

Temple Beth El^{Electronic} News

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Nissan 5769

April 2009 #1

Big Weekend Coming Up

Friday evening, April 3:

Visitors' Service: The Rabbi will talk to our visitors and answer questions at 6:30pm. The actual service will begin at **7:30pm**. Even though this is a bit later than our usual time, it is a good idea to come early to avoid possible parking problems. We need an excellent turn-out for this special service.

Also for April 3:

Goup oneg: Please bring items on trays, cut up and ready to serve. Everyone should bring something. Be sure to avoid foods which require utensils to eat.

Saturday morning, April 4:

Social Justice Seder at 11am at the Temple. Rabbi Stephanie is leading the service. Rebecca Gottlieb is coordinating the meal and recently sent out the following email--

The format for the meal will be a salad luncheon. Although it's a little bit before the official beginning of the holiday, we will be quasi-kosher for Passover.

In addition to salads, other cold dishes, and fruit/dessert, we need the following items:

Matzah

Wine

Charoset

Hard-boiled eggs

Horseradish-- ideally a whole root for the plate as well as the edible kind.

As well as the traditional (though not absolutely required):

Gefilte fish

I think we have candles and can make salt water at the Temple.

I will bring a roast beet, an orange, parsley, and potatoes (assuming the rabbi wants these again).

What to do:

#1: RSVP to Rebecca (gottlieb@uwplatt.edu) whether you are coming or not.

#2: Let Rebecca know if you will bring an item from the list.

Satudeay evening, April 4

The Landaus are hosting the rabbi for dinner, and study group will also be in Shullsburg. Tradition has it that when study group is at the Landau's, they reserve a big table at the Brewster Cafe in Shullsburg so anyone who is coming to the study group can also have dinner before the study group. Ellie and Lou plan on dinner at the restaurant at 5:30pm to allow plenty of time to finish before the 7pm study group.

Sunday afternoon, April 5:

We, along with the Unitarian Fellowship, are serving a meal at the Rescue Mission. We need a few people to serve and many people to cook or donate funds. Those who cook will be able to drop food off around 12:45pm; the meal begins at 1:30pm. Again, contact Rebecca if you would like to help. THANK YOU BECCA!

Thank You Also

- ✧ to Jacquie Dyrke and her daughter, Lisa, for hosting the wonderful Purim dinner. The stuffed shells were fantastico. Grazie! Also the costumes worn by your family (including Wayne and Terry) were terrific.
- ✧ to Rabbi Stephanie for leading a great Purim service.

Letter from Temple President, Sheila Rudin:

Now that the news of Rabbi Stephanie's departure is official, it is important that we focus on finding a new spiritual leader for our temple. Although we have applied to HUC we are not assured of getting a student rabbi, and we are also trying to find another ordained Rabbi.

Sheila and Karin filled out the application to obtain a "Rabbi in the Field." We are pleased to report that we have received many interested replies. Our next step is to form a Selection Committee to help us find the right match. Please consider serving on this very important committee. Please contact either Sheila (sgrudin@mchsi.com 563-556-4262) or Karin (karipri@ameritech.net 312-850-1191) as soon as possible if you are interested in being on this committee. The committee will meet with Rabbi Stephanie next weekend.

Our Temple is facing change. We need your help and input.

Congregational Meeting

Our Congregational Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, April 19, 2009, at 1:00pm at the Temple. PLEASE plan on attending. We are such a small group and EVERYONE's input is needed. If you are interested in serving on the Board or have any items you would like put on the agenda, contact Sheila Rudin (sgrudin@mchsi.com) or Karin Pritikin (karipri@ameritech.net).

Temple Building

Roofing and gutter work have been completed on the Temple. The remainder of the work will be started after the Visitor's Service since it involves digging around the building.

Community Event

The Loras College Arts & Culture Committee invites you to a powerful workshop presented on **Wednesday, April 1 at 11:00am**, in the Alumni Campus Center Ballroom (corner of Cox St. and Loras Blvd). Following a biblical reading and prayer by Temple Beth El's Alan Garfield, the event starts with a showing of the award-winning video "Voices from the Holocaust." Present to discuss the film will be its director, Joshua Greene, currently in residence at Hofstra University.

The film will be followed by lunch and a talk by former long time *Des Moines Register* columnist Chuck Offenberger, discussing the importance of workshops like this one and the current playing out of similar ethical issues today. A presentation on the Dachau War Trial will begin at 1:00 and last until 5:00, followed by a reception.

Please feel free to "drop in" and "drop out" as your schedule requires. There is no charge for the general public (attorneys wishing CLEs must pay \$75). The only thing Loras asks is that you RSVP by emailing valorie.woerdehoff@loras.edu or calling 588-7565 so that they have adequate accommodations in place.

From Rabbi Stephanie

On Friday, March 20th, six teenagers, two rabbis and a 13 ½-month-old left Cedar Rapids for New York City. (Great set up for a joke, right?) For nearly half of our group, this was a first-time trip to the Big City. Others of us had hit the standard tourist stops—the Statue of Liberty, the museums, Times Square. Aaron and I were the most experienced, having lived in the area for three years. Yet Sunday afternoon found us all in a place we had never been before: the Borough Park neighborhood of Brooklyn.

