

AZOY

"Is that so?"

5777
JANUARY
2017



The Monthly Newsletter of Temple B'nai Israel
The Reform Jewish Congregation of Bay County
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Shabbat Tzedek : Celebrate Civil Rights and Social Justice

Friday • January 20 • 7:00 pm

This year for the first time Temple B'nai Israel will join many other Reform Movement congregations' observation of Martin Luther King Day by participating in *Shabbat Tzedek: Celebrate Civil Rights and Social Justice*. Shabbat Tzedek honors the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. – and more broadly, honors the civil rights movement. As Jews, we have a duty to work towards a promised world where all experience wholeness, justice and compassion. As Jews working toward a more just society, we know that the vital work of the civil rights movement is not complete, and Shabbat Tzedek represents an opportunity for us to renew our commitment to this work.

Temple B'nai Israel will observe Shabbat Tzedek on Friday, January 20, 2017 when Rabbi Alana Wasserman leads us in a special Evening Service provided by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism. Each member of Temple B'nai Israel is encouraged to attend and to bring one or more guests of other faiths, races and cultures to participate in this civil rights focused service. Unfortunately, we cannot open this service to the general public due to space constraints.

The Shabbat Tzedek service will start at 7:00 pm on Friday, January 20th and will be followed by an Oneg provided by the Sisterhood. (Please note that we will not be having our regular Shabbat potluck this month.)

Our end-of-the-year Chanukah Party was held the morning of December 31st. After a delicious meal of latkes, menorah lights were kindled and then the Religious School children, led by Daniel Sternlicht, performed the "The Little Dreidels," a Chanukah play by Leah Wittenberg. Photos on pages 6 & 7.



Rabbi Alana Wasserman will be here the weekend of January 20, 2017 for a special Shabbat Tzedek; see above notice and her comments on page 2.



ISJL Education Fellow Leah Wittenberg was in Panama City the weekend of December 16, 2016. Read all about her visit on page 3.



Wondering what's going on in our Sunday Shul? Religious School co-Director Georgie Hartzog updates discerning AZOY readers on page 4.

❧ The President's Message ❧

Happy Secular New Year to each of you! It's a good time to look at your "resolutions" made at the Jewish New Year back in October and see how well you're doing. Rather than abandon unmet promises to ourselves, we can make adjustments that can help us achieve the goals we've set. Break large goals down into smaller steps that are actually doable. Give yourself permission to try alternative ways to get to where you want to be.

For instance, I promised myself that I would give up the use of technology (like cell phones and computers) on Shabbat...to observe Shabbat more consciously without the use of digital devices. I succeeded most weeks but fell short too many times during the last three months. So now I'm adjusting that goal to stress the "consciousness" of observing/honoring Shabbat. That means I will focus more on being intentionally observant of the Sabbath which will include the abstention of digital use. I'll let you know how it goes!

Have a very happy, prosperous and healthy year!

L'shalom - Sarah

The Rabbi's Message

Happy secular New Year! I hope everyone had a joyous Chanukah! I'm sorry I was not able to be at the Temple's Chanukah celebration, but I hope you know that I'm always with you in spirit.

My next visit will be on Friday, January 20th. That night, we will have an extra special Shabbat observance in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, which will have taken place that previous Monday. Instead of using our regular prayer book, we will be using the Religious Action Center's Shabbat Tzedek Evening Service. For those of you who don't know what Tzedek is, it is a Hebrew word, meaning "justice." It is the root of the Hebrew word Tzedakah. For those of you who don't know what the Religious Action Center is, it is "the hub of Jewish social justice and legislative activity in Washington, DC. As the DC office of the Union for Reform Judaism, the RAC educates and mobilizes the Reform Jewish community on legislative and social concerns, advocating on more than 70 different issues, including economic justice, civil rights, religious liberty, Israel and more. As a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, the RAC's advocacy work is completely non-partisan and pursues public policies that reflect the Jewish values of social justice that form the core of our mandate." For more information on the Religious Action Center, please visit www.rac.org.



