



Temple B'nai Israel
536 Shaw Avenue
McKeesport, PA 15132
1923 - 2000






Temple B'Nai Israel
2025 Cypress Drive
White Oak, PA 15131
2000 to 5-31-2025

See page 10 for
information about
Temple's closing

April 2024

Temple Talk

22 Adar II—22 Nissan
5784

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 Temple Board Meeting 7:30 PM W PA Small Cong. Music of Rogers & Hammerstein 7pm Zoom	3	4	5	6 Shabbat Services 10:00 AM <i>Shemini Hachodesh</i>
7		9 Rosh Chodesh Nissan	10	11	12 Shabbat Services 7:30 PM	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20 Shabbat Services 10:00 AM <i>Metzora</i>
21	22 Passover Eve 1st Seder	23 Begin counting of the Omer	24	25	26 Shabbat Services 7:30 PM	27 <i>Passover</i>
28 	29 Last day of Pesach Yizkor Service 10:00 AM	30	*Yizkor service for Pesach will be both in person & on Zoom. The Yizkor booklet can be emailed—contact the TBI office.			
						

The April 2024 issue of the
Temple Talk
 is Sponsored by
Susan Neuwirth Johnson
 In remembrance of
 her dearly departed parents
Harold L. Neuwirth, Esq.
Marilyn Neuwirth Herron
Dr. Seymour A. Herron
 & siblings
Joan H. Herron
Bruce M. Herron

April Shabbat Services

Friday	April	5	7:30	PM
Saturday	April	13	10:00	AM
Friday	April	19	7:30	PM
Saturday	April	27	10:00	PM

Note: Both Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services will now be both in person and on Zoom.

Check the Temple Talk calendar and weekly e-mail messages to confirm dates and times.

Service dates and time can also be found online at:
www.tbiwhiteoak.org

Shabbat Candle Lighting Times
April 2024

Friday	April	5	7:30	PM
Friday	April	12	7:38	PM
Friday	April	19	7:45	PM
Friday	April	26	7:52	PM


 May
 The Lord bless you
 and guard you. May The Lord
 shine His face upon you and give you grace.
 May The Lord lift His face towards you and bring you peace.

Executive Committee Message



Spring is a time of renewal and new beginnings. The flowers reappear-daffodils and crocuses are already in full bloom. The weather begins to warm up (although we have not had a severe winter) and there is a sense of anticipation of the upcoming summer of relaxation. To some, it is the expectation of the arrival of the official 2024 Mah Jong card!

Like so many of us, I have wonderful memories of one of the best parts of Spring — the holiday of Passover. When I was a child, the items to buy for Passover were quite limited. Of course there was matzo, matzo meal, cake meal, potato starch and macaroons (my friends know that I dislike coconut!). Streit's and Manischewitz were basically the only products available.

Today is a different story. Kosher for Passover bagels, donuts, full course meals, cakes and candies, as well as matzo ball soup and ready-made gefilte fish. Passover is easy to celebrate these days. How many of you remember the Maxwell House Haggadah? It is still available and in use today.

What has not changed is the power of a Passover Seder to bring friends, family and even strangers together at a table to hear the "telling" of our deliverance from bondage in ancient Egypt, as we use ritual foods, prayers, stories and songs. Jewish communities around the world have developed a number of unique Passover traditions. Some of the most well know include the Sephardic tradition of singing Had Gad Ya in Ladino or Moroccan communities marking the end of Passover with a carb-filled festival meal called Mimouna. We celebrated a Mimouna a few years ago at Temple B'nai Israel. The traditions include a next level of Passover cleaning, a Bloody Hamsa where Jews in India use drawings to place blood on their doorway. In Hungary and Austria, women at the seder would decorate the table with jewels and gold thus stripping the Egyptians of these precious goods. Gaining more popularity is the retelling through reenactment. In Tunisia, the ritual foods are placed in a basket on the table to remind us of Moses in the basket. One you may have heard of is observed by Persian and Afghan Jews. When chanting Dayenu they have the custom of lightly hitting each other with leeks or scallions, representing the whipping the Israelites endured in Egypt while enslaved.

In a little over one year, we will close the doors of our beloved Temple B'nai Israel with dignity after 112 years in existence. In the coming months you will be updated on the plans for our special weekend. Save the date for April 25-27, 2025. So many people that I have spoken with from all over the country plan to join us for this memorable weekend. If all goes well, our two former and our current rabbi will be in attendance.

