Christmas. It brings out lots of interesting reactions. Sometimes the Christmas season makes me think about why Jews celebrate it. Sometimes it makes me think about Hanukkah and how it got to be the “Jewish Christmas.” Sometimes I think about what movie I’d like to see and what dish I’ll order at the Chinese restaurant. Sometimes I bemoan the commercial orgy which takes place every fall but, at other times, remind myself that merchants are people too, and are entitled to make a decent living. Different years, different reactions; some years, multiple reactions.

There is one reaction which I get every year. I absolutely resent that cities, towns, counties, and schools put out crèches and Hanukkah menorahs. It isn’t about the money. It makes no difference to me whether a church provides the crèche or Chabad provides the menorah. Call me old fashioned but I believe strongly in a stricter, rather than looser, understanding of the separation between church and state. To me crèches and menorahs cross the line. They are religious symbols, and they convey a religious message. Cities, towns, counties, and schools have no business conveying religious messages and public officials ought to know better. It is against the law.

The Supreme Court hasn’t exactly been helpful on this subject. It has ruled that cultural symbols are permissible. This is what makes Christmas trees, Christmas lights, Santa Claus and reindeers permissible. On the grounds that our public officials have more important things to do than figure out how to celebrate Christmas in ways which conform to the rulings of the Supreme Court, I would not be unhappy if the trees and lights disappeared from public buildings. Private businesses do a fine job

A group of students at Nicolet High School in Glendale, Wisconsin asked for permission to build a sukkah on the school grounds. According to the Forward, the reason students gave for wanting a sukkah on school grounds was to provide “an opportunity to educate others about Jewish culture.” (Forward, October 24, 2014) I might be tempted to applaud the school officials for saying no. Apparently the same school officials last year said ok. It appears they changed their position this year because of pressure from parents and the community. I would applaud their change of heart if they understood they were crossing a legal line. I would also applaud it if they realized that, legal or not, public schools can teach respect for others without having a sukkah (or a cross or model of the Kasbah) on school grounds.

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with seasonal decorations, and I would be content to let them bear the full “burden” of making sure that every man, woman, and child in our country knows that it is the Christmas season and that means we are supposed to spend a lot of money. But since almost everybody agrees that trees and lights are cultural and not religious I don’t want to be accused of being a scrooge. I will admit that I am somewhat bewildered that the Court can consider a menorah a cultural symbol. I can understand how the Israel Supreme Court could reach that conclusion, but the U.S. Supreme Court?

Personally I prefer that the particular aspects of religion be practiced in the home and in religious institutions.
It’s not just what we do that’s important to us as 21st Century Reform Jews, but who we do it with, that makes us want to engage, return and experience it over and over again. This was at the core of the message delivered by Rabbi Jonah Pesner, Senior Vice President of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ), when he addressed Beth Ahabah professional and lay leadership on October 30th. “The word ‘relational’ is so overused that it is in danger of becoming meaningless,” he warned, “yet it is critical to the future of Reform Judaism.”

Rabbi Pesner challenged Beth Ahabah leaders to consider the primary question raised in Dr. Ron Wolfson’s book “Relational Judaism”, “Are we bureaucratic organizations that offer programs or are we communities of people, in meaningful relationships, bound by common purpose?” Rabbi Pesner explained, “So many congregations get caught on a programmatic treadmill. In their desire to reach more people, they offer more and more programs.” Wolfson says, “What we really yearn for is true connection; what we seek is, indeed, Relational Judaism.”

Additional questions posed by Rabbi Pesner struck a more personal chord. “Are we participating in experiences of tefila (prayer) that bind us to others, or are we sitting anonymously in a pew? Are we simply attending activities, or are we sharing profound experiences of meaning and purpose that not only enrich our lives, but actually connect us more deeply to one another?”

In addressing the “how” of Relational Judaism, Rabbi Pesner shared the excitement that he is both witnessing and inspiring in congregational communities across North America. A critical first step, he suggested, is to “change our definition of success.” He asked, “To what extent are we measuring our members’ deepening connections to one another?” and explained, “As we challenge our communities to deepen peoples’ engagement with meaningful Jewish experiences, we should also be focusing on the extent to which we are strengthening our social networks within our communities.”

Inviting Rabbi Pesner to address Temple leadership was one more step in Beth Ahabah’s visioning for the future. In many ways, he wove together a sentiment that has threaded conversations occurring at Beth Ahabah through various forums over the past year.

The visioning process we are currently engaged in will help to guide the capital and endowment campaign, scheduled to launch in the coming months. Through this process, we are already beginning to lay the foundation for our future. Each and every voice is valuable. Each and every dream, important, if we are to bring Beth Ahabah’s future into focus – transforming ourselves from a mid-century model house of worship to a 21st Century congregational family - bound by relationships built on shared sacred experiences, authentic learning, meaningful work and profound spirituality.

