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IN MEMORIAM



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Purim and Passover are coming! Dust off your costume and clean all the chametz from your house. Temple Beth Israel will have both celebrations going strong this year. On the evening of Wednesday, March 20th, at 6:30 PM, we will have our Purim service with Rabbi Joseph, Megillah reading, and a fun night. Yes, it is a school night, but we promise to get you home early. Please, come by for some of or all the fun. Bring your Hamantaschen and costumes!!

For Passover, we are working on a great Seder and reading of the Haggadah for Friday, April 19th, at 7 p.m. (please arrive at 6 p.m. for a brief Shabbat service). The rabbi will lead the Seder. All the tables will have a Seder plate with the necessary symbolic foods for your participation, and for the dinner menu, which this year will be set up buffet-style, we are working on a tentative menu as follows: Matzo ball soup, apricot-stuffed chicken breasts or salmon (tell us your choice when you reserve and pay Alma), veggies, salad and choice of dessert.

PLEASE make your reservations by April 7 so we know how much food to make. Call or text Alma Russek at (956) 970-7722, or almafrussek3@gmail.com. The cost will be \$35 adult members, \$45 adult-nonmembers, and \$15 children 12 and under. Please pay in advance so that we know how many plates we need to prepare.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 2

FROM THE RABBI

Most of us are familiar with the story of the golden calf in the Book of Exodus. Regrettably, many of us are not as familiar with the events following this dismal tale. As Rabbi Ken Nelson writes in his book, *The Light Within*, the major thrust of this entire episode is not that the Israelites blundered so soon after receiving the Ten Commandments, but rather that Moses was able to lead a despondent people from the nadir of despair to renewed spiritual aspirations. This moral resurgence was achieved through an honest confession of failure and a realistic appraisal of the situation. Moses pleads the cause of his people by admitting, "Alas, this people is guilty of a great sin." But Moses discovers that beyond sin and punishment there is also Divine compassion and forgiveness. This is the great religious lesson of the golden calf episode. It teaches us that man, who errs and stumbles, is always given another chance. Through the failure of the Israelites, Moses discovers and teaches the famous thirteen Divine attributes: "The L-RD, The L-RD, a G-D compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, rich in steadfast kindness, extending mercy to the thousandth generation, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and yet he does not remit all punishment." This remarkable revelation has been incorporated into the Holy Day of Yom Kippur, with its profound concept of repentance and atonement.

CONTINUE ON PAGE 6

Calendar

MARCH

- 20-24 *Rabbi in town*
 20 Purim Party, Megillah reading, 6:30 p.m.
 21 Purim
 22 Shabbat service, 7:30 p.m.
 23 Shabbat service, 9 a.m. with breakfast and discussion following
 23 Havdallah with program and discussion
 31 Annual Congregational Meeting

APRIL

- 7 Temple Clean-Up and Work Day
 14 Model Seder
 19-21 *Rabbi in town*
 19 Shabbat service, 6 p.m., followed by 7 p.m. Temple Community Seder
 20-27 Passover
 28 Board Meeting to discuss 2019-2020 calendar

MAY

- 1 Yom HaShoah
 5 TBI 5th Annual Blood Drive
 8 Yom HaZikaron
 8 Yom Ha'Atzmaut celebration at sundown
 9 Yom HaAtzma'ut, Israel Independence Day
 22 Lag B'Omer
 24-26 *Rabbi in town*
 24 Confirmation Shabbat service, 7:30 p.m.
 25 Shabbat service, 9 a.m. with breakfast and discussion following
 25 Havdallah with program and discussion
 26 Pot Luck for Confirmation Day

JUNE

- 2 Board meeting
 7-9 *Rabbi in town*
 7 Shabbat service, 7:30 p.m.
 8 Shabbat service, 9 a.m. with breakfast and discussion following
 8 Havdallah and Erev Shavuot service with study following
 9-10 Shavuot

Oneg Shabbat

Each member household is asked to host one Shabbat oneg during the year. Remember hosting now involves setting up, cleaning up, and providing challah, Kosher wine, grape juice, paper/plastic goods, coffee and drinks. You can bring other treats you like, but the congregation will share the responsibility of bringing snacks and desserts. If you cannot be a host on the date assigned, please call Laurel Steinberg at 550-9530.

NEWS AND NOTES

■ THE TEMPLE BOARD OF TRUSTEES is seeking one or more new members. If you would like to help with organizing temple events and guiding the temple to run smoothly, please consider being part of the board. For more information please contact board vice-president Bruce Landsman at (956)244-1034 or adjc1c2@hotmail.com.

