



Mark Your Calendar!

- Sunday, February 1
Confirmation meets
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
PTO/Education Meeting
9:30 a.m.
- Friday, February 6
Tu B'Shevat Shabbat 7:45 p.m.
Oneg
- Sunday, February 8
Sunday School Tu B'Shevat
Sedar
- Saturday, February 14
Torah Study, 10:30 a.m.
- Sunday, February 15
No Sunday School,
Presidents' Day
- Friday, February 20, 6:30 p.m.
Student-led Shabbat service.
All Sunday School students are
expected to attend.
Oneg
- Sunday, February 22
Men's Club Meeting
- Sunday, February 29
Sunday School - Bake
Hamentaschen

All committee members: Please be sure to send updates to your programs to our webmaster Wain Schroeder at niaw1@comcast.net

Rabbi's Message

My rabbinical students at Hebrew Union College were pondering a classic rabbinic question this week: What is it that brings people to services? Is it the worship itself? Is it the feeling of community? Is it habit? Is it obligation? Is it the sermon? And they also asked the flip side of the question: What keeps people from services? Is it the time? Is it the length? Is it competing priorities? Is it the weather? Is it sheer end-of-the-week exhaustion? Is it the worship itself? (Is it the sermon?)

Every congregation, no matter the size, should ask itself these questions. If the answers were simple, we would have figured it out by now. All I know is this: People tell me that, when they do come to services, they feel so much better afterwards that they themselves wonder why they don't come more often. You might say, Rabbi, of course they tell you they enjoyed coming. You might also make the argument that people would be unlikely to confess to me, the rabbi, if they regretted coming to services. You would have a point. On the other hand, I am exactly the person to tell.

So tell me, either in person, through the mail, on the phone or via email. What brings you when you come? What keeps you away when you stay away? Be anonymous if you prefer, although knowing the name behind the opinion makes the opinion more valuable. Whatever I learn from you, I will share (anonymously) with the congregation in a sermon (unless that is what keeps you away) and in this newsletter.

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President's Message

As a parent with three teenagers, much of my life is spent trying to find a few minutes when there can be a quiet time in my life. With all the running around that I do, those few minutes of peace are so valuable. I got to have a few of those moments this weekend, when I got two runs on the slopes of Shawnee to myself. I thoroughly enjoyed the skiing with my kids this weekend, but I think my favorite time was on the lift by myself at the end of the day. The slopes were still, the snow had just started falling and the chance to reflect was much needed.

I got to realize that I am lucky to have the things that I have in life, and that the troubles that bother me are much less than what many others have to endure. In any situation that I find myself in life, there is always someone doing better than me, and there is someone who is fighting battles that I would not want to battle. When I look at the world and I see someone who appears to be better off than me, I try to remember that that person also has troubles. And as well, when I look at someone who seems to be struggling more than I am, I try to think about the good that is in that person's life. I know that everyone has good in them, and when I see you in shul or on the street, that is what I see in all of you.

Because of all of you and the goodness that is within each of you, I am proud to be your president. May your *nachas* be great and your struggles be few.

Shalom,
Howie Hirsch

Rabbi's Message, cont.

We have always been a worshipping congregation. It is always good to understand our successes so we can build on them. It is also good to discover where we could benefit from doing something differently. The more input from you, the better picture we will get of our Temple community.

Remember, after winter comes spring.

Rabbi Ellen J. Lewis

Student-Led Lay Service, Feb. 20

The Sunday school students will be participating in the Lay Shabbat Service on Friday, February 20, 2004. Students in each class will have an opportunity to lead part of the service. Parents, please bring your child(ren) and share in the joy of Shabbat with other Jewish Center families. An Oneg Shabbat will follow the service when the children can enjoy sweet treats with their friends.

Thank you,
Ritual Committee

Upcoming Adult Education Programs

Torah Study

If line-by-line (and sometimes word-by-word) textual study interests you, come join us one Saturday morning per month, 10:30 to noon or thereabouts, on the following dates: **February 14, March 27, April 24, May 22, and June 12.** If you would like more information, call Sharon Herson.

Education Committee and PTO News

A field trip is planned for **Sunday, March 21**, at the Bridgewater JCC 1:00-4:00pm. Sunday School and Confirmation students will be able to swim and use the gym. Cost is \$5 per person. Transportation will be the responsibility of the parents.

We are looking for a Sunday School teacher for our K/1 grade beginning next fall. Share with our youngest children the joy of Judaism. This group meets 2-3 times a month. Please contact Lori Post at the office if you are interested.

Shoprite/A&P Vouchers

We would like to remind everyone that in addition to dues, in 2003/2004 all family memberships in the Temple are required either to purchase \$2,000 worth of A&P/ShopRite scrip or pay an additional \$100 in dues. The deadline for this obligation is April 1, 2004. Please call Sandy Seidorf to purchase scrip, or mail the \$100 to the Treasurer Paul May at the Temple.

ShopRite and A&P scrip can be purchased at Sunday School/Confirmation Class on the following dates:

February 1, 22 March 7, 21
April 4, 18 May 2, 16



SERVICE BEGINS AT
6:30PM

Cancellations Due to Weather

Should bad weather be an issue on a Friday evening and services need to be canceled, a message will be left on the Center's answering machine by 5:30 p.m. Should bad weather be an issue on Sunday morning and Sunday School needs to be canceled, a message will be left on the Center's answering machine by 7:30 a.m. We will also use the snow chain.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Jewish Life



Jewish LIFE presents a viewing of the film *Relentless, the Struggle for Peace in Israel* on Thursday, February 5 at 7:30 p.m. On Sunday,

February 8 at 10 a.m., Stephen Steinlight presents "Open Immigration and the Rise of Islamism in America and the Impact on American Jewry." And on Sunday, February 29 at 10 a.m., Norman Cohen will discuss "The Age Old Problem of Sibling Rivalry." Coming on March 11 at 7:30 p.m. Raymond Wojcik "Nu, Music? - It Ain't All Klezmer - Part 2." And on Sunday, March 28 at 10 a.m., join Chaim Waxman for a discussion on "The Half Full Cup - Strengths and Weaknesses of American Jewry."

