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**Happy Hanukkah!** - Kathie Davis, Chair of The Caring Committee

The Caring Committee members hope that everyone had a joyous Hanukkah with family and friends. We wish you a happy and HEALTHY year ahead, with the emphasis on healthy. May this be a year filled with sunshine, peace, joy and love. And let's add a dash of kindness into this mix, as well!

**Co-Presidents:**  
 Kathie Davis  
 Terry Joseph  
 Shelley Sherman

**Rabbi:** Jerry Blum

**SHABBAT SERVICES ALERT**

**6:30 PM, UNTIL APRIL**

and Daylight Savings Time



The other day, I had the honor of bringing a sweet little baby boy into the "Covenant of Avraham Avinu (Abraham our Father)", and what an honor it was to be part of this meaningful ritual. There were blessings for the brit (the covenant) recited and a name bestowed on this child, bringing into focus the many important generations and their contributions to the Jewish community

that came before him. Yet, this ritual was so much more significant. This beautiful baby is directly tied to our Temple Isaiah of Great Neck family and connects with our temple's history that brings us full circle as a community.

This adorable baby is the great grandson of one of our founders, Kurt and Sylvia Kelman (see the picture below of Kurt and Sylvia putting up the mezuzah that is still on our front door), and was aptly named Avraham Lev in honor of Kurt. During the ceremony, little Avraham Lev was wrapped in the very tallit that Kurt wore when he became a Bar Mitzvah, and we sang L'chi Lach by Debbie Friedman, a prayer and song that speaks of new journeys that we take in life, and how we must have faith in order to take the first steps forward. It speaks of God's promise to us as the Jewish people, but also to our commitment to having faith in the path forward. In the Torah, Avraham uses the words Hineni often, and it is repeated numerous times throughout our TaNaKh (Torah, Prophets and the Writings). Present at this brit ritual were Steve Kelman, his wife Shelley, and Steve's sister, Ellen. Both Steve and Ellen were proud B'nai Mitzvot of Temple Isaiah of Great Neck and all in a state of hineni.

In this past week's Torah portion, Miketz the word hineni (or Hinei) is used 10 times when retelling Pharaoh's dream to Joseph (5 times each, and it was repeated twice), and in this case it is translated as "he was here" or used just as a passing term to present Pharaoh's presence in the dream. But often when we come across the word Hineni in the Torah it means I am here, but a truer and more nuanced understanding of the word is "I am present" and I am prepared to do what is needed to be successful at a given moment. It is a word that describes the state of mind of one who is ready to take on a task of great importance. Our Biblical leaders like Avraham and Moshe were often in that state of readiness, and I wonder what that would mean for us as moderns. It is not often that we are called upon to lead our people out of slavery, nor asked to perform acts of prophecy, so what can this

mean for us, and how might it apply to our lives and our temple community?

Hineni is actually a state of mind, and being in a state of "Hineni" can take on many different meanings, such as being in a state of spiritual openness during our services, or being present for someone in our community who is in need of companionship, or just a phone call to reach out. It could also mean that one would be on-call to help out with our many activities during the year or even just show up for our events too. For us as a synagogue family, the most important way we can be in a "Hineni" state of mind is to become an active participant working to keep our community vibrant. Come and join a committee. Be part of the effort to move forward with the many tasks that will arise this coming year. You don't have to take on a leading role, but everyone can help make our temple successful. We need you to become our ambassadors to the outside world. Bring friends to our services or our events, and of course, yourselves.

During this Brit/Covenant ritual, Avraham Lev's parents both stood in a state of Hineni. They were and are prepared to ensure that this little man receives a Jewish education and is committed to Jewish values. He will be reared in a household that is based in ma'asim tovim (good deeds) and tikun olam (repairing the world), values that were handed down from generation to generation and nurtured in the Temple Isaiah community. Temple Isaiah has been a strong influence on so many people, and we must all try to have the faith and to be in a state of hineni for our kehillah.

As we enter 2025, I am grateful for all that was good in the past years, and cognizant of the challenges this coming year will bring. I pray that this coming year will inspire us to be present and participate in the growth of our community. When we are called upon to help our temple family, may we always say "Hineni", "I am here and ready" to be part of the way forward for our Kehillah Kedoshaha, our holy community.

Wishing you and those you love, a very Happy 2025. May it be a year of health, blessing, growth and peace.

*Rabbi Jerry*





**H**appy secular New Year and last day of Hanukkah! 2024 ended with lots going on- we had a rare combined event embracing the decades old tradition of Jews noting Xmas by seeing a movie and eating Chinese food followed by a first night celebration of Hanukkah; thanks to David Aubrey for the film, Judy Snow for the take-out, and Rabbi Jerry for the transition into Candle lighting and sufgan-yot! Thanks also to the Gayers for the festive décor and for introducing us to a Moroccan Hanukkah celebration which coincided with New Years day.

