TEMPLE BETH EL

Fall River, Massachusetts

86th Year February 2014 Shevat/Adar I 5774 No. 6

Regular Service Schedule

Morning Minyan (Monday & Thursday)	.8:00	am
Friday Evening Services	.5:30	pm
Shabbat Morning Services	10:00	am

RESTORING SAHAR HASSAMAIN SYNAGOGUE SPECIAL LECTURE & SLIDESHOW SUNDAY, MARCH 9TH AT 1:00 PM

On March 9th at 1:00 pm Temple Beth El is sponsoring, with the help of Senator Michael Rodrigues, a guest speaker, Mr. Jose Melo of the American Jewish Heritage Foundation. He will be speaking and showing a slideshow on the history and restoration of Sahar Hassamain Synagogue in Ponta Delgada, San Miguel, Azores. The Synagogue has recently, after many years of hard work and patient influence, been declared a national museum and will be restored with private funds and Portuguese government funds. Several of our local Fall River area people (including some Temple Beth El members) have been on a committee for the restoration for years. The presentation is open to all who wish to come and not limited to Temple Beth El members. There is no fee for admittance. Donations are welcome. Please plan to join us!

REFLECTIONS

Dear Friends.

It is with some trepidation and, I hope, humility that with this letter I embark on a new project that may engage me for some time...the idea for this project emerged during the course of my suffering the flu last week, and in my efforts to "sleep it off," I had groggy half-asleep, half-awake moments when messages and tunes seemed to come to me, and of course flit away again. But when



I awoke fully, one thing stayed with me clearly: that I could fulfill a service to our community, while drawing on my long-standing love of the Psalms, by committing myself to writing short reflections on various verses of the Psalms, and accompanying them with recordings (some my own, sometimes those of others) of these same verses.

I am proposing to do this approximately every other week, and if you are on the TBE email list, you will automatically get these reflections, with a link to a YouTube recording of the verse or verses of the Psalm for you to listen to (only if you chose to do so, of course).

Nowadays many congregations have recorded or live-stream access to their Shabbat services, and while I personally am not comfortable using such technology on Shabbat, I know that such access has been very comforting and healing to people who are sick or shut-in, or simply far away from their congregation, and cannot be with them regularly. It occurs to me that while this project can by no means take the place of your enjoying the company of our whole congregation, at least it can provide access to a few words of teaching on our sacred Psalms, and I hope that the melodies will provide solace, uplift, and companionship to your *neshamot* (your souls).

I welcome any feedback on this project, and of course you may write to the TBE office and request to be taken off the automatic list if you do not wish to receive any further Reflections.

In soul-friendship,

Cantor Shoshana Brown

A message from our Spiritual Leader, Rabbi Mark Elber

Shoshana and I recently returned from the 2014 Ohalah Conference, an annual gathering of Jewish clergy, and rabbinic and cantorial students, who affiliate with Jewish Renewal. It always takes place early in January near Boulder, Colorado because the 89-year-old founder of the movement, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi (affectionately known as "Reb Zalman") lives there. Each year the conference has a specific theme and this year's theme was "The Future of Jewish Renewal." The future has greatly preoccupied people's minds in the Jewish world of late, but, in truth, Jewish Renewal and Reb Zalman particularly have been concerned with it for well over a decade.

Since Jewish Renewal has always defined itself as a movement rather than a denomination, Ohalah has always been trans-denominational. It has tried to widen the tent (*Ohel* means "tent") under which we meet. This is a trend that has been growing as clergy that belong to various denominations (e.g. Conservative, Reconstructionist, Reform, and Orthodox) try to engage in learning from each other, finding common concerns, expanding our mutual understanding and cooperation. In addition to ALEPH: The Alliance for Jewish Renewal (under whose auspices Shoshana and I were ordained), other trans-denominational seminaries have sprung up such as Hebrew College in Newton, Massachusetts, and the Academy for Jewish Religion in New York and California, just to name a few.

