

Temple Israel of Great Neck

Where tradition meets change

a Conservative egalitarian synagogue

Film Series Presenting Academy Award Winner 'Son of Saul' on Jan. 21



A scene from 'Son of Saul,' the next movie in Temple Israel's Jewish Film Series, to be shown on Saturday, January 21, at 7:30 P.M.

Academy Award Winning movie "Son of Saul" will be the next presentation in Temple Israel's Jewish Film Series on Saturday, January 21, at 7:30 P.M. The picture will be shown in the Crystal Ballroom, followed by a lively discussion with the audience led by Rabbi Daniel Schweber.

The film—graphically showing life in the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camp from the perspective of one of the prisoners forced to help the Nazis exterminate the camp's Jews—has garnered a long list of recognitions, including being named last year's Best Foreign Film by the Academy Awards. It also won note from the Golden Globes, Cannes Film Festival, New York Film Critics Circle and critic groups in Los Angeles, Boston, San Francisco, Chicago, Dallas, Houston, and Washington, D.C., and the National Board of Review.

"It is my impression that many artists employ the Holocaust to explore the borders between humanity and inhumanity" Rabbi Schweber said. "In -Continued on page 8

Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class 'Graduating' January 20-21 Will Demonstrate Accomplishments at Services

By Marc Katz, Editor

Students in Temple Israel's latest adult B'nei Mitzvah class will display the skills they have learned on the weekend of January 20-21, culminating two years of intensive study in Hebrew, prayer and Jewish history.

"Working with this class of dedicated adults has been very rewarding," said Rabbi Daniel Schweber, who has taught the group since he joined the congregation more than a year ago. "Their enthusiasm and dedication has inspired me. They get a lot out of it, and so do I."

Members of the class include Lila Bernstein-Schoen, Carol Braksmajer, Minoo Dilmanian, Josephine Haghani, Maurice Harounian, Natali Matalon, Barbara Schultz, and Marjan Taied. They began their study in January of 2015 with Rabbis Howard Stecker and Seth Adelson. Cantor Raphael Frieder taught trope and Rahel Musleah gave instruction in basic Hebrew, prayers and the order of the Shabbat service. Rabbi Schweber took over for Rabbi Adelson when he joined the congregation in the fall of 2015.

Many in the class can now read Hebrew and follow the order of the service. The class learned how to participate in the daily minyan, the meaning of many Hebrew words and the roots they came from, prayer skills, and a survey of great Jewish books.

One of the students, Mrs. Matalon, said she was raised in Germany and only recently joined Temple Israel after moving to Great Neck. In Germany, she said, study of your chosen religion is part of the public school curriculum. When Christian students went *-Continued on page 8*



Temple Israel's latest adult B'nei Mitzvah class is preparing for their "graduation" with the clergy and their tutors, culminating two years of intensive study. *Voice Photo by Bob Lopatkin*

Friday, January 13, 2017

The Adult Bar-Bat Mitzvah Journey

A Voice Guest Column by The Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class

EDITOR'S Note: Another group of Temple Israel members are about to mark their Bar and Bat Mitzvah as adults. They reflect on the experience in a booklet to be distributed on the morning of their service. Excerpts of their writings are this Guest Column.

By Lila Bernstein-Schoen

I was raised in a Conservative Jewish family in New York City. My mother was from Brooklyn and my father from Queens. At that time and in the synagogue we belonged to, girls would only be able to have their Bat Mitzvah on Friday night, so that is what I prepared for. Unfortunately, my mother passed away four months before my Bat Mitzvah. On the night of the Bat Mitzvah I told my father I was not feeling so good, but he said it was nerves. During the service, when it was my turn, I read a few sentences and turned bright red and got very warm. The cantor said I should sit down and I remained seated for the rest of the service. It turned out that I had fever. I always thought if I had a child, I could make a big deal out of her bat mitzvah to make up for mine.

Years later, I met my husband, Alex. After getting married, moving to Great Neck and having our daughter, Nancy, we decided to join Temple Israel. I learned about the adult B'nei Mitzvah class and thought it would be something I would do much later, after my daughter grew up and went off to college, or after I retired. Then I thought that perhaps it would be a good inspiration if she could see her mother read from the Torah. So, why wait! Thus I began my journey two years ago with this cohort.

By Carol Braksmajer

I would like to express my appreciation to Temple Israel for providing the opportunity for me to become a B'nei Mitzvah. In the best of the traditions

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The Trying 20s

From the Rabbi by Rabbi Howard A. Stecker

During times of transition, when life is most uncertain, we need reminders of who we are, of the relationships and commitments that help constitute our identity. In her book Passages, Gail Sheehy identifies the main challenges we face in each phase of our lives. In our 20s, which she calls the "trying decade," we are transitioning from the home we grew up in to the home we will create for ourselves.

Help them to feel inspired by the past and animated to impact the future.

This is a time when we are often "trying things out," professionally and personally. It can be a time of accomplishment, but it is often characterized by uncertainty. What can we do to support our children and grandchildren, our nieces and nephews, when they are facing the excitement and anxiety of their "trying 20s" and beyond?

The Torah's description of Jacob's dream may provide some direction. When Jacob leaves home to escape his brother's anger and seek a wife, he has a dream of a ladder ascending to heaven. God appears on the ladder and says two things—first, I am the God of your ancestors and second, you and your descendants will be a source of blessing to all the families of the earth.

