

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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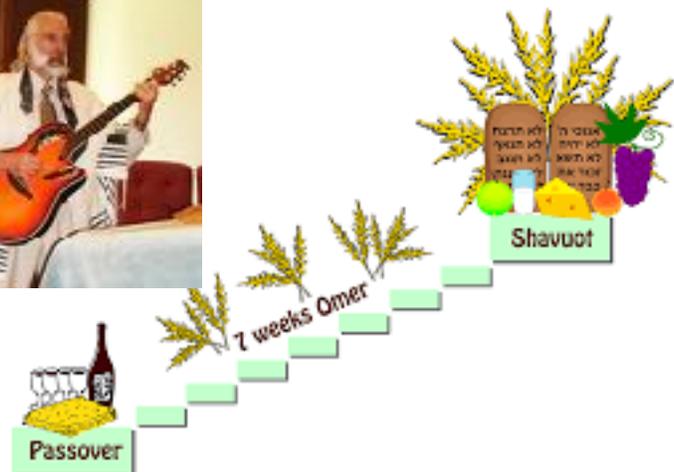
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Temple Beth Shalom
P.O. Box 9142
Hickory, North Carolina 28603
www.hickoryjewishcenter.com

From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Dennis Jones



Are You Counting the Omer???

Who would have thought that for a second year of Covid-19 would force us to have a *virtual* second night Passover Seder? Last year I missed being together for this traditional event. This year I *really* missed it. The Community Seder has always been one of the high points of our year. The TBS Sisterhood does an amazing job each year of coordinating and preparing the food and of arranging and decorating the tables. The food service, under the leadership of Glenn and April Eckard, just gets better from year to year. The camaraderie and unity among the guests of many faith traditions is always palpable. And, the recounting of the miraculous story of our deliverance from Egypt never gets old. Most of you know, I am sure, that the celebration of Passover also begins the lead-up to our next major holiday—

the *Sefirat Ha'Omer*, the Counting of the *Omer*. The *omer* was a unit of measurement used in Temple times for the bringing of grain offerings. The Counting of the *Omer* is the traditional practice of marking the 49 days between Passover and Shavuot.

I have often commented on the lack of attention the holiday of Shavuot receives in the modern progressive synagogue. Biblically speaking, in the list of holidays presented completely for the first time in the Torah in Leviticus 23, Shavuot receives its fair share of attention. Seven verses are devoted to the method for counting the time leading up to Shavuot and to the explanation of how the holiday is to be observed. That compares with only two verses in Leviticus 23 devoted to Rosh Hashanah. In fact, that holiday is not even called Rosh Hashanah in the Torah, but rather “*Shabbaton Zikaron Teruah*—a Sabbath memorial of the trumpet blast.” Rosh Hashanah became the holiday’s name in the post-biblical period. And yet in modern times synagogue seats have been filled to overflowing on Rosh Hashanah, but on Shavuot, one finds meager attendance when there is a service at all.

Perhaps it is that Shavuot does not have any prominent symbols that we can cling to—no *shofar*, no *sukkah*, no Hanukah gifts or *menorah*, no *matzah*. In fact, *the holiday does not even have a real name*. The term, *Shavuot*, in Hebrew, only refers to the weeks that we are instructed to count leading up to the observance of the holiday (Lev. 23:15-16; Deut. 16:9-10). It seems ironic that on this oft ignored holiday the rabbis of the Talmud tell us that Israel’s *most precious gift* was bestowed. **According to our sages, it was at the time of Shavuot that the holy Torah was given on Mount Sinai** (*Talmud Shabbat 86b-87b*, see also Ex. 19:1 ff.).