To view a video of Rabbi Pesner’s address, visit www.Bethahabah.org.

Rabbi Jonah Pesner was elected Senior Vice President of the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) in 2011. Named one of the most influential rabbis in America, he has been an inspirational leader, creative entrepreneur, and tireless advocate for social justice. In his current position, he is a principal architect in transforming the URJ and guiding the Reform Movement to become even more impactful as the largest Jewish denomination in the world. Among other initiatives, he is the founder and visionary leader of the Campaign for Youth Engagement, a bold strategy to mobilize tens of thousands of young people in the Jewish community.

Let’s enjoy Hanukkah. Let’s have latkes, menorahs, presents, songs, and fun. Let’s appreciate and take seriously the themes of Hanukkah about resisting assimilation. Let’s invite friends and neighbors to our homes to enjoy a Hanukkah dinner and see us light the Hanukkah. Let’s not miss the Hanukkah party on December 14th and the Hanukkah dinner and service on December 19th. If friends and neighbors would like to learn more about Hanukkah, bring them along. And let’s remind our public officials that we can do all this without a menorah in city hall. If they really want to be good neighbors maybe they could not permit bicycle races which close Franklin Street on Yom Kippur.
CURRENTLY DUE
by Russell M. Finer, FSA

Although December is the last month of the year and a time for lots of celebrations, it is only halfway through the congregation’s fiscal year.

Among my responsibilities is monitoring income and expenses associated with operating our synagogue. As you too well know, expenses come along every month - for payroll, facilities, supplies, insurance, school and office supplies. So, why am I stating the obvious? It is because I am making my annual request for timely payment on your congregational account. Please take a look at your most recent statement and send in payment for the items marked “currently due”. Your financial commitments as well as your thoughtful contributions are our largest sources of income. You are welcome to make payment by cash, check, bank drafts, debit card or credit card. We appreciate your ongoing support and generosity.

To the many of you who have already paid your accounts in-full, thank you, and, if you are able to, please consider making an additional end-of-year donation to Beth Ahabah.

My family and I wish that you all have a New Year filled with fulfillment, good health, and happiness. May it also be a year of peace throughout the world.

Russell M. Finer, FSA
Executive Director

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Torah Study with Rabbi Beifield

Rabbi Beifield leads a weekly, one hour, Torah study and discussion group on Thursdays at noon in the Joel House conference room. No knowledge of Hebrew is required. We read through the Torah line by line and discuss its meaning for us. Bring a lunch if you wish; we supply the drinks. Bring a friend; Torah Study is open to all. For more information email (rabbi@bethahabah.org) or call (358-6757) Rabbi Beifield. Make this year the year you start studying Torah.

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Israel Study Group

Do you want to know more about current events in Israel? Do you want to learn about Israel’s political, religious, and cultural life? Do you want to understand the varied and sometimes conflicting opinions about Israel? Do you want to figure out the role of Israel in your life? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, Beth Ahabah’s Israel Study Group may be right for you.

Rabbi Beifield leads a monthly, one hour discussion about Israel on the second Tuesday of the month, at noon, in the Joel House conference room. No special background is required, just an interest in learning more about Israel. Bring a lunch if you wish, we supply the drinks. Bring a friend; the Israel Study Group is open to all.

The next meeting of the Israel Study Group is on December 9th. For more information email (rabbi@bethahabah.org) or call (358-6757) Rabbi Beifield.

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Mount Moriah Update

Come to Mount Moriah Baptist Church the 3rd Wednesday of any month and you will find several of your Beth Ahabah friends practicing Tikun Olam. Beth Ahabah provides fried chicken, green beans, corn, fruit cocktail and paper products and Richmond Friends of Homeless provides the bread and dessert. Serving lunch at Mount Moriah is a very rewarding experience. Please come join us and help heal the world right here in Richmond.

For more information, contact Lynn Burris 804-439-2657 or ackmanrealty@gmail.com

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Hanukkah begins at sundown on Tuesday, December 16th

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DO WE HAVE YOUR CORRECT CONTACT INFORMATION?
If you’ve recently moved or changed your email address, please contact the Temple office at 804.358.6757 to make sure our records are up-to-date. Thank you.
Volunteers Needed for CARITAS:

Beth Ahabah will again serve as an intake site for the CARITAS Program for the homeless. CARITAS stands for Congregations Around Richmond Involved To Assure Shelter. From Saturday, December 20, 2014 through Friday, February 13, 2015, persons seeking shelter for the night will come to our school building at approximately 5:45 p.m.

