










**Purim  
Costumes  
From Our  
Past**

March  
2025

# Temple Talk

1 Adar—2 Nissan  
5785

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 <i>Rosh Chodesh 1 Adar</i>  <i>Terumah Shekalim</i>
2	3	4	5	6 Adult Education 7:30 pm Zoom	7 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm	8 <i>Tetzaveh Zachor</i>
9 	10	11	12	13  חג פורים שמח! Happy Purim!	14 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm	15 <i>Ki Tisa</i>
16	17	18 TBI Board Meeting—Zoom 7:30 pm	19	20  Hello Spring Adult Education 7:30 pm Zoom	21	22 Shabbat Service 10:00 am <i>Vayakhel Parah</i>
23	24 Final day to receive RSVP for Final Weekend	25 Final day to make hotel reservations	26	27	28 Shabbat Service 7:30 pm	29 <i>Pekudei Hachodesh</i>
30 <i>Rosh Chodesh 1 Nissan</i>	31	Check Page 7 for Information on Megillah Reading & Purim Celebration with Temple David & Parkway Jewish Center				



**The March 2025 *Temple Talk***  
**is sponsored by**  
**Rosalie & Lou Anstandig**  
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*Mollie & Ben Mayer*  
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**March 2025 Shabbat Services**

Friday	March	7	7:30 pm
Friday	March	14	7:30 pm
Saturday	March	22	10:00 am
Friday	March	28	7:30 pm

**Please Note: Friday night and Saturday morning Shabbat services during the upcoming winter months will be on Zoom only. A Saturday morning Shabbat service will be on the third Saturday of each month.**

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.tbioffice.org](http://www.tbioffice.org)



**Shabbat Candle Lighting Times**  
**March 2025**

Friday	March	7	6:00 pm
Friday	March	14	7:07 pm
Friday	March	21	7:15 pm
Friday	March	28	7:22 pm

## Executive Committee Message



In 1938, *Thanks for the Memory* was a popular song composed by Ralph Rainger with lyrics by Leo Robin for the film *The Big Broadcast* of 1938. It became the signature song of Bob Hope.

What is the meaning of “*thanks for the memories?*” It refers to a relationship that is over but was good. The relationship is just a memory but a nice memory. It means expressing gratitude for a shared experience, even if it is ending or bittersweet, essentially saying “I’ll cherish the time we had together—often used when reflecting on a positive past relationship or moment, even if it is now over.” Memories are powerful. They can make you smile; they can make you cry; they can make you angry and they can make you long for days old.

With that in mind, I dedicate this message to our beloved Temple B’nai Israel.

In many ways, our memories shape who we really are. It was a heartwarming moment for me when one of my granddaughters, who literally grew up in the Temple, realized how important the synagogue was in forming her life. Let’s take a walk down memory lane...My love for the Temple began almost 60 years ago, when I, as a young fiancée would go to the huge synagogue on Shaw Avenue in McKeesport. Therefore, I remember the many rabbis and soloists that led our congregation over the years. To name a few: Rabbi Robert Raab, Rabbi Sidney Goldstein, Rabbi Leonard Winograd, Rabbi Phillip Blachorsky, Rabbi Leonard Helman, Rabbi Daniel Schiff, Rabbi Paul Tuchman and our current Rabbi Howard Stein. We have had many soloists as well, from Morley Meridith and Ida Ray Hirsh to Andrea Guthrey, Lisa Lipkin and Barbara Barnett. Each of these men and women, unique in their own way, brought their various personalities and music to us.

At one point our membership came from near and wide—Monroeville and the Eastern Suburbs, Squirrel Hill, Oakland, Fox Chapel, Mt. Lebanon and the Western Suburbs. It is very sad that so many of our members have passed or moved away, leaving no one to replace them.

My years at Temple B’nai Israel have been a personal journey. So many of my family’s life events took place in the building on Shaw Avenue and then in the building on Cypress Street. We celebrated weddings, Bar/Bat Mitzvot, holidays, break-the-fasts, picnics, movies, Steeler parties, Purim in costume and so much more. Temple was instrumental both in Louis’ life and in his death. These I will always remember.

