



March/April 2010  
Adar/Nissan/Tyar 5770

Morgantown, West Virginia

It is a Tree of Life to  
those that hold fast to it.

**RABBI**

David Feder

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**First TOL Forum**

*Barry Pallay*

The First Tree of Life "*Congregation Forum*" or Town Hall Meeting was held January 31, 2010. It began with a pot luck dinner and meditation and concluded with a discussion session facilitated by President Linda Herbst and board member Barry Pallay. Congregants shared their thoughts, suggestions, wants, needs and concerns regarding all aspects of the Tree of Life Synagogue. Everyone's comments were noted and the results evaluated below. Of the fifty comments:

- 32% desired to experience and share a sense of Jewish community
- 28% desired programs to address their interests and enhance their experience
- 20% had questions rather than answers
- 10% expressed concerns about the lack of young and/or new faces and programs for them
- 6% expressed spiritual interests
- 2% talked about the importance of a vibrant Hebrew school
- 2% importance of coordination, involvement and leadership

Please come to the

**Tree of Life Annual Meeting  
7:00 pm on March 7, 2010**

and participate in our 2<sup>nd</sup> "*Congregation Forum.*" Let us expand the numbers and continue to discuss what is on our minds. Let us consider what these results mean and how they can be used. In particular, let us discuss how we can utilize this data to facilitate our continuing congregation dialogue. The results of these forums will help drive what we do and how we can best serve congregants and community interests.

**Community Seder: Monday, March 29th**

The seder will once again be catered by "**KIWI.**"  
More information will be posted on our web site: [etzheim.org](http://etzheim.org)



**Rabbi  
David  
Feder**

My children are still at the age where they are willing to “remember” what it was like to be a slave in Egypt (at least they were still willing last year). They could tell me how hard it was to make the bricks, to build for Pharaoh, and to work without any breaks. That really is the essence of Passover. As we read each year in the Haggadah, “In every generation, a person is obligated to see himself or herself as if he or she came forth from Egypt – *B’chol dor v’dor chayav adam lirot et atzmo k’ilu hu yatza mimitzrayim.*” We carry within us the collective memory of the Jewish people. We are asked, commanded, to experience Pesach, not as history, but as memory. We have to relive the experience annually of coming out of Egypt and Egyptian bondage.

However, there is a variant reading of this text, found in the Erfurt edition of the Mishnah: *B’chol dor v’dor chayav adam l’hayrot et atzmo k’ilu yatza mimitzrayim* – In every generation, a person is obligated to point to himself as if he or she came forth out of Egypt. We, like my children, are transformed from passively reviewing the story to actively telling our own role within it. We have to be able to answer the question, “what makes us free?” And the Haggadah begins with the assumption that we in fact are not fully free, that we are enslaved to something. Recalling the classical story of liberation helps us to apply its lessons to our lives today.

There in lies the power of Passover. Its theme of the road to freedom and liberation from bondage is a universal one. All people can tell a story of how they became free. For us, however, it is also how we became a people. Retelling it every year reminds us of our connections to each other and rein-

forces those very connections. It is not just the story of how “I” became free, but of how “we” became free.

As we prepare for *z’man cheruteinu*, the season of our freedom, let us look into the pages of our haggadot, and find our lives written across those pages.

Karen, Ari, Orli and I wish all of you a zissen Pesach!

*Rabbi David Feder*

## EDUCATION NEWS

As we move through the snows of winter, we begin to look forward to the warmth and green of spring. We began, almost prematurely, with Tu B’Shevat, celebrating the new year for trees and the hope that spring would soon arrive and instead were plunged into snow and more snow. As of this writing, it looks like we might be looking at a white Purim.

During March and April we look forward to the real spring holidays of Passover, Yom Hashoah and Yom Ha’atzma’ut with programs within the Religious School to experience all of these.

During the month of January, Jenn Reiss joined us as the teacher for the 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Grade class. Karen Feder and Laurie Brager, with help from Lisa Stern and Kyra Schlosser are teaching the 1st Grade class.