Jacob's dream reveals that he is part of a significant past and that he will have an impactful future. This strikes me as the essence of what we would want to convey to people while they are in their 20s and 30s, preparing for the commitments of adult life.

While there are multiple ways that we can help provide direction to people during this time in their lives, Jacob's dream helps us to focus on two essential

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The Strategic Plan

From the President by Rob Panzer

After 18 months of hard work, our strategic planning committee has completed its final report. As discussed previously, this process took an in-depth look at a number of aspects of synagogue life, ranging from teen engagement to financial sustainability. The plan has been presented to the Executive Committee and to the Board of Trustees, and will soon be presented to the congregation. Please be on the lookout for ways by which you can read the report as well as ways each of us can be involved in implementing the findings of the report.

One of the most important elements of this process was what has been gained by undergoing the process itself. Over 200 of our members participated, from taking the survey at the beginning, to joining one of the six task forces, to being part of a committee that was interviewed. In addition, we now have a methodology that can be used to

...our strategic planning committee has completed its final report.

explore other areas of synagogue life. As we move forward we will surely use the techniques we have learned.

I would like to thank all who joined in the process and I would like to single out three individuals who deserve our collective thanks. Co-chairs Larry Greengrass and Lynn Weitzman selflessly gave of themselves to shepherd the process through. As one of them once said, "it's like herding cats," but with their leadership we were able to bring it to conclusion. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Veronica Lurvey, who took on the job of taking disparate reports from the task forces and melding them into a cohesive document. Kol hakavod to each of you.

As always I can be reached at robpanzer18@gmail.com.

In Memoriam

Temple Israel extends condolences to the families of:

> **ROSALIE HOFFMAN** mother of Matthew Hoffman

KHANBABA ROKHSAR father of Guity Rokhsar

and Arman Rokhsar

HELEN FRANK mother of Eric Frank

MANSOUR KHALILI father of Sharona Lipp

ANITA OBERMAN mother of Linda Handsman

SHERRY GRODOFSKY

wife of Michael Grodofsky, mother of Scott Grodofsky and Melissa Perlmutter and esteemed member of Temple Israel

DANIEL GRODOFSKY

father of Michael Grodofsky and grandfather of Melissa Perlmutter and Scott Grodofsky

May their memories be for a blessing.

Mazal Toy To

Elise and Richard Kestenbaum on the engagement of their son, Jonathan, to Lindsay Kriger, and the engagement of their son, Scott, to Lindsey Cohen. Farnosh and Joseph Chadi on the birth of their grandson, James Nouriel Shamsian. **Rita and Melvin Ortner** on the birth of their granddaughter, Penelope Blake Middleman. Elaine Paris Dunckley and William Dunckley on the birth of their grandsons, Owen Alexander and Levi Benjamin Paris. Madelyn and Robert Gould on the birth of their granddaughter, Caroline (Dalia) Gould. **Helene Schachter** on the birth of her great grandson, Ethan James Stagliano. Karen Lewkowitz-Miller and Monte Miller on the birth of their grandson, Benjamin Alexander Ruben.

Upcoming Events

January 19

Board of Trustees Meeting 8:15 P.M. January 20 Adult B'nei Mitzvah Family Dinner 7:30 P.M. January 21 Adult B'nei Mitzvah 9:00 A.M. TILL Jewish Film Series Presents: "Son of Saul" 7:00 P.M. Januarv 23 Sisterhood Luncheon Lecture Noon January 24 iEngage Israel Series: "A Shared Homeland for Divided People 8:15 P.M. **January 26** Men's Club Meeting 7:30 P.M. **January 29** Family Bar and Bat Mitzvah Orientation (rescheduled) 9:30 A.M. January 30 Congregational Meeting 8:15 P.M. February 2 Beth HaGan Torah Science Fair 5:30 P.M. **February 5** Men's Club World Wide Wrap 9:00 A.M. Erev Purim

February 6 Sisterhood Board Meeting 10:00 A.M.

February 10

Congregational Tu Bishevat Seder/ Waxman Youth House Family Friday Dinner 7:15 P.M.

February 11 Tu Bishevat

February 12 TILL Jewish Film Series Presents: "Above and Beyond" 7:00 P.M.

February 14 iEngage Israel Series: "A Shared Homeland for Divided People" 8:15 P.M.

February 16 Board of Trustees Meeting 8:15 P.M. February 23

Men's Club Meeting 7:30 P.M. March 5

Men's Club Rabbinic Dialogue 9:00 A.M. TILL Film Series 7:00 P.M.

March 7 iEngage Israel Series: "A Shared Homeland for Divided People 8:15 P.M. March 11

Great Neck Community-Wide Purim Celebration 5:40 P.M.

Tribes of Israel: A Shared Homeland For a Divided People

A mini-series featuring Rabbis Stecker and Schweber

January 24, February 14, March 7 8:15 P.M.

The modern State of Israel is a place where its inhabitants are divided along "tribal" affiliations including religious, ideological, national, and geographic categories. Yet, the goal remains to create and maintain a shared society. This task is more difficult in the current socio-political environment.

This mini-series will explore the challenges and possibilities that exist as Israel approaches 70 years of existence in 2018.

Temple Lites...

• Jared Astrof, 14, the son of Jackie Einstein Astrof and Josh Astrof, received the Light of the Future Award from UJA-Federation of New York on Long Island last month for his Bar Mitzvah project efforts. He completed more than 26 hours of varied community service for the project, including competing in UJA's Aqua Run Race Against Poverty. The swimming and running race was a perfect fit for Jared, marrying his interests in both sports, in goal setting, and in raising awareness and money to combat local poverty, a cause to which he has committed many hours.