We need volunteers to help CARITAS personnel sign in the homeless, offer them refreshments and make our guests feel at home until the CARITAS bus takes them to their shelter for the night. The bus arrives at approximately 7:00 p.m. Volunteers need to be at Temple by 5:30 p.m. and should be finished by approximately 7:15 p.m.

Two volunteers are needed per night. There will be CARITAS personnel as well as a Beth Ahabah staff member present each evening. No advanced training is needed to perform this mitzvah. Please consider volunteering as an individual or a family. Most Beth Ahabah volunteers agree to work the same night each week for the duration of the program. Several members who have participated in the program with their teenage child have found this a rewarding family experience.

Items such as appropriate magazines, playing cards, books and toiletry items are always welcome as donations. To sign up or for more information, please contact Chuck Greenberg at 794-6800 or cgre41@yahoo.com.

Author Jennifer Elvgren to meet with 6th and 7th Grade Students

Jennifer Elvgren, author of “The Whispering Town”

Sunday, January 11th
9:30 am for 7th Grade
10:30 am for 6th Grade
Location: Goldburg Auditorium
Parents are welcome to attend

Students in the 7th grade study about the Holocaust at Beth Ahabah. In teaching about the Holocaust we hope to give our students an understanding of the roots of injustice, intolerance and indifference that allowed the horrors of the Holocaust to occur. We also focus on giving students empowerment to recognize and stand against injustice, intolerance and indifference in the world around them, and hope to guide them to be “up-standers” rather than “by-standers.

Eizehu Gibor or Living Jewish Values is the course of study for our 6th graders. In teaching Jewish values we study Pikuach Nefesh or Saving a Life. The students study both Jews and Righteous Gentiles who risked their own lives, and the lives of their families to protect, hide and assist Jews in escaping the Nazis.

“The Whispering Town” is a new book written by Jennifer Elvgren, an author from Charlottesville. The story focuses on the life of a Danish child before and after the Nazi occupation. Her family is sheltering a Jewish family and the story recounts how the entire town assists in helping Jews escape to Sweden. The story is based on a true account and Ms. Elvgren will talk about how she learned of the incident and how she turned it into a published story. There will also be a discussion about the Danish Resistance and the work of Righteous Gentiles (and the Danes specifically) who saved many Jews during the Holocaust. Ms. Elvgren will also discuss the process of taking a story from idea to publication. Students will each receive a copy of the book and will be encouraged to transform a personal family story from idea to written word.

CBA COMMUNITY NEWS... IN SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILIES OF.....

Morrie Post
father of Gary (Lora Bretz) Post
Charles Thalhimer, Sr.
husband of Sibyl Thalhimer
father of Harry (Marcia) Thalhimer
L. Peter Wren
father of Matt (Linda) Wren
Arthur Adams
husband of Gloria Weiner Adams
step-father of Susie (Ronnie) Adolf
grandfather of Evan (Katharine) Weiner
Jacqueline Lowenstein
wife of Murray Lowenstein
Gordon Danoff
father of Ruby Jo (David) Hiller
Jerome Gumenick
husband of Gigi Gumenick
father of Jeff (Jennie) Gumenick
father of Randy (Stacey) Gumenick
uncle of Betty Sue (Todd) LePage
uncle of Nancy Grandis White
Nana Drexler
aunt of Ruth (John) McMahon
Josephine Davis
father of Marc (Rebecca) Friedlander
Jeffrey Friedlander
father of Marc (Rebecca) Friedlander

CBA Community News Continues on Page 12
by Ramona Brand

A JEWISH WHITE CHRISTMAS?

The story of Hanukkah is at heart the battle against assimilation and acculturation. The Maccabees were not only fighting for the preservation of Jewish law and practice, but also against the Hellenization of the Jewish people. This experience would be repeated by every wave of Jewish immigrants who came to America and would struggle with becoming American, without losing their Jewish roots. Even today, many synagogues offer programs called “The December Dilemma” timed to coincide with conflicting winter holidays. It would not be surprising then, to learn, that the quintessential American Christmas song, White Christmas was penned by Jewish songwriter Irving Berlin.

Born Israel Isidore Beilin on May 11, 1888 in Tyumen Russia, Berlin was one of eight children of Cantor Moses Beilin and his wife Lena. The family moved, like so many other Jewish immigrants, to the Lower East Side of New York after watching their home burned to ashes during a vicious pogrom in Russia. They lived in desperate poverty in Russia, which continued in America as his father struggled to support the family. Eventually, after his father’s death in 1901, Berlin worked as a newspaper boy, then began singing in saloons for a few pennies a day.

