

שליח

MESSENGER



Temple Hesed, 1 Knox Road, Scranton, PA 18505

Remember



In this issue:

- Adult Education
- Intro to Judaism
- Don Dembert OBM

Please join Temple Hesed, Temple Israel, the Scranton JCC and the broader Jewish community on April 8 at 6:30 pm at the JCC parking lot as we remember Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day, for an outdoor*, socially-distanced program.

Masks and reservations will be required to attend. For those who prefer a virtual program, it will also be livestreamed on YouTube.

The following safety protocols will be followed:

- Ceremony will take place outdoors in the JCC parking lot on Jefferson Avenue.
- Masks must be worn at all times in the viewing area.
- Maximum of 50 people will be permitted in the viewing area.
- Reservations required.
- Social distancing will be enforced.

RSVP at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a044cafaa2ea7f58-yomhashoah>

*Note: this event will be held rain or shine. In the event of inclement weather, the evening's program will be held in the JCC auditorium, which will only be able to accommodate up to 50 people.

Donations to Temple Hesed

Major credit or debit
cards accepted.

Minimum \$10
donation for
acknowledgement
in the Messenger.

To donate contact
Marlene Gianzanti,
Temple Administra-
tor at 570-344-7201

BUILDING FUND

**In Honor of the Yahrzeit of Beloved
Mother, Sarah Harris Gromer**

Lee Gromer

All Good Wishes to Paula Wasser

Audrey Harrell

**In Honor of the Yahrzeit of Max
Ballot**

Bob Ballot

In Memory of Donald Dembert

Esther Friedmann

Eleanor and George Ginader

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**In Honor of the Yahrzeit of Beloved
Aunt Grace Pawlan**

Deborah Orgill

LINDA LEE LEVENTHAL TOY FUND

In Memory of Donald Dembert

Jeff and Carol Leventhal

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

**In Memory of Jay Leiman, Beloved
Father and Grandfather**

Carol and Paul Leiman and family

**In Honor of the Yahrzeit of Gertrude
Diener**

Patti Diener Lough

**In Honor of the Yahrzeit of Carl
Diener**

Patti Diener Lough

TORAH RESTORATION FUND

In Memory of Donald Dembert

Esther B. Adelman

EMMA K. FRANK FUND

In Memory of Donald Dembert

David and Gail Dickstein

Richard and Carole Fine

Friends at the 900 Club

On Zoom in April — but in May???

The news on the COVID-19 front is still mixed: more vaccines are rolling out, but there's still a lot of catching up to do. The number of people fully vaccinated is climbing at a faster and faster rate — but we're also seeing some spikes in infections, as people become less careful and stop practicing important measures such as masking and social distancing.

Given these conflicting developments, all classes, programs, and services will still be on Zoom for April.

During this month, temple leadership will plan an orderly, safe route back to opening, and we'll keep everyone informed as those plans develop.



Rabbinical

Reflections

Rabbi Daniel J.
Swartz

Down for the Count

I'll be down for the count for all of April and even a bit of May. No, I haven't taken up boxing, though there was a time in the early 20th century when Jewish boxers often dominated the ring. What I'm talking about is the Omer Count — the tradition of counting each of the 49 days between Passover and Shavuot (Shavuot being the 50th day). So what, exactly, is an omer, and why is there a tradition of counting it? The omer was a sheaf, a bundle of grain stalks, from the earliest part the barley crop, that was harvested every day and brought as an offering. Since barley doesn't grow this time of year in NEPA, and since even if it did, none of us are growing barley in any case, what has any of this to do with us today?

Well, as the Institute for Jewish Spirituality writes, "Over generations, 'counting the Omer' has been embraced as a period of inner work and spiritual preparation for receiving the Torah anew. Our mystics associated each week and each day of the week with a particular spiritual quality, or middah--a way to experience transcendence in our lives, and express our desire to live in Godly ways. In Hebrew these midst are called: Chesed, Gevurah, Tiferet, Netzach, Hod, Yesod and Malkhut; we might call them loving connection, delimiting wise boundaries, balanced self, energetic response/persistence, gratitude, righteousness, and mindful speech."

I think of it this way: Passover is a time of "freedom from," which is a great start. But it's not enough. At some point, we need to learn to move to "freedom to," that is, to

freely commit to some purpose in our lives. That's what Shavuot, which is traditionally associated with the giving of the 10 Commandments, symbolizes. But how do we get from here to there? How do we move from throwing off slavery, being stuck in the narrow, all the way to a deep commitment to a life of Hesed, of loving connection? One step at a time.