The Torah instructs us in Leviticus 23 that Shavuot is to be a full-fledged *yom tov*, on the order of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, first day of Sukkoth, and the first day of Pesach. The Torah states, “On this same day you shall make a proclamation as well; you are to have a holy convocation. You shall do no laborious work. It is to be a perpetual statute in all your dwelling places throughout your generations.” In honor of the giving of the Torah on this day, it has become the custom of many observant Jews to spend the entire night of Shavuot engaged in the study of Torah. Referred to in Hebrew as, “*Tikkun Leil Shavuot*—an act of completion/perfection on the night of Shavuot.” The all-night study traditionally ends at daybreak when the participants turn their attention to the saying of *Shachrit*, morning prayers (Rabbi Shraga Simmons, “ABC’s of Shavuot,” <http://www.aish.com>). The saying of morning prayers on Shavuot has become an event of amazing proportions in modern Jerusalem, where several hundreds of thousands of Torah students conclude their evening studies by walking to the *Kotel*, the Western Wall, to engage in morning prayers. This event has occurred since the Six Day War in 1967. While the Temple Mount was liberated in early June of that year, Jews were not allowed into the area where the temple once stood for security reasons. On the holiday of Shavuot in 1967, the Western Wall was first opened to visitors, and upwards of 200,000 Israelis spontaneously crowded into that area (Rabbi Joseph Telushkin, *Jewish Literacy*, p. 593).

Another widespread and ancient custom on Shavuot is the eating of dairy foods *only*. While as many as four possible reasons are given in support of this custom, none is truly definitive. It may connect to

the biblical book Song of Songs which is allegorically applied to the Torah, stating, “Your lips...drip honey; honey and milk are under your tongue....” (4:11). Alternately, a commandment in the Torah, Exodus 23:19, juxtaposes language connected with Shavuot, “the choice first-fruits of your soil,” with the famous, “you shall not boil a kid in the milk of its mother,” the basis for our prohibition of mixing meat and milk. There is, of course, also the Torah reference to the Holy Land as “a land flowing with milk and honey” (Ex. 33:3). This reference has been cited as a possible reason. Perhaps the most interesting possibility of all is the idea that upon receiving the Torah, the children of Israel grasped the importance of the laws of *kashrut*. So they ate only dairy until the laws of *sh’chita* (kosher slaughter) could be more fully expounded (Simmons, “ABC’s of Shavuot”).

In the Mishnaic Period (100 B.C.E.-200 C.E.), there was much debate regarding the appropriate Torah reading for the holiday of Shavuot. Some of our sages preferred Deuteronomy 16 which recounts the instructions to the people of Israel to count for themselves seven weeks and then to celebrate the “*Chag Shavuot*—Feast of Weeks” to the LORD their God. That reading was usually paired with a Haftarah portion from the book of Habakkuk. Another group of sages favored the reading of the revelation of the Torah at Mount Sinai contained in Exodus chapters 19 and 20. This reading was followed by the mysterious “Chariot” Haftarah portion of Ezekiel 1. In places outside of the land of Israel, where the holiday of Shavuot is observed for a two day period, both customs are followed in deference. The book of Ruth is also traditionally read on Shavuot, presumably in honor of Ruth an ancestor of King David who is connected with Shavuot in that, according to tradition, he was both born and died on that same holiday. (Rabbi Hillel Hayyim Lavery-Yisraeli, “Shavuot: The Day of the Giving of the Torah?” www.ConservativeYeshiva.org).

As I have pointed out many times, the miraculous redemption of the children of Israel from Egypt and the giving of the Torah on Mount Sinai were part of an overarching Divine plan for humankind. That plan was to spread the way of God through molding a particular family group into a “kingdom of priests and a holy nation” (Ex. 19:6), who through observance of the Creator’s laws would eventually become “a light to the nations, so that [G-d’s] salvation may reach to the end of the earth.” (Isa. 49:6) Our rabbis often referred to the covenant at Sinai between the Almighty and the nation of Israel as a contract or even a marriage. In the words of Rabbi Dovid Rosenfeld, “The Torah was the symbol of our bond, the gift God granted to the betrothed to consummate their relationship. The Talmud (*Berachot* 57a), discussing the verse ‘[the Torah] is the heritage (*morasha*) of the congregation of Jacob’ (Deut. 33:4), comments, ‘Do not read “*morasha*” (heritage) but “*me’orasa*” (betrothed).’ We are wedded to God. And as a result, we are wedded to the Torah, God’s wisdom” (“Shavuot: Crazy, Stupid Love,” <http://www.aish.com>).