It is important for us to learn about and remember those Jewish individuals who participated in the Civil Rights Movement and marched with Dr. King. It is important for us to learn from their example, and continue to pursue tzedek, justice, especially as we begin a New Year. I look forward to seeing all of you at this special service.

L'shalom, Rabbi Alana Wasserman

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Leah Wittenberg - ISJL Education Fellow



I had a great weekend in Panama City with the Temple B'nai Israel community! We had an intimate Shabbat dinner and services on Friday night, and I had help leading some of the prayers from Amanda Mewhinney. During services, I gave a D'var Torah about the difference between being related by blood to someone and really loving them, and I looked at Jacob and Esau's relationship as a model for this in the week's Torah portion, Vayishlach.

I had the pleasure of staying with Steve Theberge and Lisa Rahn, and on Saturday morning, I had their infamous smoked fish spread. Over lunch at the temple, Sarah Farkas, Barbara Shykoff, and I had a very interesting conversation about our identities, anti-Semitism, and our personal experiences as Jewish people living in the north of the country and now in the south.

We were surprised to find that all three of us agreed that we had been more prone to instances of blatant antisemitism in the north of the

country as opposed to the south. However we had differing opinions on the meaning of antisemitism. Barbara believes antisemitism is more of an institutionalized way of discriminating against Jews, such as the signs on restaurants that used to read: "No Dogs or Jews Allowed," while Sarah saw antisemitic acts as more personal attacks that happen when people degrade Jews in everyday talk. I think that it definitely depends on the person and their views, and to me, it is a combination of both Barbara and Sarah's ideas. Either way, we can't deny that antisemitism is on the rise in the United States and elsewhere, and whether we want to or not, we have the power to speak up about it.

The Bay County Islamic Society was holding a rally for Aleppo outside of the Panama City mall in the afternoon on Saturday. I had found out about this event from Lisa and I was very excited to attend. I met some inspirational community members including Elma Bone Ahmed, who is the head of the group of Muslim women who have been meeting with Temple B'nai Israel's sisterhood for meals, socializing, and volunteering. Hopefully the next time I'm in town (April 7-9, 2017 – mark your calendars!) I will be able to attend an event sponsored by the Bay County Islamic Society again. Building interfaith relationships is such a powerful way to spread peace and I was overjoyed to have this opportunity in Panama City.

On Saturday night we had a lovely Havdalah service at the temple with Lisa and Steve, Heather and Nate Mewhinney, Stephen Sickerman, and Sarah. After, we went out to eat delicious food at Trigo Mediterranean Grill.

I loved having the opportunity to get to know and teach the Sunday Shul students. Lizzie, Jackie, Pearl, Ari, and Amanda performed their two Chanukah songs, "Oh, Dreidel" and "Oh, Chanukah" with Dan Sternlicht accompanying on guitar. They sounded great!

We practiced the play, "The Little Dreidels" and everyone made and decorated their own dreidel costumes. After, we had a nosh of chocolate covered Oreos – a real treat! Then the students participated in a Chanukah relay race, where they had to sort objects that were found in the Jewish temple after it was destroyed by Antiochus and his army into kadosh (holy) objects and ones that belonged chutz (outside) the temple. Then we tested everyone's knowledge of Chanukah by playing some trivia. We finished the day by reading "The Borrowed Hanukkah Latkes" by Linda Glaser.

After Sunday Shul, we had the classic Jewish brunch of bagels with cream cheese and lox, and I was on my way back to Jackson, Mississippi. It was a fun-filled weekend at Temple B'nai Israel!

Sarah Farkas
Stephen Theberge
Michael Starkman
Stephen Sickerman
Pavel Amromin
Robert Goetz
Nate Mewhinney

Leah Wittenberg

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Sunday Shul Update by Georgie Hartzog

First, a little unfinished business. The winners of our last Art Contest was a tie....Ari and Lizzy, as you'll note in the photo below.



