



TEMPLE TORAT YISRAEL

January 2022 Tevet/Shevat 5782

Services

Kabbalat Shabbat

Friday, January 7th, 21st & 28th from 5:45 PM – 6:30 PM *Zoom only*

Friday Night Live (FNL) with the TTY Band & Dinner

Friday, January 14th from 5:45 PM – 6:30 PM *In Person & via Zoom*

Thank G-d its Shabbat (TGIS) with the Rabbi

Friday, January 21st from 5:00 PM – 5:30 PM *Zoom only*

Torah at the Table with Rabbi Philmus

Saturday, January 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th at 9:00 AM

Morning Shabbat

Saturday, January 8th, 15th, 22nd & 29th at 9:30 AM * In Person & via Zoom*

Saturday Kiddush Luncheon

Saturday, January 8th after services *In Person *

Tuesday Minyan

Tuesday, January 4th, 11th, 18th & 25th at 5:30 PM *Zoom only*

There will be no services Saturday, Jan. 1st due to the holiday

Temple Events

Men's Club Rock Spot Climbing Fundraiser – Peacedale, RI location

Saturday, January 1st from 5:30 PM – 8:00 PM

Men's Club University of Rhode Island Basketball Game

Sunday, January 2nd at 4:00 PM

Men's Club Breakfast with Guest Speaker, Ken Schneider

Sunday, January 9th beginning at 9:10 AM *In Person only*

See attached flyer with details

Friday Night Live Dinner - In Person with Takeout Option

Friday, January 14th

Sprouts Program: Tu Bishvat (New Year of the Trees) & MLK Tzedakah theme

Sunday, January 16th at 9:30 AM

Cohen School MLK Tzedakah Program

Students will be making sandwiches on Sunday, January 16th during school hours.

Donate Kosher Sun Butter, jam & loaves of bread to the Temple by Sunday, January 9th

Sisterhood Mindfulness Program with Facilitator, Shara Plynton

Thursday, January 20th from 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM *Zoom only*

See attached flyer with details



Shalom.

Shalom Chaverim,

Sometimes Tu Bishvat, the New Year of the Trees, is closer to the maple tapping season, but this year it falls very early (January 16-17). There will be an extra month of Adar after that to reset the calendar.

This will prevent Pesach from slipping backward into Winter. Now in the month of Shvat, the sap of Israeli fruit trees will soon begin rising and nourishing the blossoms. Our mystics teach that this subtle earthly awakening is mirrored by an awakening of the Great Cosmic Tree of Life. We often talk about how human beings are created in the Divine image, but we rarely do we pay attention to other Divine images like the Tree. According to our Torah, the Tree of Life is at the center of all that exists and G-d's powers flow through it to create reality as we know it.

This time of year we are called on by tradition to pay attention to trees. To know that each tree that we meet in the forest is a living fractal of the great cosmic Tree of Life. Trees are a source of life to us in many ways. They feed us, give us warmth and fuel, shade us, give us medicine, and provide wood for shelter. But it turns out there is even more going on below the surface. Scientists have discovered recently that trees communicate with each other underground through their roots, and they do this through a symbiotic relationship with mushrooms. When we spot a mushroom growing, it is important to understand that this is merely the fruit growing from a much larger creature underground. The largest creatures on earth are the underground networks of beneficial fungi growing on the roots of trees in forests. A vast underground network of branching mushroom threads grow out from the root tips of trees and connect them with the roots of other trees and plants. Scientists have discovered that trees use this "wood-wide-web" to send and receive chemical messages to one another. If you find this intriguing then you won't want to miss the mind-blowing documentary on Netflix called Fantastic Fungi <https://www.netflix.com/title/81183477>

The biggest and oldest trees are the most connected nodes in the forest. These highly-connected hub trees, also known as Mother Trees, share their extra sugar and nutrients with offspring through the underground network. In a single forest, a Mother Tree can be connected to hundreds of other trees. We often talk about survival of the fittest as nature's primary way of operating, but when we look deeper we can see that plants and animals are also working together all the time for mutual benefit. Our modern culture is so individualistic and isolating. It is making us lonely, depressed, anxious, and physically ill. If we want to thrive as a species we need to learn and be inspired by the way of the trees and fungi. We need less ego and more eco. Less focus on building our individualistic power, which is power over something, and more effort to build relational power, which is power with help from someone or something else. Our human relationships can only be strong and healthy if we remember that we are living in the same biosphere as our family and friends. If we pollute the waters with toxic anger and resentment we are also polluting ourselves. This Tu Bishvat may we strive to be more like the mother tree that works together with others to enhance the overall health of the forest.

