



Vassar Temple

Where You Belong

Congregation Brethren of Israel Founded 1848 Bulletin Volume 162 No. 5 January 2016

Rabbi's January Discovery Sessions

This January, Rabbi Berkowitz will lead four "Discovery Sessions" for our congregation. At these 90-minute sessions, members of our community will have an opportunity to speak about what Vassar Temple has meant to us and what we hope to build for the future. Using the model of Appreciative Inquiry, we will share the experiences that have made a positive impact on our lives and imagine how we can build upon these experiences to improve our community.

Our Discovery Sessions are an opportunity for us to learn about one another and dedicate ourselves to the education of the next generation. Each Discovery Session is geared towards a sub-group of our congregation, so we can address the needs of different segments of our population. If you are in one of these groups, planning to be in that group

soon, have loved ones in that group, or are just interested in the experiences of your fellow congregants, please join us. If you can't make the Discovery Session you

most identify with, or if you don't want to choose from one of the categories below, please know that you are welcome to join us at any Discovery Session. You need only attend one Discovery Session to have your voice heard. There will be a light nosh at



each event.

Mark your calendars now!

Young Adults and Parents with Children at Home: Sunday, January 10, 2016, 9:00am

Seniors (Self-Identified): Sunday, January 24, 2016, 12:00 noon

Upcoming Events

Jan.	2	New Paths service, p 3
	3	Lunch Box, p 5
	10	Discovery Session I, p1
	16	New Paths service, p3
	21	Discovery Session II, p1
	23	Tu B'Shevat Service & Program, p8
	24	Discovery Session III, p1
	26	Discovery Session IV, p1

Empty-Nesters and Adults without Children: Thursday, January 21, 2016, 7:00pm

Interfaith Families and Jews by Choice: Tuesday, January 26, 2016, 7:00pm

Different schedule for winter services
(winter hours)
see page 3 for details



Read about our tree of Life Fund
on page 9



Rabbi's Message: Planting for Spring



When I was growing up, Tu B'Shevat at my synagogue meant three things: 1) Locating some exotic fruit for the Tu B'Shevat Seder, 2) Watching *My Grandfather's Tree* in Religious School 3) Planting parsley for Passover.

Tu B'Shevat is the New Year of the Trees, the date from which the ancient rabbis would count the age of a tree for tithing purposes. It has evolved into a time of celebrating our mystical connection to the earth, our responsibility to care for the natural world, and the blossoming of the modern-day State of Israel.

It sometimes feels a little silly to be thinking about trees in the dead of winter. Here in the Northeastern United States, our trees are bare, and the frozen ground still seems completely inhospitable to new life. Moreover, we usually celebrate the harvest of a crop, not the planting of it!

But there is something beautiful about planting in winter, even if it is just parsley in Styrofoam cups (not very sustainable, but this was the 1980s). Planting seeds in

the coldest weeks of winter is a symbol of hope, a reminder that we can look forward to the warmth and light of the coming spring. Not only that, by planting seeds, we are actively engaged in planning for our future.

This winter, we will celebrate Tu B'Shevat, as always. We will also celebrate a different kind of planting. On February 5th, 2016, Vassar Temple will come together to officially install me as your rabbi.

It may seem a little late for an installation, given that I've already been your rabbi for six months! But this observance celebrates more than the rabbi's arrival. An installation celebrates a harvest: we rejoice in the product of a successful rabbinic search and transition. And an installation also celebrates the seeds we are planting together.

The traditions, stories, and dreams that we share, the ideas that we gather during our January Discovery Sessions, all of these will help us to plant seeds for the future. On February 5th, we will

celebrate the moment when we roll up our sleeves and get to work!

There is a Talmudic legend that Honi the Circle Maker, upon seeing a young person planting a carob tree, ridiculed, "That tree won't bear fruit for 70 years!" The young person replies, "There were carob trees when I arrived on this earth, and I am planting for my grandchildren."

When we plant seeds in the winter, we have no way of knowing what will bloom and when. Some fruits we will reap during the next harvest, some trees will be our gift to the next generation. That is why there is so much hope and determination in the very act of planting. And that is something to celebrate!

