

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

News | Activities | Events

Inside this Issue

From the Bimah: Our
Rabbi's Message

The President's Message

TBS Sunday School
Announcements and
Schedule

Sisterhood Corner and
Brotherhood

Life Cycle Events

Temple Beth Shalom
Event Calendar

Harriet Sederholm
Scholarship Foundation

Special Events and
Announcements

Temple Board of Directors

Temple Member
Business Directory

Temple Beth Shalom
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From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Dennis Jones, Student Rabbi



Hanukah—A Festival of Light Over Darkness!

I speak often of the number of times I am asked in December by my well-meaning Christian friends, “Isn’t Hanukah the Jewish Christmas?” Now, I know my friends are only expressing an interest in my faith and a concern about things that are important to me, but how can I politely tell them that there is almost no similarity between Hanukah and Christmas other than occurring at about the same time of year? In reality, the one major similarity the holidays do share, their commercialization, would not be considered a good thing by many people. Christmas, of course, marks the birthday of the central figure of the Christian faith and object of their worship. One might say that without Christmas there would be no Christianity. Judaism has no such central human figure.

Hanukkah, by comparison, is a relatively minor religious celebration commemorating the cleansing or rededication of a *holy place*. It was, for centuries celebrated very simply by just the lighting of candles, sharing of meals, and saying of prayers. In fact, most people are not aware that Hanukkah is not even mentioned in the Hebrew Bible. It does not rank among the major observances like the Sabbath, Passover, Shavuot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot, each of which is commanded several times in the Torah itself. Hanukkah's first mention in Jewish sources is in the books of First and Second Maccabees. These two books were not included in the Hebrew canon of scripture, but are assigned to a collection of writings known as the Apocrypha or Pseudepigrapha.

At a time in the second century before the Common Era, when the Syrian Greeks were occupying the Land of Israel and the holy city of Jerusalem, and the practice of Judaism had been forbidden by the maniacal ruler, Antiochus Epiphanes, a small band of Jewish rebels rose up under the leadership of Mattathias, of priestly descent. Though vastly outnumbered and poorly equipped, these Jewish guerrillas, led by Mattathias' son, Judah, nicknamed "Maccabeus—The Hammer," succeeded in defeating the Syrian armies in battle after battle, ultimately taking back the city of Jerusalem, including the Holy Temple and the area surrounding it. Once the Temple was back in Jewish hands, attention was turned to the problem that the Temple fallen into disrepair and had been defiled. Repairs were quickly made, and a new and undefiled altar was constructed. Then, according to tradition, three years to the day after Antiochus had defiled it, on the 25th day of the Hebrew month of Kislev, a festival was inaugurated for the cleansing and rededication of the holy place.

According to the Book of Maccabees (Chapter 4), the festival for the dedication of the Temple lasted eight days. That is not surprising to scholars, because when Solomon built the first Temple, he chose to dedicate it during the feast of Sukkoth, an eight-day festival. Since the Jews under Antiochus' harsh rule would not have been able to celebrate the festival of Sukkoth in the Fall, it is only natural that they would have wanted to do so, even belated, as a part of the Temple's rededication. It is not until Talmudic times (100-300 C.E.) that we find reference to the "miracle of the oil." The *Talmud* (Shabbat 21b-23a) tells us that as a part of the rededication, vessels of undefiled oil were sought for the lighting of the menorah. According to the Torah (Exodus 27:20-21), the Temple menorah is to burn day and night perpetually. Unfortunately, only one vessel of oil was found uncontaminated, about enough to burn for one day. Miraculously, that one day's supply of oil burned for the eight days of the dedication—the time it took for a fresh supply of kosher olive oil to be prepared. Josephus, who also writes in the Roman period, referred to Hanukkah *for the first time* as the "Festival of Lights" (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, Book 13, Chapter 7).

For centuries Hanukkah was celebrated by Jews very simply with the lighting of a Hanukiah, a nine canded menorah used specifically for Hanukkah evenings. Historians believe the exchange of gifts *did not begin* until relatively recently when Jews in areas where Christmas was celebrated with gift giving

decided that in order to keep their own children from becoming jealous they too would begin to give gifts. Even so, Hanukah gifts were quite modest, usually a small sum of money or Hanukah “gelt.” It was not until the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and mostly in America, that that began to change. Dianne Ashton, professor of Religious Studies at Rowan University, in her book, *Hanukah in America* (NYU Press, 2013), has shown how in America the evolution of Hanukah and Christmas have gone hand in hand in many ways. The growth and development of both holidays have been fueled by rapid industrialization and the resulting blossoming of a consumer-based economy. The marketing around both Christmas and Hanukah, designed to promote the consumption of goods, has led to the popularization of both holidays that is far beyond any celebrations that occurred in previous centuries. Now, nobody enjoys the benefits of our free enterprise economic system more than I do, however, I think most people would agree with me that the extreme commercialization of these holidays has detracted from their intended deeper spiritual meaning.