■ CONDOLENCES to the family of Eugena Spear, who passed away on August 28, 2018 from cancer. Her son was by her side at the time of her passing. May her memory be a blessing.

FROM THE PRESIDENT, *continued*

We hope to see all of you at this festivity which will be a memorable one for you and your family.



Do you ever get happy to receive notice that our newsletter is getting ready to come to our inboxes? I do. It is a time of knowing what goes on in our community at large.

Sure, we always mingle during onegs, breakfasts on Saturday mornings, and luncheons on Sundays after religious school. But there is something about the newsletter that puts all things in perspective for us: old news we may have forgotten, or are new to us, future happenings we didn't know about, goings-on that we want to make sure to join, and lashings of other things to do.

I want to thank Laurie Joseph for putting this very informative cyber-paper out for all of us to enjoy.

Receiving the Sim Shalom kind of reminds me of my childhood years when I eagerly waited for the monthly issue of my favorite car magazine to arrive, except this newsletter is full of information from people I know and love.

Go ahead, read about trips, celebrations, and not so happy events that we have had to endure as well. I hope to see you all at the Megillah reading and the Pesach Seder.

Thank you, Laurie, for chronicling our community life. We owe you a lot!

— Richard Fourzan

EDITOR'S NOTE: *You're welcome!*

ONEG HOST FAMILIES

March 22: Javier Oliva, Gicela Ramos

May 24: Confirmation Shabbat — Newman Family, Russek Family

June 7: Sharon Fulton, Stan Fisch

July 19: Barrios Family, TBA

Celebrations

ANNIVERSARIES

- 5/29 Bill & Monica Stewart
 5/30 Bill Berg & Laurel Steinberg
 6/29 Harry & Elizabeth Holzman
 8/14 Gilbert & Susy Weisberg
 8/19 Luis Gonzalez & Abby Warshowsky
 8/25 Rabbi Frank & Laurie Joseph

BIRTHDAYS

- 3/14 Gerald Sondock
 3/31 Gilbert Weisberg
 4/5 Alma Russek
 4/6 Dagan Wise-Herring
 4/11 Andre Suissa
 4/15 Jonathan Berg
 4/16 Brittini Elise Greenfeld
 4/20 Harry Holzman
 5/2 Susan Ander
 5/4 Patty Gaytan
 5/14 Marisa L. Kahn
 5/15 Benjamin Gonzalez
 5/30 Andrew Newman
 6/3 Benjamin Newman
 7/13 Laurel Steinberg
 7/14 Rebekah Shulamit Russek
 7/16 Adriana Gonzalez
 7/22 Melanie Goldstein
 7/22 Rabbi Frank Joseph
 7/25 David Suissa
 8/1 Rachel Russek
 8/8 Harold Fisch
 8/8 Nathan Fisch
 8/10 Marina Wise-Herring
 8/12 Rory Minck
 8/12 Abby Warshowsky
 8/20 Stan Fisch
 8/25 Isaac Newman
 8/30 Braulio Natanael Gaytan
 8/30 Elizabeth Goldstein
 8/31 Tonatiuh Gonzalez
 9/4 Christine Newman

PASSOVER RECIPES

from Victor DeLeon

Moustachudos (nutty cookies)

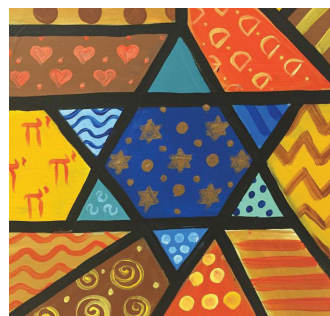
- 3 cups walnuts chopped coarsely
 3 cups almonds chopped coarsely (pecans can be instead of almonds)
 2 cups Splenda or sugar
 1-1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
 1/2 tsp ground cloves
 Mix together all of the dry ingredients.
 2 Tbsp. honey, mix into dry ingredients.
 3 eggs, mix into above ingredients
 Form mixture into 1 inch balls.
 Place onto a non-stick cookie sheet. Bake at 400 degrees for 5 to 10 minutes or until lightly browned.
 Cool for about 20 minutes before removing from cookie sheet.

