

**Newsletter**

TEMPLE SHALOM  
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NOVEMBER  
CALENDAR

# TEMPLE TALK



## November Calendar:

Friday, November 6th, Lay services at 6:30

Friday, November 13, Rabbi Brian visits. Dairy Shabbat dinner at 6:30. Services at 7:30. Oneg to follow. Hosts for the evening are Stephe and Arnie Auerbach

Saturday, Torah study at 10:30.

Friday, November 20th, Lay services at 6:30.

Friday, November 27, Lay services at 6:30.

## President's Message:

The days go by just so fast. Before you know it, it will be Chanukah. Rabbi Brian has made several weekend visits already, doing Friday night services, adult study groups, Torah studies, Sundays with the religious school and most recently, the "Not so Haunted Havdalah party." More things yet to come.

The religious school is moving along smoothly under the direction of Lauren DeWitt. This year, Hebrew has been added to the curriculum for all students. Jonie Levin works with the younger kids and Daniel Gale teaches the older group. Our teachers Jason Simoneaux, Jean Rosen, and Matt Bouchner are doing a great job.

Looking forward to seeing you all soon,

*Barbara Lirtzman*

## Rabbi's Message:

On November 21st, my daughter, Molly Hannah, will ascend the Bema of Temple Emanu-El in Dallas and read from the Torah. I am sure that the experience will leave me speechless. And as those of you who know me well can attest, that is no small feat. I will listen as my once little baby girl now grown into a young woman, reads and teaches from the Torah.

I don't know exactly how I will feel but if it is anything like my son's Bar Mitzvah, I imagine there will be many moments of deep awe as I take in the sacred power of the moment and the blessings of my life that I am usually too busy to count. How appropriate that my daughter will read from Vayetze, the Torah Portion that tells of Jacob's dream.

Jacob flees from his parent's home. He fears for his life after tricking his brother, Esau, out of his Birthright, and there, amidst the solitude and loneliness of the desert, he goes to sleep. He dreams of a ladder reaching to the heavens with angels ascending and descending upon it. He wakes up and says "Wow, God was in this place and I, I did not know it."

There are many different interpretations for this challenging verse. Actually, enough to fill several books. What does it mean that Jacob says that God was present but that he, one of our greatest patriarchs, did not know it? We will examine some of the questions raised by this Torah portion at our November Saturday Morning Torah Study.

One of the more famous and literal interpretations comes from Rashi. Rabbi Solomon Ben Isaac, the Eleventh Century French Bible Commentator, says simply that Jacob did not know God was there because he was sound asleep. But had he known that God was present he would never have dozed off in the presence of the divine

Rashi's answer is deceptively simple. How often do we sleep through the daily moments of God's presence? How often do we miss the wonders and the still small moments of joy in our lives? It's not intentional. We sleep because it is too loud to hear or we are just too distracted by the busyness of our lives or we are stressed by momentary crisis that cloud the bigger and more wondrous picture. There

are important errands to do and places to go, but we miss the ladders beckoning us to climb and gaze in awe at the wonder below.

Major events like births, B'nai Mitzvah, and weddings bring a momentary glimpse of our lives from above. If we allow ourselves to take a break from the stress of planning, we can climb up and see that we are a part of something magical and much bigger than ourselves. We realize that the daily routines of life, while important, cloud the miracles embedded in these moments. Suddenly, there is a special event, we see the ladder, climb it and dwell momentarily in that state of pure joy and thanksgiving as we gaze down upon our blessings.

But more often than not, once the event is over, we return to a narrower vision. We lose sight of the ladder and the miracles all around us. How appropriate that this month in addition to reading this Torah portion, we find ourselves in the holiday of Thanksgiving. What a special opportunity to reflect on the blessings of living in this free country, for the gift of possibility to observe our Judaism in the manner we wish, and for the gift of enough food. I am not suggesting that there are not major challenges and injustices that must be addressed but most of us are exceptionally blessed.

Thanksgiving asks us to take a moment to be grateful. Our challenge at a Bar Mitzvah, wedding, or a Thanksgiving dinner is two-fold. First, create time. Amidst the football games, the overeating, the busy roads, and the dishes to clean, take time this holiday to reflect on the message of the wonder of life. Take a moment to stand upon the ladder and see all that is holy around us.

