



Temple House of Israel Bulletin

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

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 1412, Staunton VA 24402

Web Address: <http://www.thoi.org>

December 2006, Cheshvan/Kislev 5767

From The Rabbi's Desk

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,
SHALOM! SHALOM!

I am writing this article in mid-November, as we feel the cold of Fall at night. Although there are no Jewish holidays (other than Shabbat/Sabbath and Rosh Chodesh/New month) coming soon, it is a time of secular holidays and events. In just a short time in America we will all be celebrating Thanksgiving. As you will read this message after that day, know that I wish(ed) each of you a lovely time full of good food, fun, family and lots of love. I will be enjoying the opportunity to visit with my family and to share with them a day on which we recall all our many blessings.

The Jewish Calendar & Holidays

As I write this, we are in the midst of the month of Cheshvan, which runs until November 20th, and November 21st and 22nd are Rosh Chodesh for the month of Kislev. Kislev is a much-anticipated time for most children: the twenty-fifth of Kislev is the beginning of Chanukah, the next holiday on our calendar (not counting Shabbat). A time noted for the giving of presents in America, Chanukah falls this year on the evening of December 15th through sundown on December 23rd. Get ready: get out your dreidels (four sided tops to play a gambling game), chanukiah menorahs (nine-branched oil or candle holders), and Chanukah gelt (chocolate coins used to play dreidels), and get ready to play, give and receive gifts, and enjoy latkes (oil fried potato pancakes) and sufganiyot (oil fried jelly donuts)!

The month of Kislev ends during Chanukah. The 21st and 22nd of December are Rosh Chodesh for the month of Tevet, which continues until January 19th. January 20th will be Rosh Chodesh for the month of Shevat.

During the month of Tevet, we have a fast day on December 31st. It is Tzom Asarah BeTevet (the fast of the 10th of Tevet).

Looking ahead, in the month of Shevat we will celebrate Tu Bi'Shevat (the 15th of Shevat). This year Tu Bi'Shevat falls on February 2nd-3rd. This is the new year for the Trees, sort of a Jewish Arbor day, and we have a seder to celebrate the fruits of trees. This celebration has come to have ties to the environment and ecology over the years, as well as gaining an understanding in terms of mysticism and Kabbalah. We will certainly talk more about it closer to that date.

The Congregational Calendar

Allow me to point out a few items that are coming up soon.

- December 1st and 2nd we have a Bat Mitzvah. Riff Blair will be called to the Torah and hopes you will celebrate with her. Please RSVP by November 25th to Rabbi Joe.
- Be sure to attend the Annual Congregational Meeting on December 3rd at 3:00 pm. We will be covering things that are important to the Congregation,

