



<http://va014.urj.net/bethel.html>

*The purpose of this congregation shall be to worship God in accordance with the faith of Judaism; to cultivate a love and understanding of the Jewish heritage; to strengthen the ties within the Jewish community; to strengthen the bonds of loyalty with the Jewish people everywhere; to bring nearer the Dominion of God on earth through an emphasis of the principles of righteousness and harmony in society at large.*

***November, 2009***

***A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT***

Fellow Beth El Members:

Well, we're done with Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, and Simchat Torah. We have practically nothing on our calendars for almost a month and a half until the first night of Chanukah on December 11.

Well, not quite nothing. We have had some interesting things going on, and we'll have more. I want to especially let the congregation know that on Friday, October 16, our lay service was led by students from the new Jewish sorority at JMU, Alpha Epsilon Pi. Dawn Savage, one of the JMU students who teaches in our Religious School and is the sorority's director of pledge activities, put it together, although all 20 of the sorority sisters and pledges provided readings. The Beth El Congregants who attended enjoyed the service, and the oneg provided by the sorority. We plan to have more interaction and joint activities with the fraternity and sorority at JMU, as well as Hillel.

Coming up on November 20 is our Community Awareness Shabbat. Please tell your friends (Jewish and not) about the opportunity to worship that evening with Rabbi Joe.

We have begun planning for our Fundraising Dinner on February 20. It will be a little different this year, including engaging a new caterer, and it will take more than one person to be involved. If anyone is interested in helping out, please contact me or Judy Liss as soon as possible. We need lots of help with fundraising ideas/activities this year, so I'd appreciate all the help we can get.

## *FROM THE RABBI'S DESK*

My dear fellow Valley Jews and Friends,  
Shalom. Our autumn season is well under way – we have even had some frosty nights! And the reports of flu are all around us. I hope you are staying warm and well.

### *THE CALENDAR*

#### **CHESHVAN → KISLEV (NOVEMBER)**

Cheshvan runs from the 19<sup>th</sup> of October through November 17<sup>th</sup>, with the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of November being Rosh Chodesh for Kislev. Kislev will run from the 18<sup>th</sup> of November to the 17<sup>th</sup> of December this year, with the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> of December being Rosh Chodesh for Tevet.

### *HOLIDAYS*

This is the period in our calendar with a scarcity of holidays. Following the surfeit of Tishrei, Cheshvan is devoid of any special days, other than Shabbat and Rosh Chodesh. For this reason it is sometimes (affectionately, I think) called Mar Cheshvan (bitter Cheshvan) – my suspicion is that just about everyone is glad of a break in the holiday cycle!

Once we enter Kislev, we have the secular holiday of Thanksgiving, modeled by the pilgrims on the biblical Sukkot harvest festival. Finally, near the end of the month, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev, we begin the celebration of Chanukah. This runs from the evening of December 11<sup>th</sup> until the evening of December 19<sup>th</sup>. We will celebrate Chanukah on the 11<sup>th</sup> at Beth El, and on the 18<sup>th</sup> at THOI.

Chanukah is a minor holiday on the Jewish calendar, but it looms large in the minds of many children, because of the food and presents that often are exchanged or given, and the game of Dreidel (four sided top, with letters on each side, used to play a kind of gambling game, often using chocolate coins, nuts, candies, or other delicacies as the ‘loot’ one can win) which is often played.

Of course, Chanukah is known as the Festival of Lights due to the lighting of the

Chanukiah – a special nine-branched menorah (candelabra) – one for each of the eight days, and a shamash or ‘helper’ candle. Chanukah is also when we tell the story of the oil in the Temple that lasted for eight days (time enough for more to be made), and we acknowledge that by enjoying many oily fried foods: donuts, latkes, and fried ice cream, to name a few.

There are lots of lovely customs around Chanukah, and the beautiful light of the Chanukiot (menorahs) helps to dispel the darkness of the evening at this time of year, providing light and comfort.

Should you have any questions about the customs or observances of Chanukah, please feel free to ask Rabbi Joe.

### *TZEDAKAH*

In the spirit of Tzedakah (righteous behaviors, including charitable gifts) and Gemilut Chasidim (acts of loving kindness), we ask that you donate money and/or items to help those in need. We will continue to have grocery bags at the synagogue that you can take and fill at home, then return, as well as envelopes from Mazon, the Jewish response to Hunger. If you wish additional suggestions, please see the letter that was distributed at the High Holy Days for some other worthy causes.

