

Temple Emanuel

of the Merrimack Valley

The Bulletin

Volume 64 Number 4

December 2015 – Kislev ~ Tevet 5776

*From the
Rabbi...*

Dark of the Sun, Dark of the Moon

Some years ago I was gifted a book, *Seasons of Our Joy*, by Arthur Waskow. In it, Rabbi Waskow shares customs, history, and recipes for the Jewish holidays, viewed through the lens of Renewal Judaism. His chapter on Hanukah, titled “Dark of the Sun, Dark of the Moon,” reminds us that this holiday occurs during the darkest days of the year – close to the winter solstice, when nights are longest, and the new moon, when only the slivers of the waning old moon and waxing new moon illuminate the night.

In the midst of these dark, cold days, our optimism can be diminished, our fears exacerbated, and it can be easy to believe the light will never return. For many people, particularly in the higher latitudes, seasonal affective disorder makes the winter a difficult time. And then – joy! – the light of Hanukah fills our lives, as we ignite candles, increasing in number and brightness for eight nights, turning our despair to hope, our fears to smiles. We turn the corner, from old moon to new moon, as we pass through the darkest night and move toward longer days and the promise of Spring and renewal.

In recent weeks we’ve witnessed the darkening of the world: millions of Syrian refugees fleeing civil war and Daesh, young lives lost to gun violence,



increasing anti-Semitism across Europe and here in the US, random attacks on pedestrians in Israel, the night of terror in Paris and the countless bombings and attacks around the world. It can be difficult for us to find the words to express our anger, outrage, sorrow, and fear. The weight of these horrors can feel too much to bear. And yet, we must find a way to go on.

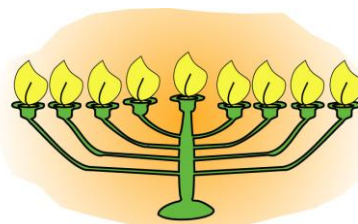
As we navigate these turbulent waters, we must remember that we are called to be “light unto the nations.” At this time, when so many in positions of leadership are allowing their xenophobia and small-mindedness to drive their agendas and darken their worldview, we must speak out and stand up for those who have no voice, for those seeking asylum, for those who are devoted to their faith and denounce the acts of violence perpetuated in the name of any God.

I urge you to take a few minutes to visit the Religious Action Center of the URJ (www.rac.org), or any other social justice organization, and offer your support. “Tzedek, tzedek tirdof – justice, justice shall you pursue!” (Deut. 16.20). Let us each strive, during these dark days, to magnify the light in the world.

Wishing you and yours a bright, joyous, and meaningful Hanuka, and increasing light and love in every aspect of our lives.

L’shalom,

Rabbi Robin S. Sparr



December 2015 Service Schedule

Date	Notes	Yahrzeiten – May their memory be for a blessing
Friday, December 4 <i>Parashat Vayeshev</i> 7:30 PM Shabbat Service	Board/Oneg Host: Fred Moses	Haskell Levy 11/28
Friday, December 11 <i>Parashat Miketz</i> 7:00 PM Shabbat Service	SHABBAT CHANUKA 6:00 PM Pizza and Potluck Dinner and Candlelighting Please bring your menorah and candles, and RSVP for dinner Board/Oneg Host: Lisa Rubin	George Abrams 12/6 Erwin Sussman 12/6
Friday, December 18 <i>Parashat Vayigash</i> 6:30 Shabbat Service	EARLY SERVICE! 6:00 PM “Pre-Neg” – join us for wine & hors d’oeuvres before services, and go out to dinner afterward Board/Oneg Host: Alix Epstein	Ruth Schwartz 12/13 Helen Rubinoff 12/15 Emil Bieder 12/17 Jean Sosin 12/17 Joseph Edward Sullivan, Jr 12/17
Saturday, December 19 <i>Parashat Vayigash</i> 10:00 AM Shabbat Service	<i>Service followed by bagels and torah study</i> Board Host: Stephanie Karakantas Oneg Host: Richard Ebner	As above
Sunday, December 20 <i>Parashat Vayechi</i> 11:00 AM Weekday Service	<i>Religious school morning tefila</i> <i>All are welcome!</i>	
Friday, December 25 <i>Parashat Vayechi</i> 7:30 PM Shabbat Service	<i>Lay leader: Stephanie Karakantas</i> <i>Chinese food dinner</i> Board Host: Karen Lipshires Oneg Host: Richard Ebner	Richard Wolfson 12/20 Kurt Moser 12/21 Merle Witty 12/21 Claude Emmerich 12/22
Friday, January 1 <i>Parashat Sh’mot</i> 7:30 PM Shabbat Service	<i>Lay led: TBA</i> Board Host: Oneg Host:	Charles Ashley 12/27 Helen Knight 12/28 Louis Weiner 12/30 Tanya Ratney 12/31 Samuel Schwartz 12/31

PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

It has been quite a month of activities and wonderfully crafted services since my last bulletin message was written! I, for one, have really looked forward to each Friday night service. What has impressed me is the variety of people who have attended—new faces to our community, friends returning to our community and the “usuals”—this latter group appears to be growing each week. If you haven't attended services for a while, you will be refreshed and re-souled when you do and likely make TEMV the place where you want to be on Shabbat.

The board and many committees have been excitedly working on upcoming programs and activities. Lots of fundraising events are being planned starting next month into the Spring. More work has gone into improving the safety of the building as well. The Board along with the House committee, are closer to having motion detectors placed in our lobby. A key pad will be installed for access into the building when services/activities are being held in the sanctuary to insure the lobby is more secure. Investigating potential grants for acquiring a defibrillator has begun along with obtaining additional quotes on a limited use, limited access lift. Every committee needs volunteers, so please consider how you can best support your temple friends and family.

Supporting the synagogue is crucial as we move forward. The Board is beginning to redefine how we ask for support, whether financial, skill or time investments, from our members and friends on our yearly membership form. Being involved is the best way to shape the future of TEMV. Taking on the role of TEMV president was not even on my radar 2 years ago! This experience has been so enriching beyond my expectations—gaining confidence, working with terrific people, building connections and friendships—making a difference in our small part of the world. There are many passionate people working hard for the entire community—I have to believe that there are just as many who may not have stepped forward—yet! Your input, time, energy and money—are all appreciated—there is no time like the present—today!



Blessings & Shalom—
Stephanie

The minutes from our TEMV Board of Trustees meetings are on our website! Log in and check out the minutes under “for members only” section.

Mark your Calendars! TEMV Board Meetings will be held every second Wednesday at 7pm through May. All are welcome.

Next Board meeting
Wed Dec 9th at 7 PM

Ritual Committee Meeting
Mon, Dec 14 at 7:00 PM

Education Committee Meeting
Sun Dec 13 at 1 PM

Parent Meeting
Sunday, Dec 13 at 11 AM

Social Action Committee Meeting
Sun Feb 7 11 AM farfel43@yahoo.com

New Machzor for the Days of Awe



Thanks to everyone who donated to the fund for the newly updated Machzor (High Holy Day Prayerbook). We only need 30 of the two-volume sets to reach our goal. Consider donating a set or more for your personal use or for the temple. You may use the form below to order

Name _____

I would like to order a total of ___ set (s) of the Mishkan Hanefesh Machzor for the Days of Awe at \$42 per set.

I would like ___ set (s) for my personal library.

I would like to donate ___ set (s) to TEMV.

Enclosed is a check for \$ ____.

(Checks should be made payable to Temple Emanuel of the Merrimack Valley – with *Payerbook Fund* in the memo

Treasurer
TEMV
101 W. Forest St.
Lowell, MA 01851

Religious School News

It feels like we have hit our stride at TEMV Religious school! Our newest students have settled in, everyone is moving forward in their comfort with Hebrew reading, and in every classroom there are interesting, engaging discussions on topics both directly and indirectly related to the curriculum. It's so exciting to see the school abuzz!

