

**February  
2024**

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TempleIsraelVestal.Org  
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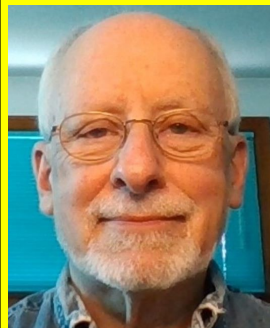
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**We are grateful to our Bulletin Sponsors**

**For the Yahrzeit of Leoni Schoemann by Jane Maas**

**In memory of Maida Piaker by Alan & Julie Piaker**



**Steven J. Gilbert**

Dear Friends. Just for fun, I asked ChatGPT to....

*Rewrite Genesis 1:1-9:28 in the style of a New York Times news story.*

Here's what it came up with.

**In the Beginning: A Cosmic Tale**

In a groundbreaking event that has left scientists and theologians alike in awe, the universe as we know it came into existence. The cosmos, once a formless void shrouded in darkness, was illuminated as light burst forth, effectively separating night from day.

This celestial phenomenon, which occurred in what could be described as the first 'day', was quickly followed by the formation of the sky, a vast expanse separating the waters of the earth. The third 'day' ushered in a new era as dry land emerged from the waters, and plant life began to flourish.

The following 'days' saw the creation of the sun, moon, and stars, the emergence of living creatures in the water and sky, and finally, the appearance of all kinds of land animals.

But the crowning achievement of this cosmic genesis was the creation of humankind, made in the image of the Creator, and given dominion over all other creatures. This marked the end of a busy six 'days', after which, the Creator rested.

In a shocking twist, however, the harmony of this newly formed world was disrupted when the first humans, a man and woman living in a garden paradise, defied the one rule set for them by their Creator. This act of rebellion had severe consequences, leading to their expulsion from the garden and the introduction of hardship into human life.

The narrative took a darker turn as violence and corruption spread among humankind, culminating in a catastrophic flood that wiped out almost all life on earth. Only one righteous man, Noah, and his family were spared, along with a pair of every kind of animal, all housed in a massive ark.

After the floodwaters receded, a new chapter began for life on earth. But as this tale shows, the world we live in today has been shaped by a series of extraordinary events, a testament to the power and mystery of the universe's beginnings.

## Rabbi Micah Friedman

Hodesh Tov - Here's to a good new month to you and yours!

Again, we begin the month of February and very soon afterwards begin a new month in the Hebrew Calendar, Adar #1. Adar is the month in which Purim takes place, one of our most festive and joyous holidays that celebrates our salvation from near total destruction under the rule of the Persian Empire. However, this year is a leap year in the Hebrew calendar which means that we will not celebrate the festival of Purim in February, but rather towards the end of March. In the Jewish calendar which uses the moon's cycle to mark time, when we have a leap year we add not simply one day to the end of February, but an entire extra month of Adar!

If you were to choose a month of the year to double, Adar would be a good choice since we are told in the Mishnah "When we enter Adar" our joy increases! But why? What is it about this time of year that lends itself to joy?

For one, as I already mentioned Purim is a joyous holiday that celebrates an averted disaster which always makes for a good occasion to celebrate. Through a more naturalistic lens rather than a historical one, Adar is also the early Spring in Eretz Yisrael (the land of Israel). It is the time when the first edible crops of the Spring harvest can be found. So, our ancestors rejoiced to have made it through the Winter season.

This year, however, in addition to many spirited Shabbat services and a number of thought-provoking learning gatherings, this past month of January has been one of loss for our community and for the Jewish people. Here in the Binghamton area, we have buried more than a handful of our community members and relatives, may they rest in peace and may their memories be for blessing. In Eretz Yisrael, this past month has brought the worst casualties for Israelis since the dreadful day of October 7th which instigated this ongoing, heart-wrenching war.

So, this presents for us an acute challenge. How can we increase in joy (as we are taught to do in this season) while making room for our ongoing grief and sadness as we continue to follow the deadly proceedings of war and to remember those in our community whom we have lost?

