



Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism
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www.thoi.org

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

DECEMBER 2014 / KISLEV-TEVET 5775

President's Message

As I write this, I realize that we are moving into the busiest time in the secular year, and most of us seem to get caught up in the events. Thanksgiving lies ahead, a great holiday that asks no more than that we be pleasant to each other for an afternoon and enjoy food that people have prepared. Doesn't sound too difficult.

Then we move into December, which is a busy month for us at THOI. We have two services, one on December 5 and one on December 19. Since Chanukah begins on December 17, our service on the 19th will be a real Chanukah celebration, not like last year's which had to occur after the fact. Our Chanukah event will be a party that begins at 6 pm. This year we will have a food bazaar where attendees can buy portions of favorite recipes prepared by members of the congregation and offered for sale before our dinner. If you would like to contribute a dish, contact Elizabeth Schwartz and tell her what you will make. So far we have mini-challah, kugels, soups and various sweets – all ethnic in some way. Elizabeth has purchased containers to hold the portions she and Ken will price and sell. Proceeds go to the women's group. It sounds like fun. Further details under The Women's Group.

After the food sale, we will have a meat potluck dinner. Those with last names A-P should make sides, salads or latkes. The rest of us will make main dishes. The desserts will come by way of the oneg hosts after the service, which we will wedge into the evening at 7:30 pm.

I am still waiting to hear from people who would like to serve on committees to move the temple into the future on a solid footing. Please consider volunteering.

My wish for all of you is that the rest of 2014 is what you want it to be.

Rosalie Waterman, temple president

From the Rabbi's Desk

Dear Temple House of Israel Congregants and Friends,

Normally, the period following the end of the High Holy days is quieter, but this year November was a very full month, with a lot happening. The highlights of what has been going on included Community Awareness Shabbat, Krystallnacht commemoration, a Shenandoah Valley Holocaust Education Project (SVHEP) event, a number of Shorty youth group activities, the Introduction to Hebrew courses, courses on Judaism through the Lifelong Learning Institutes in both Charlottesville and Harrisonburg, visits from multiple students from a variety of schools (including JMU, EMU, BRCC, MBC, and Bridgewater) in various courses and departments (such as religion, sociology, social work, and anthropology) to observe and interview someone of a faith other than their own, Church and Youth Group visits to see a synagogue and talk to a rabbi, and the Thanksgiving holiday. Most overwhelming and difficult was the occurrence of three funerals at Beth El in the month. As a result, I hope for a quieter period in the upcoming month.

Of course, December is not without its' own activities. These include Chanukah events, a Church youth group visit, more student visits to observe and interview, the community project activities in each congregation (Open Doors in Harrisonburg, and Valley Mission in Staunton), Shorty youth group activities and planning, and the usual things that show up on, or are added to the calendar. I anticipate that many of us will have full calendars outside of the congregational events, so it is a good thing that not too much is expected at the Congregation.

The Torah Parashiot through the month of December are Vayetzei, Vayishlach, Vayeshev, Miketz, Vayigash, and Vayechi. We are in year 2 of the triennial cycle (the middle or second part of the cycle).

The schedule of Rabbi-led services and events as I write this is as follows (caution: as always, see elsewhere in this bulletin, and check the website calendar online for updated information and details, as well as for other events not included here):

- Friday, 12/5 7:30 pm Rabbi-led Shabbat Service
- Friday, 12/19 7:30 pm Shabbat Service and Chanukah food bazaar and potluck
- Friday, 1/9 7:30 pm Shabbat Service

Rabbi's Message

We are moving rapidly towards Chanukah, the Festival of Lights. We remember the rededication of the Temple by the Macabees after the Assyrians had left the area, and acknowledge the role of G-d in bringing that about. Even more though, we celebrate the miracle of light, re-kindled and springing forth from the darkness, and spreading, and talk of the miraculous event that the light did not burn out, but remained lit and was used to kindle other lights. In one way of thinking, that light was the light of faith, of Torah, and of life – and it spread from that single origin to a few people, and from them to others, and yet others, until that small flame so long ago has become a bright and sustaining light that illumines our lives, our community, and our world. It is up to us to maintain and spread the light by the deeds we perform and the way we live our lives. May our lives be enlightened, and may our light shine brightly in the world.