	<p>including a change to the Constitution & Bylaws. It is also a chance for you to learn and to ask questions about what is happening, why and how, and what plans exist for the future. This is time well-spent, and an investment in our congregation and Jewish life in the community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ December 9th from 5:30 to 11 Shorty will offer a <u>Parent's night out!</u> Shorty will be available for childcare: children can be dropped off at Beth El, and will be fed, entertained, and cared for while parents take a night off. This will take place in Harrisonburg at Beth El, for a VERY reasonable price! Watch for more information to be forthcoming very soon. ▪ December 10th at Beth El, and December 14th at THOI, there will be an initial meeting of those interested in our <u>Israel Trip</u>. We will talk about the options, plans, itinerary, and some background. You can attend either meeting: both meetings will be at 7 pm. We are having two meetings for the convenience of participants, and so no one will be unable to attend due to another commitment. ▪ Thursday, December 21st, at THOI, there will be a second session on the <u>Chevrah Kadishah</u> (the 'holy society' that deals with preparations of the dead) at 7 pm. This session will focus on some text studies and background readings. All who are interested are welcome. I am working on arranging a practical training session (a what and how-to session) in January or February, bringing in some of the individuals who helped to establish the Chevrah in Charlottesville. If you have any interest in learning about the Chevrah, or might be interested in participating, please put this session on your calendar and make every effort to attend. ▪ There will be a <u>Torah Lishmah</u> (Study Torah simply for the sake of study) of the Parashat Hashavuah (weekly Torah Portion) the following Fridays in December: the 1st, 8th, 15th, and 22nd. In January, it will be on each Friday. We meet at noon at THOI. No prior knowledge is required. Bring a lunch and eat while we discuss Torah! ▪ <u>Talmud Torah Limud</u> (Torah Learning) will be held at Beth El on December 18th at 6 to 7 pm. Bring a meal, and eat while you learn and talk! ▪ The office will be closed from December 23rd through January 1st. <p>As you can see, we have a full and active calendar! It is a joy to know that we are working together to build a vibrant Jewish community.</p> <p>B'virkat shalom (with Blessings of Peace) and best wishes for the new secular year, Rabbi Joe</p>
<p>Message from the President</p>	<p>Dear Congregants,</p> <p>It's been a fabulous year so far, with lots of new members, lots of donations and many new people volunteering. I am greatly encouraged by the energy of our small community.</p> <p>PLEASE CONTINUE THAT ENERGY AND ATTEND THE CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, DECEMBER 3 AT 3 P.M.</p> <p>We would love to update you on all that has happened, is happening and will happen, AND we need you to vote on a small bylaws change.</p> <p>HOPE TO SEE YOU ALL THERE. ----- Lisa Solod</p>

<p>Notes from the Board Meeting</p>	<p>Laurie Laterza and her husband Dean and two children have been approved for membership. The membership form has been updated. An updated membership list will be sent out in January along with the invoices. ▪ The Rabbi mentioned financial obstacles for the temple youth, especially for travel to NFTY events and camp. Laura Jean will check for sponsors. Paul and Rabbi Joe are applying for the Legacy Project Grant. February 16 from 5:00 – 7:30 will be a fundraising dinner at L’Italia restaurant in Staunton. A Jewish film festival is being planned at the Visulite for a weekend in April. ▪ The Ark has a bucket of Damp-Rid in it. The roof was supposed to have been repaired. The trees have been trimmed by Pen Goodall who donated his work. ▪ A mitzvah day is planned for Dec. 10th. ▪ Tabernacle Presbyterian is now renting our building on Sunday evenings 6-10 pm. Freedom Bible Church will be asked to sign a new lease. ▪ The board voted to approve the amendment to the by-laws making the Trustees non-voting members of the Board of Directors. The motion will be brought to the Congregational Meeting. ▪ Lisa emphasized the need for long-term planning based on information she gained at the recent MAC conference. ▪ We now have 53 member units.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">----- From the minutes taken by Ruth Chodrow</p>								
<p>Noteworthy Congregational News</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The next board meeting will be just prior to the congregational meeting, December 3 at 2:00 pm. ▪ The Annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, Dec. 3rd at 3:00 pm. There are proposed changes to the temple constitution (you’ve already received those via e-mail if you have it or snail mail if you don’t) which need your vote. Please read the proposed changes and come voice your opinion! ▪ Plan to attend our next MITZVAH DAY, December 10th from 1-5 pm. We need to clear the roof of leaves and finish the ceiling tiles. ▪ Our traditional Chanukah Party will be Friday, December 15th beginning with a potluck dinner at 6:00 pm. Thanks in advance to Rosalie Waterman and Bonnie Brown who are chairing the evening celebration. If your last name begins with: <table style="margin-left: 40px; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="padding-right: 20px;">A-G</td> <td>please bring:</td> </tr> <tr> <td>H-N</td> <td>main dish</td> </tr> <tr> <td>O-Z</td> <td>side dish or salad</td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td>dessert</td> </tr> </table> ▪ Welcome to both Steve and Catherine Rosenberg who joined the synagogue last month. ▪ Welcome also to Laurie and Dean Laterza and their two sons, ages 6 and 8. We’re happy to have them as members of our temple community. ▪ Our Community Awareness Shabbat was another success with many guests. Special thanks to Janet Brody and Doug Degen for the extensive, delicious oneg they provided. ▪ Our commemoration of <u>Kristallnacht</u> with Holocaust survivor Joe Dziubak was an amazing opportunity. Joe spoke from the heart to a capacity crowd (although not quite the 350 quoted in the News Leader.) and moved each and every person in attendance. Thanks to Rabbi Joe for his flexible scheduling, always willing to add another memorable event for our education, and thanks again to Katharine Gorsuch and Avi Mizrachi for making the necessary arrangements with the Miami Holocaust Museum, presenting us with and sponsoring the refreshments for this incredible program. 	A-G	please bring:	H-N	main dish	O-Z	side dish or salad		dessert
A-G	please bring:								
H-N	main dish								
O-Z	side dish or salad								
	dessert								

