



Ma CHADASH!

מה חדש!

What's New! The newsletter of Temple Shalom Synagogue Center, Auburn, Maine

ק"ק היכל שלום

December 2023, Kislev/Tevet 5784

Annual Mega-Chanukah Party!



Friday, December 8th, 6:00 pm

Mega-Menorah lighting,
followed by a catered dinner, music,
magic and games.

Featuring a brand-new
Chanukah play performed by our
Hebrew Schoolers
and written and directed by
Rebbetzin Lisa!

Suggested Donation: \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members, children free

RSVP – 786-4201 or temple6359@aol.com

Havdalah with the Bates Jewish Students Union!

Saturday, December 2nd, 6:00 P.M.,
at Bates College

Multifaith Chaplaincy Building, 163 Wood Street, Lewiston



FROM THE RABBI



A story from the Biblical Book of Kings:

The prophet Elisha was a disciple of the famous prophet Elijah. Like most modern-day religious institutions, Elisha relied for his support on the generosity of benefactors. One such benefactor was a wealthy Shunemite woman. Having admired Elisha as a holy man for some time, she talked her husband into building an extension room onto their house for Elisha to stay whenever he was in the area. In return, Elisha promised the woman—who had difficulty conceiving a child—that she would bear a son within the next year. As Elisha promised, so it happened. Fast forward about 10 years. The child, now almost a

teenager, is out in the field. He complains of a headache, is brought home to his mother and, by the end of the day, the child dies while on his mother's lap. The wealthy woman seeks out Elisha. She berates him for making her life worse. The pain of never having had a child is bearable. The pain of losing a young child is unbearable. Elisha returns with the woman to her home, and with prayer and tenderness he succeeds in bringing her dead son back to life. A happy ending.

What the heck! What are we supposed to get from a story like this? How can a Rabbi—or any spiritual leader—live up to this impossible standard! Are we really expected to resurrect the dead? At least, this is what I think about every time I read this story.

This story is read as a *Haftarah* once each year. This year it was read on Shabbat, November 4th—less than a month after 1,200 of our brothers and sisters in Israel were savagely murdered. And just about a week after 18 of our local brothers and sisters were senselessly murdered by a mentally disturbed gunman. A few days later, on November 8th, Lisa and I attended the annual Multifaith Banquet at Bates College. Every year we are asked to provide some music but this year it was especially challenging. As soon as we got there, it was obvious to me that this year was different. As always, the room was elegant, the food bountiful and the student presentations moving and powerful. Still, a heaviness hung in the air. Students—especially the Jewish students—were palpably cautious—clearly struggling to be careful not to say anything that might trigger an Israel/Palestine debate—the kinds of debates that have been roiling so many other college campuses across the country. And the trauma of the recent mass shooting in Lewiston—and the subsequent lockdown—was equally palpable. Then it was our turn to present some music. I began by pointing out that although Jews love words—we are the “People of the Book” after all—we also have a tradition of music without words and that that seemed more appropriate for this occasion. We started with a slow *niggun* with a sing-along part. The students gingerly sang along with us. Then we transitioned into something more energetic. My eyes were closed as we ramped up the tempo. When I opened my eyes a minute or so later, I was shocked to see—dancing. About half of the approximately 200 students in attendance had spontaneously jumped up from their seats, grabbed each other's hands, formed a long line and danced and danced throughout the room. Jewish students, Muslim students, Christian students, international students all happily dancing—together—so relieved to be able to just be joyous—normal. Needless to say, Lisa and I played and sang with renewed energy and enthusiasm—and with tears in our eyes and lumps in our throats.

Spiritual leaders, Rabbis, don't have Elisha's power to ensure happy endings by resurrecting the dead, but with humility, love and *a bisl mazel*, sometimes we can resurrect the living.

Rabbi Sruli

P.S. On Saturday, December 2nd, at 3:45 p.m., Rabbi Sruli and Lisa will perform for Lewiston's annual “Holiday at the Plaza” event (Dufresne Plaza, 72 Lisbon Street). Our Temple's large, portable Menorah will also be lit at this public event.

FROM THE PRESIDENT



December. This is the time of year when a lot of us come face to face with religious diversity within our families. Whether it's within our own households, or it's a grandchild with one Jewish, one Christian parent, the Chanukah/Christmas dilemma is sure to come up. There is no one right way to handle this, as we must determine what works best for our situation. Do we stress what makes us unique, or the commonalities of the holidays? Do we talk about the religious aspects of each celebration, or do we keep it totally secular? There are many aspects to consider, and most seem to work themselves out. We live in such a multicultural world that even in our day-to-day lives we must learn to respect and appreciate other customs and traditions. So in religiously mixed families, we tend to divide our time up between both sides, getting a little taste of each

tradition. And truly, isn't spending time with family what really makes this time of year so special?

