



Synagogue of the Hills - 417 North 40th Street - Rapid City, SD
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Perhaps no other holiday in the Jewish calendar has had such a global impact as Sukkot. I will explain. Like so many of our holidays, Sukkot has deep seated roots in agriculture – it is a harvest festival and is sometimes referred to as the Festival of Ingathering. Is there an American holiday often times associated with the harvest and celebrated with a big meal?

OK, who guessed Thanksgiving? You're right. There is a strong thread which runs from the Israelite wilderness experience to that of the Pilgrims and the harsh years they endured as they strove to sink roots in this new land. Like the ancient Israelites of whom they read in the Bible, they were people of great faith who believed themselves to be sustained through GD's great beneficence. During that very hard winter before the first "Thanksgiving," it is recorded that food became so scarce in some settlements that the daily ration of food per person per day was five kernels of corn. While we cannot be certain about what motivated those Pilgrim settlers to initiate a feast of thanksgiving, it is likely that they consciously drew on a model well-known to them from the Bible they cherished. Seeing themselves as new Israelites in a new "promised land," the Pilgrims surely found inspiration in the Bible, in the Books of Leviticus and Deuteronomy, in which GD commands the ancient Israelites to observe the Feast of Booths. ⚡

Steve Benn



Services and Events

Calendar for Services and Events

December

December 5th - Shabbat
Services 7:30 with Rabbi Sara

December 6th - Torah Study 10:00,
Adult Education 1:30

December - Hanukkah Party at the
Synagogue*

Synagogue of the Hills Annual
Meeting *

January 9, 2015 - Shabbat
Services 7:30 with Rabbi Sara

January 10th - Torah Study 10:00,
Adult Education 1:30

*Check your emails for future date
and time.



*Kindle the taper like the steadfast star
Ablaze on evening's forehead o'er the earth,
And add each night a lustre till afar
An eightfold splendor shine above thy hearth.*

*Emma Lazarus
The Feast of Lights.*

The Shofar is how the members of the Synagogue of the Hills communicate with each other. That is, *The Shofar* is a monthly forum for matters of interest that is a bit more formal than a remark over a cup of coffee, but a bit less formal than a written statement to the Board of Director. It could be a birth announcement, a press release, a photograph, a public service blurb, a letter to the editor (that's me, Leonard Running), a joke, a cartoon, an opinion, anything that YOU think might be important or entertaining to our family.

Your contributions are welcome . . . no, critical to the well-being of the synagogue.

You can send emails to bhshul1@gmail.com or anything in paper form to the address on page 1.

Let *The Shofar* be heard!

The Rabbi's Corner



Greetings from Rabbi Sara Eiser

Though winter hasn't fallen as early upon us this year as last year, we can feel the change in the season in the past few weeks. Whatever our feelings about the weather, winter slows us down in many ways. We linger in our warm beds in the mornings, we put on a bit of extra weight, and we are even forced every once in a while to take a break from our work to watch the weather stop the world in its tracks.

Winter, if done right, is a time to reconnect and regain control over our increasingly busy and demanding lives, and we have an unique template for what this looks like suggested to us by Jewish tradition.

People often chuckle when I claim Thanksgiving as one of my favorite Jewish holidays, but it reflects so much of what we are taught to do in our community. For a day, we stop. We come together with family and friends. We linger over a good meal. We rest, and we are thankful for all our blessings.

Chanukah, though a minor holiday, allows us to renew our commitment to bringing light into the world in dark times. It reminds us to be proud of who we are as Jews and sends us a strong message that we should fight to remain Jewish, even when a great army is against us.

Tu B'Shevat, the new year for trees in the land, connects us to Israel with images of springtime. It is a hopeful time, a time where we plant in the faith that we will reap G-d's blessings later.

And finally we celebrate Purim, our most joyful holiday, where we are commanded to increase our joy throughout the month until the climax of the great costume party and triumphant story of Queen Esther saving us from Haman's anti-Semitism. How much more joyful will it be this year, when we have seen anti-Semitism's ravages so recently?