There is no question that the more we study the laws and precepts of the holy Torah, the more we understand the mind of the Creator G-d in whose image we were made. It follows that the more we apply the Torah’s commandments, statutes, and acts of loving-kindness to our own daily walk, the closer we will be connected not only to God, but also to our fellow man and woman. The Almighty

has a plan for the restoration of the cosmos—*tikkun olam*. The gift of the Torah, given at the time of Shavuot some 3500 years ago, is a *key element of that plan*.

President's Message

Susan Goldstein, President

Dear TBS Family and Friends,

It's been a long time since we've been together in person, and we've just celebrated our second *Pesach* via Zoom. We're all ready to be back together, but we're going to have to do it in stages. Your Reopening Committee met last night to discuss the first steps.

While we hope to open in-person services to the entire membership and guests in the near future, we're going to start small. Beginning with the *Kabbalat Shabbat* services on Friday evening, April 9, we will invite a maximum of 30 members to join us in the sanctuary. Reservations will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Members who do not attend services on April 9, will have priority for Shabbat morning services on April 24. We will arrange family seating with six feet between each family. Masks are a must. If you don't have one, we'll provide one. Hand sanitizer also will be available. We will not serve food -- even challah (Sorry 'bout that).

To summarize:

- Beginning with services on Friday evening, April 9, we will welcome up to 30 members to the sanctuary for services. We hope to welcome guests soon.
- Reservations will be required so that we can space out family groups and, if necessary, for contact tracing. **To request a reservation, please contact me at susanejgoldstein@gmail.com (preferred method) or 214.263.8464 (call or text, but less reliable than email).**
- Reservations will be accepted on a first-come/first-served basis; the window to make reservations will close when we have 30 members confirmed.
- We will arrange seating so that family groups are spaced six feet apart.
- Masks are a must.
- No singing/chanting (except for those leading the service).
- No food or drink will be served.

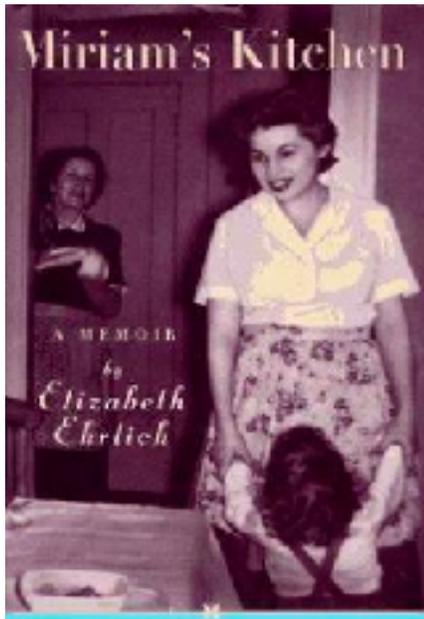
For those who aren't ready for in-person meetings, we will continue to Zoom services. All members and friends will be provided invitations well in advance of the services.

Special thanks to our Reopening Committee: Karen Ferguson, Rabbi Dennis Jones, Barb Laufer, Larry Laufer, Dr. James Norwood, Mary Lee Tosky, and Dr. Aaron Tosky

Stay safe; wear your masks; get the Covid-19 vaccine as soon as you can!