Very important to me, several years ago I celebrated my Adult Bat Mitzvah. In my day, females did not have a Bat Mitzvah. Through the tutoring and guidance of Rabbi Paul Tuchman, I was able to accomplish it as an adult, chanting Torah, Haftorah, delivering a d’var Torah and basically leading the service. Being Jewish is a shared history, culture, community and blessing. I am in!

My life was intertwined with the Temple since I was first a board member, then on the Executive Committee culminating in being the president. For the last few years, I have been writing a column for the Temple Talk. Thanks for the opportunity to share with you my thoughts and feelings on so many different topics.

To my beloved Temple B’nai Israel, I appreciate everything you have done for me. What is next? In the works is a website that will feature the Temple, its congregants, and include all yearzeit information that we already have. You can check with the office on how to include your names if you are not sure. We are guaranteed that our cemetery will be kept up and ready for future use when we are part of the Jewish Burial Society.

Farewell dear Temple. You will be greatly missed. I will never forget you. You played such an important part in my life and I miss you already.

Henrietta Szold once said “In the life of the spirit there is no ending that is not a beginning.” It will be interesting to see where we go from here. There are friends. There is family. And then there are friends that become family. You are all an important part of my Temple experience. It has been quite a run!

*Thanks for the memories!*

**Janice**

## Rabbi's Message



### Now Is the Time to Be a Zionist

*I* often hear Diaspora Jews express concern for Israel while wondering how to act on that concern. Especially now, we are at a turning point in Jewish history; October 7 demonstrated that threats to democracy and pluralism in Israel increase not only Israel's vulnerability to her enemies but to increased antisemitism around the world. Even here in *di goldene medine*, the "Golden Land," we are facing threats not previously seen in our lifetimes. So how can we, lovers of Zion looking on from our homes here, work for a safe, secure, and democratic future for the State of Israel? The short answer is "Vote!"

The World Zionist Congress (WZC), often called "The Parliament of the Jewish People," is an institution central to the Jewish people's aspirations and identity. It was conceived before the establishment of the State of Israel as a forum where all Jews could express their values. The WZC convenes every five years, and exerts governance over the decisions and budgets of Israel's major national institutions (the Jewish National Fund, the Jewish Agency for Israel, and the World Zionist Organization).

In the last WZC election, 14 different slates from across the religious and ideological spectrum won seats. While the Reform slate was the largest slate with over 25% of the votes, a new, ultra-Orthodox slate won over 16% of the votes cast. This is a concern because the Reform movement has been active in the WZC for nearly 50 years. This new slate is highly organized around a vision that writes Reform Jews out of the next chapter of Jewish history and will make Jews in Israel and around the world less safe:

- ◆ chipping away at Israel's democracy
- ◆ rolling back gains for gender equity, LGBTQ+ rights, and religious pluralism
- ◆ stripping Israeli Reform clergy (especially women) and communities of their rights, funding, and infrastructure
- ◆ expanding settlements and blocking any hope of peace between Israelis and Palestinians

The 2025 WZC election (taking place from March 10-May 4) presents a pivotal opportunity for us to exert our influence and shape the future of Israel. Any self-identified Jew who is at least 18, lives in the United States, and subscribes to the World Zionist Organization's Jerusalem Program is eligible to vote. The Jerusalem Program states:

- ◆ Zionism, the national liberation movement of the Jewish people, brought about the establishment of the State of Israel, and views a Jewish, Zionist, democratic and secure State of Israel to be the expression of the common responsibility of the Jewish people for its continuity and future.

Every vote is critical in this election, and I ask that we be guided by Rabbi Hillel's directive to not separate ourselves from the community. Now is the time to lean in, to exercise our responsibility for all Israel in supporting the vital work of the Reform voice in the World Zionist Congress. More information will be forthcoming in the next few weeks, and I am always available to discuss these issues and answer questions.

