

Congregation Brethren of Israel אחים ישראל Founded 1848 Volume 160 No. 7 January 2014

Pesach in January??

Well the holidays are early this year but not THAT early! The planning for the 3rd Annual Vassar Temple Seder, scheduled to take place on Monday, April 14th, does have to start now! If you would like to take part in planning this event, please attend a meeting on:

Sunday, January 12, 2014 at 11:00 am in the Vassar Temple Social Hall.

Questions: Contact Sandra Mamis, Passover Seder event Chair 914-456-3524 or ssmdermpa78@gmail.com



TALKING BOOKS

TALKING BOOKS, a social action project at Vassar Temple, creates a library of books with ac-

companying recordings for use by local organizations. With your support we have completed 81 childrens' books! This project is generously supported by a grant from the Groten Fund. Past beneficiaries include the Vassar Brothers pediatrics unit and the Center for Prevention of Child Abuse. Our most recent recipient sent the following note:

Dear Vassar Temple,

The children and staff of our After-School [Program] appreciate the "Talking Books."

> Sincerely, Program Committee Catherine Street Community Center

Participants select, donate, and record themselves reading books, which I then package and deliver as a gift from Vassar Temple. Recording equipment is provided. Thank you to our newest participant, Debbie Pierantozzi. I welcome sugges-

BAKERS NEEDED!

Please join us for Sisterhood's annual

HAMANTASCHEN BAKING DAY

Make friends while making hamantaschen for our Purim service and delivery to homebound congregants and out-of-town college students.

Sunday, February 23rd (snow date: March 2nd) 9:00 to 1:00 in the temple kitchen

RSVP to Judy Rosenfeld hamantaschen@vassartemple.org or 635-2414

Please bring one batch of dough - recipe available from Judy or the temple office – and a rolling pin. Remaining ingredients provided.

tions for additional book recipients. If you know someone – of any age – who would benefit from the gift of a recorded book, I would be happy to accept these individual requests and match them to volunteer readers, including desires for specific books.

Individual and group efforts are welcome - the more creative the better! If you would like to donate a book but prefer not to read, I can pass it on to a volunteer. To create a "double mitzvah" please consider making book purchases using Vassar Temple SCRIP. For further information or to sign up, please contact me at <u>socialaction@vassartemple.org</u>. Thank you for your interest!

Susan Karnes Hecht

Upcoming Events

Jan 4	Holy Rollers, p5
Jan 5	Lunch Box, p1
Jan 7	Meditation, p5
Jan 10	Special Music Program, p2
Jan 12	Seder Planning meeting, p1
Jan 12	Tiny Temple, p3
Jan 23	Adult Ed, p3
Jan 30	Adult Ed, p3

Lunch Box on January 5th

Vassar Temple Sisterhood is sponsoring Lunch Box on Sunday, January 5th. Needed are donations of:

- 3 lb. ground beef browned with 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 12-18 pieces fresh fruit. Bananas,
- citrus fruits and individual portions of grapes packed in sandwich baggies are favorites.

Foods may be dropped off beforehand in the Temple kitchen, fridge, or freezer any time the Temple is open, and should be labeled "For Lunch Box." If you would like to donate food or volunteer to help cook and serve that day, 11:30am-2:15pm, at the Lunch Box in the Family Partnership Center, please contact Jen Dahnert, Lunch Box Captain, jedahnert@vassar.edu.

Rabbi's Message: what's going on up there



Two thousand years ago, Jews living in the land of Israel spoke Aramaic as their daily vernacular. Hebrew was mostly confined to transmission of texts and scholarly writing. The upper class of Jewish society,

however, also indulged in Greek, which was the principal language for the higher strata of residents throughout the Roman Empire. To this day, therefore, certain Greek terms are widely utilized to refer to Jewish objects. Best known among them is *synagogue*. And almost as well known – though rarely recognized as actually being Greek – is *bima*, the platform at the front of the sanctuary.

Within ancient Greek culture, the bima was a platform situated in the agora (market square) from which announcements, speeches and/or performances could be carried out. In a synagogue's sanctuary, the bima has one additional function: it creates an *Aliya*, an opportunity literally to go up to the Torah.