Terri Davis, second from right, from Temple Israel's sister congregation, in Ashkelon, Israel, spoke to Religious School and High School students about the Masorti community in Israel during a recent visit to Temple Israel. With her are, left to right, Rabbis Stecker and Roth, and Jackie Astrof, the congregation's laison to the congregation.

Spreading the Light, the Love, and the Ruach

From the Religious School by Rabbi Amy Roth

As the new month of Kislev (as well as the winter weather) blew in, we turn to ways of keeping spiritually as well as physically warm. Our children are always excited to celebrate a new Hebrew month: we recognize each Rosh Hodesh with song, cheers and communal celebration. But when we arrive at the month of Kislev, there is already so much excitement—as we anticipate a month filled with learning, experiencing and preparing for Hanukkah.

Walking into the school wing during Kislev is akin to being transported into a Hanukkah wonderland! Hanukkah lights, decorations, artistic creations and colors are everywhere. You know it is Kislev when you are in the school wing. The sounds of children singing the Hanukkah blessings, as well as the festive Hanukkah songs permeate the atmosphere. While most children are excited to explain the miracle of the oil lasting for eight days, some also recognize the complex nature of the military victories of the Maccabees, and of resisting assimilation into another culture. Our older children know that in addition to being a story of the rededication of our Temple, Hanukkah is a story of the strength of Jewish identity and of maintaining our uniqueness even as we related to the non-Jewish world.

And we also know that when we commemorate a happy event, it is a



Religious School students celebrated Hanukkah with residents of the Atria Great Neck.

mitzvah to make it as joyous as possible. So-we celebrate! We do this with food (some classes are even making their own latkes!) and song.

Even as we celebrate here at Temple Israel, we also spread our Hanukkah spirit to others: our Monday/Wednesday classes travelled as a full school group to sing and visit with residents of the Atria on Great Neck Road for the second consecutive year. Our Alef and Bet children from our Sunday/ Tuesday classes brought Hanukkah joy and song to the residents of Atria on Cutter Mill Road. Our children enjoy that the residents join with them in singing many Hanukkah songs, as well as other Jewish favorites. These are powerful, significant learning experiences; perhaps nothing makes a bigger impression on children. Celebrating our favorite holidays by spreading cheer, music and smiles to others is part of our vision of tikun olam, repairing the world, through acts of lovingkindness. Some of our children also baked cookies with symbols of the holiday-and donated them to an area special needs residence.

As with all of our learning experiences, we strive for our Hanukkah projects (candle making, dreydel painting, hanukiah sculpting), food creations and music to incorporate the ruach, the spirit of the holiday. We are grateful for the many blessings of this season, including the ability of our children to be exposed to a multiplicity of cultures, religions and life circumstances. Our children are good learners: they are able to internalize lessons from many of our powerful experiential learning opportunities. Hanukkah is perhaps one of our best vehicles for this type of education: children's favorite holiday combined with the significant life lessons and experiences that it brings. Could it be any better than teaching Jewish values of strength, of remaining strong in our values and practice, while spreading the light, love and ruach to others?

I hope that you had a festive, light-filled Hanukkah!

'Powerful Women In Our Ancient Tradition'

A Shabbat Talk With Rabbi Abby Sosland

Saturday, January 21 12:45 P.M. Multipurpose Room

with an introductory Niggunim led by Cantor Raphael Frieder

Rabbi Sosland brings an urban contemporary perspective to Jewish tradition. She is the spiritual advisor at Schechter Westchester High School and conducts High Holy Day services at Town and Village Synagogue, New York.

Program sponsored by Bracha & Marty Werber, Sisterhood, and Rebecca Yousefzadeh Sassouni

Congregation Thanks Its Kiddush Sponsors

The congregational kiddush on September 24 was sponsored by Linda and Joshua Young in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Noah. Contributions toward the kiddush were made by Mojdeh and Arman Noghreh in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Alexis, and by the Emanuel children to mark the dedication of the Chapel Prayer Guide in memory of their parents, Rita and Lou Emanuel.

The congregational kiddush on October 8 was sponsored by Sharon Denner Horowitz and Franklin Horowitz in honor of the Auf Ruf of their daughter, Stefanie, and Drew Greenfeld.

A contribution toward the kiddush on October 15 was made by Tanaz and Sina Mahfar in honor of the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Sophia.

Contributions toward the kiddush on October 22 were made by Jennifer and Andrew Schwartz in honor of the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Alexander, and by Sara and Ronald Weiner in honor of the baby naming of their granddaughter, Ryan Elissa Penziner.

Ask the Rabbi: What Is A Shabbat Seder?

A New Voice Feature by Rabbi Daniel Schweber

EDITOR'S NOTE: Everyone is welcome to submit questions they think should be addressed in this column to Rabbi Schweber at rabbischweber@tign.org.

Question: I have heard you and others refer to the term "Shabbat seder." I know about the Passover seder, but what does the term "Shabbat seder" mean?

Discussion: Indeed the most known seder is the Passover seder. The term seder means order and in the world of Jewish ritual it is a technical term referring to a set of ordered ritual. There are many sets of rituals that we could add the term seder to. For example, the lighting of Hanukkah candles has a seder to it. We light the shamash and then recite the blessings in a particular order and light the newest candle from left to right.