Happy TuBishvat

Rabbi Philmus

Jan. Events

Men's Club Rock Spot Climbing Fundraiser

Saturday, January 1st
from 5:30 – 8:00 pm

Men's Club URI Basketball Game
Sunday, January 2nd at
4:00 pm

Torah at the Table w/Rabbi Philmus
Saturday, January 8th, 15th, 22, 29th at 9:00 am

Men's Club Breakfast with Guest Speaker, Ken Schneider
Sunday, January 9th
beginning at 9:10 am
See attached flyer

Friday Night Live (FNL) Service
Friday, January 14th, 5:45 pm – 6:30 pm;
see attached flyer.

Musical service followed by an in-person dinner w/takeout option.

Sprouts Program: Tu Bishvat (New Year of the Trees) & MLK Tzedakah Theme
Sunday, January 16th at 9:30 am.

Cohen School MLK Tzedakah Program
Sunday, January 16th
during school hours

Sisterhood Mindfulness Program
Thursday, January 20th
from 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm via Zoom only.

See attached flyer.

TGIS: Thank G-D It's Shabbat with the Rabbi
Friday, January 21st ; 5:00 pm – 5:30pm.
Shabbat Songs and Story. Via Zoom only.



Shalom Fellow Congregants.

As life unfolds, we must navigate the various obstacles and hurdles that arise and continue to have the faith in moving forward to enjoy the beauty and wonder of it all. For the past two years, we have been confronting the global pandemic. In the twenty-first century with all the marvels of science, who would have believed that COVID would remain a world-wide problem for so many months? When we began 2021, the vaccines were about to be distributed. We thought that the fight against COVID would soon be won after the vaccines were widely distributed. The virus mutated from the original strain to Delta and then to Omicron creating more issues for its treatment. The reluctance of some people to become inoculated has compounded the fight to conquer its spread. During the summer, the return to pre COVID normalcy appeared to be on the horizon. Instead, the virus mutated and became more contagious although not as severe as the original strain. COVID will be around for many years to come. We will need to live our lives under the new normal. Facemasks, COVID vaccine boosters and other precautions will remain a part of our lives.

During this past year, Torat Yisrael went from virtual services to a hybrid of in person and virtual. We hope that at some point during the new year, we will be able to expand our in-person service schedule. In December, 2021, we resumed our Friday Night Live Shabbat service (FNL) followed by a delicious in-person Shabbat dinner after a hiatus of 21 months. We will continue to monitor Omicron to determine if we are able to continue our monthly FNL. This past September, the Cohen Religious School returned to in person classes. It is yet to be determined if Omicron will affect in person learning. With the COVID mutations being so prevalent, it is difficult to plan events months or even a week away. The health and safety of our congregants and staff are of the utmost importance. We are constantly reviewing the COVID environment and making decisions accordingly. We will continue to keep everyone informed of any changes to our scheduled events.

Our Kol Nidre appeal was very successful. Our generous and supportive congregants donated over \$22,000.00. The Kol Nidre appeal has been the largest fund raiser for Torat Yisrael since COVID forced the cancellation of our gala Ways and Means fund raising events. To those congregants who contributed to this year's Kol Nidre appeal, I thank you on behalf of your fellow congregants. Your generosity is deeply appreciated.

The Rabbinic Search Committee under the chair of Susan Smoller has been meeting regularly during the past month. The Torat Yisrael Bulletin will contain her monthly report as to the Rabbinic Search to keep everyone up to date.

Torat Yisrael is fortunate to have dedicated members who donate their time and financial resources that enable the Temple to continue to provide religious services, social events and Jewish education. Your support during these trying times is truly noticed.

Stay healthy and have a great New Year!