***Rabbi Howie Stein***

To connect with Rabbi Stein you may call or e-mail him directly at:  
513-600-5535 | [rabbi.howie.stein@gmail.com](mailto:rabbi.howie.stein@gmail.com)



Temple B'nai Israel gratefully acknowledges  
the following donations



**MEMORIAL DONATIONS**

**Sondra and Joe Mendlowitz**, *in memory of Joe's wife, Phyllis*  
**Laura and Chuck Broff**, *in memory of Chuck's mother, Jane*  
**Mariuza Odle**, *in memory of her husband, Bob*  
**Lynn and Joel Spiegel**, *in memory of Joel's grandfather, Z.L. Weiss*  
**Marc Goodman**, *in memory of his mother, Bette; grandfathers Sam Goodman and Z.L. Weiss*  
**Barbara and Bryan Rosenberger**, *in memory of Richard Rubinstein*  
**Susan and Mark Johnson**, *in memory of Susan's uncle, Merrill Brodsky*

**MUSIC, SIMCHA & GET WELL DONATIONS**

**Lynn and Jerry Harris**, thank you Temple B'nai Israel for your Rosh Hashanah services

**Mazel Tov to Mark Simon on his 80th birthday**

*Laura & Chuck Broff*  
*Debbie & Alan Iszauk*  
*Steve Mayer*  
*Diane & Barry Weiss*

**Refuah Shlema—רפואה שלמה**

*A Prayer of Healing and  
Return to Good Health*



**Gary Gaal \* Sondra Mendlowitz**

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

*Mazel Tov*

**March Birthdays and Anniversaries  
will be acknowledged during our Shabbat service  
on Friday, March 14**

**Birthdays**

**Lindi Kendal**, Debbie Swartz, Steve Denenberg

**Anniversaries**

Sondra & Joe Mendlowitz \* Laura & Chuck Broff



### Purim 2025

Parkway Jewish Center will be hosting both Temple B'nai Israel and Temple David for a festive celebration of Purim and Megillah reading. And of course what is a Jewish celebration without food! Featuring a light dinner and hamantaschen. All ages enthusiastically welcomed!

**Date: Thursday, March 13 | Time: 5:30 pm**

**Location: Penn Center East—Rec 333**

**More information to follow — Check your Friday Shabbat emails for details**

### Temple B'nai Israel Legacy Website—Coming Soon!

For more than 113 years, Temple B'nai Israel of McKeesport and later White Oak, has touched the lives of thousands of people. Our new website, will feature a treasure trove of information including the ability to look up and view individual cemetery plots at Elrod Cemetery and view yahrzeit plaques and future yahrzeit dates. This new site will also allow you to search by name and find confirmation pictures, endowments and view the history of Temple that includes a comprehensive timeline of our history including Rabbis and Presidents.

This labor of love was the vision of Dick Leffel with the support of TBI member Anthony Arnowitz,. Together the two of them have spent literally 100's of hours over the past year photographing, chronicling, and building an impressive website. Information from this site will also be shared with the Rauh Jewish Archives at the Heinz History Center and JewishGen.org—the Home of Jewish Genealogy. We are grateful to Dick and Anthony for their vision and dedication to preserve our Temple history .