Still, the bima is essentially a stage.

It allows those who stand on it greater visibility before a congregation. Just how large ought a bima be? In many pre-WWII Reform synagogues, the bima was relatively tiny. The only person expected to stand on it was the rabbi. The employment of a cantor was very rare, as Reform congregations opted for a choir and soloists who would occupy a choir loft, more often than not, hidden from the congregation behind a screen!

Synagogue design began to change after the war. Cantors and cantorial soloists began to take their places on the bima as well, and extra seats were set up for congregational officers and honored guests. The bima, nonetheless, remained an exclusive enclave for professionals and leadership. You can see the fruits of this type of thinking in the design of Vassar Temple's bima (designed and built in 1952). It is large enough to accommodate more than one person, but it is not much larger than the two reading tables and eight chairs flanking the Ark. [Note the photos of the old bima for the Temple on Vassar Street. Not only is it quite cozy, but it has a railing indicating dividing synagogue

leadership from congregation.]

Contemporary synagogues, on the other hand, tend to have both more spacious and lower bimas – often only one step up. (Clearly the bima needs to be higher in really large sanctuary spaces.) Hence, leadership and direction of Jewish worship is presented as more open to the congregation in general. Should Vassar Temple's mid-century bima be brought into the twenty-first century?

Some things, however, do not change. The bima remains the locus for leading services, both reading and singing, and it remains the place of the Ark and the reading of Torah. Currently, Vassar Temple's sanctuary places these enduring elements separate from each other: the rabbi (or service leader) on one side, the cantor on the other, and the Ark in the middle. There are other arrangements. Some synagogues put the rabbi and cantor together at one reading table, sometimes to one side or other of the Ark, sometimes directly in front (and somewhat below), and sometimes even with the Ark off-center. What would your image of an ideal bima arrangement be?

Rabbi Paul Golomb

President's Message



The two Bobs (Abrams and Ritter) are in San Diego as this issue is being prepared, so there is no President's message for this month.

Jan. 10th Special Program for Jewish Music Month

Music scholar Andrew Hartman will speak at the January 10th Shabbat evening service This particular Shabbat is the beginning of Jewish Music Month, known as Shabbat Shira, the Sabbath of Song.

Andrew holds a B.A. and two Masters degrees from New York University. He has a classical music collection of over 6,000 LP's and CD's ranging over 1,000 years of music and hundreds of composers. A learned scholar on composer biographies and music history, Andrew is a frequent lecturer at schools, community centers, and the old New York City Opera Guild.

The service, led by Ron Rosen and Elisa Dugatkin, begins at 6:00 pm on Friday, January 10th and will include Andrew's special presentation.

January Worship Services

Jan. 3 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat

- Jan. 4 9am Torah Study; 10:15 New Paths Shabbat morning service
- Jan. 10 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat with Cantorial Soloist Elisa Dugatkin; Andrew Hartman talks on *Jewish Currents in Music* in honor of Shabbat Shira (the Sabbath of Song)
- Jan. 11 No Torah Study
- Jan. 17 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat and Birthday Blessings with Rabbi Golomb and Cantorial soloist, Elisa Dugatkin
- Jan. 18 9am Torah Study; 10:15 New Paths Shabbat morning service
- Jan. 24 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat
- Jan. 25 A Vassar Temple Shabbat; 9am Torah Study; 10:00 Shabbat morning service and Torah reading; Arye Maidenberg, Director of the Jewish Museum Travel Program, speaks on *Seeing the World Through Jewish Eyes*
- Jan. 31 6pm Kabbalat Shabbat and Torah Reading with Rabbi Golomb and Cantorial soloist Elisa Dugatkin

New Paths

New Paths services will be held Saturday mornings Jan.4 and Jan. 18 at 10am in the intimacy of our sunlit East Chapel. Moving traditional and contemporary readings illuminate the interactive service, which rotates between being lay-led and rabbi-led. A brief informal kiddush follows. Join us! For more info, contact Marian Schwartz <u>mschwa9882@aol.com</u> or Rabbi Golomb <u>rabbi@vassartemple.org</u> 454-2570.

