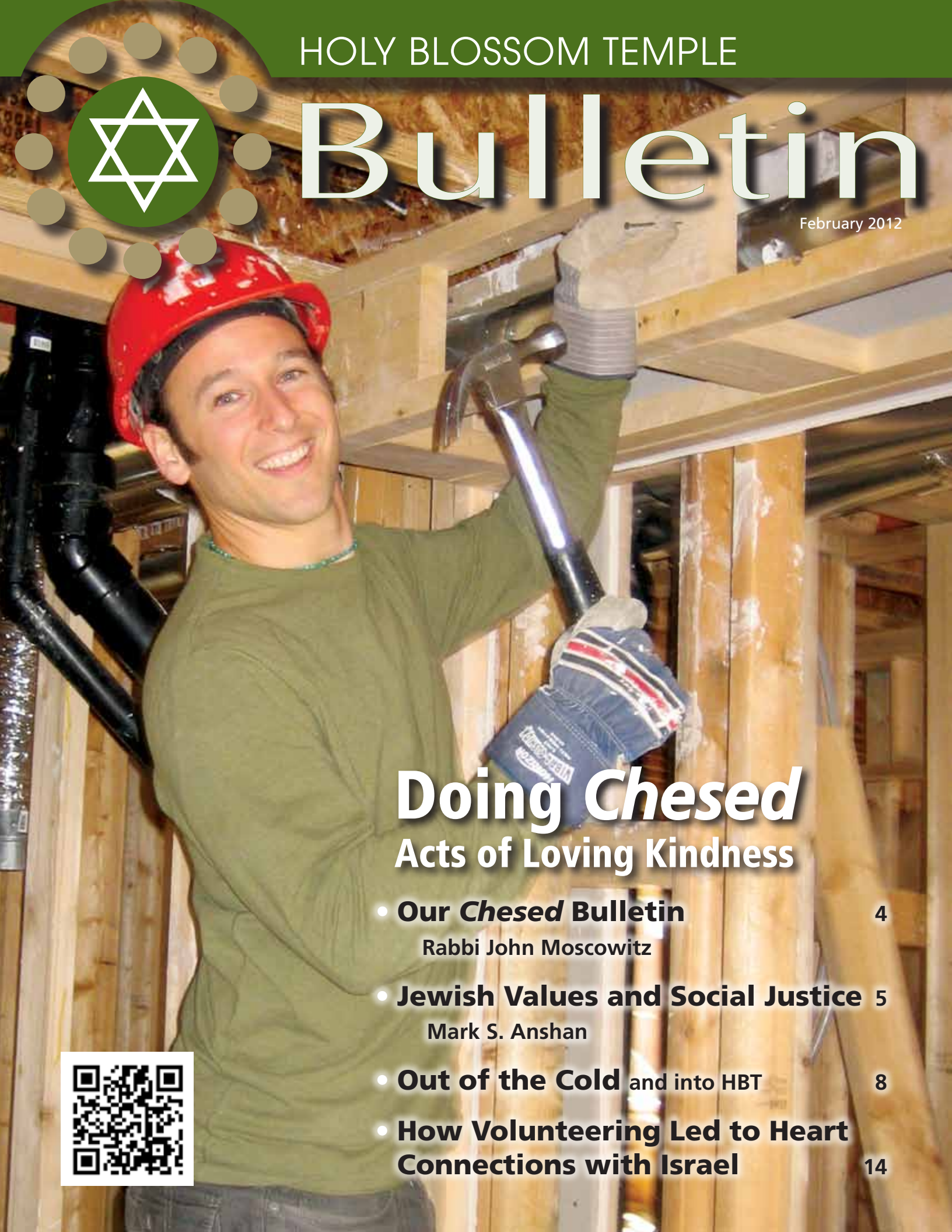




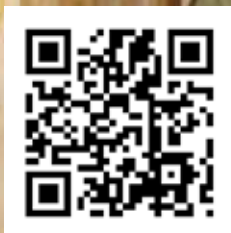
Bulletin

February 2012



Doing *Chesed* Acts of Loving Kindness

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PURIM HBT



It's the Muppet
Shul...
with our special
guest star... YOU!

Sunday March 4, 2012

12:00 noon Purim Carnival for Children

\$5.00 Members \$8.00 Non-Member Guests

Wednesday March 7, 2012

6:00pm Pre-Family Megillah Reading Pizza*

Dinner by reservation (pay per slice on night-of)

6:30pm Family Megillah Reading

(for families with children 12 and under)

**7:30pm Teen Purim Party,
Tel Aviv Style***

By reservation (canned good item)

8:00pm Adult Megillah Reading

With shpiels & costumes.

**8:45pm Adult Murder Mystery
Dessert Reception,
"Killing for the Crown"***

By reservation

(\$10 member • \$13 non-member guest)

Volunteers Needed:

Teen and Adult Volunteers needed
for the Carnival. Prize Donations
are also appreciated.

* To RSVP, please contact

Elana Fehler, 416.789.3291, ext. 0

or efehler@holyblossom.org



HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE
ק"ק פרחי קדש

416.789.3291



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HOLY BLOSSOM TEMPLE



Bulletin

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Chesed, Community and our Community Appeal:

Why The C's Have It

Rabbi John Moscovitz
jmoscovitz@holyblossom.org



In this Bulletin we are pleased to shine a light on our *chesed* endeavours at Holy Blossom. We do so not to boast of our good deeds and character, rather to let all know of the opportunities here (and beyond) to spread goodness.

And, as with all issues of the Bulletin, we aim to animate religious community: to extend the hand and heart as required to those within and without our walls; to invite in more and more – the more the better! – to help realize what all human beings seek: the kind of steadfast loyalty implied in the word . Without this, there is no “religious” in community – and, truthfully, no community.

“..we aim to animate religious community: to extend the hand and heart as required”

Chesed is unwaveringly essential to who we must be as Jews. And, without the financial generosity of those among us who can so afford – hence our Holy Blossom Community Appeal 2012 – we simply cannot be *ba'alei chesed*, doers of kindness and decency; better: Jews. More on that in a moment, but first let's turn to the Rabbis of Old, our Sages.

They remarked: “Twice (586 BCE; 70 CE) did the Jewish people go into exile: for that first time, a date for return to Jerusalem was given – but not so for the second time. Why? Because the 586 generation – while they may have practiced idolatry – were uniquely decent with one another, practicing *derech eretz*. And what was the nature of that *derech eretz* that ensured a return to Jerusalem? Their routine and unflagging practice of *tzedakah* and deeds of *chesed*.”