On one level, this is a challenge for each of us to carry with us each day of our lives. How can we make room in our hearts for both grief and gratitude, for sadness and celebration? Simply by holding on to this question we create an opening for the possibility of holding such apparently paradoxical emotions together.

I will offer us two Torah teachings which I personally find to be resources for this difficult emotional/spiritual/human *avodah* (effort). *The first comes from the name of the month of Adar. It is understood midrashically to mean Aleph - Dar - the One who is the Beginning Dwells. This is to say that perhaps the true cause of joy in this month of Adar is not our ancestral salvation from persecution or the promise of a bountiful Spring, but the simple truth that the One Who Created and Sustains the World Dwells with us here in this world, even in our grief and sadness, and every other difficult experience we encounter.*

In a way, this first teaching is the same as the second one I offer now. Traditionally, when we attempt comfort mourners we utter the expression "HaMakom Yenakhem Etkhem" or "may The Place bring Comfort to You." We refer to G-d here by the rare name of HaMakom - The Place. In a Midrash, the ancient rabbis asked "Why do we call G-d The Place?" Their answer comes from the Torah portion we will read during the first Shabbat of February (Exodus 20:21): "In every place where my name is mentioned, I will come to you and bless you." From this we learn that every single place, every physical place and every emotional place, from which people try to connect with the Source of Life, G-d can be found.

In this spiritual truth, we can experience joy and gladness because even in the midst of challenging and sorrowful times, the Compassionate One is there with us.



**Arthur Siegel, President**

Dear Members and friends of Temple Israel,

132 Men, Women, and Children - 118 Days of Captivity. One third of a year. As of this writing, these are the figures that represent the unknowable suffering of the hostages held by Hamas in Gaza. We hold out hope that negotiations will enable hostage releases without compromising Israel's security too badly, but the optimism is difficult to sustain when the status of such talks, secret by necessity, seems to ebb and flow with the daily news cycle. Meanwhile, Israel's military action to root out the terrorists and free the hostages is taking a terrible toll. We reel at the daily casualty reports - citizens and soldiers - but the repercussions are far deeper than these figures. World opinion in many quarters is tilting away from support for Israel, the only representative democracy in the Middle East. The government of Israel itself is in turmoil, as an embattled leader seeks to retain power with an unstable coalition of far left and far right. The nation's economy stagnates due to the direct cost of the war, the gutted labor market, and reduced investment from internal and external sources.

But there is always reason for optimism. I was privileged to hear the address on January 31st by David Rittberg, senior director at the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies, sponsored by the Jewish Federation of Greater Binghamton. Fresh from a recent in-depth trip to Israel, Mr. Rittberg opined that the indomitable spirit of Israel and Israelis is still evident in every quarter. While the horrors of October 7th are still fresh wounds, the kibbutznik essence is alive. The 200,000 Israelis displaced from their homes in the evacuation zone at the Gaza perimeter are managing to create ad-hoc schools and communal arrangements despite their hardships. The Hostage Families have emerged as a powerful voice, domestically and internationally, which may impact both the outcome in Gaza and the future of Israel itself. We must keep the hostages at top-of-mind, and retain our optimism as we seek peace and security for Israel. And a strong Israel depends on a strong global Jewish Community, of which we are each a part.

This theme was echoed at our January session of the Temple Israel / Temple Concord Joint Adult Education group. Rabbi Talia Laster, the Campus Rabbi at Cornell University Hillel, led an interactive Talmud study session titled: "Areyvut: What responsibility do Jews have to one another?" As we face rising antisemitism in the world, her observation that "We are all in the same boat" rings true. Rabbi Friedman, meanwhile, has been continuing his educational offering "Jewish Quest for Wisdom." this deep dive into works first translated by our Rabbi is a treat - I urge you to check it out. On February 9th, our Friday evening services will celebrate Scout Shabbat. Organized locally by Scoutmaster Mike Martinez, this has become an annual event at Temple Israel, and draws many Scouts - Jewish and guests alike - from the Southern Tier. I hope you will take the opportunity to brave the February chill and join us as we host this event in the sanctuary. We continue to experiment with new programs and special events - Keep your eye on our website for details! Bring your children to relax at TI on Shabbat afternoon, February 3rd, for some board games and refreshments, concluding with Havdalah. We are open to suggestions for such programs.

