



Temple B'nai Abraham

Temple President

Brian Epstein

Rabbi

Julie Pfau

Sarah Siedel Sisterhood President

Robin Affrime

“The Temple Shofar”

February, 2017

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Kim Ehrlich

Recording Secretary

Important Dates

Temple Board Tech Talk 7pm	2/2
Tot Shabbat 6pm	2/3
Lunch & Learn 11am	2/11
Temple Board Meeting 10:15am	2/12
Game Night 6:30pm	2/16
Tot Shabbat 6pm	3/3

Rabbi's Message

Although my PhD is in biblical studies, I am drawn, time and again, to the writings of the medieval rabbinic poets. These poetic rabbis wrote voluminous commentaries on Torah, Talmud, etc.; but they also expressed themselves through a creative medium. In their poetry, the mystical experience of the sacred is powerfully conveyed – an experience that may sometimes get buried in the midst of lengthy explications of a biblical text (though it can still be discerned!).

As we approach Tu B'Shevat, our New Year for Trees, I would like to share a poem by a thirteenth century Jewish mystic, Yosef Gikatilla – “The Nut Garden” (as printed in Peter Cole's *The Dream of the Poem: Hebrew Poetry from Muslim and Christian Spain 950-1492*).

The Nut Garden

The Nut Garden holds things felt and thought,
and feeling for thought is always a palace –

Sinai with flames of fire about it,
burning though never by fire devoured.

On all four sides surrounded so,
entrance is barred to pretenders forever.

For one who learns to be wise, however,
its doors are open toward the East:

he reaches out and takes a nut,
then cracks its shell, and eats....

Tu B'Shevat was celebrated by medieval Kabbalists through a mystical seder that highlighted the spiritual qualities revealed by different kinds of fruits and nuts. “The Nut Garden” was not written as part of such a seder, but his use of the nut as a metaphor for a numinous experience of the divine is in keeping with the mystical imagery associated with the holiday. In “The Nut Garden,” imagery of unification of thought and feeling parallels the Sinai experience – intellectual revelation is inextricably linked to fiery, passionate emotion.

Authenticity of thought and feeling lie at the core of spiritual experience, but sometimes we are blocked by our own hard shells and our protective inner walls. The inexperienced might not recognize the nourishment that lies within such a hard shell, or may prefer to find fare that is simpler to eat. Moses might have been deterred by the burning bush or by the fiery mountain. It can be challenging to see through the barriers that block us from the deepest core of sacred experience. But the poem suggests that reaching the sacred core may be as simple as eating a nut.

This year on Tu B'Shevat we will be holding our own seder (combined with a Lunch and Learn program) – on Saturday, 2/11 at 11:00 am. Due to allergy concerns, it will be more of a fruit garden than a nut garden, but through our exploration of trees and their diverse fruits, we too can taste and try different ways of approaching our spiritual cores and encountering the divine. May we all experience such divine nourishment!

Shalom,
Rabbi Pfau

Temple Donations



High Holiday Pledges

- Betsy Ramos

Yahrtzeit/Joy/Sorrow

- Robin & Steve Affrime Yahrtzeit of Evelyn Rothman
- Randye Bloom & Michael Scolaro Yahrtzeit of Julius Bloom
- Brian & Maribeth Epstein Yahrtzeit of Lillian Brewis
- Rhoda & Henry Kessler Yahrtzeit of Ella Kessler
- Marcia & Michael Rosen Yahrzeit of Judy Leslie
- Marcia & Michael Rosen Yahrzeit of Morris Herzog

***“What we learn
with pleasure
we never
forget.”***

-Alfred Mercier



Hebrew School

From the Education Director (Feb. 2017)

Jewish education can be as much about interpretation as information. A recent lesson helped exemplify the balance between factual knowledge and argumentation skills . . . while reminding me of the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of our students. Here's what happened.

As part of our unit on Havdalah, we talked about the difference between holy (kodesh) and ordinary (chol) time and objects. We divided the class into two groups: a main group and a group of challengers. The main group was then presented with an object and had to decide if they considered it kodesh or chol. Then the challengers had to present the opposite argument!

