

## Shmooze

## Letter

September 2014



RELIGIOUS SPIRITUAL LIFE

LOVE SONG  
Shabbat

A NONTRADITIONAL JEWISH SERVICE

CO-SPONSORED  
WITH HILLEL

Friday, Sept. 5

7pm • Student Union 340 CF

EVERYONE IS WELCOME!

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## September Services

Rich, Celebratory, and Sweet

From our Love Song Service at UNC-Charlotte to S'lichot and Rosh Hashanah services, September will offer depth, joy, and a loving entry into our new year.

Our High Holy Days schedule is on our very next page, but please don't forget that everyone is also welcome to join us at the reprise of our Love Song Service on September 5 at UNCC. This particular iteration of our popular, non-traditional service will feature a goodly number of Beatles songs, a couple of guest appearances by congregants, and, possibly, a dance team to help get attendees off their feet.

All the information you need is inside our September *Shmoozeletter*. Please feel free to read on. May your New Year be an especially sweet one, and may you be written and sealed for a wonderful 5775.

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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!

## High Holy Days

Abraham and Sarah's tent was open on all four sides, so the rabbis say, to welcome strangers. The religious culture that our ancestors created advocated welcoming others and caring for those in need. God's grace, according to Judaism, is everyone's for the having, regardless of language, ethnicity, or any other defining characteristic.

We celebrate Rosh Hashanah as the day in which God created the world and all humanity. Why not consider the many ways Jews can and should reach out to care for God's creation? At Yom Kippur, Isaiah offers a social action program; how does his mandate apply to our obligations to heal not just ourselves, but the world we live in?

This year, TOO's High Holy Days theme will explore Jewish universalism. As we celebrate God's creation, we look closely at our own: Who do we want to become in 5775?

All events will be held at Piedmont Unitarian Universalist Church, 9704 Mallard Creek Rd, Charlotte, NC 28262.

September 21	7:00 - 8:00 p.m.	S'lichot — Preparation and reflection for High Holy Days
September 24	7:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Erev Rosh Hashanah Service
September 25	10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Rosh Hashanah Morning Services, followed by lunch on the patio and Taschlich at the nearby Greenway
October 3	7:00 - 8:00 p.m.	Kol Nidre Service
October 4	10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.	Yom Kippur Morning Service
October 4	4:30 p.m.	Reading of Merle Feld's Play 'The Gates Are Closing,' to be followed by group discussion
October 4	6:30 p.m.	Ne'ilah Service
	7:15 p.m.	Havdalah, followed by Break-Fast

Suggested donations for non-members:

- ✧ Families: \$180
- ✧ Individuals: \$90
- ✧ Students: gratis

High Holy Days donations can be applied to membership dues if guests join within three months. Please call 704-720-7577 for more information.

Childcare provided, beginning thirty minutes prior to services.

## To Fraternity — and Beyond!



**J**ews must be about more than Judaism. Judaism must be about more than Jews.

If we are going to claim that our tradition is about ethics and morality, if we are going to insist that we have been blessed with a mandate to recreate the world more peacefully, if we are to pray to a God of all the world — and thus, all the world's peoples — then we must be about universal ideals.

I teach a history that demonstrates our stubborn adherence

to such hopes despite abuse and oppression on some of the grandest scales that human history has witnessed. And yet the smallest things may waylay us, bring us down, help us forget.

During the Days of Awe, and in the year to come, we shall study the questions that ask us to remember how Project Judaism is connected to Project Human. We will address — mindfully and fairly — some of the ways in which we might describe non-Jews as 'other.' We will think about signals we send that might make non-Jews feel like outsiders.

The 'knowing look' is one example. Over the past decade, I have seen Jews talking to one another about relationships. One might indicate that she is engaged to a non-Jew. But, she explains, her partner is fully supportive of her Jewish life, goes with her to temple, celebrates holidays with her family, and welcomes in Shabbat with her when she lights the candles.

Other Jews at the table glance at each other and her with a knowing look.

What is the unspoken assumption generating that glance? A life companion who is that supportive is bound, eventually, to convert. It's just a matter of time.

