



Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism

15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091

Web Address: thoi.org

From the
Rabbi's
Desk

April 2006, Nisan/Iyar 5766

Please be sure to read the monthly newsletter regularly to keep up with all that is going on and any changes that may be announced. Check the congregational calendar for the list of upcoming events each month and come join in! Take advantage of all that your congregation and Jewish community offer. There are Holiday celebrations, adult education classes, youth activities, religious school, and social events on the calendar throughout the year. Social action, Tikkun Olam (repair of the world), Gemilut Chasidim (Acts of loving kindness), and Tzedakah (righteous action) project ideas and suggestions are offered continuously. Be a part of it all!

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,
SHALOM!

Our Purim masks and costumes are once again stored, and we are rushing towards preparations for Passover! Where is the wooden spoon, candle and feather? Have you polished the Seder plate? How many matzah balls do we need to make? Do we have enough matzah? How many are coming this year? Did you sell the Chametz? Do you ever wonder why a festival celebrating liberation carries so many responsibilities and added tasks? ☺

Looking Forward

April is a very busy and full month for our community. We start with the Religious School model seder on the 9th, Pesach (Passover) starting on the 12th, the Jewish lecture and discussion series on the 16th, a Shorty meeting on the 23rd at Beth El, the Women's Group dinner at THOI on the 28th. Are you ready for all that?

ISRAEL TRIP UPDATE

I have sufficient responses to know that there is definitely interest in an Israel trip. I have heard from fifteen persons that want to go, between the two congregations. To assure a group rate, we will be combining our trip with another group (most buses are forty or more). I am planning for a mid-June 2007 timeframe.

A note to families of upcoming B'nai Mitzvah: one suggestion is that you consider taking this trip as your big B'nai Mitzvah celebration. We can even plan and execute a B'nai mitzvah in Israel: imagine your child reading Torah on Masada or at the Dead Sea! Such a celebration can be a very meaningful, spiritually uplifting, and joyous event for the entire group, as well a treasured memory for you and your child.

So now, if you are interested in going to Israel on a group trip in June of 2007, and you have not told me so specifically, please contact me and let me know of your interest. I am making plans starting now!

THE CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

Nisan is the next month to come. Rosh Chodesh for Nisan is March 30th, and it runs until April 28th and 29th, when we have Rosh Chodesh for Iyar. The major holiday in this month is PESACH (Passover), which runs from the evening of April 12th to sundown on April 20th. Bedikat Chametz (burning of leaven) is to occur on the 12th during the day.

From the Rabbi's Desk

The first Seder will be on the 12th at Beth El. The second Seder is on the 13th at THOI. Look for more information in this bulletin, and be sure to make your reservations and attend!

JEWISH LIFECYCLE: DEATH & BURIAL

Our abbreviated discussion of Jewish Lifecycle continues this month with the most dreaded rituals, those concerning death and mourning.

Final Illness

During a person's final illness, it is required to do whatever is possible to make them comfortable, and forbidden to do anything that would hurry their death. Near the final moments, one should not leave the room out of respect for the person who is dying. They may recite the Vidui (final confession), or if they cannot, it may be recited on their behalf. From the moment of death until the burial, it is traditional that the body of the deceased not be left alone. More on that shortly.

When one witnesses or hears of a death, the blessing recited is Dayan Ha'emet, "Blessed are You, Lord, our God, King of the Universe, the true judge." Either at the moment of death, or later at the funeral, traditionally mourners will perform the act of keriah (rending), and tear their clothing. Some choose instead to wear a torn ribbon, though this does not have the same power emotionally or spiritually for many. Mourners enter a state of Aninut (pre-mourning, preparations for the funeral and a focus on the deceased) at this point, exempt from all other obligations, and are responsible only for the preparations concerning the funeral of the deceased. Often the mirrors in the house of mourning will be covered to remove the visual reminder of the living on seeing themselves reflected.

Today, when a death occurs, the usual procedure is that the funeral home is notified and the body is removed there. In a more traditional approach, someone will accompany the body to the funeral home, and arrangements will be made to have someone remain with the body, somewhat like an honor guard, until the time of burial. This is called Shemirat, or Shemirat Haguf (guarding/guarding the body). In addition, traditionally, the Chevrah Kadishah (holy society) will be notified and will make arrangements to prepare the body ritually. The Chevrah Kadishah is usually not publicly acknowledged: what they do is not for any gain, and it is not spoken of to those not involved. Ideally, their identities are not known. Men serve as the members of the Chevrah Kadishah for males, women for females.

