TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Dennis Jones, Student Rabbi

Persecution and Deliverance—A Recurring Theme in Jewish History!

The holiday of Purim is upon us. Beginning at sundown Saturday, March 11th, until sundown Sunday the 12th, it is a time of joyous celebration for Jewish families the world over. We will observe the four *mitzvot* or commandments of Purim which are enunciated in the Hebrew Bible (Esther 9:20-22) and reinforced in the *Mishnah* (*Mas. Megilah* 2a): the reading of the *megillah* of Esther, *matanot l'evyonim*—giving money to the poor, *mishloach manot*—gifts of food to friends, and feasting. Our hearts will be filled with gladness! But, we should also take time to remember that Purim represents a very serious subject as well, the age long struggle of those who

would stand for good against the forces of evil. It is a sad fact that the enemies of Israel and of the Jewish people have borne a hatred so intense it seems unexplainable in terms of normal human emotions. Unfortunately, that hatred is both ancient and modern.

We read in the Torah, that as our people were coming out of Egypt, a tribe called Amalek laid in wait along the way and attacked Israel from the rear as they passed through. Amalek picked off the weakest members of the Israelite group, women, children, and stragglers (Deut. 25). The Torah states that Amalek "did not fear God." A very stern pronouncement against Amalek occurs twice in the Torah, once in Deuteronomy, "It shall come about when the LORD your God has given you rest from all your surrounding enemies in the land which the LORD your God gives you..., you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven; you must not forget" (vv. 17-19). This commandment appears to be a clarification of the more cryptic statement in Exodus 17, "Then the LORD said to Moses, 'Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.' And Moses built an altar and named it, "The Lord is My Banner." And he said, "The LORD has sworn; the LORD will have war against Amalek from generation to generation" (vv. 14-16).

Now, the connection between Amalek and Purim might not be immediately obvious to most readers. The evil Haman, whose hatred of the Jews defies rational explanation, leading him to seek the Jewish people's annihilation, is referred to in the book of Esther as an Agagite (3:1). The connecting link to Amalek is found in the book of First Samuel (ch. 15). The newly crowned King Saul is leading the Israelites in a life and death struggle against the neighboring tribe of Amalek. God, through the prophet Samuel, had instructed Saul that God was about to punish Amalek for the crimes done to the people of Israel when they were on the way out of Egypt, and the judgment was to be harsh. Saul, in defiance of God's command, spared the king of Amalek, Agag, the ancestor of the wicked Haman (I Samuel 15:1-9).

Parallels to those who hate the Jewish people so intensely and who seek our annihilation, while difficult to comprehend or accept, can be found in almost every generation, most recently and egregiously in the acts of Adolph Hitler and Joseph Stalin. I have never been so moved by a Purim story as I was recently by a story told by Lori Palatnik, a writer, educator, and the founding director of the Jewish Women's Renaissance Project. She tells of a neighbor she had while living in Toronto whose name was Mr. Cohen. He was a holocaust survivor. As a youth of only 17, Mr. Cohen had been taken by the Nazis to Auschwitz. Knowing he would be there for a long time, if he survived, Mr. Cohen memorized the Jewish calendar for the next several years. He was known by his peers in the camp as a walking calendar. They would ask him, "When is Shabbat?" "When is Hannukah?" "When is Pesach?" And, Mr. Cohen would be able to tell them. When it was Purim, Mr. Cohen and a group of men met secretly in their barracks. They had smuggled a few bits of potato and bread crust as well

as a book of Esther into their deplorable living area. The men stood in a circle as quietly as possible so as not to arouse Nazi suspicion, and they passed the bits of bread and potato from man to man in fulfillment of the *mishloach manot* commandment. The last to receive the morsels of food was Mr. Cohen, for it was he who was about to read the *Megillah* of Esther. As they read the story of Esther under the harsh oppression of the Nazis, you can only imagine the joy it brought to their hearts to hear of the victory of the Jewish people over their enemies on Purim over 2300 years ago. We ultimately gained victory over the Nazis as well, though many, many precious souls had to give their lives in the process. Still, the Jewish people survives, thrives, and prospers. Truly a modern miracle!! (http://www.aish.com/sp/lal/Purim_in_Auschwitz.html)

