

# TEMPLE BETH SHALOM

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## From the Bimah: Our Rabbi's Message

*Dennis Jones, Student Rabbi*



### Thanksgiving—The *Most Jewish American* Holiday

On the eve of every Shabbat, the proclamation of the Psalmist is read or chanted in the synagogue:

Come, let us sing for joy to Adonai;  
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come before God with *thanksgiving*  
and extol God with music and song.

For Adonai is a great God,  
the great King above all gods.

In God's hands are the depths of the earth,  
and the mountain peaks belong to God.

The sea is God's, for God made it,  
and God's hands formed the dry land.

(Psalm 95:1-5 [my translation], *Mishkan T'filah*, pp.  
130-131)

And, in fact, Thanksgiving has always been my favorite among the American holidays. There is just something powerful in a whole nation coming together across religious, political, racial, or any other lines that are drawn to divide us, to give thanks to the Creator and Source of our blessings. In past articles I have written in some detail about the possible historical connections between the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, the Feast of Tabernacles, and the origins of the American holiday of Thanksgiving. It is known from many sources that the Puritan Separatists who began the custom of a thanksgiving celebration were firmly grounded in the Hebrew Bible. Some writers have asserted that in many ways the Puritans were closer to Jews than to other Protestants in that regard (e.g., Hugh Fogelman, “Puritans Were More Jewish Than Protestant,” <http://www.christianity-revealed.com>). The Puritan Separatists considered themselves to be God’s chosen people. They viewed King James I of England as the oppressive Egyptian Pharaoh. Their crossing of the Atlantic Ocean was likened to the ancient Israelite crossing of the Red Sea and wandering in the wilderness of Sinai. Their arrival in the New World was seen as the Israelites’ arrival in the Promised Land. American children learn in elementary school that this religious group was called the Pilgrims. This is actually a name they gave themselves in commemoration of their wanderings in search of religious freedom. There is no question that the Puritans’ grounding in the Hebrew Bible instilled in them the centrality of giving thanks for God’s gifts. It is a fact that of the twenty-eight references to the word, “thanksgiving,” in the King James Version of the Bible, all but six are in the Hebrew Bible or Old Testament (Mario Seiglie, “Is Thanksgiving Rooted in a Biblical Festival,” <http://www.ucg.org>).

The Jewish tradition of giving thanks to the Creator, which is deeply embedded in our ritual and customs, derives, of course, from the same source. For example, the tradition of saying a minimum of 100 blessings a day goes back to the Talmudic period. The sages considered the verse, “Now, Israel, what does God, your God, ask of you? To walk in God’s ways and to serve God” (Deut. 10:12). The Rabbis of the Talmud pointed out that the Hebrew word used for “what” in that verse, *mah*, could also be read as *meah*, “one hundred.” Thus, they opined, the verse could be read as saying, “Now, Israel one hundred things (blessings) does God ask of you...” (*Menachot* 43b). Jewish commitment to the principle of giving thanks to God is also evident in the fact that the first prayer prayed every morning by an observant Jew is the *Modeh Ani*: “I thank you, living and enduring king, for you have graciously returned my soul within me. Great is your faithfulness” (translation, <http://www.chabad.org>). Jews who pray thrice daily and recite the traditional blessings required by *Halacha* do, in fact, end up giving thanks to God for the various miracles of daily life *over one hundred* times a day (See, Rabbi Marci Bellows, “How to Pray a Hundred Blessings a Day,” [www.thejewishweek.com](http://www.thejewishweek.com)). God is thanked for allowing the person to wake up, for the miracle of biological functions (upon using the bathroom), for food, for drink, for natural phenomena, to name but a few. In fact, what other religious group prays a prayer of thanksgiving *after* the meal is eaten, the Birkat Ha-Mazon? That prayer is based on the passage in Deuteronomy 8:10, “When you have

*eaten and are satisfied*, you shall bless the Lord your God for the good land which God has given you.”

As you sit with your family over a bountiful meal this Thanksgiving, keep in mind that what you are doing is celebrating the prosperity and freedom we enjoy in America. Giving thanks to God has deep roots in Judaism *spiritually* and historically. As you give your thanks, remember to invoke the ancient Hebrew blessing over bread, the *Ha-Motzi*. You might also say the traditional *Shehecheyanu* prayer, which is reserved for such special occasions. Indeed, in this country Jews have more to celebrate than perhaps at any time in our history. The level of religious freedom and economic independence we enjoy in the United States surpasses that of any previous era. And, in our lifetime we have witnessed the return of the Jews to the Holy Land and the establishment of the state of Israel. Such a restoration was only a dream for almost two millennia.

