



# Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Member Congregation of the Union for Reform Judaism  
15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091

<http://uahc.org/congs/va/va008/>

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June 2004, Sivan/Tammuz 5764

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## From the Rabbi's Disk

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,  
Shalom!

Here we are again! A very full month has passed, and another is ahead of us. Of course, the big news items were the B'nai Mitzvah of Ben Goldsmith and Philip Chodrow. Both were lovely, and really FUN! Great company, lots of laughs, much prayer, lots to be proud of, and a ton of good food– who could ask for anything more? By the way, if you found something you especially liked in the food category, you might just find the recipe in the new THOI Cookbook produced by the ladies of the Temple! Pick up a copy and check it out – only \$8.00 for members!

And speaking of the ladies of our Temple, their Bake Sale also was a success! As a result of their generosity, we are the proud possessors of a set of the new Haggadot, edited by Rabbi Sue Levi Elwell. – many thanks to them for this lovely gift that we will use for years to come.

### Upcoming Events

We have a vast array of activities going on between now and the end of the year!

May 30<sup>th</sup>: meeting for families of upcoming B'nai Mitzvah students at 10 at BethEl  
June 4<sup>th</sup>: youth service to be held 7:30 at Beth El.

June 6<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm is the Pot Luck congregational dinner at which we will host Grace Covenant Church – the group that for many years rented space from THOI. Help us to welcome them back into the building most warmly by bringing a dish of one of your favorite recipes from our new cookbook!

The last two service dates for this year will be celebrations. On June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> will be the Bar Mitzvah of Ian Jordan, and on June 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> will be the Bat Mitzvah of Jordan Kristoff. Please come to these smachot (happy occasions) to shep nachas (take pleasure and pride) in their accomplishments.

Finally, on July 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 pm, I will be preaching at the Fourth of July Vespers service in Gypsy Hill Park. I invite all of you to come and watch me do my best to craft a sermon that is expected to be not only uplifting, but also patriotic and meaningful (a very tall order indeed!).

### HOLIDAYS

I can't possibly allow the upcoming holiday of Shavuot (Feast of Weeks) to pass by without comment! From sundown on the evening of the 25<sup>th</sup> of May until sundown on the 27<sup>th</sup> is the holiday of Shavuot. This is the holiday that caps our counting of the Omer (the 49 portions of Barley harvested starting the second day of Passover), and is most closely associated with Revelation of the Torah. It is the time when we as a people arrived at Mount Sinai, where G-d was revealed to all of us, and we were given the Tablets of the Law. Because Torah is likened to milk and honey, it is customary to eat dairy and sweet things; very much in order are various types of blintzes, cheesecakes, taygelach (a pastry soaked in honey),

**The  
Rabbi's Disk  
(Continued)**

baklava, ice cream, and rugelach (pastry cookies with different fillings). YUM!  
Betayavon! (Good appetite – see the cookbook for some recipes for these items!)

**NEW BOOK GROUP**

Several members of THOI have concluded that they are not able to join the book group that started at Beth El for various reasons (time, distance, other commitments). Instead, they are planning to start their own book discussion group that will meet at THOI or the homes of members. If it runs true to form, the book group participants will have a lively discussion of whichever book they choose to read. For more information or to suggest a book, contact Beth Young (See the information elsewhere in this bulletin).

With all this going on, it is hard to guess that the year is moving towards a close, but it is true-summer is on the way! Did you feel that hot and humid weather?

**NEWS**

As we approach the end of the year, some things have wound down. Religious School ended for the year, and will not start up again until September 12<sup>th</sup>. The Introduction to Jewish Living class ended, and will not be held again until (probably) the Fall of 2006. The Read Hebrew America Hebrew Literacy classes will conclude sometime in June. The series will start up again in the Fall, so be on the look out for information concerning it if you are interested. The Adult B'nai Mitzvah class continues through June, then will pick up again in September. The weekly Torah study sessions will go through June.