Masa De Vino (Cookies)

- 1-3/4 C. Vegetable oil
 1-1/4 C. Passover wine (I use Moscato)
 1 C. Splenda or sugar
 1 C. Potato Starch
 4 C. Cake Meal
 Place on a non-stick cookie sheet. Place enough dough to make cookies about 2 inches by 3 inches when pressed lightly with a fork.
 Bake 350-degree oven for approx. 15 minutes.

Quesado

- 1-1/2 bunches of spinach
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 2 handfuls parmesan cheese (small handfuls)
 3 eggs
 1/2 cup milk
 1/2 slice of matzo
 Chop spinach finely, crumble matzo. Then mix all ingredients together and place in 8X8 baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 to 30 minutes until eggs are set and top is brown.



Thank You

Temple Beth Israel wishes to express its abiding gratitude for the ongoing support of the

ROLLINS AND AMALIE KOPPEL FOUNDATION

Thank you!

SHABBAT BREAKFAST FUND

William Berg & Laurel Steinberg, *in honor of the marriage of Jonathan Berg and Elle Eccles*

Richard Fourzan, *in honor of Rabbi Frank Joseph's Birthday*

Isabel Mercado, *donations wishing my friends a Good 2019; in honor of the Rabbi's 19th year at Temple Beth Israel; and in honor of the New Torah Cycle*

EDUCATIONAL FUND

Robert and Rebecca Dicus, *a donation in honor of Hunter*

FUNERAL FUND

Bruce and Patty Landsman

Adrian and Mary Uresti

Richard Fourzan

Rabbi Frank & Laurie Joseph

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Berg William & Laurel Steinberg, *in honor of the marriage of Jonathan Berg and Elle Eccles*

Sam Greenfeld, *in memory of my Mother, Gertrude Greenfeld*

Roy Holbert, *a donation*

TORAH FUND

Barrie and Suggie Guterman, *in honor of Dena Levine, Ben Levine, Fannie Levine, Bess Mayers, Jake Mayers, Bess Mayers, Leon Gensberg*

David and Lois A. Day, *in memory of Herschel Zinn*

FUND FOR THE READING OF YIZKOR NAMES

William Berg & Laurel Steinberg

Sharon Fulton

Sheila Greenfeld

Isabel Mercado

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr

TO THE GENERAL FUND

Emily Alpert and Bertha Janis, *in honor of Frank Joseph and Bill Berg*

Susan Ander, *in honor of Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Samuel and Ada Barrios, *donations for the High Holy Days and in honor of Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Bill Berg, Rosalie Berg and Laurel Steinberg, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Dominic and Linda Braune, *for the High Holy Days*

Edward Cooley, *in memory of Herschel Zinn*

Victor and Judy DeLeon, *donations in memory of Abel Figueroa (Alma Russek's father) In Honor Bill Berg 75th Birthday, in honor of Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Robert and Rebecca Dicus, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Alice G K East, *in memory of Herschel Zinn*

Michael Fisher, *a donation*

Richard Fourzan, *donations for the Lulav and Etrog 5779, for synagogue honors and for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Jose E Garza, *a donation*

David & Elizabeth Goldstein, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Rene & Eliza Gonzalez, *donations to the general fund and for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Gonzalez Warshowsky Family, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Sheila Greenfeld, *in memory of Gertrude Greenfeld*

Barrie and Suggie Guterman, *donations for a memorial plaque for Lewis Milton Levine; in blessed memory of Dena Fai Mayers Levine on the second anniversary of her passing, and in blessed memory of Lewis Levine on the first anniversary of his passing*

Roy Holbert, *a donation*

Rabbi Frank & Laurie Joseph, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Guta Klug, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Rollins and Amalie Koppel Foundation, *a donation*

Bruce & Patty Gaytan Landsman, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Meredith A. Linsky, *donations in loving memory of Abel Figueroa Valdez, Alma Russek's father and for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Isabel Mercado, *donations celebrating Rosh Chodesh Shevat; for High Holy days flowers; Giving Tuesday; in Celebration of Tu B'shevat; in honor Dyan Bank's Birthday; in honor of my daughter's birthday (Alexis Mercado Iliana Bat Avraham); in honor of Ada Barrios's birthday; in honor of Bill Berg's Birthday; in honor of Fernando Russek's birthday; in honor of Ilanit Teverosky's birthday (Ilanit Bat Avinadar V'Ruth); in honor of Laurie Joseph's birthday; in honor of my grandson Jason Rodriguez's birthday; in honor of Samuel Barrios' birthday; in honor of Sarah Barrios' birthday celebration; in loving memory of Abel Figueroa Valdez; in memory of Debra Levin; in memory my brother's yahrzeit (Luis Vargas Jr.); in memory of Hannah Richard's yahrzeit; Mazal Tov to Mark and Alexis Mercado Anzaldua on their anniversary; for Rabbi Frank Joseph's Surprise party; in memory of Issac Rabinovich; in memory of my dear sister Elvia Ramirez; in memory of Edie Burford*

