



Connections

Winter 2013-2014 — 5774

X-Men Judaism

Rabbi Jonathan L. Hecht, Ph.D.

X-Men is a comic book series about “mutants.” They look and act like ordinary people, but there is something that is different about them. They have special powers, which they have to keep hidden and under control. Of course, sometimes, they will be able to use those powers to save the world.

Imagine my surprise when I got an email from one of them! Well, not a real X-Man, rather, I heard from someone who told me he was a mutant. Right after the High Holy Days, I received this email: *“Rabbi, I feel like I am a mutant. My connection with Judaism is as a heritage, not a religion. I carry my Jewishness in my heart, the beauty of its history and its culture. But I simply cannot relate to the religious side. It alienates me, and, I think, many other people like me. I would love to be part of a community that actively welcomed me and didn’t make us mutants feel like we were outsiders.”*

I think that many American Jews feel like this man. In our country, Judaism is a mixture of both cultural and religious elements. For most liberal Jews, the emphasis is definitely on the cultural and the need to support Israel. We express our Jewishness in different ways: the things we eat, family gatherings, coming together on the High Holy Days, Passover seders, living ethically, reading Jewish books, enjoying Jewish humor or music. The Jewish community is made up of all kinds of people from all different backgrounds and lots of different levels of belief (and even non-belief).

According to the most recent survey of Jewish life in America, a significant number of Jews identified themselves as “Jewish without religion.” This is part of a trend among Americans in general; more people, when asked about their faith, identify themselves as “none.” The problem for us is that when Jews assimilate into American culture, we lose our Jewish identity very quickly, and simply blend into a non-Jewish world.



Temple Chaverim is here to help. We are a home for both X-Men Jews and religious Jews. Lots of people love coming to services because they believe everything the prayer book says. Those people are “Jews with religion.” But for those mutants among us, “Jews without religion,” Temple Chaverim is a place where you can feel welcome, too. I hope you will never feel hypocritical sitting in our sanctuary. Temple Chaverim has lots of access points. We are big enough for everyone who wants to be connected to other Jews. There are many entry points into Jewish life, and Temple Chaverim has it all: Jewish music, food, learning, community, social, social action and living.

Every X-Men character struggled to celebrate what made him or her different while remaining a part of a larger community. That same struggle continues. We are all X-Men and Women... searching for meaning in our Jewish identity while trying to make a difference in the world.

A Chanukah and Thanksgiving Celebration: It’s Thanksgivukkah!

“How about a few more latkes to go with that turkey?” Chanukah fell on Thanksgiving in 2013! How did you combine your holidays? Did you serve sweet potato latkes with your turkey? How about cranberry apple sauce?

This year, for the first time since Thanksgiving was enacted in 1863, the first day of Chanukah coincided with Turkey Day. It was a unique double holiday that will not happen exactly like this again for over 70,000 years. Although the holidays will overlap again, the first day convergence has only happened once before, in 1888. It won’t overlap in some way again until 2070, and then again in 2165, according to calculations by Jonathan Mizrahi, a quantum physicist at the Sandia National Laboratories in New Mexico. After that, the first day of Chanukah won’t coincide with Thanksgiving until the year 76,695. No matter what metric one uses, Thanksgivukkah has garnered a significant following.



Mizrahi’s mathematical analysis received over 100,000 page views online, to his utter amazement. “When I first did this, I thought it was interesting, but I did not expect anywhere near the response I got,” Mizrahi said.

Thanksgiving and Chanukah share many of the same values: dedication, peace between nations, gratitude, and family. The stories of the Maccabees and Pilgrims are natural compliments - both were being persecuted for their religious beliefs, and both celebrate overcoming a struggle and being thankful.

Temple Chaverim celebrates the dual holidays with the lighting of a special ‘Menurkey,’ pictured here. Congregants have been invited to bring in their own creative interpretation of a Thanksgivukkah menorah. The Cantor prepared some special holiday songs, notably “The Ballad of Thanksgivukkah.” If you would like to add a new song to your Chanukah playlist here is the link: https://soundcloud.com/rabbidavid/thanksgivukkah?utm_source=soundcloud&utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=email. And for dessert, traditional Israeli sufganiot (jelly donuts) at the oneg -- simply delicious! Happy Chanukah! Simply delicious! Happy Chanukah!

President's Message — Relational Judaism

On April 25th, 2012, I was in Atlanta, Georgia for the Annual Scheidt Seminar with one hundred other temple presidents-elect from around the country. There were many inspiring moments. Rabbi Rick Jacobs, President of the URJ, presided over various aspects of the weekend, and I remember him telling us novices to "Rise above the everyday managing of the temple's affairs and to become 'Visionaries.' Wow! How beautifully esoteric and holistically spiritually sounding that was!