There it is: decency, *derech eretz*, the doing of acts of goodness and loyalty and generosity – this is the glue which makes a community cohere, the fire that enflames a heart to give, the actions which bind us to one another, and ultimately to God. These acts restore us to sovereignty, personal and communal; they make us whole when we are broken.

Read the various accounts, testimonials and reflections here as to how we attempt to achieve this in our synagogue. Come and be a part of it all; do so and make us better – better as a collective, better Jews, each one of us.

We need your ways of *derech eretz*. No less, we need your financial support to make these things go: to sustain ongoing programs and to create new ones.

We cannot do this on dues contributions alone – not even close.

We run a fiscally prudential ship and try to sail economic, communal and personal waters that are often choppy. To sail well, to have a religious community that pays attention to personal and communal needs, to be a place and a people of *derech eretz* – for this and more, we humbly ask you to make our Holy Blossom Community Appeal 2012 among your *tzedakah* priorities.

We will be grateful for your participation at whatever level you choose. Watch soon for news on the Community Appeal from Alison Schwartz, head of our Department of Development.

Then let's join together to animate our “C”s – *chesed*, community and the Community Appeal – toward the kind of community of which we'd each readily say: “My synagogue is a place of *chesed* and *derech eretz*. I am proud to be a member of Holy Blossom Temple.”

Jewish Values and Social Justice

A core value of Holy Blossom Temple

Mark S. Anshan
president@holyblossom.org



In 1968 Albert Vorspan, then Director of the Commission on Social Action of the Reform movement and later the Senior Vice-President of the Union for Reform Judaism wrote a book entitled “Jewish Values and Social Crisis: A casebook for social action”. The purpose of the book was to provide the sources of prophetic Judaism on a multitude of contemporary social issues. Among the issues that Al Vorspan wrote on were war, peace, racial justice, poverty, religious liberty, anti-Semitism, family, interfaith relations, Israel and Zionism, Soviet Jewry and ethical wills. At that time, the book became the sourcebook

for congregational social action activity. In the editor’s introduction to the book, Rabbi Jack Spiro noted that “...in Kiddushin 40b... the rabbis question which is preferable, study or action. Their resolution – study is more important when it leads to action. Judaism is a religion of involvement as well as scholarship, a faith which requires that we do justly in addition to probing the concept of justice.”

Tikkun olam – repairing the world – is a core value of Reform Judaism and Holy Blossom Temple. For generations we have engaged in projects and activities to make our community and the world a better place. Currently our Out of the Cold program is a clear example of how we – as members of Holy Blossom – care about and help those in need of warmth, shelter and food in these difficult winter

months. As we are commanded to do, we open our home – in this case the Temple – so that those who are homeless are protected. Our social action committee has provided meaningful programs, among them a tutoring program to help underprivileged students receive the help they need in their studies. In generations past, Holy Blossom led the way in the Jewish community to support the civil rights movement and the fight to free Soviet Jews.

“Our social action committee has provided meaningful programs.”

Many of our students attend Camp George each summer. As part of the life of the camp, campers engage in social

action projects to help others in the area in which the camp is located. Our students learn the importance of *tzedekah* and performing acts of loving kindness when they participate in our Mitzvah Day and help in food banks.

Our responsibility as parents is to teach by example. For many of us, beginning Shabbat dinner by adding to our *tzedekah* boxes before we kindle the *Shabbat* candles is but one small way that our children learn the important value of charity.

The Reform movement and Holy Blossom continue to impart the critical value of social justice, making it a pillar of what we do as Jews.

In doing so we accept and live by the teaching of *Torah* with the words “*na’aseh v’nishma* - We will do and we will hear”.



Mark with members of Sisterhood at the URJ Biennial



Rise up before the Aged

Sheila Smolkin
templemail@holyblossom.org

After Winter Break our seniors returned to the program they have come to love and enjoy. Many asked me if I had heard that Rose had been unwell. (Rose is recovering from pneumonia). Did I know if Tilly was OK? (Tilly fell and broke her hip and is now recuperating at Baycrest). Where was Ben? (Ben has a cold.) And how are the Shermans doing? (They are slowly getting better.) “Mondays @ the Temple” began as a way to strengthen a sense of community among the senior members of our congregation.

I had just completed my term as President of the Congregation and was enjoying the freedom from dealing with daily synagogue issues. However, when I was approached by Rabbis Splansky and Goldfarb to consider developing a weekly program for seniors based on a model at Temple Emanu El in Dallas, I agreed to explore the possibilities. Not knowing what to expect, I gathered a group of volunteers together to see what we could do. We are now in our ninth year. The enthusiasm of the participants along with the commitment of the volunteers have made this program one of the most satisfying volunteer ventures in which I have participated.

Each week some forty to fifty persons gather to learn from interesting speakers, to do some gentle exercises, and to eat a nutritious lunch, prepared by dedicated volunteers. Two committed volunteers coordinate stimulating lectures week after week. (Temple members often give of their time to share their expertise or talk about an interesting feature of their life.) Melanie Nesbitt, a congregant and accredited dance movement therapist, is joined by some of her students from ISIS to gently and with humour encourage our participants to move their bodies. The homemade soup is indeed delicious. But there is no doubt that the success of our program has been its ability to foster close friendships among those who attend.

Peter Theimer reflects:

“What do I like about the Monday program? Companionship. I’ve met some very nice people. The lectures are very interesting. It’s a destination to get me outside. And I feel it’s part of my Temple commitment. I’m not terribly religious. I’ve had quite a checkered career with religion. But I find I’m getting more religious as I’m getting older. I’m not only a Jew by birth, but by choice. It’s a good feeling, being part of the House of Israel.”

Other participants say:

“What a wonderful way to start the week.”

“It’s an inspiration to come out on Monday no matter the weather.”

“There’s a warm, friendly feeling.”

“If we notice someone is away, we call to find out if they are OK.”

“It’s good for the mind, good for the body, and good for the tummy!”

Everyone is welcome. The age “senior” is not defined. The participants include a daughter who enjoys the day with her mother and a niece with her aunt. Some of the participants come with professional care-givers who are integrated into the group and help us by setting up tables and serving and clearing food. Everyone wants to pitch in.

Caring comes with belonging. Mondays @ the Temple is an excellent example of a community within Temple whose participants care for each other.

To volunteer for or to participate in “Mondays @ the Temple,” contact Shelia Smolkin via templemail@holyblossom.org or 416.789.3291.