Music became his refuge and he taught himself to play piano and began composing songs for Tin Pan Alley in New York. His first hit was Alexander’s Rag Time Band. He once said, “My ambition is to reach the heart of the average American, not the highbrow nor the lowbrow but that vast intermediate crew which is the real soul of the country.” He did just that, capturing the voice of the American people with songs such as God Bless America (to which he gave all proceeds from Royalties to the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts and Campfire Girls). Yiddish lyrics of the song were proudly sung in Jewish circles. The phrase “God Bless America” was taken from Berlin’s mother. While he was growing up on the Lower East Side, she would say “God Bless America” often, to indicate that, without America, her family would have had no place to go. Berlin’s songs, such as Puttin’ on the Ritz, There’s No Business Like Show Business and Oh, How I Hate to Get up in the Morning proved that Berlin’s music was durable and memorable throughout the decades.

In 1942 he wrote White Christmas for the movie Holiday Inn, which became one of the most recorded songs in history and it won Berlin the Academy Award for Best Music in an Original Song that year. Was it incredible that a Jewish immigrant, a son of a Cantor from a very religious background could capture the essence of the American Christmas experience? Perhaps Berlin himself understood the assimilated American culture better than most. His second wife was Catholic (his first wife who was Jewish, died just 6 months after their marriage. He was a poor immigrant who made it big and captured the American Dream. His words expressed the feelings of the common American man and woman.

So if you find yourself humming along to one of many versions of White Christmas while passing in and out of stores during the month of December and you feel a little conflicted doing so; don’t. It’s practically a Jewish song.

TOT Shabbat
Saturday, December 6th
Saturday, January 10th
9:00 – 10:30 am
In the Gumenick Chapel

For our young congregants who are aged 18 months to 5 years, we have special services designed to give them a fun and warm introduction to the synagogue, to Shabbat, to the holidays, and to Judaism. The family friendly service with music and movement is followed with an activity hour in the Joel House that includes stories, songs, crafts, snacks and...
FAMILY DINNERS AND Shabbat SERVICES
With Etz Chayim and Ruach Chadash

4th and 5th Grades Family Dinner and Shabbat
Friday, January 16th
6:00 pm catered Shabbat dinner
7:30 pm service

Join us in a musical celebration of Shabbat! Enjoy our Family Shabbat dinner for 4th and 5th grade families, followed by a lively family-friendly Shabbat service with music and participation! 4th and 5th grade students will be honored by being called to the bimah to help lead Shabbat prayers. Everyone is welcome to sing along as Etz Chayim and Ruach Chadash accompany with joyous music!

$10.00 per adult/$8.00 per child age 3 and up. Reservations are required: email Ramona at r.brand@bethahabah.org to RSVP and let us know how many are in your party. If you make reservations and then are unable to attend, a 24 hour cancellation notice will enable us to notify the caterer so you will not be charged for dinner. Vegetarian dinners available upon request.

FAMILY MINGLES:
2nd & 3rd Grade Mingle
Sunday, January 11th at 9:30 am
In the Joel House Multi-purpose room

Sunday Morning Social includes brunch and mingling with other parents in your child’s classes. A great way to get to make connections!

4th Grade Gesher
Sunday, January 18th
Class Project: Illuminated Manuscripts
Adult Education Theme: Afterlife and the Messiah

6th Grade Gesher
Sunday, January 25th
Adult Education Theme: Ecclesiastes and the Meaning of Life
Class Projects: Living Jewish Values

Geshers
Parents are invited to join their children at Religious School to participate in our Family Education Program called Gesher (which means “bridge” in Hebrew).
9:15 am  Students in class
9:30 am  Adult Education Session for Parents
10:30 am  Parents & children enjoy age-appropriate project & brunch

BETH AHBABH RELIGIOUS SCHOOL
FAMILY HANUKKAH PARTY!
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 14TH
9:30 – 11:30AM
GOLDBURG, JOEL HOUSE AND PRIMARY SCHOOL WING
Fun for the entire family!


Volunteers appreciated!! Contact Ramona at r.brand@bethahabah.org to get more information.

CAMP FAIR:
Sunday, December 14 during the Hanukkah party
9:30 am – 11:30am
Representatives from area Jewish camps will be attending the Family Hanukkah Party. Children who attend a Jewish camp, whether day camp or overnight have a stronger Jewish identity. Jewish campers often become Jewish leaders in the community as adults. Come find out about some of our areas Jewish camps. It’s never too early to Think Summer!!!

This Hanukkah, give your teen the gift of NFTY Convention—a five-day Jewish teen extravaganza! Jewish teens from all over North America are meeting in Atlanta, February 13-17, 2015. They will hear inspiring speakers, renew their Jewish spirit, and develop a deeper passion for local involvement in their Jewish communities. For more information visit nftyconvention.org. The deadline to register is January 5, 2015. Our congregation will be sending a delegation of youth and adults. Please contact Rachel Wolman or Rabbi Gallop for more information.
### Andrew Cole Feinmel
**January 10, 2015**

Andrew Cole Feinmel will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on Saturday, January 10th. He is the son of Mike and Allison Feinmel and the brother of Zachary.

