



## MONTHLY NEWS AND CALENDAR

### Torah Lishmah: Learning for Its Own Sake



As I write these words, I am preparing to fly to Arizona in just a few days. And I am very excited about the prospect.

Five of us — rabbinic school classmates and long-time friends and colleagues — are meeting in the Phoenix area to escape the winter, to eat and drink, to hike the canyons of the Southwest, to visit museums, to enjoy an Arizona

Coyotes hockey game but, most of all, to study and learn together.

The heart and soul of the get-together, you see, is for us to learn with and from each other. Through the several days of our being together, each of us will prepare a theme, assemble relevant Jewish texts and then we'll sit and fire questions and opinions and ideas back and forth until we've learned something new and perhaps important about the topic. But, more than this, we hope to learn something new and important about each other and ourselves. Because each time we reflect on our study materials, we reveal not only facets of that text but also of ourselves.

This, in fact, is what we have been doing for several years now. Once a month, we schedule a Zoom conference call and one of us — who has done the requisite legwork — presents the texts, explicates the necessary context and leads us in probing the richness of our tradition as a *chevruta* — a group of friends intent on growing and learning together.

Invariably, we seem to find in this more than just learning about whatever topic we have chosen. In our schmoozing and kibitzing

and questioning and joke-telling and storytelling, we discover dimensions to our friendship, dimensions to our lives, and dimensions to our world we never knew before.

Let me tell you: this is a rare pleasure for all of us. It's not that we haven't been studying and learning through the years. But, as we were all congregational rabbis, this had almost always been for a specific purpose. We learned in order that we might teach a particular course, give a particular sermon, lead a particular program. It was learning but it was always purpose-driven and, because it was so, it always seemed a little less than the ideal our Jewish people has always held dear — to learn *lishmah*. To learn for learning's sake. Not necessarily because it leads to any productive result but because it is enriching and ennobling in and of itself.

Now that we are all retired from our long-term pulpits, we can finally do it "right." We can finally study because we love the vigorous back-and-forth, because we can learn something that deepens our thinking, because it draws us close together in bonds of mutual respect, appreciation and love and ... because learning — at its best and purest — is a thrilling experience that makes us feel alive and vital.

This is the Jewish ideal — *Torah lishmah*, learning for its own sake. I cannot recommend it highly enough. Because however we do it — whether Jewish or secular texts, whether alone or in company with others, whether building on what we already know or striking out in new directions — study for its own sake keeps our minds sharp, broadens our horizons and ensures that, wherever we are in life, we never stop growing. And what could be better than that?

*Rabbi Eliot Strom*

### A Message from Rabbi Cherney



There is a story from the Talmud that is told of a man known as Honi the circle maker or Honi Hame'aggel. It is a rabbinic story of a man named Honi who calls upon G-d in a prayer for rain during a drought. He stands inside a circle he draws in the sand until rain comes, apparently causing the rain to arrive. In many ways, this

story is quite unique for its time period as it almost seems to be a form of idolatry. Yet, the story is told that Honi was respected by the people because of his actions and devotion to his mission which made the rain eventually fall!

For me, this story represents the belief that personal prayers can reach towards a power beyond themselves. A few verses later in the Talmud passage, we learn about another story centering around Honi:

*(continued on page 2)*

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## A Message from Rabbi Cherney *(continued from page 1)*

“One day, he was walking along the road when he saw a certain man planting a carob tree. Honi said to him: ‘This tree, after how many years will it bear fruit?’ The man said to him: ‘It will not produce fruit until seventy years have passed.’ Honi said to him: ‘Is it obvious to you that you will live seventy years that you expect to benefit from this tree?’ He said to him: ‘That man himself found a world full of carob trees. Just as my ancestors planted for me, I too am planting for my descendants.’” (Taanit 23a, translation from Sefaria.org)

The man teaches Honi that it isn't up to one person to create something needed in the world, but that humanity is involved in this ongoing process of caring for one another. We can do so through the world around us and our contributions to our greater family and community.

Both of these stories often get told around Tu B'Shevat, the Jewish birthday or New Year for Trees. During this minor holiday,

we learn about Jewish values related to the environment. I recently discussed these stories with Temple Judea's third graders as we thought through all the things trees provide. Being intentional in our gratitude for the world around us allows us to appreciate the way in which our Judaism is linked to the natural world.

