



July/August 2016  
Sivan/Tamuz/Av - 5776

Morgantown, West Virginia

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

**RABBI**

Joseph Hample

**OFFICERS**

President Ed Gerson  
Immediate Past Pres. Adam Rosefsky  
1st VP Michelle Leversee  
2nd VP Robert Klein  
Treasurer Linda Herbst  
Secretary Laura Cohen

**BOARD**

Alison Bass Laura Cohen  
Ed Gerson Linda Herbst  
Yoav Kaddar Bob Klein  
Rusty Mall Barry Pallay  
Jaimie Russell Merle Stolzenberg  
Robyn Temple-Smolkin

**COMMITTEES**

House Marty Sippin  
Education Jaimie Russel  
Social Action Susan Brown  
Israel Committee Art Jacknowitz  
CARE Merle Stolzenberg  
Ritual Committee Rich Cohen  
Newsletter Sylvia Cooper  
Webmaster Jan Ditzian  
Kitchen TBD

**ASSOCIATES**

Sisterhood Rosa Becker  
Hillel Rich Gutmann  
Hadassah Merle Stolzenberg  
WV Holocaust Ed. Center Edith Levy

**INSIDE HIGHLIGHTS**

Pages 2 - 4 Rabbi Joe  
Page 5 Introducing Bri  
Children's Education  
Page 6 Poetry Corner  
Page 7 President's Message  
Hadassah  
High Holiday Honors  
Page 8 Mazal Tov Shabbat  
Shavuot  
Page 9 Passover Photo Album  
Page 10 Community Sharing  
Page 11 Calendars  
Page 12 Mazal Tov Shabbat Lists

**Yizkor Book**

**2016 - 5777**

**Dedicatory Pages: Donation Schedule**

Front Inside cover: \$225 Back inside cover: \$225  
Facing Front cover: \$200 Facing Back Cover: \$200  
Full page: \$175  
Half page: \$120  
Quarter Page: \$80

Because of spacing concerns, we may need to limit  
the number of names per dedicatory page.

**Dedicatory List of Family and Friends**

Donation per Name for Members \$12  
Donation per Name for Non-members \$20

Names of those who passed away during the previous year and those  
on our memorial boards are automatically listed without charge.  
However, annual listings MUST be renewed.  
Those names do NOT roll over.

Send all submissions and donations to  
Sylvia L Cooper  
3292 University Avenue  
Apt. 607  
Morgantown, WV 26505  
(all checks payable to Tree of Life)

**THE ABSOLUTE DEADLINE FOR INCLUSION  
IN THE YIZKOR BOOK IS  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 7<sup>TH</sup>**

**NAMES RECEIVED AFTER THAT DEADLINE  
WILL BE LISTED ON AN INSERT.**





Rabbi  
Hample

## Coopers Rock of Israel

Coopers Rock State Forest is one of our key local tourist attractions. The park is located 13 miles east of Morgantown on I-68. The scenic overlook offers a breathtaking panorama of the Cheat River Gorge. Hiking trails provide access to Rock City and other impressive vistas. Coopers Rock gets its name from a legend about a fugitive who found shelter in the area. A cooper by trade, he resumed making barrels at his new mountain hideout, selling them to people in nearby communities.

One of TOL's most beloved traditions is a twice-yearly picnic and service at Coopers Rock, at the beginning and end of each summer. We meet at one of the pavilions near the overlook for a potluck supper, then worship out on the edge of the cliff. Just as there are no atheists in foxholes, so there are no unbelievers on the lip of a precipice. Gazing down at West Virginia's answer to the Grand Canyon, you will surely pray not to fall in!

The Hebrew word for rock is *tzur*, familiar from the Bible and liturgy. Moses stands on the *tzur*, the rock at Sinai, to glimpse God from behind (Exodus 33:21-23). Forty years later, in his final address to his people, Moses describes God as the *Tzur*, the Rock we lean on (Deuteronomy 32:4). The words *Adonai Tzuri v'Go'ali* "Eternal my Rock and my Redeemer" (Psalms 19:15) conclude the Standing Prayer. On the other hand, King David's catchy name for God – *Tzur Yisra'el* "Rock of Israel" (II Samuel 23:3) – introduces the morning version of the Standing Prayer. In modern Israel's Declaration of Independence there is no explicit mention of God: but *Tzur Yisra'el* is duly invoked, ambiguous enough to bridge the gap between the religious and the secular. And you may recall that *Ma'oz Tzur* "Fortress of Rock" (or loosely "Rock of Ages") is the quintessential Chanukkah

song.

