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What's been happening at Temple?



Making microbat pouches with Sharon Marks & Coralia Tudor

Winter has arrived with all sorts of wonderful activities at Religious School! Highlights in January included Tu B'Shvat celebrations, the Bet class held an amazing seder, and Ailene introduced our youngest and their families to the wonders of a New Year for Trees. In addition to the special activities and our weekly lessons in Judaics, students enjoyed participating in two Friday night services led by Rabbi Dressler with music by Jacob Brickman.

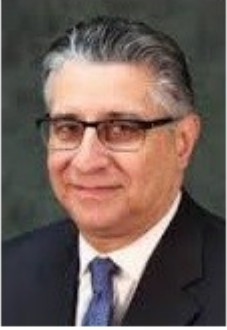


Ailene with Pre-school/Kindergarten class



In February our thoughts turned to the wildfires in Australia, so our teens, led by Coralia Tudor and Sharon Marks, made microbat pouches to help compensate for the habitat devastation.

From our President



Jason Mandlowitz

The arrival of March on our calendar brings with it a new congregational planning cycle as we approach the next General Meeting in June.

The Nominating Committee has been formed (Susan Dean, Daryl Fridenberg, Daphne Stevens, Margie Wienburg and Wally Zimmerman) and is tasked with recommending our next Executive and Board. While many are completing their current terms of office, we also have some possible vacancies. Terry Sicular and Ailene Wittstein have been acting as Interim VPs of Finance and Communications respectively. In addition, Ailene is now the Chair of our Membership Committee.

The VP Programming portfolio remains vacant. Those interested in a greater role at Temple should contact me, Rabbi Dressler or the office.

Over the years, Temple Israel has shifted from a committee structure to a task-oriented approach. Members readily volunteer to work on a project. This includes latke making, teacher appreciation, London Food Bank sorting, interfaith tree planting, and social action soup making. To maintain our programs, we need your help. We need as many volunteers as possible.

Specifically, I'm reaching out to you to encourage you to come forward and work on our Passover Second Seder, Bikkur Cholim outreach to those in need, Membership and Social Action. Please contact the office and we will ensure you get connected with the right group on the right project.

Throughout March and early April, we are scheduling meetings to consult with our religious school families, new members and Past Presidents. We are focused on enhancing the Temple Israel experience for everyone.

As you visit Temple over the next few months you will see some changes. We have ordered new external lighting poles and lights for the driveway which should arrive and be installed in about two months - when the snow and temperatures allow. Once this has been completed, we will review all other external lighting, upgrade our electrical control system, and install an automatic opener in our garage. We have begun work renovating the apartment above the garage which should take several weeks. We continue to give Temple security top priority.

Looking forward to seeing you over the remaining winter months.

Around the Property

The Board approved new external lighting poles and fixtures for the driveway and upgrades to our control system. These have been ordered and we are expecting installation in early spring.

The Board has also approved a feasibility study to rent the apartment above the garage. So far, the apartment has been cleared of carpeting and repairs have been made to the walls for painting.

Jim Stevens, VP Operations, continues to coordinate building and exterior maintenance.

Our new contract cleaners and trash removal service are working very well, and they will continue.



From our Rabbi



Rabbi Debra Stahlberg Dressler

When I was a rabbinical student, I had originally expected to become a full-time educator. Once I was ordained, however, life took me in a different direction, and I assumed a congregational position. I have loved the congregational rabbinate, specifically as a solo rabbi, in a small congregation, outside of a major metropolitan area. The work is a perfect mix - worship and music, pastoral care, administration, and of course, education. I run a Sunday School, and every week I have multiple opportunities to teach adult learners.

Education may not be my primary responsibility, as I had imagined, but it is one of my favourites. From Torah Study, to Lunch & Learn, as well as the Jewish Information Class (JIC) and community-based sessions and classes such as JEM or AJE - Adult Education allows me to find new relevance in ancient texts each and every week. Long-time programs such as Torah Study are the old-new challenges upon which Rabbis thrive - taking each week's portion, finding new connections each year while weaving themes between and among our sacred texts and historical experiences.

In recent months, we have had two unique Adult Education experiences. The first was a joint JIC-Book Club session regarding the history of Reform Judaism in North America. The JIC had reached the curricular unit introducing the movements in Judaism and the development of Reform Judaism; the book club had read *The Chosen Wars*. It was a wonderful opportunity to connect new faces with old friends as we built a deeper understanding of where and how our particular Reform Jewish expression developed.

My favourite new Adult Education program, however, is what I have affectionately come to call the "*Bagel Minyan*." Approximately one Shabbat a month, we have gathered informally over coffee and bagels. Breakfast in hand, we have studied a variety of aspects of Reform liturgy; topics have been selected from students' own requests. After our in-depth study session, we have an abbreviated Shabbat service. It has been a fun way to change up our Shabbat mornings, and the conversations have been fantastic.

