Annual Meeting renews Rabbi’s Contract for 1 year

Rabbi Daniel Swartz has agreed to a one-year contract so the Temple can make plans for the building and decide how to handle its deficit. A portion of the building fund will be used to clear this year’s deficit.

The congregation will also sell off an unused portion of its cemetery to the Dunmore Cemetery Association with the money going to the Cemetery Fund to pay for perpetual care.

The deficit comes from the loss of the NativityMiguel school which rented the lower level classrooms. Hinerfeld Commercial Real Estate has been hired to find a tenant for the now-vacant space.

Mark Davis will head the long-range planning committee which is charged with coming up with plans for the future operation of our congregation.

By the time rabbi’s contract comes up next June, we will be in a much better position to make a longer-term offer.

Steve Seitchik and Esther Adelman will remain co-presidents for the upcoming year.

The other officers are:
1st Vice President, Cheryl Friedman; 2nd Vice President, Larry Milliken; Treasurer, Jeffrey Leventhal; Secretary, Jennifer Novak; Assistant Secretary, Joan Davis.

Board members: Start Date Expiration of Term

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<td>*Josh Levine</td>
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<td>*Elected at June 19, 2019 meeting.</td>
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Honorary Life Board Member:
Jane Oppenheim

Oppenheim Speaker, Date Announced

Save the date now for our upcoming Oppenheim Institute, featuring Sylvan Sobel, who grew up in Temple Hesed and went on to a distinguished career at the Federal Judicial Center.

On Friday November 8th at 7:30 p.m., Sylvan will examine: “Can the Supreme Court Survive our Hyper-Partisan Times?” Using his experience with the Supreme Court and the Federal Judiciary as a whole, he’ll help us understand the changing roles of the court, with a focus on how politics and law intersect.

How will all this impact everything from abortion to voting rights?

Come join us for this very important discussion – and bring your friends!
Back to School Backpack Project

The Temple Hesed Social Action Committee is gearing up for its annual back to school backpack project for 2019. Lackawanna County children in need, identified by local social service agencies, are provided with new clothing and a backpack filled with supplies for the first day of school. Please consider supporting this very worthwhile project.

You can be matched with a child (grades K to 6th) to provide all or some of the needed items, or you can make a cash donation and we will purchase the items for you. Full sponsorship for a child is $100, but any monetary donation will be greatly appreciated.

Please contact Temple Hesed at 570-344-7201 if you wish to sponsor a child, and provide an email address where we can send you the child’s information. Or you can email Larry Milliken directly at ldmilliiken@comcast.net and let me know how many children you want to sponsor and if you have gender or grade preferences. Checks should be made out to Temple Hesed, with “Back to School” designated in the memo line, and should be sent to Temple Hesed by July 31. Donations of backpacks and school supplies can be dropped off at Temple Hesed or the JCC reception area during normal business hours through August 16th.

Your contribution will help ensure that children start the school year with the confidence and tools they need to succeed. Thank you in advance for your participation. “It takes a community to raise a child.”

Temple Hesed, Social Action Committee, 1 Knox Rd., Scranton, PA 18505

BBQ AND *SHABBAT UNDER THE STARS* TOGETHER July 19
BBQ AT 6, SERVICE AT 7 p.m.
Weather? Rain schmain, We’ll just go indoors.

If other events/activities are scheduled this Summer, we will announce them in our weekly email.
Rabbinical reflections: What’s the Ikar and What’s the Tafel?

There’s a principle in Halakah (Jewish legal reasoning) that in its literal form can seem obsessive-ly detail-oriented – but when looked at metaphorically, it’s key to understanding Temple Hesed’s past, present and future. The principle is called Ikar (the principle) v’Tafel (and the secondary). It’s used, for example, when you are eating a type of food that is a mixture of different types, like pizza or apple pie – you’re supposed to figure out the ikar, the “main” part of the food so you can say the “right” blessing. Probably not a question that’s keeping you up at night.

But on bigger questions of priorities, asking, “what’s the ikar and what’s the tafel” can be really helpful. It gets us away from black and white thinking, that one choice is somehow all-good and the other is all-bad. Imagine, for example, you were choosing between two job possibilities, one of which would pay more, while the other would give you more time with your family. In some circumstances, such as children starting college or facing large debts that were putting a strain on you and your family relationships, the money might be the ikar, even if you would usually choose time with family.

