



# 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.*

**June 2008, Iyar/Sivan 5768**

## Noteworthy Congregational News and Events

- Be sure to come to the **Women's Group Shabbat Dinner, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30.** This will be the Rabbi's last service of the season, so we'll take the opportunity to commemorate his past year and look forward to beginning his new five year contract with us. More details under the Women's Group.
- Our treasurer will be sending second quarter statements to congregants in June for those who normally pay their dues in installments.
- If you know a group that would like to rent our sanctuary or social hall, please ask them to get in touch with Ruth Chodrow. The churches that have rented from us during the past year have found other facilities and we'd love to have another group share our space.
- Sarah Grove-Humphries would like to attend the *Mifgash Musicale* cantorial workshop in July. Given that Sarah contributes so much to our Shabbat services, any support you can give toward her tuition and housing costs for the week-long workshop would be greatly appreciated. This is one way we can show our appreciation for all that Sarah does to bring our services to life, teaching us to sing and completing the work of our b'nai mitzvah students.
- **Summer Shabbat services will begin on Friday, July 18<sup>th</sup>** at 7:30 with congregation members leading the services and reading Torah and Haftarah. Lay-led services will be held again on August 1, 15 and 29.
- Looking for a way to volunteer your time this summer to THOI, at your own pace, without meetings or committees? We need a bulletin editor only for July – October. This important service keeps all of us connected and takes only a few hours once each month. The template can easily be transferred to your computer and our webmaven will help you with formatting, converting the file to .pdf, and distributing. Please, please contact the Rabbi or [bulletin@thoi.org](mailto:bulletin@thoi.org).
- A HUGE THANK YOU to Martha Degen who has agreed to take over the bulletin editor position beginning in November! Martha will do a fantastic job but realistically knows that she can't take on another project until then.
- The next THOI board meeting will be June 9<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm. Meetings are open to all congregants. If you have any issues for board discussion, contact Lisa Warren ahead of time so they can be considered for the agenda.

**From the  
Rabbi's Desk**

**My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,**

Shalom. Our congregational year is flying by. I have difficulty believing it is already June.

**In Our Community**

There has been much sadness of late with the loss of loved ones in our community – all we are able to say in response is the traditional response, Baruch Dayan Ha'emet (blessed is the true judge). May memory be for a blessing, and may the One who comforts console those who are bereaved.

Illness, too, has been a factor in our midst. We pray for wholeness and wellness, a refuah shelemah bimheyra (complete and speedy healing) for all those who need it.

Following all these sad events, I want at this time publicly to express my appreciation to the many members of our community who have undertaken tasks without being asked, who have reached out and made the effort to help and comfort others among us who are or have been in need through the course of the year. Of course, we know that the members of the caring committee, the women's group, and the Chevrah Kadishah are included among them, but I am thinking of all of our congregants and members who have lent a hand, been available, offered support, and reached out to those among us who needed it, publicly and privately. I cannot name all of you, but all of you who have done so are each and every one due acknowledgement and thanks for what you have done, and I, along with those you have touched, am grateful to you for it, and proud of you for what you have chosen to do. This is the holy work of building and maintaining a meaningful, loving, and vibrant community. May each of you who have been involved in these acts of Gemilut Chasidim (acts of loving kindness) be blessed. I hope you come to understand how much your taking part in the life of our community in this way means to so many others, and how you enrich the fabric of our life as a kahal kedoshah (a holy community). May you, and we, go from strength to strength.

**The Jewish Calendar & Holidays**

IYAR → SIVAN

Iyar ends on June 3<sup>rd</sup>, and June 4<sup>th</sup> is Rosh Chodesh for Sivan. Sivan will run from June 4<sup>th</sup> to July 3<sup>rd</sup>, and Rosh Chodesh for Tamuz will be July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>.

In June this year we have the holiday of Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks. It begins at sundown on the evening of June 8<sup>th</sup> and continues to sundown June 10<sup>th</sup>. It is the third of the pilgrimage festivals, and unusual in that it last only for two days (biblically, Passover is 7, and Sukkot is 8). It is called Shavuot because it falls seven weeks after Passover. The intervening time is the period of the counting of the omer (see my comments for April and May).

