow shorter, I hope that we will find new opportunities to feel thankful for the sources of light in our households and our communities. And I pray that even in dark days, we will find ways to be a beacon of hope and goodness for those around us.

Emanu El Heads to Eastern Europe – Congregational Trip Planned for June 2019

Congregation Emanu El is celebrating its 75th anniversary in many ways during the 2019 calendar year.

As part of this celebration, please plan to join Rabbi Hayon as he leads a group from our congregation to Prague, Vienna and Budapest. An informational meeting about this congregational trip was held in late October. The trip's dates are June 11th-21st with basic information available on the ARZA World website: www.ARZAWorld.com).

If you are interested in taking part in this trip and were unable to attend the meeting, please contact Jason Plotkin at (713) 535-6414 or jasonp@emanuelhouston.org.

Rabbi Hayon – Winter Adult Ed Series *Love, Sex & Marriage: Jewish law and ethics about our most intimate relationships*

Join Rabbi Oren Hayon for a six-session educational series entitled, *Love, Sex and Marriage*. The class will offer an exploration of some of the most fascinating texts from the Talmud texts about love, intimacy and commitment. **The class will begin on Sunday, January 13th** with additional sessions held on **January 27th, February 3rd, February 10th, February 24th and March 3rd**. Class will take place **from 10:30 - 11:45 a.m.**

There are no fees or previous experience needed to attend the class, but please indicate your interest so that we can plan accordingly. To RSVP, call the synagogue at (713) 529-5771 or visit www.EmanuElHouston.org.

A MESSAGE FROM CANTOR SIMMONS

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by Noah Aronson. We here at Emanu El were honored to be part of Noah's latest endeavor, The Chai Project: 18 New Songs for 18 Communities. In 2018, Noah collaborated with clergy teams and lay-leaders, fellow musicians and songwriters, community choirs, poets, recording engineers, producers and many more to create individualized musical works celebrating the unique life of each community. (For those who may not know, the Hebrew word for life is Chai – and the letters that spell it equal 18.)

Our Emanu El team consisted of Rabbi Hayon writing the lyrics, Alex Navarro arranging for many instruments, and me consulting, singing and working with our choirs to prepare for the recording and this upcoming performance. We recorded our song with Nathan Malek at SugarHill Studios here in Houston. The full album will be released at Chanukah time, and you can currently hear our recording when you check out the concert on our homepage at emanuelhouston.org.

In crafting the lyrics for our song, Rabbi Hayon found examples from our sacred texts to match each of the three instructions:

*I will do justice
Speak up for those who are not free
Like Abraham and Sarah*

*Their words still speak in me
I will love mercy
And the neighbor by my side
Like Moses taught our people
As he led us through the night
I will walk humbly
I will learn and give and grow
Like Ruth said to her people
"Where you go, I will go!"*

Just as we learn from our biblical ancestors, we also see role models within our own congregation upholding these principles: people who work toward justice and equality, who strive to always be welcoming, who often do without being asked. This concert will provide an opportunity to delve more deeply into these ideas of justice, mercy, and humility, as we envision our next 75 years here at Emanu El.

The chorus of our song features our well-known Hebrew text: Hinei Mah Tov... How good and how pleasant it is for brothers and sisters to dwell together. We are so honored to welcome Elana and Noah back to our bimah, as so much of their music has become part of our regular prayer experience here at Emanu El. I cannot wait to gather together with all of you to begin celebrating this most wondrous community.

LIGHT THE LIGHTS

CELEBRATE CHANUKAH WITH EMANU EL

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

LATKE SUPPER 6:00 PM | CHANUKAH SERVICE 7:00 PM

RSVP ONLINE AT EMANUELHOUSTON.ORG

EMANU EL AT A GLANCE THROUGH JANUARY 27TH

The below information contains a listing of events at Emanu El exclusive of our Temple worship and Shabbat schedule, which can be found monthly on page 2.

