

# Temple Beth Israel Bulletin



Rabbi Jeffrey R. Astrachan

Member, Union for Reform Judaism

## Thoughts from the Rabbi...



Dear Friends,  
Shortly after you receive this issue of the TBI monthly bulletin, Chanukah will be upon us. Known as the *Festival of Lights*, Chanukah seems to have

originated from more than one source. One pre-Jewish source is the seemingly almost-universal custom of having some sort of formalized ritual at the time of the winter solstice that includes fire or other light, a means of convincing the “powers” to end the darkness and bring back the warmth and light of Spring, and the rebirth of the earth.

The Jewish gloss on this more-primordial foundation is the Chanukah story itself, based in historical truth, but embellished with elements that neither *can* nor *should* be considered historical. While it is true that the Jews of the time were under tremendous pressure from the Syrian Greeks to assimilate, and while it is true that there was a very understandable effort on the part of the “traditional” Jewish community to retain its unique Jewishness, and while it is true that those efforts were spearheaded by the Hasmoneans, what is *not* so certain is that when the Hasmoneans regained control of the Temple precincts, the “miracle”

of the sacred oil lasting for eight days actually happened.

All of this happened just a little more than two thousand years ago, at a time when elements of history were being written down and passed down in a more reliable manner than they had been previously. The story of Chanukah appears in books that didn’t make it into the Hebrew Bible, but were included in a collection of books called the Apocrypha.

While we know that the story of the Hasmoneans and the Maccabees is based on fact, and while we know that the **minor** holiday of Chanukah is based on that history, what seems to get lost in our time are two different, but related, things:

**First**, the story of the Maccabees is a story of resistance against those who would have denied us the right to practice our own religion in our own way and would have imposed their religion and lifestyle on us whether or not we were willing; and **second**, regardless of whether we accept the reality of the “miracles” in this story, the celebration of Chanukah in our day has evolved from being a story of resistance and revolt, and a struggle for freedom of religious expression, to one of commercializing a religiously-inspirational historical story to the point of its being a Jewish version of the secular aspects of Christmas.

In our day and time I find the commercialization of **all** religious

holidays to be in the poorest of taste, whether it be the winter holidays of Chanukah, Christmas, or Kwanzaa, or the onslaught of gift catalogues from every retailer on earth trying to ensure that we spend what little money we may still have, while we struggle to pay for our more important necessities like food, clothing, and shelter.

There are yet valuable messages that religions bring to us at this season:

For the Jews, the story of Chanukah—at least to me—reminds me that what Judaism stands for is still worth fighting for, that *Jewish* values are *eternal* values on the basis of which civilization could remain civilized, and that at the end of the long darkness we yet hope to find the light.

For Christians, the story of Christmas is one of joy and hope as well. It is a story of *birth* which, taken in its broadest meaning, can be understood to express the belief that as long as there is life, there can be hope as well.

And Kwanzaa, a beautiful African-American holiday, exists to tell people that even from the lowest depths of darkness and degradation can come resistance and rebirth into a brighter future.

With the winter solstice just ahead of us, the darkest time of the year, I look forward to our being bearers of light to those who experience only darkness, and rays

(continued on next page)

## Thoughts from the Rabbi... (continued)

of hope for those who don't seem to have any hope of their own. At a time in history when so many see only despair and darkness, we Jews – who have seen so much darkness and suffering throughout our own history – are in a better position than most to bring the message that there can be light at the end of the tunnel, rebirth at the end of a long, dark winter, and hope for those in despair, if we all pull together to fight for what is right and just and fair for all.

Faithfully,



Rabbi Jeffrey R. Astrachan

**The closing date for  
the January Bulletin is  
December 12.**

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is published monthly  
(September–May) by  
TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL  
2090 Hollywood Drive  
York, PA 17403**

**Please notify the  
Temple office at  
(717) 843-2676 or  
secretary@tbiyork.org  
of any changes to your  
family status:** address,  
email, phone, or any  
lifecycle events so we  
can keep our records  
current. Thank you.