Jewish author, Tracey Rich, tells a similar Purim story about Joseph Stalin. Rich relates the story from Chabad, the Lubavitcher Hasidic Jewish group, that in the year 1953 Joseph Stalin was planning to exile all the Jews in the Soviet Union to camps in Siberia. At a Purim gathering of the Lubavitcher Jews that year, their Rebbe was asked to give a blessing on the Jews of the Soviet Union. Instead of a blessing, he told a story about a Jewish man who attended the election of a Soviet official earlier that year. The crowd was shouting, "Hoorah! Hoorah!" as the candidate stood on stage. The Jewish man did not want to validate the candidate by shouting, "Hoorah," but neither did he want to draw the suspicion of the crowd. So, he indeed shouted, "Hoorah," while knowing in his own heart that he meant "*Hu ra*," which in Hebrew means, "He is evil!" Moved by the Rebbe's message, the Jews at the Purim celebration began to shout in unison, "*Hu ra*! *Hu ra*! *Hu ra*!," referring to Joseph Stalin. Later that same night, March 1, 1953, Stalin experienced a stroke that led to his death a few days later. His plan to deport the Jews was never carried out. (http://www.jewfaq.org/holiday9.htm)

Rabbi Benjamin Blech reminds us that the meaning of Purim can be found not only in the great miracles of the ages, but also in the small miracles of everyday life. A common term for such everyday miracles is "serendipity." Defined as "a fortuitous happenstance" or "a pleasant surprise," serendipity can be thought of as a beneficial occurrence that seems to defy statistical odds. For example, one evening you have just been thinking of a friend whom you have not seen for many years and with whom you long to reestablish contact, and the next day you happen to bump into that friend at the grocery store. Or, you set an arbitrary date to meet with your friends based on your busy schedules, and then you find out in retrospect that the day you chanced to pick is, in fact, the anniversary of some important event that is meaningful to you and those friends. Rabbi Blech points out that some of the greatest scientific achievements of all time were made under the most serendipitous of circumstances.

How does this relate to Purim? The miracle of Purim is recorded in the Hebrew Bible in the book of Esther. Esther is one of only two books in the Bible which do not mention God or the name of God at all (the other being Song of Songs). And yet, one cannot read the amazing details of the hatred and

plot against the Jews, the coming of a Jewish princess into a position of power disguised and against all odds, and the ultimate triumph of the Jewish people over their enemies, without sensing the power and the hand of God in the events. So, it is with serendipity. God may not be working in overt, readily observable ways or in mighty miracles. But, according to Rabbi Blech, "Serendipity is God whispering to us; it is God's still small voice that beckons us to be aware of God's presence." (http://www.aish.com/h/pur/t/dt/Purim-and-Serendipity.html)

Purim festivities at Temple Beth Shalom will be observed this year on Sunday morning, March 12, at 10:00 AM—join us if you can!! As we celebrate the holiday of Purim and mark the final month of the Hebrew calendar, Adar, leading up to our beloved Pesach, it is my prayer for you that you too will find God working in your life, whether in the grand ways or small. *Ken yehi ratzon*—May this be God's will.

The President's Message

Marsue Davidson, TBS President

Temple Beth Shalom will have its annual meeting on Sunday, May 21st at 10am. Coffee and pastries will be served after a full agenda of guest speakers. This year's annual meeting will provide important information about our TBS board activities. A finance presentation will be given by our new accounting firm. The security committee will report on safety issues. There will be a Sunday School update, and a presentation regarding a new adult learning program. If you want to participate in decisions made at the annual meeting, but are unable to attend, please send me (Marsue.Davidson@epichealthservices.com) your proxy vote via email. A reminder email and hardcopy proxy vote form will be sent to all paid TBS members by the end of April.

The Sunday School will be having a Purim celebration on Sunday, March 12, 2017 at 10am. We would like to invite all temple members and their families to join the children of the Sunday School for carnival games, lunch, Jewish music, and dancing. Rabbi Dennis will lead the children in the Purim services and the reading of the Megillah. As is our tradition, it is fun to come dressed in costume (Let's see how many Queen Esthers and Uncle Mordechais show up) and share this time together with our family and friends.

The sisterhood will be sponsoring our Passover Community Seder again this year on Tuesday, April 11th at 6pm. Please see the invitation attached to this newsletter, and RSVP soon. Members of the sisterhood will prepare a delicious, traditional Seder meal for us, and Rabbi Dennis will lead us through the prayers, readings and songs of the Haggadah as we all come together for this most memorable holiday.

Please reach out to any board member if you have suggestions for improvements. 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 all your support and spiritual teachings. Your explanation and insight of the Torah readings month after month, has brought the children and adults closer together. Time spent with family and friends reflects the Jewish values of family and community. Thank you all for your continued support of Temple Beth Shalom.

TBS Sunday School Program

Marsue Davidson, Director Sunday School

The Sunday School will be having a Purim celebration on March 12th at 10am. We would like to invite all temple members and their families to join us. We will have carnival games, lunch, Jewish music, and dancing. Rabbi Dennis will lead the Purim services and the reading of the Megillah. The children made masks for the party at our last session, and learned all about Purim. We hope everyone will come dressed in costumes and share this time together with family and friends.

