

TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

Oct. - Nov. 2016



Chai Lites

Phone: 863-292-0722 • Website: <http://www.templebethshalompolk.org>

Kavanah & Ritual

Rabbi Garson Herzfeld

Not long ago, a friend phoned me on Sunday morning around 10:00 AM. I asked him to please call back later because I have a “ritual” when I am home: brunch and “Meet the Press.” He laughed and asked if that really would be considered a ritual.

What is ritual and what makes it so important? Certainly, blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah or waving the Lulav on Sukkot hold special value for us as Jews. They are rituals infused with meaning.

There are many rituals associated with daily prayer and Shabbat as well. One example is the Mi Sheberekh (blessing) for sick family members and friends. I often receive requests to include a person’s name even when family members are unable to attend services. It is a source of comfort and is considered by many as an added source of healing beyond medicine.

We also create new rituals. My synagogue in Winter Haven has a “Stone Ceremony” at the beginning of Yiskor on Yom Kippur, in which people bring stones up to a receptacle on the bima as a symbolic gesture of visiting the graves of relatives buried in far away cemeteries. Another example comes to mind of a friend’s father who identified as a secular Israeli. He used to spend Yom Kippur day at home fasting and meditating, while listening to all of the Beethoven symphonies.

Of course ritual need not be religious. We find rituals in public performances, concerts, theater and etiquette such as “please” and “thank you.” When we ask a casual acquaintance “How are you,” we usually hear “I’m fine” or “ok” and do not really expect an honest response that might include a detailed description of their ailments.

Last summer, one session at the Hartman Institute in Jerusalem focused on the “ritual self” and the relationship between ritual and sincerity. We read a wide variety of traditional Jewish texts and contemporary articles in Chevruta (small groups) to prepare for the presentation by the scholar-of-the-day, Elana Stein Hain.

This idea, inherent in Rabbinic Jewish thought, is framed in terms of intention or “kavanah,” which is the proper mind-set and attention in the fulfillment of mitzvot. There is a well-known discussion in Talmud (Berachot 13a-b) concerning intention and the recitation of Shema. It is based on the Mishnah “If one was reading the section of Torah containing the Shema, if one had intention, one fulfills the commandment to recite the Shema.” The rabbis, in the Gemara, discuss what constitutes intention or kavanah in fulfilling this obligation.

Another section in Talmud (Rosh Hashanah 28 a-b) looks at kavanah and uses the rituals of eating matzah on Pesach, blowing the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah and hearing Megillah Esther on Purim as examples. The discussion looks at intentionality in different situations as the basis of whether one has fulfilled the obligation involved in each of these rituals.

Rabbi Shlomo ben Aderet (known as Rashba^a) seems to unlock the query of the Talmudic rabbis in his “Commentary to Babylonian Talmud Berachot 13 b”):

“Perhaps there are two types of intention - one that is simply intention to fulfill a commandment, and another that is intention to comprehend and be attentive to the particular meaning of the ritual at hand. While shofar may require (or not require) the former, recitation of the Shema or the silent Amida requires the latter...”

As we continue the process of Teshuvah during these High Holy Days, culminating with Yom Kippur, and then celebrate Sukkot, we must consider how we engage in ritual. Hopefully we will move beyond rote performance of mitzvot to bring about a deeper sense of connection with the rituals in which we participate.

G’mar Chatima Tova - May you and your dear ones complete a good inscription in the “Book of Life.”

This article appeared on October 7th in the Jewish Press of Tampa.

Message from the President Margo Fleisher

"That which is to give light must endure burning" -- Viktor Frankl

Rabbi Herzfeld gave us much to think about in his High Holiday talks. "Be All That You Can Be," not just by observing, but also by actively participating in our temple processes: Find your inner strengths and build upon them; step forward and take a stand for social justice.

These thoughts get me fired up. Of course we are wary. Self-examination can be scary and speaking out has its risks. Our congregants often tell us that they want to do more -- serve on the Board, take an active role in our committees, attend more functions. But they don't have the energy or they fear burning out.