And it’s never really all one or the other.

Here are three ikar-tafel questions that I’ve been asking this year and that I think we as a congregation need to keep addressing. First, which is the ikar, our building or what goes on inside? Obviously, for its long-term health, a congregation needs both. And sometimes, erecting or renovating a building can bring a congregation together and become its own kind of programming. But there are times when a congregation can cling to a building at a high cost to its all-over wellbeing. Which is the case for us currently at Temple Hesed? I think one could make a persuasive argument either way. If, say, we look through the lens of social action, on the building side of the equation we would recognize the unique possibilities inherent in a sanctuary that is in and of itself a statement on social justice. When the noted architect Percival Goodman began considering what our sanctuary should look like, he delved into the social, cultural, and environmental history of our area, coming up with a design that sought to highlight the injustices and cruelty of the coal era and coal breakers, while simultaneously showing a transformative alternative vision of a society that puts people above profits, that brings in light instead of blood-stained soot. I continue to share the story of that design with countless children and adults – ranging from the interfaith Thanksgiving service that we host for Scranton Area Ministerium to a number of Christian confirmation classes that we have interacted with this year.

The ultimate goal of any of our social action programs, however, is Tikkun Olam, the repair of the world outside of our building. So if keeping our building meant giving up the backpack program or our High Holy Day food drive – both of which have significant impacts on dozens of families in our region – to me, that would indicate upside down priorities. So let’s have vigorous discussions about the fate of our building, recognizing that every option has pluses and minuses, and that we should be focused on what we agree is central, not on who we think is right or wrong.

Speaking of agreement, a second question for us to consider is: which is the ikar, agreement or inclusion? Should our focus be on building a community where everyone has a shared commitment to the same Jewish values? Or do we seek out and welcome people from a variety of backgrounds, people who will have serious disagreements with each other even on “core” issues? Again, neither one is all wrong or right. I’d like to highlight, however, that Temple Hesed plays a special role in the broader community of our region precisely because we have tried to be as inclusive as possible, playing a leadership role in a wide variety of interfaith programs. Each month, our interfaith chanting circle brings together Muslims, Baha’is, Christians, and “none of the above,” as we reflect on Jewish teachings and support each other. It’s not only unique in our area but, as far as I have found, in the country. We’re also at least very unusual, if not completely unique, in that every large program, service, or event at Temple Hesed, with the exception of the High Holy Days, has significant numbers of participants that...

(See RABBI Continued on page 12)
Another year of the Temple Presidency has flown by. As the old saying goes: “Time goes by fast when you’re having fun.”

I do enjoy this job. Yes, it is a job, since there is a lot of work involved. It is time-consuming in so many ways, not only physically, but also emotionally and intellectually. To be done efficiently and correctly, it has to be a labor of love as well.

Fortunately, I have Steve Seitchik as Co-President. Together, we are a great team. We compliment each other, since our areas of expertise are so different. We consult each other about everything, seeking the other’s input. We agree on the basics, and the rest falls into place. It is a good match. It is a challenge, but a very rewarding one.

As Presidents, we are diplomats, on-call at all times. As Presidents, we are advisors, on-call at all times. We apparently are perceived by others as all-knowing, so we have to do our homework in order to keep up. We draw on our life experiences to give us the wisdom to handle whatever is thrown at us. We have to make decisions which affect other people. We are continually solving problems, creatively if need be, because sometimes there is no previous experience to draw upon. It is our job to hold everything together and to be the picture of confidence and authority to everyone else.

There are good, dedicated people to help us through all of this. We have the diversity of the officers and Board of Directors at our disposal. We have the wisdom of the Rabbi; we have the wisdom of Past Presidents. But, as Harry Truman famously said, “The buck stops here”.

That being said, most of our Past Presidents continue to be active in one way or another, so it must be a good experience. Once you open yourself to it, it’s hard to get Temple Hesed out of your blood. There’s something intangible about what it means to be a part of this family.

This is the time that we review the past year at Temple Hesed and assess our accomplishments, while planning our next year of activities. Detailed accounts appear in the Annual Report, which is available for you to take home. If you have come to services, have read the Messenger, or have participated in some aspect of Temple life, you have a good idea of what has gone on during the past year.

