



Dancing and Dessert fundraiser on February 2

Service: February 15, 7:00 p.m.

*The cherubim shall spread wings above,  
shielding the cover with their wings,  
and their faces toward each other (Shemot: 25:20).*

One could also translate: “Each toward his brother.” At our next Kabbalat Shabbat service, we will chant the verses describing the creation of the famous cherubim. Rabbi Barbara will also tell us a chassidic story that tells us why the cherubim and the ark they guarded were placed on Temple Mount to begin with. In the telling, we will learn about the kind of love that makes places holy.

## Purim

Our Purim celebration is coming soon! Who knows what awaits? A shpiel (of any kind)? Jokes? Song and dance. Join us on **February 24** for one more Mother of All Purim Parties. Only those in fancy dress allowed....

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## Did you know?

Temple Or Olam has a web presence. Our Facebook page features videos and pictures; we also have a YouTube channel and a flickr account. In addition, Rabbi Barbara blogs on Jewish life on [adrenalinedrash](http://adrenalinedrash.com). Explore, participate, have fun!

## Purim is like...



**H**ave you ever noticed the way our festivals overlap, echo, repeat themes? Have you noticed how they direct us to explore the state of our souls, our relationships, the meaning of our lives?

Let's see. Purim is like...

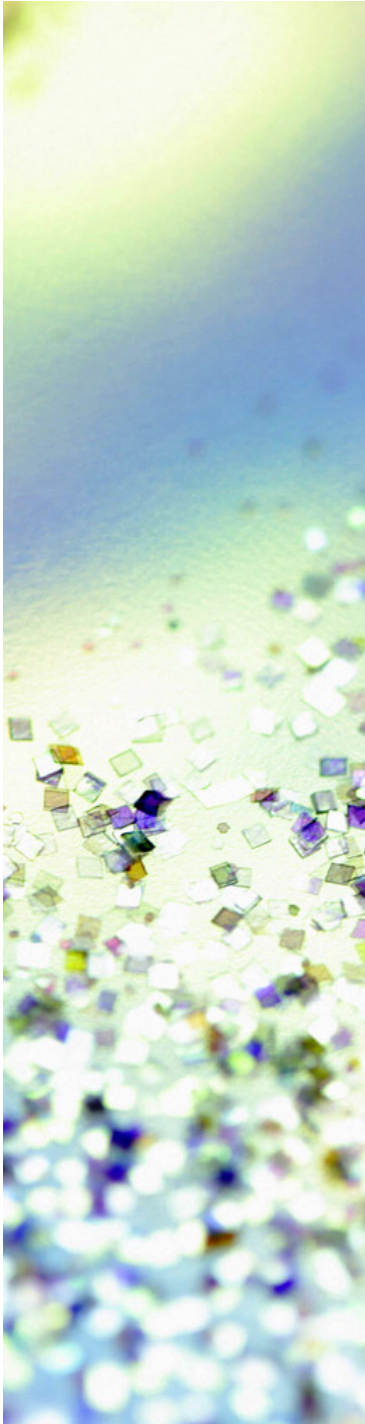
**Pesach:** During both festivals, we celebrate our freedom from bondage and terror. We remember the main narrative of Passover – our release from slavery. But Pesach, like Purim, also tells a story of our near extermination.

Pharaoh attempted to destroy the Israelites through the wholesale murder of all male children. Haman planned the genocide of all the Jews in the kingdom. Both festivals remind us that human beings can be dangerous, that power corrupted is lethal, that we have to know how to resist and when to fight back.

**Shavuot:** At Sinai, the Holy One of Blessing offered us the gift of Torah: "Moses led the people out of the camp toward God and they stood at the bottom of the mountain." (Ex. 19:17). The word used in this passage, *b'tachtit*, can also be understood to refer to the depths of the earth. A midrash suggests that the people were standing not at the foot of the mountain, but *underneath it*. "The Holy One held the mountain over them like a bucket and warned them: If you accept the Torah – good. And if not – here you will be buried" (Shabbat 88a). But the rabbis add that the people eventually had an opportunity to exercise complete free will. They point out that in the reign of Ahasuerus, the Jews faced the first truly genocidal attempt of their

# Millev Harperdes

From the  
Heart of the  
Orchard



history and triumphed. Without any evidence that God was responsible for their survival, they decided to adhere to Torah. “They [the Jews] fulfilled and accepted” (Esther 9:27), which means, so sages say, that the Jews chose to commit themselves to the Law while in exile and after a near-holocaust.

