



September/October 2014

Elul/Tishrei/Cheshvan— 5774/5775

CONGREGATION

Morgantown, West Virginia

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

RABBI

Joseph Hample

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High Holiday Schedule of Services 2014

Wednesday, Sept. 10

"Bimah for Dummies" class

7:00-9:00 pm

Saturday, Sept. 20

S'lichot program

movie ("The Quarrel") and prayer service,
7:00-10:00 pm

Wednesday, Sept. 24

Erev Rosh ha-Shanah

7:30 pm

Kiddush after service

Thursday, Sept. 25

Rosh ha-Shanah Morning

Children's service 9:15-10:00 am

Service 10:00 am-12:00 noon

Tashlich 12:30 pm

Friday, Sept. 26

Rosh ha-Shanah Second Day

Service 10:00 am-12:00 noon

Friday, Oct. 3

Kol Nidrei 7:30 pm

Saturday, Oct. 4

Yom Kippur

Children's service 9:15-10:00 am

Morning service begins 10:00 am

Break 12:30 pm

Rabbi's Tish 2:30-3:30 pm

Music & Reading of names/memorial 3:30-4:30 pm

Afternoon Service 4:30 pm

Yizkor 6:00 pm

N'ilah 7:00 pm

Havdalah 7:45 pm

Break-the-Fast after Havdalah

Friday, Oct. 10

Pizza in the Hut & Sukkot service

6:00-8:30 pm

Friday, Oct. 17

Family Shabbat & Simchat Torah service

6:00-8:30 pm





**Adam
Rosefsky**

We are a small, close knit, congregation who are lucky enough to have obtained a truly phenomenal spiritual leader in the person of Rabbi Joe.

Rabbi Joe is a huge asset to not only the Synagogue, but to the community at large. As the primary spiritual representative of the Jewish Community in Morgantown, Rabbi Joe interacts with community leaders; inter faith organizations, the press and virtually every aspect of Morgantown life. He puts a compassionate and learned face on Judaism for secular North Central WV.

As a business person, I understand the need for a return on my investment. When I carry this through to the Temple, I understand that investing in a strong spiritual leader will return a strong and vibrant Jewish community.

Prior to Rabbi Joe joining us at Tree of Life, I personally, was not moved to expand my contributions beyond the minimum of our fair share because I didn't feel I was receiving a fair return on my investment. When we hired Rabbi Joe, I increased my dues by 20%.

I believe that I have seen a significant return on my increased investment. I judge this return based on the 100% increase in our religious school. Services prior to Rabbi Joe were sparsely attended, frequently with only 1 or 2 attendees.

Now services are consistently active, well attended and vibrant. Participation in Holiday events that were barely celebrated in the past are now bringing out huge attendance.

At our annual meeting in February, the Membership authorized the board to negotiate an updated contract for the Rabbi. I am proud to say that we have extended the Rabbi's contract for an additional 5 years.

In extending the Rabbi's contract, the Board acknowledged that we are lucky to have a Rabbi of Joe's ability and dedication. We stretched to the limit of the congregation's means to ensure that Rabbi Joe would not only stay with us, but to ensure that he was happy and understood how much we value him.

After we renegotiated the Rabbi's contract, I again increased my dues by 20%, and challenged the board to meet my increase. I believe that this is a fantastic investment for our Jewish Community.

I know that not everyone is able to provide large increases. It is a stretch for me to add this much to my dues. However, I believe that it is important in order to ensure that we can maintain the security and happiness of our Rabbi.

I won't challenge you to increase by such a large amount, but when you receive your new membership letters in the mail, please take a moment and review your pledge. Have you increased your dues lately? Has your dues kept up with inflation? Are you willing to pay a little more to ensure we continue grow our community? If you can give more, I urge you to please be generous.

*Shalom
Adam Rosefsky*

Special Event Tuesday September 9 at 7pm

AME Church 61 Beechurst Ave. Morgantown

Community Coalition for Social Justice, CCSJ, invites TOL members to attend our Forum on Religious Diversity

Featuring a panel discussion about compassion and social justice

Rabbi Joe will represent our Jewish tradition and other panelists include Buddhist, Bahai, Moslem, AME church and Hindu

This event will launch a series of open house visits to different faith services...

Tree of Life Sisterhood will be sponsoring an Open Sukkah of Peace on October 10 in conjunction with the forum. Please come and invite your friends!

An Invitation from Sisterhood for the Women of Tree of Life

We cordially invite you to
Sunday morning brunch,
September 14 10:30-noon
at the home of Rosa Becker
245 Allison St.
corner of Allison and Wagner
Just a 2 minute walk from TOL

All women are welcome.
We hope to see a parade of
Mothers of Sunday School students!

You are invited to bring a treasured
object of Jewish interest
from your house
for an entertaining show and tell.

Please RSVP by Sept 8 to
rebrosalin@gmail.com

Erev Rosh Hashanah Kiddush

Donna Bolyard-Gerson will be coordinating the Erev Rosh Hashanah Kiddush this year on September 24. Please volunteer to bring any of the following:

cookies
cake that can be eaten with the fingers
cheese and crackers
fruit plate

If you would like to help but don't want to provide food, monetary donations can be made to help defray expense for paper goods and incidentals for the Kiddush.

Volunteers for set-up and clean-up would also be appreciated.

You may contact Donna at
kbolyard117@comcast.net,
or 304-599-1253
to let her know what you plan to bring.

Thanks so much for your help.



**Rabbi
Hample**

Got Time?

Does time really exist? What does it consist of? This most ethereal of resources is maddeningly difficult to dissect. I guess time is best defined as the thing we're wasting when we're idle.

In Hebrew there are several words for "time." *Et* means point in time, or the appropriate time for something. *Pa'am* means recurring time, as in the first time, the next time, the last time. *Z'man* means season, or time as a commodity, probably the most common meaning in our fast-paced era. We are always complaining we have no time, but as Ambrose Bierce noted, "There's plenty, too, and don't you doubt it – / We're never for an hour without it."