### Thank you for your March Chai Fund Donations



**Rosalie and Lou Anstandig**, *in memory of Rosalie's father, Ben Mayer; Lou's sister, Esther Florence Anstandig*

**Ruth and Scott Apter**, *in memory of Scott's uncle, Earl Scott*

**Laura and Chuck Broff**, *in memory of Chuck's mother, Jane*

**Claudia and Warren Finkel**, *in memory of Warren's mother, Hilda; Claudia's grandfather, Isadore Marcus*

**Gary Gaal**, *in memory of his grandfather, Alexander Gaal*

**Janice Greenwald**, *in memory of Louis' grandmother, Annie Gross*

**Debbie and Alan Iszauk**, *in memory of Debbie's mother, Marie Friedman*

**Susan and Mark Johnson**, *in memory of Susan's grandfather, Herman Brodsky*

**Lindi and Ron Kendal**, *in memory of Ron's grandmother, Mollie Kandel Spodek*

**Marcia and Steve Klein**, *in memory of Marcia's mother, Sylvia Schwartz*

**Marsha and Dick Leffel**, *in memory of Marsha's grandfathers, Samuel Goodman and Z.L. Weiss*

**Sue and Richard Linzer**, *in memory of Sue's mother, Betty Rosenberg*

**Steve Mayer**, *in memory of his father, Ben*

**Blossom Mendlowitz**, *in memory of her mother, Honey Klein*

**Sondra and Joseph Mendlowitz**, *in memory of Joe's mother, Edith Mendlowitz*

**Susan Rack**, *in memory of her mother, Reva*

**Susan Sabin**, *in memory of her grandfather, Joseph Odle*

**Lynn & Joel Spiegel**, *in memory of Joel's grandfather, Zelman Weiss*

**James Steiner**, *in memory of his mother, June*

**Nancy and Gary Tuckfelt**, *in memory of Gary's father, Melvin*

**Terry and Len Young**, *in memory of Len's grandmother, Nettie Young; Len's grandfather, Nicholas Bergman*

**Yahrzeits from 2 Adar - 29 Adar 5785: March 2—March 29, 2025**

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

**Yahrzeit names observed week of: March 2**

**Jacob Zeidman : Adar 2 : 3/2/2025**  
**Mose Snyder : Adar 2 : 3/2/2025**  
**Samuel Miller : Adar 2 : 3/2/2025**  
Keith Scharding : Adar 3 : 3/3/2025  
**Mary Weisberg : Adar 3 : 3/3/2025**  
**Bertha Lebowitz : Adar 4 : 3/4/2025**  
**Jacob Schachter : Adar 4 : 3/4/2025**  
Nettie Young : Adar 4 : 3/4/2025  
Samuel Goodman : Adar 4 : 3/4/2025  
**Benjamin Miller : Adar 5 : 3/5/2025**  
**Bessie Greenblat : Adar 5 : 3/5/2025**  
**Ella Levy : Adar 5 : 3/5/2025**  
**Baruch Raden : Adar 6 : 3/6/2025**  
**Israel Weiss : Adar 6 : 3/6/2025**  
**Samuel Zolten : Adar 6 : 3/6/2025**  
Sylvia Schwartz : Adar 6 : 3/6/2025  
Zelman Weiss : Adar 6 : 3/6/2025  
**Benjamin Weiss : Adar 7 : 3/7/2025**  
**Fannie Friedman : Adar 7 : 3/7/2025**  
**David Roth : Adar 8 : 3/8/2025**  
**Elek Klein : Adar 8 : 3/8/2025**  
**Estelle Escovitz : Adar 8 : 3/8/2025**  
**Fannie Schwartz : Adar 8 : 3/8/2025**  
**Max Gold : Adar 8 : 3/8/2025**

**Yahrzeit names observed week of: March 9**

**Bernard Friedman : Adar 9 : 3/9/2025**  
**Bernard Kline : Adar 9 : 3/9/2025**  
**Max Donde : Adar 9 : 3/9/2025**  
**Minnie Mehlman : Adar 9 : 3/9/2025**  
**Aaron Naimark : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025**  
**Bertha Krow : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025**  
Earl Scott : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025  
Elsie Halpern : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025  
**Joseph Odle : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025**  
**Naomi Levine : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025**  
Oscar Wander : Adar 10 : 3/10/2025  
Allen Neil : Adar 11 : 3/11/2025  
Margit Mendel : Adar 11 : 3/11/2025  
**Murray Beidof : Adar 11 : 3/11/2025**  
**Reva Rack : Adar 11 : 3/11/2025**

**Names continued from weeks of: March 9**

**Sarah Devore Raden : Adar 11 : 3/11/2025**  
**A. M. Simon : Adar 12 : 3/12/2025**  
**Frank Bortz : Adar 12 : 3/12/2025**  
**Louis E. Broder : Adar 12 : 3/12/2025**  
**Sarah Adler : Adar 12 : 3/12/2025**  
**Bernice Israel : Adar 13 : 3/13/2025**  
Jack Angerman : Adar 13 : 3/13/2025  
**Jakob Weinblum : Adar 13 : 3/13/2025**  
**Samuel Hirshberg, Sr. : Adar 13 : 3/13/2025**  
**Fannie Zlotziver : Adar 14 : 3/14/2025**  
**Hilda Finkel : Adar 14 : 3/14/2025**  
**Irene Stein : Adar 14 : 3/14/2025**  
**Madeline Berkowitz : Adar 14 : 3/14/2025**  
**Pearl Moritz : Adar 14 : 3/14/2025**  
Annie Gross : Adar 15 : 3/15/2025  
**David Berger : Adar 15 : 3/15/2025**  
Jane Broff : Adar 15 : 3/15/2025  
**Steven Benovitz : Adar 15 : 3/15/2025**  
**Sylvia Abrams : Adar 15 : 3/15/2025**