One of Reb Zalman's central tenets has been that just as Judaism underwent a radical shift from Biblical Judaism to Rabbinic Judaism at the end of the Second Temple period, and particularly after its destruction in 70 CE, similarly we are undergoing a comparable "paradigm shift" in our post-Holocaust, post-modern world now. Though the ultra-Orthodox may respond to the ensuing changes by circling the wagons closer and denying any need to adapt, most others recognize the inevitability of change, and try to respond and adapt to one degree or another. Of course we can acknowledge the necessity for change, but the question of how to engender it and in which ways, is another challenge entirely. Familiarity can be comforting and hard to relinquish, but if we're concerned with the future, flexibility is imperative. I'm sure most of us have experienced how difficult it is to change even as an individual, how much harder is it to change a community?!

The keynote speaker at the Ohalah conference this year was Rabbi Sidney Schwarz, a pioneer in charting the changes in synagogue life and in studying those congregations that seem most adept at growing despite the national tendencies toward diminishing affiliation. Rabbi Schwarz's 2013 book, Jewish Megatrends: Charting the Course of the American Jewish Future is an important examination of our current conditions and an indispensable contribution to the conversation on forging a vital future.

Rabbi Schwarz raised a number of issues regarding how synagogue culture needs to change in order to thrive in the future. He pointed out that according to the findings of the Pew study of the U.S. Jewish population (mentioned in December's column), 94% of American Jews feel good about being Jewish. However, less and less of us are finding sufficient value and meaning in synagogue life among the liberal (i.e. non-Orthodox) denominations. Some people respond to these statistics with hand-wringing, while others see the crisis as an opportunity for growth and change.

Rabbi Schwarz suggests that synagogue affiliation needs to change from an orientation towards *membership* to one of *ownership*. In other words, we want to create an atmosphere in which congregants are *engaged in our synagogues doing core Jewish activities*. We want people to find in synagogues qualities and activities that are less prevalent in the larger culture. Personally, I strongly believe that we can't expect a synagogue to have a "one size fits all" orientation. People will gravitate towards a synagogue for various reasons, and, consequently, we need to try to fulfill those needs as best we can.

There is very little sense of kedusha, of the "sacred" in the greater society, but I believe that a synagogue needs to foster that sense. It may be found for some people through sincere prayer, for others through engagement with traditional texts of our Tradition, and for others still through commitment to social justice. There is no prerequisite of what a person need believe or practice, but these aspects of Jewish life need to be open, welcoming, sincere, and committed. The sense of community, especially community with some common commitment to a greater vision is optimal. Our Tradition is replete with wisdom regarding living a sacred life. I would like us to see ourselves as part of the chain of generations still engaged in creating and bequeathing wisdom to coming generations. The Torah has always been a living document. We benefit from all that our predecessors have offered in understanding and finding meaning in it, but we have much to add if we engage in it seriously. Each generation sees the Torah differently based on the times that they have lived through. This is no less true for us, nor for the coming generations.

A synagogue is not a conventional business, though we operate in a building and have bills to pay. A synagogue is in the business of providing meaning, purpose, and sacred community in people's lives. May we never lose sight of that vision.

LEADERSHIP

Mark Elber	Rabbi
Shoshana Brown	Cantor
Stephen Silverman	President
Jeffrey Entin	Vice President
Libby Cohen	Secretary
William Chebot	Treasurer
Libby Cohen	Sisterhood Pres.
William E. Kaufman	Rabbi Emeritus

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

It is nearly February and things are going well at Temple Beth El. After a long and drawn-out process, we are very nearly ready to sign a new lease with the City of Fall River to continue to house the Child Development Program. After over 25 years of continuous tenancy, the city planners were trying to move the program into a vacant school building, but after doing their due diligence they have determined that Temple Beth El continues to be their best option. This comes as a relief to the board, as the rental income pays for a healthy portion of our substantial utility bills. Thank you to all of those who offered suggestions for new tenants, including Jeff and Theresa Entin and Bernie Taradash. With their help we were able to make some contacts with potential new tenants in the event that we were unable to continue with the current lease.

