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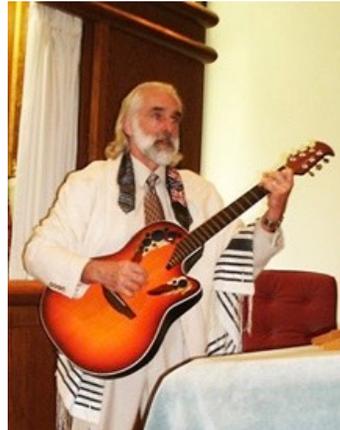
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Temple Beth Shalom
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From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

Rabbi Dennis Jones

Follow-up on our High Holidays: New Beginnings in 5783

I am still on a mountain top following our amazing High Holiday services at Temple Beth Shalom. Just to have so many precious souls together again in the Temple, post-Covid, praying, chanting, and worshipping with such כּוּנָה , Hebrew for intensity/purpose, energized me beyond words. And, having come through the valley of struggling with Covid-19 myself, the words of our ancient prayers have again taken on new meaning for me. I am hoping to extend this sense of rebirth and restoration to us all. What a privilege it was to stand together in the synagogue on the first day of the seventh Hebrew month, *Tishri*, to listen to the sound of the *shofar*, in keeping with ancient precepts (Lev. 23:24; Num. 29:1). Several times during the course of our prayer and worship on that day, we proclaim, "This is the day of the world's birth" (E.g., *Gates of Repentance*, p.144; *Mishkan Hanefesh*, p.207). It has long been the tradition in Reformed Synagogues to read from Torah portion *Bereishit*, the creation story (Gen. 1:1-2:3), on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. But, over 15 years ago, under the influence of our rabbi and my mentor, Morton Kaplan, congregation Temple Beth Shalom began the tradition of reading from *Bereishit* on the first day of the holiday. This custom shifts

the emphasis of the holy day **from a day of judgment to a day of new beginnings—new possibilities**. Every time I chant the creation account I am overwhelmed by the power of the passage and by the power of our Fall Holy Days.

Many skeptics and detractors over the years have seen in the creation story of *Bereishit* a pseudoscience that is at odds with accepted discoveries from many scientific fields. But that is absolutely not the case! The sages of Israel, even as far back as two millennia ago saw in the creation story a powerful poem, with multiple layers of meaning. They cautioned novices not to even explore the depths of the mysteries underlying this powerful account without guidance (See, e.g., *Talmud Chagigah*, 11b). Rabbi Kaplan taught often of the competing principles of unity and diversity described so beautifully in the creation story. The juxtaposition of those forces of unity and diversity work together to magnify the power and purpose of the Creator. The diversity of the creation can be thought of as an impediment, or it can be a source of strength and benefit on both ecological and societal levels. The universe's vast diversity ultimately does flow together in unity, because the entire cosmos truly is interconnected as has been proven through scientific discoveries in the 20th and 21st centuries (See, Dr. Gerald Schroeder, "Age of the Universe," www.aish.com).

Even the great commentator, the 11th century biblical scholar, Rashi, said that the Torah "ought to have started" with Exodus 12:2, because that is the first commandment about **holy time**. We know from the Torah, as it was specifically given to the children of Israel: "This month (Nisan) shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." You may recall that the Talmud records a debate between **Rabbi Eliezer who believed the world was created in Tishri** and Rabbi Joshua who believed the world was created in Nisan. "It has been taught Rabbi Eliezer says: in Tishri the world was created; in Tishri the patriarchs were born; in Tishri the patriarchs died.... Rabbi Joshua says: Whence do we know that the world was created in Nisan? Because it says, 'And the earth brought forth grass, herb yielding seed after its kind, and tree bearing fruit.' Which is the month in which the earth is full of grass and trees [begin to] produce fruit? You must say that this is Nisan" (*Rosh Hashanah* 10b-11a). In typical Jewish fashion, the ruling, based on the Mishnah (*Rosh Hashana* 1:1), is that, "There are **FOUR New Years**; the first of Nisan is the New Year for kings and for festivals; the first of Elul is the New Year for tithing animals; the first of Tishri is the New Year for years, ...for agriculture, and for vegetables; the first of Shevat is the New Year for trees according to the School of Shammai, and the School of Hillel say on the fifteenth." From Talmudic times to the present most rabbis have considered **the first of Tishri to be the birthday of the cosmos**, for example the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Schneerson, who pointed out, "With its opening statement, the Torah is establishing that it is not merely a rulebook, a listing of things to do or not do. It is God's blueprint for creation, our guide for realizing the purpose for which everything in heaven and earth was made. Every creature, object, and

element; every force, phenomenon, and potential; every moment of time was created by God toward a purpose” (“Parshat Bereishit In-Depth,” www.chabad.org).