Of course a highlight of the month was our Auction. Thanks to all who came and bid and now can enjoy the terrific items they won. Thanks to our hardworking committee and all those who donated items or obtained them from our local merchants. Special thanks to our auctioneer extraordinaire,

Richard Joseph, who kept us laughing and stupefied with trivia (except for Scott who knew most of the answers and David who knew the rest!)

We returned to a very well attended hybrid Torah study, with many people coming in person and a few on Zoom. We plan to continue this model intermittently in an effort to enjoy community in our discussions and hope it will draw additional congregants- like you!. Please consider joining us on most Shabbat mornings at 9:30 for a very brief service and an inspiring discussion of the Torah. No previous experience required. We all learn together in a relaxed and welcoming environment.

The Rabbi also completed his classes on Sheronees which focused on the women who helped Moses.

Coming soon, will be a return to lunch and learn (anyone have a suggestion of a good venue?) and a new activity- "Coffee with the Rabbi". Bring your thoughts or questions and generate a lively discussion about whatever is on your mind. Please read your bulletins and make note of the dates for our events. We are strongest as a thriving congregation when everyone participates.

We wish you all good health and fortune in 2025.

Your Presidium,

*Shelley, Terry, and Kathie*

## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

**A very special announcement and thank you to Bill Hersh** for initiative and perseverance. Years ago we applied for federal funds through the ERC program created to help nonprofits make it through the pandemic. Many of us pretty much gave up hope, but Bill continued to pursue it and we just got checks for approximately \$55,000. Thank you, Bill! Read the whole story later in this Bulletin.

**Please be aware that we have entered into a 6 month agreement** with a Southern Baptist Congregation to use our sanctuary on Sunday mornings into the early afternoon. Therefore, our usual Sunday events will have to start at 3:00 most weeks. We are still drafting the provisions of the rental agreement and there will be Sundays where they will not have access. This arrangement will provide us with much needed revenue. The people we have met have been lovely and we hope to have a warm and respectful relationship.





### **Bake Sale Thank You** - Bake Sale Committee: Terry Joseph & Amy Gorman

We held our Annual Temple Isaiah Bake Sale for Thanksgiving and once again, it was successful because of our wonderful member-bakers: David Aubrey, Bella Bekker-Silver, Claudia Benton, Amy Brook, Judy Brook, Elliott Gayer, Johanna Hurwitz, Nina Koss, and Jean Lesser, who were so generous with their time and went above and beyond to bake their delicious goodies. We would like to thank those who purchased baked goods, as well. Together we sweetened the season!

### **Our Goods and Services Auction** - Lloyd Perell, reporting

A horde of K-Mart shoppers descended on Temple Isaiah on December 22nd and bought everything in sight. Well, okay; about 30 people attended the auction and only one item wasn't sold. More about that in a minute.

We made more money than we expected, although not what we've made in past years. We don't have the number of people we used to have, but for our size the auction was very successful and many thanks to all who attended and bid.

We still have a portrait sitting available at Hi-Tech Studios for anyone who would like to make an offer (minimum bid \$75). Also, while there were several bidders for Rabbi Blum to come to your house, install and bless mezuzahs, he will be happy to do the same for anyone else as well. Just call the office if you would like this very special home blessing.

### **Temple Isaiah's Big Pay Day (really)!!!** - Bill Hersh, Treasurer

Temple Isaiah just received checks from the IRS with a net value of approximately \$55,000. Before I explain, keep in mind we still need robust dues, general donations, and fundraisers to stay in business, but this will help, along with our other efforts to get through the next year.

The story starts with passage of the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act in 2020, designed to help businesses not only stay in business, but also to encourage them to retain and pay their employees at the outset of the pandemic. The program was called the Employee Retention Credit, (ERC) and it applied to periods of time in 2020 and 2021 when we paid employees but had a documented decline in income without a decline in expenses.

We hired Verity Tax Credits in April, 2023, which offered their services to churches and synagogues for a discounted 10% fee of any refund. They determined that we would be eligible for a refund of over \$48,000, and prepared both the tax forms based on our detailed financial data for those two years, and a 32 page report about our operation and how it had been affected by the pandemic (for instance we included a copy of then-Governor Cuomo's Executive Order of March 7, 2020 – remember those days??). The forms were sent to the IRS on June 30, 2023.

And then we waited. I contacted the IRS a couple of times, on hold on the phone for hours. Then on Friday the 13th (in December), the checks arrived, including interest dating back to the 2020-2021 tax year!

We can celebrate this one-time windfall, but remember we still need everyone's support to sustain our very special congregation.



