



Where You Belong

Vassar Temple Bulletin

Congregation Brethren of Israel אהלים ישראל Founded 1848 Volume 159 No. 4 April 2013

Spring Rummage Collection and Sale

It's time once again to de-clutter your home and gather items for Vassar Temple Sisterhood's Spring Rummage Sale! Items for the sale may be dropped off in the social hall from Sunday, April 14th through Friday, April 19th between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. (only until noon on Sunday), on Wednesday, April 17th between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m., or by appointment. When you bring your rummage in, you can pick up a letter from the office to use to show the IRS that you made a tax-deductible contribution of goods to the temple.

Spring/summer clothing, household items, toys and jewelry are bestsellers. Please only donate items that are appropriate for the season, clean and in good, new or gently used condition.
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Upcoming Events
can be found on page 3

Please see page 6 for
Dr. Joel Hoffman's
April 11th
presentation

What? Trivia Night & Silent Auction

When? Saturday night, April 27th at
7:30 pm



Where? Vassar Temple, Poughkeepsie, NY

Why? Fun! Fun! Fun!

Cost? Very affordable, \$10 per person!

Snacks & beverages provided

Baby sitting available by Vassar Temple Youth Group

For more information or to reserve

trivia@vassartemple.org

845-454-2570

Flexible Feast on Three Saturday Evenings in April

Don't wait another minute to sign up for dinner at the home of a fellow temple member on one of the first three Saturday evenings in April. The menus for this "fun" raiser for the temple are on the invitation you received in late February. If you misplaced it and want another copy, or are ready to make a reservation, contact Linda Lant at 462-4145 or LinLant@aol.com. Join the fun, get together with friends, meet other members, and raise money for our congregation – all at the same time!

SCRIP Sales Hit a Milestone

Vassar Temple's SCRIP program, which uses gift cards as a fund raising tool, has reached the \$800,000 mark in sales volume and has made a profit of \$58,000 for our congregation in just over five years of operation. This tremendous success was built on the shoulders of a relatively small number of members making regular small purchases.

Imagine how much money we could raise to keep dues down and provide the offerings you want if every member and family used SCRIP for all their shopping... That would really be spectacular!

Even if every temple member paid full dues, that would only cover about 60% of our congregation's expenses, so fund raising through programs like SCRIP are essential to our financial security. And the SCRIP fund raising program doesn't cost you anything! Using SCRIP to buy the groceries, gifts, appliances, household items, clothing, entertainment, etc. that you purchase anyway will benefit Vassar Temple at no additional cost to you.

The only thing we could do to make the SCRIP program easier for you to participate in would be to do your shopping for you. Short of that, we make buying and using SCRIP as simple and convenient as possible. Remember: every member, including you, is being counted upon to bring our SCRIP sales and profits to the level at which they could have an even greater impact on our health as a congregation and our bottom line.

Sandra Mamis, SCRIP Chair
scrip@vassartemple.org

MITZVAH DAY – BE A PART OF IT!

New Projects Abound

Join with hundreds of volunteers from the area's Jewish community as we unite in performing service projects to benefit 25 local non-profits during our 15th annual local Mitzvah Day, Sunday, May 5th. There are indoor and outdoor projects to appeal to every interest and age from tots to senior citizens, activities ideal for individuals, families and groups, at sites

Mitzvah Day continued on page 3

Rabbi's Message: DARKNESS AND LIGHT

This year the two Jewish observances of Yom HaShoah and Yom Ha-Atzma'ut fall in April, on Sunday the 7th and Tuesday the 16th respectively.



Yom HaShoah is the day designated for remembering the disaster of the Nazi Holocaust, specifically the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in

1943. The date was moved forward two weeks in the Hebrew calendar so that it would not interfere with Passover. Yom Ha-Atzma'ut is the anniversary of the State of Israel's Declaration of Independence in 1948. The Declaration was issued on May 14, on the eve of the end of the British Mandate over Palestine, and is observed each year on its Hebrew date.

As you can see, the two observances are a little over a week apart and commemorate events that happened just five years apart. They create a twentieth century analogue to a statement found in the Passover Haggadah: *God took us from slavery to freedom, from servitude to redemption, from sorrow to rejoicing, from mourning to a day of festivity, from darkness to a great light.*

In reality, the proximity of the dates of Yom HaShoah and Yom Ha-Atzma'ut

is mostly coincidental. Further, both historians and Jewish thinkers strongly warn against drawing a causative relation between the Holocaust and the modern State of Israel. It is bad history, bad theology, and politically problematic in trying to work toward a solution of the Israel-Palestine crisis. Yet, with all this said, there is some correlation between the two days.

Both the Holocaust and founding of the Jewish State are twentieth century experiences. Indeed, they could not have happened in an earlier century. In brief, this is the case because of the way in which modernity and the attendant phenomenon of nationalism unfolded in history. Think of all the other holidays that Jews observe: Passover, Sukkot, Purim, Hanukkah, Shavuot, Tisha b'Av, the High Holy Days. All of them have their origins in ancient biblical or early rabbinic Judaism. Yom HaShoah and Yom Ha-Atzma'ut are the unique observances of modern Judaism. (For this reason, by the way, they tend to be ignored by the Ultra-Orthodox who try to shun all the effects – good and bad – of modernity.)