Javier Oliva, *donations on four occasions and for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Olga Quintero, *a donation*

Gicela Ramos, *donations to the general fund and for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Jacinto Reyes, *for Yom Kippur expenses*

Julian Reyes, *donations on four occasions*

Alma & Fernando Russek Jr., *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Rachel Russek, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Jesus and Angela Silguero, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Tamarah Spink, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Ilanit Teverosky, *for Rabbi Frank Joseph's surprise party*

Bert & Jamie Wolf, *in memory of Herschel Zinn*



BARRIOS' TRIP TO ISRAEL

Our dear community, I want to share our simchas from last Hanukkah during our trip to Israel. It was a unique experience to be able to go back home, for we need to remember that our home is Israel, and this, our home, is a miracle that we can perceive with our five senses. A nation, barely 70 years old, with political pressures such as hatred from other nations; yet, it still grows and flourishes with a great sense of shalom in its midst. I can only say that we came back feeling even more Zionist at heart than before and yearning to go back home soon.

— Samuel Barrios



FROM THE RABBI, *continued*

Much worse than sin and transgression are the gloom and despair that overwhelm the sinner — the sense of hopelessness and the sense of futility beyond return. In the Book of Exodus, the divine message of Moses is to hammer away at the rock and carve two new tablets like the first, which lay shattered at the foot of Mt. Sinai. Moses broke the tablets because Israel had broken the divine covenant. So, the lesson is to go beyond despair and begin all over again.

It is not so easy the second time. We are no longer handed the Ten Commandments. We have to do the carving, and we have to genuinely strive to overcome the rock-like challenges.

However, the hard way may be more gratifying in the long run. In the process, one can gradually start the uphill climb to the top of the mountain. The important thing to remember is that it is ALWAYS POSSIBLE to make a new start. Beyond failure, there is always the hope of renewal and regeneration.

Rabbi Nelson's insights are totally on the mark. Let me emphasize that it is definitely possible to go from the nadir of despair to the greatest heights of spirituality, renewal and success.

Judaism has never believed that in our personal lives we should ever dwell or focus on our past. Our focus has always been on working to create the finest lives, and to become the finest people it is possible to become right now. Our past is in the past. We cannot change it. However, it is in our power to move forward and to create the finest lives we can live now and in the future.

It is extremely important that we as a people do remember and reflect on our shared collective, historical past. Yes, as a people in a historical context, we remember that we were slaves in the Land of Egypt. But G-D freed us from slavery, and we marched as a free people to the Promised Land. We remember that because of our sins, the Babylonians destroyed our Temple in Jerusalem in 586 B.C.E. But, mere decades later, for the first recorded time in history, an exiled people returned and rebuilt their country. Our sages say that needless hatred among the various sects of the Jewish people in 70 C.E. caused the Romans to destroy the Second Temple in Jerusalem. But, once again we returned to the Land of Israel, we regained our independence, and in 1948, the modern state came into being.

While we remember and reflect on our shared historical past, we must release our personal past so that we can invest all our energy and focus to create our finest personal present.

On Friday evening, April 19, Jewish people all over the world will begin celebrating the eight-day Festival of Passover. One of our major endeavors and commandments is to rid all of our dwellings of any leaven and to refrain from eating any product that has even the slightest amount of leaven.

However, not only do we rid ourselves of all leaven from our lives physically, we also focus on ridding ourselves of any spiritual leaven. Rid yourself of any negative thought, habit or speech. In the process, you will emerge as does the spring —renewed, refreshed, and in a sense, a brand new human being.

As we prepare for Passover, let us focus on renewal. May we all become the finest, most spiritually fulfilled Jews we have the potential to be.

Laurie and I wish everyone a wonderful Passover!!!!

Shalom u'v'rahcah!!!

Peace and blessings!!!!!!

Rabbi Frank Joseph

Passover Facts and Traditions Every Jew Should Know

Excerpted from Chabad.org, by Shalom Goodman

1. Passover Is the Most Widely Celebrated Jewish Holiday:

According to the 2014 Pew Portrait of American Jews, the Passover Seder is celebrated by even more Jewish people than Yom Kippur and Chanukah.

