

The Kibbitzer

Congregation Beth Shalom of Brandon
706 Bryan Road, Brandon, FL 33511
Phone (813) 681-6547
www.BethShalomBrandon.org

September 2025 Volume 36 Issue 4

Shana Tova!



Rosh Hashanah by Rochelle Blumenfeld

CBS Welcomes Rabbi Jonathan Katz



Rosh Hashanah

Tuesday, September 23 - 10:00 AM

Yom Kippur

Thursday, October 2nd - 10:00 AM

High Holiday Calendar 5786/2025

Selichot Saturday, September 20
7:00 PM

Erev Rosh Hashanah
Begins sunset of Services Monday, September 22
7:00 PM

Rosh Hashanah
First Day Tuesday, September 23
Services 10:00 AM
Tashlich To follow - 11:45 AM
Location Brandon Parkway
Lunch 12:30 PM
Location Longhorn

Rosh Hashanah
Second Day Wednesday, Sept 24
Services 10:00 AM
Go out to brunch To follow

Memorial Service Sunday, September 28
Hillsborough Memorial Gardens 10:00 AM

Kol Nidre
Begins sunset of Services Wednesday, October 1
7:00 PM

Yom Kippur Thursday, October 2
Services 10:00 AM
Yizkor Memorial Service 11:00 AM
Children's Service 3:30 PM
Afternoon Service 4:00 PM

Break the Fast To follow Ne'ilah

Build the Sukkah To be determined

Sukkot Shabbat Dinner Friday, October 10
6:00 PM

Simchat Torah Tuesday, October 14
7:00 PM



Annual Memorial Service

It is customary during the High Holy Days to visit your loved ones at the cemetery. Please join your CBS Family on Sunday, September 9 at 10:00 AM at the Hillsboro Memorial Cemetery. There will be a brunch following the service in the main building.





Holiday Candle Lighting Times

Date

Time

Rosh Hashana

Monday, September 22

6:59 PM

Tuesday, September 23

7:50 PM

Wednesday, September 24

7:48 PM

Yom Kippur

Wednesday, October 1

6:49 PM

Sukkot

Monday, October 6

6:44 PM

Tuesday, October 7

7:35 PM

Wednesday, October

7:34 PM

Shemini Atzeret

Monday, October 13

6:36 PM

Tuesday, October 14

7:28 PM

Wednesday, October 15

7:27 PM

Blessings for Rosh Hashanah

ברוך אתה אֱדֹנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר וּשְׁל יוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן 1)

Bah-rookh ah-tah ah-doh-noi eh-loh-hay-noo meh-lekh hah-oh-lahm, ah-shehr ki-deh-shah-noo beh-mitz-voh-tahv veh-tzee-vah-noo leh-hahd-lik nayr veh-shel yohm hah-zee-kah-rohn.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G^d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us to light the candle of the Day of Remembrance.

ברוך אתה אֱדֹנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיַּמְנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְן הַזֶּה 2)

Bah-rookh ah-tah ah-doh-noi eh-loh-hay-noo meh-lekh hah-oh-lahm sheh-heh-kheh-yah-noo veh-kee-mah-noo ve-hig-ee-yah-noo liz-mahn hah-zeh.

Blessed are You, Lord our G^d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.



Blessings for the evening of September 23:

ברוך אתה אֱדֹנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם אֲשֶׁר קִדְּשָׁנוּ בְּמִצְוֹתָיו וְצִוָּנוּ לְהַדְלִיק נֵר שֶׁל יוֹם הַזִּכְרוֹן 1)

Bah-rookh ah-tah ah-doh-noi eh-loh-hay-noo meh-lekh hah-oh-lahm, ah-shehr ki-deh-shah-noo beh-mitz-voh-tahv veh-tzee-vah-noo leh-hahd-lik nayr shehl yohm hah-zee-kah-rohn.

Blessed are You, L-rd our G_d, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and has commanded us to light the candle of the Day of Remembrance.