Being quintessentially modern, the observances are complicated. First, since they are relatively new, a standard method of practicing them has not been estab-

lished. Second – and more important – they are not conventionally religious. While one hardly has to be observant or much of a religious believer in order to draw some meaning from the rest of the holidays, we are nonetheless aware of the role God plays in each festival. We cannot say the same for Yom HaShoah or Yom Ha-Atzma'ut. And in the case of the Holocaust, the presence of the divine is downright problematic.

These two days, however, draw their power not from God's will, but rather from the Jewish people itself. They are observed as an assertion of standing with the people Israel. Rosh HaShanah has the shofar; Hanukkah its lights. Purim has hamantaschen and Sukkot has the lulav. Yom HaShoah and Yom Ha-Atzma'ut have only the Jewish people themselves, on the occasions of deepest mourning and national triumph. Neither day requires anything other than a sense on each Jew's part that they belong.

On succeeding Thursdays, the area Jewish community will have an opportunity to gather. April 4th will be the annual Yom HaShoah observance at Dutchess Community College. [See article on page 9.] On April 11th, Dr. Joel Hoffman, our Religious School Director, will speak on

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President's Message – You Are Not Alone



On a pretty regular basis, I am in contact with fellow temple presidents across the country, having met many of them over a weekend in the Atlanta

area last May at the Scheidt Seminar. This network of presidents is a valuable resource because, regardless of location or size of congregation, the issues we all face on a day to day basis are very similar. Whether the temple has 80 families or 800 families, one part-time rabbi or four full-time rabbis, is in an urban, suburban, or rural location, things are pretty much the same everywhere. They worry about how to attract and retain members, about declining income and rising expenses, about getting a good turnout for services and temple programs, about having enough volunteers to run their programs. Sound familiar?

Through our online connections, we share information and ideas, what has worked and what hasn't worked in our own congregations. We support each other, and work "together" to help lead our congregations. Of course, I have a

great deal of support right here at Vassar Temple, but it is good to know that I can solicit ideas coast to coast when needed, from people in the exact same position as I am. I am not alone.

That is a lesson that we all need to be reminded of from time to time. **You are not alone.**

You have friends and family whom you turn to for support, but you also have a congregation that is here to help. You have a rabbi and many volunteers ready and willing to assist you. We often speak of our "congregational family," but it is important to remember that those aren't just words. When you are ill or in the hospital, our Reyut committee can visit with you, arrange travel to doctors' appointments, or just call and check on you. When you suffer a loss, your fellow members support you during Shiva, and our new Nachamu committee is here to help. If you are facing other struggles, you can schedule an appointment to speak with Rabbi Golomb for pastoral support. And when you're just plain having a bad day, simply attending Shabbat services or some other congregational event can lift your spirits and put a smile on your face.

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Mark and Kate Metzger, whose generous contribution allowed us to obtain a modern enhancement for our services, Visual T'filah. Using a digital projector and screen, the Friday evening Shabbat liturgy is accompanied by artwork and other imagery. With Joe Bertolozzi's music, Elisa Dugatkin's voice, and Rabbi Golomb's special touch, we are able to create a dynamic prayer experience. One of the goals of our past president, Seth Erlebacher z"l, was to bring Visual T'filah to Vassar Temple. Joel Kelson helped put the service together for use in our Shabbat Across America service on March 1st, which received many positive reviews. We plan to use this new technique at various times during the year, in the sanctuary and in the social hall.

I hope that everyone will participate in this year's Flexible Feast. A number of Temple members are graciously opening their homes to offer a variety of dinners over three Saturday evenings in April. Many thanks to Linda Lant for spearheading this exciting project, allowing people to participate on any or all of the three

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Upcoming Events

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Rabbi's message

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“3,000 Years of Jewish Continuity as Seen Through 3,000 Years of Hebrew.” [See article on page 6] Each evening is an opportunity to observe, simply by belonging.

Rabbi Paul Golomb

President's message

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evenings!

On April 27th Vassar Temple will host its first Trivia Night. You don't need to be a trivia genius to participate. Enjoy snacks, entertainment, and the company of friends. It won't break the bank either, as it's only \$10 per person. The Youth Group will provide onsite child care.

So here we are at the beginning of Spring. Mark your calendars for all of the great events coming up at temple. We would love to have you join us whenever you can. Whatever your needs, please let us know so that we can do whatever we can to help.

*L'Shalom,
Bob Abrams*

Rummage sale

(continued from page 1)

used condition. We cannot accept items in poor condition, textbooks, computers, or TVs, as they do not sell and cost us money to dispose of.

The Rummage Sale will be held on Sunday, April 21st from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., with a bag sale from 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. Your help is needed to sort the clothing each morning during the week before the sale. On sale day, we need people to keep the merchandise tables neat and help customers check out. Teens seeking community service credit are strongly encouraged to volunteer! Great training is provided and we always have a lot of fun and make new friends while working on the Rummage Sale.