Shavuot is the completion of the triad of pilgrimage festivals. It is linked to the Temple by the offering of the first fruits of the barley harvest, collected during the counting of the omer. It is also identified as the celebration of the Revelation of G-d's teachings, and receiving those teachings and laws in the Torah given to the Hebrews, by the hand of Moses, brought down from Mount Sinai. Thus, we see the movement through the year from Sukkot (Festival of Booths, harvest) and the temporary dwellings as representing wanderings, the wilderness, and reliance on G-d, through **Creation**, Pesach (Passover, Festival of Spring, Matzah, and the

liberation from bondage and exodus from Egypt/the narrow place) as representing **Redemption**, leading to Shavuot (Festival of Weeks) representing **Torah** and **Revelation**.

The tradition is to read Megillat Rut (the book of Ruth) for Shavuot. This is the text which describes a faithful and loving relationship of a woman and her daughter-in-law who make their way through life together after both of them are widowed. Ruth is also held up as the exemplar for a proselyte (a convert to Judaism). She is seen as worthy to merit becoming the great-grandmother of King David. If you have never sat down and read this short but beautiful biblical story (from the third section of the Tanakh (Bible) - Ketuvim (writings), with truly poetic language, I recommend you do. It is well worth your time.

It is the custom to eat dairy and sweets for Shavuot. This is because the Torah is likened to Milk and (date) Honey. Be sure to lay in your stock of cheeses, blintzes, cheesecake, ice cream, and honey cake! ☺

Iyar is full of non-biblical holidays. We had: Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Remembrance Day) on May 2nd, Yom Hazikaron (Israeli Memorial Day) on May 7<sup>th</sup>, Yom Ha'atzma'ut (Israeli Independence Day) actually on May 10<sup>th</sup>, but most observances were moved to May 8<sup>th</sup> to avoid having them fall on Shabbat (which also pushed back Yom Hazikaron to the 7th), and Lag Be'omer (the 33<sup>rd</sup> day of the counting of the Omer, commemorated as the day a plague lifted for the students of Rabbi Akiba, often celebrated with picnics and sports games) which occurred on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Of course, none of these commemorations are biblically based.

In contrast, June will be a much quieter month for observances. In the non-biblical category, we have Yom Yerushalayim on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, celebrating the day that Jerusalem was reunified. Aside from Rosh Chodesh, the only other celebration in this month is Shavuot, which falls on June 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>.

### **The Congregational Calendar**

Add to your calendar now the date of June 6th. We will be at Beth El for our Shavuot and Confirmation service. This year four of the members of Shorty are being confirmed. Come and shep nachas (swell with pride) for them. At 6 pm, prior to services, there is also a fund-raising dinner at Beth El to benefit Shorty, our youth group. For questions or to RSVP be in contact with Sherri Alt at sherishops@aol.com, or 820-3962.

We hold Shabbat services at THOI regularly: see the website ([www.thoi.org](http://www.thoi.org)) or the calendar for the specific schedule. Our upcoming services in June at THOI are scheduled for June 13th, and the last scheduled Rabbi-led service for this year will be June 20th.

Summer lay-led Shabbat services will begin July 18th (we are skipping the July 4th weekend). We will hold services at THOI every other week this year (so on July 18th, August 1st, 15th, and 29th) at 7:30. Come join us and enjoy the more laid-back approach of the summer. Our congregants will lead the services, read Torah and Haftarah, deliver a Devar Torah, and offer an Oneg Shabbat. All we need to make it complete is your presence! ☺

If you know the Renicks in Harrisonburg, give them a hearty 'mazel tov' on their wedding May 25th.

The Religious School picnic and Maccabiah games day is scheduled for June 1<sup>st</sup> at a park in Bridgewater (Religious school classes concluded May 18<sup>th</sup>). Watch for more details to be forthcoming. Please note: if you have a student who will be entering the religious school (K-7) next year, please be in touch with the

principals. Also, if you are willing or interested in being a teacher in the religious school, please be in touch with the principals.

