



MA CHADASH! **מה חדש!**

What's New! The newsletter of Temple Shalom Synagogue Center, Auburn, Maine ק"ק היכל שלום

January 2019/Tevet/Shevat 5779

TU B'SHVAT



Friday evening, January 18th, 7:00 PM

**Please join us as we celebrate TU B'SHVAT, The Festival of the Trees.
Sip and mix wines as we explore secrets of the ancient Kabbalists
and partake of the seven holy species from the land of Israel!**

This program will be led by Rebbetzin Lisa.

*"Eretz chita u'seora v'gefen u'te'eyna, v'rimon, eretz zeyt shemen
u'dvash-- [Israel is] a land of wheat, barley, grapes, figs,
pomegranates, olive oil and honey" Deuteronomy 8:8*

FROM THE RABBI



During the reign of King David over Jerusalem and Israel, it happened that Jerusalem was being attacked at the same time by both the Arameans and the Ammonites. *Samuel II, Chapter 10*. Joab, David's star general, decided to split David's army. Joab would take the choicest soldiers to face the Arameans. The rest of the army, Joab placed under the command of his brother Abishai to fight the Ammonites. Before going off to battle, Joab told the younger Abishai: *If the Arameans be too strong for me, then thou shalt help me,*

but if the children of Ammon be too strong for thee, then I will come and help thee. And then he famously added: Chazak VeNitchazak—We are strong, but together we are even stronger!

We recall Joab's powerful words each time we conclude one of the five books of the Torah. As soon as the final words of each book are read, the entire congregation loudly exclaims: Chazak, Chazak VeNitchazeik—We are strong, we are strong, but together we are even stronger!

Like many modern Jewish communities, we read the Torah in accordance with the triennial (or 3 year) system. The first year, we read and discuss the first-third of each weekly Torah portion, the second year the middle-third, and the final year the conclusion of the portion. Accordingly, we only get to read the final verses of each book, and shout "Chazak," during the third year of each cycle. This year happens to be the third year—the Chazak year.

Those who regularly attend our Thursday or Shabbat services already know that the third year, is my favorite. It is the year that we uncover the "hidden Torah." Long ago, when our sages divided the Torah into weekly portions, they made sure to place the most uncomfortable sections towards the end of each weekly portion — hoping that by the time most people got to them, they would be too tired to pay too much attention. Under the triennial system, however, we get to examine these challenging sections, every third year, with fresh eyes and minds!

Our tradition of shouting Chazak at the conclusion of each book of the Torah helps us realize that there is something very special about our studying the Torah *together*, as a congregation. When we discuss, argue, bounce ideas off each other, our understanding of and connection to the text immeasurably deepens. And it is a lot more interesting and fun. Each Thursday and Shabbat we are so very lucky to be able to come together to enjoy that week's Torah study. This year we are especially fortunate to uncover the hidden Torah—and to be able to shout: We are strong, we are strong, but together we are even stronger—Chazak, Chazak VeNitchazeik!

Rabbi Sruli

Rabbi Sruli is always happy to speak with and meet with members of our Temple. Please call or text his cell phone at 914-980-9509 if you would like to speak with him or to arrange a time for a meeting. You can also call or leave a message at the Temple office and Rabbi Sruli will get back to you.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Anne and I both just completed the book, 'The Life We Bury'. "In it, the author, in passing, refers to Pascal's Wager. Blais Pascal, a French philosopher (1623-1662) argues that a



rational person should live as though G-d exists and seek to believe in G-d. If G-d does not actually exist, then what was the harm in believing in G-d? However, if G-d does exist, isn't it better to enter the afterlife, whatever form that may take, on his/her good side?

Whether G-d exists or not, **belief** in G-d will lead one to be a better person...to do good...to help others...to do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Whether this is fear of damnation (I believe this is more of a Christian concept than a Jewish one, but we, as Jews, are certainly influenced by the culture and practices around us) or from a belief in the goodness of G-d, it really does not matter, as long as the result is fulfilling the Golden Rule.

If G-d does not exist and we falsely believed and led a good life because of this false belief, there is no harm. The goodness in your life, that was shared, helped others.