We have been so fortunate to have members who are not just observers, they are also volunteers. Personally, I am humbled by the amount of work that they do. We are lucky to have our highly respected and devoted rabbi. I especially want to recognize our Executive Committee who rotate as president of the congregation. Their dedication keeps our Temple B'nai Israel together. Thank you to the Board of Trustees, all of whom care very much about our synagogue. Thank you as well to all of our committees who always follow through on their assignments. What would we do without our skilled and competent office manager? She is the face of Temple B'nai Israel who connects us to our members and the outside world.

As a result of the hard work of all of these people we can be very proud of what we do and who we are. As we think about our beautiful seders, we cannot forget the men, women and children in Gaza who are still held hostage without food and medicine. Let your voices be heard. Publicly condemn hostage taking and call for the immediate release of the captives. Wouldn't it be wonderful if they could achieve the freedom that they deserve and celebrate Passover together with their families? It was a miracle getting the Jewish slaves out of Egypt. We are ready for another miracle.

Am Yisrael Chai ~ Janice

Rabbi's Message

Let Freedom Ring

(I pray that by the time you read these words they will no longer be relevant.)



Pesach this year will have a particular resonance given the war in Gaza and the more than 100 Israelis still held hostage by Hamas. The parallels to the narrative of our historical liberation from Egyptian slavery are stark. A group of our people—men, women, and children, young and old—are held in conditions intended to oppress them. The ruling power is oppressive to their own people as well. Repeated demands, both diplomatic and military, to release the captives have been met with silence. It seems that now all we can do is cry out to God for redemption and peace.

These aspects of the story are pervasive in our observance of Pesach. We feel great joy at our ancient redemption from bondage in Egypt, but are also mindful that our freedom came at the expense of great suffering by the innocent Egyptian people because of Pharaoh's recalcitrance. We are sensitive to the oppression and suffering not only of our people, but of all people in the world around us. And we look forward to that great future day when our efforts and God's will merge to bring the Messianic Age of perfect and eternal peace to the world. Past, present, and future merge in our observance of Pesach with their shared focus on God's redeeming presence—in our past history, our present world, and our aspirational future.

So as we sit down to our seders this year, let us hold all of the contradictions of the day together, as hard as that can be. Let us be grateful for the freedom we enjoy, and let us not allow our anxiety for our own future blind us to the injustices inflicted on others. Let us offer support to our compatriots in Israel even as we seek peace for all Israelis and Palestinians. And let us pray that when we conclude our service with the phrase "Next year in Jerusalem" it will be a city shining its light of justice throughout the world.

Rabbi Howie Stein



Question: What is the other book of the Bible (besides Esther) that does not mention God?

Answer: As one of our eagle-eyed proofreaders surmised, the other book is Song of Songs, which is traditionally read on the Shabbat during Pesach (and in some Sephardi traditions before Kabbalat Shabbat every week). Because the imagery in the book is often erotic, all religious traditions have interpreted it as an allegory for the relationship between God and Israel, rather than the human lovers portrayed in the text as written. Indeed, the Rabbis debated whether such material was even worthy to be included in the biblical canon; Rabbi Akiva countered such arguments by declaring "...that all of Scripture is holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies." (Mishnah Yadayim 3:5)

If you have a question that you have been wondering about, you can submit your queries to the Temple office:

To connect with Rabbi Stein directly, you may call or email him at:

513-600-5535 | rabbi.howie.stein@gmail.com



Thank you for your April Chai Fund Donations



Margie and Al Adelman, *in memory of Margie's father, Bernard Goodman*
Ruth and Scott Apter, *in memory of Scott's grandmother, Esther Apter*
Anna Dlugasch, *in memory of her parents, Thelma and Joseph Zimmet*
Elizabeth and Alan Finegold, *in memory of Elizabeth's husband, Anthony Baum*
Gary Gaal, *in memory of his grandfather, Alexander Gaal*
Deborah and James Gannes, *in memory of Deby's grandmother, Sadye Bondy*
Janice and Louis Greenwald, *in memory of Louis's grandfather, Isaac Gross*
Susan and Mark Johnson, *in memory of Susan's brother, Bruce Herron*
Marsha and Dick Leffel, *in memory of Marsha's father, Bernard Goodman; Marsha's uncle, Lee Goodman*
Miriam Leib, *in memory of her husband, James*
Sue and Richard Linzer, *in memory of Sue's mother, Betty Rosenberg; Richard's mother, Mildred*
Sondra and Joseph Mendlowitz, *in memory of Joseph's father, Sidney*
James Steiner, *in memory of James's father, Isador*
Nancy and Gary Tuckfelt, *in memory of Gary's father, Melvin*
Donna and David Tyson, *in memory of Donna's mother, Vivian Fischer*
Devi and Dennis Willaman, *in memory of Devi's mother, Joyce Lebowitz*

Why Count?