As a Congregation, we communicate in many different ways: this calendar is supplemented by information that can be found throughout this edition of the Temple *Bulletin*, in the weekly Shabbat program, available in your weekly Wednesday eLetter, on the Emanu El website: www.emanuelhouston.org and/or on our Facebook page.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER

- 12/4** – Emanu Elders, 11:30 a.m.
- 12/6** – Emanu El Mahj Night, 5:30 p.m.
- 12/7** – Chanukah Latke Supper, 6:00 p.m.
(followed by 7:00 p.m. services)
- 12/9** – Screenagers, 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.
- 12/10** – Gathering Place, 10:00 a.m.
- 12/13** – Work of Our Hands, 10:00 a.m.
- 12/13** – Young Professionals’ Cooking Class, 7:00 p.m.
- 12/14** – Classic Connections Dinner & White Elephant Gift Exchange, following 6:00 p.m. services
- 12/15** – Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Greenberg, 12:00 p.m.
- 12/16** – Emanu El Blood Drive Effort at MD Anderson, 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
- 12/16** – Emanu El’s Choir Presents “Broadway & More” plus supper, 4:30 p.m.
- 12/17** – Emanu El Mahj Afternoon, 1:00-4:00 p.m.
- 12/18** – Kids Meals, 9:30 a.m.
- 12/21** – Egg Foo Shabbos – Community Shabbat Dinner, following 6:00 p.m. services
- 12/23** – College Student Winter Break Reunion, 6:30 p.m. (at Mia’s Table)
- 12/24** – Jewish-Muslim Conversations – 2:00 p.m. (River Oaks Islamic Center)
- 12/24** – Emanu El at Ronald McDonald House – 5:00 p.m.

JANUARY

- 1/3** – Emanu El Mahj Night, 5:30 p.m.
- 1/4** – Tot Shabbat – Dinner at 5:45 p.m.,
Service at 6:30 p.m.
- 1/10** – Work of Our Hands, 10:00 a.m.
- 1/10** – Sisterhood Book Review: *As Close to Us as Breathing*, 12:30 p.m.
- 1/14** – Gathering Place, 10:00 a.m.
- 1/16** – Cooking & Catering with Chef Smirnov, 6:30 p.m.
- 1/15** – Kid Meals, 9:30 a.m.
- 1/22** – SACK Lunches for SEARCH, 9:30 a.m.
- 1/23** – Becker Parenting for Life: Supporting Your Anxious Child, 9:15 a.m.
- 1/27** – *Ever Open: A Musical Celebration*, 4:00 p.m.

NOTE: Due to the holidays of New Years and Martin Luther King Day, January will not include an Emanu Elders or Emanu El Mahj Afternoon.

**NEXT BULLETIN TO BE ISSUED:
TUESDAY, JANUARY 8th**

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

Welcome Our Newest Members

We are pleased to welcome the newest members to our congregational family. Please be sure to introduce yourself to our newcomers as they become a part of our community.

Lisa & Amir Ansari, son Jordan & daughter Allison

Rebecca Gibson & Colin Baker

Elizabeth Hufnagel & Jeff Baron, daughter Isabella

Sarah Labowitz

Christine & Mark Laskin, daughter Sarah & son Jared

Laurie Silver

Lin Mills & Bill Smolensky

Sara & Jeff Stein, sons Brycen & Zachary

New members will be shared in the Temple *Bulletin* regularly. Know someone interested in becoming a part of our community? New to town? Or looking to find a way to connect with Emanu El? Contact Jill Kaplan at (713) 529-5771, ext. 262 or JillP@emanuelhouston.org.

Released in November! Your New ShulCloud Online Portal Account

We are pleased to be providing access for all members to the new ShulCloud Online Portal. Around the middle of November, our members received an email from Emanu El that included a link to create your password to your own account. We hope that you will take the opportunity to create your password, login and look around at all of the new features available to you.

You will have access to the member directory and be able to see all of your financial transactions. You can also choose to pay any outstanding balances via credit card (3% fee still applies) through the portal, any time you would like. Lastly, if you register for upcoming events via forms on the Emanu El website, while logged into your account, your charges appear immediately.

If you have questions about how to use the portal, once you have created your password, please feel free to call us for assistance!

Volunteers Make Survival Kits for SEARCH, Homeless

In late October, volunteers came together to make survival kits for SEARCH as well as the homeless. Congregants were able to pick up these survival kits to keep in their cars as they drove around while the kits were also distributed at the interfaith memorial service for the homeless in late November. Thanks to Sandy Harris for coordinating!



Girl Scout Troop's Host First-Ever Daddy-Daughter Campout

Our first grade girl scouts held their first-ever daddy-daughter campout. Special thanks to Nicholas Krohn for helping plan the campout!