But, in celebrating our freedom, we must remember that with great blessing comes great responsibility. I am thinking primarily of the responsibility to bring freedom to others who are still in bondage. Whether that be bondage to a literal oppressor, to disease, to hunger, to poverty, or to any other malady. It is our sacred obligation as Jews to strive for the freedom of all of God's children. May the time not be far off which was spoken of by the Hebrew prophets when all mankind will be able to give thanks for freedom: freedom from disease, freedom from hunger, freedom from poverty, freedom from war. If you are bold enough to believe, the Prophet Micah foretells such a time with power yet simplicity (ch. 4, vv. 3-4), “...they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. But they shall sit every person under their own vine and under their own fig tree; and none shall make them afraid....” What a day of **thanksgiving** that will be!!

## **The President's Message**

*Marsue Davidson, TBS President*

Fall is here, clocks turned back, leaves turning, and Thanksgiving just around the corner. Did you know Thanksgiving is the only holiday that all religions and races celebrate together? It is a beautiful time of year, and we offer you and your family many thanks during this special season.

The temple has been blessed by a number of people making donations which are deeply appreciated. Their mitzvot allow us to get some much needed renovation completed and keep our doors open to

all, regardless of ability to pay dues or Sunday school fees. And managing all of this without having to raise dues in more than 16 years.

The temple is also able to support the community with donations to groups. We also like to hear from you, our members, of any special donations or charities that you would like us to support. Temple Beth Shalom is blessed with a congregation that freely expresses their wishes for continued improvement and giving and this is greatly appreciated by your Board of Directors.

Again this year, we enjoyed a fun and meaningful celebration of Sukkot. Thank you to Rabbi Dennis for making sure we had a wonderful sukkah to celebrate in. It was a beautiful day outside with the children and temple members sharing Sukkot together. Our younger children of TBS prepared decorations while the older children built the sukkah with Dennis. We gathered together for a meal and shared in the blessings of the Lulav and Etrog. It was a fun time for all who participated. (We noted that there was plenty of room in the sukkah for more TBS family and friends and hope next year we'll do a better job of filling it up).

We also celebrated Simchat Torah and read the beginning of the new year Torah readings. We learned about the cycle of Torah readings, and carried all our Torahs around the temple seven times. The Sunday School children all attended this service as part of their Sunday School commitment, and enjoyed the teachings of the Torah and Dennis' spiritual insight.

Time spent with family and friends reflects the Jewish values of family and community. We look forward to seeing everyone this month for our November services and the Torah reading of Genesis.

Be safe and have a wonderful Thanksgiving, shalom.

## DONATIONS

We appreciate generous donations from:

Madeleine Guy in memory of Cecile Tosky

Dr. Barbara and Larry Laufer in loving memory of Cecile Tosky

High Holiday donations from:

Walt Alley

Roy Osterer

Sally Pitofsky

Simon Yakopson and Valentina Perlin

Richard Rose

Roberta Atkins

Madeleine Guy



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mark Faruque has served the temple in many capacities, most recently as treasurer and we are grateful to him for his service and shall miss him. Susan Reider has stepped forward to assume the responsibility of treasurer.

Aaron Tosky ([aaront9348@aol.com](mailto:aaront9348@aol.com)) is the chairperson of the Ritual Committee, and the members are Dennis Jones (rabbi), Jane Mandle, Pam Jones, Barb Laufer, Ron DuBow and Marsue Davidson (ex officio). They plan to update wedding and building use policies and the Temple Beth Shalom Index of Life Cycle Events (birthdays, anniversaries, and yahrzeit). Please provide any information you might want included in the Life Cycle Events. You may contact either Aaron or a committee member if you have any questions regarding temple ritual and/or have suggestions.

Welcome to new Members:

Richard Rose of Morganton, and Henry and Linda Greenfield of Conover.

## TBS Sunday School Program

*Marsue Davidson, Director Sunday School*



Our Sunday School program will meet at its regular time, 10am, and then have its annual Hanukkah party in conjunction with the Temple Beth Shalom Sisterhood Hanukkah Fair on Sunday, December 11<sup>th</sup>. TBS will be hosting the Temple Beth El Jewish Gift Shop again this year and we are making this event our TBS Hanukkah celebration!! We will all come together at 12 noon to celebrate Hanukkah after our Sunday School session. The children will join in the fun of shopping for Hanukkah, making Hanukkah Arts and Crafts, and eating latkes. We are inviting everyone from the temple to attend this special event with Sunday School and Sisterhood. Eating latkes, shopping for Hanukkah gifts, and celebrating together.

The Jewish Gift Shop from Temple Beth El in Charlotte will bring many items for Hanukkah from their store, including kitchenware, jewelry, games, clothing, food, and so much more. Sunday School parents, temple members and the Hickory community are all invited to share in this special event. Please mark your calendars and come check it out! You never know what treasures you might find! Join us for this wonderful event and community fellowship in support of the women and children of Temple Beth Shalom.