ברוך אתה אֱדֹנֵי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהֵחֵיבוּ וְקִיְּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמָּן הַזֶּה 2)

Bah-rookh ah-tah ah-doh-noi eh-loh-hay-noo meh-lekh hah-oh-lahm sheh-heh-kheh-yah-noo veh-kee-mah-noo ve-hig-ee-yah-noo liz-mahn hah-zeh.

Blessed are You, Lord our G_d, King of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.



A Celebration of Creation

Rosh Hashanah 5765 / 2004

Based on the teachings and writings of Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks

One aspect of the service on Rosh Hashanah never ceases to fill me with wonder.

Rosh Hashanah is the anniversary of creation. *Hayom harat olam*, we say in our prayers: “Today the world was born.” What then – if we knew nothing of the prayers – would we expect to find as the biblical readings for the day?



Rabbi Jonathan Sacks

My vote would be simple. From the Torah, the opening of Bereishit. “In the beginning G-d created...” And for the *haftarah*? What better than the last two chapters of Isaiah, “Behold I will create new heavens and a new earth”?

Opening the machzor I would find that my answer was logical but wrong. What, in fact, do we read on the first day of the New Year? From the Torah, the story of the birth of Isaac. For the *haftarah*, the birth of Samuel. Two stories of great women – Sarah and Hannah – who longed to have children, but could not, and were then blessed by G-d.

Why these two stories? Beautiful, certainly. But what is their connection with Rosh Hashanah? The answer tells us much about the extraordinary, humane, counter-intuitive vision at the heart of Jewish life.

The famous Mishnah in Sanhedrin states (Steven Spielberg used it in his film *Schindler's List*) that a single life is like a universe. “One who destroys a life is as if he destroyed a universe. One who saves a life is as if he saved a universe.” *The birth of a human life is like the birth of the universe*. Rosh Hashanah is the festival of creation – and if you want to understand the ethical implications of creation, don't study astro-physics. Think of the birth of a child.

Throughout the centuries, Judaism has been the most child-centred civilization in history. Only once does the Torah tell us why Abraham was chosen: “So that he will instruct his children and his household after him to keep the way of the Lord.” Abraham was chosen for the sake of his children.

On the brink of the exodus, Moses gathers the people and addresses them ([Exodus 12-13](#)). He speaks about none of the things we would expect – freedom, the journey, the land of milk and honey. Instead he speaks three times about children: “And you shall tell your child on that day.”

Children have been the casualties of our age. In the West they have suffered from the breakdown of marriage and the exploitations of a consumer culture. In the Middle East they have been used by the proponents of terror as cover for gunfire and, worse, used as suicide bombers. Where have been the voices of protest? Sadly there have been too few.

There are cultures that live in the present. Eventually, inevitably, they lose their way. There are cultures that live in the past. Nursing grievances, they seek revenge. Judaism is the greatest example in history of a culture that, while celebrating the present and remembering the past, lives for the future – and for its children.

If I were to choose one Jewish message for the world in these tense times, I would say: forget power, pride, violence, revenge, wealth, prestige, honor, acclaim – and instead ask one question: will our next act make the world a little better for our children? That is the message of Rosh Hashanah – the day on which, to understand the universe, we think about the birth of a child.

President's Column



Steve Billor

Shalom!

As we approach the High Holy Days, we look forward to gathering in prayer and reflection as a united community. It is a sacred mitzvah to come together during this season, and we hope to see you joining us in observance and celebration.

We are honored to welcome Rabbi Katz as the spiritual leader for our High Holy Day services. He will be guiding us on the first day of Rosh Hashanah and again during the Yom Kippur morning service. Rabbi Katz's wisdom and presence are a true blessing, and we are deeply grateful for his leadership during these meaningful days.

On the administrative front, we are pleased to announce the successful implementation of Shalom Cloud, which now oversees key operations at Congregation Beth Shalom—including billing, Yahrzeit tracking, member communications, and more. This transition allows us to retire our bookkeeping account with Zomesa, resulting in monthly savings of over \$400. We continue to pursue greater efficiency and financial stewardship in all aspects of our congregational life.