**FEEDBACK**

As I have said in past, I am looking for feedback from each of you. I am always happy to accept compliments (who isn't?), but I especially want to hear from you how you think I can do better in the future, and what we need to do to make our Jewish community stronger and more vibrant. What did we try this year that was especially good, and what should we not do again? What should we have done that did not happen? What do you think would make our community even more fun and provide a richer Jewish experience? Please feel free to communicate your thoughts to me by email, in writing, by telephone, or in person. If for any reason you are shy or don't want to speak to or contact me directly, you can provide your views to a member of the board, and ask that they pass it along anonymously. I am sincerely seeking your views on how to make things even better.

**KEEP IN TOUCH!**

Please feel free to call, email, or make an appointment to see me to discuss anything that is on your mind, to ask about something you have always wanted to know, for pastoral counseling, or just to chat. One of my great pleasures is to get to know each of you better. Although my schedule is a tad hectic, I will always try to make time to meet with congregants.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you should hear or know of anyone who is ill or hospitalized or who might otherwise wish a visit or call, please be sure to let me know as soon as you can. You can leave a message on the telephone answering machine at the temple.

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

Rabbi Joe's Office Days for June 2004  
**In Staunton at 540-886-4091**

**Hospital  
Visits and  
Chaplaincy Calls**

**Rabbi's Office**

<p><b>Hours</b></p>	<p>Mondays: 7, 14, 21          Thursdays: 3, 10, 17, 24  <b>In Harrisonburg at 540-434-2744</b>          Wednesdays: 2, 9, 16, 23, 30          Fridays: 4, 11, 18, 25          Drop in Hours 2-4          Drop in Hours 2-4          Drop in Hours 2-4          Drop in Hours 2-4          Other times available by Appointment          Email: <a href="mailto:RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com">RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com</a> or <a href="mailto:Rabbi@BethElHarrisonburg.org">Rabbi@BethElHarrisonburg.org</a>          The office will be closed May 31<sup>st</sup></p>
<p><b>President's Message</b></p>	<p>The brief Yiddish expression “nur oif sim chis” rendered more lengthily in plain English means “only happy occasions should bring us together” and seems appropriate for this June. A hearty mazel tov to the two b’nai mitzvot, Ian Jordan and Jordan Kristoff, good food with our friends from Grace Covenant Church and an enthusiastic welcome back to Mike Brown who has completed his final radiation treatment. We all hope Mike’s recovery is lasting.          Rafael Brand          Congregation President</p>
<p><b>Noteworthy Congregational News</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our <b>potluck dinner with Staunton Grace Covenant Church</b> will be held in the social hall <b>Sunday, June 6<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm</b>. Grace Covenant is the congregation who rented our temple building a few years ago to hold their own religious services until they were able to buy a building of their own...and in the process became friends. <b>Please bring your favorite dish to share</b>. It would be nice to have good representation from our congregation since they come by the dozens!</li> <li>• Rachel and Tony Jordan invite everyone to their son <b>Ian’s Bar Mitzvah</b> on Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup>. Ian will present his mitzvah project to the congregation on Friday evening and then conduct the service beginning Saturday morning at 10:00. The congregation is also invited to the Kiddush Luncheon following.</li> <li>• For the second simcha of the month, Marsha Pillet and Joe Kristoff invite the congregation to their daughter <b>Jordan’s Bat Mitzvah</b> on Saturday, June 26<sup>th</sup>. Jordan’s biblical garden on the left side of our brick sidewalk leading into the sanctuary was the family mitzvah project.</li> <li>• Sarah Grove-Humphries would still like to attend a cantorial workshop in Cincinnati this summer, but temple funds are tight. If you haven’t sent in a contribution, please do so if you can. Since we all enjoy Sarah’s singing and would all benefit from her participation in these workshops, it would be wonderful if we could all contribute toward the costs. The temple will provide matching funds. Your checks, written to THOI, can be sent to Laura Jean Brand, treasurer, at PO Box 1412, Staunton, VA 24402</li> <li>• The next <b>Temple board meeting</b> will be held Thursday, <b>June 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm</b> Please participate in our business!</li> <li>• Our <b>Welcome Back picnic</b> will be held at Happy Hollow beginning at 3:00 on <b>Sunday, August 22<sup>nd</sup></b>. Thanks to Lynn Hewitt and Doug and Martha Degen for generously allowing us to return to Happy Hollow. More information, including directions, will be in the summer issue of the bulletin.</li> <li>• A note from A.J. Hartung: Each year should, as it unfolds, afford us new insights, fresh ideas, challenges to established and accepted practices. This, for me, is one of the greatest gifts we have been given as a people; our doors</li> </ul>

