

MISHPOCHEH

Temple Beth Shalom ☆ Brigantine Jewish Community Center

March 2014 Vol. 22, No. 2

Rabbi Gerald R. Fox

Adar I/Adar II 5774



SERVICES

Every Friday Evening
Throughout the Year,
8-9 p.m.

Light Refreshments

Saturday Service

March 15 • 10 a.m.

Sunday Board Meeting

March 16 • 10 a.m.

RABBI'S COLUMN

Commanding Happiness

Most of us have spent months in the cold and dreariness of Winter, wondering when our misery will end. By any reasonable measure, we have endured a lot this year (Superstorm Sandy notwithstanding), stuck in our homes or in others' as we deal with power outages, downed trees, damaged windows and roofs, and even flooding. And, if we didn't endure these, we certainly felt compelled to stay put more than most any Winter in recent memory.

It is normal, especially with the lack of bright sunshine that accompanies every Winter, that we become sad. We miss friends and family, and our regular routines are put into disarray.

So, it is time to ask ourselves: What makes us happy?

The funny thing about Judaism and our rich written and oral heritage is that we are often commanded to perform "mood changing" activities. Whether it is standing and sitting (again and again) in prayer during the High Holy Days, lighting a Hanukkah menorah, preparing for and holding a formal meal with a written guide during Passover, or dressing up and getting a little *shicker* and making noise and having fun during Purim, we are taught to live our lives in a pattern that includes the breadth of human emotional experience, including sorrow, praise/gratitude, wonder, nostalgia, and especially joy. We don't need to feel lost or look elsewhere because our heritage gives us a manual on how we ought to live out the days (or, at least, the seasons) of our year.

Our heritage's gifts, though, do not end there. Most of us know that our Rabbis and our holy texts direct us to live ethical lives and describe the "proper ways" to experience both the smaller and the larger moments in our lives, but we may be surprised to discover that Jewish teaching throughout these texts and passed down through our cultural traditions often directs us how to feel. No one expects us to comply perfectly or even to find these directives always pitch-perfect in tone for a given situation, which is why there are so many exceptions and qualifications. Our great Sages understood, however, that if we change our setting, our activity, our attitude, and so on, then we will change our lives dramatically. In many ways, living a Jewish life is a string of acts that lead to positive self-transformation.

And so, with the month of Adar upon us, we receive with anticipation our heritage's instruction to "be happy, [the Jewish month of] Adar is here!" (The intimation being, of course, that Purim and its accompanying joyousness, will soon be here!)

And I, for one, say, "Whoohoo! It's none-too-soon!"

So, as you enjoy the March thaw (I hope), why not be happy that our ancestors were spared from destruction, that we live in a wonderful place, that we have enough to eat, a place to sleep, and people who care about us. These may not be enough to sustain a truly joyous disposition, but perhaps our heritage is helping us to adjust our attitude to realize that happiness comes from an internal appreciation of foundational things such as these, not from the gilding with which we often adorn our lives. And just maybe, if we can remember this wisdom, we can carry our happiness with us beyond our celebration of Purim this month. It's certainly worth a try . . . !

May happiness find us in quiet moments and loud ones, during Purim and always; and may we never forget that part of our happiness is found in bringing it to others.

Rabbi Gerald R. Fox,



Coming Events

Friday, March 7
Shabbat Across
America and Canada

SHABBAT
ACROSS
AMERICA
AND
CANADA



Temple Beth Shalom is participating in Shabbat Across America and Canada on Friday, March 7. We are proud to partner with hundreds of synagogues and Jewish centers across North America and abroad for their "Chai" Year!

We will be hosting a Shabbat Dinner on Friday, March 7 at 6:30 p.m. Please call the office to make your reservations by March 3.

Congratulations

To **Dr. Harry & Sarah Chaikin** on the birth of their grandson, **James Joseph**, born January 5, 2014. The baby is also the great-grandson of **Betty Chaikin**.

Mazel tov to the whole family!

Mazel tov to **Jacob Prince**, grandson of **Ron & Lill Shender**, for making the Dean's List at Delaware County Community College.

Condolences

Deepest sympathy to **Steve & Jamie Satz** on the loss of Steve's brother, **Elliott Satz** of California, who passed away February 21.

