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Temple Beth Shalom
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Temple Beth Shalom

From the Bima: Our Rabbi's Message

The New Year for Trees

As we emerge from winter and begin to see the first signs of spring, the next notable occasion on the Hebrew calendar is Tu B'Shevat. Often called the "New Year for Trees," Tu B'Shevat is actually a transliteration of the Hebrew for the 15th of Shevat. You will recall that in Hebrew, letters represent numbers. The Hebrew letter *tet* stands for the number nine and the letter *vav* (which in this case makes the "u" sound) represents the number six; six plus nine, of course, equaling fifteen. Shevat is the eleventh month of the Hebrew calendar. The New Year for Trees is *not* a biblically commanded festival. Its first mention is found in the *Mishnah*, a collection of the sayings of Judaism's most prominent sages from just after the beginning of the Common Era. In *Mishnah Rosh Hashanah 2a*, the rabbis are discussing when the new year should fall. They did, in fact, establish four new years. The first of Nissan was

referred to as the new year for kings and festivals. The first of Elul was established for the tithe (giving of one tenth) of cattle. The first of Tishri was called the new year for years of release, Jubilee years, and for the tithe of vegetables. The famous House of Hillel placed the new year for trees on the 15th of Shevat

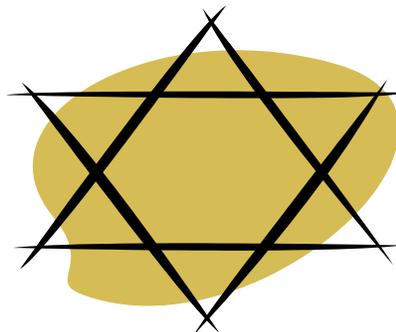
The need for a "New Year for Trees" was based on several passages from the Torah dealing with the treatment of trees, the most specific being Leviticus 19:23-25: "When you come into the land and you plant any tree for food, you shall treat its fruit as forbidden; for three years it will be forbidden and not eaten. In the fourth year, all of its fruit shall be sanctified to praise the LORD. In the fifth year, you may eat its fruit." The rabbis of the *Mishnah* probably placed the new year for trees on the 15th of Shevat because at that time of year the trees in the land of Israel, particularly those which bear fruit, begin to emerge from their winter dormancy and put forth their first buds. Since the destruction of the second Temple by the Romans in about 70 C.E., the ancient practices of tithing and the dedication of fruit, vegetables, and cattle for use by the

priesthood in Jerusalem are no longer strictly adhered to in Judaism. Still, the importance of Tu B'Shevat has remained on many levels.

In modern times, the “New Year for Trees” has become a time to emphasize Jewish responsibility toward the environment. For an ancient document, the Torah contains a remarkable number of passages that deal with the appropriate treatment of plants, animals, and the land. The passage cited earlier from Leviticus 19 about the treatment of a newly planted fruit tree is one such example. The practice of not harvesting the fruit of a young tree for the first three years would allow the tree time to strengthen and establish its root system before being subjected to harvest. You will recall that even from the beginning of man and woman’s time on earth, they were instructed to “be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and master it, to rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Genesis 1:27-28). The book of Genesis goes on to tell us that man and woman were placed in the Garden of Eden “to cultivate it and keep it” (2:15). The psalmist confirms, “The earth is the Lord’s and all it contains, the world, and all who dwell in it” (Psalm 24:1). In fact, the Almighty has made us partners in tending this

incredible planet and bringing its possibilities to fruition.

The Torah instructed the children of Israel that even during times of war, when extreme measures were necessary for the preservation of the nation, special care was to be taken not to destroy trees (Deuteronomy 20:19). According to Numbers 35:4, when cities were constructed in the Promised Land, “green belts” were to be maintained around the perimeters of the cities. Special rules were established for the harvesting of crops and the treatment of fields. For example, land was to be planted and harvested for six years, but on the seventh year the land was required to lie fallow, obviously in order to rejuvenate itself (Leviticus 25:3-4). This is actually referred to as giving the land a “sabbath rest”! There are even laws in the Torah which regulate such mundane things as the disposal of waste (Deuteronomy 23:12).



