



The Shofar

Shaare Tefila Congregation

קול
השוֹפָר

Celebrating our 58th year

Vol.58 # 4

December 2009 — Kislev /Tevet 5770



FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY... Alternative Services

Back in October we had an unusual alternative service - a drum circle. I realize now that I may have put the cart before the horse. I hadn't sufficiently explained why we're having a drum circle - or any kind of alternative service for that matter - or what our goals are. As we plan for the next program I think it would be a good idea to share some of my thinking

with you now.

My vision for Shabbat is that we as a congregation would provide as many Shabbat oriented activities as is logistically possible. Some people like arts and crafts, some people like music, some people like to meditate, some people like to learn. You name the activity, and within *halachic* reason we should provide that program. My dream is to have everyone in our congregation have a reason for coming to shul on Shabbat.

While we are in rented space, we have to drastically limit what we can offer. But we need to start offering alternatives. Shabbat is a gift. The saying goes, "more than the Jews have kept the sabbath, the sabbath has kept the Jews." Those of you who take advantage of traditional Shabbat observance know what a gift it is to have computers and cell phones off, have relaxing Shabbat meals, enjoy a Shabbat service, and even take a Shabbat nap. Shabbat is a rejuvenation day.

Shaare Tefila needs to be in your plans for Shabbat day. I know that the traditional service doesn't meet everyone's needs. But everyone needs to feel spiritual once a week. Everyone needs to be reconnected with fellow Jews and Jewish heritage. We hope that the programs we will offer will attract you and your friends and will help you realize that Shaare Tefila is trying to meet your religious needs.

Please save the dates for the following alternative programming. Dec 12 from 9:30-10:15 we will be offering meditation. January 30 the regular service will be from 8:30-10:30 and from 10:30-Noon we will offer a musical Shabbat. April 3 we will be doing bibliodrama during the regular service and on May 1 we will offer a walk in nature. Hopefully those topics pique your curiosity. More information will follow.

I look forward to hearing your comments and thoughts about this and I look forward to seeing you in shul!

B`vracha,
Rabbi Jonah Layman



FROM THE PRESIDENT The Surveys

You might be curious as to the results of the survey that was taken immediately after Yom Kippur. We had a very good response rate, much higher than typical surveys, but then again, we're not a typical community – thank goodness. 117 people responded and the answers look something like:

Of those members who attended High Holy Day services this year at Sherwood High School, over 80% were very or moderately satisfied with Sherwood High School as a facility – not withstanding the failure of the lighting for a brief moment and not withstanding the call to the cafeteria at noon on Yom Kipper – both memorable occasions. It was like being at home when the air conditioning didn't quite work to capacity at Kol Nidre, but still no one expressed a very dissatisfied reaction.

Over 70% of the members who attended Sherwood services were very or moderately satisfied with the services themselves (25% didn't respond to that question). There were quite a few comments (more on the comments below) on the services and they are being addressed by an ad hoc subcommittee to see how we can further enhance everyone's spiritual experience.

As for the reason you who didn't attend, if you didn't, the largest block was from members who attended elsewhere with their families.

As regards evening minyan time, the preponderance of responders expressed a preference for the 7:45 pm time as opposed to the 7:00 pm start time. So, as for now, we'll not change that.

As to where you seem to get your news about Shaare Tefila, almost all of you go to The Shofar and List Serve and emails (not a surprise since the survey was sent via email) for your fix, but postcards and mailings and announcements at services were important too. So they will continue. Word of mouth was also a popular source of information, and that won't be discontinued (as if...); now if we could only promise no mis-information thataway...

The survey regarding our alternative Shabbat service was also widely responded to and will help in planning future such services. The comments on routine services will also be heeded.

As to the comments: well, what some of you liked, some of you didn't. We'll be dealing with the comments one at a time in our continuous effort to try and satisfy everyone, but be prepared to feel that your particular response was ignored – it wasn't, but maybe there were others who felt the opposite.

I do have to tell you that it was very heartening to read your compliments and there were a few. But again, your constructive criticisms and advice are being listened to and discussed. So, any time, contact me or Rabbi Layman and know that we are listening and working to give you the best synagogue experience possible.