This semi-annual sale is a major Sisterhood project that brings in funds from the community to help finance improvements to our Temple facilities and programming, so please support the effort in any way you can. For further information, or to volunteer, please contact Ann Lerman at rummage@vassar temple.org or call the temple office, 454-2570.

Mitzvah Day *(continued from page 1)*

in Dutchess, Orange, Putnam, and Ulster Counties. Mitzvah Day will take place rain or shine, as we have alternate projects lined up in case of inclement weather.

The day will begin at 9:00 a.m. with a free bagel breakfast at event headquarters, the Jewish Community Center (JCC), 110 S. Grand Ave., Poughkeepsie, where everyone will have an opportunity to register and get directions to their project sites. Most projects run from 10:00 a.m. until completed. A complimentary lunch buffet at the JCC will be available to volunteers between 11:45am-1pm. Here is just a sampling of projects from which to choose:

SPECIAL FOR TOTS (age 2-6): The PJ Library Project- Enjoy a story about Mitzvah and make a craft gift for those in need in the community in the Early Childhood wing of the JCC from 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

ESPECIALLY FUN FOR KIDS/

FAMILIES: Do chores at Briggs Farm (and pet the animals), decorate blankets at the JCC, cheer nursing home residents, spruce up historic Gomez Mill House, clean up an historic Jewish cemetery, bake cookies for Lunch Box, come back to the JCC to pack up the wall of cereal boxes at 11:45.

TEENS: a stream cleanup environmental project, or choose anything from the list!

ADULTS: help Men's Club rebuild a brick walk, cook at the JCC, sheetrock at the teen shelter, plant shrubs, garden prep

SEDENTARY PROJECTS: all at the JCC-- stuff envelopes, sort items donated to Castle Point, knitting

SIGN UP EARLY! Information about all projects accompanies the Mitzvah Day registration form found both in the April issue of *The Voice*, on the table in the Temple lobby, and online at www.jewish-dutchess.org after April 1st. You can also

volunteer, or get any questions answered, by e-mailing jfs@jewishdutchess.org or calling Linda Tafapolsky at Jewish Family Services, 845-471-9817. We will also be collecting, for those in need, boxes of breakfast cereal, new packaged men's underwear/socks, and new twin size comforters/pillowcase at the JCC from April 3rd through the morning of Mitzvah Day.

Mitzvah Day is planned and carried out by a committee of volunteers, organized by Jewish Family Services (a division of Jewish Federation of Dutchess County), and underwritten by a grant from the Bertha Effron Fund of the Community Foundation of Dutchess County. Corporate sponsors include Mercedes-Benz of Wappingers Falls, The Bagel Shoppe, Kraus-Ritter Insurance, and Arnoff Moving and Storage. Financial donations of any size are always welcome from anyone. So as Mitzvah Day fast approaches, find YOUR way to be a part of it!

Worship Services

Monday, April 1 *Last Day of Passover*

10:00 a.m. Yizkor Service

Friday, April 5

7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service

Saturday, April 6

9:00 a.m. Torah Study

10:00 a.m. New Paths Service

Friday, April 12

7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service

Saturday, April 13

9:00 a.m. Torah Study

Friday, April 19

7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service with cantorial soloist, Elisa Dugatkin

Saturday, April 20

NO Torah Study

10:00 a.m. New Paths Service

Friday, April 26

7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service & Birthday Blessings with cantorial soloist, Elisa Dugatkin

Saturday, April 27

9:00 a.m. Torah Study

Friday, May 3

7:30 p.m. Shabbat Service

Saturday, May 4

9:00 a.m. Torah Study

10:00 a.m. New Paths Service

Scriptural Readings

April 5 & 6 *Shmini*

Leviticus 11:1-11:47

Haftarah: II Samuel 6:1-7:17

April 12 & 13 *Tazria-Metzora*

Leviticus 14:33-15:33

Haftarah: II Kings 7:3-20

April 19 & 20 *Aharei-Kedoshim*

Leviticus 19:15-20:27

Haftarah: Amos 9:7-15

April 26 & 27 *Emor*

Leviticus 23:23-24:23

Haftarah: Ezekiel 44:15-31

May 3 & 4 *Behar-Behukotai*

Leviticus 27:1-27:34

Haftarah: Jeremiah 16:19-17:14

Help Needed with New Temple Web Site



Because Richard Lowry, who has created and maintained the Vassar Temple website that we are all proud of, will be moving to Connecticut in the next few months, we need to set up a new website that does not require knowledge of HTML to create and maintain. Fortunately, the URJ (Union for Reform Judaism) offers a platform on which to base their web sites. A group of temple members has begun to define a new web site based on material in our current website.

No web expertise is required to participate. We are especially seeking members who can develop and update appealing descriptions of Temple functions. If you would like to be part of this project going forward, your views and assistance will be greatly appreciated. For more information, or to express your interest, contact Bob Abrams at president@vassartemple.org.

