

From the Rabbi's Desk

[For a complete schedule of Temple events and religious services, please see "February at a Glance." Please note: the access information/LINKS for events and religious services are sent in a separate weekly email. Please consult that message to connect.]

Shalom and greetings!

Calendar Notes

Hard to believe that January is half over, and it is already time to write this article for the February bulletin – and what a month January proved to be.

I won't write or repeat what I have said before (too much has already been stated, and you already know about it), but I truly hope that despite recent events that were both historic and deeply dis-

turbing, you have been able to take some comfort and see hope in the resiliency and strength of our system and institutions of government, the ideals of our nation, the inherent goodness of the American people, and the principles and values of our own Jewish faith. Though there is far to go, and we have much work to do towards unification, reconciliation, and healing in our country, it is both necessary that we

Masthead photos

Megillat Esther with Torah pointer. By Chefallen - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/ index.php?curid=18256391

Bakery of Shalom Kosher, a kosher Jewish grocery store in Kemp Mill, Montgomery County, Maryland. By Bohemian Baltimore - Own work, CC BY-SA 4.0, <u>https://</u> <u>commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=66056302</u> undertake this effort and strive towards this worthwhile and important goal, and (I have faith) possible to achieve it, though it will take time and effort.

I mentioned last month that January 28th (starting the evening of the 27th) is Tu

Purim is Feb. 26 (starting the evening of the 25th). We will be joining to celebrate the Purim service at B'nai Jacob on Thursday, Feb. 25, and will also acknowledge this holiday in our Shabbat service on Feb. 26.

Reminders

At press time, the Two Charleston Rabbis were scheduled to hold a conversation on Jan. 27 at 6:30 PM, titled "Roots In Heaven: Torah – Our Sacred Tree." The next session after that will be March 4.

There is a Torah Study on Feb. 6 (Parashah Yitro), then on March 6 (Parashah Ki Tisa).

The Jewish Literature class will meet Feb.7 and 28, and then March 14. There will be a pause over Passover.

The Temple Israel Board will meet on Feb. 9, then next on March 9.

The Sisterhood Board will meet on Feb. 14, and again on March 14.

The Leora May Book group will meet on Feb. 17 and March 17. Contact Amy Shapiro for more information.

Charleston Death Café will meet on Feb. 21.

The Social Action Committee meets Feb. 22 and March 29. Contact Rachel Dash or Cookie Glasser for information.

Status

Covid-19 Concerns — As I write this, appointments for vaccinations are available to those over 65 years of age at vari-

(Continued on page 4)



Temple cemetery tidied and ready for winter

B'Shevat, the new year for trees. I hope we will be able to enjoy a Tu B'Shevat seder together in-person next year. As the trees begin to awaken, and the sap to flow, may that be the harbinger of an upwelling of kindness and respect for all, one for another.

Feb. 13 is Shabbat Shekalim which falls on or before Rosh Chodesh Adar.

Rosh Chodesh, the new month of Adar is Feb. 12-13. Feb. 20 is Shabbat Zachor, which precedes Purim.

Feb. 25 is Ta'anit Ester, the fast of Esther, leading into Purim.

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February worship services

Rabbi Blair sends out emails regularly to keep the congregation up to date. Zoom links to online events are emailed to those on the Temple's mailing lists. Shabbat services are scheduled every Friday at 5:30 PM. All religious services are via Zoom unless otherwise noted.

Friday, Feb. 5 at 5:30 PMLIVE Virtual Shabbat service "Refugee Shabbat"Saturday, Feb. 6 at 10:30 AMTorah study—Parashah YitroFriday, Feb. 12 at 5:30 PMLIVE Virtual Shabbat serviceFriday, Feb. 19 at 5:30 PMLIVE Virtual Shabbat serviceThursday, Feb. 25ONLINE Purim Celebration with B'nai Jacob: holiday servicewill follow daily minyan, which begins this date at 5:30 PM

Friday, Feb. 26 at 5:30 PM LIVE Virtual Shabbat service—Purim



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:

