

TEMPLE ISRAEL BULLETIN

This is the reminder/bulletin email for August. The regular bulletin schedule will be followed from here forward: a September Bulletin will be sent by postal mail; anyone with an article to be included in the next bulletin (September) should submit it to Greg in the office by August 15th.

MESSAGE FROM THE RABBI

Shalom & greetings!

Baruch Hashem! Though there have been some illnesses and medical issues in our community, I have not heard of any more Covid-19 related issues. May that continue to be so! Please continue to be safe and stay healthy.

Calendar Note

I write this on Tisha B'Av, the 9th day of the month of Av on the Hebrew calendar. It is considered the saddest day in the year because it is the anniversary of the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, not once, but twice (586 B.C.E. by the Babylonians, and 70 C.E. by the Romans). On this evening the custom is to read the book of Lamentations (Eicha), which describes how devastating the loss of the Temple was, and how bereft it made the people feel. It is an admixture of gorgeous poetic language with horrific images, all presented in a hauntingly sad and beautiful musical chant. I claim no expertise, but cannot think of any other work of literature or art that is quite like it. Each year when I listen to this book being chanted I feel that it is in some way speaking directly to my soul, bypassing my head and heart and ears and mind. The closest things to this that I can think of are the Kol Nidre music at Yom Kippur, and the opening to Rhapsody in Blue, with that searing glissando that opens your heart. The sadness and the yearning that are encapsulated and conveyed by this book take the listeners to the depths of despair, and then raises them up, concluding with a verse of hope and conviction that despite the dire and terrible state of things, the world still contains good, and the possibility exists that we will come to see it realized. The book concludes, "Hashivenu Adonai Eilecha,

venashuv, chadash yamenu kekedem.” ‘Turn us unto you, O Lord, and we shall be (re)turned; renew our days as of old’ which is the phrase we recite as we conclude the reading of Torah and prepare to close the Ark.

This book speaks to me more this year than most. Our world seems dark; so many terrible things clamor for our attention. Our places of refuge, sanctuary, and peace are denied us as we cannot hold worship services together. Even the comfort of contact with others is withheld, without hugs, holding hands, and offering support to one another. Our temple and community is no longer all around us when we enter our sanctuary for sacred times.

But as in the Book of Lamentations, all is not lost. As bad as it may seem, as dark as it appears, there is still hope. We need to look harder to find the blessings, but they are there for us. Let me mention a few.

First, Baruch Hashem, only a few of us have been directly impacted by this pandemic; and we should be grateful because it could so easily have been (or still become) far worse. May we be allowed to escape the worst of it.

Looking ahead, the period leading up to the Days of Awe (Yamim Nora'im) begins on August 20th with Rosh Chodesh Elul, and the High Holy Days begin on the evening of September 18th. The holy days are approaching.

Status

We have done pretty well at adapting to the current situation, with meetings online and services presented live over Zoom. Let me say again, it is a testament to the vitality and vibrancy of our congregation and community that you have rolled with the punches and kept on going. Kol Hakavod to all of you for adapting and coping with all the changes, challenges, and impositions that have come our way, and thank you for your tolerance and forbearance as we experiment, try out new ways to do things, and make some mistakes along the way to figuring it out. I have to admit that it has been a challenge; I only hope that we (read here I) have been improving and getting closer to being able to provide what you need. We will work to continue to refine the process, making it better each week – until we can once again hold services in person. Meantime, seeing you on the screen and hearing your voices is so wonderful.

Services

I have already told you how much I look forward to seeing you all at the services. For the time being, we are able to do that by using Zoom for our Shabbat services, and allowing congregants to enter the meeting room for the service starting at ~5 pm on Friday, enabling everyone to talk via zoom with each other. This ‘social time’ before (and potentially after) the service is beautiful. We can hear and see each other (or at least the little square images of you that Zoom provides), and that means so much! I feel that we are able to gather and connect in this way, much as we did before and after our Shabbat services in past. It is a balm for my soul, and I hope for yours as well. I hope many of you will join us for our live services. Of course, if the time is not convenient, you can view the recorded version at your convenience sometime after the service concludes and the file is uploaded.

