

shmoosze Letter

July 2014



July 18: The Love Song Service, 7:00

*You'd think that people
Would have had enough
Of silly love songs.
I look around me and I see it isn't so.
Some people wanna fill the world
With silly love songs.
And what's wrong with that? I'd like to know.*

It's that time!

Mark the date and the hour: Our Annual Love Song Service will be held at Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church on July 18 at 7 p.m.. Read more about it in Rabbi Barbara's *MiLev Ha Pardes* in this issue.

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!

What the World Needs Now is Love, Sweet Love



It's summer—time for our annual Love Song Service.

Why has that service become such a beloved part of Temple Or Olam's own liturgical year?

It's fun, for one thing. We love the retro clothing—everything from sixties-style tie-dye to eighties' headbands make an appearance at our Love Song service. Some of us show up as true flower children; others re-discover the panache of the pol-

yester shirts worn by members of the Mod Squad.

We sing everything from Cat Stevens to the Beatles, from Elvis Presley to Leonard Cohen.

We admit it: At TOO we enjoy discovering creative and innovative ways to express our spiritual life. This event has proven successful in doing just that.

Fun and lightheartedness—these things are at a premium in a world that so often presents us with grief and sorrows. But it's not just all summer serendipity. There is depth to this service, a richness that never fails to move us all.

That depth comes from the *kavannah* that elevates what we are doing. Each song we choose is sung according to an established cycle of Hebrew prayers.

Example: How do we begin a traditional Kabbalat Shabbat service? With songs about the delight we find in being together, in enjoying the world around us. *Shabbat Shalom*, we sing. *Hiney ma tov*: Behold, how good it is to be brothers and sisters! We might be 'Feelin' Groovy,' or celebrating a 'Summer Breeze' in just the same way.

The passionate prayer *Yedid Nefesh* includes this gorgeous line: 'You light up the universe, my soul is faint with love and longing for

Millev Hapardes

From the
Heart of the
Orchard

you.’ It’s another, older way to say ‘I Can’t Help Falling in Love With You.’

We choose love songs that we can imagine singing to God. They are songs of thanks and songs of praise. They offer us a chance to put our innermost spiritual longings into words all of us can understand.

Who can tell what God is? How do we find a way to picture the divine? ‘If a picture paints a thousand words, than why can’t I paint you?’

The *V’ahavta* commands us to love God with all our heart, soul, and strength. The Beatles sang ‘I need your love... eight days a week.’ With the right *kavannah*, these words can be understood as a variation on that command.

We look forward to this service every year because it gives us a new way to pray ancient prayers. Through the Love Song service we learn, again, that there are songs that encompass the varied yearnings we might offer during the *Amidah*. We reinvest in the hope of *Aleynu* by singing John Lennon’s ‘Imagine.’

And we acknowledge that to understand the sheer power of God’s oneness, ‘what the world needs now is love, sweet love.’

Rabbi Barbara



Millev HaParades

Annual Meeting

June 06, 2014

7:00 - 8:00 p.m., McGill Baptist Church

A catered supper preceded the Annual Meeting of Temple Or Olam at McGill Baptist Church. More than half of the membership units were in attendance. Below are the main points and events:

- ✧ Rabbi Barbara Thiede paid tribute and presented gifts to Board of Director members and to our Religious School leaders.
- ✧ President Earl Greenwald's opening remarks focused on our move to the facilities of Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church and on membership growth.
- ✧ Michael Berkowitz, Treasurer, presented the budget for the next fiscal year; it was approved unanimously.
- ✧ Charlotte Miller, Vice President and Secretary, presented constitutional amendments to the assembled members: a change in the description of the duties of the membership director, a change in eligibility to the Board of Directors, and a change in the definition of when a member is 'in good standing.' The changes were approved unanimously.
- ✧ Ginger Jensen, Director of Religious Services and Chair of the Nominating Committee, presented the slate of nominees for the Board of Directors. They were approved, by acclamation as suggested by Ralf Thiede, unanimously:
 - * Membership Director: **Michael Filkoff** (confirmed for the remainder of a 2-year term after being appointed by the Board in July 2013);
 - * Treasurer: **Michael Berkowitz** (confirmed for the remainder of a 2-year term after being appointed by the Board in February 2014);
 - * Director of Social and Adult Programming: **Marilyn Atlas** (2 years/new);
 - * At large: **Robbin Smith** (completing her 2-year term on the Board, originally as Treasurer);
 - * At large: **Brenda Marshall** (2 years/new).
- ✧ President Earl Greenwald and Rabbi Barbara Thiede signed the Rabbi's Contract for the fiscal year 2014-15.