This year our beginning-of-summer Coopers Rock Shabbat is July 1 and spotlights Sophie and Max Brager, whose *bat* and *bar mitzvah* will be celebrated the following morning. Our end-of-summer Coopers Rock Shabbat is August 26, during the Seven Weeks of Consolation before the High Holidays. How can you not feel spiritual amid such great natural beauty! Come connect with the Rock of Israel at this indispensable Rock of West Virginia.

## Fitting In

*I was the guest sermonizer at Morgantown Church of the Brethren on Sunday, June 12, Shavu'ot morning. Here's what I said.*

I've been in Morgantown four years now. In a state with a more transient population, like New York or California, you'd be considered an old-timer after four years. But in West Virginia, most people boast of long family residence in the area. It's weird to be a carpetbagger. I'm not entirely comfortable with it.

On the other hand, our sacred text is all about journeys and pilgrimages. God sends Abraham and Sarah to "a land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1); they don't know where they're going till they arrive. The exiles who return from Babylon, like Ezra and Nehemiah, are reclaiming their ancestors' turf, but it is strange to *their* eyes. And in the best-known travelogue from the Hebrew scriptures, Moses and his followers cross the wilderness to Canaan, a country they've never seen before. They send scouts ahead to check it out, but the report of these pioneers only heightens everyone's anxiety. It's a nail-biting journey.

The first part of the Moses voyage is the most dramatic. We travel from Egypt, where we've just been freed from bondage, to Sinai, where God gives us the commandments. This leg of the itinerary apparently takes a couple of months (Exodus 19:1); or in the rabbinic retelling, exactly 49 days, the 49 days that we are commanded to count after Passover, in Leviticus 23 (:15). The 50<sup>th</sup> day is Shavu'ot

(Leviticus 23:16-21), an agricultural festival, but reimagined by the rabbis as the date of the theophany at Sinai.

And when is the 50<sup>th</sup> day after Passover? Well, as it happens, it's today. Passover was late this year, April 23; which means Shavu'ot is late too, June 12. Today is a major Biblical holiday. How shall we celebrate? I can think of many possibilities. Jews usually eat dairy foods on this occasion, because it's when God gave us the Torah, and the Torah is like mother's milk to us. So be sure to put cream in your coffee. We could sing some psalms: Psalms 113 through 118 are considered festival psalms, in Jewish liturgy. We could read the book of Ruth, another traditional text for this milestone. Your denominational calendar offers a misadventure of David as the Old Testament lesson for today. Ruth was the great-grandmother of David (Ruth 4:13, 21), so the topics are related.

In the book that bears her name, Ruth is a newcomer, geographically and culturally. She is a Moabite widow of a dead Hebrew who follows her mother-in-law Naomi back to Naomi's hometown of Bethlehem. Though poor, bereaved, displaced, and probably frightened, Ruth doesn't lie around the house licking her wounds. She goes out to glean the fields and meet the locals, and soon she finds another Hebrew husband, Boaz. This teaches us not to sit in the parlor watching for something to happen. No matter how wonderful we think we are, we dare not wait for the world to discover us. We gotta discover ourselves.

That's what I try to do as a rabbi. In a place without that many Jews, I seldom fill the sanctuary in the synagogue. So I seek opportunities to speak *outside* my congregation. From Pittsburgh to Philippi, from the Mountainlair to the Lions' Club, I've addressed many external audiences. Do they think less of me because I'm a minority, because I'm not a West Virginian? It's hard to say. I had a seminary classmate who was English, and who said Americans find her very witty, just because of her accent: her British compatriots don't consider her particularly droll. That was Ruth's advantage in Bethlehem: as an immigrant, she seemed delightfully exotic to her Judean acquaintances. And that is my

experience as a rabbi in schools and churches and community groups. Jews have seen rabbis before: but for you, the novelty hasn't worn off yet.