# Welcome!

Baruch haba b'Shem Adonai! Praised be those who enter our congregation in the name of God. May you find blessings in our house of God.

We welcome the following who have recently joined Temple Beth Israel:

**Dr. Mordechai & Beverly MacArthy  
Jay and Alyson Rubin and daughter, Josephine**

## Condolences

Rabbi Astrachan and our congregation extend heartfelt sympathy to **Linda Cohen**, on the passing of her mother, **Mary Bloom**; to **Neal Friedman**, on the passing of his mother, **Elaine Plotnick**; and to the family of **Mildred Plattner** on her passing.

## Religious School News

Welcome to an insider's view of the fifth grade class at the TBI Religious School. The dateline for our studies is in the vicinity of 900 BCE. It is the time of King Solomon and King David. What a tremendous amount there is to learn about this exciting time in ancient history! In addition to history, the fifth grade class has adopted Mrs. Carol Levinbook, a long-time Temple member, into our hearts. We exchanged Sukkot cards and look forward to more interaction as the year progresses. Last week we decorated Hanukkah cards for our troops; Mrs. Domue will be getting those into the mail for us! Please enjoy the bulletin board we decorated in the hall outside the classrooms. Wishing a safe and happy Hanukkah to our friends and family and Temple members.

*Kristi Silberstein*

## Rabbi Astrachan is available to meet with all congregants.

While drop-ins are always welcome, please consider calling first to ensure the rabbi is available, or has not been called away from the temple.

### Rabbi Astrachan's core office hours:

Tuesdays..... 10am–Noon

Wednesdays ..... 10am–Noon and 1:30–3pm

Thursdays ..... 10am–Noon

### To contact Rabbi Astrachan:

717-843-2676, ext. 7, or [basheirt@gmail.com](mailto:basheirt@gmail.com)

# December Calendar

**2—Friday**  
7:30pm..... Shabbat Family Service (led by Gimel Hebrew Students) w/December Birthday Blessings

**3—Saturday**  
9:30am..... Adult Ed

**4—Sunday**  
9:00am..... Hebrew Classes  
10:00am..... Religious School & Confirmation  
12:15pm..... Teacher's Meeting

**6—Tuesday**  
7:30pm..... TBI Board Meeting

**7—Wednesday**  
7:00pm..... TBI Sisterhood Program: "Why Teens Act Like....Teens"  
RSVP by December 5th to the Temple Office

**9—Friday**  
7:30pm..... Shabbat Service

**10—Saturday**  
9:30am..... Adult Ed

**11—Sunday**  
9:00am..... Annual Chanukah Holiday Boutique (until 3:00pm)  
9:00am..... Hebrew Classes  
10:00am..... Religious School & Confirmation

**14—Wednesday**  
12:00noon.... Lunch & Learn w/Rabbi Astrachan (Participants are welcome to bring a bag lunch)

**16—Friday**  
6:00pm..... Congregational Dinner  
7:30pm..... Shabbat Service/New Member Shabbat w/Cantor Fishbein & accompanist  
Oneg Shabbat sponsored by the Membership Committee, in honor of Temple members who have recently joined & prospective members

**17—Saturday**  
10:00am..... Bat Mitzvah of Valerie Kosson

**18—Sunday**  
9:00am..... Hebrew Classes  
10:00am..... Religious School & Confirmation

**23—Friday**  
7:30pm..... Shabbat Service/4th night of Chanukah—Menorah candle-lighting  
(please bring your own Menorah and candles)

**25—Sunday**  
No Religious School/Winter Break

**27—Tuesday**  
7:00pm..... Finance Committee Meeting

**30—Friday**  
7:30pm..... Shabbat Service—conducted by Anita & Jon Strong

December 2011						
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# Sisterhood News

## You're Invited

Whether you like espresso, latte, or regular coffee... Join the women of Sisterhood on **Sunday, December 18**, 10:00am–12:00noon at Starbucks, 1722 S. Queen St.

## Wanted: Program help

Sisterhood would like to hear from anyone who might help with some proposed food-oriented programming: Challah 101, Hamentaschen 101 and/or Seders 101. If you're proud of your baking, or are experienced in running a seder, and are willing to help teach a short program, email Deena Gross at [deenag@aol.com](mailto:deenag@aol.com) or call 870-4946.