Days of the Omer for Hebrew year 5784 begins at sundown on Tuesday, 23 April and ends at nightfall on Tuesday, 11 June. Counting of the Omer or *Sefirat Ha'omer*

is a verbal counting of each of the forty-nine days between Passover and Shavuot. The counting is intended to remind us of the link between Passover, which commemorates the Exodus, and Shavu'ot, which commemorates the giving of the Torah. It reminds us that the redemption from slavery was not complete until we received the Torah.

The Kabbalistic interpretation of counting the Omer is that this period of the counting is considered to be a time of potential for inner growth – for a person to work on one's good characteristics (*middot*) through reflection and development. Each day we recite a blessing marking that this period of time is meant to be one time of reflection, revelation, and change.

Each holiday has the ability for interpretation and reflection. Each year the holiday can mean something else because, as the years pass we change, and how we see the holiday changes with us. What a profound lesson this is for all of us, as we too count and consider, wait and hope, as we dream of a brighter future.

Your Passover Stories

As with every Passover Seder, there are many customs and traditions we observe, including the opening of a door at the beginning of the meal. This is known as *Ha Lachma Anya*, or inviting in the hungry, and the enslaved to join us. This is also the time when we share our beautiful holiday meals and tables with family and friends. Please take a picture of your Seder tables and guests...and then share them with us for our May Temple Talk cover. E-mail your photos to: tbioffice@gmail.com

The Best in Jewish Films: May 2-12



Film Pittsburgh's *JFilm Festival*, the largest Jewish cultural event in the region, returns in May 2024. The 31st annual festival will showcase Jewish themed, independent feature films from around the globe. Along eleven days of dynamic movies, we're hosting a special Opening Night event and reception at the Carnegie Music Hall, engaging Q&As with visiting filmmakers, a Mother's Day brunch, Film Schmoozes, and more! Learn more about the festival line-up or to purchase tickets visit: filmpittsburgh.org



Temple B'nai Israel gratefully acknowledges
the following donations



MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Susan and Mark Johnson, *in memory of Susan's grandfather, Herman Brodsky*
Jeff and Tamera Bondy, *in memory of Audrey Kaplan*
Steve Mayer, *in memory of Betty Kaner's husband, Larry*
Gary Gaal, *in memory of his grandfather, Alexander Gaal*
Salessa Berk, *in memory of her husband, Marvin*
Deborah and James Gannes, *in memory of Deborah's grandmother Sadye Bondy*
Marilyn Weinblum, *in memory of her mother, Sadie Morantz*
Susan and Mark Johnson, *in memory of her brother, Bruce Herron*
Robin Bernstein, *in memory of her husband, Herb Seigle*
Ann Dlugasch, *in memory of her parents Joseph and Thelma Zimmet*
Marsha and Dick Leffel, *in memory of Marsha's father, Bernard Goodman*

MUSIC FUND & SIMCHA DONATIONS

Mazel Tov to Lindi Kendal on Her Special Birthday

Rosalie and Lou Anstandig
Debbie and Alan Iszauk
\Steve Mayer

Wishes for a complete recovery to Lester Neil

Claudia and Warren Finkel
Debbie and Alan Iszauk
Marsha and Dick Leffel
Steve Mayer
Diane and Mark Simon



Refuah Shlema—רפואה שלמה



A Prayer of Healing and Return to Good Health
to
Lester Neil

Please contact the Temple office if you wish to have a name added or removed from our Refuah Shlema list.

Yahrzeits from 21 Adar II—26 Nisan 5784: March 31—May 4, 2024

If the name is printed in **Bold**, a Yahrzeit plaque will be illuminated in the Sanctuary on the date the name is to be read.

