

CHAVERIM חברים

Volume 24 Issue 16

Tishrei/Heshvan 5773 October 2012

■ From the Rabbi

100 Blessings a Day

In 2004, in the wake of the *Goodridge v. Dept. of Public Health* decision in Massachusetts, a torrent of state constitutional amendments were proposed to limit right of marriage to opposite-sex couples. The first such referendum took place in Missouri that August and, because I at the time I was resident in St. Louis, I spent much of the summer fighting it as founding chair of what came to be known as Missouri People of Faith Against Amendment 2. We placed newspaper ads and wrote op-ed columns. We gave sermons and authored bulletin articles. We held a press conference and a rally.

To no avail. We lost in a landslide at the polls. Other states promptly followed suit, many of them by even more lopsided margins than Missouri's 71-29 one to define marriage as between a man and a woman.

Now, more than eight years later, it's as if we're living in a different world. Federal judges in California, New York and elsewhere have issued rulings that, if upheld by the Supreme Court, would render all those state amendments unconstitutional. What is more, a majority of Americans now believe that marriage ought to be available to any couple—gay or straight—that wishes to so solemnize its relationship. Our culture has become more open and accepting. One only need witness the proliferation of shows like "Modern Family," still more that the appearance of gay characters on TV sitcoms and dramas now barely elicits a yawn.

Once upon a time, governments across this country marginalized and diminished an entire category of people based on their skin color. Among the many disadvantages, their freedom to marry was restricted by many states. It is said that these so-called Jim Crow laws inspired the German Reichstag in 1935 to strip German Jews of their civil rights and freedoms as well. Among these were the freedom to marry



(through "The Law for the Protection of German Blood and German Honour") and their civil rights (through the "Reich Citizenship Law").

The last year or so has witnessed dramatic and accelerating changes for LGBT equality. "Don't Ask Don't Tell" was finally repealed. One of our largest states, New York, passed marriage equality, by virtue of bipartisan support among its state senators. The

Vice-President and President of the United States

both declared their support for it. And two more states—Maryland and Washington—saw marriage equality bills signed into law.

Someday--soon, let us hope—the so-called Defense of Marriage Act and its ilk will come to be considered as morally objectionable across the nation as the Jim Crow and Nuremberg laws are to us now. It is for us, however, to hasten the coming of that day. We, who came out of slavery and centuries of bigotry, ought to be particularly impassioned about this issue. Our tradition teaches that every human being possesses an intrinsic divinity. It teaches us to love our neighbor. And it teaches us to practice equality. As we did with one civil rights movement already, let us help show the way in this civil rights struggle for dignity and equality.

I hope you will join us for our Equality Shabbat service on October 5 and that you will be able to join us in our phone banking and canvassing efforts later in the month. Look for details in our emails, flyers and here in *Chaverim*.

With blessings of love and shalom,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John A. Franken". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rabbi John A. Franken

Rosh Hashanah

In this month's column, you will find a reprint of the remarks I made on the first day of Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur.

Rosh Hashanah:

My father, who I dearly love, is infamous for telling corny jokes. After politely listening to each one, my family typically rolls its collective eye and simply gets on with life. Sometimes, however, even a lame joke that my father will inevitably tell me can have a message. Case in point. Question: "How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb?" Answer: Just one. But that one has to be willing to change." (My apologies to the psychologists --- and psychiatrists --- here today.)

As you who are therapists know, and as others less trained probably would believe as well, the profession of psychotherapy is limited, only being effective when the one in therapy is motivated to cooperate in the therapeutic process. Such motivation is only the first step, however. Only if one is committed to the hard work of therapy and to personal change can that process succeed.

I know of what I speak. Years ago, I was in a men's group that met every week to discuss deep-seated issues on all kinds of personal topics: our relationships with our fathers (and their jokes, by the way), family dynamics, our own hidden, and unrecognized, fears and troubles. Often, just one slight change in the way I thought about someone, prompted by a question, opened up a new way of thinking and a fresh perspective, and led to a remarkable change in my outlook on my life and my behavior. Ask my wife, Nancy; I think I can safely say that she saw change and, frankly, wishes I were still going to that group.