June 2<sup>nd</sup> is Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem day).

The Confirmation celebration and Shavuot service will be observed on June 6<sup>th</sup> at Beth El. There is a dinner at 6 pm beforehand to raise funds for Shorty, and all are invited to come and enjoy the entire evening. Shorty will lead the service. At this Confirmation service I always feel bittersweet, happy for the excited young adults who will go elsewhere and continue to make us proud of them, and sad because they will not be in our midst as they have been for so many years. I am asking each of the confirmands to share their thoughts at this service as their divrei Torah (words of instruction or Torah), and I hope many of you will be able to come to hear them, and note their wisdom and learning.

Shorty will have a shul-in following the Confirmation service, on June 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> at Beth El, including their annual mid-night bowling! On the 7<sup>th</sup>, Shorty members will take off on their annual overnight trip to Williamsburg.

June 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> (starting at sundown June 8<sup>th</sup>) is Shavuot.

June 13<sup>th</sup> there will a Talmud Torah Lishmah at THOI at 6:30 pm, followed by Shabbat services at 7:30. Bring something to eat, and join us for a Torah discussion.

June 27<sup>th</sup> there will a Talmud Torah Limud at Beth El at 6:30 pm, followed by Shabbat services at 7:30 pm. Bring something to eat, and join us for a Torah discussion.

Starting July 18<sup>th</sup>, there will be a Shabbat service every other week at THOI through the summer.

### **Other Programs & Special Activities**

- If you are interested in studying for and celebrating a B'nai Mitzvah, or in learning to leyn (read/chant) Torah and/or Haftarah, or to lead services, or serve as a gabbai, or you wish to discuss conversion, please be in touch with Rabbi Joe. Similarly, if you feel a conversation with the Rabbi on any topic would be of benefit to you, please be in touch with the Rabbi to make an appointment. You can call or email.
- Please know that we always seek congregant and guest participation in services throughout the year. If you are interested in taking a role in a service, please be in touch with Rabbi Joe. Roles include: reading Torah, reading Haftarah, delivering a Devar Torah, serving as Gabbai (the "MC" for the Torah service), an English reading, or having an honor. The Honors we usually confer include being called up for an Aliyah (saying the blessings for the Torah or the Haftarah), serving as Hagbah (lift, hold, and carry the Torah), Gelilah (undressing and dressing the Torah), or Petichah Usegurah (opening and closing the Ark).

May the blessings of health and love be abundant in all our lives, and may G-d bless, heal, and protect us all.

B'virkat shalom (with blessings for peace),

*Rabbi Joe Blair*

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| <p><b>Message from the President</b></p> | <p>Dear Congregants:</p> <p>This will be my last message to you as your Temple President and it has indeed been a busy two years. I hope you are pleased with what the Board has accomplished in the past couple of years and I trust you will support the next President and Board in our continued efforts to keep our Temple alive, thriving, and growing. In the past two years we have put in place handicapped accessibility projects that have gotten us notice by the National Organization on Disability, and even more importantly, we have made our historic building as friendly to the disabled, ill (whether temporarily or permanent), aged and injured as humanly possible. We hope all of you will take advantage of our sound system, ramps, railings and the seating on the sides of the bimah whenever you need to! Some of the changes were subtle but we think they were all necessary. We have strengthened our financial situation greatly, by both tightening our belt and being smarter about money, and we are beginning excellent fundraising projects. We have forged new and better relationships with our trustees. We have instituted a once-yearly Board retreat in which we envision our future, and many of those ideas are now in place with more to come. We have cleaned and repaired the stained glass and will soon install protection for our valuable windows and are planning painting of the entire outside of the building as well as repairs to the stucco and window sills and sashes. And most importantly, perhaps, we have been able to renew our wonderful Rabbi's contract for another five years and give him the raise he so richly deserves. We thank you for your support in accepting a dues increase to help make this possible.</p> <p>I have been very fortunate to have worked with an intelligent, hard working, compassionate, devoted Board of Directors, each of whom has given countless hours of time, energy and creative thinking to our Temple and its concerns. I have no doubts that the next Board, under Beth's direction, will continue to do the same. You may have good faith in our willingness to devote ourselves to the continuation of THOI and we hope that all of YOU are also on board with our mission to make sure we last for another century, or two, in the Valley.</p> <p>I hope to see more and more of our members become more and more involved in our Temple in the next few years. We need and want your presence at services, special events, holidays and volunteer efforts. And I thank you for all for allowing me to serve as your President. <span style="float: right;">.....Lisa</span></p> <p><i>Solod Warren</i></p> |
| <p><b>Adult Education</b></p>            | <p><b>Torah Parashiot</b></p> <p>Torah parashiot (Torah portions) read for the period covered by this newsletter include: Naso, Behalotecha, Shelach, and Korach, drawn from from Bemidbar (Numbers) 4:21-18:32, and special reading Shemot (Exodus) 19:1-20:23, Bamidbar (Numbers) 28:26-31, and Devarim (Deuteronomy) 15:19-16:17 for Shavuot.</p> <p>Haftarot read this month include readings from Judges 13; Zachariah 2-4; Joshua 2; 1 Samuel 11-12; Ezekiel 1 &amp; 3, and Habbakuk 2-3.</p>  |