and minds ever open, ever searching. Sooo! **Thank you Rabbi Joe**, not only for the opportunity to extend our understanding of our Law but of each other as we have gathered for “Thursdays at Noon”. I hope that the exchange of feelings about Torah and Life has given the rest of you a sense of growth not only as individuals but as part of our larger family, as it has me. I am looking forward to continuing this voyage hoping that others will find the time to join us for, if nothing else, apart from Joe (coffee only) and Rafael (abstinence) we now have a much clearer idea of what “lunch” means for some!

**Special Event**

The Charlottesville Community Jewish Day School Board of Directors is proud to present the lecture “**What The Dead Sea Scrolls Really Tell Us**” by the world-renowned authority of biblical archaeology, Hershel Shanks. Founder and editor of *Biblical Archaeology Review*, *Bible Review* and *Archaeology Odyssey*, Mr. Shanks was instrumental in forcing open the availability of the Dead Sea Scrolls for study to all scholars wishing to read them. He has also been at the center of the authenticity debate surrounding the ossuary said to have contained the bones of James, brother of Jesus. Mr. Shanks and his work have been profiled in such publications as *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times* and *Philadelphia Magazine*, to name a few. Hershel Shanks will speak at 9:30 am on Sunday, June 6 in O’Mansky Hall of Congregation Beth Israel in Charlottesville. There is an \$18 suggested donation; the proceeds will benefit the establishment of the Charlottesville Community Jewish Day School. A complimentary brunch will be served prior to the lecture.

**News of our Community**

- A note from Debby Bishop:  
I want to thank the THOI Women’s Group and congregation for honoring me at the service and oneg on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and for all the good wishes. I was especially moved to receive the first copy of “Sharing Our Best”. The compilation and publication of the book was quite an achievement. I will put the mezuzah up at my new house. In many ways this area will continue to be home. I will let you all know my new address and hope to see you. I wish THOI and all members the best for the future and look forward to reading the “Temple Bulletin” for information about what is happening.
- Congratulations to Sara Brody for her outstanding performance in Stuart Hall’s production of Cinderella! And, as if she wasn’t busy enough with that, Sara was also part of the 6-member Stuart Hall team who placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the state Destination ImagiNation competition held in Richmond last month. The team now goes on to compete in the global competition. Mazel tov to Sara and her mom, Laurie Berman, on their creative energies!
- Ellen Schorsch is the new Director of Performances for the Shenandoah Valley Art Center!
- Nancy Witt is recovering slowly. Your cards and calls are welcome.
- Congratulations to Danny Mason (and Dianne, too) on his graduation from Virginia Commonwealth University at the end of May. Mazel Tov!
- Mike Brown has finished his final treatment at the Mayo Clinic and is now home, waiting for insurance to approve his liver transplant.

**News from the Women’s Group**

- *Sharing our Best: Favorite Recipes from Temple House of Israel* is here! We’ve been told of two corrections – so far...  
On page 57, Carole Seidman’s Sweet and Sour Meatballs recipe was