We looked at a siddur. "It's holy because it has the name of God written in it, and we use it on Shabbat," the main group argued. "It's ordinary; it's just made of paper and ink and stuff," argued the challengers. We looked at a pencil. "It's ordinary because it's just a pencil," argued the main group. "It's holy because you can write prayers with it," argued the challengers.

Finally, we looked at one of our teen helpers (who had previously agreed to the good-natured teasing). "Are you ordinary because you're here every day, not just on Shabbat?" I challenged him, using the arguments the class had advocated earlier. "Aren't you just made of carbon and water and stuff? Do you have the name of God written on you?" This led to a spirited argument, culminating with my introducing the concept of b'tzelem Eloheim - the traditional Jewish idea that humans are created in the image of God. We agreed that all of us, including our imperturbable teen helper, were indeed holy beings.

Shalom,
Jill Ratzan
Education Director

Sisterhood News & Announcements

Shalom friends. I hope you are having a happy and healthy New Year. Winter can give us very nasty weather at this time of year so there will be no February meeting of the Sarah Seidel Sisterhood. Our next meeting will be on **Monday, March 13th at 7:30**. At that meeting we will discuss the book: **The Little Paris Book Shop by Nina George**. I hope you will join us for the discussion.

On **Saturday February 11th** we will have a morning service, and a Tu Bishvat Seder sponsored by Marcia and Mike Rosen. The Seder will be followed by a luncheon sponsored by Howard Barman and Andrew & Abigail Rochester. Tu B'ishvat is the

New Year for trees and is celebrated by eating fruits, vegetable and nuts that are available at this time of year.

On **Saturday night April 15th at 7:30**, Sisterhood will be hosting a spring fundraising event to be held at Temple B'nai Abraham in our all purpose room. It will be a **Trivia Pub Night**. All sisterhood and temple members and friends who are not members are welcome to attend. You may form your own team of up to 6 players or become a part of a team upon arriving at temple. Look for more information in the March newsletter.

Robin Affrime



“You are not alone, and I am not alone. We are in a Sisterhood, together, and together we can make it.”

- author unknown

Temple Cookbook:

The Temple cookbook is at the publisher- over 230 recipes! We will see it by Spring. The way this fundraiser works is that each Temple and/or Sisterhood member (family) will be responsible to purchase (you can sell them or give them as gifts) a set number of cookbooks- probably 4 or 5- so that we can get back our outlay. After that, all sales are profit. The book will most likely be priced at \$15.00, but that will not be confirmed until we are sure of all of our costs. The cookbook is very usable and will make a great gift for newlyweds, hostesses, first apartments, etc. Really, bringing a cookbook instead of flowers or wine to a dinner party is a terrific idea. There will be more information in the next months, but start to think of the people in your life who would want a copy. This has the potential to be a very successful fundraiser if we all participate. Thanks for your anticipated support.

Sisterhood Officers

Sisterhood President
Robin Affrime

Vice President
Linda Osman

Treasurer/Financial Scty
Marcy Schwartz

Recording Secretary
Marsha Caldwell

Corresponding Secretary
Patricia Light-Tolomeo

Trustees
Eileen Gale
Susan Giachetti



Supermarket Gift Card Program

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.

***“Be the change
you wish to see
in the world.”***

***-Mahatma
Gandhi***

Tikkun Olam / Social Action

Our on-going hunger relief efforts were in full force around the winter holidays! Many thanks to Robin and Steve Affrime for helping with monthly meal delivery to the Pine Motel, and to the Sisterhood for preparing 42 bag lunches delivered to the motel later in the month. The TBA community gathered some lovely toys and gifts for children at the motel as well -- our partners in this project from the Baptist Church will match gifts with a list of the children (according to age, gender, etc.). And lots of contributions for the food pantry and the monthly grocery bags for the motel--to which we contribute granola bars and canned tuna--have been a big help.

So let's begin 2017 with renewed energy and commitment to ease the difficulties of those around us: please continue your generous donations of food items, and the many helping hands that make this possible.