Just over 10 years ago, I visited London for the very first time, to lead services and Torah study while interviewing to become the next rabbi of Temple Israel. What was true in 2010 is true in 2020. Temple Israel is a community of learners across all ages. I am a very lucky rabbi indeed.



*Bagel
Minyan*



The first of two book discussions in February was "The Chosen Wars" by Steven Weisman and included Rabbi Dressler and the Jewish Information Class students

Upcoming Events

UPCOMING EVENTS

Purim

Sunday, March 8, 12 – 2 pm

Family Purim Program & Megillah!



Kindergarten Experience

Sunday, March 8 - 11 am

Children in JK / SK and their families are invited to join us for a fun and interactive introduction to the Jewish Holidays! Open to Temple Israel members and non-members. Please RSVP to the office at office@templeisraelondon.ca / 519-858-4400

Jewish Information Class

Temple Israel's Jewish Information Class (JIC) is open to anyone who wants to broaden their Jewish knowledge. Come for one class, or join them all. Classes will run on Sundays from 2 – 4 pm, resuming on March 29 after March break. Visit our website or call the office for more details.

Temple Israel Book Club

The Temple Israel Book Club meets at 2 pm on Saturday afternoons at Temple Israel. Here are the remaining books and dates for 2019 / 2020. You'll find two copies of each title in the Temple Israel library.

Jumping Over Shadows, by Annette Gendler – April 18

In The Garden of Beasts, by Erik Larson - May 9

Everyone is welcome to join the discussion!

bitly.com/tibookclub



Rabbi Richard Address Lecture

Saturday, April 4, 2020 1:00 - 9:00 pm

Our Long and Winding Road: Seeking our Path in the Longevity Revolution

with Rabbi Richard Address, D.Min

Siloam United Church, 1240 Fanshawe Park Rd. E. 519.455.9201 Office@SiloamUnitedChurch.org

Rabbi Address will be joining us for services at Temple in the morning.



Adult Hebrew Classes

It's never too late to learn Hebrew! Our adult Hebrew classes are underway Tuesday evenings. If you're interested in joining, contact Stephen State: ssstate@uwo.ca.



Social Action – Food Bank Sort

Join members of the Temple Israel Social Action Committee at the London Food Bank for an interfaith food sort, Wednesday, May 6 at 6:30 pm.



Lunch & Learn

Bring your lunch and join Rabbi Dressler Tuesdays at noon, exploring current events as well as classic Jewish topics. Our learning runs on March 10 and is paused from March 17 to April 14. We will return on April 21 and continue until May 26.



Save the Date - Comedy Night (SNL)

Saturday, May 2, 7 pm

Back by popular demand! Please share your funny stories, videos, jokes and join us for an evening of fun & frolic.



Upcoming Events Cont'd.

Save the Date - Bonia Shur's Hallel Psalms Sunday afternoon, May 31 (time TBD) at the JCC

Due to a generous grant from the LICF, Rabbi Dressler, with musical director Marque Smith, will be presenting the setting of Hallel by famed 20th century Jewish liturgical composer Bonia Shur z"l. Bonia's unique and compelling suite incorporates choir, solo voice, instrumentals, and spoken word. This program will bring together a wide variety of members of London's Jewish community, as well as interfaith partners from Christian churches. Please mark your calendars for this first-in-a-lifetime London community event.



Shabbat Shira



There's a new bakery in town that makes fresh challah - *Cobs Bread*, located in the big box stores plaza at Hyde Park & Fanshawe. The manager says if you call a couple of days ahead, they will special order your challah by adding sesame or poppy seeds on top.



Soup making is a regular part of the work of the Social Action Committee



Temple Israel Annual Meeting

Religious School



Donations

DONATIONS GENERAL

in memory of Valerie Miller from Bill Miller
from Elizabeth Van Rij
in memory of Elizabeth Rohekar from Gary & Ruth Rohekar
In memory of Isaac Jacob Rohekar from Gary & Ruth Rohekar
from Leah Shanfeld
in memory of Louis Starnbach and Hazel Ginsberg from
Marvin & Phyllis Simner
from Michael & Irina Sanatani
from Randy Kissack
in memory of Louise Shanfeld from Robert Solomon
& Barbara Lent and Ronald & Denise Wexler
from Ronald & Denise Wexler

IN-KIND - GENERAL/ADMIN

from Jason Mandlowitz & Daryl Fridenberg

IN-KIND - BUILDING

from Jason Mandlowitz & Daryl Fridenberg
from Ronald & Judith Gillatt

IN-KIND - PROGRAMMING - HHD - OTHER

from Desi & Kandice Brownstone
from Naomi Stambler
from Debra Dressler & Casey Wright

SPONSORSHIPS - EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

in memory of Gerry Wright from Michael Shmukler
& Linda Dutsch
in honour of Gabriel Warford's bar mitzvah from
Svetlana Warford