Guest Speaker at April 19th Service

At our 7:30 Shabbat service on Friday, April 19th our guest speaker will be long-time temple member Joseph Forman, who is retiring as the owner of the Up to Date. He will speak about Jewish businesses on Poughkeepsie's Main Street in days gone by. Plan to learn about local history at this fascinating talk.

New Paths Services

Please join us in the sun-lit East Chapel on Saturdays, April 6th and 20th at 10:00 a.m. Each New Paths service, whether rabbi-led or lay-led, provides a unique and thoughtful Shabbat morning experience. We focus on letting the service get through us, rather than getting through the service. A brief informal light kiddush follows. For more information, contact Marian Schwartz at mschwa9882@aol.com or Rabbi Golumb at rabbi@vassartemple.org or the temple office at 845-454-2570.

Note: All Board and Committee Meetings, except Executive Sessions, are open to all Temple members. Community Hebrew School of Dutchess County is the Hebrew Education Division of Vassar Temple.



Tiny Temple Program for Young Children

Sunday, April 28th
11:00 a.m. – noon
“Learning about Shabbat”
through songs, crafts,
stories, and a healthful snack

For infants, toddlers,
pre-schoolers and their parents

Open to the community free of charge
regardless of synagogue membership

To RSVP and for more information,
email tinytemple@vassar temple.org.



to New Members of Vassar Temple

We have new members who have recently
joined the Temple community. Please extend a warm welcome to:

Wayne Cochran

Roslyn Kaffowitz

Leonard and Carol Nectow

In Remembrance

Vassar Temple shares in the grief suffered by the family of:
Beverly Cohen, sister of Martin Revitz

Refuah Shelemah

...to **Sandor Margolin** and **Liz Freedman** who were recently hospitalized.

We Need Your Help!

It’s awful to be the last to know that someone has been hospitalized, needs a visit or needs some other kind of help.



We are, once again, asking that you be the eyes and ears in the lives of our congregational family. Federal patient privacy regulations limit the information that hospitals make available to clergy and volunteers.

We are encouraging you to contact the Temple office when a congregant is admitted to a hospital and wishes to have Rabbi visit during the hospital stay. Our goal is to meet the needs of all our congregants and we can only do this with your help.



Pulpit Flowers

- February 22 In memory of Mary R. Scheer and David Stephen Satz
donated by Dr. Justin & Deborah Scheer
- April 5 Vassar Temple Sisterhood
- April 12 Vassar Temple sisterhood
- April 19 Vassar Temple Sisterhood
- April 26 Vassar Temple Sisterhood

Anyone who wishes to honor the memory of a loved one or to commemorate a special occasion can do so by sponsoring the Sanctuary flowers with a donation to the Shrub Fund. Just call Sandi Rugar at 454-2570. The donation to the Shrub Fund is \$55.

Vassar Temple Bulletin, published monthly
Publisher: Marianne Abrams
Editor: Doi Cohen
Technical Support: Bob Abrams

Articles for the May bulletin must be submitted to the temple office by April 2. Sorry, we cannot take Bulletin articles over the phone!
Articles may be sent to Sandi Rugar via e-mail, at office@vassar temple.org or faxed to (845)452-5161.
The editor reserves the right to edit articles for style, accuracy and length.

Meditation Group Meets on April 16th

The meditation group led by Linda Cantor and Ed Rosenberg will hold its next monthly meeting on Tuesday, April 16th (note new date for April) from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the East Chapel. At each session there is a sitting meditation, a walking meditation and either chanting or a short reading. There will also be time for sharing and for questions related to the practice. Both experienced meditators and those new to the practice are warmly welcomed.

Please let office manager Sandi Rugar know if you are planning to attend by contacting the temple office, 454-2570 or office@vassartemple.org.

Joel Hoffman to Speak About the Hebrew Language on April 11th

On Thursday, April 11th, at 7:00 p.m. [note new date] our Religious School Director, Dr. Joel M. Hoffman, will present "3,000 Years of Jewish Continuity as Seen Through 3,000 Years of Hebrew." His talk will include an exploration of the remarkable history that links the Jewish people to its historic language and identity through time: the fascinating story of how Hebrew began, why almost every written alphabet today can trace its roots to Hebrew, how Hebrew developed, where the text of the Bible comes from, the relevance of the Dead Sea Scrolls and other ancient manuscripts, and finally how modern Israeli Hebrew developed.

Refreshments will be available after the presentation and Dr. Hoffman will sign copies of his book, "In the Beginning: A Short History of the Hebrew Language" from NYU Press, for those who wish to purchase it.

Known for his entertaining style as well as for his scholarship, Dr. Joel Hoffman presents to churches, synagogues, community groups, and university audiences around the world. He holds a Ph.D. in linguistics and has served on the faculties of Brandeis University and Hebrew Union College. He is the chief translator for the popular 10-volume series, My People's Prayer Book (winner of the National Jewish Book Award) and for My People's Passover Haggadah. When not focusing on

JWV Schedules April Meeting

The Jewish War Veterans, Post 625, will hold its monthly meeting on Sunday, April 7th at Congregation Schomre Israel on Park Avenue in Poughkeepsie.