News for the Jews

News for the Jews

- ✧ Rabbi Barbara Thiede reminded all present of the Jewish practice of donating to honor or to remember loved ones. She pointed out that our next festival, Tisha B'Av (Aug. 4-5), is a festival at which we remember our loved ones, visiting graves and making donations in their cherished memory. She invited donations to use for life-giving and life-sustaining events that could help us grow. \$467 were collected, most with noted memorials.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:50, followed by a Kabbalat Shabbat Service.

We Now Have 3 Bank Accounts



Our operating account and our building fund account have been joined by a third account—for the educational and life cycle activities that have their own fee schedules. To keep things in order, please write separate checks or make separate payments, as defined below:

- ✧ Operating Account: Pay with check or PayPal (via Or Olam web site). Mail checks / money orders to Treasurer, P.O. Box 362, Huntersville NC 28070-0362, or hand them to Michael Berkowitz in person.
- ✧ Professional Development fund: Pay with check or cash for life cycle events, b'nai mitzvah, pastoral counseling, spiritual direction, classes, Hebrew lessons—or give to Charlotte Miller.

Thank you for helping us to keep TOO's financial records clear and easy to understand.



The McGill-to-Piedmont UU Express

Charlotte Miller, Ginger Jensen, and John Jensen began the moving of our 'stuff' from McGill Baptist Church to Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church on Thursday, June 19. Not having a permanent space yet to call our own, we tend to stay light and ready to travel. Most everything is in bins, with the ark and the leyning table

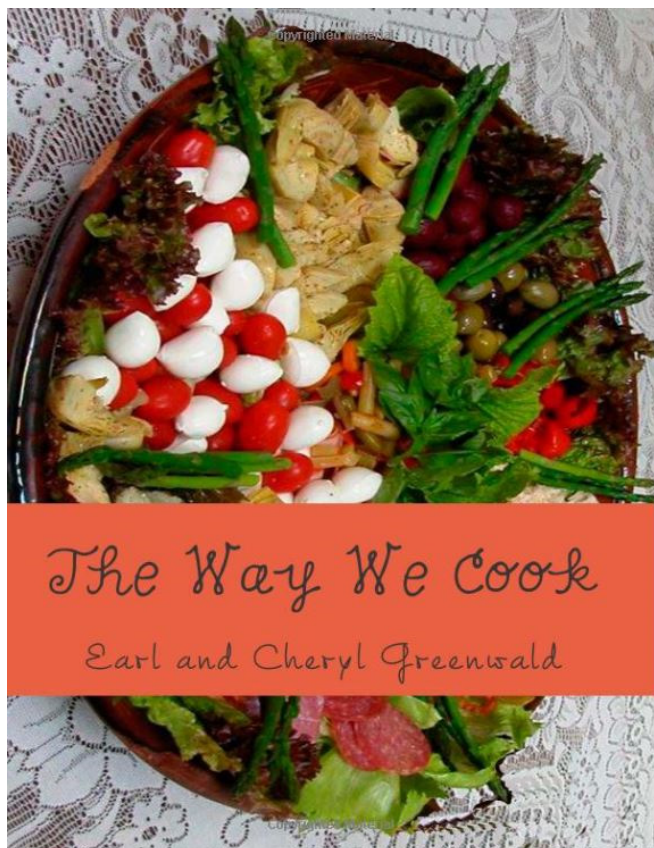
taking up most of the room. Piedmont UU has cleared space in their sanctuary storage room for our daily-use bins. Seldom-used items, such as Passover dishes, are going into the attic of the office building next door.