Call me, write me, give me your ideas, your suggestions, and of course your compliments,
Bess Teller, President, President@shaaretefila.org
(home) 240-342-2352, (cell) 240-441-7132

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The Shofar

YOUTH CORNER

Lynn Berk

December is an exciting month with lots of special activities.

On **Sunday, December 13th, Tikvat Israel, Shaare Tefila & Hebrew Day Institute is sponsoring a Chanukah Concert & Dinner.** The concert will feature the **Mama Doni Band** with lead singer **Doni Zasloff.** The band won the 2008 Simcha Award for "Inspiring Joy through Music," at the International Jewish Music Festival in Amsterdam. Quirky, funny and always unpredictable, Mama Doni's music will bring a fun new twist to Chanukah, as it ventures through dance beats, Latin pop, "Jewgrass" hoe-downs and dazzling disco. Chanukah candle lighting, a brisket & latke dinner, a performance by the HDI Choir, dreidel playing and Chanukah crafts will follow the concert. The entire program will run from 4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. The concert is free and open to the public. Tickets can be purchased for dinner(adults - \$12 /Children - \$9) by contacting lberk@comcast.net or by calling (301) 762-7338.

Tradition has it the on either Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, Jews must celebrate by eating Chinese food and seeing a movie. In keeping with this tradition, on **Thursday night, Dec 24, *from 6:30 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.*, we will be offering a Chinese dinner from David Chu's, a kosher Chinese restaurant in Baltimore, and showing several movies in multiplex style.** There will be a big screen movie in the sanctuary for adults and another movie on the big screen TV in the youth lounge for children and maybe even cartoons for the little kids. The movies are free and dinner will run \$15 for adults (13 & older) and \$10 for kids 3 to 12. Children under the age of 3 are free. There will be several main courses, egg rolls, white & fried rice and fortune cookies for dessert. Make your reservations by December 20 by RSVPing to lberk@comcast.net or by calling Lynn at (301) 762-7338.

Seaboard Region Kadima held its Fall Kallah, the weekend of October 23 – 25 at the Smith Center in Rockville, Maryland. Our Joint Kadima group had the second largest delegation at the event. We sent 18 Kadimaniks and two staff members. The kids representing our synagogues were: **Hannah Smith, Jacob Ginsberg, Sarah Hoffman, Daniel Mintz, Ben Kaminow, Jamie Sultan, Lenny Fobe, Josh Lempert, Elan Rubin and Sarah Meiselman** from Tikvat Israel and **Aaron Auerbach, Rachel Barczuch, Emily Levy, Lianna Lieberman, Ethan Meltzer, Rachel Sniffen, Jacob Weiss and Sarah Zarney** from Shaare Tefila. The two staff were Lynn Berk, Youth Director and Dana Rothstein, our Kadima Advisor.

USY International Convention will be held in Chicago, Dec 25 - 31. The Joint USY Chapter will be sending 3 delegates to the convention. Representing our joint group will be **Eric Weiss & Amalia Cowan**, our Co-Presidents, and **Zach Kaye**, our Membership/Kadima Vice President. We wish them a safe journey and look forward to hearing about the Convention in the months to come.

YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMMING CALENDAR

Saturday evening, Dec 5 Kadima Multi Chapter Maccabia & Chanukah Party

Sunday, Dec 6 Machar Chanukah Pottery Program

Saturday evening, Dec 12 USY to Wizards Basketball Game

Sunday, Dec 13 Bonim Chanukah Program

Sunday, Dec 13 Mama Doni Concert & Chanukah Dinner

Thursday Night, Dec 24 Chinese Food & Movies



FROM THE SISTERHOOD

Deborah Letow

Happy Chanukah!!!

Thank you to everyone who helped organize our wonderful Paid-up Membership Dinner: **Meryl Schaffer** for planning the speaker, **Karen Gross** and **Ethel Levine** for organizing the venue, **Elaine Stein** for taking reservations and **Fran Kensky** for organizing the delicious dinner.

Rosh Chodesh is December 19. Our facilitator for this month is **Beth Greenfeld.** Thank you to **Rachel Sniffen** for facilitating in November. Facilitators are still needed for January, April and May.