Drew is a 7th grade honor roll student at Pocahontas Middle School in Henrico County. Drew plays travel soccer for the Richmond Strikers and is also a member of the Pocahontas MS wrestling team. Drew most enjoys spending time with his friends and family, particularly on family trips. Drew is particularly skilled at creative designs such as creating videos and cartoons.

For his Mitzvah Project Drew will be working with the Glen Allen Recreation Association “Buddy Ball” program in which he helps young athletes who are otherwise unable to participate in sports because of their disabilities. Drew will honor the memory of his late grandfather, Harry Feinmel, at his Bar Mitzvah.

### Taylor McCabe
**January 17, 2015**

Taylor McCabe will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, January 17th. Taylor is the daughter of Jennifer and Jeffrey McCabe and the younger sister of Madison. She is the granddaughter of Eva Posener and the late Howard Posener, and the late Jean and Thomas McCabe.

Taylor is a 7th grade honor student at Robious Middle School. She plays the flute, enjoys rock wall climbing and attends URJ Camp Coleman every summer. Taylor loves shopping at the mall, listening to music and hanging out with her friends.

For Taylor’s Mitzvah Project she served as a Madracha at Camp Sababa this past summer. While there she helped campers with crafts, games and other activities related to the Jewish Time Travel theme.

We are very proud of Taylor and look forward to celebrating this momentous event with family and friends.

### Mitchell W. Marcus
**January 24, 2015**

Mitchell will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on January 24th. He is the son of Rick and Stephanie, and the brother of Jacob and Adam.

Mitchell is a 7th grade student attending the International Baccalaureate program at Moody Middle School. He enjoys many activities, especially soccer, and spending time with family and friends.

For Mitchell’s Mitzvah Project he is riding his bike a total of 500 miles to raise money for the Bike Walk RVA project. Bike Walk RVA is the Sports Backers’ initiative to advocate for safe and comfortable places for everyone to walk and bike in the Richmond region. Further donations can be made by following the link: http://bit.ly/GoMitchell.

We are extremely proud of Mitchell and we look forward to sharing this very special occasion with our family, friends and the Beth Ahabah congregation.

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*May your Hanukkah shine bright with happiness & peace!*  
The Officers, Board, Clergy & Staff of Congregation Beth Ahabah
DONATIONS

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IN APPRECIATION:
Anne & David Schwartz
Tanya Buress-Werby

IN HONOR OF:
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Marianne & Ted Metzger
Jeanne & Michael Decker’s special anniversary
Ann Bendheim
Lesley & David Greenberg

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Goodman-Gallop
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Karen & Dan Hough

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Neil Schlussel

Mr. & Mrs. Bari Novey’s 50th anniversary
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The birth of Landon Andrew Littauer
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Katie Atwood’s conversion
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Jane Stewart Brown
Demis Stewart

Morey Zoldan, my father & Lillian Zoldan, my mother
Karen & Dan Hough

Hilde Blumenthal
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Thinking of Buying or Selling?
Call me 1st!

STEVIE WATSON

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An armed security guard is on duty at Hebrew Cemetery on the first and third Sundays of the month from Noon to 3:00 p.m.
Jerome Gumenick  
Scott & Nancy Belleman  
Karen & Barry Hofheimer  

Dr. Irving Katz & Tessie Katz, my parents  
Gloria Starkman  

Phyllis Gurman  
Barbara & Michael Blumberg  

Joseph Weiner & Celia Yaffe  
Russell Finer  

Moritz Berenshteyn & Isaac Gorbaty  
Natan & Valeria Berenshteyn  

THE RABBI’S PHILANTHROPIC FUND  
These contributions were received in response to the Annual Appeal:  
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Donations Continued from Page 8  

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Jenne & John Griffin
Daniel Volk & Jodi Sukonick
Zelda & Paul Silver
John Leahy & Etoila Schuplin
Evan & Christie Silverstein
IN HONOR OF:
The birth of Mr. & Mrs. Mark Sisisky’s grandson, Isaiah Benson
Sisisky
Melanie Becker
The birth of Dean Solomon Levy
Laurie, Adam, Melissa & Lyndsay Nelson
Lesley Greenberg’s speedy recovery
Marianne & Ted Metzger
The birth of Nathan McGann
Laurie, Adam, Melissa & Lyndsay Nelson
The birth of Parker Bruce
Goodman-Gallop & Holden Scott
Goodman-Gallop
Fran & Stan Goldman
Ken & Katie Roeper
The Family Connection Committee
Linda & Irvin Seeman
IN MEMORY OF:
Arthur Adams
Gloria Adams
Zelda & Paul Silver
Carolyn & David Grandis
Ruth & Martin Lee
Helen & Michael Boustany
Richard Lee
Charles Thalhimer, Sr.
Minnie Held
Marianne & Ted Metzger
Harry Thalhimer & Family
Beatrice Klein
Jane K. Goldman & Dick Klein
Jacqueline Lowenstein
Murray Lowenstein & Family
Ruth Perel
The family of Ruth Perel
Minnie Held
Hannah Rapp & William B. Cliett
Vicki & Miles Lynn