## SPECIAL SPRING NATURE WORSHIP EXPERIENCE

On Saturday, April 10th, at 10:00 am, please join us at the West Virginia Botanic Garden on Tyrone Rd. (located on the east side of Tyrone Road 1.8 miles from Rt. 7 and 0.9 miles from Snake Hill Road) for prayer, stories, singing and walking meditation as we continue our journey through the spring holiday cycle which begins with the month of Nisan, and continues through the counting of the Omer concluding with Shavuot. Join us as we explore the themes of freedom and responsibility, counting and being counted upon,

blossom and harvest. If you wish, you can bring food to share after services in the natural surroundings of the Botanic Garden.

## YOM HASHOAH

The 27th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan was set aside as a day for mourning the victims of the Shoah or Holocaust by the Israeli Knesset in 1951. This year our observance takes place on April 11. At 5:00 pm, on Sunday, April 11, we will remember those who perished and those who rescued during our annual Yom Shoah service.

The Hebrew word "shoah" means destruction or catastrophe. Holocaust comes from the Greek word meaning burnt whole, referring to a burnt offering entirely consumed by fire. The meaning of holocaust and its use in describing such a wide array of contemporary tragedies makes the use of the term Shoah much more appropriate for the destruction of European Jewry during the Second World War.

It is a mitzvah to recall the six million Jews who were murdered during the Shoah, as well as the Chasdei Umot Haolam, the righteous non-Jews, who gave their lives in attempts to save members of the Jewish people. We will do this by attending special Yom Hashoah (Holocaust Memorial Day) services. In order to fulfill the mitzvah of remembrance it is suggested that a memorial (yahrzeit) candle be lit and passages of Holocaust and/or memorial literature be read.

In keeping with the spirit of Yom Hashoah, festive social events are inappropriate. It is further suggested that one eat a very simple meal on the eve of Yom Hashoah as an act of identification and solidarity with those who were in concentration camps and slowly starved to death.





**Linda  
Herbst**

As I sit here writing my piece for the newsletter I look out my window and see the snow falling, again. The bird feeders need filling, again, which means I have to put my knee boots on to get to them. I'm debating whether to shovel, which I've done many times since all this began or just wait until spring and hope that the weather warms up and the snow stops falling. I hope you all are staying safe and warm.

Our Town Hall Meeting went very well. We had a good turnout with good food. However, the turnout by the younger members was limited. I am interested in your feedback. You can contact me by email at [leherbst@gmail.com](mailto:leherbst@gmail.com) or by phone at 304-599-6947. I will be happy to talk with you. All the ideas and activities that have been suggested cannot occur without your help. Volunteers are needed; the Rabbi and the board cannot do everything. We will be identifying volunteer opportunities soon.

## ANNUAL MEETING

Our annual meeting will be held Sunday March 7 at 7 pm at the Tree of Life. I hope to see all members there. For additional information, please check our web page at [etzheim.org](http://etzheim.org).

## COMMUNITY SEDER

The Community Passover Seder will be held at the Tree of Life on Monday March 29. KIWI CATERING will once again handle the meal. Additional information will follow. Details will be posted online at [etzheim.org](http://etzheim.org) as they become available.

## EMAIL

There has been some question about TOL emails. If you are not receiving the weekly email announcements it is because we either don't have your email or the one we do have is incorrect. Please email me at [leherbst@gmail.com](mailto:leherbst@gmail.com) or call me at 304-599-6947 if you are not receiving the weekly messages.

## EMPTY BOWLS



Once again we've been asked to partner with Empty Bowls Monongalia. What is Empty Bowls Monongalia? It is an ecumenical, community-wide effort to raise money for local food pantries and kitchens. All the money raised, except for small administrative costs that aren't donated, go to feed the hungry. The fourth annual Soup and Bread Luncheon will be held on Saturday, March 13, 2010 at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church Peace Hall in Star City.

Help is needed baking cookies as well as volunteers to set up on Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup> and to work on March 13<sup>th</sup> transporting soup, serving soup and bread, bussing table, taking tickets, and various other jobs. Please let me know if you can bake or volunteer by February 26.

Tickets for the event are \$15 and you get to keep the bowl. You can purchase tickets from Rachel Blais @ 304-296-0125, George Lilly @ 304-599-2352 or Vernon Armbruster @ 304-216-0972.

