



# Temple B'nai Abraham

Temple B'nai Abraham  
President – Robin Affrime

**The Temple Shofar**  
Rabbi Julie Pfau

Sarah Seidel Sisterhood  
President - Faith Hupfl

January 2011

## Rabbi's Message

Tu B'Shevat, the new year for trees, is one of my favorite Jewish holidays. (Although, I must confess that I have many favorites.) The holiday falls on the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month of Shevat, which will correspond this year to January 19 in the secular calendar. Since one of my metaphors for understanding God is as The Process of Growth, Tu B'Shevat provides me a particularly apt opportunity for contemplation of the ways God is growing into the world.

Several years ago, when Tu B'Shevat came around, I was trying to make a decision about whether to apply for rabbinical school. That day, I went out to meditate on a tree that I had often admired and the experience gave me insight into the decision. As I sat on the dormant grass gazing at the tree, I reflected on what the tree had to teach me about the beautiful ways God could grow in my life. I noticed that its branches seemed evenly proportioned, reaching out in all directions in a way that was balanced from every angle. Some trees have a few thick branches that are dominant and they seem to reach primarily in just a few directions. I realized that I wanted to grow like this tree – I wanted my learning to be expansive rather than focused on only a few areas and I also wanted balance in my life.

Reflecting on a tree or its fruit to gain insight is a very Jewish practice and not just on Tu B'Shevat. In Pirkei Avot 3:17, Rabbi Elazar ben Azaria reflects on characteristics of trees as a way to teach about the relative importance of wisdom and good deeds – he compares good deeds to roots and wisdom to branches. If a tree has more branches (wisdom) than it does roots (good deeds) it is likely to overbalance and tip over in the wind. But if its roots are expansive, then it will remain solidly grounded no matter the winds that buffet it. This is an important lesson for individuals and also for communities – learning is valuable, but when faced with life's storms, stability and endurance are insured by deep and expansive roots. Deep and expansive roots are the kinds that form in a community when members reach out and support each other in a variety of ways – helping to make a minyan, hosting an

oneg, contributing to children's Hebrew education, and befriending new members by inviting them over for dinner or a movie.

We build community in tangible and intangible ways – through dues, donations, and physical labor; but also through forming networks of caring relationships. All of these things are investments in community. We do them for ourselves and for those who come after us. This is in keeping with another traditional lesson derived from trees that is found in the Babylonian Talmud (Ta'anit 23a):

Once while Honi HaMa'agal (the circle-maker) was walking down the road, he saw a man planting a carob tree. Honi asked, "How many years will it take for this tree to bear fruit?" The man answered that it would take 70 years. Honi said, "Are you so healthy that you expect to live that long to enjoy its fruit?" The man answered, "I found a fruitful world, because my forebears planted for me. Thus I shall do for my children."

The approach of Tu B'Shevat is an opportunity to reflect on how we can grow as individuals and a community. How are our roots and branches? What kinds of fruits do we hope to bear? Where and how can we find God growing? What can we do to nurture that growth in ourselves and others? What seeds can we plant that will someday nourish others?

In the midst of winter, it is important to remember how appearances can be deceiving. Even when things seem bare and lifeless, the trees are still full of life-giving sap and seeds are waiting below the earth just waiting to spring to life. Sometimes it can seem that we aren't growing or that God is absent. But appearances can be deceiving, and we might just need to look more deeply to pick up the clues.

May we all be blessed to discover God's growth flourishing in our lives and community.

Shalom,  
Rabbi Pfau



Temple B'nai Abraham is affiliated with  
the Jewish Reconstruction Federation.

[www.jrf.org](http://www.jrf.org)

## Temple B'nai Abraham Officers

### **Officers:**

President	Robin Affrime
Executive Vice President	Charlie Weiss
Religious Vice President	Sid Morginstin
Financial Vice President	Mike Rosen
Recording Secretary	Susan Giachetti
Past President	Betsy Ramos

### **Trustees:**

Religious School Chair	Linda Osman
Membership Chair	Kim Aubry
Building Chair	Eileen Gale

## YAHZEIT LIST

### January 7

Jennie Groveman, mother in law of Seena Groveman  
Minnie Gutstein, mother of Herman Gutstein  
Rose Wasserman, mother of Linda Bowker  
Ida Josephson, mother of Sam Josephson  
Minnie Kaufman, grandmother of Phyllis Busch  
Harry Gutstein, father of Herman Gutstein  
Joseph Schwartz, grandfather of Phyllis Chudoff

### January 14

Rose Goldberg, mother of Phyllis Kamer  
Morris Herzog, brother of Madge Rosen

### January 21

Jerry Urken, father of Gail Gernamous  
Morris Miller, father of Ilene & Roslyn Miller

### February 4

Max Kessler, father of Henry Kessler  
Nathan Goldman, father of Maxine & Philip Goldman  
Rose Kaiser, mother of Eileen Gale

If there is a name that you would like added to the synagogue's yahrzeit list, please contact Sid Morginstin at 609-298-2891. You will receive a card annually reminding you of your yahrzeit, and the name will be announced at services at which time you will be able to recite Kaddish.