Gordon Danoff
Barbara Amdusky

CANTOR GOLDMAN’S MUSIC FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
M. David Shapiro, my beloved father
Katherine Shapiro Wootton, son-in-law, Bill; granddaughters, Amy & Lisa
Robin Butin
Sandy & Alan Corbett

HEBREW CEMETERY FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Arthur Adams
Betty Sue & Todd LePage
Ruth Perel
Betty Sue & Todd LePage
Nancy Grandis White
Jean LePage
Betty Sue & Todd LePage
Harry Grandis
Betty Sue & Todd LePage
Nancy Grandis White

ETERNAL LIGHT FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Beatrice Klein
Joyce Rosenbaum

BUILDING FUND
IN HONOR OF:
Al Werner’s special birthday
Judy & Sheldon Markowitz
IN MEMORY OF:
Leona Rosenthal
Beth & Dan Rosenthal

MABEL STRADLING ORGAN FUND
IN HONOR OF:
My father, Sol Axel’s 100th birthday
Marc Axel
IN MEMORY OF:
Marjorie Koblenzer Axel
Marc Axel

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL TUITION ASSISTANCE FUND
IN MEMORY OF:
Arthur Adams
Sandra Adams

CHAI SOCIETY
IN MEMORY OF:
Ruth Perel
Marcia & Michael Zedd

MUSEUM & ARCHIVES
IN HONOR OF:
Herbert Heltzer’s Birthday
Carol & Tom Kelley III
Millie Heltzer’s Birthday
Carol & Tom Kelley III
The Speedy Recovery of Edith Brenner
Cynthia Becker
The Speedy Recovery of Claire Rosenbaum
Bonnie & Mike Eisenman
The Speedy Recovery of Karin Fine
Cynthia Becker
The Birthday of Renate Forssmann-Falck
Deborah Falck
IN APPRECIATION:
Ryan K. Smith
Linda K. Pittman
IN MEMORY OF:
My Aunt, Gertrude Miller
Audrey Landers
Charles Thalhimer
Joyce Rosenbaum
Ruth K. Bellet
Jacqueline Viener
Helene Sowerby & Philip Schuck
Joe & Courtney Sowerby
Beatrice Klein
Edith Brenner
Jane Joel Knox
Esther & Rudy Bunzl
Mrs. Alice Spilman
Bonnie & Mike Eisenman
Willie Anne Wright
Mary Lee L. Allen
Nancy Klein Gross

Donations Continued on Page 14
While Hanukkah is not a major Jewish festival, it is still one of my favorite holidays. I have wonderful childhood memories of lighting the menorah, my mother making potato latkes and of course the presents!

As an adult, I now understand that Hanukkah’s meaning… the celebration of light over darkness, good over evil and spirituality over materiality, is the true gift of this holiday.

Of course, what would Hanukkah be without latkes? If you want to try something other than the standard potato, here are two recipes from the Women of Reform Judaism (WRJ) Centennial Cookbook Collection.

Chag Sameach!
Beryl Holzbach
Beth Ahabah Sisterhood_WRJ
804-363-0814
mail to: beryl44@comcast.net

Apple Latkes
From: Temple Sholom Sisterhood
Vancouver, British Columbia

Ingredients:
2 eggs
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/3 cup water
3 cups chopped cooking apples
3/4 cup sifted all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
oil for frying

Topping:
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 cup sugar

Directions:
• Beat eggs until foamy. Add sugar, salt, cinnamon, and water and mix until well blended.
• Add apples, flour, and lemon peel and mix well.
• Heat enough oil in bottom of pan to cover. For each latke drop about 1/4 cup of batter into hot oil. Flatten slightly and fry on each side until golden brown. Add oil as needed.
• Drain on paper towels
• Combine sugar and cinnamon topping and sprinkle over hot latkes.