Einstein proved time is elastic, slowing down as you approach the speed of light. Kurt Vonnegut proposed that a person might come "unstuck in time." Abraham Joshua Heschel saw time as a thing to be sanctified. For Jews, he argued, holiness in time trumps holiness in space. The sabbath is more sacred than any place on earth, even the Temple Mount.

As the seventh day is special, so the seventh month is special. The (Biblical) seventh month begins at the new moon nearest the autumn equinox. The seventh month, like the seventh day, is a taste of forever. What if your present reality, the life you have right now, the person you are at this instant, were extended to infinity? If that seems unsatisfactory, what are you going to do about it?

Moses is unsure of his place in God's "book" (Exodus 32:32). Apparently he means the "book of life," where you can be "written with the righteous" (Psalms 69:29). The rabbis

teach that exemplary people get inscribed on Rosh ha-Shanah (September 25), but the not-so-exemplary have until Yom Kippur (October 4) to make it into the book. The book, I believe, is time itself. If we have used our days well, we are part of eternity.

The liturgy recommends three ways of getting into the book: *t'shuvah*, *t'fillah*, *tz'dakah* – repentance, prayer, and charity. Speaking for myself, my sins are mainly verbal in nature. For example, what I intend as constructive criticism may sound to the other party like arrogance, nitpicking, or sarcasm. My repentance is learning to communicate sensitively.

By the same token, my quest is mainly to know God's presence. I can say the blessings by rote, but the challenge is to say them with sincerity. Therefore, my prayer is for the courage to cry out from the depth of my soul, and for the faith to feel heard. Your repentance and your prayer may be different, of course.

As for charity, we all have something to give. Food is an excellent thing to give at the High Holidays: the Yom Kippur *haftarah* warns that fasting is futile unless you "share your bread with the hungry" (Isaiah 58:7). We can also give advice, encouragement, a sympathetic ear. As a former correctional chaplain, I continue to correspond with prisoners, which means the world to them and costs me next to nothing. Want to help? If you're wondering how to make 5775 different, let me share the names and addresses of my "pen" pals!

If we do qualify for eternity at the High Holidays, we then switch directions and celebrate the temporary. Sukkot (October 9-16) is a festival of impermanence, when we live (or at least eat) in makeshift dwellings and read Ecclesiastes: "To every thing there is a season, and a time for every purpose under heaven." This sudden jump from the palace of God to the hut of sticks could induce a kind of spiritual whiplash, but a Jew should be equally at home in the millennium and in the moment. The autumn holiday cycle

concludes with Simchat Torah (October 17), when we finish the annual reading of the Pentateuch and time-travel back to the beginning again.

We are created in God's image. But God has all the time there is, and we have very little. We need to make every day count, especially the days that serve as a window on the cosmic chronology. With the right *kavvanah* (intention), we can insinuate ourselves into forever. See you in eternity!

Not So Fast: Life Without Food

Many religions make a ritual of fasting, defined in various ways. Fasting may mean abstention from all food and drink, or from delicacies like meat and wine. Fasting may extend for a full day, part of a day, or a series of days. Longer fasts exclude certain foods only, or else are kept only in the daytime.

Some religions have a month or season of fasting. Catholics eat sparingly and forgo meat during the 40 days of Lent, in late winter. Hindus fast on the holiday of Maha Shivaratri, also in late winter. Muslims eat only at night during the month of Ramadan, which (like all the Islamic months) falls a bit earlier each year than the year before. The Ramadan fast is easy in the winter, when the nights are long, but difficult in the summer, when the nights are short.

Many religions also honor the choice of individuals to fast on a particular day of the week or month. The spiritual power of fasting is recognized even by the secular, who conduct hunger strikes for political and social causes. Local customs of fasting are found in some places. The Swiss have long observed a September fast day in memory of medieval plagues.

The Torah prescribes only one fast: Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement on the brink of autumn (Leviticus 16:29-31). Additional fast days are introduced later (Zechariah 8:19), nota-

bly Tish'ah b'Av, the Temple Fast in midsummer. The Talmud (Rosh ha-Shanah 18b) records some debate about these and other secondary fasts, including the comical advice that an improper fast – for example, on Chanukkah – requires a fast in atonement for having fasted!

A fast described in Esther 4:16 is still kept by the devout on the eve of Purim. Firstborn sons traditionally fast on the eve of Passover. But Yom Kippur and Tish'ah b'Av are the only strictly obligatory fasts, and are therefore observed for 24 hours, from dusk on the preceding day to nightfall on the holiday. All other fasts are optional in principle, and are therefore observed from dawn to dusk.

Fasting is a consciousness-altering process. It affects body and spirit, breaking down our defenses, reminding us of our weakness and dependence on God. Mishnah Ta'anit ("Fasting") provides rules for ad hoc fasts and the associated prayers and rituals, recommending Mondays and Thursdays as auspicious days to fast. A Yiddish joke tells of a man so poor that he would starve to death if not for his custom of fasting on Mondays and Thursdays.

The ancients fasted in times of drought or national crisis, hoping to awaken God's compassion. On Yom Kippur we read about some fasts of this kind, in Isaiah 58 and Jonah 3, hinting that we too are in crisis and wish to awaken God's compassion. Isaiah 58 also mentions feeding the hungry, a further reason for the observance. We fast to express our solidarity with those who have nothing to eat.

Tish'ah b'Av and some other fasts recall historical events like the destruction of the Temple. Even Yom Kippur is said to recall an event: God giving Moses the second set of tablets of the Ten Commandments (Rashi on Exodus 33:11). Moses broke the first set upon seeing the idolatrous Golden Calf. The replacement set is a sign of forgiveness.