## Easy Ways to Help Sisterhood Raise Money

- Drop off your old cell phones & printer cartridges in the box in the temple lobby.
- Buy Giant cards. Sisterhood makes \$5 for every \$100 you buy. Call Toni at the temple office, 843-2676.

## Join TBI Sisterhood in a Mitzvah!

- Chanukah is quickly approaching and we are now preparing for visitations to those members of our Jewish community who we visit at this special time. We are looking for members to make cookies, fudge or other goodies and for members to make visits. We have between 40 and 50 visits to make and need many volunteers. Items will be delivered to the Temple for pickup by the volunteers. Please contact us at [Sisterhood@tbiyork.org](mailto:Sisterhood@tbiyork.org) or call the Temple office to participate in this wonderful mitzvah!
- Set-up help on Saturday, December 10, and sales help for the Sisterhood Table at the Chanukah Holiday Boutique on Sunday, December 11, 9:00am to 3:00pm.
- The Sisterhood Book Club is currently reading *Wherever You Go* by Joan Leegant. This is a very interesting and relevant story in light of the current political and religious situation! We will be meeting at the home of member Tina Kanevsky on Monday, December 12, at 7:15pm. Mark your calendars and enjoy the book!
- We are very excited about this year's programs and events and look forward to many more! Our fundraiser will be held on the evening of February 4 and features a night of fun and exciting entertainment – including jazz music, wine and desserts, and a performance by surprise talent! Early bird tickets will go on sale soon! Watch the Temple bulletin, visit the Temple website ([www.tbiyork.org](http://www.tbiyork.org)) or "Friend" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/#!/tbiyorksisterhood](http://www.facebook.com/#!/tbiyorksisterhood).

## Help With Your Teens

Socialization, family influences, and a still-developing brain are among the reasons teens do what they do. But at an age when a "child" self is becoming an "adult" self, you may sometime think you're back in the "Terrible Twos." What to do? Sisterhood invites its members and friends to "Why Teens Act Like...Teens" at 7pm on Wednesday, Dec. 7, at the temple. Temple member Anne Ladof, M.S., a psychologist/counselor with Catholic Charities, will offer suggestions and guidance based on Dr. Anthony Wolf's *Get Out of my Life but first Could You Drive Me & Cheryl to the Mall*. Cost is \$3, or bring a dessert/fruit. Coffee/tea will be provided. RSVP to Toni by Dec. 5, 843-2676.

## SISTERHOOD TRIBUTE FUND

843-2676

**To:..... Occasion:..... From:**  
Linda Cohen..... In memory of your mother, Mary Bloom ..... Diane & Michael Tamarkin  
Jay & Ellen Kay  
Elyana & Jeremy Funk..... In memory of grandmother, Mary Bloom..... Jay & Ellen Kay



## Bat Mitzvah of Valerie Kosson Saturday, December 17, 2011

Valerie Kosson loves music, sunshine, technology, Camp Harlam, her four cats, Japanese Animé, New York City, her parents and her friends (not necessarily in this order). She is a sunny thirteen year-old who lives in New Freedom and attends 7th grade at Southern Middle School.

Valerie inherited her parents' love for music and plays piano and percussion, with a special focus on mallet instruments. She is a member of her school band, and this year won percussion seats with both the York Junior Symphony Orchestra and the Southern Middle School Jazz Band.

Valerie participated in her first recording session last year as a side musician on her mom's CD (playing bells and marimba). For her mitzvah project, Valerie will perform a concert with her mom at a retirement home in Shrewsbury. She has been a student at TBI's religious school since the 3rd grade, and sings in the TBI Youth Choir. In addition to her December 17th ceremony, Valerie will be traveling to Israel during Chanukah with her family on a special Bar/Bat Mitzvah tour, and will become a bat mitzvah once again at Masada.