But this expectation — or hope — on the part of Jews must be examined for what it is. At the very least, it suggests that the young woman's beloved will be truly accepted in the community only after conversion. It *should be* just a matter of time.

We need to examine our hearts, our souls, and our minds. We need to study our ancient history — one that made room for non-Jews who supported and became part of our synagogues. We need to ask what Judaism should be.

# Millev Harperdes

From the  
Heart of the  
Orchard

The older I get, the more I am made aware of the beauty and humanity of my tradition. I see how it embraces the expectation that I approach the entire world with compassion, love, and understanding. Judaism asks me to honor others for the good people they are, not for whom I want them to be.

Judaism asks me to pay attention to those times when my small-mindedness separates me from the divine. The Holy One of Blessing asks me to be, above all, simultaneously human and good.

Four years ago, I quoted this kabbalistic text in our *Shmoozeletter*. Let's look at it again:



*There is the one who sings the song of his soul, discovering in his soul everything – utter spiritual fulfillment.*

*There is the one who sings the song of his people... he strives for fierce heights, clinging to the entire community of Israel in tender love. Together with her, he sings her song, feels her anguish, delights in her hopes. He conceives profound insights into her past and her future, deftly probing the inwardness of her spirit with the wisdom of love.*

*Then there is the one whose soul expands until it extends beyond the border of Israel, singing the song of humanity...*

*Then there is the one who expands even further until he unites with all existence, with all worlds, singing a song with them all...*

*There is the one who ascends with all these songs in unison, the song of the soul, the song of the nation, the song of humanity, the song of the cosmos – resounding together, blending in harmony, circulating the sap of life, the sound of holy joy.*

Join me, please, in this blessing: May we sing, these High Holy Days, and in the New Year, the song of the cosmos, the song of holy joy.

*Rabbi Barbara*

## Board Meeting

Your Board of Directors held no meeting this month. Our next meeting will be Sunday, Sept. 28, at 7:00 p.m. via conference call.

## Setup and Takedown for High Holy Days

Our High Holy Days 5775 are fast approaching. We have many ways in which you can participate as part of our community, and a very easy way for you to do it! A SignupGenius e-mail will be coming to you soon, which lists all the events, food, and slots for helpers. Questions? Contact [templeadmin@or-olam.org](mailto:templeadmin@or-olam.org).

Looking forward to seeing you there!

## Childcare for High Holy Days

We will have adult care givers for our High Holy Days schedule. If you know you will be attending and need childcare, please let us know that by e-mailing the temple administrator.

- ✧ Sep. 24 Erev Rosh Hashanah 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
- ✧ Sep. 25 Rosh Hashanah 9:30 a.m. to noon
- ✧ Oct. 03 Kol Nidre 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
- ✧ Oct. 04 Yom Kippur 9:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. / 3:30 - 8:00 p.m.

## High Holy Days Play: 'The Gates are Closing'



a play by merle feld

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

News for the Jews

# News for the Jews

you, the congregation. We will be calling you, or you may get in touch with us via [president@or-olam.org](mailto: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 HDD'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.

## 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 rock-in' good time with plenty of youthful vigor. Don't miss it this time!

Friday,  
Sept. 5  
7pm  
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## Final Summer Reports from Or Olam Teenagers

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

### LingLing Jacobson:

On the Fourth of July we set off many different types of fireworks like rockets, firecrackers, sparklers, and more stuff like that. Later in July, I flew to Texas to visit my aunt and uncle and cousin. We visited the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum and saw Mark Cuban's and Jerry Jones's houses. We ate out a lot and went shopping there, where I got a Michael Kors cross body purse (my favorite thing to have bought all summer).

In August I traveled to New Jersey and visited my sister and my niece and nephew. I also visited colleges with my siblings: Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania. I went to the ocean beach in Delaware and collected many seashells. I also went swimming this summer: in Texas, when I was there at my aunt and uncle's pool; at the Lake Norman scuba diving quarry; and at Carowinds, where I went several times because I am a person who loves roller coasters along with the wave pools there. I also went swimming in a creek in Pennsylvania.

I exercised and tried to make money this summer. I sorted a collection of old coins together, and I hope I can sell them for money. I washed cars to make money also. I learned some more songs to play on my keyboard, and I drew a lot of pictures in my sketch book. I am moving into a new bedroom soon, so we painted it and worked on it this summer. I read a number of books, too.

