

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Dennis Jones, Student Rabbi



What's in a Name???

It is hard to believe that the year 2016 has come and gone. And what an exciting year it has been! With the turbulence of the presidential and gubernatorial campaigns behind us, it seems to be in our hearts, as Americans, to look forward to the future with hope. I know that for my entire adult life, whether my preferred candidate wins or loses, I always wake up the next morning thankful to be an American. We are fortunate to be heirs of one of the most stable and prosperous governments in history. Our constitutional republic has provided an

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unprecedented level of peace, prosperity, and individual rights to its citizens. And, we have worked diligently to expand those rights to all classes of humankind, not only in our own country, but to citizens of foreign lands as well. I pray with pride every Sabbath and Holiday, “Bless our country as a safeguard of peace, its advocate among the nations” (*Mishkan T’filah*, p. 179).

2016 has also been a good year for congregation Temple Beth Shalom. We are blessed to be in solid financial standing, and our membership has continued to grow slowly but steadily. I cannot say enough good things about our dedicated and hard-working Board of Directors and the many volunteers who make our Temple such a warm and inviting spiritual home. That warmth is reflected, I believe, in the positive responses of the many visitors whose company we have enjoyed this year. I know that I for one relish the opportunity to interact with members of all faiths, as we seek to deepen our understanding of one another. Whenever groups of students, in particular, visit our Temple, I can be sure that I will be asked many deep and insightful questions. And, in fact, several students of late have sought a deeper understanding of the name of God, as used in the Hebrew Bible—that name which we, of course, refer to as *Adonai* out of reverence and in keeping with tradition.

I have always believed that a glimpse into the great mystery that is God can be provided by a study of the Divine name. The name of mankind’s Creator, the Sustainer of All Things, has been clearly revealed to us in the Hebrew Bible. And yet, the average reader of scripture remains relatively unaware that the Almighty God has a name at all, let alone what it is. That is because this name is *not* translated as a name in most well-known scriptural translations. You can only imagine my shock and amazement, when, as a young college student in the 1970’s, I began an in-depth study of the Hebrew Bible and discovered that the name of God is used almost 6000 times in the Torah, Prophets, and Writings (*Tanakh*). And, yet, I had *never* seen it. That is because most modern translations, in following the King James Version, have translated the four letter name of God, *yod-heh-vav-heh*, as LORD in all capital letters. I completely understand and respect the translation editors’ intent to honor ancient laws and traditions guarding against taking “the name of *yod-heh-vav-heh* in vain,” as the third commandment implores. (Exodus 20:7) Yet, a side effect of that editorial decision is that millions have been denied a more intimate knowledge of the Creator’s Name. “LORD” is a *title* and not a name. And, while I am a husband, a father, and a teacher, none of those titles conveys a personal knowledge of who I am like my name, Dennis Steven Jones, does.

The name of the Creator is revealed for the first time in Hebrew Scripture to Moses in his encounter with the burning bush on a mountain called Horeb (Ex. 3:1-15). You will recall that while he was pasturing a flock he came upon a bush that appeared to be burning, though not consumed. From the midst of the bush, a voice called out to Moses with the identification, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob” (v. 6). Moses was, of course, commissioned to approach the Pharaoh of Egypt to request the release of the Israelite populous who

had been serving as slaves there. Moses protested, “I am going to the sons of Israel, and I shall say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you.’ Now, they may say to me, ‘What is His name?’ What shall I say to them?” (v. 13). At that point, the Almighty made the stunning revelation, “*eh’yeh asher eh’hey*.... Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, “*eh’yeh* has sent me to you.” (v. 14—keep in mind there are no capitals in Hebrew) Now, the Hebrew phrase, “*eh’yeh asher eh’ye*,” is difficult to translate, and has been rendered in most translations as, “I AM THAT I AM,” although that is probably not the most accurate translation (Gerald L Schroeder, *God According to God*, p. 85). I will definitely explore that possibility more fully in a future article. For our present purposes, it is most interesting to note that in the very next verse in the Torah, God tells Moses, “Thus you shall say to the sons of Israel, ‘*yod-heh-vav-heh*, the God of your fathers..., has sent me to you.’ This is my name forever, and this is my memorial unto all generations” (v. 15). One might ask why the revealed name changed within the space of two verses from “*eh’yeh asher eh’yeh*” or simply “*eh’yeh*” to “*yod-heh-vav-heh*”?

