



November/December 2011  
Cheshvan/Kislev/Tevet 5772

Morgantown, West Virginia

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

**RABBI**

David Feder

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# CHANUKAH



**Chanukah Party**  
**Sunday, Dec 18, 2011**  
**5:00 pm**  
**(Details to follow.)**



**Latke Brigade**  
**2:30 pm**

## TREE OF LIFE GIFT SHOP CHANUKAH SALE 2011 ONLY FIVE DAYS TO SHOP

<b>SUNDAY</b> December 4	<b>10:00 – 12:00 noon</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> December 7	<b>5:00 – 06:30 PM</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b> December 11	<b>10:00 – 12:00 noon</b>
<b>WEDNESDAY</b> December 14	<b>5:00 – 06:30 PM</b>
<b>SUNDAY</b> December 18	<b>10:00 – 12:00 noon</b>



**Driedels, Gelt, candles, menorahs,  
wrapping paper and giftware!**  
**Spend \$10.00 & gift wrap is only \$1.00!**

**WE HAVE ALL YOUR GIFT NEEDS.  
NO SALES TAX!**

**ALL PROCEEDS GO  
TO SUNDAY SCHOOL!!!**

**QUESTIONS/ DELIVERY OPTIONS?**  
**Contact Joan Addicks 599-4521**



**Rabbi  
David  
Feder**

Most of us associate Chanukah with the miracle of the oil. The Maccabees are prepared to rededicate the Temple. A tiny cruse filled with enough oil to last a single day is found. The Maccabees chose to kindle it and it burned for eight days, enabling the priests to prepare enough oil to continue kindling the menorah regularly.

When we think about Chanukah, we think about the big miracles. The ones that occur in Technicolor. The ones that happened in ancient times. Perhaps we should focus on smaller miracles, the miracles of everyday life.

How many of these have we experienced? A friend appearing just when we needed one. A delay enables us to avoid an accident. A random encounter leads to a friendship or a relationship. Children who are born on or after their parents' last attempt. On a somewhat grander scale, the existence of life on this planet. Without all of the right conditions, life never would have existed on the planet, much less evolved into creatures like ourselves.

During Chanukah, on the first night, share those smaller miracles with those who are assembled around your menorah. Remembering "the wonders performed for our ancestors at these seasons in that time" is the perfect opportunity to consider and to share the wonders of our own lives. Then, we may realize that we are surrounded by miracles of the smaller variety each and every day.

Chag Ha-Urim Sameach,,

## CHANUKAH

Chanukah begins on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of the Hebrew month of Kislev and continues for 8 days. This year, the first night will be Tuesday, December 20. Chanukah literally means "dedication", referring to the rededication of the Second Temple in Jerusalem by the Maccabees or Hasmoneans in 166 B.C. E. The Temple had been desecrated by the Syrians, led by their ruler, Antiochus IV and turned into a pagan shrine. The Hasmoneans or Maccabees, a priestly family living in the village of Modi'in, led a popular guerilla war of conservative Judeans against the Syrians and their Hellenistic Jewish sympathizers. Overcoming forces that were far more numerous and much better trained, the Maccabees set about restoring the Temple to its original purity. Basing their rededication on the description of Solomon's original dedication of the Temple, the celebration lasted for 8 days.

The Maccabees proved to be poorly suited for ruling the nation and generations of internal strife and intrigue characterized their reign. The Rabbis replaced the Maccabees as the hero of the Chanukah story with God, emphasizing the miracle of the small overcoming the mighty as well as the story of the container of oil that lasted for eight days. In fact, Chanukah is the only ancient holiday we celebrate that is post-biblical. The story of Chanukah can be found in the books I and II Maccabees, which are part of the extracanonical collection known as the Apocrypha.

Chanukah is traditionally observed by kindling lights in the *chanukiyah* each evening, as well as eating food cooked in oil such as *latkes* (potato pancakes) and *sufganiyot* (doughnuts). It is also a time for playing with the *dreidel* or *s'vivon*. The custom of gift giving at Chanukah time is a relatively recent addition based on the older custom of *Chanukah gelt*, giving children small amounts of money for Chanukah.

## KRISTALLNACHT

This year marks the 63rd anniversary of Kristallnacht, when on November 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>, hundreds of synagogues and Jewish owned businesses throughout Germany were "spontaneously" vandalized by German mobs, many of them burned to the ground. This marked the escalation of violence against Jews that would lead to the final solution. Our observance of Kristallnacht will occur on Wednesday evening, November 9, at 6:30 pm, immediately following Hebrew School and preceding Judaism: The Basics.