Tom Becker Lois Coleman Patricia Cohen Coniglio Jonathan Freedman Betsy Gooding The Hutt Family Ken Kleeman Zel Lewis and family Gary Markham Hedy Poppelsdorf Mike Pushkin The Ramos Family Terrie Rosenfeld All impacted by the Pandemic All affected by natural disasters, including Fire, Hurricanes, and Typhoons All suffering due to violence, civil unrest, war, or other causes

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:

January: Russ Emrick, Caroline Ostand,

Ken Silverstein, Elizabeth Kantor-Bright, David Kushner, Richard Holicker, Terrie Rosenfeld, Tiana Hall, Hedy Poppelsdorf (milestone), Richard Gottlieb, David Shapiro, Beth Winter

February: Barrie and Tod Kaufman, Ronni Cohen Spudich, Carole Louis Bloom, David Stern, Bob Aaron, Hal Selinger, Margot Jogwick, Barrie Baer Kaufman

March: Rachel Dash, Amy & David Shapiro, Marsha Albert, Shelly & David Winowich, Gary Markham, Bob Kimball, Eugenia & David Feibelmann

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! Tell the Rabbi about it.

(Continued on page 7)

Please contact Rabbi Blair

If you are having any difficulties getting groceries or medicine, feel a need to talk with someone, have a pastoral concern, or just want to chat, please feel free to call me (the rabbi) at 304-989-4014 or email me at

RabbiJoeB@gmail.com

I am in the building for at least part of most days (Saturdays excepted), and can always find time to talk to you. I read email regularly (except on Shabbat or holidays). You can call me on Shabbat, and if it is an emergency, leave me a message telling me that it is urgent – I will call back as soon as I can.

At this time, though I would love to see you, in light of the Covid-19 case load numbers and the recommendations of many health professionals, I am erring on the side of caution and avoiding in-person meetings. I want to keep all of us safe and healthy. Soon, G-d willing, we will begin to move past this situation. TEMPLE ISRAEL 2312 Kanawha Blvd. E. Charleston, W.Va. 25311 (304) 342-5852 www.templeisraelwv.org templeisraelwv@gmail.com

Joshua I. Barrett, President Joseph M. Blair, Rabbi

Rabbis Emeriti Rabbi James D. Cohn, Z"L Israel B. Koller, Z"L

February yahrzeits

Names are read the Friday evening prior to the yahrzeit date, which is in parentheses.

February 5th Myron "Mike" Greenwald (6) Leonard Ingraham (6) Mary Weisberg (6) Nat Jurin (7) Harry Silverstein (7) Louise Herzog Sclove (8) Morris Siegler (8) Bernard L. Wasserman (8) Joseph Weisberg (8) Barbara Reinfeld (10) Lorene Adler (11) Irving Badner (11) Helaine Rotgin (11)

February 12th

Garald F. "Gary" Allen (13) Sylvia G. Goldman (13) Melvin H. Hager (13) Alan A. Greenspon (14) Doris Lewis (14) Roselind Case (15) Rachel Cassidy (15) Norma Cohn (15) Dr. Morris I. Mendeloff Sr. (15) Clara Warner Schwabe (15) Jacob Kandel (16) Jerome Warner Schwabe (16) Clara Price (17) Isadore J. Berman (18) Doris Mack (18) Newton Margolis (18) Miriam Mayer (18) Ida Schwartz Preiser (18) Aaron Cohen (19)

February 19th

Fannie Galperin (20) Philip Frankenberger (21) Howard Michael Levinson (21) Helen Tweddle (21) Pauline Reinfeld (22) Irma Rose (22) June Warhoftig (22) Sylvia Berman (24) Sadie W. Levin (24) Hazel Westen (25) Annette Cohen Hark (26)

February 26th

Anne Shore Levinson (27) George Harry Meyer (27)



Rebecca Taub Godfrey (28) Lillian Ostand (28) Laura Loeb Small (28) Marcus "Bill" Thalheimer (28) Frances Sokolovsky (March 1) Fred A. Bloomberg (March 2) Natalie Melman (March 2) Frank A. Baer Sr. (March 3) Benjamin Machanoff (March 3) Erwin Mayer (March 3) Adele Lehman Metzel (March 3) Esther Pincus (March 4)

Condolences on p. 7

February at a Glance

All services, meetings, classes and events are virtual with one exception*, via Zoom and/or conference call, until further notice. If you aren't receiving emails from Rabbi Blair about these sessions, please let him know.

