

Shmooze Letter

November 2014



November Events

Israel Today

Nov. 07, Panera Bread (community room)
8034 Concord Mills Blvd., Concord NC 28027

Piedmont UU is setting up for a fundraiser, so we will host **Dr. Kathryn Johnson**, assoc. prof. of Religious Studies at UNC Charlotte. She is a convert to Islam and offers a nuanced perspective on the political landscape of Israel and its neighbors. A list of foreign news outlets that report on the Middle East will be in the 11/4 loop (if you want to be up to date for that discussion). This will be the inaugural event to our series on 'Israel Today,' the most popular topic requested for our Adult Education. Other events to follow.

6:00 pm Dinner on your own at Panera
7:00 pm Short Shabbat Service
7:15 pm Short talk by Dr. Johnson followed by Q&A

ISJL Weekend and Shabbaton Fr-Sa Nov. 21 & 22

We have so many cool things to do with our ISJL intern, **Lex Rofes**, that our November 21-23 weekend is turning into a Shabbaton! Friday night we will have a potluck, tzedakah project, and Torah service with Rabbi Barbara and Lex leading. Saturday will be Torah study, meetings with teachers, Board, and committees, music and drumming instruction, Havdalah, supper, and games. Sunday is Religious School with Lex.

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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 is 'Judaism'? Do you know?

The Way must be based on the Pure,
 On Truth, on Rites and on Worship.
 The Pure is unique without second.
 The Truth is correct without evil.
 The Rites are simply respect.
 Worship follows the Rites.
 During their daily activity, people
 cannot forget Heaven, not even for a moment.
 Only in the morning, noon, and evening,
 three times they prayed.
 This was the true principle of the *Tian Dao* (The Way of Heaven).

You might think you have read an ancient Chinese text. In fact, you have. But you have also read the work of Jews, work that comes from the Kaifeng community in China, which flourished between their arrival, likely in the 10th century C.E. and the 17th century.

Why should we think about the history of this community?

Because it provides us with a reminder of the multi-vocal nature of our tradition. Some Jews have lived without any knowledge of the rabbinic corpus. No Talmud of any kind, with its rich and variegated commentaries on Torah, its stories, its myths. No law codes or philosophical works. No mystical texts, like *Sefirah Yetzirah* or the Zohar.

Even those of us who have never read a word of Rashi or the Rambam know that these are names that belong to our tradition. We may never have cracked open the *Shulchan Aruch* (which even provides legal prescriptions for exactly how and where tzitzit should be placed on a prayer shawl), but we know that *halakha* (Jewish law) has been required reading for generations of our mostly Ashkenazi ancestors.

Can we imagine a Jewish community that did not live under the pressure of Christian overlords when that history determined so much of Jewish experience?

What have we to learn from the lives and the literature and the practice of Jews whose rituals may seem more Chinese than Jewish, more African than Jewish, more Indian than Jewish?



Millev Harperdes

From the
 Heart of the
 Orchard

We can learn that 'Jewish' is a term we should apply with care.

During the first Religious School day in November, I will be bringing our children the sounds and pictures of Jewish communities from all over the world. They will hear a song that sounds African (but the words are the *Shema*). They will see pictures of a family with a mother dressed in a sari; she is the matriarch of a family of Jewish oil pressers outside of Alibag, India. The woman playing a def wearing a traditional costume of Uzbekistan? She is Jewish.

What is the lesson? What is the question?

What is 'Jewish' and what is 'Judaism'?

Could you say?

Rabbi Barbara

How did the Patriarchal sages rectify their reverence?

First they washed their bodies, changed their clothes.

Then they 'purified their natural rulers' (mind)

Then they 'rectified their natural senses.'

Then they respectfully entered the Way of the Scriptures.

'The Way (*Dao*) is without shape and image.'

Meanwhile (I) will tell you the practice of worshipping Heaven and prayer.

It was as follows:

'First, bend the body and pray,

The *Dao* is in the bowing

Then stand without leaning and pray,

The *Dao* is in the standing.

Be quiet and keep up the silent prayer.

