

שליח

MESSENGER



Temple Hesed, 1 Knox Road, Scranton, PA 18505

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to report that during our last fiscal year, ten new member families, many of which include children, have joined our Temple Hesed family. Although Temple activities are still not up to full speed, these new members have already participated in much of what we are doing. Our school has been reconfigured by Rabbi Swartz; holiday celebrations have taken place; new committees are being formed.

Please give a warm Hesed welcome to the following:

David and Jane Kessler
Richard and Iris Davison
Jay Shechter and Teresa Butler
Terry Luma and Gary Rozman
James and Carole Cader
Brian Levy
Joshua Oliveri and Karissa Lombardo
Melinda Gold
Daniel Chejfec
Michael and Katheryne Hassett



Esther B. Adelman
Co-President

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Rabbinical

Reflections

**Rabbi Daniel J.
Swartz**

Rabbinical Reflections: The Scourge of Anti-semitism

For the first time, the speaker at this year's Greater Scranton Area MLK dinner and symposium will be directly addressing antisemitism along with racism. While I'm glad to have the topic addressed in a public forum that will reach well beyond the Jewish community, the sad fact is that this is happening because antisemitism is surging in America to levels that haven't been seen since the early days of World War II. So in my Rabbinical Reflections column this month, I'll very briefly outline some of the background that everyone should have to better understand what is going on right now.

Antisemitism is a far from recent phenomenon. Indeed, anti-Jewish hatred extends back to the pre-Christian era, when we were persecuted for being monotheists and for refusing to worship monarchs and emperors. Things got considerably worse, however, with the rise of Christianity. Many early Christian writings, most notably sections of the Gospels, are filled with anti-Jewish vitriol. This arose in part because early Christians were doing their best to distinguish and distance themselves from the religion that gave rise to Christianity, and in part because they were also writing to an audience of Roman overlords, trying to make the case that Roman authorities should be targeting Jews and not Christians. When Constantine adopted Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, that is exactly what happened. Jews were stripped of many of their rights, and for centuries were blocked from many professions and, over much of Europe, from owning land. Waves of violence against Jews regularly erupted throughout Christian Europe, especially during the Crusades and various phases of the Inquisition. Jews were blamed for the black plague, and at one time or another, most European countries had periods when Jews were forcibly removed and banned from re-entering that country.

When Luther first began writing, he praised Jews, apparently being under the impression that the only things preventing Jews from converting en masse to Christianity were the very excesses of the Catholic Church he was railing against. But when that turned out to not be the case, his writings became filled with virulent Jew-hatred, calling for all synagogues and Jewish schools to be burned, all the houses of Jews to be destroyed, and all teaching of Judaism to be prohibited on pain of death. Luther's Jew-hatred became deeply ingrained in predominantly Lutheran countries.

Things were better, or at least less bad, in the Islamic Empire up until at least the late 19th century. Jews had dhimmi status in most Muslim countries, which gave them a variety of protections even as it restricted them from enjoying fully equal rights. When the Islamic Empire flourished, Jews frequently did better, the prime example being Maimonides, who served as the private physician to the Caliph. But when the empire was under attack, Jews would find themselves blamed just like in Christian Europe.

In America, Jews generally found a better situation, primarily because of First Amendment protections and the separation of church and state, as imperfect as it was. But from their very early days in America, anti-Jewish attitudes were inextricably bound up with more general anti-immigrant sentiments. Indeed, it was in America that much of the conspiracy-laden thinking that gave rise to "modern" Jew-hatred, to true antisemitism, first arose. These writers began to define Jews not as people of the Jewish religion but as a separate, inferior and unassimilable "race." (Please note that the term "race" here, or in the context of "white" or "black" "races" has zero scientific validity.) Not only were Jews immigrants who could never become "true" Americans, but they were the evil masterminds behind immigration more generally. This modern antisemitism quickly spread to Europe, especially France and Germany, eventually playing a key role in the rise of Nazi ideology.

Rabbinic reflections continued

Today, antisemitic attitudes can be found across the political spectrum in America and elsewhere. In the left, antisemitism sometimes masquerades as anti-Israel attitudes.

While there are legitimate reasons to criticize Israel — indeed, given the extreme nature of the emerging government in Israel, I imagine you will hear me criticizing aspects of Israel with some frequency over the next couple of years — true antisemites go beyond criticism to a desire to wipe out Israel entirely. In America, however, while such attitudes are deeply troubling, they have not been the major cause of violence against Jews.

It is right-wing antisemites who have actually shot and killed Jews in America, motivated by a mixture of older Nazi ideologies and revamped “great replacement” conspiracy thinking. The killers at both the Poway synagogue and the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh quoted extensively from “great replacement” tracts, as did the shooters in El Paso and Buffalo. Though the latter two did not target Jews in their mass murders, they both had plans to do so were they able to pursue future attacks.