You can go on line and check them out at [www.emptybowlsmon.org](http://www.emptybowlsmon.org).



## GREETINGS FROM YOUR TREASURER

Sorry if this sounds like a broken record, but please send in your dues pledge if you have not already done so. We rely on each member to contribute in order to keep the Rabbi paid, our Religious School functioning, the lights and heat in the building on, and wonderful programs like the Hanukkah party and the upcoming Community Seder happening.

If you are new to the community, we hope that you are finding your experiences at Tree of Life fulfilling and that you are becoming part of our Tree of Life family.

If you are in need of gift ideas, seek no further - a donation to one of the Tree of Life funds is a wonderful way to commemorate a special occasion or to memorialize a loved one. These funds include: General, Prayer Book, Religious School, Torah Scroll Repair, Holocaust Education, Rabbi Discretionary, and Social Service. Many of our lovely new prayer books are still looking for sponsors at a mere \$25 each. And for really special events, please consider purchasing a leaf (\$250) or a stone (\$2,500 for the small ones) on our beautiful Simcha Tree.

If you have any questions about our dues pledge guidelines or about making donations, feel free to contact me either by email at [mpstolzen@yahoo.com](mailto:mpstolzen@yahoo.com) or call in the evenings or on weekends at (304)292-6767. Hope to see everyone at a TOL event very soon!

*Merle Stolzenberg, Treasurer*

## YOM HA'ATZMA'UT

On the fourth day of the Hebrew month of Iyar in 1948, Israel was reborn as a modern state. Although this year that will fall on April 19/20, we will celebrate it at the synagogue on Sunday afternoon, April 18<sup>th</sup> at noon. Please join in celebrating Israel's 62nd birthday with Israeli food, music and fun.

## CLERGY HOSPITAL VISITATION

The law (HIPPA) prohibits The Temple and our clergy from obtaining clergy sheets and religious census information from hospitals.

### We need your help!

Please notify **Kathy Abate**, [xuaf@aol.com](mailto:xuaf@aol.com) co-chair of the CARE Committee of any serious sickness in your family or hospital admissions.

## etzhaim.org

Presenting ... the **Calendar Page** of our new website.

Calendar information appears in several locations. The main place, of course, is the Calendar Page. If you click on an event, more information will appear. Information is posted as soon as I receive it and updated regularly.

In addition, events coming up in the next few weeks automatically appear on the Home Page, lower right side under "Upcoming Events."

Special Events will sometimes be showcased at the top of the Home page with extra information, if needed, found under Calendar on the Special Events page.

*Sylvia Cooper*

*We note with sorrow  
the passing of  
**Henry Stoloff**  
brother of Buffy Vohse  
  
May his memory  
be as a blessing*

## HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL PROGRAM

*Heidi Solomon*

The 13th annual Yom Hashoah Holocaust Memorial Program will be held Tuesday April 13 - Wednesday April 14 inside the Mt. Lair. WVU Hillel needs volunteers to read names of Holocaust victims during this 24 hour vigil. To participate or to make a donation please e-mail [wvuhillel@gmail.com](mailto:wvuhillel@gmail.com) or call Blair Lord at 304-549-6000.

## Schmooze with Jewz

*Heidi Solomon*

WVU Hillel would like to invite TOL members for "Schmooze with Jewz" - Shabbat diner at the newly renovated (hopefully finished) Hillel House Friday March 19th at 6:30 pm. Don't miss this chance to mingle with the Jewish student community of WVU. RSVP to [heidi.solomon@mac.com](mailto:heidi.solomon@mac.com) by March 17th.

## Share Your Simcha Buy a Leaf on THE SIMCHA TREE

**\$250/leaf**  
**\$2500/Small Stone**  
**\$5000/Large Stone**  
**Contact**  
**Merle Stolzenberg/  
Barbara Jacowitz**



Remember a loved one  
with a  
**Yahrzeit Plaque**  
\$300 DONATION  
Contact: **Bennett Millstone**

## MI SHEBEIRACH / WELLNESS PRAYERS

Please remember to consult with those who are in need of healing, before publicly adding their names to the Mi Shebeirach list. With their permission, we would like to add whatever support we can to their recovery and healing.



