

THE TEMPLE ISRAEL NEWS

ATHOL, MASSACHUSETTS VOL. 18 TAMMUZ/AV 5764 JULY, 2004

RABBI'S MESSAGE

New Year Greetings! This is season to take a moral inventory of ourselves and chart a new year to come with new commitments to ourselves and our community. In thinking back on the last year, were there any moments when you caught yourself making a positive moral judgment and then wished you could make it a regular habit or wished that more people would join you in doing the right thing? Was there any time when you made a promise to yourself and then forgot about it a week later? Rosh Hashanah is a time to collect all those promises and partially fulfilled commitments and put them into practice. Every morning during the month of Elul, the shofar is sounded in synagogues all over the world calling on us to practice justice, to live honorably, and to be humble. The shofar is a wake up call. It is taking the pent-up energy of our moral world that is sometimes left on the back burner and bringing to the fore. As we pipe the sound out of the small aperture on one end of the shofar, we force ourselves out of the smallness of our being and expand ourselves to embrace the universe with compassion. We stretch our moral spirit each and every Rosh Hashanah. Consider it as a visit to a spiritual.spa.

One wake up call I got this summer came through the work that I did with teens in doing gemilut hasadim (compassionate deeds) at our summer camp at the Springfield JCC. We went all over the city looking for mizvot to do from visiting sick children at the hospital to feeding the hungry and homeless at a local shelter. It was a lesson to the kids about how much they are really needed in providing compassionate care to those in need but it was also a wake up call to me. I was standing with a few of the campers at a local playground in Springfield's north end handing out sandwiches to children. At first there was no one around but then I felt I tug at pant leg and I turned around. Below me was a toddler looking up

at me with her great big eyes. I handed her a sandwich and she walked away. It was that moment that I realized how important it was for us the well-fed to feed each and every one of God's creatures.

To help instill a sense of that at Temple Israel, I would encourage you to bring food items to shul when you come on Rosh Hashanah. I'm told at the local pantries that the poor are in need of rice, beans, and oil, but canned foods are also welcomed. Let's see how much we can collect and I will take everything we collect to a local food pantry. Let's start the new year right. Let's make good on our commitments to ourselves and our community.

Shanah Tovah,
Jon



Shabbaton Elul

September 3-4

"The End of Exile? American Jewry at 350"

Friday night

6:00 PM Pot Luck Dinner

7:00 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service

Sermon Topic: "Exile in America: Good for the Jews?"

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The first Jewish settlers in this country found that it was difficult to take their old world Judaism with them. Few believed that America would develop into the largest Jewish community the Jewish world has ever known. America has altered the path of Jewish civilization. Has it been for the best?

Saturday Morning

9:15 AM Meditation

10:00 AM Prayer Services

11:30 AM Torah Discussion: "Spiritual Exile"

We will reflect on the words of Parshat Ki Tavo, "The Lord will scatter you among all the peoples, and the life you face shall be precarious; you shall be in terror, night and day, with no assurance of survival" (Deuteronomy 28:64). Is life in the Diaspora really that terrible? What lessons can we take home about living the life of Diaspora Jews?

12:00 PM Hot Cholent Lunch

Roundtable: "Are you American first and Jewish second?"

7:30 Sunset Torah Discussion for Children

8:00 Poetry and Havdalah

ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS

Rosh Hashana

Rosh Hashana is the "head of the year." We gather for two days in prayer to celebrate the renewal of our spiritual lives in the new year. We acknowledge God's sovereignty in our lives and we welcome the opportunity to become better people. The theme of the day is judgment - all human beings pass by God in review. A member

of the congregation sounds the shofar to herald the new year but also to wake us from complacency and spiritual paralysis. On Shabbat, the shofar is not sounded (the laws of Shabbat supercede the laws of a festival day - Shabbat is more important). We eat a new fruit and say the shehechyanu to thank God for brining us to this day. We eat apples dipped in honey for a sweet year.

Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur is the companion day to Rosh Hashana. The theme of Yom Kippur is atonement. We are cleansed of the encrustations of spiritual impurity (sins) that we have gathered from the previous year. On Rosh Hashana, we are judged; on Yom Kippur, the judgment is sealed. We have another chance to improve our spiritual lives. Those over the age of 13 are expected to go without food and water for the entire day. Fasting represents our sincere wish to exercise our souls. The physical self is put on hold for a day. We do not wash, use perfumes, wear leather shoes, or have sex with our mates. Some dress in pure white for an added effect. The shofar is sounded at the last service of the day (at nightfall) to signify the closing of the gates of judgment.