The date is now official -- on Sunday, March 9th at 1:00 pm we will welcome Mr Jose Melo of the American Jewish Heritage Foundation for a lecture and slideshow discussing the restoration of the Jewish/Azorean synagogue in Ponta Delgada, San Miguel, Azores. We expect it to be a big event, with many local and international dignitaries and both Portuguese and Jewish contingents. Mr. Melo will discuss the history and restoration plans for Sahar Hassamain Synagogue in Ponta Delgada. State Senator Mike Rodrigues will be there, as he is a driving force on the committee spearheading the restoration. If you would like to be on the Temple Beth El committee to help plan and organize the event, please contact the office as soon as possible. We expect a very large turnout, and we can use all the help we can get as we prepare for the big day.

Keep warm, stay healthy, and be careful on the roads and sidewalks while the cold and snowy weather conditions prevail. Our thanks to Tom and George for doing a fabulous job of keeping our sidewalks clear - an almost daily chore this year, and a bitterly cold one. Spring will be here soon!

> Steve Silverman President

Sisterhood Gift Shop

We have a new selection of mezuzot, Star of David pendants, and kipot. If you will be needing any special Judaica merchandise that we don't carry, contact me to browse through some catalogs.

Hannah R. Evans Phone: 508-674-2505 Email: hannahbecky@comcast.net

Sisterhood President's Message

Dear Members.

February is here and that means we're that much closer to Spring. Personally speaking, I can't wait. As I'm writing this, there is a good deal of snow on the ground and it is extremely cold. What can I say, it's winter in New England. Welcome to my world.

Those of you that missed our Tu B'Shevat Seder missed a wonderful Shabbat experience. Rabbi Mark and Cantor Shoshana led a beautiful service, and did a good job walking us through the Seder. I've had a great deal of positive feedback from those folks that attended. I would like to thank Beverly Solup for all the help she gave me in organizing the Seder luncheon. I also want to thank Marie Twomey and Judy Morgenstern for taking the reservations and sending out the e-mails. Lastly, without the help of Tom Gregory and George Haire it would be impossible to do what we do. You have no idea the amount of work that goes into the preparation and execution of these events. We are so lucky to have these people to work with. Please make it a priority to attend our next function.

The next meeting of the book club is scheduled for Wednesday, February 19th. We will be discussing The Goldfinch by Donna Tartt. So let's get reading ladies. I hope to see all of you there. If you'd like to get a head start on March's book, Me Before You by Jo Jo Moyes has been selected. We will meet on Wednesday, March 19th to review it. These meetings always take place at 10:30 am in the Temple library.

There is something I need to explain. Recently Sisterhood members received a bill for their dues. This bill is for 2013 through 2014. The payment that some folks made late last year was for 2012 through 2013. I hope this clears up any questions you may have.

Watch your e-mails and notices regarding any up and coming events. There are a few things in the planning stages, so stay alert.

So until next month, Shalom.

Libby Cohen

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SERVICE SCHEDULE

February 2014 Shevat/Adar I 5774

Saturday, rebruary r (TAdar	Saturday,	February	1 (1/	Adar	I)	
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Weekly Portion: Terumah 10:00 am Rosh Chodesh Adar I

Friday, February 7 (7 Adar I)

Candle Lighting 4:50 pm Shabbat Service 5:30 pm

Saturday, February 8 (8 Adar I)

Weekly Portion: Tetzaveh 10:00am

Friday, February 14 (14 Adar I)

Candle Lighting 4:59 pm Shabbat Service 5:30 pm

Saturday, February 15 (5 Adar I)

Weekly Portion: Ki Tisa 10:00 am

Friday, February 21 (21 Adar I)

Candle Lighting 5:07 pm Shabbat Service 5:30 pm

Saturday, February 22 (22 Adar I)

Weekly Portion: Vayakhel 10:00 am

Friday, February 28 (28 Adar I)

Candle Lighting 5:16 pm Shabbat Service 5:30 pm

IN MEMORIAM

NORMAND FUTORANSKY JANUARY 11, 2014 – SHEVAT 10, 5774

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E-Mail: templebethel@comcast.net
Website: frtemplebethel.org

Office Hours:

Monday - Friday, 9 am to Noon

Office Closed:

Monday, Feb. 17th - Presidents Day

Fall River United Jewish Appeal, Inc.