Staff: We are delighted to welcome back veteran teacher Marylin Gallant to our staff. She will be picking up the classes I've been teaching (new Hebrew readers and 6/7 Judaica), which will free me to carry out other tasks of the school director, such as teacher supervision, curriculum design, and more in-depth programming. Please join me in offering a hearty "brucha haba-ah – welcome" to Morah Marylin.

Hadashot: Our weekly newsletter seems to be working well as a communication vehicle for our school families and staff. If you have news or information to share, feel free to send it to me for inclusion in the Hadashot.

COMING UP:

Sunday, December 6: NO SCHOOL: Consider attending Limmud Boston instead!

Friday, December 11: Shabbat Chanuka Service; 6pm pizza and potluck dinner (rsvp), 7:00pm service. Bring your menorah!

Sunday, December 13: School in session

Torah Tots from 10:30 – 11:15

Parent informational meeting 10:00 – 10:30

Education Committee Meeting 12:00 – 12:30

Sunday, December 20: School in session; 11:00 am Sunday Tefilah (all are welcome)

Sunday, December 27: NO SCHOOL; Winter recess

Saturday/Sunday, January 23-24: JOSTY Shul-In – this is an amazing, fun, spirited pre-youth group overnight program for 6th, 7th and 8th grade students, hosted at Temple Ohabei Shalom in Brookline. I'll be sending out more information and applications via email in the weeks ahead.

L'shalom,
Rabbi Robin S. Sparr
Director of Education

CONTINUING EDUCATION: SUNDAY AFTERNOON MUSSAR!

Dear friends:

Thanks to all who indicated their interest in participating in an adult education opportunity this winter.

The overwhelming choice was Mussar (cantillation was a close second), and most people indicated a preference for Sunday afternoons.

Ideally, I'd like to plan to offer the four-week *Taste of Mussar* course on Sunday afternoons at 2:00pm, on the following dates:

January 10

January 24

February 7

February 28

snow day March 6

I would love to offer cantillation as well, but am not sure I can do so this academic year. However, I will likely offer a short course to the 6/7th graders on Sundays later this spring, and will invite those interested in a wee taste to join us for that. Next year, we can look at programming that might lead to adult bar/bat mitzvah, which would certainly include cantillation.

Mussar does have a cost associated with it, \$36 per member. Please confirm your space in this class by letting me know via email, and also submit your check for \$36 made out to TEMV with "Mussar" in the memo line. If the cost represents a hardship for you, kindly let me know in confidence as there is scholarship money available.

I'm so excited to take this journey into Mussar with you all!

L'shalom,

Rabbi Robin S. Sparr

Valentine's Dance at TEMV?

We're thinking of having a dance on Sat Feb 13 with a live band, the Bar Chords. Is this something you'd be interested in? Cost will be \$20 a person. Food and chocolate served. We need a commitment of at least 20 people, email events@temv.org with your thoughts. The Bar Chords will be playing at the Lakeside Tavern in the Clarion Inn in Wakefield if you'd like to hear them first.

Hannukah Celebration

Temple Emanuel of the Merrimack Valley

Led by Rabbi Robin Sparr

Fri. Dec. 11

6 PM Dinner

(pizza and salad)

RSVP: pizza@temv.org

7 PM Service

**Bring your menorahs and
candles**



**A celebration for
everyone!**

101 W. Forest St. ☆ Lowell, MA ☆ www.temv.org

978 454-1372 ☆ publicity@temv.org

Social Action Update

Lunch Assembly

(for the Lowell Transitional Living Center- LTLC)

Wow!! What a blast we had at this year's first lunch assembly. We generated a record number of lunches(274) and did so very quickly. The clean-up also went quickly. Thank you to all who participated.. The next one is on January 15th at 9:30 AM.

We will need the following:

- Boxes of granola bars
- Bottled Water
- Jars of Peanut Butter
- Jars of Jelly.

Please leave in the kitchen.

Winter Clothing Collection

Thank you for those who have already contributed.. Please continue to add more coats, gloves, mitens, scarves, etc. and we will get them to Community Teamwork.