Their preparations include reciting prayers, ritually washing the deceased (similar to bathing in a Mikvah), cutting the nails, combing the hair, dressing, and placing the body in the casket. The tradition is that the body will be dressed in Tachrichim (linen shrouds), so that all are equal in death. For a male, it is also customary to remove the tzitzit (fringes) from the corner of their Tallit (prayer shawl), placing the tzitzit in the casket, and wrapping the deceased in the prayer shawl.

Once the deceased is prepared and placed in the casket, the casket is closed, and no one is expected to view the deceased again. Sometimes the Chevrah Kadishah will arrange for the Shemirat Haguf, in other locations, the funeral director or the congregation will do so. It is usually not the family that performs this mitzvah.

We do not embalm or cremate the body: that is considered to be an affront to the deceased and a defacing of the image of God which the deceased bore. We seek to bury the body, including all of the deceased that is available, so we even enclose any clothing or other materials that contain bits of the blood of the deceased.

The aron (casket) is to be simple. Usually it is plain pine or (more recently) cardboard, though sometimes it is stained, and it may have a decorative Magen David (Star of David) on the cover. We encourage simplicity and plainness; this is not a time for

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ostentation or unnecessary expense. The casket must be made entirely of materials that will decompose naturally, such as wood and natural glues, without any metal or plastics.

Funeral services can be held at a funeral home, in a person's home, at the synagogue, or graveside. The custom is that the funeral will take place within twenty-four hours of the death, but this has been modified because our families are so far-flung and travel arrangements are not easy to make at times. With the existence of refrigeration, this is less of a concern than it would have been in days past.

At the service, it is common that there will be a hesped (eulogy), unless it is during a holiday which limits the ritual that can be performed. Funerals can never take place on Shabbat or on Yom Tov. Often Psalms are recited, the Eyl Maley Rachamim (God full of compassion) prayer is recited, and the Kaddish Yatom (orphan's or mourner's Kaddish) is recited. The final act in the funeral is the throwing of dirt on the casket. Most traditionally, the grave is filled by the mourners and those present at the funeral; in some places each takes a turn at putting some dirt in to the grave, but the final filling in is done by the funeral home employees. The sound of the dirt on the casket emphasizes the finality and reality of death, and helps the mourners move from the state of Aninut to Aveilut (mourning), when the focus shifts to themselves and their loss, rather than being on the deceased.

After the burial, it is customary to return to the house of mourning for a meal of consolation, and the start of the Shivah (seven days of intense mourning) period. During Shivah, it is usual for there to be a minyan in the house of mourning daily, except on Shabbat or when it is a Yom Tov, to allow the mourners to recite the Kaddish without having to leave the house. This is a time for the mourners to be comforted by visitors and for them to remember the deceased and talk about them. There is one unusual situation that arises: when the burial takes place, and the Shivah is interrupted by a Holiday that begins after Shivah, Shivah is terminated early. This can lead to the odd situation that Shivah may only last a few hours in some circumstances, when burial is on an Erev of a holiday.

After the conclusion of Shivah, the mourners return to more usual activities such as work, but remain in a state of mourning for a total of Sheloshim (thirty days) for most relatives, and up to eleven months and a day for the seven relations (Parents, Spouse, Children, Siblings). However long the mourners remain in the status of Aveilut, they continue to recite the Kaddish.

Sometime after the funeral it is customary to erect a monument on the gravesite. It is usual to do this within the first year. The monument is then 'unveiled', either when it is erected, or on the anniversary of the date of death, which is called the Yahrzeit or Yorzeit (Year time or anniversary). After the first year, the Yahrzeit falls on the date of the funeral. We mark it by lighting a candle that will burn for slightly more than twenty-four hours, and recall the name of the deceased in our service on Shabbat.

In addition to the Yahrzeit, there are four occasions through the course of the years on which we remember the deceased by their names. These are the Yizkor (memorial) services which are part of the synagogue service, or may take place in the cemetery, and which are observed on Yom Kippur, and on the last day of the holidays of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot.

There are many other customs and traditions associated with death and funerals, but I will close here. Please feel free to be in touch with me if you need further information.