One of the wisest Rabbis of our own time, Jonathan Sacks, the former Chief Rabbi of the British Isles, writes, **“Hanukah is about the freedom to be true to what we believe without denying the freedom of those who believe otherwise.** It’s about lighting our candle, while not being threatened by or threatening anyone else’s candle” (<http://www.rabbisacks.org/>). The name *Hanukah* is based on the Hebrew word, *chanak* (chet-nun-kaf), which means “to dedicate.” While remembering that our ancestors, in centuries past, struggled to maintain their religious freedom and to rededicate the place considered most holy to them, shouldn’t we also rededicate ourselves to the things that matter most—faith, justice, and love? There is no doubt that the observance, prayers, acts of contrition, and seeking of forgiveness that we observe from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur are of greater import biblically and historically. But, we do have, during these cold winter months, an opportunity to *recommit* ourselves to the promises so recently made at Yom Kippur—to uphold the high moral and ethical standards of our Jewish tradition. It is, in fact, the pursuit of social justice and peace which, according to the Hebrew Prophets and echoed in our *Aleinu* prayer, will hasten the acknowledgement and sovereignty of the Creator *encompassing the entire earth*. This year, as you observe our **Festival of Lights**, will you pledge yourself to those values that the Prophet Isaiah says will make the Jewish people a “light to the nations”? Isaiah records Adonai’s message to us: **“I will make *you* a light to the nations, so that *my* salvation may reach to the end of the earth.”** *Ken yehi ratzon*—May this be God’s will!!

The President's Message

Barbara Laufer, President

You have been blessed with a wonderful and hardworking board of directors and it is important to me to share some of their accomplishments and contributions. Tiffany Hull and Lin Gentry are known as the alto section of the temple "choir" having been members for about 15 years. Both have contributed to the educational community, Tiffany as an Art teacher and Lin as a school counselor. Tiffany is the good fairy who makes the wonderful coffee and purchases all the food for shabbat. She also makes jewelry and creates art when she can, and visits her family in Montana and Texas. Tiffany has been on the board in the capacity of Vice-President, bulletin editor and currently secretary. Lin is a significant contributor of homemade desserts, loves sports, and is an expert at trivia crack. She has also been on the board for more than 10 years. Lin has invigorated the Sisterhood as President, and added things such as Game Night and Movie Night.

As your representative, I was asked to write an opinion piece for the Hickory Daily Record regarding the shooting at Tree of Life Synagogue. Unfortunately, mass shooting events have continued. Within four days bombs were sent because someone hated democrats; two people were killed because someone hated blacks; eleven people were killed, and six injured, because someone hated Jews; and a child killed another child in a Charlotte school. All these tragedies are bound together with the twisted barbed wire of hatred. As President of Temple Beth Shalom, I have been asked by several people if I knew any of the massacred people at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Squirrel Hill, Pittsburgh, and the answer was no and yes. No, I did not know any individual killed or injured in this heinous attack, but yes, I knew them because I shared their culture and values. Jews are committed to peace and social justice, speaking the truth, sanctifying human life, and treating every person with dignity. I know that as they prepared for Sabbath service they were preparing for the songs, prayers and Torah reading that are the same for every other Jew all over the world preparing for the Sabbath. The youngest members killed, precious brothers, would have been preparing to welcome the stranger to their service with lovingkindness. The Torah was the first code to grant equal protection under law to non-citizens, "You shall not oppress the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." This frequent commandment - to love your neighbor as yourself, including the stranger – appears 36 times in the Torah. Some theorize that rules repeated the most might be the ones that are most difficult to live up to, but this call for empathy is the best way to honor those killed and wounded.

Mr. Rogers grew up and lived within three blocks of the Tree of Life Synagogue, and Squirrel Hill was his neighborhood. He started each show with, "I like you just the way you are" and sang, "Won't you be my neighbor?" Not bad advice no matter how old you are.