Please join me for my installation on Friday, February 5th, 2016. A Shabbat dinner will be held at 5:30 pm, with services at 7:00 pm. My professor, Rabbi Aaron Panken, the President of HUC-JIR, and my mentor, Cantor Patrice Kaplan, will be joining us, along with a few of my loved ones and friends. I hope you will, too.

Rabbi Leah Berkowitz



President's Message: TGI

2016 begins on a Friday. So TGIF and Happy New Year!! Since most of us have off on New Year's Day, we get to enjoy a long weekend. That's a nice way to begin the year.

No, there is not a typo in the title of this article - TGI. The missing letter "F" is no error. "Thank God It's ..." you finish it with whatever you're thankful for. Think of the title as my way of reminding you of what you're grateful for.

2016 is also a leap year, a year containing one additional day, added to correct our Gregorian calendar because of how it drifts from the astronomical or seasonal year. February 29th, Leap Day, is added to the calendar as a corrective measure because the Earth does not orbit around the sun in precisely 365 days. With New Year's Day falling on a Friday at the start

of a Leap Year, it seems like an especially fine time to make a corrective resolution in our lives.

Like the Gregorian calendar which drifts from nature's seasons, over time our lives can seem to drift away from what is real, important, meaningful, or brings us joy. New Year's, including the High Holy Days, can remind us and inspire us to put our life on a better track.

I like the way Rabbi and the Ritual Committee reminded us during Hanukkah with a set of videos to show how the Torah and mitzvot can serve as a guide for a more righteous life.

At sundown on Sunday, January 24, 2016 we start the festival celebration of Tu B'Shevat / טבשׁב וט, also known as the New Year for Trees. Each tree is con-

sidered to have aged one year as of Tu B'Shevat. This is why the holiday is also referred to as the "Birthday of Trees." So you might say, if there is reason in your life *to turn over a new leaf*, this may be the time to do it!

At Vassar Temple, we've been turning over several new leaves. And we will keep doing so to make our Temple a source for what is real, important, meaningful, and brings joy to your life. I hope that one of your New Year's resolutions will be to take a *leap of faith*, by making Vassar Temple a greater part of your life.

Bob Ritter

January Worship Services

1	6:00pm	Shabbat evening worship with Rabbi Berkowitz, organist Joseph Bertolozzi and cantorial soloist Elisa Dugatkin
2	9:00am 10:00am	Torah study New Paths Shabbat morning service
8	5:30pm 7:00pm	Family Shabbat Dinner with Rabbi Berkowitz Family-friendly Shabbat Service with Rabbi Berkowitz, organist Joseph Bertolozzi and cantorial soloist Elisa Dugatkin
9	9:00am	Torah study
15	6:00pm	Shabbat evening worship with Rabbi Berkowitz and organist Joseph Bertolozzi
16	9:00am 10:00am	Torah study New Paths Shabbat morning service with Rabbi Berkowitz
22	6:00pm	Shabbat evening worship with Rabbi Berkowitz, organist Joseph Bertolozzi and cantorial soloist Elisa Dugatkin
23	9:00am 10:00am	Torah study Shabbat torah service with panel discussion, Tu B'shevat seder and light kiddush lunch.
29	6:00pm	Shabbat evening worship with Rabbi Berkowitz, organist Joseph Bertolozzi and cantorial soloist Elisa Dugatkin
30	9:00am	Torah study

Scriptural Readings

Jan. 2	<i>Sh'mot</i> Exodus 4:18-6:1; Isaiah 27:6 – 28:13, 29:22-23
9	<i>Va'era</i> Ex. 8:16-9:35; Ezekiel 28:25 – 29:21
16	<i>Bo</i> Ex. 12:29-13:16; Jeremiah 46:13-28
23	Shabbat Shirah <i>B'shalah</i> Ex. 14:26-17:16; Judges 4:4 – 5:31
30	<i>Yitro</i> Ex. 18:12-20:5; Isaiah 6:1 – 7:6, 9:5-6

Follow the Rabbi!

