



ABC's of Chanukah (Hanukkah)

by Rabbi Shraga Simmons

Chanukah (Hanukkah), the Festival of Lights, begins on the 25th day of the Jewish month of Kislev, and lasts for eight days. On the secular calendar, Chanukah generally falls out in December.

This primer will explore:

- (1) A Bit of History
- (2) Other Customs

Read the complete
version of this article
at "Aish.com"

(1) A Bit of History

The Hebrew word Chanukah means "dedication." In the 2nd century BCE, during the time of the Second Holy Temple, the Syrian-Greek regime of Antiochus sought to pull Jews away from Judaism, with the hopes of assimilating them into Greek culture. Antiochus outlawed Jewish observance including circumcision, Shabbat, and Torah study under penalty of death.

As well, many Jews called Hellenists began to assimilate into Greek culture, taking on Greek names and marrying non-Jews. This began to decay the foundation of Jewish life and practice.

When the Greeks challenged the Jews to sacrifice a pig to a Greek god, a few courageous Jews took to the hills of Judea in open revolt against this threat to Jewish life. Led by Matityahu, and later his son Judah the Maccabee, this small band of pious Jews led guerrilla warfare against the Syrian-Greek army.

Antiochus sent thousands of well-armed troops to crush the rebellion, but after three years the Maccabees beat incredible odds and miraculously succeeded in driving the foreigners from their land. The victory was on the scale of Israel defeating the combined super-powers of today.

Jewish fighters entered Jerusalem and found the Holy Temple in shambles and desecrated with idols. The Maccabees cleansed the Temple and re-dedicated it on the 25th of Kislev. When it came time to re-light the Menorah, they searched the entire Temple, but found only one jar of pure oil bearing the seal of the High Priest. The group of believers lit the Menorah anyway and were rewarded with a miracle: That small jar of oil burned for eight days, until a new supply of oil could be brought.

From then on, Jews have observed a holiday for eight days, in honor of this historic victory and the miracle of the oil. To publicize the Chanukah miracle, Jews add the special Hallel praises to the Shacharit service, and light a menorah during the eight nights of Chanukah.

(2) Other Customs

After lighting the Chanukah menorah, families enjoy sitting in the glow, singing and recalling the miracles of yesterday and today. The first song traditionally sung after lighting the candles is Maoz Tzur (Rock of Ages).

A number of other customs have developed, including:

- eating "oily" foods like fried potato latkes (pancakes) and sufganiyot (jelly donuts), in commemoration of the miracle of the oil
- giving Chanukah gelt (coins) to children
- spinning the dreidel, a four-sided top with a Hebrew letter on each side (sivivon in Hebrew)

What is the origin of the dreidel?

In times of persecution when Torah study was forbidden, Jewish children would learn anyway. When soldiers would investigate, the children would pull out a dreidel and pretend to be playing.

The letters on the dreidel are nun, gimmel, hey, shin. The first letters of Nes Gadol Haya Sham – "A Great Miracle Happened There." (In Israel, the last letter is a Pey "Here.") One way to play dreidel is to see who can keep theirs spinning for the longest time. Or alternatively, to see how many dreidels you can get spinning simultaneously.

Another version of dreidel is where players use pennies, nuts, raisins, or chocolate coins as tokens or chips. Each player puts an equal share into the "pot." The first player takes a turn spinning the dreidel. When the dreidel stops, the letter facing up determines:

Nun – nothing happens; the next player spins the dreidel

Gimmel – the spinner takes the pot

Hey – take half the pot

Shin – add one to the pot

(Alternatively, you can play where everyone spins their own dreidel simultaneously. Anyone who gets Nun takes 2 from the pot; Gimmel takes 1 from the pot; Hey puts 1 into the pot; Shin gives 1 to the person on his/her right.)

Happy Chanukah!

Services

Friday Evening 8:00 p.m.

Saturday Morning 9:30 a.m.

Minyan

Sunday Morning 9:15 a.m.

Monday, Wednesday
and Thursday Evenings 7:40 p.m.

Lower level chapel

Refer to calendar for holiday service times.

Sisterhood News

Sisterhood members enjoyed our opening event, a wonderful Membership Dinner at the synagogue catered by Shallots Bistro. Heather Braoudakis entertained us with musical numbers that were selected by popular request from other concerts she has performed.

Book reviews by our own **Selma Katz** are an important part of our programming. In October the book reviewed was "The Light between the Ocean." Future books will be "The Lost Wife," "I Am Forbidden," and "One More River." One of these will be chosen as the selection that deserves to be included for "Jewish Book Month."

The Torah Fund Luncheon on November 5th will feature Sonni Helmer also known as the Button Lady. She will tell us about the history and evolution of buttons and display many unusual examples.

