

Temple B'nai Abraham

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Rabbi

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Sarah Siedel Sisterhood President

Randye Bloom



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Kim Ehrlich

Recording Secretary

Susan Giachetti

Important Dates

Board Meeting	1/7
Morning Shabbat	1/9
Game Night	1/19
Tot Shabbat	1/22

“The Temple Shofar”

January, 2016

Rabbi's Message

Bahya ibn Paquda, a medieval Jewish philosopher, presented one of the earliest examples of instruction in Jewish meditation, as part of his book “*Hovavot Levavot*,” “*Duties of the Heart*.” According to Bahya, there are seven pillars of wisdom established in creation, and each of these pillars contains traces of God’s wisdom. Meditation upon God’s creation involves trying, as much as possible, to discover and appreciate the traces of God that are manifested in it.

Because of where we are in the Jewish calendar, it is an appropriate time to consider Bahya’s 5th pillar of wisdom – plants and minerals. In particular, it is a fitting time to engage in meditation and contemplation of trees. Tu B’Shevat, the New Year for Trees, falls on the 15th of the month of Shevat, which will correspond to January 25th in the secular calendar this year.

For Bahya, meditation on plants and minerals involves considering their various combinations and characteristics, their form, their shape, their usage, the ways that they operate in the world, even their potential purpose. Since one of my preferred metaphors for understanding God is as *tahalikh ha-tz’mitah*, 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, and the experience gave me insight into the decision. The tree that I chose to

meditate on was one that I had often admired. As I sat on the dormant grass gazing at the tree, I reflected on what the tree had to teach me about God and about the kind of growth I was seeking. I noticed that its branches seemed evenly proportioned, reaching out in all directions in a way that was balanced from every angle. I realized that I wanted to grow like this tree – in ways that were balanced, expansive, reaching in many directions – and I began to discern how the rabbinate could embody this kind of growth.

Reflecting on a tree or its fruit to gain insight is a very Jewish practice, and not just on Tu B’Shevat. At Ellen Wehrman’s tree planting, I shared a passage from Pirkei Avot 3:17 in which 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 kind that form in a community whose members reach out and support each other in a variety of ways – including showing up to make a minyan, hosting an oneg, contributing to children’s Hebrew education, and reaching out to befriend 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 across

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Blood Drive



The blood drive held December 21 was a huge success. Almost 30 pints collected [our goal was 21]. Thank you to blood donors Robin Affrime, Marsha Caldwell, Joel Dowshen, Marsha Dowshen, Michael Scolaro, and Randy Bloom. Special thanks to helpers on the day of the blood drive: Steve and Robin Affrime, Eileen Gale, Rhea Goldman, and Marcia Rosen. It was a very successful day and you all made a difference!

Supermarket Gift Card Program

*“Write it on
your heart that
every day is the
best day in the
year.”*

It is always the season for sharing and giving. Please share with the Temple by purchasing your gift cards from Acme or ShopRite for your New Year’s celebration.

Please make checks payable to **Temple B’nai Abraham** and send to: **Marsha Dowshen / 502 Farnsworth Ave., Bordentown, NJ 08505 / (609) 298-5306**. Your cards will be sent to you the same day.

- Ralph Waldo

Emerson

TBA Website

Please go to the Temple B’nai Abraham website at www.bnai-abraham.org to view the latest calendar of events, subscribe to our announcements and newsletter as well as find useful information about our community.

Tikun Olam

Thank you for the donations for the food pantry, granola bars/tuna for the grocery bags for the motel, and meal delivery!

Many thanks to Debby Weiss and Robin and Steve Affrime for their continuing support and help with meal delivery. Feel free to contact Marcy Schwartz at marcy_schwartz@hotmail.com if you have any questions or would like to join in.



Sisterhood News & Announcements

We had a terrific meeting in December! The "regifts" were generally much nicer than one would expect and everyone was so polite- no trading at all!! It was great to see Susan Zaveloff and Charyl Morginstin at the table. Marcy Schwartz read a compelling story by Nadine Gordimer titled, "The Soft Voice of the Serpent." The discussion was quite personal and thought-provoking. Thank you so much, Marcy, for sharing your gift of discussing stories with us.

Thank you to Bonnie Goldman and Rhea Goldman for volunteering to be hostesses and setting out such a lovely table- we really appreciate it!!

The next meeting will be March 14 and we will show the movie, "Fill the Void."

More to come as we get closer to the date. During the months that we are not meeting, we will be working hard to organize the cookbook and determine what holes we need to fill. Please input your recipes now or sent them to Randye or Robin for inclusion. Thanks so much.

Judy and David Margulies have moved to Monroe to allow David to have an easier commute to work. We wish them the best of luck in their new digs! We will miss you, Judy- but hope that you will make covered dish.