The Trackman Family wishes to thank the community for all their support, concern and generosity during this trying and sad time in our family. Words cannot express our deep feelings for all of you. May we go from strength to strength.

**Mazel Tov to Brian and Maribeth  
Epstein on the birth of their  
daughter Ella Grace,  
Tuesday, December 14, 2010.**

## Tot Shabbat News

Our great Tot Shabbat Services start at 6:00 p.m. and include, candle lighting, pot luck dinner, story time, a theme related craft, and songs. If you need any additional information, would like to get on the Tot Shabbat mailing list or would like to volunteer to help clean up or set up, please contact Marla Hoffman - [rhynestonegrl@gmail.com](mailto:rhynestonegrl@gmail.com)

Friday, January 7 -- Tu B'Shvat  
Friday, February 18 -- Torah  
Friday, March 18 -- Purim  
Friday, April 8 -- Pesach  
Friday, May 6 -- Israel  
Friday, June 10 -- Family



## Religious School News

It is our tradition to have the families of our students supply drinks and snacks for Hebrew School and Sunday School. The list below indicates the month that you have been assigned:

January- Deitch/Kunkler  
February- Lowry/Schwartz  
March- Mitchell/Nissim  
April- Erickson/Stupak  
May- TBD

Please provide juice boxes (best for portion control) or water bottles, and healthy snacks that are prepackaged (i.e. pretzels, sunchips, granola bars).

**WE HAVE STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES  
SO SNACKS CAN NOT CONTAIN PEANUTS,  
COCONUT OR COCONUT OIL.**

You are buying for approximately 20 children. Divide this with your "partner" any way you both agree! If you can't do the assigned month, please contact another family to see if they can switch with you. Please deliver the food on or before the Thursday or Sunday prior to the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

Any questions, please contact me at (609)291-0355 or email [Attyosman@verizon.net](mailto:Attyosman@verizon.net). Thanks! I'm sure the kids will appreciate your efforts!

Linda Osman  
Religious School Co-Chair

## President's Message

Since Thanksgiving, we have been in a whirlwind of activity! No sooner was Thanksgiving digested than Hanukah was upon us. Then, for some of us, we added the celebration of another religious holiday, and the New Year. We've also experienced joys and sorrows that are a part of the cycle of life. So much frenetic activity built into such a short amount of time! Whew!

A few very exciting events happened during these busy weeks. The Hebrew School Hanukah party was a blast! Students helped to peel and grate potatoes and onions for latkas, peel apples for applesauce, worked on crafts and listened to a story. It was a very busy and entertaining Sunday. For this wonderful party, I have to thank the parents and grandparents who donated all of the food and their time to help the children make latkas and applesauce from scratch. With your help the party was much more than just a good idea. Thanks for making it so much fun!

Thank you to Samantha Shain for leading services Friday night after Thanksgiving. Sam led a beautiful service and offered us a well thought out and significant sermon/discussion. We appreciate all the time you put into making the service so meaningful for all those who attended.

Thanks to Sid Morginstin and Mindy Fink for leading services this past Friday night. Again, we were blessed to have a beautiful service provided by two very special congregants.

In the past few weeks we have also had the opportunity to have a Friday night service lead by Leslie Hilgeman, our newest intern. Rabbi Leslie will be filling in for Rabbi Julie on those occasions when she is out of town. The service was held in the all purpose room, but I thought the physical arrangement, a circle, was very conducive to a small gathering of davening friends. The service turned out to be very warm and intimate.

As time moves forward and we begin a new year, I leave you with this thought: *"We spend January 1<sup>st</sup> walking through our lives, room by room, drawing up a list of work to be done, cracks to be patched. Maybe this year, to balance the list, we ought to walk through the rooms of our lives... not looking for flaws, but for potential."* Ellen Goodman

Happy New Year,  
Robin

## Supermarket Gift Card Program



The gift card fund raiser is extremely important as a source of income for the Temple. We need more participation!