One of the most inspirational talks was by Steven Gitler, temple president at Adath Emanu-El in New Jersey. He quoted from a book called *Relational Judaism: Using the Power of Relationships to Transform the Jewish Community*, by Dr. Ron Wolfson.

"(Dr. Wolfson) talks about how Jewish institutions have traditionally been programmatic in their focus -- kind of the "build it and they will come" mentality. They work to plan events, working out every detail of the event. But what is happening more and more is that people come to programs, have a good time, but leave having made no connection to the institution in the process. We're doing great at the programmatic part, but we're falling down on the building relationships part. People come for programs but they stay for relationships. I've come to many events that I probably never would have come to on my own because I have friends here and they were coming. This really got me thinking. In order to keep having successful programs, grow the congregation and raise funds more effectively, we need to get better at the relational part.

People most often join synagogues because they are seeking connections and become a part of the community. When you ask our members why they joined, almost everyone will say it was because of how friendly and down to earth and welcoming everyone was. I want us to make sure that the same level of personal connection continues on in every contact people have with our synagogue because that's what will make people want to stay. That is what will keep our Jewish community strong."

This past High Holidays, I challenged everyone to participate and build those connections at Temple Chaverim. Let us work together. How can we help build relationships? How can we help make people feel more connected? And it isn't about email, Facebook, the Bulletin or regular mail. It is about one on one, personal, face to face, or telephone conversations. We need to talk to one another. Don't be surprised if you get a phone call from me, and you are more than welcome to call me, too! I want

to hear your ideas and thoughts.

I must say that it is the relationships that I have formed and the challenges I have faced that have forced me to grow personally in ways I never imagined.

I'm looking forward to continuing to serve my most precious synagogue, Temple Chaverim.

Warmly,
Bruce Steifman



Bruce and friends, Rob Herenstein (left) and Ron Samuel (right) at the Sukkah Social

Cantor's Corner

Cantor Bradley Hyman

We had a magnificent fall season, filled with holidays, special events, and many reasons to celebrate with congregants, friends and families who genuinely care about one another and Temple Chaverim. We have fantastic offerings, which I hope many of you will consider participating in.

Starting off, we have our very successful **Guitar Shabbat** coming up on **January 24, 2014**, and our new **Band Shabbat** coming up on **March 28, 2014!** Many of you have asked me how one can join these wonderful groups of musicians. The answer is: call or send me an email and tell me you want to join! Guitar Shabbat always has room for more, especially bass guitarists.



Cantor Brad, daughter Liora, Mike Shackman, Steve Pinsky at Guitar Shabbat

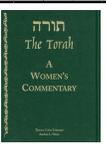
The Band Shabbat musicians would be especially happy to welcome bassists, percussionists and brass to fill out our horn section. Even if you just want to try it out, come join in one of our practice sessions. We are all about having fun, making new friends and creating a joyful sound.

Beginning in January, I will be teaching a class that will enable you to feel confident to lead a **Shiva Minyan**. Congregants will become more familiar with our liturgy and our *minyan* books, which are transliterated. Each student will also receive a CD with all the prayers and blessings -- read or chanted for practice purposes. **Classes will meet on Mondays at 7:30 pm, January 6, 13, and 27.** Please call the Temple office to register.

Here is some advance notice: beginning in March, you will have a chance to "**Cook with the Cantor.**" We will look at the origins of various dishes and prepare some of the most beloved recipes from our collective tables. So many of our foods are associated with the people who put them on the table, but where did it all come from? Let us eat and explore together. We will meet on **Mondays at 7:30 pm, March 3, 10, and 24.** I will need you to register to make sure we have enough food for everyone.

In Religious School we have been singing up a storm! This year I have been going into the classrooms, and one thing I can tell you is our kids love to sing! It has been so much fun working together and making music.

Rabbi Bennet's class, **Listening to the Voices of Our Past: the Women's Torah Commentary**, meets Wednesday at 8 pm, once a month until May 7. All women -- and, yes, men, too -- are invited to explore a different parashah at each session, while focusing on the voices of women, who for so long were not permitted to contribute to the ongoing dialogue and study of Torah. **Upcoming dates are: December 11, January 8, February 12.**



Our Newest Temple Members

Shalom, Chaverim!

*Sandy and Esther Beberman
Mindy and Emma Berlowitz
Keith, Kara, Brett and Jesse Bockstein
Kerry, Kim, Ian and Matthew Brecker
Matthew, Melissa, Skylar and Bradley Cowen
Robert, Sharon, Glenn and Melissa Dym
Jonathan, Rose, Julia, Adam and Gavin Fisch
Jesse Gerlitz and Amy Oster
Shelly Gooler and Peggy Jacobs
Glen, Lisa and Ben Grondahl
Harold, Tina and Erica Hoffman
Seth, Stefani, Jack, Logan and Sydney Horowitz
Michael, Barbara, Zachary and Shannon Kalish
Jeffrey, Michelle, Jake and Joshua Kert
Ruth Labensky
Samuel and Joanne Levant, Bari Talente and
Bridget Pritchard
Edmund and Sheila Michael
Roy, Debi and Zach Pikser
Norman and June Prisant
Robert, Sharon, Aaron and Evan Savary
Irwin and Shirley Stern
Ian, Evan and Benjamin Weinberg
Eric, Rachel, Seth and Ari Ziman*

Please Join Us for Friday Night Dinner!