A happy and healthy 2016 to all and prayers for PEACE, Randye

Sisterhood Officers

Sisterhood President
Randye Bloom

Vice President
Debby Weiss

Treasurer/Financial Scty
Marcy Schwartz

Recording Secretary
Robin Affrime

Corresponding Secretary
Patricia Light-Tolomeo

Trustees
Eileen Gale
Susan Giachetti

Memorial & Sisterhood Donations

- Get well to Marlene Lavine from Phyllis Kamer, Rita Nissim
- Get well to Roland Fog from Rita Nissim, Renee Harrison, Jay and Elaine Trackman
- In memory of Jean Scattergood from Rita Nissim

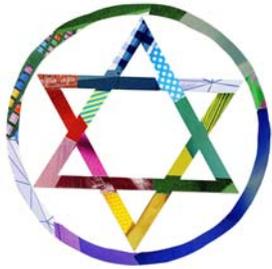
Healing List

The Healing List been cleared of all names from last year. Please send me any names you would like to have on the list. egale10@verizon.net.



***“Deeds of giving
are the very
foundations of
the world.”
- Jewish saying
derived from
the Mishna,
Pirkel Avot 1:2***

Game Night, Tuesday 1/19, 6:30pm



This is an informal venue to play games and socialize outside of the context of services. Please feel free to bring Jewish or non-Jewish friends who love games, and anything (dairy/vegetarian) you might want for munchies! If enough people come, we can have multiple tables of people playing different games. There will be several options of card and board games to play, but if you have a particular game you'd like to play and introduce to people, feel free to bring it. We'll see what grabs people's interest!

Rabbi's Message Continued

differences. All of these things are investments in community – and we do them not only for ourselves but also 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."

As Tu B'Shevat comes around this year, it is an opportunity to reflect on the ways that we would like to grow as individuals and as a community. How are our roots and how are our 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?

I encourage everyone to reach out widely and form connections with people who might be outside of your usual circles. As we do this, may we all be blessed to discover God's growth flourishing in our lives and community.

Shalom,
Rabbi Pfau

Yahrzeits for Winter 2015

Week of January 1 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evelyn Rothman, Mother of Robin Affrime Blanche Cantor, Mother of Ray Cantor
Week of January 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernard Zeichner, Father of Stan Zeichner Julius Bloom, Father of Randy Bloom Jacob Epstein, Great-Uncle of Brian Epstein Marcel Nissim, Husband of Lee Nissim Shyrle Kushner, Mother of Ellen Benowitz Jennie Groveman, Mother-In-Law of Seena Groveman Ethel Speiser, Mother of Bernie Speiser Minnie Gutstein, Mother of Herman Gutstein Rose Wasserman, Mother of Linda Bowker Ida Josephson, Mother of Sam Josephson
Week of January 15 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Harry Gutstein, Father of Herman Gutstein Joseph Schwartz, Grandfather of Phyllis Chudoff Judy Leslie, Friend of Marcia Rosen
Week of January 22 nd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rose Goldberg, Mother of Phyllis Kamer Morris Herzog, Brother of Madge Rosen, Uncle of Michael Rosen Jerry Urken, Father of Gail Gernamous
Week of January 29 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
Week of February 5 ^h	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max Kessler, Father of Henry Kessler
Week of February 12 ^h	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nathan Goldman, Father of Maxine & Philip Goldman Rose Kaiser, Mother of Eileen Gale

Old Prayer Books & Kippot

Old prayer books, Tallim, kippot, or other religious items that are no longer needed should be buried. Please place these items into the box (by the sanctuary stairs). Items will be brought to the local Chabad House for burial. \$5 donations are appreciated.

Siddur & Tallit Donations

A new siddur (prayer book) can be purchased in honor of or in memory of someone for \$35. A tallis (prayer shawl) can be purchased for \$60. Please contact Marcia Rosen at: mjanrosen@comcast.net

Memorial Plaques

Plaques are available for \$250. To order a plaque, send the following to TBA: Marcia Rosen, Plaque Chairman PO Box 245 Bordentown, NJ 08505 or: mjanrosen@comcast.net.

English name of loved one, Hebrew name of loved one and date of death in the English calendar. Once the plaque has been installed, you will be billed. Plaques will not be moved from one board to the other.

Morning Services 2016

January 9 th
February 13 th
March 12 th

April 2 nd
May 14 th
June 4 th



**TEMPLE
B'NAI ABRAHAM**

58 Crosswicks
PO Box 245
Bordentown, NJ 08505

609.298.1527
www.bnai-abraham.org

*Shabbat morning services begin at 10:00 a.m.
(when there are B'nai Mitzvah, services begin at 9:30 a.m.)*
January, 2016 ~ Tevet— Sh'vat 5776

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednes day	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27 No Hebrew School	28	29	30	31 No Hebrew School	January 1 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	2
3 No Hebrew School	4	5	6	7 4:30 pm Hebrew School 7:30pm Board Meeting	8	9 10:00 am Shabbat Services
10 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School	11	12	13	14 4:30 pm Hebrew School	15 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	16
17 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School	18	19 6:30pm Game Night 	20	21 4:30 pm Hebrew School	22 6:00 pm Tot Shabbat 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	23
24 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School	25 Tu BiShvat טו בשבט 	26	27	28 4:30 pm Hebrew School	29 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	30