Everyone please take one minute to write a check and send it to Dowshen 502 Farnsworth Ave Bordentown, NJ 08505 or call 298-5306. Your cards will be sent to you the same day.

### High Holy Day Pledges

Betsy and Vic Ramos  
William and Rona Goldberg  
Jay and Elaine Trackman  
Howard Barman  
Ray & Cynthia Cantor  
Eileen Gale



## Social Action

A big thank you to all who have donated granola bars and food! Keep those contributions coming! All contributions of general, non-perishable foods are also welcome for the food pantry too.

We are still delivering meals to the Pine Motel on the last Thursday of the month. Many thanks to everyone who helps with the meal delivery. We greet the motel residents and offer them dinner, we see a combination of relief and deep appreciation. We're proud that B'nai Abraham continues to support this meaningful and very necessary activity.

Marcy Schwartz

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The Temple and Sisterhood communities extend our condolences to Ray and Cindy Cantor and family on the loss of Cindy's dad, Richard Walter

## Temple Donations

### In Memory Of

Michele Trackman from Eileen Gale & Ronald, Michael, and Rochelle  
Gerald Rosen from Karen Rednor

### In Honor Of

Edith Rose for her 100th birthday from Michael Scolaro and Randy Bloom

## Sisterhood Donations

### In Memory Of

Jerald Rosen from Joel & Marsha Dowshen, Linda Bowker, and Phyllis & Is Kamer  
Lee Nissim from Jack & Jean Nissim, the Jagers, Marsha & Joel Dowshen, and Sandy & Newt Parks  
Michele Trackman from Peter & Karen Granaldi, Susan & Tom Giachetti, Marsha & Joel Dowshen, Henry & Rhoda Kessler, Linda Bowker, Charyl & Sid Morginstin, Sheila Lamonsoff, Reene Harrison. Barbara & Jeff Streisfeld, Neil & Karen Nissim, Phyllis Chudoff, Eileen Gale, Joanne & Ted Lutz, Robin & Tony Zak, Faith Hupfl, Gertrude Bonatti, Karen & Fran Sutter, Mimi Geller, Schwartz-Shain Family, Sandy & Newt Parks, Anita Berson, Marlene & Sid Lavine, Bettie Campbell, and Berny & Arlene Speiser

### Rejoicing With You

Brian and Maribeth Epstein on birth of Ella Grace Epstein from Jay & Elaine Trackman, Sid & Charyl Morginstin, Sandy Schwartzbird, Rita Nissim, Eileen Gale, Phyllis Chudoff, Robin & Steve Affrime, and Susan & Tom Giachetti

## Torah Prayer Books (Chumashim)

A new Torah prayer book can be purchased in honor of or in memory of someone for \$75 or an existing Siddur may be sponsored for \$35.00. Please call (298-0437) or email Betsy Ramos: [bramos@capehart.com](mailto:bramos@capehart.com).

## Healing List

The list has become quite long. On January 15, 2011 we will start again with a new list. Please contact Sid at 609-456-9508 with the names of those you desire to put on the list. Also, please tell him when the name can be removed. Sid makes an effort to contact you about 2 months after adding a name, however, sometimes he is very busy, so, please contact him if there are any changes.

## General Donations

For anyone interested in making a general donation to the synagogue that does not fit into any of the above categories, of course, the synagogue will be happy to accept the donation. You may send a check to Temple B'nai Abraham, P.O. Box 245, Bordentown, and indicate whether it is for a special occasion and whether you would like the synagogue to send an acknowledgment. If it is a non-temple member, please provide their name and address.

In case a loved one dies, the following information will be helpful in thinking through what steps to take:

- 1) As soon as possible, please contact the Rabbi, the Temple President, and the Sisterhood President.
- 2) If you would like the Rabbi to officiate at the funeral, please ask the Funeral Director to contact the Rabbi when exploring possible dates and times.
- 3) There are many traditional Jewish practices that may offer guidance about the handling of the body, the funeral, and the burial. Please ask the Funeral Director to explore these options.
- 4) Resources about mourning, death, and dying are available from the Rabbi. There is also a synagogue document containing information about Jewish funeral procedures.

We hope this information will be needed as infrequently as possible!

