

Shmoosy's Letter

June 2014



June 06 Service, Dinner, Annual Meeting, 6:00

Yes, and the Raffle is Back – Here's Your Chance. Don't Miss it!

Our Annual Meeting (members only, please) begins at 6:00. Members will receive reports from the president and from last year's committees, vote on a slate of nominations for open Board positions, decide on amendments to our constitution, approve the budget for 2014-15, and witness the signing of our rabbi's contract. All this *and* a raffle, a contest, a pleasant dining experience, and a short and joyous Kabbalat Shabbat service to round it all off. Who could ask for more?

Services begin at 7-ish, after the meeting.

McGill Baptist Church

5300 Poplar Tent Rd., Concord NC 28027

June 20 Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 7:00

Join us for our first official service at Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church. Our theme? Radical hospitality. Our plan? A Kabbalat Shabbat service that includes opportunities to be welcomed and to welcome others into a new stage in our community's life. This service will be particularly friendly for children, so please bring the entire family.

Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church

9704 Mallard Creek Rd., Charlotte NC 28262

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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](#). Rabbi Barbara blogs on Jewish life on [adrenalinedrash.com](#). Explore, participate, have fun!

Radical Hospitality in Jewish Tradition



What do you do if guests show up at your house and you have no room for them? What do you do (besides celebrate!) if a crowd shows up for study on Shabbat and there isn't space to seat them?

This may be a surprise: Shabbat, the day when we are enjoined not to work, does not, according to Talmud, trump the shlepping you'd have to do to clear space for guests. Accord-

ing to Mishnah Shabbat, you are allowed to remove a few bundles of straw or wheat to make room for visitors. If students are crowding into the *Beit Midrash* ('study house') on Shabbat, you are actively encouraged to move stuff around to prevent them from leaving: Study, after all, is critical to the practice of Judaism.

Hospitality is a mitzvah.

'Welcoming guests is greater than receiving the face of the *Shekhina* (the Indwelling Presence of God),' one rabbi says. (Though another insists that when we welcome guests, it is 'tantamount to honoring God.' We have been made, after all, *b'tzelem Elohim*, 'in God's image.')

Our Torah reminds us of the value of hospitality. It was Open House at our ancestors' home each day: Abraham and Sarah's tent was open on all four sides. Rivkah demonstrates that she was destined to join the mishpoche when she generously offers to water the thirsty camels Abraham's servant took with him on his trip to find Isaac a suitable wife. (See this issue's article on the *mem* to find out why Rivka would have had to haul some 200-250 gallons of water to fulfill her promise).

Hakhnasat orchim (the 'bringing in of strangers') is a part of *gemilut chasadim* ('giving of loving kindness'). And *gemilut chasadim*, as the song goes, is one of those things on which the whole world rests.

Millev Harperdes

From the
Heart of the
Orchard

The community of Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church believes, as the Reverend Robin Tanner tells me, in radical hospitality. Starting June 20, they are welcoming us into their home, and they are moving a good many bales of straw to help make us feel comfortable there.

We hope for many wonderful outcomes to our move. We hope to make it easier for our far-flung little congregation to attend services in a location that is more central. We want to be able to serve the university area, and to extend our welcome to students at UNC Charlotte. We hope to grow this next year in a location that will feel accessible to Jewish families of North Charlotte and of the Cabarrus County region.

We hope that Piedmont UU members will feel welcome at our services and festival celebrations. We, too, will have opportunities to practice 'radical hospitality.'

Please join us at our first chance to do just that, at our June 20 service. The Reverend Robin Tanner will be present to light the Unitarian Universalist chalice and to welcome us to at Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church. Members of her community may well be in attendance, too.

Let's set out a few extra chairs. Let's make sure to sit by strangers so we can help them feel welcome. Let's meet and greet our hosts with warmth and gratitude. Let's practice *hakhnasat orchim*.

Rabbi Barbara



Millev HaPardes

Board of Directors' Meeting

May 18, 2014

7:00 p.m., via conference call

[Earl Greenwald, Cheryl Greenwald, Charlotte Miller, Ginger Jensen, Robbin Smith,
Michael Filkoff, and Michael Berkowitz]

The TOO Board of Directors met via conference call on Sunday, May 18, at 7 p.m. Below are highlights from that meeting:

- ✧ The Yom HaShoah candle fundraiser has now paid for itself and is contributing positively to the TOO budget. Donations are still welcome from those who have not yet paid for their candle.
- ✧ Marilyn Atlas was elected chair of the Adult Education Committee to replace Arlene Filkoff, who resigned to handle other duties.
- ✧ Rabbi's Professional Development Fund will be moved to a separate bank account, separate from the general funds.
- ✧ The usage agreement with Piedmont UU Church will soon be finalized for a one-year term of usage. [Update: Both parties have now signed the association.]
- ✧ A new policy description for Membership Director was approved, with changes by Michael Filkoff, Chair.
- ✧ Dues and membership categories for 2014-15 were discussed and will be finalized by the annual meeting.
- ✧ The June Board meeting is to be in-person for a social and professional gathering to start the year off in a positive way.
- ✧ The Annual Meeting to be an all-purpose affair: supper, meeting and fun events, Kabbalat Shabbat service. June 6, 6:00 pm