That's why I find the Omer counting so useful. Each day I think, ok, what step can I take today? What one small thing can I do to bring myself closer to the bigger goal of loving connection? If I were to try to skip the small steps and look at the whole journey at once, I'd be completely overwhelmed. I used to do a lot of mountain climbing. Even with experience, if you start a climb by looking at how far away the top is, you'll never start — it's just too daunting. But if you plan a route and then focus on the first leg of that route, and then the next, and then the next, the top draws ever nearer.

If you're interested in Omer counting practices, you can check out www.jewishspirituality.org for a variety of resources. Or come to a chanting circle, or enroll in our Wilderness Journey adult ed class. You have a lot of options for a first step. But you can never get to the top of the mountain unless you choose one of them and take that step.

Rabbi Daniel J. Swartz

Zoom Into Adult Education

Adult Education on “The Wilderness Journey” — April 4, 11, 18, 25 & May 2, from 2:30 to 4 pm

Our next adult education class is about to begin — and, to misquote the Seder, this class will be different from all other classes! It will be a combination of text study, discussion, deep exploration and personal exercises. During the class, we will journey together through the five step process of a spiritual “Wilderness Journey”:

Step 1: Stuck in the Narrow Place.

We can’t move toward freedom and the “promised land” until we first develop an awareness of where we are stuck and constricted. We’ll look at Pharaoh’s “heart diseases” to diagnose our narrow place, as well as understanding that a Divine response can only come after we learn how to “cry out.”

Step 2: Crossing the Sea

How do we prepare to “cross the sea,” to take a leap of faith, and to step into unknown waters? We’ll look at some mystical texts about that leap, and also listen to some musical explorations.

Step 3: The Sweet and the Bitter

Wilderness can be purifying, but it can also highlight bitterness. Through the metaphor of the Exodus struggles with water bitter and sweet, we’ll explore what’s hidden

in our own wells, what needs to bubble up, and the purposes of bitterness.

Step 4: Standing at Sinai

What does the idea of revelation mean to us as modern, Reform Jews? Can we really receive something new? Can we find new ways of seeing, or tear through the veils we have created around ourselves? And what is the connection between revelation and wilderness?

Step 5: Building the Holy Place

Why was the sanctuary built in the desert? What does it mean to create a space for the Holy to dwell? What is the difference between building out of obligation and building through generosity? And how do we make the holy “portable” — something that is able to remain with us and to continue to adapt through our various life changes.

Because this class will be taught online, it is also open to non-Temple members, so feel free to tell your friends.

Please email Rabbi Daniel if you are interested in the class, so he can make sure you have all the necessary information. The class will be on Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88450605698?pwd=Y3BrRzVpdUhRL09xamZ0R3dDN1ZkZz09>

Or from the Zoom app, enter Meeting ID: 884 5060 5698 and Passcode: Midbar

5698 and Passcode: Midbar

Chant with Us Saturdays in April

Numerous scientific studies have demonstrated the health benefits of gratitude — better sleep, less depression, increased self-esteem, more able to plan for the future, and even fewer aches and pains. But how do we become more grateful? As Temple Hesed Co-President Esther Adelman pointed out in her *Messenger* column last month, our chanting circle always begins with gratitude. But in April, we’ll focus even more on practices that can help us live more grateful — and thus happier and healthier — lives. Drawing on teachings from Judaism, Buddhism, and other faiths and philosophies, we’ll meet each Saturday at 11:30 am.

No prior experience is required, and everyone, no matter their faith background, is welcome to join us. To join, simply go to:

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83570030002?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83570030002?pwd=TE8xQ2NDTi8xSk83cnRSOXFMY2lUdz09)

[pwd=TE8xQ2NDTi8xSk83cnRSOXFMY2lUdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83570030002?pwd=TE8xQ2NDTi8xSk83cnRSOXFMY2lUdz09)

Or from the Zoom app, enter Meeting ID: 835 7003 0002 and Passcode: Gratitude



INTRO TO JUDAISM CLASSES BEGIN -- FOR POTENTIAL CONVERTS AND ANYONE ELSE WANTING TO KNOW MORE - WEDNESDAYS AT 2:15 OR 6:15