Special thanks are due to Neil Spindel, Sandy Schwartz, and Gerry Pliner for their dedication in launching the financial components of Shalom Cloud. Their efforts have been instrumental in this important upgrade.

As part of this transition, we've also refreshed our membership records. Over time, we've maintained listings for many beloved long-time members who, though no longer active, remained on our rolls. With this update, we now have a clear and accurate list of current, contributing members—a concentrated core of individuals deeply committed to sustaining CBS. Each of you plays a vital role in keeping our congregation vibrant and forward moving.

We are actively exploring new strategies to re-engage former members and welcome new ones into our community. If you know someone—past or prospective—who might be interested in reconnecting with CBS, we encourage you to reach out and invite them to be part of our journey.

As always, we welcome your feedback. Please feel free to share your thoughts and suggestions with any board member. While we may not be able to implement every idea, we are committed to listening and considering all possibilities that support our shared mission.

Todah Rabah for your continued support and engagement.

Warm regards,

Steve Billor



Gabe's Column

*“Every question we ask must include the words
‘parents with young children.’”*



Gabe Lifschitz

L'dor Vador in Today's Complex World

When we gathered for dinner to welcome Rabbi Will Guyster, I was struck by the richness of his journey—from growing up in the Soviet Union to celebrating his Bar Mitzvah in Tampa at Kol Ami. His stories spanned continents and causes: living in Ghana, founding a nonprofit to uplift local communities, and teaching entrepreneurship at MIT. What moved me most was his quiet conviction that peace and harmony are possible, even in places the media often portrays as troubled.

Over dessert, our conversation turned to the future of our congregation. I shared a guiding principle: if we want to thrive, every decision we make should include the words “parents with young children.” Rabbi Guyster nodded immediately and said, “L'dor Vador.” From generation to generation. He understood that our vitality depends on nurturing families who will raise their children in our faith.

We spoke about identity, belonging, and community. Rabbi Guyster believes we can hold fast to our Jewish identity while embracing the diversity around us. He offered a vivid example from Israel—a kosher McDonald's staffed by Palestinians, a quiet testament to coexistence.

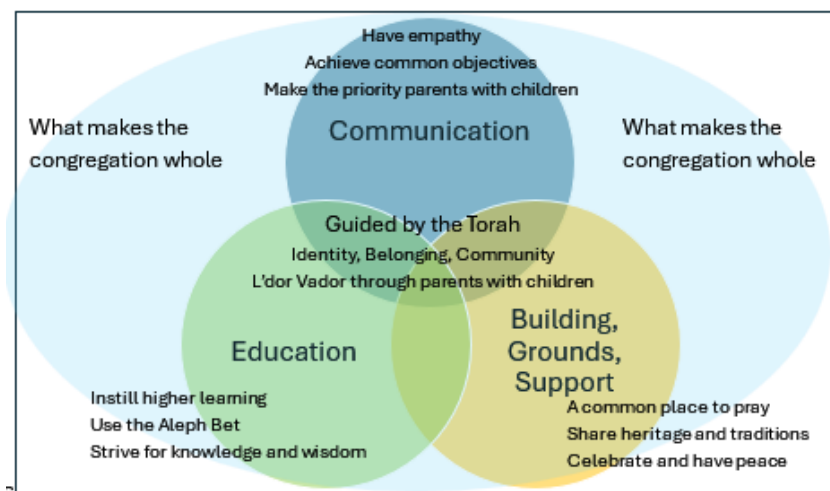
In a previous column, I shared a diagram showing how our mitzvot flow from three pillars: communication, education, and building support. At their intersection lies our purpose, guided by Torah. Torah shapes our identity and affirms our belonging. And it calls us to act—to create programs, messages, and spaces that welcome young families and ensure L'dor Vador.

That means aligning our communications, both internal and external, around a shared priority: making our congregation a place where children thrive. When we do that, the cycle renews itself. Parents bring their children. Children grow into leaders. And the legacy continues.