From the

Next month, we will continue with the topic of Taharat HaMishpachah, (family purity).

Rabbi's Desk

TZEDAKAH (Righteous Action)

After all the natural disasters and wars, basic needs around the world, in our nation, and locally all continue to be much greater than anyone could ever have imagined.

Please donate whatever funds you are able to those in need by going to www.jdc.org, www.ujc.org, www.mazon.org, or www.urj.org, or send your donations by mail. Please don't forget to support First Step, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, the Free Clinic, and the many other worthwhile organizations that help those in need in our own area.

JEWS ONLINE

A website that I recommend you look at is http://www.ajc.org/site/c.ijITI2PHKoG/b.1024685/k.5212/Canon_of_Jewish_Literacy.htm. Although a lot to type into your browser address line, it is an excellent site and worth a visit! It is a site that lays out a reasonable and helpful listing of the canon of Jewish literacy. In other words, it suggests a list of books that you should read in different categories in order to be an educated and informed Jew. Whether you had a day school education, or virtually no Jewish education, all of us have gaps in our knowledge, and this is a way to find materials that can help to fill them in! [NB: you may find some of these items in the library at the synagogue!]

SALE OF CHAMETZ

If you would like to sell your Chametz, please fill in this form and send it in to Rabbi Joe by April 10th, along with whatever you wish to be used as a donation to Tzedkah. He will serve as your agent for the sale, and make the necessary arrangements.

Contract of Sale of Hametz:

"On (date) _____, I/we,
(name) _____, hereby
give Rabbi Joe Blair, of 2700 Leeds Lane,
Charlottesville, VA 22901, 540-886-4091,
rabbijoeb@hotmail.com, authority to sell all chametz
in my/our possession as well as the place, or places,
in which it may be stored, including (places)

_____ ,
 _____ ,
and _____."

(Signed) _____

JEWISH HUMOR

- Becky greeted her husband Bernie, with a big kiss when he returned from a hard day of work.
 "So, nu, Bernie, you had a hard day. I bet you're tired and hungry. How does this sound? A nice juicy steak, potatoes just the way you like them, a bean casserole, and a big piece of apple pie?"
 "Not tonight, darling," said Bernie, "Better we should have dinner at home."
- A reporter was interviewing Rabbi Seligman after a bolt of lightning struck the synagogue roof and sent it crashing down in ruins. He asked, "Rabbi, what was your

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reaction when you saw the terrible devastation?"

"My first reaction?" asked the rabbi, "I thought thank goodness we took out insurance against acts of God!"

- Sheldon called his neighbor Marvin over to demonstrate his puppy's obedience. Tail wagging, the dog leaped to Sheldon, who pointed to the newspaper and said "Fetch!" The pooch saw and whined, "You think it's easy wagging this tail day and night? Oy! It's killing me! And that dog food is just dreck! But do you care? When was the last time you took me for a good walk?"

Marvin was amazed. "Your dog is talking...!"

"I know," said Sheldon, "I'm still training him. He thought I said 'kvetch'."

[Kvetch = complain and whine]

- Goldblum and Markowitz were discussing the meaning of life and death. "Considering all the heartaches, sorrows, and tragedies that life holds, death is really no misfortune. In fact," said Goldblum, "when you analyze it, it could be that it's better for a man not to have been born at all!" Markowitz nodded and said, "True. But how many people do you meet who were that lucky?"

JEWISH WIT AND WISDOM

On Their Deathbed:

* Bury me next to a straight man. Groucho Marx

(Does this still have the same connotation it once did? ☺)

* Too many first nights. And taking all that aspirin didn't help either! Sophie Tucker to Spencer Tracy

Speaking unconsciously?

If you do not let your son grow up as a Jew, you deprive him of those sources of energy which cannot be replaced by anything else. He will have to struggle as a Jew.... Do not deprive him of that advantage.

Dr. Sigmund Freud

JEWISH HISTORY

Mother Ruth – A miniseries aired on CBS about her (Haven), and she was called 'America's Schindler' by Readers Digest. When much of the world turned its back on the Jews of Eastern Europe during World War II, Brooklyn-born Dr. Ruth Gruber fought to make a difference here. She escorted 1,000 refugees to America as part of a secret U.S. government mission. Among those she rescued were Dr. Alex Margulies, who helped develop the CAT-scan and MRI machines. At the age of ninety-two she won a Pulitzer prize for her last book, *Inside of Time: My Journey from Alaska to Israel*. She said, "All of us must look inside our souls and find the tools to fight injustice wherever it exists. What I wish for the Jewish people is security and peace – and for the Land of Israel to continue to bloom."