Ruth adapts to the customs of her new region. The Torah permits the poor to gather the fallen fruit on other people's farms (Leviticus 19:9-10, 23:22, Deuteronomy 24:19-21), so Ruth does it, thus feeding herself and her mother-in-law. The Torah encourages a childless widow to connect with a male relative of the man she lost (Deuteronomy 25:5), so Ruth does that, marrying her husband's cousin Boaz. Likewise, I'm doing *my* best to assimilate in Appalachia. I eat pepperoni rolls only by mistake, since they're against my religion. But I'm *talking* like a West Virginian, saying "The rug needs washed" and "The cat wants fed." I'm *commuting* like a West Virginian: got me an all-wheel-drive car. I'm *thinking* like a West Virginian, planning events for the summer, when the weather's nice: not the winter, when you're snowed in. Ruth is my paradigm. She teaches us how to belong.

Actually, Jewish tradition regards Ruth as the primordial convert. Not that the scripture envisions proselytism, or proclaims any specific recipe for changing religions. Biblical characters like Jethro (Exodus 18:9-11) and Naaman (II Kings 5:15) express admiration for Israel's God without really joining the fold. No one delineates a protocol of conversion until Greco-Roman times. The procedure ultimately standardized by the rabbis, immersion in flowing water called a *mikveh*, is strikingly similar to the Christian ritual of baptism: but it is undreamt-of in Ruth's era.

Still, Ruth utters what sounds very much like a vow of affiliation with her new faith community: "Your people shall be my people and your God shall be my God" (Ruth 1:16). This is a kind of rebuttal to Naomi's three attempts at discouraging her (Ruth 1:8, 11, 15). To this day, Jews try three times to turn away a prospective convert. If they persist after three rebuffs, God help them.

On June 2 I spoke at Wesley United Methodist Church downtown and someone asked if Judaism is growing briskly these days. I had to admit that it is not. It's such a complicated

religion: nowadays people prefer something simple. It's an embarrassingly ethnic religion: nowadays people prefer something universal. And generations of pompous, self-important rabbis have damaged the brand almost beyond rehabilitation.

That's why it's exciting if we do get the occasional seeker. Converts bring us a great gift, the gift of faith. Jews are often embarrassed to say they believe in God, partly because of our bitter history: if God loves us *so much*, why the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Holocaust? Converts don't carry that burden in quite the same way as bio-Jews. But I guess Judaism is different from lots of religions in that we don't really try to sell it to others. It's a national religion, not a universal religion. God doesn't want everyone to be Jews. God wants *Jews* to be Jews, the best Jews we can possibly be; and God wants non-Jews to be the best non-Jews *you* can possibly be.

Still, we believe the Torah is for everyone. Righteous non-Hebrews in the text, Noah and Job and Cyrus, model the behavior God expects of all nations. Now you might ask, why was the Torah given in the desert, in the wilderness? Why not in downtown Jerusalem? It was given in the desert, in a land belonging to no one, so that anyone on earth might come and receive it. I reckon that means everyone can celebrate its arrival.

You might wonder why Ruth is a prescribed text for this particular holiday. The story seems to take place on the brink of summer, when the first crops are being harvested. The story also occurs in the summer of Ruth's life, when she meets and marries the husband who will make her a mother. Ruth is summer reading. Then there's the connection to King David, Ruth's great-grandson. According to folklore, David both was born and died at Shavu'ot. Ruth's role as ancestress of King David is rich with irony and symbolism. To be the ancestress of King David is to be the ancestress of the messiah, since the messiah is, by definition, a descendant of David. Not bad for a childless, penniless foreign widow.

Do Jews today believe in the messiah? That's a delicate question. Some of the prophets foretell a *person* who will fulfill God's agenda, while

others foretell a *day* that will fulfill God's agenda: "The great and awesome day of the Eternal" (Joel 3:4, Malachi 3:23). Frankly, I find it easier to believe in a pivotal *day*, and of course, that's a part of living Judaism: the sabbath, the various feast or fast days, each of which brings God's program nearer to fruition. The Talmud (Shabbat 118b) suggests that redemption will come when all Israel keeps two consecutive sabbaths properly. That shows the power of a day. Or as Dinah Washington sang, what a difference a day makes.