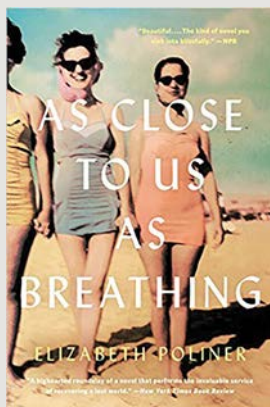
Sisterhood Hosts Annual Women's Day

Participants at our Annual Sisterhood Women's Day had an opportunity to hear from Monica Ryan, owner and president of Village Plumbing; Irma Galvan, founding owner and James Beard Award-winning chef of Irma's Restaurant; and Mimi Swartz, executive director of *Texas Monthly Magazine*.



Sisterhood News & Happenings

December 2018 –
January 2019



BOOK REVIEW:

As Close To Us AS Breathing,

by Elizabeth Poliner

THURSDAY, JANUARY 10TH

12:30 PM

Reviewed by Marlene Rubin. The novel is about a Jewish family of three sisters who return, with their husbands and children, each summer to a beach house on the Connecticut shore. Set in the 1950s, the novel explores their individual, interconnected, and disjointed histories.

Book reviews are free and open to the public. Guests are encouraged to bring their lunch and desserts will be served.



CONGREGATION EMANU EL
SISTERHOOD

A Starry Night Downtown with the Sisterhood

Wednesday, December 12th at 5:00 p.m.

Join Sisterhood to enjoy a starry night on **Wednesday, December 12th starting with 5:00 p.m. dinner** at Grotto Restaurant, conveniently located at 1001 Avenida de las Americas adjacent to the George R. Brown Convention Center. Self-parking will be validated for 3 hours at the Avenida North parking garage, directly across the street on Rusk. Valet is available at the entrance of Grotto Restaurant for \$11.

Following dinner we will tour the spectacular sculptures, *Soaring in the Clouds*, *Wings Over Water*, *Gust* among many others that are part of the special magnificent light and motion display at the George R. Brown Convention Center and Discovery Green. You will be dazzled by the sparkle of the beautiful lights adorning the sculptures and the graceful movement of objects while admiring the splendor of these nighttime sights in our city. All are invited to enjoy this enchanted evening.

RSVP to (713) 529-5771, ext. 233 or sishood@emanuelhouston.org.

Come to Cooking and Catering with Chef Smirnov

Wednesday, January 16th, 6:30 p.m.

Food, Fun, Friends, what could be better? Chef Smirnov will tell you everything about food that you were afraid to ask, may even include a demonstration. Be prepared to sharpen your culinary skills with great tips revealed by the Chef especially for us. Mark your calendar and plan to attend what promises to be an enjoyable and enlightening program.

A delicious light dinner will be served to complement this special evening. There is no charge for this event. We ask that you RSVP by Monday, January 14th so that we can prepare appropriately to sishood@emanuelhouston.org or (713) 529-5771, ext. 233.



Sisterhood Selling 2019 Mah Jongg Cards

Believe it or not . . . It's time to purchase your 2019 Mah Jongg cards. The standard size is \$8, and the large size is \$9. Sisterhood benefits by your purchase. Please make your check payable to Sylvia Brody and mail to 2004 Vermont, Houston, TX 77019.

For more information, contact the Sisterhood office at (713) 529-5771, ext. 233.

LIFECYCLE EVENTS

IN THE COMMUNITY

A pair of staff members were named to the boards of their professional organizations. Executive director **David Lamden** was elected Vice President of the National Association of Temple Administration (NATA) at their annual conference in Austin. A week prior, Program Director **Jason Plotkin** was elected to the board of the Program & Engagement Professionals of Reform Judaism (PEP-RJ) in a position with oversight of membership.

Amy Davis won her third Emmy in November, this one coming in the category of “Journalistic Enterprise” for general excellence in consumer protection reporting for KPRC-TV, Channel 2.

WEDDINGS

Elizabeth Santos & Ryan Penner

Auna Marie Denson & Sam Williamson Freedman

Kailey Caplan & Henry Ubelaker

Amy Ecker & Andrew Dodd

BIRTHS

Everett Alexander Brown, son of Danielle & Eric Brown; grandson of Michael & Michael Brown, Joni & Richard Epstein; great-grandson of Doree Fromberg

Hannah Jean Tarai, daughter of Sarah & David Tarai, granddaughter of Ellen & Martin Grabois, Kristina & Paul Tarai

DEATHS

Morrie Abramson, husband of Rolaine Abramson, father of Karen Selzer and Beth Abramson, grandfather of Morgan Selzer, Cory Selzer and Mathew Abramson, brother of Renee Spolane

