



Temple House of Israel Bulletin

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

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December 2004, Kislev/Tevet 5765

From the
Rabbi's Desk

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,

SHALOM!

I hope that you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday (the secular Sukkot!), filled with food, fun, and family; steeped in love, blessings, and lots of all good things.

I am shocked that it is already December! It seems that it was just days ago that it was summer and I was getting ahead by preparing early for the High Holy Days, and here we are almost at Chanukah and the turn of the secular year!

THE CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

As I write this, the month of Cheshvan has already faded into Kislev. The next holiday event on our calendar will be Chanukah on Kislev 25, which this year starts at sundown on the evening of December 7th (through the day of December 8th until sundown), and which runs until sundown on December 15th. The first candle is lit on the 7th, and the last are lit at sundown on the 14th.

As a matter of observance, when Chanukah falls on Shabbat, as it will on the 10th of December this year, the recommended practice is to light the Chanukiah (Chanukah menorah) first, and then light the candles for Shabbat. This way, we don't violate the prohibition on work (lighting a fire) on Shabbat because it is already lit before we usher in the Sabbath.

Also speaking of the recommended practice, our tradition teaches that we add candles to the Chanukiah from Right to Left (the way we read Hebrew), but we light the candles from Left to Right (the way we read English). On the first night the one candle is on the far Right as you face the Chanukiah, and we light that one using the Shammash (the helper candle). On the third night, the candles will be in the first, second and third positions from the Right, and we light them in the opposite order, from the Left, with the third position lit first, again using the Shammash. On the eighth night all eight candles are placed in the Chanukiah starting from the Right, and we light them with the Shammash in reverse order, starting from the Left. This practice is followed to honor the opinions of both the School of Hillel and the School of Shammai, the members of which disagreed on the proper way to light the Chanukiah because one saw the holiday as diminishing over time (less left to celebrate), and the other saw the amount of light and sanctity increasing (each day adding to the light of the holiday).

Rosh Chodesh for the new month of Tevet is the evening of December 12th through to sundown of December 13th. The most noteworthy date in the month of Tevet is Ta'anit Asarah Be'Tevet, the Fast of the 10th of Tevet, a fast day from sunup to sundown commemorating the imposition of the siege of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E (which will fall on December 22nd), leading in a few months up to the commemoration of the destruction of the Temple, observed on Tisha Be'Av (the 9th day of the month of Av).

**From the
Rabbi's Desk**

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Community Awareness Shabbat was a rousing success, as far as I could tell. I hope that others felt similarly. It seemed to me that the visitors were appreciative and learned a bit about us. I know that they were well fed!

LOOKING AHEAD

- December 5th is the Religious School Chanukah celebration.
- December 5th is also the Annual Congregational Meeting at 3 pm.
- December 10th is the THOI Chanukah Dinner and Shabbat service at THOI.
- The Hebrew Introduction/Review class is meeting this month at both congregations, as is the Adult B'nai Mitzvah class, and so too the Confirmation Class and Youth Group.
- There will be a class on the Zohar on December 19th at THOI at 7 pm.

B'virvat shalom (with Blessings of Peace),
Rabbi Joe Blair
December 2004

Office Hours

The Rabbi is in Staunton on Tuesdays and Thursdays and in Harrisonburg on Mondays and Fridays. Please feel free to call or email to set up a time to meet. Please note that the Rabbi will be out of the office on December 13th and from December 24th through January 2nd for winter break.

**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 leave a message on the telephone answering machine at the temple. Messages are checked frequently.

Email: RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com
Beth El Congregation 540-434-2744
Temple House of Israel 540-886-4091
Home 434-971-4741 [For emergencies only, please]

**Noteworthy
Congregational
News**

**You are cordially invited (read: urged) to attend the
Annual Congregational Meeting
Sunday December 5, 2004 at 3:00 pm**

**There will be a discussion concerning a proposed dues increase
and your input is respectfully requested**

- Lynn Hewitt is again hosting her **Winter Solstice party on December 18th at 6 pm**. Bring a light snack or drink to share and enjoy the solstice (well, it's very close to the solstice!) with friends. Call Lynn at 377-6704 for directions.

Noteworthy

- Our **Chanukah Potluck Dinner** will be held on **Friday, December 10th** at

Congregational
News

6:00 pm. We'll celebrate with latkes – thanks to the Bonnie and Mike Brown and Dianne Mason – and light our menorahs and spin the dreidle. Bring your menorahs and 5 candles (it'll be the 4th night + the shamas), and if your last name begins with:

A through M please bring a dessert or side dish to share
N through Z please bring an entrée to share.