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| <p><b>Reaching the Rabbi</b></p>    | <p>The Rabbi is available to meet by appointment. If you wish to meet or speak with the rabbi, please email or call to set an appointment.</p> <p>The office is not staffed and the building is generally closed when the rabbi is not in. Messages are regularly checked by the Rabbi at both congregations, and email is frequently read during the week. Please understand that the rabbi will not be available or reply on Shabbat or on Jewish holidays unless it is an emergency that cannot wait.</p> <p>In the event of an urgent need the rabbi may be contacted by telephone. In that case, please call the cell phone number listed, leaving a detailed message, and be sure to express the need for an urgent response.</p> <p>Rabbi Joe's Email: <a href="mailto:RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com">RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com</a><br/> Beth El Congregation 540-434-2744<br/> Temple House of Israel 540-886-4091<br/> Cell phone (Please use this # for emergencies) 434-981-3959</p>  |
| <p><b>News of our Community</b></p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Temple House of Israel lost a pillar of our community with the passing of Ralph Degen on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. Our heartfelt condolences to Doug and Martha, Michael and Anna and to Doug's sisters Sharon and Leslie and their families. Ralph's contributions (in so many ways) to the Jewish community as well as to the Staunton community at large will ensure that his memory lives on. He was a generous man who will be missed by all of us.</li> <li>▪ Mazal tov to Ellen Eve Werther who graduated from Mary Baldwin College earning a Masters in Teaching degree on May 18<sup>th</sup>. Way to go Ellen!</li> <li>▪ Congratulations to Ben Goldsmith who will attend the Frost School of Music at the University of Miami. He plans to complete the requirements of the Bruce Hornsby Creative American Music Program, a song-writing initiative, while majoring in Media Writing and Production.</li> <li>▪ Mazal tov to Natasha Benenson who was called to the Torah May 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> and completed her Bat Mitzvah in outstanding form...just as we expected!</li> <li>▪ Sarah Grove-Humphries was recently awarded the 2008 Musikgarten Exemplary Program Award recognizing her full course of Musikgarten classes for children to age 9 and adults. Her studio is one of only 54 programs in North America to receive the award for 2008. Congratulations Sarah!</li> <li>▪ Summer Family Music Class: <i>Musikgarten's All Together Now</i> recaptures the magic of nursery rhymes (a wonderful part of our cultural tradition featuring delightful language and playful rhythms) in a versatile, mixed-age curriculum. There is lots of movement for toddlers, while three year-olds and older will learn language skills and use their imaginations in fun new ways. Parents will receive a family packet, parent book and either an instrument or manipulative. The class is offered June 17<sup>th</sup> -July 10<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays and Thursdays 7:00-7:45 pm at Emmanuel Episcopal Church, 300 W. Frederick Street for families with children from birth to four, with older siblings welcome. Tuition is \$60 per family plus \$25 for materials (eight classes for the price of six). To register contact Sarah Grove-Humphries 885-4223 or register online at <a href="http://www.musikgarten.org/Sarabs-music">www.musikgarten.org/Sarabs-music</a>.</li> </ul> |