These Are The Obligations Without Measure: Among Them, Bikur Cholim

Bikur Cholim Testimonial By Hank Rosen

One afternoon a week, I visit with fellow member, Milton Friedman, at his home. I have been visiting Milton for the past two and a half years and we have an interesting chat and schmooze for forty-five minutes to an hour. Our topics range from sports to current events to the goings on at Holy Blossom Temple. I also, from time to time, bring him soup. He really enjoys it. We have formed a great relationship and I look forward to my every visit with Milton.



Ode To A Good Friend By Milton Friedman

Had you asked me four years ago if I knew Hank Rosen, the following dialogue would have followed:

Q: Who?

A: Hank Rosen

Q: You mean Hank Greenberg, one of baseball's best hitters, who played for Detroit but never on Yom Kippur?

A: No, Hank Rosen.

Q: Who did he play for?

Fast forward four years. Now I know Hank's birth name, his wife's name, his street address, his email address and his telephone number. I even know where he buys his bagels. And he knows as much, maybe more, about me.

How did this strange turn of events come about? Two words: *Bikur Cholim*.

For more information about *Bikur Cholim* please visit www.holyblossom.org, or email: templemail@holyblossom.org.

"Our Loved Ones, Ourselves"

**Support and Training for Holy Blossom Temple Members
Experiencing and Caring for those with Dementia**

Gerri Richman and Sandy Atlin

In partnership with Mount Sinai Hospital, Holy Blossom Temple will become a satellite of the Reitman Centre/Mount Sinai Hospital CARERS program. Called "Our Loved Ones, Ourselves", this initiative is being planned for the spring of 2012 at Holy Blossom Temple, for the benefit of our members and families living with dementia. A special Judaic component of music, sacred text, and prayer will be incorporated to provide comfort to both care recipients and caregivers in the familiar surroundings of their spiritual home at the Temple.

We are looking for individuals interested in volunteering to staff our program as:

- **Facilitators for the Caregiver Training**
- **Group Leaders for the Care Recipients activity group**
- **Simulated Patients.**

Training to supplement your experience will be provided. Volunteers will both give much and get much from this mitzvah. If you have relevant skills and experience and wish to learn more about this opportunity to give back to our community, please contact - Gerri Richman or Sandy Atlin via templemail@holyblossom.org.



The Cyril & Dorothy, Joel & Jill Reitman
Centre for Alzheimer's Support and Training





Out of the Cold and into HBT

Bob & Nadine Charendoff,
Co-Chairs, HBT Out of the Cold

Now in its 15th season, the Holy Blossom Out of the Cold is part of a coalition working to ease the plight of homelessness and socially isolated people in Toronto. Every Thursday night, up to 120 guests are offered a nutritious meal, nursing services, a warm place to sleep for the night, as well as clothing and other essentials.

The program relies entirely on the generosity of the community with financial donations and donations of hard goods, and is sustained by an incredible



team of over 400 volunteers. It takes a lot of work and dedication on the part of our volunteers to make this happen. And the experience is significant in its gratification. Without exception, Out of the Cold volunteers do this because they feel the need to help, and they are rewarded each night with smiles, and with the satisfaction that they've helped people in need.

Susan and her family regularly serve dinner at Out of the Cold:

“The obligations of Tzedakah and Tikun Olum have always been taken very seriously in our home. My husband, Joseph, and I have taught our children to be thankful for what they have and mindful about what they can do to make the world a better place. Simply put, the Out of the Cold Program gives our family an opportunity to have a first-hand experience in giving to the

community. Whether it is handing a warm coat to someone who does not have one or serving a delicious hot home-made meal to someone who has not eaten, we have been privileged to be part of this community effort and glad to make a difference to the guests at the Out of the Cold Program at Holy Blossom.”

More importantly, the guests find a sense of dignity and belonging here. Brad, one of our regular guests, considers HBT's OOTC his home:

“I'm homeless, and I have no family. OOTC gives me a place to come where I feel secure from the streets. The volunteer staff... they treat me with respect... and I have great respect for them. At OOTC I have people I can talk to if there is something bothering me – so I can improve my situation. The food is excellent, and it's nice going to sleep with a full belly rather than an empty one. Again, not having any family, it's nice to have someone care about me – and I feel that here.”

It truly is a “feel good” experience for everyone involved. No wonder the guests, and volunteers alike, return week in and week out, year in and year out. It's all about people taking care of each other. An anonymous letter from an OOTC guest sums up what the program is all about:

“I was a guest for dinner and overnight (this past November). I again felt, for this night, like something more than homeless. Surrounded by good hearted members of the community, served by ever gracious and helpful volunteers, completely fabulous music and food; not to mention a warm place to sleep and breakfast and lunch; Just thank you in all sincerity. And thanks again to all your staff and volunteers and to the people responsible for having created your OOTC site...”

To volunteer for Out of the Cold, please email OOTC@holyblossom.org



Pathways to Education

Gloria Howard and Dorothy Wolfson

Over two years ago, the Social Action Committee wrote a Temple Bulletin article, which inspired us to volunteer in the multi-cultural community of Lawrence Heights. Working as a team in both the public and independent school systems for many years, we were looking for a shared opportunity to reach out to students who could benefit from our expertise. When we met with the project coordinator, Victor Dhue, at The Pathways to Education office, we felt an instant bond and knew we had found a place where we could make a difference in the lives of others.

This volunteer position appealed to us, because not only did it allow us to meet once a week, but it also provided us with an opportunity to be a part of strengthening the city in which we live. Pathways offers opportunities for underprivileged students to get the support they need in order to attain graduation status, and set future goals. Students from Afghanistan, Ghana, Latin-America, Somalia and the Caribbean, among others, come to Pathways hoping for a better future.

As the first graduates of the Lawrence Heights Program marched across the stage last June and declared the colleges and universities they would attend this fall, we knew our dedication and commitment were worthwhile. To branch

outside of the Jewish community has proven to be of great value. Whether we help students learn to write a paragraph or work through math problems, we see the glow in their faces. They recognize their own accomplishments and feel good. By instilling confidence and the hope for a better future, it is a win/win situation.

All children deserve a good education that provides them with the tools for lifelong learning. If the path to success is complicated by family turmoil and economic uncertainty, the success rate tends to diminish. Volunteering to help these children, some of whom were born in Toronto and others who are relatively new to Canada, is without doubt a mitzvah.

The Pathways Program is operated under the umbrella of Unison and Health Community Services. If you are looking for a most rewarding volunteer experience you can reach Victor Dhue via templemail@holyblossom.org or 416.789.3291.