Three Tone Latkes
From: Oheb Shalom Sisterhood
Baltimore, Maryland

Ingredients:
2 large potatoes
1 large sweet potato
1 medium zucchini
1 medium onion
2 eggs
1/2 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
1 shake of pepper
1/4 cup matzah meal

Directions:
• Peel potatoes. Grate potatoes and zucchini and set in colander to drain while you grate the onion.
• Press as much liquid out of potato mixture as you can and add to beaten eggs.
• Add salt, pepper and matzah meal (if needed, add a little more matzah meal until you have a good consistency).
• Mix well. Drop batter in hot oil. Brown on both sides and drain on absorbent paper.

Note: Make Two Tone Latkes without the zucchini.

NEW TO THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

If someone Jewish you know is new to the Richmond community and might be interested in finding out about Congregation Beth Ahabah, please contact Russ Finer at the temple office 804.358.6757, ext. 302 or at r.finer@bethahabah.org so he can send them an information package.

Thank you!
October was busy for Brotherhood with not only ushering for the many High Holy Day events, but also putting up the Sukkah. This year we built the Sukkah in the driveway even bigger. To remind you, a couple of years ago, the Brotherhood bought a kit which provided the poles, corners, and green windscreen from our Bernstein Fund for capital purchases. Last year we purchased an additional section. This year we added lengths of pipe to the top to make it wider to accommodate more tables and thus more people. The branches used to lightly cover the top have been donated each year by a Temple member.

This year’s new member greeting gathering was held in it. As can be seen in the photograph, a lot of people of all ages were able to celebrate Sukkot in the Sukkah. Rabbi Beifield was pleased to offer a blessing for the event. There was, eventually, standing room only. Thus we have a request to purchase another section. This has put a strain on our Bernstein Fund. Anyone wishing to contribute to it, thus allowing us to continue to make purchases for the Temple, please contact Ionel Kahn, Brotherhood Treasurer at iakpapa@comcast.net. All checks, made payable to Beth Ahabah Brotherhood, are tax deductible.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO....
Vicki & Andy Littauer on the birth of their grandson, Landon Andrew Littauer, born September 2, 2014. Also to his parents, Vicki & Jordan Littauer.

Ellyn & Steven Sukonick on the marriage of their daughter, Jodi Sukonick to Dan Volk on September 7, 2014.

Melissa Moes & Eric Denmon on their marriage on September 13, 2014.

Russell Finer on the birth of his grandson, Dean Solomon Levy, born September 14, 2014. Also to his great-grandfather, Allen Finer and parents, Rachel & Aaron Levy.


Etoila Schuplin & John Leahy on their marriage on October 5, 2014.

Erin Kasoff & Britt Calloway on their marriage on October 11, 2014. Also to Erin’s parents, Bonnie & Ron Kasoff.

Katharine Williams & Evan Weiner on their marriage on October 18, 2014. Also to Evan’s grandmother, Gloria Adams & his aunt & uncle, Susie & Ronnie Adolf.
Dr. Jack Spiro, Rabbi Emeritus at Beth Ahabah, teaches a course at VCU about the history of Judaism in America. Susan and I were lucky enough to be able to audit this course not long after we moved to Richmond, and we enjoyed it greatly.

A section of the course dealt with the Jewish immigration early in the 20th century. Making the decision to leave one’s native country and culture behind and leap into the unknown of a foreign land with its strange language and customs must be incredibly difficult. What are the things, I wondered, that drove such a wrenching decision?

Dr. Spiro taught that there are generally two factors at work, which he called push and pull. There is a great deal of inertia at work also, certainly. That law of physics that says that bodies at rest stay at rest until some outside force is exerted on them works for people in much the same way it works for heavy packing boxes. Things seem impossibly difficult at home, we say, and we might be better off somewhere else (that’s the push). On the other hand, we say, we might be better off dealing with the devil we know rather than the one we don’t (that’s the inertia).

Then we hear about another country in which things are said to be better, and maybe we hear from relatives who have already gone there and are content, if not actually happy. Maybe they even offer to help us if we join them (those things make up the pull). When the pull and push overcome the inertia, we take action and immigration happens.

On November 17th, the Museum & Archives will open “The Other Side of the Curtain: Soviet Jews Create New Lives in Richmond, Virginia”, a new exhibit dealing with the concepts and the efforts that resulted in over 800 Jews coming to Richmond from the late 1970’s to the early 2000’s to begin new lives as Americans. This is not an exhibit that is abstract in any way. Many of the people who came to Richmond then are still here, and you know many of them whether you realize it or not. They and their children (and grandchildren) are so thoroughly American that sometimes they are hard to identify – that’s good, I think. At the same time, we shouldn’t forget the difficult decisions they had to make and the overwhelming obstacles they had to overcome.

This exhibit is the final step in a multi-year program created through the coordination and cooperation of the University of Richmond, Jewish Family Services, the Richmond Jewish Foundation, the University of Richmond Hillel and ourselves. Previous exhibitions at the U of R, a symposium held on campus and the new documentary film “Draw Back the Curtain” were all part of the project. We are deeply grateful to the many persons and organizations that assisted in this project.