Programs are at the Shimon and Sara Birnbaum JCC, 775 Talamini Road in Bridgewater unless otherwise noted. To register or for further information, contact Laura Friedman, Assistant Executive Director, at 908-725-6994 x213 or e-mail LFriedman@ssbjcc.org.

Regional Shabbaton

The annual Regional Shabbaton (formerly Spirituality Kallah) will take place on Shabbat February 28, 2004 at Temple Beth El, Hillsborough, NJ. Participants in the day-long program will share prayer, song, and study, as well as meals and social time.

Participating in the popular program will be: Rabbis Jennifer Clayman, Temple Emanu-El, Westfield; Faith Joy Dantowitz, Congregation B'nai Jeshurun, Short Hills; Dan Levin, Temple Emanu-El, Livingston; Garry Loeb, Temple Beth El, Monroe, NY; Laurence Malinger, Temple Shalom,

Aberdeen; Eric Siroka, Or Chadash, Flemington; Vicki Tuckman, Congregation Beth Chaim, Princeton Jct; Stephen Wylen, Temple Beth Tikvah, Wayne; and Rabbi Arnold Gluck and Cantor Yvonne Shore, both from host congregation Temple Beth El.

Topics include: "Spiritual Journeys Through the Spring Holidays;" "Abraham Says 'No!' a Re-Visioning of the Akedah; and Searching for Meaning in the Book of Exodus through Midrash – Understanding Common Sense.

The workshops will take place after lunch and following the morning's program, which will include Torah study and worship services. The Darshan at morning services will be Rabbi Norman Cohen, Professor of Midrash at the Hebrew Union College – Jewish Institute of Religion. Registration forms are available in your temple office. Prompt registration is urged. For more information, contact Paul Kaufman at 201-722-9090, ext. 201, or pkaufman@urj.org

Berman Center Spring 2004 Programs

LECTURE BY "THE GOD SQUAD"

Msgr. Thomas Hartman and Rabbi Marc Gellman, better known as "The God Squad," will discuss "Religion and

Violence in the Contemporary World" and answer questions from the audience. Open to the public free of charge. No tickets required. The program is sponsored by the Kenner Lecute, the Berman Center for Jewish Studies, and Lehigh's Hillel and Newman Centers. Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 p.m., Packard Lab Auditorium, Lehigh University

SYMPOSIUM ON JEWISH WRITING:

"IMAGINING JEWS: CONTEMPORARY EXPLORATIONS"

A diverse and imaginative group of Jewish writers and poets reflect on Jewish memory and identity — past, present and future. Participants include Melvin Bukiet, Lawrence Langer, and Irena Klepfisz in a session on "Writing and Rewriting the Holocaust"; Ilan Stavans, Ruth Knafo Setton, and Faridh Goldin on "Multicultural Jews"; and Gerald Stern, Allicia Ostriker, and Dara Horn on "Rethinking Jewish Identity. Registration is required.

Visit the Berman Center's website at www.lehigh.edu/~inber/symposium.html for more information or call 610-758-3352.

Donations

Yahrzeit donations

- Jim and Linda Arvesen in memory of Elmer Arvesen, Elizabeth Arvesen and Ken Weiland's mother, Ruth Schneider
- The Post-Goldner Family in memory of Gertrude Post and Adolph Goldner
- Judy and Wain Schroeder in memory of William Brugmann
- Rona and Stanley Schick in memory of Rita Hecht
- Ann Stahl in memory of Samuel Horowitz
- Leslie and Murray Heller in memory of Mildred Sobine
- Iris and Howard Hirsch in memory of Jessica Hirsch and Henriette Goldstein

The congregation mourns the loss of former long-time member Sam Levine.

From Your Newsletter Editor

We're looking for a new newsletter editor beginning this fall. Be creative, have fun, and help the Temple at the same time! Contact Howie or Lisa if interested.

The deadline for March's issue will be February 18.

10 Minutes of Torah

UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM'S DEPARTMENT OF LIFELONG JEWISH LEARNING

The Union will send you a **one-page e-mail** each day on a topic of Jewish interest. All you need to do is find **10 minutes a day** to "do Torah."

WHO? Reform Jews committed to having Judaism inform their daily lives are encouraged to participate.

WHAT? 10 minutes a day of personal connection to a Jewish text, issue or topic.

- Monday: Torah
- Tuesday: Social Action
- Wednesday: Israel Connections
- Thursday: Jewish Ethics
- Friday: Jewish World

Select all five days or any combination.

HOW? Each weekday morning (Monday-Friday) an e-mail will be delivered to your inbox for you to study at your convenience.

To sign up for *10 Minutes of Torah* please visit
www.urj.org/torah/ten

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- Blaustein Early Childhood Center
- Youth/Teen Programs
- Jewish LIFE/Cultural Programs
- Vacation Day Programs
- Senior programs
- Camp Talamini-Ruach
- Summer Swim Club
- **NEW!** JCC Dance School



**Shimon and Sara Birnbaum
Jewish Community Center**

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