Gloria Howard and Dorothy Wolfson have been Temple members for many years. They attended religious school classes and were confirmed at Temple. Their own children and grandchildren continue to enjoy the Temple.

Pathways offers opportunities for underprivileged students to get the support they need in order to attain graduation status, and set future goals





HBT: Where One Mitzvah Leads to Another

Amy Kirsh

I have been a member of Holy Blossom Temple since I was a child. I attended the Pre-school, then the Religious School, and from the age of eight, I sang in the youth choir led by Cantor Maissner every Friday night. At choir, I felt the power of community at Temple. I remember fondly Cantor Maissner calling us his 'Kinderlach,' teaching us the *Shabbat* songs, and giving out solos when we met in his office at 5:45 every Friday night. These are very special memories. As I got older I was involved in HABSTY; I sat on the board as treasurer and one year sold the most Bagel Boxes out of anyone in the youth group. I was a Student-Teacher, taught music, chaperoned Grade 7

working with people on the Autism spectrum. After years of working with a private school, I recently launched Growing Opportunities to provide behavior modification therapy, as well as organize and implement work experiences for youth and young adults with Autism.

“Holy Blossom has given these young men a sense of community and belonging”

In May, 2011, two young men, David and Eric, started to volunteer, with my support, at Holy Blossom's Holy Sprouts program. This program was a huge success for Temple and a successful experience for David and Eric beyond what we first imagined. The boys tremendously enjoyed being part of the “Holy Blossom Community.” They met new people and worked hard to prepare the vegetables for the weekly farmers' tent. This good experience even led one of the boys to attend Rosh Hashanah services with me this year.

Since October David and Eric have moved their newly gained work skills inside, and to their parents' delight, they are given a modest salary for the work they do in coordination with the Holy Blossom office and maintenance staff. The monthly cheque represents dignity and self-worth. Holy Blossom has given these young men a sense of community and belonging while being able to hone their work skills and expand their life experiences.

By working with these young Jewish men, I have been privileged to help foster a connection for Eric and David within the Jewish community. For me, being at Holy Blossom with the boys allows me to enjoy the life of the Temple – that connection continues to mean so much to me – and to give back to the community which has helped shape the person I am today.



retreats, and led services with Rabbi Splansky in the Religious School. Holy Blossom was my home away from home and it still is.

When I was in my later teens, Rabbi Splansky called me and asked if I would work with a young girl who had Autism. Her parents needed someone to look after their daughter at the synagogue while they attended Shabbat morning services. This first experience, I believe, is partly why I have dedicated my professional life to

To Comfort the Bereaved

By "Carol", HBT member

The support that I received from Temple when my husband died was enriching. From the first point of contact when our family met with Rabbi Splansky to tell her about the life and character of my dearly loved husband, she was astute, informative and comforting. Rabbi Moscovitz later phoned me and provided sage advice. Cantor Rivers was wonderfully sensitive at the service and months later with the family at the unveiling. And the congregants who came to lead services during shiva brought warmth, comfort, and the sounds of tradition into our home.

[I have been asked to convey my experience as a recipient of the bereavement support group.] I had no intention of participating in a bereavement support group, because I was managing my deep loss reasonably well. However, upon receipt of a personally addressed invitation from Rabbi Splansky to participate in the program, I reconsidered, viewing it as an opportunity to learn from the experience.

The group comprised individuals connected to HBT through the burial of their relatives – parents, spouses, siblings – as recently as a few months to over a year. The social worker who led the group was the consummate professional. Privacy was established and respected from the initial session where participants were asked to introduce themselves solely on a first-name basis and indicate who they were grieving and the

nature of their loss. Beyond that, no one was forced to speak, raise issues or contribute to solutions or enrich meanings or understanding. The social worker was validating and offered perspectives and strategies for dealing with loss.

I learned in breadth and depth. The advantage of having participants in different phases and in different roles contributes both to anticipatory socialization of issues that I may confront and current understanding and meaning, whether directly affecting others or me. I'm grateful to Holy Blossom Temple for sponsoring such a complement of support. Establishing a comfortable and compatible environment for congregants in mourning, reflects a caring supportive institution, carried out by people for people.

To participate in our next Bereavement Support Group (Wednesdays at 7 pm on May 2, 9, 16 and 23, 2012) please contact Hayley McAdam, ext. 246 or hmcadam@holyblossom.org.

To volunteer as a Shiva Service Leader, contact Rabbi Splansky, ext. 244 or ysplansky@holyblossom.org and we'll provide you with the training and support to fulfill this essential mitzvah.

Global Chesed

Mikayla Blumenthal

I was incredibly lucky to go on a Me to We Trip last summer to Kenya. The first time I heard about Free the Children was at Holy Blossom, when the Kielburgers were awarded the Rabbi Plaut Humanitarian Award. I started doing some research, and read about the amazing things that Free the Children and Me to We do locally and internationally. I went on the Water Walk at Holy Blossom with Marc Kielburger, and heard him speak. I got the chance to talk to him, and he offered me the chance to attend We Day, an annual concert/celebration of the past work of FTC and a kick-off for the next year. I wouldn't have found Free the Children if it weren't for Holy Blossom.

The first thing I noticed when I met the people on my trip was how welcoming they all were. We were all instantly friends. This made living with each other for three and a half weeks, a lot easier! Our group leaders were amazing, too. They took us through everything we needed to know quickly and efficiently. When we first arrived in Kenya, it was a little disorienting. It seemed very different from what I was used to at home.

It took us about eight hours to get to Eor Ewuaso, the village we would be working in. The landscape itself was beautiful. The roads, however, were not! When we arrived at our camp, the camp staff welcomed us in. They greeted us with a song in Swahili! That was one of my favourite parts of the trip. They truly were an amazing group of people; we were very lucky to get to know them.

Our group of 24 (23 girls and one boy!) stayed in a field across from the primary school. During the morning, when it wasn't as hot, we worked on the classroom we were building. During the afternoon, we would play games with the school children. I was one of very few Jews on my trip, and I enjoyed telling other people about my religion. The local children themselves were interested!

During our time in Kenya, I gained a lot of humility and appreciation for what I have. I also gained a lot of respect for people who, although they have very little, retain an amazing sense of hope and joy. This trip changed my view of the world and my role in it.



Chesed for the Earth

Marc Levy

I may be what you would call a closeted environmentalist. I have always marvelled at the wonders of Creation. I've just normally preferred to keep my wonder to myself lest I be accused of preaching. More recently I have found my most meaningful interactions with the environment have not involved solitary tiptoeing through tulips or hugging trees, but doing these things with other people.