I am sure we have all been enjoying the music provided by David Stern and Bob Morris, and appreciate the technical support and expertise of Rich Katz in getting us online. We will be training additional congregants to operate the equipment in anticipation of those times that Rich is unavailable. Please wish whoever takes this on well, and understand that they are volunteers taking on a very complex task, so please overlook any glitches that may occur. The first volunteer for this will be filling in for Rich on July 31st, so don't be too surprised if there are some things that look a bit different.

Bulletin

Returning to the purpose of this mailing: the rest of this message covers planned events and activities of Temple Israel in the next few weeks, for the month of August 2020, including current/updated Temple news, information, and a bit of what is going on to help keep us connected and informed. We want to serve you in as many ways and as well as it is possible. We will return to our usual Bulletin on the standard schedule with the September edition (items to be included are due to Greg by August 15th).

Please be in touch with me (the rabbi), the office (Greg), or members of the board if you have any needs, suggestions, concerns, or questions.

COVID-19 CONCERNS

Still no changes. The short story: the situation is unchanged from last month. 😞 Please stay safe.

If you are having any difficulties getting groceries or medicine, are running into difficulties, feel a need to talk to someone, or have a pastoral concern, please feel free to call me (the rabbi) at 304-989-4014, or email at rabbijoe@gmail.com. I am in the building for at least part of most days, and can always find time to talk to you. At this time, though I would love to see you, in light of the Covid-19 case load numbers increasing, I am erring on the side of caution and avoiding in-person meetings.

Shalom,

Joe
Rabbi Joe Blair

Please note: the access information/LINKS for events are sent in a separate weekly email, generally on Sunday. Please consult that message to connect. This is a list of the events scheduled.

TEMPLE EVENTS

Thursday, July 30th, A Bissell Torah, 3 pm, Lamentations – the book of Eicha, which is read on Tisha B'Av. Repeats weekly.

Friday, July 31st, 3:30-4:00 PM, Mocktails, Cocktails, & Prayers. An informal gathering to wind down the week, in preparation for Shabbat. This format seems to have outlived its usefulness; with the live gathering before the Shabbat service, the need is no longer felt, so this will be the last session of Mocktails.

Friday, July 31st, Virtual Friday Shabbat service. Because Rich Katz will be away, we may have to modify what we have done for the last few weeks. We will try to retain the Live format in any case. Watch for the links email to connect. 5 pm social gathering, 5:30 pm service. Repeats weekly.

Sunday, August 2nd, Yiddish/Hebrew Literature in Translation: Short Stories. A chance to read a classic or contemporary work of Jewish writing, gather, and have a free-ranging conversation about it., 2 pm. Repeats every two weeks through August. Stories for this session: *If Not Higher* and *The Wonders of America*.

Sunday, August 2nd, Charleston Death Café, 7:30 pm. Repeats monthly.

Monday, August 3rd, Temple Israel Zoom Check In Meeting, 10 am. Repeats weekly.

Wednesday, August 5th, Temple Israel Conference Call Check in Meeting, 10:30 am. Repeats weekly.

Thursday, August 6th, A Bissell Torah, 3 pm, Ruth (Chapter 4, Cont'd.) Repeats weekly.

Friday, August 7th, LIVE Virtual Friday Shabbat service. 5 pm social gathering, 5:30 pm service. Repeats Weekly.

Saturday, August 8th, Torah Study, 10:30 am. Parashah Eikev, Deut. 7:12-11:25. Repeats monthly.

Monday, August 10th, Temple Israel Zoom Check In Meeting, 10 am.

Tuesday, August 11th, Temple Board Meeting, 5:30 pm.

Wednesday, August 12th, Temple Israel Conference Call Check in Meeting, 10:30 am.

Thursday, August 13th, A Bissell Torah, 3 pm. Topic TBA

Friday, August 14th, Live Virtual Friday Shabbat service. 5 pm social gathering, 5:30 pm service.