However, if you do not believe in God and there is some kind of afterlife, and once you get to that afterlife, then it is too later to say 'oops, I should have believed'.

Of course, I would like to believe in a G-d who does not look at one's belief in G-d as a test, but measure the entire person for goodness. Would a loving G-d punish someone for not believing, but still leading a good life? Would a loving G-d turn a blind eye to that person? I would hope not, but it is safer to believe, especially when there is no downside to that belief.

Of course, believing in G-d does not mean you have to go to Temple every week or year or ever. It does not mean that you have to be Jewish. It just mean that in your heart, you believe and hopefully live your life accordingly.

A dear friend of mine, who died while we were in our 20's was a true atheist and a supporter of idealistic (although, in my opinion, unattainable) socialism. In high school and college, we had many discussions about both the existence of G-d and Socialism. I visited my friend about two weeks before his passing. We both knew the end was near, although we smiled and both knowingly lied about the future. During this last visit, we again spoke about the existence of G-d. I cannot say he believed, but I can say he was more open to the possibility of G-d existing. Did he realize it was safer to believe, just in case G-d exists. Was he hedging his bets?

My guess is you cannot convince someone to believe in G-d. It is too personal. Too, inside oneself. G-d is not based in science. G-d cannot be proven. Yet, G-d cannot be disproven, either. Be open to the existence of G-d and live by the Golden Rule. After all, as Blais Pascal wrote and argued (so much more eloquently than me) what do you have to lose by believing?

David Allen

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!BOOK GROU NEWS!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



We had a full round table on December 10. Present were Margaret Meyer, Helene Perry, Lindsey Walker, Babs Shapiro, Sandy Traister, Bertha Bodenheimer, Judy Abromson, Elcha Buckman and me, Lesli Weiner. Lauren Belfer's title *And After the Fire* refers to what one is left with after the

Holocaust. Susanna Kessler grew up in NYC without knowing much of her family's past history. When her uncle Henry dies she uncovers a long-hidden music manuscript. It turns out to be an anti-Jewish cantata by Johann Sebastian Bach. Without giving any more of the plot away, (because you will want to read this novel,) some of the ethical and sociological questions we discussed were:

Can art do harm? How should we approach a work of art that would have been unobjectionable in its own day but is troubling in ours? Can we separate art from the context in which it was created?

This is what is so rewarding about being in a Book Group: you get to discuss what you were pondering while reading. We always have room for more!

Our next selection is *The Submission* by Amy Waldman. Written ten years after 9/11, this novel re-imagines the aftermath of the terrorist attack.

"A jury gathers in Manhattan to select a memorial for the victims of a devastating terrorist attack. Their fraught deliberations complete, the jurors open the envelope containing the anonymous winner's name—and discover he is an American Muslim. Instantly they are cast into roiling debate about the claims of grief, the ambiguities of art, and the meaning of Islam. Their conflicted response is only a preamble to the country's. The memorial's designer is an enigmatic, ambitious architect named Mohammad Khan. His fiercest defender on the jury is his sole widow, the self-possessed and mediagenic Claire Burwell. But when the news of his selection leaks to the press, she finds herself under pressure from outraged family members and in collision with hungry journalists, wary activists, opportunistic politicians, fellow jurors, and Khan himself—as unknowable as he is gifted. In the fight for both advantage and their ideals, all will bring the emotional weight of their own histories to bear on the urgent question of how to remember, and understand, a national tragedy.

In this deeply humane novel, the breadth of Amy Waldman's cast of characters is matched by her startling ability to conjure their perspectives. A striking portrait of a fractured city striving to make itself whole, *The Submission* is a piercing and resonant novel by an important new talent."

So join us for what should be another lively discussion on MONDAY, JANUARY 14 at 4 PM. We lived through the grief, now let's talk about the healing.....lesli



MLK Day at Bates

Sunday, January 20th—7 to 8 P.M.

Once again, the Temple Shalom community will observe MLK Day by participating in the annual Bates College Martin Luther King, Jr. Interfaith Service. Please join Rabbi Sruli and Lisa in a musical offering from our community—song sheets will be provided. The service will be held in the Peter J. Gomes Chapel, corner Campus Avenue and College Street, from 7-8 p.m. The service will be full of music, art, reflection, and word!