Rabbi Berkowitz is on Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress, and Instagram. Follow her and join the conversation!
 Twitter/Instagram: @RabbiLRB
 Facebook: [RabbiLeah Berkowitz](#)
 Read Rabbi Berkowitz's blog at:
<http://thisiswhatarabbilookslike.wordpress.com>



Upcoming New Paths Services

Join us at the New Paths sabbath morning service Saturdays, Jan. 2nd & Jan. 16th at 10:00am in the informal, intimate setting of Vassar Temple's East Chapel. The moving liturgy of the New Paths prayer book includes both traditional and contemporary writings, mostly in English, and participants may bring supplemental materials to share. Each New Paths service, whether lay led or rabbi led, provides a unique and thoughtful shabbat morning experience. A brief informal kiddush follows. For more information, please contact Marian Schwartz mschwa9882@aol.com, Rabbi Berkowitz rabbi@vassartemple.org, or the Temple office 845-454-2570.

New Schedule for Monthly Family Service

Starting on January 8th due to the New Year holiday, join us on the **first Friday night of each month** for a **Family-Friendly** Shabbat service. The monthly family service will begin at **7:00pm** throughout the year (including the winter months), with Shabbat dinners beginning at 5:30pm when scheduled. Please note this change from our previous schedule and watch Temple publicity for information about dinners and other special events.

Vassar Temple Sisterhood Judaica Shoppe

Many thanks to Joanne Abraskin, Michele Sinn and Zoe Weinstein for graciously helping to make our Hanukkah sale a success. A special mention to our co-manager, Donna Loshin, who can always take over in a blink! Last but not least, our faithful customers whose continued support makes us smile!

We sold out some of our newest additions: Fair share chocolate tablets and Nepal banners!
Thank you again!

Perla Kaufman

Condolences to...

Ann Lerman and family on the passing of her mother Bridget Molloy;

The Erdreich & Kotz families on the passing of Dr. Herbert Kotz.

Pulpit Flowers



January 1: Donated by Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund

January 8: Donated by Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund

January 15: Donated by Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund

January 22: Donated by Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund

January 29: Donated by Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund

Update for November & December Flowers:

November 20: Donated by Jim and MaryAnn Robinowitz in honor of their granddaughter Luna's Hebrew naming ceremony

December 11: Richard Levien in honor of Sandra Mamis

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 Vassar Temple Sisterhood Bimah Flower Fund. The donation to the Fund is \$55. Just call the Vassar Temple office at 454-2570.

Fiddler on the Roof Trip to NYC

Guess who's going to *Fiddler on the Roof*? Vassar Temple, and YOU, we hope! Mary Ritter is organizing a NYC theater trip for January 31st and we are taking names NOW. Family and friends all welcome. We are going to have a blast. If enough sign up, we will get a private bus. A group dinner will be planned in the city. Interested? Contact Bob Ritter at president@vassartemple.org for details.



Refuah Shelemah

Marge Groten recovering from eye surgery;

Paula Landau having been hospitalized; Donna Loshin recovering from a procedure.

We Need Your 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

Editors:

Sue Lesser and

Donna Loshin

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 publicity@vassartemple.org. The editors reserve the right to edit articles for style, accuracy and length.

From Our Religious School Director: Our School Bubble



A public-school teacher mocks a student. A boss bullies an employee. A student teases a classmate. An employee undermines a colleague. All of these un-Jewish behaviors, and more, plague the modern, secular world, and they are so prevalent that sometimes we no longer notice how offensive and hurtful they are. Even worse, we sometimes think they are inevitable.

Most public school students expect to be mocked by their teachers, for instance. They don't ask one another whether they will encounter cruelty from their putative mentors. They ask instead which teachers are the worst. They know that putting up with abuse is part of what it means to go to school.

Yet our Jewish tradition is clear that this kind of demeaning behavior is both deplorable and avoidable. We call it cursing. Not cursing out, which is merely uttering words in frustration, but rather cursing; purposely using words with intent to harm.