I hung out with my friends! - at a couple of pool parties and sleepovers. I bonded very closely with a minor friend, and now I call her my best friend. I created an Instagram account with my best friend, and it has over 2,000 followers.

Of course it is summer, so I enjoyed a great deal of my summer sitting on the couch in front of the TV. I watched 5 seasons of one of my new TV shows that I discovered over the summer, 'The Vampire Diaries.' I have really enjoyed the summer of 2014!



### JingJing Jacobson:

As I am going off to boarding school next year, at the NC School of Science and Math, I spent a lot of my summer preparing for the next school year. However, that does not mean that I did not have fun while doing so. As a requirement for school, I needed to perform 60 hours of volunteering at an agency. I performed my work service at the Metrolina Food Bank, where I met a lot of nice and interesting people, and I was able to contribute back to society by packaging and sorting foods and goods for those who cannot afford them. Going to the food bank every morning also gave me time to practice my driving, as I have a permit but not yet enough hours to get my license.



In addition to doing volunteering, I was also able to explore the many different course possibilities at the school. I was able to create my own schedule and to choose fun classes, like ballet and oil painting. And of course, how would a school be a school of math and science without summer homework? Unfortunately, I did have to complete an online summer course and read the book *Ready Player One* by Ernest Cline. On the bright side, for a book required for school, I was highly impressed by the novel. It was science fiction and not at all like typical summer reading books. I would highly recommend the book to those who enjoy adventure novels.

Thankfully, my summer was not all about school. I got to watch some movies with my friends, such as 'The Fault in Our Stars' and 'Maleficent.' Also, one of the highlights of my summer was going to see my favorite band, Fall Out Boy, live, along with Paramore and New Politics during their tour, 'Monumentour,' in late July, with my friends. All three of them were fantastic live. In addition, I also spent some time focusing on some of my hobbies. I learned a lot about HTML coding, and I spent some of my summer writing stories. I also went snorkeling at the Lake Norman scuba diving quarry.

Towards the end of summer, my family and I took a road trip up north. We stopped in Pennsylvania to tour some colleges: Princeton and the University of Pennsylvania. Both were great colleges, and I was impressed by their campuses. We also visited my half sister and her 2 children in New Jersey, as well as attended a family reunion in rural Pennsylvania. We spent a day at the beach, too, which was really fun.

Looking back, I can see just how many new experiences that I've made this summer to make it truly memorable.

### Phillip Jacobson:

My entire summer was very packed. In preparation for college, I took a class on how to write college essays in early June. I found it very useful, and I was able to get a head start on my college applications.





In early July, I worked on my Eagle Scout Service Project for Piedmont University Unitarian Church. With the help of Mr. Steve Smith and several boys from my troop, we were able to construct two picnic tables and five benches for the church grounds.

In mid-July, I visited family in Dallas, Texas, where I was able to visit the George W. Bush Presidential Library and Museum and Southern Methodist University.

At the end of July, I went on a scuba diving excursion with a crew from my Boy Scout troop. We drove to Islamorada, a small town in the Florida Keys. There, we embarked on a 45-foot schooner into the open ocean. We lived on the boat for five days, traveling to various reefs to scuba dive at. We did 14 dives total, including two night dives. I got a chance to see many types of marine life: moray eels, nurse sharks, reef squids, stingrays, and many different types of coral. We also happened to be in Florida during mini lobster season, so we were able to go catch lobsters. Catching lobsters was very frustrating and exhausting, but I managed to catch one of legal size, which we cooked for dinner. It turned out luck was on our side during the trip: Even with the unpredictable weather of the keys, we did not encounter any foul weather and we were able to do all of our dives.

Lastly, in early August, I went to a family reunion in Pennsylvania. I also visited Princeton University and University of Pennsylvania while there. Now that school is starting, it is time for me to work hard and prepare for college.