Moadim l'simcha

Susan



TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President

This week's Torah portion, Tzav Leviticus 6:1-8:36, includes many supplemental instructions on sacrifices. At first glance, it might seem dry—just like the little piece of challah that gets burned to represent the sacrifice—and full of only men getting to do everything in the temple. In my Women's Commentary Torah, there's a section called Contemporary Reflection, after each portion. For this week, it says “many contemporary Jews find this portion among those that make their eyes glaze over”. It also talks about the author Elizabeth Ehrlich who is Jewish but wasn't interested in practicing the religion until she spent a year learning from her mother-in-law, and discovered that she did want to add a bit of ritual to her mundane daily activities. I have the book she wrote about her experiences, Miriam's Kitchen: A Memoir. It

goes through a year of her shadowing Miriam, a Holocaust survivor, from one Rosh Hashanah to the next, full of stories and recipes. Ehrlich says, “...the mundane and the spiritual are inextricably tied.....you are only washing dishes, but you are doing something more.” The work that women did and still do matters. The Contemporary Reflection adds that Ehrlich learned something about spiritual leadership in that year. Women don't have to accept being excluded from religious study. We can learn about the covenants, rituals, and faith and combine that with the power of the home to continue the connection we feel with G-d. We are the ritual experts.

Sisterhood will put on another Trivia Night on Saturday, April 17, at 7pm on zoom. This activity is for everyone, not just sisterhood. Hope to see you all then! Which Major League Baseball team plays their home games in Coors Field?



TBS Sunday School Program

Kathy Jones, Sunday School Principal

This month, our students learned about the story of Passover and the traditions we now observe in celebrating this historic Jewish holiday. Hebrew study revolved around learning the various Passover terms including those pertaining to the Seder meal and the 10 plagues. All

of the Sunday School families received a Passover basket with goodies, crafts, and items to help them perform the Bedikat Chametz and to eat the Seder meal. (Thank you, Sheri Stock, once again, for delivery of the baskets!) The month culminated in all 10 of the Sunday School students and their families attending the virtual TBS Community Seder on March 28th. They all did a great job with the “Four Questions”!

Our next Sunday School class, via Zoom, will be April 11th, at 10 AM. Anyone wishing to know more about TBS Sunday School and to receive the Zoom links, should contact Sunday School Principal, Kathy Jones, at krsjones2002@yahoo.com.

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 will be **Wednesday, April 21st, at 6:30pm via Zoom**. Board meetings are open to all temple members. Contact Susan Goldstein if you wish to join the meeting.

TBS Board members are:



Officers:

- Susan Goldstein, President
- Barbara Laufer, Past President
- Susan Rieder, Treasurer
- Tiffany Hull, Secretary

Members at Large:

- Liz Correll
- Karen Ferguson
- Lin Gentry
- Amy Hedrick
- Mary Lee Tosky
- Linda Greenfield
- Kathy Jones
- Susan Huitt
- Jodi Lavin-Tompkins

Donations



In honor of Burt Sederholm, donations have been received for the Harriet Sederholm

Scholarship Fund from:

Marion and Ron DuBow

Anthony Clay

Linda and Dr. Sandy Guttler

The TBS Board of Trustees

Susan Goldstein

Thomas Girman

Phyllis Sederholm's co-workers at Novant Health
Compliance, Privacy, and Internal Audit

Also in honor of Burt Sederholm, donations have been received for TBS Sunday School

from:

Deanne Griffin

The Sederholm Family

TBS Gives through Donations

Our donation for April was sent to The Family Care Center

Do you have a favorite charity you would like us to donate to? Let us know

Please consider these funds for your next donation:

Building and Grounds Security
Sunday School
Community Relations



When we get back to temple again, please consider pairing with a board member(s) to host a weekend at Temple Beth Shalom. When members contribute to the life of our synagogue in this way, we all feel a part of our Jewish community and an active participant in assuring its well-being.

TBS Message Board

*Congratulations to all who have been fully vaccinated.
We look forward to seeing you in Temple soon!*

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 Temple Beth Shalom Message Board, PO Box 9142, Hickory, NC 28603. A greeting card will be sent acknowledging your donation and your message will appear here in the next issue of the TBS Bulletin.