Throughout my Reform Jewish education at Holy Blossom and Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute, I was encouraged to engage in acts of *Tikkun Olam* and *Chesed*. While I am always grateful for opportunities to do *mitzvot* myself, I am even more grateful when I am able to help create opportunities for others to do *mitzvot*.

My association with Shoresh Jewish Environmental Programs (www.shoresh.ca) began three years ago after a chance meeting with Risa Cooper. I became a volunteer at the organization's flagship, the Kavanah Garden on the Lebovic Campus in Vaughan. The garden teaches children and adults how we may connect our biblical and agricultural past to our Jewish communities in the present. The vegetables we grow are donated to Ve'ahavta (www.veahavta.org) who use them to lovingly prepare meals for those in need.

In my first year at the Kavanah Garden, I met Daniel Hoffmann of The Cutting Veg (www.thecuttingveg.com) and learned about Community Supported Agriculture and Holy Sprouts.

When I am preparing muddy onion bulbs with others who are doing the same, all pretenses tend to melt away and I am able to connect with other Temple members on a more intimate level. Every week a sizable haul of fresh organic vegetables is donated to



Holy Sprouts CSA, inaugural season.

Wychwood Open Door's program to feed the hungry.

The generosity with which the directing minds of these organizations treat those who approach them, Temple members or those from the community at large, is nothing short of miraculous. As Jews we are commanded to be stewards of the earth. I have had solitary

moments in my life in which I have experienced God's presence in nature. However, an overwhelming majority of these experiences have involved people being stewards of each other.

To volunteer of Holy Sprouts this spring, contact Rabbi Splansky at ysplansky@holyblossom.org

How Volunteering Led to Heart Connections with Israel

Pam Albert

This Israel connection in our Holy Blossom community started with a desire to help Israel during the heat of the Second Intifada. We established a fund and took action, providing direct financial and emotional aid to victims of terror in Israel.

What Motivated Me To Establish One Family Fund Canada?

As a Reform Jew and as a member of HBT, I believe that I have a responsibility to live my life “Jewishly”. Part of this entails giving back to the Jewish community and to the Jewish people. In addition to providing financial aid to Israeli families in crisis, One Family Fund also provides a tangible, concrete way to directly help Israel. As a parent, I wanted to provide my children with a living example of their responsibility to help others. What better a way to experience giving back than through meaningful heart connections with the land and the people of Israel?

Following Are Some Testimonials From Temple Members Who Have Helped Us Raise Over 6 Million Dollars To Help Victims Of Terror

“Going on the One Family Fund Cross Israel Hike after having lost our son, Joel, was inspiring beyond measure. The Israeli victims of terror taught me how to “cry with one eye and smile with the other”; and I have learned how valuable a privilege it is to be able to give back.”

– Julie Schwartz

“My support for One Family Fund is a result of a number of factors. First, the investment is in Israel and Israelis - in our homeland, and in our people. Second, there is a need. I have seen first hand the lifelong impact that terrorism has on the direct victims as well as their families. Third, most of the funds that are raised are used directly in the provision of services to victims of terror and their families. And finally, from a selfish perspective, my involvement with One Family has enriched my life through the people I have met.”

– Michael Diamond

“Days, weeks later, as the trails begin to merge and blur, it is the people you bring into sharp focus. Guides and medics. Fellow hikers you never knew before. And Israelis, full of hope and courage, whose lives and loved ones were ripped apart, who transform on the trail from victims to hikers and friends.”

– Dr. David Rosenkrantz

For more information on how you can volunteer or join One Family Fund’s Cross Israel hike in October, see: www.onefamilyfund.ca.



Concentric Circles



Rabbi Yael Splansky
ysplansky@holyblossom.org

What did Rabbi Shimon mean when he said: “The entire world stands on three pillars: *Torah* (Sacred Study), *Avodah* (Worship), *u’Gimilut Chasadim* (and the Exchange of Kindnesses)?” Did he mean it metaphorically? That the communities we build are only as strong as those who perform these sacred deeds? That the individual lives we lead are only as strong and worthy as the *mitzvot* we do? Or did he mean it literally? That the entire universe is sustained by these three pillars and without them, the cosmos would come crashing down? I don’t know exactly what he meant, but the fact that this slice of *Mishnah* (*Pirkei Avot 1:2*) has been selected as a central tenet of Jewish life, tells me that what Rabbi Shimon says is true.

Holy Blossom Temple is known far and wide for being a big congregation with a big membership and a big program of big events in a big building. But what not everyone knows is how well and how often we do the little things: the little gestures of kindness, the little acts of reaching out one to another, the little and oftentimes spontaneous deeds of *chesed*, which make our congregation a sacred community. They happen ALL the time.

One of the pleasures of being a rabbi is seeing the many invisible lines of *chesed*, which bind us one to the other. With deep admiration, I observe congregants young and old performing acts of *chesed*, not necessarily because anyone asked them to, but simply because they are Jews, who know how to put themselves

in the right place at the right time to do the right thing. Another pleasure of being a congregational rabbi is playing matchmaker, introducing someone with a need to someone with a complementing ability, or bringing together like-minded people to dream up a large-scale mitzvah project. *Chesed* is what animates a congregation a sacred community.

“One of the pleasures of being a rabbi is seeing the many invisible lines of chesed, which bind us one to the other.”

A synagogue is not a “House of God.” God doesn’t need a house. A synagogue is a house for people, who are dedicated to doing God’s work, who are inspired to act in ways that show themselves to be worthy of having been created in the image of God. A sacred community emerges when we look at one another with *chesed* – genuine kindness – and see the face of God.

This bulletin tells stories of good impulses and steadfast commitment, stories of hard work and real smarts, stories of loyalty and reaching out without fear. And these, of course, are just a handful of the thousands of stories we write each week. I admire our congregation for all the good we do within our Temple walls, within our Jewish community, with our neighbours across town, with our brothers and sisters in Israel, and with our fellow human beings on the other side of the planet. Like concentric circles these acts of *chesed* radiate out and do, in a very real way, sustain the world. *Yasher Koach!*

Family Mitzvah Day





Now and Then: Treasures From our Archives

From the very beginning, the notion of *chesed* - caring for each other within the congregation and for those in the larger community beyond —has been central to Holy Blossom's existence. Our records indicate that as early as 1868, a group of congregational women founded the Ladies Benevolent Fund to assist new Jewish settlers in Toronto. During the Second World War, Sisterhood initiated a War Work Day every Monday at the Temple, during which members knitted and sewed items needed for the war effort. In the early 1960s, Brotherhood began sending volunteers into the homes of bereaved congregants to

lead *shiva* services. Other examples of Temple's past *chesed* activities include providing assistance and hospitality to both Vietnamese boat people and Russian-Jewish émigrés, and building Plaut Manor, a home for the working poor and women who are victims of domestic violence.