A willingness to change can be unsettling, and change itself can be even more so. One well-known rabbi insists that the "human tendency to cling desperately to old ways and ancient habits is the sign of spiritual malaise."

We all know, I am sure, the principal difference between an optimist and a pessimist. An optimist believes that change is possible. A pessimist believes that attempts to change are hopeless and futile.

Although a leopard may not be able to change its spots, it can at least recognize that those spots may mean different things to different animals. To its prey, those spots mean fear; to its mate, those same spots mean comfort and serenity. Change may come

from without or within. Change may come by accident or it may result from a deliberate, measured attempt to do so. Change is measured with a compass, which gives us direction, not a speedometer.

Today, at this beginning of the new Jewish year, we all make resolutions. Mine probably should be to find another men's group. I'm sure Nancy would agree with that. Yours may be to be kinder to the homeless man begging for money on Martin Luther King Drive, or to be more understanding when your children inevitably do something that, frankly, just drives you nuts. Or to rekindle a friendship with a long lost friend, or work together more cooperatively with your colleagues at the office.

In a book entitled "The Book of Jewish Values," there is the story of a rabbi who was spending the night at the home of a shoemaker. Waking up late at night, the rabbi saw the shoemaker still at work by the flickering light of a feeble candle. "Look how late it is," said the rabbi to the shoemaker, "your candle is about to go out. Why are you still working?" With his focus still upon the shoe he was repairing, the shoemaker said, simply, "As long as the candle is burning, it is still possible to mend."

As long as our candle is burning, we can mend just as that shoemaker did. We can reconcile our differences, make peace within our families, help someone in financial distress, and work to express ourselves, individually and as a congregation, in a more positive, helpful way.

When we wish each other a happy and sweet new year today, we say, as a congregation, "I wish you, and us, success in our attempts to change and improve ourselves in the coming year."

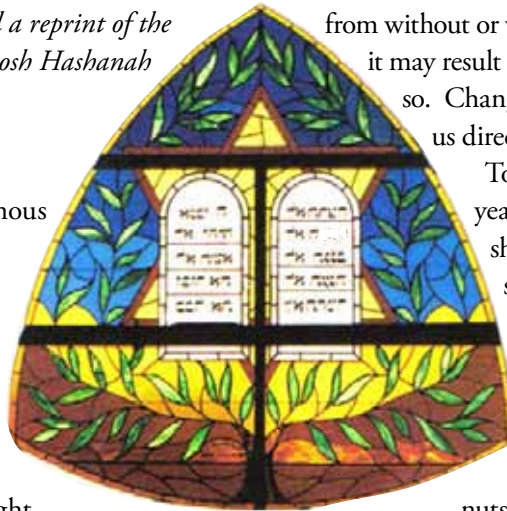
With that I end by saying, simply "Yom Tov."

Day of Atonement:

As I stand here today, my stomach grumbles. I'm sure I'm not alone. As I listen to my gastric complaints, I am reminded that this day is a day for reconciliation. As I understand it, the predominant theme today is G_d's willingness to grant forgiveness to those who sincerely repent.

Empty stomach, full heart.

As I reflect upon the past year, I realize that it is often the things that, at the time, seem little and insignificant that call for such forgiveness. I particularly remember the homeless man



begging in front of the Subway sandwich shop who came into the shop, looking for a place to sit. As I sat at a nearby table, I avoided the man's gaze, hoping he would not sit at my table. He did not, but he did sit at the table of a total stranger --- about my age --- and struck up a conversation. He didn't ask for food, he didn't ask for money, he just wanted to talk with someone. The man sitting at his table looked up, smiled, and the two had a lively, engaging chat that so obviously filled the hearts of both.

One empty stomach, two full hearts.

As I look back upon the past year, I wonder whose other hearts could have been filled if only I had looked up and done what that man at the table did. How many times did I say nothing when something so obviously needed to be said? How many times did I say something when discretion would have advised me to just say nothing?

Conitron can be a hard pill to swallow. Asking forgiveness does not come easily. So necessary, yet so remarkably difficult to do. The winds of time leave marks and hurt that do not easily heal. Yet, those winds continue to blow, and we look back to see the damage those winds have wrought, and look forward as we harness those winds as a source of energy and vitality in the coming year.

