

Temple Beth El^{Electronic} News

Visit our temple website at <http://www.templebe.org>

Nissan 5769

April 2009 #2

Thank You

- ✧ To everyone who brought ritual items and delicious food to the Social Justice Seder. Special thanks to Rabbi Stephanie for an inspiring Seder, to Rebecca for coordinating, and to Phillip Glenn for finding the Afikomen!
- ✧ To Alan and Phyllis Garfield who have volunteered to be the permanent contacts between Temple Beth El and Hospice.
- ✧ To Phyllis Garfield, Fern Reinstein, Sheila Rudin, and Randy Sirk, who provided food for our Sunday dinner at the Rescue Mission. Thanks to Hank Goldstein for his cash donation (used to purchase milk), and to Esther Lieberman and Wayne Dyrke who not only cooked but also helped to serve the meal. Temple Beth El (in collaboration with the Unitarian Fellowship of Dubuque) fed 98 people (not including staff or volunteers)—the most we've ever served.

If you would like to continue the local fight to end hunger, the Rescue Mission accepts donations. With more children eating there, they are experiencing an increased need for milk. You may also want to consider a donation to Mazon (a Jewish response to hunger), and Rebecca will have donation envelopes at our upcoming service.

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. The slate for the Board nominees for the coming year is:

Alan Garfield
Phyllis Garfield
Ellie Landau
Lou Landau
Cindy Mikel
Karin Pritikin
Sheila Rudin
Randy Sirk

According to the By Laws, the Congregation votes on this slate of nominees, and then the newly elected Board selects its officers from the Board. (So congregants don't vote on officers, just who is on the Board....)

Mitzvah Moments

Mazel Tov to Jeremy Klein, our Loras student, and our own Jewish wrestler. This year he led the Loras College team in pins and took third place in the regional conference. His record for the year was 16 and 11. Great job!

Sisterhood

Our annual Sisterhood dues are \$25. Any woman affiliated with the Temple is eligible to join Women of Reform Judaism. Give or send your dues for this year to Phyllis Garfield. Our dues help to support regional and national initiatives. For more information, contact Rebecca Gottlieb.

Visitor's Service

More than 90 people attended our recent Visitor's Service. We printed 88 booklets, and we ran out of them! Thanks to Rebecca for coordinating and everyone for baking. Our guests commented on how "gracious and welcoming we are."

Rabbi Selection Committee

The Rabbi Selection Committee (chairpersons Sheila and Alan; members Ellie, Lou, Karin and Rebecca) have met and are working hard at finding a replacement for Rabbi Stephanie.

Our sympathy goes to the family of Chester Solomon. He and his wife Charlotte lived in Dubuque for many years. Chester passed away last week in Arizona. Some of you met his daughter Cindy and her husband Stan when they came to Dubuque to help celebrate our 175th this past summer.

Community Event

Sustainability, Building Tomorrow's Neighborhood Conference

Thursday, April 23, 2009, Loras Alumni Campus Center

Time: Noon to 8 p.m. (come when you can)

Event Sponsored by Loras College, Clarke College, University of Dubuque, Wartburg Seminary, NICC, Aramark, City of Dubuque, Dubuque Metropolitan Area Solid Waste Agency, Dubuque Chamber of Commerce, and Keep Iowa Beautiful/Alliant Energy

There will be **free admission**. Drinks and snacks will be served throughout the day.

Displays from local schools, businesses, and organizations

General Sessions and breakout sessions throughout the day

More Conference Information available on the website at

<http://depts.loras.edu/sustainability/conference4-2009.html>

www.dmaswa.org

From Rabbi Stephanie

I like to think of myself as a rational person, and yet...

As a child, I would always walk so carefully on the sidewalk. When I inadvertently stepped on a crack I was inconsolable, convinced I had caused bodily harm to my mother as the old adage said, "Step on a crack and break your mother's back."

Every time I sneezed, I needed to hear someone say "bless you"—so much so that if no one were around, I would say it aloud to myself.

I have always understood that spilling salt is to be avoided, though I have never known the precise danger; and never quite certain which shoulder is the correct remedy, I've taken to sprinkling spilled salt in a manner not unlike shaking the lulav—up, down, and all around.

The more I think about it, the longer my list of personal superstitions becomes. Yet I do still consider myself a rational person. I think most Reform Jews do; it's what draws us to the Reform expression of Judaism over others—we do not have to check our rationality at the door. As Reform Jews, we have removed from our liturgy the suggestion of simple cause and effect (i.e. if I do *this*, good things will happen; if I do *this*, bad things will happen). We understand that the world does not work that way and we do not have control over all situations. Nevertheless, superstitious practices seem as prevalent in Reform households as any other, and is that not precisely what superstitious practices suggest?

Whether your personal practices are riddled with superstition (you wouldn't reveal a pregnancy until the second trimester), you're mindful only of Jewish superstition (you wouldn't have a shower until after the baby was born), or you scoff at all superstition (not only would you have a baby shower, you would have it in the first trimester on Friday the 13th), join us for what promises to be an interesting and lively discussion of Jewish superstition at adult study on Saturday, April 25th. Hope to see you then!

L'shalom,
Rabbi Stephanie M. Alexander

Upcoming Activities

- **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, April 25th, 7:00 pm – Adult Study @ Randy Sirk's: Jewish Superstition**

On the Horizon...

- **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 4/18/09

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.

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

Friday, April 24...7:00pm Shabbat service
Saturday, April 25...7:00pm adult study

dinner: Mikel & Pierce, oneg: Aidenbaum
dinner: Goldstein & Chapman,
study: Randy Sirk

Friday, May 8... 7:00pm Shabbat service
Saturday, May 9...7:00pm adult study

dinner: Gottlieb, oneg: Dyrke
dinner: Dyrke, study: Rudin

Friday, June 5...7:00pm Shabbat service
Saturday, June 6... time TBD

dinner: TBD, oneg: Alexander
End-of-Year Adult Social hosted by the Alexanders