



The Menorah

Notes from the Rabbi: Ethan Seidel New Ideas for Classes I Might Teach

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Do you have some ideas for a class that you would take, were I to offer it? Though I'm about to offer a few suggestions of my own in this article, my goal here is to get you thinking: For what topic would you both like to study, *and* have the energy to actually show up to a class?

I've been heartened by the success (15-20 attenders for each session!) of my Shabbat morning Talmud class. But I realize that Talmud is not for everyone. And Shabbat morning after services does not work for everyone, especially families with small children.

I would love to offer a class or two that might appeal, both in subject matter, and scheduled time during the week, to a larger swath of the community. Here are some thoughts about possible new classes that

have been running through my head:

What about a lunchtime class downtown? We have a congregant who has offered a conference room in his office (near Rhode Island & Connecticut) for this purpose. I was thinking about offering a class on *Pirkei Avot* (a tractate of Mishnah composed mostly of ethical teachings) that we could study together in English at this downtown venue.



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President's Column: John List Living Our Values by Being a Good Neighbor

This column is devoted to the topic of being a good neighbor. My hope is that it will start a conversation within TI with each of us thinking how we can live that value.

Many of us naturally practice this trait in our own personal lives, but early in January I better understood the need for us to think about this as a community when the Rabbi; Jevera Temsky, our Executive Director; Sheri Blonder, our Synagogue Administrator; and I had a meeting with eight neighbors who live on Juniper Street very close to the shul.

The neighbors were respectful of TI but expressed major concerns about traffic congestion and disrespect for residential property. Some of their concrete examples of encroachment were blocking the alley,

taking parking spaces in front of homes and strangers walking on their personal property.

The Torah addresses this directly. In *Parashat Ki Tavo*, we read that the Levi'im shall speak up in a loud voice, saying various curses to every person of Israel as they prepare to enter the Promised Land. Among the curses: Cursed be the one who moves back his neighbor's boundary.



(Continued on page 3)



Notes from the Rabbi (continued)

This would be convenient for me, because I'm already scheduled to teach such a class on Sunday mornings at TI. Moreover, the Rabbinical Assembly is about to publish a nice new edition of *Pirkei Avot* that we could use. I could imagine such a class taking place once or twice a month. Interested?

How about a late Shabbat afternoon class at my house, to meet once a month? That might even involve the consumption of homemade pastries. Does the topic even matter? I was thinking about using one of Rabbi Jonathan Sacks' books as a text to inspire discussion. In particular, *To Heal a Fractured World* might serve this purpose. But maybe you have a different book of his, or a different author entirely that you think might work.

And a class needn't always be based around a particular text. Is there an idea you'd like to explore, or a skill you'd like to learn?

Think about it. Mull it over. What would you like to learn about your heritage? How could you best learn what your heritage has to teach you? When and where might you be able to take a class? Let me know your thoughts.

Rabbi Seidel

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JTS Program **March 13**

The Jewish Theological Seminary will present an **Evening of Learning: Great Debates in Judaism**, on Sunday, March 13, 5 – 9 p.m., at B'nai Israel Congregation.

The keynote speaker will be JTS Chancellor, **Arnold Eisen**, who will discuss "The Internal Contradictions of the Jewish Soul."

Tifereth Israel is a co-sponsor of this event. Save the date!

Juniper St. Collection

TI is now collecting winter clothing for **Shepherd's Table**. Clothing should be:

- in good condition
- suitable for winter only
- for men, women or children

NO underwear.

As usual, place donations in the wicker basket at the Juniper Street entrance to TI.

Collection ends on **February 25**.

President's Column (continued)

As I walk down Juniper Street, I see lovely, well cared for homes, lawns, flowerbeds and trees. And, I see the many things that TI has done to improve the neighborhood: our rain garden and plantings; the results of our regular lawn maintenance; our tot lot; and, our many improvements along the alley. Individually and together, we have created and are the stewards of a calm, lovely neighborhood.

As you would expect, our neighbors are part of a caring community. Much like we are always helping each other at TI, they host guests in their homes, carry groceries and other necessities in and out for those who cannot carry heavy objects, shovel each others walks and clear off parking spaces for their own and

others' cars in winter. Also important is that some of the most immediate neighbors of TI are seniors for whom easy and convenient access to their homes is especially important.

As an institution, we are trying to be good neighbors. For example, the TI office communicates to our vendors and others who use our facility guidelines about parking and respect for neighbors' properties and we make a concerted effort to enforce them.

As individuals in the TI community, we try in our everyday activities to be responsible for living the values that our tradition teaches us. High among those is respect for our environment and the people we as a community are living among. I ask that you

begin to attach high importance to those values.

So, I am asking you to think about this topic and discuss it with your friends and family. As one way to respond to this need, we have updated the TI Parking Guidelines, which are printed below and are available in the office.

I hope that you can come up with some creative ideas about how we as a community can practice the important value of being a good neighbor. Rabbi Seidel, Jevera and I are looking forward to hearing from you about this. It is my sincere hope that if we can think concretely about how to live this value it will alleviate the concerns of our neighbors.

Revised Tifereth Israel Parking Guidelines

Tifereth Israel is a big presence on Juniper Street — perhaps more than you know if you are only here a few times a week or month.