What exactly is forbidden on fast days? Five things, according to the

Mishnah: eating and drinking, washing, anointing oneself, leather shoes, and marital relations. However, these amenities are permitted for medical necessity, according to the principle of *pikkuach nefesh* (saving lives). You are never allowed to fast on Shabbat, except when Yom Kippur coincides with Shabbat, as it does this year. It is also forbidden to fast on Rosh Chodesh (the new moon). All fast days but Yom Kippur are rescheduled if they would have fallen on Shabbat.

Fasting is an ascetic practice, a hardship, but also a lightening of our load. Yom Kippur is not supposed to be too gloomy. The Mishnah (Ta'anit 4:8) even reports dancing on Yom Kippur. You'll dance too, if fasting gives you faith that your sins are forgiven. *Tzom kal*, may it be an easy fast.

Adult Education

We now offer a wider variety of adult education opportunities. Talmud classes and meditation classes on Monday evenings are coordinated by Rich Cohen. Adult Hebrew classes on the first and third Wednesday evenings of the month are taught by Aric Agmon. Two acclaimed novelists will speak at Saturday bagel brunches: Michael Blumenthal (author of *The Greatest Jewish-American Lover in Hungarian History*) on Oct. 18, and Maggie Anton (author of *Enchantress: A Novel of Rav Hisda's Daughter*) on Nov. 1.

My rabbi's class is the second Wednesday evening of the month. On Sept. 10 I will teach Bimah for Dummies: what you need to know to participate in a service. On Oct. 8 I will teach Comparative Religion: how Judaism is different from other faiths, and how Reform is different from other Judaisms.

Evening classes start at 7:00 pm. Bagel brunches start at 10:00 am. Adult ed classes are open to everyone free of charge, and at all levels. No one is too raw, or too refined. Please join us as your schedule permits.

Children's Education

The Sunday school term starts on Sunday, Sept. 7. This year's religious school curriculum focuses on Jewish journeys. The term will be divided into four units: Bible, Middle Ages, transition to modernity, and the last hundred years. Unit I, Biblical journeys, will be presented from Sept. 14 through Nov. 2.

This year's Hebrew school curriculum seeks a balance between phonics, vocabulary, and grammar, which should reinforce each other. We are using an interactive Hebrew learning tool called Hineni, which will make Hebrew more fun for the kids. We will also provide a weekly one-hour Hebrew study hall on Wednesday afternoons in case they need a little extra help.

We have four bar / bat mitzvah students this year. We will hold a meeting for b'nei mitzvah parents on the first day of Sunday school, Sept. 7. If you have a youngster approaching 13, I hope you can attend.

This year's teen program, called The Jewish Experience, will meet three times a month: once on Saturday for social or sports activities, twice on Sundays for learning opportunities. For the learning sessions, older community members will help our young people explore Jewish dimensions of food, language, cinema, social action, and spirituality.

Please let me know if your kids will participate, if you are willing to join the Education Committee, if you are willing to be a room parent, and if you or your teenagers are willing to teach. Teachers get free tuition for one child.



TODA (Thank You) from the TOL Board:

Jonathan Lederman: for lighting TOL memorial boards.

Aric Agmon: for teaching adult Hebrew classes.

Saturday Teen Movies & Schmooze: Rabbi Joe, Steve Markwell, Margalit Persing, Emily Layman (4/5, 4/12, 5/3).

Congregational Passover Seder organizers: Steve Markwell, Steve Sharkey, Margalit Persing (4/14).

Friday Evening Oneg Hosts: Donna Bolyard-Gerson, Martha Lass (4/18); Rita Tanner, Marilyn Manilla (4/25); Linda Jacknowitz, Sylvia Cooper/Sara Aronon (5/2); Sunday School Families (5/9); TOL Congregation, Susan Brown Cake (5/16); Michelle Leversee (5/23); Congregation (5/30, Shavuot); Michelle Leversee, organizer & all helpers (6/13; in honor of Jacob Lemoff Bar Mitzvah); Sherry Hildebrand, Eleanor Simmons (6/20); Michelle Leversee, organizer & all helpers (6/27, in honor of Josh Sharkey Bar Mitzvah); Lee Kass (7/25); Daya Wright/Sara Aronon, Gwen Rosenbluth (8/1); Donna Bolyard-Gerson (8/8); Rusty Mall (8/15).

Lee Kass/Margalit Persing (organizers)/All Contributors: for Neal Sheme's Bar Mitzvah potluck lunch (5/10).

Year-end Sunday School Picnic: for the success of the picnic --Michelle Leversee, Margalit Persing, organizing/shopping; Lederman-Leversee family for staking out a good spot; David Lederman & Bob Klein for grilling; Teachers & Families for bringing food; Rosa Becker and Sisterhood for Butterfly Lady, Heather Tokas; & Emily Layman, Bonnie Sharkie (5/18).

Shavuot Organizers/Presenters/helpers: Steve Markwell, Margalit Persing, Linda Jacknowitz/ Rosa Becker, Yoav Kaddar, Stan Cohen, Nina Price, Rich Cohen, Barry Wendell, Rabbi Joe/Lee Kass (5/30).

Ed Gerson & Marty Sippin: for taking responsibilities as House Chair; removal of old cabinets in Social Hall, arranging for wax removal, and oversight of laying new floor (July).

CHARM Campaign Donors: for making renovations possible.

TOL Cleanup Bonnie, Josh & Emily Sharkey, Michael O'Neal, Margalit Persing, Linda Jacknowitz, Yoav Kaddar, Adam Rosefsky, Michelle Leversee (6/8).

Michelle Leversee, Ed Gerson, Marty Sippin, Bob Hunt, Lee Kass: for trying to resolve flooding problem over a period of months; obtaining and assisting plumber Roger Dalton to replace broken drain pipe (6/19)—the flooding problem is now resolved.

David, Emily & Jonathan Lederman, Michelle Leversee, Lee Kass, Merle Stoltzenberg: furniture moving/documents sorting to prepare Social Hall for new floor (7/1); Michelle for taking papers for shredding & recycle.

