

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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Temple Beth Shalom
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www.hickoryjewishcenter.com

From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Dennis Jones



The Joseph-Hanukkah Connection

I never tire of talking about the patriarch, Joseph. Although he is just one of twelve sons and one daughter of Jacob, Leah, Rachel, Bilhah, and Zilpah, Joseph receives far more coverage in the Torah than any of his siblings. He is featured almost as prominently in the book of Genesis/Bereishit as Abraham and Jacob, his forbears. The story of Joseph unfolds in the Torah over the course of three portions, *Vayeshev*, *Mikeitz*, and *Vayigash*, Genesis 37:1-47:27. Because of their positions as the ninth, tenth, and eleventh readings of the Torah cycle, the Joseph readings fall every year in the weeks leading up to the holiday of Hanukkah. It is interesting that we read this story in conjunction with the "Feast of Dedication," because, as you will see, Joseph, more than any other patriarch with the possible exception of Moses, models a deep awareness of God in both his speech and behavior (Rabbi Ari Kahn, "Echoes of Eden," <http://echoesofeden.rabbiarikahn.com/>).

You will recall that Jacob, whose name by this point had been changed to Israel (Gen. 32:28), had acquired two wives, Rachel and her older sister Leah, during his sojourn in the area of Syria. The Torah is very explicit in stating that “Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah” (Gen. 29:30). Scripture goes on to say, however, that as a result of Leah’s unloved status, she was granted the first four sons born to Jacob: Ruben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah. Torah portion *Vayetzay* goes on to describe the birth of Jacob’s twelve sons and one daughter, Dinah, to his two wives, Rachel and Leah, and their two handmaidens, Bilhah and Zilpah. Jacob had already sired ten sons and one daughter, when Rachel finally conceived and gave birth to Joseph. It is obvious from the Torah text that Jacob considered the birth of Joseph special, because it was at that time that he informed Laban that he would be leaving the region of Syria and heading south to the land promised to Abraham, the land of Israel (Gen. 30:25).

Torah portion, *Vayeshev*, opens with Joseph as a youth of seventeen years. Unfortunately, perhaps due to the passion he felt for Rachel, the Torah makes it clear that Jacob did not hide his love and favoritism for Joseph: “Now Israel (Jacob) loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a multicolored tunic. And his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers; and so they hated him and could not speak to him on friendly terms” (Gen. 37:3-4). To make matters worse, Joseph had a set of back-to-back dreams foretelling his rise to a position of leadership. In the first dream he and his brothers were binding sheaves in the field. Joseph states, “My sheaf rose up and also stood erect, and behold your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf.” In the second dream Joseph relates, “The sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me” (Gen. 37:5-9). The telling of these dreams only increased his brothers’ hatred for him all the more. Even his father seemed a bit roiled at the report of the second dream. He rebuked him, saying, “What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?” (v. 10).

When Israel sent Joseph to check on his brothers who were pasturing their flocks in Shechem, the brothers saw it as an opportunity to punish Joseph. They debated killing him or just leaving him in a pit, but ultimately sold him to a caravan of Ishmaelite merchants who happened to pass by. The merchants, of course, took Joseph down to Egypt. Joseph’s brothers took his multicolored tunic, dipped it in the blood of a goat, and gave it to their father Jacob, leading him to believe that Joseph had been killed by wild beasts. Jacob was beside himself with grief. The Torah reports, “Then all his sons and all his daughters arose to comfort him, but he refused to be comforted. And he said, ‘Surely I will go down to Sheol in mourning for my son.’ So his father wept for him” (Gen. 37:35).

The Ishmaelite merchants sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, the captain of Pharaoh’s bodyguard. Even in his servitude it must have been very evident that God was present with and blessing Joseph. Potiphar noticed it: “Now his master saw that the LORD was with him and how the

LORD caused all that he did to prosper in his hand” (Gen. 39:3). Potiphar was so impressed with Joseph that he made him his personal steward and put him in charge of all of the affairs of his household. That proved to be a wise decision on Potiphar’s part because the Torah tells us, “The LORD blessed the Egyptian’s house on account of Joseph; thus the LORD’s blessing was upon all that he owned, in the house and in the field” (v. 5).