The ethical treatment of animals is also a prominent concern in the Torah. Leviticus 19:19 prohibits the

crossbreeding of species. Several laws pertain to the preservation of species. One such example is Deuteronomy 22:6: “If along the road, you chance upon a birds nest, in any tree or on the ground, with fledglings or eggs and the mother sitting over the fledglings or the eggs, do not take the mother together with her young. Let the mother go, and take only the young, in order that you may farewell and have a long life.” It is on this same theme that the famous passage, “You shall not boil a kid in its mother’s milk” (Exodus 23:19 and Deuteronomy 14:21), the very passage from which the *Kashrut* laws of separating milk and meat derive—the ethical treatment of a parent of a species and its young. Even in such a simple statement as, “You shall not muzzle the ox while it is threshing” (Deuteronomy 25:4), one can sense the ancient intent of not wanting to cause an animal undue stress or suffering. I have always been astounded that in *the* central communication of Jewish law, the giving of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20, the Almighty keeps the welfare of animals in mind. When the instructions for the keeping of the seventh day Sabbath are given, in verse 10 the Torah states, “the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male servant

or your female servant, or **your cattle**.... For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” So it is clear that even our livestock, just as we ourselves, were to be given a time of rest and restoration one day in seven.

Another, more metaphorical, lesson that we can take away from the “New Year for Trees, is a deeper appreciation for the very source of the amazing laws and precepts that have preserved us as a people, the Holy Torah. It is likened in our tradition to a “tree of life.” The laws of the Torah truly have, as promised (Joshua 1:8), kept those who observe them happy, healthy, successful, and prosperous. Referring to the Torah as a “tree of life” connects back to the original “tree of life” in the Garden of Eden, from which, according to the creation story, if man and woman had eaten, they would have lived forever (Genesis 3:22). One of the most beautiful and soulful chants from the Sabbath morning liturgy is the one we do after reading the Torah, as we return it to the ark, “*Eitz chayim hi...*” Based on a paraphrase of the passage from the Hebrew Bible found in Proverbs 3:17-18, we are instructed: “Behold, a good doctrine has been given you, My Torah; do

not forsake it. It is a tree of life to those who hold it fast, and all who cling to it find happiness. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace.” We have truly inherited an awe-inspiring and lofty tradition, teaching us to love God, our Creator, and to have compassion not only for our fellow human, but for the earth and all of its creatures, plant and animal.

As we observe Tu B’Shevat, the New Year for Trees, which falls this year on Wednesday, February 4, please join me in thanking God for the awesome creation that has been entrusted into our care, as well as for the remarkable laws, the Holy Torah, which instruct us as to how that care should be implemented.



President’s Corner

Barbara Laufer, TBS President

To everyone I send a special valentine. According to Chabad Rabbi Boteach “love is the gravity that pulls the

universe together.” Judaism defines love as “the emotional pleasure of identifying virtues in another person.” The Jewish expression of love is a triangle: love of self, love of another and love of God. Leviticus 19:18 teaches us, “Love your neighbor as yourself”... which is strengthened in Leviticus 19:34 “the stranger who resides with you shall be to you as one of your citizens; you shall love him as yourself”....

The Saturday 10:00 A.M. service on February 7th will be followed by a very special Lifetime Achievement Celebration luncheon honoring Elaine Zerden for her many contributions to Temple Beth Shalom.

If you can join us please RSVP to Liz Zerden Correll by February 1st 828-324-8468; or lizzerden@charter.net

Elaine is the answer to Psalm 34 that asks, “Who is the one with a passion for life, loving every day and seeing the good?” Donations in her honor can be sent to Temple Beth Shalom, P. O. Box 9142, Hickory, NC 28603.

Just around the corner is the March 25th deadline for Seder reservations. Once again sisterhood will be sponsoring this event with homemade brisket, matzo ball soup, kugel, charoses, and tzimmes.

The reservation form is on the last page. Shalom

TBS Sunday school Program

Marsue Davidson, Sunday school Chair

The Sunday school children and parents continue to gather every other Sunday and are learning all about their religion and preparing for their Bar and Bat Mitzvah's.

The second half of our Sunday School session has begun and February 8th we will be studying Tu-Be Shevat which is the Year of Trees.

We will be continuing the Friday night services at 7:00pm and all children and families are welcome and we encourage attending.

Student Rabbi Dennis is encouraging all of us to incorporate the children in the evening services in order for the children to begin to understand and implement the teachings they have learned over this Sunday school session.

Thank you Dennis for your continued dedication and evolving integration of the children into congregational services.

Condolences...

Our deepest sympathy to Linda Gutter on the loss of her beloved father Henry Rosenfeld. Our thoughts and prayers are with you and your family during this time of sorrow.

Larry and Barbara Laufer donated to Temple Beth Shalom in honor of Henry Rosenfeld and we all thank them for their generosity.

Thank you Elaine Zerden for donating to Temple Beth Shalom honoring Henry Rosenfeld. Sandy and Linda are greatly appreciative and we all thank you for your continued dedication and support of temple members.

Donations...

Special thanks of gratitude to Marion and Ron Dubow; Lin Gentry, Eagle scouts; Linda and Sandy Guttler; Kathy and Dennis Jones; Barbara and Larry Laufer; Tim Stinson; Ben Setser; and MaryLee and Aaron Tosky for their generous donations to purchase new siddurs for the temple.

Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle Events

Birthdays

Sam Gross 2/28
Shelly Richards 2/28
Hannah Archer 3/2
Susie Jones 3/2 Sarah Jones 3/3
Jesse Jones 3/5 Kathy Young-Shugar 3/5
Lisa Klein 3/5
Elizabeth Powell 3/9
Ben Kane-Eames 3/16
Bonnie Gold 3/22
Bud Tosky 3/22
Matthew Bonfield 3/24
Kenneth Huitt 3/26
Mark Faruque 3/26
Sue Cohn 3/28
Sonia Pelzer 3/2

Anniversaries

Cangemi 3/6
Shubin 3/15
Klein 3/18
Freieman 3/18
Shugar 3/24

Yahrzeits

William Miller 3/16
Else Simons 3/20
Albert Ifergan 3/28

Temple Beth Shalom Event Calendar 2015

February 2015 hosted by Barbara and Larry Laufer and Pete and Ginny Sobokin

6th at 7:00pm Friday night evening service
7th at 10:00am Special Morning Service and Luncheon Honoring Elaine Zerden
8th at 10:30am Sunday School studying about Tu-Be Shevat/New Year for Trees
22nd at 10:30am Sunday School studying about Purim History and Meaning

March 2015 hosted by MaryLee and Aaron Tosky

6th at 7:00pm Friday night service
7th at 10:00am Morning Services
8th and 22nd at 10:30am Sunday School studying about Passover

April 2015 hosted by Sisterhood and Stephen and Marsue Davidson

4th Passover Seder
12th at 10:30am Sunday school studying about Counting the Omer
24th at 7:00pm Evening Services
25th at 10:00am Morning Services
26th at 10:30am will be studying Yom Hatzma'ut/Isreal Independence Day

May 2015 hosted by Larry and Barbara Laufer

3rd at 10:30am Sunday School will be studying Mothers and Judiasm
15th at 7pm Friday night services
16th at 10am Saturday morning services
17th at 10:30am Sunday School will studying Shavouot

Looking for Something to Do...

Night Will Fall is a documentary by director [Andre Singer](#) that uses footage originally compiled by the British Government in April of 1945 as part of the [German Concentration Camps Factual Survey](#). The 1945 film was part of an effort led by the British Ministry of Information's [Sidney Bernstein](#) to fully illustrate the crimes of the [Nazis](#). Bernstein brought in [Richard Crossman](#) to write the film's narration and had [Alfred Hitchcock](#) flown over from [Hollywood](#) to advise on the structure. The British government shelved the film without showing it to the public, and questions remain whether they purposefully suppressed it for political reasons or whether they determined that other projects would be more effective in the [de-Nazification](#) process

70 years after being relegated to the archives, an updated version of the documentary produced by [Sally Angel](#) and [Brett Ratner](#) will be broadcast by major networks around the world on 27 January, [Holocaust Remembrance Day](#), the 70th anniversary of the liberation of [Auschwitz](#). Look for additional showings. *Night Will Fall* combines the original footage with new interviews of the survivors who are still alive, including

Anita Lasker-Wallfisch and Branko Lustig..

Night Will Fall has been described by [Stephen Fry](#) as "incredibly dark, deep, disturbing, shocking and brilliant".

Judaic Art Gallery at the North Carolina Museum of Art Closes to Expand

The North Carolina Museum of Art (NCMA) announces that it will be expanding its [Judaic Art Gallery](#), one of only two galleries devoted to Judaica in an American art museum.

The highlights section will provide a grand introduction to the Judaic Art Gallery and its collection. It will feature a selection of the more sculptural pieces, including an imposing *Standing Hanukkah Lamp* from an 18th-century Eastern European synagogue, a splendid silver hanging *Sabbath Lamp* from late 18th-century Amsterdam, and an elegant pair of English Torah finials with matching Torah pointer, created by a London silversmith in 1783 with all the grace and craftsmanship of the finest Georgian silver.

The gallery will close the week of February 9 and reopen in June in an expanded space with new display cases and a larger selection of beautiful objects.

North American Jewish community's solidarity with the Jews of France, JFNA is organizing a mission to Paris from February 8-10, 2015.

We are horrified and profoundly saddened by the terror attacks in Paris, including the brutal murder of four members of the French Jewish community in a deadly siege at a kosher market. These tragic events make it abundantly clear that Jews around the world face a unique and elevated threat.

The mission program includes meaningful opportunities to engage with leadership and members of the Jewish community, including those directly affected by the recent terror attacks, as well as to meet with French government leadership.