Actually I've been trying to burn out. At times, I thought I was close, but it hasn't happened yet!

A candle must burn in order to light. We are commanded to kindle the flame on Shabbat. We let the candle burn until it is consumed. A candle that goes out before it is spent is sad. So is a candle that never burns at all. These candles never achieve their full potential.

I attended the ROAR Mental Health Matters conference in St. Petersburg on the Friday before our October 21st Shabbat services. The Rev. Dr. Kathurah Nichols talked about burnout and said, "You can't burn out if you never been on fire in the first place!"

That's why Temple Beth Shalom has a small group of people who do so much -- people with amazing talent for music, organizing, writing, teaching, speaking, technology, media, cooking, decorating. We hear their names and see their faces all the time. I often wonder if these folks continue so energetically because they know we never feel so alive as when we're serving others, sharing our talents, and building upon our strengths.

Keeping it to ourselves doesn't grow it. To keep it you have to give it away.

YOU also have a light to share.. Don't hide your beautiful self from us. What lights your fire? What keeps it burning? If you aren't sure, take a risk. When you are invited to the bimah, come up! If you're nominated to the Board, accept! If you're asked to join a committee, say "YES!" Ask yourself what you have to contribute and you will be amazed by how brightly you shine.



*Greetings From
the Sukkah!*



Calendar

November

November 1 –12:00 p.m.	Mah Jongg
November 4 – 8:00 p.m.....	Shabbat Service
November 5 – 9:30 a.m.....	Torah Study
11:00 a.m.	Adult Bat Mitzvah Group Meeting
November 6 – 9:00 a.m.....	Executive Board Meeting
10:00 a.m.....	Religious School
November 8 –12:00 p.m.	Mah Jongg
7:00 p.m.....	TBS Board Meeting
November 13 –10:00 a.m.	Religious School
November 15 –12:00 p.m.....	Mah Jongg
November 18 – 8:00 p.m.....	Shabbat Service
November 19 – 9:30 a.m.....	Torah Study
11:00 a.m.	Women’s Bat Mitzvah Group Meeting
November 20 –10:00 a.m.	B’Nai B’Rith Breakfast
November 22 –12:00 p.m.....	Mah Jongg
November 27 –9:30 a.m.	Brotherhood Breakfast
November 29 –10:30 a.m.....	Needlework
12:00 p.m.....	Mah Jongg

December

December 2 –8:00 p.m.....	Shabbat Services
December 3 –9:30 a.m.....	Torah Study
December 4 –9:00 a.m.....	Executive Board Meeting
10:00 a.m.....	Religious School
December 6 –12:00 p.m.	Mah Jongg
December 11 –10:00 a.m.	Religious School
December 13 12:00 p.m.....	Mah Jongg
7:00 p.m.....	TBS Board Meeting
December 16 –6:30 p.m.	Chanukkah Dinner
8:00 p.m.....	Shabbat Service
December 17 –9:30 a.m.....	Torah Study
December 18 –10:00 a.m.	B’Nai B’Rith Breakfast
December 20 –12:00 p.m.	Mah Jongg

For more details visit the calendar on the temple website: <http://www.templebethshalompolk.org>

Welcome New Member

Welcome to our newest member, Joseph Rodriguez. Joe has recently moved from Palm Beach County where he was a high school teacher. Please add Joe's name, phone number and email to your Temple Directory:

Joseph Rodriguez - jrod2@bellsouth.net - (561) 301-1268

Directory Corrections

Please correct the following phone numbers in your 2016-17 High Holiday Chai Notes

Norman Bork - (815) 494-0190

Louis Calabretta - (863) 271-3833

Members who did not pick up a copy of the new 5777 High Holidays Chai Notes/Directory can get their copy at the temple at services or during Religious School on Sunday mornings. Please check the calendar on the website for dates that the building will be open.