Aleksandr Kiriakova, husband of Galina Kiriakova; father of Rimma & Robert Rabaev

Stuart Rosenthal, husband Margie Rosenthal; father of Suzy & Greg Kopel, Beth Rosenthal Deutsch & Ben Deutsch; grandfather of Caroline and Grace Kopel Kate, Alexandra and Margot Deutsch; brother of Ilyse Atema

Alfred Barritt Taylor, husband of Lee Taylor, former spouse of Sandra Baldwin Walters, father of Kathryn & Jonathan Paine, Victoria & Alex Arizpe, Heather & Michael Coletta, Elizabeth & Doug Borntrager; grandfather of Austin Arizpe, Alyssa Arizpe, Benjamin Coletta, Kathleen Coletta, Nathaniel Coletta, Matthew Coletta, Eli Borntrager, Opal Borntrager, Amelia Paine, Beatrice Paine and Josephine Paine

Rachael Tenenbown, wife of Roger Tenenbown; mother of Danielle and Isaac; daughter of Laura & Tom Alvarez; sister of Eva Alvarez; daughter-in-law of Linda & Michael Tenenbown; sister-in-law of Rachel Pasternak

Kay Schwartz Feldt, mother of Lori Holman and Andrea McDiarmid; grandmother of Alex McDiarmid, David McDiarmid, Zachary McDiarmid, Jessica Holman Berg & Michael Berg, Tarryn & Eric Holman, Erica Reischer Craft & Ricardo Craft; great-grandmother of Joshua and Zachary Berg, Michaela and Chloe Holman, Avery and Caden Craft; sister of Ralph Ablon

NEWS AROUND THE CONGREGATION

Congregation Emanu El Seeks Blood Donors in Honor of Rabbi Walter, Loved Ones

Several Options of Involvement Available to Donate Blood, Platelets

In response to congregants asking how they could help Rabbi Roy Walter in his battle with cancer, Congregation Emanu El is asking individuals to donate blood in honor of Rabbi Walter or a loved one.

Individuals who indicate that they are giving for Rabbi Walter will also enable the Rabbi to accrue ‘credits’ towards his needs for blood, which is a normal part of treatment and recovery.

To aid in this process, there are several options available:

1. Emanu El is partnering with MD Anderson to host a platelet drive for Rabbi Walter at MD Anderson’s facility, 2555 Holly Hall on **Sunday, December 16th**. There are six spots available at each of the time slots – **10:00 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 2:00 p.m.** – on a

first-come, first-serve basis and registration can be done on EmanuElHouston.org. It takes approximately two hours to complete the process.

2. MD Anderson also advises individuals to think about scheduling an appointment at their MD Anderson Blood Donor Center located at 2555 Holly Hall St. Free parking is available at the Holly Hall location with hours of operation on **Tuesday – Thursday from 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. and Friday – Monday from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.**
3. Lastly, a community-wide blood drive will be held in conjunction with Emanu El’s annual Purim Carnival on **Sunday, March 24th**. More details to come.

Please note that platelets can be donated every 48 hours while ‘whole blood’ can be donated every 56 days. In order to give blood, one must be in good general health and feeling well. Individuals must be at least 17-years old, weigh at least 110 lbs., have a photo ID and not be pregnant.

General information on giving blood with MD Anderson can be found online at www.mdanderson.org/bloodbank.



SCREENAGERS

Sunday, December 9th from
10:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Did your child ask for a new smartphone, tablet or gaming console for Chanukah? Are you concerned about setting limits on screen time during the upcoming school break? Join us for a special screening of *SCREENAGERS: Growing Up in the Digital Age* and a discussion on the use of technology.

“In *SCREENAGERS*, Delaney Ruston takes a deeply personal approach as she probes into the vulnerable corners of family life, including her own, to explore struggles over social media, video games, academics and internet addiction. Through poignant, and unexpectedly funny stories, along with surprising insights from authors, psychologists, and brain scientists, *SCREENAGERS* reveals how tech time impacts kids’ development and offers solutions on how adults can empower kids to best navigate the digital world and find balance (screenagersmovie.com).”

NOTE: This family education program is being held for 5th through 8th grade students (and their parents) in our Helfman Religious School program, but this screening is open to the community.

Rabbi Jonathan Greenberg to Lead Guest Lunch & Learn Post-Shabbat on Saturday, December 15th

Please make plans to join Rabbi Jonathan Greenberg, Senior Vice President of the Haym Salomon Center, for a lunch and learn entitled, “Everything’s Terrible: The Contemporary Middle East and What America Should (and Shouldn’t) Do”. This special educational opportunity will take place on **Saturday, December 15th at 12:00 p.m.** in the Stillman-Lack Library at Emanu El.