Our neighbors are surprisingly attuned to the activities in the shul. Many of them are happy to have such a vital institution right on their street and over time they have adapted to the cycle of life for the congregation, including Shabbat, *haggim* and religious school.

Our active TI community also brings challenges to homeowners on a primarily residential block. As you move through the neighborhood on foot or by car, you can do a few things to keep a cordial relationship between our beloved synagogue and the broader community. Here are some guidelines to keep in mind. As you read them, you will see that they are good guidelines for all of us!

STREET PARKING

If you are physically able, **park on Jonquil or Kalmia Street along the**

sides of the playing field. This will free up street parking for neighbors, particularly older people who cannot walk very far. It also frees up space for TI members and guests who need to park near the Juniper entrance.

Park along 16th Street when parking restrictions are off. Parking is open all weekend, and weekdays 9:30 am – 4 pm and after 6:30 pm.

Respect occasional cones that a neighbor puts out to reserve a space. Who knows? They may have a disability or they may be saving space for when they come home with a big load of groceries.

***Leave appropriate space when parking** — not so close that you box in another driver and not so far that you take up two spaces! **Park at least 10 feet from a hydrant and at least 25 feet from a stop sign.**

ALLEY PARKING

***Park at least 5 feet from the alley entrances** on Juniper and Jonquil. It

is critical that emergency vehicles have clear access to the alley.

***If you park in the alley lot, pull all the way in so that your back tires are within the boundary line.** Can't fit? Please look for another spot.

WHAT IF I NEED TO PARK CLOSE TO THE JUNIPER ENTRANCE?

If you have a mobility issue, or for any other reason need to park close to the Juniper entrance, **we want to make it easy for you to get into the synagogue!**

Please **let the office know when you will need a parking space reserved.** You can call 202-882-1605 or write to info@tifereth-israel.org.

PROPERTY BOUNDARIES

If you are picking-up/dropping-off passengers, ask them to wait on TI property.

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Lifelong Learning

Eitan Gutin

Mitzvah Day

Nearly 40 parents and children dropped into TI the Sunday of MLK weekend for our 5th Annual **Family Mitzvah Day**. The results of their efforts? Seven blankets for kids in shelters during January's Snowzilla, more than 70 containers of bean soup (dry) donated to the Capital Area Food Bank, and a whole stack of get well cards sent to sick children. Thank you to everyone who came out, and to **Marla Sevi** and **Roz Kram** for working on the supplies for the projects.

Kosher Food Drive

The Himmelfarb School's Gimel Class, under the leadership of their teacher, **Morah Hindy**, has decided to teach the whole school about kosher food while helping to fill the

shelves of a new kosher food bank that will be opening soon in the DC metro area.

Running throughout our school February 3-14, the **Gimel Class Kosher Food Drive** will be a schoolwide competition to see which class can collect the most kosher non-perishable food. Parents and students alike will be learning about the *mitzvot* of feeding the hungry and keeping kosher.

Help Us Grow Our School

On Sunday morning, **March 6**, the Himmelfarb School will host its annual Open House. Any visitors will have the opportunity to see our classes in action, meet the school's leadership, and learn all about what makes our school such a special learning community. Please contact Eitan

Gutin, the Director of Lifelong Learning, for more information.

Hosts, Wonderful Hosts!

Thank you to all the households that volunteered their time and space to host guests from the Far West region of USY. Twenty-eight USY'ers and staff spent four days in DC before heading to Baltimore for USY's International Convention at the end of December. The teens had a great time with the community and were impressed with the Tifereth Israel experience.

Speaking of hosts, Tifereth Israel USY is hosting this year's **Seaboard USY Formal**. The dance will take place on Saturday night, **February 27**. We will be hosting Jewish teens from all over Virginia, DC, and Maryland for this annual celebration.

Parking (continued)

If you or your children are walking in the neighborhood, please stay on the sidewalk. Walls are fun to walk on but it's important to have the owner's permission first!

ANYTHING ELSE?

Yes! If you are having a gathering at TI, or even just inviting a few friends to services or an event, please ask them to park along Jonquil, Kalmia or 16th Street and also share these guidelines with them.

**DC's Parking Enforcement Management Administration takes these issues seriously. You could get cited or towed for blocking or sticking out into the alley or for parking by a stop sign or hydrant.*

Winter/Spring Membership Package

- **Dues reduction:** 50% reduction off full regular dues until June 30
- **Two free Shabbat dinners** for the adults and children in your family
- **Tuition reduction:** free Himmelfarb school tuition for the first child in your family and 50% off tuition for your other children, for the first year you have children attending our school.

Know someone who might be interested? Tell them about Tifereth Israel!

New Members Jared Garelick

Jaclyn Shettler and Aaron Marx

Jaclyn and Aaron, native Michiganders, have lived in the area for about five years. Jaclyn grew up in the Detroit area and Aaron in far northern Sault Ste. Marie. They met as students at the University of Michigan.

Jaclyn has a background in international affairs and now works for a woman-owned consulting firm doing government contracts. Aaron is a chemical engineer-turned-lawyer now practicing international trade law. Jaclyn and Aaron are board game enthusiasts, and Jaclyn enjoys playing piano. The family includes a daughter, **Sophia**, who is 5, and a son, **Leo**, who is 2.