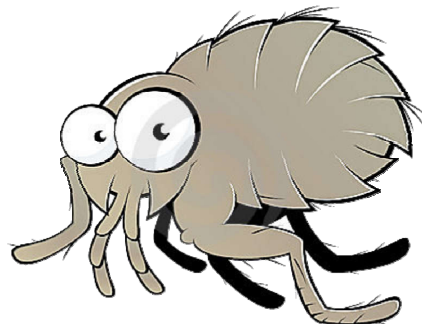
News for the Jews

News for the Jews

We Are Ready to Sell Your Fleas!

TOO's Last Event: The Flea Market

Our last fundraising event of the year needs to be a humdinger so that we can finish our year in the black and are ready to take on a more ambitious budget next year. We would like to have everyone lend a hand in some way, no matter how small.



Can't be there in person on **Saturday, June 14**? How about making cookies or cupcakes to sell that day?

Bring us that stuff you were going to drop off at Goodwill.

Have a pop-up tent, or tables we can use? Bring them over!

To make things easier on the morning crowd, we will be loading a rental truck on Friday afternoon/evening with all the stored items in the Greenwald garage. It will be driven to Advent Lutheran Church on Hwy 49, across from UNC Charlotte, at 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, when we will set up. Come have some fun with us, make money for TOO, and put some unwanted items to good use.

- ☆ We need your donations! (furniture, knick-knacks, dishware, artwork, etc.)
- ☆ We need your baked goods! (cookies, cupcakes, brownies)
- ☆ We need your hands and your presence! (to transport, set up, tag, sell, clean up)

Don't miss it!



Saturday, June 14, 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Advent Lutheran Church, front parking lot

Hwy 49 across from UNC Charlotte

E-mail Cheryl Greenwald about any items you have, or about assistance you are ready to give — cg@greenwalds.net

Shavuot Picnic and Activities Galore at Dorton Park , June 01

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Aleph Bet Water Balloon and Water Gun Challenge

Teachers vs. children testing their Hebrew skills and tossing those balloons — what could be more fun (parents, please make sure the kids have extra clothes...). Another reminder for moms and dads: You may be asked to help the children, so brush up on your Alef Bet before Sunday if you can!

11:00 a.m. Carlebach Sing-along

From *Essai Einai* to *Ki Va Moed*

11:30 a.m. Ten Commandment Program

We'll hear the shofar, read the Ten Commandments, and have a modern-day Sinai experience. What might be new commandments for this time, this place, our congregation? Our kids will create a new set of tablets to bring to our Annual Meeting that next week.

12:00 noon Picnic: All Things Dairy

Bring on the blintzes and the cheesecake, the ice cream and the cream puffs: It's Shavuot when we create luscious milchig meals...

01:00 p.m. Adult Education Program

Choosing Judaism – Over a Secular/Cultural Jewish Life, As Transformation and Acknowledgment of a Jewish Neshama: A Book of Ruth Shavuot Study Session

The **Book of Ruth** is rich in detail: We learn about how ordinary people can alter halakha to ensure the best possible future for a family, a community, and a nation. Why do we read this book on the anniversary of receiving the law? At the time when we receive the law, we should acknowledge that the law as given is not enough, and that bending and changing the law is actually a necessary practice.

In this book, Ruth chooses her people and acknowledges her Jewish neshama in five moving, intriguing, and inspiring chapters. The study session will explore this amazing text and use it as our jumping off point to address, discover, and reveal the many ways one can live in Jewish community.

Does this work have anything to say about the *ger toshav* (a non-Jew resident and companion in Jewish community)?

How does The Book of Ruth reflect present-day experiences for those choosing Judaism?

In what ways does The Book of Ruth function as a mirror for our own community's aspirations and hopes?

Kvelling Corner

Marilyn Atlas

This month's kvell is for our congregation. We will be renewing our covenant to TOO as well as making our pledges for continued financial support. We are such a warm, caring, and active congregation. I, particularly, want to kvell about our new members. They are Bill Jetton, Brenda Marshall, Melanie Carty, and Jacob Brayton. They have already signed up and are active in various committees.

We need to give ourselves a pat on the back as we continue to grow not only in numbers but also as a spiritual Jewish renewal congregation.

Israeli Dancing with Penny

At Temple Or Olam — Program to Follow

June 28, 2014

2:00 - 4:00 p.m.

Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church, 9704 Mallard Creek Rd, Charlotte NC 28262

\$10 for adults

\$5 for children



Pre-registration is encouraged to avoid money handling on Shabbat.

We need at least 12 pre-registered adults to hold the class, so please register today! We are encouraging payment in advance; however, 'last-minute' registration will be available at the door. To pre-register, please go to our home page and click on the PayPal link – specify 'Israeli Dancing.'