Andrew G. Sholes



Torat Yisrael's Cohen School

On December 5th, we celebrated Chanukah as a school with a special snack of latkes and sufganiyot. Students played dreidel and enjoyed chocolate gelt in their classrooms. A huge thank you to Ally Antin for spearheading the parents "fryers club" and thank you to all the parents for their hard work that morning in the kitchen. An email and text of pictures from this special event was sent to all families so please make sure to check it out.

In addition to all the Chanukah lessons and fun, many of the classes focused on the Parsha of Joseph this month. The K/I class decorated their own coat of many colors and wore them! The 2/3 grade class completed a Joseph's Coat mosaic craft. The students in grade 4/5 cut out squares of "fabric" with words on them and assembled them into Joseph's coat after coloring them, which assembled into the text of Gen 37:3 "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his sons, because he was the child of his old age. Also, he made him a tunic of many colors".

Grades 6/7 have been meeting with Rabbi Philmus, along with their teacher Brenda Levin, as part of their B'Nai Mitzvah program. The first session was titled "Growing Up" and students reflected on their responsibilities becoming teenagers

as they cross over from childhood to adulthood. They discussed Rabbi Elazar, who said that teachers should respect students as if they were teachers themselves. And they explored the idea of Kavod, treating someone with dignity. The most recent session was called "Making Friends" and explored Jewish and cultural ideas about friendship. The students were also introduced to Dunbar's Theory of Mapping Friendship and the importance of lifting friends up in times of need.

Classes continue to practice their Hebrew reading skills and specific prayers. Teachers are following our prayer curriculum tailored to their students' skill level. In late January they will be able to lead those prayers from the bimah during our first all school Tefillah.

The Sprouts program was on December 19th, and focused on Shabbat and was led by Leah Ross-Coke. They explored a book about Shabbat, sang songs about Shabbat, created challah covers, enjoyed a Scavenger hunt for Shabbat items and took home a delicious challah made by Shoshana Laufer. The next one will be on January 16th @ 9:30 and will be Tu B'Shevat themed. Reminder that it may be held in the social hall so please remember to wear your masks at all times while in the building.

In mid-January we hope (Covid dependent) to start a weekly Hebrew Boot Camp. Polls for times and days will be sent via text in January. Bootcamp will be taught by Andrea Allgood. The fee will be determined by the number of weeks the camp will run. More details to follow in 2022.

We will continue to have some outdoor lessons and recess so please send your child into school with weather appropriate clothing. We have a wonderful aide, Julia, who helps out on Sundays at the school and the students absolutely adore her! We are looking for one more high school volunteer to help us out on Sundays. Please have your child contact Dori if they are interested in dedicating consistent weekly Sunday hours.

Parents are reminded to continue to complete a quick health assessment of their children every Sunday morning and to not send any children that have been exposed to Covid or have cold or flu-like symptoms to school. We will have extra masks and hand sanitizer available. Parents are required to inform Dori if a member of the family has tested positive for Covid in order to safely notify other families. No names will be given in the notification. Please remember that if anyone in the household is sick, do not send students to school.

Feel free to contact me at school@toratyisrael.org regarding school programs and policies.

The Rabbinic Search Committee

The Rabbinic Search Committee (RSC) has been diligently progressing with the search for a new Rabbi. We sent out a survey to the congregation and over 60% of the families responded with priorities for the future and other feedback. This was valuable information and was taken into account when the RSC completed and submitted, to the Rabbinical Assembly (RA), a thorough questionnaire (over 26 pages long) related to our current congregation, our vision for the future and the priorities and qualities for our new Rabbi. The RA has posted the job posting and questionnaire so that all Rabbis who are members of the RA can review the posting and apply to be our Rabbi. The entire RSC will interview each applicant and will report the progress to the congregation. Each Rabbi will have an introductory virtual interview and, if appropriate, a second in-depth interview. Each applicant will be asked identical questions by the same member of the RSC, in order to ensure consistency and impartiality. The RSC will invite suitable candidates to spend time with us in East Greenwich. We plan to invite the Rabbi for a weekend and we hope that many of our congregants will meet the Rabbi and provide feedback to the RSC. If we do not receive suitable applicants from the RA, we will request a waiver from the United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism (USCJ) to post the job elsewhere. This is the process that is mandated by the USCJ, of which we are a member. The RSC has attended three USCJ webinars related to the hiring of new Rabbis and is incorporating the relevant information into the search process. We appreciate your feedback and invite you to please contact any of us with ideas, comments or questions.