Jaclyn discovered TI through congregant **Lee Anderegg**, a friend through the Takoma Park mom's group. That makes Lee TI's Magnet Mom of the Month. Jaclyn grew up identifying as Jewish because her father is. Recently, she decided to formally convert, studying with Rabbi Seidel to do so. As Jaclyn put it, the family has hung around TI for a while now, attending events like tot Shabbat and Purim parties.

Michael and Adele Sumner

Michael and Adele moved to downtown Silver Spring in August after 30 years living in Teaneck, New Jersey. They had decided to sell their house and live someplace different in retirement and chose the Washington area, finally opting for Silver Spring over Bethesda. Michael previously worked in health care analysis and policy, most recently for a large health insurer. Adele was a CPA in a small accounting firm and is looking forward to a tax season without stress.

The Sumners found TI when they came to explore the area and TI member **Francie Kranzberg**, in her official capacity at Jconnect, showed them around areas they were considering.



They wanted to find an apartment within a mile of a synagogue, and that is what she guided them to, making Francie TI's Jewish Communal Services Magnet Member of the month.

Michael and Adele have two grown children, a daughter in Phila-

delphia and a son in Israel. Since moving here they have been exploring the area, discovering local treats like Strathmore and the Shakespeare Theatre. Michael enjoys playing bridge, and Adele is on the lookout for a mahjong game.



Amy Nelson and Chris Romer and daughters Isadora and Zinnia, featured in the January issue of *The Menorah*

Funeral Practices Committee Always On-Call

Haverim of the Funeral Practices Committee are on call to provide counsel and services to synagogue members and their dependents.

In the event of a death, prior to contacting the funeral home, please contact one of the following haverim, Rabbi Seidel, or the TI office (202-882-1605).

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| Shelly Heller | h: 301-942-1836
w: 202-242-6698 |
| David Cohen | h: 301-652-2872 |
| Marcia Goggin | h: 301-593-8480
w: 301-754-1963 |
| Bruce Heppen | h: 301-299-3255
c: 202-997-1890
w: 703-417-8983 |
| Ann Kline | h: 301-946-2693
c: 301-346-9862 |
| Robert Rovinsky | h: 202 237 1036
c: 202 815 8707 |

TI Christmas Luncheon Program Expanded to Seven Shelters

Frank Solomon

A lot of Jews went to church for service on Christmas Day. But they were engaged in a different kind of service.

One contingent of nearly 20 Tifereth Israel members helped serve Christmas luncheon at St. Stephen and the Incarnation Episcopal Church in Columbia Heights. A group from the D.C. Jewish Community Center worked alongside them, bringing drinks to some 200 homeless people.

The two groups were part of a larger TI social action effort to provide Christmas luncheon on Christmas Day, 2015. TI, helped by volunteers from Adat Shalom and the DCJCC, served food to nearly 600 people at seven shelters. In past years, TI and Adat Shalom served four shelters.

200 Volunteers

Altogether, nearly 100 servers worked at the shelters under seven crew captains. They included 56 adults and 36 children. Separately, almost another 100 volunteers worked at the TI kitchen and their own homes. The behind-the-scenes volunteers:

- Prepared sweet potatoes, cabbage, stuffing, turkey, mac and cheese.
- Smoked and carved turkey.
- Organized food and supplies.
- Gathered donations and wrapped gifts.
- Stored food overnight and warmed it on Christmas morning.
- Picked up food at various homes and TI and delivered it to the shelters on Christmas Day.

Still another contingent of artists and musicians entertained the diners while they ate. This was the first time that TI provided entertainment in a coordinated manner, and nearly a

dozen professionals and amateurs responded.

Mark Novak led singing. **Jeff Steinberg** played the fiddle. **Mona Berch** showed off her accordion skills. **Gene Herman's**, **Sara Goldberg's** and **Raine Weiner's** families sang. The **Levone** children provided a rendition of a holiday song that they reportedly composed themselves. **Sara Robinson** tap danced. **Noa Baum** told stories. **Audrey Smith** led caroling.

Jeff Peterman went to as many shelters and snapped as many photographs as he could that morning.

Glitches

The three new shelters added this year were Loaves and Fishes, in D.C., and Dorothy Day Place & Bethesda House and Chase Partnership House, both in Rockville. Because this was our first time at these shelters, things got a bit chaotic for some volunteers.

Cabbage reportedly arrived late. Because of the unusually warm weather, there was a bit of panic on how to store all the cooked food. A few volunteers went to an old address. One shelter turned out to be a halfway house, where most of the residents went home for Christmas dinner with their families.

As in the past, there seemed too many servers and too much food. The first has been a perennial problem, notwithstanding that we added three new shelters this year and even though we limited the number of servers for each shift.

The second problem, surplus food, has been equally vexing. Estimating the amount of food needed is more an art than a science. Estimates were provided by the shelters' paid

staff and based on our experience. The previous year's turnout doesn't always indicate the following year's showing, especially under the unexpected warm weather.

Limited Publicity

Meanwhile, the program garnered little publicity other than a listing on *The Washington Post's* religion page about the luncheon, notwithstanding four different news releases for area newspapers and TV and radio stations. Most news outlets said they were inundated by Christmas luncheon news all over town. Plus, Christmas charity and volunteer activities are so common that they aren't considered news these days.