**Yahrzeit names observed week of: March 16**

**Fannie Lebovitz : Adar 16 : 3/16/2025**  
**Ida W. Kaplan : Adar 17 : 3/17/2025**  
**Lena Gottlieb : Adar 17 : 3/17/2025**  
**June Steiner : Adar 18 : 3/18/2025**  
**Marvin Gerendash : Adar 18 : 3/18/2025**  
**Sarah Lazar : Adar 18 : 3/18/2025**  
**Arthur Stern : Adar 19 : 3/19/2025**  
**Edward Kline : Adar 19 : 3/19/2025**  
**Norman Skolsky : Adar 19 : 3/19/2025**  
**Rose Kalstone : Adar 19 : 3/19/2025**  
**Mollie Kandel Spodek : Adar 20 : 3/20/2025**  
**Molly Weiss Gonzales : Adar 20 : 3/20/2025**  
**Morris Lux : Adar 20 : 3/20/2025**  
**Rose Zolten : Adar 20 : 3/20/2025**  
**Theodore Israel : Adar 20 : 3/20/2025**  
**Albert Weiss : Adar 21 : 3/21/2025**  
**Jacob Lazar : Adar 21 : 3/21/2025**  
**Mary Fetters : Adar 21 : 3/21/2025**  
Nathan Shapiro : Adar 21 : 3/21/2025

Continued on page 9



**Yahrzeits from 1 Adar—29 Adar 5785: March 1—March 29, 2025**

**- Continued from page 8 -**

***Yahrzeit names observed week of: March 23***

***Benjamin Goldstein : Adar 23 : 3/23/2025***  
***Bertha Fisher : Adar 23 : 3/23/2025***  
***David Lucas : Adar 23 : 3/23/2025***  
***Herman Brodsky : Adar 23 : 3/23/2025***  
***Harry Fisher : Adar 24 : 3/24/2025***  
***Benjamin Kline : Adar 25 : 3/25/2025***  
***Betty Rosenberg : Adar 25 : 3/25/2025***  
***Esther Florence Anstandig : Adar 25 : 3/25/2025***  
***Lena Schwartz : Adar 25 : 3/25/2025***  
***Melvin Schwartz : Adar 25 : 3/25/2025***  
***Miriam Adler : Adar 25 : 3/25/2025***  
***Bernard Kalstone : Adar 26 : 3/26/2025***  
***Bessie Kaplan : Adar 27 : 3/27/2025***  
***Joseph Lebovitz : Adar 29 : 3/29/2025***

***Max Feldman : Adar 30 : 3/29/2025***  
***Sam Sabin : Adar 30 : 3/29/2025***  
***Yitchok Solomon : Adar 29 : 3/29/2025***  
***Honey Klein : Adar 27 : 3/27/2025***  
***Ida Roobin : Adar 27 : 3/27/2025***  
***Julia Baumgarth : Adar 27 : 3/27/2025***  
***Kate Bloom : Adar 27 : 3/27/2025***  
***Nicholas Bergsman : Adar 27 : 3/27/2025***  
***David Israel : Adar 28 : 3/28/2025***  
***Fannie Klein : Adar 28 : 3/28/2025***  
***Helen Reiter Sand : Adar 28 : 3/28/2025***  
***Henry Shussett : Adar 28 : 3/28/2025***  
***Marie Friedman : Adar 28 : 3/28/2025***  
***Abraham Fisher : Adar 29 : 3/29/2025***

*May their Memories continue to be a blessing*

**Important Updates & Information on Final Weekend Celebration**



[tbiwhiteoak.org](http://tbiwhiteoak.org)

**The excitement is building for the Temple's Final Weekend Celebration & Reunion.**

**Reminder: Your RSVPS are due by March 24  
Hotel Room Block Reservations are open until March 25**

**Make sure to check the Temple website (use QR code) for additional important information about the Final Weekend**

**We are pleased to share with you that along with Rabbi Stein; Rabbis Schiff and Tuchman with Cantor Barbara Barnett, Lisa Lipkin and Andrea Guthrey will all be participating in our Final Shabbat services.**

***What will happen with the yahrzeit plaques?***

**Answer:** Family members that would like their loved ones' yahrzeit plaque may request it. Following the Final Weekend, you will be able to pick-up your plaques during Temple office hours: Monday – Friday from 9:00 am—1:00 pm. Please call the Temple office to make your request known.