Greenberg is a respected voice on foreign policy whose work has been carried in The Jerusalem Post, New York Daily News, New York Post, The Washington Times, The Hill, The New York Observer, The Daily Caller, and numerous other publications.

Prior to joining the Haym Salomon Center, Greenberg spent two years as a Vice President at the Illinois Policy Institute, one of the country’s premier free-market think tanks. Greenberg spent more than five years at the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, first in the Washington office and, later, as Midwest Political Director where he was responsible for 95 Congressional districts across nine states.

The lunch is free to guests but RSVPs are requested in order to properly plan. To RSVP, please visit www.EmanuElHouston.org or call (713) 529-5771.

Broadway & More: A Volunteer Choir Showcase

You will surely want to sing along as Emanu El’s volunteer choir presents musical numbers from Annie Get Your Gun, Oklahoma, Cole Porter and more celebrating the best of Broadway on **Sunday, December 16th at 4:30 p.m.**

The cost of the performance which includes a post-show supper is just \$5 and can be purchased by visiting www.EmanuElHouston.org or by sending a check to the synagogue (1500 Sunset Blvd, Houston, TX 77005).

Reserve your tickets now as seats are limited!

Egg Foo Shabbos – Community Shabbat Dinner Friday, December 21st following 6:00 p.m. services

What’s the holiday season without some Chinese inspired food? This year, we’re changing the format of our annual ‘Egg Foo Shabbos’ celebration and styling the post-Shabbat meal similar to our popular community Shabbat dinners instead of an Oneg.

Following services, join our community for a \$5 per person meal featuring Chinese classics, fortune cookies and more. Register online or by sending a check to Congregation Emanu El by **Wednesday, December 19th** so that we can plan accordingly.

For more information, contact Jason Plotkin at (713) 535-6414 or JasonP@emanuelhouston.org.

Jewish-Muslim Christmas Conversations

Monday, December 24th at 2:00 p.m.

Congregation Emanu El is partnering with Beth Israel and HCRJ on Christmas Eve to partake in a thoughtful conversation and explore commonalities between Jews and Muslims.

The event entitled a “9th Annual Jewish/Muslim Christmas: Uniting Our Hearts in a Divided World” will take place **from 2:00-4:00 p.m.** at River Oaks Islamic

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Center, 3110 Eastside Street, Houston, TX 77098, with participants from the aforementioned congregations, the River Oaks Islamic Center and the Minaret Foundation.

Please **RSVP** to Justin Deutsch at HCRJ at (713) 782-4162 or admin@hcrj.org.

Volunteer Opportunity at Ronald McDonald House

Monday, December 24th at 5:00 p.m.



For a second straight year, members of the Congregation will head over to Ronald McDonald House, 1907 Holcombe, on Christmas Eve to spread holiday cheer.

Join us on **Monday, December 24th at 5:00 p.m.** as we will serve a catered meal to families from all over who are currently living at the facility and seeking pediatric treatment in the medical center for a wide

variety of health issues. We will also be doing a fun craft with the kids who are currently receiving treatment and their siblings, as well.

Space is limited to first 15 people who sign up, as RMH limits the group number. Email Jill Kaplan at JillK@emanuelhouston.org to secure a spot.

The Ronald McDonald Holcombe House is a home away from home for families whose seriously ill children are being treated at a Texas Medical Center member institution. The House has 50 private bedrooms equipped with two queen size beds and a full bath. Dedicated volunteers provide frequent meals and family activities for residents of the House.

The House also has a Houston Independent School District school room for patients and school bus transportation for siblings to area public schools. Additionally, families staying at Holcombe House are provided scheduled weekday van service to Texas Medical Center hospitals and a near-by grocery store.

UPCOMING PROGRAMMING OFFERINGS FOR AFFINITY GROUPS & SPECIAL INTERESTS AT EMANU EL

Congregation Emanu El is actively seeking to create groups within our community that serve different ages, stages and interests. Are you interested in forming a group like the offerings listed below?

Contact Jill Kaplan or Jason Plotkin at the synagogue. Jill can be reached at (713) 529-5771, ext. 262 or JillK@emanuelhouston.org and Jason can be reached at (713) 535-6414 or jasonp@emanuelhouston.org.