Thank you to everyone who helps with Kiddush set up and cleanup.

And as always **buy Scrip**; it is our biggest fund raiser. This year Sisterhood has already given \$5,000 to the synagogue. Please keep eating and help us raise more funds.

SECRETARIAL SERVICES OFFERED BY SISTERHOOD

Shaare Tefila Sisterhood is now offering to provide members with free secretarial services with the purchase of Mitzvah Fund or Torah Fund cards.

Are Thank You notes bogging you down? Do you find yourself constantly saying I'll just drop a note to thank (fill in the blank with your favorite person) for all they are doing for Shaare Tefila, – or to a friend who needs get well wishes. Now it's so easy: call Laura Ross 301-871-3935 (10 Mitzvah Fund cards \$25) or Florence Lipsky 301-438-3439- (10 Torah Fund cards \$30) and leave her a message on her machine if she's out, to please send a card.. Can anything be easier?

DO YOU BAM?

DO YOU CRACK?

DO YOU DOT?

2010 MAH JONGG CARD

Time for the new cards-just when you got to know the old card here comes the new one.

\$7.00 for the standard size card

\$8.00 for the large print card

Shaare Tefila receives \$1.25 for each card we sell. Make checks payable to Shaare Tefila Sisterhood Deadline is Feb 2, 2010.



Mail to: **Zella Shabasson**

17 Falling Creek Court

Silver Spring, MD 20904

The Shofar

CONSTRUCTION UPDATE

It is a pleasure for me to write to everyone and let you know of the progress that has been made over the past month. I know that without actual construction taking place, it may not seem as if much is happening, but believe me, we are making progress every day. Activities accomplished during just these past few weeks have brought us closer to our ultimate goal.

As was reported at the High Holidays and in last month's *Shofar*, we were to receive a Guaranteed Maximum Price (GMAX) contract from Hammen Contracting in October. We did receive this contract and at the November Board of Directors meeting a motion was passed which allowed the President to enter into the contract. This contract calls for the construction of the entire building - with the permanent sanctuary and chapel areas shelled in. This means that the sanctuary and chapel space would be constructed, but it would neither be finished to the level of drywall, painting, flooring, light fixtures, etc. nor would we have access to the space. The contract does allow us to finish the interior space for an additional \$190,000 while we are still early on in the project. Therefore, efforts are underway to raise this additional money as well as needed funds to furnish our sacred spaces. We are confident that our members and others will come forward to make this effort a success!

As part of the motion to enter into the contract with Hammen Contracting, it was noted that the contract was contingent on obtaining and closing on a bank loan and obtaining all permitting.

Our Loan Committee has submitted all requested documents to our lender at this time. The bank's loan committee was to have met by the time you are reading this, but I do not have the results of that meeting to report at the time of this writing. However, we are optimistic that the loan will be approved.

We submitted the completed architectural plans and all site plans to the various reviewing agencies in Montgomery County. As of this writing we have not heard back yet from the Department of Permitting Services (DPS) on the building permit, however, Bob Hammen has been in contact with our County plan reviewer weekly to keep the process moving along. We expect to get comments from DPS in the next week or so. In partnership with our builder and architect, we will then review and submit a response along with any modifications that may be needed to the construction drawings. Regarding the site plans, we have obtained approval on our forestation and conservation plans. Other site plans for WSSC, grading, and sediment control/storm water management are in review. Under the leadership of Max Kantzer, our civil engineering firm is following up with these agencies. I am pleased to report that we are on track to have all approved permitting by the end of this year, which will enable Hammen Contracting to start construction in January 2010. The dream for our new home is becoming a reality!

Judy Carroll,
Building Design Project Manager

THE SHOFAR

Shaare Tefila Congregation
10881 Lockwood Drive
Silver Spring, MD 20901

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MEET OUR BAR MITZVAH ETHAN MELTZER

On Saturday Dec. 5, 2009, Ethan Meltzer will celebrate his becoming a Bar Mitzvah with his Shaare Tefila family. Ethan is a 7th grader at the Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School in Rockville.

In the summers Ethan attends Camp Ramah in Palmer, MA. Ethan loves to play baseball and basketball and will be playing this year for our Kadima chapter.