The rhythm of sacred time, of Shabbat and our holidays, allows us the space and the time to reconnect with our heritage, ourselves, and our loved ones. The simple act of lighting candles on Friday night can transform a meal alone or with family into an oasis of peace and light. Whether a banquet, leftovers, or takeout, the meal is warmed by the glow of the shabbat candles, a simple act that is transformative both physically and spiritually.

Remember this winter to create this sacred space and guard it jealously. It isn't selfishness or laziness to do so, as some may suggest. It is instead a taste of godliness, to rest as G-d rested. Our prayer book tells us that we are eternally in Egypt, in allegorical slavery to schedules and forces out of our control. This time is our redemption from this hardship, G-d's reminder to us to turn inward again and focus on what matters; our family, our friends, and our inner selves.

May we all enjoy this gift of slowing down this winter and use it to reconnect with those we love.

Choref tov v'chamem, may you have a good and warm winter.

Sara Eiser



Community News- Visitors

Who are those bearded men dressed in black, sweeping into our town with their temporary shelters strapped to the back of their thundering machine seeking to shock the complacent and reassure the like-minded?



Hell's Angels?
Sons of Silence?
No!

It's the Frozen Chosen - Rabbi Yoni Grossman and his dad driving down from North Dakota for real Hasidim on a light-hearted mission introducing and celebrating Sukkot on the High Plains.



“A religious man is a person who holds God and man in one thought at one time, at all times, who suffers harm done to others, whose greatest passion is compassion, whose greatest strength is love and defiance of despair.”

— Abraham Joshua Heschel

Rosh Hashanah:

Alex Willick and Dalia Shapiro

- New York, NY

Art and Ellen Hartz - St. Louis, MO

Yom Kippur:

Tarlan Rabizadeh - Los Angeles

Alexander Sorkin - Jerusalem



Tzedakah *on the receiving end*

The phone rang; a form was filled out; and a week later an ordinary envelope arrived with a check - a large check - a check whose amount was in the low five figures and divisible by 18 - chai - the 18th letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

The brief letter that accompanied the check thanked the Synagogue for its good work stipulating that the donation was to be used "wherever it is needed most."

More than a hundred synagogues across the country have received a similar if not identical donation from this anonymous donor. More information on our benefactor and his/her activities can be found at www.chaiminded.org.





Mazel Tov!



*We celebrate the marriage of
Rebekah Benn and Raymond Huseby*



Chanukah: *Looking back*

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT US: THE SYNAGOGUE OF THE HILLS, RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA

South Dakota has the distinction of being the only state in the union without a Chabad Lubavitch contingency. This may have something to do with the fact that out of around 300, the total Jewish population in all of South Dakota, only 1/10th of which comprise the Black Hills' Jewish congregation, we are too small to be called "small". We are tiny. And the Chabadniks love to visit us. We can count on them every summer. They usually come in pairs; however, this year at Sukkot we were visited by a family, very fine people, caring and thoroughly likeable. Rabbi Grossman and two of his sons, the elder of whom is also a rabbi, arrived from North Dakota, driving a pickup (sooooo South Dakota) with a "traveling sukkah". As it turns out, though, thanks to the Ames family, Barb, Dan and Alex, we already have a beautiful sukkah in our own synagogue's beautiful backyard. And we do have the services of a student rabbi once a month, not from Chabad, but from the URJ seminary in Cincinnati. We are presented with a new student each year, and we love them. Always interesting young people with a wide variety of strengths and talents.

