



Temple Shalom

Shofar

January 2006 • Tevet – Shevat 5766

Volume XLX Issue IV

www.templeshalom.net

My House Didn't Kill Anyone (Many Paths to a Secure Israel)

Sunday, January 1
Eighth Night Chanukah

Friday, January 6
Family Service Led by 5th
Grade, 7:30 PM

Saturday, January 7
Shabbat Morning Worship
and Study 10 AM

Parashat Va'era
Exodus 6:2-9:35

Friday, January 13
6th Grade Shabbaton, 6 PM
Erev Shabbat Service &
One New Jewish Thing
Shabbat, 8 PM

Saturday, January 14
Shabbat Morning Family
Service 9:30 AM
Shabbat Morning Worship
and Study 10 AM
Primary Age Shabbat
10:45 AM

Parashat Bo
Exodus 10:1 – 13:16

Friday, January 20
Tot Shabbat 6:45 PM
Erev Shabbat Social
Concerns Service 8 PM

Saturday, January 21
Shabbat Morning
Monthly Meditation, 9 AM
Shabbat Morning Worship
and Study, 10AM

Parashat Beshalach
Exodus 13:17 – 17:16

Friday, January 27
Shabbat at Home, NO
REGULAR SERVICES

Saturday, January 28
Congregational Shabbat
Morning Service, 10 AM

Parashat Yitro
Exodus 18:1 – 20:23

On November 11 I flew 12 hours, leaving Ben Gurion Airport at 2AM on a Friday morning, in order to be home from Israel for Shabbat with my family. My first Temple responsibility was to lead Shabbat morning services at the 7th grade retreat. On that retreat at the Smith Center I read from the Sefer Torah using as a yad (torah pointer) an olive branch I had plucked from a tree in Eretz Yisrael, from the actual location mentioned in the verses we chanted that morning: "Avram passed through the land as far as the site of Shechem, at Elon Moreh (the terebinth of Moreh)." That's exactly where I had been the previous Wednesday.

On my desk as I am writing now sits that drying olive branch, as well as a small shard of Jerusalem stone, souvenirs of an unusual mission to the land of Israel. During the week that the Torah portion describes our ancestor Abraham's first arrival in the land

of Canaan and his arrival at the very same site of my plucking a branch (Genesis 12:6), a minyan of rabbis harvested olives with Palestinian farmers within sight of the West Bank settlement of Elon Moreh. While Jews the world over were reading that Abraham was called and commanded to go forth from his native land to a "land that I will show you" in order that "all the families of the earth shall bless themselves in you," a minyan of rabbis worked side by side with young Palestinian laborers to rebuild a Palestinian home demolished for lack of a building permit which was literally impossible to obtain.

We were called to leave our homes in North America to travel to Israel by Rabbis for Human Rights, an Israeli Rabbinic group with members from all Jewish movements that seeks to teach and embody the values expressed in Jewish teaching from the story of Abraham through the prophets and the Rabbinic sages to Israel's Declaration of Independence. These Rabbis, who serve in Israel's Defense Forces and whose children have served as well, believe that Israel's physical security is enhanced and protected by a respect for the human rights and dignity of our Palestinian neighbors, whether citizens of the State of Israel or under

our control or authority in Jerusalem and the West Bank. They also work diligently to promote the human rights of Israeli Jews and Arabs, some who are victims of terror by our enemies and some who are increasingly victimized by policies which are turning a relatively egalitarian society into one



Rabbi Serotta with Rabbi Shaul Feinberg of HUC-JIR, and demolished home

which has enormous socio-economic gaps, widespread poverty among children, and gaping holes in the social safety net.

Our mission had three main goals: rebuilding the Dari home in the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Issawiyeh, participating in ensuring the legal right of access to their lands of subsistence olive harvesters on the West Bank, and opening an office in Hadera (site of a recent terrorist bombing) for Israelis threatened by an unfortunate American import, the "Wisconsin Plan" welfare "reform," all three goals reflecting the activities of courageous Israeli rabbis. We also sought the