Despite the glitches and lack of publicity, most volunteers thought the activity was a fun and worthy cause. Most said they would do it again. As crew captain **Franca Brilliant** said, "In the end we served a delicious Christmas dinner to hundreds of people."

There are many heroes who deserve thanks:

- **Gene Herman** with his friend **Mr. Davis** for turkey preparation and carving.
- **Mona Berch** for taking care of non-perishable food and supplies.
- **Roz Kram** for directing the kitchen staff.
- **Andrea Kline** for coordinating gift donations and gift-wrapping.
- **Janet Nesse** and **Deena Dugan** for preparing mac and cheese.
- **Georgiana Herron** for managing sweet potatoes and **Carolivia Herron** for cabbage.
- **Carolivia's relatives** for delivering food. **Carolivia's friends and**

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February Highlights at Tifereth Israel

February 1, 8, 15, 22, 29	Monday Lunch & Learn <i>Parashat HaShavuah</i> , 11 a.m.; Lunch, 12 noon
February 6	SHALEM, Rabbi Chuck Feinberg, "Judaism and Human Rights," 1:15 p.m.
February 7	Kol Nashim, "For Love of Chocolate" tour of SPAGnVOLA factory, 11:30 a.m. Movie Nite, <i>The Great Dictator</i> , 7:30 p.m.
February 13, 27	Shabbat Talmud Study with Rabbi Seidel, 1:00 p.m.
February 14	Gevarim Brunch, Bill Galston, "The 2016 Presidential Primaries," 10 a.m.
February 16	Kol Nashim Book Club, <i>All of a Kind Family</i> , at home of Esther Herman, 7:30 p.m.
February 26	Friday Night Dinner and reading by Theater J of <i>Falling Out of Time</i> by David Grossman
February 27	Adam Chazan Bar Mitzvah

TI Christmas Luncheon Program (continued)

- neighbors who helped refrigerate food overnight.
- **Varda Fink** for turkey stuffing.
- **Mark Berch** and **Seth Glabman** for warming up food at TI on Christmas morning.
- **Larry Greenfield**, **Earl Dotter**, **Stephen Gunter** and **Arnold Revzin** for pick-up and delivery.
- **Lisa Hack** and **Steve Harvey** at Adams Place.
- **Franca Brilliant**, **Seth Grimes** and **Judi Berland** at John Young.
- **Larry Baizer** at Loaves and Fishes.
- **Anita Finkelstein** at Dorothy Day Place & Bethesda House.
- **Ed Stromberg** at Chase Partnership House.
- **Sara Goldberg** at Tubman's Women Shelter.
- **Gene Herman** at Open Door.
- **Susan Catler's** online assistance was invaluable.

Most of all, thanks to all those unnamed volunteers from Adat Shalom, the DCJCC and TI. It takes three villages to do this Christmas service.

Editor's note: And, finally, special thanks to super-hero **Frank Solomon** for coordinating and leading the entire, expanded seven-shelter program!

This effort would not have been possible without the following can-do shelter crew captains:

Gevarim

Andrew Reamer

גברים

Sunday Brunch: Food for Thought

February 14, 10:00 a.m. "The 2016 Presidential Primaries: A Look Behind and Ahead" with TI member and renown political analyst **Bill Galston**, Senior Fellow, Governance Studies, The Brookings Institution.

Bill Galston will give his views on the results of the Iowa caucuses (February 1) and the New Hampshire primary (February 9) and what we may see in the slew of state contests coming up in late February and early March.

Cost is \$10 for Gevarim and Kol Nashim members, \$12 for others.

Movie Nite@TI

From February through May, Movie Nite@TI presents "Nazis, Jews, and Hollywood: The Early 1940s." In the 1930s, Hollywood did not depict the Nazi treatment of Jews. This self-censorship fell away with the start of World War II. The sudden availability of many accomplished emigre European Jewish actors and directors

had a large impact on the movies that followed. Join us for an evolving discussion about the role of American and refugee Jews in Hollywood producing films about the fate of wartime European Jews.

February 7. *The Great Dictator* (1940, 124 mins). A political satire-drama about dictator Adenoid Hynkel (Charlie Chaplin), whose look-alike, a poor Jewish barber, avoids persecution from Hynkel's regime.

March 6. *To Be Or Not To Be* (1942, 99 mins). A comedy directed by Jewish emigre Ernst Lubitsch, about a troupe of actors (led by Jack Benny) in Nazi-occupied Warsaw who use their abilities at disguise and acting to fool the occupying troops.

April 10. *Casablanca* (1942, 102 mins). Directed by Jewish emigre Michael Curtiz and written by Julius and Philip Epstein and Howard Koch. An American expatriate, Humphrey Bogart, must choose between his love for Ingrid Bergman and helping her Czech resistance leader husband, Paul Henreid, escape Vichy-

controlled Morocco to continue his fight against the Nazis. ["Casablanca" has only three U.S.-born actors. Can you name them?]

May 8. *Hangmen Also Die!* (1943, 134 mins). Directed by Fritz Lang on a story by Bertolt Brecht and Lang. The film is loosely based on the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, "The Hangman of Prague," number-two man in the SS, and a chief architect of the Holocaust. Each movie is free, nosh is \$4.