We Need Your Help



Oneg Hosts Needed

We have openings to host the following Onegs: December 2 & 16, February 10, March 10 & 24. Hosting an Oneg Shabbat is the perfect opportunity for a once a year commitment to Temple Beth Shalom that will benefit everyone. If you are not a frequent participant at Shabbat Services, this provides you a chance to see friends who you might otherwise only see at the High Holidays. And who knows? You might decide that you have found another way to “be all that you can be!”

Please contact our Oneg Coordinator Arlene Greenberg at arlenegreenberg@gmail.com or call her at (863)268-4382 or (561) 374-0266 to sign up for your spot. If we cannot find any volunteers, we may not be able to offer an Oneg on these dates.

It's not too late to join our **Women's Bat Mitzvah Group**

BatMitzvah

It's not too late to consider joining our Women's Bat Mitzvah Group. We currently have 8 or 9 interested members who will be split into two groups - those who already know how to read Hebrew and those who are beginners. A date for the first group Bat Mitzvah has not been set, but we hope that they will be ready by late Spring of 2017.



Temple members and Rabbi Herzfeld will be working with both groups to tutor and lead the effort. The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday, November 5th at 11:00 a.m. following Torah Study. Please join us if you are interested. We hope to incorporate a community action project and some fundraising opportunities into this endeavor.

Celebrate an evening of songs and lighting candles.

Please bring your menorahs and candles.



Pre-Chanukah Dinner & Mini Service

December 16, 2016 at 6:30 p.m.



Catering by TooJays

Deli meats or vegan wrap, potato latkes and dessert.

Please indicate on your check if you would like a vegan meal.

Cost \$12.50 adults, children thirteen and under \$7.00. Non -members \$15.00.

Your check is your reservation.

Please send your check to the address below by December 9th.

Late reservations cannot be honored.

Temple Beth Shalom • P.O. Box 313 • Winter Haven, FL 33882

For more information contact Arlene Greenberg arlungrenberg@gmail.com or Sandi Grinker sandi@tampabay.rr.com.

Thank You

■ **Rabbi's Welcome Back Dinner thank you's** to anonymous donor for sponsoring our children's dinners, Meryl Crews for planning, shopping and preparing the meal, Melanie Crews for putting in the time and effort into preparing delicious squash casseroles, Janis Koike for all the help and assistance, Diana Kramer for serving dinner and clearing and cleaning up, Myrna Soberman for washing and drying dishes, Art Levine setting up, clearing and cleaning up, to the many people that attended and also helped to clean up after dinner, and a special thanks to Arlene Greenberg for the most important job of tracking attendance for the dinner.

■ **Selichot thank you's** to Meryl Crews, Arlene Greenberg and Sandi and Phil Grinker for hosting the refreshments.

■ **High Holidays thank you's** to Rabbi Herzfeld for leading us through an inspiring HH journey, Janis Koike for coordinating the High Holiday guest information and preparing the Yiskor list, Sharon Shuller and the Mah Jongg Group for donating flowers for the bimah, Sandi Grinker for ordering flowers, Meryl Crews and Margo Fleisher for coordinating all the HH service participation, Renee Cohen for coordinating the Stone Service, Howard Korn for blowing the shofar, Ryan Yassen for playing Kol Nidre on the cello, Phil Grinker for singing Kol Nidre, Meryl Crews for all her beautiful singing, Brotherhood members for serving as ushers, Margo Fleisher for coordinating our security through the Polk County Sheriff's Office, and everyone who participated in the service.

■ **Chai Notes/Directory thank yous** to Saul and Shirley for selling ads, Meryl Chayt and Steven Chayt for gathering the info for the contents and designing the directory, Meryl Crews for printing the directory.