Ethan loves computer games and Japanese anime cartoons and books. At school he is in the cartooning club.

Ethan has been a member of Shaare Tefila for his whole life and attended nursery school back in the building on Lockwood Drive. Ethan, his sister Ilana and his parents are proud to celebrate this milestone at Shaare Tefila.

Happy Birthday to our Youth!

Melanie Gross
Jason Kaye
Adam Levin
Michael Rosenberg
Elyssa Sagall
Rachel Sniffen
Hope Weiss
Sara Zarny



TRIP TO ISRAEL WITH THE RABBI

Are you interested in traveling to Israel this summer? Would you like to know more about the trip I'm leading July 18-30, 2010?

Then please save the date: Tuesday Dec 15 at 8pm at the Bresler House (after minyan). Representatives of Keshet: The Center for Educational Tourism in Israel will be on hand to present the draft itinerary and answer any questions you may have.



Check out their website - www.keshetisrael.co.il - to see who they are. And RSVP to me (rjlayman@shaaretefila.org) if you plan on attending.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

ISRAEL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Our column this month is about the "peace process," which, in the opinion of the authors of this article, is not a "process" at all, but a series of negotiations which have had little or nothing to do with "peace." Rather, they represent a series of attempts to postpone or forestall open warfare. Every time these negotiations reached a point where an actual peace treaty seemed attainable between Arabs and Israelis, the Arabs resorted to open warfare or, in their language, intifada.

The negotiations have begun countless times and have been given many names. A few come to mind, not necessarily in chronological sequence: The Camp David Accords, the Oslo Accords, the Madrid Conference, the Wye River and Sharm-El-Sheik Memoranda, the Hebron Protocol, the 2000 Camp David Summit, The Road Map to Peace, the Taba Summit, the Annapolis Conference, and probably others we can't recall at the moment.

Even earlier, long before Israel became an independent nation under the auspices of the United Nations, there were negotiations between Arabs and Jews to try to live together peaceably in the Middle East. There was the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, the Faisal-Weizman Agreement of 1919, and after the War of Independence, the Armistice Agreement of 1949. There are a few more that did not have the distinction of having a formal name. For example, there were the peace proposals of Count Folke Bernadotte in 1947-48, the Jarring Mission in 1967 to 1971, the Rogers Plan in 1969, the Reagan Plan in 1982, the Elon Plan in 2002, the Nusseibeh-Ayalon Agreement in 2002, the Arab Peace Initiative in 2002, the Geneva Accord in 2003, the Franco-Italian-Spanish Middle East Peace Plan in 2006, etc., etc. From an historical perspective, while most of these did appear to avoid or defer open conflict, these efforts did not result in "peace."

DECEMBER JOKE:

ON THE AIRPLANE Thanks to **Helen and Bob Solomon**

On a flight from Atlanta, GA, a well attired middle-aged woman found herself sitting next to a man wearing a kippa. She called the attendant over to complain about her seating.

"What seems to be the problem, Madam?" asked the attendant.

"You've sat me next to a Jew!! I can't possibly sit next to this strange man. Please find me another seat!"

"Madam, I will see what I can do to accommodate," the attendant replied, "but the flight is virtually full today and I don't know if there is another seat available." The woman shoots a snooty look at the snubbed Jewish man beside her (not to mention the surrounding passengers).

A few minutes later the attendant returned and said, "Madam, the economy and club sections are full, however, we do have one seat in First class."

Before the lady had a chance to respond, the attendant continued, "It is only on exceptions that we make this kind of upgrade, and I had to ask permission from the captain. But, given the circumstances, the captain felt that no one should be forced to sit next to an unpleasant person..."

The flight attendant turned to the Jewish man sitting next to her, and said: "So if you'd like to get your things, Sir, I have a comfortable seat for you in First class..."

At this point, the surrounding passengers stood up and gave a standing ovation while the Jewish man walked up to the front of the plane.

The lady then said indignantly, "The Captain must have made a mistake..."

To which the attendant replied, "No Ma'am. Captain Cohen never makes a mistake."

