

# Shmoozeeletter

Temple  
Or Olam



**SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:**

- Shabbat Service: July 24
- Torah Restorer Hora Galore-a: July 31, 2010. Help us by selling tickets!
- Judah Malin elected as vice president.
- We need a media representative: Please volunteer.

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**TORAH RESTORER HORA GALORE - A: SAVE THE DATE!**

Join **Temple Or Olam** for a summer dance fundraiser for the congregation's Sefer Torah – the handwritten scroll containing the Five Books of Moses in handwritten script.

On the docket for the evening? Dancing the traditional Jewish hora, learning a sweet bit of swing and rumba, dancing to tunes from the forties on, and an up-close-and-personal look at Temple Or Olam's own Sefer Torah. Dr. Barbara Thiede will be demonstrating features of the congregation's century -old Torah scroll – which includes the work of master scribes from German, Russia, Moravia, and Macedonia.

Temple Or Olam's Torah was pieced together after WWII from remnants from

several European scrolls dating back to the late 19<sup>th</sup>



Sofer Neil Yerman holding the rededicated Torah during his visit on May 19, 2006.

and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. New York master sofer Neil Yerman has suggested that the Torah may have been created from sections of scrolls that survived the Holocaust.

Join us for an evening of

music and dance and learn how scribes have preserved bible texts that date back over two centuries! Our program will also include light snacks.

- 7:00-8:30:** Salsa and Swing
- 8:30-9:00:** Learning about Temple Or Olam's Sefer Torah
- 9:00:** Refreshments, Israeli dances, and yet more dancing to great tunes from the forties on!

**Date:** July 31, 2010  
**Location:** McGill Baptist Church, 5300 Poplar Tent, Concord, NC  
 Tickets available at the door and in advance; please call 704.720.7577 for more information:  
 \$25 family · \$10 individual  
 \$5 student · \$6 senior  
 \$12 senior couple

**DO NOT FORGET THE THINGS YOU SAW WITH YOUR OWN EYES....**

In D'varim, the last book of the Torah, Moses recalls the scene at Sinai. He reminds the people – do not forget your experience of the wondrous, of the miraculous, the gift of experiencing the Divine.

Indeed, millennia later, we still find it a difficult task

to hold on to our experiences of undiminished joy, our memories of transcendent moments. How can we balance our world of obligations and tasks with our need to know the peace prayer can grant us, the joy community can offer, the knowledge that our lives matter beyond their

span in time? In this **Shabbat service** we will ask these questions and more. Perhaps a fresh encounter with the ancient miracles of Torah can help us recall the memory of so many small miracles we have seen with our own eyes.

**July 24, 10:30**

## MILEV HAPARDES

Hasidism, a mystical and magical Jewish movement born in the early eighteenth century, owes much of its legacy to Rabbi Yisrael ben Eliezer, the Baal Shem Tov (also known as the Besht).

So many stories surround the Besht – stories of a man’s capacity to see goodness in everything. For the Baal Shem tov, God’s blessing permeated the universe. Everything

contained a spark of the Divine.

Some stories tell of the Besht’s ability to ascend to heaven and argue for his people. Others describe magical journeys to poverty stricken innkeepers and wealthy business owners who didn’t know they needed his help until he arrived and changed their lives. Those who came on their own account to see him were given compassion

and understanding.

The words recorded by his students transcend his time and ours. The Besht had a way of teaching his people how to pray, how to aspire to simple kindness and goodness, how to be mensches.

In an age where Talmud-educated Jews were admired and revered, the Besht insisted that neither education nor religious training was required to be



Reb Barbara  
Senior Rabbinic Student

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## FROM THE HEART OF THE ORCHARD

close to God. One of his most famous stories tells a tale about a poor boy who could not even read the words in his siddur. In synagogue, during prayer, all the child could do was to recite the letters of the aleph bet.

“God knows how to put his letters together into the right order, the right words,” the Besht would say. “God

understands the child’s prayers.”

The Besht spoke a great deal about *devekut*, the practice of cleaving to God. You can’t keep God on the periphery, he said. You have to strive to understand that at every moment, the Divine Presence is with you.