Two Gun Cohen

One of the strangest alliances may be that of a London charlatan and Sun Yat-Sen. Born to poor Polish immigrants in 1887, Morris Cohen was a wastrel, but he became connected to revolutionary China when in a gambling den in Saskatoon, Canada, he defended the Chinese owner during a robbery. Cohen, who packed two guns, went to China in 1922, and became a bodyguard for Sun Yat-Sen, and a general officer in the army, all without knowing Chinese. His adventures included exploits as a tycoon, arms dealer, and an adventurer, and he can be viewed as a visionary, a hustler, or both. In any case, he was a real Jewish character. Three cheers for Uncle Moe! ☺

FOOD FACTS

The intricate braiding of Challah for Shabbat probably started in Germany, where it was called berches or barches. The crown shaped Challah for Rosh Hashanah symbolizes hope for harmony under God's kingdom. A fish or bird-shaped Challah for the meal Erev Yom Kippur suggests that one's sins will be carried away. A Challah for the final day of Sukkot with the shape of a hand pressed into it represents reaching for blessings. Challot for Purim are often long and braided to mark the ropes that tied Haman and with which he was hung.

The origin of Bagels is lost in time, but here are some facts about these 'Brooklyn Jawbreakers' and 'alligator teething rings'. Bagels were once offered to mourners because their round shape symbolized the cycle of life and death. The first printed mention of Bagels is found in the Jewish Community regulations of Cracow, Poland in 1610, which required that they be given free to pregnant Jewish women. At least 9 million Bagels are consumed in the U.S. each day. In Japan, 'chic' Bagels are adorned with dried fish or soy sauce. Both Jews and Greeks at times wore bagels as good luck charms. So remember as you have yours with a shmear that even our lowly Bagel has an interesting history and a long reach!

B'virkat shalom (with Blessings of Peace),
Rabbi Joe

Office Hours and Contact Information

RABBI'S AVAILABILITY & OFFICE DAYS

Rabbi Joe is available *by appointment*. Simply leave a message at the congregation, or email him to arrange a time to meet. In the event of an emergency, if you can't reach him through the synagogues, please contact the rabbi at home by phone.

Email: RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com

Beth El Congregation 540-434-2744

Temple House of Israel 540-886-4091

Home [Emergencies only, please] 434-971-4741

If you should hear or know of anyone who is ill or hospitalized or who might otherwise wish a visit or call, please leave a message on the telephone answering machine at the temple. Messages are checked frequently.

A Message from Lisa Solod, President

Dear Congregants:

Being the President of the Temple House of Israel Board of Directors doesn't mean that I have all the answers or can handle all of the little questions that come up. I am especially grateful this month to have board members Laurie Berman and Rachel Jordan (along with past president Paul Klein) who stepped up to the plate and helped organize the Passover dinner, with all its complications. Information on that dinner is found in the bulletin, but I need to let the whole congregation know how gratifying it is when fellow board members really take charge.

Now I would like to ask many of you to try and do the same thing. When a call for help goes out over the THOI yahoo groups lists, please read it and see if there is something you can do to make a difference. Our congregation is small but strong, but we need EVERYONE to play a part in order to ensure our future and ensure that we serve every member of our Jewish community to the best of our ability.

Please respond with a resounding YES when anyone asks for your help. Thanks.

