

Monthly Children's Programs – Beginning January 2nd, 4 p.m.

Also In the Messenger:

- ✧ *Tu B'Shvat Seder set for February*
- ✧ *Bond with others at the Purimshpiel*
- ✧ *URJ goes online*

We tried something different at Hanukkah this year – having a program for children and families just before a service, instead of on a Saturday or Sunday morning, when it seems like everything from team sports to dance conspires against us.

It worked well enough that we're going to continue the experiment through the rest of the year – having programs for children and families at different times and locations, like our Tu

B'Shvat Shabbat Seder in February.

In January, we're starting things off right away, on the 2nd day of the month, Tuesday, January 2nd, at Temple Israel, from 4 to 5 pm. We'll be looking at Jewish bedtime rituals and making Sh'ma pillows that everyone can take home. While the program will be held at the beginning of our joint Hebrew School with Temple Israel, it is open to everyone and appropriate for children of all ages.

Children will choose from a variety of fleece designs – from planets to puppies to pandas – and then put together their very own prayer pillow, a soft, squishy, fuzzy, friendly reminder to say the Sh'ma and give thanks every night.

Parents are welcome to join in and learn ways to help their children find extra joy and comfort each night. RSVP to the temple office so we have enough supplies to make pillows for everyone.

New Selichot and Shiva Prayerbooks are In – and Old Ones are Available to Take Home

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When Rabbi Daniel went to the Union for Reform Judaism's biennial convention in December, he brought home with him a number of copies of the Reform Movement's new prayerbooks for Selichot (the meditative service that helps prepare us for the High Holy Days) and Shiva (home services held during the first week of mourning).

He is sure that everyone will find the new prayerbooks both meaningful and easy to use, and he's

looking forward to the next opportunity to share them with you.

In the meantime, we now have several copies of our previous Selichot prayerbook, as well as some (somewhat tattered) Shiva prayerbooks.

All Temple Hesed members are welcome to take home one or more copies of any of these prayerbooks. Just ask Rabbi Daniel, and he'll make sure you get them so you can give them a new and welcoming home!

Tu B'Shvat Shabbat Seder— February 2nd, 6 p.m.

Last year, we tried an experiment on Tu B'Shvat – combining it with our Friday night service. It turned out so well that we're doing it again this year! On Friday, February 2nd at 6 pm, we will be doing a mash-up of our regular Shabbat service and Tu B'Shvat rituals.

We'll gather, not in rows, but around a table. There, we'll intersperse more typical Shabbat prayers with special songs for Tu B'Shvat. And throughout the whole thing, we'll be eating a variety of exotic fruits, nuts, and tree-derived products like chocolate. There will be no charge for this fun evening, but we are asking people to RSVP – call 570-344-7201 or email templehesed@comcast.net so

that we prepare the right amount of food for the evening. This even will be child-friendly, so bring the whole family! We hope to see you there!



Be Shaken and stirred – join the cast of a Thriller Megillah

James Bond likes his martinis shaken, not stirred, and dry, very dry.

Well, there certainly will be dry wit in this year's Purimshpiel (coming on March 3rd!), but you have a chance to be shaken AND stirred when you join the cast of this year's shpiel.

It will be a veritable Thriller Megillah, complete with spies, betrayals, bald villains with cats, great “secret agent” music and much more.

As always, participants only have to attend one rehearsal, and no stage experience (or, for that matter, talent!) is required.

Please tell Rabbi Daniel as soon as possible if you want to be part of the cast, as he is writing the shpiel even as you read this Messenger.

We also need volunteers to help with the dinner and the mini-carnival.

Everyone is welcome to participate – and fun is guaranteed, or double your money back!



Rabbinical Reflections — Rabbi Daniel J. Swartz

Last Chant(s)



This month, Rabbi Marjorie and I are headed to Santa Fe for the final part of “Kol Zimra” (voice of song), our two-year class in Hebrew sacred chant and chant leadership with Rabbi Shefa Gold. Over the course of the four in-person sessions in New Mexico, the monthly “Zoom” webinars, and the weekly check-in with our “chant buddy,” we’ve not only learned dozens of chants but, more importantly, the theory and theology behind them. So I thought this would be a good time to share some of what I’ve learned in my “Rabbinical Reflections” column.

