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MAY, 2009      8th of Iyyar, 5769

# Temple *Or Olam*



## Temple Or Olam Website

*Same place, different face*

If you visit the Temple Or Olam website, [www.or-olam.org](http://www.or-olam.org), you will see some differences. It's been redesigned, with the intention of being easier to navigate, and to take advantage of new capabilities of the internet.

To fully utilize the website, there are two things you should do.

- **Register as a member.** This option is available only to Temple Or Olam members. When you register, and then log on, you will be able to see member-only areas, like Flickr photo galleries and board meeting minutes. Send an email to [webmaster@or-olam.org](mailto:webmaster@or-olam.org). Include your preferred userid and password (8-10 characters each), and whether or not you consent to having your picture, and your children's pictures, in the public area of the website. Also, if you are a member of [flickr.com](http://flickr.com), you will be able to order prints from our members-only photo galleries, so include your Flickr userid in this email if you have one.
- **Subscribe to updates.** The schmoozeletters will no longer be sent out on email lists. If you'd like to receive notification of when they're posted on the website, as well as when other information is posted, then subscribe to updates by going to [www.or-olam.org](http://www.or-olam.org). Look on the right side of the screen, under "subscribe" and choose how you'd like to receive them.

Some things you'll be able to do on the website: watch Or Olam videos, listen to CD tracks, add calendar items to your Google calendar, be automatically updated on news and more.

Website questions? email: [webmaster@or-olam.org](mailto:webmaster@or-olam.org)

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

- *Friday, May 8, 7PM: Family Shabbat service*
- *Sunday, May 3, 9:30AM: Religious School*
- *Sunday, May 3, 2PM: Adult Torah Study*
- *Sunday, May 10: No Religious School*
- *Sunday, May 10th, 2PM: Adult Torah Study*
- *Sunday, May 17, 9:30AM: Religious school (last day, includes party)*
- *Sunday, May 17, 2PM: Adult Torah Study*
- *Sunday, May 24, 2PM: Adult Torah Study*

*I ask not for a lighter burden, but for broader shoulders (unknown)*

## MiLev HaPardes *From the heart of the orchard by Dr. Barbara Thiede, student rabbi*

*Lev* is the Hebrew word for heart, the location, according to biblical understanding, of knowledge, insight, intelligence, and understanding. The word *pardes*, orchard (sometimes paradise!) is often used as an acronym for Jewish text study.

Here's how *pardes* works: We make initial observations by reading the plain meaning of the text – that's *peshat*. Then, applying *remez* (hints), we look for clues and allegories – particularly in the language of the text. To *drash* is to inquire and seek for deeper meanings, often in comparative context. And finally, we hope for *sod*, the moment of revelation, the precious experience of insight that is, perhaps, divinely inspired. The first four letters of each of these words combine to spell the Hebrew word *pardes*. Orchard. Paradise. *Gan Eden*, where the limbs of the Tree of Knowledge reach out to all creation, mortal and divine.

*B'lev Pardes: In the heart of the orchard.* In this little corner of our new *Shmoozeletter* we will visit with Jewish tradition, Jewish knowledge, Jewish life.

A beginning: During the very first blessing of the *Amidah*, we invoke our ancestors: Avraham, Yitzhak, Ya'akov, Sara, Rivka, Rachel and Leah. By naming our ancestors, we evoke our history, and God's covenant with our ancestors and, by extension, us. That's our *p'shat*, a simple, plain sense of the *Avot v'Imahot* (Fathers and Mothers) blessing.

*Remes*: Clues and hints. We could say "the God of Avraham, Yitzhak, Ya'akov, Sara, Rivka, Rachel and Leah." But in this blessing, we don't simply list names. Instead, we repeat the "God of" phrase for each of our patriarchs and matriarchs. God of

Avraham, God of Yitzhak, ... Why? Perhaps the text is hinting -- reminding us that the entire service has been building to this moment – the moment when we step forward (literally) as individuals. The God of Avraham is also the God of Steve and the God of Ruth and the God of Gabriel.

*Drash*: Seeking, inquiring, we compare the phrase "great, mighty, and revered" God to other locations where it is our ancestors who are called "great, mighty, and revered" (Deuteronomy 10:15) or even the covenant God made with them (Nehemiah 9:32). These words begin with the earthy "great" (*gadol*) and end with a word of transcendental super-sense: *norah* means "awe-inspiring." We can aspire to begin with our ancestors, with our covenant, and with our God in a space of greatness and goodness; we can reach for a sense of awe.