Young Professionals: Israel Cooking Class Thursday, December 13th at 7:00 p.m.

Join fellow Emanu El Young Professionals along with Rabbi Fixler for an intimate cooking class led by the new community Shlichah, Hadas Levy. We'll join together for a great night of cooking Israeli dishes, get to know each other and enjoy a great dinner that we have just made from scratch. Using different Israeli cuisine, we will explore various Ashkenazi, Sephardic, and Mizrahi traditions with unique flavors you've never tasted before!

Space is limited, so please **RSVP** to Jill Kaplan, JillK@emanuelhouston.org by **December 6th**. Address will be provided upon receiving your RSVP.

Classic Connections December Dinner and White Elephant Gift Exchange

Friday, December 14th,
Following 6:00 p.m. Service

Get together with Classic Connections for an evening

of laughter, latkes, and libations on **Friday, December 14th** after Shabbat evening services. We will repeat last year's highly successful White Elephant Gift Exchange at which you can pick, pass or trade your ultimate re-gift!

This is the perfect time to find a new home for that gift you have been longing to part with, a gag gift, or just something that strikes your fancy. Please keep the value under \$10. The more people who participate and bring something to exchange, the livelier the action. Remember, it's one gift per person!

A catered meal will be served, including wine. The cost will be \$15 per person. Advance registrations are a must. Please **RSVP** at www.EmanuElHouston.org to register, pay and indicate any dietary preferences. Contact Jason Plotkin at (713) 535-6414 or JasonP@emanuelhouston.org for additional information or assistance in registering. Classic Connections is a group for members of our community who are in their 50s and 60s.

Emanu El College Student – Winter Break Reunion

Sunday, December 23rd, 6:30 p.m.

Home from college for Winter Break? We've missed you! Come catch up with your rabbis and all your friends from Congregation Emanu El. Join us for a reunion dinner at Mia's Table, 3131 Argonne Street, on **Sunday, December 23rd at 6:30 p.m.** Dinner's on us – hope to see you there!

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Two Monthly Mahj Opportunities for Congregation

First Thursdays at 5:30 p.m. & Third Mondays at 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Our “first Thursday” group of Mahj players gathers at 5:30 p.m. in the Stillman-Lack Library with a nominal \$5 fee to cover drinks and dinner. The December gathering is **Thursday, December 6th**. Novice and advanced players welcome! For more information and to RSVP, please email Elizabeth Townsend at ElizabethT@emanuelhouston.org or (713) 529-5771, ext. 222. RSVPs can also be handled on the Emanu El website at www.emanuelhouston.org.

Due to high demand, the Emanu El Jokers will host a fun afternoon of the **third Monday of each month**, starting on **Monday, December 17th from 1:00-4:00 p.m.** Bring your sets, cards and friends. Noshes and drinks will be provided. If you would like to play, please **RSVP** to the Sisterhood office at (713) 529-5771, ext. 233 or sishood@emanuelhouston.org.

Emanu El Seeking to Create Euchre Play Group



In response to a call out for congregants to inform the synagogue on what they would like to see, a member of our congregation is seeking to start a Euchre play group at Emanu El.

Euchre is a card game that is popular in the Midwest (Ohio,

Michigan) and similar to one played in South Africa, called Klaverjas. Euchre is a trick-taking card game most commonly played with four people in two partnerships with a deck of 24 cards (Nine through Ace). Each player is dealt five cards. Similar to Bridge (but much, much simpler), there is at most two rounds of bidding to select a trump suit and play begins.

The one anomaly is that only in the trump suit, the jack of that suit is the highest card (the right Bower) and the jack of the other same-color suit is the second highest card (left Bower). Otherwise, cards are ranked as expected with an Ace being the highest and the 9 being the lowest. The object of each hand is for the team that selected the trump suit to take three “tricks” out of a possible five. The team gets one point for taking three or four ticks, two points for taking all five tricks. If the team is unsuccessful, the other team gets two points for

“Euchring” them. The first team to reach ten points wins.

Already playing Euchre and looking to find others to join? Contact Jason Plotkin at (713) 535-6414 or JasonP@emanuelhouston.org to connect with other members of the congregation to start this new group.

Emanu El Volunteer Choir

The Emanu El Volunteer Choir has been active group this year, holding performances at various venues across town and taking part in the congregation’s Purim Schpiel. An active fall and spring are in the works!