Shabbat and Its Discontents Adult Education Course

January 23, 7:00 pm January 30, 7:00 pm February 6, 7:00 pm February 13,7:00 pm

The Sabbath seems to be the perfect observance. It is a day of rest, and we all value time off from work. Or, do we? At best, most Jews observe Shabbat "from a distance." We acknowledge its existence, laud its purpose, and then treat late Friday and Saturdays like the rest of the week. In four sessions Rabbi Golomb will discuss what it can mean to keep Shabbat, in particular, noting that its observance has been a matter of controversy throughout all of Jewish history, going back to biblical times themselves.

Scriptural Readings

Jan. 4 **Bo** Ex. 10:1-11:3 Jeremiah 46:13-28

Jan. 11 **B'shelah** Ex. 13:17-15:26 Judges 5:1-31

Jan. 18 **Yitro** Ex. 18:1-20:23 Isaiah 6:1-7:6; 9:5-6

Jan. 25 Mishpatim Ex. 21:1-22:3 Jer. 34:8-22, 33: 25-26

Celebrate Tu B'Shevat at Tiny Temple on Jan. 12th

Join in the fun as Tiny Temple observes Tu B'Shevat, Sunday, Jan. 12th from 11 am- noon. This wonderful free program is especially for children ages infant thru kindergarten and those raising them. Temple membership is *not* required, so please spread the word! Tu B'Shevat is known as "the birthday of the trees" and, in recent times, has become an occasion to show appreciation for the environment and nature. Children will learn

tion for the environment and nature. Children will learn about the holiday through crafts and other fun activities in a relaxed and friendly setting. The adults will be able to meet others who are raising Jewish children, and a healthy snack featuring the fruits of the trees will be served. Tiny Temple is held once a month during the school year and is always free of charge. Each month features a timely Jewish theme. To help with the planning of this event, please RSVP to Laura Brundage at <u>tinytemple@vassartemple.org</u>. Laura will also be happy to answer your questions and place you on the Tiny Temple email list.

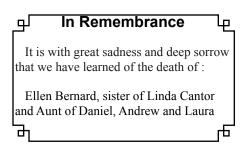
Mazel Tov to... Mark & Jasmine Russo on the birth of their daughter Maya.

born on 10/28/2013



Seen at Lunch Box







Refuah Shelemah

to our Temple Member, Joel Zaritsky who was injured in an accident.







Pulpit Flowers

- January 3: Vassar Temple Sisterhood
- January 10: Vassar Temple Sisterhood
- January 17: Vassar Temple Sisterhood
- January 24: In Honor of Eden and Dalia Golomb's birthdays,
- Rabbi Paul and Debbie Golomb
- January 31: Vassar Temple Sisterhood

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

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.

Vassar Temple Bulletin, published monthly
Publisher:Marianne Abrams
Sue Lesser and
Donna Loshin
Technical Support:Technical Support:Bob Abrams

Articles for the February Bulletin must be submitted to the Temple office by January 1st. Sorry, we cannot take Bulletin articles over the phone! Articles may be sent via email to bulletin@vassartemple.org. The editors reserve the right to edit articles for style, accuracy and length.

From the Religious School Director



There's no "I" in team.

It's an old, familiar saying meant to promote a team as a cohesive unit, rather than as a group of disjointed individu-

als. (Rearrange the letters and there's a "me" in "team," but I don't think that's the point.)

But although a team isn't supposed to be disjointed, there's no way around the fact that it's still made up of individuals, so there's a necessary tension between the group and the individual --- an issue we find addressed right at the start of the book of Exodus, which we started reading in December.

Exodus begins with the phrase, "these are the names of the children of Israel." Rashi, the great 10th-century commentator, suggests that God recalled the names of the children of Israel because (according to Genesis 15:5) Abraham's descendants were going to be like the stars in the sky, and, Rashi adds, God calls each of the stars by name. (The way Rashi knows is that the prophet Isaiah says so in his poetry in verse 40:26.) This is why God called the Israelites by name. This is roughly the point where most people stop reading. What Isaiah knows about cosmology strikes the modern reader as being even less impressive than the way Rashi combines these disjointed passages. And the theology of a God who names the stars seems quaint at best, and perhaps irrelevant or even objectionable.

