



The City of Cambridge's

CITY-WIDE HOLOCAUST COMMEMORATION

Wednesday, May 14, 2008

Temple Beth Shalom of Cambridge

THE 2008 HOLOCAUST
COMMEMORATION
COMMITTEE

The Honorable Alice Wolf,
Massachusetts House of
Representatives

The Honorable
E. Denise Simmons,
Mayor of Cambridge

The Honorable Henrietta Davis,
Cambridge City Councillor

Richard C. Rossi,
Deputy City Manager,
City of Cambridge

Rabbi Elizabeth Weiss Stern,
Congregation Eitz Chayim

Madeleine Amorosi,
Cambridge Public Library

Vali Buland,
Cambridge Law Department

Brian Corr,
Cambridge Peace Commission

Martin R. Federman,
Cambridge Peace Commission

Dennis Friedler,
Congregation Eitz Chayim

Michael Muehe,
Cambridge Commission for
Persons with Disabilities

Beth O'Sullivan,
Congregation Eitz Chayim

Karen Preval,
City Manager's Office

Erica Schultz,
Temple Beth Shalom

Heidi Urich,
Congregation Eitz Chayim

Jeff Walker,
Office of Mayor E. Denise
Simmons

**IN MEMORIAM:
HILDA SILVERMAN 1938–2008**

Just as the final arrangements for tonight's commemoration were being made, the Cambridge Peace Commission—and the Cambridge Holocaust Commemoration Committee in particular—lost one of our dearest friends and colleagues, Hilda Silverman.

No one touched as many of us more deeply than Hilda. For decades Hilda's work for Justice and Peace was legendary, reaching into all parts of the community with a unique combination of insight and compassion. She never sought recognition, positions or titles, but was always ready to *do* what needed to be done, to *act* on behalf of her deeply held opinions and values, and, most importantly, to offer her always discerning and invaluable counsel.

Her passing leaves an enormous void in our community. There are no words to express how much we will miss her and, with that understanding, we lovingly dedicate this year's commemoration to her memory.



THE PROGRAM

MUSICAL SELECTIONS

Unaccompanied Cello Suite #2

Eyl Malei Rachamim

PERFORMED BY Ray S. Jackendoff, clarinet

WELCOME

Linda Kasten, President, Temple Beth Shalom

OPENING REMARKS

Rabbi Elizabeth Weiss Stern, Congregation Eitz Chayim

MUSICAL SELECTION

Listen to Me

Leonardo Ciampa

PERFORMED BY

The Cambridge Community Chorus, William Thomas, Director

This piece was written for the Cambridge Community Chorus. It received its World Premiere at the 2007 City-Wide Holocaust Commemoration.

The text is paraphrased from Psalm 55.

INTRODUCTION

Brian Corr, Executive Director, Cambridge Peace Commission

GREETINGS

Hon. E. Denise Simmons, Mayor, City of Cambridge

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager, City of Cambridge

RESISTER/RESCUER MONOLOGUES

Students from the Graham & Parks School

Rabbi Stephen Wise

PERFORMED BY Ryan Conlin

Chana Senesh

PERFORMED BY Sarah Daniels

MUSICAL SELECTION

Denaš (Run!)

PERFORMED BY Petra Gelbart

THE RATIONALE FOR A COMMUNITY-WIDE COMMEMORATION

*An excerpt from a piece written by
Martin R. Federman for the 1994
Commemoration*

Each year ... the same question presents itself: “why a community-wide event commemorating the Holocaust?” ... isn’t this a Jewish thing, something for the Jews to concern themselves with ... ?

The answer is an emphatic no. The Holocaust forces us to confront the parts of ourselves that still shut out not only the horror of the Jewish past, but any number of pasts and presents ... it was, in fact, the end of an entire culture that is remembered, revered and sometimes reconstructed, but never again to be re-created. It reminds us that genocide’s insidious goal is not only the death of individual people but the eradication of Peoples.

These are lessons that many others understand from their own histories. Jews must remember because we must not forget. For the broader community there is only one justification to continue remembering: so that the way we live our lives is profoundly informed by what we now know.



THE SIX CANDLES

In previous commemorations, the candles rested on special platforms created for this event by the Clayground storefront studio, then located in Cambridge. The colored platforms represented the fact that, in order to easily identify various “anti-social” communities and concentration camp inmates, the Nazis developed a system of triangular and six-pointed star patches. Often a triangle color-coded to a particular group was inverted and superimposed onto a yellow triangle so that, for instance, a yellow star indicated “*Jude*” (Jews), while red over yellow triangles meant the wearer was a Communist or other targeted political person. The colors used were as follows:

Yellow: Jews
Black: Gypsies
Pink: Gay Men, Lesbians
Purple: Jehovah’s Witnesses
Red: Communists, Politicals
Blue: Emigrants
Green: Criminals

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPEAKER

Heidi Urich, Congregation Eitz Chayim

SPEAKER

Jack Trompetter, “Hidden Child” and Holocaust Survivor

Jack Trompetter is a Cambridge resident and longtime member of Temple Beth Shalom. In 1942, Jack was only 3 months old when he was separated from his Jewish parents and sent to live on a farm with a Protestant family in the Netherlands.