Perhaps the hardships he suffered gave Joseph a greater consciousness of the Divine. We begin to see evidence of that when he was confronted with the temptation of Potiphar’s wife. She was obviously enamored with Joseph and approached him boldly requesting intimacy with him. He rebuffed her with the statement, “How then could I do this great evil, and sin against God?” (v. 9). According to the biblical account, that did not stop her. She continued to pursue Joseph. Once when they were alone, she “caught him by his garment.” He fled leaving his garment with her. Potiphar’s wife used the incident to concoct a false accusation against Joseph landing him in prison.

Even in prison God’s blessing upon Joseph was so pronounced that it was noticed by others. “The LORD was with Joseph and extended kindness to him and gave him favor in the sight of the chief jailer. And the chief jailer committed to Joseph’s charge all the prisoners who were in the jail” (Gen. 39:21-22). It was in prison that Joseph first displayed his unique ability to interpret dreams. He accurately interpreted the dreams of the Pharaoh’s chief cupbearer and baker. Joseph, however, did not take credit for the interpretation for himself, but rather explained, “Do not interpretations belong to God?” (Gen. 40:8). It was this ability to interpret dreams that brought Joseph to Pharaoh’s court. Pharaoh had had a recurring dream and no one was able to interpret it. It was then that the chief cupbearer remembered that Joseph’s interpretation of his dream, while in prison, had in fact come true.

Joseph’s awareness of and devotion to God are clearly evident in his words to Pharaoh, who at that time would have considered *himself* a god. When Pharaoh tells Joseph that he has had a dream and that no one is able to interpret it he states, “I have heard it said about you that when you hear a dream you can interpret it.” Joseph humbly replies, “It is not in me; God will give Pharaoh a favorable answer” (Gen. 41:16). Upon hearing of Pharaoh’s dreams of the seven plump cows grazing along the Nile who are eaten by seven gaunt cows and seven full years of grain which were eaten up by seven withered ears, Joseph tells Pharaoh, “God has told Pharaoh what God is about to do” (v. 25). Joseph then informs Pharaoh that the dreams indicate that there will be seven years of plenty in Egypt followed by seven years of famine. The fact that the dream was repeated twice “means that the matter is determined by God and God will quickly bring it about” (v. 32). Joseph’s interpretation must have resonated strongly with Pharaoh. Pharaoh tells his servants, “Can we find a man like this in whom is a spirit of God?” And, Pharaoh tells Joseph, “Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one so discerning and wise as you

are” (vv. 38-39). Pharaoh, of course, goes on to appoint Joseph as the ruler of all Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself.

Joseph’s abiding consciousness of God can be seen in the naming of his sons. He names his firstborn Manasseh, making to forget, saying, “God has made me forget all my trouble and all my father’s household.” He names his second-born Ephraim, fruitfulness, saying, “God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction” (vv.51-52). But, Joseph’s devotion to the Almighty is most pronounced in the graciousness with which he deals with his brothers’ wrong toward him. You recall that the sons of Jacob had to go down to Egypt to get grain because there was no food in Canaan. The brothers deal with Joseph not knowing that it is, in fact, their lost brother. He however recognizes them. Once he reveals his identity to them they are quite fearful. Joseph tells them not to be angry or grieved insisting that it was God’s plan for him to be where he was. Joseph makes multiple statements to that effect, for example, “God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance. Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God” (Gen. 45:7-8).