## News from Jewish Family Services

### Join us for a Happy Chanukah!

Come have lunch, eat some latkes, and celebrate the season! Jewish Family Services invites you to our annual Chanukah Party, hosted with the JCC's Tuesday Club, starting at 11:30am on Tuesday, Dec. 20, at the JCC. Of course there will be plenty of gelt, too. Please RSVP to JFS at 843-5011 by Dec. 15, and also let us know if you need a ride.

### Remember those in need at the holidays

Again this year, JFS will place a Mitzvah Menorah in the lobby of the Jewish Community Center to collect donations of gift cards for participants in our Project Manna food pantry program. Gift cards are needed for such essential places as supermarkets, gas stations, Wal-Mart, Kmart, and Target.

The menorah will be up through Dec. 15. For more information call Jessica Brein at 843-5011.

Project Manna also welcomes donations year-round. The greatest needs are for canned fruit in juice, baked vegetarian beans, peanut butter, strawberry jelly and canned vegetables. Latke mixes also would be welcome for the December disbursement to clients.

Donations can be brought to our offices at the back of the JCC if you call ahead. There is also a "food of the month" collection bin in Temple Beth Israel's lobby, overseen by eighth-grader Jacob Arbetman.

### Medicare deadline looms

If you or someone you know has Medicare coverage, Dec. 7 is the deadline this year for changing your Part D prescription drug coverage. For information on how to compare plans and find the most economical coverage for your needs, call Deena Gross at JFS as soon as possible.

JFS works with the county's Apprise program to provide Medicare counseling. Apprise volunteers, including temple members Larry Pitler and Pat Hill-Kaplan, have received extensive training about Medicare.

No matter what time of year, temple members and friends who are turning 65 can attend a free, introductory class on Medicare taught by Apprise volunteers, as a precursor for setting up an individual appointment to explore enrollment options. For information on Apprise call 771-9006.

## Perpetual Memorials

*"In our hearts our loved ones never die"*

### DECEMBER

Edwin I. August  
Sidney Bernstein  
Sylvan Blier  
Betty H. Feder  
Arnold Freedman  
Samuel Greenberg  
Samuel James Hankin  
Herman Hanover  
Stella Harrison  
Edward C. Hill  
Edna Hollander  
Morton L. Jandorf  
Jonas R. Kagen  
Martin N. Lehmayr  
Rae L. Leibowitz  
Ellen Jean Levine  
Fred Lowell  
Minna Margolin  
Robert L. Miller  
Sophia Queen Piperberg  
Alan R. Piperberg  
Evelyn M. Samuelsohn  
Henry C. Sevel  
Harold R. Smotkin  
Esther F. Tamarkin  
J. Harold Trattner  
Mildred L. Trattner  
Ben Wolinsky  
Minnie Wolinsky  
Aaron Zell

## Tree of Life

Leaves may be purchased for \$125, stones for \$1,200, and plaques for Burning Bush \$75, by contacting the Temple office.

# Contribution Funds

## ART

To Linda Cohen, in memory of your mother, Mary Bloom, by Barbara, Ryan & Bradley Eagle; Mackie Epstein  
In memory of Edwin Smolin, by Shirlee Smolin

## BUILDING

In memory of Galina Bilko, by Raisa & Fedor Bilko  
To the Plattner Family, in memory of Mildred Plattner, by Gordon & Ellen Freireich  
To the Friedman Family, in memory of Elaine Plotnick, by Carol & Bob Grossman  
In memory of Samuel Bass, by Carol & Bob Grossman  
To the Cohen Family, in memory of Mary Bloom, by Carol & Bob Grossman  
In memory of Glenn Miller, by Jackie & Neil Tucker  
In memory of Murray Morgan, by Carla & Herb Morgan  
In memory of Arnold Freedman, by Sue & Jeff Freedman  
In memory of Mildred Trattner, by Mrs. James K. Trattner  
In memory of Marion Somers, by Jody & Arnold Gale  
Donation by Sheila & Maxwell Goodman  
To Neal Friedman, in memory of your mother, Elaine Plotnick, by Michelle & Martin Weiss & Sons; Carol & Steven Shapiro