All members of the congregation are invited to join the choir by contacting Richard Zoll at Richard.Zoll@yahoo.com. The choir traditionally **rehearses on Tuesday evenings at 7:00 p.m.** at the synagogue. Please make sure to contact Richard to verify the rehearsal schedule for the month.

Houston Jewish Dog Play Group

Calling all pups . . . bring your humans to Houston Jewish Dog Play Group. The new Houston Jewish Dog Play Group. It’s really cool. We get to play at the dog park (sometimes there is even water involved) and our humans kibbitz with each other. After, we even get to go for drinks. If you’re interested, have your human give Pam Kutner a ring and she’ll send the details when available. pamelaekutner@gmail.com.

Our clergy want to know . . .

If you or a loved one is sick or hospitalized please let us know.

Contact the synagogue at (713) 529-5771, so that our rabbis can reach out and visit and be a source of strength and support.

Visiting the sick and praying for those who are ill are important and meaningful mitzvot.



We appreciate the thoughtfulness of those who remember and honor their friends and loved ones through their generous contributions.

BECKER EARLY CHILDHOOD SCHOLARSHIP FUND

To provide Becker Early Childhood Center scholarships
In Memory of **Alfred Taylor**
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To provide and enhance Becker Early Childhood Center programs
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CARY PASTERNAK CEMETERY FUND

To maintain and enhance Emanu El Memorial Park
In Memory of **Rachael Tenenbown**
Vicki & Herb Pasternak

CLERGY'S GOOD WORKS FUND

To provide Emanu El's clergy with funds to help individuals in need to support organizations that benefit the community
In Honor of

Baby naming
Erica Rose & Charles Sanders

Don Harris's Birthday
Ellen & Martin Grabois

Rabbi Oren Hayon
Lori Gibson

Rabbi Pamela Silk
Leslie Cohan
Sheri Feldman
Silvia & Gary Fritzhand

Shel Vedlitz
Sharon Katz

In Memory of **Peter Berkowitz**
Ellen & Martin Grabois
Graciela Herog Robinson
Barbara & Norman Frankel
Andrea & Albert Raizner

EDIS LEWIS PARKANS EMANU ELDERS FUND

To provide programs for Emanu Elders
In Memory of **Selma Mantel**
Sylvia & Steve Brody
Shirley Schnoll

EDWARD WAYNE HUNGER FUND

To feed the hungry of Houston
A Donation For Kids' Meals
Linda Lesser
Raymond Maislin

In Honor of **Syd Waldman's Birthday**
Lynn & Jeffrey Busch
J.J. Silk's Birthday
Zachary Hansen

In Memory of **Marvin Gerber**
Linda & Marvin Stein
David S. Kaufman
Pamela Kaufman & Dennis Keierleber

FARB TZEDAKAH CANS
To support small and emerging organizations that improve life for underserved Houstonians
A Donation

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Karen & Jeff Basen-Engquist
Sonia & Peter Benjamin

David Bozarth
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Carol & Barry Goodfriend
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Maxine Reingold
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Dianne & Ellis Tudzin
Dolores Wilkenfeld
Felicia & Michael Zeitman
Linda & Richard Zoll

FREDELL LACK EICHHORN CANTOR'S MUSIC FUND

To enhance musical programming
In Honor of **Cantor Rollin Simmons**
Sheri Feldman

GENERAL ENDOWMENT FUND

To provide for the general needs of Emanu El and its facilities
In Honor of **Paula & Joe Levy's Wedding Anniversary**
Adele & Steve Croft

In Memory of **Isidore Spitz**
William Spitz

HELEN & HARRY REICHEK LECTURE FUND

To provide and enhance congregation programs
In Honor of **The Speedy Recovery of Robert Reichek**
Bonnie & Gary Blumberg

PHILIP G. LUSKY RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

To provide Helfman Religious School scholarships
In Memory of **Congregants lost at Tree of Life Synagogue, Pittsburgh, PA**
Gary Goodfriend

RABBI ROY WALTER ENRICHMENT FUND

To support spiritual and cultural enrichment
In Honor of **The Speedy Recovery of Sam Block**
Ruthe & Marty Berman
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Velva & Fred Levine
Marilyn Presser

In Memory of **Bobbie Fields**
Arlene & Marshall Hoffman
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RIVA BURSTEN CARING CONGREGATION FUND