Sunday, August 16th, Yiddish/Hebrew Literature in Translation: Short Stories. A chance to read a classic or contemporary work of Jewish writing, gather, and have a free-ranging conversation about it., 2 pm. Stories TBA.

Monday, August 17th, Temple Israel Zoom Check In Meeting, 10 am.

Tuesday, August 18th, Temple Israel Annual Congregational Meeting, via Zoom, 5 pm.

Wednesday, August 19th, Temple Israel Conference Call Check in Meeting, 10:30 am.

Wednesday, August 19th, Leora May Book Group, 7 pm. Repeats Monthly.

Thursday, August 20th, A Bissell Torah, 3 pm.

Friday, August 21st, Live Virtual Friday Shabbat service. 5 pm social gathering, 5:30 pm service.

Monday, August 24th, Temple Israel Zoom Check In Meeting, 10 am.

Wednesday, August 26th, Temple Israel Conference Call Check in Meeting, 10:30 am.

Thursday, August 27th, A Bissell Torah, 3 pm. Topic TBA.

Friday, August 28th, Live Virtual Friday Shabbat service. 5 pm social gathering, 5:30 pm service.

Sunday, August 30th, Yiddish/Hebrew Literature in Translation: Short Stories. A chance to read a classic or contemporary work of Jewish writing, gather, and have a free-ranging conversation about it, 2 pm. Stories TBA.

Monday, August 31st, Temple Israel Zoom Check In Meeting, 10 am.

Wednesday, September 2nd, Temple Israel Conference Call Check in Meeting, 10:30 am.

Thursday, September 3rd, A Bissell Torah, 3 pm. Topic TBA.

Friday, September 4th, Live Virtual Friday Shabbat service. 5 pm social gathering, 5:30 pm service.

Saturday, September 5th, Torah Study, 10:30 am. Parashah Ki Tavo, Deut. 26:1-29:8.

Sunday, September 6th, Charleston Death Café, 7:30 pm.

TZEDAKAH (CHARITY)

Please be generous – needs continue to run especially high in light of the Corona Virus Pandemic effects. Note the many Tzedakah opportunities: Manna Meal, Covenant House, Sojourner/YWCA, RCCR, Mazon, and all the other worthy causes in our community and beyond.

OTHER NOTICES

The annual Congregational meeting will take place on TUESDAY, August 18th. Please watch for information about it and plan to attend via Zoom or Telephone. You must attend to have your vote counted.

West Virginia CARES is seeking to learn more about families living with dementia in West Virginia and how congregations can help. Please help them to learn more about what they can do to help by taking a one page survey. Click this link:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdu_LK6tQsVSaco3708suy-7sBBFPpUZj_vR1I91FptrDmU-g/viewform

Thank you very much!

EXIT OPTIONS is asking for your opinions.

What ways out would you like to have available for yourself if you were slowly dying of an incurable disease, in severe pain, throwing up everything that you swallowed? What would you want available for your loved ones if they were in that predicament? Would you want the physician to prolong the agony as long as possible? Would you use Hospice? Would you want to take an oral drug or an IV drug to end it all painlessly and quickly? Would you want to use a gun?

Only three of these five options are available in West Virginia and the majority of US states. Participate in a free anonymous multiple-choice poll available on the internet to make your own wishes known to policy makers. In the poll, there are four items describing hypothetical scenarios with variations on those described above, and another seven items to gather demographic information such as your religion, how devout you are, your approximate age, and the two-letter postal abbreviation for your state of residence, etc.

The website and poll are sponsored by Exit Options, Inc., a non-profit advocacy organization whose website is hosting that poll on the internet. Just copy and paste <https://www.exitoptions.org/> into your web browser and select 'Poll' from the menu bar. The website also has a trove of information about the options already available to you. The website also provides answers about what services hospice organizations can provide and whether you can travel to another state to take advantage of that state's "death with dignity" laws.

IN THE CONGREGATION

[This includes only those who have approved having their name included.]