But I think there's a message here.

The stars all seem pretty much the same to me. (My middle-school astronomy teacher would surely be disappointed.) All I see when I look skyward are sparkling points of light, each one indistinguishable from the next. In fact, the only star I really care about is my own, the sun. All the others are just generic stars to my eye, even though I know that some stars are almost one thousand times hotter than others, and the brightest stars are literally ten billion times more brilliant than the faint ones. There are even stars whose luminosity changes. And they come in different colors. But none of that matters to me when I look at them.

My naive observation from afar ignores the individuality of the stars and lumps them all together...except my own, of course. I don't think this heliocentric attitude of mine is a terrible crime. But with the Book of Exodus upon us, I have Rashi's words in mind as I think about teams and other groups, like classes and schools and such. That's because some people treat humans --- and children, in particular ---the way I treat the stars.

I often hear comments like, "Well, she's a 6th grader" or "They're teenagers," as if knowing a young person's age is enough to know the person. It's obviously not.

One of the benefits of a small school is that we don't have to fall into this trap. We can acknowledge and respond to each person's individuality; the personalities, quirks, preferences, qualities, idiosyncrasies and more than are only visible close up.

We can take our cue from the opening lines of Exodus as read through Rashi's Isaiah-tinted eyes. There may be no "I" in team, but we can treat each person we meet, even in a group, as a distinct "you."

Dr. Joel Hoffman

Jewish Meditation at Vassar Temple

Jewish Meditation is held the first Tuesday of every month from 7:30-8:30pm at Vassar Temple under the leadership of Linda Cantor (of Vassar Temple) and Ed Rosenberg (of Temple Beth El). Upcoming sessions will take place on Jan. 7, Feb. 4, and March 4, and both beginners and those experienced in the practice of meditation are warmly invited to attend. At each session there will be a sitting meditation, a walking meditation, either chanting or a short reading, plus time set aside for questions and sharing. To assist with our planning, please RSVP to the temple office at 454-2570 or office@vassartemple. org if you expect to attend any or all of these upcoming sessions.

The Wind Chill Fund

Donations to the Temple tzedakah box this winter will benefit the Wind Chill Fund. This fund helps sustain Hudson River Housing's (HRH) emergency overnight shelter services through the most bitterly cold months of the year, when the facilities can be overflowing. HRH provides not only a warm, clean, safe place to sleep, but also dinner, breakfast, a shower, transportation to and from the shelter, and referral services. During 2012, HRH provided overnight shelter to over 1,500 homeless adults and children, and now the need is even greater. As we relax in our warm, secure homes, let's think of those who don't share these comforts by dropping a donation in the Temple tzedakah box. Checks made out to "Wind Chill Fund" are also appreciated and are tax deductible, as well.

Holy Rollers on January 4th

Join us for "Holy Rollers" at the Erlebacher's at 27 Patricia Dr. in Pleasant Valley. We will have a Havdalah service followed by the 'airing' of two Torah rolls and you can help! Refreshments will be served.

- Saturday, January 4th at 7:00 pm.
- Snow date: Sunday, January 5th at 4:00 pm

Contact Melissa at Mae52@columbia. edu for directions and call the Temple at 454-2570 if you need a ride.

More Lunch Box Scenes





Crop Walk Was Very Successful

The local CROP Walk for Hunger, sponsored by the Dutchess County Interfaith Council, one of the most successful events of its kind in the nation, raised almost \$58,000 last year, more than any other walk in the Northeast/ New England region! Vassar Temple has a long history of supporting this worthwhile endeavor, and this year's event, which occurred on October 20, was no exception.