Along the same line, the order of rituals at the Friday night Shabbat table is a seder. In recent years educators

The beauty of the Shabbat Seder is that it comes weekly ...

including Ron Wolfson and Noam Zion have framed the Shabbat rituals as a seder as a means of helping us discover the deep and layered meanings to the rituals at the most special of meals. Unlike the 15 steps of the Passover seder, there is no set order. Ron Wolfson, in his book titled "The Shabbat Seder," lists the following ten steps.

 Hakhanah L'Shabbat, Preparing for Shabbat-We take the necessary steps to prepare the food, the table and ourselves for welcoming of Shabbat.
 Hadlakat Nerot, Candle Lighting-The ancient rabbis teach that we light Shabbat lights to bring peace and harmony into our homes. When we light the lamps we transport ourselves from weekday time to holy time.
 Shalom Aleikhem, "Peace Be To You"-We welcome the Shabbat Queen and the angels, who according to legend, visit the Shabbat table with a hymn of peace, welcome and blessing. 4. B'rachot, Family and Table Blessings-Shabbat is a time for family and friends to be together. We celebrate this togetherness by blessing one another, especially the children.

5. Kiddush-Over a cup of wine, we recount how God rested on the seventh day of creation and made the seventh day holy. Through this blessing we declare the day as holy and recognize that God gave us the holy day of rest as a gift.

6. Netilat Yadayim, Washing the Hands-The breaking of bread is compared to the eating of the offerings in the Temple. We symbolically purify ourselves by washing our hands with a cup.

7. Ha-Motzi, Blessing Over the Bread-Traditionally we use two braided loaves to break bread on Shabbat. The two loaves symbolize the double portion of manna the Israelites received on Friday for the Shabbat.

8. Seudat Shabbat, The Shabbat Meal-The relaxed atmosphere, our togetherness and tasty foods make for a special time.

9. Z'mirot and Learning, Shabbat is a time for oneg, joy. Traditionally this joy was expressed with song and Torah learning.

10. Birkat Ha-Mazon-We conclude the meal thanking God for the food that we have enjoyed.

The beauty of the Shabbat Seder is that it comes weekly as opposed to just once a year. It is also shorter. While doing all ten would most certainly provide a meaningful experience, one can omit or try various ones out each week. Some of the rituals are more prescribed and others are just customary. The prescribed rituals are numbers two, five, six and seven. If you want to learn more about Shabbat feel free to speak with me, Rabbi Stecker or Rabbi Roth, You can also visit myjewishlearning.com. We also have communal Friday night dinners on occasion. The next one is February 10. I look forward to celebrating Shabbat together with you.

The Adult Bar-Bat Mitzvah Journey...

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of the Jewish people, Temple Israel strives to bring their congregants and their families closer to God, the Torah and continues to teach present and future generations the best in Jewish values and Jewish heritage.

In 2015, I was recovering from a serious illness and my sisterin-law, Sherry, told me about the new B'nei Mitzvah adult class being formed at Temple Israel. I decided to go to the first meeting in February. As I listened to Rabbi Adelson describe the program, my initial thought was "I'm too old for this" and that I would never be able to learn Hebrew and complete the course. However, I remembered what my husband, Michael, told me: "Never to let anything prevent or interfere in any way from living a happy, healthy and fulfilled life." That it's never too late to learn something new, be it a new career, a college degree, computer skills, or in this case a new language.

I have tried to live up to my husband's advice. If he was here today, I know he would be extremely proud of what I have been able to accomplish during these two years of the class. My husband and I have always tried to instill in our children that learning does not stop when formal schooling is over. You can follow your dreams despite obstacles, age, circumstances or background no matter where you are in life. Learning should continue throughout your lifetime. By becoming a B'nei Mitzvah I will try to continue to be that kind of example to my children. I hope they can be proud of me as I am of them.

By Minoo Dilmanian

As I finish this journey, I am ecstatic to be called a B'nei Mitzvah. Growing up in a traditional Iranian Jewish home, I never experienced a formal Jewish education. Rather, I blindly followed our customs like my ancestors did before me. When my son started at the religious school 17 years ago, egalitarian treatment was new to me. As a gift to myself, I decided to take advantage of the opportunity to become a Bat Mitzvah. I will truly miss the Tuesday night classes and the priceless friendships that grew because of it.

By Josephine Haghani

As we started our journey together about 2 years ago, all with different backgrounds and varying levels of Jewish knowledge, we really didn't know what would lie ahead. But with the help and direction of our teachers: Rabbis Stecker, Adelson and Schweber, and the incredibly patient Cantor Frieder and Morah Rahel, we each found abilities in ourselves that we didn't know we had.

Hashem has blessed each of us with a treasure box of abilities, many of which we cannot recognize in ourselves. All we need is to trust in Hashem and follow his path, to have emuna and faith that He wants what is best for us. The most important thing we have gained is the seed that these classes planted in us: to continue on our journey, achieve personal growth, and improve our relationship with each other and God.

By Maurice Harounian

I was blessed to be born into a close knit Jewish community in Tehran. My parents emphasized Jewish education, so I learned to read some Hebrew from a young age. My parents and extended family followed traditional Sephardic customs, including keeping Shabbat, attending our shul on a regular basis and observing kashrut. Maintaining Jewish values, and giving tzedaka within the community was critical in a country of over 98 percent Muslims. By age 13, in accordance with common custom, I had a very informal Bar Mitzvah that was limited to saying the blessings before and after the Torah reading on Shabbat.