Sukkot

Five days after Yom Kippur, Jews celebrate the bounty of the new year. As the harvest comes to a close, we build a small open air hut (sukkah) in our backyards and revel in the outdoor elements one last time before the winter. A sukkah gives shade from the sun, but light must come through its thatched roof. Families typically take their meals in the sukkah. We wave a bouquet of branches including the palm, myrtle, and willow and hold an etrog (citron) in our left hand in praise

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of God. The lulav and etrog are also used as ritual beseeching God for good rains during the winter season in erez yisrael.

Simchat

Torah

The coda of Tishri is Simchat Torah. Originally scheduled as the final day of Tishri celebration, with the recurring theme of the days of judgment on Hoshana Rabba (the day before) and a special eighth day of assembly to conclude Sukkot, Simchat Torah has come into its own as the celebration of the reading of the Torah. The following Shabbat we start from the beginning of the Torah, the book of Bereshit, Genesis. On Simchat Torah, we have a ceremonial reading of the last verses of the Torah from the book of Devarim, Deuteronomy. We dance with the Torah, wave flags, and eat sweets for a sweet new year.

SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Rosh Hashana First Day, (September 15-17th)

Evening Service 6:30 - 7:00 PM (Sept 15)
Morning Service 9:00 AM- 12:30 PM (Sept 16)
Tashlich following at 1:00 PM at the Miller's River

Rosh Hashana Second Day (Sept. 16-17th)

Evening Service 6:30- 7:00 PM (Sept 16)
Morning Service 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM (Sept 17)

Shabbat Shuva

September 17th

Pot Luck Dinner 6:00 PM
Kabbalat Shabbat Services 7:00 PM

September 18th

Morning Service 10:00 AM

Yom Kippur, September 24th and 25th

Kol Nidre 6:00 - 8:00 PM (Wear tallit and tennis shoes)
Morning Service 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Mincha/ Neilah 5:00 - 7:00 PM (shofar sounded)

Sukkot

Monday, October 3 - Sukkah Party at the Marons
6:00 PM

Shmini Atzeret/Simchat Torah

October 7th

10:00 AM Yizkor Services
6:00 Simhat Torah Services (with flags and dancing)

TEMPLE ISRAEL SCHEDULE—5765

November 6	Shabbaton
November 21	Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service
December 4	Shabbaton
January 8	Shabbaton
February 5	Shabbaton
March 5	Shabbaton
March 24	Purim
April 2	Shabbaton
April 8	Passover Family Program
May 4	Yom Hashoah
May 7	Shabbaton
June 4	Shabbaton
June 12	Shavuot Family Program
July 2	Shabbaton
August 6	Shabbaton

THE TEMPLE ISRAEL NEWS

ATHOL, MASSACHUSETTS VOL. 18 TAMMUZ/AV 5764 JULY, 2004

Board of Directors
and Temple Israel Officers
for 2004-2005



CELEBRATE SHABBAT WITH TEMPLE ISRAEL!

The next of our very special opportunities to enjoy Shabbat as a community comes on the evening of Friday, June 27 and on Saturday, June 28. On Friday evening, we will have a “dairy-vegetarian” potluck dinner at 6:00, followed by a Shabbat service at 7:00 and an Oneg (Try some great desserts and warm conversation!) after the service at 8:00. Please give a call to Dr. Myron Maron, Dinner Coordinator, at 978-724-0238 to give us an idea of what you plan to bring for the potluck dinner.

Then, on Saturday morning, our Shabbat service will be from 10:00 to 12:00 with a special lunch at noon.

NOTE: Child care for the little ones will be available from 9:15 through lunchtime.

The afternoon will be filled with learning and fellowship. You may join us in singing or learning some traditional Shabbat songs, if you like. Our Shabbat evening begins with a chance to meditate with Dr. Maron at 7:45 PM prior to our poetry study which begins at 8:30 PM. These two events—meditation and poetry study have a beauty and an intellectual/spiritual component all their own. Please, give them a try! We will conclude with a lovely Ma’ariv/Havdalah service, beginning at approximately 9:10 P.M. Please accept our warm invitation to attend any or all of the components of this wonderful Shabbat.

3 Years (Ending in 2007)

Emily Koester (Corresp. Secretary)
Jeff Plotkin
Bill Clark

2 Years (Ending in 2006)

Mark Dembek
Ray Haber
Mitch Grosky (Past Co-President)
Myron Maron (President)

1 Year (Ending in 2005)

Tom Freudenheim
Suri Maron
Louis Plotkin

OTHER (Non-board Position)

Nansi Glick (Recording Sec./Clerk)
David Koester :CFO-Chief Financial Officer



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August 6-7—Shabbaton Weekend

Even though it's summer, there's a lot happening at comfortably air conditioned Temple Israel! Please visit with us for a special Shabbaton or attend one of our programs! We'd love to see you!

For more information, please call Temple Israel in Athol at 978-249-9481 or contact Dr. Myron Maron, President, at 978-724-0238 .