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August 6, 2009

16 Av, 5769

Temple *Or Olam*



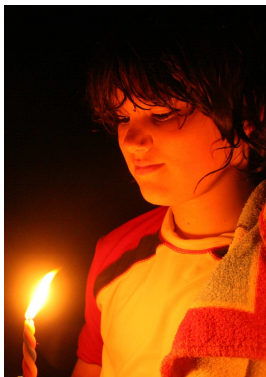
Youth Group Update

The youth group’s July activity was a night-time swim party under the stars at the Mace house. I’d like to thank Reb Barbara and son Erik for leading the wonderful Havdallah service. It was just the right balance of spiritual and casual. We wish everyone could have been there to see the candlelight reflected on the kids’ faces in the dark, and to hear the crickets accompany the music of the service. I’d also like to thank Charlie for sharing all his pool toys (except for his personal snorkel!) and for being a gracious host.

The next youth group event is also a night time event. We’ll be meeting outside the Jacobson’s house on August 15th to stargaze, courtesy of Seth Holtzman’s telescopes and expertise. Youth group members will be hearing from Seth, and should especially look out for message about the weather. If it’s too cloudy, we have a “cloud-date” of August 20th.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- August 2, 2PM: Torah Study
- August 9, 2PM: Torah Study
- August 14, 7PM: Beatles Service
- August 15, 8:30PM: Youth group star-gazing event
- August 16, 10:30: Kippah making workshop
- August 16, 2PM: Torah Study
- August 23, 2PM: Torah Study
- August 28, 7PM: Shabbat Service
- August 30, 2PM: Torah Study



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

A wealthy guest entered an inn in some forgotten town in Poland. He saw a beggar in the foyer, and treated him with open contempt.

“Get out of my way, you!” he said, and pushed him roughly.

Later, the man learned that the beggar was really Reb Zusia and he returned to the inn to express his remorse.

“Forgive me, Rebbe,” he cried. “You must forgive me, for I didn’t know?”

“Why do you ask Zusia to forgive you?” Reb Zusia asked, shaking his head and smiling gently. “You haven’t done anything bad to him! It wasn’t Reb Zusia that you insulted, but a beggar. Go and ask the beggars everywhere to forgive you!”

In just a few days, August 20th on the Gregorian calendar, we open the month of Elul, the final month in the Jewish liturgical year. Elul is a month of reflection, of introspection.

The shofar is sounded each day of Elul. Why? Tradition says that Moses went back up the mountain on Rosh Chodesh Elul to receive the second tablets, the tablets that would be – this time – co-created by divine and human energies. The shofar was sounded daily in order to remind the Israelites to pay close attention to the state of their souls.

According to Maimonides the sound of the shofar is the call to *teshuvah*, to the self-examination that culminates in Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Our legends and liturgical practice, our stories and our theology

– they give us many opportunities to reflect and consider, to take stock of who we are and who we would like to become.

Why do many Jews say the *Shema Hamitah* at night (the bedtime *Shema*)? Because the texts surrounding the bedtime *Shema* ask us both to forgive those who have hurt us and to reflect on who we may have hurt that day.

Who did we push away?



Who did we treat with impatience or contempt?

We could change so much with a few moments of daily reflection.

We could become more compassionate and understanding, less demanding

and insistent if we asked ourselves each night where we missed the mark during the day.

The shofar sounds inside our souls, calling us to *teshuvah*, return and atonement. Not just during Elul. Not only on Yom Kippur.

Who was that beggar at the door?

Big Event!

September 13th will be a big day for Temple Or Olam.

10:00AM: Religious school families are meeting at Steve and Robbin Smith’s house for their opening day.

10:45AM: The rest of the congregation is joining them at the Smith house, as Reb Barbara teaches us some songs and melodies for the High Holy Day services. Please bring chairs for your family.

11:30AM: We depart for [Shalom Lake Norman](#), which takes place at [Ramsey Creek Park](#) from Noon to 4PM. There will be all kinds of Jewish cultural activities, and is a good chance for us to be with the larger Jewish Community.