So just what is “chant,” and why do it? First, the “what.” Chant is an intentional, repeated melody that lies at the intersection of personal meditation and group prayer. While it’s easy to focus on the singing itself, the silence that surrounds a chant – a preparatory silence to set one’s intention and a concluding silence to let the chant sink in – are at least as important as anything that is sung. When we chant in Hebrew, chant also becomes a type of Midrash, a Torah commentary to seek out the layers of meaning hidden deep in every text.

But why do it? I’ve found two sets of reasons for chanting that make sense to me. The first apply to chanting by myself, as part of a daily practice. I spoke at the High Holy Days about the importance of practice, about the growth that is possible when we have enough discipline and dedication to do something even when we don’t feel like it. Spiritual practices are a great way to help us remember those things that we tend to forget. We all have different things that we each find difficult – some people need to remember gratitude, others to slow down, still others to speak up or to trust their decisions more. Because there are so many different, varied chants, it is easy to find a particular practice that can help us hone in on whatever problem we are trying to address at a given moment.

Unlike some spiritual practices, however, one thing I treasure most about chanting is that I don’t have to do it all by myself. Chanting in a group, a “chanting circle,” can be simultaneously inspiring and comforting, a chance to reflect and learn and while also permitting the mind to relax, be soothed, and just float along. It’s easy to understand why chanting with Shefa is inspiring, whether it’s in the amazing setting of the Amazon or with the soaring harmonies and fabulous voices of our classes in Santa Fe.

But – and I must admit, this did surprise me – I find the chanting circle that we’ve hosted at Temple Hesed for the past year and a half to be both more inspiring and more

comforting than even those in the Amazon or Santa Fe. The setting is admittedly more prosaic, and we rarely have enough sophisticated voices to be able master intricate descant lines or harmonies. But the very nature of our chanting circle here is a big part of why I find it so moving, and why I hope you’ll give it a try if you haven’t yet.

Our chanting circle here is unique in that we have such a varied, diverse group that comes. Our Jewish chanters have come from Reform, Reconstructionist, Renewal and Conservative traditions, and we’ve also had Jews of no particular affiliations. (no Orthodox yet, but I’m still hopeful) But our diversity doesn’t stop there – chanters include followers of Islam, including Sufi traditions, as well as by Protestants, Catholics, Unitarians, Hindus, Baha’i, and Wiccans. We’ve had a number of different nationalities and ethnicities represented, and our welcoming nature has meant that our LGBTQ brothers and sisters are a regular part of our circles. There is nothing else in Scranton remotely like it – and not much like it anywhere else in our country.



Rabbi Gold

And yet despite our diversity – or perhaps because of it – we manage to become a cohesive whole as we chant together, manage to open our hearts to each other and give each other support through the various trials and tribulations of life. While it is work putting together the right mix of chants and teachings each month, it is work I

dearly love, and I always feel like I end up receiving more than I gave.

So give it a try – this month, on January 13th at 10:30 as we explore the theme of the Tree of Life in honor of Tu B’Shvat, the New Year of the Tree, or perhaps in February as our chants focus on Masking and Unmasking as we approach Purim. No prior experience or vocal talent is needed, and everyone, from any faith background or none, is welcome. Just give it a chant-s, and I bet you’ll feel the same way that I do about the experience.

Rabbi Daniel Swartz

January 2018



SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 Civil New Years & Rabbi's Birthday	2	3	4	5 SERVICES 6 p.m.	6
7	8	9	10	11	12 SERVICES 8 p.m.	13 Chanting Circle 10:30 a.m.
14	15	16	17 Board Meeting @ 6pm	18	19 SERVICES 8 p.m.	20
21	22	23	24	25	26 SERVICES 8 p.m.	27
28	29	30	31 Tu B'Shvat			

Holidays 5778

Rosh Hashanah— *Yom HaShoah*—
Sept. 21, 2017 Apr. 12, 2018

Yom Kippur — *Yom HaZikaron*
Sept. 30, 2017 Apr. 18, 2018

Sukkot— *Yom HaAtzmaut*
Oct. 5-11, 2017 Apr. 19, 2018

Simchat Torah — *Lag B'Omer* —
Oct. 13, 2017 May 3, 2018

Hanukkah — *Shavuot*—
Dec. 13-20, 2017 May 20-21, 2018

Tu B'Shvat — *Tisha B'Av*—
Jan. 31, 2018 July 22, 2018

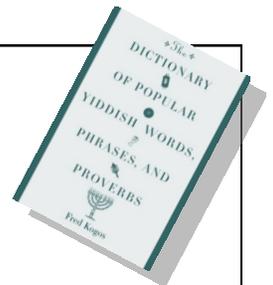
Purim— *Selichot* —Sept. 1
Mar. 1, 2018

Passover—
Mar. 31-Apr. 7, 2018
(Holidays begin at sundown the night before)

YIDDISH SAYING OF THE MONTH

“Every way up has its way down.”