The stories about Honi remind us that prayers and actions are both important. Actions allow us to be connected to and working for the repair of our world, known as *tikkun olam*. It is our job to plant the seeds for future generations. Taking care of our world and community are Jewish values that we uphold. We are reminded of these values through our holidays and Jewish texts that remind us how our tradition has engaged in *tikkun olam* for centuries. What can we do this year to help the world around us to grow?

*Rabbi Elyssa Cherney*

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## Thank You for Your Donations

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In memory of Milton Aronoff and Michael Alpart

In appreciation of afternoon Yom Kippur service  
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In memory of father Nathaniel Eckel-Nachmann and grandmother Ethel Fagen

In honor of Rita Schwartz's service as League of Our Own membership chair

In memory of Rose Martinelli's yahrzeit; Ner Tamid

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In memory of the yahrzeits of Dorothy Prager, Julius Prager and

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In honor of the birth of Rex Sessions

In memory of Irving Schuster

In memory of Eleanor Stolber

In memory of Eleanor Stolber

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## Dr. Rebecca's Monthly Moment

February is one of the few months in which there are no Jewish holidays. In our religious school on Sundays, we are still staying busy with our first-graders making mezuzahs at a Family Education event, our third-graders having a Shabbat service and dinner and Pre-Gan and Mommy & Me students enjoying classes.

On Wednesday evenings, we have five different classes scheduled! There are two optional classes for grades 4 to 6: Hebrew Bootcamp, our basic session to learn the language, and Prayer Prep to review the prayers. Confirmation Academy divides into two different sections based on grade level: grades 7–8 and 9–10. This year, grades 7–8 are learning about the Holocaust and Israel and grades 9–10 are focusing on World Religions. Our teens are learning from outstanding speakers who visit each class. Also on Wednesday evenings is a class for B'nai Mitzvah Preparation. This 12-week course is the first step in formal training for the ceremony.

We are also looking forward to our Purim Carnival, coming up on March 17 (snow date March 24)!

*Rebecca Slavin-Phillips, Ph.D.*  
Director, Temple Judea Religious School



Students in Gan and grade I visited the Mercer Museum, where they sang holiday songs with the assistance of Seth Wohl.



Bible Players treated students in Gan through grade 6 to a Chanukah Comedy Show.



Grade 5 students pose with "Mikayla's Monthly Mitzvah Basket." This basket contained snack bag donations destined for Mikayla Hornick, a 12-year-old religious school student and cancer patient, and her family.



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## Temple Judea Upcoming Events

*Torah Study is held every Saturday at 8:45 am. Please check the calendar on our website ([TempleJudea.org](http://TempleJudea.org)) for any changes and updates to this schedule.*

### February

Friday, February 1	Traditional Shabbat Service with Rabbi Cherney	7:00 pm
Saturday, February 2	PJ Munchkin Minyan with Jkidphilly	10:30 am
Sunday, February 3	Religious School	9:00 am
	Family Ed. grade 1	10:30 am
Monday, February 4	Choir rehearsal	7:30 pm
Tuesday, February 5	Rosh Chodesh meeting (call office for location)	6:30 pm
Wednesday, February 6	Hebrew Boot Camp	5:30 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep	5:30 pm
Friday, February 8	Grade 3 Shabbat Dinner and Service led by Rabbi Cherney	(dinner) 6:00 pm (service) 7:00 pm
Sunday, February 10	Religious School	9:00 am
	My Special Person and Me	10:45 am
	<b>Temple Judea Coffee House</b>	5:00 pm
Tuesday, February 12	League of Our Own event	2:00 pm
Wednesday, February 13	Confirmation Academy and Prayer Prep	5:30 pm
	Hebrew Boot Camp	5:30 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep	5:30 pm
Friday, February 15	Small Wonders closed for in-service	
	Friday Night Express Shabbat led by Cantor Frimark	7:00 pm
Sunday, February 17	No Religious School	
Monday, February 18	Small Wonders closed	
	Office closed	
Wednesday, February 20	Hebrew Boot Camp	5:30 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep (with parents)	5:30 pm
	Board meeting	7:30 pm
Friday, February 22	Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Simon	7:00 pm
Saturday, February 23	<b>Kaballah class</b> led by Rabbi Simon	10:30 am
Sunday, February 24	Religious School with Pre-Gan	9:00 am
	Religious School Committee meeting	9:15 am
	Adult Ed. Brunch	10:00 am
Monday, February 25	Choir rehearsal	7:30 pm
Wednesday, February 27	Confirmation Academy and Prayer Prep	5:30 pm
	Hebrew Boot Camp	5:30 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep	5:30 pm