On a practical note, our building still needs attention as we prepare for hurricane season. We've made great strides since Hurricane Milton, but there's more to do. I'll be organizing efforts in the coming months, and your help—your time, your care—will be a mitzvah.

Shalom,

Gabriel Lifschitz



Brandon Jewish Youth Academy

Open House and Open Hearts



Ianna Rosenfeld

Congregation Beth Shalom hosted its first informational meeting about our BJYA, our free Hebrew school on July 27th. The school is ready to welcome new students for the upcoming 2025/2026 school year.

While the attendance for the event was admittedly disappointing, it was a great display of the vision of its founder Neil Spindel and the commitment to the future of the congregation by its members. Three families were in attendance for a session of celebration, information and community. The day started with a presentation highlighting the accomplishments and progress of the school's founding students Jack and Abby. Neil spoke about the spark and creation of the school as well as the inspiration for the school, his beloved mother, MARJORIE RICHTER SPINDEL.

While parents engaged in the information session, children explored hands-on learning through arts, crafts, and Jewish-themed games like *Matching Mitzvahs* and *Dreidel Trouble*—a joyful contrast to the limitations of online Hebrew school.

After the information session, as with any good Jewish gathering, food was provided. Parents were given the chance to meet congregants and get a feel for the environment and community CBS has to offer. The turn out and support from congregants was well felt. It is clear everyone at CBS believes the children are the future of our congregation. Our members' willingness to nurture and encourage these connections between generations was inspiring. That said, we need more families!

Let us build a future where laughter echoes in our classrooms, traditions are passed hand to hand, and every child finds their place in our story. The school is ready. The curriculum is ready. The participants are ready. All we need now are families—Jewish families of all ages who want to grow, learn, and belong. Together, we can once again be a multigenerational congregation sustained by joy, learning, and connection.

Ianna Rosenthal



Congregation Beth Shalom

Shabbat Services

Can't make it to services?

Join us online with a live feed from Zoom!

Zoom Link:

**[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83776565288?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83776565288?pwd=V3RIZzRXWkdaTjhsejBpNWJFTjIBUTo9)
pwd=V3RIZzRXWkdaTjhsejBpNWJFTjIBUTo9**

Meeting ID: 837 7656 5288

Passcode: 101324

CBS Office Hours

The administrative office is currently open by appointment only. We can be reached by calling the office, (813)681-6547, email, cbsbrandon@outlook.com.

Although our hours are limited, we are always here for you. Do not hesitate to reach out with any needs, concerns, or questions.

Congregation Beth Shalom

provides a meaningful spiritual home for people of all ages and levels of knowledge, a place to learn and to question, a place to worship and to celebrate, and a place to find a community that cares.

We offer:

- ✧ Friday worship services at 7:00 PM
- ✧ Complete B'nai Mitzvah preparation
- ✧ Adult Education classes
- ✧ Communitywide events
- ✧ Community Food Bank

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Becoming a partner in our congregation offers an opportunity for enduring friendships and a personal spiritual journey. A place in our Jewish community.

Members also have free access to many of our educational and entertainment events.

August Yahrzeits

Dorothy Brown	Mother	Of	Stephen Zweibach
Herman Finke	Father	Of	Mark Finke
Dorothy S. Goldstein	Mother	Of	Judith Pliner
Louis Kaplan	Father	Of	Janice Perelman
Sharon Leibowitz	Sister	Of	Gail Verlin
Pauline Magdovitz	Mother-in-Law	Of	Caren Magdovitz
Carl Miller	Father	Of	Sheryl Finke
Joseph Plesur	Husband	Of	Carole Plesur
Elwin Saviet	Father	Of	Howard Saviet
Issac Shienbaum	Father	Of	Marvin Shienbaum
Becky Smith	Grandmother	Of	Lynn Kaler
Elinor Smith	Mother	Of	Caren Magdovitz
Raymond Sperry	Father	Of	Bruce Sperry

DONATIONS



Gabe Lifschitz
Neil Spindel

Todah Rabah!



