



# Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism  
15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091  
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1412, Staunton, VA 24402  
[www.thoi.org](http://www.thoi.org)

***Our mission is to perpetuate Jewish life and identity through a welcoming community of spirituality, learning, service, joy and worship***

**MAY 2017 / IYAR - 5777**

## President's Message

Dear THOI:

**Our annual meeting is on Sunday, May 21 at 6 pm.** Prior to the meeting we will have a meat meal at 5:00 pm. Please avoid milk and milk products in your dishes. Bring a main dish, a side salad or a salad. Dessert will be provided. Before the May 21st 6 pm meeting you have several tasks as a responsible temple member. When you receive your meeting materials either in the US mail or by email, please read everything closely and make copies which you bring with you to the meeting. If you cannot attend the meeting, fill out a proxy form and give it to someone who will be attending. Each member gets one vote at the meeting; family memberships get two votes. When the meeting begins, since everyone will have read the reports ahead of time, we will not read them again, but only take questions and comments. This method means we will move through the agenda quickly. The meeting will culminate in a vote to seat the new Board of Directors. Our nominating committee, Doug Degen, is busy finished up the slate of officers.

We have several in the congregation who are ill. Nancy Witt and Dianne Mason come quickly to mind. Please include them in your thoughts. A card would be appreciated, I'm sure.

Rosalie Waterman, president

## Annual Dinner, Meeting and Slate of Officers

**We will have a (meat) dinner at 5:00 pm on Sunday, May 21.** Please avoid milk and milk products in your dishes. Bring a main dish, a side salad or a salad. Dessert will be provided.

**Our annual meeting will follow immediately at 6 pm.**

Thanks to the members listed below who have volunteered to serve on the board.

### **Temple House of Israel Slate for 2017**

President:	Bonny Strassler
VP Buildings:	Ellen Boden
VP Membership:	Ellen Werther
Secretary:	Ruth Chodrow
Treasurer:	Patty Sutker
At-Large:	Dan Schorsch
At-Large:	Larry Sutker
Trustee:	Doug Degen
Trustee:	Alan Goldenberg
Trustee:	Richard Young

**Please attend our meeting.** Each member (person) gets one vote. In the event that you are not able to attend, a proxy will be sent out with the other meeting materials. We need a quorum to elect the slate.

THANK YOU TO DOUG DEGEN FOR SERVING AS OUR NOMINATING COMMITTEE

## From the Rabbi's Desk

Dear Temple House of Israel Congregants and Friends, Passover has come and gone. The year is passing quickly and it is almost summer. It is hard to believe that the year has flown by so quickly. At the same time, it has been a very full year. It has gone from the many highs (lifecycle events) to some lows (significant illnesses), from joy (birth of grandchildren) to sadness (loss of family members), and from the individual to the community. Many have contributed in a variety of ways to making things work: some in attendance some in time, some in treasure, and some in all three. I appreciate the efforts of everyone who has added to the life of the congregation. Kol Hakavod (all honor) to them.

## Recent Highlights

The Spring 2017 **Elementary Biblical Hebrew** course is continuing with meetings through May (check the calendar). I can't imagine we will complete the entire book, but we are having a great time going through it so far! Still time to join in, if you are included. Please join us for the next class meeting or contact me.

The 'pulpit swap' with Emmanuel Episcopal Church's Rev. **Shelby Owen** was timely, informative and interesting. Her message was based on the Torah reading for the week, was well received. It was a pleasure to invite her to share my bimah/pulpit.

The **Interfaith series** on Wednesday evenings was wildly successful. On April 29th, THOI hosted congregants from several churches and the Islamic Association of the Shenandoah Valley for a lovely dinner followed by a most interest program. I was delighted to be able to welcome our guests on behalf of the congregation, and to see well over 100 people from the larger community coming together to learn more about each other. Apparently the other events in the series were similar; and one of our congregants was a speaker sharing their own views at each of the events. There was some talk about doing something similar more than once a year; if that happens I urge you to participate. It was uplifting and a true pleasure, allowing us to build and deepen connections and rapport with those in our larger community.

The **Passover Seder** was truly a lovely evening. Good food, great company, a fun Seder, good singing (thanks to Linda Blazer), beautifully presented and well organized (thanks to Buffy and Carol Shapiro, Beth Young, Bonny Strassler and others).

## Looking Forward

Coming up on May 1st is a free film viewing of *Rosenwald* at the Court Square Theater in Harrisonburg at 7 pm.