## The Tax Man May Not Cometh

Anyone who's required to take a minimum annual distribution from their IRA can use that account to send a donation directly to the Temple for Temple Fundraisers including the auction, journal or dues and even the Kol Nidre appeal. Doing so saves you the taxes on the amount donated and satisfies that part of your required withdrawal. Your brokerage will have a form and/or call your



## The 360 Circle of Tzedakah

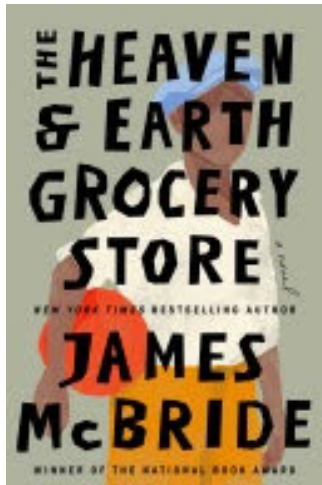
By contributing to the 360 Circle you assure that your best wishes will be shared with all congregants who are celebrating a simcha, healing, or sadly suffering a loss. A Temple card sent to a fellow member will wish a Mazal Tov on an important occasion, express a get well, or a condolence, and it will always include your name. You won't have to write a separate check each time you wish to share your support; one check will cover you for the whole year! Simply send a payment of \$360 to Temple Isaiah, earmarked for the 360 Circle, and your name will be included on all cards sent out to commemorate the life events of your fellow congregants.



### Coffee with the Rabbi:

**Wednesday, January 8th, beginning at 1:30pm**

Have you ever wanted to ask your rabbi anything about our traditions or practices? Come join Rabbi Jerry for coffee and schmoozing. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP to the office so we can prepare.



### Book Discussion

**January 12 at 11am, Judy Snow's place.**

Our next book discussion will be led by Judy Snow and Judy Densky. "The Heaven and Earth Grocery Store" is a testament to a time when communities came together, helped each other, and cared about their neighbors." In this case a community of Black and Jewish residents of the Chicken Hill neighborhood of Pottstown, PA. in the 1920's and '30's. It is a "poignant look at relationships, redemption, racism and the American dream." The NYT called it "a murder mystery locked inside a Great American Novel." *Get ready to read and discuss. Please contact the office for Judy Snow's address.*



### Hybrid Torah Study

Join Rabbi Jerry and your friends on **Saturday, January 18th and 25th at 9:30AM** for Torah study in the sanctuary. (A zoom link will be in the Weekly Announcements for those who are unable to attend in person)

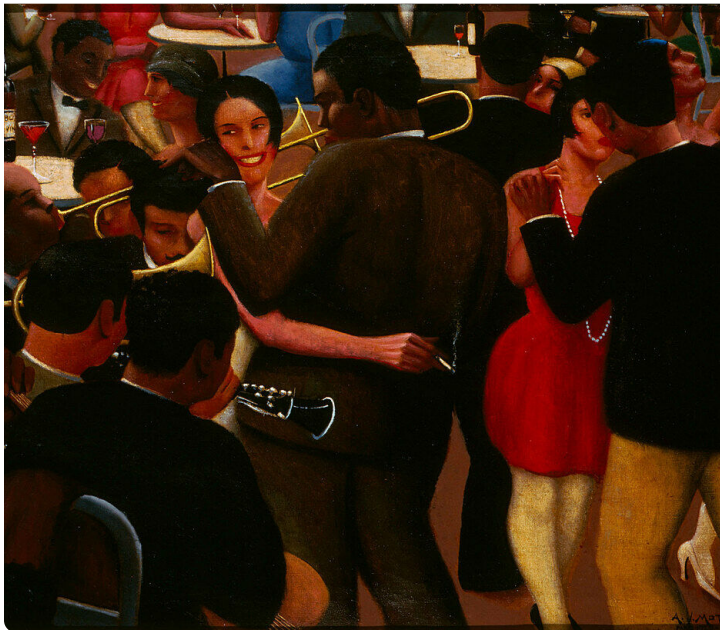
Help us bring back the sense of community that in-person Torah study has always provided!



### Current Events with Helman & Judy Brook

**Sunday, January 19th, at 2 PM**

Delve into current events – there are plenty of them – with Helman Brook. Discuss how they're represented in the media and how they affect us.



Archibald J. Motley Jr., *Blues*, 1929

## Art Lecture Series with Professor Dennis Raverty, Lecture 2 of 3, Sunday, February 9th at 3pm

### The Great Depression and Postwar Struggles for African American Artists

Many African Americans were employed by the Federal Art program of the W.P.A. as artists, teachers and muralists. After the war some continued those careers forged during the previous decades under government support. This lecture considers the works of these artists.