It is still much safer to be a Jew in America than almost anywhere else on the planet. But if America is to remain our home, we need to be ready to speak out against any form of hatred, whether or not Jews are directly targeted. For we have seen over and over again, throughout the centuries of ancient Jew hatred and modern antisemitism, that even when haters don’t start with the Jews, they end up targeting us eventually. Only when we build a world of acceptance for all and solidarity with all can we truly defeat antisemitism.

Confirmation Class Trip to L’taken Teen Social Justice Seminar

After a hiatus of several years, Temple Hesed once again has a confirmation class — indeed, our largest class in a long time — five high school students! On the weekend of January 20-23, the entire class will travel with Rabbi Daniel to take part in the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism’s L’taken Teen Social Justice Seminar, a program that Rabbi Daniel used to run when he was on the RAC staff. During this weekend, our students will learn about important contemporary social issues and what Jewish tradition has to teach about them. Past L’taken seminars have included briefings on issues ranging from stem cell research to climate change. Students will also take part in Shabbat services and tour the Holocaust Memorial Museum. Then on Monday, January 23rd, our students will go to the offices of Senators Casey and Fetterman and Representatives Cartwright and Meuser, to give presentations about what they have learned. Later in the spring, we will have our students speak at a Temple Hesed Shabbat service to share their experiences with us. We are grateful to the Oppenheim Institute, which helped make this exciting opportunity possible for all of our students.

Religious School Report

In December, Temple Hesed member and Jewish Family Services counselor Don Minkoff introduced our students and their families to the many ways Jewish Family Services helps out families in our area. We loaded up many bags of kosher food for the JFS kosher food pantry, to help families during the cold winter months, as pictured below. We also learned about myths and truths about Hanukkah — for example, did you know that Hanukkah wasn’t its original name, that Hanukkah lasts for eight days for a reason completely different from the story of the oil, and that dreidels were used at Christmas before they became part of Hanukkah? Then, on December 18, we had a wonderful first night of Hanukkah dinner together, using special hand-dipped candles we made that very evening! Take a look at the beautiful candles we made and the fun we had making them! In January, in addition to continuing with our Hebrew lessons, we’ll be learning about and making mezuzahs.

Religious School Activities



JAHRZEITS

December 25 – 31

1 – 7 Tevet

Service January 6

*David Zukowski, *Edward Berger, *Chester Levy, *Bernard Rymland, *Isadore Adelman, *Harvey Sanford Siegel, *Gus Weinberger, *Meyer Davis, Ralph Meyer, *David Rosenberg, *Martin Weilheimer, Jerry Kline, *Charlotte Milliken, *Herbert Smith, *Carole S. Goodman, *Bernard B. Wormser, Bessie Kaplan, *Jessica Parker Mannoff, *Judith Pell Weinberger, *Isaac Ziegler, *Janet Phillips

January 1 - 7

8 - 14 Tevet

Service January 6

*Jennie Bakaley, Grace E. Davis, *Louis Kleeman, *Olga Adelman, *Blanche Silverstein, *Isadore Levine, *Berniece Lenchner, *Alvin Ziegler, *Herman Schneider, *Dorothy Tapper, *Freda Ball, *Henrietta Jacobs, *Frederick L. Wormser, *Ruth Livingston, Jessie Samter Ellenbogen, *Samuel Feldman, *George Bauer, *Mabelle Druck, *Minnie Harris, *Tillie Lauer Marks, *Gertrude Ziegler

January 8 - 14

15 - 21 Tevet

Service January 13

*George Joel, *Faye Bernstein, *Eric S. Gardner, *Edward Denis, *George Phillips, *Marvine L. Dinner, *Ophelia H. Hefter, *Hattie Ross Lauer, *Anna Fragin, *Shirley Troy Cornfield, *Edna Kabatchnick, *Abraham Wolf

January 15 - 21

22 - 28 Tevet

Service January 20

*David H. Dickstein, *Jack Friedman, *Abe Newman, *Mary Freeman, *Ethel Friedmann, Emily Kominz, *Michael R. Graham, *Lena Berg, *Simon Lauer, *Herman Goodman, *Leonard A. Saltzman, *Harry Tapper, Anne Marie Heilbrunn, *Sadie R. Lichtman, *Morris Whitman, *Sarah Bloch, *Arthur L. Goldsmith, *Abraham Leventhal, *Dr. Morton Hodes