At no less than our high-holiday services we read the Torah portion that describes how God has put blessing

and curse before each one of us. And we are commanded to choose blessing. We read further that this basic instruction to use our words for blessing and not for curse is not difficult for us. It is not high up in the heavens nor far away across the sea. It is, rather, within the grasp of each one of us. We can all follow this basic precept.

Our tradition emphasizes the importance of treating one another with dignity, respect, and holiness, because each one of us is created in the very image of God. Even 3,000 years ago, we recognized that subjects do not belong to the king, but, rather, subjects and kings alike belong to God. How much more, then, are both students and teachers subject to the same rules?

Judaism detests words that bully, tease, mock, or otherwise seek to attack the holiness that is inherent in every human being. More and more, it seems to me, we fight an uphill battle in America in this regard, because so much of our modern society has come to accept and even expect destructive verbal behavior.

This is why we work so hard in our religious school to create a bubble of

Judaism, not just teaching about our tradition, but actively modeling it.

Students are given extraordinary latitude. They wander around class if they get antsy or walk to my office if they wish. They use a wide variety of electronic devices. They wear what they want. But a student who calls another "stupid" gets reprimanded. This contrast between their almost unprecedented freedom and our outrage at otherwise common behavior drives home what is important to us: the way we treat one another.

More generally, we recognize that religious school is not just a way to give children a Jewish future. It is most children's primary experience of Judaism. So we do everything we can to give them an environment in keeping with our highest ideals.

Our ultimate goal is two-fold. We hope the students will eventually go out into the world the way the prophets did, speaking out against injurious speech. And in the meantime, we hope our school will provide a sacred community --- a respite from daily indignities and an affirmation of each individual's sacred soul.

Dr. Joel Hoffman

Lunch Box News

Thanks to one and all who stepped up to help out with Lunch Box in December (you know who you are!) Men's Club will be sponsoring the Sunday, Jan.3rd Lunch Box. You can help by donating:

3 lb. ground beef or ground turkey, browned with 1/2 cup chopped onion
1-2 dozen pieces fresh fruit or bananas

Food donations can be dropped off beforehand any time the Temple is normally open. Please label it "For Lunch Box." Nonperishable fruit can go in the clear plastic bin in the counter just inside the kitchen door. Please e-mail mensclub@vassartemple.org to let them know what you will be donating!

Thank you for your support of this life-sustaining project.



Thank You to Vassar Temple

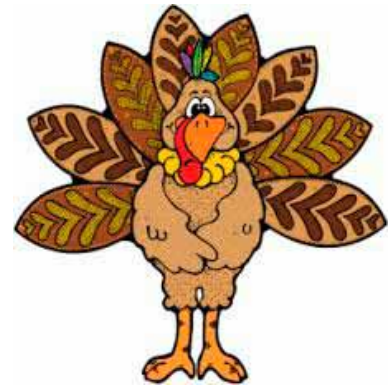
Mel's Place (The Living Room):

Thanks to your generosity, our October tzedakah box collection was able to provide 8 bath towels, 3 gigantic bottles of laundry detergent, 1 humongous package of paper towels, bath soap, and lots of canned coffee, coffee fixings, and cups. Mel's Place is operated by the Mental Health Association and is open 7 days a week to provide the homeless and troubled with a safe place to go and essentials such as showers, laundry facilities, a mailing address, counseling, and referral services.



Trim-a-Thanksgiving & Turkey Trot:

Your donations of turkeys, trimmings, and funds enabled us to provide 10 bountiful Thanksgiving baskets and almost 3 dozen turkeys to brighten the holiday for local families in need. Following a moving lesson presented by Nancy Samson that captured the spirit of this community project, Temple preteens and teens thoughtfully filled the baskets and decked them out with handmade cards. Together, we made it happen!



TIKKUN OLAM
REPAIRING THE WORLD

Jewish War Veterans Meeting

The Private Herman Siegel Post 625 of the Jewish War Veterans of the United States will hold a regular monthly meeting on Sunday, January 3, 2016 at Congregation Schomre Israel, 18 Park Avenue in Poughkeepsie. The meeting begins at 9:30am.