December proved to be quite the learning experience. The 1st Lesson was all about Prayer. Students were on the move, experiencing the 5 Types of Prayer that Jews experience. If you don't know what those are.....ask a kid!

Lesson #2 continued in the "prayer" theme. Reading a book titled *The Hundredth Name* (in this story only camels know), students again experienced the power of prayer and the amazing link it has between the major world religions. Guest Lisa Rahn spoke of the relationship that our Sisterhood is developing with the Muslim sisterhood.



The highlight of the month was the visit from our ISJL fellow, Miss Leah. What a delight! She not only schooled us in the Chanukah story, but developed the program for the upcoming Chanukah Party. Thanks to all who attended! Remember, he is surrounded by a lot of girls. Mr. Daniel has done a great job with developing the music for the occasion.



As the 2016 ends, you can be very proud of the progress that our student are making in the area of Hebrew. Mr. Daniel has a unique way of teaching and the kids' responses are positive. (I continue to sit next to Amanda and Pearl for tutoring/cheating).



JANUARY JOYS & REMEMBRANCES

Y A H R Z E I T S - THEIR MEMORIES ARE FOR US A BLESSING

TEVET 4	ZELIG WAJSFELNER – GRANDFATHER OF MIKE STARKMAN	
01/10	JANET SUTTON – MOTHER OF PAM SUTTON	
01/10	MARVIN EUZENT – HUSBAND OF MARGE EUZENT	
01/12	BRENDA KELLY – SISTER OF MARSHA KRASELSKY	
01/23	ROSE MILLER – MOTHER OF NATHAN MILLER	
01/28	LAUREN BIDLEMAN – GRANDDAUGHTER OF JUDITH SCOTT & SARAH FARKAS	

BIRTHDAYS

01/08	CYNTHIA GINGOLD
01/12	PAUL ZIPES
01/13	RABBI RICHARD BAROFF
01/15	NATHAN MILLER
01/15	NORM GULKIS
01/19	BRIAN HUMBOLDT
01/22	SUE GULKIS
01/24	MIKE STARKMAN
01/29	LISA RAHN
01/31	MICHELLE DEAM

ANNIVERSARIES

01/01	ROBERT & JOANNE GOETZ
01/26	NORM & SUE GULKIS

If your Joy or Remembrance is missing or incorrect please e-mail *The AZOY* Editors at theazoy@gmail.com and let Sarah & Stephen know about it ASAP (if not sooner)!

JANUARY 2017 CALENDAR

SUN	01/01		Happy New Year!	
FRI	01/06	7:00 pm	Shabbat Service led by Mike & Mary Starkman	
SUN	01/08	9:30 am	Religious School	
WED	01/11	6:30 pm	Monthly Temple Board of Directors Meeting	
WED	01/18	6:30 pm	Sisterhood Meeting	
FRI	01/20	7:00 pm	Special Shabbat Tzedek Service with Rabbi Wasserman honoring civil rights <i>Bring friend(s) from different faiths to service Special Oneg to follow</i>	
SAT	01/21	9:30 am 12:00 pm 5:00 pm	Interfaith Jewish-Muslim Women's Meeting at The Egg & I on Thomas Dr, PCB Lunch & Learn with Rabbi Wasserman - <i>bring a bag lunch, we'll provide beverages</i> Havdalah at Oaks by the Bay in St Andrew - <i>followed by dinner at local eatery</i>	
SUN	01/22	9:30 am 11:30 am	Religious School with Rabbi Wasserman Lite Brunch with the Rabbi	
SUN	01/29	9:30 am	Religious School	

From webmaster Robert Goetz: Have you got a business that could use more customers? Or perhaps you know a business that would enjoy more clientele. Then you do not want to miss out on Temple B'nai Israel's new online business directory launching this January! Talk about broadening your digital footprint! TBI's website, www.bnaiisraelpc.org, received over 57,000 hits during the six month period from May through October. An online business listing is currently free for members for 2017. Non-members may list for only \$144 for 12 months. Send your business name, address, contact information, and a brief description of 25 words or less to TBIpcWebmaster@gmail.com.