## JEWISH BOOK MONTH

Each year we mark the centrality of books for the People of the Book with Jewish Book Month, lasting from the 25<sup>th</sup> of Cheshvan to the 25<sup>th</sup> of Kislev, this year corresponding to November 21-December 21.

Our Religious School will be having a reading drive. The class that reads the most books per person will have a pizza party. Lists of recommended Jewish books will also be sent home with each student prior to our Thanksgiving break.

## CLASSICS OF NORTH AMERICAN JEWISH LITERATURE

In honor of Jewish Book Month, in November and December we will be looking at selections of some classics of North American Jewish literature and at what makes them classics – what insights they offer into the inner life of Jews in contemporary North America, as well as how Jews and the Jewish community intersect with the greater society. We will be reading selections of Philip Roth, Saul Bellow, Mordecai Richler, Grace Paley, Cynthia Ozick and others. November 6, 13, December 4, 11, 18



**Ed  
Gerson**

## President's Report

Israel has a Declaration of Independence but no Constitution. Tree of Life does not have a membership committee in our Constitution and by-laws; nevertheless we've had a membership since 1948 and counting. How is governance or Jewishness?

This year we published a yizkor book instead of reading aloud 500 plus names. The board debated this change at Sylvia's urging and as if by magic the Board eased our Yom Kippur fast. The book was beautifully simple and meaningful. How does change occur? As I grow older change seems less a yes/no alternative than a discrete travel itinerary with stop to shop rest areas along the way.

My next new book is Daniel Kahneman's "Thinking, Fast and Slow," reviewed by the NYT's David Brooks. The author challenges "the planning fallacy" which Brooks restates as people overrating their own abilities and exaggerating their capacity to shape the future. Brooks says "The key to wisdom in these circumstances is to make the distinction between discreet good and systematic good. But you don't have the power to transform the whole situation."

Discrete good: as in the names of all those who planned and worked to make High Holy Days a success and are there throughout the year bringing Jewish meaning to TOL. This is our Membership Committee. Systematic good: go and study.

*Shalom - Ed Gerson*



**Merle  
Stolzenberg**

## From our Treasurer

Thanks to all of you who have made your pledges. If you have not yet made your pledge, please do so as soon as possible. Even if you would like to make arrangements to pay your pledge later, we would like to know what our revenues will be for planning the budget. We ask that you be as generous as possible and really contribute based on the fair share guidelines. Even in these times of economic turmoil, our fixed expenses are just that - fixed.

Please contact me if you have any questions or need to arrange a payment plan. We truly depend on each of our members' support.

## Religious School

Our Religious School has gotten off to a very good start. We have welcomed back almost all of our old students and we have welcomed a number of new students this year: Alex Behr, Anthony Weber, Max Schlosser, Lilly Robinson, Daniel and Olivia Kaddar and Ellis Works.

We have also welcomed back three teachers, Sheryl Grossman, this year teaching our Kindergarten/First Grade Class, Miriam Sokoloff in our 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> Grade and David Levine in our 4<sup>th</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Grade. We welcome Julie Winegard as our preschool teacher and Melody Kaplan as our 5<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Grade teacher as well as a midweek Hebrew School teacher. Both Julie and Melody are undergraduate students at WVU.

In November, Josh and Emily Sharkey will be moving to Florida. The Religious School will miss them as well as their parents Bonnie and Steve.

During our opening months of Religious School much of our energy was focused on introducing the teachers and

the material, as well as preparing for our Fall Holiday marathon. Our major project was creating artwork for Sukkot. Led by our Arts Project Coordinator Miriam Sokoloff, students created paper mache art for hanging in a sukkah, as well as creating their own lulavim and etrogim. We hope that the memories of these projects will form a deep connection to Sukkot and its observance for years to come.

In preparation for Rosh Hashanah, our junior high and high school students with the assistance of Michelle Leversee prepared baskets of apple and honey and distributed them to some of our senior members who are no longer able to move about as easily. This was a meaningful mitzvah for our students and was very much appreciated by all the recipients.

As we look forward to November and December we are planning projects for Jewish Book Month and Chanukah.

## SISTERHOOD

The Tree of Life Sisterhood is planning a membership drive. We hope all female members of the Tree of life will join us in supporting the Congregation. In this month's newsletter is the membership application. Please fill it out and send it to the Temple address. We hope all will enjoy an active successful year in Sisterhood. The Sisterhood supports the functions of the Temple.

In November we will have a luncheon and open meeting to greet all members. It is to be chaired by Barbara Jacowitz and Kathy Abate. We need your help to make the new year a success. The Sisterhood plans to continue a series of focus groups in an effort to determine the needs and interests of its members. The first focus group helped set our primary goal in 2011- 2012 to increase the TOL membership.