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JANUARY



sunday	monday	tuesday	wednesday	thursday	friday	saturday
1 New Year's Day 8:30 AM No Religious School 6 PM Eighth Chanukah Candle Lighting 6:30 PM No Chai School 6:30 PM No Confirmation Class	2 Office Closed 7:30 PM Torah Reading for All	3 4:30 PM Hebrew School 6:30 PM Introduction To Conversational Hebrew 7:30 PM Israel 101: Parties & Politics	4 7 AM Wednesday Morning Minyan Service 4:30 PM Hebrew School Early Session 6:30 PM Brotherhood M'ting 6:45 PM Confirmation Class 6:45 PM Hebrew School Late Session	5 12:15 PM Lunch With The Prophets 7 PM Shir Shalom Choir Practice	6 7:30 PM Family Service Led by 5th Grade	7 10 AM Shabbat Morning Worship & Study
8:45 AM Religious Sch. Early Ses. 8 9 AM Jewish Texts: Talmud 11:15 AM Religious Sch. Late Ses. 2 PM Celebrations 6:30 PM Post Confirmation Program M'ting 6:30 PM Religious School Evening Session	9 7:30 PM Torah Reading for All	10 4:30 PM Hebrew School 6:30 PM Introduction To Conversational Hebrew 7:30 PM Israel 101: Parties And Politics	11 7 AM Wednesday Morning Minyan Service 4:30 PM Hebrew Sch Early 6:45 PM Confirmation Class 6:45 PM Hebrew Sch. Late	12 12:15 PM Lunch With The Prophets 7 PM Shir Shalom Choir Practice 7:30 PM Board Of Trustees Meeting	13 6 PM 6th Grade Shabbaton 8 PM One New Jewish Thing Shabbat With the Shir Shalom Choir	14 9:30 AM Shabbat Family Service 10 AM Shabbat Morning Worship & Study 10:45 AM Primary Age Shabbat Service
8:45 AM Religious Sch. Early Ses. 15 9 AM Book Discussions 9 AM Jewish Texts: Talmud 10 AM Hal Bruno Brotherhood Brunch 11:15 AM Religious Sch. Late Ses. 6:30 PM Confirmation Class 6:30 PM Religious Sch. Evening	16 Martin Luther King Day Office Closed 7:30 PM Torah Reading for All	17 4:30 PM Hebrew School 6:30 PM Introduction To Conversational Hebrew 7:30 PM Israel 101: Parties & Politics	18 7 AM Wednesday Morning Minyan Service 4:30 PM Hebrew Sch Early 6:45 PM Confirmation Class 6:45 PM Hebrew Sch. Late	19 12:15 PM Lunch With The Prophets 7 PM Shir Shalom Choir Practice	20 6:45 PM Tot Shabbat 8 PM Erev Shabbat Service	21 9 AM Shabbat Morning Monthly Meditation 10 AM Shabbat Morning Worship & Study
22 8:30 AM No Religious School Professional Day 6:30 PM Post Confirmation Program Meeting	23 7:30 PM Torah Reading for All	24 4:30 PM Hebrew School	25 7 AM Wednesday Morning Minyan Service 4:30 PM Hebrew Sch Early 6:45 PM Confirmation Class 6:45 PM Hebrew Sch. Late	26 12:15 PM Lunch With The Prophets 7 PM Shir Shalom Choir Practice 7:30 PM Executive Committee Meeting	27 6 PM Shabbat at Home No Regular Services	28 10 AM Congregational Shabbat Morning Service 12 PM Pot Luck Shabbat Lunch
29 8:45 AM Religious Sch. Early Ses. 9 AM Jewish Texts: Talmud 11:15 AM Religious Sch. Late Ses. 6:30 PM Confirmation Class 6:30 PM Religious Sch. Evening 6:30 PM Sisterhood Event: Author's Tea	30	31 4:30 PM Hebrew School				

Counting Our Blessings

Message from Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach



In our culture and our everyday lives, the January New Year is a time for taking stock,

and starting anew. Much like the spiritual Jewish New Year, it is another opportunity for “resolutions,” and revolutions in the way we lead our lives.

On a personal level, I have always felt a special intensity and connection with the power of the January New Year, through the simple coincidence that January 1st is my birthday. It lends an added urgency to the sense, for me, of a new start on this particular day.

Part of taking stock and starting new, of course, involves looking around. And it is in that act that I believe our Jewish tradition has a richness for us, and a gift with many returns, a gift that keeps on giving.

What is the theatrical scene that I cite more than any other? It is the opening of Fiddler on the Roof, in which Anatevka’s rabbi is approached by his disciples and asked if there is a blessing for the czar. Most of you know his blessings, of course (“May God bless and keep the czar... far away from us.”) But it is his answer that concerns me at the moment (“Of course, there is a blessing for everything), as well as the creativity of his response. For there is a blessing for everything in Jewish tradition: the first fruit of the season, the beauties of nature, a friend seen again after a long absence, the trees blossoming in the Spring, for good news, and on hearing bad news.

The *berakha* recited upon hearing bad news (the death of a loved one, for example) is a reminder, however, that the translation of the word *berakha* as “blessing” is a bit of a problem, since, in English, “blessing” seems to imply only something “good.” Perhaps a *berakha* is more of an “awakening,” (I credit Rabbi Lawrence Kushner for this translation), an “awareness,” an opening of our eyes to the fact that in the midst of the ordinary and the everyday... something extraordinary is there, all around us.

I have long wanted – I have been waiting – to launch a *Berakha* initiative, a congregational campaign for creative engagement with the writing of our own words, the heightening of our own spiritual awareness, to the point where everyone will feel free to create his or her own *berakhot*, on any and many of the occasions of our lives. I wonder, now, this Gregorian New Year, what I have been waiting for. For, with Jacob I say, “*ein zeh ki im beit Elohim, v’anochi lo yadati*; this community is none other than a house of God, a place of spirituality, and I have not taken full advantage of that.” (Alright, the exact translation of the last phrase is: “and I did not know it.”) Like Jacob, we discover that God, that holiness is all around us, the throbbing underlying heartbeat of the universe, and we...we might have blinked, and forgotten it for a while.