I will not be an ancestor of the messiah, in the genealogical sense: I'm childless. But if the messiah is a *day*, you or I may be among those who expedite its arrival. Anyone who believes there's a plan, anyone who insists that right makes might, is engaged in the work of *tikkun*. *Tikkun* is one of the great Jewish buzzwords. The Hebrew dictionary translates it as repair, remedy: if you get your dishwasher or your computer fixed, that's *tikkun*. But as a religious term, it means the ways we improve ourselves and the ways we improve the world. Adjustments to Biblical law, to make it viable in the messy reality we live in; and adjustments to society, to bring it in line with God's expectations: that's *tikkun*. The intangible contribution we make to the universe by praying, by fulfilling religious ritual, by meditating on our role in the spiritual pageant. All of that is *tikkun*.

There are idiomatic uses of the word *tikkun*. The cheat sheet that shows you the right way to read the Hebrew aloud is called *tikkun*: it repairs your pronunciation. Social action projects are called *tikkun*: they repair the state, the city, the family. The speculations of the mystics are called *tikkun*: they realign the cosmic energies.

As I mentioned, Shavu'ot is when God gave us the Torah at Mount Sinai. But the legends say we overslept and almost missed the whole shebang. Therefore the custom is to stay up all night on Shavu'ot *studying* the Torah, so as not to lose out again. Of course, the nights are short this time of year. If you were going to pick a Jewish holiday for not sleeping, a holiday in the May-June timeframe is the natural choice. Chanukkah would be a disastrous choice. It's in December.

The all-nighter on Shavu'ot is called *tikkun leil*, repairing the night.

Not to worry, I haven't really been up all night. At my age, it's easier said than done. But we did have a late-evening program at the synagogue, and it was a lot of fun, trying to see how long we could keep our eyes open. It brings back those college years of cramming for finals.

Speaking of the small hours, Ruth pulls a midnight caper to get her man. She goes down to the threshing floor late in the evening, when the farmers are combining business and pleasure and the wine is flowing freely. After lights out, she snuggles up next to Boaz, her future husband (Ruth 3:6-8). You might think that's pretty bold. But if that's what it takes to be the ancestress of King David and the messiah, if that's what it takes to realign the cosmic energies, if that's what it takes to belong in Bethlehem, so be it. The newcomer, the outsider, the transient has become fully integrated into her new environment.

Ruth is my role model, the gambler who bets all her chips on fitting in, and wins the jackpot. The saddest thing in life is alienation, the feeling that we are not needed or wanted, that no one notices us. The feeling of a rabbi arriving in a state where Jews are only a sliver of the population. But the insight of Ruth is that *God* notices us, and we notice *ourselves*, and that's a foot in the door. Figure out what you can offer your community, and you too can spawn the messiah.

## The Meaning of Osher

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI), at Mountaineer Mall off Green Bag Road, is an arm of WVU, but with a style all its own. OLLI is a school offering courses strictly for fun. Teachers are volunteers and provide instruction on any subject you can imagine. Fees are modest, and there are no grades or exams, just the chance to study whatever interests you.

Our local chapter originated as Appalachian Lifelong Learners (ALL), and was then brought under the banner of the national OLLI organization by the late Irv Goodman, a member of our Morgantown Jewish community. The national group is endowed by the San

Francisco-based Bernard Osher Foundation, an education-focused philanthropy launched by a Jewish businessman originally from Maine. OLLI operates in partnership with 119 colleges and universities from coast to coast. The program mainly serves older adults, but everyone can take advantage of its attractions.

On six Monday afternoons this past April and May I taught an OLLI class on Old Testament Personalities. The first thing I told the class was not to use the term "Old Testament": Jews call it the "Hebrew Bible." I taught one session on Genesis, one on Exodus, one on Leviticus through Deuteronomy, one on early prophets and kings, one on later prophets and kings, and one on Writings (miscellaneous other books, such as Ecclesiastes and Daniel). There was more than enough material to fill six two-hour presentations. I could have easily taught twelve weeks.

The roster included several familiar faces from TOL, but most of my customers were Christians, some quite knowledgeable about the Bible. Still, they were intrigued to hear what a rabbi would say about it. I mentioned a few Christian commentators, often contrasting their viewpoint with the Jewish interpretation. For example, Christian authorities play down the significance of Abraham's circumcision, a ritual discontinued in Christianity; Jewish authorities play it up. Likewise, St. Ambrose claims the Gideon saga in Judges 6 means that Judaism will eventually be replaced by Christianity; of course, no Jewish scholar reads the story that way.