Rabbi Joe, Lee Kass, Margalit Persing, Michelle Leversee, Rosa Becker, Sylvia Cooper, Nina Price/Lee Petsonk: sorting books & genizah for donation, recycle/burial (May, June, July/August).

Oneg Shabbat Lay-Leaders: Linda Jacknowitz & Margalit Persing (7/11); Steve Markwell (7/18).

Rabbi Joe: for his inspiring sermons, Adult Education classes, Torah Studies leadership; another great year of inspired and fun learning in Sunday School; special Tuesday *Tish'ah b'Av* service (8/5).

History Committee: Ed Gerson for spearheading TOL History Project.

Ritual Committee: for organizing Shabbat Bagel Brunches, and providing occasional Lay Leadership for Torah Studies & co-leadership Shabbat services with Rabbi Joe.

Social Action Committee: Susan Brown for organizing Soup Kitchen volunteers at Trinity Episcopal Church (the 5th Saturday of the month).

CARE Committee: for special arrangements with congregants needs.

Jan Ditzian, Sylvia Cooper, Margalit Persing: for their excellent work on the Website, Newsletter, Weekly Email blast; **Ed Gerson** for his wonderful photos.

Bonnie Sharkey and Service Lay leaders

And thank you to **Lee Kass** for organizing these Toda lists.

Please let us know if your name has been inadvertently omitted.

Volunteer of the Year

Jonathan Rosenbaum is not one to relish fame, but at the 4th of July parade he was sitting on the back of a Mustang driving down High Street with signs saying, "Volunteer of the Year, Positive Spin." In late 2012, Jonathan led the reorganization of this nonprofit Community Bicycle shop which was close to liquidation. On behalf of the Morgantown Bicycle Board, he formed and chaired a transition team consisting of Positive Spin's many stakeholders, including several from the City, WVU, and local non-profits, who joined in an effort to save the organization. On April 16, 2013 a new board of directors was formed allowing the shop to re-open. As Chair of Positive Spin*, not only did he accept the "Volunteer of the Year" award on the board's behalf, but he was also asked to lead the bicycle decorating contest and announce the winners who received awards from Positive Spin.

Jonathan is also President of the local League of Women Voters**. As Jonathan was being recognized on stage, the league was successfully registering several new voters. Jonathan is proud to be a leader of these two organizations. All volunteers can lead to powerful positive changes.

* Positive Spin is a place where people congregate to share their collective knowledge about bicycle repair, fabrication, and skills. It offers an encouraging environment to empower people to repair their own bicycles while providing the necessary tools and salvaged /

donated parts. It enables people who otherwise can't afford a bike, to acquire one and to keep it running. It is, in the deepest sense, the community helping the community. Contact: info@positivespin.org

** The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan volunteer organization working to promote political responsibility through informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate. It does support or oppose legislation after serious study and substantial agreement among its members. Membership is open to any citizen 18 years of age or older. Contact: jr@lwv.org



Shirley manned the League table while Jonathan represented Positive Spin.

A Note to David

by Michal Mahgerefteh

I wear no crown
nor point a sword at another
not even called *one* among the crowd
I just live by impressions inspired by
your psalms

in my joyous haste I slowly walk
'til bone-dull ache deeply feels the rush
of countless *thank you[s]* and *blessings*
to the Almighty Power of Creation

someone must have noticed me
wandering between fig and olive
hearing my singing and fervent
prattles to sheep-goat seed-leaf

my wish is not being as You or God
or part of history that doesn't arise as
truth

come-peek at my sublunar world
dwell if you wish in my fertile imagination

find me on the flattering wings of Monarchs
gliding over the thick plateau of seasonal
petal-twigs
dining on droplets of nectar from its
trunk
and skirting cumulus clouds over peak-
mountain rock

I wear no crown
nor point a sword at another
not even called *one* among the crowd
I just live by impressions inspired by
your psalm

INVITATION FROM THE RITUAL COMMITTEE

Rabbi Joe has requested that Congregants co-lead services with him. So far only members of the Ritual Committee and Barry Wendell have co-led.

Please consider joining Rabbi Joe some Friday night regardless of whether you know any or all of the prayers. Your contribution can be partly or all in English or Hebrew or to join him in singing. You can provide your point of view on the weekly Torah portion or some other current topic. By getting more lay participation we hope to increase the interest and participation of our members. All contributions are appreciated.

We Thank TOL's Generous Donors

Carol Petsonk

in memory of Jonah

Alma Shultz

"for Israel"

Gloria Lees

in memory of David Kornstein

in memory of Phillip and Irene Sisskin

Shirley Rosenbaum

in memory of her husband (used for Sunday school picnic)

Sylvia Cooper

to CARE committee in appreciation of Sara Aronin's
preparation of the Oneg in honor of Barry Cooper
CHARM donation in memory of Esteban Lederman
CHARM donation in memory of Barbara Levy

Howard Mall

in memory of cousin: Hugh David Goldsmith

In memory of father: Julius Mall

Margalit Persing

in memory of Martin Rosen

In memory of Esteban Lederman (for religious school)

Stolzenbergs

in memory of Evelyn Newfield (to CHARM)

In memory of Martin Rosen (to CHARM)

The Jewish Teen Experience: Upcoming Bnai Mitzvah & Teen Activities

The pre and post Bnai Mitzvah age group at TOL is growing every year. Based on feedback from parents and youth after last year's program offerings, we are pleased to provide several opportunities for this important group to both further their Jewish education and socialize with their peers.

Starting in October on the 2nd and 4th Sundays of every month, post Bnai Mitzvah age youth are invited to TOL for a one hour class, on a topic of Jewish interest. These classes will be led by different members of the congregation or community with relevant expertise. The sessions will kick off in October with Rabbi Joe leading three classes on the topic, "Judaism: Present and Future". This will be an opportunity for our youth to get answers to questions they have asked about the different denominations in Judaism. Classes will meet from 12:15-1:15 during Hebrew school. Upcoming topics will include, Jewish food, music, Yiddishkeit, Comparative religions, and perhaps other student generated topics. These classes are optional and self contained units, so students can come at any point in the year that they are able and interested.

