



TEMPLE ISRAIAH *BULLETIN*

Office - 487-5373, email: isaiahgn@yahoo.com

Published Monthly

February 2018

February 2018 Calendar of Events

*When the weather (or other circumstance)
threatens the cancellation of services or a
temple event, if the office is closed please call
Kathie Davis to check:
516-487-1576 or 516-297-0254*

Friday, Feb. 2—Shabbat Service, 8:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 3—Torah Study & Service, 9:30am

Monday, Feb. 5—Book Club, 7:30pm

Tuesday, Feb. 6—Board Meeting, 7:30pm

Wednesday, Feb. 7—Tai Chi, 11:00AM

Friday, Feb. 9—Shabbat Service, 8:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 10—Torah Study & Service, 9:30am;
Art Show, 6:30pm to 9:30pm

Sunday, Feb. 11—Art Show, 11:00am to 4:00pm

Wednesday, Feb. 14—Tai Chi, 11:00am

Friday, Feb. 16—Shabbat Service, 8:00pm

Saturday, Feb. 17—Torah Study & Service, 9:30am

Wednesday, Feb. 21—Tai Chi, 11:00am

Thursday, Feb. 22—Lunch & Learn, 11:30am

Friday, Feb. 23—Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 6:15pm

Saturday, Feb. 24—Torah Study, 9:30am; Shacharit
Service, 10:30am

Wednesday, Feb. 28—Tai Chi, 11:00am; Purimspiel
and Megillah Reading, 7:30pm



Winter Fine Art Show

Saturday evening,
February 10, 6:30 – 9:30pm
and
Sunday afternoon,
February 11, 11:00am – 4:00pm

Original Works by Local Artists On Sale:

Paintings Sculpture
Ceramics Photographs
Jewelry

Wine and Cheese, Chocolate &
Home-Baked Pastries
Please RSVP 487-5373



CANTOR'S COLUMN

Our Jewish Valentine

By Cantor Leslie Friedlander



We learn in the Torah and the Talmud that our tradition offers us many ways to celebrate life.

While most of the country celebrates Valentine's Day this month, we could simply consider it a secular day of love that Hallmark and FTD have marketed, but the truth is, we know its actual name is Saint Valentine's Day.

The exact origin of Valentine's Day is uncertain, but it is likely a commemoration of the martyrdom of one of at least three saints named Valentine. This St. Valentine may have been a priest in third century Rome. In the hope of training better soldiers, Claudius II prohibited young men to marry. Secretly, this St. Valentine persisted in performing marriages and when it was discovered, he was put to death by Claudius on February 14.

Another opinion is that Valentine's Day was originally a pre-Christian Roman fertility festival called Lupercalia, a festival dedicated to Faunus, the Roman god of agriculture. One author described it as a sacrificial offering of goats and dogs, known for their sexual proclivity. After the offerings there would be orgies and sexual excesses. Another version describes it as a more mundane social occasion when young men pulled love notes written by unmarried young women and had to guess the note's author. This was a way to pair together eligible men and women as sexual partners. And they could have been one and the same celebration because it is understood that in the year 498 Pope Gelasius – a pope known for suppressing pagan rites - declared the sexual lottery system to be outlawed and proclaimed February 14 as St. Valentine's Day.

Whether Valentine's Day is a celebration of the martyrdom of a Catholic saint or an ancient Roman pagan fertility rite, it is clearly not a Jewish holiday, not the least of which because Judaism doesn't celebrate the martyrdom of anyone.

We are reminded by the Talmud's words that for everything taboo, Judaism has an alternative. In fact, Judaism does have a Valentine's Day of sorts – actually, Judaism has two of them.

There is a little-known but joyous holiday called *Tu B'Av*, whose origin dates at least to Second Temple days, perhaps even earlier. *Tu B'Av*, meaning the 15th of the month of Av, marked the beginning of the grape harvest and Yom Kippur marked its end. On both *Tu B'Av* (which usually falls in August) and Yom Kippur, according to the Mishnah, "...the daughters of Jerusalem used to walk out in white garments, which they borrowed in order not to put to shame anyone who had none...[they] came out and danced in the vineyards exclaiming: 'Young man, lift up your eyes and see what you will choose for yourself. Do not seek beauty but seek a good family...'"