The completeness of Joseph’s devotion to God and forgiveness of his brothers’ wrong is summed up in a statement that Joseph makes just after their father’s death. With the passing of their father the brothers are once again fearful that Joseph will be angry with them and retaliate against them. The Torah records, “And Joseph wept when they spoke to him... Joseph said to them, ‘Do not be afraid for am I in God’s place? As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good in order to bring about this present result, to preserve many people alive’” (Gen. 50:17-19). This is the connection that the sages make between the Joseph story and the story of Hanukkah. At the time of the Maccabees many had drifted away from Torah and into Hellenism, but at the call of Mattityahu and his sons large numbers repented and turned their hearts completely back to the God of Israel and God’s Torah. The people’s relationship with God was fully restored because they emulated the Divine attributes (Talmud, *Shabbat* 133b). This parallels the Joseph story in that Joseph did not merely forgive his brothers while harboring resentment for the wrongs they had done to him. Rather, he loved them and cared for them unconditionally, preserving their lives as if they had never wronged him, thus demonstrating the true meaning of forgiveness and complete reconciliation (Rashi, Genesis 45:12). With the kindling of this year’s Hanukkah lights, may we also explore ways to make God’s presence more manifest in our own lives and in our own relationships. *Ken yehi ratzon*, may this be God’s will!

The President’s Message

Barbara Laufer, President

Thomas Carlyle wrote “wonder is the basis of worship”. 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 almost 15 years. Both have contributed to the educational community. Tiffany is an Art teacher, and Lin a former school counselor. Tiffany is the good fairy who makes the wonderful coffee, and purchases all the food for Shabbat. She has been on the board in the capacity of Vice-President, bulletin editor, and currently is secretary. Lin is a significant contributor of homemade desserts, love sports, and is an expert at “trivia crack.” She has also been on the board for more than 10 years. And has invigorated the Sisterhood, serving as President, and adding events such as game night and movie night.

Sisterhood had a very successful Hanukkah Fair on Sunday, December 8th, and, thanks to our members old and new, earned the most money ever, Thank you! Please join us for services on December 20th and 21st, and the Hanukkah party afterwards on the 21st.

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 brave police officers rushed into a synagogue a year ago to save lives, we must rush forward to combat violence in our language and our actions. 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 Rest of the Year

Listed below are board members who have volunteered to host at temple services, but we also need additional member volunteers. Hosts’ responsibilities are identified below and if you are willing to volunteer, please email Mary Lee Tosky at marylee.tosky@gmail.com and put TBS Hosting in the subject line. Or use this link to sign up <https://bit.ly/2t9uEPH>. Thank you.

December 20-21 (Hanukah party)	Sunday School	Sunday School
January 17-18	Barbara & Larry Laufer	Ginny& Pete Sobotkin
February 14-15	TBD	hosts needed
March 9 (Purim Party)	Kathy Jones	hosts needed
March 20-21	Aaron & Mary Lee Tosky	Maria & Andy Rieder
April 9 (Seder)	Sisterhood	
April 17-18	TBD	hosts needed
May 15-16	Lin Gentry	Tiffany Hull
May 29 (Erev Shavuot)	TBD	hosts needed

June 19-20

TBD

hosts needed

July 17-18

TBD

hosts needed



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 perform 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 kiddush 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.

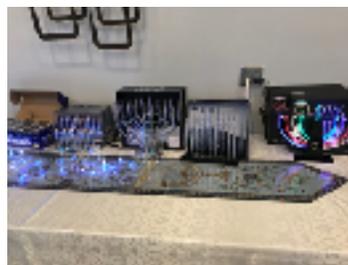
TBS Sisterhood

Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President

The sisterhood had a very successful Hanukkah Fair in December! Thank you so much to everyone who came! The Temple Beth El gift shop ladies generously donated a raffle prize for our temple's Hanukkah party on Saturday, December 21st. It's a really special item the whole family will love. Be sure to join us for a chance to win this fabulous prize!

Our next meeting will be Wednesday, January 8th, 6:30pm at NY Hibachi (2128 Hwy 70 SE, close to Valley Hills Mall).