If you are from out of town, plaques can be mailed to you. There will be a prepaid fee to cover the cost of shipping and handling. Contact the Temple office for information.

***What will happen to all of the artifacts and art at the Temple?***

**Answer:** During the Final Weekend, many pieces of artwork and Judaica will be made available for sale. Items will be identified, and a minimum opening bid will be posted for each item. Items will be awarded that night. Temple will accept cash, checks or credit cards for payment. Individuals will be encouraged to claim and leave with their artwork that night. Packing and shipping of items are the responsibility of each person. Religious items, such as mezuzahs, will not be removed until our after the final weekend.



## The Hidden Meaning of Purim

By: RACHEL ZERIN is a rabbi at Temple Emanu-El, in Providence.

Purim has many traditions, but only five commandments: joy, reading the *megillah* in the evening; reading the *megillah* in the morning; enjoying a festive meal; *mishloach manot*, giving gifts of at least two different types of food to at least one person; and *mat'not la-eyyonim*, giving money to the poor – traditionally, enough money for two people to each buy a meal. And so, the question is: Why did the rabbis decide that these five commandments are a necessary part of celebrating?

Purim? What is the common theme that ties these acts to the central message of Purim?

One thing that binds these commandments together is the Book of Esther itself. Toward the end of the *megillah*, we read that Mordechai wrote a letter to all the Jews, explaining what had happened and telling them to “make days of feasting and gladness, and sending portions to one another, and giving gifts to the poor” (Esther 9:22).

These commandments, then, are about re-creating the original Purim.

Contained in this same verse from the *megillah* is another theme of Purim that unites these commandments: Mordechai tells the Jews to mark “the month in which things switched from sorrow to joy and from mourning to celebration.” We bring joy to ourselves and others by feasting, sharing food with our friends and the poor, and by retelling the story of Purim, knowing our happy ending from the very beginning.

But these verses containing Mordechai’s commands and the theme of joy are not the only things that unite these five commandments. There is one other theme that unites them: revealing the hidden.

The Book of Esther is unique in that it is the only book in the Bible that does not mention God’s name a single time. This was so strange that there is a discussion in the Talmud about whether the Book of Esther should even be included in the Bible. Rabbis were not the only ones who found this troubling – in Christian versions of the Old Testament, there are several verses added to the Book of Esther simply to include God’s name in the story.

As we all know, Esther was included in our Bible in the end, and without God’s name. But that doesn’t mean that God isn’t there.

The rabbis saw a connection between the name Esther and the Hebrew word *hester*, or hidden. They saw the meaning of Esther’s name, combined with the absence of any explicit mention of God, and took this as an indication that the Book of Esther is about that which is hidden.

Although we don’t find God’s name explicitly mentioned, Jews have always understood the story to be one in which God acts in hidden, subtle ways. It is because of the hidden presence of God that Esther becomes queen, that she is able to gain favor with King Ahasuerus and that she is ultimately able to have the king overturn Haman’s evil decree. God may not be explicitly there, but God is present. It is as if God is a stagehand, dressed in black, working behind the scenes to make sure that everything goes as it should.

Esther herself is also hidden – she hides her identity as a Jew from the king and most of his court. It is only because of this that she is able to get Haman and Ahasuerus to attend the feasts she has prepared, and to ultimately overturn Haman’s plan. And it is both because she hid her identity and because she ultimately revealed it that she was able to save her people.

The story of Esther, then, is about the hidden and the revealed. But what does this have to do with the commandments of Purim?

The three other commandments are a little less obvious. At first glance, it may seem that giving gifts to the poor has little to do with the hidden and the revealed. However, there is actually a strong connection between the two.