Also beginning on October 18, there will be a monthly social gathering for all pre and post Bnai Mitzvah youth, facilitated by Steve Markwell and Margalit Persing, with special guest appearances by Rabbi Joe. Depending upon the activity, hours may vary, but are generally set for 7:00-9:00 pm. As last year, activities will vary and may include some social action as well as bowling, movies, ice skating, and mini golf which were some favorites last year. Events will be held at TOL and other venues. First activity to be determined, but will definitely include planning for the year and pizza! Parents are always welcome, and will be invited to help out with driving and other needs!

LAY LED EDUCATION

On Monday nights at 7pm we will be continuing our one hour lay led Talmud class. So far there are three of us who puzzle over and debate the law, and ethical and inspiration teachings contained in the Talmud. No prior training or knowledge is required. We are using good English translations and are enjoying such tidbits as learning the derivation of the prohibition of performing certain work on the Sabbath, although it is permissible to trap a deer or a snake on the Sabbath.

On alternate Monday nights at 7pm we will begin exploring guided meditation techniques contained in teachings of the Kabbalah and will explore various sources including books by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Schalomi.

Last Bar Mitzvah of the Season

The Sharkey Family would like to thank all who helped prepare a beautiful Oneg for Joshua Sharkey's Bar Mitzvah. The family is truly appreciative of the wonderful Congregational Family that we share. Thank you also to Rabbi Joe and Margalit for their help in guiding Josh to a successful Bar Mitzvah.



The Morgantown Chapter of Hadassah

Invites all the women of Tree of Life
to our Welcome Brunch/Sukkot Party
Sunday, October 12th
10 am - 12 noon

At Sara Aronin's home - 203 Piave Lane - 407 408 3410 - aronin8@gmail.com

Feel free to bring a friend. Be sure to bring a dairy/veggie dish to share.

Please RSVP to Merle: mpstolzen@yahoo.com or 304 292 6767

The Botany of Sukkot

by Lee. B. Kass (lbk7@cornell.edu) in collaboration with Professor Allan Witztum

Four plant species mentioned in the Torah are part of our Sukkot services rituals. We are asked to gather together the Four Species during the first day (Leviticus 23:40). The four plant parts are assembled together under the broad term lulav. When our Rabbi explained their meaning and interpretation as representing parts of the human anatomy I was inspired to find the botanical names for these plants. Professor Allan Witztum at Ben Gurion University of the Negev provided additional information. Three of the plants were first named (given Latin binomials) by the Swedish botanist Linnaeus (Carl von Linné, 1707-1778), in his treatise *Species Plantarum* (1753).

Etrog ((אֶתְרוֹג) means the fruit of a citron tree, botanical name *Citrus medica* L. [Family Rutaceae]. The tree grows in Asia, Media, Assyria, and Persia (Iraq and Iran). The species was first described by Tournefort in 1700 and was named by Linnaeus.

Lulav ((לולב) means a ripe, green, closed frond from a date palm, botanical name *Phoenix dactylifera* L. [Family Arecaceae]. The tree is native to India. The species was first described by Kaempfer in 1712 and was named by Linnaeus.

Hadass ((הדס) means boughs with leaves from the myrtle tree, botanical name *Myrtus communis* L. [Family Myrtaceae]. The tree is widespread in the Mediterranean region and is commonly cultivated. The species was named by Linnaeus.

Aravah ((אֲרָבָה) means branches with leaves from the willow tree. There are 38 species of willows, but the Brooklyn Botanical Garden website identifies the Biblical species as *Salix acmophylla* Boiss. [Family Salicaceae]. The tree typically grows in humid habitats, but in Israel it is found everywhere, even the desert. It flowers from March to May. The species was named by Pierre E. Boissier (1810-1885).

While we may never know the authentic botanical names for biblical Sukkot plants, our list provides the closest summary of names known currently by systematic botanists.

You will find photos of the date, myrtle, and citron growing at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden at, <http://www.shmais.com/chabad-news/latest/item/daled-minim-the-brooklyn-botanic-gardens>. For the willow, see the Jewish Community news service at, http://www.collive.com/show_news.rtx?id=26984.

A Taste of Hebrew

By Rabbi Joe Hample

On July 28 I taught a two-hour Hebrew class at Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI). Here's some of what I presented.

Uniqueness. Hebrew has never been one of the languages with the largest number of speakers, but two things make it interesting. First, it is the language of the oldest part of Bible, the source of religious vocabulary like *amen* and *sabbath*, and numerous given names: John and Mary, Jacob and Elizabeth, David and Deborah, and hundreds more. Second, it is the only language ever successfully revived after centuries of disuse. There have been efforts to resuscitate other dead or dying languages, but none has made much progress.

Affiliations. English is an Indo-European language of the Germanic branch: closely related to German, Dutch, and Scandinavian languages; more distantly to Latin, Greek, Slavic and Iranian languages, and Sanskrit. But Hebrew is an Afro-Asiatic language of the Semitic branch: closely related to Arabic, Amharic (in Ethiopia), Aramaic, and ancient Babylonian; more distantly to Hausa (in Nigeria), Somali, Berber languages, and ancient Egyptian. The following are the living Semitic languages by number of speakers. The ones you've never heard of are mainly in East Africa.