The Tree of Life Sisterhood functions in the interest and need of the Tree of Life community. We need your membership and help in order to have another successful year. Please join us. We would appreciate any efforts and suggestions. You can make a difference with your active membership.



## Community Sharing Page

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### TODAH RABAH

#### **Donna Bolyard Gerson**

Coordinator of our delicious Rosh Hashannah Oneg

#### **Joan Addicks**

Facilitator of our beautiful Yom Kippur Break-the-Fast

#### **Post Bnei Mitvah Class with Michelle Leversee**

For the lovely apple and honey baskets you brought to those unable to get out.

Jobs well done and greatly appreciated.

### SIMCHAT TORAH

photos: Ed & Donna Gerson



*We note with sorrow the passing of*

*Sylvia Gerstein  
Generous Supporter  
of  
Tree of Life*

*Frieda Socol  
Gwen Rosenbluth's  
Sister-in-Law*

*May their memory  
be as a blessing.*



### 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.

**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**

**\$400 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.



## The Purpose of This World

*Yehoshua November*

When some Jews cannot explain the sorrow of their lives they take a vow of atheism. Then everywhere they go, they curse the God they don't believe exists.

But why, why don't they grab Him by the lapels, pull His formless body down into this lowly world, and make Him explain.

After all, this is the purpose of creation— to make this coarse realm a dwelling place for His presence. makes a wonderful gift.

## HADASSAH

Shalom and shana tova to everyone. May 5772 be a year of happiness, health, prosperity, and peace. Hadasash's opening brunch is planned for Sunday October 30, 2011. Roz Becker will host us in her beautiful home at 245 Allison Street. Bring a friend and a veggie/dairy dish to share. We look forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.

Our Hadassah Hanukah Pot Luck Party is scheduled for Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, with Thursday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> as a back-up Snow Day. Plan to meet at 6:00 pm at Joan Addicks' home to enjoy a great holiday meal (Joan promises latkes!) and a terrific program organized by Daya and Roz.

There have been rumors of a Pampered Chef meeting. If you are interested, please let us know and we will move forward with planning this activity.

In a few weeks you will be receiving an invitation to be a Centennial Hadassah Donor. We urge you to give generously. A century has elapsed. Hadassah and Israel need your support as much as ever.

I want to remind each and every one of you about the incredible deal in honor of Hadassah's 100 year celebration. In 2010 Life Membership cost \$360. Until December 31, 2011 you can be a life member for only \$100. Don't let this amazing opportunity get away. This makes a wonderful gift.

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL CELEBRATES SUKKOT





# URJ BOARD WORKSHOP

Jay Gellman is the chair of the Joint Commission on Synagogue Management, and is passionate about the importance of the role of the Commission with our congregations. He is also a Vice Chair of the URJ South District, chairing the Leadership Development Committee.

On Sunday, Sept. 18 Jay facilitated a URJ Board Workshop which was attended by over 80% of our Trustees for an intense six-hour discussion. Topics included Jewish connectedness in our community and a love for Israel, leadership development with a vision toward the next generation, achieving a critical mass by adhering to our mission statement, specific productive output planning for meetings, committees, and policy. The Board of Trustees thanks Hillel's and our Deva Solomon for providing meeting facilities; also, thank you to Donna Bolyard-Gerson for coordinating food and refreshments throughout the day.

This URJ Workshop is the first of several available URJ programs provided at no cost to us. Thank you Jay Gellman for a well-planned and action-provoking program!

PHOTOS: ED GERSON



# Calendars

DECEMBER 2011				
Date	Day	Event	Time	
December 2	Friday	Family Shabbat Service	6:30 pm	
December 3	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
December 4	Sunday	Religious School	10:00 am	
		Classics of Jewish Literature	7:00 pm	
December 7	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	
December 9	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
December 10	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
December 11	Sunday	Religious School	10:00 am	
		Classics of Jewish Literature	7:00 pm	
December 14	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	
December 16	Friday	Mazal Tov Shabbat	7:30 pm	
December 17	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
December 18	Sunday	Religious School	10:00 am	
		Classics of Jewish Literature	7:00 pm	
		Chanukah Party	5:00 pm	
December 20	Tuesday	1 <sup>st</sup> Night of Chanukah		
December 21	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	
		Hadassah Hanukah Party	6:00 pm	
December 23	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
December 24	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
December 25	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		
December 28	Wednesday	NO HEBREW SCHOOL		
December 30	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
December 31	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
January 1	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		