Shavuot and Purim demonstrate that revelation and responsibility are linked. When we consider the revelation we received, when we consider what it costs to observe it, when we ask how we relate to Torah and the law, we begin to ask fundamental questions about the meaning of our lives on this earth.

**Yom Kippur:** Rabbi Soloveitchik says: “Perhaps the feature common to both Purim and Yom Kippur is that aspect of Purim which is a call for Divine compassion and intercession, a mood of petition arising out of great distress.” On Yom Kippur too, he points out, we acknowledge our deepest spiritual longings and fears. Purim tells us about the unknown and the irrational that can set any relationship on its head. Yom Kippur, too, reveals, in our prayers and petitions, our confusion, our uncertainty, and our insecurities.

Our festivals are not unrelated holidays; they are an opportunity to explore the trajectories of human existence. Each year, we can come to them anew. We can explore their stories and their rituals. We can discover different meanings and fresh opportunities for growth of all kinds.

May we take the many opportunities they offer us.

*Rabbi Barbara*

# Jews in the News

## Dancing & Dessert

We did it, and it was a triumph – for the first of many annuals, we hope! About 80 fun folks gathered around decorated tables under balloon bouquets on Saturday night to celebrate the end of our Torah journey that started in August. The fundraising committee included Cheryl and Earl Greenwald, Arlene Filkoff, Michelle Filkoff, Heidi Yalowitz-Lasser, Mark Prince, Barbara Goldstein, Barbara Hellman, and Charlotte Miller. The committee brought together delicious desserts, valuable raffle items, and almost too many silent auction selections to fit on the tables, keeping everyone happy for three solid hours.

*Dancing & Dessert* was a success in so many ways. It was truly an all-comers event with donors, sponsors, neighbors, friends, and congregants bumping on the dance floor and keeping a close eye on those bid sheets. (What was it about that Dancing Rabbi that was so enticing??) Tickets to venues and performances were a big hit, as well as gift certificates, especially for food and massages. Heidi Lasser, a committee member, elegant in chocolate brown velvet and red heels, drew lots of raffle buyers for the chance to

have the jeweled pendant around her neck. Goopy desserts were balanced by three popular fruit trays, necessitating return trips to the food tables. Coffee and drinks kept us awake and ready to spend the whole night on the dance floor.

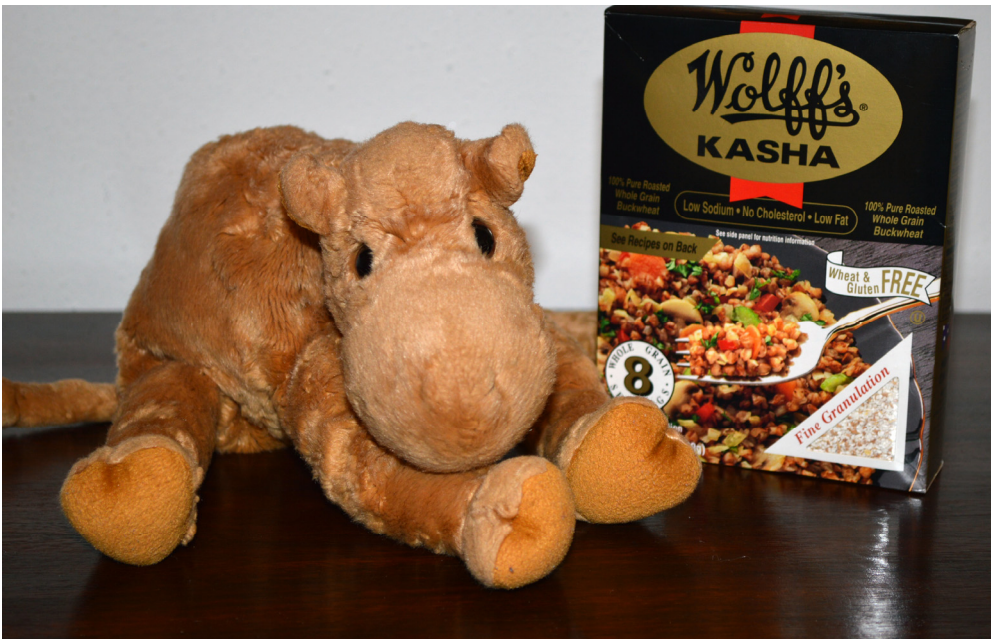
Even after three hours of activity, more helpers than were expected stayed to take down, clean up, and pack away. Many, many thanks to those who volunteered way beyond our initial call to you. Our heroes include Michael Berkowitz; the Jacobson family, who were there early and stayed to the end; the Jensens, manning the drinks and the dance floor; Robbin and Steve Smith, taking care of the money; Shannon and Jonas Everhart, who were enjoying a date night with us; our high school girls, who taught us some dance moves we are still feeling; Bob and Beth Miller, who moved those boxes of china one more time; and of course, the fundraising committee.