First, I believe that we should engage in a concerted effort to reconnect ourselves with the traditional *berakhot*, the vast array of individual expressions of spirituality already available in our tradition. For we already have such tools in Jewish life, you do not need to go off looking to Buddhism or eastern spiritual traditions of esoteric mysticism to discover “spirituality,” Reform Judaism never banned or banished such expressions. But it is probably the case... that we did not emphasize it enough.

How can we re-learn what is already there, our rich tradition of plug-‘n-play, ready to use *berakhot*? Watch for several initiatives in the coming months, but the first place to start might be our Adult Ed offering on the first three Tuesday nights of March, “An Introduction to Jewish Spirituality.” There, we will outline the structure of a Jewish prayer service, relearn many traditional blessings... and also explore a “Jewish” way of creating new *berakhot* ourselves.

What is a “creative” *berakha*? It is the ancient Jewish formula (the opening Hebrew words **Barukh Atta Adonai, Eloheinu Melekh HaOlam**, which loosely translate as “Blessed/Praised are You, Adonai, Sovereign of Existence”), followed by words that come from our heart. It is a combination of the fixed and the free, the set and the spontaneous.

An example. We fill up our cars with gasoline. We are using a non-renewable source of

energy, but it is actually more than that. It is *fossil fuel*! It is something that was once alive. It is the energy of life itself that lets us get from here to wherever it is we are going. And so: “*Barukh Atta, Adonai Eloheinu, Melekh HaOlam*, who lets us fly on the wings of life.” Just one example. And we might even add, as we fill our cars up, that while we are given the power to go, we choose wisely where it is we choose to go.

I invite all of you to send in your ideas, your words, moments when your eyes were open and you were touched by wonder and awe. I invite expressions from the congregation, a “*Berakha* A Month,” (with credit, I think, to *Moment* magazine which did something similar for a while), your words to appear in a corner of the Shofar.

And we will look for other ways in which we reconnect to this most personal and deeply powerful part of Jewish life and tradition.

This Gregorian New Year, let us begin... to count our blessings. And to share those blessings with each other.

L’shanah tovah, kiveyakhol. Happy (January) New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads “Michael L. Feshbach” in a cursive script.

Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach

We are so fortunate to have Susan Riddles as our new bookkeeper. She is originally from Kansas but for the last 20 years has lived in Pennsylvania. She lives with her husband Brant, of 22 years in Falls Church, Virginia. They have a son, Cameron, who is studying to be a cinematographer at North Carolina School of Art.

Please stop by the office and introduce yourself to Susan and give her a big Temple Shalom welcome!

My House Didn't Kill Anyone: Many Paths to a Secure Israel (continued)

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opportunity to discuss our concerns with Israeli and American officials. Both the Mayor of Jerusalem (ultra-Orthodox Rabbi Uri Lupoliansky, a young man who heads a charitable institution, Yad Sarah, that provides wheelchairs for Israeli Jews and Palestinians), and also, Jacob Wallach, US Consul General, met with us at length and seemed genuinely interested in pursuing our findings.

I wish I could report full success on these missions but at least I can say that we made a beginning. We added the voices of American Jews in support of our Israeli colleagues. We also directly experienced some of the challenges of trying to do the just and the right thing. Rain and an ugly incident in which an Israeli policeman (charged with manslaughter on the day we left) shot a relative of the Dari family, meant that we only spent a day building on the site.

Worse still, in a neighborhood called Anata, (the Biblical Anatot, birthplace of Jeremiah) adjacent to where we were building, another home was demolished the same day. That very morning four rabbis from our delegation sat with the family owners from 5AM to 8AM, hoping to prevent the threatened action. Both of these demolitions occurred because the home owners did not have valid permits to build. However, the owners cannot receive such permits because their property lies in areas which have never been zoned by the Jerusalem municipality since 1967! Meanwhile huge new Jewish neighborhoods like French Hill and Maaleh Adumim are approved and rise on the hillsides above. This blatant discrimination adds nothing to the physical security of Israel. "My house didn't kill anyone" mourned a member of the Bishara family when we visited the ruin of his home the next day. Meanwhile his children handed us pieces of Jerusalem stone from the rubble. One now sits on my desk. And we were left to ponder what contribution this discriminatory policy will make to violence and hatred.

On the other hand, the Dari family knows that there are Israeli and American Jews who

stand for a different relationship with their neighbors. They also know that many other Jews in this DC area stood with us and behind us, including generous folks in our congregation, and especially two small but important institutions in our area, Amcha for Tzedakah and Am Kolel, both of which made significant contributions to rebuilding their modest two room home (being rebuilt at a cost of about \$15,000.) I want you to know that I felt your presence with me as I had the honor of performing acts of justice and charity in your name and with your blessing.

Likewise the Palestinian olive harvest on the West Bank is not a simple issue, as it has



Rabbi Serotta helping with the olive harvest

been plagued by settler violence. Through the efforts of RHR and the Israeli Courts an arrangement has been worked out with the Israeli army to protect the rights (and the safety) of the Palestinian farmers. But without the monitoring by Israeli Jewish volunteers these rights are in jeopardy. So last Wednesday a minyan of Israeli and American Rabbis went out into the West Bank as Shomrei Mishpat (guardians of justice).