The second challenge is to make the moment last for more than a fleeting hour or day so that long after the simcha or the holiday is over, we will still have the ability to awaken in the morning, look around, and say, "God was in this place and I, I did not know it."

But I do know.

*Rabbi Brian Zimmerman*

# Upcoming 2016 Adult Learning Programs:

January 9th Modern Reform Responsa

February 20th Lillith: A Different Kind of Love Story

March 19th An Adult Look at the Story of Purim

April 9th Jazz Up Your Seder: Great Ideas and Conversations for Your Home Celebration

May 7th Havdalah and The Art of Saying Goodbye

June 4th Gefilte Fish and Ethical Wills

\*\*Check the newsletter and e-mail updates for exact times and locations!\*\*

## Announcements:

The congregation needs a projector and screen. The cost is about \$1200.00. Please help us to purchase one. You can give the donation to Mrs. Barbara Lirtzman.

Let's fill the box for Food Net! Bring non-perishable food items or monetary donations to High Holiday services. Checks go in the envelope at the food collection box. For FoodNet guidelines see this link:

[http://www.foodnetacadiana.org/foodnet.php?frame\\_file=frm\\_donating.html](http://www.foodnetacadiana.org/foodnet.php?frame_file=frm_donating.html)

If you haven't signed up to do a Shabbat dinner, contact Gail Johnson. There are a few dates left.

Adult Hebrew classes, taught by Jonie Levin, are well-attended. Tuesday's session is for temple members. Thursday's session is for non-members, and no need to be Jewish. Contact Barbara Lirtzman if you are interested in the alef (basic) or bet (next level).

If you would like some information on becoming a member of Temple Shalom, please contact Barbara Lirtzman.

## Birthdays & Anniversaries:



- Nov 2 Bren Dorsey
- Nov 4 Zipora Aviner
- Nov 5 Sandy Kaplan
- Nov 14 Kenny Mayers
- Nov 15 Sarah Konikoff
- Nov 16 Kjersti Jacobson
- Nov 18 Suzanna Loewy & Manny Klepper
- Nov 27 Mark Jacobson

- Nov 12 Suzette & Joe Gall
- Nov 27 Greg and Marilyn Picket



# November 2015 Yahrzeits:

## **Names to be read on November 6th**

2nd Hyman Listberg  
 2nd Jane Feist  
 3rd Jerry Leo Mayers  
 3rd Blake Raffel  
 4th Thomas Tim Tatar  
 5th William Kiesel, Jr.  
 6th Annette Lerille  
 7th Henry L. Cohn, Jr.  
 7th Jennie Segal  
 7th Mae Reeves Greenwald

## **Names to be read on November 13th**

8th Willie J. Yarbrough  
 9th Nathalie H. Haas  
 9th Margaret P. Stander  
 11th Kathryn Kram  
 12th Ethel K. Lerner  
 14th Mildred Riseman  
 14th Joseph Kerstein  
 14th Anne Albert

## **Names to be read on November 20th**

16th Irving Werbin  
 21st Nancy A. Dreyfus

## **Names to be read on November 27th**

22nd Dora L. Riseman  
 24th Leopold Weil, Sr.  
 25th Norma Muroff  
 25th Irwin H. Davlin  
 26th Joe C. Wormser  
 27th Harold J. Siegal  
 27th Morris Kravitz  
 27th Itschak Weitz

## **Names to be read on December 4th**

29th Noah L. Hart, MD  
 30th Carolyn Schmulen  
 30th Mathilda Weil  
 1st Ferdinand Levy  
 2nd Michael Kleban  
 5th Isadore Levitan

## The Mitzvah of Saying Kaddish:

Remembering loved ones who died by observing their Yahrzeit is considered the highest mitzvah because there is no way they can repay us. That is why it is important to attend services at temple to say Kaddish for a loved one on the Shabbat when the Yahrzeit is observed. In death, as in life, our support and comfort comes from our community. To be a Jew is to be part of a people. Come and be present with your people for the observance of the anniversary of the death of a loved one. Giving a donation in memory of a Yahrzeit is also a way to remember loved ones. Any amount of donation is acceptable.

## Donations:

\*\*Donations to Temple Shalom are always welcome. You may designate a particular fund or have the donation go to the general fund. Donations may be sent to Temple Shalom, P.O. Box 53711, Lafayette, LA 70505.\*\*