



Temple House of Israel Bulletin

A Reform Congregation Affiliated with the UAHC
15 North Market Street, Staunton, VA 24401 (540) 886-4091

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

December 2003, Kislev/ Tevet 5764

From the Rabbi's Desk

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends:
Shalom!

It is already DECEMBER! Where has the time flown?

I hope that you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and were able to spend it with your loved ones. I was mindful as my family gathered that the source for Thanksgiving is drawn from Sukkot – the Harvest time Festival of Booths. The Pilgrims were well aware of this biblical holiday, and modeled their celebration of survival on it. We are lucky to have both of these opportunities to express our Thanks for all we have.

Chanukah

After the busy High Holiday season, we had a *brief* period of quiet. Now we are about to enter the flurry of activities around Chanukah!

One of the issues that seems to arise each year at this time is what I call the “December Dilemma;” how to handle the juxtaposition of Chanukah in light of the huge emphasis placed upon the other seasonal holidays. I would like to lead a brain-storming and discussion session sharing the various strategies and options possible for parents. Would this be of interest to you? I am thinking of scheduling this during the Chanukah workshop at Beth El during Religious School on December 7th if that would work for most people. Don’t forget the events on Dec 7th and 14th!

Adult Education

The weekly Torah study sessions are fast becoming a highlight of the week! If you can, please join us at noon each week on Thursday in Staunton or Friday in Harrisonburg. You can bring a bag meal, and take part in our lunch and learn. The discussions are free-wheeling and fun! No preparation or prior experience needed.

The Introduction to Jewish Living class began on November 16th. This is a 20 session course designed to offer a broad overview for those who want to know a little more about Judaism. It is appropriate for Jews who have a limited exposure to traditional practices, for anyone who just wants to know more about Judaism, and for all who may be considering conversion at some future date. There is room in the class, and you would be most welcome: 7 to 9 p.m. Sundays at Beth El.

The Read Hebrew America Hebrew literacy course is already about half over as I write this. Those taking the class have made amazing progress! Kol Hakavod Lachem! After this five-week session is completed, if there is sufficient interest, I would like to offer the second course in the series. This will also focus on reading practice, but will include looking at some of the prayers we recite in services. Please keep your eyes open for further information on that course, which will probably start in mid-January (perhaps the week of the 12th).

Religious School & Youth Group

KITAH DALED: I can tell you that Kitah Daled is working hard and really

learning a great deal! I am very pleased with their progress, and with how much they are retaining. Some of our discussions of the readings assigned are fascinating. I hope that you have a chance to see the reaction papers that they are writing!

CLASS TRIPS: In support of the Kitah Daled curriculum, we will be taking four field trips this year. The final one will be to the Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C. Jon Meyer has agreed to head up the planning for that one. The three other trips will be Saturday mornings to services (Orthodox, Conservative, Renewal) in Charlottesville. Tentatively, I have scheduled these for December 6th, January 17th, and January 24th. I would appreciate it if parents could help with transportation and logistics. Please give me a call and let me know what you are willing to take on.

B'NAI MITZVAH FAMILIES: There will be a meeting of the B'nai Mitzvah families on Sunday, December 13th at Beth El following Religious School (from 12:45 to 2:15). We can order pizza. At that meeting I plan to go over scheduled ceremony dates, policies, planning, services and participation, and answer any questions that parents or B'nai Mitzvah students may have. Please put this on your calendar and make every effort to attend.

YOUTH GROUP: Members went to the Fall MAC Regional Kallah. It was amazing and fabulous – good thing there is another event in March to look forward to! A huge Yishar Kochech to Sheri Alt for all her work with the Youth Group! Now it is time to begin plans for the big ski weekend. We also need to keep on with the confirmation discussions and all the other activities!

COME ON BY!

Please feel free to call, email, make an appointment, or drop in to see me to discuss anything that is on your mind, to ask about something you want to know, for pastoral counseling, or just to chat. One of my great pleasures is to get to know each of you better.

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. Otherwise, there is almost no way of finding out! You can leave a message on the telephone answering machine at the temple – it is checked daily (except Shabbat). May you have a very happy Chanukah, and may the festival of lights bring light to you.