Don't forget to look at the last page of this bulletin for Sunday School dates, times, lesson plans, and services.

## TBS Sisterhood

*Lin Gentry, Sisterhood President*

The next sisterhood meeting will be Wednesday, Nov 16th at 6:30pm, at the home of Linda Greenfield. Her address is 2704 Birdie Lane NE in Conover. It's in Rock Barn. Take exit 133 off I-40, Rock Barn Road. She'll make dinner for us, including a vegetarian option. Please let Lin know if you'll be there.

Sisterhood will host their annual Hanukkah fair on Sun Dec 11, 11am-2pm at the temple. The gift shop from Temple Beth El in Charlotte will bring Hanukkah and Judaic items from their store that day so that we can shop here in Hickory instead of having to go online or out of town. Please put this date on your calendar and make plans to attend--it's always a great time and they bring such a variety of items. Tell all your friends and family--this is a fundraiser for sisterhood and a great way to get together and socialize. If you are unable to make it to this event, although we sincerely hope that will not be the case, you may be able to find some Hanukkah items at Bed, Bath and Beyond, or Target, although there will be a much larger selection at the Hanukkah fair on December 11th.

## Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund



The Harriet Sederholm Scholarship Fund was established by a long-standing Temple member, Burt Sederholm, to honor his wife Harriet, who died shortly after her retirement after 25 years with the Catawba County Department of Social Services. Mr. Sederholm's efforts provided the initial funding from

generous family members and friends and it has been added to over the years. The scholarship is available to students. Temple members are looked upon favorably, but one does not need to be a temple member nor Jewish to apply. The scholarship fund dividends are used to provide scholarship awards. Candidates may submit an essay to any one of the committee members. The essay will explain who the candidate is, what they are doing currently, what their plans are for the future, how the scholarship funds will be used and, if applicable, what the connection may be to Jewish life.

Interested students should submit their essay by April 30th. The scholarship season runs from May 1-April 30. All applicants will be notified in writing if their application has been approved or declined by May 15<sup>th</sup>. Awards should be mailed to recipients by May 31st.

The essay should be emailed to any of the committee members: Lin Gentry, Julie Owens or Sandy Guttler.

Naturally, the committee encourages everyone to make a tax-deductible donation to the Scholarship Fund at any time.

## Temple Board



Our next board meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, December 7th at 7pm. Board meetings are open to all temple members. Please join us and become a part of our TBS family,

### TBS Board members are:

#### Student Rabbi:

Dennis Jones

#### Officers:

Marsue Davidson, President

Vice-President TBA

Treasurer - Susan Reider

Tiffany Hull, Secretary

Barbara Laufer, Past President

#### Members at Large:

Liz Correll

Marion Dubow

Debra Engelmann

Lin Gentry

Sandy Gutler

Pam Jones

Aaron Tosky

Karen Ferguson

### Please join us in welcoming

Keith Starnes, an Instructor of Religion and Humanities at Caldwell Community College and Technical Institute, who will be bringing students from three of his classes to the Temple service on November 18th.

## Simchas

Joy Kastan and her husband Peter invite everyone to attend Joy's Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, January 7, 2017, at the 10am service at Temple Beth Shalom. They also invite everyone to a luncheon following the morning Shabbat service. We hope that you all will come to help Joy and Peter celebrate this very joyous and important occasion. Thank you all for setting this date aside for them.

## TBS Member Business Directory

Dr. Ron DuBow  
Internist, Geriatric Specialist  
(elderly care) Pediatrician  
2651 Morganton Blvd SW  
Lenoir, NC 28645  
828-757-8950

Dr. Laura Faruque of  
A Womans View  
915 Tate Blvd SE  
Suite170  
Hickory, NC 28602  
828-345-0800

Dr. Mark Faruque of  
Bethlehem Family Practice  
174 Bolick Lane Suite 202  
Taylorsville NC 28681  
828-495-8226

Marsue Davidson, RN DCS  
Unifour Nursing  
805 W. 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Newton, NC 28681  
828-464-0244  
[www.unifournursing.net](http://www.unifournursing.net)

Robyn Diamond, Certified Health  
and Wellness Coach, Specializing  
in Digestive  
Health and Stress Management  
843-991-6338  
[Robyn@HealthHappyYou.com](mailto:Robyn@HealthHappyYou.com)  
[www.HealthHappyYou.com](http://www.HealthHappyYou.com)

## Temple Beth Shalom Life Cycle November Events

### Birthdays

Rachel Faruque 11/4  
Rachel Engelmann 11/7  
Jon Levinson 11/8  
Susan Huitt 11/9  
Emmanuel Gitlin 11/9  
Alec Davidson 11/10  
Mary Lee Tosky 11/13  
Jenna Gold 11/15  
Laura Levinson 11/15  
Camden Dominique 11/7  
Levinson 11/16  
Lilla Schneider 11/18  
Sue Cole 11/28  
Aeden Gerds 11/29