Shabbat Talmud Study

Brakhot is the Talmud's first tractate and one of the most accessible. In addition to discussions of halakhah, it also has many enchanting stories and fables. Even or especially if you've never studied Talmud before you might enjoy joining our ongoing reading of the last chapter. We read the text in English (photocopies are provided, although folks are encouraged to buy the book, an English translation published by Koren), and discuss.

Shabbat afternoons, 1:00–1:45 pm.
February 13, 27; March 12, 26; April 9; May 7, 14; June 4, 25.

SHALEM Programs

Jessica Weissman

Note: January's snowed-out SHALEM program by **Alan Ronkin** on "Challenges to World Jewry 2016" is rescheduled for **April 2**.

On **February 6** TI member **Rabbi Chuck Feinberg** will speak on "Judaism and Human Rights," discussing slavery in ancient and modern times, the nature of punishment, and whether our society believes there can be healing and reconciliation for those guilty of serious crimes. His talk will use the words of the Torah Reading (*Parashat Mishpatim*) and the Haftarah (Jeremiah) as a springboard for discussion.

On **March 7** we turn our attention to something that affects many TI families. TI's own **Ann Kline** will speak on "No Baloney: Being a Caregiver in the Sandwich Generation." Everyone tells caregivers to take care of themselves so they can take care of others, but how can we achieve that when we are caught between the needs of our parents and our children and all the other demands and pulls of life?

Ann will provide some strategies for resilience and strength that everyone, not just those of us in the middle of the sandwich, can use.

New Office Hours

The TI office hours have been changed. New hours are:

Monday, Wednesday,
Thursday: 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Tuesday: Noon - 6 p.m.

Friday: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Social Action at TI: Gene Herman 2016 MLK Weekend Shabbaton



The 2016 Shabbaton on January 15-17 commemorated a 50-year tradition of social action at Tifereth Israel with a focus on the programs that the Social Action Committee sponsors on a regular basis. This year's event included a Friday night dinner that featured a lively discourse by Rabbi Abramowitz on his early years at TI and the role of social justice in the core values of the congregation.

The Shabbaton also featured a Social Action Fair set up in the lobby entrance to the Cherner Auditorium. The fair included displays intended to highlight the missions, history and volunteer opportunities of organizations with which TI has had strong relationships for several years.

The main speaker during the Shabbat morning service was **Patty Stonesifer**, President and CEO of Martha's Table. She described the current activities of her organization, the many ways in which she envisions expanding the scope of operations and the results that they

have achieved in serving the needs of less fortunate DC residents over many years of operation.

Martha's Table has a strong focus on nutrition and healthy eating, a theme that was recapitulated during the afternoon panel discussion. Ms. Stonesifer's talk generated considerable interest and she was able to answer a number of questions that were raised. It was also noted that for more than 20 years TI has been participating in the organization's van run program that delivers hot meals and beverages to the homeless in downtown DC.

After lunch, the Shabbaton continued with a panel discussion. Participants were **Schroeder Stribling**, Executive Director of N Street Village; **Cynthia Prather**, Early Readers program at Shepherd Park Elementary School; **Jack Ventura**, B'Nai Brith Project Hope (Passover Project); **Pam Stone**, TI-Shepherd Park tutoring program; and **Karen Gremont**, Senior Director of Healthy Eating at Martha's Table.

Each representative provided a brief overview of the goals of their particular program and fielded questions on a variety of topics from the audience. The bottom line was that there are many opportunities for volunteers in all of these programs.

The Social Action Committee would like to thank:

- The TI staff for invaluable support.
- **Earl Dotter** for the meaningful MLK photographic display.
- **Lynn Golub-Rofrano** for acting as floor gabbai.
- **Rabbi Jason Kimelman-Block** for chanting Musaf.
- **Rabbi Ethan Seidel** for moderating the afternoon panel.
- TI congregants who participated in the day's program.

What is TI's Future?

Jeff Peterman

On Friday night of the recent Social Action Shabbaton weekend, Rabbi Abramowitz gave a wonderful talk about his first years at TI, when it first changed from an Orthodox to a Conservative shul in the early 1960s. He spoke about how he led the synagogue through a tumultuous transition, constantly having to deal with the expectations of the "elders" on the one hand, and with the needs of the incoming younger members that he brought in on the other.

It was a time of great change in the country and in the community, often with significant resistance. Many of the things that we take for granted at

TI today, such as egalitarianism, lay leadership in the service, and our tremendous involvement in Social Action (especially with the civil rights movement) started during that period.

Many of us see the synagogue once again undergoing transition. While the community is vibrant, with great involvement of a wide variety of members in the services and at social events, some feel that there is a clear split between how we "elders" feel that people should contribute to the community and how younger members feel that they can best serve.

This shows up in many ways. For example there is limited support by younger members for Synagogue-directed social action projects (they seem to prefer to take other routes to activism), and seldom attend programs such as SHALEM. At Rabbi Abramowitz's talk the youngest attendee was probably over 50.

The age differentiation is also evident in our synagogue leadership; most of our institutional infrastructure is managed by older members. Many of us are concerned that in a few years there will be no one left to manage things that we consider important.