FUND - ADULT ED

from Murray Lusk

FUND - EDUCATION

in memory of Louise Shanfeld from Allen & Carole Gumphrich
and Arthur & Sandra Benjamin
from Michael & Sandra Fisman
in memory of Dan Grushka's grandmother & uncle from
Robert Solomon & Barbara Lent

FUND - ART, DECORATION, AND DESIGN

in memory of Candace Nefsky from Melody Enzel

FUND - BUILDING

in memory of Gerry Wright from Jeremy & Dinah Frank

FUND - MUSIC AND CHOIR

in memory of Sonya Sydel from Melody Enzel

FUND - LIBRARY

in honour of Brad Simmons from Arthur & Sandra Benjamin
in memory of Samuel Nefsky from Melody Enzel

FUND - RDF

in memory of Simon Tobin and David Tilner from Arthur
& Sandra Benjamin
in memory of Arthur's father from Arthur & Sandra Benjamin
from Debby Albin & Yair Medini
in honour of Rabbi Dressler from Jeremy & Dinah Frank
in honour of Luciana's bat mitzvah from Jeremy Keller
& Coralia Tudor
in memory of Louise Shanfeld from John & Susan Dean and
Lawrence Hoffman & Gayle Hoover
in memory of Gerry Wright from Lawrence Hoffman
& Gayle Hoover

FUND - RITUAL

in memory of Louise Shanfeld from Anne Freeman
in honour of Luciana's bat mitzvah from Jeremy Keller &
Coralia Tudor

FUND - SOCIAL ACTION

In memory of Louise Shanfeld from Andy Barak & Sally Cozens,
Jeremy & Dinah Frank, Linda Freedman and
Ricky Mandel
in memory of Bill Miller from Jason Mandlowitz
& Daryl Fridenberg
Randy Kissack

FUND - RABBI & AILENE WITTSTEIN CAMP GEORGE

in memory of Rabbi Wittstein's 10th yearzeit from Al
& Louise Levy
in memory of Rabbi Joel Wittstein from Arthur & Sandra
Benjamin, Jason Mandlowitz & Daryl Fridenberg,
Linda Freedman and Stephen State
in memory of Louise Shanfeld from Rose Philip

Note: Donations included to February 29, 2020. If we have inadvertently missed an acknowledgement on your behalf, please let the office know so that we include your kindness in our next publication.

Fund Highlight - Rabbi Wittstein Camp George Fund

Thank you to all the donors who contributed to the Rabbi & Ailene Wittstein Camp George Fund in honour of Rabbi Wittstein's 10th yearzeit in February. The camp fund created in his memory helps member children experience the unique sense of community that our URJ summer camps provide. The expense of Jewish overnight camp would be beyond many families' means without this generous support.

News

Kol Hakavod to:

Stephen State for reading Torah and to David Rosner for leading Torah Study at the Shabbat Shira service on February 8
Ailene Wittstein for providing Joel's favourite doughnuts at the Shabbat Shira service
Jacob Medgell for leading services on February 15 and to Heather & Jacob Megdell for sponsoring the kiddush
Heather & Jacob Megdell on the birth of their first grandchild, Arabella "Bella" Arts
Gail Bass on the bar mitzvah of her oldest Toronto grandchild, Jonah Izzy Bass
Debby Albin and Yair Mendini on the birth of their granddaughter Zoey
Rael Wienburg on being hired for the series "See"
Pam Block for organizing our Purim Spiel
Terry Sicular on writing her new book
Rabbi Dressler and her AJE class
To the London Jewish Community Foundation for Hallel Project grant monies awarded to Temple Israel

Condolences to:

The family of Bill Miller
Daniel Grushka on the loss of his grandmother & his uncle
Ken Milne on the loss of his brother

Please let the office know when you're celebrating something that you'd like us to put in the next bulletin.

From the Board

Board Notes:

Announcement of Nominating Committee formed for Executive & Officers of 2020 & 2021 pursuant to TI Constitution
- Members: Susan Dean, Daphne Stevens, Daryl Fridenberg, Wally Zimmerman and Margie Wienburg

Ailene is now Chair of the TI Membership Committee

Terry Sicular is interim VP Finance and Ailene Wittstein is interim VP Communications

2020 Meeting Schedule

All members of Temple Israel are welcome – and encouraged – to attend our Board meetings.

Here's our schedule for 2020:

March 29 – Board @ 3:30 pm

May 13 – Board @ 7 pm

June 24 – General Meeting @ 7 pm

All meetings are held at Temple Israel.



Join the Temple Israel Facebook page

If you're on Facebook, please "Like" our page at facebook.com/Temple-Israel-of-London-Ontario. As we continue to work on our new website, we'll also be using Facebook to share the latest news about upcoming events at Temple Israel, as well as news from around the community and articles from URJ.