Items that are left at the synagogue are delivered to appropriate locations & organizations, including Mazon, the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank, First Step, the Valley Mission, the Volunteer Farm, and other local and national organizations that help those in need. Please keep in mind the requirements for non-perishable foodstuff, (items such as tuna, peanut butter, canned meats, soups, fruits, vegetables, and milk, boxed pasta, cereal, cake mixes, juices, baby formula and baby food, and spices/seasonings), household items (such as laundry detergent, toilet paper, paper towels, trash bags, cleaning supplies), and personal care items (such as soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrushes, toothpaste, dental floss, diapers,

and mouthwash). These are the items that are often in short supply at the shelters, food pantries, and food bank.

Please also consider those who need clothing at this time. Hats, mittens, coats, scarves, and other warm and waterproof items are needed.

Also, please consider volunteering time at Harts, the Volunteer Farm, or at the Valley Mission, or at one of the many other organizations that seek to help those in our area who are in need.

## TORAH PARASHIOT

The Torah parashiot (Torah portions) read for the period covered by this newsletter include the following in November: Vayera, Chaye Sarah, Toeldot, and Vayetze, drawn from Bereshit (Gen.) 18:1-32:3.

Haftarot read on Shabbatot (Sabbaths) in November include selections from 2 Kings 4, 1 Kings 1, Malachi 1-2, and Hosea 12-14.

## RABBINIC EDUCATIONAL INITIATIVES

Please note that the offerings for adults continue this month. There are three on the calendar. Please watch the bulletin for information on upcoming classes and courses each month.

First, on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, Sunday at 2 to 3 pm, is the next in the series on Women in the Tanakh (Bible). This will be held at Beth El. All are welcome to join in our conversation.

Second, we continue the five session Introduction to Hebrew (Read Hebrew America) classes on November 5<sup>th</sup> (at Beth El), or November 16<sup>th</sup> (at THOI) at 6-9 pm.

Third, continuing on November 12<sup>th</sup>, from 1-3 pm at Beth El, is the third in the five session course offered through the JMU Lifelong Learning Institute. Any member of Beth El or THOI who wishes is welcome to attend for no cost. We have already discussed (but by no means exhausted!) the topics of How Judaism has Influenced the World, and Who Wrote the Bible. We will continue with the topics of What is Kabbalah; A Brief History of

Israel, and Why is there Anti-Semitism. Come to any or all of these sessions and join our discussion.

## CONGREGATIONAL TRIP TO ISRAEL

I want to once again remind you to think ahead and plan for a congregation trip to Israel to take place in late February or March of 2011. This should give everyone time to put it on their calendars, and to save up for this fantastic opportunity. If you think this sounds interesting, please speak to me, or to any of those congregants who went on the last trip. It will be a somewhat different itinerary, but just as educational, enjoyable, exciting, and meaningful as the last time! I will be mentioning this again periodically throughout the intervening time, so look for more information to be forthcoming.

## ITEMS OF NOTE THIS MONTH

⊗ Because of the holidays and conferences that occur in November, the usual schedule is disrupted. There will be rabbi-led Shabbat services at Beth El on October 30<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm, with a Family Shabbat preceding at 6 pm, then on November 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 pm, with an Oneg Shabbat following. The service on the 20<sup>th</sup> of November is the Community Awareness Shabbat for Beth El; please invite friends, neighbors, teachers, and any other person interested to join us for the service and the Oneg that follows.

⊗ Based on the holidays and conferences that occur in November, the usual schedule is disrupted. In November, there will be rabbi-led Shabbat service at THOI on November 14<sup>th</sup>, which is a Shabbat Shacharit (morning) service at 10 am. This Shabbat morning service also serves as the Religious School Consecration service.

The next Rabbi-led service at THOI will be on Friday December 4<sup>th</sup>, which will be the Community Awareness Shabbat for THOI. Please invite anyone who may

be interested in joining us to experience the service and the Kiddush luncheon that follows.

NOTA BENE: There is No Religious School on Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup> – the service on the 14<sup>th</sup> IS Religious school for all students.