Former Chief Rabbi of Great Britain, Jonathan Sacks, concludes, “Torah is not a book of history even though it includes history. It is not a book of science even though the first chapter of Genesis...is the necessary prelude to science, because it represents the first time people saw the universe as the product of a single creative will, and therefore as intelligible rather than capricious and mysterious.” Rabbi Sacks goes on to say that everything the Torah contains, which would include not only the laws, statutes, and commandments, but also the narratives, particularly the creation narrative, has the driving purpose of ethical and spiritual instruction (See, “Bereishit—A Living Book,” www.aish.com).

Rosh Hashanah truly is the beginning of all beginnings. There is, I believe, in the core of every Jewish soul a deep connection with the creation and the Creator. The faith and traditions of our people that have been passed down from generation to generation have imbued us with an innate sense of purpose and moral responsibility. Though some may be able to deny that purpose and responsibility for a time, and all fall short of the highest goals we set for ourselves in that regard, Rosh Hashanah is that recurring “day of remembrance,” that brings us back to not only who we truly are, but also to ask **who we can be**. And, Yom Kippur is, in the words of Rabbi Sacks, a time “to ask [such] questions once a year in the company of others publicly willing to confess their faults, lifted by the words and music of ancient prayers, knowing that God forgives every failure we acknowledge as a failure, and that [God] has faith in us even when we lose faith in ourselves.... That is when we discover that, even in a secular age, God is still there, open to us whenever we are willing to open ourselves to [God]” (www.abc.net.au/religion/rabbi-sacks-yom-kippur-and-drama-of-forgiveness/12703034).

Getting back to Rabbi Kaplan’s teaching, the vast diversity of our creation can be seen as a problem. When human beings choose to use that diversity to promote fear and tribalism, only division and evil can result. That same diversity, though, can serve as a springboard to greater creativity and strength. Rabbi Kaplan points out that in times of economic difficulty the worst elements of humankind’s nature tend to manifest themselves, whereas, in times of prosperity we see less of that. Our challenge in going forward is to choose a higher road even when others may be choosing the lower.

Having just experienced an amazing Ten Days of Awe, ימים נוראים, it is my prayer that we each recommit to those lofty principles given to us by our Creator in the Holy Torah and preserved for us by our ancestors. The Hebrew Prophets have for millennia held out of vision for humankind that is breathtaking. They foresee a time when sickness, famine, and war shall be completely eliminated. It is my absolute belief that this vision *is* the will of the Creator for this miraculous creation. It is my further belief that through our good deeds, our works of Torah, we *can* bring this vision to fruition. As we begin the New Hebrew Year 5783, may each of our parts in this holy endeavor become clearer to us. **Won’t you join us**

at Temple Beth Shalom as we pursue this Divine connection and purpose together? *L'shanah tovah tikatevu v'tekatemu!!*—May you be written down and sealed for a good year!!

President's Message

Susan Goldstein, President

Dearest TBS Family, What an incredible treat it was to see so many of you in person during the High Holy Days! Better yet, you sang out with gusto. I was particularly pleased to hear so many of you join in the special High Holy Days melodies, including Neilah -- and I'm hoping to convince Rabbi Dennis to include more of those melodies next year! And, of course, there are so many to thank for making the Ya'amim Nora'im so special this year.