My group guarded and picked olives (using no tools, only our hands and our ability to climb trees) among a dozen or so trees down a steep slope from the industrial area of the settlement of Elon Moreh. I worked with Rabbi Ed Rettig, an Israeli living in Modiin, who works for the American Jewish Committee in Jerusalem. What an experience to be picking olives in the Samarian hills a few kilometers from the Biblical mount of bless-

ings, Har Gerizim! But sadly we had arrived too late in one area where the army had failed to coordinate with our group and local farmers and one Palestinian's face had been badly beaten by a settler with his rifle butt.

I firmly believe that American Jews have a responsibility to support Israelis working for their security and social justice in these and similar ways. Last year I was proud to join almost 500 North American rabbis from all movements in signing an open letter to Prime Minister Sharon. Together with Rabbis Marc Gopin (Orthodox), Jack Moline (Conservative), and Sid Schwarz (Reconstructionist) we presented it to the

Israeli embassy. The text concludes: "The home demolition policy contradicts the kind of Israel envisioned by the founders of a Jewish state, one that celebrates the prophetic voice which has animated our people for centuries, and which has given such vitality to the Zionist movement. This vision is articulated in the Scroll of Independence when it describes the state as one that "will be based on freedom, justice, and peace... In the spirit of this vision, Israel must protect minority rights and listen to those who stand with the

poor and the powerless... Ultimately Zion will only be redeemed through justice, and those who return to her through acts of righteousness (Isaiah 1:27)."

I was honored to stand last month with American and Israeli Rabbis who contributed in this way both to the physical security of Israel through pursuing justice and acts of righteousness, as well as to the moral survival of a call and blessing to humanity which originated in an area the world now calls Iraq, but has the potential to flourish, with God's help, in the land of Israel.

There are many similar ways to support Israeli security and spiritual welfare by visiting Israel and helping with this work, as well as through supporting organizations that promote it on a day to day basis. One convenient vehicle for this support, Amcha for

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Rabbi Serotta with Rabbi Shaul Feinberg of HUC-JIR



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Tzedakah, was initiated by our Rabbi Emeritus Bruce Kahn. I have other ideas for targeted philanthropy for those who are interested. I am always ready and available to speak with any congregants who want to deepen their relationship to Israel in this or any way and look forward to hearing from many of you, as well as studying together with you in the framework of our Israel 101 Adult Education series this year at the Temple.

Nizkeh L'mitzvot—May we merit many opportunities to do mitzvot like these in our world.

Rabbi Gerry Serotta



L'chaim— One New Jewish

We did so many new Jewish things, from classes where we studied for b'nai mitzvah, or Hebrew, or history, or Torah. We performed deeds of loving kindness, like bringing Nursing Home residents to Shabbat Services. We invented new Jewish Traditions such as having friends over for the last night of Chanukah.

And now, we are going to celebrate together at Shabbat Services.

At Erev Shabbat services on January 13th, everyone who tried one new Jewish Thing will be called forward for a group blessing. That Shabbat, we complete the reading of Genesis, and go on to Exodus. And while we have completed One New Jewish Thing, there is always the opportunity to go on to many.

Please come that evening for a special blessing if you have participated in the L'Chaim, One New Jewish Thing, initiative started by President Marilyn Ripin.

Remember, Erev Shabbat Services, Friday, January 13 at 8 PM.

Mitzvot at the End of Life watch This Space

We are pleased to announce that a significant number of Temple Shalom members gathered in early November to begin the process of creating a new and powerful opportunity for ourselves to be involved in the Jewish practices of attending to our deceased congregants and their families. Building on the long and dedicated service of our Mitzvah Committee, so ably led by Wilma Braun, which aids families after the funeral with memorial services (shiva) in their homes and in other ways, we plan to establish, God-willing, a Temple Shalom Chevra Kaddisha.

A Chevra Kadisha (the Aramaic term for Holy Fellowship) involves some of the most venerated and historic Jewish customs and voluntary obligations. Members of the Chevra Kaddisha will learn the traditional customs associated with accompanying the

person's body after death (shmirah), including the gentle rituals associating with washing and preparing the body (toharah) and we hope to have sufficient numbers to offer ourselves to our fellow congregants who request those rituals. A few of our members who have already performed these mitzvot have shared with us that this is a truly sacred, powerful, and holy experience.

For the time being in case you have been unaware of the current arrangements, the Jewish Funeral Practices Committee of Greater Washington has negotiated a contract through a bidding process open to all funeral establishments in the area, with Hines-Rinaldi Funeral Home. The contract guarantees that any and all the traditional and basic customs of a dignified Jewish funeral and burial will be provided for a pre-established reasonable fee.

If, God forbid, there is a death in your family our request is that you please contact the Temple office in order to be in touch with one of our Rabbis before scheduling any funeral or burial arrangements.

We will be providing monthly reports in the Shofar about our activities so please watch this space. If you are interested in being on our mailing list please contact Rabbi Serotta. We will have another organizing meeting some time in the next few months and we hope to organize as well an adult education series on Jewish mourning practices and beliefs.