Summary of

At the last Board meeting, Mike Brown presented an extensive analysis of the

March Board meeting

accessibility issues facing our temple. Rachel Jordan will use this analysis to apply for grants to improve handicapped access. For now, the Board authorized Mike to contact a contractor for estimates and (assuming we have the funds) construction of a railing near the side door and grab bars in the bathrooms. These were among the most obvious and least expensive needs that we could meet. • There will be a temple Mitzvah day on April 23, 1-5 pm. The social hall ceiling tile is about half done and the improvement is remarkable. Hopefully with another Mitzvah day we can finish this project. • Our gas and electric bills for the first two months of this year were three times higher than last year. This unexpected expense has put a crimp in funding for new projects. Please help out in any way you can. For example, Linda Singer at the Final Draft Bookstore will make a donation to the temple in return for used books that congregants bring in. Look through your bookshelves and bring your unwanted volumes to the temple – we thank you. • Laurie Berman, our vice-president, has contacted several new families that might be interested in temple membership. • There will be a Women’s Group dinner on April 28. • There was extensive discussion about switching the bulletin to a strictly e-mail format for those congregants who have e-mail. This is a result of ever-rising duplication and postage costs. • Ruth suggested that the temple collect used computer ink cartridges that are then brought to Staples. The cartridges can be traded in for a \$3.00 coupon at Staples, which can then be used to purchase anything at Staples. It was suggested that we set up a collection box for used ink cartridges.

Noteworthy Congregational News

- Join us for our **Community Passover Seder on Thursday, April 13th at 6:00pm**. Details are in the attached flyer, but the bottom line is we’d love to have you celebrate Pesach with us. **Make your reservations with Laurie Berman 885-2925 and P.O. Box 718 Staunton 24402 by April 3rd**.
- Linda Singer has proposed that if we collectively gather books to pass on to her at **Final Draft Booksellers**, she will in turn, make a donation to the temple. **Leave any books you wish to donate** in the Rabbi’s office.
- Dinner at L’Italia was a wonderful success. Thanks to Laurie Berman for making the arrangement for us all. We gained more than \$200 from the evening at L’Italia!
- Used printer ink cartridges can be traded in for a \$3.00 coupon at Staples, which can then be used to purchase anything at Staples. **Please re-cycle your ink cartridges in the collection box set up in the back hall** below the coats.
- Our next **Mitzvah Day is set for April 23rd from 1-5 pm**. Come help us work toward completion of our replacement ceiling. Bring a ladder if you have one, rags and cleaning supplies (like 409).
- The **April Board meeting** will be held **Thursday the 6th at 7:00 in the social hall**.

News of our Community

- Elana Brody will be performing along with other professionals at a night of original music and musical theater to benefit Lime Kiln Theater in Lexington. The performance will be held on April 22 at the Lenfest Performing Art Center in Lexington at 8:00 pm. Check out <http://www.chrisvanclavemusic.com/lime-aid/index.htm>.
- Kudos to Sam Witt who continues to donate whole blood and platelets every two weeks. Sam has donated more than 15 gallons through the Virginia Blood Services in the past several years! Platelets are the clotting compound found in whole blood and are transfused to help cancer patients going through treatment. If you are interested, contact the Virginia Blood Services at 800-989-4438 or www.vablood.org.
- Ruth Chodrow led a group of residents from Kendal Retirement Village in

Lexington on a tour of the temple on March 3rd. She explained the history of the congregation and the architecture of the building. Rabbi Joe joined Ruth in discussing Judaism with the group. We thank Mort Robbins making the arrangements – the group was most appreciative, and we enjoyed their visit.

- Beth Young will be talking about the temple to the Kiwanis group on April 13th.
- If you have taken home any of the tablecloths or towels from the temple to launder them, please return them as soon as possible. In particular, we are missing the square blue cloth that is a cover for our round “challah table”. Thanks!
- Our annual **Bake Sale has been re-scheduled for May 27th**. Thanks to Ellen Schorsch who has contacted the Staunton Farmer’s Market. We’ll be selling our Please get out your favorite recipes and get ready. Ethnic food sells well and the event is a good fundraiser for us.
- We’ll serve a **Shabbat dinner on April 28th at 6:00 pm**. Please join us for a traditional Shabbat dinner of chicken as well as a vegetarian entrée along with a salad, vegetable and potatoes. **Make your reservations with Beth Young 885-1481 by April 24th at \$8 per person and children under 5 years, \$5.**
- Come join us on **April 9th at 2:00 pm for our Women’s Group meeting** to finalize the plans for dinner and make arrangements for the bake sale in May.