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The Caring Committee is a group of congregants that help mobilize our community to support those members experiencing difficulties. They are now officially in operation. Please know that if you know of anyone who is ill or who may need assistance, or if you are in that situation, we want you to call and let the committee members know. They will let other members of our community know of the need and help to facilitate having those needs met. Please call one of the committee members. AJ Hartung 337-6836 Rosalie Waterman 886-1713 or caring-comitee1@thoi.org Lou Boden 896-6960 or caring-committee2@thoi.org Rabbi Joe Blair 886-4091 or rabbi@thoi.org <p>When one of us learns of a community member in need of assistance, we will ask for members of our community to pitch in and volunteer to take on tasks as needed. Please respond positively and fulfill your part in making our community an even better place to live! So if you have an emergency, are in need of someone to help you in some way, or would like a visit from the Rabbi or a congregant, please remember to contact the Caring Committee to let us know.</p>
<p>News of our Community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Condolences to Sarah Grove-Humphries on the death of her grandfather in Pennsylvania on October 27th. ▪ Further condolences to Byron Grove Humphries on the death of his father November 17th in Florida. ▪ Condolences also to Linda Blazer on the death of her uncle Charles. ▪ We wish a refuah shelemah to David Brody who is home recovering from a heart attack suffered November 6th. ▪ And to Ken Schwartz who is home after suffering a stroke on November 5th. ▪ We join as a congregation in saying the Misha Berach for: Bonnie Brown and her family for her father, Paul Lowe. Rachel Peretz-Combs and Paul Combs for Dee Fizdale, David Comes and Vicki Bickford.. Lisa Solod for her mother, Fredi Solod. Marsha Pillet for her step-father and her mother, Herb Lerner and Claire Lerner Laurie Berman for her mother, Helene Berman-Seidenfeld Betty Menaker Dan Schorsch Nancy Witt
<p>News from the Women's Group</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remember that <u>Sharing our Best: Favorite Recipes from Temple House of Israel</u> makes an excellent holiday gift. It's in stock and only \$8.... ▪ Our Shabbat dinner on November 3rd was once again a delicious dinner and enjoyable evening. Thanks to Marsha Pillet for her salad and the wine, Natasha Benenson who brought roasted potatoes, Elise Pullen for her baked apples, Beth Young for the challah and roasted vegetable couscous and Rosalie Waterman for our hors d'oeuvres. ▪ Special thanks to those who are contributing goodies to make Riff Blair's Bat Mitzvah Oneg Shabbat a delicious one. AJ, Beth, Elise, Marsha, Natasha, Rosalie, and Ruth. <p>Happy Birthdays to be celebrated in December:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Gregg Goldenberg on December 6th ▪ Robert Pendleton on December 11th ▪ Alan Goldenberg on the 12th ▪ Beth Young on the 14th ▪ Sam Goldenberg also on the 14th ▪ Sarah Grove-Humphries on the 15th ▪ Rosalie Waterman on the 19th ▪ Jesse Landsberg Ward on the 25th ▪ Anna Degen on the 28th ▪ Philip Chodrow also on the 28th ▪ Ben Freedman on the 31st <p>Happy Anniversary to :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rachel and Tony Jordan celebrating on December 29th
<p>Religious School</p>	<p>Special kudos to Tom Pereles and Laura Jean Brand who are both teaching this year. Thank you!</p> <p>Greetings from the Beth El/Temple House of Israel Religious School! November was a quick, but very busy month.</p> <p>Two of our Daled students, Rachel Berger and Jacob Stein, went to MAJYK (NFTY's Mid-Atlantic Junior Youth Kallah) in Roanoke, November 10-12. Reform Jewish teens came together for learning, fun, and a chance to get to know one another. Our students spoke very highly of the experience -- ask them about it when you get a chance!</p> <p>On November 19th, the Religious School hosted a Shabbat Family Education program. Members from both the Beth El and THOI congregations as well as the religious school families joined together to discuss our weekly holiday - Shabbat. The Rabbi led a discussion, Roberta Stein led the children in song and dance, and our principals and teachers helped everyone with wonderful crafts including: painting glass Shabbat candlesticks, creating a family Challah cover with handprints, painting tzedakah boxes, rolling our own Havdalah candle with beeswax, and painting a spice box. We all came together at the end for a mock Sabbath meal, Zemirot, and then a discussion and celebration of Havdalah. In addition to their crafts, everyone received a booklet of Shabbat blessings for use at home. The take home message was that we can all find ways to make the Sabbath day special for each of our families.</p> <p>This December and January, we hope you will join us for the following Religious School events: Sunday, December 17th - Chanukah Celebration Sunday, January 28th - Tu B'Shevat Seder</p> <p>We thank the congregations for their support of the Religious School and we wish everyone a Happy Hanukkah. And all good things - good health, happiness, and peace in the New Year! Chag Sameach!</p> <p style="text-align: right;">-----Dara, Linda, and Ruth</p>
<p>B'nai Mitzvah</p>	<p>If you are interested in studying for and having your own B'nai Mitzvah, or in learning to leyn (read/chant) Torah and/or Haftarah, or to lead services, or you wish to discuss conversion, please be in touch with Rabbi Joe.</p>