- ⊗ November 5<sup>th</sup> at 12:15-1:30 pm is the next meeting of the Interfaith Association. At this meeting, the program presented will be “Members of Three Faiths Look at Gratitude: Personal Reflections from an Islamic, Jewish, and Christian Perspective”. It should be extremely interesting. The meeting is in the West Dining room at Eastern Mennonite University. Lunch is available for purchase in the cafeteria, starting at 11:45 am. Please feel free to join this group.
- ⊗ Saturday, November 7<sup>th</sup> from 5:30 to 11 pm, Shorty (the Youth group) will offer a Parent’s Night out. They will provide babysitting at Beth El for toddlers up to age 12, with Havdalah, entertainment, dinner, and activities. For information or to make a reservation, contact Sherri Alt or Grace Lambeth.
- ⊗ November 8<sup>th</sup> at 7 pm at THOI will be the Jewish Community of Shenandoah Valley’s commemoration of the 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Krystallnacht, the night of Broken glass. We are planning a dramatic presentation, a short film, and a very brief service, and will be inviting members of several local churches to join us. Please plan to attend. Recognizing that this is a school/work night, we are holding this to approximately one hour.
- ⊗ The Kinderlachen program will next be held on Saturday, November 21<sup>st</sup> at 10-11 am at THOI. This is open to anyone in the community (members or not, Jewish or not) who wishes to bring their child to a Jewish-themed “play group” including some activities, music, arts and crafts, stories, snacks, a few blessings and a chance to socialize.

Please plan to attend with your children, and invite anyone in the community you know who would be interested.

- ⊗ Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2 pm at Beth El will be the next of the (more or less) monthly Women in the Bible sessions. All are welcome to come and discuss the story. No experience or prior knowledge required.
- ⊗ Looking ahead, on December 6<sup>th</sup> at 3-5:30 pm at THOI, there will be a Literary reading of her work by Sharon Leiter, published poet. This will be free and open to the public. More information will be forthcoming.

## *OTHER PROGRAMS & SPECIAL ACTIVITIES*

If you feel a conversation with the rabbi on any topic would be of benefit to you, please be in touch to make an appointment. You can call or email Rabbi Joe as shown elsewhere in this newsletter.

Please know that we always seek congregant and guest participation in services throughout the year. If you are interested in leading a lay service, or in taking a role in a service, please be in touch with Sherri Alt, Margee Greenfield, or Gary Stein. Roles include: reading Torah, reading Haftarah, serving as Gabbai (the “MC” for the Torah service), an English reading, or having an honor. The honors we usually confer in our services include being called up for an Aliyah (saying the blessings for the Torah or the Haftarah reading; there are some restrictions on who may have this honor), serving as Hagbah (lift, hold, and carry the Torah), Gelilah (undressing and dressing the Torah), Petichah Usegurah (opening and closing the Ark), and candle lighting with the blessings. Please remember that these roles each are honors, and that we are counting on you to be there to help us make our services special.

And if you are interested in singing for our services, please be in touch with Ron Ornstein, who is coordinating music with the choir for our worship.

If you are interested in studying for and celebrating an adult B'nai Mitzvah, or in learning to leyn (read/chant) Torah and/or Haftarah, or to lead services, or serve as a gabbai, please be in touch with the rabbi.

If you are interested in or wish to consider conversion, or you just want to learn more about Judaism (whether you are Jewish or not), please be in touch with the rabbi.

### **CLOSING MESSAGE**

At this season when our nation as a whole takes time to think of all the blessings we have and share, and to give thanks, may you find that your own life is full of too many blessings to count. May you know G-d's bounty, see the beauty of G-d's creation, and experience G-d's love through those around you.

Rabbi Joe Blair  
November 2009

### **REACHING THE RABBI & THE RABBI'S AVAILABILITY**

The rabbi is available by appointment. If you wish to meet or speak with the rabbi, please email or call to set an appointment time. In that way, the rabbi will be able to respond and give you his full attention, as you deserve. The rabbi does not read or respond to email or phone messages on Shabbat or holidays.

In the event of an emergency, the rabbi may be contacted by telephone. In that case, please call the cell phone number listed: if you reach voicemail, please leave a message speaking clearly with your name, telephone numbers, the specific topic, and be sure to express the need for an urgent response. The rabbi will respond as soon as possible.