Piedmont adheres to a green philosophy, so we will continue using our supply of disposables until they are down to the minimum needed for outside events. We will then use dishes and flatware in the Piedmont UU kitchen for our onegs and dinners.

Everyone in Charge of Oneg Take Notice

(and that actually *is* everybody...)

Cleanup will take more time—to wash, dry, and put away whatever does not fit into the dishwasher. There will be some getting used to new ways of doing things, so we need to be patient with each other and adhere to guidelines. We look forward to joyously using the sanctuary, the patio, the playground, and the wooded areas in the same gentle and conscientious manner that Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church espouses.



Greenwald Cookbook

Author! Author!

The Greenwalds have added to their impressive list of accomplishments by becoming authors of a cookbook of family favorites. This is decidedly old-timey cooking and baking; p. 16 contains a curdling indictment of margarine. Not only are the authors joyously adding to our collective culinary expertise, they are also adding to the Temple's budget with a donation of August profits to TOO. Could our future oneg offerings suddenly improve? Check it out.

Greenwald, Earl and Cheryl. *The Way we Cook*. ISBN 9781497445178. Sold at Amazon.com.

Kvelling Corner

Marilyn Atlas

In the July Schmooze, I would like to kvell about our Rabbi's husband, Ralf. You know that in the majority of Jewish congregations, there are Rabbi's wives, but we are honored to have a Rabbi's husband. Ralf has such lungs. In the park, during our Shavuot service, Ralf blew the shofar so long and hard that we thought that 'the earth moved under our feet.' In all seriousness, what would our High Holiday services be like without his shofar blowing? What would our congregation be without his wit? And what would TOO services be like without his beating of his drums? I deem Ralf to be the 'Heart Beat of TOO.'

Traveling Teens Send Greetings

Emory Spivock:

Summer started off great for me because I was able to spend three weeks at the house of one of my friends. After that, we went on our family vacation. We launched summer with a day in NYC where I saw all kinds of neat things that I've only read about in books – like Chinatown, the Statue of Liberty, the Empire State building, Times Square, the 911 Memorial, and other attractions. Yet, I realized that I really don't like a big city. In NY, we boarded the 'Celebrity Summit' and sailed to Bermuda for a week, which was wonderful. Bermuda was fun – and seeing it through my mom's eyes was even funnier. We saw 'Bermuda cats' and 'Bermuda sky' – anything Bermuda was better. The highlight of that trip was jet skiing to a sunken boat. The water was beautiful.



After the cruise we went to see family in Florida for the 4th-of-July week. And after that, the fun is over for a while. I go to work at the school as a general helper moving books and furniture and helping them get ready for the new school year.

I am excited to meet our German exchange student, who will come to stay with us for 6 weeks. He'll be here practicing his English and learning the culture. As school nears, I'll be starting field hockey practice. All in all, a pretty busy summer.

Bryston Spivock:

I'm spending my summer seeing friends, working, and going on vacation. We just came back from a cruise to Bermuda, which was pretty awesome. I really liked being on the ship and meeting new friends. Bermuda was a neat island, too, and the best thing was jet skiing. We did a neat underwater dive where fish swam right up to us, let us hold them, and swam through a hoop. They actually seemed trained and tame.

On our drive back from NYC, we went through a couple more colleges, getting an idea about where I might want to go in a year.

Now we are seeing my aunt and cousin in Florida, since they just came back from China. After visiting with all our relatives for a week, we will go home and have a little break – which means I'm going to work for a few weeks. Then I need to get ready for our foreign exchange student. His name is Julian; he is my age, and he seems really excited to come to the States.

He will get to go to Illinois with me, as I go on a trip every year with my Grandfather, called the Papagochees. It's just "the guys." This year we are going to do a Huck-Finn type adventure, where we get a cabin on the Mississippi, camp out, and do some boating on the river.