We plan to make a site visit at the Hines-Rinaldi facility on Sunday, January 8 at 2PM in order to get a sense and a feel for what may be involved in some of the mitzvot we hope to learn to perform. Call Rabbi Serotta for details.

The Foundation for Jewish Studies

2 Great Courses, 2 Great Teachers!

Shaping Judaism: The Jews of Eretz-Israel under Christian and Muslim Rule, 300-800 C.E., with University of Maryland's Dr. Kenneth G. Holum. (7:00-8:15 PM)

Sharing Narratives: How Israelis and Palestinians Understand Their Own and the Other's Histories, with Paul Scham, Middle East Institute and co-author of new book, Shared Narratives. (8:30-9:45 PM)

**Each course runs 10 sessions at Temple Shalom
Wednesday evenings, Jan. 25-Mar. 29, 2006
\$180 per course / \$150 for TS members registering before Jan. 9**

**For more info:
www.foundationjewishstudies.org or call 202-250-5019
Open Academy for Jewish Studies Rabbi Gilah Langner, Director**

INSTITUTE FOR LIFE LONG LEARNING AT TEMPLE SHALOM

January Offerings

Pirkei Avot: The Most Studied Rabbinic Text of All Time

The Mishnah's Pirkei Avot is usually translated as "Sayings of the Fathers" or "Ethics of the Fathers." Traditionally, each week we are supposed to study one of the six chapters of Pirkei Avot. Every prayer book contains all or much of the Pirkei Avot text. What is so compelling about this text? Come and find out!

Required text: Pirkei Avot (edited by Kravitz and Olitzky, UAHC Press). Copies will be available for purchase for \$14.95 on the first night.

Tuesday evenings, 7:30 to 9:00 PM

January 10, 17, and 24, 2006

\$40 for members

\$50 for non-members

Taught by Rabbi Bruce E. Kahn

Letting God In: Exploring Jewish Practices for Spiritual Deepening

Many of us seek to find a way to bring God more closely into our lives. We ask: "Where is God for me? Where do I find my deepest sense of spiritual connection?" This workshop will introduce participants to a variety of Jewish practices that deepen our capacity to experience what Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel has called "the holy dimension of living." Participants will have the opportunity to practice approaches that encourage an interior look at how we experience the Divine Presence in our lives.

Sunday, January 15, 2006, 1:00 to 6:00 PM

Taught by Rabbi Leila Gal Berner, Ph.D. and Ann Klein

The Foundation for Jewish Studies:
Lunch and Learn Series

Visions of the End of the World: The Development of Apocalyptic and

Eschatological Thought In Late Prophetic and Early Post-Biblical Writings

Millions of Americans today make instant best-sellers of Christian religious works dealing with The End Days, the "Rapture," the Millennium, and other ideas which imply an imminent end of history as we know it, and describe a cataclysmic transition to a new era. The concepts feel completely foreign to many Jews, and, indeed, there is much that is new and, arguably, potentially dangerous, in many of these ideas. But general speculation about the end of time and the culmination of history is not something in the sole possession of our Christian neighbors. Indeed, apocalyptic and eschatological literature (literature dealing with the end of the world as we know it) began with Jewish writers, in a particular period of late Biblical and early post-Biblical history. In these four weeks we will explore the origins of this ancient Jewish literature and the historical context in which it emerged, from some of the visions of Isaiah, Ezekiel, Second Isaiah and Zechariah, to the Book of Daniel, to Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphic works (the so-called "Inter-Testamental Literature") such as I Enoch, 2 Baruch and 4 Ezra. In examining some of these writings, we might even be able to see hints which lay the groundwork for—and begin to illustrate the earliest divergences of—the world-views of what would later become both Rabbinic Judaism and a nascent Christianity.

All terms used will be fully defined. No prior background studying this period of history is required. Register online through the Foundation for Jewish Studies at www.foundationjewishstudies.org

Thursdays, January 5, 12, 19, 26

\$25 per series

Taught by Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach

At the 6th & I Historic Synagogue

600 I Street, NW

(Chinatown metro stop on the Red Line)

Talmud

Ever been curious about how Judaism developed after the Bible? Who are "the rabbis"

people always cite? The course will give you a feeling for the content of the Talmud – law, history, stories, theology and arguments. No knowledge of Hebrew or background in Talmud needed.

Sunday mornings, 9 to 10:30 AM

Classes continues on January 8, 15, 29, 2006

No charge

Taught by Rabbi Michael L. Feshbach and Rabbi Gerry Serotta

Book Discussions

If you enjoy reading, consider participating in Temple Shalom's book discussions. Come to one or come to all, but do come; all are welcome to participate.

Jan 15, 2006 "Apples from the Desert: Selected Stories" by various authors

Sunday during Early Session, 9 to 10:30 AM

No charge

For further information, contact Heidi Coleman at 301-588-1173.

Israel 101: People and Politics, Land and Culture Parties and Politics: How the Israeli Political System Works

"Newly relevant given all that is happening on the Israeli political scene today."