Do not forget it is Heaven.

Moving, inquiring, and singing in prayer.

Do not disregard, it is Heaven.

Retreat three steps, suddenly behind.

The Prayer is behind.

Advance five steps. Look up in front,

The Prayer is in the front.

Bow to the left and pray.'

Board Meeting

October 26, 2014

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

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

The Temple Or Olam Board of Directors met in its monthly meeting via conference call on Sunday, October 26, at 7 p.m. Below is a short synopsis of the business accomplished at that meeting:

- ✧ Joyfully accepted into TOO membership Mark Prince, Rebekkah Grossman, Cody Scercy, and Trey Whitesides.
- ✧ Approved an additional \$50 to be added to the \$100 owed to Merle Feld for the play performed at Yom Kippur as a gift for letting us pay over time.
- ✧ Approved the movement of the small balance in the Emergency Fund to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, closing the Emergency Fund.
- ✧ Approved the movement of the small balance in the Building Fund to the separate Building bank account, closing that Building Fund.
- ✧ Approved a change to the Caring Committee Policy defining how to serve nonmembers.
- ✧ Approved the formation of a Finance Committee to meet as needed for oversight or audits of financial records. Members of the current committee are to be Richard Jacobson, Bill Jetton, and Charlotte Miller, current treasurer.
- ✧ Accepted the resignations of Earl Greenwald, as President, and Cheryl Greenwald, as Director of Outreach, to be effective as soon as replacement appointments are approved. [A special meeting to do such has been called for Sunday, Nov. 16, at 7:00 pm.]

Resignations

At the Board of Directors' Meeting on October 26, Earl and Cheryl Greenwald announced their resignations from the Board effective November 16, 2014. We wish them only the best.

We are humbled by the speed with which our members stepped in to fill these upcoming vacancies (President, Director of Outreach). In addition, we are happy to be able to appoint a Director of Religious Services, a position that is currently vacant. All appointees will take office at the Board of Directors' Meeting on November 16 and shall

News for the Jews

News for the Jews

serve, as per our Constitution, until the next annual meeting of the congregation.

Once these appointments have been formalized by the Board, a separate e-mail will be sent to the congregation with specifics. Thank you so much for your patience as we go through our constitutional process.



Tot Time at TOO

With Rabbi Barbara

- ☆ December 7
- ☆ February 4
- ☆ April 12

11:30 - 12:30, Advent Lutheran Church, University City Blvd., across from UNC Charlotte

Sukkot Report

What a great time we had at the Sukkot campout! It was the perfect relaxed event after our wonderfully-intense High Holiday services. Arlene Filkoff did yeoman’s work organizing the weekend, along with her Religious School parents. Several of those who attended only Saturday had so much fun, they vowed to stay over night next year. Thirty-two TOO members and guests came, including the families Berkowitz, Filkoff, Huneycutt, Malin, Jensen, Everhart (with Shannon’s brother Will), Chait, Jacobson, VanArsdale, Gordon, and Miller.

Though we were only a few miles east of Concord at T. N. Spencer Park, the woods and cooler weather provided a true fall experience. The Berkowitz and Filkoff families manned the large campfire, the tents, and the emergency supplies. The males took charge of erecting our temple sukkah, using the bundles of dried corn stalks for the roof. One of our Cabarrus gleaned farmers generously cut and bundled the stalks so Charlotte Miller could pick them up on Saturday morning. Everybody pitched in to decorate the sukkah with popcorn strings, pinecones, and hand-drawn fruit and vegetable pictures.

Our sukkah was placed in a recently-cleared small amphitheater spot a short distance removed from the group camping site. We were surrounded by walls of tall pines opening to the sky, like a sukkah within a sukkah. After a convivial potluck dinner, we gathered in the sukkah for Havdalah and the ceremony of the lulav and etrog. Our lulav was made entirely from local material that symbolized the connection to where we are now—a cornstalk top with a straight, green seed stalk, fern from the woods, and basil from the Filkoff house. It was bound with braided corn leaves.