We rely on each other, and I thank each of you for keeping up with your Dues commitments, and for your many other donations, large and small. Whether a memorial or a simcha, a donation to Temple Israel is appreciated in many ways. and these donations do add up. Critical to our mission is your participation in our services, classes, and programs. With some of our regulars away for Winter holidays, we particularly appreciate those who can join us in-person, and it has been great to see new faces as well!

b'shalom,  
Art

Arthur B. Siegel  
President - Temple Israel

## CONGREGATIONAL NEWS

### Get Well Wishes to...

**Jeff Shapiro, Barbara (Bobbi) Markowitz, Moira Shirvan,  
Ann Spitz, Roy Paston**

### Condolences to...

**Susan & Ben Kasper on the passing of Susan's aunt  
Maida Piaker**

**Celia & Sophia Klin and Suzanne Krause on the passing of  
Celia's mother Paulette Klin**



### Save the Date:

**Temple Israel's Chocolate Seder  
Sunday April 14th at 5:00pm  
More information in the March bulletin**

### Congratulations to our January lottery fundraiser winners:

**Steve Gilbert, Laurence & Edyce Wyman, Ann Cohen, Nerma Miller**

### **The Caring Community Please Inform the Rabbi:**

If your health condition changes, if you undergo a medical procedure, if you are hospitalized, if you move to an assisted living facility, or if you are in rehab, please contact the Temple at 607-723-7461 or email Rabbi Friedman at rabbimicahfriedman@gmail.com or the office at office@templeisraelvestal.org

# February 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Carol Engel-Mason	2 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Mimi Bartschi  Light candle 5:02pm Erev Shabbat Services 5:30pm	3 <b>Kids Game Event &amp; Havdalah</b> 3:00pm—6:00pm  Shabbat services 9:30am-12pm Havdalah services 6:15pm
4 <a href="#">Happy Anniversary</a> Howard & Bonnie Brown	5	6 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Mike Azersky Janet Stram  Minyan 5:30pm	7 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Howard Rittberg	8 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Jim Novak  <b>Executive Board meeting 7:00pm</b>	9  Light candle 5:11pm & Erev Shabbat Services 5:30pm	10  Shabbat services 9:30am-12pm Havdalah services 6:30pm
11	12 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Suzanne Siegel Kerri Weinstein	13 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Ina Bellis  <b>Jewish Quest for Wisdom 6:00pm</b> Minyan 5:30pm	14  <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Michael Schapiro	15 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Randy Friedman	16 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Steve Gilbert  Light candle 5:20pm Erev Shabbat Services 5:30pm	17 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Jane Maas  Shabbat services 9:30am-12pm Havdalah services 6:30pm
18	19 <b>Presidents Day</b> <b>Office closed</b>	20 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Eileen Head  <b>Board of Trustees meeting 7pm</b> Minyan 5:30pm	21  <b>Ritual Committee meeting 10am</b>	22 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Howard Brown	23  Light candle 5:28pm Erev Shabbat Services 5:30pm	24  Shabbat services 9:30am-12pm Havdalah services 6:45pm
25	26 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Larry Hurwitz Isaac Sambursky	27 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Andrea Tobias Kostick  Minyan 5:30pm	28 <a href="#">Happy Birthday</a> Penelope Leja	29		