Although I don't think my wife, Nancy, would necessarily agree, I am a simple man. Yet I live in a complex world, as

we all do. A world filled with poverty, hunger, war, pestilence, greed. Living in such a world, I must acknowledge that, although I resist the thought, I share, as we all do, some blame for such inequities. I have a wonderful family, a lovely wife, handsome sons, a good job, a sound house. For these I am sincerely thankful. Yet, as I have driven through the streets of Baltimore this last year, and seen, and ignored, men and women begging on our street corners, seen friends lose their jobs, walked by the homeless with little thought, I am ashamed that I have not done more to make this world a better place.

Full stomach, empty heart.

As a community at Bolton Street, we have the same obligation to the world, and to each other. As we look inward today, let's not forget that. Our empty stomachs today can --- and should --- lead to full hearts tomorrow if only we look up and see the world not as it is but as we want it to be.

I have read about a midrash where G_d is asked "If it is such a difficult world, why don't you send someone who can change it?" G_d answered, "I did send someone. I sent you."

Doug Carrey-Beaver

■ From the Cantor

An Exciting Journey into A New Year

Our journey into a new year offers great promise. We have completed successful High Holy Day services and look forward to the celebrations of Sukkot and Simchat Torah that will bring our community together and give us the opportunity to embrace our heritage together.

My personal thanks go to all the people who helped make our High Holy Day services successful and enjoyable. My appreciations go to the middle school students that helped me with children's services, Sharon Krevor Weisbaum for leading the successful youth services again this year and Leslie Margolis, who blessed us with her excellent flute playing during our musical presentation on Rosh Hashanah evening. I also want to thank Rabbi John Franken for the time and support he provided in the organization and leadership of our High Holy Day services. Please take advantage of the many fine adult education sessions and



services he has planned for this entire program year.

Our daughter Elana is very involved and enjoying her gap year Israel youth leadership experience in Israel. I hope everyone may have the opportunity to visit Israel and see the beauty, vision and accomplishments of a land that contributes greatly to our Jewish collective soul.

It is of particular interest for me to relive my own previous experiences of living in Israel through Elana's eyes. You can also sense this relationship with Israel by visiting her blog which includes her well written perceptions and very nicely organized travel log with pictures at: elana-israel.blogspot.com.

Best wishes to all as we continue on our journey through this new year of hope and involvement.

Cantor Alan

■ Notes & News

Tennis Anyone?

Interested in an intra-Synagogue mixed doubles tennis tournament? Call or e-mail Dale Walker (410-367-3626; depeshkov@comcast.net) or Gary Felser (410-484-3297; gfelser@aol.com).

Tallitot

If you have borrowed a tallit from the Synagogue and have not yet returned it, please return it at your earliest convenience to Debbie Barnes.

Welcome New Members!

Robyn Waxman and her daughter, Carlie Goodsell
Michael Kwass, Laura Mason and their children, Max and Isabel
Jonathan and Lane Zawacki and their children Amelia, Leo, and Hugo and Eli
Harry and Dana Bosk
Jill Epstein-Molter and her sons, Jacob and Owen Molter

October Birthdays & Anniversaries

If a name has been omitted from this list, please E-mail Debbie Barnes at dbarnes@boltonstreet.org

1	Andrew Rybczynski	18	Laurel Black
2	Rohan Korn	19	Gail & Scott Berkenblit, Joy Mandel & Tim Nehl
3	Nathan Krimmel	20	Larry Wissow
6	Salem Reiner	21	Caroline Kaufman, Gerald Gross, Aaron Schneiderman
7	Michael Rubinstein, Max Grossman, Sophie Gitlin, Elanor Sandhaus, Eleanor Lechtzin	22	Wendy Jachman
8	Mason Miller	23	Alec Goldstone, Judy Gundel, Leah Genth
9	Lissa Abrams	24	Robert Brown, Paul Raynes
10	Beth and Jeff Raymond, Jeff Stern, Emma Conn, Diane Stillman, Brynn Berman	25	Marissa Feinsilver & Joseph Urban
13	Jacob Norin	27	Dana Johnson
16	Sara & Paul Rybczynski, Babs Bierman	28	Glenn Grossman, Stephen Snyder
17	Benjamin Gilstein	29	Maggie Dier
		30	Mike Zabner

October Contributions

Contributions may be made by sending a check, made out to Bolton Street Synagogue, to the bookkeeper at Bolton Street Synagogue, 212 W. Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore, MD 21210. The following are the funds to which contributions may be made: Operating, Religious School, Religious School Scholarship, Rabbi's Discretionary, Cantor's Discretionary, President's Discretionary, Library, Music, and Melvin Cohen Social Action.