<p>Adult Education</p>	<p>Torah Parashiot</p> <p>Torah parashiot (weekly portions) for this month include Vayetzei, Vayishlach, Vayeshev, Miketz, and Vayigash, from Bereshit (Genesis) chapters 29 to 46.</p> <p>Included among the topics in these readings are the stories of Jacob’s dream, his service to Laban for Rachel and Leah, their parting, wrestling with the angel, the encounter with Esau, the story of Dinah, the birth of Benyamin, Joseph’s dream and sale into slavery, the story of Tamar, the rise of Joseph, the reunion of the brothers, settling in Egypt, blessing of the sons of Joseph, death of Jacob, and the death of Joseph.</p> <p>Torah Lishmah will try to touch on each of these parashiot as we move through the Torah. Come to THOI at noon on Fridays, bring your lunch, and add your voice to our conversation.</p> <p>For Talmud Torah Limud we will focus on the story and commentaries concerning Jacob’s dream, using a book by Lawrence Kushner as the basis of our discussion. This will be from 6 to 7 pm on December 18th at Beth El. This story is rich and wonderful. Come talk about it! Bring a meal and join us for the ongoing conversation and rich learning that Torah affords all of us.</p> <p>General Adult Education</p> <p>On November the 12th at 6 pm at Beth El I showed a film and afterwards lead a discussion on some of the Jewish themes in that film. The film was Divan, a story of Hasidim, rebbes, and a couch. If you missed the evening, you can still rent this wonderful documentary film locally.</p> <p>The next film will be shown on January 21st at 6 pm. Again, I plan to be done by 9, as it is a work/school night. I have chosen a marvelous film, an Israeli movie in Hebrew, Arabic, German, and English, with subtitles. It is called Lalekhet al mayim (Walk on Water). It is a story about a mossad (secret service) agent, a nazi still at large, and a tangle of relationships. This is definitely a film you will want to see. I think it is unrated, and there is use of some language, and some nudity is shown, which probably makes it unsuitable for younger children. Come view the movie, and talk about your thoughts on it. Free to members!</p> <p>Conversion Classes</p> <p>Although I will not be offering the formal Introduction to Judaism class this year, I am teaching some classes that will cover some of the same information and material as part of the Adult Education offerings. Among those classes that may be useful for this purpose are: the five session Crash Course in Basic Judaism to begin in April, the four Crash Courses in Jewish Holidays (we have already had two of them), the two Meet the Talmud sessions, the single session classes on the Five Megillot and Pirke Avot, Talmud Torah Limud, Torah Lishmah, and the Film and Discussion sessions. I believe that these are all appropriate for those considering conversion, as well as those simply interested in learning more about Judaism, whatever their level of knowledge. If you are interested in the conversion process and what it entails, please contact Rabbi Joe.</p>
<p>Judaica Shop</p>	<p>AJ Hartung will be ordering for Chanukah in the next few weeks. Please contact her at 337-3863 for any special needs. Catalogs are available for your perusal and AJ will be happy to meet with you at the temple to look over the selections!</p>