Yahrzeit names to be read week of: March 31

Mary Fetters : Adar II 21 : 3/31/2024
Thelma Angerman : Adar II 23 : 4/2/2024
Julia Baumgarth : Adar II 27 : 4/6/2024
Kate Bloom : Adar II 27 : 4/6/2024

Yahrzeit names to be read week of: April 7

Joseph Glantz : Adar II 29 : 4/8/2024
David Coslov : Nisan 1 : 4/9/2024
Alexander Gaal : Nisan 2 : 4/10/2024
Dora Weiss : Nisan 2 : 4/10/2024
Melvin Tuckfelt : Nisan 2 : 4/10/2024
Bernard Goodman : Nisan 3 : 4/11/2024
James Leib : Nisan 3 : 4/11/2024
Margaret Glick : Nisan 3 : 4/11/2024
Mollie Gelb : Nisan 3 : 4/11/2024
Sadye Bondy : Nisan 3 : 4/11/2024
Sidney Mendlowitz : Nisan 3 : 4/11/2024
Edward Goldberg : Nisan 4 : 4/12/2024
Herbert Seigle : Nisan 4 : 4/12/2024
Ida E. Keller : Nisan 4 : 4/12/2024
Phillip Fenster : Nisan 4 : 4/12/2024
A.H. "Bam" Angerman : Nisan 5 : 4/13/2024
Esther Flores : Nisan 5 : 4/13/2024

Yahrzeit names to be read week of: April 14

Alan B. Fleischman : Nisan 6 : 4/14/2024
Ethel Moskowitz : Nisan 6 : 4/14/2024
Lee Goodman : Nisan 6 : 4/14/2024
Emanuel Weiss : Nisan 7 : 4/15/2024
Leo Seigle : Nisan 7 : 4/15/2024
Lillian C. Finkel : Nisan 7 : 4/15/2024
Thelma Zimmet : Nisan 7 : 4/15/2024
Ida Horshman : Nisan 8 : 4/16/2024
Adolph Burnstein : Nisan 9 : 4/17/2024
Breine Weiss : Nisan 9 : 4/17/2024
Dorothy Leah Katz : Nisan 9 : 4/17/2024
Isador Steiner : Nisan 9 : 4/17/2024
Ron Silverblatt : Nisan 9 : 4/17/2024
Rosa Weiss : Nisan 10 : 4/18/2024
Esther Apter : Nisan 11 : 4/19/2024
Harriet Rubinstein : Nisan 11 : 4/19/2024
Henry Gelb : Nisan 11 : 4/19/2024
Sophia Israel : Nisan 11 : 4/19/2024

Yahrzeit names to be read week of: April 21

Lillian Palkowitz : Nisan 13 : 4/21/2024
Max Moritz : Nisan 13 : 4/21/2024

Yahrzeit names continued week of: April 21

Morris Fetters : Nisan 13 : 4/21/2024
Dorothy Bortz : Nisan 14 : 4/22/2024
Morris Fetters : Nisan 13 : 4/21/2024
Dorothy Bortz : Nisan 14 : 4/22/2024
Murray Knopf : Nisan 14 : 4/22/2024
Sarah Rubenstein : Nisan 14 : 4/22/2024
Charles Schwartz : Nisan 15 : 4/23/2024
Hobart Darling : Nisan 15 : 4/23/2024
Robert Lloyd Klein : Nisan 15 : 4/23/2024
David Feldman : Nisan 16 : 4/24/2024
M. Louis Roman : Nisan 16 : 4/24/2024
Sadie Morantz : Nisan 16 : 4/24/2024
Samuel Kaplan : Nisan 16 : 4/24/2024
Anthony Baum : Nisan 17 : 4/25/2024
Bessie Lebowitz : Nisan 17 : 4/25/2024
Marie Moses : Nisan 17 : 4/25/2024
Robert Rosenberg : Nisan 17 : 4/25/2024
Sidney Israel : Nisan 17 : 4/25/2024
Jack Klein : Nisan 18 : 4/26/2024
Louis Mendlowitz : Nisan 18 : 4/26/2024
Rose Beck : Nisan 18 : 4/26/2024
Arthur Mermelstein : Nisan 19 : 4/27/2024
David Rubenstein : Nisan 19 : 4/27/2024
Joseph Zimmet : Nisan 19 : 4/27/2024
R. E. Kaplan : Nisan 19 : 4/27/2024