**JANUARY 2011    TEVET – SH'VAT 5771**

| Sunday                           | Monday        | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday                                 | Friday                                                                                                  | Saturday                                      |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------|-----------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
|                                  |               |         |           |                                          |                                                                                                         | 1<br><br>NEW YEARS                            |
| 2<br>No School<br>(Winter Break) | 3             | 4       | 5         | 6<br>Rosh Chodesh<br><br>HS<br>4:30-6:30 | 7<br>Tot Shabbat<br>6:00 pm<br><br>Shabbat Evening Service<br>7:30 pm<br><br>Candle lighting<br>4:31 pm | 8                                             |
| 9<br>9-10 SS<br>10-12 HS         | 10            | 11      | 12        | 13<br>HS<br>4:30-6:30                    | 14<br>Candle lighting<br>4:38 pm                                                                        | 15<br>Oneg Shabbat Morning Service<br>9:30 am |
| 16<br>No School (MLK Weekend)    | 17<br>MLK Day | 18      | 19        | 20<br>Tu B'Shvat<br><br>HS<br>4:30-6:30  | 21<br>Oneg Shabbat Evening Service<br>7:30 pm<br><br>Candle lighting<br>4:46 pm                         | 22                                            |
| 23<br>9-10 SS<br>10-12 HS        | 24            | 25      | 26        | 27<br>HS<br>4:30-6:30                    | 28<br>Shabbat Evening Service<br>7:30 pm<br><br>Candle lighting<br>4:54 pm                              | 29<br>24th of Sh'vat Mishpatim                |
| 30<br>9-10 SS<br>10-12 HS        | 31            |         |           |                                          |                                                                                                         |                                               |

## Sisterhood Oneg Schedule

|                 |        |         |                                    |                                        |
|-----------------|--------|---------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <b>JANUARY</b>  |        |         |                                    |                                        |
| Mon             | 10-Jan | 7:30 PM | Sisterhood Program                 | Ellen Wehrman & Patricia Light-Tolemeo |
| Sat             | 15-Jan | 9:30 AM | Shabbat Morning                    | Linda Osman & Shira Lowry              |
| Fri             | 21-Jan | 7:30 PM | Erev Shabbat                       | Randy Bloom & Marcy Schwartz           |
| <b>FEBRUARY</b> |        |         |                                    |                                        |
| Fri             | 6-Feb  | 7:30 PM | Erev Shabbat                       | Charyl Morganstin & Sandy Swartzbird   |
| Sat             | 8-Feb  | 9:30 AM | Shabbat Morning                    | Marcia Rosen & Madge Rosen             |
| Mon             | 12-Feb | 7:30 PM | Sisterhood Program                 | Faith Huplf                            |
| <b>MARCH</b>    |        |         |                                    |                                        |
| Fri             | 4-Mar  | 7:30 PM | Erev Shabbat                       | Marsha Dowshen & Rita Nissim           |
| Sat             | 12-Mar | 9:30 AM | Shabbat Morning                    | Jen Carton & Stacy Deitch              |
| Mon             | 14-Mar | 7:30 PM | Sisterhood Program                 | Eileen Gale & Betsy Ramos              |
| <b>APRIL</b>    |        |         |                                    |                                        |
| Fri             | 1-Apr  | 7:30 PM | Erev Shabbat                       | Karen Nissim & Sheila Lamonsoff        |
| Mon             | 11-Apr | 7:30 PM | Sisterhood Program                 | Phyllis Chudoff                        |
| Sat             | 16-Apr | 9:30 AM | Shabbat Morning                    | Elaine Trackman & Renee Harrison       |
| Tue             | 19-Apr | 6:00 PM | 2nd night community Seder Passover | Kim Aubry & others                     |
| <b>MAY</b>      |        |         |                                    |                                        |
| Mon             | 9-May  | 7:30 PM | Sisterhood Program- Book Review    | Rita Nissim & Mimi Gellar              |
| Sat             | 14-May | 9:30 AM | Shabbat Morning                    | Anita Berson & Sonia Fenick            |
| Fri             | 27-May | 7:30 PM | Erev Shabbat                       | Rhea Goldman & Bonnie Goldman          |
| <b>JUNE</b>     |        |         |                                    |                                        |
| Fri             | 3-Jun  | 7:30 PM | Erev Shabbat                       | <b>Bar Mitzvah</b>                     |
| Sat             | 4-Jun  | 9:30 AM | Shabbat Morning                    | Noah Goldberg                          |
| Mon             | 13-Jun | 6:15 PM | Sisterhood Pot Luck                | Marsha Dowshen & Randy Bloom           |
| Fri             | 24-Jun | 7:30 PM | Member of the Year                 | Debby Weiss & Marcy Schwartz           |