High Holy Days

September 18, 7PM: Erev Rosh Hashanah service

September 19, 9:30AM: Rosh Hashanah service, followed by Tashlich

September 27, 7PM: Kol Nidre

September 28, 9:30AM: Yom Kippur service

September 28, 6:30PM: Neila, Havdalah, then break fast

Message from the Board

What's in store for Shabbat

- **August 14th:** Family Service/Beatles Service: Come to services wearing your favorite 60's garb. And I don't mean just the Holtzman/Boguslaws! We are having a reprieal of the Beatles service. This is very much a family service.
- **August 28th:** Regular service, with Torah service

Birthdays

- Fred Commike, August 3
- Erik Thiede, August 10
- Jacqueline Jewel, August 20
- LingLing Jacobson, August 28
- Alison Cutler, August 31
- Julie Roberts, September 4

Yahrzeits

Elaine Cutler, mother of Brian Cutler
21 Av, August 11

Eileen Zelig, sister of Tom Jensen
6 Elul, August 26

Irving Stemberk, father of Robbin Smith
6 Elul, August 26

Mi Sheberach

The congregation extends its prayers for continued, and complete, recovery for JingJing Jacobson.

We hope that everyone is enjoying their summer and that the pace is a little more relaxed for you. There is one particular group in our community that is not relaxing this summer. Our Religious School Committee has been hard at work this summer preparing the curriculum and lesson plans for a fun-filled and challenging school year. Many thanks to Jody Mace, Richard Jacobson, Jill Partridge, Teresa and Judah Malin; Ginger Jensen (Ritual Committee); Lisa Boguslaw (Social Committee) and Reb Barbara who have been working together closely to coordinate the classes and events planned for the year.

The first day of school will be 9/13. This year we will be gathering at the Smith residence in Huntersville allowing students to reconnect by playing games and then a sing along to learn new melodies for Rosh Hashanah services. (All congregants invited, with more details to follow). We chose Huntersville so that after class we can all attend the Shalom Lake Norman festival at Ramsey Creek Park which is just a few miles away.

We are still looking for volunteers to help at the school. You don't need to have a student in the school and you don't need to know Hebrew and you don't need to prepare lesson plans. What could be easier? If you can volunteer for even one class, it would very helpful and much appreciated by our teachers and also the students who can show off their skills. Volunteering three times during the year would be great. You are welcome to observe classes at any time and see the impressive learning that takes place. Why not pitch in while you are there?

Another group that has been hard at work this summer is the Membership Committee. Thank yous go to Jill Partridge and Kim Jordan who generated a lot of fresh ideas for attracting new members. We will be taking action on several of the suggestions right away such as re-implementing guest sign-in sheets and name tags and trying others as the year progresses. The committee will also be contacting new members for feedback to find out more about their needs, putting up fliers at Hillel House and sponsoring a Purim party for nursing home residents and their families. These are just a few of the ideas that were proposed. This will be an ongoing project so please call or email additional ideas to Jill.

Got problems? We've got answers!

This year, some of the religious school students will begin to study Jewish ethics. They will be using Maimonides' Mishneh Torah and other Jewish sources, and will learn how rabbis, through the ages, have made decisions. We'd like your help. What we need from you are problems. You supply the problems, and the students, looking to Jewish law, will supply the solutions.

The first area that the students will study is gifts. Do you have a dispute in this area that you need wise resolution on? Or, perhaps, can you imagine such a dispute? "Yes, I gave my friend my crockpot but I had such a headache! I just wanted her to leave me alone. I didn't know what I was saying." Or "My uncle has three children, but just before he died, he said, 'my son Moishe gets it all!' Does that count?" The problem doesn't actually have to be real!

Please email your questions to religious-school@or-olam.org. The questions will be read out loud in class and discussed. Your identity will not be revealed. The answer may show up in a future Schmoozeletter.

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