**May 3rd, 17th and June 8th** is a 3-part series on **Getting your Ducks in a Row**. This seminar is a how-to on pre-planning and making arrangements - offering a gift to your loved ones so they won't have to guess what you want to happen. Sign up by contacting Deb Jacobs and reserving your spot. This is a must for anyone who will be reported as an adult on any tax forms this year or in the future!

**May 5th** will be the Women's Group Shabbat Service. Plan to come and show your support for them—or participate in the service!

**May 7** will be a **Bazaar at Beth El** at which home-made corned beef sandwiches, Israeli style food, crafts and other things will be available. Noon to 4 pm.

**May 21** is the scheduled **Annual Congregational Meeting**. I hope you will attend.

## Torah and Calendar

The Torah Parashiot for the coming weeks are Shemini, Tazria-Metzora, Acharei Mot-Kedoshim, Emor, Behar-echukotai and Bamidbar.

Calendar: Rosh Chodesh for Sivan will be May 26th.

May 1st is Yom Hazikaron—Israel Memorial Day

May 2nd is Yom Ha'atzma'ut—Israel Independence Day

May 24th is Yom Yerushalayim

May 30th is Shavuot

Shavuot falls the evening of May 30th through June 1

## Rabbi's Message

We are in the midst of the period of the counting of the Omer. This is the 49 day time between the second day of Passover and the start of Shavuot (the Feast of Weeks). It began as a harvest observance, noting the gathering of the barley crop, but this period has gained a deeper and more spiritual meaning that defines it. It is seen as the time of wandering in the wilderness, moving from the formative event of the Exodus, which represents Redemption and liberation, towards the defining event of Revelation, the encounter with G-d at Mount Sinai, and the formation of the people Israel through that meeting.

Following the encounter, Moses ascends the Mount to confer with G-d on behalf of the people, and is given the Torah (instruction, teaching, guideline, law) to bring back to them. Tradition says that the Torah came in three forms: the tablets of the ten sayings, the teachings of the Tanakh (the bible, taught by Moses to the people—what is called the 'written law'), and the teachings beyond the Tanakh (passed by Moses to the elders, along with the rules for how it is permissible to engage in exegesis and isegesis, which form the basis of the 'oral law', much of which appears in the Talmud).

Of course, the story famously goes on to tell us that the people engage in the error of the Golden Calf while Moses is still closeted with G-d.

Our task at this time is to eschew the errors of the people in past: to avoid worship of the golden calf, in whatever form it may take for each of us, whether wealth, power, prestige, or material items.

We are, instead, to turn to the instruction we were given in the form of the Torah and the Tanakh and the Law, and use it as a guide to live a life that is meaningful, purposeful, and sacred, seeing and treating others as the vessels of holy sparks that they each are. Our redemption comes in the ability to see and choose to reject enslavement, either of our self through habits and old patterns of thought, or of others through how we think of them and treat them. Our revelation comes in being able to imagine a world that is truly godly, and to work towards it.

May we be blessed to truly experience redemption and revelation in this way, speedily in our days.

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## Contacting the Rabbi

Please note: Rabbi Joe may be reached by email at [RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com](mailto:RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com).

(Other email addresses may not reach him in a timely fashion, or at all.). He reads email regularly, except on Jewish Holidays or Shabbat, when he does not use the computer.

**His cell phone number is 925-272-8563 (925-RAVJOE).**

Telephone messages left at the Congregation number are only checked sporadically.

PLEASE CALL if you have any urgent messages or in case of an emergency, and please let Rabbi Joe know if you or anyone you know is ill or would want a call or visit for any reason. You are also invited to contact Rabbi Joe to arrange an appointment to meet. Rabbi Joe will be happy to make an appointment to speak with you, so that he can offer you his full, undivided attention.

## Women's Group

During the month of April, members of the Women's Group collected items to donate to the **Journey Bag project**, initiated by Phyllis Meador of 1st Choice Realty and in partnership with the local Department of Social Services serving Staunton, Waynesboro and Augusta County. THOI women filled 15 bags with pajamas, books, toys, self-care products and blankets for boys and girls ranging in ages from 7—12. Phyllis came to speak at our April meeting and shared her desire to make a difference in the lives of children in foster care. Additional donations of duffle bags, backpacks and self-care items were also collected for **People Places** in Staunton, another local foster care agency. We are so happy to have had the opportunity to give to these much needed projects!