A Sisterhood blood drive, probably in the early 1960s. Pictured standing at the right is Celia Cooper. (Her husband, Morris, was the first coordinator of shiva service leaders.)



Pikuach Nefesh – To Save a Life

In partnership with One Match, Holy Blossom is hosting a Stem Cell Registry Drive on Sunday, April 29th, 12 - 4 pm.

A quick and painless cheek swab is all it takes.

Temple member, Lucy Waverman, has initiated this event in hopes of finding a donor for her brother, David Geneen, and others like him. The ideal match is someone, aged 17-35, of Jewish descent.

For more information www.onematch.ca



Welcome to Our Congregational Family

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome the following new member to Holy Blossom Temple:

- **Cathy Newman**

Mazal Tov



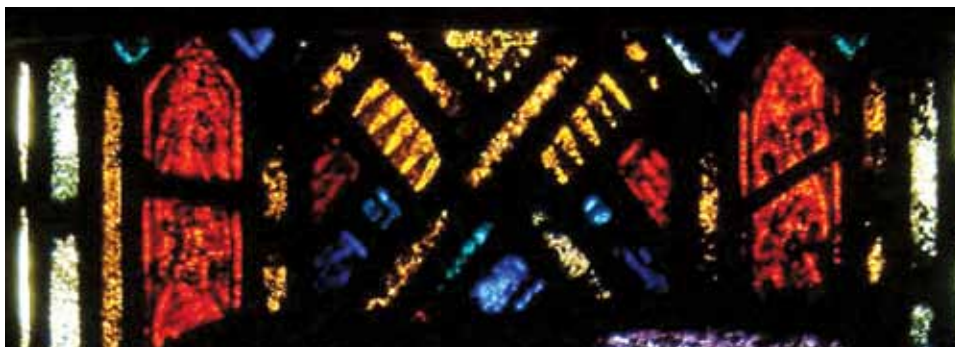
■ Mazal Tov to **Helen Tizel** on the occasion of her special birthday – 100 years old

■ Mazal Tov to **Caryl & Bert Barruch** on their 70th wedding anniversary

■ Mazal Tov to **Carole Sterling**, on Chairing the recent URJ Biennial, 2011 in Washington, DC.

■ Mazal Tov to **Prof. Alan Brudner**, on having been named to the Royal Society of Canada.

■ Mazal Tov to **Lawrence Bloomberg** on receiving the Order of Canada award, for volunteerism and philanthropic contributions to health care and education in Ontario.



Births

■ Anndra Schwartz & Josh Kuretzky on the birth of a daughter **Torryn Copper Schwartz Kuretzky**. Proud grandparents are Elaine & Barry Kuretzky and Carolyn & Bernie Schwartz. Proud great grandfather is Gordon Schwartz.

■ Terri & Ted Schipper on the birth of a granddaughter **Alexis Lauren Schipper**. Proud parents are Pamela & Noah Schipper. Other proud grandparents are Merri & Emilio Kraizel; Katty Kraizel and Ava & Bernie Rubin

B'nei Mitzvah



■ March 24, 2012
1 Nisan 5772
Arly Abramson, daughter of Bonnie Goldberg & Adam Abramson



■ March 31, 2012
8 Nisan 5772
Jonathan Kirsh, son of Natalie & Jeff Kirsh



■ March 31, 2012
8 Nisan 5772
Taylor Johnson, son of Lianne Pollock & Laurie Johnson



■ March 17, 2012
23 Adar 5772
Rachel Nirenberg, daughter of Toba Fryer & David Nirenberg



In Memoriam

- **Pearl Braidberg**, mother of Ann Posen and Shelly Merovitz
- **Stanley Clavir**, husband of Sharon Clavir, father of Loni Fay, Pam Chiotta Clavir and Robin Mirsky
- **Harry Cohen**, father of Shereen Heichelheim, Joanne Scharf and Mark Cohen, brother of Herb Cohen
- **Hilliard Conway**, father of Richard Conway, Audrey Mirvish and Susan Mitchell
- **Gail Dublin**, wife of Morris Dublin, mother of Anne Dublin and Max Dublin
- **Bonnie Goldman-Masters**, wife of Dayle Masters, mother of Arthur Masters, daughter of Bernard & Fran Goldman, sister of Sari Goldman, Richard Goldman and Kathryn Goldman.
- **Edith (Dita) Harris**, wife of Fred Harris, mother of Mitzi Goldenberg, David Harris and Leonard Harris
- **Rose Hillsberg**, sister of Marion Starr and Jack Gorvoy

- **Sidi Katz**, sister of Marta Collins, mother of Yaacov Katz and Ronit Katz
- **Lorraine Lerner**, mother of Julie Schwartz and Lisa Learner-Wagner
- **Harold Linton**, father of Marlene Stein, Gayle Grossman and Helene Obar
- **Harold Nashman**, partner of Bella Hull, brother of Rina Fishbein, father of Alon Nashman, Bruce Nashman, Mark Nashman, Laura Nashman and Danny Nashman
- **Syd Roth**, husband of Rose Roth, father of Esther Lynne Burnett and Neal Roth, brother of Norman Roth and Paul Roth.
- **Joseph Shulman**, husband of Harriett Shulman, father of Heidi Poch and Jodi Shulman, brother of Henry Shulman

We thank our generous donors

Archives Fund

Gail Dublin, In Memory: The Archives Team

Floral Fund

Annie Chusid, Bat Mitzvah: Wendy Freeman & Elliott Chusid
Arly Abramson, Bat Mitzvah: Bonnie Goldberg & Adam Abramson