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## March

Friday, March 1	Traditional Shabbat Service with Rabbi Cherney	7:00 pm
Saturday, March 2	Munchkin Minyan	10:30 am
Sunday, March 3	Religious School 9:00 am	
	Family Ed. grade 2	10:30 am
Monday, March 4	Choir rehearsal	7:30 pm
Wednesday, March 6	Hebrew Boot Camp	5:30 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep	5:30 pm
Thursday, March 7	Small Wonders closed for in-service	
	Rosh Chodesh meeting (call office for location)	6:30 pm
Friday, March 8	Traditional Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Cherney	7:00 pm
Saturday, March 9	Shabbat Service with grade 6 participating led by Rabbi Cherney	10:30 am
Sunday, March 10	Religious School	9:00 am
	My Special Person and Me	10:45 am
Monday, March 11	League of Our Own event	2:00 pm
Wednesday, March 13	Confirmation Academy and Prayer Prep	5:30 pm
	Hebrew Boot Camp	5:30 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep	5:30 pm
	Board meeting	7:30 pm
Friday, March 15	Friday Night Express Shabbat led by Cantor Frimark	7:00 pm
Saturday, March 16	Shabbat Service with Bat Mitzvah of Molly Gibson	5:15 pm
Sunday, March 17	<b>Purim Carnival</b>	9:00 am
Monday, March 18	Choir rehearsal	7:30 pm
Wednesday, March 20	<b>Purim Celebration with megillah reading and dinner</b> with Cantor Frimark	5:30 pm
	<b>Purim Shpiel: "Improv at Shushan"</b>	7:00 pm
	B'nai Mitzvah Prep	5:30 pm
Friday, March 22	Shabbat Service led by Rabbi Simon	7:00 pm
Saturday, March 23	Shabbat Service with Bat Mitzvah of Sadie Adams led by Cantor Frimark	10:30 am
	<b>"Aging Spiritually" with Rabbi Simon</b> (first class in a new series)	10:30 am
Sunday, March 24	Religious School with Pre-Gan	9:00 am
	Religious School Committee meeting	9:15 am
	Adult Ed. Brunch	10:00 am
Monday, March 25	Choir rehearsal	7:30 pm
Wednesday, March 27	Confirmation Academy and Prayer Prep	5:30 pm
Friday, March 29	<b>60th Anniversary Celebration and Shabbat Service with Temple Judea</b>	
	<b>Choir</b> — led by Cantor Frimark	7:00 pm
Saturday, March 30	Shabbat Service with Bat Mitzvah of Emily Gerstein led by Cantor Frimark	10:30 am
Sunday, March 31	Religious School	9:00 am
	Religious School Faculty meeting	11:30 am

## Big News from Small Wonders

Small Wonders children and teachers will start February with a BIG pajama party. On February 6, we will all come to school in our PJs, enjoy a milk and cereal snack, and have breakfast for lunch. Entertainment for our party will be provided by Puppets Pizzazz, as we spread our blankets on the Social Hall floor, cuddle up with our favorite stuffed animals, and get ready to laugh and sing and dance along with the hilarious puppets. It is definitely one of our best days of the year! Events like this are funded through the Hot Lunch proceeds, so thanks for your support in making it happen!

On February 13 and 14, we will celebrate love and friendship in our classrooms with special snacks and crafts. There is no school for children on February 15 as the staff and I learn together in a teacher training.

All school parents are invited to join us on Thursday, February 21, at 7:00 pm, where there will be a representative from NOVA

(Network of Victim Assistance) to speak with parents about the “Good Touch, Bad Touch” program that will be presented to the children the following week. I sincerely hope all parents with children ages three and above will come to the meeting to hear the information first-hand.