We welcome everyone to all of our activities. We wish all a very Happy "Thanksgivukkah," a once-in-a-lifetime event. Looks like latkes instead of sweet potatoes this year!

Phyllis Projansky

Men's Club News

The Congregation Kol Emeth Men's Club will have their first Sunday breakfast of the year on Sunday, November 10, 2013. It will start at 10:00am after minyon. Our guest speaker will be George Castle who has authored 11 books. Castle has been a sports journalist and is currently the Historian for the Chicago Baseball Museum.

His topic will be *Chicago Baseball Timeline: Past is Prologue*. Our breakfasts are always popular and very well attended. Please let us know if you are coming so we can prepare enough food.

Herman Nussbaum

Congregation Kol Emeth Sends Deepest Sympathy to: Dawn Rosen on the loss of her father, James Kwasigroch
Lee Shandling on the loss of her brother

Yahrzeit / Yizkor Donations

Helen Applebaum

Sonia Berk

Irwin and Karen Berkley

Margaret and Harry Besser

George and Judy Blinick

Rich and Micki Bloom

Dr. Donald and Roberta Charous

Chester Gaynes

Dr. Jane Halpert

Ilona A. Hartman

Elisa Davis Helford

Fern and Bernard Katz

Leona Katzman

Alfred and Shirley Kleifield

William and Betty Klein

Judy and Richard Lieberman

Michael and Ludmila Livshultz

Gloria Manus

Ellen Marchi

Howard Mirsky

Lori and Richard Mitchell

Wendy Mitchell

Herman and Ruth Nussbaum

Marcia and Marvin Nussbaum

Arnold and Karen Okmin

Mike and Iris Okmin

Bernie Perlstein

Dr. Irwin and Zelda Rich

Sarine and Bob Rohde

Rabbi Robert & Dawn Rosen and Son

Jean Rosenblum

Corinne G. Roth

Lois Schwartz

Marcy Schwartz

Anne and Eugene Solar

Daniel and Alison Sonenfeld

Isaac and Teresa Vatkin

Benny Wapner

Brian and Rivka Weiner

Eleanor and Daniel Zeff

Should you wish to honor the memory of your beloved departed with a permanent Memorial Plaque, please contact the synagogue office at 847-673-3370.

Message From The President

Whew, the holiday season is over. I know that the Holidays, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are reasons for celebrations but no one, least of all our Rabbi, can say that attending all or even some of, the services is not exhausting. I am not the only person who must feel this way; the month of Heshvan, which follows the month of Tishrei, has no holidays in it so that we can relax a little and reflect on the holidays we just celebrated. I hope everyone found the services that we attended meaningful and ultimately satisfying.

I am thankful to **Rabbi Schechter**, to **Cantor Gluck**, and to **Steven Marcus** and the choir for their contributions to our appreciation of the Holidays. Thanks are also due **Dr. Paul Helman**, Co-President for Ritual, and the other members of the Ritual Committee for organizing our services so well. We also owe a debt of gratitude to **Judy Kessler** in the Kol Emeth office and the volunteers that assisted her, for their hard work, which made everything possible. To **Sheldon Cooper** who distributed the honors to the proper congregants, to the ushers who welcomed us into the synagogue, and to those who prepared the Kiddish after the services we owe a debt of gratitude. To each other, we owe thanks for the feeling of a single community that infused our sanctuary.

Of course there were glitches, there were mistakes made and if you will bring them to my attention I will try and see to it that these errors do not happen again next year. After all "the buck stops here."

The many Rabbis who created and crafted our services gave us a powerful liturgy, but also the opportunity for reflection on our personal lives and situations. In my opinion, that is why these holidays have so much meaning for us and why it draws us back to the synagogue year after year. Most of us live busy lives and yet we find time to attend these services. We owe those Rabbis a debt of gratitude but we should also be thankful that Congregation Kol Emeth is a synagogue where we experience the powerful, yet profoundly individual, message of these Days of Awe. May we continue to do so for many more years.

Having left the High Holidays behind us for another year we next come to Hanukkah, a holiday with a complex history but of unalloyed joy. Our celebration of Hanukkah this year is enhanced by sharing it with Thanksgiving. Together they express our appreciation for G-d's gifts of both independence and plenty.

Congregation Kol Emeth is more than just holidays. We have weekly Shabbat services on Friday night and Saturday morning. We have services on Sunday morning and on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evening. The Men's Club, Sisterhood, and the congregation's Planning and Activities Committee are planning a full program of talks, events and dinners. The Old World Theater Company is presenting at Kol Emeth a full season on entertaining productions. I personally invite you to join with your fellow congregants and friends at these functions when you can. I am confident that you will enjoy the experience.

Yona and I wish you a healthy and happy year, civil and Jewish. We hope to see you soon. Enjoy the winter as best you can. Stay well and happy.

Norman Gelfand

We Celebrate... We Pray... We Remember...