The **Women's Group Shabbat is fast approaching on Friday, May 5th.**

Please come support us as we celebrate the gifts of all the women in our congregation. There are still many opportunities to participate in the service, but just showing up is great, too!

The **Caring Committee** is once again up and running. We have had many opportunities to bring a smile and care for those in our congregation who needed a little lift. Please contact Ellen Schorsch [ellenschorsch@gmail.com](mailto:ellenschorsch@gmail.com) if you know of members the committee should contact.

The **Women's Group donated two large-print Mishkan T'filah for Shabbat.** If you are interested in using one during a service, please ask for a copy.

**Women's Group treasurer needed!** Please consider filling the post of treasurer. Elizabeth Schwartz promises that the job is easy and all the books are in fine order. Please contact Bonny Strassler [bonstrassler@comcast.net](mailto:bonstrassler@comcast.net) if you are willing to take on this fun and rewarding job.

Our next meeting will be May 7th at 2:00 pm in the social hall.

Come help plan our **June 16th Appetizer Gathering at 6:00 pm.** This is a fundraiser and will include heavy hors d'oeuvres and wine. The cost will be \$12 per person.

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## Interfaith Program

Our first-time hosting of the Interfaith Lenten program, chaired by Bonny Strassler, was a stunning success. About 130 people attended, including clergy and congregants from Trinity Episcopal Church, Emmanuel Episcopal Church, Allen Chapel AME Church and the Islamic Center of the Shenandoah Valley. The potluck dinner contributions covered three tables, with a separate table for dessert. For many of the attendees, it was their first time at THOI, so Rabbi Joe gave a brief introduction about the congregation and the sanctuary. Speakers from Emmanuel, the mosque and THOI then presented their personal viewpoints on their relationship to God. We received many thanks for our hospitality and many compliments on our speaker, Bonny. Bonny would like to thank Frank Strassler for arranging the loan of extra chairs. Thanks also to Larry, Gail, Penelope, Sarah, Byron and Ruth for assistance in set-up and cleanup, and special thanks to Kyle for overseeing the busy kitchen. It was a lively and interesting evening for all. Ruth and Bonnie, THOI representatives to the planning committee, also wish to thank Caleb Payne, Beth Young and Ellen Werther for speaking at the other meetings in the Lenten Program. This five-part series has been a wonderful opportunity for people of different faiths to meet, share a meal and learn from each other.

## Special Program

Wednesday, **May 3 and again on May 17 and June 8, 6:30—8:30** pm we are hosting speaker Mary Ann Stripling, PhD. Her **Ducks in a Row** program can help you plan for:

- ◆ Preparing a will and the peace of mind that it brings
- ◆ Preparing a medical directive so decisions made by loved ones can be made confidently and without guilt
- ◆ Organizing family memorabilia and distribution of belongings so there are fewer hard feelings
- ◆ Financial planning which brings beneficial savings for everyone
- ◆ Sharing family history to bring appreciation and closeness to the whole family



Contact Debbie Jacobs at [deb1130@hotmail.com](mailto:deb1130@hotmail.com) to register. Cost is \$30 which includes a book and companion workbook. Couples are \$25 each.

## News from the Pews

- Ruth Chodrow is delighted to report that her son **Philip married Rose Morris-Wright** last month. Wanting to avoid fuss and bother, they took along three Swarthmore friends and quietly got married at City Hall in Somerville, MA. Afterwards they celebrated with High Tea at the Boston Public Library. Philip and Rose are both second-year graduate students in math—he is at MIT, she is at Brandeis. Ruth was not surprised (they've been together for six years), but very pleased indeed.
- **Philip Chodrow**, again in the news, was recently awarded a Graduate Research Fellowship from the National Science Foundation. This grant will support his research into the mathematical modeling of human systems at the Human Mobility and Networks Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Philip is currently a Ph.D. candidate in the Operations Research Center of MIT.
- **Refuah Shelemach:** Speedy and full recovery for Leah Farmer, Greg Cizek, Dennis Ward, Lynne Landsberg, Ellen Werther and Linda Blazer.
- **Prayers for healing and wholeness** to Adam Clark, Nancy Witt, Dianne Mason, Steve Guberman, Sue Solomon, Dan Schorsch and Ken Schwartz

## Donations

Thank you to the following people for their donations to Temple House of Israel:

For the Rabbi's Hebrew Classes ..... Ruth Chodrow  
In lieu of the seder ..... Lynne Landsberg and Dennis Ward  
..... Nancy Witt  
..... Sam Witt