Perhaps there's something in the air, or perhaps people have just had time to think things through due to the pandemic -- but for whatever reason, in the past couple of weeks, more than half a dozen people contacted Temple Hessed asking about conversion. So we've started up two **Intro to Judaism classes, both on Wednesdays, one from 2:15-3:15 and the other from 6:15-7:15.** While the classes

have already started, Rabbi Daniel is happy to catch people up. You'd be most welcome to join us, and also to pass on the word to anyone you think might be interested -- these classes do not require any commitment to convert. If you are interested or know of someone who is, it's best if they email the rabbi first at rabbidaniel@comcast.net -- but they are also welcome to come check

out a class. The link for both classes is the same: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81840316264?pwd=QVRNVHdQK3RKOXRLUUNpeDVrZjhLdz09>

Or from the Zoom app, enter Meeting ID: 818 4031 6264 and Passcode: Gerut

April 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
* 				1	2 Services 6pm*	3 Passover ends Chanting Circle-11:30am*
4 Adult Education 2:30-4pm*	5	6	7 Intro to Judaism Classes @ 2:15 or 6:15pm*	8 Yom HaShoah – 6:30 pm@JCC	9 Services 8pm*	10 Chanting Circle-11:30am*
11 Adult Education 2:30-4pm*	12	13	14 Intro to Judaism Classes @ 2:15 or 6:15 pm*	15 Yom HaZikaron	16 Services 8pm* Yom HaAtzmaut	17 Chanting Circle-11:30am*
18 Adult Education 2:30-4pm*	19	20	Intro to Judaism Classes @ 2:15 or 6:15pm*	22	23 Services 8pm*	24 Chanting Circle-11:30am*
25 Adult Education 2:30-4pm*	26	27	28 Intro to Judaism Classes @ 2:15 or 6:15pm*	29	30 Services 8pm*	

5781 Holiday Calendar

Rosh HaShanah —
Sept. 18-19

Yom Kippur — Sept. 27-
28

Sukkot — Oct. 2-9

Sh'mini Atzeret-
Simchat Torah — Oct.
9-10

Hanukkah — Dec. 10-18

Tu B'Shevat — Jan. 27-
28

Purim — Feb. 25-26

Passover — Mar 27-Apr. 3

Yom HaShoah — Apr.
7-8

Yom HaZikaron —
Apr. 14-15

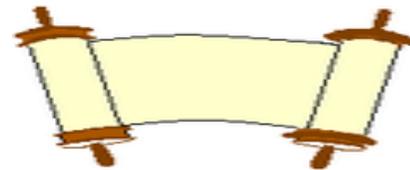
Yom HaAtzmaut —
Apr. 15-16

Lag BaOmer —Apr. 29-
30

Shavuot — May 16-17

Tishah B'Av — July 17-18

Selichot Service —Aug. 28



Torah Portions

Name	Civil date	Hebrew date
Shemini	April 10 2021	28.Nissan.5781
Tarzia- Metzora	April 17, 2021	5.Iyar.5781
Ancsrei- Kedoshim	April 24, 2021	12.Iyar.5781

More information available from URJ.org

“When a wise man
talks to a fool, two
fools are talking.”

From 1001 Yiddish Proverbs—By Fred Kogos

JAHRZEITS

Week Ending April 3 (April 2)

*Albert Rose, *Arthur Adelman, *William Stein, *Jack Benkaim, *Ruth Folk, *Lois Besen, Joel Ostro, Roslyn Mitchell, *Ida Richman, *Samuel N. Kramer, *Hattie O. Levi, *Elsie Schneider, *Abraham Cornfield, Fred A. Ellenbogen, *Hannah Joseph, Edward Bernstein

Week Ending April 10 (Service April 9)

*Meyer Slavitz, *Myer Kabatchnick, *Stephen Mannaberg Loebel, *Israel Linder, Jerome I. Karnoff, *Dr. Neal E. Soifer, *Joan Alperin, Florence Brown, *Arnold L. Apfelbaum, *Paul William Weinstock, Sheldon A. Davis, *Daniel H. Stone, *Dr. Gladys Ball

Week Ending April 17 (Service April 16)