After first emigrating to Forest Hills in 1973, my family moved to Great Neck in 1977. We have maintained dual membership at Temple Israel and Iranian Jewish Center since then. My father was one of the founders of IJC, now known as Beth Hadassah. My wife, Jacqueline, and I were married at Temple Israel 26 years ago. As long time members, we regularly attend services on Shabbat and other holidays. One of the greatest and most meaningful privileges for me is to carry the Torah on Rosh Hashanah. Praying together with my wife and children, and listening to Rabbi Stecker's sermons connects us as a family and a Jewish community. Our children Aaron, Tamara, and Delilah all became Bar and Bat Mitzvah at Temple Israel and in Jerusalem. Our youngest child, Joseph, will do the same this summer.

Two years ago, at my wife's urging, I reluctantly went to an introductory session to learn about the Adult Bar Mitzvah program. From that first session, I was hooked! Since then, I have attended "Hebrew School," learning a long array of different subjects from alef bet, numbers, Hebrew words and their roots, holidays, Torah commandments, mitzvot, Jewish history, comparison of Rabbis' commentaries, reading Siddur, prayers and Torah and Haftorah with trope and Kabbalah.

I am truly grateful for all the help and time of my teachers. I appreciate the friendship, support and encouragement of my amazing classmates. It was also an unforgettable experience to train for my Bar Mitzvah at the same time as my son, Joey.

By Natali Matalon

I was never able to read a prayer for a holiday or go to synagogue and follow along. It became an insecurity. I did not see myself as an educated Jewish woman. Becoming a mother and wanting to be a role model to my young children, my insecurity grew stronger and I vowed to fix it. I set a goal to read Hebrew fluently before my eldest daughter, Elizabeth, was old enough to realize her mom's deficiency. I was living in Park Slope at the time, and the Chabad Rabbi's daughter offered to train me. She tried, but it wasn't an organized course and without the structure and consistency, I didn't make much progress. When we moved to Great Neck with three kids, I was inspired by a family relative, Guity Rokhsar, who completed the Temple Israel B'nei Mitzvah program. I decided to follow in her footsteps and give it another try.

...In the Words of Those Who Took the Trip

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For the past two years, I have been part of this class that has taught me so much. I made wonderful friends, together with whom I made this journey and finished. Today, I am very proud to say that I can finally read Hebrew and enjoy a service in a synagogue. I am so grateful to our amazingly dedicated teachers. They taught us to read, about Jewish law, history, tradition and of course, prepared us for our B'nei Mitzvah.

By Barbara Schultz

My journey to becoming a Bat Mitzvah began at a very early age. I was an only child of extremely assimilated parents. While we celebrated some of the holidays it was never a big deal in our family. We didn't belong to a shul and never went to services except for other people's Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. When my friends began to go to Hebrew school I wanted to go, but my parents said girls weren't required. One of my friends gave me some of her Hebrew school books which I still have to this day. For some reason I was always interested in Judaism and being Jewish. There was something within me that yearned to know more. When I discovered the "All of a Kind Family" book series about a Jewish family of my grandmother's time, I devoured them. I still love to read novels about Jews.

When I met my husband, Lenny, who was from a more traditional family, I told him I would keep kosher. I had very little knowledge about what it entailed, but I didn't really know how to run a non-Kosher kitchen either. I learned to cook all the traditional foods and hosted most of our holiday celebrations and still do to this day. When we moved to Great Neck, we immediately joined Temple Israel. I became active in Hadassah and eventually became president of our group.

When I began to teach, I started in a small yeshiva in Queens, Hebrew Academy of West Queens. Again, I learned a tremendous amount in that atmosphere and I loved it. After a long child care break, I returned to teaching, first at Hebrew Academy of Nassau County in West Hempstead and then finally at North Shore Hebrew Academy. I have become self taught in Jewish history, and am a voracious reader about Judaism. I became a Holocaust educator and am now assistant chairperson of the Holocaust Resource Center at Queensborough Community College.

The point of all this is that with all my involvement in Jewish institutions I never learned to read or speak Hebrew. That was the main reason I did not go to services. This Bat Mitzvah became an extremely important goal for me as I always felt like a fraud. My journey over the past two and a half years was interrupted last year when I became sick. I insisted to my family that I would not drop out when I could not attend class and when I was better I was tutored in order to catch up. While I might not be the greatest Hebrew reader, I am so ecstatic about reaching this milestone.

By Marjan Taied

As a young girl, born and raised in Iran, my Jewish knowledge was limited to observing Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Passover. In addition, under no circumstances were you allowed to marry outside the Jewish religion. While attending high school and ultimately Tehran University, I was always exempt from Islamic religious studies because I was part of a religious minority.

Later on, I married and had my own children. When it was time for my own kids to reach the Bar and Bat Mitzvah age, I admired them for their hard work and dedication towards preparing for their D'var Torah and learning to chant the Torah and Haftarah with trope.

So, when I learned about the adult B'nai Mitzvah classes offered at Temple Israel, I was encouraged to participate. Within the past two years, I have learned to read Hebrew and have become empowered to participate in the services. I also studied the background, historical context, and spiritual elements of the B'nei Mitzvah service. Participating in the classes led me to re-explore or sometimes explore for the first time, my Jewish roots and place in Jewish life. The adult B'nei Mitzvah experience has helped strengthen my Jewish identity and enhance my connection to our Jewish community in ways I never imagined. It is a moving and emotional experience and one that I will always cherish.