Get Well

Barry Bornstein, Bernie Gittelman, Diane Waxman, Sandra Wray (sister of Lill Shender), **Nancy Zucker**

General Donations

Fred & Terry Horowitz in honor of Karen Fineberg's return to good health.

Barbara & Michael Shore in memory of Shirley Schreiber.

Drs. Robert & Roberta Ball

Faye Kahn in honor of Dr. Robert Ball's recovery.

Bruce & Dee Bortner in memory of Bradley Price.

Ron & Jackie Caplan in honor of the birth of Betty Chaikin's great-grandson, James Joseph.

Ronald & Lillian Shender in honor of their grandson, Jacob Prince, for making the Dean's List.

Lorraine & Burton Stolove in memory of Raisl bat Yohanah.

Message Cards

Sid & Shirley Morgan:

Congratulations to Dr. Harry & Sarah Chaikin on the birth of their grandson, James Joseph.

Ron & Lill Shender: *Get Well wishes* to Barry Bornstein.

Jacqueline & Fred Fabel: *Condolences* to Steve & Jamie Satz on the loss of Steve's brother.

Dr. Henry & Gloria Jacoby: *Condolences* to Steve & Jamie Satz on the loss of Steve's brother.

MAY I HAVE YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE!

*Are you celebrating a special day,
honoring someone or
remembering a loved one?*

A good way to do this is to sponsor an Oneg Shabbat on a Friday night or a Saturday Kiddush lunch. It will make you feel good and will help your synagogue carry on this time-honored tradition.

For only \$25 for a Friday night or \$100 for a Saturday Kiddush lunch, this has got to be the biggest bargain on the planet!

Call Diane at 266-0403 and make your intentions known.

Yahrzeit Donations

Linda Hahn in memory of her former husband, Rabbi Sanford H. Hahn.

David Horowitz in memory of his sister, Louise Horowitz.

Samuel & Arlene Maisus in memory of Sam's father, Philip Maisus.

Howard & Arlene Waronker in memory of Arlene's mother, Edith Rosenthal.

Judith & Stanley Levick in memory of Judith's mother, Claire Goldman.

Linda Oram in memory of her father, David Masket.

Harvey & Diane Steiner in memory of Harvey's mother, Hilda Steiner.

Dr. Evlynn Harmon in memory of her father, Hyman David Freed.

Burton & Lorraine Stolove & Family in memory of Burt's father, Max Stolove, for the Bingo Fund.

Faye Kahn in memory of her father, Leroy Landau.

Allan & Andrea Abramowitz in memory of Allan's father, Bernard Abramowitz.

Beverlee Bearman Reiter in memory of her cousin, Irwin S. Scherzer.

Betty Chaikin in memory of her brother-in-law, Mason Waronker, and her sister-in-law, Lillian Waronker.

Ronald & Lillian Shender in memory of Lill's father, Jule Harrison.

Laurence & Debra Berger in memory of Debra's grandfather, Michael Hoffman.

Nancy Gordon in memory of her mother, Julia Louise Manheimer.

Rose Zeltser in memory of her father-in-law, Morris Zeltser.

Seymour & Norma Trachtman in memory of Norma's sister, Joan Weiss.

Drs. Robert & Roberta Ball in memory of Bob's mother, Anna Ball.

Sheila & Saul Feder in memory of Sheila's father, Sholem Werbin.

Barbara Pearlman in memory of her brother, Herbert Salus.

Howard & Carol Serotta in memory of Howard's father, Paul Serotta.

Dr. Joseph & Lillian Hassman in memory of Lill's uncle, Robert Magalnick.

Natalie Solomon in memory of her mother, Muriel Samuelson Schenker.

Sidney & Shirley Morgan in memory of all their loved ones.

HELP WANTED

TBS seeks authors for our monthly newsletter "Mishpocheh" to write articles on current Jewish events – here and in Israel. If interested, call Lill, 264-9347, or Diane, 266-0403.

Thank You To the Oneg Shabbat & Kiddush Sponsors

For January

Friday, January 17 – **Betty Chaikin** in memory of her father-in-law, Isadore Chaikin;

Michael & Carol Albert in memory of Carol’s mother, Betty Eisen.

Friday, January 24 – **Rose Zeltser** in memory of her father-in-law, Morris Zeltser.

Friday, January 31 – **Dr. Howard & Arlene Waronker** in memory of Arlene’s mother, Edith Rosenthal.