Aside from all those plans and initiatives and negotiations there are proposals for a one-state solution, which is a single state with both Jews and Arabs, and a two-state solution, which is exactly what the UN proposed back in 1948, which the Arabs rejected then and continue to reject to this date. The problem with all peace plans and all negotiations, and the reason why they have all failed, is that the Arabs have steadfastly refused to recognize Israel as an independent nation. Until the world, and especially America, confronts this fact squarely, all efforts to formulate a plan acceptable to both sides appear to be doomed to failure. As long as the Arabs refuse to accept a Jewish state on a sliver of land that is less than one one hundredth the size of the Arab lands surrounding it, the authors believe there will be no lasting peace between Arabs and Jews.

To be sure, two countries have signed peace treaties with Israel: Egypt and Jordan. But, in truth, it is a cold peace between them which can more accurately be described as an absence of war. Still, that's progress, of sorts. And the Jews, ever optimistic, having survived for the past 2,000 years in a hostile world, continue to persist in the pursuit of peace despite all odds. In this vein, Israel has offered the Palestinian Arabs many concessions, culminating in the year 2000 in Prime Minister Ehud Barak's offer to give Yassir Arafat about 95 percent of the West Bank and the whole Gaza Strip. Arafat and his people would also get East Jerusalem for their capital. Unprecedented as this offer was, Arafat rejected it outright, without making a counter-offer. Pres. Clinton, who had brokered the Camp David Summit negotiation, was undiplomatically candid in placing the blame for failure squarely on the shoulders of Arafat.

In further pursuit of peace, Israel unilaterally withdrew all its settlers and military troops from Gaza in 2005. The thought was that the Arabs, who had complained that Israel's occupation was the primary cause of their lack of economic and political progress, could then develop a democratic and thriving economy. The Israeli settlers in Gaza were removed forcibly by Army troops as well as from some settlements in the Northern West Bank. Instead of leading to peace, however, Gaza was taken over by Hamas, the most virulent anti-Israeli terrorists in the Palestinian Arab populace. Then began an incessant rain of rocket and mortar fire from Gaza into Israel which continued for the next three years. After three full years of taking this bombardment, Israel finally responded with Operation Cast Lead, a three week invasion of Gaza to put an end to it. The world, that is, the UN, did not condemn Hamas or Gaza for firing rockets and mortars into Israel, but it did condemn Israel for responding to these attacks and trying to defend itself.

The conclusion is inescapable. The Palestinian Arabs could have had a separate state of their own in 1948 and on several occasions since then, but they have consistently refused to do so if it means recognizing the existence of Israel. Until they accept Israel and say so publicly to the world, the promulgation of peace plans and solutions, and the very pursuit of peace between the Arabs and Israel can continue its purpose of avoiding open conflict, but in the opinion of the authors, is unlikely to bring about true peace.

Comments and questions may be referred to: Al Kliman or Harry Zubkoff

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The Shofar

SHAARE TEFILA CONGREGATION 2009 SCHOLAR IN RESIDENCE WEEKEND



DR. EDNA NAHSHON

Associate Professor of Hebrew, Jewish Theological Seminary

PRESENTATIONS TWICE DURING WEEKEND:

Friday, December 4, 7:45 p.m. Services

Followed by refreshments & presentation, at:

Sandy Spring Bank, 17801 Georgia Avenue, enter through the rear

Saturday, December 5, 9 a.m. Services

Presentation during Services, followed by Kiddush and Q & A, at:

Olney Elementary School, 3401 Queen Mary Drive (at Georgia Ave.), Olney, MD

FRIDAY EVENING PRESENTATION: "Between Sacredness and Feminism: Male-Female Union in the Artwork of Nechama Golan"--- Artist Nechama Golan was raised in a secular home and educated in theater, dance, and visual art. In the 1980s, she became religiously observant and moved with her husband and two daughters to the *Haredi* (ultra-Orthodox) community of Bnei Brak, Israel.

She is part of a contemporary Israeli scene that desires to reclaim and reconnect with Jewish tradition, and reexamine notions of **sacredness, faith and divinity**. Those are expressed in a search for **spirituality**, an attachment to heritage, and a strong critical stance towards particular social aspects of rabbinic Judaism. Golan's artwork stresses the place of **women in traditional Judaism**, a subject approached with both boldness and deep **respect** for religious views.