The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. Although Schomre Israel is strictly kosher, there will be hamantaschen and coffee at this meeting. Post Historian Suzanne Federman will talk about the history of the Post.

In the event of inclement weather, announcements will be on Cumulus Radio: 101.5 WPDH, 1490 WKNY, 92.7/96.9 WRRV, 94.3/97.3, 1390/1340 OLDIES, 97.7.

For further information contact Post Commander Ralph Schwartz at Rschwa9881@aol.com or (845) 849-0025.

Vassar Temple Teens Share their Washington, DC Experience on April 5th

As part of their religious school education, six high school students from Vassar Temple (Danielle Brundage, Noah Carbo, Ali Dahnert, Brianna Erlebacher, Rachel Marcus, and Kiley Quackenbush) traveled to Washington, DC in January for the transformative experience of participating in the L'Taken Seminar. Sponsored by The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, L'Taken provides students the opportunity to survey a variety of social policy issues, explore the Jewish values surrounding these issues, develop advocacy skills, and become empowered to effectively lobby governmental leaders.

Learn about their experiences in our nation's capital from our amazing students when they address the congregation at Shabbat services on Friday, April 5th at 7:30 p.m. In the meantime, visit the Vassar Temple blog at <http://vassartemple.wordpress.com/category/social-action/> for highlights and photos of the weekend.

Hebrew, translation, and the Bible, he also writes thrillers.

The entire community is invited to this fascinating free program. For more information visit Dr. Hoffman's website <http://www.lashon.net>, email adulded@vassartemple.org or rsdirector@vassartemple.org, or call the Temple at 845-454-2570.

Sababa Center Opens at Our Religious School

On Sunday morning, March 3rd, Vassar Temple opened its innovative "Sababa" Center to enrich religious education.

Supplementing a classroom-based curriculum in the Seth A. Erlebacher Religious School, the center provides small-group and individualized experiences to the entire student body. The center is held in our Reifler Library and takes its name from a slang Hebrew word for "great," reflecting the center's goal of offering great Jewish learning in an alternative format.

"Most teachers can reach about 90% of their students most of the time. We designed the Sababa Center to make sure that the other ten percent are also engaged in productive learning," explains our Director of Education, Dr. Joel M. Hoffman. "Everyone is unique," Hoffman adds, "and the Sababa Center encourages students to express their individuality by giving them a maximally responsive learning environment for at least part of the day."

While classroom learning tends to be curriculum based, the Sababa Center helps students explore tangents to what they are learning in class, and find their own personal connection to that material. Accordingly, the Sababa Center is staffed by teachers with diverse approaches and a wide range of knowledge and skills. Students rotate through the Sababa Center for 15-20 minutes at a time.

The Sababa Center is funded in part by a grant from the Ann and Abe Effron Fund. For more information, go to our blog, <http://vassartemple.wordpress.com/>

A teacher works with students in the Sababa Center



Your Help and Food Donations Needed for April 7th Lunch Box

This will be our last Lunch Box of the school year and we need your help! The April 7th Lunch Box at the Family Partnership Center will be sponsored by the 5th grade of our religious school, captained by parent Wendy Giangrasso. You can help them cook and serve a hearty lunch of chili con carne by bringing 3 lbs. of ground beef browned with ½ cup of chopped onion, or a dozen pieces of fruit (bananas, oranges, and green grapes are especially popular) to the temple by Friday, April 5th. If you leave



the food in the temple refrigerator, be sure it is clearly marked with your name and “Lunch Box 4/7.” You can also have fun (and get community service credit) by helping at the Lunch Box that Sunday from 11:30 to 2:00.

If you can donate food or help cook and serve, please let Wendy Giangrasso know right away by calling 223-8331 or emailing WandFG@aol.com.

Lunch Box Thanks

Parent captain Shaari Roland thanks the Lerman, Moore, Nicholson, Erlebacher, Marcus, and Peritz-Greenman families and Doi Cohen for their donations of hot dogs and fruit. The meal was prepared and served at the Lunch Box by the 8th and 9th graders of our Religious School on March 3rd. Special thanks go to Janet Greenman and Annmarie Lerman for helping the students with the cooking and serving.

CEREAL COUNTS!!! 2013 ANNUAL DUTCHESS COUNTY-WIDE CEREAL BOX DRIVE APRIL 3rd THROUGH SUNDAY, MAY 5, 2013

This summer, right here in our county, there will be children, teenagers and adults who will not have access to breakfast. Breakfast hunger is real. Breakfast hunger is intolerable. This spring we can work together to make breakfast happen this summer.

Once again, we announce Cereal Counts!!!, a powerful food drive run in this county each spring aimed at supplying food pantries throughout the county with breakfast food. Breakfast supports physical and mental health. It is, indeed, the essential meal of the day for everyone.

This year, as part of our annual spring Cereal Counts drive, we would like ask you to please consider hosting a mini-drive through your schools, businesses, organizations, teams and groups. These mini-drives are simple to host. Just post a sign inviting people to bring in a box of cereal

by a deadline date you choose, and leave out a carton in which people can leave their donated box. The result: a rewarding collection of cereal boxes (and great team morale).