Refuah Shelemah/Mi Sheberach (Healing & Wholeness/Blessings) to those who have been included in recent Mi Sheberach lists at services, and wishes for continued good health for those who are on the mend or have returned to full health:

Lois Coleman
Don Deutsch
Jonathan Freedman
Matty Herzbach
Margie Hutt
Rabbi Israel Koller
Peggy Koller
Gary Markham
Bob Steinberg
Rabbi Victor Urecki

Mazal Tov (Congratulations):

[Please tell us about these events so we can acknowledge them as appropriate.]

To those who reached or will reach milestones in the past month or this one, and to all who had any birthday or anniversary or other life event worth celebrating! Among those we know who are/were to be acknowledged we include:

July: Paul Ostand, Tom Susman, Lee Forb, Terrie and Bill Rosenfeld, Liz Weisberg (Milestone), Louis Weisberg, Dona Hall
August: Mary Rich Maloy (Milestone), Allan Tweddle, Sarah Gottlieb, Victor Bastron, Judy Lundy
September: Ladonna Kushner, Josh Barrett, Bill Rosenfeld, Lynne Gattleib, Gayle Twigger-Shaw

If you have a milestone event of any kind, or any birthday, anniversary, or life event that is worthy of celebration, please let us acknowledge and celebrate it with you! Please tell the Rabbi about it.

Baruch Dayan Haemet (Condolences)

Temple Israel sends condolences to the family of Rick Burka who died recently. Rick was the son of Bernard A. "Bud" Burka, and may have been known to some current Temple members. May the mourners be comforted from heaven.

Yahrzeit List (by Week Read)

July 31st (Falling in August)
Florette Angel (Aug. 3)
Beatrice Kleeman (Aug. 3)
Ben Swarts (Aug. 3)
Carol Behr (Aug. 4)
Ike Rosenberg (Aug. 4)
Sarah Rosenfeld Zakin (Aug. 4)
Jack Tweddle (Aug. 5)

Dan Barrack (Aug. 6)
Meta Bornheim (Aug. 6)
Bee Gattlieb (Aug. 6)
David Gottlieb (Aug. 7)
Charles M. Rotgin Sr. (Aug. 7)
Henry Steinberg (Aug. 7)

August 7th

Estelle Gussie Hager (8)
Fran Leslie Jurin (8)
Stan Weinberg (8)
Esther Basman (10)
Lillian Caroline Isis (10)
Charles Forman (11)
Grover Cleveland Kaufman (11)
Elizabeth Pierce Randall (11)
Philip Jordan Silverstein (12)
Eddie Warner Casto (13)
Jay Margolis Jr. (13)
Bernard Bloom (14)
Kay Polan (14)

August 14th

Rose Bloom (15)
Milton Wyner (15)
Marty Glasser (16)
Saul Ostand (16)
Evelyn Broh Polan (16)
Ben Baer (17)
Bernise Weiner Saval (18)
Samuel Sloman (18)
Phyllis Irene Skeens (20)
Gideon Feibelman (21)
Selwyn Robert Jurin (21)
Helen Warhoftig (21)

August 21st

Ruth Mendelsohn Brown (22)
Henry L. Kohn (22)
Lawrence C. Kaufman Sr. (23)

Pauline Rubio (23)
Marcus Smith (23)
Austin Moore (24)
Ida Eckmann (25)
Lenard Kushner (25)
Thelma Levine (25)
Jane P. Silverstein (25)
Marvyn Cohen (26)
Harriet Opper (26)
Harry Pollack (26)
Isaac J. Hofmayer (27)
Maurice Plotkin (27)
Norma Webster (27)
Rabbi James D. Cohn (28)
Peggy F. Greenspon (28)
Clara Spiegler (28)

August 28th (Falling in September)
Gertrude Artz (Sept. 1)
Joseph Bloom (Sept. 1)
Louis Rotgin (Sept. 1)
Nettie Weinstein Goldman (Sept. 2)
Robert Sidney Aaron (Sept. 3)
Beatrice Cohen Binderman (Sept. 3)
Deidre Eisinger (Sept. 3)
Mina G. Greenspon (Sept. 3)