



# Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism  
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*Our mission is to perpetuate Jewish life and identity through a welcoming community of spirituality, learning, service, joy and worship*

**OCTOBER 2016 / ELUL 5776 –TISHREI 5777**

## President's Message

Dear Temple House of Israel,

We are swiftly advancing on October, which is our busiest month this year because of the high holidays. This year we welcome Rabbi Joel Schwartzman who will play opposite Rabbi Joe to accommodate both congregations. Rabbi Joel will be with us on Erev Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur day. Please introduce yourself at the Erev Rosh Hashanah dinner on October 2 at 6 pm, organized by the Women's Group. It is a meat meal; therefore, remember not to bring dishes that contain milk products. Also, please bring a dessert to share for afterward. As you remember, this is the holiday season that encourages us to assess our behavior of the last year and to ask forgiveness for our failings. For some of us, that is a massive job. I had better get started!

We have a new Gaspack heat and air conditioning unit for the social hall. Enjoy the temperature and consider writing a check to the building fund to defray its cost. Your contribution to the fund will be matched by an anonymous donor. What a deal! We send continuing thanks to the donor who is chipping in until the end of 2016.

Two last things. First will someone please organize the break-the-fast meal? I would be so appreciative. Secondly, welcome to our new members Steve Goldfarb and Elaine Smith. Increasing our family always feels like a blessing.

See you at services.  
Rosalie Waterman, temple president

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## From the Rabbi's Desk

Dear Temple House of Israel Congregants and Friends,

It seems hardly possible, but we are already at the High Holy Days! The calendar has been full and there is lots ahead as we enter into the busiest time of our liturgical year. Take a look at the information on Rosh HaShanah, Yizkor, Yom Kippur and even Sukkot preparations and events and plan to come together to celebrate as a community.

This year I will be 'trading pulpits' between the two congregations with Rabbi Joel Schwartzman. If you have not met him, make a point of introducing yourself when you see him.

The September highlights as I see them: The first **Death Café** for this year took place on September 7<sup>th</sup>. The conversation was rich and full, and particularly in depth – made possible by the smaller attendance. The two hours simply vanished as we talked. The next Death Café will be November 2<sup>nd</sup> at THOI from 7-9 pm and will continue in 2017.

I am happy to say that the **Elementary Biblical Hebrew** course for Fall/Winter 2016 started out well. We had 9 students signed up – we still have room for more, if you wish to join us. Contact Rabbi Joe to register: email [rabbijoe@hotmail.com](mailto:rabbijoe@hotmail.com). The course will meet 6 more times: September 25 from 4:00 – 5:30 and October 30, November 13 and 20, December 4 and 11 from 2:30 – 4:00 pm. The text for this course will primarily be from the book of

## From the Rabbi's Desk Con't.

Samuel, where we will focus on the Hebrew and content of the story of the "Witch or Ein Dor" – a really interesting and fun topic. The spring course will focus on selected prayers in the siddur, including the meanings, some history and context and connection to the Tanakh. The **Introduction to Hebrew** course to learn the Hebrew Alefbet and vowels, along with a very basic and rudimentary vocabulary will take place on Sunday afternoons, 4-7 pm, for 5 sessions beginning October 30 through November and December. The same course will be offered at Beth El beginning in November. This is free and open to anyone interested. The first **Tot Shabbat** with Morah Allison was a blast. Kudos to all who participated. Note: This is suitable for pre-school through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, but older children can come and enjoy it, too – and sometimes are invited to help out. The next service is Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup>. Families with pre-school children should contact Allison Kaye at [Allison.s.kaye@gmail.com](mailto:Allison.s.kaye@gmail.com). I have worked with **SHORTY** (our youth group) and advisors Becky and Dara as they plan and hold their events. They are doing well and we have good reason to be proud of them. **Religious school** is under way. The Daled group is working on and making progress on mastery of the service liturgy for Hebrew, and in Judaica, we are studying modern Jewish history (1881 to the present) that will include the immigrant experience (Ellis Island for many) and the Sho'ah (Holocaust) along with a visit to the Richmond Holocaust Museum. If a student asks, please share your family history.

I have had fun visits with community groups who want to ask about Judaism. I went to the Grottoes United Methodist Church, hosted the middle and upper schools from Stuart Hall, spoke to a Mary Baldwin University class, and guest lectured to sociology classes at JMU. I always enjoy these interactions with others, and see them as an important time to teach and build connections with others serving as an ambassador for the congregation.

Scheduled religious services are listed on the calendar.

## Torah and Calendar

The Torah Parashiot for the coming weeks are: Ki Tavo, Hitzavim, Vayelech (Shabbat Shuvah), Ha'azinuy, Sukkot Shabbat CH"4, and Bereshit. We are still in year 3 of the triennial cycle. We begin our cycle anew after Simchat Torah, starting the first year readings with Bereshit/Genesis 1:1.

Rosh Chodesh for Tishrei (which is also Rosh Hashanah) is October 3<sup>rd</sup>. The traditional date for Selichot (penitential prayers in advance of the High Holy Days) is September 24<sup>th</sup>. Tzom Gedaliah, the fast in commemoration of the assassination of Gedaliah, the last Jewish governor over Israel before the modern state, is observed October 5<sup>th</sup>. The Yamim Nora'im, the days of awe, run from October 2<sup>nd</sup> at sundown to October 12<sup>th</sup> at 42 minutes after sundown. Some conflate the month of Elul to the Yamim Nora'im, marking a forty day period. Erev Sukkot is October 16<sup>th</sup> and Sukkot runs through the 24<sup>th</sup>. Simchat Torah begins the evening of October 24<sup>th</sup>. Sukkot will be celebrated in the Shabbat service on October 22<sup>nd</sup>.