The Trying 20s

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areas. We can do our best to connect them to their past in the deepest way possible. For our own family members this can mean sharing stories about ancestors that paint pictures of their personalities, values and legacies. I find that my three sons, all in their 20s now, are more receptive than ever to learning about their ancestors and increasingly perceptive about understanding intergenerational family traits as part of their own emotional and ethical makeup.

Equally in keeping with the dynamics of Jacob's dream, we can inspire our loved ones to face the future by conveying our expectation and faith that they will be a source of blessing to the world. Notice that God does not speak to Jacob about how he will make a living or who will be his life partner. While I don't suggest that we avoid these conversations with our millennial loved ones altogether, it is ultimately more important that they feel expected and able to contribute significantly to the world—in short, to be a source of blessing. Through conversation and example, we can explore what that means. It can include contributing meaningfully to community with financial resources and time, advocating for those who are vulnerable, and conducting oneself with honesty and dignity in personal and professional situations.

For most of us it is a lifelong quest to discover our ultimate identity and destiny, but it feels especially urgent when we are in between the home we were born into and the home we will create.

I encourage a shout-out and a reach-out to anyone you know who is navigating the "trying 20s" and beyond. Help them to feel inspired by the past and animated to impact the future. Remind them who they are, who we are.

Wrap With the Men's Club! Sunday, Feb. 5 9:30 A.M.

Conservative Jewish men and women around the world will celebrate the mitzvah of putting on tefillin at the annual "World Wide Wrap." There will be extra sets of tefillin, trainers from the Men's Club and the clergy to help participants. Afterwards, congregants are invited to a breakfast sponsored by the Men's Club.

Candle Lighting Times

Friday, January 13

4:31 P.M.

Friday, January 20

4:39 P.M.

Friday, January 27

4:47 P.M.

Friday, February 3

4:56 P.M.

Daily Minyan Times Friday, January 13

7:00 A.M. 4:40 P.M.

Friday, January 20

7:00 A.M. 6:30 P.M.

Friday, January 27

7:00 A.M. 5:00 P.M.

Friday, February 3

7:00 A.M. 5:00 P.M.

Sunday, January 15, 22 & 29 & February 5

8:15 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Monday, January 16, 23 & 30 & February 6

6:45 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Tuesday, January 17, 24 & 31 & February 7

7:00 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Wednesday, January 18 & 25 & February 1 & 8

7:00 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Thursday, January 19 & 26 & February 2 & 9

6:45 A.M. 8:00 P.M.

Celebrate Tu Bishevat at Temple Israel Friday and Saturday, February 10 and 11

Tu Bishevat and Shabbat Shirah, when the "Song of the Sea" is read, are always near each other. Celebrate both:

FRIDAY EVENING:

An enhanced N'Ranenah service at 6 P.M. in the Multipurpose Room followed by a communal Shabbat dinner at 7:30 P.M. in the Crystal Ballroom featuring separate Tu Bishevat celebrations for children and adults.

Cost for the dinner:

Early bird special until Friday, February 3: \$25/adult; \$12/for children 12 and under After Friday, February 3: \$35/adult; \$20/for children 12 and under (children 2 and under are free)

Reservations will not be taken after Wednesday, February 8

RSVP for Friday night dinner by Wednesday, February 8 is a must. Call Jennifer at 482-7800.

SATURDAY MORNING:

8:45 A.M. in the Sanctuary in celebration of Shabbat Shirah, "The Shabbat of Song," Cantor Frieder will be joined by a group of professional singers adding even more song to the service.

Adult B'nei Mitzvah Class Celebrating Jan. 20-21

-Continued from front page off to study their religion for an hour a day, she was left alone in class. "I was not able to read or speak Hebrew. I would join my

father in saying prayers each evening, but I

knew them only through repetition." Now, as the mother of four young children in the Temple Israel schools, she said she wanted to be a role model for her children. "This was a big accomplishment for me," she said. "My goal was to be able to read Hebrew before my children learned how to read. Now I can help them with their homework. I can

During the weekend of services marking the culmination of study by the class, each student will read part of the Torah. Three groups of students will read the Haftorah. On Friday evening they will take part in the N'Rananah service, followed by a Shabbat dinner with family, friends, clergy, and the congregation.

even correct their mistakes!"

In addition, the Saturday morning service will include the baby naming of Danielle, the youngest daughter of Mrs. Matalon and her husband. "She was born while I was in the middle of studying for my Bat Mitzvah," Mrs. Matalon said.

In appreciation of their teachers, the class is

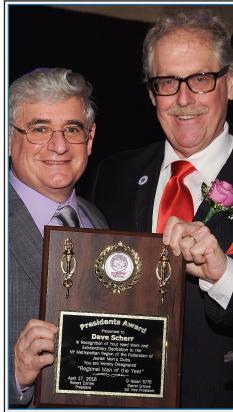
making a donation to Temple Israel's Tree of Life in their honor. The class agreed that the weekend of their B'nei Mitzvah "is a beginning, not an end," Mrs. Matalon said. "It is a jumping off point to a new way of engaging Judaism."

Members of the class wrote about the experience of participating in the study program. Their thoughts will be published in a booklet being distributed during the Shabbat weekend. Excerpts of their writing are in the Guest Column of this issue of The Voice.