And every Friday evening we sing familiar words from the Book of Exodus: *V'shamru v'nei-Yisrael et-haShabbat la'asot et-haShabbat l'dorotam b'rit olam. Beini u'vein b'nei Yisrael ot hi l'olam*. The Israelite people shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout the generations as a covenant for all time. It shall be a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel.

In a way, the observance of Shabbat is a valentine from God.

According to Genesis, God worked on the creation of the world for six days and the seventh day was a day of rest. Our tradition teaches us that creation wasn't completed in those six days and that creation is an ongoing, evolving process to this day. A midrash explains that God was in the middle of the creation when God stopped working – it wasn't finished but God chose to stop. God chose to start and God chose to stop...and, in fact, God didn't even have to create in the first place, but chose to do so.

The observance of Shabbat is one way we are able to express the understanding that creation is God's act of love, a gift that God gave openly. When we think of a valentine, we think of something reciprocal – we don't expect a gift without giving something in return. Our love for God, expressed through Shabbat, is much the same. God expressed love for us by creating the world and giving us Shabbat and we, in turn, reciprocate by doing mitzvot – our personal expression of creation – and by observing Shabbat.

Let us own the blessing of Shabbat as our weekly Jewish valentine.

RABBI'S COLUMN

By Rabbi Jerry Blum

Don't Worry, Be Happy – Exactly what you'd expect to hear from your rabbi in these turbulent times, RIGHT?! (Don't worry, I didn't fall for it either.)

BUT, in all actuality, it's not too far off the message for the coming month of Adar. The Babylonian Talmud tells us in tractate **Ta'anit 29a** "*MiShe'nichnas Adar, marbim b'simchah* – *When one enters into (the Hebrew month of) Adar, they shall increase their joy*", and this is based on the passage in the Megillah (Esther 9:20-22) :



"And Mordecai wrote these things, and sent letters to all the Jews that were in all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far, charging them to observe the fourteenth and fifteenth day of Adar, yearly, the days wherein the Jews enjoyed rest from their enemies, and the month which had been transformed from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a day of joy; that they should make them days of feasting and gladness, and of sending gifts one to another, and to the poor."

You guessed it, Adar is the month that brings us **Purim**, and let's face it, Purim is fun! With all the **Purim Spiels**, fun costumes (just you wait and see), the noise making when we say the "**H word**", and don't forget those **Hamentaschen**, how can't you **enjoy** the month of Adar? But, I don't think this is totally what the rabbis had in mind when they spoke of increasing joy. Don't get me wrong, some of our Sages were indeed, "party animals" (you wouldn't believe some of the stories in the Talmud), but many of our sages and great rabbis were also seeing joy through a more spiritual lens.

One may ask, can the pursuit of so much joy be a distraction from a spiritual life? Psalm 100:2 says "***Ivdu et HaShem B'simchah***" – ***Serve the Lord with Joy***", meaning that we might find joy in living a life of spirituality. This all begs the next question, are we meant to be joyful all the time during Adar? What about those moments when there is no joy? Those times when we are struck with profound sadness, or fear? When our personal circumstances take us in the opposite direction of joy? Can the month of Adar change all this? I think not.

I believe that joy must be cultivated, but how does one cultivate joy when we are continually surrounded by sadness, or strife? How can we even think of joy when we are stressed out by work or our relationships, or even our current events? Isn't this just the opposite of the joy of Adar that our rabbis speak of?

I have found for myself that the month of Adar and the story of Purim are an invitation to understand that sorrow and joy walk hand in hand throughout our lives. The story of Purim tells of a time of great danger and strife for our Jewish brethren in Shushan, but through the perseverance and bravery of Esther and Mordechai, we were "*transformed from sorrow to gladness, and from mourning into a day of joy*" (Esther 9:22)

We can't go through life papering over our sadness with a veneer of happiness. Adar invites us to cultivate the ability to feel joy even as we try to balance out what is painful or hard in our lives. Sadness and joy do not cancel each other, and ultimately, we may find that letting ourselves feel our sorrows can be a way of opening our hearts to deeper joy.