Actually, that's what I like about any holiday. And since I live a distance (albeit, closer than Qatar!) from my immediate family, I'm so glad to spend my holidays with you, my extended family. Not only can we celebrate Chanukah at the annual party, and by lighting the megamenorah each night, but we can also spend the afternoon on Christmas Day at a movie and dinner afterwards. And in the meantime, I'm enjoying the beauty of the holiday lights and decorations, and watching *It's a Wonderful Life* one more time.

May the whole world embrace religious diversity, and all of our differences. May we live in peace and safety.

And may your holidays, all of them, be memorable.

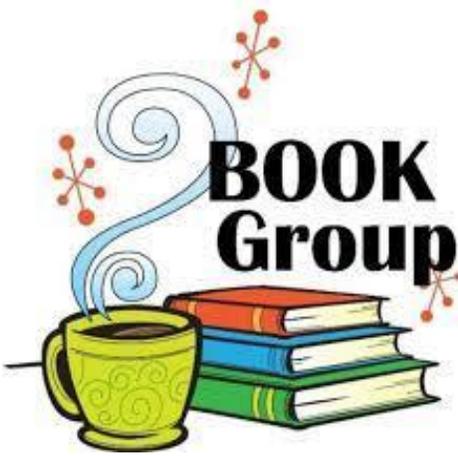
Lesli Weiner
President

SPEEDY RECOVERY

We pray for refuah sh'leimah – the full and speedy recovery of **Valci Braga, Rachel Corvi, Lee Jay Feldman, Andrea Finn, Sara Graf, Robert Galumbeck, Isaak Gekhtin, Detlef Gerlach, Ariella Green, Sharon Hemond, Alison Jaeger, Cylus Johnson, Suzan Katzir, Michael Kendall, Linda Koskela, Henry Lefkowitz, Michelle Lemieux, Lee Leveille, Carolyn Marshal, Bruce Meyer, Alice Richman, Bob Scott, Sandy Traister, William White**, and all others who are not well at this time. *We like to hear good news! Whenever you request that a name be put on this list, please let Temple Shalom know when it can be removed.*



!!BOOK GROUP NEWS!!

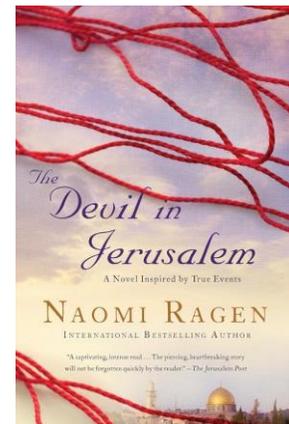


I'm not too sure why the turnout was so low on November 13th, but I know why I wasn't there. Computers are great until they don't work right. Oh well. But the wizard at HP support got it all straightened out.

Anyways, Lindsey Walker, Judy Abromson, Babs Shapiro, Marsha Auster had a short discussion about *The Thread Collectors* by Shaunna Edwards and Alyson Richman. It was a good Civil War story about a black soldier and his black woman, and a Jewish soldier and his wife. The group felt it was a bit unrealistic for a white northern woman to travel alone

around confederate territory. But there were some interesting pieces such as how the threads were collected to embroider maps on cloth that aided black slaves to escape to union lines. While it was an interesting slice of history, the book itself was just okay.

Our next book is one of 13 novels written by Naomi Ragen, an award-winning novelist, journalist and playwright. *The Devil in Jerusalem* is a terrifying thriller based on a true event. Read on:

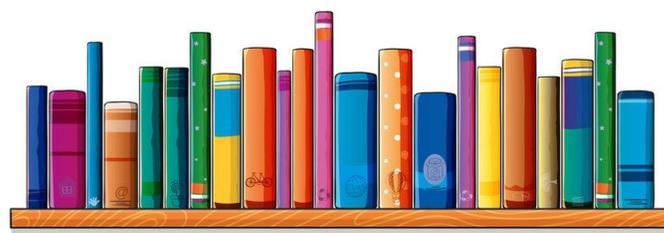


“An ambulance screams through the Jerusalem’s quiet streets. Inside, a toddler fights for his life, his parents nowhere to be found. With profound shock, an emergency room doctor realizes that the child’s mother—a young American—is already at the hospital, sitting at the bedside of yet another child with traumatic injuries. Devoutly reciting Pslams, she stubbornly refuses to answer any questions, cautioning her children to say nothing.

Brought in to investigate, Jerusalem detective Bina Tzedek-herself a young mother-carefully peels back layer after layer of secrets and lies, following a dark, winding path through Jerusalem’s Old City, kabbalists, mystical ancient texts, and terrifying cult rituals, until she comes face to face with the horrifying truth which has held a young American family captive.