Garfinkel Family Fund

Pearl Braidberg, In Memory: Randi & Alan Garfinkel

Holy Blossom Temple Foundation

General Donation: Jill & Ben Lustig
Pearl Braidberg, In Memory: Sybil & Jack Geller
Hilliard Conway, In Memory: Debra Grobstein Campbell & Barry Campbell; Selma Edelstone & Ron Kramer; Jess Gordon; Pam Gordon; Susan Guttman & John Harris; Merle Kriss; Rena Mendelson & Allan Detsky; Nancy Ruth; Barbara & Hubert Stitt; Martin Thall and Family; Denise Zarn & James Shenkman; Donna & William Zener
Clare & Monte Denaburg, In Honour: Dorothy & Syd Shoom
Lorraine Learner, In Memory: Barbara & Richard Conway; Jill Kamin & Murray Hart
Harold Nashman, In Memory: Esther & Cyril Hersh
Dr. Sandra Shiner, In Memory: Corinne & Neil Berinstein
David Smuschkowitz, In Memory: Esther & Cyril Hersh

Holy Blossom Temple Renewal Project

Isaac Quiroz, In Honour: Rosalie Sussman

Jacob's Tower Fund

Isaac Quiroz, In Honour: Jill Hertzman; Anne Moranis
Morris Vigoda, In Memory: Jill Hertzman

Jean Fine Seniors Fund

Hershell Ezrin, In Appreciation: Mondays @ the Temple
Morwenna Given, In Appreciation: Mondays @ the Temple
Gillian Helfield, In Appreciation: Mondays @ the Temple
Holy Blossom Temple Brotherhood, In Honour: Mondays @ the Temple
Rosalin Rose, In Honour: Mondays @ the Temple
Sandra & Henry Sherman, In Honour: Mondays @ the Temple
Al & Dora Track^{z1}, In Appreciation: Mondays @ the Temple

Joan Kerbel Leadership Development Fund

Mark S. Anshan, In Honour: HBT Sisterhood
Sara Charney, In Honour: Sheila & Bob Smolkin

Carole Sterling, In Honour: HBT Sisterhood

Library Book Fund

Gail Dublin, In Memory: Etta Ginsberg McEwan; Ellen Karabanow
Rabbi Edward Goldfarb, In Appreciation: Dr. Mildred Eisenberg
Dr. Sandra Shiner, In Memory: Ora & Michael Leese

Musical Heritage Fund

Clare & Monte Denaburg, In Honour: Jo Mira Clodman; Sara Clodman and Family; Rina & Saul Fishbein
Helena Fine, In Honour: Vally & Arieh Waldman
Bonnie Goldman-Masters, In Memory: Sharon & Lorne Tarshis
Peter Mandell, In Honour: Paula Kirsh
Dr. Sandra Shiner, In Memory: Louise & Jan Blumenstein

Musical Legacy Fund

Gail Dublin, In Memory: Holy Blossom Temple Singers

Out of the Cold Fund

General Donation: Susan Fleisher; Forest Hill Lions Club; Dr. Allan Gold; Goodman & Company; Hartley Hershenhorn; David Isbister; Melamed Family and Friends; Rebecca Mooallem and Family; Edwards Sterling Pierce; Joanne & Ronald Schwarz; Avishai, Eli and Jesse Sol
Pearl Braidberg, In Memory: Janice & Larry Babins; Caryl & Bertram Barruch; Shelly Berenbaum & Chuck Litman; Joy & Charles Cohen
Hilliard Conway, In Memory: Bonnie Croll & Robert Henry; Shelley & Arthur Gans; Fay Greenholtz & Michael Rotsztein; Ellen & Alan Levine and Family
Esther Cowan, In Honour: Zelda & Leonard Melamed
Sheila & David Freeman, In Honour: Harriet Wolman
Regine Frost, In Honour: Sandra Greenbaum
Maurice Green, In Honour: Marsha Slivka
Meghan Hendrickson, In Honour: Beverly & Milton Israel
Spencer Hendrickson, In Honour: Beverly & Milton Israel
Joseph Israel, Yahrzeit: Lauren Hendrickson; Andrew Israel; Beverly & Milton Israel
Bernice Mukamal, In Memory: Deborah Zemans & Daryl Gelgoot and Family
Isaac Quiroz, In Honour: Vally & Arieh Waldman
Ann Rosenfield, In Honour: Vally & Arieh Waldman
Dr. Sandra Shiner, In Memory: Heidi & Neil Poch and Family
David Smith, In Honour: Kathy & Lorne Freeman

Bev & Brian Stewart, In Honour: Susanne Egier
Leon Steinberg, In Memory: Sharon & Lorne Tarshis
Betty Wolfe, Yahrzeit: Carol Abugov and Family
Barney Wolfe, Yahrzeit: Carol Abugov and Family

Harry & Cecile Pearl Youth Award Endowment Fund

Jayne & Bob Berman, In Honour: Deborah Zemans & Daryl Gelgoot and Family
Helen Cooper, In Memory: Deborah Zemans & Daryl Gelgoot and Family
Tica Levy, In Honour: Deborah Zemans & Daryl Gelgoot and Family
Dr. Sandra Shiner, In Memory: Deborah Zemans & Daryl Gelgoot and Family
Morris Vigoda, In Memory: Deborah Zemans & Daryl Gelgoot and Family

Plaut Manor Fund

Ruth Gelber, In Memory: Dorothy & Robert Ross and Family

Prayer Book Fund

Jeffrey Detsky & Carrie Sheaffer, In Honour: Rhoda & David Eisenstadt
Jean Silver, Yahrzeit: The Spiegel & Steinberg Families
Morris Vigoda, In Memory: Sharon Abron Drache

Rabbi's Discretionary Funds

Rabbi John Moscovitz, In Appreciation: Dr. Debby Vigoda and Family
Rabbi Yael Splansky, In Honour: Pearl Hermant
Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner, In Appreciation: Janet & Mark Webber
Cantor Benjamin Z. Maissner, In Honour: Julie & Eric Kirsh and Family
Cantorial Soloist Lindi Rivers, In Appreciation: Dr. Debby Vigoda and Family
Rabbi Edward Goldfarb: Israel Brodziak, Yahrzeit: Mrs. Bluma Brodziak and Family
Cantorial Soloist Lindi Rivers: Samuel Drake Stanway, Yahrzeit: Lyle H. Stanway

Shacharit Breakfast Fund

George Ash, Yahrzeit: Ruth Gales
Stanley Ash, Yahrzeit: Ruth Gales
Rosalyn Borins, Yahrzeit: The Borins Family
Sara Botnik, Yahrzeit: Ruth & Dr. Robert Ehrlich; Hanna Shlesinger
Jason Cash, Yahrzeit: Lillian & Dr. Stanley Cash
Hilliard Conway, In Memory: Conway, Mirvish and Mitchell Families
Esther Charney, In Memory: Family and Friends of Esther Charney^{z1}
Phillip Daniels, In Memory: Risa Bordman; Cheryl Daniels; Jonathan Daniels