The great Chassidic master known as the Ba'al Shem Tov (Rabbi Israel ben Eliezer, d. 1760) taught that we should continually work to find what is good and joyful within every experience life gives to us. My dad (who I often thought was a great Chassidic master) used to tell me that each life has great happiness and great sadness. Each of these add color and depth to what ultimately become the picture of our lives. In the end, these sorrows and joys help us to recognize all the blessings that we were given in this world.

May we all have a joyful Adar and Purim.

And now for the shameless plug – Don't forget to join us for some **Purim High-Jinx on Wednesday, February 28**, when the cantor and I will attempt to dazzle you with Purim Joy! Don't forget your costumes....we won't! ;)

"VOICES OF ISAIAH"

What Brought Us to the Door of Our Synagogue?

By Judy Snow & Scott Schleifstein

In October 2016, the Isaiah family gathered together in prayer and fellowship for our 50th High Holiday Season and the start of our Jubilee Year. It is a time to reflect on our past and look forward to the future.

Joining Temple Isaiah and being a part of this community for the last seven years really has been like coming home for my husband and me. I grew up in Great Neck and my brother was a bar mitzvah at Temple Isaiah in the early eighties when the temple was at its old location on Stoner Avenue. Neither my sister nor I had a bat mitzvah service but I was in a confirmation class with Rabbi Judith Lewis in the late eighties when I was in high school. In college I was not that involved in Jewish organizations or identity. However, after I graduated, as I found myself in New York City working and going to graduate school to be a librarian, I began attending Reform young professional organizations and synagogue events. My husband and I lived on the Upper East Side and in Forest Hills and moved back to Great Neck about 15 years ago.



As a librarian in Great Neck, there is a natural synergy between temple adult education, social action, community involvement, Jewish education, and Temple Isaiah. When I began to hear about the temple getting a home of their own at Chelsea Place off of Cutter Mill Road in Great Neck, we decided to investigate. Between the wonderfully friendly people, the interesting and engaging events and activities, and a shared sense of purpose and values, my husband Scott and I began to see that joining this temple would be a great place for us to grow, learn, and be part of a family of friends. The clergy here is wonderful, and the members are motivated to keep the Temple growing and offering so much in terms of Jewish education and inclusiveness to all people interested in Reform Judaism. We've never looked back!

We welcome and solicit your personal story and experience in our "Voices of Isaiah" column. Tell us your story ... the unique path to the door of our synagogue. The *Shehecheyanu* blessings that connect your family to our Temple Isaiah family. Raise your voice, sing out in joy and share your Isaiah experience. Please contact either Kathie Davis or Bill Rosenberg to share your story.

February Lunch & Learn
Thursday, February 22, 11:30am
Bistro Burger - 605 Middle Neck Road
February session led by Cantor Leslie Friedlander



February 2018

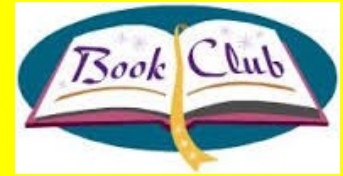
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2 Shabbat Service 8:00pm	3 Torah Study & Service 9:30am
4	5 Book Club, 7:30pm	6 Board Meeting, 7:30pm	7 Tai Chi, 11:00am	8	9 Shabbat Service 8:00pm	10 Torah Study & Service 9:30am Art Show, 6:30pm
11 Art Show, 11:00am	12	13	14 Tai Chi, 11:00am	15	16 Shabbat Service 8:00pm	17 Torah Study & Service 9:30am
18	19	20	21 Tai Chi, 11:00am	22 Lunch & Learn with Cantor Friedlander, 11:30am	23 Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 6:15pm	24 Torah Study 9:30am Shacharit Service 10:30am
25	26	27	28 Tai Chi, 11:00am Purimspiel and Megillah Reading, 7:30pm	<i>Save the Dates:</i> <i>March 9—Shabbat Across America</i> <i>March 25— “Guess Who? Part II”</i> <i>March 31—Second Night Seder</i>		

Book Club

Monday, February 5, 7:30pm

The Book of Separation

By Tova Mirvis



This is the memoir of a woman who leaves her faith and her marriage and sets out to navigate the terrifying, liberating terrain of a newly mapless world. Born and raised in a tight-knit Orthodox Jewish family, she questions the strictures of her community and breaks free. Honest and courageous, Tova takes us through her first year outside her marriage and community as she learns to silence her fears and seek adventure on her own path to happiness.