Social Action Sabbath

(for all in the Temple Community).

This service will be held on Friday January 15th and the theme will be "Inequality". This issue has been in the headlines for the past year and impacts us all.

Our invited speaker will be from Community Teamwork (Lowell's anti-poverty agency).

Thank you,
Frank

Thanksgiving with the Greater Lowell Interfaith Leadership Alliance (GLILA)

On Sunday November 15, GLILA presented its annual interfaith Thanksgiving service. The theme this year was about the earth- the ways we harm it, benefit from it, and can save it.

There were prayers, songs, dances, etc from many faith traditions(Jewish, Roman Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Hindu, Lutheran, Muslim, Native American, Sik).

Rabbi Sparr led several songs and a dance (Vine and Fig Tree).

There were several videos including one about Stone Soup by Tom Chapin.

It was followed by a bread and soup supper along with information tables about health care, Habitat, Amnesty International, and others.

GLILA meets each month. Contact me for any questions or further information.

TEMV TRIVIA

Adam Sandler has updated his Hanukkah Song for the first time in ten years. What famous soccer player is name checked in his new version? Answer next month. Last month's answer: *Hanukkah (remember Thanksgivingkah)*

Ritual Committee

We continue to work with Rabbi Sparr planning Shabbat services and other Shabbat events such as oneg and dinners before services. As attendance at Shabbat services grows (a wonderful thing), the time required for set up and cleanup is also growing. Please consider any of the following to support your community: committing to hosting an oneg-perhaps in honor of a life cycle event or the blessed memory of a loved one, calling a friend you'd love to see and host an oneg together, committing to arriving early to help set up tables and chairs for your pot luck or pizza dinner, or planning to stay "until the end" to help with clean up.

We welcome all to our committee meetings where we plan our events or to participate in the other activities that breathe life into our community.

Karen
Ritualchair@temv.org

Musical Night and Fundraiser

Mark Your Calendars

Sat March 12

Confirmed musical talent: Rabbi Robin Sparr, Rahel, and others likely

Auction Items, Raffle Baskets, Program Book with Ads Support our single largest fundraiser of the year

Help solicit donations and ads contact

auktion@temv.org for more information on how you can help with this fun and profitable event.

TEMV YOGA



TEMV yoga meets twice a week. Wed. 6:30 – 7:45 pm and **Gentle Yoga, Mondays, at a new time, 11:15 am.** Everyone is welcome to join either class on a drop in basis. All levels welcome. The Monday morning class is a great way to start the week with long deep

stretches.

Cost \$7 for the instructor and a \$3 donation to the temple. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a mat.

For more information, contact Phebe at (978) 256-2855 or email the instructor, Cornelia Dinca, at yogainfo@temv.org.

For cancellations and last minute changes it is recommended that you join the email list by sending a blank email to yoga-join@temv.org

Mah Jong

Tuesdays 6 PM & Thursdays 1 PM

Send a blank email mahjongg-join@temv.org to join the email list. We sometimes cancel at the last minute and we want to let everyone know. Send us an email or give us call to let us know you plan on being there. Spread the word; bring your friends and neighbors!



\$2 Temple donation appreciated.

Contact: mahjong@temv.org or Shirley 978 851-4724 or Phebe 978 256-2855

Happening at TEMV Weekly Email Blast

Watch your Inbox for the Happening this week at TEMV Email Blast

Please watch your email inbox for a reminder of everything happening at TEMV for the week. Since the end of September a weekly blast with all activities and reminders for the week has been sent to the community email list. If you haven't been receiving these important reminders, check your spam folder. To join the distribution list automatically – address an email to:

community-join@temv.org .

The email includes Rabbi Sparr's office hours for the week, committee meetings, special announcements, Shabbat Services updates and reminders. Send feedback to publicity@temv.org

New Member service and potluck dinner on November 20

Thank you to all who helped make the new member potluck and service a meaningful and happy experience, where Temple Emanuel welcomed 4 new member families: The Barry Family, The Kirrane Family, Andy Diamond and Lola Miller and, welcomed back the Gallant Family and Beth Gandelman.