Part of my objective was to introduce the Mishnah, the Talmud, and the *midrash*, rabbinic documents that develop the Jewish understanding of the scripture. Jewish legend sometimes embellishes a minor Biblical character into a pivotal figure: like Serach, Jacob's granddaughter who supposedly lived to the time of Moses; or Nachshon, Aaron's brother-in-law who was supposedly the first to enter the Red Sea. The class was surprised that many texts are interpreted more than one way within Judaism: for example, the sudden death of Nadab and Abihu in Leviticus 10:1-2 can be variously explained. All the different versions are equally authentic.

The Bible is a fairly male-oriented document, but we looked at plenty of female characters: Miriam and Deborah, Ruth and Esther, the wife of Noah and the wife of Job, the queen of Sheba and the heroine of the Song of Songs. Some Biblical women outwit their male adversaries: Tamar gets the best of Judah in Genesis 38, Jael slays Sisera in Judges 4. In Nehemiah 8, Ezra reads the Torah aloud to "men and women and all who could listen with understanding." This shows that the book belongs to both sexes.

The Bible contains many contradictions, which I explored extensively with my OLLI crowd. Were man and woman created simultaneously (Genesis 1), or man first and woman later (Genesis 2)? Was Goliath slain by David (I Samuel 17) or by Elhanan (II Samuel 21)? Did David purchase the site of the future Temple cheaply (II Samuel 24), or did he pay top dollar (I Chronicles 21)? These discrepancies probably reflect different authors with different agendas, though we can only speculate about the details.

The fanciful elements of our tradition often amused the class. The Bible describes Rahab as a *zonah*, "harlot"; but as Rashi spins it, this means she sold various *m'zonot*, "foods." The Bible claims, implausibly, that Solomon built the Temple without iron tools (I Kings 6:7); the rabbis say Solomon must have had a magic worm that could split rock (Mishnah Avot 5:6). One student quipped that the course should be called "The Lighter Side of the Old Testament." Christians tend to see the era of the Hebrew Bible as the grim period before Jesus, but Jews accentuate the positive.

The OLLI class was so enjoyable, for me and my students, that I can't wait to do a sequel in the fall. I thought I might teach "Old Testament Rituals: Don't Try These at Home!" Anyway, the class laughed when I proposed this topic.

*Osher* is a Hebrew word. It may mean "wealth," related to *ashir*, "rich"; or with another spelling "happiness," related to *Ashrei* ("Happy Are They") and *Asher* (one of the twelve sons of Jacob). The Jewish surname *Osher* is probably a variant of the Biblical name *Asher*: but as the name of

## Introducing Bri/Education

5

the lifelong learning institute, it suggests both wealth and happiness. Happy are they who have this resource in their community! Hope to see you at OLLI as your time permits.

### INTRODUCING BRI



Greetings TOL Congregation:

As some of you may already know, I recently began working with Rabbi Joe as his new administrative assistant. Although I recently moved back to West Virginia from Austin, Texas, I'm a Morgantown native, and very excited to be working and living in this community once again. Outside of my role at TOL, I am currently in the midst of applying to embalming school, volunteering with The Doe Network, and doing as many 5k/10k walks as possible this summer.

I would like to express my appreciation to the members of Tree of Life Board of Directors, as well as Rabbi Joe, and to the many congregants who have been so welcoming to me in my new role here. To those I have not yet had the pleasure of meeting, I look forward to making your acquaintance in the future at TOL. Please feel free to contact me with any updates to the Healing, Recent Losses or Yortzait'n lists as I will now be maintaining these documents. Also, please feel free to contact me with any other questions, or just to say hello! I look forward to my continued role here at TOL.

Thank you,  
Bri Brennen  
bribrennen@gmail.com  
304-319-0311

### Children's Education

Rabbi Joe

The past Sunday school year ended on May 22 with a concluding ceremony at TOL and picnic at Marilla Park. Thanks to all who helped, especially picnic coordinators Jaimie Russell and Bob Klein. Four of our young scholars have *b'nei mitzvah* celebrations this summer: Stevie Babbitt on June 17-18, Sophie and Max Brager on July 1-2, and Zoe Schlosser on July 29-30. The new Sunday school year begins on August 28 with an introduction to the 2016-17 program.