NextFilmSeriesPresentation: 'Son of Saul' on January 21st

-Continued from front page my opinion, 'Son of Saul' helps us see that victims of the Holocaust never lost their humanity despite being thrown into a hell of inhumanity."

Other movies scheduled as part of the series sponsored by TILL, Temple Israel Lifelong Learning, the adult education committee, include "Above and Beyond" on Sunday, February 12, and "Keeping the Faith" on Sunday, March 5. Movie snacks are provided to the audience at all showings. The series is presented at no charge for members of the congregation and their guests.



Men's Club Past President David Scherr, left, received the Quality Club Award for the Temple Israel Men's Club from New York Metro Region President Rob Cohen of the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs.

Men's Club Earns Quality Club Award for Fifth Consecutive Year

Temple Israel's Men's Club was presented with the Federation of Jewish Men's Clubs' Quality Club Award for the fifth year in a row. The award was presented at the New York Regional Men's Club Dinner attended by Temple Israel Men's Club Co-President Jack Guberman and Past Presidents Marc Langsner, Leonard Katz and Dave Scherr.

The Quality Club Award was developed to strengthen and encourage member clubs to offer a variety of activities at the local level and to participate in regional programs. The award is given each year to member clubs who meet established criteria at the International, Regional and local levels. This past year only five of the 29 clubs in the New York Metro Region qualified for the award. The award is on display in the showcase to the left of the rear Temple Israel entrance.

Participants Are Needed for the 'Shabbat of Men's Voices' On April 7-8

Male members of Temple Israel ages 13-85 are being invited to participate in the congregation's Shabbat HaGever, the all-men conducted weekend of services, to be held Friday night, April 7 and Saturday, April 8.

"We will start by conducting Mincha on Friday evening and continue right through Havdallah on Saturday, concluding Shabbat," said Cantor Raphael Frieder. He said he "will do whatever it takes to make participants sound professional with the parts they are doing." Training classes will start in January in the Blue Room and all men are welcome to participate.

The first Shabbat HaGever, or "Shabbat of Men's Voices," conducted several years ago, brought a large number of congregants together to lead the service. It was followed by an all-woman run service, called Shabbat Kol Ishah, or "Shabbat of Women's Voices," and the following year a service conducted by both men and women, called Shabbat Koleinu, "The Shabbat of Our Voices." "This year the Men's Club will be sponsoring the Shabbat HaGever service by combining its annual Friday night Shabbat HaChodesh service with Shabbat HaGever, so if you participated in the Men's Club service in the past please join us for an expanded Shabbat HaGever this year," said Sam Husney, an organizer of the service.

"The service provides an opportunity for men to sing together, and to give everyone an opportunity to expand their knowledge," he said. Classes leading up to the service will include both communal and individual work. Part of the class will cover learning congregational tunes and the other part will focus on the part each participant will lead. Classes will be held on January 18 at 8:15 P.M, following the evening minyan and will continue on Tuesdays thereafter through the first week of April.

"We share some snacks, a bottle of Scotch, and we study and learn together," he said. To participate in the service, contact Howard Spun at 773-4116, Mr. Husney at 482-0402 or Cantor Frieder at 482-7800.

Happy Birthday Candy Man!



Morning minyan attendees celebrated the 89th birthday of minyan "regular" Ed Goldfeder on Sunday, November 27, followed by a lavish breakfast hosted by his wife, Shirley. Eddie, better known as "The Candy Man," is a morning minyan mainstay, and when word got out that he was celebrating his birthday, the minyan was filled to capacity! Eddie, pictured above, is surrounded by just a few of his many loving fans, left to right, Cheryl Moin, Simone Kahen, Mrs. Goldfeder, Alise Kreditor, Marilyn Torodash, and Renata Faranik.

From Generation to Generation Temple Israel Gratefully Acknowledges The Following Contributions

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Contribution: Suad Rabi

MUSEUM FUND

In memory of: Edward Melnick Greta Melnick Nadine Feingold

-Continued from back page Shemot Saturday, January 21

The book of Exodus begins in this portion and moves from the account of the history of a clan to the history of the Hebrew nation. A new king, who does not know Joseph, ascends the throne of Egypt and enslaves the Israelites. Moses is born to Israelite parents, but owing to a set of strange circumstances, he grows up in Pharaoh's palace as an Egyptian prince. He goes out to observe the Israelites at work and kills an Egyptian taskmaster for beating a slave. He is then forced to flee for his life to Midian, where he marries and becomes a shepherd for his father-inlaw, Jethro, the priest of Midian. While tending his flock at Mt. Horeb (Sinai), Moses encounters God in a burning bush and is commissioned to return to Egypt and free his people. Accompanied by his brother, Aaron, he makes an appeal to Pharaoh which is totally rejected. Events are thus set in motion which will lead to the Exodus and Moses' life-long task of bringing his people back to their land. Va'era

Va'eraSaturday, January 28In this portion, God reiterates His pledgeto redeem His people from slaveryand promises severe punishment forthe Egyptian people. A contest thenensues between the will of Pharaoh.Moses and Aaron make another appealto Pharaoh and in the process humiliate

D'var Torah

his magicians. The appeal, however, is again rejected. There follows the first seven of the ten plagues, which God must inflict on the Egyptians in order to achieve the release of the Israelites. The plagues of blood, frogs, lice, swarms of insects, pestilence, boils and hail (as well as locusts, darkness and the slaying of the first-born, which are related in the next portion) demonstrate God's ability to manipulate nature and to protect His people. Since a number of the plagues were directed against Egyptian divinities, also present here is the beginning of the war by the Israelites on polytheism.