Our deepest appreciation to everyone who had even the smallest part in pulling off D&D so well. We made some money for the Torah fund and laid a solid foundation for an even better event next year. Got some suggestions for future planning? Email Charlotte Miller, our administrator, at:

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



**At left:** Mark Prince, Cheryl Greenwald, Arlene Filkoff, Heidi Yalowitz-Lasser, Judah Malin, Charlotte Miller, and Earl Greenwald at the Dancing and Dessert event, February 2, 2013.



gezunt

geh

share and enjoy

Gimmel the Camel keeps kasha....

## The Rabbi and the Pope

One of the Pope's advisors told the pontiff that despite years of good relations, all the Jews should be kicked out of Rome. The Chief Rabbi heard the news and told the Pope they would only leave if the Pope agreed to a debate and could provide a sound theological argument for making the Jews leave. The Pope did agree, but insisted on one condition: Neither man could say a single word during the debate.

The day came, and the Chief Rabbi sat before the Pope. Finally, the Pope raised three fingers. The Chief Rabbi knowingly looked at him, looked toward heaven and raised one finger.

Then the Pope took his index finger and made a circle motion toward the sky. The Chief Rabbi slowly tapped his finger on the ground.

Then the Pope took out the sacred elements and served communion to himself. The Chief Rabbi took an apple from his robe and began to eat.

The Pope threw up his hands and said, "This man is too good for me, the Jews can stay!"

After the Chief Rabbi left, the cardinals

gathered around the Pope and asked what had just happened. The Pope said: "I raised three fingers to signify that God is in three persons – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But then he raised one, reminding me that God is always one, no matter how we see the holy. Then, with the circle of my finger I said, 'God is everywhere and omniscient.' But the Chief Rabbi tapped on the ground to remind me that God is always with us. Well, then, I celebrated the Mass to show him the power of my office, but he took out an apple to remind me that we all have sinned."

The Chief Rabbi got back to his people, and they asked: "What happened, what happened?" He explained that the Pope raised three fingers to show that the Jews had three days to get out of Rome. "But I raised my forefinger to show that not one Jew would leave the city. Then he motioned that the Jews must leave every part of Rome, but I pointed to the earth to show that we would stay right here." Then his congregation asked, "Well, then what happened?" The Chief Rabbi said: "Well, I'm not sure. He took out his lunch, so I took out mine."

Ruth's

Rotkohl

Recipe

(red cabbage)



- ✧ ½ cup of olive oil
- ✧ half a large onion
- ✧ one heaping tbsp. ketchup (if not more)
- ✧ 2 or 3 bay leaves
- ✧ 1 large apple sliced thinly
- ✧ 5 - 6 chestnuts cooked and grated (deep cross-cut, microwave five minutes on low, cook in water for at least 15-20 minutes until they can be shelled; then cook again and then grate them – or use chestnut flower)
- ✧ ½ cup Zinfandel (white wine)
- ✧ ½ cup burgundy wine (no Manischewitz!)
- ✧ 1 tbsp. sugar
- ✧ 1 tbsp. allspice
- ✧ soy sauce to taste
- ✧ salt to taste
- ✧ 1 tsp. red vinegar

**Directions:** Cut the cabbage fine, heat oil and sauté the onions (don't brown). Toss cabbage with meat fork until well-blended. Add all other ingredients, cover, and cook slowly. Check every ten minutes. Keep on tossing for 45 minutes.