Wednesday,
February 28,
7:30pm



Purimspiel

Megillah
Reading

Temple Isaiah's Winter Fine Art Show

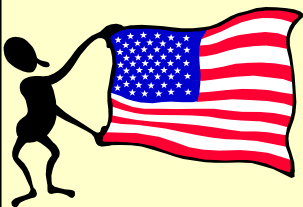


Saturday & Sunday,
February 10 & 11
See Page 1 for Details

Friday, March 9, 2018

Join tens of thousands of Jews across America as we come together to eat, drink, relax, enjoy, debate and celebrate at the 18th annual

Shabbat Across America



*Bring the family - bring your friends to an
early Shabbat service at 6:30pm followed by a
delicious kosher dinner at 7:30PM
(A Program of National Jewish Outreach)*



Adults: \$36; Non-member guests only \$18; Children under 13: Free
RSVP REQUIRED—487-5373 or isaiahgn@yahoo.com

**Bakers wanted: for information
please call Kathie Davis at 487-1576 or Sheila DeFazio at 643-1459**

Save the Date

Sunday, March 25th, 3:00pm

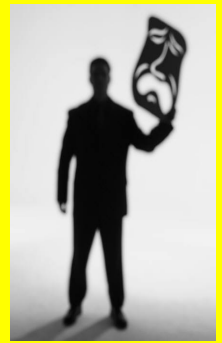
"Guess Who?" Part II

A Live-Action Trivia Contest

Politicians, a few; New singers & actors too;
Refreshments for you.

**Come Out of the Winter Doldrums for an Evening of Fun and
Entertainment with Richard Solow**

Wine, cheese & noshes
\$20 in advance, \$25 at the door
RSVP to 516-487-5373



Please Join Us at the Temple Isaiah Family Seder Second Night of Passover

***Saturday, March 31, 6:30PM at Temple Isaiah
(New Caterer This Year)***

Temple family and guests are invited to join us for this joyous occasion.
The seder will be led by Cantor Leslie Friedlander and Rabbi Jerry Blum

Space is limited—reservations and payment MUST be made in advance

Adults: \$65.00
Children 14-18: \$30.00
Children under 13: Free

Please Return to Temple Isaiah—1 Chelsea Place, Great Neck, NY 11021

Sign me up for the Second Night Seder:

Name _____ Phone _____

Number attending—Adults: _____ Children: _____ Total Enclosed:\$ _____

General Donations

In Loving Memory Of:

Richard Davis, Husband of Kathie Davis
Kathie Davis
Leon Epstein, Father of Irwin Epstein
Selma Dechter, Grandmother of Irwin Epstein
Irwin Epstein
Jack Peter Fink, Father of Cantor Leslie
Friedlander
Amy & Howard Gorman
Jeannette Abelow, Mother of Pat Tanton
Ruth Isaac
Mildred Levinson, Mother of Lee Levinson
Amy & Lee Levinson
Abraham "Al" Maller, Husband of Connie Maller
Connie Maller
Charles Miller, Grandfather of Denise Miller
Sadie & Max Shiller, Grandparents of Steve Fein
Denise Miller & Steve Fein
Bernard Rosenberg, Father of Bill Rosenberg
William Rosenberg, Grandfather of Bill
Rosenberg
Bill Rosenberg
Enid Rubin, Mother of Harold Rubin
Harold Rubin
Nuhim Causanschi, Brother of Golda Shapiro
Golda Shapiro
Paul Eisenman, Father of Bella Bekker-Silver
Philip Silver, Father of Jonathan Silver
Bella Bekker-Silver & Jonathan Silver
Sophie Kristal, Mother of Evelyn Solow
Evelyn & Richard Solow
William Zimberg, Father of Shelley Willcox
Shelley & Robert Willcox