Visit this exhibit and three others at 1109 West Franklin Street, just a few doors east of the synagogue. It will be in place until the end of 2015. We are open from 10 am - 3 pm, every day except Friday and Saturday.

**Richmond Jewish Trivia:**

Rabbi Calisch gave an address at the dedication of Beni Israel synagogue in Tarboro, N.C. on February 11, 1897. He spoke of the history of the Jews as a religious community and was well received by members of the congregation and by those invited to the event.
“Field of Lost Shoes” is a new film about the Civil War and tells the story of the Virginia Military Institute (VMI) cadets’ participation in the Battle of New Market. One of the cadets prominently featured in the film is Moses Ezekiel, a Richmond native and the first Jew admitted to VMI. Ezekiel wrote extensively about his experiences during this event in his memoirs. These memories were faithfully re-enacted in the current film. Ezekiel later became a world-renowned sculptor. This photo is from the large Moses Ezekiel collection of documents, photographs and objects housed at the Museum & Archives.

Volunteer at BAM&A

BAM&A depends on volunteers like you who love history and are interested in learning more about the history of the Richmond Jewish community. Help catalog and file or assist with other needed tasks.

For more information about the volunteer opportunities at BAM&A, call David Farris at 804.353.2668.
## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

**December 2014 & January 2015**

Schedule of Shabbat Services, Religious School Classes

### DECEMBER

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Time</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, December 1</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 3</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, December 5</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Saturday, December 6</td>
<td>Tot Shabbat Service</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, December 7</td>
<td>Religious School</td>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday, December 8</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 10</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, December 12</td>
<td>Brotherhood Shabbat Dinner</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brotherhood Shabbat Service</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sunday, December 14</td>
<td>Religious School Hanukkah Party and Camp Fair</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, December 15</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, December 17</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, December 19</td>
<td>Congregational Shabbat/Hanukkah Dinner</td>
<td>6:00 PM</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Family Shabbat Service w/Etz Chayim</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>Friday, December 26</td>
<td>Shabbat Service in Gumenick Chapel</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
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### JANUARY 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Friday, January 2</td>
<td>Shabbat Service</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday, January 4</td>
<td>Religious School</td>
<td>9:15 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday, January 5</td>
<td>Midrasha Monday</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, January 7</td>
<td>Midweek Hebrew</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday, January 9</td>
<td>Shabbat Service w/Adult Choir</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday, January 10</td>
<td>Tot Shabbat Service</td>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Bar Mitzvah:</strong> Andrew Feinmel</td>
<td></td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### CALENDAR INFORMATION IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE, please check the calendar online at bethahabah.org

- **Sunday, January 11** Religious School: 9:15 AM
  - 2nd & 3rd grade Family Mingle: 9:30 AM
  - Author Jennifer Elvgren, author "The Whispering Town": 9:30 AM
  - 7th grade students: 9:30 AM
  - 6th grade students: 10:30 AM

- **Monday, January 12** Midrasha Monday: 7:30 PM

- **Wednesday, January 14** Midweek Hebrew: 7:30 PM

- **Friday, January 16**
  - 4th and 5th Grade Shabbat Dinner: 6:00 PM
  - Family Shabbat Service w/Etz Chayim & Ruach Chadash: 7:30 PM

- **Saturday, January 17**
  - **Bat Mitzvah:** Taylor McCabe: 10:30 AM

- **Sunday, January 18** Religious School: 9:15 AM
  - 4th Grade Gesher

- **Wednesday, January 21** Midweek Hebrew: 7:30 PM

- **Friday, January 23** Shabbat Service: 7:30 PM

- **Saturday, January 24**
  - **Bar Mitzvah:** Mitchell Marcus: 10:30 AM

- **Sunday, January 25** Religious School: 9:15 AM
  - 6th Grade Gesher

- **Wednesday, January 28** Midweek Hebrew: 7:30 PM

- **Friday, January 30** Shabbat Service: 7:30 PM

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Rabbi Beifield and friends at the 2013 Family Hanukkah party

*Photo Credit: Sara Jane Longstaff*
TEMPLE STAFF

Martin P. Beifield Jr.  Sophia and Nathan Gumenick Senior Rabbi
Jesse Gallop  Associate Rabbi
Russell M. Finer, FSA  Executive Director
Ramona Brand  Education Director
Dr. Jack D. Spiro  Rabbi Emeritus
Frances T. Goldman  Cantor Emerita
Natan Berenshteyn  Music Director & Accompanist
Sarah Beck-Berman  Cantorial Soloist

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Soviet Jews Create New Lives in Richmond, VA
November 17, 2014 - December 31, 2015

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