<http://www.or-olam.org>

For questions,
please call Arlene Filkoff
704-875-2353
e-mail: afilkoff@gmail.com

Know your ALEPH-BET

Memes about Mem



Ah, water! Those of us whose bodies consist of at least half of that stuff appreciate having plenty of it around. Eight glasses a day, they say. A camel, of course, can gulp down twenty gallons in a single session. But camels are known binge drinkers.

The letter מ stands for ‘waters,’ מַיִם *mayim*, and comes straight from the Phoenician word for water, 𐤎. Note the open *mem* and the final closed form at the end of מַיִם – and also that the last two letters by themselves, *yod* and *mem*, spell ם ‘sea.’ The second-century ‘Book of Creation’ (*Sefer Yetsirah*) explores the letters of the Aleph Bet as Creation itself. The author gives a central place to the ‘mother letters’ *mem* (water) along with *aleph* (air) and *shin* (fire, which also inspired the shape of our congregation’s *shin* logo). God *literally* – with the Aleph Bet – spells out the universe.

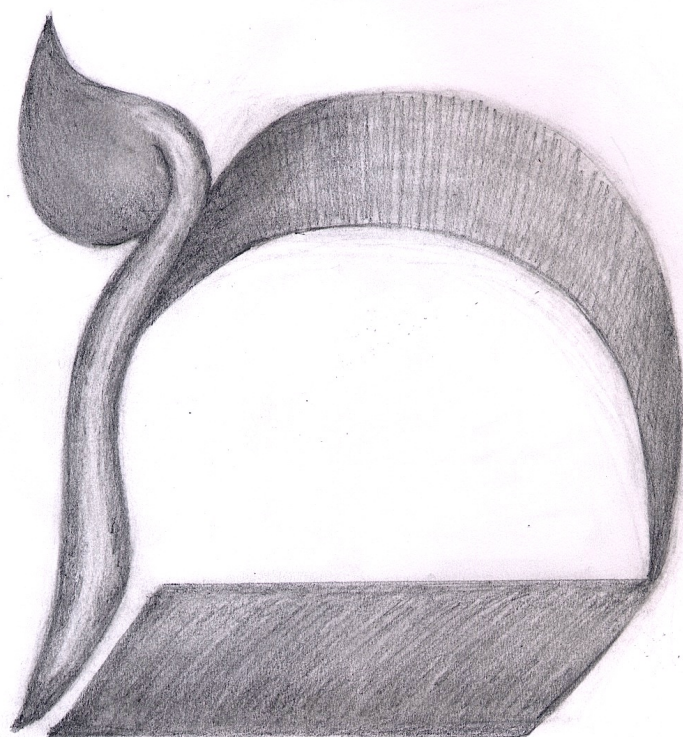
Ancient Greek philosophers thought of mathematics as the language of God, and of God as the ‘measurer’ of everything. For those writing in Hebrew, numbers and letters are inseparable, as are ‘thing’ and ‘speech.’ In that light, the study of letters is the study of creation and thus a form of prayer.

Mem has the numeric value of 40, a number that returns us to associations with water. Noah survived forty days of rain during the flood as God ‘cleansed’ the earth (although I cannot help but imagine what a gruesome mess the world must have looked like when the waters were gone). To cleanse the body, we use a mikvah that should contain a minimum of 40 seahs of water (1 seah = 1.93 gallons). The number 40 in general seems

associated with periods of transformation and fruition; you will see that number when something takes a long time leading up to something (years of walking through the desert, days spent by Moses on Mount Sinai, days spent by scouts exploring the landscape for Moses).

In the study of Hebrew letters, this letter certainly turns out to be the most מ-orable.

Ralf





CALENDAR

- Su Jun 01 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. Shavuot at Dorton Park, 5790 Poplar Tent Road, Concord NC 28027
- Fr Jun 06 6:00 p.m. Annual Meeting, Temple Or Olam (McGill Baptist Church)
7:00 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat service (McGill)
- Sa Jun 07 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
- Sa Jun 14 07:00 a.m. setup, Advent Lutheran Church, 8840 University City Blvd.
08:00 a.m. - 01:00 p.m. Or Olam Flea Market (Advent Lutheran parking lot)
10 a.m. Torah Study
- Fr Jun 20 07:00 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service (Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church, 9704 Mallard Creek Rd, Charlotte NC 28262)
- Sa Jun 21 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
- Sa Jun 28 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew

June BIRTHDAYS

06-05

Jachqueline Louise Gordon

06-08

Rebecca Smith

06-13

Doris Gordon

06-14

Jillian Smith

06-15

Jacob Brayton

06-21

Michael Filkoff

06-06

Morton G. Atlas

father of Marilyn Atlas

06-06

Phyllis Greenwald

mother of Earl Greenwald

YAHREZITS

06-14

Eugene Greenwald

father of Earl Greenwald

06-15

Audre Spivock

mother of William Spivock

06-25

Herbert Filkoff

father of Michael Filkoff

Correction: In the May edition, there was a typographical error in the e-mail address of the chair of the Men's Group. The correct address is

stephensmithnc@bellsouth.net.

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templeadmin@or-olam.org

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