## General Fund

### *In memory of...*

**Maida Piaker** by Bob & Lori Schapiro, Ilene Pinsker & Ronald Sacks, Bonnie & Howard Brown, Ann Cohen, Don & Barbara Zelter, Dan & Mimi Bartschi, Sandy Feld & Karen Piasecki, Dorie & Damian Osisek, Robert & Diana Weiss, Len & Naoma Feld, Shirley Bronsky, Susan & Ben Kasper, Charles & Susan Gilinsky, Jim & Beverly Novak, Irving & Myra Memis, Marilyn Bell, Roy & Sandra Paston  
**Carol Krause** by Bonnie & Howard Brown, Randy Friedman & Brenda Schlaen, Charles & Susan Gilinsky, Len & Naoma Feld, Marcia Hofstein, Marcy Cohen, Michael & Wendy Wolff, Don & Barbara Zelter, Lynne Green, Ina Bellis

**Linda Rosenberg** by Charles & Susan Gilinsky

**Steven Rappaport** by Howard & Bonnie Brown, Keith & Donna Nelson, Alfred & Denise (Azersky) Friedrich, Roy & Sandra Paston  
**Paulette Klin** by Carol Herz & Howard Schwartz, Len & Naoma Feld, Michael & Wendy Wolff, Anonymous, Howard & Bonnie Brown, Don & Barbara Zelter, Lori, Bob, Jared & Lindsey Schapiro, Marcy Cohen, Dan & Mimi Bartschi, Lynne Green, Roy & Sandra Paston

### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Dora Arnson** by Herbert Kline  
**Hyman Thirer** by Joel & Heidi Thirer  
**Ruth Azersky** by Alfred & Denise (Azersky) Friedrich  
**Katie Brown** by Marcia Brown

### *In honor of...*

**The birth of Louis & Maxine Rosenberg's grandson Freddie** by Marilyn Bell, Len & Naoma Feld  
**Marcia Hofstein's special birthday** by Howard & Bonnie Brown, Roy & Sandra Paston  
**Maxine Rosenberg's birthday** by Roy & Sandra Paston  
**Barbara Zelter's birthday** by Roy & Sandra Paston

### *Speedy recovery to...*

**Roy Paston** by Len & Naoma Feld, Robin & Jeff Greenblott  
**Ann Spitz** by Len & Naoma Feld

## **CONTRIBUTIONS**

### *Thank you to...*

**Rabbi Friedman for helping our family** by Alfred & Denise (Azersky) Friedrich

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

#### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Michele Dumoff Slotnick** by Lynn Dumoff  
**Fritz Rosenberg** by Rolph Rosenberg  
**Jeremy Ullmann** by Arie Ullmann & Rhonda Levine  
**Leza Weisslender** by Ruth & Jeff Shapiro

### *In memory of...*

**Maida Piaker** by Art & Suzanne Siegel  
**Anita Foster** by Art & Suzanne Siegel  
**Edith Krasnow** by Art & Suzanne Siegel  
**Andrew Krasnow** by Art & Suzanne Siegel  
**Sanford Siegel** by Art & Suzanne Siegel

### *In honor of...*

**Marcia Hofstein's special birthday** by Art & Suzanne Siegel

### VINES Garden Fund

#### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Narola Rosenberg** by Jane Maas  
**Gail Weinberg** by Dennis & Sandy Foreman

### *In memory of...*

**Linda Rosenberg** by Jane Maas

### Landscaping Fund

#### *In honor of...*

**The birth of Louis & Maxine Rosenberg's grandson Freddie** by Al Lavker, Arlene Osber  
**Marcia Hofstein's special birthday** by Louis & Maxine Rosenberg  
**Maxine Rosenberg's birthday** by Hersh & Beverly Rozen

### *In memory of...*

**Maida Piaker** by Al Lavker, Arlene Osber, Louis & Maxine Rosenberg  
**Linda Rosenberg** by Arlene Osber

**Paulette Klin** by Al Lavker, Hersh & Beverly Rozen

### *In loving memory of...*

**Dr. Donald Bronsky** by The Bronsky/Cafritz Family of New York and Shirley Bronsky

### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Chuck Schweiger** by Arlene Osber  
**Pauline Epstein** by Maxine & Louis Rosenberg