Special thank you to Rabbi Robin for leading us in song and prayer and the Chelmsford UU First Parish Meetinghouse Ringer's Bell choir for their beautiful music.

Thank you to the many cooks who donated to the delicious potluck supper and the membership committee who sponsored the oneg and helped with set up and clean up.

The Membership Committee's goal is to recruit, integrate and retain membership in order to sustain the Temple. If you know of an individual or family who would be interested in considering membership, please email membership@temv.org

To Shpiel or not to Shpiel, that is the question

Hint: Winter and Purim are way more fun with a Shpiel



Are you interested in participating in a Purim Shpiel? It would require a commitment to rehearse twice a week, Sunday afternoon and a weeknight to be determined, beginning in January. This will be a musical production, so enjoying singing will make rehearsals a whole lot more fun for you. Purim is March 25. Whether it happens and the date will depend on the level of interest and the availability of those interested

If interested please contact Nancy Greene at greenek61@gmail.com or 978-987-1168 by Dec 11. There will be an informational meeting and musical run through at 1 pm on Sunday, December 20. Please let Nancy know by the 11th if you are able to attend.

Membership News

Rufua Shlema

“The renewal of body, the renewal of spirit..”

Erica Kahan
Don Klafus
Alice Kleinhans
Jim Lipshires
Rachel Rand
Nancy Rovin
Eliot Yaffa

Recent Donations

Beginning this month, we will acknowledge donations here. A big thank-you to our November donors:

Donna and Michael Furman,
A very generous anonymous person,
Al and Carol Gefen.

Another thank-you to those who have donated high holiday machzor:

The Voss/Abromovitz family,
The Epstein/Sullivan family,
Kerri and Andrew Sheingold
Karen Lipshires,
Marylin Gallant,
Shirley and Chip Papp,
Jim Zawisza.

There’s still plenty of time to donate high holiday prayer books or to buy a set for yourself!. More information about the new machzor can be found on page 3 of the bulletin. .

Bereavement Info

The Temple Emanuel community is available to assist members who experience the passing of a loved one. In addition to calling **Rabbi Sparr**, please notify **Karen Lipshires** (617 312-0393) or email caring@temv.org . We will respond to the needs of the individual members by notifying Temple members of the death, arranging for *Shiva*, or helping in any other way that we can be of service.

TEMV Donation Form

In times of joy and in times of sorrow, to mark a special occasion or to remember a loved one, it is a custom to give charity. Kindly consider TEMV when you wish to share your gratitude for the blessings of life, loved ones, and special moments

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Kindly accept my donation ____ in honor
____ in memory of: _____

Please apply my donation to the following fund:

- _____ General Fund
- _____ Education Fund
- _____ Rabbi’s Discretionary Fund
- _____ Prayerbook
- _____ Social Action
- _____ Music
- _____ Youth Group
- _____ Library Fund
- _____ Hechel Loans Fund
- _____ Security / Safety (i.e defibrillator)
- _____ Accessibility Fund

Kindly send an acknowledgement of my donation to:
Name: _____

Address: _____

Contact the treasurer Alix Epstein at treasurer@temv.org for information on any of the funds.

Crafting for a Cause

Sunday, November 15, 2015

Sunday, December 13, 2015

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm

Temple Sanctuary

**Do you knit, crochet, sew, make scarves or
blankets from fleece fabric?**

Join us to make warm clothes for the Lowell Transitional Living Center and Community Teamwork warm clothing drives.

E-mail Michelle Vlamis at mvlamis@comcast.net for information

Programming for Tots

Temple Emanuel - Lowell

2015 - 2016

Programs for Young Families (birth to 6; siblings, grandparents and extended family welcome!

With Rabbi Robin S. Sparr

Tot Shabbat

Friday Evenings from 6:00pm – 6:30pm



Engaging Erev Shabbat service of music, movement, prayer and stories. Potluck dinner follows immediately after the service. Services are held every other 2nd Friday of the month, September through May.