385 High Street, Fall River, MA 02720 Tel: (508) 673-7791 Fax: (508) 678-6735 e-mail: fruja@comcast.net

Office Hours: Monday & Thursday, 9 am to Noon

<u>Friendly Visitor:</u> Jackie Gedacht is ready, willing and able to visit the sick or shut-ins. Call the UJA office at (508) 673-7791 to schedule a visit.

Senior Center: (at the Fall River Jewish Home)

Open 5 days a week for lunch...Kosher and delicious. For reservations/cancellations call the Nutrition Office at (508) 324-4619 or (800) 293-8943 before 1:30 pm on the previous business day before you want to reserve or cancel.

Social Worker: We have a social service program for our community. If you are in need of the services of a social worker, call (508) 673-7791. Confidentiality will be respected.

Camperships



A limited amount of campership funds are available for children and grandchildren of Temple members who will be attending Jewish summer camp. If you are interested, a letter of application for a campership must be received in the Temple office by March 1, 2014.

Camp Ramah Tikvah Family Shabbaton

On March 28-30, Camp Ramah in New England is hosting its first-ever Tikvah Family Shabbaton for families with kids with disabilities. We are looking forward to a wonderful weekend retreat with programming catered specifically towards parents, siblings and children and young adults with disabilities. For more information about the Shabbaton go to www.campramahne.org. If you have any questions about the Shabbaton contact Tali Cohen, Director of Tikvah Vocational Services at talic@campramahne.org or (781)702-5290 x108.

TBE Happenings

Rabbi Elber and Cantor Brown recently attended the OHALAH Shabbaton and Conference held in Broomfield, Colorado. OHALAH is a professional organization for Jewish clergy who are involved with ALEPH: the Alliance for Jewish Renewal. The "grandfather" of the Renewal movement, Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, now 89 years old, was once again in attendance, and, in conversation with our cantor he asked after the well-being of our members Dr. Irving Fradkin and Charlotte Fradkin, whom he knew from his two years in Fall River many years ago.

Thank you to the TBE Sisterhood for shopping, preparing and setting up—along with the help of Tom and George our custodians—for our first Tu bi-Shevat Seder in several years.

Our Tu biShevat Seder-Shabbat was a grand event, with close to thirty people crowding in the Chapel for the service (with the reading of the Ten Commandments from the Torah), and over forty people for the Seder. Adas Israel's president Jeff Weissman's three grandchildren—Zoe, Jonah, and Ian Grajales -- were the stars of the Seder, reading a skit called "The Apple Tree's Discovery." (Alas! Since it was on Shabbat we have no pictures.)

Speaking of these three lovely children, they are amongst the seven students currently enrolled in the revived TBE Hebrew School! Stay tuned for a Shabbat morning service coming this spring when our students will take a special part in leading the service!

On Jan 20th, Martin Luther King Day, the rabbi and cantor took part in the annual MLK Breakfast at Bristol Community College. The rabbi gave an inspiring benediction to close the event, and the cantor sang a rendition of Ani Ma'amin, after which she led all in attendance in We Shall Overcome. The cantor also attended the special MLK Day service at the Bethel AME Church in Fall River, with a handful of others of our community in attendance, including Bill Chebot, Bernie Alpert, and our former member Ron Weisberger. The congregation at the "other Bethel" was very appreciative of our joining them.

WHATER CLOTHING DRIVE

Just a reminder that we are still collecting warm winter clothes in a big box in the vestry. Come on by and drop off anything you are no longer using. Call first and we will come out to your car and pick up your donation.