## Celebrations

Lots of Birthdays in May :

Sim Brand celebrates on May 1st  
Susan Pereles celebrates on May 4th  
Sam Pereles celebrates on May 14th  
Dianne Mason will celebrate on May 19th  
Ruth Chodrow celebrates on May 30th



Happy Anniversary to Lynne Landsberg and Dennis Ward celebrating May 27th

Happy Anniversary also to Rabbi Joe and Karen Blair on May 29th

## May 2017

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 Elementary Biblical Hebrew 4:00—5:30	1	2	3 Ducks in a Row 6:30-8:30 pm	4	5 Women's Grp Shabbat at 7:30	6
7	8	9	10 Temple Board Meeting at 7:00	11	12	13
14 Elementary Biblical Hebrew 4:00—5:30	15	16	17 Ducks in a Row 6:30—8:30 pm	18	19 Shabbat Services at 7:30	20
21 Dinner at 5; Annual Meet at 6:00	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Elementary Biblical Hebrew 4:00—5:30	29	30	31			





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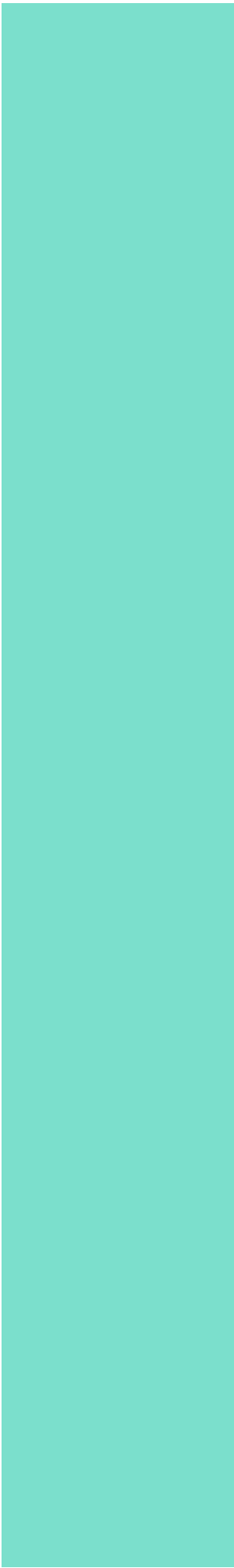
## President's Message



**From the  
Rabbi's  
Desk**

**Recent  
Highlights**





## May Yahzeits

Gertrude Barber	Leah Barber	Ellna Byrne
Velma Byrne	Ida Harris	Morris Klotz
Blanche Cohn	Joseph Cohn	Gloria Goldsmith
Rosaline Kamerman	Heidi Kaplan	Ethel Kelly
Abraham Kravitz	Joseph Oppenheim	Edward Patterson
Jack Printz	Max Raybin	William Robins
Clara Sebell	Mildred Shor	Flora Switzer
Moses Walters	Nettie Williams	Elbert Evans Ward
Rose Pickus	Frank Rubin	

## Board of Directors

President	Rosalie Waterman	886-1713	drwaterman@comcast.net
VP Member	Debbie Jacobs	688-8058	deb1130@hotmail.com
VP Bldgs			
Secretary	Bonny Strassler	289-3004	bonstrassler@comcast.net
Treasurer	Patty Sutker	456-6647	lpsutker@yahoo.com
At-Large	Ellen Boden	703-401-2939	championsresource@hotmail.com
At-Large	Ken Schwartz	886-9222	curo44@gmail.com
At-Large	Ellen Werther	430-4343	junetenth1935@gmail.com
Trustee	Doug Degen	996-8651	dbd@ntelos.net
Trustee	Alan Goldenberg	885-6878	adgvlg@gmail.com
Trustee	Richard Young	885-1481	richardfyoung@gmail.com
Rabbi	Joe Blair	925-272-8573	RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com

**A HUGE THANK YOU TO DEBBIE JACOBS, KEN SCHWARTZ AND KAY STOHR WHO HAVE SERVED THE TEMPLE WELL DURING THE PAST TERM OF OFFICE.**

## Notice from the Editor

- The next bulletin will include both June and July—our Summer issue. Please submit anything you'd like to note by the May 25th deadline.
- Our August bulletin will begin our 2017-2018 religious year.
- If you'd like to announcement a change, an achievement, a move, a new hobby, summer plans or anything else you think notable, I'll be happy to publish it in the bulletin.