NEW MEMBERS

Carol Harris
Neil and Leila Handelman

MAZEL TOV TO

Jerry and Trudy Myers on the Bar Mitzvah of their great-grandson
Sheila Wexler on the Bar Mitzvah of her grandson, Daniel
Dr. Irwin and Zelda Rich on the Bar Mitzvah of their grandson, Ian

CONGREGATION WANTS TO WISH A SPEEDY RECOVERY TO

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| Judy Blinick | Sally Lerner |
| Dr. Donald Charous | Sondra Lorig |
| Maureen Gold | Janine Oberrotman |
| June Korey | Harriet Reifer |
| Donald Kotler | Richard Snow |

DONATIONS FOR SPEEDY & COMPLETE RECOVERIES

Sarine and Bob Rohde
VVVVVVVVVV

GENERAL DONATIONS

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Kornick and Berliner Monuments | Dr. Irwin and Zelda Rich |
| Michael and Ludmila Livshultz | Lois Schmidt |
| Susan and Gary Pechter | Sheila Wexler |

DONATIONS TO RABBI'S CHARITY FUND

Sarine and Bob Rohde

Old World Theatre Company Presents Of Mice and Men.

Although it may seem far away, Old World Theatre Company's second production of the season is *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck. It opens Saturday, February 1, 2014 and plays Sunday, February 2, and the following weekend Saturday and Sunday, February 8 and 9.

It is not too early to order tickets as we expect this production to attract a very large audience. Tickets are \$20.00 for CKE members and \$23.00 for non members. Student tickets are \$10.00.

You may order your tickets in advance by sending your order to the synagogue office. Indicate the date and the number of tickets you wish to purchase.

Maj Jongg Players

Thanks for helping the sisterhood earn extra money. When you receive your renewal notice, please remember to send or call in your order,

\$8.00 for small, \$9.00 for large, payable to:

Marilyn Cooper
1175 Lake Cook Rd. #407
Northbrook, IL 60062
847-498-9348



Mark Your Calendar But Most Importantly, Plan To Attend and Make Your Reservation!

November 3rd and 10th – Craft Club
November 5th – Sisterhood Torah Fund Luncheon
November 8th – Shabbat Dinner
November 10th – Men's Club Breakfast
Featuring George Castle speaking on
Chicago Baseball Timeline: Past is Prologue
November 17th – USCJ Scholar in Residence Rabbi Joel Levy
"On the Impossibility of Jewish Marriages –
Why Almost No Jews are Really Married These Days"
November 19th – Sisterhood Book Review
November 27th - Chanukah begins (first candle)
November 28th – Happy Thanksgiving
Wishing you and your family a Happy Thanksgiving.
CKE Offices are closed.
Thanksgiving Service at 9:15am
Wishing you and your family a joyous Hanukkah

For complete information of exact time, location, cost (if applicable) and reservation information, please see flyers or call the office at 847-673-3370.

0 to 200 in 6 seconds

Morty was in trouble. He forgot his wedding anniversary and his wife Miriam was extremely upset. She told him "Tomorrow morning, I expect to find a gift in the driveway that goes from 0 to 200 in 6 seconds OR ELSE!!"
The next morning Morty got up early and left for work. When Miriam woke up, she looked out of the window and sure enough there was a box gift-wrapped in the middle of the driveway.

Miriam put on her robe and ran out to the driveway and opened the box to find a brand new bathroom scale. Morty has not been heard from since.

Tree Of Life

Perfect for a Special Birthday or a Special Anniversary, the Kol Emeth Tree of Life offers a unique and lasting record of your simcha. Any type of happy occasion is beautifully engraved for all to see.

Consider purchasing a Leaf, an Acorn or even a Rock for our beautiful Tree Of Life. For only \$118.00 you can purchase a Leaf, for \$236.00 an Acorn or for a Rock it is only \$354.00. Please contact **Judy Kessler** in the Synagogue Office for more information or to order.

Newly Revised Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Our office secretary is **Judy Kessler**.

We appreciate and encourage newsletter contributions from all our congregants but, hard copy (paper) submissions will no longer be accepted. If you are unable to submit electronically, please contact **Judy** in the office. All emails must be sent to hakol@fischhoff.com. Articles must be sent by the 10th for the following month's newsletter.
Ha Kol is compiled by **Judy Kessler** and edited by **Roger Fischhoff**.

Congregation Kol Emeth

5130 West Touhy Avenue
Skokie, Illinois 60077



Address Service Requested

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|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| Rabbi | Barry Schechter |
| President | Norman Gelfand |
| Co-President/Religious Matters | Dr. Paul Helman |
| Vice President/Membership | Leigh Sisk |
| Treasurer | Michael Okmin |
| House Committee Chairman | Len Colen |
| Sisterhood Representative | Sarine Rohde |
| Men's Club Representative | Bob Rohde |



Happy Thanksgivakkah!