Bolton Street would like to acknowledge the following contributions:

Ethel Zelenske to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in memory of her cousin, Morris Wax

Karen Brown to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in memory of her aunt, Ruth Gelber and to the Melvin Cohen Social Action Fund in memory of her step-mother, Alice Simons Siedner

Barbara Silverstone to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in honor of Ethel Zelenske reading from the Torah on Rosh Hashanah

Marc Greenberg to the Religious School Fund in memory of his father, Irwin Greenberg

Amy Halushka on behalf of PAC to the Religious School Fund in memory of Jennifer Mendelsohn's father, Jay Mendelsohn

Larry Wissow to the President's Discretionary Fund

Carol and David Goldstein to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund in honor of Stephanie Goldstein and Erin Still, Leah and Ben and for Rabbi Franken's sermon on Rosh Hashana

Gary Felser and Debra Brown Felser to the Operating Fund in memory of Gary's mother, Mildred Smith

Bayla Weisbart to the Melvin Cohen Social Action Fund in memory of her brother, Peter Solomon

Barbara and Gary Anderson to the Operating Fund in memory of Barbara's mother, Marion Kreshtool

October Yahrzeits

If a name has been omitted from this list, please E-mail Debbie Barnes at dbarnes@boltonstreet.org

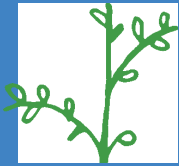
1	Esther Rothman, grandmother of Aaron Schneiderman	Tishrei	15
1	Ceil Zukof, grandmother of Marc Hartstein	Tishrei	15
1	Peter Solomon, brother of Bayla Weisbart	Tishrei	15
1	Thelma Neuworth, mother of Richard Neuworth	Tishrei	15
4	Imre Rado, father of Agi Rado	Tishrei	18
8	Jacob Samuel Zabner, father of Mike Zabner	Tishrei	22
9	Mildred Sisco, mother of Joyce Caplan	Tishrei	23
12	Sidney Pats, father of Betty Katzenelson	Tishrei	24
14	Bertha Liebow, grandmother of Elisabeth Liebow	Tishrei	28
16	Sam Woolf, grandfather of Phil Woolf	Tishrei	30
17	Evelyn Karp, grandmother of Gail Vernick	Heshvan	1
19	Bernard Caplan, father of Carl Caplan	Heshvan	3
20	Mildred Smith, mother of Gary Felser	Heshvan	4
20	Marion Kreshtool, mother of Barbara Anderson	Heshvan	4
22	Alice Simons Siedner, step-mother of Karen Brown	Heshvan	6
22	Eleanore Mervis Cohen, grandmother of Randi Reiss-McCormack	Heshvan	6
24	Matthew Poliakoff, father of Phaye Poliakoff-Chen	Heshvan	8
26	Riva Frederick, mother of Aaron Schneiderman	Heshvan	10
28	Joseph Goldberg, father of Shiela Meyers	Heshvan	12
28	Israel Rubinstein, grandfather of Alan Rubinstein	Heshvan	12



We hope you will join us on the following dates:

- October 10th, evening, Phone Bank at BSS
- October 17th, evening, Phone Bank at BSS
- October 28th at Noon, Neighborhood Canvassing

Details will be forthcoming.



Bolton Street Synagogue's Uncommon Voices Speaker Series

What Makes Children Successful and Can These Qualities Be Taught?