## CANTORIAL FUND

To Neal Friedman, in memory of your mother, Elaine Plotnick, by Ruby & Mark Schmidt  
To Linda Cohen, in memory of your mother, Mary Bloom, by Ruby & Mark Schmidt; Gary Stotsky; Gail & Richard Blumenthal; Esther & Michael Furman

In memory of Henry Butler, by Fran & Ivan Butler  
In memory of Gene Cohen, by Roseann Cohen & Family

## GEN & LAZ YUDIN

In memory of Dorothy Seligson, by Linda & Steve Seligson  
To Rabbi Jeffrey & Shelley Astrachan, in honor of Steven & Abby's B'nei Mitzvah

## PRAYER BOOK FUND

To Dr. & Mrs. Vafa Shayani & Family, in memory of Dr. Roohollah Shayani, by Scott & Cathy Hartman & Family

## RABBI FUND

In memory of David Firshtein, by Fira & Vladimir Kaganovsky  
Donation by Diane & Neal Friedman  
To Allen & Lore Britton, in honor of birth of your granddaughter, Mirabel Nakijima Britton, by Michael & Tomoko Britton  
In memory of Edward Hill, by Patricia & Sheldon Kaplan  
In memory of Evelyn Samuelsohn, by Melody Smith  
In memory of Esther Tamarkin, by Michael & Diane Tamarkin  
In memory of Sylvan Blier, by Kathleen Blier  
To Roseann Cohen, in memory of Gene L. Cohen, by Debbie Cohen Spingarn  
To Rabbi Jeffrey & Shelley Astrachan, in honor of Steven & Abby's B'nei Mitzvah, by Tina & Alex Kanevsky; Lore Gutmann; Mike, Patti, Ashley & Rachel Freer; Betty & Bernard Tucker

To Linda Cohen, in memory of your mother, Mary Bloom, by Ellyse & Larry Selfon  
In memory of Harold Smotkin, Alan Piperberg & Sophie Piperberg, by Ruth Smotkin

## RABBI IRWIN GOLDENBERG YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP

To Neal & Diane Friedman, in memory of Neal's mother, Elaine Plotnick, by Esther & Michael Furman

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

To Linda Cohen, in memory of your mother, Mary Bloom, by Linda, Steve & Lauren Seligson; Jessica & Ken Brein & Family; Lone Chock & Donald Epstein; Mitchell Grossman & Family; Marilyn & Bill Bowers  
Donation by Rabbi George & Rita Astrachan, in honor of the B'nei Mitzvah of our grandchildren, Abby & Steven  
In memory of Abe Yamin, by Rabbi George & Rita Astrachan  
To Dr. Neal Friedman & Family, in memory of your mother, Elaine Plotnick, by David & Barbara Simon

## TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL GENERAL FUND

In memory of Henry Butler, by Leon Butler

## TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL FUND

In memory of Fred Lowell, by Margaret & Steven Lowell

**A MINIMUM CONTRIBUTION OF \$10.00 IS REQUIRED FOR A CONTRIBUTION TO BE ACKNOWLEDGED IN THE BULLETIN**

# York Jewish Community Programs

## Shop Till You Drop

Sunday Dec. 4  
10am-3:30pm  
M \$15 (06101-01)

Enjoy a day to shop without the children! Drop your children off and get some shopping done! We have planned an exciting day complete with swimming and games! Lunch will be provided. You may pick them up anytime during the day before 3:30 pm.

Pack a bathing suit and towel. For more information contact Laura Merklin at 843-0918 or lmerklin@yorkjcc.org

## The Fabulous Shpielkes

Sunday, Dec. 4, 4pm

The Fabulous Shpielkes, a mother-daughter duo of international Klezmer music acclaim, will offer a free public concert. This program is being co-sponsored by the Susquehanna Folk Music Society and is a non-ticketed event. Just show up and enjoy!