THANK YOU... THANK YOU...

Len Colen House V.P. - Thanks to all the workers and no supervisors, the Sukkah was ready for Sukkot. I would like to thank **Brian Katzman, George Mandel, Herman Nussbaum, Bill Raffeld, Bob Rohde, Tim Cochrane, Johnnie Cochrane, and John Burns**. A really big THANK YOU. You were great!!!

Sondra Lorig - Thank you so much for all of your cards and good wishes for my broken foot. They really helped me very much, and I sincerely appreciated receiving them. It's wonderful having so many caring friends at Kol Emeth.

The Leonard Keller family - Words can't express our appreciation for your generous donations to Kol Emeth on our loss of our beloved **Leonard Keller**.

It has been a very difficult time for our family and it's comforting to know you cared. We love all of you.

Janine Oberrotman - Special thanks to all my friends at Kol Emeth for their good wishes and donations on the occasion of Dan's and Julia's wedding and for arranging a wonderful kiddush celebration which united my family and friends. With love to all.



Zadie's First Football Game

Steve Goldstein decided to take his Zadie, Hymie, to his first football game. They had great seats right behind their team's bench. After the game, he asked his Zadie how he liked the experience.

"Oh, I liked it," Zadie replied, "but I just couldn't understand why they were killing each other over 25 cents."

Dumbfounded, Steve asked, "What do you mean?"

"Well, they flip a coin. One team gets it, and then for the rest of the game, all they keep screaming is, 'Get the quarter back! Get the quarter back!' It's only 25 cents!"



Remember... HaKol's deadline is the 10th of the month prior to publication. Thanks!

Your Custom Calendar Is Just Moments Away!!!

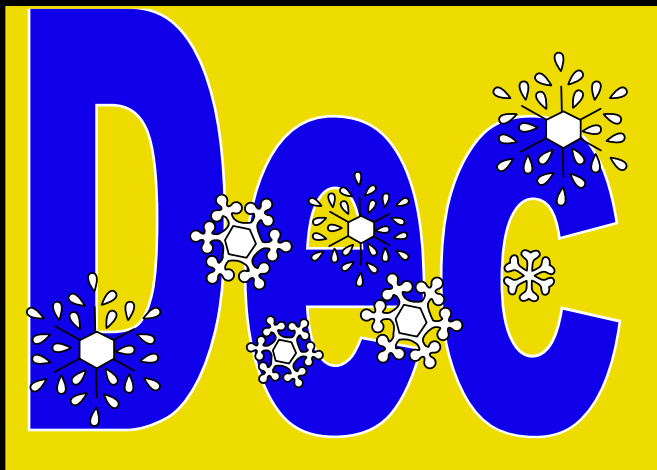
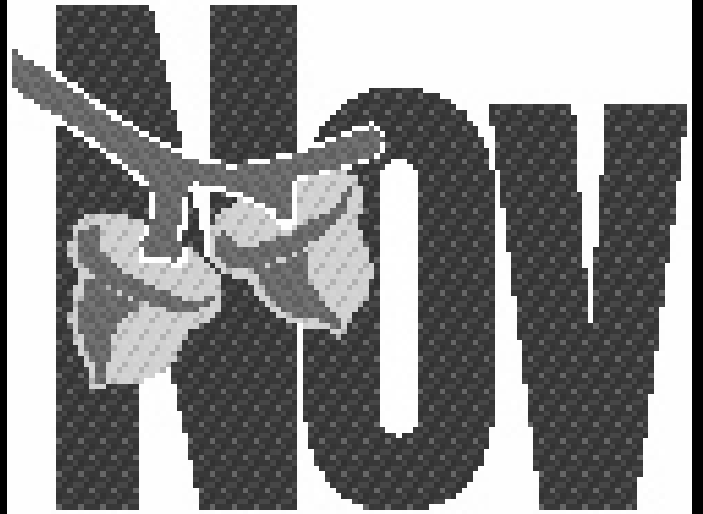
All calendars are now available on kolemethskokie.org any time you want and in any form you want.

Go to KolEmethSkokie.org and click on the calendar link under the main photo and you will see a list of the next two weeks' events. Click on the link at the bottom and you'll see a list of the following two weeks.

If you wish to see the month at a glance just select "view by month". Click on anything in blue and you'll see all the details of the event.

You can also focus in on any specific type of events by clicking to the right of "all categories" and selecting the category(s) in which you are interested. The calendar will then only show those categories.

Now go down to the bottom and click on printer friendly version and print your custom calendar.



Are you planning a simcha in the next few years?

You can now look up the dates of Jewish holidays on our calendar through the end of 2023. (Please note... You should always check with **Rabbi Schechter** to make sure that certain "black out" periods are avoided.)