Then drop your mini-load off at the JCCDC anytime between April 3rd and May 5th. On May 5th, Mitzvah Day, volunteers will pack up all of the cereal boxes into a U-Haul truck. The cereal will then be delivered to pantries run by Dutchess Outreach; the Community Action Partnership in Poughkeepsie, Beacon, Red Hook and Dover; Hudson River Housing; the Reach Out Church in Hyde Park; Beulah Baptist Church; St. Paul’s Episcopal Church; the Department of Social Services; Interfaith Senior Housing, and more.

Even if it’s not possible for you to run a mini-drive, we encourage you to

bring a box of cereal to the JCCDC anytime during the drive period. Every box counts. Every box makes breakfast real.

Hungry summers are coming. CEREAL COUNTS!!! 2013. It’s a truckload of good morning health.

Nancy and Dave Samson, Cereal Counts!!! Founder and Coordinators
Max Samson, County-wide Student CC Captain
(845)462-4828 cerealcounts123@aol.com



From the Religious School Director



As I write this, just a few weeks before Passover, Israel is bracing for a possible locust invasion. And why? Because locust hordes are swarming in neighboring Egypt.

Yes, that's right.

The same plague described in the Book of Exodus, the one recounted every year at Passover seders across the world, is striking modern-day Egypt at just the right time.

We can hardly be surprised at the headlines: "Biblical Plague Waiting in the Wings." "History Repeats Itself." "Swar-mageddon." And so on. I have no doubt that this will be just the first of many such headlines. Every year, around Passover and Easter, news organizations repeat their claim that "new evidence" has been discovered to confirm the biblical accounts. Some years the media focus on new proof of Noah's Ark and the Great Flood --- a bit of wood, perhaps, or newly unearthed fish fossils on a newly discovered Mt. Ararat. Other years we read about some previously unexplored wind, current, or gravitational anomaly that might explain the parting of the Red Sea. On the other side of things, Rabbi S. David Sperling, PhD, reminds readers in this season's issue of Reform Judaism that "The biblical tradition of slavery in Egypt ... appears to be fictitious."

I fear that all of these miss the point. Worse, they propagate a fundamental misunderstanding about these stories and

the roles they play in our lives. That's because the value of these stories doesn't lie in their historical accuracy. Discovering ironclad evidence of every single detail of the Exodus story wouldn't make any difference.

And yet these stories are not fiction, so I think my colleague Dr. Sperling is misleading. But if not history or fiction, what are they?

There's a third category: sacred myth. Most people use the word "myth" to mean something that didn't happen, but it more accurately refers to something whose value doesn't depend on it having happened.

By analogy, we might compare a real diamond and a toy diamond. The real diamond is like history. Its value depends on independently verifiable data. The owner of a diamond relies on expert gemologists to determine its worth, just as a reader of history relies on expert historians. If the gemologists conclude that a diamond they thought was real is actually a fake, then it loses value. And vice versa. Historical accounts are similar. History is supposed to be accurate.

The toy diamond is like fiction. It's not supposed to be real. But it had better have some other qualities. Perhaps it is close enough to a real diamond to fool some people. Or maybe it's just an inexpensive way of letting 5-year-olds dress up. In any case, if you think you have a real diamond, but it turns out to be a toy, you have good reason to be disappointed. Fiction is similar. It's supposed to have some inherent quality to it.

Myths, though, are like family heir-

looms. We can imagine a diamond that's been in the family for as long as anyone can remember. Our ancestors guarded it in Europe, then brought it to the New World when they were forced to flee. No one knows how long we've had it. That's how old it is. We keep it in the safety deposit box, and insure it heavily. We can also imagine that a new insurance company requires that our diamond be appraised. So we accompany a gemologist to the safety deposit box, and wait in anticipation to learn the diamond's valuation.

What do we do, though, if the expert tells us that what we have is a common piece of quartz? Do we throw it out? I don't think so. That's because, regardless of any other qualities, the rock is part of our family's heritage. Sacred myths are like that.

Likewise, regardless of any other qualities, the Bible is our family heirloom. We've been carrying it with us for literally hundreds of generations. Any other qualities --- and I believe there are many, because the Bible still holds undiscovered beauty and wisdom --- are a bonus.

So keep reading history. And keep reading fiction. But on Passover, be sure to take time to celebrate our sacred family heirloom.

Oh, and look out for the locusts.

Dr. Joel M. Hoffman

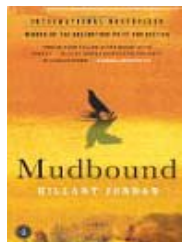
Book Club to Discuss "Mudbound" on April 11th

Vassar Temple Sisterhood's Book Club will discuss "Mudbound" by Hillary Jordan, a prize-winning novel set in the Mississippi Delta in 1946, on Thursday, April 11th at 2:00 p.m. in the Community Room of Collegeview Tower, 141 Fulton Ave., Poughkeepsie.

City-bred Laura McAllan is trying to raise her children on her husband's farm, a place she finds foreign and frightening. When two young men return from the war to work the land, they form an unlikely friendship across racial lines which drives this powerful story to its tragic conclusion. The book is available in paperback

or through the local library system.