Sunday School parents – Sunday School will be held on the day of our TBS annual meeting, Sunday, May 21st. We will have dedicated teachers with activities, snacks and games for the children while the grown-ups attend the meeting. Please plan to attend. We need and want your participation in the annual meeting because your input and involvement with the temple is the biggest reason for TBS Sunday School's success. Families dedicated to Jewish learning promote the values of our religion, and develop future generations of Jewish families in our community.

The parents and children of TBS wish to thank Rabbi 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 this year's special events. Please mark your calendar for 2017 services and special celebrations.

Passover Seder

Tuesday, April 11th

6pm

TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President

The Sisterhood is planning a busy spring and we hope you can join us.

We're going to collect items for the Women's Resource Center's Personal Pantry. The Women's Resource Center has been serving the Hickory community for thirty years. They offer women in need a hand up, not a hand out. They offer women help through workforce development, advocacy, financial literacy classes, and many other programs to help them build a better life for themselves and their families. The WRC isn't a United Way agency and has no religious affiliation. They rely solely on contributions from individuals, local businesses and community groups, and grants. For more information, please visit their website at www.wrchickory.org.

The WRC has a Personal Pantry to provide items that cannot be bought with food stamps. We'd love for you to please bring any of the following items to temple whenever you come--whether it's to services, Sunday School, or the community seder. We'll have a box in the lobby.

toothbrushes, toothpaste, floss,
shampoo, conditioner, deodorant, razors,
soap, feminine products--helpful if they're in small packages,
toilet paper, tissues, paper towels,
laundry detergent (box or bottle), dryer sheets, bleach,
canned powder cleaner (Ajax, comet), toilet bowl cleaner,
floor cleaner, window cleaner, dish soap (liquid)

The sisterhood thanks you for your help.

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, March 15th, 6:30 at DaVinci's. The first person to email me the word 'donation' will win a prize at our next meeting.

Also, please make plans to come to our annual community seder on Tuesday, April 11th, 6pm at the temple. Send your reservation form and check made out to "TBS Sisterhood" to Barb Laufer at her home address by April 1 (no foolin'!). There is conveniently a reservation form in this newsletter.

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 to 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 March 8th 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

Open Zerden Board Seat

About ten years ago, one of the temple founding-members, Mr. Howard Zerden died and donated $500,000 to Temple Beth Shalom. The donation led to the formation of the Howard Zerden Trust. The mandate of the trust is to help fund the cost of a rabbi or student rabbi.

The trust has experienced great success and has reimbursed our temple for rabbinical expenses for the past ten years.

One of our original board members, Esther Greene, has decided to retire from her board seat. For over ten years, Esther has provided excellent focus and dedication to the Zerden Trust.

The board meets once a year for about one hour. Eight of the nine seats are filled and we encourage members to volunteer for the recently vacated ninth board seat.

If you are interested or have questions, kindly contact the Board Chairman, Sandy Guttler, at 828-612-3023.

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
A Womans View
915 Tate Blvd SE
Suite170
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
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

Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle March Events

Birthdays

Susie Jones 3/2
Sonia Pelzer
Sarah Jones 3/3
Jesse Jones 3/5
Bonnie Gold 3/22
Bud Tosky 3/22
Matthew Bonfield 3/24
Kenneth Huitt 3/26
Mark Faruque 3/26
Sue Cohn 3/28

Anniversaries

Larry & Barbara Freiman 3/18

Yahrzeits

William Miller 3/16
Mildred Asch 3/16
Else Simons 3/20
Albert Ifergan 3/28
Helen Schonberg 3/27

Local and Regional Events

Free **yoga classes** for adults and teens at Patrick Beaver Memorial library (375 3rd St NE) on Wednesdays from 6-7pm. Bring a yoga mat or towel to lay on. Call 828-304-0500 for more information.

Member Business Directory

Alice Guy
The Hickory Wine Shoppe
238 Union Square NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-334-4441
Info@HickoryWine.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

