

שליח

# MESSENGER



Temple Hesed, 1 Knox Road, Scranton, PA 18505

## Temple Hanukkah Celebration December 3 — Dinner at 6, Service at 7

For the first time since Purim, 2020 — just before the world shut down for the Pandemic — Temple Hesed will be hosting a dinner before a service, at 6 p.m. on December 3. Though it's Hanukkah and not Passover, this night will be different from all other nights. Instead of being a potluck, we are asking all families to bring their own food.

We'll supplement that with some latkes that volunteers — including Rabbi Daniel -- will be making. Instead of washing dishes, we will use disposables and ask each family to clean up after themselves.

We'll set tables as far apart as possible in the Social Hall, and there will be some fun Hanukkah activities at each table. In other words, we're trying to have as much fun as possible while staying safe.

If you'd like to join us for dinner, please RSVP

to the Temple office so we can set up the right number of tables — either email us at [temple-hesed@comcast.net](mailto:temple-hesed@comcast.net) or call 570-344-7201. And let us know if you'd like to join the "latke fry-off."



No RSVP needed for our service at 7 p.m., which will be family-friendly, with lively music and a story. Who knows, we might even see a reunion of the "Shmooze Brothers." Everyone is welcome, and there is no charge for either the service or the

dinner.

Because we are expecting over 20 for the service, we do ask that people be masked and respect social distancing in the Main Sanctuary. If you'd like to join us online, it will be the same link as all our Shabbat services — see "December Service Scheduled" article on Page 4.



### In this issue:

- 10 Commandments
- Inward Journey
- New dreidel

## New Inclement Weather Policy

The Temple Hesed Board has voted to put a new inclement weather policy in place.



We will always try to hold services with an in-person option as long as conditions are safe.

But when they are not, instead of cancelling services altogether, we will simply move to an online-only service. If you want to check if services will be online-only, just give the Temple office a call and we'll put it on the voice mail message.

Links for services will be the same whether or not there is an in-person option.



## Donations to Temple Hesed

Major credit or debit  
cards accepted.

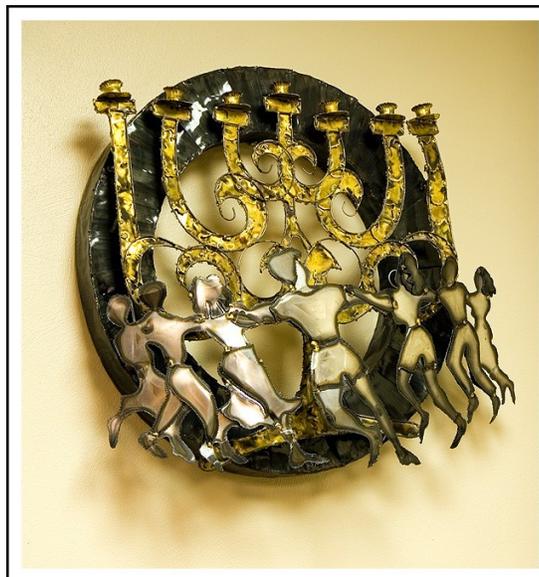
Minimum \$10 dona-  
tion for acknowl-  
edgement in the  
Messenger.

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

(Listings of Donations will  
be published in the next  
issue of the Messenger.)

### **December Interfaith Chanting Circle: The Inward Journey**

Who are we? So often, our answers to this deep question are shallow. Instead of really examining who we are, we define ourselves through our jobs or family roles, as sibling, child, parent, companion. We may reveal part of who we are through these roles, but if we identify too closely, then what happens when we retire or lose someone? Do we also lose ourselves? This month, we'll take an inward journey of self-examination. Through our chants, study and discussion, we'll explore what shapes our core identities. With that understanding, we can engage in more authentic relationships with other people, with the world, and with the divine.



We'll be gathering for three Circles in December — on the 4th for one hour, both in-person and online, and also on the 11th and the 18th, for about 30 minutes, only online. There will be no Chanting Circle on December 25. All Chanting Circles start at 11:30. To join online, just click:  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83570030002?pwd=TE8xQ2NDTi8xSk83cnRSQXFMY2lUdz09>

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



*Rabbinical*

*Reflections*

Rabbi Daniel J.  
Swartz

## Miracles Here and Now

**In** America, we're used to dreidels with the letters *nun*, *gimel*, *hey*, and *shin*, which we read as a mnemonic for the phrase “a great miracle happened there.” (Historically, these letters actually arose as part of a widely played gambling game — for an explanation of the true origin of the dreidel, see <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-origin-of-the-dreidel/>) In Israel, dreidels have a *peh* instead of a *shin*, standing for *poh*, “here,” instead of “there.” But whether it's here or there, both kinds of dreidel portray a common understanding — I would say misunderstanding — of miracles: that they are dramatic and obvious and, most of all, things of the past.