- Ralph Cohen's discussion of anti-Semitism and Shakespeare was an excellent introduction to Shenandoah Shakespeare's production of "The Merchant of Venice". Those who participated in this joint event were treated to new insight and saw the play with a new perspective.
- CD recordings of the outstanding concert of Jewish music held at the temple in November are available from Sarah Grove-Humphries for \$3 (to cover the duplication costs). What an absolutely joyful afternoon of music that was! Thanks to Sarah for selecting such up-lifting music and for the hours spent rehearsing and coaching the members of Lyrisa in Hebrew! Sarah reports that Lyrisa (aka SARAH AND THE DIXIE SCHICKSAS) thoroughly enjoyed themselves and they look forward to singing another concert at the Temple. Editor's note: Lyrisa clearly knew how to sing long before their concert for us last month, but their quick grasp of Hebrew and Jewish minor keys were really impressive.
- Thanks to all who have helped toward the renovation of the social hall! What began as a generous library bat mitzvah project has become a generous social hall renovation project! If you've been in the temple recently, you're sure to have noticed the changes taking place. The final product will be worth the inconvenience of dust and mayhem while our construction and remodeling continue. Your contributions toward our completion continue to be very much appreciated.
- You're welcome to attend the next **Temple board meeting** on **January 27th at 7:00** in the temple social hall.

News of our
Community

- If you enjoyed the music of Lyrisa, here's another opportunity. Sarah Grove-Humphries will direct Lyrisa, (definitely not in Hebrew this time) at the 8th annual "Christmas at Augusta Stone" benefit concert to be held at Augusta Stone Church in Ft. Defiance on Mon., Dec. 6th at 7:30. In addition to Lyrisa, there are five other performance groups. A free will offering will benefit the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank.
- Sarah's Music Studio is offering the early music program Musikgarten for children from birth to age 5. Musikgarten's programs awaken and develop a young child's natural joy and talent for making music. Music's melodic and rhythmic patterns stimulate neural pathways in the brain and develop listening skills, the foremost necessity for learning. Classes begin the week of January 11, 2005 and are held at the Staunton Academy of Ballet, 105 N. Augusta Street. If you or someone who know is interest in Musikgarten classes, please contact Sarah Grove-Humphries at 540-885-4223 or at humphries@rica.net. For more information about Musikgarten, please call 1-800-216-6864 or visit them on the web at www.musikgarten.org.

News from the

- Thanks to all who donated items for our **yard sale** held in October. Special thanks to Shirley and Rafael Brand for chairing this event and to Vera Flint,

Women's Group

Dianne Mason, Rosalie Waterman and all who helped with setting up and selling. With a little help from our chair-people, we made a little over \$500!

- Our Shabbat dinner prior to Community Awareness Shabbat was a wonderful success. Thanks to Shirley Brand, Laura Jean Brand, Ruth Chodrow, Vera Flint, Rachel Jordan, Marsha Pillet, Rosalie Waterman and Beth Young who cooked and served a delicious meal! The chaos in the kitchen really doesn't show at the dinner table, does it?
The Community Awareness Service was very warmly received by all who attended!
- **Remember to keep selling our cookbook!** It makes a great gift and is joyfully received by everyone. We're very close to our break-even point.
- The Birthday Fairy fell asleep last month so all those who celebrated birthdays in November really didn't get a year older. Congratulations to:
Karen Blair and Paul Klein (who are probably grateful for the extra year)
Jordan Kristoff, Ian Jordan and David Young (who don't know any better)
Leah Farmer (who is willing to celebrate 70 years again next year!)
Asher Brand (who probably isn't really concerned either way!)
And Happy Anniversary to our November nuptials:
Diane and Paul Klein
Sarah and Byron Grove-Humphries

We wish the following friends a **HAPPY BIRTHDAY** in December:

Robert Pendleton on December 11th
 Alan Goldenberg on the 12th
 Sam Goldenberg on the 14th
 Beth Young, also on the 14th
 Sarah Grove-Humphries
 Anna Degen on Dec. 28th
 Philip Chodrow also on the 28th
 Ben Freedman on the 31st.