Social Action News:

Thank you to all who have been bringing in warm winter clothing to our donation box in the vestry. Winter is not over yet! You can still bring items in if you have not gotten around to it yet. The box has been emptied twice so far by the Rev. Jeremi Colvin for her Bayside Ministry.

We are now collecting cans of tuna, along with **small** jars of mayo (they have to fit in a motel-size frig!) and hand-held can openers to support the ongoing project of feeding the displaced families who are living in the Somerset and Dartmouth motels. Look for a drop-off box in the vestry.

Rabbi Elber and Cantor Brown would like to thank our Jewish Campership Committee for their generous contribution to the camp that their son Lev will be attending this summer. Camp Tikvah, at Camp Ramah Darom, in Georgia, is an award-winning camping program for children on the Autism Spectrum and their families. (So the Rabbi and Cantor will also get to go to Jewish camp!) We can look forward to hearing more about this experience in the fall.



TBE's Religious School's First Youth Group Outing: Lev Elber turns 11 at Holiday Lanes! A great time was had by all, and may this outing be the first of many!

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YAHRZEITS

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Arlyne Dondis

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Dr. & Mrs. David Greer
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SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

The newly formed TBE Social Action Committee has chosen as their project this year to respond to the Homeless Family Crisis in the Fall River area. If you are interested in being involved, or spearheading an additional project, please get in touch with Cantor Shoshana.



IRA JAY FLEISHER
FUNERAL DIRECTOR

458 HOPE STREET PROVIDENCE, RI 02906 E-MAIL: ira.fleisher@sci-us.com TEL: 401-331-8094 800-447-1267 FAX: 401-331-9379 LESSONS FROM DOWNTON ABBEY Cantor Shoshana Brown (Originally published in The Herald News on January 10, 2014)

2014 has begun—by now, you may have already seen the first installment of Season 4 of *Downton Abbey*, whose story begins roughly a century before ours, with the sinking of the Titanic in 1912. My husband (the rabbi) and I recently acquired a boxed set of DVDs covering the first three seasons. While I have been a veteran fan of *Downton*, my husband has not, and so I have been enjoying watching him become caught up, and delighting in his newfound enthusiasm for the series, its writing, acting, the scenery and clothing, and the development of the characters of all the main players over time. But I have been asking myself: what else is there to *Downton Abbey* that makes it so compelling?

The time period in which *Downton's* story takes place shares some important features with our own. Although organized religion does not play a central role in *Downton's* plot twists (so far), nevertheless the features its era shares with ours are of great import to religious institutions today. The early 1900's were years of rapid technological advances, witnessing Western society on the precipice of enormous social change. We laugh as we watch Carson the butler practice answering the Abbey's first telephone, and the dowager Countess shade her eyes upon first encounter with the estate's newlyinstalled electric lights. But the social changes that accompany these technological ones are even more radical: the beginning of the struggle for women's rights, the early cracks in the walls that had divided the British social classes for centuries: the rise of nation-states against colonial powers...it was a time of mass upheaval, a devastating war in Europe, and a subsequent refugee crisis.

In our own day some of us over a certain age feel as bewildered as the Abbey's butler at the rapid pace of innovation. It used to be that the cantor's primary role in the synagogue was to sing-nowadays it might be expected of a cantor to tweet as well! (I do not know how...in fact, I do not even text!) "Brick and mortar" institutions are outmoded today for many members of the young adult generation and we of the older generations who still attend services in our various places of worship miss them! What will become of the edifices that our forbears toiled to erect, of our faiths' liturgies, our worship traditions...more importantly, of the special kind of community that coalesces when people sing, pray, study sacred texts, share sacred meals, and embark together on faith-inspired tasks to try to bring the world a little closer to "redemption"? While it is true that great gatherings such as the various "Occupy" encampments and the Egyptian revolution on Tahrir Square came about by means of Facebook, Twitter, etc., nevertheless these movements share a kind of "Brigadoon" quality, here today and gone tomorrow; alliances are easily made and easily forgotten. How can a person have thousands, or even hundreds, of actual "friends"? What does it mean when 50 people wish me "Happy Birthday" on Facebook but would never call me to invite me out to coffee?

