

Shmoos Letter

August 2014



August Services: A Good Time to Bring Guests

Both August services will feature an ice cream social at our oneg and plenty of opportunity to get to know us and our style of worship. Please do your best to help us get the word out. Bring friends to our Kabbalat Shabbat Service on August 08 or to our Torah Service on August 22. Our ISJL intern will be with us on August 22 to help answer questions about the Institute for Southern Jewish Life.

Our Religious School Directors and faculty also plan to be present at both services so they may offer information about our upcoming school year. And as usual, at Temple Or Olam, we can expect beautiful music and thoughtful exploration of Jewish texts and tradition from Rabbi Barbara.

Aug 08: Kabbalat Shabbat Service, 7:00 p.m.

Aug 22: Torah Service, 7:00 p.m.

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!

From the President

Temple Or Olam has settled comfortably into our beautiful, new venue, Piedmont UU. We must now focus on our major objective for this year, to grow our congregation. To achieve growth, people must experience us socially and religiously. The Board of Directors is spreading the word about our arrival in the University Area. Articles by Rabbi Barbara and Charlotte have been published in the Charlotte Observer and in all the Neighbors sections, as well as the Charlotte Jewish News and the newsletter of the Baptist Cooperative Fellowship, of which McGill is a member. The Membership Committee is planning a strategy for public awareness of our presence.



Now for your part—my request is that you proudly let others know that you value your Jewish inheritance. Wear your Judaica. Answer with pleasure a question about what that twisted bread is that you are buying. And above all, bring your extended families, friends and colleagues, all who seek a spiritual home, to our religious observances and events. Shabbat services on August 8 and 22 are perfect occasions for guests. Rabbi Barbara and members of the Board will greet your guests, and we will enjoy an ice cream social during oneg at each August Shabbat.

Talk to everyone about High Holidays at Temple Or Olam and invite them to celebrate those events with us. For Yom Kippur afternoon, we're planning a special offering—reading of an award-winning contemporary play, *The Gates Are Closing*. Its author, Merle Feld, is a widely published poet and the author of *A Spiritual Life* and of a new book of her poems, *Finding Words*. Members of our congregation will direct the play and read the parts. The play reading is another great opportunity for all of us, members and guests alike, to celebrate the Jewish life and the joy of our temple and congregation.

See you all at Shabbat.

Earl Greenwald

President, Board of Directors

Outreach and Universalism — Jewish Tradition



He has been part of a large Jewish family for years, now. He attends family simchas, sits down for the Passover meal, helps light Hanukkah candles, takes the kids to religious school, and even tells a Jewish joke now and again. He is not a Jew.

She attends Friday night services, serves on two committees, and takes part in social action programs run by the Temple. She is not a Jew.

Neither one is an anomaly in Jewish life. They have their precedents, their ancestors.

The laws of Torah speak both about and to the *ger toshav*, the resident non-Jew among Jews. A *ger toshav* is to observe Shabbat rest and participate in Israelite festivals. Non-Jews living among the Israelites may not consume the blood of an animal. They are subject to the rules the Israelites must attend to – from forgiveness rituals to making sure not to blaspheme God’s name. The Israelites, in turn, are reminded that gleanings also go to the *ger*, that cities of refuge are available to them *and* to the Israelite, and that they must possess food and clothing, just as the widow and the orphan. The Israelite is not to oppress the stranger, but to befriend the *ger*. Torah tells us: There shall be one law for both.

The *gerim* were, it would seem, invited right into the covenant. In Deuteronomy 31:12, Moses recalls that God was explicit: He was to gather the people, ‘men, women, children and the strangers... that they may hear and learn to revere the LORD your God and to observe faithfully every word of this Teaching.’

Scholar Carolyn Hayes writes that the Pentateuchal model is one of peaceful coexistence, cooperation, and even some form of integration of an ethnic ‘other.’ She adds that the rabbis, in their commentaries, may elaborate on distinctions between the Israelite and the non-

Millev HaParodes

From the
Heart of the
Orchard

Israelite, but then undermine that difference by imagining the possibility of a *ger* observing, in some way, the same law.