### One Night Stay

*Howie Good*

An old man with eyes like dead sparrows  
is telling a story at the next table

in the restaurant of the Quality Inn  
in Lebanon, Pennsylvania, something

about the price of scrap metal after the war.  
Suddenly he lowers his voice. The Jews,

he mumbles. My wife and I look at each other.  
Meat hooks. Gas chambers.

Our daughter notices. What? she asks.  
I shake my head. We finish eating

and go up to our \$74-a-night room  
and all lie on one bed and watch TV.

The studio audience is laughing.  
May tomorrow be a song without words.

### Shabbos Haiku

By Shelley White on January 12, 2010



Friday night candles  
Reflect on the silver tray  
The light on your face

Grandma's tablecloth  
Chicken soup and knaidlach  
The tam on my tongue

A slice of challah  
Poppy seeds between my teeth  
The softness of dough

### CARE COMMITTEE

*Kathy Abate*

The CARE committee sends gift bags and greetings to TOL members who are shut ins at the holidays. Upon request, the CARE committee will coordinate food for member families sitting Shiva and food and transportation for member families needing help due to illness or other emergencies.

If you know of a person in need of such assistance or who should be on our holiday greetings list, please contact the rabbi, Kathleen Abate at [xuaf@aol.com](mailto:xuaf@aol.com) or Susan Newfield.

If you are willing to be part of our "soup and challah" brigade or can volunteer to on occasion provide food for Jewish families in our community or want to share your thoughts and ideas about the committee, please contact Kathy Abate at [xuaf@aol.com](mailto:xuaf@aol.com) or Susan Newfield.

### Hadassah

*Monique Gingold*

Shalom y'all. We are busy planning a Rosh Chodesh meeting for March or April of this year. We have our eyes on showing an entertaining film on six of the greatest female jewish comedians, past and present, or a travelogue about Israel based on members' recent trips. Stay tuned for details.

There is a Region Board meeting April 24-25 in Columbus. It would be great if someone would join Merle at the meeting. These meetings are a great opportunity to meet new people, learn about what is going on in Hadassah and to rebuild enthusiasm and direction. Lastly, June 6, 2010, we will end the year with our annual Book Meeting where we all share information about the great books we have read.

We look forward to seeing familiar faces and meeting new ones!!!

## Bar Mitzvah in Jerusalem

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On Rosh Chodesh Kislev (November 18, 2009), **Matanya Solomon** celebrated becoming a Bar Mitzvah in Jerusalem at a synagogue where his great great great grandfather served as gabbai. Matanya's great grandfather (Rabbi Aaron Solomon of blessed memory) was born in the yishuv (courtyard of Jewish homes) right below the synagogue. Matanya read the Rosh Chodesh Torah reading during morning services, celebrated with brunch at the Quarter Cafe just steps from the Kotel, and then toured the Old Court Yishuv Museum and Jerusalem Archaeological Park's Southern Wall Excavation with a special family tour led by his Uncle Dovid and cousin Avigail. Matanya spent 5 1/2 weeks in Israel. Much of his time was spent in the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem. Matanya volunteered at a terror victims' support center where he packed food boxes and at an archaeological sifting project where he sifted through dirt from the Temple Mount that had been thrown away by the Arabs during an illegal construction project. Matanya also traveled and stayed in the Galilee, Golan, West Bank, Negev Desert, and Eilat.



Matanya learning how to put on his tefillin with his father (Dan) and Grandfather (Rabbi Josef Solomon).



Practicing reading Torah. Dan, Meera, Matanya, Grandpa, cousin Ruel, Uncle Dovid.



Walking to shul on the morning of the Bar Mitzvah. Meera, Grandpa, Matanya, and Dan.



At the brunch after the service. Meera, Matanya, Daya, Dan.