We're hosting a Movie Night on Saturday, January 11th, 7:00pm at the temple. Everyone is invited—it's not just for sisterhood. We'll have popcorn and candy, bring a chair or cushion if you like. We don't have a movie picked out yet—bring a dvd if you want.





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 18th, 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:

Officers:

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

Members at Large:

- Liz Correll
- Marion DuBow
- Lin Gentry
- Amy Hedrick
- Linda Greenfield
- Mary Lee Tosky
- Karen Ferguson
- Kathy Jones



Simchas for Jennie (Yehudit Razel) Burrows and Steven (Racham) Cockerell, and family. A baby naming ceremony for little Miriam Rose Cockerell, born September 1st, 2019, was held at the Friday night service on November 22nd. Miriam Rose’s hebrew name is Miriam Razel Bat Yehudit Razel v’Racham.

Donations

A donation of \$100.00 was made to the Kwanza Family Homeless Shelter for the month of December

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

Looking for a way to give tzedakah?

Sunday School is collecting winter hats, gloves, scarves, personal/hotel size hygiene supplies, backpacks, and manual can openers for the local homeless population. Please help by bringing these items to temple and placing them in the tote box in the foyer.



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. 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



Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle December Events

Birthdays

Nick Weatherly 12/3	Ginny Sobotkin 12/18
Roberta Atkins 12/3	Ben Setser 12/21
Kathy Jones 12/5	Eva Reed 12/28
Pete Sobotkin 12/6	Andrew Weatherly 12/29
Herman Garrick 12/12	Donnie Powell 12/30
Pam Axler 12/12	Sarah Peltzer 12/31
Hannah Davidson 12/13	
Barry Sobotkin 12/16	

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

TBS Message Board

Thank you to the Burrows/Cockerell family for the wonderful treats for our Oneq Shabbat on Friday, November 22nd in honor of the naming of Miriam Razel Bat Yehudit Razel u' Racham.

Get Well wishes to Rabbi Dennis 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.

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

Local and Regional Events

WDAV 89.9 FM

Sunday, December 22

Hanukkah Lights 2019 | 5:00 PM

The seasonal favorite returns with all new Hanukkah stories read by NPR's Susan Stamberg and Murray Horwitz.

Candles Burning Brightly | 6:00 PM

Mindy Ratner hosts this annual celebration of Chanukah, the Jewish Festival of Lights. Mindy awakens listeners' spirits and taste buds with this audio exploration of Chanukah music, foods, and traditional activities.

Sunday, December 29

A Chanukah Celebration with Chicago

A Capella 6:00 PM

An inspiring, informative and entertaining show featuring choral music set to Chanukah texts both familiar and original.

The BEST Potato Latkes

- 4 russet potatoes, grated, then rinsed and drained
- 1 large onion, grated
- 2 eggs
- 2 tablespoons potato starch (or more)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- oil for frying

MIX - FRY - ENJOY



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/>.

Interfaith Council

Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2019-2020

Date	Event	Bulletin Deadline
December	8 Sunday School 10:00am	
	20-21 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)/ Hanukah Party/Luncheon	December 7
January	5 Sunday School 10:00am	
	17-19 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)/ Sunday School 10:00am	January 4
February	2 Sunday School 10:00am	
	14-16 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)/ Sunday School 10:00am	February 1
March	9 Purim Megilah Reading 7:30 PM (Monday)	
	20-22 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)/ Sunday School 10:00am	March 7
April	5 Sunday School 10:00am	
	9 Passover Community Seder 6:00 PM (Thursday)	April 4
	17-19 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)/ Sunday School 10:00am	
May	3 Sunday School 10:00am	
	15-17 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)/ Sunday School 10:00am	May 2
	29 Erev Shavuot/Friday Night Service 7:30pm	
	31 TBS Annual Membership Meeting 10:00am	
June	7 Sunday School Final Session 10:00am	
	19-20 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)	June 6
July	17-18 Services (Fri. 7:30pm/Sat. 10:00am)	N/A

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.