However, the *Modim* (thankfulness) prayer, which is said in daily, Shabbat, and holiday prayers, offers a radically different concept of miracles. It says, “For Your miracles which are with us every day, and for Your wonders and Your favors at all times, evening, morning, and afternoon.” Obviously, these aren't splitting-the-sea-type miracles. Rather, this prayer highlights the sweet yet subtle wonders that surround us and yet can easily be overlooked. Birth is one such miracle, as is love. I would also list the opening of a crocus, the song of the wood thrush, a meal shared with friends, watching a sunset, or seeing someone who has failed at something repeatedly persevere until they succeed. If we're too rushed, cynical, or preoccupied, we can miss any of these. But if we're paying attention, they can all bring comfort, inspire us, and connect us to a sense of meaning in the world. We even have a special blessing designed to help us pay attention to the beauty and blessings around us -- *shecacha lo b'olamo*, what a blessing that it is like this in Your universe. (which, by the way, I've written a chant for that we'll do in December's chanting circles.)

That's all well and good, I can hear some of you say, during ordinary times. But when facing a pandemic, deep divisions in society, and climate disasters, don't we need something more — if not the splitting of a sea, at least some miraculous oil? I would argue that it is precisely at times like these that we are most in need of small, sweet miracles. Along with all the tragedy and loss this pandemic has inflicted, it has also reminded us of the importance of connecting to each other, of taking a walk through the woods, of the power of a hug. I hope as the pandemic recedes — may it be speedily and in our days — we can retain gratitude for miracles such as these.

When we are divided, experiences that bridge across divides are even more valuable than infrastructure spending. Small, sweet miracles are about as universal a human experience as anything. For thousands of years, people all across the world have paused to take in beautiful sunsets. Perhaps if we noticed someone doing just that, we'd be less prone to label them an enemy.

And when we face a seemingly insurmountable challenge such as climate change, little miracles can inspire us to take the next step, then the step after that, and so on till it seems clear that we shall overcome. If you closely examine the Talmudic account of the oil miracle, for example, you'll see there was a small miracle before the famous one: knowing that there was only enough oil to last for one day, the Hasmoneans nevertheless kindled the lights. Indeed, our tradition is full of stories of similar small miracles before great ones, where someone took a first step even though the way forward was murky at best: Daniel ready to go into the lion's den or Nachshon ben Aminidav stepping into the sea before it split. These stories echo in the small actions taken that have changed the world — sitting at the front of the bus or at a lunch counter; wearing a yellow star in solidarity; living beside a pond and writing about it.

So perhaps this Hanukkah, we should make a new type of dreidel, one with a *nun*, *mem*, *kuf*, and *ayin*, for *Nes Matok Koreh Achshav* — a sweet miracle is happening now. If more of us noticed such miracles, it could shed a light brighter than any menorah.

# December Services Scheduled

Please note the times for our December services:  
On December 3, dinner at 6 and service at 7;  
on December 10, service at 7, and on December 17, service at 6. There will be no services on December 24 and 31.

When we start back up in the new year, (just after Rabbi Daniel turns 60!) we'll alternate between 6 and 7 during January and then consider if that is working or if we should move to one 6 pm service on the First Friday and 7 pm services the other weeks. All services have an online option, which remains the same from week to week.

The Zoom link is  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89442525110?pwd=T1U0a0x1RjhoSnNPYXp4S2R4UG9tQT09>

Or from the Zoom app enter Meeting ID: 894 4252 5110 and Passcode: Hessed

To view from YouTube on the Temple Hessed channel go to:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCwWXduQKzeDWe61fbDSNLT>

Sign up now for

## Winter Adult Education: An Interfaith Look at the 10 Commandments



As noted in the November *Messenger*, starting in January, Rabbi Daniel will be offering a unique adult educational opportunity — a chance for us to study together with another Scranton area congregation, St. Luke's Episcopal Church.

The class is likely to be on Sunday afternoons, alternating between St. Luke's and Temple Hessed, and it won't start till after the MLK weekend. It will be Zoomed and taught in-person.

Some of the details of the class are still being worked out with the Reverend Rebecca Barnes, Priest-in-charge of St. Luke's, including discussions about possibly bringing one or two additional congregations into the mix.