Gail Dublin, In Memory: Matilda Bigio
Philip Eisenberg, Yahrzeit: Dr. Mildred Eisenberg and Family
Hyman Erdell, Yahrzeit: Carol Collin and Family
Charles Fishbein, Yahrzeit: Rina & Saul Fishbein
Samuel Godfrey, OBE, Yahrzeit: Dr. Sheila Pollock
Harry Grobstein, Yahrzeit: Debra Grobstein Campbell & Barry Campbell
Mildred Grobstein, Yahrzeit: Debra Grobstein Campbell & Barry Campbell
Alice Herman, Yahrzeit: Carole & Dr. Bernard Zucker and Family
Louis Himes, Yahrzeit: Linda Rubenovitch and Family
Rose Kozloff, Yahrzeit: Susan Himel & Neil Kozloff and Family
Moshe Krieger, Yahrzeit: The Krieger Family
Abraham Nashman, Yahrzeit: Rina & Saul Fishbein
Dr. Ira Pollock, Yahrzeit: Dr. Sheila Pollock
Stanley Richmond, In Memory: Harriet Wolman
Sam Ruth, Yahrzeit: The Ruth Family
Oscar Salem, Yahrzeit: Jocelyne & Dr. Shia Salem
Harry Schwartz, Yahrzeit: Isabel Schwartz
Dr. Sidney Steinberg, Yahrzeit: Ellen & Alan Levine and Family
Anne Wein, In Memory: Jill & Solomon Wein and Family
Sophie Windish, Yahrzeit: Marie Knaul
Frank Wolff, Yahrzeit: Alison Polan and Family

Stagecraft Fund

Michael Ryval and Cast and Crew of Stagecraft, In Honour: Vally & Arieh Waldman

Morris Vigoda Memorial Fund

Morris Vigoda, In Memory: Esther Zeller Cooper & Morris Cooper; Judith Gunter; Marie Knaul; Malca & Jay Marin; Stuart McKay; Elaine & Harvey Socol

Gordon and Linda Wolfe Family Youth Award Endowment Fund

Pearl Braidberg, In Memory: Linda Wolfe

Leonard Wolfe Memorial Educational Fund

Marvin Daniels, In Memory: Honey Wolfe
Honey Wolfe, In Honour: Richard Wolfe

Youth Awards Fund

Clare & Monte Denaburg, In Honour: Reba Clodman
Michael Hart^{z1}, In Honour: Vally & Arieh Waldman

Life at Holy Blossom

For all programs between Feb. 19 to April 30, 2012

Monday

February 27, March 5, 12, 19, 26,	10:00 a.m.	Mondays @ the Temple
February 27-March 5	7:30 p.m.	Texts and Textiles, Rabbi Michael Stroh (final two sessions)
February 27 – March 12	7:30 p.m.	Sisterhood Zumba Classes (No class February 20th- Family Day)
April 16	7:30 p.m.	Facing Dying and Death: A Journey of Discovery of Meaning and Purpose, Dr. Larry Librach
April 23-May 14	7:30 p.m.	Israel Seminar – Engaging Israel – Confronting Difficult Questions

Tuesday

Weekly	11:00 a.m.	Advanced Hebrew Grammar, Rabbi Edward Goldfarb
March 13	7:30 p.m.	Lost Scriptures, Prof. Barrie Wilson (final session)
March 13	7:30 p.m.	Treading The Middle Path Of Harmony And Balance – An Evening of Teaching and Meditation, Rabbi Yoel Glick
March 20		Sisterhood presents -Unique Lives Transformed presents Elli Davis, Real Estate Agent and Adina Lebo Chair of CARP.
April 3-May 1	7:30 p.m.	Faith and Faithless: How Belief May Take You By Surprise, Rabbi John Moscovitz

Wednesday

Weekly	9:30 a.m.	Sisterhood Torah Study, Rabbi Edward Goldfarb
Weekly	11:00 a.m.	Yiddish Novel, Rabbi Edward Goldfarb
March 28-April 11	7:30 p.m.	Ethical Eating, Rabbi Yael Splansky
April 18	7:00 p.m.	Yom Hashoah Commemoration, Speaker: Anci Shafran
April 25		Yom HaZikaron/Yom Ha'Atzmaut "Festivale": A Real Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration.

Thursday

February 23, March 15, May 17	10:00 a.m.	Library Book Club, Dr. Janna Nadler
March 22-29	10:30 a.m.	Sacred Waters and the Mikveh, Geri Durbin
April 19-May 10	10:30 a.m.	What I Believe, Rabbi Michael Stroh
May 3	9:30 a.m.	Sisterhood Kallah, The Spirit of the Mishnah: The Rabbis as Revolutionaries. At the Donalda Club

Friday

Little Blossoms - Shabbat Prep for children 3 and under

January 13 – March 20 9:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 p.m.

Tot Shabbat - (For children 5 and under and their families)

Hot Shot Shabbat (For children 5 & up and their families)

February 17	5:30 p.m.	(Service & Craft)
March 2	6:00 p.m.	(Service & Pot Luck Dinner)
March 16	5:30 p.m.	(Service & Craft)



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Saturday

Weekly	9:00 a.m.	The Wisdom of the Talmud, Weekly Torah Study, Rabbi John Moscowitz
February 25, March 31, April 28	10:15 a.m.	Shabbat Meditation, Michelle Katz
February 25, March 24, April 21	1:00 p.m.	Women's Rosh Hodesh Beit Midrash, after Kiddush

Sunday

Weekly	10:00 a.m.	Temple Singers, Cantor Maissner
April 15	9:30 a.m.	Brotherhood Breakfast Club
April 15, May 6	10:30 a.m.	Sunday Book Club, Sharon Singer

Daily Services

Mon. to Fri.	7:30 a.m.	Shacharit
Mon. to Thur.	6:00 p.m.	Mincha
Sun.	9:00 a.m.	Shacharit
Friday, April 6	9:00 a.m.	Shacharit

Shabbat Services

Fri.	6:00 p.m.	Kabbalat Shabbat Services
Sat.	10:30 a.m.	Shabbat Morning Service
Sat.	10:30 a.m.	Family Shabbat Service

Tot Shabbat:

Feb 17	5:30 p.m.	Service & Craft
Mar 2	6:00 p.m.	Service & Pot luck dinner
March 16	5:30 p.m.	Service & Craft

Shabbat Fusion

February 24, March 30, April 27, May 25	6:30 p.m.
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