Jews are committed to the concept of Tikkun Olam which is the healing of the world through socially responsible action, creating harmony, and pursuing social justice - because we all have a spark of the

divine. Just as the brave police rushed into the synagogue to save lives, we must rush forward, to combat violence in our language and our actions.

Please join us for services on December 7th, with a Hanukkah party after services on the 8th, which will include a baby naming for Ezra Hewitt Parkhurst, son of Mat and Caitlin Parkhurst. With the winter solstice almost upon us, let's commit to celebrating the longest night of the year by lighting candles for peace on earth and good will to all.

Hosts for the Year

Listed below are board members who have volunteered to host at temple services, but we also need additional member volunteers. Host's responsibilities are identified below and if you are willing to volunteer, please let Mary Lee Tosky know. Thank you.

December 7-8	Sunday School	
January 11-12	Jaime and Kathy Jones	hosts needed
February 8-9	Linda and Henry Greenfield	hosts needed
March 8-9		hosts needed
April 12-13	Lin Gentry/Tiffany Hull	hosts needed
April 20 - Seder	Sisterhood	hosts needed
May 10-11		hosts needed
May 31/June 1		hosts needed



“... you shall keep My sabbaths, for it is a sign between Me and you throughout your generations...” Exodus 31:13

Shabbat & Holiday Hosts' Responsibilities

(revised July 2018)

Please consider pairing with board member(s) to host a weekend at Temple Beth Shalom. It is hoped that by members contributing to the life of our synagogue in this way, we will all feel a part of our Jewish community and an active participant in assuring its well-being. This list will hopefully take away the guess work and please remember that all members present will be helping you in any way possible. Your volunteerism is greatly appreciated.

Prior to the Rabbi/Holiday Weekend:

The host(s) should communicate with each other regarding who will do which responsibilities. The host board member should make sure that someone has a key for opening the Temple to make preparations.

Friday Evening Oneg:

1. Three tables are set up with table cloths. One side table should be for coffee, challah, and wine/juice for a congregational Kiddush. Two tables should be set up with plates, napkins, silverware, and desserts.
2. Hosts should supply desserts. Challah, coffee, cream, sugar, wine, juice, sodas, and ice should already be stocked in the kitchen, but hosts should check for them ahead of time and let the Board know if supplies are not there.
3. Female hosts should set up the Shabbat candles, and performs the lighting of candles when the Rabbi directs. Hosts should also make sure that the yahrtzeit and ner tamid lights are lit prior to services.
4. Near the middle of the Friday evening service, hosts should brew coffee, pour Kiddush cups, and make sure the challah and desserts are set out (desserts and challah can be put out and kiddish cups filled before the service).
5. After the service, the hosts should assist with distributing wine/juice to the congregation.
6. At the end of the evening, hosts should complete host inventory; store all left-overs; clean the kitchen; sweep floor; and take out the trash. Recyclables should be separated into the recycling bin.
7. The host board member should ensure that the Temple is locked up for the evening and a security check done when you get there and when you leave.

Shabbat Morning:

Sabbath morning activities are minimal. Paid kitchen personnel will prepare the food and set-up and clean-up. At the end of the luncheon, they will also gather tablecloths for laundering and take garbage/recycle to the street.

Host couples only need to help with setting up tables and chairs and putting on tablecloths and distributing wine/juice for Kiddush.

TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President



A big thank you to those who shopped at the Sisterhood's annual Hanukkah fair on November 11th! The Sisterhood always enjoys hosting them and appreciates their bringing so many beautiful items to Hickory so that we can shop. A portion of their proceeds goes to support Temple Beth El's Sunday School, so we're glad to help them. Be sure to put it on your calendar for next year!

Sisterhood also hosted our second Torah study on Saturday night, November 10th. We enjoyed Havdalah and a delicious dinner before discussing the portion for that week. We look forward to our next Torah study. Remember, it's open to women, men, and teenagers.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, December 5th, at O'Charley's on Hwy 70 at 6:30pm. (Free Pie on Wednesdays!!). We'll decide the date of our next Torah study and our next Movie Night at the temple. Bring your calendar—see you then!

TBS Sunday School Program

Kathy Jones, Sunday School Program Coordinator

Sunday school met on November 25th. Students practiced their Hebrew with Rabbi Dennis, while parents decorated the Synagogue for Hanukkah. Sunday School will be hosting our next service weekend on December 7th and 8th which will include a Hanukkah luncheon and party following Shabbat morning services on the 8th. There will be latkes, dreidel, bingo, music, and a Sisterhood raffle. We hope everyone plans to attend!



Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund



The Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund was established by a long-standing Temple member, Burt Sederholm, to honor his wife Harriet, who died shortly after her retirement after 25 years with the Catawba County Department of Social Services. Mr. Sederholm's efforts provided the initial funding from generous family members and

friends and it has been added to over the years. The scholarship is available to students. Temple members are looked upon favorably, but one does not need to be a temple member nor Jewish to apply. The scholarship fund dividends are used to provide scholarship awards. Candidates may submit an essay to any one of the committee members. The essay will explain who the candidate is, what they are doing currently, what their plans are for the future, how the scholarship funds will be used and, if applicable, what the connection may be to Jewish life.

Interested students should submit their essay by April 30th. The scholarship season runs from May 1-April 30. All applicants will be notified in writing if their application has been approved or declined by May 15th. Awards should be mailed to recipients by May 31st.

The essay should be emailed to any of the committee members: Lin Gentry, Karen Ferguson, or Sandy Guttler. Naturally, the committee encourages everyone to make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Fund at any time.

Temple Board

Our next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 12th at 7pm. Board meetings are open to all temple members. Please join us and become a part of our TBS family.

TBS Board members are:

Student Rabbi:

Dennis Jones

Officers:

Barbara Laufer, President

Susan Goldstein, Vice-President

Susan Rieder, Treasurer

Tiffany Hull, Secretary

Marsue Davidson, Past President

Members at Large:

Liz Correll

Marion DuBow

Lin Gentry

Jaimi Jones

Linda Greenfield

Mary Lee Tosky

Karen Ferguson



Donations



Catherine Boro for Sunday School

Linda Fedder - general donation

Linda Fedder in honor of her father Yelin's Yahrzeit

Barbara and Larry Freiman in honor of Ron and Marion DuBow,
Larry and Barbara Laufer, and Dennis and Kathy Jones



Looking for a way to give tzedakah?

Jaimi Jones, daughter of Dennis and Kathy Jones, and School Social Worker for Alexander County Schools, is trying to collect hygiene/cleaning supplies for families of Hiddenite Elementary School students. It is the poorest school in the district and has a high rate of families living in poverty. She has had calls from parents seeking help to be able to send

their children to school with clean bodies and clean clothing. If anyone is willing to help her with this mitzvah by donating some of these supplies, please bring them to the next service at the Temple. **A box will be in the TBS foyer for the collection.**

They are in need of the following items for Kindergarten through 5th graders:

Shampoo Conditioner Children's and Adult Toothpaste and Toothbrushes Body Wash
Bar Soap Boy's and Girl's Deodorants Shaving Cream Safety Razors Ultra Thin Kotex
Toilet Paper Laundry Detergent Dish Soap Lysol Wipes

TBS Member Business Directory

Dr. Ronald DuBow
Internist, Geriatric Specialist
(elderly care) Pediatrician
2651 Morganton Blvd SW
Lenoir, NC 28645
828-757-8950

Dr. Laura Faruque
A Woman's View
915 Tate Blvd SE
Suite 170
Hickory, NC 28602
828-345-0800

Dr. Mark Faruque
Bethlehem Family Practice
174 Bolick Lane Suite 202
Taylorsville, NC 28681
828-495-8226

Marsue Davidson, RN DCS
Epic Health Services
805 W 25th Street
Newton, NC 28269
828-464-0244
www.marsue.davidson@epichealthservice.com



Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle December Events

Birthdays

Nick Weatherly 12/3
Roberta Atkins 12/3
Kathy Jones 12/5
Pete Sobotkin 12/6
Herman Garrick 12/12
Pam Axler 12/12
Hannah Davidson 12/13
Barry Sobotkin 12/16

Ginny Sobotkin 12/18
Aviella Ogilvie 12/17
Ben Setser 12/21
Eva Reed 12/28
Andrew Weatherly 12/29
Donnie Powell 12/30
Sarah Peltzer 12/31

Anniversaries

Larry and Barbara Laufer 12/28
Henry and Linda Greenfield 12/31

Yahrzeits

Joseph Brisbane 12/5
Ruth Morewitz 12/7
Herman Davis 12/9
Helene Tiber 12/16
Arnold Simons 12/30