## Something to Share

We are looking for your contributions. Do you have any recipes or jokes that you know other congregants would love?

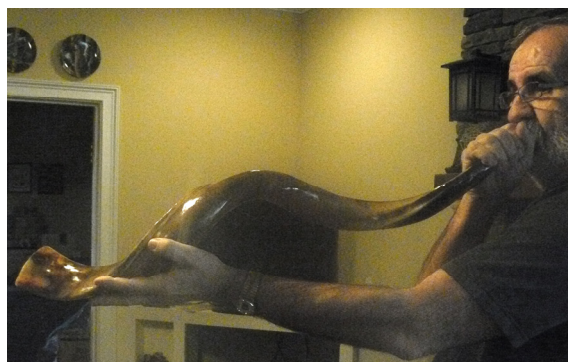
How about children's stories, family news, or pictures to share?

The shmoozeletter is a community product. You can participate!

Please send your contributions to:  
[editor@or-olam.org](mailto:editor@or-olam.org).

P.S.: We reserve the right to edit for spelling, clarity, etc. ☺

## Shofar for Sale!



No, not the congregation's, but it comes close! We have received word that Beverly and Jeff Amarello in the UNC Charlotte neighborhood are moving and would like to sell their shofar. They thought that it might find a loving home with a member of Or Olam. Beverly's number is 980-622-4150. The asking price is \$150.

# Know your ALEPH-BET

## The Aleph

Interestingly, it's not the first letter of Torah. Bet is. The aleph is a letter with a humble personality. The word ויקרא *vayikra*, which opens Leviticus, ends with an aleph, one that Moses modestly did not want to write: 'And He called' it means; God called Moshe; but humbly, Moses was going to drop the final aleph, turning the word into *vayikar*. That way, the wording would make it sound more like God chanced upon Moses, rather than having made a personal call. Moses did not feel he deserved that much honor.

So then Moses compromised on a baby aleph. You can see it in our own Torah scroll: ויקר<sup>א</sup>

Neither Moses nor that equally unassuming little letter escaped greatness: Aleph is the first letter of the ten commandments.

And yet, when you dig into Aleph's family tree, it begins with a bovine bust. 🐂 It's an ox head, originally, which morphs both into the aleph and into the letter א (just rotate it).



Aleph has no sound of its own. For that, it needs some vowel marking ('diacritic') underneath, and that's the *truth*: אֱמֶת ('emet'). Why can't it just be silent? It has the numeric value of 1, and it is the first letter of God's name, I am who I am, אהיה אשר אהיה, in Exodus. But we cannot hear silence. Silence is sensory deprivation. Prime is beyond our perception, so we give it a sound of our own to hear it.

May we all find the diacritic within ourselves to give sound to the first of everything.



*Know Your Aleph-Bet is a column of your resident linguist. You may be stuck with it until tav. Tav luck. Bet will be next. Wanna bet?*

## February

### BIRTHDAYS

02-01  
Stephen Smith

02-10  
Jason Roberts

02-12  
Abraham Lincoln

02-13  
Bennett Leder

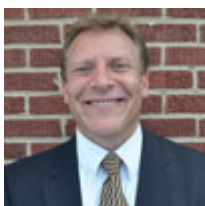
02-18  
George Washington

02-18  
Teresa Malin

02-17  
William Spivock

### YAHRZEITS

No yahrzeits are on record for this month.



Temple Or Olam welcomes our newest members, **Michael Berkowitz** and his three sons, **Preston, Zachary, and Harrison.**

We would like to thank **Ken Klawans**, whose generous matching donation of \$6,000 helped us raise the purchase price of our new Mizrachi Torah.

If you need to add a date to the temple calendar or check the availability of meeting space, please contact: [templeadmin@or-olam.org](mailto:templeadmin@or-olam.org).

Religious school: [religious-school@or-olam.org](mailto:religious-school@or-olam.org).

Submissions to the shmoozeletter: [editor@or-olam.org](mailto:editor@or-olam.org).

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