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| <b>Book Group</b>                  | On <b>May 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30</b> , we'll discuss <i>Last Night at the Lobster</i> at Dianne Mason's home. Come join us! In the coming months: June 25 <sup>th</sup> we will discuss <i>Eat, Pray, Love</i> at Pat Warner's home; July 30 <sup>th</sup> at Janet Brody's we'll talk about <i>Walden II</i> and on August 27 <sup>th</sup> , <i>The Alchemist</i> . We look forward to welcoming new readers.   |
| <b>News from the Women's Group</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Please come to our last meeting of the season on <b>Sunday, June 8<sup>th</sup> at 2:00</b> so we can <b>elect new leadership</b> and plan our Shabbat Dinner and Oneg.</li> <li>▪ Our semi-annual <b>Shabbat Dinner will happen on June 20<sup>th</sup> at 6:30</b>, just prior to the last Rabbi-led services of the season. Join us for chicken or a vegetarian entree with all your favorite side dishes. Dinner reservations, at \$8 per person, are requested by June 16<sup>th</sup>. Please call or email Beth Young at 885-1481 or <a href="mailto:bulletin@thoi.org">bulletin@thoi.org</a>.</li> </ul> <p><i>Birthdays to be happily celebrated in June:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Karen Blair on June 1<sup>st</sup><br/> Sam Brown on the 2nd<br/> Nancy Witt celebrating on the 13<sup>th</sup><br/> Ray Rubin on the 14<sup>th</sup><br/> Ruth Blair on June 18<sup>th</sup><br/> Also Bill Blair on the 18<sup>th</sup><br/> Debby Bishop on the 23<sup>rd</sup><br/> Mike Brown on the 23<sup>rd</sup><br/> Shirley Brand on the 28<sup>th</sup><br/> Ellen Schorsch on the 30<sup>th</sup></p> <p><i>Anniversaries in June include:</i></p> <p style="margin-left: 40px;">Alan and Vicki Goldenberg celebrating on June 6<sup>th</sup><br/> Ellen and Dan Schorsch celebrating on the 14<sup>th</sup><br/> Shirley and Rafael Brand celebrating 57 years together on the 17<sup>th</sup></p> |
| <b>Oneg Reminder</b>               | Acknowledging that this information may be outdated, according to the master schedule, the following people have oneg responsibilities.<br>For June 13 <sup>th</sup> Benn Legum 886-2165 with Janet Brody 851-0877<br>For June 20 <sup>th</sup> The Women's Group  |
| <b>Judaica Shop</b>                | We have two new CDs in stock: <i>The Real Complete Shabbat Songs and Blessings</i> , which has several of the songs we sing in services, and <i>Birthdays of the World: Rosh Hashana CD</i> . Each is \$20. There are also several new mezuzot from which to choose. Shoppers may contact Natasha at 886-1157 or <a href="mailto:judaica@thoi.org">judaica@thoi.org</a> .  |
| <b>Notes from the Editor</b>       | If you have comments and suggestions, I'd love to hear from you at <a href="mailto:bulletin@thoi.org">bulletin@thoi.org</a> . Also, <b>if you are interested in helping put together the bulletin for the summer July-August issue, as well as September and October</b> we would love to hear from you.   |