Arabic	300,000,000
Amharic	21,800,000
Hebrew	7,000,000
Tigrinya	6,700,000
Silt'e	830,000
Tigre	800,000
Aramaic	550,000
Sebat Bet Gurage	440,000
Maltese	371,900
Modern South Arabian	360,000
Inor	280,000
Soddo	250,000
Harari	21,283

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History. Hebrew originated as a dialect of Canaanite, similar to nearby languages like Moabite (in what is now Jordan) and Phoenician (in what is now Lebanon). The Bible portrays the Canaanites as an alien people completely different from the Israelites, but the linguistic evidence indicates otherwise. Toward the end of the Biblical period, Hebrew gave way to Aramaic, the language of ancient Syria, which became dominant throughout the whole Fertile Crescent. Bits of the Bible (especially Daniel and Ezra) and much of the rabbinic literature are in Aramaic rather than Hebrew, or a mishmash of the two. Texts like the *Kaddish*, *Kol Nidrei*, and *Chad Gadya* are in Aramaic. The Masoretes, medieval grammarians in Tiberias (in the Galilee), standardized the spelling and pronunciation of Hebrew: but by that time it was no one's mother tongue. The revival of Hebrew as a vernacular dates from the late 19th and early 20th century.

Grammar. In English *sing*, *sang*, *sung*, *song* or *begin*, *began*, *begun*, the meaning is in the consonants, but the grammar is in the vowels. The same in Semitic languages, including Hebrew: the meaning is in the consonants, typically 3-letter roots, but the grammar is in the vowels. For example, from *G - D - L* ("grow") come the following words:

GaDoL "big"
GaDeL "growing"
GóDeL "size"
GoDLi "my size"
GoDLo "his size"
G'DuLa "greatness"
G'DiLa "increase"
GiDuL "growth"
G'DaL "grow!"
GaDaL "he grew"
GaDLa "she grew"
GaDLu "they grew"
GoDéL "he grows"
eGDaL "I will grow"
GiDeL "he magnified"
aGDiL "I will enlarge"

However, some grammar is in consonants like *h*, *y*, *m*, *n*, *t*, called formative letters:

haGDeL "enlarge!"
haGDaLa "enlargement"
GoDLah "her size"
yiGDaL "he will grow"
y'GaDeL "he will magnify"
yaGDiL "he will enlarge"
maGDiL "he enlarges"
miGDaL "tower"
miGDaLim "towers"
G'DaLim "sizes"
GaDaLnu "we grew"
niGDaL "we will grow"
tiGDaL "you / she will grow"
G'DiLot "increases"
G'DuLot "greatnesses"

***K'tiv* (Spelling) and *K'ré* (Pronunciation).** In English some words are spelled one way and pronounced another. For example, *lb* is pronounced *pounds*. Also, if the text contains something disturbing, a person reading aloud may choose to paraphrase. This happens in Hebrew too, when a particular word is written in the sacred text, but the rabbis have decided that a different word should be pronounced. For example, the form *hu* may be masculine or feminine in the Bible, but in post-Biblical Hebrew *hu* is only a masculine form, with *hi* as the feminine counterpart. Where *hu* is written, but the meaning is feminine, the custom is to pronounce *hi*. As the grammarians explain, there is a difference between the *k'tiv* ("spelling") and the *k'ré* ("pronunciation"). The personal name of Israel's God is written *YHVH* ("The One Who Exists"), but never pronounced as spelled. Transliterations like *Yahweh* and *Jehovah* are only guesses as to the original sound. When we read aloud in worship, we pronounce the word *Adonai* ("Sovereign") or *Elohim* ("God"). When we read aloud in casual situations, we pronounce the word *Ha-Shem* ("The Name"). Linguistic fluidity, scribal errors, and rabbinic discomfort with the plain meaning

of the text are among the reasons for the *k'tiv* – *k're* discrepancy. As reverence for tradition restrained the sages from simply altering the verbiage, they compromised by pronouncing what was not written. A footnote will explain any unusual emendations.

G'matriyyah (Numerology). Roman numerals are letters used as numbers. MIX is an ordinary English word, but it could also be interpreted as a Roman numeral, 1009. In Hebrew, too, letters are used as numbers. For example, 33 is written *LG* (pronounced *Lag*, as in *Lag ba-Omer*, a minor festival 33 days after Passover) and 613 is written *TRYG* (pronounced *Taryag*, traditionally the number of commandments in the Torah). On the other hand, every word in the dictionary could be interpreted as a number. This is called *g'matriyyah* (“numerology”). The number 18 is lucky because it is the numerical value of *chai* (“living”). By chance *yayin* (“wine”) has a numerical value of 70, and *sod* (“secret”) also has a numerical value of 70. From this we learn that when wine goes in, secret comes out. Numerology is sometimes deployed to clarify ambiguous Biblical texts. Israel’s mythic enemy *Amalek* (numerically = 240) is a metaphor of *safek* (“doubt,” also numerically = 240). Numerology plays a large role in the esoteric Judaism called *Kabbalah*. With enough permutations, it can prove anything.

Jewish Vernaculars. For centuries Hebrew was largely reserved for song, study, and prayer. At everyday work and play, Jews spoke Greek or Latin or Arabic, French or German or Spanish, etc. Jews typically used Hebrew letters and mixed some Hebrew words into every language. If Jews came to be separated from non-Jewish speakers of their languages, e.g. when German Jews moved into Slavic lands or Spanish Jews fled to Balkan countries, their dialects evolved into distinctively Jewish vernaculars like Judeo-German (Yiddish) and Judeo-Spanish (Ladino). Judeo-Arabic, Judeo-Persian, and many other specifically Jewish vernaculars are documented. Yiddish, particularly, produced a great literature and still has a fair number of speakers, especially among the God-fearing.

Variety of Pronunciation Styles. Under the influence of Jewish vernaculars, Hebrew has been pronounced differently in different parts of the world. Ashkenazic (European), Sephardic (Mediterranean), and Mizrahi (Middle Eastern) pronunciation styles are quite distinct. For example, “daughter” is *bas* in Ashkenazic Hebrew, *bat* / *bad* in Sephardic Hebrew, and *bath* in Mizrahi Hebrew. The word is pronounced *bat* in Israeli Hebrew, a synthesis closest to Sephardic. The word was presumably *bath* for the medieval grammarians, probably *bat* / *batt* in Bible times.