We've been a synagogue since the 1940s, which is a nice, long time. Stan Adelstein, our President, core founder/ lay leader/major benefactor, has been at the hub of our congregation from its very inception. The beginning, as far as only I remember it, dates back about 45 years, to a Passover seder. There I met some of our original members: the Adelsteins (Stan and Ita), the Rivkins (Myron and Sarah); the Horwitzes (Nate and Ruth); the Bobers (Jack, Harriet and Haim), the Gilberts (Wayne, Kristi and their 2 very young girls), and Jewish people from near and far. The Synagogue of the Hills was, and still is, the only shul for 300 miles in any direction, and at Passover, a Jew wants a seder. Stan led that seder, as he has for every seder since. Stan has also blown the shofar at the High Holy Days as far back as I can recall.

Services then were held at the nondenominational shared chapel at nearby Ellsworth Air Force Base. The Torah scroll was kept in a revolving compartment, the other half of which accommodated ritual items for church services. The revolving platform with the Torah had to be turned to face the congregation for synagogue services. Lay leadership, library, teachers, everything we did was thanks to volunteers. Still, our wish was for a place of our own.

Once again, Stan stepped in and presented us with a lovely little house, idyllically set between a nature park, an apple orchard and a little stream, now remodeled into a shul. Our Synagogue of the Hills is complete with sanctuary, classrooms, administrative office, Judaica, library, kosher kitchen and social hall. In the springtime a little group led by our dear Mary Ingram plants a flower garden. Lay leadership is mostly under the aegis of Steve and Jo Benn. Our bulletins, our teachers, holiday celebrations, all voluntary and under the guidance of our excellent Board of Directors. Tiny as we are, we are all needed, and we all pitch in to make our synagogue a warm, comfortable and welcoming Jewish home. It's a shul of our own, perfect for all occasions. ✨

Ann Haber Stanton, November 2014

Chanukah: *Looking forward*

As with most things in Judaism Chanukah is a thing of many meanings, and even more spellings (I found 16 so far!). You would think that the diverse views of this holiday would make it confusing, maybe even make it inaccessible to us. How can we celebrate a holiday whose very definitions can be disputed? And yet the contradictory notions of this holiday are what have always drawn me to it.

I am Jewish through my grandmother, but not in upbringing. I came late to my studies, and while I did attend adult studies at synagogue I also studied on my own. The most surprising thing that I learned and am still learning is that being Jewish is not a singular definition; but while the definition may differ, the words will always lead to the same thing. We are Jewish.

Seeing Judaism as an outsider made me want to understand it, but seeing Judaism now from inside makes me want to feel it as well. Chanukah does this for me. There are various views of what this holiday commemorates, various reasons that flow through our mind as we light the menorah. To some it is a Maccabean victory over religious oppression, to some it is an expression of the miraculous, seen in a day's worth of oil lasting eight days.

Two views. Same story.

And these days there is also another view sneaking in, a secular view that pits Chanukah against Christmas as a Festival of Lights, a holiday filled with twinkling bulbs, sparkly wrapped gifts, and parties that host dreidel games and potlucks.

I love these multiple views and all of the ways we celebrate this holiday because to me it represents all of the ways I see G-d. G-d may be faceless for Jews, but he is very real. She is that feeling that follows us through our day, giving us a little more strength when we want to quit. He is that prayer we say when we are at our lowest and the laughter we share when we are happy. G-d is a light, a victory, and a Chanukah, a 'dedication', that we continue to fulfill. G-d does not need ever-burning oil, victorious battles, or prettily wrapped gifts. G-d only needs us. He needs us to be human, to struggle, to pray. She needs us to see the light in the darkness, to search for it and to hold on to it. I embrace all of the sides of Chanukah as I embrace all of the sides of G-d.

Spirit does not need a face or form to be held.

Light does not need to be touched to be felt.

So whatever story you tell and whichever way you spell it, make Chanukah this year. The meaning of the word is 'to dedicate'. The meaning of the holiday is...? ☆

Michelle Fish

Member Profile



Ann Stanton

“Passionate, compassionate, productive, energetic, progressive, devout” – many adjectives might be used to describe Ann Stanton. “Proud” is not one of them. Well, OK, she would say that she is proud of her three sons. Moms are supposed to do that – especially if they’re lawyers and professionals, veterans to boot.