January 22 - 28

29 Tevet - 6 Shevat

Service January 27

*Solomon Schudmack, *Anita Appleton, *Carl Goldman, *Alice Goldsmith, Barbara Ballot, Saul Kaplan, Theodore Kaplan, Robert Sundheim, Frimi Gromer, *Rebecca Levy, *Barbara Sapsowitz, *Monroe R. Smith, *Milton Aronsohn, *Carl Davis, *Lillian Goldfarb, *Madeline Goldsmith, *Jacob Sydansk, *Charles Noe, *Jennie Lehman, *Sadie W. Young, *Sol Davidow

January 29 - February 4

7 - 13 Shevat

Service February 3

*Frances Kaufman, Helene Cader, Benjamin Cader, *Dorothy Rosenberg, *Pamela Tigrett, *Aaron Cooperman, *Emma L. Sarlin, *Stephen M. Simon, *Simon J. Freeman, *Maxwell M. Neumann, *Lena Weinberger, *Margaret L. Oettinger, Jonathan W. Rosenstein

January 2023

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6 Services, 6pm	7 Chanting Circle, 11:30am
8	9	10	11	12	13 Services 7pm	14 Chanting Circle, 11:30am
15 MLK Dinner and Symposium	16 MLK Interfaith Service	17	18 Board Meeting 6 pm	19	20 Services, 7pm Confirmation Trip to D. C.	21
22	23	24	25	16	27 Services, 7pm	28 Chanting Circle, 11:30am
29	30	31				

ADV.

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344-7201

January Chanting Circles, 7th, 14th and 28th at 11:30 am — Healing the Broken

Our world is filled with inner and outer brokenness. Inside each of us are past hurts, regrets, flaws and wounds, some self-inflicted and others visited upon us despite our best efforts. All of these are readily apparent to ourselves, even though they might be hidden from the rest of the world. The outer brokenness — the many ways the world is filled with division, anger, hatred and hurt — is more obvious, but its roots in inner brokenness are sometimes concealed. We will seek healing through our chanting, study, and mutual support this month, even as we also learn that the very brokenness we experience can sometimes be a blessing or, as Leonard Cohen put it, “There is a crack in everything; that’s how the light gets in.” We’ll meet in person and online on January 7th for about an hour, and online only on the 14th and 28th. No chanting circle on the 21st due to Rabbi Daniel’s trip to DC with the confirmation students.

All gatherings begin at 11:30. To join us online, just click :

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83570030002?
pwd=TE8xQ2NDTi8xSk83cnRSQXFMY2lUdz09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83570030002?pwd=TE8xQ2NDTi8xSk83cnRSQXFMY2lUdz09)

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

Everyone is welcome to join this diverse, supportive group.

Get Welles

Michael Cornfield
Lynne Fragin
Kenny Ganz
Larry Golden
Paula Kane
Ellen Kline
Phil Knobel
Maggie LoRusso
Rich Mates
Harriet Noble
Charlene Ostro

MLK Events, January 15 and 16

For many years, Temple Hesed has played an active role in the interfaith MLK service co-sponsored by the Scranton Area Ministerium. This year, we’re also playing a key role in the Greater Scranton Area MLK Commission’s annual MLK dinner and symposium — and we encourage you to come to both!

The MLK dinner and symposium will be on January 15, from 1:30 to 4, in the fourth floor of the University of Scranton’s DeNaples Center, in the McIllhenny Ballroom. The featured speaker this year will be Sister Mary C. Boys of Union Theological Seminary in New York, who will be speaking on ***When Good People Remain Silent: Anti-Semitism, Othering, Belonging***. Our own Rabbi Daniel will be one of three local clergy people giving a response after the presentation. There is a \$25 registration fee for the event, whether attending in person or online. To register, go to:

https://scranton.fcsuite.com/erp/donate/list/event?event_date_id=2980

The annual interfaith service will be held this year at 7 pm, Monday, January 16th, at the Salvation Apostolic Temple Church, 223 N Main Ave, Scranton, PA 18505. Rabbis Daniel and Majorie will both be speaking at this joyous celebration, along with other members of the Scranton Area Ministerium and lots of wonderful music. There is no charge, and we encourage everyone to come.

Coming up — Tu B'Shevat Seder and a Dr. Suess Purim Shpiel — volunteer now!

Coming up in February and March are two exciting events for members of all ages. First, on Sunday, February 5, we will be co-hosting a Tu B'Shevat seder with Temple Israel. Details, including the time of the seder, are still being determined. If you'd like to be involved with the seder and help us by volunteering, please contact Rabbi Daniel at rabbidaniel@comcast.net. In March, on Saturday, March 4, we will hold our annual Purim celebration. This year, the highlight will be a Dr. Suess-themed Shpiel, led by the Cat in the Kippah! If you'd like to be part of the shpiel, please email Rabbi Daniel at rabbidaniel@comcast.net.

TEMPLE HESED

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Joan Davis -- **Assistant Secretary**

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Rich Mates—*Editor, Messenger*
(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.

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.