SPEEDY RECOVERY

We pray for refuah sh'leimah – the full and speedy recovery of **Georgette Belanger, Phil Bray, Gary Buckman, John Calloway, June Wilner Chason, Lloyd W. Cohen, Cheryl Dufour, Louise Forgues, Robert Galumbeck, Isaak Gekhtin, Anne Geller, Ariella Green, Sharon Hemond, Elizabeth Johnson, Suzan Katzir, Henry Lefkowitz, Susan Lifter, Bruce Meyer, Sandy Miller, Maude Olsen, Sybil Rahilly, Joel Salberg, Sara Tedlow, Sandy Traister, Neal Weiner,** and all others who are not well at this time.



We like to hear good news! Whenever you request that a name be put on this list, please let Temple Shalom know when it can be removed.

PAINT 'NIGHT' AT LAVA

Sunday, January 6
34 Court St, Auburn
12:30 PM



\$12/person, materials included

Food and drink available for purchase

Non-judgmental artist on hand to guide us through
our artistic endeavors, so paint away!!!

No experience needed.
You will be among friends.

Call Julie at 786-4201
Or email temple6359@aol.com

Dr. Elcha Buckman Discusses Happiness and Humor

Sunday, Jan. 27 at 11:00 a.m.



Please join us on Sunday, Jan. 27 for an 11 a.m. brunch, please RSVP, followed by a noontime talk, "Stories and Jokes: The Rest Is Just Laughter" on happiness, humor, and health by our esteemed member Dr. Elcha S. Buckman, an advanced practice nurse psychotherapist and family business consultant.

Elcha has more than 50 continuous years of passion for her eclectic, humanistic-based psychotherapy work, with 40 of those years in private practice. She's partnered with more than 5,000 clients in achieving their goals for a happier, healthier, secure, and more peaceful lives. "I work through my belief in openness, authenticity, and collaboration with my clients and their other health care providers. Listening to

my clients is most important to me as it leads to therapy based on mutual trust, open communication and safety, the very foundation of their feeling heard and understood, and my understanding. When I say to a client 'I understand,' I want them to know and feel that I honestly do," Elcha says.

A member of the Association of Applied and Therapeutic Humor, Elcha is the author of "The Handbook of Humor: Clinical Applications in Psychotherapy." The summer 2018 edition of the journal *Brain World Magazine* called Elcha's book, along with Herbert Streaan's "The Use of Humor in Psychotherapy," as a classical educational text in discussing comedy's usefulness as a diagnostic tool for treatment in clinical settings.

Life is full of ups and downs, she says. "It's during these times that we may need support when it seems that our experiences are limiting us and our life choices. Many times it's our stories and thoughts that stand in our way of developing our strengths and potential, and having a more comfortable life."

Elcha has degrees from Boston University in general nursing (BS-RN) with specialization and Board Certification (ANCC) in child, adolescent, and family psychiatric-mental health nursing (MSN) and humanistic, development, and organizational psychology (EdD). She received a post-doctoral two-year fellowship at the Boston Institute for Psychotherapies. Her licensed medical background as an advanced practice registered nurse enables her to differentiate emotional from physical symptoms and pain, and to treat and refer appropriately.

Please RSVP, 786-4201 or temple6359@aol.com

Shabbat Together!

שבת ביחד!

Save the Date!

Saturday, February 9th, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Great food and drink, bonding, playing, studying, hanging out.

Special Presentation: Impressions from Israel

For the entire community—all ages!

In order to create a Shabbat atmosphere, we ask that participants commit to stay through Havdallah and to not use phones, Tablets, etc.

Please RSVP by January 10th.