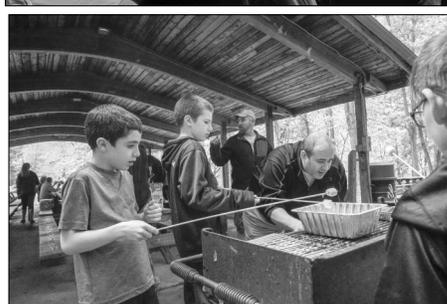
The TOL religious school has a three-year spiral curriculum. That is, we rotate from year to year among three overarching themes: Jewish stories (sacred text), Jewish values (observances both ethical and ritual), and Jewish journeys (history). By the time we complete the three-year cycle and return to a particular topic, each child has reached a higher developmental level and is able to appreciate the material in a new way. Since we have just completed Jewish stories, we are now moving on to Jewish values, otherwise known as *mitzvot*.

Please advise if the kids in your life will participate in the forthcoming Sunday school year. The morning (religious) program, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon, serves ages 3-13. The afternoon (Hebrew) program, 12:15-1:15 pm, is recommended for second grade and up.

Equally important, please tell us if you or an adult

family member can help us out as a teacher. We pay young adults for their time; older adults mostly serve on a volunteer basis, but we can discuss the arrangement appropriate for you. No special knowledge is required: I publish a flexible lesson plan each week and you can improvise from there. See you August 28!

### Sunday School Picnic



Photos: Ed Gerson

Visit <http://etzhaim.org>

**A Little Jehudah Halevi**

**THE PHYSICIAN'S PRAYER**

My God, heal me and I shall be healed,  
 Let not Thine anger be kindled against me so that I be con-  
 sumed.  
 My medicines are of Thee, whether good  
 Or evil, whether strong or weak.  
 It is Thou who shalt choose, not I;  
 Of Thy knowledge is the evil and the fair.  
 Not upon my power of healing I rely;  
 Only for Thine healing do I watch.

*Translated by Nina Salaman  
 from Heinrich Brody, ed., Selected Poems of Jehudah Halevi  
 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1924, 1952).  
 Copyright © 1952 by  
 The Jewish Publication Society of America.*

**THE MEETING OF THE STARS**

The stars of the world have joined to-day.  
 'Mid the host on high none are found like these.  
 The Pleiads desire such unity,  
 For no breath can come between them.  
 The star of the east hath come to the west;  
 He hath found the sun among the daughters thereof.  
 He hath set up a bower of thick branches;  
 He hath made of them a tent for the sun.

*Translated by Nina Salaman  
 from Heinrich Brody, ed., Selected Poems of Jehudah Halevi  
 (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1924, 1952).  
 Copyright © 1952 by  
 The Jewish Publication Society of America.*



Jehudah Halevi  
 1075 - 1141

**STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS**

*Barry Pallay*

We are a people with  
 great strength  
 But individually with many  
 weaknesses and flaws.  
 As a people we see most often  
 the big picture  
 But as individuals  
 we may not see  
 the forest for the trees  
 And struggle with personal  
 wants, social good and  
 God given free will.

We have a great heritage.  
 We carry with us the Torah  
 And the Books of Moses.  
 But individually even during  
 those moments when  
 we received the Tablets  
 We succumbed to baser instincts.

Our God has been patient with us  
 Merciful and forgiving.  
 We have an obligation to meet  
 the greater good  
 To honor God by carrying out  
 the commandments  
 By living our lives with strength  
 and compassion  
 Even as we have all our human  
 weaknesses.  
 It is our daily challenge  
 As well as our opportunity  
 Work on our weaknesses  
 Maintain the goodness  
 of our strength.  
 All a blessing.

( Barry Pallay reflection  
 June 5, 2016 )



Ed Gerson

Ready or not, summer is here, yet by the time this newsletter reaches you, the days will have begun getting shorter. This Fall we will have benefited from several families who will have already moved elsewhere.

A recent brass leaf to Michelle Lerversee reads: "In Gratitude to Michelle Lerversee For Your Generous, Loving, and Dedicated Service to Our Community." Michelle, our 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President, had success as a Sunday school teacher for the kindergartners and organized Rabbi Joe's formal installation in the fall of 2013. Her warm concern and energetic involvement will be missed.

Brian Lemoff served as Education Committee Chair for almost a decade and served as substitute principal in Rabbi Joe's absence. During Brian's time on the board, the religious school policy was shaped into congregation policy through his efforts at Board meetings.