■ **Break the Fast thank you's** to Meryl Crews, Sandi Grinker, Diana Kramer, Judy Richter and Sue Zwerling for preparing the lox platters, Meryl Crews, Sandi Grinker, Marcia and Marty Halpert, Janis Koike, Diana Kramer, Elaine Pincus, Brenda Poller, Judy Richter, Varda Rottenberg and Myrna Soberman for setting up and cleaning up,

Lloyd Chain, Michael Richter, Randy Spiwak, Rachel Spiwak, Marcos Mirelez, Howard Korn for setting up tables and chairs

■ Thank you to Arlene Greenberg for hosting Rabbi Herzfeld for dinner at the Olive Garden on Friday, Sept 23rd and to Judy and Michael Richter for hosting Rabbi Herzfeld for dinner at Arabella's on Friday, Oct 21st.

■ **Sukkot decoration thank you's** to Jessica and Chuck Brucks, Ryan and Josh Yassen, Emily Crews and Nick Cliett, Connor Norton and Elyse Barlow, Meryl and Jimmy Crews, Randy Spiwak, Rachel Spiwak and Marcos Mirelez, Margo Fleisher, Elliott and Josef Bond.

■ Thank you to Elaine and Bernie Pincus and Marcia and Marty Halpert for hosting the Sukkot/Simchat Torah Oneg.

Donations

■ Yahrzeit donation from Herb LeShay in memory of his sister, Isabel Kaskel

■ Yahrzeit donation from Meyer and Irene Lipkind in memory of Dolly Dickter Weitz

■ Yahrzeit donation from Bev Lerner in memory of Leonard Treister, brother of Ken Triester

■ Yahrzeit donation from Allen and Renee Cohen in memory of Gladys Cohen

■ from Marcia Liebman in honor of Arlene Greenberg with best wishes for a speedy and complete recovery

■ High Holiday donations from Bev Lerner, Irwin and Brenda Kleinman and all or non-member guests who contributed generously to our synagogue

■ Yiskor donation from Allen and Renee Cohen

October Yartzeits

Gladys Cohen	mother of Allen Cohen
Erna Mayer	mother of Max Mayer
Arthur Seligman	grandfather of Michelle Chain
Sara Tarnower	grandmother of Jett Segal
Abraham Zwerling	grandfather of Steve Zwerling
LaVerne Luke	mother of Janis Koike
Edward Coleman	nephew of Sue Zwerling
Irene Coleman	sister of Sue Zwerling
Mary Coleman	niece of Sue Zwerling
Stanley Braverman	perpetual yartzeit
Loretta Calabretta	mother of Louis Calabretta
David Sniderman	father of Barbara Brooks
Benjamin Weiss	father of Marcia Halpert
Stanley Bauer	father of Adrienne Sundheim
Harry Schwachter	grandfather of Barbara Brooks
Joyce Friedmann	mother of Richard Friedmann
Lorraine Chain	mother of Lloyd Chain
Jules Adelman	perpetual yartzeit
Claire Geller	perpetual yartzeit
Jessie Haas	perpetual yahrzeit
Mollie Miller	perpetual yartzeit
Judith Nufeld	sister-in-law of Varda Rotenberg
Nathan Siegel	father of Saul Siegel

November Yartzeits

Helen Seligman	grandmother of Michelle Chain
Lina Cohen	mother of Bev Lerner
Robert Smith	father of Vincent Smith
Max Goldstein	father of Jacqueline Korn
Lillian Sonnenschein	grandmother of Phil Grinker
Joseph M. Cohen	uncle of Brenda Poller
Joe Bronstein	perpetual yahrzeit
William Landesman	father of Deanna Schwartz
Ruth Wolfe	perpetual yartzheit
Masuo John Koike	husband of Janis Koike
Theresa Poller-Bendon	aunt of Robert Poller
Alexander S. Erlbaum	perpetual yahrzeit
Anne Feder	mother of Art Feder
Elliott Fleisher	father of Margo Fleisher
Julia Ann Weinmann	mother of Jan Weinmann
Gladys Lowy	perpetual yartzheit
Dora Zulver	grandmother of Steven Chayt
Martin W. Lerner	father of Rob Lerner