### Collin Kanofsky:

I went to first grade readiness camp and I had kindergarten homework. I went to Camp Mindy also. My summer was a really good summer. I went to Seattle, Washington. I climbed on a different mountain to see Mt. Saint Helens. I went on another hike to see some waterfalls. I saw some navy ships. My family wasn't with me; it was just me and daddy. We got to see two kinds of torpedo shooters! And we got to go inside where people would shoot the guns inside the ship. The outside of the ship is where we found the torpedoes from the ship. I saw the horses at Sage's camp. I also saw a teepee at Sage's camp. In Seattle, I slept in the trailer with my cousin Gregg. The only bad part was that there was no water in the trailer and we had to go to the house to use water. I also jet skied with uncle Rudy watching me. I also got to drive a little. My summer vacation will go on for years and years! (maybe, or maybe till August 20, 2014). – *transcribed by Sierra.*

### Sage Kanofsky:

This Summer I had a lot of fun. I went to Camp Mindy for 2 weeks. I also went to Hidden Valley Camp in Washington State. It is a sleep-away camp for 3 weeks. My favorite part was horseback riding. In the beginning of the summer, our family went to South Myrtle Beach and slept at my grandma's beach house. I also made the Charlotte United team. We also went to Virginia Beach. We swam a lot in the JCC pool and my grandpa's pool. I went on a jet ski with my dad, and we went super-fast. My sister and I played volleyball in our front yard. It's lots of fun. I had a great summer and I can't wait for next summer!

### Sierra Kanofsky:

This summer I went to Israel with my grandma for my best friend's bat mitzvah. We had a hard time getting there because our airplane got delayed because a hurricane was coming. It was delayed so much we would have missed our connection, so we went home. The next day we tried again, and after a two-hour delay we were on our way. We went to Chicago and London before getting to Tel Aviv. There was a lot of tension

when we got there between Israel and Gaza. They can't even stamp passports anymore for risks of getting you in trouble if you travel to an Arab country. Within the first three days we were there, an Israeli had killed a Arab boy and had started a mini war. We visited Jerusalem and went to my best friend's bat mitzvah. She did great! Then my grandma and I were supposed to visit Ben Gurion University for a speech I was going to make about some statues we put in my grandpa's building, but it wasn't safe to travel there, so we went to the Dead Sea instead. We climbed Masada (may it not fall again) and spent a few days in the north away from the bombings, we thought. One morning my grandmother woke up from a bomb exploding: Lebanon had fired for the first time in quite some time, but it was going to take more than a bombing to wake me up, so I slept through it. After touring the Golan Heights for a few days, my grandma and I went to Tel-Aviv, where we met up with my friends again. While we were in Tel-Aviv, we had three bomb warnings, but there was more of a risk of debris falling on us there than the missile itself because of the Iron Dome. Everyone goes into the elevator area and meets their neighbors until they say **הכל בשדר** (*hakol seder*, 'everything is okay') and everyone goes back to their rooms. I will never forget this trip and all the fun I had. It was definitely an experience. I also had lots of volleyball camps. Lastly, I have been working with Freedom School. Freedom School helps underprivileged kids who are at risk of falling behind in school by losing their reading skills stay on track during the summer so they're not behind when the school year start. That's what I did this summer.



# Kvelling Corner

Marilyn Atlas

This month's kvell celebrates **Keri Huneycutt**, as our director of the children's Religious School in the TOO congregation. Keri is so impressive. She is calm. She is enthusiastic. She is gifted with children. She fosters creativity and the joy of learning how to embrace our Jewish faith. She puts in many hours to be our angel who has the task of imparting Yiddishkeit to our precious and vocal children. (I wonder, during the next service who will get the microphone? Ha! Ha!) In all seriousness, Keri, TOO wants to thank you for all your hard work and dedication.

# Know your ALEPH-BET

## Samech — Hag Samech!



The *samech* is hard to pin down historically. In its various written forms, it seems closest to Greek 'chi' (Ξ / ξ). Maybe Phoenician 𐤎 ('s') became something that looked like the Greek ξ, then something like a tilted 3,

then the familiar ring-shaped ם.

Interesting that it should follow the 'nun' in the Hebrew aleph-bet. You will recall that נ is sometimes associated with *nefilah*, 'fall,' and 'samech' is also the shoresh (root) for the verb 'support.' What is more, the word *samech* סמך can also be read as an acronym for *salach* סלח 'to forgive,' *mechal* מחל 'to pardon,' and *kaper* כפר 'to atone.' It thus seems a most fitting letter to contemplate as we approach Yom Kippur.