Rabbi Joe's Email:

[RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com](mailto:RabbiJoeB@hotmail.com)

Beth El Congregation

540-434-2744

Temple House of Israel

540-886-4091

Cell phone (Please use this # for emergencies)

434-981-3959

## **Yahrzeits**

<b>01</b>	<b>Selma Miller Sadie Spiro Fredrick Nessen Samuel Freed</b>	<b>1954</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>02</b>	<b>Selina Ney Bruno Freudenthal Lawrence Loewner Jack Stein</b>	<b>1945 1955 2004</b>	<b>Member Judy Freudenthal's Father Member Mayor of Harrisonburg Gary Stein's Father</b>
<b>03</b>	<b>Louis Perlman</b>		<b>Milton Perlman's Brother</b>
<b>04</b>	<b>Albert Lubman</b>	<b>1968</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>05</b>	<b>Gussie Myers</b>		<b>Joyce Helbraun's Mother</b>

	<b>Sam Hirsch</b>		
	<b>Louis Wides</b>	<b>1962</b>	
<b>07</b>	<b>Eva Brooslin</b>	<b>1956</b>	<b>Ruth Clayman's Mother</b>
<b>09</b>	<b>Annie Ney</b>	<b>1979</b>	<b>Member Bill Ney's &amp; Leo Zindler's Grandmother</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Nathan Ratner</b>	<b>1989</b>	<b>Laurie Schwalb's Father</b>
<b>12</b>	<b>Irene Nusbaum</b>		<b>Member</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>Minna Mintzer</b>		<b>Member</b>
	<b>Ada Krim</b>		
	<b>Dr. Henry Helbraun</b>		<b>Erwin Helbraun's Brother</b>
<b>17</b>	<b>Rose Hirsch</b>	<b>1913</b>	<b>Member</b>
	<b>Charles Schweitzer</b>		<b>Thea Golub's Father</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Baby Ney</b>	<b>1920</b>	
	<b>Sybil Rose</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>Member Bo Rose's Mother</b>
<b>20</b>	<b>Caroline Ash</b>	<b>1965</b>	
	<b>Sophia Wuzburger</b>	<b>1943</b>	
<b>21</b>	<b>Ida Miller</b>	<b>1939</b>	<b>Member</b>
	<b>Monroe Nussbaum</b>	<b>1986</b>	
<b>22</b>	<b>Kattie Ney</b>	<b>1980</b>	
<b>23</b>	<b>Albert Wise</b>	<b>1904</b>	<b>Member</b>
	<b>David Myerberg</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>Member</b>
	<b>Dave Levy</b>	<b>1931</b>	<b>Member</b>
	<b>Doris Freed</b>	<b>1969</b>	
<b>25</b>	<b>Isaac Ney</b>	<b>1941</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>Sam Fishman</b>		
<b>28</b>	<b>Sam Blatt</b>	<b>1965</b>	<b>Frank Blatt's Grandfather</b>
	<b>Zvi Hirsch Derechinsky</b>		<b>Max's Father</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>Edward Poster</b>	<b>1955</b>	<b>Alan Poster's Father</b>
<b>30</b>	<b>Sylvan Ney</b>	<b>1977</b>	<b>Member</b>

## ***DONATIONS***

*Beth El Congregation is grateful for the following generous donations:*

### **Yizkor Donations and Pledges:**

W. Arthur Spector	Roberta Mondres
Suzi & Marc Trubitz	Ami Daniel
Alan & Nancy Post	Eddie Ney
John & Nancy Stewart	Andy Kohen
Estelle & Joshua Robinson	Judy Freudenthal
Sheila Padoll	Anne Mintzer
Franklin Blatt	Les & Becky Mintzer
Evelyn & Larry Williams	Ruth Clayman
Herb Rodbell	The Ornsteins
Bill Ney	Roberta & Gary Stein
Miriam Banker	Joyce & Erwin Helbraun
Cindy Baron	Lenore Price
Sandi & Bo Rose	Dale Brothers
Marlene Brumbaugh	Sherri Alt
The Neckowitz family	Jerry & Esther Minskoff
Margee & Jennie Greenfield	Bekah, Chris, & Leah Robles
Judy & Stewart Liss	Mona Wolf
Linda & Peter Kohn	Michael & Carol Schikman
Bev & Leo Zindler	

### **Donations From High Holiday Visitors:**

JMU Hillel  
Jamie Breitner  
Pavel & Nadia Lagoda  
Joshua & Marybeth Neckowitz

### **Additional High Holiday Donations To HARTS:**

Janet Daniel

### **Gifts & Memorials:**

Jessica MacWilliams  
Eddie Ney & Frances Stewart in memory of Jeanne Meyers Pomerance  
Max Derechinsky

### **Yahrzeit Fund:**

Mitchel & Valerie Lovinger in memory of Sarah Lovinger

### **Donations for the Repair of our Torahs:**

Anonymous  
Phil & Ashly Renick

## **RELIGIOUS SCHOOL**

*As you teach, you learn.* --**Jewish Proverb**

This has been a wonderful month of teaching and learning as the Religious School celebrated Sukkot and Simchat Torah. We joined with students and teachers, parents and siblings, and fellow congregants in honor of the fall season, commemoration of our history and pilgrimage, and celebration of our Torah. Many thanks to our very helpful parent volunteers – Ruth Berger and Heidi Rafferty for our Sukkot celebration and Becky Mintzer and Valerie Kramer for our Simchat Torah celebration.