Modern Hebrew. A nationalist community of Jews began settling in the land of Israel from 1881, when assassination of the tsar intensified Russian antisemitism. Revival of Hebrew was promoted by eccentric lexicographer Eli'ezer ben Y'hudah (1858-1922). Yiddish author Mendelè Moicher Sforim (1836-1917) translated his own work into Hebrew, thus providing models for how to joke and complain, gossip and flirt in the language. The first kibbutz (D'ganyah) and the first all-Hebrew city (Tel Aviv) both date from 1909. The Techni'on scientific institute, founded in 1913, was to be German-speaking, but demonstrations by teachers and students forced the use of Hebrew instead. By the time of the British mandate after World War I, Hebrew was well-established as the language of the community. From the independence of Israel in 1948, Hebrew and Arabic are the official languages of the country.

New Words. The ingenuity of ordinary people and the Hebrew Academy enrich the language in the following ways.

By redefinition (compare *Kindle*, *Twitter*):

chashmal (“electrum,” Ezekiel 1:4; in modern Hebrew, “electricity”)

atar (Aramaic: “locality”; in modern Hebrew, “website”)

By suffixation (compare *selfie*, *Bridgegate*):

kappit (“teaspoon”) based on *kaf* (“spoon”)

ofanayim (“bicycle”) based on *ofan* (“wheel”)

By blending (compare *smog*, *sitcom*):

kol (“voice”) + *noa* (“movement”) = *kolnoa* (“cinema”)

tappuach (“apple”) + *zahav* (“gold”) = *tappuz* (“orange”)

By applying patterns (compare *thunk*, *wi-fi*):

tabbach (“cook”) + pattern of *mikdash* (“sanctuary”) = *mitbach* (“kitchen”)

chashav (“think”) + pattern of *mazleg* (“fork”) = *machshev* (“computer”)

shoter (“guard”) + pattern of *mishpachah* (“family”) = *mishtarah* (“police”)

oferet (“lead”) + pattern of *zikkaron* (“memorial”) = *ipparon* (“pencil”)

By loan translation (compare *it goes without saying*):

l'hitra'ot (“goodbye,” lit. “to see each other”) based on French *au revoir*, German *auf Wiedersehen*, etc.

la-b'ri'ut (“bless you” after sneezing, lit. “to the health”) based on French *santé*, German *Gesundheit*, etc.

By borrowing (compare *a la mode*, *chow mein*):

yanu'ar (“January”)

protektz'yah (“influence, connections”)

Mount Morris - August 17, 2014

Congregants gathered at the home of Lee Petsonk and Susan Brown to give our unneeded religious books and papers a proper Jewish burial. Lee prepared a large grave to receive material that had been culled from TOL's large collection of old and dusty "left overs."

A tallit was decommissioned by snipping off its tassels. This tallit was used to symbolically shroud the books as they were taken into the burial site. Of course, being the "people of the book," we had to pause and rescue several of the books, but eventually the hole was filled. Rabbi Joe led the funeral service which concluded with congregants placing symbolic shovelfuls of dirt on the books.

We left the hard work of truly filling in the site to Lee and repaired to Lee and Susan's home to enjoy a lovely sunlit pot luck picnic. It was duly noted that it rained before the event and after, but we had nothing but blue skies and sunlight during.

A big TODAH to Lee and Susan for hosting and enabling this event.





Photo: Ed Gerson

TOL celebrated Rabbi Joe's birthday with a lovely oneg sponsored by Lee Kass and Barry Wendell.

Mazal Tov Shabbat

On September 5th, we will celebrate July, August and September Mazal Tov Shabbats. October celebrants will be toasted on Friday, October 24th. Join us for a festive evening with lots of good cheer.

Errors? Omissions? Contact Linda: ljacknowitz@frontier.com

July 2014

Hanna Behr
Mark Brazaitis
Heather Brown
Rich and Laura Cohen
Bob Cohen and Kathy Abate
Laurie Brager
Jean Gould
Jack Golden
Linda Herbst

Michelle Leversee
and David Lederman
Marilyn Manilla
Nina and Jeremy Price
Ruth and Paul Siegel
Terry and Marty Sippin
Heidi and Deva Solomon
Alan Stolzenberg
Eva Segert Tauger
Franc Stern
Marty Sippin
Matanya Solomon
Ariel Stern
Naomi Tauger
Ariana Tauger
Anthony Weber

August 2013

Anne Behr
Shirley and Bill Bellman
Shirley Bellman
Denise and Al Berrebi
Al Berrebi
Ilene Blacksberg
Nina Drummond
Amy Gutmann
Henry Gould
Rabbi Joe Hample
Erik Edwards
Elliott Edwards
Debbi Hart
Linda Jacknowitz
Millie Karlin
Martha Lass
Linda and Art Jacknowitz
Maureen and Yoav Kaddar;
Maureen Kaddar
Lana and Robert Klein
Susan and Neal Newfield
Justin Ludmer
Johnathan Lederman
Ann and Marty Pushkin
Debbi Pariser
Bonnie and Steve Sharkey
Ruth Siegel
Leah Stern
Mark Tauger
Max Snider
Rodney Wright
Daya and Rodney Wright

September 2014

Anne S. and Nyles Charon
Nyles Charon
Judy Cohen
Margie Goldstein
Monique Gingold
Donna Bolyard
Sharon and Bob Hildebrand
Norman Lass
Joyce Kohan
Neal Newfield
Eitan Price
Jeremy Price
Lisa and Michael Stern
Paul Siegel
Sheila Wexler and John Fuller
Ken Lemper

October 2014

Linda and Roger Abrahams
Sara Aronin and Michael O'Neal
Craig Behr
Anne and Craig Behr
Ilene Blacksberg
Laura Cohen
Denise Berrebi
Rosa Becker
Jean and Henry Gould
Lee Kass and Robert Hunt
Emily Layman
Rusty Mall
Bennett Millstone
Gwen Rosenbluth
Susan Brown
Sarah Rosefsky
Rita Tanner
Cindy Tanner
Henry Temple
Barry Wendell
Alana Works



Blessed Are They Who Sow and Do Not Reap

Blessed are they who sow and do not reap -
they shall wander in extremity.