Monday, Feb. 1 at 10 AM – Zoom check-in

- Tuesday, Feb. 2 at 10 AM B'nai Jacob Torah class
- Thursday, Feb. 4 at 10 AM B'nai Jacob Talmud class
- Thursday, Feb. 4 at 3 PM A Bissel Torah
- *Friday, Feb. 5 at *St. Marks UMC in

Please recycle.

- downtown Charleston *<u>outdoors</u>: 12-12:15 PM: Interfaith Service of Unity and Reconciliation (masks and social distancing required)
- Friday, Feb. 5 at 5:30 PM LIVE and Virtual Shabbat service. Torah Parashah Yitro.
- Saturday, Feb. 6 at 10:30 AM Torah study. Ex. 18:1 – 20:23.
- Sunday, Feb. 7 at 2 PM Jewish Literature in translation
- Monday, Feb. 8 at 10 AM Zoom Check-in
- Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 10 AM B'nai Jacob Torah class
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- Tuesday, Feb. 9 at 5:30 PM Temple board meeting
- Thursday, Feb. 11 at 10 AM B'nai Jacob Talmud class
- Thursday, Feb. 11 at 3 PM A Bissel Torah
- Friday, Feb. 12 at 5:30 PM LIVE and Virtual Shabbat service
- Sunday, Feb. 14 at 10:30 AM Sisterhood board meeting
- Monday, Feb. 15 at 10 AM Zoom Checkin
- Tuesday, Feb. 16 at 10 AM B'nai Jacob (Continued on page 4)

February at a Glance-continued from p. 3

(Continued from page 3)	Committee meeting	Thursday, March 4 at 6:30 PM – Two
Torah class	Tuesday, Feb. 23 at 10 AM – B'nai Jacob	Charleston Rabbis Discussion
Wednesday, Feb. 17 at 7 PM – Leora May Book Club	Torah class Thursday, Feb. 25 at 10 AM – B'nai Jacob	Friday, March 5 at 5:30 PM – LIVE and Virtual Shabbat service –
Thursday, Feb. 18 at 10 AM – B'nai Jacob	Talmud class	Shabbat Parah and "Refugee Shabbat." Torah Parashah Ki
Talmud class	Thursday, Feb. 25 at 3 PM – A Bissel Torah	Tisa.
Thursday, Feb. 18 at 3 PM – A Bissel Torah	Thursday, Feb. 25 with B'nai Jacob on Zoom	Saturday, March 6 at 10:30 AM – Torah
Friday, Feb. 19 at 5:30 PM – Live and Virtual Shabbat service	 Purim celebration. Daily minyan begins at 5:30 PM, followed by the 	study –Ex. 31:18 – 33:11, Num. 19:1 – 22.
Sunday, Eak 21 at 7:20 DNA Charlester	service for Purim.	Friday, March 12 at 5:30 PM – LIVE and
Sunday, Feb. 21 at 7:30 PM – Charleston Death Café	Friday, Feb. 26 at 5:30 PM – Live and Virtual Shabbat service including Purim	Virtual Shabbat service with Pulpit Exchange
Monday, Feb. 22 at 10 AM – Zoom Check- in	Sunday, Feb. 28 at 2 PM – Jewish Literature in translation	Saturday, March 13 at 10 AM – B'nai Jacob Shabbat service with
Monday, Feb. 22 at 6:30 PM – Social Action		Pulpit Exchange

From the Rabbi's Desk, continued from p. 1

(Continued from page 1)

ous clinic locations through the state, as doses are available. As the rollout continues, availability for younger ages should open, perhaps before this bulletin is mailed. You may also find that some pharmacies and doctors' offices may have vaccines. You should call around, and ask that your name be on the list of those who are in line to be vaccinated.