POEM

O the Homeless Colors of the Evening Sky!

Nelly Sachs

READ BY Brian Corr

LIGHTING OF THE SIX CANDLES

LED BY Vali Buland

It is traditional at many Holocaust commemorations to light six candles representing the six million Jews who were exterminated, including more than one million children. In our ceremony, we remember the groups specifically targeted by the Nazis—the Jews and Roma (Gypsies) who were singled out for total annihilation, and the gay men and lesbians, the disabled and the resisters who, along with others, were rounded up, subjected to experimentation, persecuted and murdered.

We light the first candle to remember the voices of the Jewish community

Members of Temple Beth Shalom

We light the second candle to remember the voices of the Rromany community

Petra Gelbart, descendant of Roma (Gypsy) survivors

We light the third candle to remember the voices of the gay and lesbian community

Toni Snow & Lesley Phillips, Cambridge GLBT Commission

We light the fourth candle to remember the voices of those with disabilities

Michael Muehe & Donald Summerfield,
Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities

We light the fifth candle to remember the voices of the resisters
Janet Rustow, granddaughter of German Resisters

David Somers, Jewish World War II veteran

We light the sixth candle to remind us never to forget
Members of Congregation Eitz Chayim

READING

Each of Us Has a Name

Zelda Schneurson Mishkovsky
translated from the Hebrew by Marcia Falk

LED RESPONSIVELY WITH THE COMMUNITY BY

Rev. Thomas St. Louis, New Covenant Church of Cambridge and
Waltham

Fr. Kevin J. O'Leary, St. Peter Parish Catholic Church

Rev. Meg Anzalone, First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church

Rabbi Elizabeth Weiss Stern, Congregation Eitz Chayim

Elizabeth Dann, Muslim American Society, Boston Chapter

Each of us has a name
given by God
and given by our parents.

*Each of us has a name
given by our stature and our smile
and given by what we wear.*

Each of us has a name
given by the mountains
and given by our walls.

*Each of us has a name
given by the stars
and given by our neighbors.*

Each of us has a name
given by our sins
and given by our longing.

*Each of us has a name
given by our enemies
and given by our love.*

Each of us has a name
given by our celebrations
and given by our work.

*Each of us has a name
given by our seasons
and given by our blindness.*

Each of us has a name
given by the sea
and given by
our death.

THE CALLING OF NAMES

INTRODUCED BY

Hon. Alice Wolf, Massachusetts House of Representatives

Members of the community are invited to call out the names of individuals or groups who perished in the Holocaust and are to be memorialized.

EYL MALEI RACHAMIM

RECITED BY Rabbi Elizabeth Weiss Stern

TRANSLATION: *Exalted, compassionate G-d, grant perfect peace in Your sheltering Presence, among the holy and pure, to the souls of all our brethren, men, women, and children of the House of Israel, who were slaughtered and burned. May their memory endure, inspiring truth and loyalty in our lives. May their souls thus be bound up in the bond of eternal life. Amen.*

FIRST THEY CAME

First they came
for the Communists,
and I didn't speak up,
because I wasn't a Communist.

When they locked up
the Social Democrats,
I did not speak up, because I
wasn't a Social Democrat.

Then they came for the Jews,
and I didn't speak up,
because I wasn't a Jew.

Then they came for
the trade unionists,
and I didn't speak up,
because I wasn't a trade unionist.

Then they came for the
Catholics,
and I didn't speak up,
because I was a Protestant.

Then they came for the sick,
the so-called incurables,
and I didn't speak up,
because I was not mentally ill.

Then they came for me,
and by that time there was
no one left to speak out for me.

*Rev. Martin Niemoller
1945*



T-4: THE NAZI PROGRAM OF EXTERMINATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE

The Nazis had an expression: *lebensunwertes Leben*, “life unworthy of life”. This phrase encapsulated the Nazi attitude toward people with disabilities. A person with a physical or mental disability was deemed to have such a poor quality of life that his or her life was simply not worth living. Moreover, people with physical or mental defects tainted the gene pool. This pseudoscientific belief had its roots in the American eugenics movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, which held that the entire human population was in danger of slipping into physical, moral, and economic decline if physical or mental defectives were permitted to procreate.

Like other approaches to perceived problems, the Nazis set out to devise a solution. In this case, the headquarters for the Nazi doctors and scientists whose task was to devise the solution was codenamed “T-4” (from the operation’s headquarters address: *Tiergarten 4*, in Berlin).

An early step in the program was the demonization, followed by the forced sterilization, of people with disabilities. A German children’s arithmetic text of the time asked “normal” schoolchildren to determine how much money could be doled out to healthy newlyweds from the money spent on “the crippled, the criminal, and the insane.” Funding for schools and hospitals for people with disabilities was cut, and disabled children were registered
(continued on p. 7, sidebar)

KADDISH (MEMORIAL PRAYER)

LED BY Rabbi Elizabeth Weiss Stern

Yit-ga-dal v’yit-ka-dash
sh’mei raba
b’al-ma di v’ra khir-u-tei
v’yam-likh mal-khu-tei
b’cha-yei-khon uv’yo-mei-khon
uv’cha-yei d’khol beit yis-ra-eil
ba’a-ga-la u-vi-z’man ka-riv,
v’im-ru amen.