Elaine Lipschutz will lead the discussion, to which everyone is welcome. To RSVP or get more information, contact Doi Cohen at 462-6193 or dcohen1230@gmail.com.



Purim Pasta Thanks: Vassar Temple Triumphs over Hunger

Temple members,

As you know, during Purim, it is traditional to listen to the Megillah and shake groggers to drown out the name of Haman. In doing so, we acknowledge the triumph of good over evil.

Thank you all for bringing in so many boxes of pasta on Purim, for shaking them, and for donating them. Those boxes of pasta filled bags. Bags became an abundant carload. Friends staffing the Zion Baptist Church food pantry, the recipients of this year's Purim pasta, were thrilled. Empty shelves became well stocked with plenty of meals, thanks to you.

Regards,

Nancy and Dave Samson

Religion and Power: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism on the Individual and the State

Our spring adult education course will take place at the temple on three alternate Thursdays at 7:00 p.m.

- On April 25th “Cross and Crown: Christianity’s Ambivalent Relationship to Power” will be presented by the Rev. Sam Speers, Director of Religious and Spiritual Life at Vassar College, and the Rev. E. Robert Geehan, pastor of the Reformed Church of Poughkeepsie and former professor of history at West Point.
- On May 9th “The Kingdom of Faith: Islam and Power” will be explained by Dr. Mouannes Hojairi of the Africana Studies Department at Vassar College.

- On May 25th “586, 70, 1948 and All That: Judaism and Power” will be discussed by Rabbi Paul Golomb of Vassar Temple.

These presentations are open to the community free of charge and everyone is welcome to attend one or more of them. For more information, contact the temple at 845-454-2570 or email rabbi@vassartemple.org or adulded@vassartemple.org.

Holocaust Commemoration and Film on April 4th

This year the annual community Holocaust Commemoration at Dutchess Community College will feature a screening of the award-winning, PBS POV documentary film, *Inheritance*, directed by James Moll. The film captures a remarkable meeting between a Nazi officer’s daughter and one of his victims.

Monika Hertwig, is the daughter of mass murderer Amon Goeth, the Nazi camp commandant played by Ralph Fiennes in *Schindler’s List*. In *Inheritance*, she seeks out Helen Jonas, who was enslaved by Goeth and who is one of the few living eyewitnesses to his brutality. The women’s raw, emotional meeting unearths terrible truths and lingering questions about how the actions of parents continue to ripple through generations.

YomHashoah, the Day of Remembrance of the Holocaust will be observed by the community in the James and Betty Hall Theatre at Dutchess Community College on Thursday evening, April 4th. At 6:00 there will be a Coffee Reception in the Ritz Lounge. The 6:30 Candle Lighting Ceremony will be followed at 7:00 by the screening of *Inheritance*. There will be a reception in the Ritz Lounge at 9:00.

Terrific Purim Celebration Drew a Full House

After 120 people enjoyed a delicious pasta dinner prepared by the Men’s Club’s great chefs, the sanctuary filled up on Saturday evening, February 23rd, with people of all ages ready to celebrate Purim. After showing off their costumes and participating in a hilarious Purim service led by Rabbi Golomb and cantorial soloist Elisa Dugatkin in funny hats, everyone was treated to the best Purim spiel ever. Writer/producer/director Art Menken and his wonderful stage and acting crew outdid even their previous successes with a clever musical performance of “The Wizard of Shnoz.” This was followed by a spirited reading of the Megillah of Esther, during which Rabbi Golomb showed off more hats and the congregation drowned out the name of Haman by shaking boxes of “Purim Pasta” which were later donated to our hungry neighbors. The evening was topped off by the sharing of delicious hamantaschen which had been baked in the temple kitchen.

To see many more of the excellent photos taken by Alan Lemberger, go to www.vassartemple.org and click on Photo Gallery.



Barbara Greenberg, still in her acting makeup, and Brianna Erlebacher during the Megillah reading



Jacob Kudria played a beautiful “overture” on his violin



Director Art Menken also played the Wizard.



Munchkins Sam, Caleb, Anna, and Mariel spiced up the show.

Our French Toast Breakfast was Lots of Fun

The challah French toast was marvelous and we all licked our fingers when we got together for breakfast on Sunday morning, March 10th. Thanks to our SUPER Chef Mark Metzger and his helpers Bob Abrams, Donna Loshin, Anna Metzger, and Bob Ritter, and to the many supporters of this delightful event! The students and teachers of our Seth A. Erlebacher Religious School were treated to the same finger-licking great snack.

Many thanks to the Vassar Temple Men's Club and Sisterhood for their generous support.

Perla Kaufman



*The Men's Club helped with the cooking --
and the eating!*

*Chuck Stein and Ron
Rosen*



*Religious School students and aides
enjoyed the breakfast.*



*New members, Paul and Jean Rosenfeld enjoyed chatting
and deciding which food looked the best.*



Contributions

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IN HONOR OF

Duane & Amanda Brown and their
 children, Abigail & Elliott Brown
 Amanda Brown

Memorial Board Plaques

Honor the memory of your loved ones with a plaque on the Memorial Board in the sanctuary. For information, call Sandi at the Temple office at 454-2570.