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| <p><b>Donations</b></p>              | <p>Thank you to these generous people who have contributed to Temple House of Israel during the past month.</p> <p>In memory of Ralph Degen ..... Debby Bishop<br/> ..... Laura Jean and Asher Brand<br/> ..... Charlie Brown Golf Group<br/> ..... Don and Ruth Chodrow<br/> ..... Claiborne Elder<br/> ..... Joseph and Nancy Gilbert<br/> ..... H. Roller and Jerry Lynn Shipplett<br/> ..... Sybil Kaufman<br/> ..... Lynne Landsberg<br/> ..... Seymour and Carol Levin<br/> ..... Lovegrove Construction<br/> ..... Marion and Rose Lowe<br/> ..... Robert and Augusta Markley<br/> ..... Thomas and Teresa McSwaine<br/> ..... Charlie Obaugh<br/> ..... Paul and Martha Vames<br/> ..... The Rimel family<br/> ..... Ellen Scarborough<br/> ..... Dan and Ellen Schorsch<br/> ..... Brenda Schuler<br/> ..... Michael and Beth Sellman<br/> ..... Thomas and Yvonne Hamrick<br/> ..... David Updike<br/> ..... Sue Owens Updike<br/> ..... Dan Wachspress<br/> ..... Richard and Beth Young</p> <p>In memory of Ralph and Millie Degen ..... Francis Degen Horowitz<br/> For Sarah Grove-Humphries workshop ..... Don and Ruth Chodrow<br/> ..... Doug and Martha Degen<br/> ..... David and Rosalie Waterman</p> <p>For the stained glass windows ..... Marcia Robinson</p> |   |  |
| <p><b>Yahrzeits<br/>for June</b></p> | <p>Charles Becher<br/> Bertha (Bracha) Brand<br/> Elan Joshua Brand<br/> Bernard S. Bresky<br/> Frederick Simon Cohn<br/> Howard Michael Goldenberg<br/> Fannie Rosenthal Goldstein<br/> Henry Heilbroner<br/> Aaron Hewitt<br/> Samuel Gordon Jacobsen</p>  | <p>Mollie Kamerman<br/> Samuel Kamerman<br/> Bernard Kaplan<br/> Herbert Kaslow<br/> Dora Klotz<br/> Bessie Landsberg<br/> Philip Alan Levin<br/> Infant Sam Levy<br/> Bertha Mindell<br/> Frieda Mordetsky</p> | <p>Archie w. Printz<br/> Bess Rosen<br/> Ida Helen Rosen<br/> Jerry Schwartz<br/> Dr. Sol J. Simon<br/> Betty Jo Snyder<br/> Erwin Seymour Solomon<br/> Abraham Switzer<br/> David Lee Switzer<br/> Harry Witt</p> |

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|------------------------|---------------------------|---|---|
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|                        |                           | Alan Goldenberg   | <a href="mailto:trustees3@thoi.org">trustees3@thoi.org</a>                                    |
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|                        |                           | Sarah Grove-Humphries   | 885-4223 or <a href="mailto:cantor@thoi.org">cantor@thoi.org</a>                              |
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| Young Adults Group     | Natasha Benenson          | <a href="mailto:young-adults@thoi.org">young-adults@thoi.org</a>                              |   |
| Caring Committee       | Lou Boden                 | <a href="mailto:caring-committee2@thoi.org">caring-committee2@thoi.org</a> or<br>540-255-5555 |   |
|                        | Rosalie Waterman          | <a href="mailto:caring-committee1@thoi.org">caring-committee1@thoi.org</a> or<br>886-1713     |   |
| Film Series            | Shirley Brand             | 949-0529 or <a href="mailto:films@thoi.org">films@thoi.org</a>                                |   |

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| <b>JUNE</b>                     | 2                          | 3  | 4  | 5                    | 6   | 7  |
| 1<br>Religious school picnic    |                            |    |    |                      | SHORTY fundraising dinner at 6 @ Beth El<br>Shavuot/Confirmation service at Beth El at 7:30 |    |
| 8<br>Women's Group meet at 2:00 | 9<br>Board Meeting at 7:00 | 10 | 11 | 12                   | 13<br>Talmud Torah Limud 6:30<br>Shabbat services at 7:30                                   | 14 |
| 15                              | 16                         | 17 | 18 | 19                   | 20<br>Shabbat dinner at 6:30<br>Shabbat services at 7:30                                    | 21 |
| 22                              | 23                         | 24 | 25 | 26                   | 27  | 28 |
| 29                              | 30                         |    |    | See you<br>July 18th |   |    |