After an evening nature walk with the ranger, stories and s’mores around the campfire, everyone retired for the night, some in the sukkah. Keri led a brief worship session on Sunday morning before takedown and goodbyes at 11am.

Looking Toward Hanukkah

We just finished a month chock-a-block with holidays and a bat mitzvah, but don't let down too far. Hanukkah is just around the corner. We are tentatively celebrating jointly with Piedmont on Saturday, Dec. 20. Israeli dancing with Penny is scheduled. Have some good Hanukkah ideas? Call us! We need you.

Financial Update

At our annual meeting in June 2014, Or Olam took a large step of faith and increased our budget considerably, mostly to continue increasing Rabbi Barbara's contract so that we can eventually offer remuneration that reflects the value of her time and commitment to TOO. Thank you for making that leap successful by quickly responding with your renewal paperwork and pledge commitments. Emails have gone out detailing each family's financial pledges and any payments made toward those pledges. If you are paying quarterly, the payment for July-September should be made by now. The October-December quarter is due by December 31. Monthly payers should keep abreast of their payments similarly. Email statements will be sent out again in January 2015.

We are also pleased to announce that our High Holiday visitors were very generous in their donations, leaving us after expenses with a profit that will lessen the fundraising burden for this year. Several guests expressed their appreciation for the warm welcome and relaxed atmosphere we present. We will continue to contact all our visitors occasionally and welcome them again anytime.

Charlotte Miller, Treasurer
Michael Filkoff, Director of Membership

Our New Members

At the October Board meeting, four new members were accepted into Temple Or Olam. Rebekkah Grossman, Cody Scercy, and Trey Whitesides are already active in our young adult group, Derech Israel. Mark Prince and his young son, Zachary, also joined. Zach is in the Religious School, and Mark works with the Fundraising Committee. Please welcome these new members when you see them.

ISJL Shabbaton Weekend: Tentative Schedule

All Friday and Saturday events at Piedmont UU

Friday, November 21

06:00 p.m. Potluck Dinner and tzedakah project
07:00 p.m. Torah Service

Saturday, November 22

11:00 a.m. In-person Torah Study
12:00 - 01:00 p.m. Lunch on your own, or as a group in the area
01:15 p.m. Discussion with Lex about outreach and future plans. Everybody welcome.
02:30 p.m. Lex and Derech Israel. Everybody else takes a hike on the greenway.
03:30 p.m. Lex and Religious School teachers for training and discussion
04:30 p.m. Instruments, drums, and singing. Everybody joins in!
05:40 Havdalah
06:10 p.m. Pizza / salad supper
07:00 p.m. Games!

Sunday, November 23

all morning Lex with Religious School

Important Note

Lex will be staying with us the entire week of November 16 - 23, between visiting another NC congregation and Temple Or Olam. He will be doing his ISJL work during the day but will need a place to stay on the nights of November 17, 18, and 19. The other nights have been arranged. Anyone have a spare room available?

Donations for October

Zarine Meyer and Altof Kotwal
The Huneycutt family
The Billings family
Bruce Alpert
Jack Stein

Linda Adler
Mike and Susan Tribucher
Doris and Jason Gordon
Earl and Cheryl Greenwald



Kvelling Corner

Marilyn Atlas

October was such an amazing month for us at TOO. I have so much kvelling to do that I may burst of kvell. First of all, we want to welcome our new members, Mark Prince, Cody Scercy, Trey Whiteside, and Rebekkah Grossman. You are very special to us. Thanks for joining our lively group. Secondly, there was the 'The Gates are Closing' play, which was superbly directed by our own Jacob Brayton and acted by TOO members. Thank you, Jacob and all the congregants who spent so much time developing, directing, and acting in this thought-provoking play. Yay for the TOO team. And then we have been blessed with Alan Coffman. We know how much time you spent creating a magical but simplified Facebook account. We will be eternally grateful to you.

Remember, if anyone wants to send me a kvell about someone in the TOO congregation, please email me at Marilynaf@aol.com. Kvelling is good for the soul!