It is often impossible to understand what is going on in Israel without knowing something about its complicated political system. Israel is a multi-party, nationally based, unicameral Parliamentary democracy. And no single party has ever "won" an Israeli election outright. An explanation of the Israeli political system, the current political alignments and their antecedents, and an exploration of prospects for the future.

Taught by Rabbi Michael Feshbach

Tuesdays, January 3, 10 and 17 from 7:30 to 9:00 PM

\$40 per 3-week session for members

INSTITUTE FOR LIFE LONG LEARNING AT TEMPLE SHALOM

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\$50 per 3-week session for nonmembers

Shaping Judaism: The Jews of Eretz-Israel under Christian and Muslim Rule

Open Academy Course co-sponsored by the Foundation for Jewish Studies and Temple Shalom

Seth Schwartz has argued that traditional Judaism took shape in the Roman provincial society of Eretz Israel under Christian influence. This course will examine this hypothesis and extend it through the Muslim conquest by using Rabbinic literature and the rich archaeological evidence for Jewish religion, art, and communal life discovered in the last century.

Register online through the Foundation for Jewish Studies at www.foundationjewishstudies.org

Wednesday evenings, 7:00 to 8:15 PM

January 25 to March 29, 2006

\$125 for members

\$135 for non-members

Taught by FJS instructor Dr. Kenneth G.Holum

Sharing Narratives: How Israelis and Palestinians Understand Their Own and the Other's Histories

Open Academy Course co-sponsored by the Foundation for Jewish Studies and Temple Shalom

This course is based on the book "Shared Histories: A Palestinian-Israeli Dialogue", edited by the instructor, Walid Salem and Benjamin Pogrund. The course will cover the Israeli/Palestinian conflict, examining perspectives on both sides and the often-contradictory historical perceptions which affect negotiations and approaches to peacemaking. Students should gain a knowledge of the historical events of the conflict, an understanding of how the two sides view them, and an appreciation for the impacts of these divergent understandings on the peace process.

Required texts: *Shared Histories: A Palestinian-Israeli Dialogue*, *A History of the Israel-Palestinian Conflict* by Marc Tessler (or a

similar history of the conflict)

Register online through the Foundation for Jewish Studies at www.foundationjewishstudies.org

Wednesday evenings, 7:00 to 8:15 PM

January 25 to March 29, 2006

\$125 for members

\$135 for non-members

Taught by FJS instructor Paul Scham

Introduction to Conversational Hebrew

Planning a trip to Israel? This course is designed for you. Learn how to read the signs for bathroom and exit and sale. Know how to thank the clerk or waiter for that extra service or ask for what is missing. If you're a true beginner or want brush up on your skills, join us as we prepare for our trip to Israel.

Tuesdays evenings, 6:45 to 7:30 PM

January 3 through May 18, 2006 (no class

April 11 and 18)

\$180 members

\$220 non-members

Taught by Rachel Robinson

Torah Reading for ALL

Requirements: Basic Hebrew readings skills necessary. A minimum number of 5 individuals is required for this class to occur. At Temple Shalom, we encourage adults to experience the exhilarating feeling

of studying and chanting Torah for the first time in their lives. If you have not yet had that transforming experience, please consider trying your hand at reading Torah. You will have the opportunity to struggle with a text that can speak right to your heart, to capture its sacred meaning, and to help others relive those passages that have been in the heart and souls of our Jewish nation for thousands of years.

Monday evenings, 7:30 to 9:00 PM

January 2 through 23 (4 sessions)

Taught by Cantor Ramón Tasat

The Most Incredible Summer of Your Life!



FOR TEENS!

Log on to www.nftyisrael.org for more information or to register online!

2 Program Options

- **5 Exciting Weeks**

Beautiful Prague and "Exodus" Voyage to Israel by Cruise Ship (1st week)
4 Amazing Weeks in Israel

or

- **4 Amazing Weeks in Israel**

Magnificent Sights of Ancient and Modern Israel
Jewish Pride and Self Esteem
Superior Programs Designed Especially For Reform Jewish Youth
Great Fun and Friendship
Safety and Security our first priority