The mission itinerary* is set to include briefings/ meetings with Tali Ochayan of the Protection Service of the Jewish Community in Paris; Jewish Agency Emissary, Daniel Benhaim; Editor of Charlie Hebdo, Girard Biard; Israeli Ambassador, Yossi Gal; Chief Rabbi of France, Rabbi Haim Korschia; as well as Lassana Bathily, the 24-year-old employee of Hyper Casher who saved 15 customers during the attack. Additionally, the itinerary is set to include site visits and an opportunity to meet with the

families of the attack victims to pay condolences.

If you are interested in participating in this event, please register at www.cvent.com/events/solidarity-mission-to-france/event-summary-d16aca44a970452b8c4991e1f42acd35.aspx



TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President

Temple Beth Shalom Sisterhood is an auxiliary organization of multigenerational women dedicated to family, synagogue, and community. From the very beginning, the women of Temple Beth Shalom recognized the need for an organization where women of all ages, lifestyles and interests could gather. The dues are presently \$36 per year (Sept-June).

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, February 19th 6:30pm at DaVinci's. Please come join us, we would like to set a date for a family game night at temple.

Also, save the date for the temple community Seder on Saturday, April 4 2015.

Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund Announcement

The Sederholm Scholarship was established by a long-standing Temple member, Bert Sederholm to honor his wife, Harriet, who died shortly after her retirement from work in Hickory. Mr. Sederholm provided the initial funding that 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 or Jewish to apply. The scholarship fund is fully invested and the dividends are used to provide scholarship awards.

Interested students should submit an essay explaining their interests and desire for scholarship support by June 15, 2015. The essay can be sent to any of the committee members:

- Lin Gentry at
- Julie Owens
- Sanford Guttler

Naturally, the committee encourages anyone to make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Fund at any time and a check can be sent to Temple Beth Shalom and earmarked for the Sederholm Fund.

Temple Board

Barbara Laufer, President
Tiffany Hull, Vice President
Sam Shames, Secretary
Mark Faruque, Treasurer

Members at Large:

- Aaron Tosky
- Liz Correll
- Marsue Davidson
- Robyn Diamond
- Debra Engelmann
- Lin Gentry
- Sandy Guttler
- Pam Jones
- Susan Rieder
- Marion DuBow

Our next board meeting is scheduled for February 4pm. All board meetings are open to all temple members. Please join us and find out the new and exciting direction for TBS.

Additional Temple Beth Shalom Service dates for 2015

May 15-16th sponsored by the Laufer family

June 19-20th Andrew Igdal Bar Mitzvah

TBS Member Business Directory

Dr. Ron Dubow
Internist, Geriatric Specialist (elderly care), Pediatrician

2651 Morganton Blvd SW
Lenoir, NC 28645
828-757-8950

Dr. Laura Faruque of Womens View PA

915 Tate Blvd SE
Suite170
Hickory, NC 28602
828-345-0800

Dr. Mark Faruque of Bethlehem Family Practice

174 Bolick Lane Suite 202
Taylorsville NC 28681
828-495-8226

Marsue Davidson, RN DCS Unifour Nursing

805 W. 25th Street
Newton, NC 28681
828-464-0244
www.unifournursing.net

Robyn Diamond, Certified Health and Wellness Coach, Specializing in Digestive Health and Stress Management

843-991-6338
Robyn@HealthHappyYou.com
www.HealthHappyYou.com

Professor Gitlin Hebrew Lessons

109 6th Ave NE
Hickory, NC 28601
828-328-9443

Alice Guy of The Hickory Wine Shoppe

238 Union Square NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-334-4441
Info@HickoryWine.com

Michelle Oxenberg Jordon
Managing Director of Design

3166 Main Ave. S.E.
Hickory, North Carolina 28602
828.322.3480 Ext. 271
michelle@robertabbey.com
www.robertabbey.com

Scott and Julie Owens of Taste Full Bean

29 2nd Street NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-325-0108
www.tastefullbeans.com

SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

invites you to attend the April 4, 2015 Seder
at 6:00 P.M.



EVENT WILL BE HOME COOKING FROM SISTERHOOD WITH ALL YOUR FAVORITES.

All RSVPs and checks need to be in by deadline of March 25, 2015 or a late fee of \$5 will be assessed.

We can't provide refunds and may not be able to accommodate walk-ins.

Prices are as follows for Temple Beth Shalom Members and their families:



- All children under age 5 free!
- Aged 6-12 will be \$15.00
- Aged 13 and up \$25.00
- Guests (non-members of TBS) \$30.00



Please remit with check made out to Sisterhood Temple Beth Shalom to:



Barbara Laufer
5231 Peninsula Drive
Granite Falls, NC 28630



Please put a number of attendees in proper space.

5 and under free _____

6 and up \$15.00 _____

13 and up \$25.00 _____

Guests to TBS \$30.00 _____



Name: _____

Please indicate if you have any "table-mate" preferences as there will be assigned seating