KUDOS!

Diana & Gerry Gutenstein

Our very own kitchen mavens

Lynn Kaler

Cleaning & Prep for Rabbi Guster's visit

Toby Koch

Cleaning & Prep for Rabbi Guster's visit

Gabe Lifschitz

Our Behind-the-Scenes Dynamo

Gerry Pliner

Updating financials in Shalom Cloud

Sandy Schwartz

Updating financials in Shalom Cloud

Neil Spindel

Updating financials in Shalom Cloud

Organizing an amazing BJYA open house

Writing/presenting open house video

Ianna Rosenthal

Our kitchen wizard & teacher extraordinaire

Hosting a wonderful BJYA open house

Ianna & Eric Rosenthal

Working on plan to energize our calendar

Our August "Rabbis"

Steve Billor

Myron Feldman

Sandy Schwartz

Neil Spindel



Candle Lighting Times

Date	Time	Parsha
Friday, Sept 5	7:17 PM	Ki-Teitzel
Friday, Sept 12	7:10 PM	Ki-Tavo
Friday, Sept 19	7:02 PM	Nitzavim
Friday, Sept 26	6:54 PM	Vayelech



Join Us for Shabbat!

Every Friday night at 7:00 PM, our congregation comes together to welcome Shabbat with beautiful tunes and inspiring prayers. After the service, we continue the celebration with an oneg.

Would you like to sponsor an oneg to celebrate a mitzvah?
Please reach out to Toby Koch at (813) 654-0877.



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Gerry Pliner

2nd Vice President

Toby Koch

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Neil Spindel

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Sandy Schwartz

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Myron Feldman

Lynn Kaler

Gabe Lifschitz

Eric Rosenthal

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MEMBERSHIP

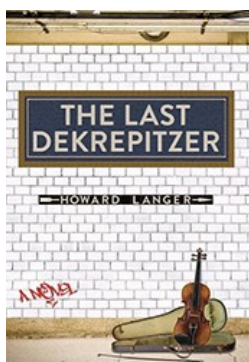
Becoming a partner in our congregation offers an opportunity for enduring friendships and a personal spiritual journey. A place in our Jewish community.

Members also have free access to many of our educational and entertainment events.

Jewish Book Council

The Last Dekrepitzer

by Howard Langer



Howard Langer's inventive novel, *The Last Dekrepitzer*, imagines what would happen if the last remaining survivor of a Hasidic sect found his way to the pre – Civil Rights American South and took on a new identity as a blues musician named Sam Lightup. In doing so, the novel explores subjects like race, the legacy of the Holocaust, music, and G-d.

Although the story jumps around in time, Sam's story begins when he is in the shtetl, learning how to lead his community as the rebbe-in-waiting. His particular sect is known for having leaders who are famous for their peculiar style of fiddle playing, and Sam, called Shumel Meir at the time, is getting ready to become that leader. Yet the Holocaust is looming, and Sam gets conscripted into the Russian army as a fiddle player. When he finally finds his way out, his world has been destroyed and he has to start over.

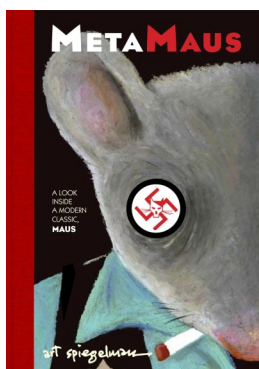
That new beginning takes place in Mississippi. As someone who has been treated as an outcast, Sam is drawn to the African Americans in his community. He befriends Black preachers and falls in love with a Black woman named Lula. Eventually, he makes his way to New York City, where his unique fiddle playing finds an audience.

Throughout the novel, Langer is able to employ humor while also displaying the tragedies happening around Sam. Because of his history, Sam functions as a kind of broken prophet. He struggles with big questions, especially with the place of prayer and G-d after all he has seen. His answer, however, is not to abandon religion whole-cloth. Judaism still matters to Sam, but the way he approaches it is different than most. Through his music, Sam is able to find spiritual meaning. More than anything, the book explores the role that music can play in bringing people closer to one another and the non-believer closer to the Divine.