Lecture 3, upcoming: **Civil Rights, the Politics of Identity and Recent Black Art:** The Black Arts Movement of the late 1960s and 1970s addressed the lack of exhibition opportunities and the marginalization of black artists while more recent concerns include questions of historical representation as modern artists inscribe their personal stories into the evolving historical narrative.

**\$15 PER LECTURE**

(those who attended the first in the series are eligible for the adjusted fee – 3 lectures FOR \$40)



## Womens' Rosh Chodesh Service Friday, February 28th at 6:30pm

Rosh Chodesh is a celebration of the new moon that has long been associated with women who are released from some obligations each month at that time. It is rooted in the Talmud but some believe it was a reward to Jewish women for refusing to give their jewelry for the golden calf.

The Women of Temple Isaiah will conduct a special service on Shabbat eve of February 28th and it promises to be moving and informative.

We invite all of our women to participate in speaking portions of the service, leading prayers and songs, and providing home-baked oneg. Please contact Terry Birnbaum-Horton to volunteer.



# January Celebrations & Rememberances

## BIRTHDAYS

Victor DeFazio .....Jan 7

## ANNIVERSARIES

Linda & David Burghardt.....Jan 13

## YAHRTZEITS

**Sylvester DeFazio**  
Father of VictorDeFazio (1/1)

**Robert Ensler**  
Brother-in-law of Sheila & Victor DeFazio (1/6)

**Herbert Lerner**  
Stepfather of Rona Levy (1/8)

**Anna Rosenthal Brook**  
Mother of Helman Brook (1/10)

**Alfred Perell**  
Father of Lloyd Perell (1/12)

**Sadie Shiller**  
Grandmother of Stephen Fein (1/17)

**Charles Miller**  
Grandfather of DeniseMiller (1/22)

**Paul Eisenman**  
Father of Bella Bekker-Silver (1/24)

**Donald Kaner**  
Brother-in-Law of Paula Newman (1/25)

**Hilda Feuerberg**  
Mother of Linda Burghardt (1/26)

**Philip Friedman**  
Son of DianeHaber (1/27)

**Philip Silver**  
Father of Jonathan Silver (1/27)

**Ann Diamond**  
Mother of David Diamond (1/30)

**Sophie Kristal**  
Mother of Evelyn Solow (1/31)

## Honoring Friends and Family



### Order An Engraved Plaque to Honor and Remember Your Loved One

It is deeply rooted in Jewish tradition to place in the sanctuary of the synagogue a plaque with the names of loved ones who have passed away. Once a plaque is dedicated, it becomes a permanent memorial. The Yahrtzeit lights will be illuminated on the yahrtzeits of your loved one's death and at Yizkor services throughout the year. The cost per plaque is \$700.

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Deceased: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Death: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to reserve a space for use in the future to be grouped with currently ordered plaques. \_\_\_\_\_ (# of spaces)

Please return form and payment to Temple Isaiah. Please note that all credit card charges have a 3% administrative fee.

### Share your Simchas or Memories with us.

Email images to: [isaiahgn@yahoo.com](mailto:isaiahgn@yahoo.com).





## General Donations

Willa Lewis & Edward Moulin IMO relatives, sorely missed

Golda Shapiro IMO Esther Causanschi

Mary Morella & Irwin Epstein: a belated welcome to Rabbi Jerry Blum

Shelley & Robert Willcox IMO Hannah Zimberg

## Help Us Improve Our Recordkeeping

When you send a check to the Temple, please use the Memo field to indicate what the check is for (dues, an event, etc.).

Moishe Templegoer 5785 Reform Road Hebrew Hills, USA		DATE _____
<b>PAY</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>\$</b> <input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>		
<b>MEMO</b>	<i>2025 Dues</i>	_____

# January 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1  Moroccan Chanukkah 4:30pm	2		4  Torah Study Zoom ONLY - 9:30am
5	6	7	8  Coffee with the Rabbi 1pm	9	10  Shabbat Services In Temple and Zoom - 6:30pm	11  NO Torah Study
12	13	14	15	16	17  Shabbat Services In Temple and Zoom - 6:30pm	18  Torah Study In Temple and Zoom - 9:30am
19  Current Events with Helman & Judy Brook 2pm	20	21	22	23	24  Shabbat Services In Temple and Zoom - 6:30pm	25  Torah Study In Temple and Zoom - 9:30am
26	27	28	29	30	31  Shabbat Services In Person and Zoom - 6:30pm	

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## Temple Isaiah of Great Neck

1 Chelsea Place, Great Neck, NY 11021

### Office Hours:

Wednesdays & Thursdays 12 - 3 PM

Call 516-487-5373 or email [isaiahgn@yahoo.com](mailto:isaiahgn@yahoo.com) for additional times.

**Deadline for bulletin submissions: 15th of the month**