All persons of the Jewish faith who have served in any branch of the United States armed forces (Active, Reserve, or National Guard) are cordially invited to attend and participate in the activities of this JWV Post. As Schomre Israel is strictly kosher, no food or drink may be brought into the synagogue. If you need a ride or for further information, please contact the Post Commander, Robert L. Morrison, at ROBL56@aol.com.

January Tzedakah Box

The collection this month in the tzedakah box near the staircase will benefit Meals on Wheels of Greater Poughkeepsie. Their volunteers prepare and deliver 2 healthy meals per day, Monday thru Friday, enabling clients of any age who cannot prepare their own meals to remain in their homes and maintain their independence. To learn more about this wonderful organization, visit www.mealsonwheelsofpg.com. To suggest an organization to be a beneficiary of a future tzedakah box collection, please contact Marian at socialaction@vassartemple.org.

Weekly Adult Study Groups

Torah Study with the Temple's Rabbi Leah Berkowitz, which examines passages from the week's torah portion or haftorah, is held Saturday mornings at 9:00am. "The Talmud: Modern Ideas from an Ancient Text", is taught by Senior Scholar Rabbi Paul Golomb on Tuesdays at noon (no class Jan. 12). All are welcome to come, learn and join in the lively discussions at both classes--no previous training required! Questions? rabbi@vassartemple.org or (845)454-2570

Contributions

RABBI'S FUND

In Honor of:

Bob Ritter & Rabbi Leah Berkowitz
for making our
50th wedding anniversary special
Roger & Ellen Klinger
Rabbi Leah Berkowitz for helping
select a Hebrew name for our grandson.
Bill & Susan Barbash
Rabbi Leah Berkowitz
Chuck & Roni Stein
Rabbi Leah Berkowitz's birthday
Bob & Mary Ritter
Dave & Susan Hecht
Bob & Marianne Abrams

In Memory of:

Daniel Budson Alan & Susan Fink

SUSTAINING FUND

In Honor of:

In appreciation of Rabbi Berkowitz &
my VT family Carol Strauss
Wishing Paul & Naomi Goldberg well
Lila Matlin

In Memory of:

Nathaniel Rubin Martin & Ellie Charwat
Dr. Herbert Kotz Martin & Ellie Charwat
Hildegard Tuchmann Doi Cohen
Elsa Cohen Doi Cohen
Ruth Cohen Doi Cohen
Marion Tierney Kevin & Debbie Tierney
Marion Present
Debbie Tierney & Brian Landesman
Lester Fries Mark & Kate Metzger

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Alma Barbash
William & Susan Barbash
Abraham Baum Nina Kraut & Son
Celia Kraut Nina Kraut & Son
Anna Cairo Marty & Lynn Revitz

COMMUNITY TZEDAKAH (Lunch Box)

In Honor of:

Vassar Temple Alex Sinn and Family

TURKEY TROT

In Honor of Marian Schwartz
and Vassar Temple

Alex Sinn and Family
Richard Levien
Paul & Andrea Ciminello
Lila Matlin

ERDREICH FUND

In Memory of:

Dr. Herbert Kotz

Georgene Dreishpoon
Matt & Muriel Lampell

Memorial Board Plaques

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

Hanukkah Shabbat, December 11, 2015



Buy Scrip

Help Yourself

Help the Temple

Jan. 23rd Tu B'Shevat Service: Our Dirty Little Secret

The holiday Tu B'Shevat has become not only a time to plant trees in Israel, but a time for us all to celebrate nature and the environment. Soil is a part of our surroundings that we take for granted; but we could not survive without it. It's not simply dirt, but the very basis of life on earth. The delicate balance of nutrients, moisture, microbes and minerals creates an environment conducive to growing all of the planet's crops and supporting all of the planet's livestock. Without it, life on the planet as we know it would not exist.