# Calendars

MARCH 2010				
Date	Day	Event	Time	
March 3	Wednesday	Hebrew School	4:00 pm	
March 5	Friday	Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
		Tot Shabbat	5:45 pm	
March 6	Saturday	Vegetarian Potluck Dinner	6:30 pm	
		Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
March 7	Sunday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
March 10	Wednesday	Religious School	9:30 am	
		<b>Annual Meeting</b>	7:00 pm	
March 12	Friday	Hebrew School	4:00 pm	
March 13	Saturday	Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
March 17	Wednesday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
		Religious School	9:30 am	
March 19	Friday	Hebrew School	4:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
March 20	Saturday	<b>Shmooze with Jewz @ Hillel</b>	6:30 pm	
March 21	Sunday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
March 24	Wednesday	Religious School	9:30 am	
March 26	Friday	Hebrew School	4:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
March 27	Saturday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
March 28	Sunday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
March 29	Monday	<b>NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL</b>		
		<b>Erev Pesach</b>		
March 30	Tuesday	<b>Community Seder</b>	TBA	
March 31	Wednesday	Pesach Morning Service	9:00 am	
		<b>NO HEBREW SCHOOL</b>		

APRIL 2010				
Date	Day	Event	Time	
April 2	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
April 3	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00am	
April 4	Sunday	<b>NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL</b>		
April 5	Monday	Last Day Pesach Service	9:00 am	
April 7	Wednesday	Hebrew School	4:30 pm	
April 9	Friday	Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
April 10	Saturday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
April 11	Sunday	<b>Nature Worship Experience</b>	10:00 am	
April 13/14	Tues/Wed	Religious School	9:30 am	
April 14	Wednesday	<b>Yom Hashoah Observance</b>	5:00 pm	
April 16	Friday	24-hour Memorial Prog at WVU		
April 17	Saturday	Hebrew School	4:30 pm	
April 18	Sunday	Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
April 21	Wednesday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
April 23	Friday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
April 24	Saturday	Religious School	9:30 am	
April 25	Sunday	<b>Yom Ha'atzma'ut Celebration</b>	12:00 pm	
April 28	Wednesday	Hebrew School	4:30 pm	
April 30	Friday	Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
May 1	Saturday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
		Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
		Religious School	9:30 am	
		Hebrew School	4:30 pm	
		Judaism: The Classics	7:00 pm	
		Study Shabbat	7:30 pm	
		Torah Study	10:00 am	



## SOUP KITCHEN

On January 30th, Tree of Life congregants braved snow, ice, football traffic and downtown gridlock to honor our commitment to help at the soup kitchen.

On the 5th Saturday of the month, which usually occurs about four times a year, we prepare the noon meal for the Morgantown Soup Kitchen .



**Tree of Life Congregation**  
PO Box 791  
Morgantown, WV 26507-0791  
(304) 292-7029  
<http://etzhaim.org>

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**



## **PASSOVER**

Passover begins on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Nisan, which corresponds to Monday evening, March 29, this year. For the seven days following, we refrain from consuming foods made from the grains, wheat, barley, rye, oats, and spelt. Many Ashkenazi Jews also follow the practice of refraining from consuming kitniyot – other grains and legumes that could be mistaken or accidentally mixed with the aforementioned grains, such as lentils, beans, rice, and corn.

For many, preparations for Pesach occupy a large role in the observance of the festival. Some transform their kitchens, removing pots and pans, dishes and flatware used throughout the year and substituting items used exclusively for

Pesach. Others use the approach of Pesach as an opportunity to engage in serious spring cleaning.

Wherever one fits in the spectrum of Pesach observance or involvement, Pesach means the chance for transformation, to willingly disrupt one's life for a week. Not disruption for the sake of disruption, but an interruption for the purpose of growth and introspection.

No where is this more evident than in the core of Passover observance, the story, the mitzvah of sipur yetziat mitzrayim – telling the story of the exodus from Egypt. Each of us on Seder night personalizes that story, telling the story of our own lives and the life of our

people. Some do it with more of a dramatic flair, others seem to stumble through it, but on this night, we are all telling our story.

The Seder is not designed to be one size fits all. The rabbis emphasize that the tale be told according to the knowledge and understanding of its participants. There is no wrong way of telling this tale.

On Passover we remember where we came from and who we are.

*Rabbi Feder*

***May this Passover be  
filled with meaning.***