- Rabbi Dennis was, as always, “on it,” always sharing his favorites. Actually, I think the only parsha that's not his favorite is Akeidat Yizchak. And someday I'd really like to have a discussion about what happened to Avraham between Sodom & Gomorrah and the Binding of Isaac. The possibilities are endless.....
- Our Security Team, co-chaired by Larry Laufer and Dr. James Norwood, did a masterful job of making sure we were safe throughout all our services. And we were so glad that our own Erica was part of our HPD team.
- Rebittitzen Kathy made all of our women members SO proud as she clearly won the “Battle of the Shofarim.” Way to go, Kathy!
- To those who brought children to our services we owe a special debt of gratitude. It was so wonderful to see -- and hear -- our Jewish future. Bring them often and let them fly onto the Bimah so they can feel at home there.
- To those who brought food to our Rosh Hashanah luncheon or our Yom Kippur Break Fast, please note that there were virtually no leftovers. TBS has a great group of cooks who complement our own Chef Samantha.
- To Sheri Stock who makes sure we always have the BEST challah.
- To everyone who attended, either in person or via Zoom, you strengthen us with your presence. So, on to Sukkot. Please use our sukkah during the chag to wave the lulav and etrog and/or enjoy a family meal (dairy only, please). The sukkah is there for our community, and we hope you'll use it.

Chag Sameach,

Susan



TBS Sisterhood

Sheri Stock, Sisterhood President

Hello everyone! Sisterhood has some exciting plans! Our annual Hanukkah Fair (in conjunction with Temple Beth El's Discovered Traditions shop) will be held in person at the synagogue on Sunday November 20th! There will also be an opportunity to shop TBE's Discovered Traditions website beforehand and have Temple Beth Shalom receive the credit for the sale. I hope to see you all there! Sisterhood has also assumed the responsibility for ensuring that there is challah (and gluten free challah) available at all of our services. If anyone has any special requests for challah, let me know. I'm taking reservations for a wine and cheese tasting (free of charge) at the temple on Sunday, October 23rd at 3pm. Please let me know by the 20th if you will be attending. Stay safe and I hope to see all of you soon at synagogue!

TBS Sunday School Program

Kathy Jones, Sunday School Principal

TBS Sunday School has been roaring along. The students have been learning about their Jewish heritage, Hebrew, the importance of tzedakah, and the High Holidays. We will be meeting again this Sunday, October 9th at 10 AM to build the Sukkah and eat in it. The entire congregation is invited to attend and/or visit the Sukkah any time during the week of Sukkot to bench the etrog and lulav. As always, if you would like to know more about the TBS Sunday School Program, please contact Kathy Jones, Principal, at krsjones2002@yahoo.com.



Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund



The Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund (HSSF) was established by a long-time Temple member and past President, Burt Sederholm (may his memory be for a blessing), to honor his late wife Harriet, who died shortly after her retirement from 25 years with the Catawba

County Department of Social Services. The

scholarship committee is a sub-committee of the Temple Beth Shalom Board. The committee manages funds invested for the purpose of rewarding one-time scholarships with the earnings from the invested funds. These awards honor the memory of Harriet Sederholm and her efforts to improve the lives of so many impoverished adults and children in Catawba County.

The HSSF scholarship is available to students. Candidates will 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.

The committee will make decisions based on the following preferences but not absolutes:

Is the applicant a temple member or related to a temple member?

Is the applicant Jewish?

Will the funds be used for educational needs?

Will the funds make a difference regarding the applicant's ability to benefit from the activity?

Is the activity something deemed to be of value by the committee?

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 meeting is October 19th at 6:30pm at the temple and on Zoom. Board meetings are open to all temple members. Contact Susan Goldstein if you wish to join a scheduled monthly meeting.

Board members are:

Officers:

- Susan Goldstein, President
- Barbara Laufer, Past President
- Mary Lee Tosky, Acting Vice President
- Susan Rieder, Treasurer
- Lin Gentry, Secretary

Members at Large:

- Liz Correll
- Karen Ferguson
- Derek Cooperberg
- Sheri Stock
- Susan Tiger Huitt
- Jodi Lavin-Tompkins



The TBS board thanks you for your donations

High Holiday donation

Dr. Richard Rose

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

Our month of October donation went to support the Hickory Soup Kitchen

- Please consider these funds for your next donation:
- Building and Grounds
- Security
- Sunday School
- Community Relations and Social Action



Please consider pairing with a board member(s) to host a Shabbat or Holiday 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 Community Mitzvah Projects

This month, the Community Relations and Social Action Committee (CRSAC) was able to partner with Alexander County Schools to prevent the eviction of a single mother and her 3 school age children. We helped to catch her up on rent and legal fees and hope for her to be working soon. What a joy it was for TBS to be able to fulfill what the prophet Isaiah tells us: “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: ... to provide the poor wanderer with shelter...”