Precious Moments



Havdalah at Temple Or Olam's 2014 Sukkot Campout at T. N. Spencer Park in Concord.



Caleb Malin, Gabriel Malin, Evan VanArsdale, Harrison Berkowitz, and Zach Berkowitz getting in the swing of Sukkot.

It's Coming! Dinner, Dancing, & Dessert 2015



Our third annual Dinner Dancing & Dessert 'On the Wings of Love' is fast approaching on February 7, 2015, at the Mooresville Citizen Center. This is our major fundraiser for the year, supporting our budget and the Dove House Children's Center of Statesville. We have an expanded three-course dinner, beer and wine, dancing, both live and silent auctions of jewelry, painting, trips, baskets, tickets, and more.

How can you help?

- ✧ By buying tickets for yourselves and selling to your friends. Bring a group! We will be glad to arrange group seating. Just let us know. Tickets will be ready by November 15. They are a nice round \$50 each this year.
- ✧ By suggesting possible auction donors or soliciting them. Email Arlene at afilkoff@gmail.com for info.
- ✧ We would LOVE to have a winery set up a tasting/pouring table that will serve as our wine for the evening. If you know someone we can talk to, email templeadmin@or-olam.org.
- ✧ Would your business or someone you know like to be a sponsor? We have very reasonable sponsor packages that include tickets to the event and PR space. Email Arlene.
- ✧ As requested, our dinner menu is below.

Appetizers—out at 6:00 p.m.

Crostini, spinach and artichoke dip, mango and pineapple salsa, homemade lime chips on table next to beer and wine

Dinner—out at 6:30 p.m.

Smoked Beef Brisket
 Sweet Spiced Chicken / white and dark meat
 Grilled Sweet Potatoes
 Gourmet Macaroni and Cheese
 Southwestern Baked Beans
 Bread and Fruit Salad
 Winter Green Salad

Red Velvet Cheesecake
 Caramel Apple Cake
 Chocolate Chip Kahlua
 Lemon with Sweet Glaze





CALENDAR

- Sa Nov 01 10 a.m. Torah Study
 Gleaning in Cabarrus County
- Su Nov 02 09:30 a.m. Religious School with Rabbi Barbara
- Fr Nov 07 06:00 p.m. Dinner and discussion (07:00 p.m.) on 'Israel Today' with Dr. Kathryn Johnson, Panera Bread, 8034 Concord Mills Blvd.
- Sa Nov 08 10:00 a.m. Torah Study
- Su Nov 09 09:30 a.m. Religious School
- Sa Nov 15 10:00 a.m. Torah Study
- Su Nov 16 09:30 a.m. Religious School
 07:00 p.m. Meeting of Board of Directors
- Fr Nov 21 ISJL Weekend begins! Potluck and Torah Service with Lex Rofes and Rabbi Barbara
- Sa Nov 22 A full day of activities ending with Havdalah, pizza, and games
- Su Nov 23 09:30 Religious School with Lex
- Sa Nov 29 Thanksgiving weekend—no Torah Study or Religious School

November **BIRTHDAYS**

11-05 Melanie Carty	11-11 Brian Cutler	11-12 Richard Jacobson
11-13 Isla Garcia	11-23 Philip Jacobson	11-29 Sam Leder

11-01 Morris Miller father of Ellie Joffe	11-13 Annadine K. Jaffee mother of Marilyn Atlas	11-14 Wilhelm Thiede father of Ralf Thiede	YAHREZEITS
11-15 Jaqueline Hutchins aunt of Arlene Filkoff	11-20 Hulda Dorzback mother of the late Ruth Kingberg	11-25 Goldie Barna mother of Cheryl Greenwald	

Rabbi:	rabbi.thiede@or-olam.org	Barbara Thiede
Temple administrator/secretary:	templeadmin@or-olam.org	Charlotte Miller

Committees:

Caring Committee:	caringcommittee@or-olam.org	Heather Chait
Men's group:	mensgroup@or-olam.org	Stephen Smith
Religious school:	school@or-olam.org	Keri Huneycutt

Board:

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