UNION FOR REFORM JUDAISM

האיחוד ליהדות רפורמית
SERVING REFORM CONGREGATIONS IN NORTH AMERICA

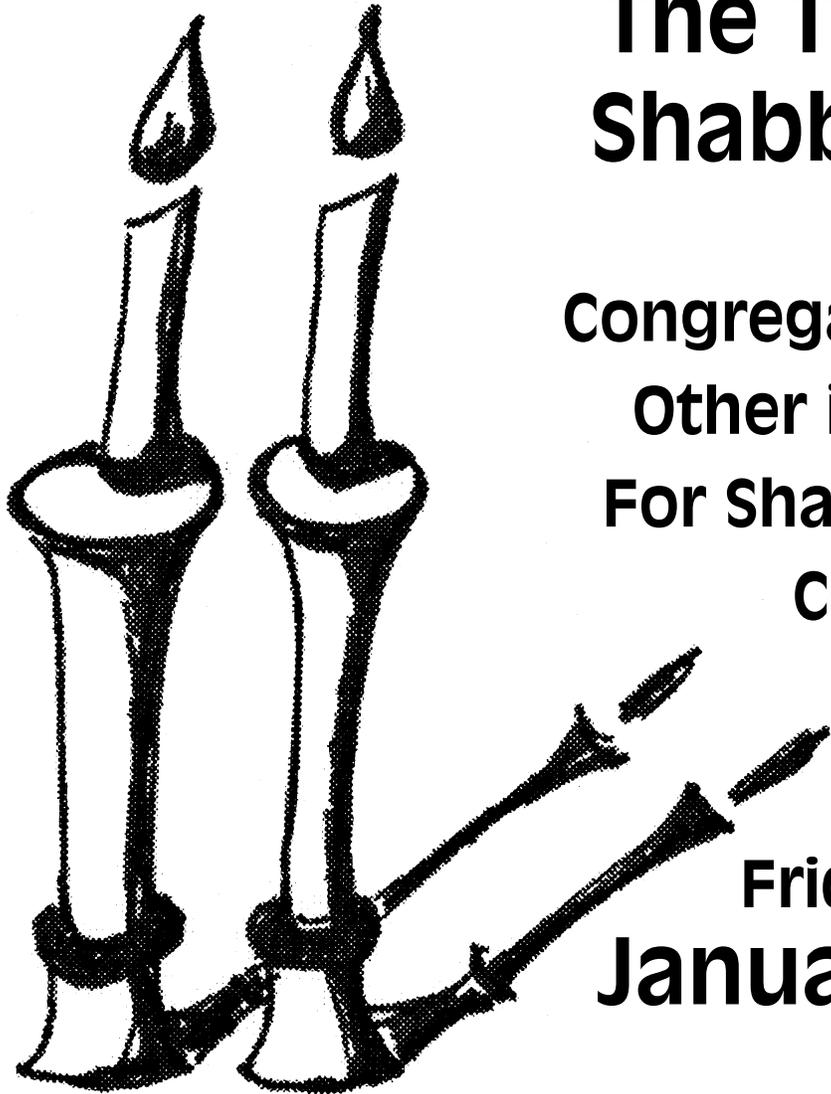
845.987.6300 Ext 6351

Email: nftytravel@urj.org

A Temple Tradition Returns

The Third Annual Shabbat at Home

**Congregants Inviting Each
Other into Our Homes
For Shabbat Dinner and
Celebration**



**Friday Evening
January 27, 2006***

Please fill out and return the forms sent to your home with the invitation or in the flyers in mid-December. If you have misplaced the form, contact Debbie Kopp at the Temple (301) 587-2273, as soon as possible.

*There will be no service at the Temple on that Friday night but there will be a special congregational Shabbat morning service at 10AM on January 28 when Yahrzeit names will be included. Please inform the office if you wish to have the name of a loved one included either the previous or the following

Lisa Tillman

author of
BLOOD RELATIONS

The author will be here
speaking about her book
and her writing experience.

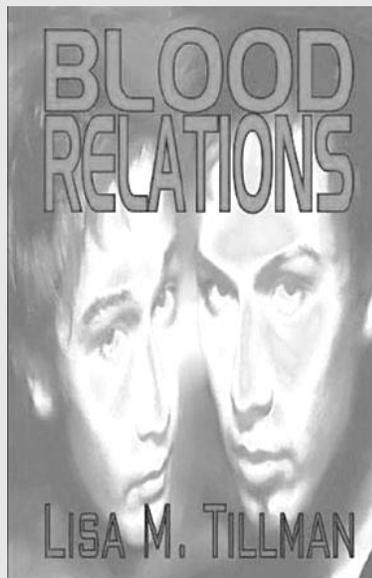
Sponsored by the
Temple Sisterhood

Sunday
January 29, 2006

6:30PM

No Charge

Books sold in the
Temple Gift Shop



All are Welcome

IN THE COMMUNITY

Temple Shalom Book Discussions in the Coming Year By Heidi Coleman

Sunday, January 15

(Martin Luther King weekend)

“*Apples from the Desert: Selected Stories (The Helen Rose Scheuer Jewish Women’s Series)*” by Savyon Liebrecht, Marganit Weinberger-Rotman (Translator), Makhon Le-Tirgum Sifrut Ivrit (Israel), Jeffrey M. Green (Translator), Barbara Harshav (Translator), Gilead Morahg (Translator), Riva Rubin (Translator)—collection of 12 short stories published in Israel between 1986 and 1992. It accentuates (mostly from the female point of view) the human side and nuances of the many people who live in Israeli—religious, secular, Ashkenazi Sephardic, Arab and Jew.

Sunday, March 26

“**Who Wrote the Bible**” by Richard Friedman—considered perhaps the best written popular book about the question of who wrote, edited and compiled the Five Books of Moses. Based on a careful review of the clues available in the text and biblical archaeology, the book turns a potentially dry scholarly inquiry into a lively detective story. (Rabbi Feshbach will participate in the discussion.)

Sunday, May 21

(last day of Sunday school)

Discussion of which books to select for next year.