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Kol Nashim

Pearl Schainker



Kol Nashim Book Club

The KN Book Club met January 19 to discuss *The Lady in Gold* by Anne-Marie O'Connor. This novel was the basis for the movie, *Woman in Gold*. There was a thoughtful and lively discussion about the wealthy Jews of Vienna at the beginning of the 20th century and up to World War II and the Holocaust.

The next meeting of the KN Book Club is **February 16**. See details in article below. All are invited to come.

Games People Play

Formerly known as Game Night, this lively annual event, cosponsored by Gevarim, took place on January 30. New this year, charades were on the

schedule, in addition to poker, a large array of board games and a nice nosh. For non-gamers, there was also knitting and crocheting, helped by our local experts.

For Love of Chocolate

On **February 7**, join Kol Nashim for a tour of SPAGnVola, a boutique chocolatier in Gaithersburg. They create award-winning chocolates, managing the entire process from farm to store.

The cost is \$15 and includes a chance to dip some chocolates of your own. The tour is limited to 20 people so contact Grant at the TI office to sign up as long as there is still room.

What is the Meaning of Religious Experience?

On **March 6** at 10:15 a.m. in the Library, **Maxine Grossman**, Associate Professor of Jewish History at the University of Maryland, will explore how, as Jews, we go about "experiencing" religion.

Be the Wise Child at the Seder

Rabbi Avis Miller will lead two sessions on **April 3** and **10** at 10:15 a.m. in the Library.

KN Book Club

Jessica Weissman

The Kol Nashim book club meets on **February 16** at the home of Esther and Gene Herman to discuss *All of a Kind Family* by Sydney Taylor. Taylor's portrait of a close-knit Jewish family in New York and how they both assimilated and kept their identity holds up well and provides plenty of material for discussion.

Even if you read the series when you were 10 you will be pleasantly surprised by how good the books are. Those of you who never read them (I'm looking at you, guys) have a treat coming.

Feel free to read the sequels as well – *More All of a Kind Family* is the next and best of the rest, and there are three more of varying quality.

At this meeting we will decide on the next few books. We alternate fiction and non-fiction.

Fiction suggestions include:

The People of Forever Are Not Afraid by Israeli author Shani Boianjiu;

The Golem and the Jinni by Helene Wacker; and

Michelle Brafman's *Washing the Dead*. Ms. Brafman is local and may be available to attend our discussion.

Nonfiction suggestions include:

Countrymen by Bo Lidegaard, a historian's lively account of how Denmark rescued its entire Jewish community during WWII and sent them out of the country to safety; and

Tearing the Silence, a collection of essays by Germans who moved to America post-WWII, edited by Ursula Hegi.

Please bring more suggestions to the meeting, or send them to me beforehand.

TI's Future (continued)

But maybe we are wrong. Maybe the things that we consider important should be allowed to diminish and be replaced by other things considered important by the younger members. Is it time that we "elders" allow the community to evolve in a way that better suits the younger members?

As we approach our Centennial, this is a good time for us to consider our future, to not only remember the community we have been but to think about what we want our community to look like in the years ahead.

Let's hope that we can do so with wisdom and consideration for all points of view, with a strengthened and growing TI community.

Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers

Barbara Raimondo

School Days

Oh, to be back at university! **Ophir Lifshitz**, son of **Lisa Traiger**, is studying computer science and linguistics at University of Maryland College Park and recently road-tripped it up to Boston to participate in the famous MIT Mystery Hunt -- an internationally known scavenger and puzzle hunt that attracts teams from around the world. They were looking for the missing Powerball ticket! If they found it, they're not saying.

Sibling traveler **Aylat Lifshitz**, a junior special education major at Towson University, spent a week of her winter break in Las Vegas on a social action trip. She was with a team of Hillel students volunteering in the community's food bank and a charter school.

And **Oren Steinberg**, son of **Julie** and **Jeffrey Steinberg**, graduated in December from Washington College with a double major in mathematics and computer programming. For now he is tutoring math, programming, and test preparation. He plans to become a teacher.

Getting a Raise

He's back and badder than ever! **Bob Rovinsky** has returned to federal service at the Commerce Department as a re-employed annuitant (look it up!) working for the Chief Information Officer. Speaking of information, Bob will also be teaching "A Storyteller Looks at the Book of Exodus" at the Jewish Study Center in February. Check it out!

Adventurers **Claudine Schweber** and **Ed Koren** went to Paris for 10 days in mid-December. *En vacance? Mais, non!* (Look it up!) Claudine is involved with a Jewish French Organization (OSE) that transformed itself during World War II and saved thousands of children's lives --

including those of her mother and uncle. Claudine is co-president of the OSE-USA group, representing the second generation. So trips to Paris always involve going to OSE.

Today, OSE is back to its original mission of providing health care to the Jewish -- and now larger -- community, and is currently working with the French government to provide psychological and trauma support for victims of the November 13 attacks. Claudine and Ed took many photos of the memorials to the victims.

They also were able to see the most amazing exhibit: Chagall: the Triumph of Music, which displays his paintings on classical music themes, including the magnificent glass ceiling of the Paris Opera and his costumes for The Magic Flute (<http://chagall.philharmoniedeparis.fr/en/exhibition>).