When I come back, I'll go to Boston with my school for our last class trip called Senior Venture. We will be doing a 46-mile bike ride as well as seeing many historical sites and walking the Freedom Trail.

A week after we come back from that, it's back to school for my senior year!

Saying Goodbye

Reprinted from the Rabbi's Blog
(AdrenalineDrash.com) June 30, 2014

I don't really know if anyone knows the whole story.

The whole story is painful. It is beautiful.

When my little congregation formed in January, 2004 as a havurah, our first meetings were held at a local church in Concord, North Carolina. One of our interfaith couples suggested that church; one of the two spouses was an active and happy member at that church.

So we met in their fellowship hall once a month or so for about a year.

None of us knew that there was a deep division in the community about our presence. None of us knew that the minister (who has long since moved away) was being visited each week by church members who believed Jews worshipping in the church was a real danger to the community.

'The Jews will destroy the church,' the minister was told.

I had friends in other churches. One was Pastor Steve Ayers, of McGill Baptist Church. Wounded and shocked, I told him what had happened.

He said, 'Come to McGill, Barbara.'

So we moved to a Baptist church in Concord.

We knew that some Jews would automatically assume that we were messianic and would not dare to come and find out otherwise. We knew that some people would call McGill and ask if Jews met there. We knew both congregations might take a hit for their conviction that they could worship in the same space with love, tenderness, and respect.

In the very first year we were at McGill we learned we would have to raise thousands of dollars to restore our first Torah. For twelve families, that was a daunting challenge. Steve told me that McGill Baptist would refuse to take any rent; whatever money we had should go to the restoration.

To this day, I remind congregants that some of the letters on our first Torah were put there by Baptist generosity.

Sometimes, despite all our busy schedules, we managed to do congregational things together – a joint Hanukkah-Christmas party, a trip to see the Dead Sea Scroll exhibit when it came to Charlotte. I visited the McGill Baptist Adult Education class every year and spoke on a range of different topics to a community of enthusiastic and loving learners.

I stood before the congregation yesterday to thank them. I cried through each word.

I thought of the things that had happened to me in that sanctuary.

Before we made the move to McGill, the congregation had invited me to deliver a talk on Judaism. After a long and wonderfully enthusiastic conversation with congregants at a program that was supposed to last an



Pastor Steve Ayers with Rabbi Barbara Thiede, June 29
at McGill Baptist Church

Picture by Ronald Hartsell

hour and turned into almost three hours, I turned to my husband, Ralf, and said, 'I think I better apply to rabbinical school – I need to know a lot more than I do to answer questions like those.'

Later, I joked that I got the 'call' in a Baptist sanctuary.

I have sung Avinu Malkeynu with passion and power in that room. I have prostrated onto its floor. I have felt the souls of my ancestors attending to our prayers.

I have heard birds chirping at the window while we sang *Elohai neshama*, 'my God, the soul you have given me is pure.'

I have seen my congregants dance across the floor.

Children have sung prayers and chanted from our Torahs.

God has flowed right through my bones.

We have celebrated, and celebrated, and celebrated again.

How could I manage to tell those generous people at McGill that I became a better rabbi in their sanctuary, that I learned how to serve the Holy One there?

At yesterday's service, Pastor Steve gave Temple Or Olam a blessing. He wished us well as we move closer to the university area, to another location and a different part of the way on our path. He reminded his congregation (and us) that living the love of God is our task. We are the face of the divine, he said. Sometimes we are the only messenger to others for that love.

He spoke about what it means to love others who are not always like you, who speak or look or act differently, but who need your outstretched arms, your heart and soul extended.

B'tzelem Elohim, in the image of God were we created. Each of us is a face of the Divine.

To all of you at McGill Baptist Church: For your grace, your generosity, your open-heartedness, and your love, I say again, 'thank you.'

God knows the whole story.