9–10:30 AM at Temple Shalom.

Bagels and coffee.

No fee to participate.

All welcome.

For information,

call Heidi Coleman at

301-588-1173.

Renaissance Group

On Sunday morning, November 20th, 35 members of Temple Shalom's Renaissance Group enjoyed a docent-led tour of the National Archives. Alan Lewis, Renaissance Group Steering Committee member, arranged this event for us, and by all accounts, it was a huge success. Many of the participants intend to return for a more in-depth visit. After the tour, we had lunch at the café in the National Gallery of Art.

We are currently busy planning activities for the spring and will announce events shortly. In the meantime, we would like to urge you to support two Temple-wide events this winter, including the Tu BiShevat Seder on February 12th, and the performance of Golda's Balcony at the Warner Theatre on March 5th.

For further information about the Renaissance Group, contact Francine Simons at

francine311@comcast.net, 301-838-9530. Also, please let her know if you wish to be added to the Renaissance Group's email list. If you already have asked to be on this list but have changed your email address in the last six months, please forward your new address to her.

The Temple Shalom Renaissance Group is for Temple members over 50 who want to join other members in a variety of social activities.

Golda's Balcony Starring Valerie Harper At the Warner Theatre Matinee on:

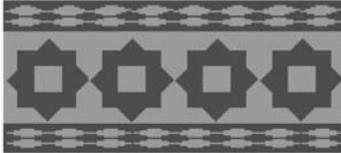
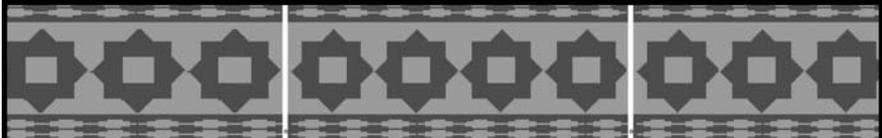
**Sunday
March 5, 2006**

\$45, \$68, & \$75 Prime Seats in Each Section

For Information Call Helen Crystal at 301-649-4048

Name _____ Phone number _____

Amount enclosed _____ (Please make checks payable to Temple Shalom. Send to Temple Shalom 8401 Grubb Rd. Chevy Chase, MD 20815 ATTN: Bookkeeper/Golda's Balcony)



BROTHERHOOD PRESENTS

“HAL BRUNO”

Subject:

**Who Might Win? Who Might Lose?
What is Our Government Doing for the Future?**

**Join Us for Brunch
Sunday, January 15, 2006**

10 AM

\$3 PER PERSON

CALL FOR RESERVATIONS:

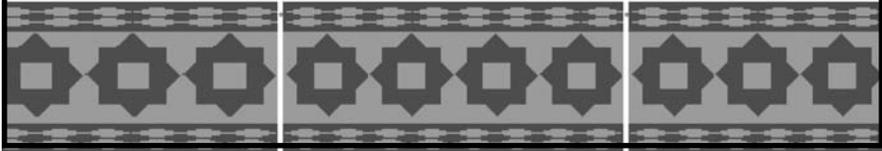
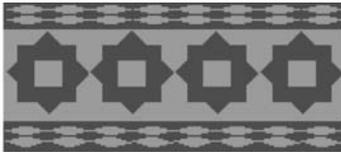
301-587-2273, Temple Office

301-585-1127, Bernie Blumenthal

301-588-6577, Myles Levin

301-598-2883, Irv Malamut

**Please note that
Entertainment Books are still available.**





Temple Shalom

<i>Rabbis:</i>	Michael L. Feshbach Gerald Serotta
<i>Rabbi Emeritus:</i>	Bruce E. Kahn
<i>Cantor:</i>	Ramón Tasat
<i>Cantor Emeritus:</i>	Saul Rogolsky
<i>Executive Director:</i>	Susan Goutos Zemsky
<i>Director of Education:</i>	JoHanna Potts
<i>President:</i>	Marilyn Ripin

SHOFAR DEADLINE for the February Issue is January 10

Submission should be on a computer disk, preferably in a Microsoft Word (.doc) format or a text (.txt). Please use no left or right justification, no hard returns, underlines, etc. Also please attach a separate hard copy of instructions as to where you wish centering, bolding etc. to appear. Email submissions will be gladly accepted, send to:

execdir@templeshalom.net.

A HARD COPY MUST BE SUBMITTED ALONG WITH ALL SUBMISSIONS.



SAVE THE DATE

L'CHAIM : ONE NEW JEWISH THING

Friday

January 13, 2006

8:00 PM

At Erev Shabbat Services

All who have participated in the L'Chaim, One New Jewish Thing initiative will be called for a group blessing. Let's celebrate the growth of our Jewish commitment—and pledge to go on to more.



FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL Snow Policy Reminder

Religious School follows MCPS during the week, in the event of inclement weather. Thus if schools are closed, we are closed. If county schools close early, we are closed. On Sundays, please check the WTOP website after 7:30 AM for closing information. www.wtop.com

Temple Shalom
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Chevy Chase, MD 20815
301-587-2273 • FAX 301-588-9368
www.templeshalom.net