In the *Sifre* to Parsha Acharei Mot, we find an interesting discussion of a single verse from Leviticus: ‘You shall keep My laws and My rules, by the pursuit of which man shall live.’



The text notes that the biblical verse applies the commandment to all humanity, to *ha'adam* rather than to the Israelites alone. ‘Priests, Levites, and Israelites are not spoken of...’. We read here of humanity’s obligations, not of those of a particular ethnic group. The text goes on to quote Second Samuel “It says: ‘This is the Torah of the human being, my Lord God’” (2 Sam 7:19).

Mustering a series of biblical prooftexts, the *Sifre* concludes: A gentile who does Torah is like the High Priest!

Our High Holy Days will address a worthwhile theme. What is the relationship of the way we treat the stranger among us to the community we want to build? In what ways does our history suggest a far more universalist world-view than we know?

Rosh Hashanah, the rabbis tell us, is the birthday of the world. Yom Kippur, rabbis have quipped, is the Day of At-one-ment. The man who takes the children to religious school, the woman who serves on committees – they might not always be Jews. As we celebrate humanity’s creation and our longed-for connection with the Holy One of Blessing, let us stand with and for each other, wherever we come from and whoever we are.’

Rabbi Barbara

Board Meeting

July 27, 2014

7:00 - 8:38 p.m., via conference call

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

The TOO Board of Directors met via conference call on Sunday, July 27, at 7 p.m. Below are highlights from that meeting:

- ✧ Announced the successful request of \$1,050 from the Lenora Stein Fund for Community Creative Learning. Grant is for further integration and success of all children in the Religious School.
- ✧ Announced that TOO will present a dramatic reading of *The Gates are Closing* on Yom Kippur. Yizkor donations will be used to pay for the performance rights.
- ✧ Approved the position of community chaverah for one year to be filled by Ginger Jensen, who will move to an at-large seat on the Board. Further evaluation will be done after a year.
- ✧ Announced the resignation of Michael Berkowitz as treasurer and approved Charlotte Miller as interim treasurer to replace Michael. Charlotte will handle the day-to-day mechanics as Bill Jetton continues his work on a membership management system for TOO. Bill will compile the financial reports for the Board.
- ✧ Continued to work on a clear policy for the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund and the Emergency Fund, both of which are donation funded.
- ✧ The Rabbinic Development Fund is now a separate bank account and is funded by Rabbi Barbara's fees from counseling, teaching, and life cycle events.

How PR Works for the Temple

We have talked repeatedly about the need to get the word out that we have moved, that we are ready to welcome interested guests, that our Jewish experience is awesome. How exactly does that message get to those people? Well, the very best way is for you to tell others how much your Jewish culture and practice means to you and how to find our nurturing Or Olam community.

The next best method is through various public relations outlets such as magazines, newspapers, neighborhood flyers, Home Owner Association newsletters, radio and TV public service announcements, social media sites, etc. In contrast to a spontaneous personal conversation with you, these outlets require pre-planning and have lead

News for the Jews

News for the Jews

times from days to weeks. Take, as an example, [Charlotte Jewish News](#). The submission deadline for an article is one month prior to publication, meaning the research and writing must start a couple of weeks before that. Slick magazines like [Lake Norman Magazine](#) have a lead time of about six weeks. [The Charlotte Observer](#) is thinking weeks in advance also and must mesh topic suggestions with their other articles and with how often they've run something similar. Even our submissions to the 'Religion News' section of local inserts need at least ten days lead time and can then get bumped because of space or relevance.

What makes an interesting story that will spark editorial interest? Something unique and of wide interest. Everybody conducts services, participates in tikkun-olam projects, and holds fundraisers. That's life, not news. What have we done lately that did catch an editor's eye? We were lead Observer article when Neil Yerman was here for the Torah dedication. That was a one-time, interesting event. Marty Minchin's [story](#) on our move from Concord to the University area appeared in all the Observer's regional sections because we were the first and only Cabarrus congregation. The next week, Rabbi Barbara's [remembrance of Rabbi Zalman](#) in the Saturday 'Faith and Values' section commemorated a unique person who led a movement. These are the big outlets, and we will continue to pursue our share of this space.