Blessed are the generous
whose glory in youth has enhanced the
extravagant
brightness of days -
who shed their accoutrements at the
crossroads.

Blessed are the proud whose pride
overflows
the banks of their souls
to become the modesty of whiteness
in the wake of a rainbow's ascent
through a cloud.

Blessed are they who know
their hearts will cry out from the wil-
derness
and that quiet will blossom from their
lips.

Blessed are these
for they will be gathered to the heart of
the world,
wrapped in a mantle of oblivion
-- their destiny's offering unuttered to
the end.

Avraham Ben Yitzhak
(Collected Poems, translation by
Peter Cole)

Pomegranates

If you have ever struggled
to free pomegranate seeds
from their encasement, you
will appreciate this u-tube vid-
eo. Thank you to Heidi Solo-
mon for sharing. Heidi as-
sures us that it really works.
So watch the video, go buy
some pomegranates for the
High Holy Days and enjoy!
They're good for you too.

*May your joys be as
numerous as the
seeds are plentiful.*

<http://youtu.be/jJ7dk9nDR-k>



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*We note with sorrow
the passing of*

*Barbara Levy
Rabbi Joe Hample's
Aunt.*

*Julius Horowitz
Linda Herbst's Uncle*

*May their memory
be a blessing*



**Share Your Simcha
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THE SIMCHA TREE**

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\$2500/Small Stone
\$5000/Large Stone
Contact
Merle Stolzenberg**



**Remember a loved one
with a
YAHREITZ PLAQUE
\$400 DONATION
Contact: Bennett Millstone**

October 2014			
Date	Day	Event	Time
10/2/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
10/3/14	Friday	Kol Nidrei	7:30-9:00 pm
10/4/14	Saturday	Yom Kippur	10:00 am-8 pm
10/6/14	Monday	Lay led meditation group	7:00-8:00 pm
10/8/14	Wednesday	Comparative Religion adult ed class	7:00-9:00 pm
10/9/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
10/10/14	Friday	Pizza in the Hut & Sukkot service	6:00-8:30 pm
10/11/14	Saturday	Torah study	10:00 am-12 pm
10/12/14	Sunday	Hadassah Sukkot Brunch @ Sara Aronin's home	10:00 am-12 pm
10/13/14	Monday	Lay led Talmud Study	7:00-8:00 pm
10/16/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
10/17/14	Friday	Family Shabbat & Simchat Torah service	6:00-8:30 pm
10/18/14	Saturday	Shabbat bagel brunch & author presentation: Michael Blumen-thal	10:00 am-12 pm
10/20/14	Monday	Lay led meditation group	7:00-8:00 pm
10/23/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
10/24/14	Friday	Mazzal Tov Shabbat	7:30-9:00 pm
10/25/14	Saturday	Torah study	7:30-9:00 pm
10/27/14	Monday	Lay led Talmud study	7:00-8:00 pm
10/30/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
10/31/14	Friday	Candy potluck & short Shabbat service	6:30-7:30 pm
11/1/14	Saturday	Shabbat bagel brunch & author presentation: Maggie Anton	10:00 am-12 pm



SEPTEMBER 2014			
Date	Day	Event	Time
9/4/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
9/5/14	Friday	Coopers Rock & Mazzal Tov Shabbat	6:00-8:00 pm
9/6/14	Saturday	Shabbat & full Torah service & potluck	10:00 am-1 pm
9/8/14	Monday	Lay led meditation group	7:00-8:00 pm
9/9/14	Tuesday	Religious Diversity pgm (Rabbi Joe speaking), Greater St. Paul AME Church, 61 Beechurst	7:00-9:00 pm
9/10/14	Wednesday	Bimah for Dummies adult ed class	7:00-9:00 pm
9/11/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
9/12/14	Friday	Family potluck & Shabbat service & oneg	6:00-8:30 pm
9/13/14	Saturday	Torah study	10:00 am-12 pm
9/14/14	Sunday	Sisterhood Brunch @ Rosa Becker's home	10:30 am-12 pm
9/15/14	Monday	Lay led Talmud study	7:00-8:00 pm
9/18/14	Thursday	Rabbi's open office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
9/19/14	Friday	Mostly English Shabbat service & oneg	7:30-9:00 pm
9/20/14	Saturday	Shabbat bagel brunch & short morning service	10:00 am-12 pm
9/20/14	Saturday	S'lichot movie & service	8:00-10:00 pm
9/22/14	Monday	Lay led meditation group	7:00-8:00 pm
9/24/14	Wednesday	Erev Rosh ha-Shanah	7:30-9:00 pm
9/25/14	Thursday	Rosh ha-Shanah 1st day	10:00 am-12 pm
9/26/14	Friday	Rosh ha-Shanah 2nd day	10:00 am-12 pm
9/26/14	Friday	Shabbat service & oneg	7:30-9:00 pm
9/27/14	Saturday	Torah study	10:00 am-12 pm
9/28/10	Sunday	Kever Avot / High Holiday cemetery visit	2:00 – 3:00 pm
9/29/14	Monday	Lay led Talmud study	7:00-8:00 pm



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A Prayer for Peace

עֲשֵׂה שָׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֹמָיו, הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ, וְעַל כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל, וְאֶמְרוּ אָמֵן.

*Oseh shalom bimromav,
hu yaaseh shalom aleinu,
v'al kol Yisrael, v'al kol yoshvei*

May the One who makes peace in the high heavens
make peace for us, for all Israel and all who inhabit the earth.
Amen.

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