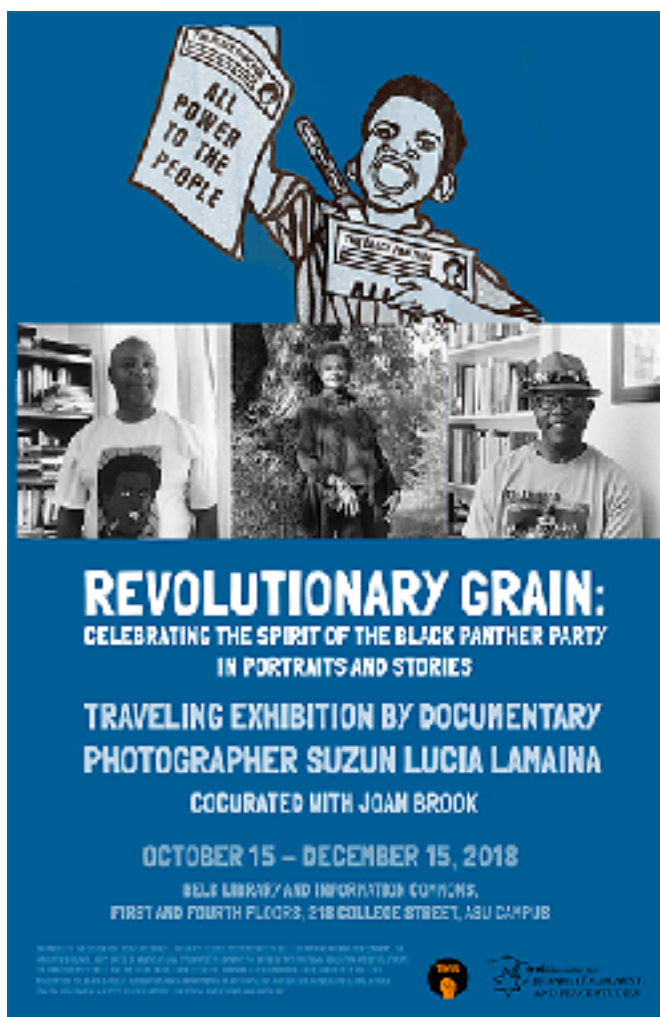
Member Business Directory

Karen Ferguson, MAIT
Certified Professional in Learning
and Performance
KB Learning Designs
kblearningdesigns.com
karen.sederholm@gmail.com

Scott and Julie Owens
Taste Full Beans Coffeehouse
29 2nd St NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-325-0108
www.tastefullbeans.com

Dr David Peltzer
Newton Family Physicians
767 West First Street
Newton, NC 28658
828 465-3928
www.newtonfamilyphysicians.com

Local and Regional Events



This fall, **Belk Library and Information Commons** is host to the traveling exhibit **“Revolutionary Grain: Celebrating the Spirit of the Black Panther Party in Portraits and Stories”** by California-based artist Suzun Lucia Lamaina. The Center for Judaic, Holocaust and Peace Studies, the program's organizer, invites the public to view and discuss the exhibit that starts on the library's **first floor** and concludes on the **fourth floor**. It opens on the evening of **Monday, October 15**, and will be on display **until Saturday, December 15**.

TBS Message Board

Get well wishes to Barbara and Larry Laufer from your TBS family!

If you wish to post a message to acknowledge a special event or achievement, condolence, or send a get well message, give or send your message and a \$5 donation to Marion DuBow at 2752 Brittany Dr., Lenoir, NC 28645. A greeting card will be sent acknowledging your donation and your message will appear here in the next issue of the TBS Bulletin.

Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School

<u>Date</u>		<u>Comments</u>	<u>Bulletin Deadline</u>
December	7-8	Services Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am Hanukah Party/Luncheon (in lieu of Sunday School)	November 24
	23	Sunday School 10am	
January	11-13	Services Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am/Sunday School 10am	December 29
	27	Sunday School 10am	
February	8-10	Services Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am/Sunday School 10am	January 26
	24	Sunday School 10am	
March	8-10	Services Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am/ Sunday School 10am	February 23
	22	Purim Megilah Reading/Friday night 7:30pm (in lieu of Sunday School)	
April	12-14	Services/ Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am/Sunday School 10am	March 30
	20	Passover Community Seder (Sat.) 6pm	
	28	Sunday School 10am	
May	10-11	Services Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am No SundaySchool (Mother's Day!!)	April 27
	19	TBS Annual Membership Meeting 10am	
May/June	31-2	Services/ Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10am Sunday School End of Year Party 10am	May 18
June	8	Erev Shavuot Service 7:30pm (Sat.)	

Want to contribute to the TBS Bulletin? Send entries to Karen Ferguson at karen.sederholm@gmail.com. All entries are reviewed by the TBS Board before publication.