When you want some quick PR, think social media. Our [Facebook page](#) is perfect for that *tikkun olam* article or Religious School event with pictures. Alan Coffman edits our page and welcomes new material to keep things fresh: coffman.alan@gmail.com. If you are a Facebooker, be sure to post your comments about services and holidays too. Interested people value the opinion of insiders.

The [Shmoozelatter](#) and website are always presenting TOO to the public. The 'Shmooze' is sent not only to the congregation, but also to a long list of TOO non-Jewish friends. Here is where you are welcome to suggest an article, maybe with pictures, longer than may have been posted on Facebook. Our [blog](#) and [Loop](#) are published through the website and publicly available, mostly for announcements of upcoming events. Finally, the Rabbi also publishes an Internet blog, [Adrenaline drash](#), which you can subscribe to and recommend to others.

We welcome the assistance of good writers and organized planners. Even better, having a designated public relations director would be a wonderful opportunity to coordinate our efforts into a formal public relations plan. In the meantime, if you have story ideas that fit the criteria for uniquely interesting events, email Charlotte Miller at templeadmin@or-olam.org.



Setup and Takedown Routine, and Oneg Signup

It's that time of year, folks! As a small community, we must share the load of preparing for our services and holidays. And the move to Piedmont UU provided one large advantage—no setup for Sunday services! Unless we use the sanctuary on Saturday, we do not have to do any setup on Friday, just clean up and stack the chairs.

As in the last two years, we would like to have three families sharing the setup dates and another three families share the takedown of those dates, though we will take single-date commitments rather than none. Whether setup can take place prior to Friday afternoon will vary from week to week, depending on Piedmont's activities in the sanctuary.

Holiday and festival dates are listed separately from service dates, at the bottom of the spreadsheet in yellow. Most of these extra needs are for food service or decorating. You may also select your own date for oneg prep/cleanup, or else wait to be assigned a date.

To claim a slot, log on to the website, go to the Members drop-down box, far right of top banner, and click on 'Service/Oneg Signup.' The form is an Excel spreadsheet. The far-left column contains Setup, then Takedown, then Oneg, followed by holidays at the bottom. Service dates are listed across the top. To sign up for anything, just type your name in the appropriate box under the task and/or date. It will be save automatically. Instructions for all activities will be included in the Member Documents section under 'Members.' You will get a reminder email approximately one week prior to your chosen date.

Let's get those dates filled so that no one is overburdened preparing for a service we all will enjoy.

Gleaning

From the publicity they receive, it seems that meaningful *tikkun olam* opportunities are big, splashy events where selfies and group grins for the press are required. That is a small percentage of the population that does wonderful work in a big way. Most of us, though, are more attuned to daily attention to the small kindnesses and assistance that are within our power to give.

TOO may be small, but we are in the thick of an ongoing activity that is quietly supplying our lower-income population with healthy fresh produce that would normally be out of their budget. The Society of St. Andrew has been coordinating gleaning opportunities since 1979, and in North Carolina since 1992. Their philosophy is an ecumenical outreach of 'food for the body, God's word for the spirit, community of love for the heart, opportunity for those who desire action.' It's the revival of an ancient practice from Deuteronomy that tells us to leave the unharvested portion in the field for the widow, the orphan, and the alien so that we all may be blessed (Deut. 24:19). 'The North Carolina Gleaning Network is going strong, salvaging

News for the Jews

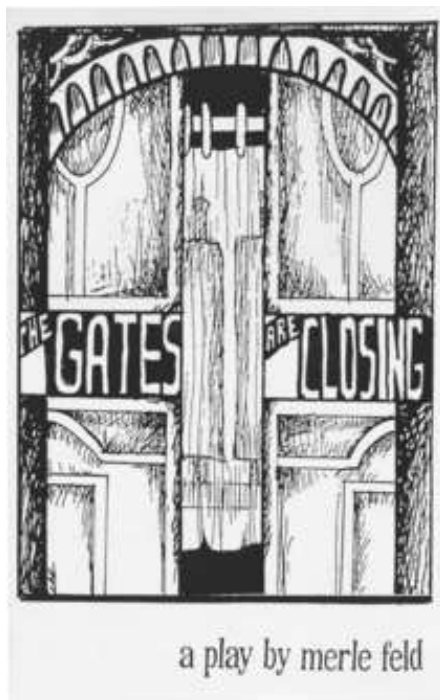
over five million pounds of fresh produce for the hungry each year. In this agriculturally diverse state, gleaners work to salvage everything from strawberries to sweet potatoes to collard greens.'