Judi Berland and **Mona Berch** represented TI at the Synagogue Disability Inclusion roundtable sponsored by the Federation. The discussion focused on a new web-site, Disability and Inclusion Web-pages. Attendees provided feedback on this new page, and synagogues shared how they are becoming more inclusive. A synagogue and agency self-assessment tool was also shown. It is hoped that it will help communities become more inclusive.

They Always Amaze

A daughter was born to **Laurie** and **David Braun** on January 14. At birth she was 19.5 inches long and 8 pounds. All are doing well.

Sara and **David Handwerker** are in Massachusetts with their new granddaughter. **Elizabeth** and **Daniel Handwerker** and **Amira, Ilana** and **Sam Handwerker** look forward to meeting their new niece and cousin.

Ruth and **Gabe Tabak** are pleased to announce that **Liora Judith Tabak** was born on Friday, January 8. She weighed 8 pounds 13 ounces and measured 20 inches long. All are home and doing well.

Sad News

TI member **Dorothy Ruth Filderman** died in December, after a long illness. She was 86 and lived in Palm Beach Gardens, Florida. She is survived by her husband of 68 years, **Wolfe Filderman**, known by everyone as **Todd**; her children, **Amy Jo Taxin**, **Lynne Dee Filderman**, **Pennye Sue Latimer** and **Franklyn Todd Filderman**; six grandchildren and two great-granddaughters. Funeral services were held in Miami.

Norman Morris, father of TI member **Ken Morris (Terri Zall)**, and grandfather of **Rebecca** and **Jonathan**, died in December, at the age of 86. He was the author of *Television's Child* (1971) and *Prostate Cancer Survivors Speak Their Minds* (with Dr. Arthur L. Burnett II).

May family and loved ones find strength in their memories.

And now for the meaning of last month's word, *florilegium* (no need to look it up.): "a volume of writings" (Merriam-Webster Online).

Thanks to all who sent me news, sent me to others who sent me news, or otherwise helped sniff it out. Please send your hue and cry for next time to baraimondo@gmail.com, with "Nayes un Mekhayes" in the heading, or to P.O. Box 466, Washington Grove, MD 20880.

This brings to a close this edition of Nayes un Mekhayes for TI'ers.

Medallic Tributes to the Amidah

Simcha Kuritzky

The central part of any Jewish service is the *Amidah* (standing prayer), also called the *Sh'moneh Esrei* (18 prayers, although now 19 for weekdays and fewer on *Shabbat* and *Yom Tov*). The first three benedictions, which occur before the *Kedushah* (based on Isaiah chapter 6), are almost the same for all services.

Perhaps the least memorable part of this prayer are four words at the beginning of the second benediction: *atah gibor l'olam Adonai* (You are great forever, Lord). I have never seen any significant portion of any version of the *Amidah* on a medal, but the initials of that phrase -- *alef, gimel, lamed, alef* -- which form the acronym *AGLA*, appear on a number of amulets.

One of the most popular printed amulets (often attributed to the Baal Shem Tov — founder of Hassidism — himself) shows a bird-headed angel with three words of power on its six wings. The top wings show the four-letter acronym on the right side and again backwards (*ALGA*) on the left.



Some of the most popular Hebrew amulets use a large *heh* for *HaShem*. Israel *yeshivot* have produced a number of amulets for sale, two of which are shown below. These are around 45mm in diameter and made of base metal. The one on left has *AGLA* acronym above a large *heh* with a number of other amuletic

names. The one of the right has *AGL"A* (the " indicates this is an acronym) below the *heh* with different amuletic names.



Two that I bought when I visited Israel in 2008 are shaped like keys (to unlock prosperity). The one on the left below has the *tefilah haderekh* (prayer for a journey) in the center and names surrounding, including *AGLA* at 8-9 o'clock. The one on the right has *AGLA* as the last horizontal line.



Lest I give the impression that only modern amulets use *AGLA*, below is a traditional Persian Jewish silver amulet which contains a number of traditional phrases, including the initial letters of the entire Psalm 121. At the end (left side) of the horizontal wording is *AGLA*.



In the Renaissance, many Christian noblemen hired Jewish tutors to teach them to read the Bible in the original Hebrew. Some of these Christians also learned *Kabalah* and Jewish magic. They soon incorporated *AGLA* into Christian magic.

At left below is a modern pewter amulet that reproduces John Dee's cross (he was a judge in Elizabethan England). On the right is a recent reproduction of the Great Magic Circle. Although it has a *magen David* in the center, on either side of it is an Alpha and Omega, showing its Christian origin.

At the top and continuing below on both amulets are the four Latin letters *AGLA*. This word had special meaning to Germans, who used it as a charm against house fires. For them it stood for *Almächtiger Gott löscht aus* (Almighty God extinguish it).



Among the books of Judeo-Christian magic that include *AGLA* are the *Key of Solomon* and the *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses*. On the next page is a silver British six pence which had one side polished off with the Third Pentacle of Mars (which guarantees victory) engraved on it.

The four letters around the center of the cross are *AGLA* in Hebrew (the original *Key of Solomon* was a Latin manuscript, but the best-known version today is an 1888 translation by Liddell Mathers which put the inscriptions back into Hebrew).

(Continued on page 13)

Bar Mitzvah



My name is **Adam Chazan** and I was born on February 8, 2003.