As of November 16, the following members and friends of the congregation had contributed \$1,991 to sponsor Rabbi Golomb and our other walkers: Jen & Steve Dahnert, Debbie Golomb, Mark & Anna Metzger, Ron Rosen, Ralph Schwartz, and Dave & Ilana Wolf. Additional participants from our congregation included Eleanor Pupko, who organized a group of walkers from Spackenkill High School, and Mariah Robishaw, who walked with a group from New Hackensack Reformed Church. Special thanks are also extended to Joel & Linda Babas, Doi Cohen, Joan Reifler for her bake sale help, Marian Schwartz for working at the registration table and to Dave Wolf for acting as Temple recruiter. Twentyfive percent of the funds collected through the Dutchess County walk will remain within our local community; the rest will address hunger relief in other areas of the world.

JWV Meets on Jan. 5th

The Jewish War Veterans, Post 625, will hold its monthly meeting on January 5, 2014 at Congregation Shomre Israel on Park Avenue, Poughkeepsie, NY. Although you cannot see Congregation Shomre Israel from the JCC, it is just north of the rear of the JCC on Park Avenue. It also has an entrance on College Avenue. The meeting will begin at 9:30am. As Shomre Israel is strictly kosher, <u>no</u> food or drink may be brought into the Synagogue.

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 <u>Rschwa9881@aol.com</u> or (845) 849-0025.

Contributions

RABBI'S FUND

In Memory of:

Arthur Stern Barbara Stern Kathy LaLone Austin Jane LaLone In Honor of: Gloria Turk receiving The Hadassah Tower Award Eleanor Charwat receiving The Adriance Honors from the Poughkeepsie Public Library David & Nancy & Samson Family

SUSTAINING FUND

In Memory of:

Lisa Graney Sandra & Harry Mamis Charles Ernest Joan Reifler Philip Browner Miriam Browner Lacher Hildegard Tuchmann Doris Cohen Frank DeGeorge Beverly Crudele-Metlis Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Matthew & Muriel Lampell

Sylvia Nectow Leonard & Carol Nectow Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Richard & Marsha Lowry Michael Aronson Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Lila Matlin Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Harry & Sandra Mamis Seth Erlebacher Nathan Givner Roslyn Kaflowitz Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Ed & Vivian Garber Herbert Jacobson Rose Jacobson Elsa Cohen Ruth Seegal Cohen Doris Cohen Shirley Ernest Joan Reifler Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Wallace & Elizabeth (Matlin) Schwartz William Robinowitz James & MaryAnn Robinowitz

Ellen Bernard, Linda Cantor's Sister Linda Babas

In Honor of:

Rabbi Golomb Louise Leavitt Vassar Temple Steve & Linda Lant Matthew Lampell's Birthday Lila Matlin Dr. Justin Scheer's 90th Birthday Lila Matlin Eleanor Charwat receiving The Adriance Honors from the Poughkeepsie Public Library Ed & Vivian Garber Yahrzeit Fund: Albert E. Schwartz Ralph Schwartz **Community Tzedakah (Lunch Box):** Ralph & Marian Schwartz Lisa Graney Lisa Graney Matthew & Muriel Lampell **Grandmothers' Fund:** Abraham Baum Nick and Nina Kraut

Hineni Fund:

Seth A. Erlebacher Melissa A. Erlebacher



JANUARY 3 Alma Barbash Moise Barchilon Greta Blaine Rose Brond Jean Citron Donald DeWitt Morris Effron DeWitt Fischman Harry Fogle Samuel Grand Harris Harold Groten Mort Hollinger Bertram Katz Keith Warner Landau Meyer Miller Joseph Robinson Frances Rosen Nicholas Stern Carl Tobias

JANUARY 10

John Ciminello Irene Goldstein Ethel Haber Beatrice Salit Horn Betty Israel Mordecai "Shep" Jackson Bess Claster Kaufman Davida Krevolin Evelyn Laks Rae Lipman Sylvia Mednick George Meltzer Gloria Menken Dr. John Y. Notkin Marion Present Mauricio Ribbi Anne Richmond Mrs. Ben Rosenstein Elizabeth Satz Dr. Charles Scope Harold R. Sherwin Jeffrey Sisselman Gabrielle Soroka Bessie Trivers Marion Tiernev Dorothy Vogel Pauline Wolfson