Yahrzeit names to be read week of: April 28

Harry Kohn : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Harry Weiss : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Lois Weaver : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Mildred Linzer : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Samuel Seigle : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Bruce Herron : Nisan 21 : 4/29/2024
David Katz : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Ida Berkovitz : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Ida Brown : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Joseph Ruben : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Sarah Blumenthal : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
A. M. Amper : Nisan 23 : 5/1/2024
Mark Keller : Nisan 23 : 5/1/2024
Rebecca Brown : Nisan 23 : 5/1/2024
Harry Kimmelman : Nisan 24 : 5/2/2024
Ida Samuels : Nisan 24 : 5/2/2024
Marlene Kohn : Nisan 24 : 5/2/2024
Israel Rudoy : Nisan 25 : 5/3/2024
Lily Rosner : Nisan 25 : 5/3/2024

Continued on
page 9

Yahrzeits from 21 Adar II—26 Nisan 5784 March 31—May 4, 2024

Yahrzeit names to be read week of: April 28

Harry Kohn : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Harry Weiss : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Lois Weaver : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Mildred Linzer : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Samuel Seigle : Nisan 20 : 4/28/2024
Bruce Herron : Nisan 21 : 4/29/2024
David Katz : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Ida Berkovitz : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Ida Brown : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Joseph Ruben : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
Sarah Blumenthal : Nisan 22 : 4/30/2024
A. M. Amper : Nisan 23 : 5/1/2024
Mark Keller : Nisan 23 : 5/1/2024
Rebecca Brown : Nisan 23 : 5/1/2024

Harry Kimmelman : Nisan 24 : 5/2/2024
Ida Samuels : Nisan 24 : 5/2/2024
Marlene Kohn : Nisan 24 : 5/2/2024
Israel Rudoy : Nisan 25 : 5/3/2024
Lily Rosner : Nisan 25 : 5/3/2024
Ella Zukerman : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Eva Kalchstein : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Jacob Herron : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Rose Fisher Weiss : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Sidney Weiss : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Tony Burnstein : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Ella Zukerman : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Eva Kalchstein : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Jacob Herron : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024
Rose Fisher Weiss : Nisan 26 : 5/4/2024

May their memory be a blessing z"l

Jews on Broadway—Part 1.
The Music of Rogers and Hammerstein
with Mike Roteman from
Congregation Ahavath Achim

Presented by the
Western PA Small Congregations &
Jewish Community Legacy Project

Tuesday, April 2—7 PM Zoom

Check your Friday Shabbat e-mail
For Registration Link or call the Temple office

Yiddish 101

Schmata—a rag or piece of worn out clothing

Azoy zugst du—So you say...Oh Yeah?

Vas hastu gezagt...What did you say?

Ich farshtey a bissel—I understand a little

Farbissina punim—angry or sour face

April Birthdays and Anniversaries will be acknowledged during our Shabbat service on Saturday, April 13

Birthdays

Barry Frishof, Diane Bendix, Scott Apter, Kenneth Allen, Gary Gaal
Lou Anstandig, Steve Mayer, ***Rae Miggantz***, Steve Klein

Anniversaries

Terry and Len Young
Marcia and Steve Klein

Special celebrations appear in bold italic



A Brief History of Temple B'nai Israel....Then and Now

- 1912** Letter mailed to McKeesport Jewry to form a new congregation. A.M. Simon heads organization committee.
- 1914** Jenny Lind Street property purchased for \$4,500.
- 1915** Six acres of land acquired for Elrod Cemetery.
- 1922** Groundbreaking for Shaw Avenue sanctuary.
- 1923** TBI is dedicated on August 26.
- 1945** TBI mortgage paid in full.
- 1952** Egon Pesson Building is dedicated.
- 1962** TBI celebrates their Golden Anniversary.
- 2000** Temple moves in August from McKeesport, Shaw Avenue to White Oak, Cypress Street.
- 2001** Under the guidance of Lou Anstandig and Rabbi Danny Schiff and Temple Board, membership has grown to over 170 families.
- 2012** Temple celebrates their 100th Anniversary.
- 2022** Temple announces plans for the Next Chapter Legacy Campaign.
- 2024** President Lou Anstandig and the Temple Executive Committee announce plans during the High Holidays for the Temple's closing in 2025. **Watch video at: tbiwhiteoak.org**



Over the past several months, many of you, our Temple members and Friends have asked questions and expressed concerns about what happens next. Be assured that the Temple Executive Committee continues to explore and make decisions that are in everyone's best interest regarding the Temple closing and preserving it's legacy. We are hoping to answer some of your questions:

Question: Couldn't we merge with another synagogue?