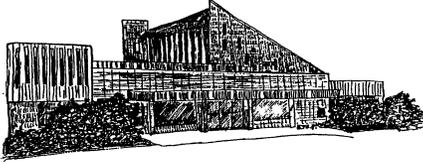
Yiddish Proverb from a book by Fred Kogos



Torah Portions

Name	Civil Date	Hebrew Date
Shemot	Jan. 6, 2018	19.Tevet.5778
Va'era	Jan. 13, 2018	26.Tevet.5778
Bo	Jan. 20, 2018	4.Shevat.5778
Beshalach	Jan. 27, 2018	11.Shevat.5778

Yahrzeits and Personal Notes



Get Well Wishes

Larry Golden
 Paula Kane
 Julie L. Mates
 Ashley Milliken
 Charlene Ostro
 Emily Trunzo
 Janet Slawitsky
 Edward Snitko,
 Sr.

Week Ending December 30 (Service January 5)

*Morris Goldsmith, *Israel Greenberger, *Elliott Weisberger, *David Zukowski, *Edward Berger, *Chester Levy, *Isadore Adelman, *Meyer Davis, *Harvey Sanford Siegel, *Gus Weinberger, Ralph Meyer, *David Rosenberg, *Martin Weilheimer, Jerry Kline, *Bernard Wormser, *Herbert Smith, *Jessica Parker Mannoff

Week Ending January 6 (Service January 5)

*Isaac Ziegler, *Janet Phillips, Robert Lerner, *Jennie Bakaley, Grace E. Davis, Max Tevelin, *Louis Kleeman, *Olga Adelman, *Blanche Silverstein, *Isadore Levine, *Bernice Lenchner, *Alvin Ziegler, *Herman Schneider, *Freda Ball, *Henrietta Jacobs, Jessie Samter Ellenbogen, *Frederick L. Wormser, *George Phillips

Week Ending January 13 (Service January 12)

*Samuel Feldman, *George Bauer, *Mabelle Druck, *Minnie Harris, *Tillie Lauer Marks, *Gertrude Ziegler, *George Joel, *Faye Bernstein, *Eric S. Gardner, *Edward Denis, Nancy Jackman, *Marvine L. Dinner, *Ophelia H. Hefter, *Hattie Ross Lauer, *Anna Fragin, *Shirley Troy Cornfield, *Edna Kabatchnick

Week Ending January 20 (Service January 19)

*Abraham Wolf, *Jack Friedman, *Abe Newman, *Mary Freeman, *Ethel Friedmann, Emily Kominz, *Michael R. Graham, *Simon Lauer, *Herman Goodman, *Leonard Saltzman, Anne Marie Heilbrunn, *Sadie R. Lichtman, *Morris Whiteman, *Ruth Livingston

Week Ending January 27 (Service January 26)

*Sarah Bloch, *Arthur L. Goldsmith, *Abraham Leventhal, *Dr. Morton Hodes, *Solomon Schudmack, *Professor Anita Appleton, *Carl Goldman, *Alice Goldsmith, Barbara Ballot, Saul Kaplan, Theodore Kaplan, Frimi Gromer, *Rebecca Levy, *Barbara Sapsowitz, Robert Sundheim, *Monroe R. Smith, *Milton Aronsohn, *Carl Davis, *Lillian Goldfarb, *Madeline Goldsmith, *Jacob Sydansk, *Charles Noe, *Jennie Lehman, *Sadie W. Young

Week Ending February 3 (Service February 2)

*Sol Davidow, *Frances Kaufman, *Dorothy Rosenberg, *Pamela Tigrett, Jacob Newman, Blanche Anspacher, *Aaron Cooperman, *Emma L. Sarlin, Fred Friedmann, *Stephen M. Simon, *Maxwell M. Neumann, *Lena Weinberger, *Margaret Oettinger

RJ Connect: Taking Judaism Online

Boston, MA; December 7, 2017 - URJ President Rabbi Rick Jacobs today announced RJ Connect, a new initiative with networking resources, an online officiation connection service, and Introduction to Judaism and Taste of Judaism® courses, including Online Introduction to Judaism. The URJ represents the largest, most diverse Jewish movement – 900 congregations strong and inspiring 2 million people across North America.