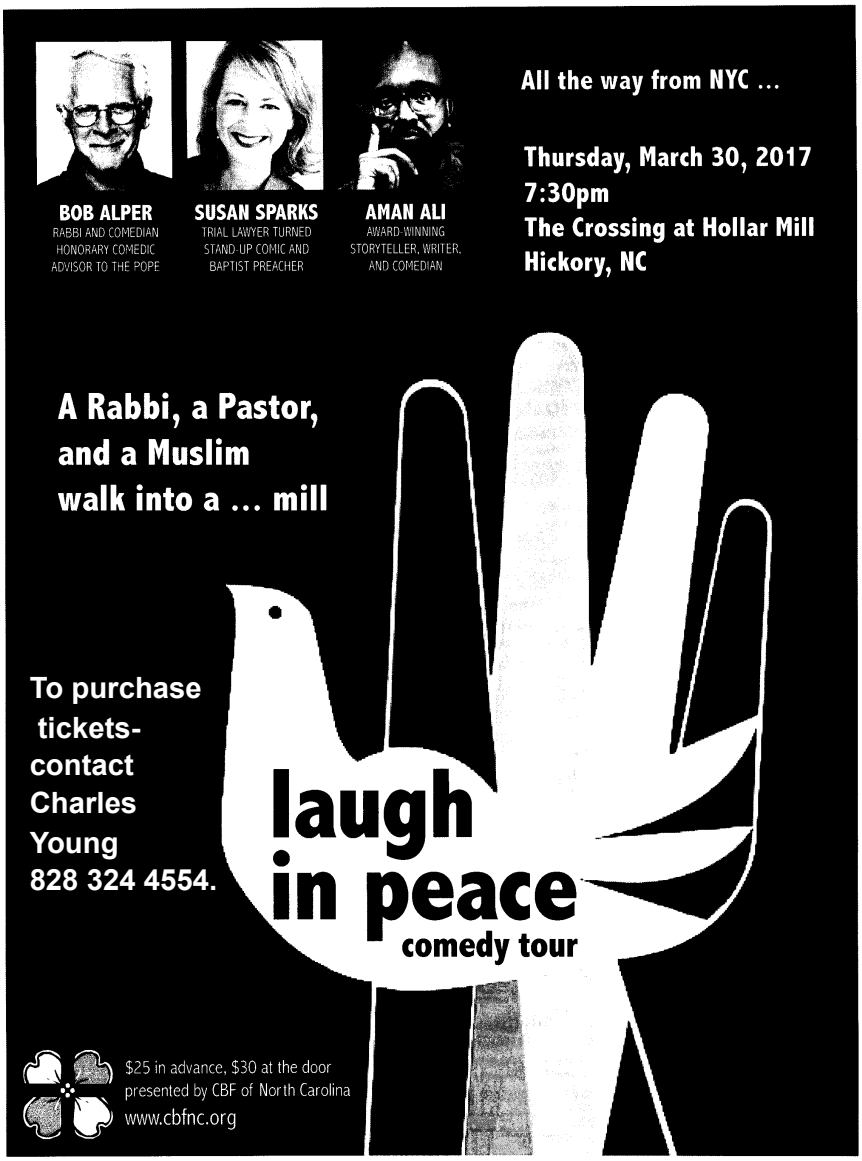
Scott and Julie Owens
Taste Full Beans Coffeehouse
29 2nd St NW
Hickory, NC 28601
828-325-0108
www.tastefullbeans.com

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

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

The Women's Resource Center invites everyone to their next **Inspiring Women's luncheon** on Tuesday, March 14th from 12-1pm at the Center at 125 3rd Street NE. The luncheons are free, but a donation is suggested. A box lunch is provided. This event features a woman from the community telling her story of how she became who she is today. Although it is free, please call the Center to reserve your seat and lunch at 828-322-6333.

Wintergreen hikes on Saturdays and Sundays at 11am. A leisurely walk along the one mile Hemlock Nature trail at South Mountains State park. Meet at the Jacob Fork



Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2016-2017

Date		Events	Bulletin Deadline
March	10-12	**Services** Friday 7:30pm /Saturday 10am **/Sunday School/Purim (Megillah Reading/Party)** 10am	February 25
	26	**Sunday School** 10am	
April	7-9	**Services** Friday 7:30pm /Saturday10am **/Sunday School** 10am	March 25
	11	**Passover Community Seder** (Tuesday) 6:00pm	
	23	**Sunday School** 10am	
May	5-7	**Services** Friday 7:30pm /Saturday 10am **/Sunday School** 10am	April 22
	21	**Sunday School** 10am/Annual Meeting 10am	
	30	**Erev Shavuot Service** (Tuesday) 7:30pm	
June	2-4	**Services** Friday 7:30pm /Saturday 10am	May 20
		Sunday School End of Year Party 10am	

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.

SISTERHOOD OF TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

invites you to attend the April 11, 2017 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 April 1, 2017** 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
- 65 and over will be $20.00
- 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 number of attendees in space below:

5 and under free _____

6 -12: $15.00 _____

13 -64: $25.00 _____

65+: $20.00 _____

Guests to TBS: $30.00 _____

Names:_____

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

_____

have any questions regarding temple ritual and/or have suggestions.