SATURDAY MORNING PRESENTATION: "Jews AND Shoes"--- A surprisingly rich presentation about the practical and symbolic significance of shoes in Jewish culture since antiquity. *Who knew?*

SHAARE TEFILA CONGREGATION'S THE JUST MISSED CHANUKAH, CHANUKAH GATHERING

featuring the entertainment of

RONNIE BARAS

Hypnotist/Mentalist

Saturday Evening

December 19th, 2009, 7:00 pm

(appropriate for ages 7 and above)

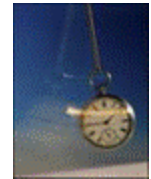
Redland Middle School

6505 Muncaster Mill Road, Rockville, MD 20855—Same place we have held Purim!

Appetizers, Latke Bar, Gourmet Desserts

Non-member rate: \$10 for 13+, \$5 for under 13

Don't miss out on all the fun. This is a show that EVERYONE will enjoy.



FREE FOR MEMBERS!

RSVP to the Office NO LATER than Friday, December 11

_____ # Member adults 13+ Names: _____

_____ # Member children under 13 Names: _____

_____ # Non-members 13+ (\$10/person) Names: _____

_____ #Non-member children under 13 (\$5/person) Names: _____

\$_____ Total enclosed for non-members

Please return, with check if applicable, to: Shaare Tefila Congregation * 10881 Lockwood Drive * Silver Spring, MD 20901

December 2009

14 Kislev 5770 - 14 Teves 5770

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 14 KISLEV	2 15 KISLEV	3 16 KISLEV	4 17 KISLEV	5 18 KISLEV
		7:30 pm Sisterhood Book Group @ Barbara Fink's Home	RS Adult Ed.		 4:28 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman, Bresler House 7:45 pm Shabbat Service, Sandy Spring Bank, Olney Scholar-in-Residence	וישלח  5:38 מוצאי שבת 9 am Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School Ethan Meltzer's Bar Mitzvah Scholar-in-Residence
6 19 KISLEV RS 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman	7 20 KISLEV ▶ Choir practice Board Meeting	8 21 KISLEV	9 22 KISLEV RS Adult Ed.	10 23 KISLEV Religious Committee Meeting	11 24 KISLEV  4:28 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman, Bresler House 6 pm Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School	12 25 KISLEV יום א' חנוכה  5:39 מוצאי שבת 9 am Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School Membership Shabbat Alternative Service
13 26 KISLEV  יום ב' חנוכה RS 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman 4-8 pm Mama Doni Chanukah Concert @ TI	14 27 KISLEV  יום ג' חנוכה ▶ Choir practice Sisterhood Board Meeting	15 28 KISLEV  יום ד' חנוכה	16 29 KISLEV  יום ה' חנוכה RS Adult Ed.	17 30 KISLEV  יום ו' חנוכה  יום א' ראש חודש טבת Finance Committee Meeting	18 1 TEVES  יום ז' חנוכה  יום ב' ראש חודש טבת  4:30 9:30 am Torah w/ Rabbi Layman, Bresler House 6 pm Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School	19 2 TEVES  יום ח' חנוכה  מקץ  5:41 מוצאי שבת 9 am Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School Jr. Cong. Sisterhood Rosh Chodesh Chanukah Party
20 3 TEVES RS 11:00 am Talmud Class w/Rabbi Layman	21 4 TEVES ▶ Choir practice Education Committee Meeting	22 5 TEVES	23 6 TEVES RS Adult Ed.	24 7 TEVES 5-8 pm Family Program, Chinese and Movie @ TI	25 8 TEVES  Christmas Day  4:34 OFFICE CLOSED 6 pm Shabbat Service, Buffington Building, Olney	26 9 TEVES  ויגש  5:45 מוצאי שבת 9 am Shabbat Service, Olney Elementary School
27 10 TEVES  תענית עשרה בטבת	28 11 TEVES ▶ Choir practice	29 12 TEVES	30 13 TEVES	31 14 TEVES		



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The Shofar
Shaare Tefila Congregation
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www.shaaretefila.org or info@shaaretefila.org

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