There are ongoing and special worship and education opportunities for both children and adults. Our children continue their studies with those from Temple Israel at combined weekly Hebrew classes, organized and led by Rabbi Swartz. An adult study group, also led by Rabbi Swartz, first studied various interpretations of some of the Psalms, and later in the year learned about five of the little-known women of the Bible. There will be summer classes on everything you wanted to know about Yiddish. If there is some aspect of Judaism that you’ve been thinking about, we’d welcome your input for the topic of the next adult study. These classes are a great opportunity to learn about your Jewish heritage and to meet and socialize with your Temple family. Worship is covered separately in the Annual Report. (See page 5)

There were the award-winning Back-to-School project, the fun-filled and financially-successful “Callaway We Go”, the family-oriented Chanukah and Purim dinners, Rabbi’s always-clever Purimshpiel, the monthly inclusive meditational Chanting Circles, and our lovely Passover Seder. We look forward to the return of former Temple member, Sylvan Sobel, who will be speaking to us in this fall’s Oppenheim Institute.

None of this just happens. There are wonderful dedicated Temple members who step up to the plate to make sure that they happen. We love and appreciate the core of people that we can count upon. We just wish that there were more of you!

If there is some area of Temple life that particularly interests you, please contact me. I’ll be delighted to hear from you. If you think of something that we haven’t ever done or haven’t seen ESTHER (Continued on page 5)
The Worship Committee Annual Report

The Worship Committee, under the expert guidance of Rabbi Daniel Swartz, oversees all worship services, formulates relevant policies, plans special events, and handles all matters relating to the worship practices at Temple Hesed.

We offer a variety of worship services: the celebration of Shabbat using Mishkan T'Filah, with its unique format, featuring interesting, unusual interpretations, lovely poetry, and educational comments; the “rocking” informal Shabbat services utilizing our in-house updated prayer guides; family holiday and festival services, with the beautiful, holiday-specific Gates of Joy; and special Shabbat services marking various occasions.

Rabbi Swartz uses many different formats for teaching the parashah of the week, including thought-provoking interactive dialogue. When he reads Torah in the Ziegler Lounge, we gather around the table to see the interesting and diverse ways that the scribes have used to put this amazing scroll together. Rabbi explains the traditions behind these variations: to emphasize an important verse, to mark the end of a passage, to call attention to a particular word or phrase. We now also utilize the beautiful podium/Torah table lovingly handcrafted by our own Larry Milliken.

Music in our services plays a major role in taking us from our mundane routines to the world of Reform Jewish worship. We have continued our regular Shabbat music schedule. On the first Shabbat of the month, Rabbi Swartz has led us musically down new paths, teaching us new melodies for old favorites and introducing us to some other options as well. Ed Snitko most capably leads us in song on the second and fourth Fridays, incorporating those new melodies that we have enjoyed. Harry Adelman demonstrates his expert musicality on the third Shabbat of each month, when we hold our informal services.

We have continued with scheduling the 6:00 service on the first Friday of every month, and the 8:00 service on the remaining Friday evenings, except when a special service, such as the Oppenheim Institute or a festival observance, begins a bit earlier.

Many Temple members graciously participated in all phases of the five services held during the High Holy Days. We thank all of the English readers, Hebrew chanters, ark openers, Torah dressers and carriers, ushers, and all others who made these services more meaningful. We are grateful to Ed Snitko, whose moving interpretations of the High Holy Day melodies added beautifully to the worship experience.

We invite all members and their families and friends to join us at weekly services, where we experience the beauty and uniqueness of Mishkan T'Filah, the timely, often-brilliant Torah commentaries of Rabbi Swartz, the ever-evolving spiritual music, and the warm camaraderie of our Temple Hesed family.

We do encourage input from the Congregation, since it is crucial to the work of this committee. Our goal is to be a part of making Temple Hesed an integral part of the lives of the congregation—spiritually, socially, and educationally.