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

**Rabbi's Office
Hours, Hospital
Visits and
Chaplaincy
Calls**

Rabbi Blair's office days are fixed as Mondays and Thursdays in Staunton 886-4091 with Wednesdays and Fridays in Harrisonburg (540) 434-2744.

Drop In times, when the Rabbi is in the office and available without an appointment, **are listed in the calendar below.** Other times are available by appointment. Call the temple at 886 - 4091 or email: rabbijoeb@hotmail.com.

Monday, Dec 1 Drop-in 1-3 pm.	Thursday, Dec 4 Drop-in 2-4 pm.	Monday, Dec 8 Drop-in 1-3 pm.	Thursday, Dec 11 Drop-in 2-4 pm.
Monday, Dec 15 Drop-in 1-3 pm.	Thursday, Dec 18 Drop-in 2-4 pm.		

**President's
Column**

The office will be closed December 22nd through January 1st. Messages will be checked regularly during this period.

A few thoughts for the month of November. We had a very nice joint board meeting with Beth El this past week. It is evident to me and to others that Beth El and Temple House of Israel need to become closer. As a small population of Jews in the Valley (and with the growing anti-Semitism in the world) it is to our advantage to be able to speak as one with a common heritage and common missions. More joint activities were discussed that would allow us to become more familiar with each other as individuals and more comfortable on numerous levels. Our goal is to have at least two joint meetings each year and possibly more.

On another note: Many of you know that we operate at a deficit in most years. We are lucky that donations help us to come close to even. But that is not enough. Please consider giving to the Temple as a year-end gift or naming Temple House of Israel in your estate. Your tax advisor may be able to provide a way to help you and the Temple at the same time. If you know fellow Jews who might want to join our congregation and/or support us, please encourage them.

Shalom,
Doug Degen

Special Events

- Rabbi Peter Grumbacher, who was a student Rabbi at Beth El many years ago, is touring a portion of the United States during his fall sabbatical. His purpose is to tell the story of his father's arrest on Kristalnact, internment at Dachau, and subsequent miraculous release. The story continues with his emigration to the U.S. and tour of duty with the United States Army in the European Theatre. Rabbi Grumbacher will present this program at Beth El on Thursday, December 11 at 6 pm. Please come for dinner and what promises to be a wonderful program. Please let Janet Kohen know by phone at 433-1898 or by email at janetacts@adelphia.net by December 8th.
- **Our Pre-Chanukah Chanukah Cookie Decorating Party and Potluck Dinner will be held on Friday, December 12th beginning at 6:00 pm.** Ruth and Don Chodrow are chairing this evening and will be providing latkes. Please bring a dish to share according to the first letter of your last name:
A-I main dish J-R side dish S-Z dessert
Immediately following dinner, we will have a cookie decorating party since we really can't be lighting Chanukiah since it really won't be Chanukah quite yet. The Chodrows will provide some cookies and frostings, but please feel free to bring in pre-baked cookies to decorate. And yes, there will be dreidle games and music! The Judaica Shop will be open so you can purchase your holiday gifts. We have a large supply of menorahs and Chanukah candles.
- **Please, please come to the Annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 14th at 4:00 pm.** We need your input!
- Everyone is welcome to the **Winter Solstice party** at Lynn Hewitt's house on Sunday evening December 21st at 6:00. Please bring a light snack or drink to share and enjoy the solstice with friends. Call Lynn at 377-6704 for directions.

Judaica Shop

We have a large supply of Chanukah candles and chocolate gelt. We also have the Gates of Song songbooks available for \$15, many cards, mezuzahs and other Judaica items. Please let Dianne Mason know of any other items that you would