Plans for Ladies Night Out, scheduled for April 4, are all coming together, promising another exciting night of shopping, raffles, silent auctions, food and wine, and mingling. Ticket info will be available soon!

Registration for Summer Stars Camp and the 2019–2020 school year is underway. Give me a call to find out how to get your child in on the fun!

*Sheryl Milstein*

Director, Small Wonders at Temple Judea

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## February Yahrzeits

26 Tevet	February 1	Ruth Lipkin Aravind Menon Fania Sidline	Grandmother of Stacey Ehly Father of Sunitha Menon Mother of Alex Sidline
27 Shevat	February 2	Roxe Sills	Aunt of Jennifer Landis and Robin Silber
28 Shevat	February 3	Sheldon Gilgore Natalie Pines	Father of Lloyd Gilgore Mother of Marcia Philipson
29 Shevat	February 4	Celia Notgarnie	Mother of Benson Notgarnie
30 Shevat	February 5	Jamil Bekhor Mark Kayser Lettie Klatzkin Fannie Peters	Brother-in-law of Sonya Guggenheim Friend of Marinetta Serotte Mother of Charles Klatzkin Grandmother of Gloria Viess
2 Adar 1	February 7	Allen Needleman	Brother of Richard Needleman
3 Adar 1	February 8	Dennis Delcau Rhea Foster Linda Grater Ruth Saffren	Husband of Fran Delcau Mother of Gigi Kitei Wife of Gerald Grater Mother of Leonard Saffren
4 Adar 1	February 9	Morris Braverman	Grandfather of Robert Braverman
7 Adar 1	February 12	Milton Glatt Ellie Wasserman	Father of David Glatt Stepmother of Lacey Krause
10 Adar 1	February 15	Phillip Weiner	Father of Joel Weiner
12 Adar 1	February 17	Ralph Opstbaum Peter Ward	Father of Nadine Stein Husband of Maxine Ward
13 Adar 1	February 18	Beatrice Schonfeld	Mother of Margery Hewitt
14 Adar 1	February 19	Charles Hollender Dorothy Stertz	Grandfather of Fran Delcau Mother of Susan Schultz
15 Adar 1	February 20	Florence Gershowson Harry Zelmanow	Mother of Spencer Snyderman Father of Phoebe Ward
18 Adar 1	February 23	Lillian Goldblatt	Sister of Freda Heyman
19 Adar 1	February 24	Jayne Heft	Mother of Philip Heft
20 Adar 1	February 25	Tobias Tannenbaum	Grandfather of Alisa Talke
21 Adar 1	February 26	Lorri Kiehl	Grandmother of Tamra Adams

The Coffee House returns to Temple Judea  
with musical performances by talented  
area teens!



Sunday, February 10, 2019

5:00 pm to 7:00 pm

\$10 per person

(includes beverages, light refreshments,  
and delicious desserts)

Proceeds benefit Temple Judea's  
JUSTY Youth Group

Walk-ins welcome; RSVP preferred. Reply by email  
to [tjbucksyouth@gmail.com](mailto:tjbucksyouth@gmail.com). For additional information  
email [Seth.Wohl@gmail.com](mailto:Seth.Wohl@gmail.com)

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**Editorial Committee:** Gail Snyder, Lesley Weissman-Cook

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For advertising rates and information, please contact the temple  
office.

## TEMPLE JUDEA OF BUCKS COUNTY

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*Save the date for the return of*

## **CASINO NIGHT!**

Saturday, April 13 7:00 pm to 11:00 pm  
Details to come

### **Special Events — February 2019**

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| Sunday, February 10   | <b>Coffee House</b> — Talented teens return for a delightful musical performance. 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm. \$10 admission includes light refreshments. Proceeds support Temple Judea's JUSTY Youth Group. (See full information on page 7.)  |
| Saturday, February 23 | <b>Kaballah Class led by Rabbi Simon</b> — 10:30 am. Final class in Rabbi Simon's popular "Miraculous Living" series. This month's topic is Nobility. Rabbi Simon will also lead Friday night Shabbat services and Saturday morning Torah Study on this weekend. (Rabbi Simon will teach another series of classes on "Aging Spiritually" beginning Saturday, March 23.) |

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*Check our website ([TempleJudea.org](http://TempleJudea.org)) for the most up-to-date information or changes to our events and schedules.*