For February

Friday, February 7 – **Dr. Burton & Judith Schwartz** in honor of their children and grandchildren.

Friday, February 14 – **Terry & Fred Horowitz** in memory of Terry’s mother, Elinore Scher.

Friday, February 21 – **Betty Chaikin** in memory of her father, Harry Schindler.

Friday, February 28 – **Drs. Robert & Roberta Ball** in memory of Bob’s mother, Anna Ball.



MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 2.....Patricia Koutcher, Rosalyn Weinstein
- 9.....Sandy Cogan
- 10.....Michael B. Albert
- 11.....Norma Gittelman
- 12.....Stanton L. Levin, Dr. Eli W. Zucker
- 13.....Marvin A. Waxman
- 15.....David S. Horowitz
- 17.....Faye Kahn
- 19.....Jerald Cohen
- 20.....Dr. Barry L. Glaser
- 23.....Howard Serotta
- 25.....Frances Goldstein
- 27.....Bret Bergman
- 28.....William Boutin
- 30.....Sarah Fox

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 22.....John & Lena Elzufon

The Daughters of Zelophehad

by *Lilyan Cralle*

Think Women’s Lib is a fairly recent phenomenon? Think again.

The Bible tells the story of Zelophehad, of the tribe of Manasseh, who was part of the exodus from Egypt. Unfortunately, he died during the Israelites’ time in the desert and left no sons to inherit his share of the promised land. However, he did have five daughters. While daughters were not considered in the line of inheritance, they petitioned the leadership and Moses for their father’s portion anyway.

Moses turned to God for an answer, and God told him to

grant the daughters’ request.

It then became a generalized regulation that, when there were no sons, daughters would have first inheritance rights, followed by other male relatives in a set sequence. Zelophehad’s daughters also were required to only marry men from their own tribe so that ownership of the land would remain within the tribe.

It may not have been full equality, but it certainly was an important first step for women’s rights. Along with the matriarchs, let us also remember the names of Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah and Tirzah — the daughters of Zelophehad.

HELP EXPAND OUR FAMILY
We need more new, active members.
Do you have friends or neighbors who could join us?

Prayer Book Dedication

We are offering you a chance to purchase a memorial/honorarium plaque to be placed in our new prayer books (inside front cover) for only \$36. We have only 24 books remaining for dedication, so call the office at 609-266-0403 and make your wishes known.

BOOK CLUB
Monday, March 17 • 1 p.m.
 to review
“Me Before You”
 by **Jo Jo Moyes.**
 The club will meet at the **Community Center Room 139**
 RSVP to Shirley at ssmorgan3@verizon.net or call 609-266-8599.





The Timeless Message of Purim: Jubilation Tinged with Wariness

The timeless message of Purim is as ancient as ancient Persia's Haman, and as modern as modern Iran's Ahmadinejad. As a tale of the Jews' imminent destruction and heroic

deliverance, it is harrowing as it is comforting. The old story does not seem so *passé* these days.

Haman, minister to King Achashueros, prompts the king to order the annihilation of his Jewish subjects. In the Purim story, the evil decree is thwarted. Queen Esther fearfully discloses to her husband and king that she is herself Jewish. Consequently, if he does not repeal the genocide, she will die with her people. Since Esther is the king's favorite, he becomes enraged, and orders Haman and his sons to reap the death they devised for the Jews.

The outcome of the Purim story is deliverance. Yet it also reflects how vulnerable Jews can be in a hostile environment. The disturbing undercurrent running through the narrative shows how easily safety can tip to danger, how quickly the homeland can become the killing field.

Perhaps it is this tension between opposite emotional poles – despair to elation – that ignites the nearly delirious happiness with which Jews across the ages have greeted and celebrated Purim. It is the most joyous, playful and tender celebration in the Jewish calendar. Literally and figuratively drunk with jubilation, Jews celebrate Purim with riotous happiness and high spirits.

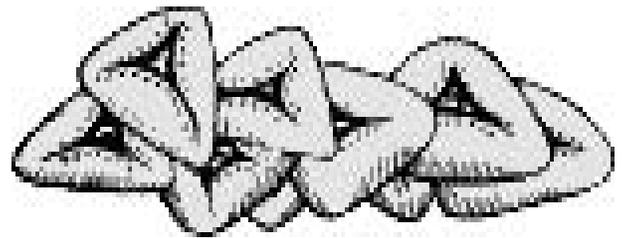
WHY DO WE EAT HAMANTASHEN FOR PURIM?