Precious Moments

La'asok be'divrei Torah - soaking up Torah in the park. At our Shavuot Picnic in the Park, our Religious School students engaged in a Hebrew reading contest with their teachers. Students got the opportunity to throw a soaking wet sponge at a teacher if they had the correct answer (or get sponged themselves). Here Michael Berkowitz is about to feel the impact of a Spongiform Liquid Arial Trajection (SPLAT) delivered by Isla Garcia.

On the cover page, the teachers indicate a decided preference to who ought to be soaked in Torah study next.



Know your ALEPH-BET

Nu? The Nun.



So what is your bean count again when the *nun* turns up on your dreidel? *Nisht*. Yiddish uses the *nun* for the sound of **N**, and what you see is what you get—‘nothing.’ *Nun* shall ‘pass.’

In ancient times, the association would not have been with nothing, but probably with a snake or fish. The letter נ goes back to Phoenician 𐤎, which is related to a hieroglyph depicting a snake. The Aramaic word for ‘(sea?) serpent, fish’ was *nun*. And the Qur’an refers to Jonah as *Dhu’n-Nun*, ‘the fish dude.’ Maybe the ‘fish’ association was stronger than the ‘snake’ meaning because of the letter’s place after *mem*, ‘water.’

Medieval women in Europe apparently thought so, too. They frequently made a Torah binder out of the cloth that was used at their son’s circumcision. After washing and bleaching the fabric, they embroidered a blessing onto the cloth. The letters were frequently embroidered with fanciful figures; the letter *nun* was one of them. And what emerged most often from that letter? A fish.

Nun is known for some wily escapades. In *Ashrei* (Psalm 145), which is an acrostic in which each line starts with a letter of the Aleph-Beit, the line that should begin with *nun* is AWOL. And in all Torahs, including ours, the words of Numbers 10:35-36 are bracketed by *nuns* that are written in mirror reverse—the famous ‘inverted *nuns*’ of the Torah. The text they enclose translates as ‘And when the Ark began to move, Moses proclaimed: “Rise up, Adonai, and disperse Your enemies; may

those who hate you flee from Your presence”.’ That’s, of course, the text we sing when we rise as the Ark is opened (*kumah Adonai, v’yafutzu oi-vecha...*). Why the inverted *nuns* around those words? Feel free to add your own interpretation of what those inverted letters are doing around that passage—nobody really seems to know. You might associate them with the wings of the cherubim on the ark. Or maybe they represent *nefilah*, ‘fall,’ as the enemies are being scattered left and right.

There is so much in Torah that we do not understand. Maybe our last resort is yet another *nun*. ‘We will do, and then we will understand,’ the Israelites said upon hearing Moses read out the record of the covenant (Exodus 24:7). *Na’aseh v’nishma* it is in Hebrew — וְנִשְׁמָע נַעֲשֶׂה. And that famous line is known by, you guessed it, its acronym — נִן *nun*.

Ralf





CALENDAR

- | | |
|-----------|---|
| Sa Jul 05 | 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew |
| Sa Jul 12 | 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew |
| Fr Jul 18 | 07:00 p.m. The Love Song Service, Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church |
| Sa Jul 19 | 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew |
| Sa Jul 26 | 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew |
| Sa Aug 02 | 10 a.m. Torah Study
11 a.m. Adult Hebrew |
| Fr Aug 08 | Kabbalat Shabbat Service and Ice Cream Social
Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church |

TEMPLE OR OLAM

July BIRTHDAYS

07-01 Ginger Jensen	07-03 Anderson Everhart	07-08 Shannon Everhart	07-10 Sierra Kanofsky
07-16 Matthew Leder	07-20 Yvette Spivock	07-28 Yonatan Owens	07-30 Arthur Kingberg

07-13
Rose Joffe
mother of the late Irving Joffe

07-16
Nathan Meyer Shapiro
father of Rabbi Barbara Thiede

YAHREZEITS

07-19
Evelyn Thiede
mother of Ralf Thiede

07-22
Ruth Kingberg
wife of Arthur Kingberg

07-24
Norman Roettger
father of Ginger Jensen

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Religious school:	school@or-olam.org	Keri Huneycutt
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