*Sod*: Revelation, insight, mystery. By naming our ancestors, we are integrating the entire Jewish line into the present moment. We are networking across time and space. Consider what happens when we open to the idea of naming others who have created our heritage and history, people living in us and through us and alongside us because they share our spiritual identity. Who else walks in? What does that tell you about yourself, how you know God and how God has been transmitted to you?

The *Avot and Imahot* blessing. Like all of our blessings, it bears fruit for thought.

Step into the heart of the garden of Jewish history, liturgy, tradition, culture, and community. The orchard is rich and beautiful, well worth the trip.



### Youth Group

Temple Or Olam now has a youth group for kids 10 and up. We are meeting about once a month for fun activities. This is a co-operative group. Each family will be planning one activity. The first gathering was in the Mace basement, and included shooting pool, playing foosball and air hockey, and eating.

The next one will be on Saturday, May 30th. We will be playing games and roasting marshmallows at the Partridge house. Look for an email soon with details.

Interest in knowing more? Want to help?

Email [youth@or-olam.org](mailto:youth@or-olam.org)

# Message from the President

*Robbin Smith*

## What's on store for Shabbat

Temple Or Olam's family service, on May 8th, will be led mainly by the religious school students. Their progress learning the prayers and psalms has been impressive. Please attend. If you're a parent of a religious school student, it's an important time for him or her to practice prayers, experience leadership, and be reminded of what they're working towards in religious school. If you're not the parent of a religious school student, we hope you will stome come and enjoy the energy and fun of our kids.

Our service on May 22nd will be led in great part by the Bagrut (post-Bar and Bat Mitzvah) students and our next Bar Mitzvah. Reb Barbara will give a a sermon on the Haftora, which includes beautiful verses from Hosea.



## Birthdays

- Barbara Thiede: May 1
- Tom Jensen: May 18
- JingJing Jacobson: May 19
- Sylvia Gardiner Holzapfel May 19

## Yahrzeits

- Suzie Shapiro, sister of Barbara Thiede  
7 Iyyar May 1, 2009

I'd like to introduce myself and let you know what our congregation has accomplished and what we hope to accomplish.

I learned Hebrew as a child in Hebrew school and then promptly forgot all of it. It all came back to me when I was helping my two daughters (Jillian, age 19 and Rebecca, age 14) prepare to become B'not Mitzvah. I have an interfaith marriage with a very supportive husband, Steve. I assisted teaching Hebrew school for three years and then taught second grade religious school at other congregations for 8 years, including two with Reb Barbara. When my family joined Temple Or Olam, I promised Reb Barbara that I would get involved in some way again after a one year break for much needed rest. I



thought about starting youth group activities for the congregation but Jody Mace, who is always one step ahead of me, took action first (please see youth group news.) Approximately seven months into my sabbatical came a request from the Board to serve as interim president. I guess I'll just have to finish my sabbatical some other time. Many thanks to Ralf Thiede for his recent leadership and his guidance and advice during our transition. I am honored to serve in this role and am looking forward to the journey that we will take together.

We have a congregation and a Board that consists of thoughtful, creative, hardworking, dedicated people. Some things that we have accomplished so far in addition to thought-provoking services and stimulating religious school: a wonderful community Passover seder, a congregational survey to request your input, a team-building event for the Board facilitated by Rabbi Steve Silvern (our advisor from ALEPH) and a user group meeting to work on updating the Temple Or Olam website.

We'd like to continue working on keeping lines of communication open, getting folks to RSVP to invitations, sharing the workload through additional volunteer involvement, as well as thoughtfully increasing membership and continuing wonderful congregational events. Have a great summer!

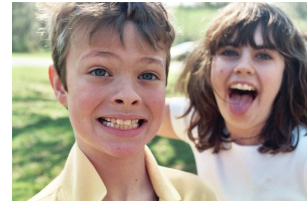
## Religious School

The religious school year is drawing to a close. The students' progress in Hebrew has been phenomenal. They've also learned the stories in the book of Genesis, and have celebrated by playing Genesis games and dressing up as their favorite Genesis character.

There will be no school on May 10th, because of Mother's Day, and the 17th will be our last day. After we have one last Hebrew session, we will have an end of year party for the kids. Please send in a snack or drink to share with the class.

We'd like to extend our sincere gratitude to the Jacobson family for sharing their house with us this semester. It was a warm, welcoming, comfortable home for us. Thank you, Richard, for helping out at the school too. Thanks to Jin-Mei for putting up with us, and to Philip, JingJing and LingLing for cleaning up their stuff we could meet.

Thanks for a great year!



*A visit from Noah*

## Contact Information

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*Tashlich on Mallard Creek Greenway*