If you are eligible, I hope you will take advantage of the opportunity and receive the vaccination – that will help speed along the time when we can begin to return to our accustomed activities – but simply getting the vaccine is not enough yet, and we will need to continue our current policies for some time.

The experts continue to urge that we all remain cautious and careful. As a result, the Temple building is closed, and there are no in-person meetings or events permitted.

Please stay safe and healthy – use masks, handwashing, and social distancing.

Online Activities— We are continuing to refine and upgrade what we can do with the equipment, to allow us to continue and improve our online presence, while planning ahead to operate both online and inperson, when that is possible. Plans are being made for permanent installation of the equipment (without impact to in-person options), with flexibility for use in several areas of the building in addition to the main sanctuary.

We are delighted to welcome those who join us from other locales – we welcome you!

Services – We will continue weekly Shabbat services as we have been, opening the Zoom session at 5 PM, with services starting at 5:30. Other events are also offered online (including classes, check ins, and meetings) – see the weekly LINKS email for how to connect.

Prayer Books – As long as it will benefit congregants, we are prepared to lend prayer books for your use. If you wish to borrow a siddur for Shabbat please be in touch with the Rabbi or the Office to arrange to pick one up. You don't need to come in the building at all – just let us know you want to borrow a prayer book(s), and let us know when you plan to come by. We will place them on the bench at the front of the building (Kanawha Blvd. side); you can just pull up into the circular drive, find the bag on the bench in front with your name on it, and take that bag of books.

Next Month

As always, we want to serve you in as many ways and as well as it is possible. 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.

At Last – Blessing

With the arrival of Tu B'Shevat, we begin to look towards the coming of spring. Very soon we will come to Purim, and only weeks after that is Passover, our spring holiday – with, we hope, a return of lovely weather, which will allow us to comfortably enjoy the outdoors – socially distanced and masked, but feeling the sunshine and breezes.

B'virkat Shalom (with blessings of peace),

Joe

Rabbi Joe Blair

The Temple welcomes new members Joe Golden and Peggy Burkhardt. They make their home in Beckley.

Sisterhood Message Relief is in sight, but in the meantime, keep up staying safe, and be sure to keep current with Temple events

On Saturday afternoon, Jan. 23, I received a phone call from B'nai Jacob's president, Marc Slotnick, telling me that if I wanted to get my COVID-19 vaccination that I needed to get

down to the Civic Center.

Not only did I go park the car and make my way inside, but once in there I was greeted by the kindest, most helpful people – and I might add, all volunteers – ensuring that everyone who was seeking a vaccination would be able to receive one.

I have been seeking a vaccine, and when this telephone call came, I wasted no time.

On the way home I thought to myself, borrowing these words from the old Alka-Seltzer commercial, "Plop-plop, fizz-fizz, oh what a relief it is." Having shared that thought, we still need to wear facemasks and practice social distancing and not become complacent with the fact that we have some of the retardant in our bodies. The all clear has not been sounded but we have made great strides in getting to that point.

Some of you who have received your first vaccine are in that holding pattern until you get the second, while several of you have received both, all of which is good. However, since the guidelines of living through a pandemic have been revealed one day at a time, following the recommendations of those who are well-equipped to dictate what and how we should do things is worthy of our time to listen and comply.

If you haven't been vaccinated, I hope your time will be coming soon.

are going to opt for the opportunity rather than not.

While I am hardly in a position to give all of this advice, I would rather just

Many thanks to City's CARE director for January general meeting program

Emily Hanna provided us with important contact info concerning Charleston's CARE program supporting mental illness, homelessness and hunger. Please keep these phone numbers handy.

On Jan. 17, Sisterhood's guest speaker for our general meeting was Emily Hanna, who is the director of the Coordinated Addiction Response Effort (CARE) program for the City of Charleston. Emily shared the important contact phone numbers that will be useful for all of us. Mayor Goodwin's office has a response phone number and that is 304-348-8174.