For grades K-5, I attended the Jewish Primary Day School of the Nation's Capital. For the past two years, I have been studying in the Takoma Park Middle School Math, Science, and Computer Science Magnet program.

I enjoy playing basketball, guitar, cooking, photography, and being around my family, my parents, Dan and Ronit, and my 19-year-old brother, Jonah.

My bar mitzvah is on February 27, and I am studying *Parashat Ki Tisah*. As my bar mitzvah project, I have been tutoring in the Shepard Park program.

My parents and I will be visiting in Israel from March through June and I will be studying at a local school in Rehovot.

Medallic Tributes to the *Amidah* (continued)



Below is a \$3 gold coin with AGLA below the bust in Latin script. The *Sixth and Seventh Books of Moses* states that "he who bears upon his person this name, written upon a gold plate, will never die a sudden death."



The rest of the inscription (*mephenaj phaton*, which appears in front of the bust) is unique to this book, copied from the 1686 German work *Semiphoras und Schemhamphoras Salomonis Regis*, which claimed Adam said this at the entrance to Heaven to make himself unconquerable.

Some things take on a life of their own. The initials (AGLA) of these four little words — *atah gibor l'olam Adonai* — buried in a much longer (though important) piece of liturgy certainly have had a disproportionate impact on amulets and medals.

New Program Catalog

TI's *Winter/Spring Adult Education and Programs Catalog* is now posted on the TI website.

Here's a direct link:

<http://www.tifereth-israel.org/sites/default/files/spiritweb/AdultEdCatalog.WinterSpring.2016.pdf>

Upcoming Friday Night Minyan Assignments

February 5

David & Laurel Rabin
 Glenn Rapoport
 Jacqueline Ratner
 Andrew Reamer
 Sanford & Shelley Reback
 Naomi Reem
 Jay Renbaum & Shannah Koss
 Arnold & Naomi Revzin
 Ruth Reynolds
 Howard Riker & Danielle Glosser
 Morris & Judy Rodenstein
 Joseph Rofrano & Lynn Golub-Rofrano
 Charles Rombro & Pamela Stone
 Chris Romer & Amy Nelson
 Elliot Rosen & Sharon Cohen
 Andrew Roshwalb & Jackelyn Lopez Roshwalb
 Aviel Roshwald & Alene Moyer
 Ari Roth & Kate Schechter
 Nancy Roth
 Marc Rothenberg & Ivy Baer

February 12

Robert Rovinsky & Renana Brooks
 David & Stephanie Rubin
 Howard & Hannah Rubin
 Stephen & Jill Saletta
 Mark & Diann Saltman
 Lawrence & Pearl Schainker
 Eric & Shira Schechtman
 Daniel Schiff
 Michael & Mical Schneider
 Keith Secular & Susan Catler
 Paul Seltman & Jeanne Ireland
 Hershel & Judith Shanks
 Phillip & Ruth Shapiro
 Yvonne Shashoua
 Noam Shelef & Deborah Quint Shelef

Jaclyn Shettler & Aaron Marx
 Scott Shoreman & Elizabeth Carp
 Randy Showstack & Michele Zador
 Nathaniel Shyovitz
 Richard & Marjorie Siegel
 Yochanan Sullivan

February 19

Morton Simon
 David & Rona Siskind
 Audrey Smith
 Aaron & Reva Snow
 Dan & Elizabeth Sokolov
 Frank Solomon & Laurie Russell
 Louis & Madge Lee Specter
 Barry & Sari Siegel Spieler
 Gregory Stackel & Genevieve Dara Sapir
 Jeffrey & Julie Steinberg
 Lois C. Steinberg
 Steven Stoller
 Jack Stone & Wilma Brier
 Herman & Malka Stopak
 Shelley Sturman
 Edwin Stromberg & Rose Ellen Halper

March 18

Marc Suddleson & Molly Surden
 Howard & Michele Sumka
 Michael & Adele Sumner
 Gabe & Ruth Tabak
 JT & Naomi Taransky
 Kassahun Teffera & Melke Mengiste
 Jevera Temsky
 Neil & Rachel Tickner
 Michael Tilchin & Linda Greer
 Peter & Rhoda Trooboff
 Paula Tucker

Jonathan & Cathy Tuerk
 Allan & Judy Tulchin
 Michael & Ruth Unterweger
 Mark Verschell & Elizabeth Leff
 Susan Vitale

March 25

David Wachtel & Jennifer Goldstein
 Reenie Wagner
 Harry Waldman & Susan Morse
 Marc Warshawsky & Vivian Seidner
 Matthew Watson & Ellen Cabot
 Marc & Deborah Weinberger
 Eric Weiner & Sharon Moshavi
 Jon Weintraub & Judith Heimlich
 Michael Weiss & Phyllis Stanger

Jessica Weissman & Louise Kelley
 Dov Weitman & Sylvia Horwitz
 Alan & Cynthia Weitz
 Howard & Barbara White
 Louise Wiener
 Peter Winch & Denice Zeck
 Adam & Dorothea Wolfson
 Ariel David Wolsztijn & Karen Lisa Silberstein
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Rich Kruger & Naimah
Weinberg

In Honor of

Liora Judith Tabak
Rich Kruger &
Naimah Weinberg
Iris & Michael Lav
Michael & Iris Lav

Thank You

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(Continued on page 16)

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