Young Adult Group	Last year it was “Latkes and Vodka”. This year Lesley Kipling is hosting a “Gin and Jews” Hannukah party on December 16th . The party starts at 7:00 at 2437 Avalon Woods Drive in Harrisonburg (right off of Reservoir Street). Call Lesley at 202-577-4706 if you need directions. Feel free to bring a date or friend.		
Youth Group and Confirmation Class	Shorty (our Youth Group) is meeting regularly and keeping busy. They are looking forward to all the events planned, including Parent’s Night Out in December, a January fund-raising dinner at THOI with a service, the ski-weekend at Beth El, and some Social Action programs. Shorty is in the middle of a busy and wonderful year, but if you, or someone in your family, is eligible for membership in Shorty (post-B’nai Mitzvah age through Senior year in High School), and not yet a member, please be in touch with Rabbi Joe or Sherri Alt, or ask one of our members, and get involved! Don’t miss this fantastic program that lets you meet really cool Jews from all over the world!		
Film Series	No film for December (aren’t our lives busy enough?!), but we’ll resume in January on Saturday evenings at 7:00 pm. In November, the film was <i>Divan</i> , an interesting documentary that Shirley picked out. Don’t forget our Film Festival which will be held at the Visulite Theater in April.		
Donations	Thank you to these generous people who have made contributions to the Temple during the previous month. These are in addition to those donations made for Yizkor. We greatly appreciate your donations! In memory of Bennie SragovitzBeth and Richard Young In memory of Shirley and Samuel Zweg Samantha Adato In appreciation of Temple House of Israel..Rabbi Sue Elwell and Nurit Shein For the general fundSimon LevyCrys Sragovitz		
Notes from the Editor	If you’d like to include anything, please have your information, comments and suggestions to me by December 20th for the January newsletter.		
From the Web Maven	If you haven’t yet visited the Rabbi’s web-log (blog), you should! Find it online at http://www.thoi.org/blog/ Rabbi Joe writes of the issues on his mind and information that he believes congregants and people around the world might enjoy. We have also created the blog so that temple members can log their thoughts on themes related to Judaism in a small community. If you are interested in contributing to the blog, please contact the Rabbi who can help you get started. Basic comfort working on the Internet required.		
Yahrzeits for November	Burton Blair	Jack Brodsky	Fannie Cohen
	George Degen	Betty Donenfeld	Max Freeman
	Esther Goldberg	Julius Goldeberg	Beryl Gutnick
	Harry Harris	Ada Kaufman	Leah Kirmko
	Paul Lewis	Ralph Lurie	Abraham Peretz
	Bernice Raskin	Joseph Rosen	Ralph Rosen
	Louis Rosenthal	Leopold Schorsch	Ethel Shapiro
	Louis Shapiro	Fannie Strauss	Fannie Switzer
	Julius Switzer	Jacob Wilhelm	