In Honor of **Freddie & Paul Croft's Wedding Anniversary**
Freddie & Paul Croft

In Memory of **Blanche Behrend**
Eddie Dawidowicz
Freddie & Paul Croft

**ROSE GOODFRIEND
ISRAEL PILGRIMAGE**

To help send Confirmation students to Israel

In Honor of

Syd Waldman

Emily, Joey & Hannah
Spinner; Andi & Brett
Riesenfeld

In Memory of

Gena Goodfriend

Gary Goodfriend

**SARAH & ADOLPH
BLUMENFELD KLEI
KODESH SACRED OBJECTS
FUND**

To purchase and maintain Emanu El's sacred objects

Communal Commitment for

a Dropped Torah Scroll

Susie & David Askanase

Sara Astrich

Claire & Dick Brooks

Stefani Carlson

Adina Cohen

Rochelle Cyprus

Helen Dreyfus

Cydney Forman

Mitzi & Norman Levine

Laura Mayer

Sherry & David Parker

Dennis Postel

Debora & Keith Remels

Syd Waldman

Dolores Wilkenfeld

SISTERHOOD FUND

To enhance Sisterhood programming

In Memory of

Rachael Tenenbown

Barbara & Allen Pauly

**STILLMAN-LACK
MEMORIAL LIBRARY
FUND**

To maintain and enhance the Stillman-Lack Memorial Library

In Memory of

Selma Mantel

Inez Eskowitz

Brenda Lind

Judy & Stan Schretter

**SUSMAN FUND FOR
FAMILY PROGRAMMING**

To support programs for families

In Memory of

Stuart Rosenthal

Judith & Alford Osborn

TEMPLE FUND

To support the needs of the temple and to fulfill the mission of Congregation Emanu El

In Honor of

**Benjamin Nathan Kessler's
Birthday**

Madgelyn & Richard

Pesin

**The Speedy Recovery of
M.M. Feld, Jr.**

Susan & Jack Lee

In Memory of

Marvin Cohen

Aileen & Brad Gugenheim

Renee Gugenheim

Marvin Gerber

Anita & Morton Seline

Irving Katz

Carol & Michael Wilk

Steve Sherman

Carolyn Plessner

Royce Ann Sline

Joel Hays

End of Year Donations

When making your arrangements for end-of-year giving, please consider including Congregation Emanu El in your plans. Your tax advisor can assist you in ensuring that your donation is tax-deductible.

Donations to the Sisterhood Flower Fund

For donations to the Sisterhood Flower Fund (for the Shabbat handout) please make checks payable to "Congregation Emanu El Sisterhood" and mail or drop off to Donna Fraley at the synagogue, 1500 Sunset Blvd, Houston, TX 77005. Donations can also be made online at www.EmanuElHouston.org. Please make sure to specify which Shabbat service(s) you would like your flower fund donation listed. In order to ensure the donations are listed, we ask that they be at the synagogue no later than the Wednesday before Shabbat.

BECKER EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER NEWS



Becker School

Becker Parenting for Life Speakers

The below programs are open to Becker families and the community at large.

Supporting Your Anxious Child

Wednesday, January 23rd, 9:15 a.m.

SPEAKER: [Eric Storch, Ph.D.](#), Menninger Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Baylor College of Medicine

Is your child anxious? What does that mean; how does that look in young children? Dr. Storch will describe anxiety in children, help you understand their feelings, and will give you strategies to support your child.

YES, You Can Say NO

Wednesday, February 6th, 9:15 a.m.

SPEAKER: [Kim Swales, MA, Ph.D.](#)

It is hard to say no. Choices, limits and even saying no can create a positive setting for children to be self-reliant and responsible as they grow and develop. Kimberly Hause-Swales will share ideas, strategies and techniques to help you feel confident guiding your children.



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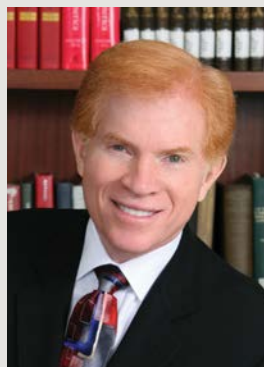
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SAVE THE DATE!



Rabbi Gary Zola
To Serve As
Scholar-in-Residence
In February

Rabbi Gary Zola, Executive Director of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives will serve as the Barish Limmud Scholar-in-Residence the weekend of **February 15-17th** at Emanu El. Zola will provide the D'var Torah during Friday's Shabbat worship and lead a special Saturday morning study at 9:00 a.m. amongst other opportunities for the community to learn with him. The Barish Limmud Scholar is made possible by the Barish Family and the Chair King.



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