- The **next Women's Group meeting** will be **Sunday, January 9th at 2:00 pm.**

<p>Confirmation Class</p>	<p>Confirmation Class will meet on Sunday, December 19 at 12:30 at Beth El. The topic will be "Ethical Dilemmas: Assimilation; Inter-dating and Intermarriage?"</p>
<p>Youth Group SHORTY</p>	<p>Sunday, December 19 at 1:30 the youth group will meet at Beth El, immediately following the Confirmation Class discussion. Activities to be announced.</p>
<p>Religious School</p>	<p>Religious School: December 5 – Chanukah party, December 12 and 19 No school on December 26 or January 2.</p>
<p>Judaica Shop</p>	<p>Happy Chanukah from The Judaica Shop! We have many gift items from which to choose, wrapping paper, gift tags, children's items, as well as menorahs, candles and Chanukah gelt in stock. We celebrate the first night of Chanukah on Tuesday, December 7th, so it's time to get ready.... If you have any special needs, please call Dianne Mason at 885-6254.</p>
<p>Staunton Book Group</p>	<p>From AJ: "Our book group appears to be affording us a wonderful way to not only focus our minds on readings we might never have even browsed through but also to</p>

	<p>understand each other better and so, just maybe it is another small step that we will take with us into everyday life. We seem to have, inadvertently, developed a theme in these readings of survival and <u>The Pianist</u> with its incredible interplay of sometimes only passing encounters with poignant results leads us to our next book. This will be our first novel but it is based on a true-life story. Beautiful, frightening, evocative and pertinent to today, set in Antarctica during World War II, <u>White Out</u> is by the deceased British journalist James Marshall. There are 3 copies of this book in the Augusta County system. Our gatherings are informal and open to members and friends, so, come along! We'll meet at Natasha Benenson's home on January 20th." Directions and time will follow in the January bulletin.</p>		
Film Series	<p>The film from October, "Monsieur Ibrahim", was enjoyed by all. The next film will be held in January with date and film title to be announced.</p>		
Notes from the Editor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to those of you who call me and fill me in on all the gossip! If you'd like to see your news – or anything else in the bulletin - please don't hesitate to contact me. • The deadline for each issue is the 20th of the preceding month. January's bulletin will go to press on December 20th. 		
Donations	<p>Thanks to all these generous people for their contributions to our temple community during the past month. Your financial commitment to Temple House of Israel is greatly appreciated.</p> <p>For our High Holiday Memorial Service Rachel Peretz Larry and Patty Sutker</p> <p>In honor of Sarah Grove-Humphries' Bat Mitzvah Paul Klein Ralph Degen</p> <p>In honor of Sara Brody's Bat Mitzvah Paul Klein</p> <p>For the Social Hall Renovation..... Don and Ruth Chodrow Ralph Degen</p> <p>For the Social Hall in honor of Roz Kamerman Joan Kluger</p> <p>In honor of Roz Kamerman Debby Bishop</p> <p>For the High Holidays Steve Rosenberg</p> <p>General Donations Ken Schwartz Tzedakah Box</p>		
Yahrzeits for December	Joseph L. 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			1	2 Torah study noon; Hebrew Refresher at 7	3	4
5 Adult B'nai Mitzvah 1-3 @ THOI Staunton Congregational Meeting at 3:00	6	7 Rabbi's office day	8	9 Torah study noon; Hebrew Refresher at 7	10 Chanukah potluck at 6 Shabbat Services at 7:30pm	11
12 Adult B'nai Mitzvah 2-4 pm @ BE	13	14 Rabbi's office day	15	16 Torah study noon Hebrew Review Class 7-9 pm	17 Shabbat Services at 7:30	18
19 Youth Group at 12:30; Confirm. Class at 1:30; Lecture Series/ The Zohar 7- 8:30 @ THOI	20	21 Rabbi's office day	22	23 Torah study noon	24 WINTER BREAK THROUGH JANUARY 2	25

Dec 2	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome!
Dec 5	Adult B'nai Mitzvah class 1-3 in the social hall; Congregational Meeting at 3:00 pm
Dec 7	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Dec 9	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome! Hebrew Introduction/Refresher 7-9 pm
Dec 10	Chanukah potluck dinner at 6:00 – Bonnie & Mike Brown and Dianne Mason hosts Shabbat Services at 7:30
Dec 14	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Dec 16	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome! Hebrew Introduction/Refresher 7-9 pm
Dec 17	Shabbat Services at 7:30 – oneg by Ellen & Dan Schorsch 942-3149 and Nancy Wi488
Dec 19	Lecture Series: The Zohar 7-8:30 in the social hall
Dec 21	Rabbi's office day 10 am – 5 pm
Dec 23	Rabbi's office day 11 am – 7 pm; Torah study at noon; everyone is welcome!