Based on true events, *The Devil in Jerusalem* from internationally bestselling author Naomi Ragen is an eye-opening look at the dangerous predators lurking around the watering holes of those who come seeking spiritual enlightenment.”

Our next meeting will be MONDAY, DECEMBER 11 at 4PM. I also want to add that her bio states that Naomi Ragen is an active combatant against anti-Israel and anti-Semitic propaganda.....lesli



Ma Chadash/What's New is published monthly by Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center. Temple Shalom is an independent congregation and a member of the Lewiston-Auburn Jewish Federation.

The mission of Temple Shalom, Synagogue-Center is to foster a strong Jewish identity and an active Jewish Community.

Rabbi Sruli Dresdner

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CHINESE AND A MOVIE

A DECEMBER 25th TRADITION

MOVIE AT FLAGSHIP CINEMA, AUBURN
(UNDETERMINED AT THIS TIME)

SOMETIME IN THE AFTERNOON



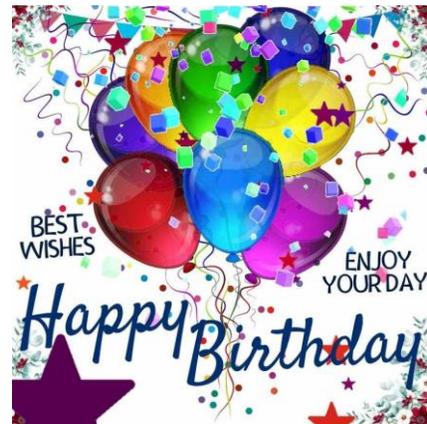
DINNER AFTER THE SHOW
AT LOTUS

STAY TUNED FOR FURTHER DETAILS

RSVP BY DECEMBER 18
786-4201 or temple6359@aol.com

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO

Estelle Rubinstein	Dec	3
Susan Scott		5
Andrew Bodenheimer		6
Joshua Goodman		7
Lillian Zidle		7
Briana Robillard		9
Jennifer Nussinow Tasker		11
Carla Marcus		15
Sarah Levine		30



Yahrzeiten

Morris Supovitz	Dec.	1
Herbert Scott		5
Charles W. Marcus		6
Ethel Plavin		8
Dorothy Fishman		10
Morris Zallen		10
Morris Silverman		11
Frances Silverman		12
Sherman Shapiro		13
Frances Stern		13
Marcia Bell		16
Mazie Schwartz		16
Jack Simons		18
Keyla Fuks		21
Harriet Passerman		21
Deborah Isaacson		23
Patti Levenson		25
Shirley Isaacson		28
Peter Olejer		30
Pauline Cohen		30



Rabbi Sruli is always happy to speak with and meet with members or our Temple. Please call or text his cell phone at 914-980-9509 if you would like to speak with him or to arrange a time for a meeting. You can also call or leave a message at the Temple office and Rabbi Sruli will get back to you

CONTRIBUTIONS

GENERAL FUND

The following made donations

“In memory of Helene Perry”

Betsey Caswell

Joan Tankey

Harriet & Nelson Tarbell

Nirenstein Family

Elaine Makas

Sheri Olstein

Jane Shapiro

Lewis Perry

Elaine Toutain

Bertha Bodenheimer

In memory of Manny Plavin

Cathy & Stan Tetenman

In memory of Manny Plavin

Michael Gagne

In memory of Manny Plavin

Bonnie & Larry Faiman

To Melissa Johnson in honor of the
birth of a granddaughter

To Bertha Bodenheimer in memory
of her grandnephew, Benjamin Biton

Gladys Garcia

In honor of Rabbi Sruli, Lisa & family
congregation

Joy & Lewis Zidle

In memory of Allen Bean

In memory of Max Lezberg

Philip Laine

In memory of Renee Laine

Tom Reeves

In memory of Manny Plavin

Lewis Perry

In memory of Manny Plavin

Donnie & Rocky Isaacson

In memory of Sonny Isaacson

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In memory of Manny Plavin

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CEMETERY FUND

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In memory of Jimmy Plavin

In memory of Manny Plavin

Ruth & Herb Halperin

In memory of Helene Perry

FAMILY HEBREW SCHOOL

Mara & Chris King

In honor of all the selfless time

Rebbetzin Lisa puts into preparing
our children for their b'nai mitzvah

LIBRARY FUND

Lindsey Walker

In memory of Helene Perry

MARCUS MEMORIAL GARDEN FUND

Carla Marcus

In memory of Rose Marcus

PULPIT/PRAYER BOOK FUND

Mitch Ross

In memory of Lottie Ross

Allen Miller

In memory of Abraham Miller

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Susan & Larry Weiner

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Jamie Isaacson Family

In memory of Sonny Isaacson

Diana Bell

In memory of Manny Plavin

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BELL MEMORIAL CHAPEL FUND

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COHEN/LEVOY CARDEN FUND

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