Answer: There were no possible mergers in the White Oak/McKeesport area. There were no realistic merger possibilities in the suburbs which would allow us to achieve our main goals, which are to fund our cemetery in perpetuity and to preserve our legacy in the manner in which we are proceeding.

Question: Is there an official date for the closing?

Answer: The final Shabbat weekend for Temple will be the last weekend of April 25-27, 2025.

Question: What is the Temple up to now?

Answer: The Temple will continue to function on a normal schedule until its final weekend. There will be weekly Shabbat services, festival services, High Holiday services, social and educational activities.

Question: What will happen to the Temple building and all of the religious artifacts?

Answer: The Temple building will be sold. The stained glass windows are an integral part of the structure and will not be removed. The stained glass window boxes will be removed and final plans for their placement are still in progress. Likewise, plans for the final placement of Torahs, prayer books and other religious artifacts are still in progress.

Question: What will happen to the Temple Elrod Cemetery?

Answer: We are currently in serious discussion with the Jewish Cemetery and Burial Association of Greater Pittsburgh to manage and maintain the cemetery.

Continued on page 11

A Brief History of Temple B'nai Israel....Then and Now

Question: What will happen to the yahrzeit plaques?

Answer: Once the Temple officially closes, the small Yahrzeit plaques in the sanctuary will be removed from each of the large Memorial plaques. For the cost of postage, we will mail the small plaques to anyone requesting them. For those living in the area, you may call the Temple office to make arrangements to pick them up. Yahrzeit plaques not requested will be buried in the Temple cemetery.

Question: Will there still be a Temple website?

Answer: Before the Temple's final closing, there will be a brand new website. Included on the site will be photos of confirmation classes, photos of individual Endowment plaques, photos of events, gravesites at Elrod Cemetery, and photos of small Yahrzeit plaques. Temple historical information and other photos will also be included on the website.

Question: Are there plans for a final farewell celebration?

Answer: Absolutely! Plans are already in motion for a Grand Finale & Reunion Weekend. We hope you will join us for a Shabbat weekend of friendship and shared memories on **April 25-27, 2025**. In addition to Rabbi Stein, Rabbis Schiff and Tuchman will be asked to participate in this special weekend. More information will be shared with everyone soon.

A 5th Question—Can We Ever Be Free?

-ReformJudaism.org-

Mah nishtanah halailah hazeh... "Why is this night different from all other nights?" our children ask us at the Passover Seder. Because, we answer, we were slaves to Pharaoh in Egypt and G-d set us free.

Free? Are you free?

Can a person with a mortgage be free? Can a person with a mother-in-law be free? Can a person with a job be free? Can a person without a job be free?

Freedom! Is there anything more desired yet more elusive? Is there a need more basic to our souls, yet so beyond our reach? How do we achieve freedom from the demands, cares and burdens of daily living?

But look at a child. Observe how they play, become immersed in a book, sleep and smile at their dreams. Assured that father and mother will feed them, protect them and worry about all that needs worrying about, the child is free. Free to revel in their inner self, free to grow and develop, open to the joys and possibilities of life.

This is why Passover, the festival of freedom, is so much the festival of the child. For it is the child who evokes in us the realization that we, too, are children of G-d, and are thus inherently and eternally free. It is the child who opens our eyes to the ultimate significance of Passover: that in taking us out of Egypt to make us His chosen people, G-d has liberated us of all enslavement and subjugation for all time.

The child is the most important participant at the Passover Seder. The entire Seder is constructed around the goal to mystify the child, to stimulate their curiosity, to compel them to ask: Why is this night different from all other nights?

The child asks, and we answer. But there is another dialogue taking place — a dialogue in which we ask, and the child explains.

Take a good look at your children and grandchildren this Passover. Pay them close attention — enter their mind, view reality from their perspective. For how else might we taste freedom?





**Temple B'nai Israel
 2025 Cypress Drive
 White Oak, PA. 15131**

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TEMPLE TALK

April 2024

The Bulletin of Temple B'nai Israel

Rabbi Howard Stein

President: **Lindi Kendal**; Vice President: **Dick Leffel**;

Secretary: **Rosalie Anstandig**; Treasurer: **Steve Klein**;

Office Manager: **Debbie Iszauk**

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