	<p>like stocked. Dianne can be reached at 885-6254. The shop is normally open during Friday night services. Feel free to call Beryl Gutnick at 886-8958 if you would like to meet at another mutually agreeable time.</p>
<p>News of our Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mazel Tov to Kevin and Danielle and big sister Mackenzie who are all pleased to announce the arrival of Sophie Erin Little, born October 31st. Mother, baby, Daddy and Mackenzie are all doing very well. • Congratulations to Byron Grove-Humphries who played Sir Hugh Evans, the Welsh parson, in the Mary Baldwin production of <i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>. The entire cast was great and Byron was up there with the best of them, in spite of not having any previous acting experience.
<p>Religious School and Pre-School Activities</p>	<p>The students seem to be recovering from the hectic holiday schedule and settling down to lessons again...just in time for more holidays! They especially enjoyed Ken Hanson's presentation about the Dead Sea Scrolls and a close up look at a 200 year-old Torah, as the entire scroll was unwound and nearly encircled the sanctuary! Thank you to Rabbi Joe, Marsha Pillet and Jon Meyer for arranging his visit. Please note the following dates:</p> <p>Nov 30 – No school for Thanksgiving break</p> <p>Dec 14 – Religious school will celebrate Chanukah at 10:30 am. <u>All</u> families are invited to participate, including those not enrolled in religious school. Please let Marsha Pillet (249-4946) know in advance if you are planning to attend so we have an accurate count.</p> <p>Dec 21 & 28 – No school for winter break</p>
<p>Noteworthy Congregational News</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CONTACT! If you have email and haven't been getting occasional notices via email it means we don't have a correct email address for you. If that's the case or if we need an update or don't have your email address at all, please send it to templenews@ntelos.net. At times it's nice to get messages to you quickly! • While doing your Chanukah cleaning, if you come across any Temple library books, please return them. No penalties and we'd love to have them back! • On the other hand, please check out some library books! We have a wonderful library that could broaden your horizons, inform you of history, entertain you with traditional or contemporary tales and perhaps even teach you a thing or three about Judaism. • And speaking of our library, enjoy the wonderful presentation of "Jerusalem Jones and the Mystery of the Dead Sea Scrolls"! Thanks to Beryl Gutnick who purchased and donated Ken Hanson's new DVD, you can enjoy his entire show... just by checking it out from our temple library. • Our special installation service for Rabbi Joe went beautifully. Thanks to all those from both congregations who participated and contributed. Special thanks to Ruth Chodrow and Franklin Blatt who organized the event. Everyone enjoyed the singing led by Sarah Grove-Humphries and Janet Kohen and we especially appreciate Rabbi Scott Sperling's willingness to officiate at this special occasion. Our visitors included members of Staunton City Council and Steve and Jane Paulhus from Staunton Grace Covenant Church and it was wonderful to see Rabbi Lynn Landsberg who joined us to share this simcha. • Our Community Awareness Shabbat held in November was attended by many and enjoyed by all. Friends, neighbors, teachers and colleagues participated in

<p style="text-align: center;">Noteworthy Congregational News</p>	<p>our worship service and heard Rabbi Joe’s wonderful commentary on, among other things, the fact that more than half of the commandments have to do with instructing us in how to behave toward all human kind. Shalom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The next board meeting will be Sunday December 14th at 2:45. • Immediately following the board meeting on December 14th, we will hold our Annual Congregational Meeting at 4:00 pm. Please come! New officers will be elected and we need your votes! 																				
<p style="text-align: center;">News from the Women of the Temple</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR RECIPES (break-the-fast, Shabbat and any dinners all count) to Ruth Chodrow at rchodrow@cfw.com or 811 Selma Blvd., Staunton 24401 or 886-2252 for our new cookbook! • We are still in need of chairpeople for the Passover Community Seder on April 6th as well as the Bake Sale that we intend to hold in May. If you are interested in helping or chairing, please contact Beth Young at 885-1481. There are notes from previous events to help you organize in each case. • We’d like to say HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the known December birthdays: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Pendleton celebrating on the 11th Alan Goldenberg on the 12th Sam Goldenberg’s 3rd birthday on the 14th Beth Young (not her 3rd) also on the 14^h Sarah Grove-Humphries on the 15th Philip Chodrow on the 28th Anna Degen also on the 28th <p>Won’t you share your dates so we can celebrate with you? Shall I start printing the year? Or age? It wouldn’t be so hard to find out that information!</p>																				
<p style="text-align: center;">Notes from the Editor</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any address and/or email address changes and updates for our files would be very much appreciated. Please send them on to me. Thanks! • 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! • Any suggestions you may have for new items, changes, additions or deletions to our bulletin are always welcome. I look forward to hearing from you at templenews@ntelos.net. 																				
<p style="text-align: center;">Contributions</p>	<p>Thank you to these generous people who have recently supported our Temple: We do appreciate your contributions!</p> <table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%;">In Memory of Mildred Degen:</td> <td>Zelda Oppleman</td> </tr> <tr> <td>For the bulletin:</td> <td>Karen Wendt</td> </tr> <tr> <td>For the High Holidays:</td> <td>William Cohen</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Art Goldsmith and Jan Kaufman</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Gloria and Leslie Goldsmith</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Dr. Penny Goldstein</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Sarah and Byron Grove-Humphries</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Ken and Elizabeth Schwartz</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Dahlia Neiss and Adam Caldwell</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>Roman Sorkin</td> </tr> </table>	In Memory of Mildred Degen:	Zelda Oppleman	For the bulletin:	Karen Wendt	For the High Holidays:	William Cohen		Art Goldsmith and Jan Kaufman		Gloria and Leslie Goldsmith		Dr. Penny Goldstein		Sarah and Byron Grove-Humphries		Ken and Elizabeth Schwartz		Dahlia Neiss and Adam Caldwell		Roman Sorkin
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<p style="text-align: center;">Bulletin and</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</p>																				