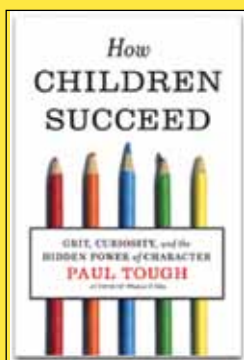


PAUL TOUGH

Author of *How Children Succeed* and *Whatever it Takes: Geoffrey Canada's Quest to Change Harlem and America*

Tuesday, October 30, 7:00 pm

Bolton Street Synagogue, 212 West Cold Spring Lane, Baltimore
FREE and Open to the Public



In *How Children Succeed*, Paul Tough argues that the qualities that matter most have more to do with character: skills like perseverance, curiosity, conscientiousness, optimism, and self-control. He introduces us to researchers and educators who, for the first time, are using the tools of science to peel back the mysteries of character. Through their stories—and the stories of the children they are trying to help—Tough provides new insights regarding how best to steer an individual child or a whole generation of children toward a successful future.



BALTIMORE
CURRICULUM PROJECT

Doors open at 6:30 pm with opportunities to talk with representatives from Greater Homewood Community Corporation and the Baltimore Curriculum Project—two local nonprofits addressing education issues in our City's Schools.

For more information, contact Claudia Diamond at claudiaadamond@gmail.com or visit www.boltonstreet.org.

BOLTON STREET
SYNAGOGUE
EQUALITY SHABBAT



Friday, October 5th

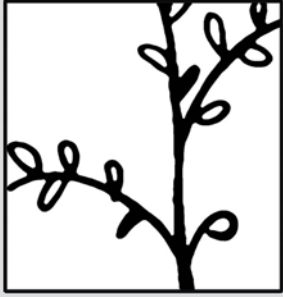
212 W. Cold Spring Ln.
Baltimore 21210
410-235-5354

6:00 pm LGBT Potluck to meet our new Rabbi and other members of the community

7:30 pm Equality Shabbat service and Oneg featuring guest speaker Jessie Weber, Esq.

9:30 pm Drinks and socializing at Loco Hambre (adults only)





CHAVERIM

THE BULLETIN OF BOLTON STREET SYNAGOGUE

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Baltimore, MD 21210

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Fax: 410-235-8050

<http://www.boltonstreet.org>

Call 410-235-5354 to schedule an appointment

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410-235-5354, jfranken@boltonstreet.org

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410-964-3155, cantor@boltonstreet.org

Doug Carrey-Beaver, President

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Melissa Zieve, Vice President

410-542-7445, melissa.zieve@verizon.net

Jeff Stern, Treasurer

chicubf@comcast.net

Ralph Raphael, Secretary

410-825-0042, rdr@ralphraphael.com

Michael Green, Religious School Principal

410-821-7373, mbgterp@aol.com

Debbie Barnes, Administrator

410-235-5354, dbarnes@boltonstreet.org

OCTOBER 2012 CALENDAR

10/1	Succot	
10/5	6:00 p.m.	LGBT Potluck
10/5	7:30 p.m.	Friday Equality Shabbat Services
10/6	9:15 a.m.	Taking Hold of Torah Series, Library
10/7	9:30 a.m.	Religious School Simchat Torah Celebration/Brunch - All congregants welcome
10/8		Shmini Atzeret – Admin. office closed
10/8	7:30 a.m.	Yizkor Service
10/9		Simchat Torah
10/10	TBD	Phone Bank re Marriage Equality at BSS
10/12	7:30 p.m.	Friday Services
10/14	9:15 a.m.	A Current Affair Series, Library
10/14	9:30 a.m.	Religious School
10/17	TBD	Phone Bank re Marriage Equality at BSS
10/19	7:30 p.m.	Friday Services w/Shir Chadash
10/20	10:00 a.m.	Leah G's Bat Mitzvah
10/21	9:15 a.m.	A Current Affair Series, Library
10/21	9:30 a.m.	Religious School
10/22	7:00 p.m.,	Board Meeting
10/26	6:30 p.m.	Family Pot Luck
10/26	7:30 p.m.	Family Services with Zayin Class
10/27	9:15 a.m.	Taking Hold of Torah Series, Li- brary
10/28	12:00 Noon	Neighborhood Canvassing re Mar- riage Equality at BSS
10/28	9:15 a.m.	A Current Affair, Library
10/28	9:30 a.m.	Religious School
10/30	7:00 p.m.	BSS' Uncommon Voices Present "What Makes Children Success- ful and Can these Qualities be Taught?", with Paul Tough, Author