



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

APRIL 2018 / NISAN— IYAR 5778

From our Temple President

Dear members and friends,

The time has come to say goodbye to Rabbi Joe and push forward to a new phase in the history of THOI. Many thanks to Rabbi Joe for the 15 years of service to our Jewish community. He has done a great deal to strengthen the congregation's resolve to be a vibrant Jewish center and has reached out into the larger community. Rabbi Joe's excellent teaching has intersected with many Hebrew and OLLI students, local college and university students, local biblical scholars and a larger network of interfaith participants. His many connections and outreach have reflected well on our congregation and my gratitude abounds.

Such a large transition in leadership can be a challenge, but I'm certain that for THOI this will be a meaningful and positive time for congregational self-reflection. The temple board takes very seriously your input and looks to move ahead with your concerns and desires duly noted. Will change reflect your individual preference? Possibly no. However, can we agree that while our perspectives and insights are diverse, we all want the same end: a vibrant Jewish community that feeds us socially, emotionally and spiritually. Individual needs are different and my only wish is that you seriously consider how you can act on your need. Reach out and make the temple the place you want to be. Don't sit on the sidelines wishing it to be something else. Be that change by being involved with committees and by attending religious, educational and social events.

As mentioned previously, the temple board has formed a search committee charged with securing an interim rabbi to lead us for the next year. The process is currently underway and more information will be shared as the search continues.

L'Shalom
Bonny Strassler

Yard Sale

- **Spring Yard Sale**

Friday April 20th, 7:30—11:30 am and Sunday April 22nd, noon—2:00 pm
Collect your gently used items, particularly: small furniture, housewares, garden items, clothing, jewelry, linens, books, children's items. No exercise equipment or exceedingly heavy items, please. One person's trash is another person's treasure!

Drop off times: Before or after services on Friday, April 6

Sundays April 8 and April 15, 2:00—3:30

PLEASE come help set up on Sunday, April 15th 2:00—3:30

Women's Group

- Our next **Women's Group meeting will be held on April 15th at 2:00 pm at the temple**. The main agenda item is the yard sale but please come with any other ideas or projects you may have for the group to discuss.

From the Rabbi's Desk

Dear Temple House of Israel Congregants and Friends,

Passover came at the end of March and we are now in the period of the counting of the Omer, the bridge between Redemption (celebrated at Passover), and Revelation (celebrated at Shavuot). We are, so to speak, wandering in the wilderness, moving between these two pillars that (together with creation, celebrated at Sukkot) form the tripod that supports and sustains our Jewish world.

Falling in the interim between these two major festivals are some non-Biblical commemorations, including Yom Ha'Shoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day), Yom HaZikaron (Memorial Day), Yom Ha'atza'ut (Israeli Independence Day), and Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Reunification Day).

May the crossing of this wilderness lead us to blessings and deepening relationships with family, friends, community and G-d.

Of Note: The service on March 16th was a discussion from the Torah portion Vayikra, Leviticus 3:1-4:26. It was also Shabbat haChodesh—the Shabbat marking the start of the month of Nisan, known as THE MONTH, the start of the year for us, and leading up to Shabbat HaGadol, the Great Sabbath which falls immediately prior to Passover. The reading dealt with the offerings in the Temple for well-being and for sin, giving details about what can be offered and how to offer it. Comparing these kinds of offering, and thinking about offerings and sacrifice in general led to a very interesting conversation. Those who engaged in the Torah discussion were a lively group, with lots to say and some wonderful ideas and questions. It was fun and a chance to learn and engage with the text in a meaningful way.

The second night Passover seder had a really nice group in attendance and the entire evening was a pleasure.

To Come: April 14th there will be a Havdalah service and the showing of a film, "Skokie" at THOI. This movie focuses on the real events when the Nazi party in Chicago decided to hold a rally in Skokie, a suburb of Chicago, which was roughly 40% Jewish at that time, with a very large proportion of Holocaust survivors living there. The film is an older one, starring Danny Kaye in a serious dramatic role—but despite its age, it is chillingly relevant, given events in this region in the months past. We will start at 6:30 pm with light refreshments, show the film, hold a brief discussion, and conclude with a Havdalah ceremony at approximately 9 pm or a few minutes after. I hope to see you there.

Rabbi's message on page 5

Rabbi's Contact Information

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 of Jewish holidays or Shabbat, when he does not use the computer.

His cell phone number is 925-272-8563 (925-2-RAVJOE).

Please note and use this number—messages left elsewhere are not checked regularly.

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.

Celebrations



Bonny Strassler celebrates on April 5th
Martha Degen celebrates on April 7th
Rabbi Joe on April 13th
Vicki Goldenberg on the 21st
Laurie Berman on March 28th

News from the Pews

- **Mi Sheberach and Refuah Shelemach:** Continued thoughts and prayers for Shirley Brand, Leah Farmer, Steve Guberman, Joanne Simons (Carla Donley's aunt), Greg Cizek's father and Dan Schorsch. For Greg Cizek, Jim Clark, Michelle Clark, Tom Davis (Gail's husband), Kate Goldenberg, Sherry Lowe, Sue Solomon, Ellen Schorsch, Ellen Werther and Dennis Ward.
- Jan Kaufman is recovering from eye surgery.