Dan and Daya Solomon both frequently gave of their time and made efforts on behalf of our congregation over many years. It should be remembered that Dan was a key figure in the Fairmont Temple Beth El merger with Tree of Life in the late 1990s.

Nina Price was a religious school teacher for a year, and a Hebrew school teacher for three years. Creative and resourceful, she

organized Sunday school to make yarmulkes and mezuzahs, and to make maps of Israel out of ice cream. How about that?

I wonder, is Tree of Life becoming like WVU, graduating our best talent to the betterment of others? Through these sometimes heart-rending changes there is growth. Let's not look for replacements, but for worthy successors.

There is a Hasidic story of a remote village whose wheat crop became infected with a red bacillus. The village was soon occupied by madmen and madwomen, but before it was too late, the sages came to an understanding. Wheat from the previous year was sufficient to feed one man for one year. The rest could eat the infected wheat and survive their madness, with the one man serving as the standard of sanity for the others when a new healthy crop came from the earth next year.

The recent Orlando incident brings to mind people who have eaten bad wheat. Today's political animosity and retaliation far exceeds what I experienced upon returning from the Vietnam War in May of 1968. When this current madness ceases, and it will, our traditions will still be valid, for these madmen and madwomen can acknowledge only that a coincidence has interrupted them. This is how their universe was created, and this is how their universe ended. On that day, we will recite Shehecheyanu and have a little nosh. A new harvest will have come from the earth.

Shalom, Ed Gerson  
President 2016-2017

## ROSH HASHANNA AND YOM KIPPUR REMINDER FROM THE RITUAL COMMITTEE

This year we will be following the procedure we utilized last year for assigning honors.

If you would like to do a reading during the holiday services, please contact the ritual committee. The committee will not be calling to solicit volunteers to read. During September those who have volunteered will be called and will be notified of their assignments.

*To volunteer you may contact Rich Cohen, prior to September 15<sup>th</sup>, at 304 2923695 or at [rpc116c@gmail.com](mailto:rpc116c@gmail.com)*

## Goodbye to the Lederman/Leversee family



Photos: Ed Gerson

## Hadassah Annual Book Brunch

**Members shared an amazing variety of titles. The complete list is on the TOL web page.**





***Passover Lakeview 2016***



## Community Sharing

10

*We note with  
sorrow  
the passing of  
May their memory  
be a blessing*

*Don Gerace  
(friend of Lee Kass)*

*Janis Bagby  
(friend of Shirley Rosenbaum)*

*Sue Ellen Price  
(mother of Jeremy Price)*

*Daniel Radman  
(uncle of Debbie  
Rosenbaum Jones)*

*Father Jude Molnar  
(friend of Eleanor Simmons)*



### Todah to ...

Margalit Persing for  
proofreading our  
Newsletters.

Remember a loved one  
with a  
**Yahrzeit Plaque**

\$400 DONATION

Contact: Merle Stolzenberg  
mpstolzen@yahoo.com

### Mazel Tov to

Benjamin Torsney, PhD  
and his lucky mother Cheryl  
who got to help hood him at  
recent ceremonies at  
Temple University

Captain Amanda Torsney  
(née Lundstrom),  
DDS, US Army  
and her supportive husband,  
Edward Torsney

Anita Levin  
2016 recipient of the  
Jewish Federation of  
Greater Toledo's  
"Spirit of Jewish Family  
Service Award."

Emily Lederman  
National Merit Awardee  
and  
National AP Scholar  
with distinction

### Look Who Came to Visit!



### Invitation to a Friday night oneg

We all enjoy a tasty oneg (snack) at Friday night services, but it doesn't happen by itself. As agreed at the February 9 congregational meeting, each member family is encouraged to volunteer to provide one Friday night oneg per year: two families a week. Onegs might honor a loved one's memory, or a family birthday

For the "Wine and Cheese" Shabbat, Sisterhood will provide the wine; congregants are invited to bring cheese and crackers. When it is a "Mazel Tov" Shabbat, Susan Brown provides a cake; a family is needed to bring other refreshments. Food should be vegetarian.