The members of the RSC are: Allyson Antin; Steve Cohen; Barry Golden; Andy Sholes; Sherri Smith; Susan Smoller; David Wasser; Jeremy Weinberg.



Librarian's Corner

Three Sisters: A Novel by Heather Morris

Against all odds, three Slovakian sisters have survived years of imprisonment in the most notorious death camp in Nazi Germany: Auschwitz. Livia, Magda, and Cibi have clung together, nearly died from starvation and overwork, and the brutal whims of the guards in this place of horror. But now, the allies are closing in and the sisters have one last hurdle to face: the death march from Auschwitz, as the Nazis try to erase any evidence of the prisoners held there. Due to a last-minute stroke of luck, the three of them are able to escape formation and hide in the woods for days before being rescued.

And this is where the story begins. From there, the three sisters travel to Israel, to their new home, but the battle for freedom takes on new forms. Livia, Magda, and Cibi must face the ghosts of their past--and some secrets that they have kept from each other--to find true peace and happiness.

Inspired by a true story, *Three Sisters* will hold a place in readers' hearts and minds as they experience what true courage really is.

Laura Steele



Sisterhood

We hope that your Chanukah and holiday season was festive!! We want to wish you all a very Happy 2022!! Wow something new to remember, 2022!! We follow Temple Torat Yisrael's policy on Covid and wearing masks in the building.

November - Winter coat and winter clothing drive, update: We outdid ourselves this year, we are proud to say we had two car loads with 50 large garbage bags full of items. This was quite a success!! The true success is on the faces of the kids and families of the Providence Mount Pleasant High School. Winter is here in Rhode Island and these donated items will keep them warm. A BIG Thank You to all who donated. A BIG Thank You to Leah & family for lugging all of the bags, from the TTY building to the car, from the car into the school building.

December - Food drive - Sisterhood vs Men's Club. Sisterhood and Men's Club would like to thank you all for the contribution of food that we collected for the first ever competition food drive. We collected an abundance of food for both the Louis & Goldie Chester Full Plate Kosher food pantry and St. Luke's food pantry. The true winners are the food pantries & the people who are in great need.

On December 12th, we had 6 gals attend our knit & kvetch. Elaine Salinger was on hand to give a lesson in Knitting. Check out our Facebook page for pictures.

January 20th (Thursday) from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm – Mindfulness Program - Shara Plynton, a school social worker will be teaching us all about Mindfulness and how it can help us in our lives. The program runs for 1.5 hours and will be on Zoom. **See flyer for more information. Cost: \$10** fee either a check made out to Temple Torat Yisrael Sisterhood and mailed to TTY or Venmo @Leah-Ross-Coke with Mindfulness in the memo. **RSVP: ttysisterhood@gmail.com** to let us know that you're attending. A Zoom link will be emailed to you so make sure we have your email address. Everyone is invited to participate.

February we are taking a break. Upcoming in March is the Sisterhood Passover Wine Sale.

March - Sisterhood and Men's Club Shabbat. Tentatively for 3/12

Please join Sisterhood and send in your dues, \$25 year + \$5 for the Mitzvah fund. The Mitzvah Fund pays for the candlesticks for our Bat Mitzvah girls as well as items needed for our Temple's kitchen. Membership in Sisterhood & Men's Club for five years entitles your child to apply for the \$5,000.00 Frederic G. & Lawrence G. Cohen College

Scholarship. If you are a New Member of Temple Torat Yisrael, your first year of dues to Sisterhood is free, so please come check us out!

Join our Temple Torat Yisrael Sisterhood Facebook Page

Please use our Sisterhood email to RSVP - ttysisterhood@gmail.com to all of our events

Respectfully ~Judy Finkle Programing VP of Sisterhood - email Judy hotpinkjudy@yahoo.com with any new ideas

In Our Torat Yisrael Family



Mazal Tov to everyone celebrating a Birthday in January!