Like the characters in *Downton Abbey*, I do not know where it is all leading. Certainly our latest technological innovations can be used for goodsaving lives and empowering people in ways that no one could have dreamt of a century ago. But as a religious leader, I am concerned about the loss of face-to-face gatherings which involve long-term commitment, and which we used to call "community." A kind of magic can happen when people sing, share a meal together, bow their heads together in the same physical space over a long period of time. Downton Abbey shows a kind of "community" which takes place on one estate, involving a large social spectrum of people, from elderly to newborns—and we marvel as they share their travails together, mature in wisdom and kindness over time, and help one another meet the challenges of the new era. Here in Fall River, I know that I am by no means alone, as a clergyperson, in praying for the wisdom necessary to meet the challenges of our own "new era." Whatever surprises the future brings, I also pray that we not lose the talent for real encounters, true friendships, and the strength that comes from actual community, which, since we have no grand manor houses to meet in, may be found in our synagogues and churches. No formal attire required!

Cantor Shoshana Brown is the co-spiritual leader, and musical director, of the Jewish congregation, Temple Beth EI, of Fall River.



Are you on our e-mail notification list? If not, you are missing out on up-to-the-minute news, as well as some terrific new content. Your e-mail address will be kept private and never given out to another organization. If you would like to be on the list, send us an e-mail at templebethel@comcast.net

YAHRZEITS

2/1/2014 Adar-I 1, 5774

Sarah Aber Sarah Korn William Wolfson

2/2/2014 Adar-I 2, 5774 Hyman Karp

2/4/2014 Adar-I 4, 5774 Bernard Chebot

Sadie Lovit

Nathan Bernard Silverman

2/5/2014 Adar-I 5, 5774

Morris Levine Barney Prebluda

2/6/2014 Adar-I 6, 5774

Morris Haims Edith Kusinitz Philip Ostroff Bertha Weinstock Philip Zalkind

2/7/2014 Adar-I 7, 5774 George Lucove

2/8/2014 Adar-I 8, 5774 Elena Lee Cohen Selma Juda Mannis Shapiro

2/9/2014 Adar-I 9, 5774

Albert H. Dubitsky Sander Epstein 2/10/2014 Adar-I 10, 5774 Sidney Schenker

2/11/2014 Adar-I 11, 5774

Louis I. Galitsky Hyman B. Gollub Mary Robinovitz George Sandler

Larry Lurie

2/12/2014 Adar-I 12, 5774 Louis Bachman Hyman Levine

2/13/2014 Adar-I 13, 5774 Robert M. Cohen Ida Dubitsky

2/15/2014 Adar-I 15, 5774 William Goldman Vivian Grozen

2/16/2014 Adar-I 16, 5774 Samuel Katzman

2/18/2014 Adar-I 18, 5774 Helen Freedman Florence Lash Sylvia Yoken

2/19/2014 Adar-I 19, 5774 William Feinberg Ruth Levine William Lurie 2/21/2014 Adar-I 21, 5774 Abraham Trieff

2/22/2014 Adar-I 22, 5774

David Chavenson Marian Cohen Samuel Feldman Noah Horvitz

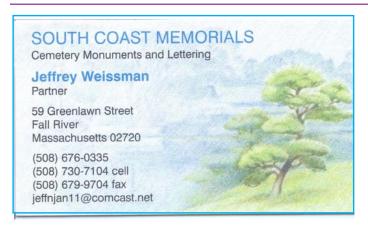
2/23/2014 Adar-I 23, 5774 Helen (Yelena) Golub Edwin Macy

2/24/2014 Adar-I 24, 5774 Manuel Hyman Eva Waksler

2/25/2014 Adar-I 25, 5774 Thelma Greenberg

2/26/2014 Adar-I 26, 5774 Minnie Entin Virginia Granovsky Frederick Kaplan

2/28/2014 Adar-I 28, 5774 Miriam Reiser Barry Schwartz Samuel Stampler Dr. Sanford Udis



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