2. Passover for All: Giving is the hallmark of Judaism and the Jewish people. The Jerusalem Talmud records that Jewish communities would make collections of *maot chitim*, literally “wheat money,” before Passover.

3. Live Leaven Free: As Passover approaches, Jewish people can be found cleaning their houses, cars and offices to get rid of chametz, anything produced from grain that has risen.

4. The Main Thing Is the Matzah: If you can do only one (or two) things to celebrate Passover, it's this: eat a kezayit (a measure formally described as the size of an olive) of matzah (2) after dusk on the first night of Passover.

5. The Most Popular Hebrew Book: The Haggadah, the text around which the Passover Seder is based, is the most popular book in the history of Jewish printing, having gone through thousands of editions. Amazingly, there is very little variance between versions.

6. The Coffee-Maker's Haggadah: In 1932, Maxwell House, a leading coffee manufacturer, decided to print and distribute the now iconic Maxwell House Haggadah. There are more than 50 million of these Haggadahs in print.

7. Fine Wine Is Divine: Throughout the Seder evening, everyone drinks four cups of (ideally red) wine. For some reason, there's a persistent idea that Seder wine needs to be gloopy sweet stuff that tastes like cough syrup. Thankfully, there are hundreds of high-quality kosher wines out there.

8. Go Nuts: Kids are a major part of the Passover celebration. How to keep them engaged? The rabbis of old had a solution: give them nuts. Not sure if nuts will do it for your progeny? Make sure that the Seder itself is so engaging that they stick around to see what happens next.

9. Four Squared: Did you ever notice how many elements of the Passover Seder come in groups of four? Four sons, four questions, four cups of wine. What's the significance? The most common answer is that all these fours correspond to the four terms G-d used when promising to take the people out of Egypt.

10. Lamb, Anyone? In ancient times, the center of the celebration was the Passover lamb, which was sacrificed in the Holy Temple and then eaten with matzah and bitter herbs as a dessert at the end of the Passover meal. Roman invaders destroyed the Temple nearly 2,000 years ago, and we no longer bring the sacrifice. Today, we still eat the matzah and bitter herbs without the lamb, and then eat an extra piece of matzah, known as the afikoman, to remind us of the missing meat. © Copyright, all rights reserved.

A Letter of Appreciation to Congregation Temple Beth Israel

Shalom!!

One of the most important concepts in Judaism is *hakarat hatov* — gratitude, being thankful. As Jews we begin every day of our lives by reciting the Modeh Ani prayer, words of gratitude, expressing our thanks to G-D for another day of life. “I offer thanks to You, living and eternal King, for You have mercifully restored my soul within me; Your faithfulness is great.”

I am extremely grateful to G-D for all the wonderful blessings He has given me — for my family, and especially to my wonderful wife Laurie, who has always been supportive of my endeavors, dreams and goals; for the privilege of being a Rabbi, which has enabled me to experience the heights of spiritual fulfillment; and for the privilege of being a part of Temple Beth Israel, which we both cherish.

I wish to express my lasting gratitude to everyone at Temple Beth Israel for the wonderful surprise party you planned to celebrate my nineteen years of serving the community. I was extremely surprised, humbled and pleased by this tremendous honor and show of support. No Rabbi could love a congregation more. Thanks to you, Laurie and I have met some of the most incredible individuals we know, and some of our finest friends.

The congregation could not have planned a finer party. It was held in my favorite place — the synagogue — with so many of the friends we sincerely treasure. The western theme of the party, the food and the entertainment — a wonderful live performance by an extremely talented country musician — and the atmosphere were PERFECT!!!! Many people worked hard to bring this to fruition, and I am extremely grateful.

Thank you also for the wonderful gifts. The cowboy hat is the best western hat I have ever owned, and I cannot wait to be fitted for new boots. These wonderful gifts could not be appreciated more!

In the Babylonian Talmud in Ta’anit 29A, our sages counseled: “Be happy. It’s Adar, the month of the observance of Purim.” Because Purim had so many joyous celebrations, the month of Adar was always associated with joy. It is fitting the congregational party in my honor occurred during the month of Adar.

It is Adar, so I could not be happier. Thank you once again for the wonderful party. Laurie and I look extremely forward to being a part of this wonderful congregation and community for many years to come. We wish everyone a wonderful Purim.

Shalom u’v’rachah,
Rabbi Frank Joseph



