



# 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***

**FEBRUARY 2019 / ADAR — NISAN 5779**

## From the Rabbi

### A Word ... or More “Plethora”

Just before the funeral service for her husband began, a woman was approached by someone who asked her, “*May I say a word?*” She replied, “*Of course,*” and with that the man approached the lectern and said “*Plethora,*” and that was his word. As he passed her on his way back to his seat, she said, “*Thank you, that means a lot to me.*”

Some people don’t laugh while others tell me they will repeat it over and over. And on occasion someone will call or email me later, sometimes laughing as they speak, telling me they googled the word “plethora” finding out it, in fact, means “a lot.”

*February’s Torah portions contain a plethora of minutiae. After five months of wonderful stories beginning as we start Genesis and ending in the revelation at Sinai, one reads Torah, mitzvot, chukim and mishpatim, “In many respects all those words are synonyms for the do’s and don’ts for which our tradition is famous. Some are well-known and others are truly in the treasure trove of legal details of which we have a plethora not only in the portions we begin in February but in post-biblical Judaism as well.*

As we approach Valentine’s Day, the love-themed holiday, we remember that Christianity’s Paul said that Judaism was a religion of law while his was a religion of love. Well, what he said was not true. God showed Divine love through those very laws of which Paul spoke. *You cannot have a viable society without a system to keep people and institutions in line. That’s the important point the plethora of Torah, mitzvot, chukim and mishpatim make. It’s all in the details that teach as much as does the lore we’ve been reading until now.*

Rabbi Peter H. Grumbacher  
Contact me at: [interimTHOIrabbi@gmail.com](mailto:interimTHOIrabbi@gmail.com)

## Recent Donations

Your donations, above and beyond your annual dues, keep us moving forward. **Many thanks** to those who have supported our congregation as we look to enhance our physical building and our holy Torahs.

- For the Entrance Renovation Fund ..... Ellen Schorsch  
..... Ann Cohen and Stuart Davidson
- For the Entrance Renovation in memory of Lynne Landsberg  
..... Alan and Vicki Goldenberg
- For the Building Fund ..... Patty and Larry Sutker
- For the Torah Restoration Fund ..... Paul Oakley

## Words from our Temple President

Dear members and friends,

Several months ago, Rabbi Grumbacher charged us with a membership task. He asked each of us to bring along a friend to a service. Not any friend, but a Jewish friend. This may include past members, current members who have not yet attended services during our interim year, and folks from the community at large. Encourage them to come and meet Rabbi Grumbacher and other THOI members. What better way to grow and deepen our community but with a hearty welcome and a delicious, memorable oneg!

So check out the calendar of upcoming events. Make a plan. Extend an invitation. Join your community. Let us share our many strengths and joys with our guests. We have a lot to offer and working together our small Jewish community will become increasingly vibrant.

L'Shalom,  
Bonny Strassler

## Services and Events

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January 25	Funeral service for Peggy Jean Klotz, Doug Degen's aunt, 10:00 am in the sanctuary
January 26	Torah study at 9:00 am
January 26	Shabbat morning service at 10:00 am with guest soloist Laura Savage
January 27	Poetry and music of the Holocaust at the JMU Forbes Center at 2:00
January 28	Lecture and Q&A with Holocaust survivor twins, JMU Forbes Center at 11:00—12:30
February 8	Shabbat service at 7:30 pm
February 9	Torah study at 9:00 am
February 9	Shabbat morning service at 10:00 with Reverend Shelby Owen
February 10	Women's Group meeting at 2:00 pm
February 23	Movie and Havdalah at 6:30 pm

## Women's Group

The January Women's Group meeting was cancelled due to snow.

Our next meeting will be held **February 10** (weather permitting) **at 2 pm in the social hall**. We will have a short business meeting and Ellen Schorsch will present her Baklava recipe, complete with samples. We will discuss events planned for March and May. Please join us and bring any ideas you have for future social events or charitable work. Everyone is welcome to share their ideas!

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Coming together  
is a beginning;  
keeping together  
is progress;  
working together  
is success.