### Anniversaries

Steven and Bonnie Gold 11/17  
Whitney Doninique 11/9  
Liz Correll 11/22

### Yahrzeits

Samuel Lippe 11/7  
Doris Davidson 11/8  
Clara Gitlin 11/9  
Werner Cohn 11/9  
Bert Yelin 11/9  
Murray Asch 11/10

## Member Business Directory (cont'd)

Professor Gitlin Hebrew Lessons  
109 6<sup>th</sup> Ave NE  
Hickory, NC 28601  
828-328-9443

Alice Guy of  
The Hickory Wine Shoppe  
238 Union Square NW  
Hickory, NC 28601  
828-334-4441  
Info@HickoryWine.com

Michelle Oxenberg Jordan  
Managing Director of Design  
3166 Main Ave. S.E.  
Hickory, North Carolina 28602  
828.322.3480 Ext. 271  
michelle@robertabbey.com

Marc Fedder M.D., F.A.C.P.  
Frye Care Internal Medicine of  
Hickory  
915 Tate Blvd Suite 186  
Hickory, N.C., 28602  
828-303-2131

## Local and Regional Events

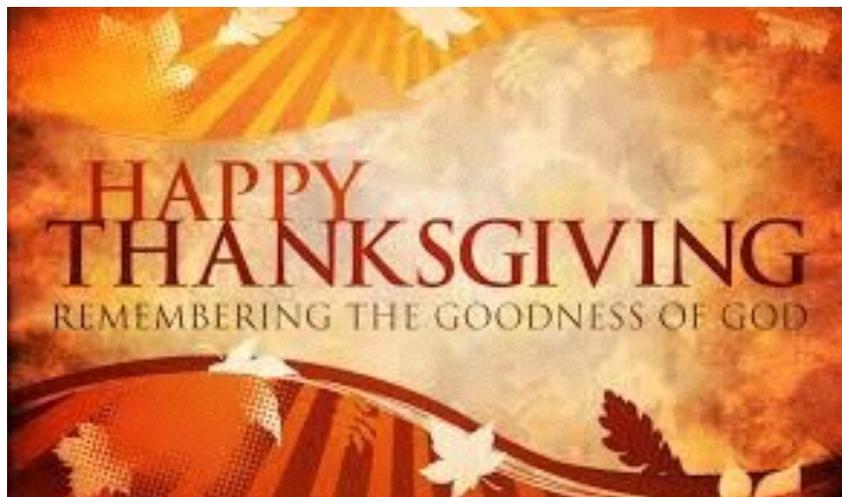
Looking for family entertainment this Fall? Here is a link to lots of local events.

<http://hickory.macaronikid.com/article/1319494/fall-events-festivals-in-hickory-and-western->

**Professor Ruth Bernuth** will be speaking at **Appalachian State University on Tuesday, Nov 15th from 7:00 to 8:30pm.**, Prof. Bernuth is a faculty member and the director of the Carolina Center for Jewish Studies at UNC. She will be speaking about her book, **How The Wise Men Got to Chelm: The Life and Times of a Yiddish Folk Tradition**, at the Reich College of Education Lecture Hall, room 124, 151 College St, Boone, NC. The talk is free and open to the public, and her book will be available for sale.

For more information call 828.262.2311

or visit <http://holocaust.appstate.edu/events/speaker-series>



## Schedule for Rabbi Services and Sunday School 2016-2017

<u>Date</u>	<u>Comments</u>	<u>Bulletin Deadline</u>	
November			
	18-20	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School 10am	November 5
December	9/10	<b>Services 7:30pm / 10:00am</b>	November 26
	11	Sunday School 10am and Sisterhood Hanukkah Fair/Party 11am - 2pm	
	25	First day of Hanukah!!	
January	6-8	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School 10am	December 24
	22	Sunday School 10am	
February	3-5	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School 10am	January 21
	19	Sunday School	
March	10-12	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School/Purim (Megillah Reading/Party) 10am	February 25
	26	Sunday School 10am	
April	7-9	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School 10am	March 25
	11	Passover Community Seder (Tuesday) 6:00pm	
	23	Sunday School 10am	
May	5-7	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School 10am	April 22
	21	Sunday School 10am	
	30	<b>Erev Shavuot Service</b> (Tuesday) 7:30pm	
June	2-4	<b>Services 7:30pm</b> /Sunday School End of Year Party 10am	May 20

Submissions for the bulletin may be sent to Karen Ferguson at [karen.sederholm@gmail.com](mailto:karen.sederholm@gmail.com). Please respect the posted deadlines. All submissions are reviewed by the TBS Board before publication.