What soil does for us and what we do to soil is the topic for discussion at the morning Shabbat service on Saturday, January 23rd at 10:00am. After a 9:00am torah study with Rabbi Berkowitz, a complete shabbat morning torah service will begin at 10:00 am. During the service, three Temple members who are

environmental professionals, Paul Ciminello of Ecosystems Strategies, Peter Groffman of Cary Institute, and Margery Groten, formerly of Scenic Hudson, will speak about soil, the very basis of life on earth, and will take questions later during the kiddush lunch.

After the service, enjoy a Tu B'Shevat seder, featuring fruits and beverages symbolic of the holiday, and a free light kiddush lunch. Please RSVP for the lunch by Jan. 18th to ritual@vassartemple.org.

*Sandra Mamis 914-456-3524
Chair, VT Ritual Committee*



Talking Books

TALKING BOOKS creates a library of books with accompanying recordings for the use of local organizations. With your support, and that of the Groten Fund, we have completed 86 children's books! Past beneficiaries include: VBMC pediatrics unit, Catherine Street Community Center, and Center for Prevention of Child Abuse. The newest recipient is Grace Smith House, our local domestic violence shelter. The assistance of Kate Metzger as liaison to Grace Smith is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks to our newest participant, Pam Spilke.



would benefit from the gift of a recorded book, I would be happy to accept individual requests and match them to volunteer readers. Individual and group efforts are welcome! 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 please contact me at socialaction@vassartemple.org. Thank you for your interest!

Susan Karnes Hecht

Participants select, donate, and record themselves reading books, which I then package and deliver as a gift from Vassar Temple. Recording equipment is provided. I welcome suggestions for additional book recipients. If you know someone – of any age – who

JANUARY 1

Alma Barbash
Julius Bloch
Rose Brond
Jean Citron
Donald DeWitt
Morris Effron
DeWitt Fischman
Harry Fogle
Roberta Weiss Gordon
Harris Harold Groten
Bertram Katz
Keith Warner Landau
Meyer Miller
Frances Rosen
Faye Seif
Nicholas Stern

JANUARY 8

Moise Barchilon
Greta Blaine
John Ciminello
Leo Dorn
Irene Goldstein
Samuel Grand
Ethel Haber
Mort Hollinger
Beatrice Salit Horn
Betty Israel
Mordecai "Shep"
Jackson
Evelyn Laks
Rae Lipman
Dr. John Y. Notkin
Marion Present
Mauricio Ribbi
Anne Richmond
Joseph Robinson
Mrs. Ben Rosenstein
Harold R. Sherwin
Gabrielle Soroka
Marion Tierney
Bessie Trivers
Carl Tobias
Pauline Wolfson

JANUARY 15

Bella Albert
Richard Bram
Herman D. Chertock
Thelma Fival
John Garlock
Hody I. Gellert
Dr. Donald L. Goldfarb
Lois Grand
Mary Lass Hoffman
Joseph Norman Katz
Bess Claster Kaufman
Hy Kohan
Leon Krauss
Davida Krevolin
Pearl Levick
Shirley Lipschutz
Gerald Mamis
Stanley Markum
George Meltzer
Gloria Menken
Andrea Sue Rabin
Robert Reinhart, Jr
Guiseppa Ribbi
Dr. Charles Scope
Jeffrey Sisselman
Herbert L. Strauss
Dorothy Vogel

JANUARY 22

Rafael Barchilon
Joseph Baskin
Stephen Bokor
Monte Tate Brown
Fay Scheer Chazen
Rose Dorfman
Joseph Effron
Andrew H. Erdreich
Belle Baum Fein
William Feinbloom
Sidney Friedman
Ruth Haber
William Haber
Stanley Krell
Bessie Lipschutz
Philip Lustig
Sylvia Mednick
Ann J. Miller
Miriam Rosenberg
Oppenheimer
Rose Plotkin
Morris S. Rosen
Daniel Russotto
Sarah Sacharoff
Elizabeth Satz
Henry Seligman
Joseph Solomon
Helen Wagner
Theresa Wang
Herman Yelsky