In Honor of:

Belle & Elliott Gayer for Their Hard Work and
Dedication in Hosting the Lovely Tu B'Shevat
Seder

Helman & Judy Brook
Kathie Davis
Sheila & Victor DeFazio
June & Allan Feldman
Barbara Feldman
Ron & Yvette Gitelman
Ruth Isaac
Jonathan Kaminetzky
Ruth Mandelbaum
Rita Rubenstein
Golda Shapiro
Shelley Sherman
Judy Snow & Scott Schleifstein
Arlene Soifer

The Speedy Recovery of Steve Fein

Judy & Helman Brook
Kathie Davis
Sheila & Victor DeFazio
June & Allan Feldman
Gail & Robert Gordon
Carol & Bill Hersh
Terry Birnbaum-Horton
Mindy & Howard Israel
Terry & Richard Joseph
Ruth Mandelbaum
Bill Rosenberg
Alisa & Martin Secofsky
Shelley Sherman

In Honor of (Cont'd):

The Engagement of Jonah Moulin, Son of
Willa Lewis & Ed Moulin

Judy & Helman Brook
Kathie Davis
Sheila & Victor DeFazio
June & Allan Feldman
Gail & Robert Gordon
Carol & Bill Hersh
Terry Birnbaum-Horton
Mindy & Howard Israel
Terry & Richard Joseph
Ruth Mandelbaum
Steve Fein & Denise Miller
Bill Rosenberg
Alisa & Martin Secofsky
Shelley Sherman

The Special Birthday of Victor DeFazio

Judy & Helman Brook
Kathie Davis
June & Allan Feldman
Gail & Robert Gordon
Carol & Bill Hersh
Terry Birnbaum-Horton
Mindy & Howard Israel
Terry & Richard Joseph
Ruth Mandelbaum
Steve Fein & Denise Miller
Bill Rosenberg
Alisa & Martin Secofsky
Shelley Sherman



*Commemorate the good
times in your life with a
leaf on Temple Isaiah's
Tree of Life.
Call the office for details.*

PARTNERS IN CARING (PIC)

Sid Jacobson JCC's Partners in Caring offers an array of specialized services including support groups, counseling, information and community referrals, workshops, autism and Alzheimer's programs, as well as other social services. Together with UJA-Federation of New York and your synagogue, we are your partner in caring for you and your family.

PIC helps create a caring, responsive Jewish community by providing support for:

**Bereavement
Parenting
Life Cycle Issues
Marital/Family Concerns
Divorce/Separation
Caregiving issues
Respite programs and
services**

For assistance, contact us at
516-484-1545 ext. 196.

A licensed social worker will respond promptly to provide you with information and support.

*Partners in Caring is funded by a
grant from UJA-Federation of
New York and partnering
synagogues*



SJJCC.ORG

RIVERSIDE- Nassau North Chapels

55 North Station Plaza
Great Neck, New York 11021
(516) 487-9600

PRE-NEED COUNSELING AVAILABLE

DAVID M. RUBIN



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TEMPLE ISAIAH OF GREAT NECK

1 Chelsea Place
Great Neck, NY 11021

www.templeisaiahgn.org
Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism
Issue No. 173 Published Monthly

**Deadline for submissions
10th of the Month**

BULLETIN

Co-Presidents: Kathie Davis, Bill Rosenberg
Cantor: Leslie Friedlander
Rabbi: Jerry Blum
Production: Cathy Reibstein



**Need Help?
Facing a
Challenge?**

PIC helps create a caring, responsive Jewish community by providing support for:

Bereavement Parenting
Life Cycle Issues Marital/Family Concerns
Divorce/Separation Caregiving issues
Respite programs and services

For assistance, contact us at 516-484-1545 ext. 196.

A licensed social worker will respond promptly to provide you with information and support.

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