B'virkat Shalom,
Rabbi Joe Blair

Contacting the Rabbi

Please note: Rabbi Joe may be reached by email at 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 (925-2-RAVJOE). 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 now 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.

Christmas Eve Dinner at the Valley Mission

We have agreed to provide the Valley Mission residents with Christmas Eve dinner again this year. And Eric Stamer Catering has once again agreed to prepare the food we provide.

Please consider donating the following items for Eric to prepare. All items must be delivered on Monday, Dec 15. Please let Beth know what you plan to contribute so we can fill out the menu.

You may contact Eric at 540-294-7307 or Tish at 540-849-0537 directly to arrange delivery.



- 4 loaves of white bread, 2 pounds bacon (for stuffing and gravy)
- 4 whole turkeys
- 2 whole mustard and brown sugar glazed hams
- 40 pounds of large russet potatoes (or portion thereof)
- Green bean casseroles (not assembled) :
 - 8 cans cream of mushroom soup
 - 32 cups cut green beans
 - 10 cups French fried onions
- 40 pounds of carrots
- 30 heads of romaine lettuce
- Assorted desserts (cakes, pies, cookies, etc)

Join us to help serve and then dine with the Mission residents on December 24th at 4:00 pm. If you have any questions or need help with delivery, please contact Beth (phone 885-1481 or bydesign1993@gmail.com)

NEWS FROM THE PEWS

- ❖ Lynne Landsberg, our former Rabbi, and her husband Dennis Ward are moving back to Staunton! Effective December 5th, you'll find them at home on South Washington Street in walking distance to downtown. Welcome home!
- ❖ Beth and Rich have adopted Bhaaloo, a Sproodle puppy (half springer spaniel, half standard poodle), who is very cute at 9 weeks old. It's a good thing he's cute!
- ❖ Congratulations to Sarah Grove-Humphries, Linda Blazer, and Ruth Chodrow for their participation in the Valley Collegium Concert entitled "Of Peace and Joy," on November 15. The group of singers and instrumentalists played music of Ludwig Senfl, J.D. Bach, and others to a packed house.
- ❖ Congratulations also to Ben Strassler, son of Bonnie and Frank Strassler. Ben, who is only in sixth grade, had a leading role in the recent Lee High Production of "The Neverending Story." Anyone who saw the play would agree that he is a most accomplished young actor and did a great job.

December Calendar and Services

	1	2	3	4	5 Shabbat Services 7:30	6
7 Intro to Hebrew at 3:00	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 Intro to Hebrew at 3:00	15	16  1 st Night of Chanukah	17 Temple Board Meet 7:00	18 3 rd Night of Hannukah	19 Food Bazaar at 6:00; Potluck dinner; Shabbat Services 7:30	20 5 th Night of Hanukah
21 6 th Night of Hannukka	22 	23 Last Night of Chanukah	24 Dinner at Valley Mission 4:00	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			

Oneg hosts for December 5: Beth Young and Patty Sutker

Oneg hosts for December 19: Debbie Jacobs and Steve Rosenberg

The Women's Group

Now that the High Holidays have come and gone, the Women's Group is planning for Chanukah. The **Chanukah party will be on December 19**, beginning at 6 pm. As a modest money-maker, we are encouraged to participate in a **Food Bazaar**. Bring in small portions of "ethnic" foods in disposable containers (Elizabeth S. purchased some containers for our use). Elizabeth and Ken will price the items, and we will all have the chance to buy good food from each other. Please contact Elizabeth to tell her what you can make as a contribution. Immediately following we'll have our **Chanukah potluck. This will be a meat meal (no dairy)**. Dessert will be furnished by our oneg hosts after the service. Please bring dishes according to your last name : A-P sides/salads/latkes and R-Z main dishes. Bring your menorahs as well for the group lighting. **Children's activities** include a roll of paper for children of all ages to record their favorite Chanukah memories (in words or pictures) and of course there will be a dreidel game to be played.

We also have plans to make and deliver dinner for the free clinic in Fishersville, on December 18. We will be providing three lasagnas, two salads, one of Beth's famous Challahs, and desserts. We prepared a similar meal for the free clinic folks last year and they absolutely loved it. Thanks to Patty, Ellen Schorsch, Rosalie, Debbie, Beth, Ellen Werther, Bonny Strassler, Elizabeth and Martha for contributing, cooking and baking.