Thanks to Vice President Marsha Albert, our program chair, for arranging for Emily to address our meeting.

Emily Hanna can be reached at 304-348-6440 and her personal cell phone is 304-989-0316. As we learned during her presentation on Sunday morning, the City of Charleston is willing to help in any and all ways possible, but they need to be notified of specific needs concerning mental illness, homelessness or hunger.

Please make a note of these important numbers and keep them in a place where you will be able to see them easily and respond on an as-needed basis.

Thank you for attending our meeting and for learning along with the rest of us things that we can do to make a difference.

Millie

Please follow the newspapers' and all other recommendations for how to get signed up or perhaps it might mean standing in a line and waiting your turn. I have met several people who are not going to get the vaccine and they have theories that justify their thinking, but I believe that there are enough of us who share it from the standpoint of my personal view. My second vaccine will follow in approximately 21 days, but not going longer than 28, but I fully intend to continue living the guidelines. At my place of business, we have a clear sign on the front door and inside each employee who waits on customers and/ or is getting things ready for customers is wearing a face mask, which is the very least we can do at this time of our lives. This month's bulletin message really has nothing to do with the business of Sisterhood, but then again if you give it some thought you might agree that it certainly does.

And as a closing note our online offerings at so many different levels have been intriguingly warm and wonderful and I hope you are partaking of what interests you as an important member of Temple Israel.

Smiling from behind my face mask,

Millie Snyder,

President

Except where noted, photos by Greg Proctor

Our Thoughtful Contributors

If you would like to make a donation to a Temple or Sisterhood fund, please mail your check to Temple Israel and tell us to whom you would like a card to be sent.

Donations to a Sisterhood fund (Care Committee, Floral Fund or Y.E.S. Fund): checks should be made payable to Temple Israel Sisterhood, noting which fund on the memo line.

Donations to the Temple Israel Social Action Fund should be made payable to that fund.

Donations to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund are used to help Temple members in financial distress. Donations should be made payable to that fund.

Donations to the Unrestricted Fund or those to the Library should be made payable to Temple Israel.

> Please write separate checks when making contributions to more than one fund or when paying membership dues.

Join us for a Purim Celebration with B'nai Jacob on Feb. 25



Purim performance at the Jewish Theatre in Warszawa, Poland. March 2009.

By Kotoviski photograph by Henryk Kotowski - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6212989

Why it's important to look at the bright side even when there doesn't seem to be one...

Purim is the Jewish "day of reversals" – things that appear to have a bleak outcome turn around and have happy endings, and the ordinary expectations and behaviors are turned on their head for the day. This day is a joyous celebration of survival and life, with costumes, carnivals and games, story-telling, silliness, jokes and humor, song, and – of course! – favorite symbolic foods and beverages.

Tzedakah continues to be so important-please give when and what you can

Please be generous – at this time there are so many who are struggling, and needs continue to run unusually high in light of the Corona Virus Pandemic impact in limitations on businesses, resulting job losses, housing costs, and rampant health care costs that are hitting those who can least afford them, to name only a few of the causes.

In addition, there are many suffering from natural disasters, including volcanoes, flooding, typhoons, and fires, far too many endangered by violence caused by civil unrest and war in many locales, and uncountable numbers who are being hit by supply chain failures for food and medicines in many areas. This is not only locally, but globally.

The result is that needs are greater now than at almost any other time, and the urgency is even greater than it might have been. Please think generously and donate as you are able. Federated Jewish Charities, AJWS, HIAS, and so many other organizations are faced with requests from an overwhelming number of those in dire need. The Social Action committee and Sisterhood are each asking for donations for specific efforts: hunger relief and warm clothing, respectively; look for more information elsewhere in the bulletin.

At the Temple Board meeting, the idea was raised to donate in memory of Charleston Police Department Officer Cassie Johnson. If you wish to do so, donations are being sought in her memory.

Please remember the many Tzedakah opportunities locally: Manna Meal, Covenant House, Sojourner's Shelter/YWCA, RCCR, Mazon, and all the other worthy causes in our community, and those beyond.