Or Olam has been one of the gleaning partners for several years, recently coordinated by Arlene Filkoff. Mostly done in the summer and fall, gleaning dates are relayed to the Society by farmers who have finished their mechanical harvest. The Society wants the very usable produce that has been left behind, contacting communities like TOO to provide the labor. Most of these dates are very last-minute, usually no more than a week ahead of time. Such short notice requires our members' continuous dedication for several months, a difficult task in our very busy lives. From our 26 member families who would be physically able to participate, 16 people, young and less young, have gleaned on five occasions so far this summer. Our members have helped in the pulling of over 18,200 lbs. of corn and 5,000 lbs. of tomatoes in Cabarrus County that have reached Charlotte and five other counties' food distribution sites and food pantries.

Want to help? Email Arlene Filkoff (afilkoff@gmail.com) your address so that she can notify you immediately upon receipt of a gleaning opportunity. Our deepest appreciation goes to Arlene for assuring TOO's continuing presence in this important work. Make sure you tell her so next time you see her... and then give her your email so that you can participate next time.



High Holy Days Play: 'The Gates are Closing'



Every year, Or Olam plans a wonderful High Holy Days schedule that provides new meaning and perspective on our lives in Judaism and the world. This year is no exception. We are adding an adult education portion that should be both exciting and thought-provoking.

On Yom Kippur afternoon, prior to the evening closure and break-fast, Or Olam will present a dramatic reading of 'The Gates Are Closing' by Merle Feld. The action 'takes place in a synagogue on Yom Kippur evening, the following morning, and late that afternoon. [We follow] 10 main characters spanning a wide range of ages, backgrounds, and professions as they grapple with issues of identity, meaning, repentance, and forgiveness on this most somber of days.'

'The Gates' has been performed repeatedly worldwide and has won several awards since its debut at the Jewish Repertory Theatre in 1986. Its exploration of the universal themes of atonement and forgiveness is accessible and deeply personal. Interesting also is that its author, Merle Feld, and her husband, Rabbi Edward Feld, were instrumental in the formation of the Reconstructionist movement, which has strong ties to our Renewal movement.

This is a TOO performance, and those ten characters will be ten of you, the congregation. We will be calling you, or you may get in touch with us via president@or-olam.org. This is also a public performance. You are welcome to invite everyone you know to attend; there will be no ticket charge, though we will take donations if offered. The suggested audience is b'nai mitzvah and older, mostly for thematic understanding.

How does little TOO afford to access to such a well-known work? With your help, of course. One of the enduring portions of the Yom Kippur service is Yizkor ('may God remember') when we honor the memory of those who have died. A donation is usually made in each deceased's name by family and friends to commit *tzedekah* funds and do a deed of *chesed*. The play's expense will be covered from a portion of these donations. All donors who committed prior to the High Holy Days will be included in the Book of Remembrance available on Yom Kippur.

Want to send your memorial donation in now? Mail a check with clear description of who you are remembering and from whom the gift is coming, or use our Paypal facility on the website and use the textbox at the end to provide the same description.

Our HHD's this year are going to be stupendous. We will be worshipping in a sanctuary with plenty of light and greenery, just right for celebrating the birthday of the world on Rosh HaShanah. Our Yom Kippur services will reflect on the big questions of our place among the peoples on this earth. We will address those themes throughout (see Rabbi Barbara's MiLev HaPardes, p. 3).

Lenora Stein Grant

Earlier this summer, Arlene Filkoff, Keri Huneycutt, and Rabbi Barbara wrote our second proposal to the Lenora Stein Fund for Community Creative Learning of Winston-Salem. Last year, TOO won funding for technology to assist our special needs students in the Religious School. This year's proposal was a request to leverage our burgeoning Israeli dance sessions into another learning style that will connect with students of all abilities. We again were approved for the full amount of our request. Stay tuned for a longer story in a future *Shmooze* issue.