If this sounds interesting to you, please email Rabbi Daniel at [rabbidaniel@comcast.net](mailto:rabbidaniel@comcast.net) or call the Temple office at 570-344-7201, so we can make sure to set times for the class that will work for all who are interested.



## JAHRZEITS

November 21- 27  
17 – 23 Kislev  
Service December 3

\*Ida Needle, \*Ida Gutman, \*Lillian Ziman, \*Isador Gevanthor, \*Lena Kurlancheek Silverstein, \*Hyman Weiss, \*Brian David Schneider, \*Steven Rex Tepper, \*Hannah Klein Smith, \*Albert Pace, \*Frank Bernard Cohen, \*Richard Oppenheim, Leo Moskovitz, \*Sophie Stone, \*Philip Ungar, \*Jack Goldman, \*Selma Berger, \*Susan Lonstein

November 28 – December 4  
24 – 30 Kislev  
Service December 3

\*Anne J. Lipsins, \*Jacob Ackerman, Ruth D. Karnoff, Michael Mitchell, \*John Ross Lauer, \*Dr. Jonas Selverstone, \*David Rothenberg, \*Albert Jacobs, \*Miriam Parker Gelb, \*John J. Gaffney, Arthur Selznick, \*Harry Lonstein, \*Esther C. Oppenheim, \*Jean Stein Sutton, \*Maxine Wylen, \*Linda Lee Leventhal, Dr. Newton Freund, \*Rudolph M. Goldsmith, \*Etta C. Levey

December 5 – 11  
1 – 7 Tevet  
Service December 10

\*Herman Ziman, \*Anna L. Brownstein, \*Ellis M. Oppenheim, \*Irwin E. Alperin, Ira Lauscher, Rose Fine, \*Erich Traub, \*Esther Gordon, \*Fannie Roos, \*Jonas Lauer, \*Sadie Freeman, \*Yetta Linder, \*Abraham D. Goldberg, \*Louis E. Newman, Bernardine Kaplan, \*Harriet D. Morris

December 12 – 18  
8 – 14 Tevet  
Service December 17

\*Dr. Leon Braunstein, \*Frank Feldman, \*Mary Leventhal, \*Nancy Stahler, \*Morris Cohen, \*Anna Swartz, \*Fannye M. Slavitz, \*Lea S. Mauer, Doris Toledano Frieder, \*Toby Rodgick, \*Rose Schudmack, \*Gloria Dinner, \*Samuel Roos

December 19 – 25  
15 – 21 Tevet  
Service January 7

\*Sarah Greenberger, \*George Joseph Weisberg, \*Margaret Smith, \*Minnie Ginsburg, \*Rebecca Newman, \*Carolina Schwartz, \*Goldie Neumann, \*Morris Goldsmith, \*Israel Greenberger, \*Elliott Weisberger, \*David Zukowski, \*Edward Berger, \*Chester Levy, \*Bernard Rymland

December 26 – January 1  
22 – 28 Tevet  
Service January 7

\*Isadore Adelman, \*Harvey Sanford Siegel, \*Gus Weinberger, \*Meyer Davis, Ralph Myer, \*David Rosenberg, \*Martin Weilheimer, Jerry Kline, \*Charlotte Milliken, \*Herbert Smith, \*Carole S. Goodman, Bessie Kaplan, \*Jessica Parker Mannoff, \*Judith Pell Weinberger, \*Isaac Ziegler, \*Janet Phillips, \*Jennie Bakaley, Grace E. Davis, \*Louis Kleeman

Get

Wells

Michael Cornfield

Lynne Fragin

Kenny Ganz

Larry Golden

Ellen Kline

Phil Knobel

Maggie LoRusso

Rich Mates

Chelsea Minkoff

Harriet Noble

Charlene Ostro

Ceil Rydzewski

Joel Vener

## Build Back Better Bill Praised; Swift Senate Action Urged



Rabbi Pesner

**November 19, 2021, WASHINGTON** - In response to the House of Representatives' passage of the Build Back Better Act (H.R. 5376), Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner, Director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, released the following statement on

behalf of the Union for Reform Judaism, the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and the wider Reform Movement institutions:

"We commend the House of Representatives for passing the Build Back Better Act, an essential bill that will invest in and help

address the enduring health and economic disparities exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, begin to mitigate the looming climate crisis, support childcare and pre-k education, and more. Judaism teaches us to 'speak up, judge righteously, champion the poor and the needy (Proverbs 31:9).' These words inspire our commitment to supporting the millions of families struggling to put food on the table, keep a roof over their heads, manage medical expenses, care for family members, or enjoy equitable access to education that allows people to fulfill their potential.