April 5

David H. Ettenson
 Tillie Schwartz
 Hon. Joseph H. Gellert
 Herman Baskin
 Samuel Baskin
 Eric Samson
 Mimi L. Schor
 Dr. Albert Gould
 Joseph Friedman
 Sally Reifler
 Idel Izraelewicz
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 Morris D. Kovacs
 Mollie Rosenberg
 Max Michael Simon, MD
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 Frances Lazarus
 Joseph Frankel
 Simi Levy
 Jaime Hecht
 Julius Albert
 Elaine F. Bloch

April 12

Edyth Friedman
 Rhona Prussin
 Martha Katz
 Lorraine Goldberg
 Morris Rosenberg
 Jeannette S. Newman
 Lillian F. Kovacs
 Rabbi Aaron Pearl
 Jack Jacobson
 Herbert Rosand
 Evelyn Lanning
 Kenneth (Mickey)
 Rosenblum
 Charles Volkman, Sr
 Dr. Paul Koltai
 Solomon Salberg
 Nathan "Toolie" Turk
 David Korobkin
 Alvin B. Brooke
 Anne Lacher
 Louis Schwartz
 Elias Altman
 Sally Richman
 Ida Salit
 Frank Scholnick
 Harry Degenshein
 Philip Mardon, MD
 Paul Plansky

April 19

Sadie Lieberman
 Mildred Metlis
 Dr. Fritz Weigert
 Philip Lacher
 Fannie Bard
 Evelyn Partridge
 Marion Volkman
 Eva Bley
 Doreen Kimmel
 Eva Freedman
 Rebecca Wolfson
 George N. Freedman
 Eric Mendel
 Gladys Salberg
 Nathan L. Reifler
 Samuel H. Weisman
 Delbert LaLone
 Gertrude Rosenmann
 Sonkin
 Jesse Barbash
 Eva Feldman
 Reuben Lewis
 Lewis Troeger
 Claire Troeger Moselle

April 26

Gertrude Weiss
 Norman S. Reifler
 Joan Marshall
 Andrew May
 Lester M. Ritter
 Harry Bard
 Estelle Josias
 Sidney Cohen
 Esther Strauss
 Clara Levy Ribbi
 Sara Silberman
 Bessie Goldman Lass
 Anna Dreishpoon
 Frances R. Finnerman
 Abraham Tavss
 Robert Uttal
 Dr. Wolfgang U. Weigert
 David L. Golomb
 Betty Fein
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Religious School Director:	Dr. Joel M. Hoffman
Cantorial Soloist:	Elisa Dugatkin
Organist:	Joseph Bertolozzi
President:	Robert Abrams
1st Vice President:	Bob Ritter
2nd Vice President:	Marge Groten
Secretary:	Jeff Brenner
Treasurer:	Brian Silverman
Sisterhood President:	Lisa-Sue Quackenbush
Men's Club Co-Presidents:	Jeff Brenner & Dave Wolf
Immediate Past President:	Sandra Mamis
Youth Group President:	Rachel Marcus



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 LAST DAY PASSOVER Office Closed 10am Yizkor Service	2 May Bulletin deadline 10am SEP	3 6:30-8:30pm RS 8-12	4 10am SEP 11:30am Talmud	5 CAN JAM Weekend 7:30pm Shabbat Service	6 9am Torah Study 10am New Paths 1st Flexible Feasts by RSVP only
7 YOM HASHOAH 9am-12pm RS K-7 11:30am Lunch Box	8 Flyers Deadline	9 10am SEP	10 6:30-8:30pm RS 8-12	11 10am SEP 11:30am Talmud 2pm VTS Book Club 7pm 3000 Years of Jewish Continuity as seen through 3000 years of Hebrew with Dr. Joel Hoffman	12 7:30pm Shabbat Service	13 9am Torah Study 2nd Flexible Feasts by RSVP only
14 9am-12pm RS K-7 RUMMAGE WEEK	15 RUMMAGE WEEK	16 YOM HA'ATZMA'UT 10am SEP 7:30pm Meditation Group RUMMAGE WEEK	17 6:30-8:30pm RS 8-12 RUMMAGE WEEK	18 10am SEP 11:30 Talmud RUMMAGE WEEK	19 7:30pm Shabbat Service RUMMAGE WEEK	20 9am Torah Study 10am New Paths 3rd Flexible Feasts by RSVP only
21 9am-12pm RS K-7 9:30am Spring Rummage Sale	22 7pm Board	23 10am SEP	24 6:30-8:30pm RS 8-12	25 10am SEP 11:30am Talmud 7pm Cross & Crown—Christianity's Ambivalent Relationship to Power	26 7:30pm Shabbat Service and Birthday Blessings	27 9am Torah Study 7:30pm Trivia Night
28 LAG BA'OMER 9am-12pm RS K-7 11am Tiny Temple	29	30 10am SEP				