Yahrzeits

JANUARY 17

Bella Albert Stephen Bokor Richard Bram Herman D. Chertock Thelma Fival John Garlock Hody I. Gellert Dr. Donald L. Goldfarb Lois Grand Mary Lass Hoffman Joseph Norman Katz Hy Kohan Rabbi Marcus Kramer Pearl Levick Shirley Lipschutz Gerald Mamis Stanley Markum Rose Plotkin Andrea Sue Rabin Robert Reinhart, Jr. Guiseppe Ribbi Morris S. Rosen Daniel Russotto Sarah Sacharoff Joseph Solomon Herbert L. Strauss

JANUARY 24

Rafael Barchilon Joseph Baskin Fay Scheer Chazen Rose Dorfman Joseph Effron Andrew H. Erdreich Aaron Estrin Belle Baum Fein William Feinbloom,OD Sidney Friedman Henry Goldstein Joan Golomb Ruth Haber William Haber Stanley Krell Eugenia Lenger Bessie Lipschutz Philip Lustig Ann J. Miller Joseph Moselle Miriam Rosenberg Oppenheimer Pola Schek Henry Seligman Helen Wagner Theresa Wang Herman Yelsky

JANUARY 31

Leonard H. Arnold Alice Davidson Betty DeGeorge Pedro Gitler Alan Pack Greller Pauline Gross Shirley LaLone Melvin Lesser Nancy Levinson Virginia Newman Livingston Joseph Marcus Susan Matlin Andrew Frederick Mendel Walter L. Mock Russell B. Oppenheimer, DVM Ronah Gordon Posner Sara Rosenberg Dr. Harold Rosenthal Gertrud Rothstein Herbert Schiffman George Schoenbrun Mark C. Schwartz Stanley Soirefman Irving Wrobel

Vassar Temple Bulletin

140 Hooker Avenue Poughkeepsie, N.Y. 12601 845-454-2570 www.vassartemple.org



PRSTD STD U.S. Postage Paid Permit # 11 Newburgh, N.Y.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Rabbi: Rabbi Emeritus: Religious School Director: Cantorial Soloist: Organist: President: 1st Vice President: 2nd Vice President: Secretary: Treasurer: Sisterhood Co-Presidents: Men's Club Co-Presidents: Immediate Past President: Youth Group President: Paul Golomb Stephen A. Arnold Dr. Joel M. Hoffman Elisa Dugatkin Joseph Bertolozzi Robert Abrams Bob Ritter Marge Groten Jeff Brenner Brian Silverman Carolynn Frankel & Jennifer Dahnert Jeff Brenner & Dave Wolf Sandra Mamis Rachel Marcus



			1 4:30pm Hebrew School 6:30pm Religious	2 11:30 am-12:30 pm Talmud	3 CAN JAM WEEKEND 6:pm-7:pm Shabbat Service	4 9a Torah Study 10am New Paths
5 9am Religious School, K-7	6 7:00 pm Exec Committee mtg 7:15 Ritual Committee mtg.	7 7:00 pm Meditation	8 4:30p Hebrew School 6:30p Religious School	9 11:30 am-12:30 pm Talmud	10 6:pm-7:pm Shabbat Service	11 9a Torah Study
12 9am Religious School, K-7 9:30-10:30 Sisterhood mtg Palace Diner Tiny Temple– 11:am-12:pm	13	14	15 4:30p Hebrew School 6:30p Religious School	16 11:30 am-12:30 pm Talmud	17 6:pm-7:pm Shabbat Service	18 9a Torah Study 10am New Paths
19 NO Religious School, K-7	20	21	22 4:30p Hebrew School 6:30 Relig School 6:30p Religious	23 11:30 am-12:30 pm Talmud	24 6:pm-7:pm Shabbat Service	25 9a Torah Study
26 9am Religious School, K-7	27	28	29 4:30p Hebrew School 6:30p Religious Sch	<i>30</i> 11:30 am-12:30 pm Talmuda	31 6:pm-7:pm Shabbat Service	