We urge the Senate to swiftly pass the Build Back Better Act and invest in an equitable recovery for America's communities and families."



# December 2021

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 4th night Hanukah	2 5th night Hanukah.	3 6th night Hanukah Dinner 6p. Service, 7p*	4 7th night Hanukkah Chanting Circle 11:30a
5 8th night Hanukkah	6	7	8	9	10 Services 7p *	11 Chanting circle* 11:30a
12	13	14	15 Board Meeting 6p	16	17 Services 6p*	18 Chanting circle* 11:30a
19	20	21	 	23	24 No Services	25 No Chanting circle
26	27	28		29	30	31 No Services New Year's Eve

# 5782

## Holiday

## Calendar

Rosh HaShanah —  
Sept. 6-8

Yom Kippur — Sept. 15-16

Sukkot — Sept. 20-27

Sh'mini Atzeret-Simchat Torah — Sept. 27-28

Hanukkah — Nov. 28 Dec. 6

Tu  
B'Shevat — Jan. 16-17

Purim — Mar. 16-17

Passover — Apr. 15-22

Yom HaShoah — Apr. 27-28

Yom HaZikaron —  
May 3-4

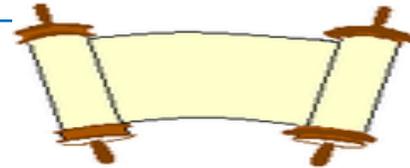
Yom HaAtzmaut —  
May 4-5

Lag BaOmer — May 18-19

Shavuot — June 4-5

Tishah B'Av — Aug. 6-7

Selichot Service — Sep. 17



### Torah Portions

Name	Civil date	Hebrew date
Mikeitz	Dec. 3, 2021	30. Kislev. 5782
Vaygash	Dec. 10, 2021	7. Tevet. 5782
Vayechi	Dec. 18, 2021	14. Tevet. 5782
Shemot	Dec. 25, 2021	21. Tivet. 5782

More information available from [URJ.org](http://URJ.org)

“If you want something, you have to work for it.”

From 1001 Yiddish Proverbs—By Fred Kogos

# URJ Says Key Findings of Misconduct Report will be Released

The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) report released today (Nov. 9) is an important contribution to the ongoing reckoning in our community. The painful and deeply concerning findings in the report must be, and we believe will be, urgently addressed to ensure that the training of our clergy and professional leaders is done in the most ethically rigorous and accountable way. This report would not have been possible without the courage of those who came forward.

The HUC-JIR Report includes a number of recommendations for HUC-JIR, as well as one that includes four of the independent organizations that are part of the Reform Movement—HUC-JIR, the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR) and the American Conference of Cantors (ACC). That recommendation is for the four organizations to work together to ensure that the system that places clergy in jobs across our Movement protects the safety and well-being of everyone within our communities. The URJ is committed to participating in that effort.

We want to reiterate our steadfast commitment to address all reports of sexual harassment, abuse, and misconduct within the URJ, and its programs and camps, and to ensure all URJ environments are safe, equitable and inclusive. As part of this process, earlier this year, we engaged Mary Beth Hogan at the law firm of Debevoise & Plimpton to conduct an independent, comprehensive, and impartial investigation, the key findings of which will be released publicly.

The safety and well-being of every individual in our community is our sacred moral responsibility. It is, and always will be, our highest priority.

**Rabbi Rick Jacobs**  
President, URJ

**Jennifer Brodkey Kaufman**  
Chair, North American Board, URJ

## TEMPLE HESED

1 Knox Road  
Scranton, PA 18505

Office: 570-344-7201

Fax: 570-344-4514

Website: <http://www.templehesed.org>

## Temple Hesed

On the Web at: [templehesed.org](http://templehesed.org)

### SPIRITUAL LEADER

#### Rabbi Daniel J Swartz

570-877-3454 (cell)

570-344-7201 (office)

[rabbidaniel@comcast.net](mailto: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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### STAFF

**Marlene Gianzanti**—*Temple Administrator*

([marlenecmg1@comcast.net](mailto:marlenecmg1@comcast.net))

**Edward Snitko**—*Director of Music*

**Jennifer Rosen Novak**— *Director of Social Media*

**Rich Mates**—*Editor, Messenger* ([hesednews@gmail.com](mailto:hesednews@gmail.com))

**Jeff Heilbrunn** — *Webmaster*

### 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. Bring a face mask.

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.