If you would like to donate funds or household items to use toward our TBS mitzvah projects, please contact the CRSAC Chairperson, Kathy Jones, at krsjones2002@yahoo.com

TBS MESSAGE BOARD

Our hearts go out to the family and friends of long time TBS member, Henry Greenfield, who passed on September 29th.



The Temple Beth Shalom sukkah, built by our Sunday school kids and parents, is ready. Please feel free to bring a lunch or supper (dairy only) and enjoy it during the holiday of Sukkot. Lulav and etrog are there for the shaking!

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

Jack and Hannah Levy
Druzy Dreams Crystals
<http://www.etsy.com/shop/druzydreamscrystals>

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



Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle October Events

Birthdays

Craig Axler 10/3
Samuel Peltzer 10/6
Daniel Tosky 10/7
Ronald Joseph Cohn 10/10
Steven Gold 10/11
Susan Rieder 10/21
Richard Engelmann 10/31

Anniversaries

Yahrzeits

David Tosky 10/11
Richard Goldstein 10/18
Joanna Dandekar 10/23
Stanley Atkins 10/27
Sid Freedman 10/30

Local and Regional Events



On October 28, Bread & Puppet Theater will come to Appalachian State with a brand new performance in the tradition of the iconic Bread & Puppet Circuses that began at Goddard College in Plainfield, Vermont in 1970.

Many ASU events are open to the public (in-person and virtually). For more information, go to: <https://holocaust.appstate.edu/events>, or contact the Center at 828.262.2311 or holocaust@appstate.edu.

"No Justice With Healing? No Healing Without Justice?"
Wednesday, October 19, 2022, at 7 p.m.
Room 114, Belk Library and Information Commons with Craig Higson-Smith

Higson-Smith is a South African human rights activist and psychologist who has worked for years on the questions of healing and justice for survivors of organized violence and torture. For over 30 years He has engaged deeply with survivors of war crimes in multiple locations.



**SHALOM
HARMON
INSTITUTE**

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



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/>.

Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2022-2023

For event updates, email: info@hickoryjewishcenter.com

DATE	EVENT	BULLETIN DEADLINE
October	4 Erev Yom Kippur/Kol Nidre 7:00 PM (Tuesday)	September 18
	5 Yom Kippur 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM Neilah/Breakfast (Wednesday)	
	9 Sunday School/Build & Decorate Sukkah/Short Service/Party 10:00 AM	
	16 Simchat Torah Service 7:00 PM (Sunday)	
	21 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
23 Sunday School 10:00 AM		
November	5 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	October 23
	6 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	18 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	20 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
24 Thanksgiving Community Service (10:00 AM at Corinth UCC)		
December	2 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	November 20
	4 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	18 Sunday School Hanukah Party/Bingo 10:00 AM	
	31 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	
January	13 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	December 18
	15 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	28/29 Saturday Morning Service 10:00AM/ Sunday School 10:00 AM	
February	11 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	January 22
	12 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
	24 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	26 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
March	6 Erev Purim Service/Megillah Reading 7:00 PM (Monday)	February 19
	11/12 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM/ Sunday School 10:00AM	
	24 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	26 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
April	6 Passover Community Seder 6:00 PM (Thursday)	March 19
	15/16 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM/ Sunday School 10:00	
	28 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	30 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
May	6/7 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM/ Sunday School 10:00 AM	April 23
	19 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
	21 TBS Annual Membership Meeting 10:00 AM (Sunday)	
	25 Erev Shavuot Service 7:00 PM (Thursday)	
	28 Sunday School 10:00 AM	
June	3/4 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM/ Sunday School Final Session/Party	May 21
	23 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	
July	8 Saturday Morning Service 10:00 AM	N/A
	21 Friday Night Service 7:00 PM	

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.