According to Jewish tradition, Haman, the evil character in the Purim story, wore a three-cornered hat. Somewhere along the way in Jewish history, the idea of Haman and his three-cornered hat was cleverly combined with a popular pastry called “Mantashen” to form “Hamantashen.” In Yiddish, “Mantashen” means poppy seed pockets and “Hamantashen” means “Haman's pockets.”

While originally hamantashen pastries were filled with a poppy seed filling, over time the fillings became more varied. Today there are hamantashen filled with fruit preserves, chocolate and even peanut butter.

In Hebrew, the pastry is called “Oznai Haman” which means Haman's ears. This name may have come from the Midrash which says that when Haman entered the Kings's treasury, he was bent over with shame and humiliation (literally with clipped ears).

Now eat some and enjoy!



Seeing the Unseen

It is a remarkable detail that the Book of Esther, which details one of the many redemptions of the Jewish People, does not mention God even once. The narrative plays out very clearly as a struggle between our own internal identity and that which we share with others; there are consequences, the Megillah reminds us, for both hiding ourselves and making ourselves known.

So it is with our relationship with God and God with us with which we struggle, often silently, in an attempt to make the unseen seen. Perhaps these words below will nourish our souls and remind us to be less afraid to confront this, at times distant and at times awesome, relationship.

– Rabbi Gerald R. Fox

The following is reprinted with permission from the journal Sh'ma (www.shma.com) January 2014, as part of a larger conversation about being settled and unsettled.

“This uncertainty is killing me
And it's the chase that keeps
my feet on the ground.”
– from the song, “Uncertainty”
by The Wellspring

The conclusion to one of the most personal of the Amidah's blessings reads, “*Baruch atah Hashem, shomea tefilla*” – “Blessed are You, God, who hears prayers.” Whether or not we believe, literally, that God hears our prayers, I want to remind myself that God hears me, God hears *us*. My small voice can cut through the cacophony of the world's constant hum and be heard in an intimate way.

What is more “uncertain” than the existence of God? Being in a loving relationship with an invisible partner is so hard and frustrating. When Moses first encounters God at the burning bush, he asks who he should say has sent him. God's answer is perfectly mystical and cryptic and simple: “I will be what I will be.” As Ezra Koenig of Vampire Weekend asks in “Ya Hey,” “Who could ever live that way?” We need more than an esoteric,



March Yahrzeits

- 3/1 Drs. Robert & Roberta Ball *in memory of Bob's mother, Anna Ball*
- 3/4 Howard & Carol Serotta *in memory of Howard's father, Paul Serotta*
- 3/7 Howard & Myrna Levin *in memory of Myrna's father, Max Cylinder*
- 3/10 Joan Rosenfeld *in memory of her father, William Hirsch*
- 3/12 Milton & Phyllis Berkes *in memory of Milton's brother, George Berkes*
 Betty Chaikin *in memory of her sister, Helen Lipkin*
 Gerald Pepper *in memory of his father, George Pepper*
- 3/17 Milton & Phyllis Berkes *in memory of Milton's mother, Rose Berkes*
 Michael & Cheryl Guterman *in memory of Cheryl's mother, Lillian Brownstein*
- 3/19 Leslie & Susan Tuerk *in memory of Leslie's father, Stanley H. Tuerk*
- 3/20 Harry Labkow
- 3/23 Vera Getz *in memory of her father-in-law, Nathan Getz*
 Barbara Pearlman *in memory of her brother, Herbert Salus*
- 3/26 Barry Bornstein & Fran Dratch *in memory of Barry's grandmother, Fanny Denbow*
- 3/30 Carl & Beth Apter *in memory of Carl's mother, Molly Apter*
- 3/31 Dr. Joseph Hassman *in memory of his mother-in-law, Esther Davis*

Simply Shirley . . .

Welcome to my fellow readers

I think by now all of us have had enough of the white stuff and are ready for Spring. Well I'm happy to report that soon it will be Spring and the flowers will start blooming.

To those of us who have weathered the cold and made it to Friday night services, I would like to comment on just how great it is to see Matan and Doron at some of the services. Doron has become quite the little Rabbi, standing when he is supposed to and even turning the pages at the right time. Truly love seeing our twins at services.