### *Speedy recovery to...*

**Marcia Zalbowitz** by Hersh & Beverly Rozen

### Children's (Family) Library

#### *In honor of...*

**The birth of Louis & Maxine Rosenberg's grandson Freddie** by Jane Maas

### *In memory of...*

**Maida Piaker** by Lynn Dumoff

### Adult Library

#### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Anna Cohen** by Ann Cohen

### Rabbi Hurwitz Fund

#### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Narola Rosenberg** by Rolph Rosenberg  
**Lee Korn** by Tony Turnbull

### Bernie Shifrin Music Fund

#### *In memory of...*

**Maida Piaker** by Myrna & Mel Dubofsky

### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Brian Rapp** by Barbara Roberts  
**Selbert Krassin** by Terry Shelley-Krassin

### Clergy Sustaining Fund

**Rabbi Friedman for his part in Steven Rappaport's funeral** by Mike Azersky

### Rabbi Hurwitz Fund

#### *For the Yahrzeit of...*

**Ruth Azersky** by Ralph Azersky



## Adult Library

January 27th was International Holocaust Memorial Day.

This year it brought to mind the Anne Frank story and diary. We have biographies of Anne and her father in our library that reveal one aspect of their lives. Now, we have the rest of the story in *The Last Secret of the Secret Annex* by Joop Van Wijk-Voskuil and Jerden De Bruyn. Their book is based on historical research, and most importantly, interviews with two of the family's six protectors, Miep Gies and Bep Voskuil (Joop's mother). Another protector, Johan Voskuil, Bep's father, was the carpenter hired by Otto Frank to build the bookcase that hid the entrance to the secret annex. Miep, Bep and Johan were the primary protectors who regularly ran errands, brought groceries, clothing and other everyday necessities to those in hiding for 761 days.

We learn from first-hand accounts what life was like in Nazi occupied Amsterdam. The many restrictions placed upon Dutch Jews, the various lengths that people of all faiths went to survive, how the Nazis enlisted the Dutch to do their dirty work and the bounties paid for finding Jews were just a glimpse of the wartime life. Full descriptions of how the secret annex was created, furnished and readied for its occupants was revealed. Bep and Miep gave accounts of daily life in the secret annex --- a somewhat different view from Anne's writings. Perhaps most disturbing was the description of the anonymous telephone call, actual betrayal and capture of the occupants. Long after the war, although the former protectors had figured it out and in their hearts knew the betrayer's identity, the betrayer took her secret to her grave. Consequently, to this day the case remains unsolved.

This is an important book about the unsung heroes of the Anne Frank story and their unending loyalty to Otto Frank. Look for it in our library along with several other new books. Please remember to sign them out and leave the cards in the box on the desk.

As always, any book that you haven't read, no matter how old, is new to you.

Ann Cohen

### Temple Israel Funds:

<b>Adult Library</b> (\$10 minimum, \$36 for a bookplate)	<b>Bernie Shifrin Music Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)
<b>Bulletin Sponsor</b> (\$36 minimum)	<b>Cemetery Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)
<b>Children's Library</b> (\$10 minimum, \$36 for a bookplate)	<b>Clergy Sustaining Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)
<b>General Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)	<b>Hebrew School Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)
<b>Kiddush Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)	<b>Landscaping Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)
<b>Mitzvah Corps</b> (\$10 minimum)	<b>Rabbi's Discretionary Fund</b> (\$10 minimum)
<b>Rabbi Hurwitz Scholarship</b> (\$10 minimum)	<b>VINES Garden</b> (\$10 minimum)