Much appreciation for a new Religious School volunteer, Max LaGoda, who is helping to organize the many books and supplies in the religious school classrooms. He has also taken time to talk to one of our classes about his experience living in Israel. Thanks Max!

To all congregants -- please join us on Saturday, November 14, 2009 in honor of the Consecration Service for our new Religious School students to take place at Temple House of Israel at 10:00 a.m. We look forward to seeing you there!

L'shalom,  
Dara

## **MEN'S CLUB**

The Men's Club had a delightful 2 hour dinner and 3 minute meeting at L'Italia last month. It was great to simply relax and visit with everyone. **Our next event will be Tuesday, November 17, at Beth El** for our first of 3 **Lion's Club Spaghetti dinner** evenings. If you've never been to one of these, we fix and serve spaghetti and meat sauce ( Eddie Ney's Famous secret recipe), garlic bread, salad and dessert, for about 30-40 Lion's Club members as a fundraiser for the Men's Club and of course eat hardily ourselves. We usually hold our minimalist meeting at some point in the kitchen. A good time is always had by all, so join in the fun. Help is needed in the afternoon and especially from 5:30 onwards. You can rsvp to me (e mail : [ornfam@comcast.net](mailto:ornfam@comcast.net) or 434-8695) or to Eddie or just show up. While you are marking that on the calendar, jot down "**Men's Club, Dec. 10, 6 PM Daves on Main Street**" for our next dinner meeting. And as always...we're always looking for new ideas and new energy.

B'Shalom,  
Ron Ornstein, Men's Club President.

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

### **Congratulations to Anne Mintzer**

On her receiving the Tower Certificate from the C'Ville Haddassah where Anne is a Life Member. In September an article appeared in the Haddassah Newsletter honoring Anne who responded to her certificate with her own gift to the Chapter earmarked for the Sarah Wetsman Davidson Tower. As stated in the article, "one of the best things about Hadassah is the women you meet." (And Harrisonburg is only one hour away.)

### ***Board Members***

<b>Joe Blair</b>	<b>Rabbi</b>
<b>Gary Stein</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Sherri Alt</b>	<b>Vice President</b>
<b>Mona Wolf</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Michelle Ornstein</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Judy Freudenthal</b>	<b>Trustee</b>
<b>Andy Kohen</b>	<b>Trustee</b>
<b>Bill Ney</b>	<b>Trustee</b>
<b>Sherri Alt</b>	<b>Sisterhood President</b>
<b>Ron Ornstein</b>	<b>Men's Club President</b>
<b>Judy Liss</b>	<b>At large member</b>
<b>Chuck Slott</b>	<b>At large member</b>
<b>Margee Greenfield</b>	<b>Immediate Past President</b>

### **Bridge Editor**

**Elliott Golub**  
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## November 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> Religious School (9) Bagel Bar Rabbi at Star Peer Conference-----	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b> Lay Service URJ Biennial (Toronto)-----	<b>7</b> <a href="#">Parashat Vayera</a>
<b>8</b> Religious School (10) Bagel Bar URJ Biennial	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> Lay Service	<b>14</b> RS Consecration Service RS (11) <a href="#">Parashat Chayei Sara</a>
<b>15</b> No Religious School	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Lions Club Dinner 30th of Cheshvan, 5770 <a href="#">Rosh Chodesh Kislev</a>	<b>18</b> 1st of Kislev, 5770 <a href="#">Rosh Chodesh Kislev</a>	<b>19</b> Board Meeting	<b>20</b> Rabbi Service Community Awareness Shabbat	<b>21</b> Kinderlachen at THOI 10 AM <a href="#">Parashat Toldot</a>
<b>22</b> Religious School (12) Bagel Bar	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> Thanksgiving	<b>27</b> Lay Service	<b>28</b> <a href="#">Parashat Vayetzei</a>
<b>29</b> No Religious School (Thanksgiving Holiday)	<b>30</b>					