Ann could also say that she is proud about her education and family life in New York City and her accomplishments since coming to the Black Hills of South Dakota in 1959

But when asked about her work creating Founders Park on the banks of Rapid Creek or her book, *Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush*, or the many projects which she has conceived and completed, Ann will defer with a smile to her many collaborators – “Oh, it wouldn’t have gotten done if it hadn’t been for so-and-so.”

Ann also describes her contributions in terms as being driven by a purpose:

- * for children – her own (grandchildren, too) and others’ children.
- * for Rapid City – a unique interactive playspace telling the story of our city’s founding.
- * for her Synagogue – her book, a narrative that describes and contemplates the wild, courageous, danger-filled lives of Jewish pioneers in the Hills – a gift to Jewish pioneers of the 21st century.

More than that, Ann’s modest, humorous and slightly eccentric outlook is a reflection of her relationship with her god and her sense of place in the long story of celebration, sadness and perseverance of a larger community and holy tradition. ✡

Gift Shop

Autographed copies of *Jewish Pioneers of the Black Hills Gold Rush* written by our talented member, Ann Stanton, are on sale for \$21.20, which includes tax. Part of your purchase is *tzedakah* - \$5.00 from each copy will go to the Synagogue. You are welcome to shop anytime you are in the building. Please remember to add 6% sales tax to your total (there is a tax chart on the wall in the gift shop). Payments may be left in the black payment box on the desk. Thank you!

Yahrzeits

"to remember is to keep alive"

The following *yahrzeits* will be observed:
Attendance at services is encouraged so *Kaddish* may be recited.

In Memoriam:

Father of Karen McKinney

Ruth Horwitz- long time member of the Synagogue of the Hills
passed away Monday, November 17 in Colorado.

Bertha Adelstein November 25, 1993
Mother of Stan Adelstein

Morris Adelstein December 16, 1968
Father of Stan Adelstein

Joseph Haber November 25, 1987
Father of Ann Stanton

Richard Ingram December 18, 1990
Father of Mary Ingram

Harriet Pearce November 26
Mother of Karen McKinney

Rosette Elfassy December 21, 2001
Sister of Georgette Ohayon

Death is merely moving from one home to another. The wise man will spend his main efforts in trying to make his future home the more beautiful one."

-Rabbi Menachem Mendel Morgenstern of Tomashov (the Kotzker Rebbe)



Remember:

Challah and the Oneg

The Colonial House has challah available on any Friday after 12:00 noon. It is very helpful for someone to volunteer to pick up the challah and prepare the oneg after services.

If you want to help out by picking up the two loaves and set up the oneg in our synagogue kitchen please notify Leonard at 348-0805. You could even bring your own homemade challah or specially purchased oneg snacks.

If you have something special to celebrate, commemorate, or just want to bring something for the joy of it, there is an oneg sign-up sheet on the bulletin board, or you can call or email by Wednesday, noon, of the week for which you wish to volunteer.

THANK YOU!



TREE OF LIFE DONATIONS

You may purchase a leaf in honor of, or in memory of a loved one or special occasion. Leaves cost \$100.00, each. Please provide the wording you would like inscribed on the leaf (29 characters and 4 lines maximum).

Please send acknowledgment to _____

All donations are tax deductible; please consult your tax expert for details.

Your continued support of Synagogue of the Hills is greatly appreciated!

I would like to make the following donation to Synagogue of the Hills:

My Name _____

In memory of _____ In honor of _____

anniversary ~ birth ~ graduation ~ appreciation ~ birthday ~ marriage ~ bar or bat mitzvah

Donation amount _____

Please make check payable to: Synagogue of the Hills and mail to 417 N 40th St, Rapid City, SD 57702

The following is a list of funds to which the donations can be made; Please circle your choice.

Building Fund ~ General Fund ~ High Holy Days Flower Fund ~ Oneg Fund ~

Endowment Fund ~ Tzedakah Fund ~ Other _____