The February book club was held on Monday, February 10 and was hosted by MaryAnne Miller and what a wonderful hostess MaryAnne always is. The book reviewed was "The Assistant," by Bernard Malamud. Truly a very interesting read which made for a very good discussion. It is the story of Morris Bober, a neighborhood grocer who wants better for himself and his family and all of the hardships he must go through to reach his goal.

Our next book review will be held on Monday, March 17 and our hostess will be Stephanie Miller. We will meet in Room 139 at the Community Center and the book we will review is "Me Before You," by JoJo Moyes.

Please contact me at 609-266-8599 or ssmorgan3@verizon.net should you be interested in being added to our book club list.

*Until I write again, Think Spring,
Simply Shirley*

Seeing the Unseen *continued*

vague response!

This uncertainty becomes destructive when it is my reason for not praying. Though I hope God hears my voice, I don't want to put my prayers out if they may not be heard. I want my partner known, invested, and present. When I think of my prayers falling upon deaf ears — or worse, upon no ears — it shakes my very foundation of faith and love to the core.

— *Dov Rosenblatt*

I struggle with belief in a personal God who responds to supplications, and with belief in God at all. And I struggle to pray when, in other settings, speaking aloud, ostensibly to myself, would brand me as crazy. And yet, I pray — not always, but often. Sometimes, it's but one or two prayers; other times, the full liturgy. I don't believe that God has any need of my prayers, but they serve as a vehicle to teach me humility and perspective, to add rhythm and ritual to my day.

Prayer is usually easier for me when I'm surrounded by people, when I feel the full weight of community. *We are praying*. A collective that stretches back millennia is speaking *b'kol echad*, in one voice, reliving our history and asking for our basic human needs to be fulfilled. Mostly, I think, prayer is an integral practice and a reminder of what it means to be human — full of failings, working in concert with other people, descendants of a collective past, and capable of striving for something more. — *Chelsea Garbell*

One night, when my mom came into my room to put me to bed, I said, "I have something to tell you. Sometimes I talk to God out loud. Does God hear me, mom? Or am I just talking to air?" I was 10 years old and self-conscious, so I added, "Don't tell anyone in my class that I asked, 'cause they'll be like, 'you talk to air?'"

I still talk to air. Or God. I don't know. I share Dov Rosenblatt's sense of doubt, but I don't share his discomfort with it. In fact, I have an aversion to certainty. Religious certainty, in my life, has meant violence and hatred. The same people who "know" God's will take it upon themselves to impose that will on everyone else.

The God I engage in relationship gave me the ability to seek and interpret amid great mystery. And the mystery itself is what makes room for wonder, engagement, and growth — and brings about those little sparks of holiness that catch my heart.

— *Hallel Abramowitz-Silverman*

Dov Rosenblatt is a professional musician and educator based in Los Angeles, where he teaches about understanding prayer through songwriting and music.

Chelsea Garbell is an English-as-a-second-language kindergarten teacher in Samut Sakhon, Thailand.

Hallel Abramowitz-Silverman is an 18-year-old American-Israeli activist living in Jerusalem. She will begin her service in the Israel Defense Forces on March 5.



Browse Our Library

Books that have been discussed by our Book Club and other best sellers have been placed in the Temple Library for your enjoyment. If you would like to read any of these books, or any others that we have, the office is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. each day of the week.

The Yiddish Policemen's Union by Michael Chabon

Girl With a Pearl Earring by Tracy Chevalier

The Ministry of Special Cases by Nathan Englander

People of the Book by Geraldine Brooks

Chicken Soup for the Jewish Soul – Stories to Open the Heart and Rekindle the Spirit

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A Reminder

to all Temple Beth Shalom members
 Please notify the office of any births, engagements,
 marriages, illnesses or deaths. This way the Rabbi,
 Board and Temple membership can be notified. The answering
 machine is on 7 days and 24 hours a day.

Help Our Temple through your donations

Your donations in memory of loved ones, simchas, our Library Fund or Rabbi's Discretionary Fund not only help the Temple, but also are a way to remember various happy and sad events in your life. Unsolicited general donations are needed to help the Temple meet its annual operating expenses. Keep in mind, less than 50% of our operating expenses are covered by membership dues. Listed below are the various items to which you can contribute.

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Rabbi's Discretionary Fund	Whatever you desire
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Kiddush Fund	Whatever you desire