## Rabbi's Message

I have mentioned previously that we are now in Elul, the time of introspection and self-evaluation. I have been engaging in that exercise again this year, seeking at a deep level. One of the things that I have been reviewing is how I have been able to respond in the past year to the many times that people have come to me with things they wanted or needed support or help handling. The fact is that there has been a lot that has happened among our congregants. I have tried to be available and to help those who wanted what I could offer. I know that in some cases that was not enough to meet their needs, or that what I could offer was not what was wanted. I also know that it was no that I did not try, or that I did the wrong thing (as far as I can determine), but that I was not able, for a variety of reasons, including my own limitations: for that I am sorry, because I would want anyone who comes to me to find what they need, that I know that is not realistic or humanly possible. So at this point, I ask forgiveness for my failings and foibles, from anyone to whom I cause or allowed injury or hurt, knowingly or not.

In turn, I hereby forgive any and all trespasses, slights, injuries hurts, offences, insults, behaviors, actions and words on the part of others, wiping the slate, so that they (and I)

## Rabbi's Message (cont'd)

can begin the year 5777 in a clear and clean state.

May this be for each of us a year of health, prosperity, joy and well-being, filled with love and laughter, and may we each experience the sense of belonging, and the support and uplift of our community in times of need. May we each feel and enjoy the many blessings of our life, and share those blessings with others. May this year bring peace and wholeness, with security for all who seek it.

Le'Shanah Tovah Umetukah – to a sweet and good new year!

Rabbi Joe Blair

## 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** (925-2-RAVJOE). Please note this number. 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.



only \$25 from the Women's Group to your front yard.....

## Happy Birthday

### *Happy Birthday to*

Elias Gardner who will celebrate his 8<sup>th</sup> birthday on October 9<sup>th</sup>

Marsha Pillet celebrates her birthday on October 21<sup>st</sup>

Benn Legum celebrates on October 23<sup>rd</sup>

Bonnie Brown celebrates on October 28<sup>th</sup>

## News from the Pews

- ✓ We officially welcome Caleb Payne to our membership.
- ✓ We also welcome Steve and Elaine Goldfarb, our newest members.
- ✓ Condolences to Karen Lange on the passing her mother, Sylvia Lange.
- ✓ Condolences to Vicki Goldenberg on the loss of her mother, Dorothy Bresky, who died in Atlanta on August 10<sup>th</sup>. She lived to celebrate her 94<sup>th</sup> birthday.
- ✓ Our condolences also to Sarah Grove-Humphries whose Aunt Sylvia passed away unexpectedly on September 6<sup>th</sup>. Services were held in Pennsylvania.
- ✓ Continued wishes for strength, health and recovery to Adam Clark, Vera Flint, Steve Guberman, Ken Schwartz, Dan Schorsch, Sue Solomon, Ellen Werther, David Waterman and Nancy Witt.

## Coming Attraction

TEMPLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, EBENEZER BAPTIST CHURCH AND MARY BALDWIN ARE CO-SPONSORING **"ROSENWALD" Wednesday, Nov. 16 at 6:45 pm**  
Screening at Mary Baldwin's Francis Auditorium

The documentary, **"Rosenwald"**, is the remarkable story of Julius Rosenwald's partnership with African American communities across the south during the Jim Crow era of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. This modest man who never finished high school and was the son of an immigrant peddler, rose to become President of Sears Roebuck and used his wealth to become one of America's most effective philanthropists.

**"Rosenwald"** sheds light on this silent partner of the Pre-Civil Rights Movement. His Jewish ideal of tzedakah (charity) and tikkun olam (repairing the world) and his deep concern over racial inequality in America led him to build over 5,300 schools, educating more than 600,000 rural southern African American students. He was inspired by Booker T. Washington and horrified that youth of southern African American Communities, forbidden to attend area public schools, had no means of formal education.

The list of prominent alumni and educators who attended the Rosenwald Schools include Tony Award winning playwright George Wolfe, poet Maya Angelou, U.S. Representative John Lewis, Pulitzer Prize winner Eugen Robin of the Washington Post and the ancestors of Loretta Lynch (US Attorney General) and law professor Anita Hill.

**The Shenandoah Valley has our own Rosenwald School in Waynesboro at 413 Port Republic Road. When the schools integrated in 1965, the building became the Rosenwald Community Center and operates today as a gym, meeting space, and offices for the Waynesboro Parks and Recreation Dept.**

Rosenwald also awarded fellowship grants to a who's who of African American intellectuals and artists of his day so that they could pursue their scholarship and art. Scholarship recipients included: Marian Anderson, James Baldwin, Julian Bond's father and uncle, Ralph Bunche, W.E.B. DuBois, Katherine Dunham, Ralph Ellison, John Hope Franklin, Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, Gordon Parks, Jacob Lawrence and Augusta Savage along with Woody Guthrie. Julius Rosenwald's story is less familiar, but his impact on education, social justice and philanthropy in America is unparalleled. His innovative philanthropic approach transformed American education and positively affected tens of thousands of southern African Americans.

**"Rosenwald"** is directed by the award winning documentarian Aviva Kempner.

**### For more information ###**

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