Review by Marc Katz

MetaMaus

by Art Spiegelman



For the past sixty years, Holocaust survivors have told their stories in writing, but few books have revolutionized the way people looked at the Holocaust as much as *Maus*, Art Spiegelman's graphic biography of his father, Vladek. In his new autobiography, *MetaMaus*, Spiegelman takes readers through the process of his innovative graphic narrative. He tells us why he chose to tell his father's story in comic book form, why he chose to represent Jews as mice, and how he responded to the backlash he received after *Maus* was published. He also includes interviews with his wife and children, discussing their roles in the creation of *Maus* and how it changed their lives.

Not surprisingly, the most striking feature of this autobiography is Spiegelman's art-work. The book is filled with his sketches, inspirations, previous work, and even family photos. Also included is a DVD that contains *Maus I* and *II* and "an exemplary thimbleful from the vast *"Maus Midrash."*

Review by Alyssa Berlin

Bashanah Haba'a Rosh Hashanah



Please click on box to hear the song.

"Bashana Haba'ah" is a Hebrew phrase meaning "Next Year". It is also the title of a well-known Israeli song, often associated with [Rosh Hashanah](#), the Jewish New Year. The song expresses both sadness and hope, with lyrics about looking forward to a better future. The song was written by [Ehud Manor](#) and composed by [Nurit Hirsch](#).

Next year we will sit on the porch
and count migrating birds.
Children on vacation will play catch
between the house and the fields.

You will yet see, you will yet see,
how good it will be next year.

Red grapes will ripen till the evening,
and will be served chilled to the table.
And languid winds will carry to the crossroads
old newspapers and a cloud.

You will yet see, you will yet see,
how good it will be next year.

Next year we will spread out our hands
towards the radiant light.
A white heron like a light will spread her wings
and within them the sun will rise.

You will yet see, you will yet see,
how good it will be next year.



Please bring your non-perishable foods and/or personal items in a bag to CBS. We will have large bags available for your convenience. There is a donation box in the lobby for your donation. We operate a food bank once a month to serve the community. Thank you for your support!

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Braiding a 4-strand Challah



Want to learn how to braid a round challah? Just click the challah image to watch the video.



A. Take strand 1 and cross it over strand 2.



D. Take strand 7 and cross it over strand 8.



B. Take strand 3 and cross it over strand 4.



E. Take strand 2 and cross it back the opposite way, over strand 7.



C. Take strand 5 and cross it over strand 6.



F. Take strand 8 and cross it over strand 5.



G. Take strand 6 and cross it over strand 3.



H. Take strand 4 and cross it over strand 1.



I. Take strand 7 and twist it with strand 4.



J. Tuck the twisted ends under the challah. Repeat this process with the remaining loose ends—twist and tuck 1 with 6, then 3 and 8, then 5 and 2.



K. When all of the loose ends are twisted under, gently plump the challah into a nice, even round shape.



September 2025

September "Rabbis"

Friday, Sept 5	Neil Spindel
Friday, Sept 12	Gabe Lifschitz
Friday, Sept 19	Myron Feldman
Friday, Sept 22	Stephen Billor
Friday, Sept 26	Neil Spindel



* Hillsborough Memorial Gardens

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Ex Com Mtg 6:30 PM Board Mtg 7:00 PM	3 Hebrew Lessons 6:00 PM	4	5 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	6
7	8	9	10 Hebrew Lessons 6:00 PM	11	12 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	13
14	15	16	17 Hebrew Lessons 6:00 PM	18	19 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	20 Selichot 7:00 PM 
21	22 Erev Rosh Hashanah 7:00 PM 	23 Rosh Hashanah 10:00 AM 	24 Rosh Hashanah 10:00 AM 	25	26 Erev Shabbat Service 7:00	27
28 Yizkor 10:00 AM* 	29	30				