Congratulations Arlene, Keri, and Rabbi Barbara!

Love Song Service at UNC Charlotte

September 05 at 7:00 p.m., Student Union 340 C&F

Are you still bemoaning your absence from our Love Song Service on July 18? Well, you should be, because it was terrific. But you are in luck! Rabbi Barbara, Ralf, and as many TOO congregants as can be there will be serving up another Love Song Service at UNCC on Friday, September 5, 7:00 pm. This one is sponsored by UNCC's Hillel and should be a rockin' good time with plenty of youthful vigor. Don't miss it this time!



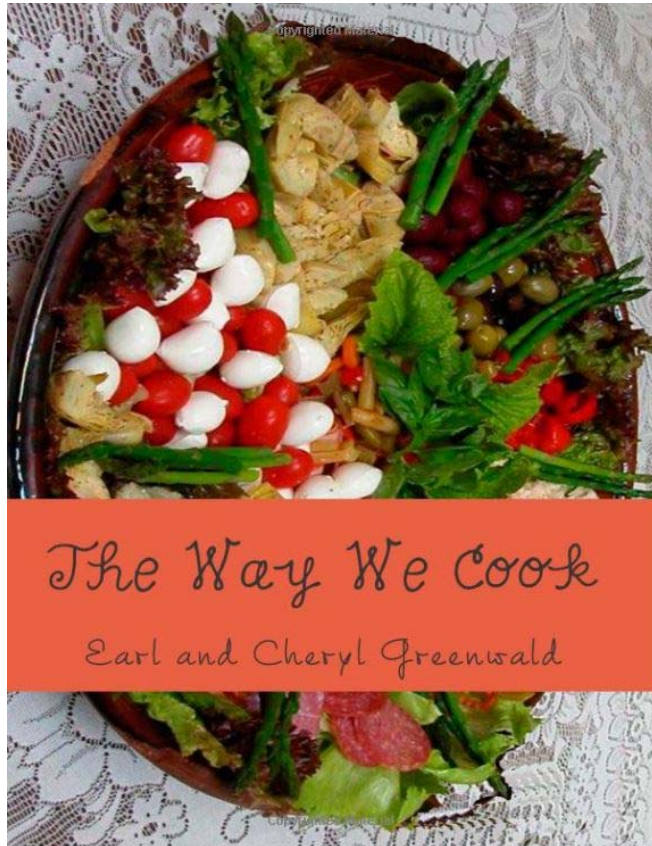
New Or Olam Office: The Chaverah

By Ginger Jensen

Temple Or Olam's Board of Directors has created a new board position: chaverah (Hebrew for friend.) I will be serving as our first chaverah.

This job is similar to that of an ombudsman. Is there something you wish The Temple would do? Or not do? Is there a resource you wish we had available? If this is a matter you don't want to bring formally to the board or the rabbi for whatever reason—including confidentiality—please contact me.

I'm looking forward to helping to make this congregation even more responsive to all our members.



Greenwald Cookbook

We don't cook books, but we do cookbooks

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

This month's kvell is for our dearly beloved Rabbi. We have such a jewel. Her energy, laughter, spirituality, and wisdom are a constant source of inspiration. Our congregants have shared with me that time flies by during services. Others have shared that Rabbi Barbara's enthusiasm has created an environment for their children to want to continue to come to services after their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. (What a feat!) Last year, I told my sister how much fun, enjoyable, and thought provoking the Yom Kippur services were. My sister said: 'Yom Kippur services, fun?' I said: 'Yes.' I am looking forward to our unique and spiritual fulfilling High Holiday services. Rabbi Barbara, you are the best, and we are so blessed to have you.

Final Summer Reports from Or Olam Teenagers

What *have* they been up to...?

Leta VanArsdale:

For starters, to get ready for high school, Leta VanArsdale and her friends are doing room clean outs – stuff, games, clothes – which of course all of the parents are thrilled about. She is also trying to babysit as much as she can. Leta is taking tennis lessons, going to beach with her friend for a week, Camp JB, and has two books to read and assignments due 1st day of school... and of course Carowinds! Love Carowinds. ☺

Leanna Jensen:

The Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute is located in Front Royal, Virginia. The staff works with the National Zoo to breed endangered species, such as red pandas. I spent a week there taking an introductory class on ecology. During the week, I went bird watching, canoeing, and hiking.