Yahrzeiten

If you are observing a yahrzeit and are planning to come to Thursday morning minyan to say Kaddish, we urge you to contact **Bob Laskoff** (ral@laskofflaw.com) and let him know so that he can include that information in his weekly reminder email. It is your responsibility to call friends and neighbors to make sure there are enough people for the minyan.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Sarah Olstein	Jan.	1
Henry Meyer		3
Becca Platz		9
Cynthia Hart		10
Jennifer Ann Cohen		10
Susan Lifter		10
Neal Weiner		12
Elyse Bodenheimer		14
Rachel Fakhery		16
Adrienne Rau		17
Victoria Cohen		20
Gillian Schair		20
Susan Teich		22
Bertha Bodenheimer		23
Rosa Cohen		23
Kristine Rausch		23
Behzad Fakhery		25
Sandra Traister		25
Jackie Laskoff		29



HAPPY ANNIVERSARY TO

Ellen & Aaron Burke	Jan	21
Robert & Jackie Laskoff		29

Yahrzeiten

Elsie Goodman	Jan	1
Ida Finks		6
Augusta Olstein		6
Ellen Schleicher Bodenheimer		7
Celia Supovitz		10
Bernard Weiner		10
Henry Brody		11
Bernard Marcus		11
Lois Barr		12
Reevan Levine		12
Janet Wilner Kornreich		13
Maynard Schwartz		13
Ernest B. Williams		13
Martin Miller		15
John A. Platz		16
Jennie Krasner		18
Maxwell Passerman		18
Arthur Fishman		19
Marie Rau Stein		21
Shirley Asher		23
Anne Leavitt		24
James LaPerriere		30
Morris Cohen		30
Michael Steinman		30



Ma Chadash/What's New is published monthly by Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center. Temple Shalom is an independent congregation and a member of the Lewiston-Auburn Jewish Federation.

The mission of Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center is to foster a strong Jewish identity and an active Jewish Community.

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Check your basements, attics!
We are in need of a wheelchair to keep in the
synagogue to assist those in need!

Let Julie know if you have one in good condition
to donate, 786-4201 or temple6359@aol.com.



CONTRIBUTIONS

GENERAL FUND

Donnie Isaacson

In memory of Jack Simon

In memory of Shirley Isaacson

The Bell Family

In memory of Marcia Bell

Helene & Lewis Perry

Happy birthday to Aaron Burke

In memory of Mazie Schwartz

The Bell Family

In memory of Irving & Marcia Bell

Ellen & Rick Port

In honor of grandson, Andrew Casares

bar mitzvah

ENDOWMENT FUND

Marcia & Manny Plavin

In memory of A.H. Plavin

MARCUS MEMORIAL GARDEN FUND

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In memory of Dr. Bernard Marcus

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Phyllis Graber Jensen

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In memory of Sylvia Kutzen

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In memory of Frances Stern

Anne & David Allen

In memory of Lilo Levey

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BELL MEMORIAL CHAPEL FUND

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DATED MATERIAL
JANUARY 2019

JANUARY AT TEMPLE SHALOM

Tuesday, 1/1		New Year's Day – Office Closed
Thursday, 1/3	8:00 am	Weekday morning minyan & breakfast (Please note time)
Saturday, 1/5	9:30 am	Shabbat Service
Sunday, 1/6	12:30 pm	Paint Event at Lava – RSVP!
Monday, 1/7	12:30 pm	Mahjong
Thursday, 1/10	7:00 am	Weekday morning minyan & breakfast
Saturday, 1/12	9:30 am	Shabbat Service
Sunday, 1/13	10:00 am	Hebrew School
Monday, 1/14	12:30 pm	Mahjong
	4:00 pm	Book Group Meets
	5:15 pm	Program Committee Meeting
	7:00 pm	Temple Board Meeting
Thursday, 1/17	7:00 am	Weekday morning minyan & breakfast
Friday, 1/18	7:00 pm	Tu B'Shvat Service
Saturday, 1/19	9:30 am	Shabbat Service
Sunday, 1/20	7:00 pm	MLK Day at Bates College
Monday, 1/21	12:30 pm	Mahjong
Thursday, 1/24	7:00 am	Weekday morning minyan & breakfast
Saturday, 1/26	9:30 am	Shabbat Service
Sunday, 1/27	11:00 am	Brunch & Program with guest Elcha Buckman – RSVP!
Monday, 1/28	12:30 pm	Mahjong
Thursday, 1/31	7:00 am	Weekday morning minyan & breakfast