Gratefully yours,
Marcy Schwartz

(any questions or want to join in? feel free to call me at 609-324-0571)



Yahrzeits for Winter 2016/2017

Week of Feb. 3 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Judy Leslie, Friend of Marcia Rosen Rose Goldberg, Mother of Phyllis Kamer
Week of Feb. 10 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Morris Herzog, Uncle of Michael Rosen, Brother of Madge Rosen Jerry Urken, Father of Gail Gernamous
Week of Feb. 17 th	None
Week of Feb. 24 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max Kessler, Father of Henry Kessler Nathan Goldman, Father of Maxine & Philip Goldman Rose Kaiser, Mother of Eileen Gale
Week of Mar. 3 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selma Levitsky, Great-Aunt of Brian Epstein
Week of Mar. 10 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rose Klepner, Mother of Len Klepner Howard Brewis, Great-Grandfather of Brian Epstein Leonard Greenblatt, Brother of Marcia Rosen Ruth Killian, Daughter's Mother-In-Law of Sharon Coleman

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 2016-17

February 11 th Lunch & Learn
March 25 th
March 11 th Josh Kunkler's Bar Mitzvah

April 23 rd Mia Nissim's Bat Mitzvah
May 13 th
June 3 rd E. Gale & R. Affrime B'not Mitzvah



**Temple B’nai Abraham and Sarah Seidel Sisterhood
Host List for Shabbat Services and Sisterhood Meetings
2016-2017**

*If you are unable to host on your date, **please switch with someone** and let Robin know. **You are responsible for finding a replacement.** Contact me with any other concerns you might have. Email address: raffrime@gmail.com Home Phone Number: 609-499-1761*

Date	Event	Host Families
2/11/17	Tu Bishvat Seder and Luncheon	Seder: Rosen Luncheon: Barman and Rochester Families
2/24/17	Friday Night Oneg	Aubry/ Josh Affrime Families
3/10-3/11/17	Josh Kunkler Bar Mitzvah	The Kunkler Family
3/11/17	Adult Purim Party at TBA all purpose room	Affrime/Chudoff
3/13/17	Sisterhood Meeting Nosh	Nissim/Lamonsoff Families
3/25/17	Shabbat Morning Luncheon	Epstein/Ehrlich Families
4/11/17	2 nd Seder at TBA all purpose room	Kim Aubry
4/21, 4/23/17	Mia Nissim Bat Mitzvah	The Nissim Family
5/11/17	Sisterhood Meeting	Patricia Light-Tolomeo/Susan Zaveloff
5/13/17	Shabbat Morning Luncheon	Stan Zeichner/Sandy SchwartzBird
5/19/17	Friday Night Oneg: Hebrew School Advancement	Weiskott/Schwartz Families
5/20/17	Bordentown Street Fair Table	
5/21/17	Bordentown Street Fair Bake Sale	
6/2-6/3/17	Adult B’nai Mitzvah	Eileen Gale/Robin Affrime
6/12/17	Sisterhood Annual Covered Dish	Randy Bloom/Marsha Dowshen
6/30/17	Friday Night Oneg: Member of the Year	Schwartz/Shain/Weiss Families



**TEMPLE
B'NAI ABRAHAM**

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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.)*
February, 2017 ~ Sh'vat 5777—Adar 5777

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School 11 am Adult Hebrew	30	31	Feb. 1	2 3 pm Adult B'nei Mitzvah 4:30 pm Hebrew School 7 pm Temple Board Tech Talk	3 6 pm Tot Shabbat 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	4
5 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School	6	7	8	9 2 pm Adult Hebrew 3 pm Adult B'nei Mitzvah 4:30 pm Hebrew School	10	11 11:00 am Tu B'Shavat Seder Lunch & Learn Rosen, Rochester, Barman
12 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School 10:15am Temple Board Meeting	13	14	15	16 4:30 pm Hebrew School	17 6 pm Tot Shabbat 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	18
19 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School	20	21	22	23 4:30 pm Hebrew School	24 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	25
26 9 am Sunday School 10 am Hebrew School	27	28	March 1	2 4:30 pm Hebrew School	3 6 pm Tot Shabbat 7:30 pm Shabbat Services	4