Elan Smith (9 years old), Esta Karp, David Levy (13 years old), William Massey, Dr. Melissa Pezza, Jason Deutsch, Dr. Naveh Levy, Rebecca Ginsburg, Sonya Colletti, Charlie Massey (9 years old), Eden Smith (7 years old), Daniel Smith, Robert St. Clair, Gary Siperstein, Elizabeth Honey Massey, Stephanie Norin, Benjamin Revkin, Judith Steiner, Valerie Philmus, Ruth Blasbalg, Jill Niedelman, Lary Norin, Kurt Salomon (12 years old) & Alan Olinsky.

Our Torat Yisrael Community Acknowledges with Thanks the following Generous December 2021 Donations:

GENERAL FUND

In Memory of William Abeshaus
- Debra Abeshaus

In Memory of Esther Adelman
- Karen Wier

In Memory of Philip Birenbaum
- Beverly Rotenberg

In Memory of Norman Bomzer
- Harriet Bomzer

In Memory of Jeffrey Bookbinder
- Joanie Bookbinder

In Memory of Irene Buckin
- Sheila Kaplan

In Memory of Bertha Davis
- Marc & Helen Davis

In Memory of Hermione Goldman
- The Goldman Family

In Memory of Lenore Goldstein
- Nancy Waszkis

In Memory of Milton Goldstein
- Nancy Waszkis

In Memory of Celia Greene
- Jim & Sana Greene

In Memory of Leo Greene
- Jim & Sana Greene

In Memory of Ruth E. Hirsch
- Jim & Sana Greene

In Memory of Gladys Greenberg
- Marlene & Gerald DiPrete
- Robert & Robin Greenberg

In Memory of Julius Heimann
- Sam & Lillian Mendelowitz

In Memory of Edith Honig
- Dr. Richard G. Honig

In Memory of Evelyn Vera Labush
- Bernard Labush

In Memory of Norman Levine
- Joanie Bookbinder

In Memory of Benjamin Mendelowitz
- Sam & Lillian Mendelowitz

In Memory of Esther Nemtzow
- Roberta & Wayne Wilfand

In Memory of Earl J. Resnick
- Sharon & Andy Gilstein

In Honor of Janet Richman's 100th
Birthday!
- Phyllis Potash

In Honor of Ruth Ross' 85th Birthday!
- Nina L. Ross

In Memory of Ruth Russian
- Sheila Russian

Thank you for the month of minyans in
memory of Carolyn B. Salk
- Harold, Jeff, Rick, Mike Salk & Families

In Memory of Herbert William Schindler
- Laurie & Stephan Goldman

In Memory of Leonard J. Sholes
- Steven & Dana Sholes

Thank you TTY for High Holiday Services!
- Brenda Siravo, a non-member guest of
Rabbi Philmus at Yom Kippur Services

HAROLD & ROSE BELLIN ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of Albert N. Bellin
- Trudy Katz

In Memory of Rose Bellin
- Trudy Katz

BERTHA & BERNARD GOLDBERG ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of Muriel Davis
- Bertha & Barbara Goldberg

In Memory of David Engle
- Bertha & Barbara Goldberg

In Memory of Sidney Kramer
- Bertha & Barbara Goldberg

In Honor of Ruth Ross' 85th Birthday!
- Bertha & Barbara Goldberg

In Honor of David Wasser
- Bertha & Barbara Goldberg

MYER GROSSMAN ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of Emma Cohen
- Alan & Anita Olinsky

DOROTHY & SIDNEY KRAMER ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of Ralph Kramer
- Dorothy Kramer

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Honor of my Grandson, Tylah Coke's
Bar Mitzvah Celebration!
- Ruth Ross

MICHELE PAM ROSS FUND

In Memory of Evelyn Vera Labush
- Ruth Ross

SECURITY FUND

In Memory of Lillian Finkle
- Jonathan, Judy & Ariel Finkle

LEONARD J. SHOLES ENDOWMENT FUND

In Memory of Leonard J. Sholes
- Andrew G. Sholes

STREAMING FUND

In Memory of Harry Klitzner
- Lynn Field