Esther Adelman, Chair
**July 2019**

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**Holidays 5779 (2018—2019)**

- **Rosh Hashanah**—Sept. 9–10, 2018
- **Yom Kippur**—Sept. 18–19, 2018
- **Sukkot**—Sept. 23–30, 2018
- **Sh'mini Atzaret—Simchat Torah**—Sept. 30–Oct. 1, 2018
- **Hanukkah**—Dec. 2–10, 2018
- **Tu B'Shvat**—Jan. 20–21, 2019
- **Purim**—March 20–21, 2019
- **Passover**—Apr. 19–26, 2019

- **Yom HaShoah**—May 1–2, 2019
- **Yom HaZikaron**—May 7–8, 2019
- **Yom HaAtzmaut**—May 8–9, 2019
- **Lag B’Omer**—May 22–23, 2019
- **Shavuot**—June 8–9, 2019
- **Tisha B’Av**—Aug. 10–11, 2019
- **Selichot**—Sept. 21, 2019

**Torah Portions**

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More information is available from www.reformjudaism.org

“A person is sometimes stronger than iron and sometimes weaker than a fly.”

**http://www.yiddishwit.com**
### Holidays 5779 (2018–2019)

**Rosh Hashanah**— Sept. 9–10, 2018  
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**Tisha B’Av**— Aug. 10–11, 2019  
**Selichot**— Sept. 21, 2019

Jewish Holidays begin at sunset. Dates specified are for evenings. That means they run from sundown until dusk on the last day if the Holiday.

More information is available from [www.reformjudaism.org](http://www.reformjudaism.org)

### Torah Portions

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<td>30.Av.5779</td>
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“Every ass likes to hear himself bray.”

http://www.yiddishwit.com
Yahrzeits and Personal Notes

Week Ending July 6 (Service July 5)

Week Ending July 13 (Service July 12)

Week Ending July 20 (Service July 19)

Week Ending July 27 (Service July 26)

Week Ending August 3 (Service August 2)

Week Ending August 10 (Service August 9)

Week Ending August 17 (Service August 16)

Week Ending August 24 (Service August 23)

Week Ending August 31 (Service August 30)

Get Wells (Mi Shebeirach)
Sandy Cooperman, Charlotte Milliken
Michael Cornfield, Charlene Ostro
Larry Golden, Joel Ostro
Ellen Kilne, Edward Snitko, Sr.
Phillip Knobel, Emily Trunzo
Rich Mates

Mazel Tov
To Sue Meyer on her marriage to Carol Van Wie.
Notes to Proposed Budget

INCOME

Temple Dues; No increase in Dues
Endowment Distribution: Per Investment Committee
Rental of School: NativityMiguel Left as of June 30, 2019

Expense:

Rabbi: One-year contract
Maintenance: Reduction due to NativityMiguel leaving
Utilities: Reduction due to NativityMiguel leaving

Additionally;

Temple Hesed agreed, with Board authorization, to sell Dunmore Cemetery two acres of land located at the far end of our cemetery that borders Dunmore Cemetery and Forest Hills Cemetery. The agreed upon price is $31,000 per acre, which compares favorably with other cemetery land sales. Proceeds from the sale will be deposited in the Cemetery Fund. Attorney Jeff Levine is preparing the deed and agreement of sale.

Long Range Planning Committee report

The Long-Range Planning Committee is actively reviewing the Temple’s financial and contractual obligations within the short- and mid-term (approximately up through 2025), and to consider that with regard to a range of possible options to maintain the Temple as a viable congregation moving forward.

While the Temple has a strong history of continuing financial well-being, thanks in large part to the support of the congregation over many years; and to responsible and robust financial stewardship, significant challenges threaten the smooth continuation of the Temple’s well-being in the future.

To avoid a rash decision made in a desperate situation, we seek a well thought-out decision while time allows.

The Committee welcomes ideas from the Congregation about possible approaches to consider as well as asking all to “keep your ear to the ground” if you hear of a potential opportunity we should consider.
July 13th Chanting Circle: Walls!

Our July Interfaith Chanting Circle will meet at 11:30 a.m. on July 13th.

Our theme for July will be Walls! They’re in the news lately – but they’re also in our minds.

When do we need mental walls to protect us? When do they trap us?

How can we break free from ways that we have walled ourselves off?

Our chanting circle will explore all of these questions, through chant, study, and discussion.

As always, everyone is welcome to join this welcoming and supportive group.

In August, we will chant on the 10th at 11:30 a.m. Topic; TBD.

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Investment Committee Report for Wednesday, June 19th, 2019

Temple Hesed Congregational Meeting

Jeff Leventhal Chairperson

The Temple Hesed Investment Committee continues to split the Temple’s various endowment and building funds between Stifel Nicolaus and Merrill Lynch for investments and advice.