URJ President Rabbi Rick Jacobs announced goals for RJ Connect, during the 2017 URJ Biennial General Assembly in Boston. He also announced the hiring of Rabbi Julie Zupan as RJ Connect Director.

After a pilot phase, RJ Connect will include three interlocking initiatives:

A new network of groups for Millennials – many, but by no means all, synagogue based. The network will reflect and address the high mobility in that cohort and enable young adults to draw strength from each other.

A new and powerful officiation connection network. The URJ will make it easier for couples considering marriage, including interfaith couples, to find Reform rabbis and cantors through the CCAR and ACC, and also to find the right Reform congregation for their new family.

In-person and online Introduction to Judaism and Taste of Judaism® classes, and the Yours, Mine and Ours program for interfaith couples.

Rabbi Jacobs said, “RJ Connect is about welcoming previously unconnected people, which will in turn bring strength to our Movement for years to come. RJ Connect will be a suite of transformative programs that connects and sustains our communities in the short and long term by activating the full potential of our congregations and institutions to impact a lifestyle of profound transition and mobility.”

RJ Connect expands the offerings of Audacious Hospitality, the URJ’s focused effort to embrace diversity and reach out to those currently not engaged in Jewish life in order to further strengthen the Jewish community, led by Vice President of Audacious Hospitality April Baskin. As Baskin explained, “For too many it is too challenging to connect to Jewish life. Successful groups offering relevant ways to plug into congregational life thrive in many areas of North



Rabbi Julie Zupan

America but these discrete programs are not interconnected in a way that strengthens the larger whole. Finding rabbis and cantors as officiants, partners and teachers is not as easy as it should be, particularly for the growing number of couples planning an interfaith or same-sex wedding. RJ Connect is about making connection easy.”

RJ Connect is being created to reflect these needs, utilizing the broad reach and expertise of the URJ and its network of North American congregations and communities to enable interfaith couples, seekers, and young adults to form connections with each other and with Judaism. It will begin with prototyping in select areas.

RJ Connect’s Millennial network will replicate, incubate and bring together the most successful young adult communities that have flourished and found followings both in and outside the walls of their congregations. Existing programs in Boston, New York, Boise, Charlotte, Dallas, Detroit, Memphis and others that incorporate dinners, learning sessions, real relationships with clergy, innovative payment models and more, are models that RJ Connect will grow and link together as a way to attract and serve Jewish young adults every day of the week.

RJ Connect’s clergy connection service will offer the opportunity to effectively match appropriate clergy members for the 10 million people who come to ReformJudaism.org for Jewish learning, holiday and ritual guidance, history and recipes. These matches will lead to close clergy relationships that last long after a wedding day.

Daryl Messenger, Chair of the URJ’s North American Board, added, “The idea of connection, of community, is central to everything we do and believe as Jews. We are finding more ways to make even more connections for everyone who identifies with



A Proud Member of the URJ

the way we observe and live Judaism, and with our core commitments to the great moral issues of the day. The URJ and our nearly 900 congregations will be creating new avenues for building meaningful relationships with more people.”

Rabbi Zupan’s previous role was as the Director of the URJ’s Reform Jewish Outreach Boston, supporting individuals and interfaith couples exploring Judaism through classes and workshops. She has served as a congregational rabbi and in a variety of educational roles.

Rabbi Zupan said, “RJ Connect will use the URJ’s robust resources and connections to better enable seekers, individuals, couples, and families to make Reform Judaism an essential part of their daily lives. It’s thrilling to help all people – those with strong Jewish backgrounds, interfaith families, and those new to the Jewish community – to access the deep wisdom of Jewish tradition at a time in their lives when they’re seeking meaningful Jewish connections.”

“Rabbi Zupan excels as a teacher and guide for all those exploring the many pathways into a more meaningful Jewish life,” said Rabbi Elaine Zecher, Senior Rabbi, Temple Israel of Boston. “I have had the pleasure of working closely with her as she becomes a true partner to seekers, couples, and families. There is no one better to bring the opportunities of RJ Connect to the Jewish community.”