**News
(and a request)
from the
Women’s
Group**

Happy Birthdays to be celebrated in April:

Eva Blair celebrating on April 4th
Kelli Lynn Goldenberg on the 6th
Martha Degen on the 7th
Amy Goldenberg Fox also on the 7th
Joe Blair on the 13th
Rafael Brand on the 14th
Sara Blair on the 19th
Vicki Goldenberg on the 21st

**Adult
Education**

- The Intermediate Hebrew students are moving along very nicely, and seem to be having fun at the same time! This course is designed to practice reading Hebrew, to improve prayer service skills, and to build some Hebrew vocabulary to better understand the liturgy. In April we will meet at THOI on the 3rd, 17th and 24th at 6 to 7 pm, and at BE on the 9th, 23rd, and 30th at 2:30 to 3:30 pm. It is never too late - you can join the group at any time! All you need to know is the alef bet and vowels. There is no cost to members for this course.
- Jewish Lecture & Discussion Series
In March we focused on the Zohar, the Book of Radiance. It was a wonderful discussion! Our discussion will continue with a focus on Kabbalah. The next session will take place on April 16th, Sunday, at 7 pm at THOI. There is no prerequisite. All members of both congregations are invited.
- The weekly Parashat Hashavuah (weekly Torah portion) discussion continues at noon on Fridays at THOI on days when the office is open. All members of both congregations are invited to bring your lunch and join in the discussion. No prior knowledge or experience is required, no need to read anything in advance, and all you need is a willingness to jump in, talk, and have fun!
- The Harrisonburg-Rockingham Interfaith Association (IFA) meets on the first Thursday of each month at noon. The group is open to individuals and religious institutions, and all are welcome to attend.

Adult Education

The April 6th program is a little out of the ordinary: the IFA will present an Interfaith Chocolate Seder (with lunch) at Beth El, led by Rabbi Joe. The seder and lunch will be \$6 per person. I encourage all our congregants to come and participate – you know you love chocolate, so what could be wrong? Please RSVP to Rabbi Joe by April 1st, so we will know for how many to prepare.

Programs for the rest of this year include: a presentation on Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) training by Kenton Derstine (May 4th) and a presentation on Immigrants in our growing and changing area (June 1st) by Laura Zarrugh.

The topic for the annual day-long retreat meeting is a presentation and training session by the Virginia Interfaith Council on Public Policy (VICPP), discussing why and how one would be involved in ‘faithful democracy’ and advocacy to our legislators. It will take place on Friday April 21st at Blessings Lodge from 9:30-3:30, will cost \$20/person, and includes lunch and snacks.

If you would like to attend any of these meetings, please be in touch with Rabbi Joe for details.

B’nai Mitzvah

Our next B’nai Mitzvah event is coming up VERY soon. Devin Oberdorff will celebrate his Bar Mitzvah at Beth El on April 7th and 8th. After that we have two B’not Mitzvah: Laura Jean Brand May 12th and 13th, Grace Lambeth June 15th and 16th, each at Temple House of Israel. More good news: we are already scheduling our smachot (celebrations) for the coming year. At the moment, we are looking at three students celebrating their B’nai Mitzvah, and at least one adult!

If you would be interested in having a B’nai Mitzvah, or in learning to read Torah, chant Haftarah, lead services, or to serve as Gabbai, please be in touch with the rabbi.

Film Series

Our film series continues on Sunday, April 23rd at 7:00 pm. with the movie title to be announced. Thanks to Shirley Brand for continuing to research various films for us.

Tot Shabbat

Please join us for our next **Tot Shabbat** on **Saturday, April 29th at 10:30 AM** at the temple. Families with children 6 years old and under are welcome to come, learn about the holidays and enjoy light refreshments. To RSVP contact Shelby at 943-6934 or shelbyapple@yahoo.com.

Staunton Book Group

Question 1A across: What novelist is currently being sued for plagiarism in the high courts? 1 Down: The name of the wonderful intricately and beautifully written book that is supposedly plagiarized? Hint: He’s an author and it’s a book we’ve read. **March 28th at 7:30 we’ll be discussing Siddhartha** by Herman Hesse at Leah Farmer’s house. Our April read is **The Bread Givers** by Anzia Yezierska at A.J.’s home in Churchville. **Please join us at 7:30 pm on April 26th** for a lively discussion. Call AJ at 337-6836 for directions.

Religious School

Our first big event in March was the Religious School Shabbat on March 3rd at Beth El. The students led the service and presented the Devar Torah, and kol hakavod (all honor) to them! A very nice job indeed. We can all kvell (take pleasure) in their accomplishments.