We were split into groups, which determined the area of ecology we would study. I was in the herpetology group, and we used transmitters to track box turtles. At the end of the week, each group prepared a presentation and a question regarding our area of study. My group's question was 'Why are box turtles not found in areas dominated by Japanese stiltgrass?' We hypothesized that the stiltgrass outcompetes the native vegetation, which prevents the turtles from finding food.



John Jensen:

Dad took me to Daytona for the Fourth of July weekend. We got to the track on Thursday, and got all of our passes. Then, we went to our hotel. But when we were about to go the track for practice, all of a sudden something got in the way: rain. I was very confused when it was raining because when we made it there, it was bright and sunny. Later, after practice, I talked to my favorite driver, Jeff Gordon.

Friday, we swam and relaxed at the hotel until we went to the track. We went to the NASCAR/Sprint exhibit, and I played the new NASCAR 14 game. At about 8:00, the rain stopped and we went to get seats for the Nationwide race. Kasey Kahne won in a close battle with Regan Smith.

On Saturday, I went to the track first thing. I got my first ever pace car ride around the track. The Sprint Car race never got started due to rain, so it got re-scheduled to Sunday at 11:00 a.m.



On Sunday, we went to the track for the race. It got started. But we left just eight laps in because the rain came again. That was when I decided I'd had enough with the rain trying to spoil the fun we had, so we left for home. Overall, it was fun minus the rain.

Precious Moments



Philip Jacobson and Steve Smith benching together. The tables were built as part of Philip's Eagle Scout project and are now serving the Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church campus.



How many ears are on this picture? None, if you are counting ears of corn. This field was picked clean by the gleaning crew. Or Olam volunteers gleaned tens of thousands of pounds of produce left by harvesting machines. Corn and tomatoes were delivered to area food pantries and distribution sites.

Israeli Dancing with Penny

Israeli Experience at Temple Or Olam

August 23, 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 text Marilyn Atlas
704-746-4499
e-mail: Marilynaf@aol.com



CALENDAR

- Sa Aug 02 10 a.m. Torah Study

- Fr Aug 08 07 p.m. Kabbalat Shabbat Service, Piedmont Unitarian Univ. Church
 Membership event with ice cream social at oneg
 Religious School info session with teachers after the service

- Sa Aug 09 10 a.m. Torah Study
 11 a.m. Adult Hebrew

- Sa Aug 16 10 a.m. Torah Study
 11 a.m. Adult Hebrew

- Fr Aug 22 ISJL Summer Weekend with our intern, Lex Rofes (Piedmont UU Church)
 05 p.m. Potluck supper with Lex
 07 p.m. Torah service
 Membership event with ice cream social at oneg
 Religious School info session with teachers after the service

- Sa Aug 23 10 a.m. Torah Study
 11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
 02-04 p.m. Israeli Dancing at Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church (p. 11)

- Sa Aug 30 10 a.m. Torah Study

August BIRTHDAYS

08-01 Leta VanArsdale	08-09 Andrew Chait	08-09 Michelle Filkoff	08-10 Erik Thiede	08-14 Camille Kanofsky	08-15 Evan VanArsdale
08-25 Will King	08-27 Phil VanArsdale	08-28 LingLing Jacobson	08-30 Earl Greenwald	08-31 Alison Cutler	

08-05
Richard A. Gordon
father of Jason Gordon

08-15
Eva Miller
mother of Ellie Joffe

Yahrzeits

08-17
Elaine Cutler
mother of Brian Cutler

08-26
Elaine Silver
great-aunt of Arlene Filkoff

Rabbi:	rabbi.thiede@or-olam.org	Barbara Thiede
Temple administrator/secretary:	templeadmin@or-olam.org	Charlotte Miller
<u>Committees:</u>		
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Men's group:	mensgroup@or-olam.org	Stephen Smith
Religious school:	school@or-olam.org	Keri Huneycutt
<u>Board:</u>		
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Outreach director / Fundraising:	outreach@or-olam.org	Cheryl Greenwald
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