URJ BIENNIAL 2017

DECEMBER 6-10 • BOSTON, MA

UNION for REFORM JUDAISM

Reform Movement Supports Jerusalem as Israeli Capital

NEW YORK – Today, the Reform Jewish Movement, represented by the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), and the Association of Reform Zionists of America (ARZA), issued the following statement:

We strongly commend President Trump and Ambassador Haley for the United States' veto of the Security Council resolution on Tuesday and the strong U.S. opposition, in the General Assembly deliberations yesterday, to statements repudiating President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel.

The U.S. position at the UN affirms our own position about the role of Jerusalem in Israel's life. The URJ President, Rabbi Rick Jacobs, captured the feelings of Jews across the globe on the Shabbat morning following the U.S. recognition of Jerusalem with words we affirm again at this moment:

Our love of Jerusalem is such a powerful dynamic in our communal and individual lives... On Wednesday of this week, by declaring formally U.S. recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Israel, President Trump affirmed an age-old dream of the Jewish people... Jerusalem is, in fact, the capital of Israel. That is how it should and must be. The President was correct in noting that a sovereign state is entitled to name its own capi-

tal. And his act of formal recognition was a powerful repudiation of the efforts of those who would promulgate the lie that Jewish attachment to key areas of Jerusalem is only a myth. And we stand, unified with Israel and Jews everywhere, in condemning violence in response to this decision.

As Rabbi Jacobs also emphasized, and we have said consistently, United States policy should be pursued in a manner that strengthens the Trump Administration's efforts to restart an effective peace process between Israel and the Palestinians.

We commend Ambassador Haley for affirming, in her speech to the General Assembly, that President Trump's recognition of Jerusalem 'does not prejudice any final status issues, including Jerusalem's boundaries' and 'does not preclude a two-state solution' and we call on all the member states of the UN to join in support of efforts to restart the peace process. Doing so successfully will be a far more effective way of achieving a viable state for the Palestinians, security for Israel and stability in the region than continued one-sided resolutions of the UN condemning Israel.



Chanting Circle: Tree of Life - January 13th, 10:30 a.m.

Take a look at the leafless, deciduous trees outside. They look pretty lifeless this time of year, right? But there's something important and life-giving going on inside, even as the outside looks barren.

Just this time of year (which is why maple syrup is produced now), the sap begins to flow mysteriously upward as trees prepare for Spring. This secret fountain of life is why Tu B'Shvat, the New Year of the tree, is celebrated at this seemingly barren time.

And that's also why at this month's chanting circle, on January 13th at 10:30 am, we will focus on the idea of the Tree of Life. Through our chants and study, we will seek to connect with the wisdom, energy, and upward flow of life found in the surrounding forest.

Everyone is welcome to join us for a relaxing, energizing morning.

**TEMPLE HESED
"SCRANTON'S FIRST SYNAGOGUE"**

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ABOUT TEMPLE HESED:

Temple Hesed, a Reform Synagogue founded Aug. 20, 1860, is Scranton's first and oldest Jewish congregation. It is one of the earliest congregations to join the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, now the Union for Reform Judaism. It has been a member since Dec. 12, 1874.

The synagogue serves the needs of individuals and families in Lackawanna County and surrounding areas. Situated on Knox Road, off Lake Scranton Road in the East Mountain section of Scranton, the current building opened in 1973. Temple Hesed operates a cemetery on West Warren Street in Dunmore.

The office is open Tuesday-Thursday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.; and Friday 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Rabbi Swartz is happy to set appointments at any convenient time. Contact him to set a time. The rabbi also has "drop-in" hours every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and Friday from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. The Rabbi holds these times open for visits or calls for which an appointment was not or could not be made.

The Temple Hesed Cemetery is open for visitation six days a week. Visitation hours are: Monday-Friday 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m. till dusk and it is closed for Shabbat on Saturday. For more information, call the office.



Eco-Tip:

Water: Only 1% of the water on Earth is drinkable, with more and more water sources drying up each day (UN Environment Programme). Reduce your water usage and your water bill immediately by installing a low-flow showerhead and aerators on all water faucets. Look for devices that are EPA Water Sense labeled:

<http://www.epa.gov/WaterSense/>

Eco-tip provided by GreenFaith: www.greenfaith.org