April Donations

Thank you to the following people who support our small congregation with their much appreciated financial donations:

In Memory of Rabbi Lynne Landsberg Martha and Doug Degen
..... Byron and Sarah Grove-Humphries
..... Beth and Rich Young

In Memory of Dr. Nancy Witt Martha and Doug Degen
..... Byron and Sarah Grove-Humphries
..... Sheila Warren
..... Jay and Rita Tanzer
..... Debbie Bishop
..... Ruth Chodrow
..... Larry and Patty Sutker
..... Beth and Rich Young
..... Janet Doerr and David McCaskey
..... Pat Campbell

In honor of the Community Awareness Shabbat .. Pam and Brian Dettelbach


Judaica Shop

Check out our Judaica Shop—it may have exactly what you're looking for! Our prices are below retail! If you'd like to place a special order, please contact Marsha directly at horsebaskets@gmail.com.

April Services and Events

- **March 31 Passover seder at 6:00 pm (reservations required)**
- **April 6 Shabbat services at 7:30; oneg by Schwartz and Legum**
- **April 13 Lay-led services for Yom HaShoah at 7:30; oneg by Shapiro and Boden**
- **April 14 Rabbi-led Havdalah service at 6:30 with screening of the movie “Skokie” and discussion**
- **Friday, April 20 Women’s Group Yard/ Bake Sale 7:30 am—11:00**
- **Also on April 20 Rabbi-led Shabbat service at 7:30; oneg by Werther and Davis**
- **Sunday, April 22 Women’s Group Yard/Bake Sale 12:00-3:00**

You can contribute to Temple House of Israel in many ways:

1. We have met the challenge from an anonymous benefactor for our Torah’s repair estimate. Additional funds will be needed to actually do the restoration. Contribute to our **Torah Restoration**, by making out your check to THOI and writing TRC OR “Torah Restoration” on the bottom.
 
2. THOI is registered at **amazonsmile.com**. Any time you shop at Amazon simply go to smile.amazon.com from the web browser on your computer or mobile device and a portion will be donated to THOI. You may also want to add a bookmark to smile.amazon.com to make it even easier.
3. **Honoring someone or something?** Birthday, anniversary, special event? For only \$25 you can have a flock of flamingos delivered anywhere in the vicinity.
4. Did you know that **THOI is on Facebook**? Our presence on social media will potentially reach more Jews and non-Jews alike and will perhaps generate new members. Ellen W has agreed to keep our site updated and provide timely information of our activities. **Please “like” and “follow” the THOI Facebook** page to take advantage of this important social media tool.

Many ways to benefit THOI

April Yahrzeits

Herman Barber	Ella Barth	David Bishop
Sim Brand	Alfred Brettner	Evelyn Brettner
Isadore Cohen	Walter Cohen	Samuel Duken
David Gelberg	Nathan Greenspan	Louis Harris
Jacob Klotz	Sylvia Kramer	Joseph Masinkoff
Joann Neuman	Arthur Printz	Esna Roth
Harold Shapiro	Maurice Siegel	Holly Singer
Irving Singer	Henry Switzer	Sophie Switzer
Janet Brody	Jack Witt	

Rabbi's Message

Zman HaAviv: the time of Spring and Change

Spring is here (despite those days when the weather cannot make up it's mind—it is snowy as I write this!). We know this from the calendar many of us use, online or printed, and we know with even more certainty from the Hebrew calendar. On that calendar, Passover fell starting on Nisan 14 which corresponded to March 30th.

Pesach (or Passover) is called the spring holiday, recognizing that it marks the change of seasons, and is the harbinger of new beginnings. Most of us think of it as a time of hope, renewal, and growth. And indeed, it feels so. When we look outdoors and see the budding of the plants, the leaves opening on trees, the first flowers, and the changes that occur around us which add to the natural beauty of our surroundings, it certainly leaves no question that we have entered spring time. On the secular calendar, both Earth Day and Arbor Day fall within a week of each other this month—so this is not only about the Hebrew calendar or Jewish celebrations; it is felt more universally.

The feelings of freshness, renewal, growth, and rebirth, all speak to the natural order, the regular cycle of seasons. The series of notable changes around us help us to feel ready to move forward and embrace and rejoice in what is to come.

In that light, I am writing now to let you know of a coming change in the life of the congregation.

Having served the congregation for fifteen years, it is time for change. I will be leaving the congregation, and the community, as of June 30th to serve elsewhere. Change is healthy, and it is inevitable. Often we resist change, because what we know is comfortable, but (as we were told in a television tale), resistance is futile. I hope that we will all understand that change is simply part of life, and embrace it for what it is.

As I write this, I do not know what the future holds for me, but I move forward with a sense of confidence and hope, looking forward to an opportunity to grow and renew myself, both professionally and personally. I will look forward to enjoying the ride, no matter where it leads me.

I leave the community and the congregation with no regrets, but some sadness, because I have come to know and care deeply for those in the congregation and the larger community, and I will miss seeing you and serving as your rabbi. At the same time, I know that there are good people, folks with a steady hand who are at the tiller, and the course that will be set will be for the best. The future is before you; face forward into the wind and enjoy the journey.

There is no need now for tearful goodbyes; if those are called for, there will be time enough close to when I conclude my time with the congregation. Remember that 'farewell' need not mean 'goodbye' - modern technology is rather amazing at permitting communications at a distance. Meantime, I will be continuing to fulfill my role as rabbi and serve the community, up until June 30th. I look forward to seeing and talking with you at one or another of the activities in the congregation in that time.

May this season of spring, with the changes it brings to us all, be a blessing now and for the future.

Chag HaAviv Sameach [happy Spring].
Rabbi Joe Blair