An interest payment schedule has been set up and timely payments have been made from these funds to ensure that the Temple’s expenses and financial obligations are met in prompt fashion. This schedule can be modified and adjusted going into this new fiscal year as per recommendations from the Treasurer, the acting President(s), and Marlene.

The encouraging news is that all of Temple Hesed’s investments have done well enough to experience an increase in their values. This is in spite of the constant fluctuations in their monthly values due to economic, market and political pressures and conditions.

In order to avoid any possibility of having to invade the corpus of any of the funds, the annual amounts of interest payments available will be closely monitored and adjusted as needed in order to help pay the Temple’s daily and routine operating expenses and bills.

The Temple Hesed Investment committee will continue to meet with our funds’ financial advisors and account managers, act on their recommendations, and continue to monitor the funds’ status and progress on an ongoing basis. Our investment committee plans to meet once each with our two financial advisors again this coming July.

My thanks to the following investment committee members who continue to offer their time, wisdom, advice, and support to insure that these Temple’s assets are protected and invested wisely in accordance with direction from the Temple Hesed Board. Members of this committee are:

David Dickstein  Richard Fine
Jeffrey Jacobson  Richard Levy

Sincerely, Jeff Leventhal, Chairman
Summer Adult Education: Learn Yiddish Language, Culture, and Cuisine

We’ve studied some serious topics in Adult Ed at Temple Hesed – everything from the ethics of war to the Book of Psalms.

Oy – that’s too serious for the summer. So we won’t be schleimiels – we’ll do something fun!

Have you figured it out yet – it’s Yiddish! Everyone knows about “chutzpah,” and probably at least a few Yiddish insults or jokes. But just what do those words actually mean in Yiddish?

For that matter, just what is Yiddish?

This series of four light-hearted adult education classes will explore Yiddish culture, cuisine, and, of course, language.

We’ll see clips from Yiddish theatre (with subtitles). We’ll also hear some Yiddish tales and “bintl briefs,” a sort of Yiddish “Dear Abby.”

We’ll even cook a bit together. And through it all, we’ll learn at least a “schmear” of Yiddish.

Classes will run from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on four Sundays, July 14, 21, 28 and August 4.

New High Holy Day Prayerbooks and Electronic Yahrzeit Board

In memory of the recent death of Laurence Davidow, as well as of their parents, Sol and Margaret, the Davidow family recently made a wonderful contribution to the Temple, enabling us to purchase both new High Holy Day prayerbooks and an electronic Yahrzeit board, which will be installed in the Ziegler Lounge.

We’ll have more information about the new prayerbooks in the September Messenger bit at a time, starting this year with Erev Rosh Hashanah and perhaps Rosh Hashanah morning.

We’re sure you’ll enjoy the change. And we’ll be in contact with families as we begin entering information into the Yahrzeit Board; we’ll have a dedication service once it is up and running.

Many thanks to the Davidows; we’ll be able to enjoy their generosity for many years to come!

Laurence Davidow
are not Jewish. That includes everything from our fabulous drag show fundraiser to the more than 100 people who attended our Purim celebration, to our social action programs to even our Passover Seder. This has become de facto an important part of who we are. Which means that we should reflect thoughtfully and seriously on what that says about us and what our mission should be.

Finally, which is the ikar, cooperation or competition with other synagogues and Jewish institutions and organizations in our area? We already run a joint Religious School program with Temple Israel. And next year, Temple Israel is unlikely to have a rabbi. There’s a new rabbi at Temple B’nai B’rith in Kingston, one who is interested in doing more joint programming. I have weekly classes at both Elan Gardens and the Jewish Home, and we’ve been part of the JCC’s Purim celebration for a number of years running. All of this, however, has been ad hoc. Should we plan on more cooperation, and if so, what would that look like? Or do such efforts detract from serving our own members? What do you think?

I hope as we go forward into new territory this year, we have lively and yet respectful conversations on these and other concerns, recognizing that there is more than one “right” answer but also knowing that we need to focus on the principle priority, once we figure out what that is! The more everyone is involved in this process, the stronger we will be. Which brings me to my final comment on what the ikar is, from a saying by Rebbe Nachman of Bratzlav: All the world altogether is a very narrow bridge, but the ikar, the main thing, is not to be afraid. Let us approach the coming year without fear and full of hope. Then we will surely find the “right” blessing!

Rabbi Daniel J. Swartz