Bo Saturday, February 4 In this portion, the plagues of locusts and darkness are described and then the account is interpreted in order to

record a detailed set of instructions which. God gives to Moses and Aaron to prepare the Israelites for freedom. They are first directed to establish a calendar starting with the month of liberation, Nisan. The calendar is meant to provide social and religious cohesion as well as to symbolize the free man's ability, indeed responsibility, to make time. Then follow directions for offering the paschal sacrifice (to be eaten in haste) and for smearing blood on the doorposts and lintels so Israelite houses will be spared the final plague. God then passes over the land and kills all the first born sons of the Egyptians, whereupon Pharaoh finally sends the Israelites out and they begin their journey toward Sinai. The Exodus is the key event in all Jewish history, and the instructions given here are by way of assuring that we remember God's role as redeemer to eternity.

Sabbath Services

-Continued from back page **Friday, February 3** Evening Service/TEP 5:00 P.M.

Saturday, February 4

Morning Service 9:00 A.M. Weekly Portion: Bo Exodus 10:1 – 13:16 Haftarah: Jeremiah 46:13 – 28 Sabbath Service Officers and Greeters:



25 Cutter Mill Plaza, Great Neck across from the Inn at Great Neck 516-466-2434 Your Ad Here will be seen by all Temple Israel members. For advertising rates: (all 482-7800 Seth Horowitz, Rachel Geula, Rebecca Friedman-Charry, Susan Brustein, and Brent Greenspan "Unlocking Tefila" 10:30 A.M. Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M. Toddler Service 11:00 A.M. Afternoon Service 4:35 P.M. Se'udah Shelishit 5:05 P.M. Evening Service 5:42 P.M. Havdalah 5:57 P.M.

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D'var Torah

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by Rabbi Marim D. Charry

Vayehi

Saturday, January 14

In this portion we conclude the cycle of Jacob stories and the Book of Genesis. After 17 years in Egypt, Jacob feels that his end is approaching. He makes Joseph swear that he will bury him with his forbearers in the land of Israel, and he blesses Joseph's children, Ephraim and Manasseh, thereby effectively elevating them to the status of Israelite tribes. Jacob then calls in all of his sons and delivers his testament in which he characterizes them and predicts what the future will bring each of them. Upon Jacob's death, the brothers bury him in the Cave of Machpelah and return to Egypt where they beg Joseph's forgiveness for the way they treated him. Joseph reassures them again that it was all part of God's plan. The concluding verses remind us of God's promise that the Israelites would return to the land of Canaan and prepare us to move in the Book of Exodus with its account of the enslavement and redemption. -Continued on page 11

Temple Israel of Great Neck

Marc Katz, Editor

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TEMPLE ISRAEL OF GREAT NECK

108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023 P: 516.482.7800 | F: 516.482.7352 info@tign.org | www.tign.org Temple Israel Voice (USPS # 078-740) is published monthly by Temple Israel of Great Neck at 108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023. Periodicals postage paid at Great Neck, NY 11021.

Postmaster: Send address changes to: Temple Israel Voice, 108 Old Mill Road, Great Neck, NY 11023 Subscription \$5.00 per annum

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*Deceased

Sabbath Services

Friday, January 13

Evening Service 4:40 P.M.

Saturday, January 14

Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: Vayehi Genesis 47:28 – 50:26 Haftarah: I Kings 2:1 – 12

Sabbath Service Officers and Greeters: Moji Pourmoradi, Eleanor Askari, Sherry Husney, Andy Katz and Audrey Kent Itzkowitz

Havurah Service 10:00 A.M. Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M. Toddler Service 11:00 A.M. Afternoon Service 4:10 P.M. Se'udah Shelishit 4:40 P.M. Evening Service 5:17 P.M. Havdalah 5:32 P.M.

Friday, January 20 N'Ranenah/Evening Service 6:30 P.M. Adult B'nei Mitzvah Dinner 7:30 P.M. Saturday, January 21 Morning Service/Shabbat Morning Group Aliyah 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: Shemot Exodus 1:1 – 6:1 Haftarah: Isaiah 27:6 – 28:13; 29:22 - 23

Sabbath Service Officers and Greeters: Harold Citron, Toby Katz, Seth Horowitz, Shahram Delafraz, and Joyce Weston

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Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M. Toddler Service 11:00 A.M. Niggun Circle with Cantor Frieder following kiddush Afternoon Service 4:20 P.M. Se'udah Shelishit 4:50 P.M. Evening Service 5:25 P.M. Havdalah 5:40 P.M.

Friday, January 27 Evening Service 5:00 P.M.

Saturday, January 28 Morning Service 9:00 A.M.

Weekly Portion: Va'era Exodus 6:2 - 9:35; Numbers 28:9 - 15 Haftarah: Isaiah 66:1 - 24

Sabbath Service Officers and Greeters: Jackie Astrof, Keyvan Frouzan, Sherry Husney, and Ellen Birnbaum

Havurah Service 10:00 A.M. Junior Congregation 10:30 A.M. Toddler Service 11:00 A.M. Afternoon Service 4:25 P.M. Se'udah Shelishit 4:55 P.M. Evening Service 5:34 P.M. Havdalah 5:49 P.M. -Continued on page 11