Most of us do, in fact, keep God on the periphery, calling mostly on Divine

compassion and understanding when we are stressed or grieving. How many of us wake to each day with a prayer of gratitude? How many of us bless the earth and those we love even once a week with heartfelt thanks for our continued existence?

But cleave to God with your whole heart, and you spread Torah, the Besht claimed. Those around you

will see in your love and gratitude the love and gratitude they have forgotten they needed themselves or wanted to show others. *Devekut* will lead you to open your heart to your fellow human beings, to compassion for them, to understanding, to forgiveness. If you cleave to God

you will cleave to goodness itself.

What a magical outcome that would be – for us, for our families, and for our community.

*Reb Barbara*



The Baal Shem Tov  
1698-1760

LETTER FROM THE BOARD – JULY 2010



Thank you to the members who attended the **Annual Meeting** on June 13 and to the Board Members who provided snacks. Judah Malin will be serving as Vice President.

We are fortunate to have him on the Board, and we look forward to his contributions in the coming months.

All committees reported on their accomplishments from the past year, which were numerous. We heard from the **Ritual Committee** (Ginger Jensen) about the new method for volunteering/assigning Oneg Shabbat responsibilities, the **Social Committee** (Laiko Quintero) about the success of our holiday and festival events and Tot Shabbat, and the **Membership Committee** (Jill Par-

tridge) about our growth over the past year. We also heard about action plans to continue that growth, as well as what’s in store for the upcoming Religious School year. The **Tikkun Olam Committee** (Seth Holtzman for Lisa Boguslaw) is also developing for giving back to our communities this year. The **budget** was reviewed by our Treasurer, Richard Jacobson, and approved by the membership.

Our Torah will need repairs in the next year or two. Rather than



ANNUAL MEETING

putting in the budget as an expense item, the Board has decided to raise funds for the work needed. All members should have received a package of information containing the budget, a copy of Reb Barbara’s comments from the Annual Meeting and tickets to sell for the **Torah repair fundraiser**. We can all help raise money by selling our tickets and making this

event a success!

Several roles were slimmed down in order to make them more manageable: Jill Partridge volunteered to track RSVPs through e-Vites so that we can accurately plan our events, and Angela Hodges volunteered to write a monthly article for the *Charlotte Jewish News*. Many thanks to Jill and Angela.

**Still needed: Someone to stay in touch with local media.** This is an easy task as the information will be provided to our press contact person – it’s simply a matter of submitting the information to a list of established contacts. If you can help with this important role, please contact anyone on the Board.

Our goals are similar to last

“Our Torah will need repairs in the next year or two.”

CONDOLENCES

year: continued, thoughtful growth in membership, continued, improved communication, and also a renewed emphasis on Tikkun Olam both in the congregation and in the Religious School.

Reb Barbara addressed the group and gave her thoughts on the future of our congregation. She reaffirmed her dedication to

Temple Or Olam.

After the meeting we gathered at a local restaurant for dinner and more schmoozing.

The Board also wishes to extend its condolences to Ralf Thiede, Reb Barbara and son Erik on the passing of Ralf’s mother, Evelyn Thiede. May her memory be for a blessing.

*Robbin Smith*  
President



## BIRTHDAYS



[www.or-olam.org](http://www.or-olam.org)

07-01 Ginger Jensen  
07-03 Gabriel Y. Quintero  
07-04 Laiko Quintero  
07-08 Carla Eastis  
07-16 Matthew Leder  
07-19 Ava R. Holtzman  
07-19 Stewart Roberts  
07-26 Robert Klein  
07-30 Arthur Kingberg

## C O N T A C T I N F O R M A T I O N

Dr. Barbara Thiede: [rabbi@or-olam.org](mailto:rabbi@or-olam.org)

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## T H E N E W B O A R D

President: Robbin Smith  
Vice President: Judah Malin  
Director of Religious Service: Dr. Barbara Thiede  
Treasurer: Richard Jacobson  
Membership Director: Jill Partridge