Henry Ford

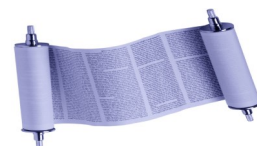
## News from the Pews

- Our sympathies go to Doug Degen and his family at the passing of Peggy Jean Klotz on December 29th at age 94-1/2. The funeral for Aunt Peggy will be held on January 25th at 10:30 am with Rabbi Peter Grumbacher leading the service. There will be a private burial in Lynchburg.
- In January, Ruth Chodrow led a group of home-schooled children and their parents on a tour of the temple. The students and their parents then heard a presentation on the history of the temple and on Judaism in general. Most of the participants had never been in a temple before. After the presentation, questions occupied another half hour. The group was most appreciative.
- Paul Klein has finished his treatments for a slow growing, esophageal cancer. We wish him a smooth recovery and continued good wishes.
- Gail and Tom Davis would like to thank THOI for your support and prayers during Tom's recent hospitalization. He is home now and actively participating in his physical rehabilitation.
- Mi Sheberach and Refua Sh'leimah to all those in our community who are in need of healing.

### As a Reminder

#### Support Temple House of Israel

- THOI is registered at **amazonsmile.com**. Any time you shop at Amazon simply go to [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) from the web browser on your computer or mobile device and a portion will be donated to THOI.
- If you use Facebook, you are encouraged to add comments to THOI posts. Please "like" and "follow" us on social media. Spreading the word will encourage others to join.
- Consider a donation to the Torah Maintenance and Repair fund. Keeping our Torah scrolls in good repair requires an on-going and regular effort. Your checks to THOI should be marked "Torah Restoration Fund".
- The flamingos are always ready to fly and they follow directions well.



Help the Women's Group raise funds that help THOI and the Greater Staunton community. Contact Deb Jacobs by email: [deb1130@hotmail.com](mailto:deb1130@hotmail.com) at least 1 week in advance of the 'flocking' date. The cost to 'flock' someone has dropped to \$15 during our winter sale!

### February Celebrations

Jim Osborne will celebrate his birthday on February 1st  
Jesse Brand celebrates on the 2nd  
Freddy Goldenberg celebrates on the 8th  
Miriam Freedman on the 9th  
Sara Brody's birthday is February 13th  
Vera Flint turns 90 years old on February 17th  
Kasey Goldenberg celebrates on February 24th  
Michelle Clark on the 25th  
David Waterman on the 29th  
Elizabeth and Ken Schwartz celebrates their anniversary on February 12th



## Congregant's Capsule

### Benn Legum and Penelope Ferguson's story

Benn was born and raised in Williamsburg, VA, where his parents were one of the three founding families of Temple Beth El, a conservative synagogue there. Benn and Penelope maintain a membership there to carry on the family tradition.

Staunton became Benn's home after graduating from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy in 1980. He worked for Waynesboro Community Hospital as a Pharmacist before starting Home I.V. Care and Nutritional Services. Thereafter he joined Temple House of Israel and has been a member since then. He has volunteered twice with Sar EL through *Volunteers for Israel* and both times spent two weeks with the Israeli Defense Forces.

Benn earned his Doctor of Pharmacy at the University of Florida. His thesis focused on the benefits of setting up clinics in Ethiopia to combat the spread of tuberculosis so the Ethiopian Jews who had not emigrated to Israel would have care. His day job is as a Clinical Pharmacist with Valley Health. He has served on the Augusta Regional Free Clinic board and as their Clinic Charge Pharmacist for 24 years. He also served on the boards of Stuart Hall and Augusta Health's Hospice .

Penelope Ferguson first moved to Staunton in 1994 and renovated a home here. She moved to Harrisonburg for about 10 years before returning to Staunton to be with Benn, renovating their home here. She is a retired Registered Dietitian, having worked Critical Care, Behavioral Health and Support Nutrition. She also worked for a company as a consultant dietitian, where she first met Benn.

Penelope is a board member of the Alleghany Mountain Institute, volunteers with AMI, and teaches health topics with the Valley Program for Aging Services. She enjoys cooking and is a published author of articles on cooking and nutrition.

Penelope and Benn were married by Rabbi David Katz on February 14, 2018 at Temple Beth El in Williamsburg, in the sanctuary named in honor of Benn's father. They have made THOI the focus of their religious life. They enjoy renovating and construction projects around their home, traveling and enjoying their togetherness.

## February Yahrzeits

Melvin Berman	Moshe Cohen	B. Edelman
Irving Goldberg	David Goldstein	Henrietta Goldstein
Fannie Greenstone	Hyman Greenstone	Oscar Mindell
Ina Schwartz	Nancy Witt	Hiah Neuger
Harry Patterson	Betty Robins	Leah Schneider
Jerome Seligmann	Becky Shapiro	Dorothy Sragovitz
Regina Strauss	Mae Suskins	Minnie Switzer
Albert Williams	Rose Zultowski	Rabbi Lynne Landsberg

## Board Contacts

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