	<p>contributed by Ellen Schorsch</p> <p>On page 97, Beth Young’s challah recipe should read “1 tsp. Sugar”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our <b>bake sale</b> was a success! Thank you to Ellen for making the arrangements with the Farmer’s Market, to Ruth and Marsha for the set up and to all who contributed baked goods, time and energy to make the sale a success! In addition, we sold another 17 cookbooks!</li> </ul> <p>Postscript: Ellen had an “encounter” with a deer on her way to the market that Saturday morning! We trust that her car’s passenger side is repaired by now.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We’re planning a yard sale in October – so stash those treasures out of the way for just a little bit longer and we’ll sell them in the fall....</li> <li>• We’d like to say <b>HAPPY BIRTHDAY</b> to the all of the known June birthdays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Karen Blair celebrating on the 1<sup>st</sup></li> <li>Sam Brown on the 2<sup>nd</sup></li> <li>Nancy Witt on the 13<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Ray Rubin on the 14<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Twins Ruth Blair and Bill Blair on the 18<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Debby Bishop on the 23<sup>rd</sup></li> <li>Mike Brown on the 25<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Shirley Brand on the 28<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Ellen Schorsch on the 30<sup>th</sup></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>And June <b>HAPPY ANNIVERSARIES</b> to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ellen and Dan Schorsch on the 14<sup>th</sup></li> <li>Shirley and Rafael Brand on the 17<sup>th</sup> (53 years!)</li> </ul> </p>
<p><b>Youth Group</b></p>	<p>The Youth Service will be held on June 4<sup>th</sup> at Beth El. All Youth Group members and Religious School students whose B’nai Mitzvah occurred in this school year are invited to participate. Come help them celebrate their accomplishments!</p>
<p><b>Staunton Book Group</b></p>	<p><b>Staunton’s Own Book Group!</b> You are invited to read <u>The Five People You Will Meet in Heaven</u> for our first discussion. Rabbi Joe has generously provided a list of interesting books and, of course, we can come up with our own list of books to explore. Come join us on <b>Tuesday, June 29<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 at the Young’s house</b> to discuss our first book, to listen or to make suggestions for next time. For more information, please contact A.J. Hartung at 337-6836 or Beth Young 885-1481.</p>
<p><b>Judaica Shop</b></p>	<p>Check out our many gift items in stock and peruse the many Judaica catalogs available. There’s a lot to choose from! Please let Dianne Mason know of any items that you would like stocked. The shop is normally open during Friday night services and Dianne can be reached at 885-6254 to arrange another time.</p>
<p><b>Notes from the Editor</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you would prefer to receive this bulletin via e-mail, please let me know and I’ll be happy to send it in that format. Thanks to those who have responded!</li> <li>• The deadline for each issue is the 20<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month. I look forward to hearing your suggestions and comments at <a href="mailto:templenews@ntelos.net">templenews@ntelos.net</a>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Bulletin and Membership</b></p>	<p>If you are not currently a member and would like to continue receiving this bulletin, the subscription rate is \$15 per year (August-June) made payable to Temple House of Israel. Please contact Laura Jean Brand, our treasurer, at 942-3656 or mail your check to THOI, PO Box 1412, Staunton, VA 24402.</p>

<b>Contributions</b>	<p>Thank you to these generous people who have recently supported our Temple: We do appreciate your contributions!</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Asher and Laura Jean Brand ...In honor of Philip Chodrow's Bar Mitzvah  Ralph Degen.....In memory of Mildred Degen  Gloria Goldsmith.....In honor of Rabbi Joe's work with Ben Goldsmith  A.J. Hartung .....In memory of Beryl Gutnick</p>																																					
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<b>JUNE</b>		1	2	3	4	5
				Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon		
6 Potluck dinner w/ Grace Covenant @6pm	7 Rabbi's office day	8	9	10 Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon	11	12
13	14 Rabbi's office day	15	16	17 Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon	18 Services/Bar Mitzvah of Ian Jordan	19 Bar Mitzvah of Ian Jordan 10:00am
20	21 Rabbi's office day	22	23	24 Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon; Board meeting at 7 pm	25 Services/Bat Mitzvah of Jordan Kristoff	26 Bat Mitzvah of Jordan Kristoff 10:00 am
27	28 Rabbi's office day	29 Book Group at Young's @ 7:30	30			

May 1	Bar Mitzvah of Philip Chodrow at 10:00 AM
May 3	Rabbi's office day
May 6	Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon open to all interested people
May 10	Rabbi's office day
May 13	Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon open to all interested people
May 16	Book Group "Revenge" at Beth El at 9:30 <b>AND</b> The Women's Group at 2:00 in Staunton
May 17	Rabbi's office day
May 20	Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon open to all interested people
May 21	Shabbat Services at 7:30 PM – oneg hostesses Laurie Berman and Sue Johnsen
May 23	Adult B'nai Mitzvah at Beth El at 2:30 <b>AND</b> Film "Left Luggage" at 7:00 pm
May 24	Rabbi's office day
May 27	Rabbi's office day; Torah study at noon open to all interested people 7:00 pm Temple Board Meeting