Temple Contacts	Rabbi	Joe Blair	886-4091 or rabbi@thoi.org
	President	Lisa Solod	463-7637 or president@thoi.org
	Past President	Paul Klein	past-president@thoi.org
	V. P. of Membership	Laurie Berman	885-2925 or membership@thoi.org
	V. P. of Building/Grounds	Michael Brown	885-3809 or building@thoi.org
	Secretary	Ruth Chodrow	886-2252 or secretary@thoi.org
	Treasurer	Laura Jean Brand	942-3656 or treasurer@thoi.org
	Director at large	Rachel Jordan	804-440-5839 or director-at-large@thoi.org
	Trustees	Doug Degen	886-8651 or trustees2@thoi.org
		Alan Goldenberg	trustees3@thoi.org
		Richard Young	885-1481 or trustees@thoi.org
	Cantorial Soloist	Sarah Grove-Humphries	885-4223 or cantor@thoi.org
	Temple Web Maven	M Conner	website@thoi.org
	Bulletin Editor	Beth Young	885-1481 or bulletin@thoi.org
	Bulletin Circulation	A.J. Hartung	337-6836
	Shorty (youth group)	Sheri Alt	youth-group@thoi.org
	Religious School	Linda Kohn	religious-school@thoi.org
	Young Adults Group	Natasha Benenson.	young-adults@thoi.org
	Caring Committee	AJ Hartung	337-6836
		Rosalie	caring-committee1@thoi.org or
	Waterman	886-1713	
	Lou Boden	caring-committee2@thoi.org or	
		886-6059	
Film Series	Shirley Brand	949-0529 or films@thoi.org	

December					1 Torah study at noon Shabbat services at 7:30 Bat Mitzvah	2 Bat Mitzvah Shabbat services at 10:00
3 Religious School Annual Congregational meeting at 3-5 pm	4	5	6	7 Interfaith Association Meeting at 12 Intro to Hebrew at 7	8 Torah study at noon	9
10 Religious School	11	12	13	14 Israel trip meet at 7:00	15 Torah study at noon Chanukah Dinner at 6 Shabbat services at 7:30	16 Tot Shabbat at 10:00
17 Religious School	18 Talmud Torah Limud at Beth El at 6-7 Jacob's dream	19	20	21 Chevrah Kadishah meet at 7:00	22 Torah study at noon	23
24 No religious school	25	26	27	28	29	30
31 No religious school	1	2	3	4	5 Torah study at noon Youth group fund-raising dinner at 6 Youth Group Shabbat service at 7:30	6

Dec 1	Intro to Hebrew at 7:00 Shabbat Services + Bat Mitzvah of Riff Blair at 7:30 – the Women's Group oneg hosts
Dec 2	Bat Mitzvah of Riff Blair at 10:00 am
Dec 3	Board Meeting at 2:00; Annual Congregational Meeting at 3 pm
Dec 7	Intro to Hebrew at 7:00
Dec 8	Torah study at noon
Dec 14	Meeting for those planning to go on the Israel trip – 7:00 pm
Dec 15	Torah study at noon Chanukah Potluck Dinner at 6:00 – Bonnie and Mike Brown, and Rosalie and David Waterman Shabbat Services at 7:30
Dec 16	Tot Shabbat at 10:00
Dec 18	Talmud Torah Limud at Beth El at 6 pm
Dec 21	Chevrah Kadishah group meeting for anyone interested at 7:00 pm
Dec 22	Torah study at noon
Dec 24, 31	No religious school