JANUARY 29

Leonard H. Arnold
Jesse Colodner
Betty DeGeorge
Pedro Gitler
Henry Goldstein
Joan Golomb
Pauline Gross
Rabbi Marcus Kramer
Shirley LaLone
Eugenia Lenger
Melvin Lesser
Nancy Levinson
Virginia Newman
Livingston
Joseph Marcus
Andrew Frederick Mendel
Walter L. Mock, Jr.
Dr. Harold Rosenthal
Alan S. Rubenstein
Pola Schek
Herbert Schiffman
Mark C. Schwartz
Isadore Shefts
Irving Wrobel

FUND FACTS: The Tree of Life

The Tree of Life. You walk by it every time you walk into the Temple. It stands as a testament to major life events in the lives of our congregants. It recognizes mitzvahs performed and appreciated. It celebrates simchas including weddings, anniversaries, new births and milestone birthdays. It is a proud symbol of the life of our congregation. It is awesome in the true sense of the word.

In addition to its symbolic value, it has a very literal value to our Temple. Every one of the plaques on the Tree got there because someone chose to make a contribution to Vassar Temple

to recognize an important occasion or moment in their life. Half of each of those contributions has been added to the Temple's Endowment Fund, and half has gone toward supporting operating expenses and program-



ming in the years the gifts were made. Over time, this has provided significant support for our Temple through contributions at the levels found on the Tree of Life page of the Temple web site: <http://vassar temple.org/donate-to-vt/donate-to-funds>

The next time you enter the Temple, take a moment to stop and look carefully at our Tree of Life, and think about the special meaning behind each and every

Vassar Temple Bulletin

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 845-454-2570
 www.vassartemple.org



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Rabbi:	Leah Berkowitz
Rabbi Emeritus:	Stephen Arnold
Senior Scholar:	Paul Golomb
Religious School Director:	Dr. Joel M. Hoffman
Cantorial Soloist:	Elisa Dugatkin
Organist:	Joseph Bertolozzi
President:	Bob Ritter
1st Vice-President	Mark Metzger
2nd Vice- President:	Ron Rosen
Secretary:	Susan Karnes Hecht
Treasurer:	Len Greenberg
Sisterhood Co-Presidents:	Laura Brundage & Danah Moore
Men's Club Co-Presidents:	Dave Samson & Dave Wolf
Immediate Past President:	Bob Abrams
Youth Group President:	Brianna Erlebacher

January 2016 Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Office closed 6pm Winter Shabbat Services	2 9am Torah Study 10am New Paths
3 No Religious School 11:30am Lunchbox	4	5 10am SEP 12pm Talmud Study 6:30pm Ritual Cmte	6 4:30pm Hebrew 6:30pm R/S gr 8-12 7pm Wise Aging Workshop	7 10am SEP	8 5:30pm Family Shabbat Dinner 7pm Family Shabbat Service	9 9am Torah Study
10 9am Discovery session with Rabbi Berkowitz 9am Religious School	11	12 10am SEP No Talmud Study 7pm Rabbi B speaks on Tevye the Dairyman at Boardman Rd Library	13 4:30pm Hebrew 6:30pm R/S gr 8-12 7pm Wise Aging Workshop	14 10am SEP 7pm Exec Cmte meeting	15 6pm Winter Shabbat Services	16 9am Torah Study 10m New Paths
17 No Religious Schoo	18	19 10am SEP 12pm Talmud Study	20 4:30pm Hebrew 6:30pm R/S gr 8-12 7pm Finance Cmte	21 10am SEP 7pm Discovery session with Rabbi Berkowitz	22 6pm Winter Shabbat Services	23 9am Torah Study 10am Morning Shabbat Service w/ Speakers
24 9am Discovery session with Rabbi Berkowitz 9am Religious School	25	26 10am SEP 12pm Talmud Study 7pm Discover Session with Rabbi Berkowitz	27 4:30pm Hebrew 6:30pm R/S gr 8-12	28 10am SEP 7pm Board Meeting	29 6pm Winter Shabbat Services	30 9am Torah Study