The Religious school had their Purim celebration on March 12th. We began with a Service during which we read the Megillat Ester (the scroll of Esther), then moved on to a performance by the students of their version of the story of Purim, and finally to our fun-filled fair with food and games and prizes! Thanks to those who participated (including the religious school teachers, several parents, Roberta Stein, Margee Green-

field, and Shorty, our youth group) a wonderful time was had by all!
 Don't forget to mark your calendars – NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL on March 26th or April 2nd for Spring Break. The last day of Religious School is May 7th.

**Youth
 Group
 SHORTY**

The Youth Group, Shorty, had an active month. March 3rd to 5th was TheVENT, the biggest Kallah of the year, and almost all of the members of Shorty went and had a great time! We have NEVER sent ten of our youth to a Kallah before! If you want to know how it went, ask one of them!

The following week they came back to Beth El and helped out with the Purim Carnival, and did a great job. Finally, they continued their regular schedule, meeting at THOI in Staunton on March 26th at 5 for another program.

The next meeting scheduled for SHORTY will be at Beth El at 4 pm on April 23rd.

Don't forget to bring children's books as donations to help Shorty with their Tzedakah efforts for the Reach out and Read project. You can leave these donations in the office or the social hall. Shorty will continue this project until June.

**Judaica
 Shop**

Stop by to see the new items in the Judaica Shop. If you have any particular Judaica needs, please call Dianne Mason at 885-6254.

Donations

Thank you to these generous people who have made contributions to the Temple during the previous month. We appreciate your donations!

For the social hall building fund.....Shirley and Rafael Brand

For our new accessibility fund.....Lynne Landsberg

**Notes from
 the
 Editor**

- Costs to print and mail our bulletin continue going up. It would be great to cut down costs by sending each issue via email to those of you who can receive it that way and read it on-line or print your own copy.
- The deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month. Anything you'd like published in the May bulletin should be given to me by April 20th. Your suggestions are welcome!

**Yahrzeits
 for
 April**

Herman L. Barber	Walter E. Cohen	Arthur H. Printz
Ella Hirsh Barth	Samuel Duken	Harold Ely Shapiro
David Wayne Bishop	David Gelberg	Maurice Siegel
Sim Brand	Jacob H. Klotz	Henry Switzer
Alfred Brettner	Sylvia Kramer	Sophie Switzer
Evelyn Brettner	Joseph Masinkoff	Jack Witt
Isadore Cohen	Joann Neuman	

**Temple
 Contacts**

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President	Lisa Solod	463-7637 or lisa@rockbridge.net
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APRIL						1
2	3 Intermediate Hebrew at 6	4	5	6 noon - Interfaith Chocolate Seder @ BE Board Meeting at 7:00 pm	7 Torah study at noon	8
9 Women's Group meeting at 2:00 in social hall	10	11	12	13 Passover seder 6:00 pm	14 Torah study at noon Shabbat Services 7:30	15
16 Lecture/discussion at 7:00: Kabbalah	17 Intermediate Hebrew at 6	18	19	20	21 Torah study at noon	22
23 Mitzvah Day 1-5 Youth Group @ BE at 4:00 Film Series at 7:00 THOI	24 Intermediate Hebrew at 6	25	26 Book group at 7:30 at AJ's: <u>The Bread Givers</u>	27	28 Torah study at noon Women's Group Shabbat dinner at 6:00 Shabbat Services at 7:30	29 Tot Shabbat at 10:30 am

April 3	Intermediate Hebrew at 6:00
April 6	Board meeting at 7:00
April 7	Torah Study at noon
April 9	Women's Group meeting at 2:00
April 13	Community Passover Seder at 6:00 pm - Reservations required by April 3 to Laurie Berman
April 14	Torah Study at noon Shabbat Services at THOI at 7:30 pm - hosts: Lynn Hewitt 377-6704 and Kaufman/Goldsmiths 464-5196
April 16	Lecture/discussion on Kabbalah at 7:00 pm
April 17	Intermediate Hebrew at 6:00
April 21	Torah Study at noon
April 23	Mitzvah Day 1-5 at the temple Film Series at 7:00 pm
April 24	Intermediate Hebrew at 6:00
April 26	Book Group at 7:30 at AJ's home: The Bread Givers
April 28	Torah Study at noon Women's Group Shabbat dinner at the temple at 6:00 pm Shabbat Services at 7:30 pm – hosts: Chodrows 886-2252 w/ Degens 886-8651
April 29	Tot Shabbat at 10:30 am