*Harlan Ackerman, *Rose Swartz, Nellie Wooden, *Edith Leventhal, Dr. Carl Strauss, *Gertrude Diener, *Al J. Dolinger, Jennie Newman, *Jack M. Yanover, Aaron Pashkow, *Shirley Mitteldorf, *Frances Ehrlich Joseph, *Elsa Stein Ehrlich

Week Ending April 24 (Service April 23)

*Alice L. Goldsmith, *Fred Mark Seagaard, *Elizabeth R. Levi, *Ralph L. Levy, *Selma Stein, *Aaron H. Vogel, Harold Kaplan, *Rebecca Weinberg, *Janet Slawitsky, *Rae Epstein, *Harry Ackerson

Week Ending May 1 (Service April 30)

*Emma Kramer Freeman, Dr. Jacob S. Kominz, *Lena Rosenberg, *Joyce Kroll, *Fred B. Levi, *Grace Pawlan, Hannah Feinberg, *Samuel Morris, *Elias Strauss, *Louis N. Kramer

Get

Wells

Michael Cornfield

Mark Davis

Lynne Fragin

Larry Golden

Maggie LoRusso

Marieann Mates

Rich Mates

Chelsea Minkoff

Harriet Noble

Jane Oppenheim

Charlene Ostro

Emily Trunzo

Joel Vener



Sheloshim

Donald F. Dembert, 89, Waverly, died March 12 at home. His wife is the former Carol Silberman Nelson Dembert.

Don was born in Scranton, the son of Florence Frank Dembert and Sander Ellsworth Dembert. He was the grandson of Emma Kleeman Frank and Samuel E. Frank and Rose Salsburg and Sol Dembert.

Don was graduated from Wyoming Seminary, Kingston, PA. Also a graduate of Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT, Don earned a Masters Degree from Boston University while working in Filene's Executive Training Program. Don served in the United States naval reserves during the Korean War before returning to Scranton.

Beginning his career as a stock broker with Bache and Co., Don retired as Vice President of Investments with Wells Fargo. He won many awards in his 45-year career and was respected by his clients and the entire financial

See **DEMBERT** (Continued on page 8)

DEMBERT (Continued from page 7)

community for his expertise and integrity.

A member of the Waverly Country Club, Glen Oak Country Club, Temple Hesed, and a life member of the Jewish Community Center, Don was an avid 4-wall handball and tennis player, skier, and golfer. He excelled at sports and was proud of the tournaments and trophies he won.

Don was involved for many years as a volunteer for many regional organizations, including the Jewish Community Center, Temple Hesed, and the Northeastern Pennsylvania Philharmonic. A true selfless and kind gentleman, he was loved and respected by all who were privileged to know him. Don had a special spark and love of life that resonated with absolutely everyone he knew.

For many years, Don raised beagles and loved his dogs, all named Sandy. He loved travel, visiting many places in the world, and he would often share stories about his 25 years vacationing in Maui where he was "the mayor" of the Grand Wailea.

Don is survived by the children and grandchildren of his blended family: daughter Heather Dembert Rafter and her husband John Rafter (Portola Valley, CA), son Harley Frank Dembert and wife Amy Wessan (Tarrytown, NY); step-son Michael Nelson and his wife Madelaine Saldivar (Wayne, PA), and Daniel Nelson (Burlington MA). He will be greatly missed by grandchildren Alex, Jackson & Emma Laura Rafter, Lydia Dembert, Sarah, Alex, Vivian, and Luke Nelson.

Graveside services were conducted in Temple Hesed Cemetery in Dunmore.

TEMPLE HESED
1 Knox Road
Scranton, PA 18505

Office: 570-344-7201
Fax: 570-344-4514

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Temple Hesed

On the Web at: templehesed.org

SPIRITUAL LEADER

Rabbi Daniel J Swartz

570-877-3454 (cell)
570-344-7201 (office)
rabbidaniel@comcast.net (email)

OFFICERS

Esther Adelman, Steven Seitchik and Cheryl Friedman — **Co-Presidents**;
Jeffrey Leventhal — **Treasurer**; Jennifer Novak — **Secretary**; Joan Davis — **Assistant Secretary**

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Honorary Life Board Member: Jane Oppenheim

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(marlenecmg1@comcast.net)

Edward Snitko—*Director of Music*

Jennifer Rosen Novak— *Director of Social Media*

Rich Mates—*Editor, Messenger* (hesednews@gmail.com)

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.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, appointments should be made for all meetings with the rabbi.

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.