Membership

of Israel. Please contact Scott Goldenberg, our treasurer, at scottg@cfw.com or 886-0202 or mail your check to THOI, PO Box 1412, Staunton, VA 24401.

Yahrzeits for December

Joseph Barth	Sadie Goldman Jacobson	Simon Rosenthal
Flora Barth	Max Klotz	Alma Wise Samuels
Louis Belfor	Milton Stuart Klotz	Phillip Seltzer
David Brownold	Clara Litvin	Albert Shultz
Hannah Degen	Earl Boyd Nicely	Lydia Switzer
Rose Greenfield	Tina Rosenberg	Rhea Cohen Walters
Aaron Hyman Harris	Abraham Rosenthal	Irvin Weinberg

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December 2003

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 Rabbi's office day 6 Kislev	2 7 Kislev	3 8 Kislev	4 Rabbi's office day 9 Kislev	5 L 4:38p 10 Kislev	6 11 Kislev
7 12 Kislev	8 Rabbi's office day 13 Kislev	9 14 Kislev	10 15 Kislev	11 Rabbi's office day 16 Kislev	12 L 4:39p 6:00p Potluck, cookie dec., 7:30 services 17 Kislev	13 18 Kislev
14 4:00p Congregation Meeting 19 Kislev	15 Rabbi's office day 20 Kislev	16 21 Kislev	17 22 Kislev	18 Rabbi's office day 23 Kislev	19 L 4:41p 24 Kislev	20 Chanukah 25 Kislev
21 6:00p Winter Solstice Party Chanukah 26 Kislev	22 Chanukah 27 Kislev	23 Chanukah 28 Kislev	24 Chanukah 29 Kislev	25 Rosh Chodesh Chanukah 30 Kislev	26 L 4:44p Rosh Chodesh Chanukah 1 Tevet	27 Chanukah 2 Tevet
28 3 Tevet	29 4 Tevet	30 5 Tevet	31 6 Tevet			

Dec. 1	Read Hebrew America class at 7:00
Dec. 8	Read Hebrew America class at 7:00
Dec. 11	Rabbi Peter Grumbacher, a child of a survivor, will speak at Beth El. Call Janet Kohen for details about dinner beforehand - 433-1898
Dec. 12	Pre-Chanukah Potluck dinner at 6:00 followed by cookie decorating: call the Chodrows 886-2252 Shabbat Services at 7:30 PM - Mike and Bonnie Brown and Laura Jean and Asher Brand as hosts
Dec. 14	Temple Board Meeting at 2:45 PM Annual Congregational Meeting at 4:00 PM with election of officers for next year
Dec. 15	Read Hebrew America class at 7:00
Dec. 21	Winter Solstice Party at Lynn Hewitt's home. Call 377-6704 for directions.