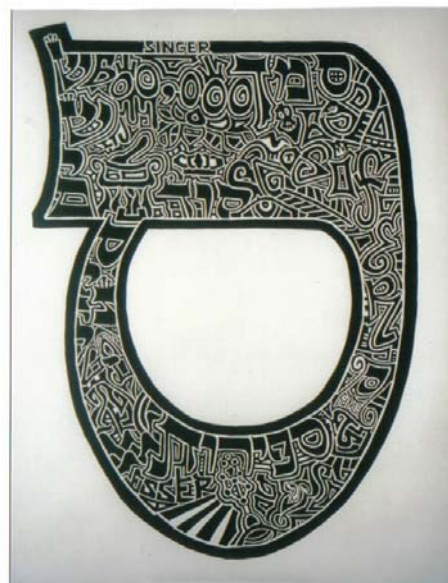
Then again, the modern Hebrew word for 'trout' is *shemesh*, related to Arabic *samak* 'fish,' which appears to have been the meaning associated with Phoenician 𐤎. (Is that why so many pronounce the festival 'Yom Kipper'??). But if that is so, then there would still be a connection to *nun*, which may also mean 'fish, serpent.' Some people even visualize *samech* as a serpent biting its tail (scratching its head, more likely).

The numeric value of the letter is 60. Sixty is a frequently used factor by which to extrapolate to the supernatural: Manna was sixty times as good as honey, sleep is one sixtieth of death (as dream is one sixtieth of prophecy), Sweet 'N Low is sixty times as sweet as sugar, and multiplied by a factor of

sixty, Shabbat gives you a sense of the World to Come.

Sixty is also our base for time and space. We divide hours and minutes by sixty, and a full circle is six times sixty degrees (360°). The *samech* itself has a circular shape. As we move through our scroll in time and roll it back again to the beginning, so our Torah is a circular text—and as we do so from generation to generation, so it supports us. The *samech* is thus also a most fitting letter to contemplate as we approach Simchat Torah.

Ralf






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**CALENDAR**

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- Fr Sep 05      7 p.m. The Love Song Service, UNC Charlotte Student Union 340 C&F
- Sa Sep 06      10 a.m. Torah Study  
                     11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
- Su Sep 07      Opening Day of Religious School, Dorton Park Shelter #1
- Sa Sep 13      10 a.m. Torah Study  
                     11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
- Su Sep 14      Second session of Religious School, Advent Lutheran Church
- Sa Sep 20      10 a.m. Torah Study  
                     11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
- Su Sep 21      7:00 p.m. S'lichot Service  
                     an anticipation and preparation for High Holy Days
- We Sep 24      HAPPY NEW YEAR!  
                     7:00 p.m. Erev Rosh Hashanah and oneg
- R Sep 25        10:00 a.m. Rosh Hashanah, lunch, Taschlich
- Sa Sep 27      10 a.m. Torah Study  
                     11 a.m. Adult Hebrew
- Su Sep 28      10:30 a.m. Hebrew Cemetery Memorial Building dedication
- Fr Oct 03      7:00 p.m. Kol Nidre Service
- Sa Oct 04      10:00 a.m. - throughout the day: Yom Kippur service, 'The Gates are Closing' reading, Ne'ilah, Havdalah, break-fast.

## September BIRTHDAYS

09-04 Julia Chait	09-07 Gabriel Malin	09-07 Cheryl Greenwald	09-15 Janet Sternbach
09-19 Jonas Everhart	09-24 Alan Coffman	09-29 Joseph Garcia	

## YAHREZEITS

09-01 Eileen Zelig sister of Tom Jensen	09-01 Irving Sternbach father of Robbin Smith and	09-07 Sandra Greenwald sister of Earl Greenwald
09-08 Albert Joffe father of the late Dr. Irving Joffe	09-26 Joseph Resnick father of Phyllis Herschenfeld	09-27 Harold Spivock father of William Spivock

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Religious school:	<a href="mailto:school@or-olam.org">school@or-olam.org</a>	Keri Huneycutt
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