TBS Community Mitzvah Projects

Homelessness, hunger, and unemployment continue in our community. We encourage TBS members who can help, without risking their own safety, to continue to volunteer and donate wherever a need exists. Food, hygiene items, and cleaning supplies are still in demand. You can donate these items, or the funds to purchase them, directly to the Hickory Soup Kitchen; the Second Harvest Food Bank; the Lenoir Soup Kitchen; the Salvation Army of Taylorsville, Hickory, or Lenoir; and the Kwanzaa Family Inn in Lenoir. You can find their contact information on their websites. Our own TBS Community Relations and Social Action

TBS Member Business Directory

Let us know if you would like to list your business here in the Bulletin. It is a free benefit of TBS membership

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

Ghiora Mehler
The Southern Chickpea
Falafel Truck
thesouthernchickpea.com
828-999-0496



Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle April Events

Birthdays

Aidan Weatherly 4/2
Derek Cooperberg 4/3
Ronald Cohn 4/6
Amy Hedrick 4/7
Ryan Laufer 4/10
Dennis Jones 4/12
Pam Jones 4/14
Jim Correll 4/18
Ben Peltzer 4/22

Anniversaries

Jon and Laura Levinson 4/15
David and Pam Jones 4/25

Yahrzeit

David Cohen 4/3
Sue Brisbane 4/5
Ruth Leifer 4/19
Fania Suess 4/25
Rose Miller 4/26

Local and Regional Events

Member Business Directory

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



Center and Partner Organizations Mark this Year's Yom HaShoah with Online Commemoration and Readings April 7

On Wednesday evening, April 7, Appalachian State University's Center for Judaic, Holocaust, and Peace Studies and its partner institutions will mark the beginning of this year's Yom HaShoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) with an online commemoration and readings of names of European Jews murdered by the Germans during the Holocaust. The event co-organized with the Temple of the High Country and ASU's Hillel and AEPi chapters will begin at 8:00 pm EST (and end at 9:00 pm). In response to the ongoing pandemic, to avoid community spread, and to keep everyone safe, it will be held on a ZOOM platform. To register, please click [here](#). The registration site will also allow you to volunteer for a reading. To receive more information, please contact the Center at 828.262.2311 or holocaust@appstate.edu.

Temple Beth Shalom has an active membership in the Catawba Valley Interfaith Council, where Rabbi Dennis serves as president. You can find out more about this organization and its activities at: <https://www.facebook.com/CVICNC/>.



Follow this link for information about upcoming online events at SHI: <https://www.hartman.org.il/programs/>

The 19th International ASU Summer Symposium on Children in the Holocaust To Be Held Virtually for the first time in its nineteen year history, from July 18-23, 2021.

Participating teacher-participants will learn and analyze how the Nazi regime sought to indoctrinate Gentile children and turn them into supporters of their regime. They will also examine how persecuted Jewish children tried to cope with persecution and, eventually, outright genocidal onslaughts. The presentations and assigned materials will shed new light on children's complex challenges and struggles under Nazi rule and occupation, in the ghettos and even camps, as well as many's resilience and despair.

For more information on this symposium and access to the online registration forms, see [here](#). For responses to any questions, please contact the Center at holocaust@appstate.edu or 828.262.2311.

Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2020-21

For event updates, email: info@hickoryjewishcenter.com

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Bulletin Deadline</u>
April	9 Friday Night Service 7PM In Temple and Virtual/Zoom	March 26 (Fri.)
	11 Sunday School 10AM Virtual/Zoom	
	24 Saturday Morning Service 10AM In Temple and Virtual/Zoom	
	25 Sunday School 10AM Virtual/Zoom	
May	7 Friday Night Service 7PM	April 24
	9 Sunday School 10AM	
	16 Erev Shavuot Service (Sunday) 7PM	
	22 Saturday Morning Service 10AM	
	23 TBS Annual Membership Meeting (Sunday) 10AM	
June	4 Friday Night Service 7PM	May 28 (Fri.)
	6 Sunday School Final Session 10AM	
	19 Saturday Morning Service 10AM	
July	9 Friday Night Service 7PM	N/A
	24 Saturday Morning Service 10AM	

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.