September 11, 2015

November 13, 2015

January 8, 2016;

March 11, 2016

May 13, 2016

Torah Tots

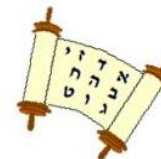
Sunday Mornings from 10:30am – 11:15am

Family program including stories, songs, movement, and ideas for home celebration of Jewish holidays.

October 18, 2015

December 13, 2015

February 7, 2016



Temple Emanuel of the Merrimack Valley
101 W. Forest St.
Lowell, MA 01851

978 454-1372
rabbi@temv.org
www.temv.org

Wandering Ivy

This is the start of a multi-part series on Jews in Prague. I hope you enjoy it.

The first Jews to arrive in Prague were traders, one of the few professions Jews could undertake, given their questionable “right” to live where they’d like, to own land and to participate in crafts. Jews excelled at trading for two reasons. First, they grew up praying in one language and speaking to each other in another. This helped Jews pick-up other languages easier, which in turn made negotiation, buying and selling easier too. Second, because of the tradition of traveling teachers, Jews were also more knowledgeable about the world outside their community and town than their non-Jewish neighbors. Nonetheless, dietary and religious practices did not allow for full integration of traders. Commonly, small communities of Jews formed in towns and cities along the trade routes or with large bustling marketplaces so that Jewish traders had a place to stay for the night, kosher food and people with which to pray.

The first trade routes through the modern Czech lands did not pass through Prague. It was, geographically, a difficult city to reach. When the Amber Route moved west in the eleventh century, Prague became a major stop along the way. However, Jewish traders are first chronicled to have been trading at Prague markets in 970 by the Spanish Jewish merchant, Ibrāhīm ibn Ya‘qūb. Although legend has it that Princess Libuše (who also named Prague) invited Jews to settle here in the 860s. Nonetheless, Prague’s Jewish community is younger than the Jewish communities of Cologne (first formed in Roman times), Mainz (est. ~ 900) and Regensburg (est. 981), but older than Frankfurt, Vienna and Berlin.

More next month...

Day Trip to New York City

Anyone interested in a day trip to NYC, contact Theresa at trip@temv.org. See a show and have lunch. Looking at early next year. Depending on the level of interest we’ll decide whether to drive or take the bus.

Temple Contacts

If you need to speak to someone at the Temple, here are some important contact people. (Please limit calls to home numbers to between 10:00 am and 10:00 pm except in cases of emergency or prior arrangement.)

Rabbi Robin Sparr

Temple: 978-454-1372; Home: 508-736-5555
rabbi@temv.org

President

Stephanie Karakantas, president@temv.org

Director of Education

Rabbi Robin Sparr rabbi@temv.org

Ritual Committee

Karen Lipshires, ritual@temv.org, 617-312-0393

Caring Committee

Karen Lipshires, caring@temv.org, 617-312-0393

Education Committee

Sue Corneliussen, education@temv.org

Treasurer

Alexandra Epstein treasurer@temv.org ,

Social Action

Frank Baskin, farfel43@yahoo.com , 978 458-1512

Membership , Membership@temv.org

Programming

Shirley Papp, spapp7@gmail.com, 978-851-4724

Publicity

Phebe Rand, publicity@temv.org, 978-256-2855

Publicity Corner

TEMV is on Twitter! Follow us @TEMV_Lowell to stay on top of Temple happenings and items we share from the wider communities of which we are a part.

Don’t forget to Like us on **Facebook**. Anyone can post comments and post to the temple’s Facebook page. Your posts on the TEMV page helps boost our visibility.

Publicity volunteers needed to: Post fliers at our local supermarket, library, work, coffee shop. Post events on various websites, write articles for the local papers, take photographs at temple events, and brainstorm ideas. Send an email to publicity@temv.org or call Phebe at (978) 256-2855 if you are willing to help in any way.

Please patronize our sponsors, and tell them you "Read All About It" in the TEMV Bulletin...



**PRINCETON
PROPERTIES**

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