We are discussing many ideas for the Winter and Spring. We will be going out to dinner sometime in the Spring and will continue our periodic Dutch treat lunch dates. TBA. Elizabeth and Ken have offered to give dance lessons, and we are hoping to have a discussion about Chapters of the Heart, the book edited by Rabbi Sue. It is available at the Sacred Circle and our Judaica Shop.

There is an SPCA box in the store room to hold your donations for the organization. Elizabeth will put a list on the bulletin board which indicates what donations the SPCA can use.

Our next meeting will take place on January 18, 2015.

Best, Ellen Werther

Religious School

Happy Thanksgiving! This is a great time of year for me to say THANK YOU to our teachers, students, and supportive parents! And, a big, big, thank you to Rabbi Joe for all you do to help support our youth! It has been a wonderful few months of religious school this year! I appreciate all of you so much!

On November 16th, we celebrated a Global Day of Jewish Learning on November 16th as families with congregations from around the world. Our Beth El RS group talked about COURAGE and HEROISM. We had wonderful discussions about several great Heroes in our tradition – Esther, Moses & Judah Maccabee. We talked about some of the characteristics that make people heroic. We also considered heroism and courage in multiple ways – including through hands-on artistic projects and delicious snacks (yes, we made a "hammer" for Judah Maccabee out of a pretzel rod and a giant marshmallow rolled in peanut butter, honey or Nutella with chocolate chips – it was AMAZING!). Thank you so much to our wonderful volunteers - Shelley Feldman and Heidi Rafferty for helping with this special day!

In December, we have our children's favorite holiday to look forward to! Wishing everyone a Happy Hanukkah. Enjoy celebrating the miracle of the lights with your families!

L'shalom,
Dara

SHORTY

Becky Mintzer and Dara Hall want to brag on SHORTY happenings just a bit. SHORTY has been busy with lots of great events this fall! Among our many meetings included:

Dinner in the Sukkah during Sukkot along with a JMU soccer game
Meetings at various restaurants around town including Panera and McAlister's
Volunteering with kids at the after school program at Pleasant Valley ES many times
A fun night in the Corn Maze in October
Fiddler on the Roof at Blue Ridge Community College in November

Upcoming events: on Christmas day, we will be doing what all good Jews should be doing – enjoying Chinese food and a movie! We will be seeing Exodus: Gods and Kings.
Ski weekend will be February 6th – 7th.

We also attend NFTY-MAR events – MAJYK and The Vent are coming soon!

Wouldn't you like to join in on all of the fun? If you are a teen 13 or older and have been b'nai mitzvah OR you identify as a Jewish teenager aged 14-18, then please join us!
Contact Becky Mintzer at rem82398@aol.com or Dara Hall at mddmhall@verizon.net for more information.

December Yahrzeits

Hubert Thompson	Rhea Walters	Irvin Weinberg	Lydia Switzer
Flora Barth	Hannah Degen	Rose Greenfield	Aaron Harris
Joseph Barth	Anne Goldberg	Sadie Jacobsen	Max Klotz
Louis Belfor	Milton Klotz	Clara Litvin	Earl Nicely
David Brownold	Tina Rosenberg	Abraham Rosenthal	Albert Shultz
Alma Samuels	Phillip Seltzer	Simon Rosenthal	Elain Werther



**HAPPY
HANNUKAH!**

Judaica Shop

The Judaica Shop is stuffed with (anyway you spell it) Hanukkah goodies. Wooden dreidels, plastic dreidels, fancy candles, plain candles, menorahs – Chanukiot - in all kinds of designs, Chanukah gelt, cards, Hannuka table runners and placemats, story books. As a special gift idea, consider giving **Chapters of the Heart**, edited by Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell, or our own Women’s Group cookbook **Sharing Our Best** or Joan Nathan’s **Quiches, Kugels and Couscous: My Search for Jewish Cooking in France**. We don’t have stock left of Tina Wasserman’s **Entrée to Judaism**, but it is another wonderful cookbook (available through URJ). We shared an outstanding workshop cooking day with Tina several years ago.

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