Please go to <http://etzhaim.org/Oneg29.pdf> for a copy of this year's oneg schedule To host (provide refreshments), for 5776-7 please contact Laura Cohen, [lcohenwv@gmail.com](mailto:lcohenwv@gmail.com); or Richard Cohen, [rpc116c@gmail.com](mailto:rpc116c@gmail.com), 304-292-3695

Share Your Simcha  
Buy a Leaf on  
**THE SIMCHA TREE**  
\$250/leaf  
\$2500/Small Stone  
\$5000/Large Stone  
Contact  
Merle Stolzenberg  
[mpstolzen@yahoo.com](mailto:mpstolzen@yahoo.com)



Visit <http://etzhaim.org>

<b>JULY / AUGUST 2016</b>			
7/1/16	Friday	Cooper's Rock Shabbat in honor of Sophie & Max Brager	6:00-8:00 pm
7/2/16	Saturday	Sophie & Max Brager B'nei Mitzvah & kiddush	10:00 am – 1:00 pm
7/7/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
7/8/16	Friday	Mostly English service & oneg	7:30-9:00 pm
7/9/16	Saturday	Torah Study: Korach	10:00 am – 12:00 noon
7/14/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
7/15/16	Friday	<i>Frozen</i> -themed service & potluck starting with dessert	6:30-8:00 pm
7/16/16	Saturday	Sorry, no program	
7/21/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
7/22/16	Friday	Mah Tovv Service in tent & toga-style dress & Israeli potluck	6:30-8:00 pm
7/23/16	Saturday	Torah Study: Balak	10:00 am – 12:00 noon
7/28/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
7/29/16	Friday	Kabbalat Shabbat in honor of Zoe Schlosser	7:30-9:00 pm
7/30/16	Saturday	Zoe Schlosser Bat Mitzvah & kiddush	10:00 am – 1:00 pm
8/4/16	Thursday	Sorry, no Rabbi's drop-in office hours	
8/5/16	Friday	Lay-led service & oneg	7:30-9:00 pm
8/6/16	Saturday	Sorry, no program	
8/11/16	Thursday	Sorry, no Rabbi's drop-in office hours	
8/12/16	Friday	Lay-led service & oneg	7:30-9:00 pm
8/13/16	Saturday	Sorry, no program	
8/14/16	Sunday	Lay-led Tish'ah b'Av service sitting on the floor	4:30-5:30 pm
8/18/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
8/19/16	Friday	Wine & Cheese & short service	6:30-7:30 pm
8/20/16	Saturday	Torah Study: Va-et'channan	10:00 am – 12:00 noon
8/25/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
8/26/16	Friday	Cooper's Rock Shabbat	6:00-8:00 pm
8/27/16	Saturday	Torah Study: Ekev	10:00 am – 12:00 noon
8/28/16	Sunday	First day of religious & Hebrew school	10:00 am – 1:15 pm
9/1/16	Thursday	Rabbi's drop-in office hours	1:00-5:00 pm
9/2/16	Friday	Shabbat Rosh Chodesh service & oneg	7:30-9:00 pm
9/3/16	Saturday	Sorry, no program	

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

## FIRST CLASS MAIL



### **Mazal Tov Shabbat**

On **Friday, September 16th**, we will honor our August-September Mazal Tov members. Please join us for a festive evening with lots of good cheer.

Errors? Omissions?  
Contact Linda:  
[ljacknowitz@frontier.com](mailto:ljacknowitz@frontier.com)

#### **August 2016**

Anne Behr  
Denise and Al Berrebi  
Al Berrebi  
Ilene Blacksberg  
Amy Feinberg  
Henry Gould  
Rabbi Joe Hample  
Erik Edwards  
Elliott Edwards  
Debbi Hart  
Art and Linda Jacknowitz  
Linda Jacknowitz

Millie Karlin  
Martha Lass  
Maureen and Yoav Kaddar  
Maureen Kaddar  
Lana and Robert Klein  
Susan and Neal Newfield  
Justin Ludmer  
Johnathan Lederman  
Ann and Marty Pushkin  
Bonnie and Steve Sharkey  
Ruth Siegel  
Leah Stern  
Mark Tauger  
Max Snider  
Daya Masada and Rodney Wright  
Rodney Wright

#### **September 2015**

Anne S. and Nyles Charon  
Nyles Charon  
Judy Cohen  
Monique Gingold  
Donna Bolyard

Sharon and Bob Hildebrand  
Norman Lass  
Ken Lempert  
Joyce Kohan  
Neal Newfield  
Eitan Price  
Jeremy Price  
Lisa and Michael Stern  
Paul Siegel  
Sheila Wexler and John Fuller

**מזל טוב!**