# February 2024 Yahrzeits

## February 1—8

**Nathan Levin** observed by *Ruth Levin*  
**Robert I Weintraub\*** observed by *David Weintraub*  
**Ida Wische** observed by *Elliot Brodsky*  
**Herman Balin** observed by *Florence Balin*  
**Joan Dorothy Bowman** observed by *Lori Lewis*  
**Rita Osber\*** observed by *Arlene Osber*  
**Jeanette Smith\*** observed by *William Jaffe*  
**David Benensohn** observed by *David Weintraub*  
**Alan Leon Kirsch** observed by *Wendy Wolff*  
**Faye Rittberg\*** observed by *Howard Rittberg*  
**Katie Brown** observed by *Marcia Brown*  
**Leza Weisslender Morgan** observed by *Ruth Shapiro*

## February 9—14

**Alec Menewitch** observed by *Edyce Wyman*  
**Joseph Schwartz** observed by *Lynne Green*  
**Bess Balin** observed by *Florence Balin*  
**Alan Robinson\*** observed by *Rochelle Goldberg, Harriet Horowitz*  
**Robert Wearb** observed by *Ann Bronsky*  
**Pauline Glicker** observed by *Larry Hurwitz*  
**Nathan Goldstein\*** observed by *David Goldstein*  
**Rachel Sall** observed by *Ron Sall*  
**Sarah Sall\*** observed by *Ron Sall*  
**Sara Schapiro\*** observed by *Barbara Schapiro*  
**Rebecca Weinberger** observed by *Judy Simon*  
**Gloria Earl** observed by *Janet Stram*  
**David Ribler\*** observed by *Pamela Marcus*  
**Jeremy Ullmann** observed by *Arieh Ullmann*

## February 15—22

**Donald Bronsky\*** observed by *Mark Bronsky, Peter Bronsky, Shirley Bronsky*  
**Seymour Shirvan** observed by *Moirra Shirvan*  
**Eleanor Weinstein** observed by *Michael Weinstein*  
**Leopold Aryhe Weisner** observed by *Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu*  
**Rhoda Seidel** observed by *Fran Goldman*  
**Dr. Thomas Tanenhaus\*** observed by *Dave Tanenhaus*  
**Dora Arnsen** observed by *Herbert Kline*  
**Barbara Blazar\*** observed by *Jennifer Schutzer*  
**Clara Brachin** observed by *Esther Gilinsky*  
**Goldie Bograd** observed by *Marilyn Bell*  
**Rose Gilinsky\*** observed by *Esther Gilinsky*  
**Belle Margolis\*** observed by *Brenda Margolis*  
**Bernard Shifrin\*** observed by *Myrna Dubofsky*

## February 24—31

**Herbert Foster** observed by *Art Siegel, George Siegel*  
**Rose Sall\*** observed by *Ron Sall*  
**Roslyn Siegal\*** observed by *Eileen Head*  
**Louis Beilin** observed by *Marcy Cohen*  
**Rita Tino Davis** observed by *Larry Davis*  
**Hannah Goldman** observed by *Philip Goodman*  
**Lillian Goodman\*** observed by *Philip Goodman*  
**Mina Levene\*** observed by *Gail Shulman*  
**Hamama Yona Mah'pud** observed by *Rabbi Moshe Shmaryahu*  
**George Kaufer** observed by *Naoma Feld*  
**Saul Levin** observed by *Ruth Levin*  
**Elizabeth Spitz** observed by *Ann Spitz*

An asterisk (\*) indicates that the name has a memorial plaque in the Sanctuary

### **Mourners' Kaddish**

If you wish to recite Mourner's Kaddish during a weekday Zoom service, please contact Howard Schwartz at [schwerz@stny.rr.com](mailto:schwerz@stny.rr.com) or call the Temple office at 607-723-7461. An e-mail notice will be sent to the congregation encouraging attendance to have enough participants to make up a Minyan. It would be helpful if you contact Howard or the office ten days or more before the date to provide enough time to send out the notice. Temple Israel holds weekday Minyan services on Zoom and in-person on Tuesdays and Fridays at 5:30pm. If you would prefer a different day to coincide with a Yahrzeit date, let us know and we will work to make those arrangements. To see a video on how to recite the Mourner's Kaddish, go to the Temple Israel website, [templeisraelvestal.org](http://templeisraelvestal.org), under Worship.