NOVEMBER 2011				
Date	Day	Event	Time	
November 2	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	
November 4	Friday	Family Shabbat Service	6:30 pm	
November 5	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
November 6	Sunday	Religious School	10:00 am	
		Classics of Jewish Literature	7:00 pm	
November 9	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Kristallnacht Observance	6:30 pm	
November 11	Friday	Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	
November 12	Saturday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
November 13	Sunday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
		Religious School	10:00 am	
		Classics of Jewish Literature	7:00 pm	
November 16	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	
November 18	Friday	Mazal Tov Shabbat	7:30 pm	
November 19	Saturday	Torah Study	10:00 am	
November 20	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		
November 23	Wednesday	NO HEBREW SCHOOL		
November 25	Friday	Shabbat Evening Service	7:30 pm	
November 26	Saturday	Shabbat Morning Service	10:00 am	
November 27	Sunday	NO RELIGIOUS SCHOOL		
November 30	Wednesday	Hebrew School	5:00 pm	
		Judaism: The Basics	7:00 pm	



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

**FIRST CLASS MAIL**



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***"...call the Sabbath a delight"***  
***Isaiah 58:13***

In Hebrew, *Oneg Shabbat*, the tradition of joining in refreshments and camaraderie after Friday evening worship, means *Sabbath delight*. In our TOL community, congregants volunteer to host these weekly events. Whether this is a long time personal commitment or your first such effort, please share in this important community mitzvah.

**To volunteer as a host,  
please contact Linda Jacknowitz, 304-292-1777 or [jacknowitz@frontier.com](mailto:jacknowitz@frontier.com)**

**FYI:**

**Guidance:** Hosts decide how simple or elaborate to make things; finger foods work well. For an ordinary Shabbat, plan on around 15 congregants. The kitchen stocks: plastic table cloth, basic paper goods, tea, decaf coffee, sugar, and creamer. There is an electric kettle and drip coffee pot.

While it is the Host's responsibility set up and clean up, often times others are happy to help. Leftovers can be put in the refrigerator for Sunday School. The Synagogue is open approximately 20 minutes before services begin. If you need earlier access, please coordinate with Rabbi Feder.

A brief kitchen orientation is available by request.

For most months, the 1st Friday of the month is hosted by the Religious School.  
The 3rd Friday of the month is hosted by the TOL Board in honor of that month's Mazal Tov celebrants.

Visit <http://etzhaim.org>



## SISTERHOOD DUES FORM

Please mail this form, with your check for Sisterhood 2011-2012 dues, to the Sisterhood Treasurer, Eva Segert-Tauger, at the address below. If you prefer, you may send a check without the form directly to Eva.

Treasurer  
TOL Sisterhood  
P.O. Box 4051  
Morgantown, WV 26504-4051

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

### DUES LEVELS:

Standard membership level	\$25.00	_____
Sarah membership level	\$36.00	_____
Rivka membership level	\$72.00	_____
Leah membership level	\$90.00	_____
Rachel membership level	\$108.00	_____
Miriam membership level	Above \$108.00	_____

Life members \$18.00 \_\_\_\_\_

(New life memberships are not available at this time at this level)

TOL Sisterhood is a non-profit organization, and the entire amount of your dues may be tax-deductible, depending on your individual situation. (For more details, please consult your tax advisor.)

The TOL Sisterhood pays \$15.00 each year per member to Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ), and \$2.00 each year to the WRJ regional organization. The remainder of the dues directly benefits the Tree of Life Congregation

If you have any questions about your dues, please call Eva at (304) 599-4268 or send an e-mail to [esegert@gmail.com](mailto:esegert@gmail.com).

*Eva Segert-Tauger, Treasurer*

## NOVEMBER-DECEMBER MAZAL TOV SHABBAT HONOREES

### November 2011

*November's  
Mazal Tov Shabbat  
will be  
Friday, November 18th*

Bob Cohen

Alan Rosenbluth

Richard Cohen

Stan Cohen

Jean DeLynn

Amy and Richard Gutmann

Larry Jacowitz

Susan Newfield

Michael Stern

Linda and Adam Rosefsky

Deborah Green

Rebecca O'Neal



### December 2011

*December's  
Mazal Tov Shabbat  
will be  
Friday, December 16th*

Kathleen Abate

Roger Abrahams

Paul Brager

Daniel Berrebi

David Hart

Art Jackowitz

Robert Hunt

Adam Komisaruk

Martha and Norman Lass

Keith Newman

Muriel Millstone

Emily Lederman

Stephanie Savitch

Linda Rosefsky