Please make your donations directly to the worthy organization(s) of your choice, and be as generous as you are able.

Leora May Book Club to discuss new history documenting dangers and difficulties faced by African-Americans travelers

The Leora May Book Club will meet Feb. 17. Our book is Overground Railroad: The Green Book and the Roots of Black Travel in America, by Candacy Taylor. Please join us.

Amy Shapiro, Chair

[Ed. note: at right is some background info about the subject of *Overground Railroad*.]

Rabbi Liaison Comm. wants your input

The Rabbi Liaison Committee will be meeting shortly. If you have any comments or concerns for the committee, please contact Mary Rich Maloy, David Thalheimer, David Shapiro, or Josh Barrett.

Mary Rich Maloy, Chair

In the congregation continued

(Continued from page 2)

Baruch Dayan Haemet (Condolences)

Temple Israel offers condolences to the family of Susan Fretwell who died in San Antonio, Tex. May the memory be a blessing.

Temple Israel offers condolences to Zel Lewis and her family on the recent death of her brother, Raymond Kandel. May the memory be a blessing.

Temple Israel offers condolences to Hedy Poppelsdorf on the recent death of her husband, Fedor Poppelsdorf. May the memory be a blessing.

We pray that all of those who are mourning or bereaved will be comforted from heaven.

The Negro Motorist Green Book

Excerpted from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The Negro Motorist Green Book (also The Negro Motorist Green-Book, The Negro Travelers' Green Book, or simply the Green Book) was an annual guidebook for African-American road-trippers. It was originated and published by African-American New York City mailman Victor Hugo Green from 1936 to 1966, during the era of Jim Crow laws, when open and often legally prescribed discrimination against African Americans especially and other nonwhites was widespread. Although pervasive racial discrimination and poverty limited black car ownership, the emerging African-American middle class



An African-American family with their new Oldsmobile in Washington, D.C., 1955

By Scurlock, Addison N. - http://sirismm.si.edu/ archivcenter/scurlock/618ns0242828cp.jpg, Public Domain, <u>https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?</u> <u>curid=45886751</u>

bought automobiles as soon as they could, but faced a variety of dangers and inconveniences along the road, from refusal of food and lodging to arbitrary arrest. In response, Green wrote his guide to services and places relatively friendly to African-Americans, eventually expanding its coverage from the New York area to much of North America, as well as founding a travel agency.

Many black Americans took to driving, in part to avoid segregation on public transportation. As the writer George Schuyler put it in 1930, "[A]II Negroes who can do so purchase an automobile as soon as possible in order to be free of discomfort, discrimination, segregation and insult." Black Americans employed as athletes, entertainers, and salesmen also traveled frequently for work purposes.

African-American travelers faced hardships such as white-owned businesses refusing to serve them or repair their vehicles, being refused accommodation or food by white-owned hotels, and threats of physical violence and forcible expulsion from whites-only "sundown towns." Green founded and published the *Green Book* to avoid such problems, compiling resources "to give the Negro traveler information that will keep him from running into difficulties, embarrassments and to make his trip more enjoyable." The maker of a 2019 documentary film about the book offered this summary: "Everyone I was interviewing talked about the community that the *Green Book* created: a kind of parallel universe that was created by the book and this kind of secret road map that the *Green Book* outlined."

From a New York-focused first edition published in 1936, Green expanded the work to cover much of North America, including most of the United States and parts of Canada, Mexico, the Caribbean, and Bermuda. The *Green Book* became "the bible of black travel during Jim Crow," enabling black travelers to find lodgings, businesses, and gas stations that would serve them along the road. It was little known outside the African-American community. Shortly after passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which outlawed the types of racial discrimination that had made the *Green Book* necessary, publication ceased and it fell into obscurity. There has been a revived interest in it in the early 21st century in connection with studies of black travel during the Jim Crow era.

Four issues (1940, 1947, 1954, and 1963) have been republished in facsimile. Twentythree additional issues have been digitized by the New York Public Library Digital Collections.