## Community Chanukah Celebration

Sunday, December 18  
12:30-2:30pm, all ages

Celebrate Chanukah with us at the JCC. Share in the joy of the holiday with face painting, a nosh of latkes, arts and crafts, and much more. The festivities will begin with a menorah lighting demonstration followed by a sing-along filled with ruach (spirit)! Then enter for a chance to win a spot in our 1st live Chanukah trivia game show. Four lucky contestants will have the opportunity to win a prize in this friendly Chanukah themed competition. Also, don't miss your chance to participate in our 3rd annual multigenerational latke eating contest. Lunch will be available for purchase.

## BBYO Menorah Lighting

Dec. 20-27, 4-4:15pm, all ages

Join the BBYO as they light the nightly candles of the Chanukah menorah, say the holiday blessings, sing songs, and lead a lively game of dreidel. Everyone is welcome!

## TEMPLE BENEFACTORS

SANDY & SCOTT BAKER  
KATHRYN & IRA BERMAN  
NINA & MICHAEL BORN  
JESSICA & KEN BREIN  
ELAINE & GEROW BRILL  
LEON BUTLER  
INA & STEVE CAPLAN  
AGNES & DAVID COHEN  
BARBARA EAGLE  
MAXINE EPSTEIN  
IONE CHOCK & DONALD EPSTEIN  
ESTHER & MICHAEL FURMAN  
NANCY & TIM GRUMBACHER  
MINDY JO & CHRIS HAMME  
BETH LOSS-HIGGINS & KEN HIGGINS  
JACKLYN & MICHAEL KLEINMAN  
BONNIE & MORT KOUSEN  
JANE & STANTON LEBOUITZ  
MARCIA & LARRY LIEBGOTT  
BERNARD RAVITZ  
RUBY & MARK SCHMIDT  
LYNNE & MARTY SHAPIRO  
ANITA & JON STRONG  
BETTY & BERNARD TUCKER  
HARLA & ERIC VERMAN  
DIANE KRASNER & DAVID WELBER

## Temple Beth Israel Board & Officers

Barbara Eagle.....	President	Trustees:	Term:
Debra Simon .....	Vice President	<i>Terms expire in 2012:</i>	
Linda Seligson.....	Secretary	Gordon Freireich	2nd
Deborah Sherman .....	Assistant Secretary	Louis Lavetan	1st
David Welber .....	Treasurer	Michael Perelman	1st
Mary Platkin .....	Assistant Treasurer	Kenneth Silberstein	2nd
Anita Strong.....	Sisterhood Representative	<i>Terms expire in 2013:</i>	
Gerow Brill .....	Men's Club President	Jessica Brein	1st
Anita Strong .....	Religious School Principal	Deena Gross	2nd
Bill Walter .....	Religious School Chairperson	Chris Hamme	2nd
Rabbi Jeffrey Astrachan .....	Ex Officio	Allison Siegelman	1st
Barbara Schmidt & Leonard Berkowitz .....	Past Presidents	<i>Terms expire in 2014:</i>	
Rabbi Irwin Goldenberg.....	Rabbi Emeritus	Patti Freer	1st
Honorary Life Trustee.....	Martin Shapiro	Viv Lazar	1st
		Eric Verman	1st
		Bill Walter	2nd

Temple Beth Israel  
New Member  
**Shabbat Dinner & Worship**  
Friday, December 16

*Traditional Buffet Menu:*

Roasted Chicken  
Brisket  
Oven Roasted Potatoes  
String Bean Almondine  
Salad & Dressing  
Beverages

*Please Bring a Dessert to Share at the Oneg*

Adults (Ages 13+) - \$15  
Children (Ages 4-12) - \$8  
Children (3 & Under) - Free  
NEW TBI MEMBERS ARE OUR GUESTS

Dinner: 6:00pm  
Service: 7:30pm

*Please Detach & Return to the Temple Office NO LATER THAN December 12*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ # Adults: \_\_\_\_\_ # Children: \_\_\_\_\_ # Free: \_\_\_\_\_  
Ages: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please Note: *Payment Must be Made at the Time of Reservation.  
Please Enclose a Check OR Call Toni at the Temple with Your Credit Card Information.*

Mail to: Temple Beth Israel  
2090 Hollywood Drive  
York, PA 17403

Telephone: 717-843-2676