Y’hei sh’mei raba m’va-rach
l’o-lam u-l’al-mei al-may-ya.

Yit-ba-rach v’yish-ta-bach
v’yit-pa-ar v’yit-ro-mam
v’yit-na-sei v’yit-ha-dar
v-yit-a-leh ve-hit-ha-lal
sh’mei di-ku-d’sha
b’rich hu.

L’ei-la min kol
bir-cha-ta v’shi-ra-ta
tush-b’cha-ta v’ne-cha-ma-ta
da-ami-ran b’al-ma,
v’im-ru amen.

Y’hei sh’la-ma ra-ba
min sh’may-ya
v’chayim a-lei-nu
v’al kol Yis-ra-eil
v’im-ru amen.

O-seh shalom bim-ro-mav,
hu ya-a-seh shalom a-lei-nu,
v’al kol Yis-ra-eil,
v’im-ru amen.

*May His great Name
grow exalted and sanctified
in the world that He created as He willed.
May He give reign to His kingship
in your lifetimes and in your days,
and in the lifetimes of the entire
Family of Israel, swiftly and soon.
Now say: Amen.*

*May His great Name be blessed
forever and ever.*

*Blessed, praised,
glorified, exalted,
extolled, mighty,
upraised, and lauded
be the Name of the Holy One
(Blessed is He)
beyond any
blessing and song,
praise and consolation
that are uttered in the world.
Now say: Amen.*

*May there be abundant peace
from Heaven
and life upon us
and upon all Israel.
Now say: Amen.*

*He Who makes peace in His heights,
may He make peace upon us
and upon all Israel.
Now say: Amen.*

MUSICAL SELECTION

Zog Nit Keynmol (The Partisans' Song)

Hirsch Glick / Dmitri Pokrass

LED BY

The Cambridge Community Chorus, William Thomas, Director

The song became the hymn of the United Partisan Organization in 1943. It spread to all the camps in Eastern Europe and later to all Jewish communities the world over.

Please join the Chorus in singing the English lyrics.

Zog nit keyn mol az du geyst
dem letstn veg,

Chotsh himlen blayene farshteln
bloye teg.

Vail kumen vet nokh undzer
oysgebenkte sho—

Es vet a poyk ton undzer trot:
Mir zaynen do!

Fun grinem palmenland biz vaysen
land fun shney,

Mir kumen on mit undzer payn, mit
undzer vey.

Un vu gefaln iz a shprits
fun undzer blut,

Shprotsn vet dort undzer gvure,
undzer mut.

Es vet di morgznun
bagildn undz dem haynt,

Un der nekhtn vet farshvindn mitn
faynt.

Nor oyb farzamen vet di zun
in dem kayor—

Vi a parol zo geyn dos lid
fun dor tsu dor.

Never say that there is only
death for you,

Though leaden skies may be
concealing days of blue,
Because the hour we have
hungered for is near—

Beneath our tread the earth
shall tremble: We are here!

From land of palm tree to the
far-off land of snow,

We shall be coming with our
torment and our woe;
And everywhere our blood has
sunk into the earth,
Shall our bravery, our vigor
blossom forth.

We'll have the morning sun
to set our day aglow,

And all our yesterdays shall
vanish with the foe,

And if the time is long before
the sun appears—

Then let this song go
like a signal through the years.

CLOSING REMARKS

Martin R. Federman

At the conclusion of the program, please join us for a short reception in the synagogue vestry downstairs.

T-4 (CONTINUED FROM P. 6)

with the government. Eventually, more than 30 institutions within Germany, Poland, and Austria became killing centers for disabled children. Estimates of the number of children murdered under this program start at 5000, but the figure could be much higher. Some of the children were drugged to death, others were starved.

T-4 began in October 1939 with the "Führer decree" granting physicians the authority to administer a "Mercy death" to adults with disabilities. According to Robert Jay Lifton, the T-4 program "involved virtually the entire German psychiatric community and related portions of the general medical community" (1986). The murders were carried out by doctors at designated killing centers, most often psychiatric hospitals or nursing homes. In a 12-week period in 1940, 1558 mental patients from the German province of East Prussia were murdered in this way. Disabled people and others were also murdered in the concentration camps under another program codenamed "14f13." It is difficult to determine exactly how many people with disabilities were murdered under the various "euthanasia" programs. The figure often cited is between 90,000 and 100,000, but psychiatrist Frederick Wertham puts the figure at 275,000 for Germany and Austria alone.

Source: Pelka, Fred. *The ABC-CLIO Companion to the Disability Rights Movement*. Santa-Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO, 1997





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Congregation Eitz Chayim

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CCTV

Cambridge Community Chorus and Music Director William E. Thomas

Cambridge Public Library

Cambridge Public Schools

City of Cambridge Employees' Committee on Diversity