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## The Hidden Meaning of Purim

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Although giving *tzedakah* is always a *mitzvah*, in reality, the poor are often ignored and marginalized to the extent that we no longer see them.

Generally, *tzedakah* can be given either directly, straight into the hands of the person who needs it, or indirectly, through an organization or an individual appointed to distribute funds to the needy.

On Purim, we are asked to give as directly as possible, and are even encouraged to go out of our way to encounter people to whom we can give. Commanding us to give money to the poor in the midst of one of our most joyous holidays forces us to see those whom we may have been ignoring, to reveal the hidden in our community.

There is also sensitivity to the fact that those who are poor might be so well hidden that we do not know who they are. And so, in case there are people in our community whose needs have not been revealed to us, we give gifts of food to everyone. We also partake in festive meals, in which we feast with others in our community. These meals are a *mitzvah*, a commandment, so that the community is obligated to provide these meals and no one can remain hidden from the joy that permeates Purim.

Perhaps the main message of Purim, is that we must reveal that which is hidden in our midst. We must make sure that we do not overlook those in want in our communities. We must seek out and include everyone in our feasting and our gift giving, so that, for at least one day a year, no one will be hidden from our community. In this way, too, do we help to reveal the hidden presence of God by recognizing the spark of the divine that exists in all of us, by affirming the sanctity of each and every person.

This Purim, you are encouraged to pay attention to those who have been hidden from you. Who is in need that you haven't noticed – in your immediate community, in the greater Jewish community, in the global community? How can you reveal those who are hidden to yourself, and to others? How can you make their needs known, and draw in those who are marginalized?

May we all fulfill the specific commandments of Purim – listening to the megillah, feasting, giving mishloach manot, and giving gifts to the poor, and may we do so in a way that also fulfills the spirit of revealing that which is hidden.

The connection to reading the *megillah* should be somewhat obvious. If the *megillah* is about the hidden presence of God, then reading it through our interpretive lens is about experiencing God's hidden presence and the way God acts behind the scenes. The blessings we recite both before and after reading explicitly bless God for being the one who saves us, revealing God's hidden presence in the *megillah* through the blessings that bracket it.

### On A Parting Note....

This is but one of many parting messages that will continue to be shared over the next several weeks as we count down the final days of our beloved Temple B'nai Israel. What a wonderful experience it has been to return as a member to the Temple where I grew up, and to work in the Temple office (where my mother-in-law Claire once sat) and talk with all of you over the past 5 years. Every day when the phone rings, I looked forward to finding out who is calling. The surprise and joy of hearing your voices and being able to answer your questions is a gift that I treasure every day.

April will be the final issue of *Temple Talk*....all of us who worked diligently to bring you the news of Temple—Thank you to Rabbi Stein and Janice Greenwald for their inspiring messages. Thank you to each of the wonderful, diligent proofreaders: Rosalie Anstandig, Janice Greenwald, Lindi Kendal, Marsha and Dick Leffel. ...And finally, a thanks to each of you for your support. Hope to see in April. **Debbie**



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 2025 Cypress Drive  
 White Oak, PA. 15131

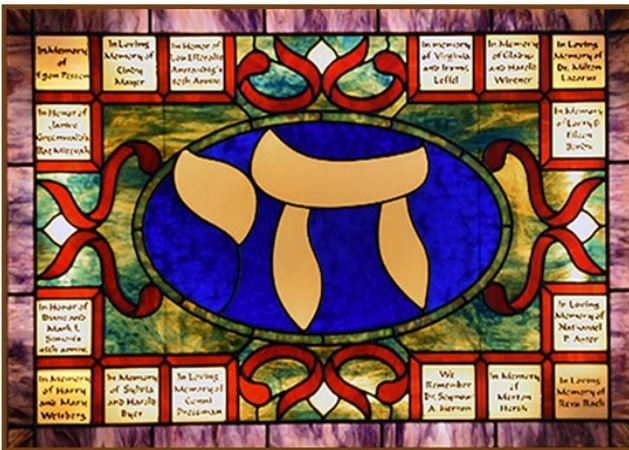
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*The Bulletin of  
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**March 2025**



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