Less than a half hour subway ride from Manhattan, it was, as one of our students put it, “like being in a different country in a different time.” All around us, men in black hats and long coats, frequently with stockings on their feet, bustled from place to place. Women in wigs and hats pushed strollers with one, two, three, even six children, all bundled in identical brown, navy or black coats. Buses with Hebrew writing on the sides waited for boys outside the boys’ school and girls outside the girls’ school. A sign in the window of a dry cleaners advertised “shatnez testing” (to make sure garments do not mix materials in violation of biblical law). Services listed in the window of a hair salon included wig repairs, simcha hairstyling and “peyos perms.” (So that’s how they get their sidelocks so curly!) Near our hotel, on the Upper Westside, there seemed to be risqué lingerie and underwear shops on nearly every corner. Here, in Borough Park, there was also a lingerie shop—its window displaying the finest in flannel nightgowns and terrycloth robes. And, of course, on every corner, on every block—synagogues, big and small.

In some ways, Borough Park was exactly what we were expecting, though to quote a student once again, “you have to see it—all of the details—to believe it.” But in others ways, we were quite surprised. Most notably, we were all taken aback by how *friendly* so many people were. Though we were dressed modestly (the brisk weather helped insure that), we were expecting to stand out like a sore thumb and we did. Yet rather than sidelong glances and looks of disapproval, several men in particular stopped to ask us where we were from and what brought us to New York. They asked about our Jewish community in Iowa, in one case even inquiring about recovery from the flood, and welcomed us to their neighborhood. We were floored. We had expected the Chassidic Jews of Borough Park to stereotype us, and yet, as it turns out, we had stereotyped them.

In a short while we will celebrate Passover in commemoration of our journey from Egypt to the Promised Land—from *Mitzrayim*, a place of narrowness, to the wide open spaces of the desert. The holiday is a challenge to each of us to move from narrow-mindedness to open-mindedness. May each of us find or make an occasion to broaden our horizons this Passover season.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Stephanie M. Alexander

Upcoming Activities

- **Friday, April 3rd – Visitors' Service**
- **Saturday, April 4th, 11:00 am – Social Justice Seder**

Using a specially-prepared Haggadah that reflects upon Passover's call to social justice, this seder includes all of the traditional rituals and foods and is open to everyone – please join us!

- **Saturday, April 4th, 7:00 pm – Adult Study @ The Landaus' – “God: Outside the Box”**

Our discussion this evening will examine our ideas about God in new ways, recognizing that being outside the theological box is not new, but part of an evolution of ideas and understandings influenced by the realities of each generation's experiences.

Please read the following selections from *Reform Judaism Magazine* before the study session:

“What God Can Learn from Us,” – <http://reformjudaismmag.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=1426>

“God's Hidden Name Revealed,” – <http://reformjudaismmag.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=1433>

“The Duty to Disobey,” – <http://reformjudaismmag.org/Articles/index.cfm?id=1438>

On the Horizon...

- **Saturday, April 25th, 3:00 pm – Interfaith Worship Discussion**

There are many settings in which we, as individuals and a congregation, engage in interfaith worship – from organized Thanksgiving services and community-wide peace vigils, to public invocations and impromptu blessings. What are the appropriate parameters for such worship? Does “interfaith” have to mean all faiths? Is there room for uniquely Christian, Jewish, Muslim devotion in such a setting? These questions, posed by our own members, are certainly food for thought for all. Saturday afternoon we'll reflect upon these situations and more and evaluate different interfaith models.

- **Saturday, May 9th, 3:00 pm - Discussion of the book *God Knows*, by Joseph Heller**

“Joseph Heller's powerful, wonderfully funny, deeply moving novel is the story of David -- yes, King David -- but as you've never seen him before. You already know David as the legendary warrior king of Israel, husband of Bathsheba, and father of Solomon; now meet David as he really was: the cocky Jewish kid, the plagiarized poet, and the Jewish father. Listen as David tells his own story, a story both relentlessly ancient and surprisingly modern, about growing up and growing old, about men and women, and about man and God. It is quintessential Heller.” (*Warning: This is a fascinating example of historical fiction, but most definitely “Rated R”.*)



Service and Mitzvah Schedule for 5769

Revised 3/28/09

NOTE: Rabbi Stephanie offers a slew of activities on the weekends she is here. The schedule below does NOT include those specific activities. Refer to each newsletter for the specifics of an upcoming weekend.

Friday, April 3... Visitors' Service. dinner: Randy Sirk
6:30pm Rabbi Stephanie meets with our visitors
7:30 pm (NOTE TIME CHANGE) our Shabbat service begins GROUP ONEG

Saturday, April 4...
11:00am Social Justice Seder
7:00pm adult study dinner: Landau, study: Landau

Sunday, April 5 DUBUQUE RESCUE MISSION Meal

Sunday April 19...1:00pm at the temple—SPRING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Friday, April 24...7:00pm Shabbat service dinner: Mikel & Pierce, oneg: Aidenbaum
Saturday, April 25...7:00pm adult study dinner: Goldstein & Chapman,
study: Randy Sirk

Friday, May 8... 7:00pm Shabbat service dinner: Reinstein, oneg: Dyrke
Saturday, May 9...7:00pm adult study dinner: Dyrke, study: Rudins

Friday, June 5...7:00pm Shabbat service dinner: TBD, oneg: Alexander
Saturday, June 6... time TBD End-of-Year Adult Social hosted by the Alexanders