That question may be answered by an understanding of how the name, *yod-heh-vav-heh* is pronounced. As a result of efforts by our sages to safeguard the extreme sanctity of the name of God, it appears that the exact pronunciation of that name may have become lost to us. The vast majority of scholarship on this subject favors the pronunciation, “Yahweh.” I do not find that view compelling in that the Hebrew word, Yahweh, conveys no apparent meaning. That would be extremely unlikely, as the *vast* majority of names used in the Hebrew Bible *do* convey some type of meaning in their translation. Take for example my Hebrew name, Dani’el, “God is my judge.” There is a minority scholarship opinion which favors the pronunciation, “Yehovah,” for the Divine Name, a pronunciation which *does* convey meaning. At least one scholar (James D. Tabor, *Restoring Abrahamic Faith*, p. 20) has posited in this pronunciation of the name the contraction of three Hebrew verbs that have been preserved in the ancient Hebrew hymn “*Adon Olam*.” In the seventh line of that hymn we chant regarding the Most High, “*v’hu hayah, v’hu hoveh, v’hu yihyeh b’tifarah*—roughly, the One who was, the One who is, and the One who will be.” (*Gates of Prayer*, p. 729) *Hayah* translates as “was,” *hoveh*—“is,” and *yihyeh*—“will be.” If one were to place these verbs in this order, **YIYEH, HOVEH, HAYAH**, and then to contract the emboldened letters, one would have **YEHOVAH**, a contraction meaning quite literally “the One who will be, is, and was.” What strikes me most is not only how this correlation imparts such rich meaning to the pronunciation of the Divine Name, but also how it seems to reconcile an apparent discrepancy between verses 14 and 15 in chapter 3 of Exodus. Both verses would contain only slightly alternate renderings of Hebrew verbs for “to be.”

Now, the Divine name is not some kind of talisman or incantation that one has to “get right” in order to earn merit. But, an understanding of the name does seem to figure quite prominently in the message of the Hebrew Prophets, particularly in their predictions of a future time of peace and prosperity for

all humankind. One of the more well-known references is in Joel (ch. 3, v. 5-Hebrew), where the prophet states, “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name *yod-heh-vav-heh* shall be delivered.” Another is the one we chant in every Jewish service as a part of our *Aleinu* prayer. It is a quote from Zechariah 14:9, “*b’yom hahu yihyeh yod-heh-vav-heh echad u’shemo echad*—in that day, Yehovah will be one and God’s name one.” These are just two of the many references to the Divine Name and its importance, particularly in a time period referred to by the Prophets as “the latter days.” But, that is a topic for a future message. For now, my sincere prayer for each of you is the utmost of health, happiness, prosperity, peace, and spiritual growth in the New Year, 2017! *Ken yehi ratzon*—may this be God’s will!



The President’s Message

Marsue Davidson, TBS President

Happy Hanukkah and New Year from Temple Beth Shalom. The board members would like to extend their blessings to all of the members and families of our congregation. Winter has come to North Carolina with cold temperatures and we are blessed to have each other. We hope that the year 2016 was prosperous and that everyone will have health and happiness in 2017.

The temple celebration of Hanukkah with the children was a wonderful event and the children had a blast. We had an amazing turn out and enjoyed the arts and crafts, potato latkes and spending time together. It is a beautiful time of year, and we send you and your family many thanks during this special season. The temple continues to be blessed by a number of people making donations which are deeply appreciated. Their mitzvot allows us to get some much needed renovation completed and keep our doors open to all, regardless of ability to pay dues or Sunday school fees. The temple is also able to support the community with donations to groups. We would like to hear from our members of special donations or charities you would like us to support. The temple is blessed with a congregation

that freely expresses their wishes for continued improvement and giving and this is greatly appreciated by your Board of Directors.

Thank you to Rabbi Dennis for our Hanukkah celebration and services. We gathered together for a meal and shared in the blessings of Hanukkah. The children all attended this service as part of their Sunday school commitment and enjoyed the teachings of the Torah and Dennis' spiritual insight. Time spent with family and friends reflects the Jewish values of family and community. We look forward to seeing everyone in the coming new year.

Be safe and have a wonderful New Year, shalom.

TBS Sunday School Program

Marsue Davidson, Director Sunday School



Our Sunday School celebrated its annual Hanukkah event on Sunday, December 11th. We had an amazing time and great turn out. We celebrated Hanukkah by having fun shopping at the Hanukkah fair from Temple Beth El's gift shop, making an arts and crafts project, and eating latkes and treats. Kathy and Heidi helped the children create beautiful Hanukkah wreaths to take home. The children decorated them with jewish symbols, flowers, birds, and ribbons. They all turned out amazing and will be cherished forever. I know I will use my wreath every Hanukkah to remind me of the special memories we created together. Jamie made delicious potato latkes, Kathy her amazing Hanukkah candy, and the children loved them all.

All of us of Temple Beth Shalom Sunday School program wish all of you a Happy Hanukkah and New Year. We have learned so much this school year already and are looking forward to the

remainder of the program. The parents and children of TBS wish to thank Dennis, Kathy, Heidi and Jamie for all their hard work and commitment to the Sunday School program. Without this loving family, the Sunday School program would not exist. Our children are learning about their religion, values and spiritual connections because of them. We thank you, Jones family, for all you have brought to our temple and the love you continue to share.

Sunday School parents, temple members and the Hickory community are all invited to share in special events. Please mark your calendar for 2017 services and special celebrations, and remember to reference the last page of this bulletin for Sunday School dates, times, lesson plans, and services.

TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President



The sisterhood would like to thank everyone who came to our annual Hanukkah fair! It was a great turnout and we appreciate all those who came and bought gifts (for yourself or for others!). The gift shop brought such beautiful items again this year--we saw wine cork menorahs, mugs, tallit and kippah, coloring books, children's books and toys, and of course beautiful jewelry and so much more. We're planning a trip down to Charlotte in the spring or early summer to visit their shop in person. Everyone is welcome.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday, January 10th at 6:30pm. We're going to try a new place this time--the Food Factory on 321 by the bridge going into Granite Falls. The first person to email me (Lin) to say if you will be attending and includes the word dreidel will win a prize. If you plan to be at the meeting please let Lin know.

If you want to host for a rabbi weekend, please let Tiffany know. It's very easy and everyone helps out.

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 fund dividends are used to provide scholarship awards. **Scholarship awards are available to students, and may be used for college, summer camp, or other educational enrichment programs.** Temple members are looked upon favorably, but one does not need to be a temple member nor Jewish to apply.. Candidates must 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, Julie Owens, Sandy Guttler, or Karen Ferguson. 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, January 11th 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:

Marsue Davidson, President

Vice-President TBA

Treasurer - Susan Reider

Secretary - Tiffany Hull

Past President - Barbara Laufer

Members at Large:

Liz Correll

Marion DuBow

Debra Engelmann

Lin Gentry

Sandy Guttler

Pam Jones

Aaron Tosky

Karen Ferguson



Ritual Committee

Aaron Tosky (aaront9348@aol.com) is the chairperson of the Ritual Committee, and the members are Dennis Jones (rabbi), Jane Mandle, Pam Jones, Barb Laufer, Ron DuBow and Marsue Davidson (ex officio). They plan to update wedding and building use policies and the Temple Beth Shalom Index of Life Cycle Events (birthdays, anniversaries, and yahrzeit). Please provide any information you might want included in the Life Cycle Events. You may contact either Aaron or a committee member if you have any questions regarding temple ritual and/or have suggestions.

Simchas

Joy Kastan and her husband Peter invite everyone to attend Joy's Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, January 7th, at the 10am service at Temple Beth Shalom. They also invite everyone to a luncheon following the morning Shabbat service. We hope that you all will come to help Joy and Peter celebrate this very joyous and important occasion. Thank you all for setting this date aside for them.

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
A Womans View
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](http://www.HealthHappyYou.com)

Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle January Events

Birthdays

Ben Setser 12/21 (Happy Belated Birthday Ben)
David Jones 1/1
Marsue Davidson 1/2
Werner Locke Cohn 1/4
Stephen Davidson 1/5
Hudson LaBarge 1/5
Liz Correll 1/7
Alice Guy 1/12
Sarah Shugar 1/16
Jaime Jones 1/20
Deane Yelton 1/21
Rachel Igdal 1/25
Madeleine Guy 1/25

Anniversaries

Laura and Mark Faruque 1/6
Pete Sobotkin 1/31

Yahrzeits

Mahal Dayan 1/1
Moses Gitlin 1/10
Clara Setser 1/14
Gwen Datnoff 1/17
Ida Lippe 1/29
Harold Setser 1/20
Charles Laufer 1/23
Joe Guttler 1/27

**Member Business Directory
(cont'd)**

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 Jordan
Managing Director of Design
3166 Main Ave. S.E.
Hickory, North Carolina 28602
828.322.3480 Ext. 271
michelle@robertabbey.com

Marc Fedder M.D., F.A.C.P.
Frye Care Internal Medicine of
Hickory
915 Tate Blvd Suite 186
Hickory, N.C., 28602
828-303-2131

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

DONATIONS

We appreciate generous donations from:

Elaine Zerden in memory of Ceil Tosky

Linda Fedder - donation to general fund.



Condolences

Our heartfelt sympathy goes to Laura and Mark Faruque on the death of Laura's father, Bernie Miller.

Local and Regional Events

Looking for family entertainment? Here is a link to lots of local events.

<http://hickory.macaronikid.com/article/1319494/fall-events-festivals-in-hickory-and-western-piedmont>

Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2016-2017

Date	Comments	Bulletin Deadline
January	6-8 Services 7:30pm /Sunday School 10am	December 24
	22 Sunday School 10am	
February	3-5 Services 7:30pm /Sunday School 10am	January 21
	19 Sunday School	
March	10-12 Services 7:30pm /Sunday School/Purim (Megillah Reading/Party) 10am	February 25
	26 Sunday School 10am	
April	7-9 Services 7:30pm /Sunday School 10am	March 25
	11 Passover Community Seder (Tuesday) 6:00pm	
	23 Sunday School 10am	
May	5-7 Services 7:30pm /Sunday School 10am	April 22
	21 Sunday School 10am	
	30 Erev Shavuot Service (Tuesday) 7:30pm	
June	2-4 Services 7:30pm /Sunday School End of Year Party 10am	May 20

Want to contribute to the TBS Bulletin? Send entries to Karen Ferguson at karen.sederholm@gmail.com no later than the posted deadline. All entries are reviewed by the TBS Board before publication.