December 20—New Member Shabbat

All welcome to attend No charge for new members
Adults—\$20 Children—\$10
RSVP to Louise at lsunshine@templechaverim.org by 12/13.

January 31—Matzah Ball Madness!

RSVP to Louise at lsunshine@templechaverim.org by 1/24.

Bar & Bat Mitzvah Mazel Tov

Eli Kellner	12/7/2013	Robert & Suzanne
Chloe Haber	12/7/2013	Monica & Albert
Sydney Schmidt	12/14/2013	Corey & Rachel
Reed Altschul	12/14/2013	Marc & Rhonda
Jake Solomon	1/4/2014	Todd & Danielle
Kayla Menkes	1/4/2014	Adam & Julie
Jacob Weber	1/4/2014	Ron & Sherri
Ethan Bloom	1/11/2014	Mark & Amy
Sari Guttenberg	1/11/2014	Jeremy & Stacy
Alec Pankin	1/18/2014	David & Marni
Zachary Lichtenstein	1/18/2014	Steven & Ava/ Cindy Scherk
Matthew Leav	1/18/2014	Daniel & Jill
Ethan Berlent	1/25/2014	Jonathan & Leslie
Alexis Wolf	1/25/2014	Mark & Sarane
Hannah Traub	2/1/2014	Russell & Karen
Sarah Levine	2/1/2014	Seth & Rachel
Ryan Hollander	2/8/2014	Mark & Susan
Ethan Treihaft	2/8/2014	Leonard & Stacey
Eric Rosenblatt	3/1/2014	Brett & Shari
Brooke Reamer	3/1/2014	Richard & Jennifer
Amanda Schwartzberg	3/2/2014	Jay & Barbi

Youngest Member



Temple Chaverim welcomes our youngest member: Hannah Eve Stern born on August 4, 2013, shown here with her proud parents, Dr. Michael and Rebecca Stern, just before her naming ceremony in October. She is the granddaughter of Hal and Debbye Brandell, our Religious School Principal.

Men's Club

• **Card and Game Nights**

4th Wednesday of each month at 7:30 pm
RSVP to Jamie Ortsman at ortsman96@gmail.com.
Food \$20 per person



• **Monthly Meetings**

Sundays 9:30 am
December 15, January 19, February 16
Contact David Bluth at davidbluth@hotmail.com.

Donate Blood and Help Save Lives!



Sunday, December 8 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM

Free breakfast courtesy of
Men's Club & Hasson Caterers

Free pint Ben's chicken soup

Chance to win pair of tickets to
Super Bowl at Met Life Stadium in NJ

For details, call **Steve Lefkowitz 516-507-9992**.



Religious School Goes Artsy!



Did you grow up craving the next edition of Spiderman, Iron Man or the Incredible Hulk? Thank Stan Lee. Do you own something with the "I Love New York" logo? Thank Milton Glaser! Have you ever coveted a Judith Leiber bag? Obvious who to thank for that one! Read on to learn about the incredibly creative new initiative happening in December in our Religious School.

Thanks to our Temple Chaverim Congregant Debbie Wells, herself a graduate of Parsons School of Design in NYC and an award winning graphic designer and photographer, our students will be learning about Jewish people in America who have been incredibly successful in the fields of art and design.

This innovative program will include art workshops where the students will have the opportunity to experiment with some of the creative concepts and art techniques that made these people famous and successful. Artists that they will be learning about include: Al Hirschfeld, known for hiding his daughter Nina's name in his caricatures; Judith Leiber, a Holocaust survivor, who turned the evening handbag into a piece of wearable art worn by the rich and famous; and Ralph Lauren, an iconic designer whose artistic talents have enabled him to become one of the richest men in the world.



One of the most exciting parts will be a field trip to view the current **Peter Max Exhibit at the Nassau County Museum of Art** (pictured above). During a guided tour, everyone will get a chance to see up close his original drawings filled with glorious colors and whimsy.

The culminating event will be on **Friday, January 3**, our very own **ART EXPO**, featuring the work our own students created during the art workshops. Everyone is invited to come admire the artwork and "kvell!"

This is going to be a fantastic experience for our young people and may even encourage a few of the kids to create their own successful careers in the arts!

Debbie Brandell, Principal, Religious School

Stay, Play and Pray



We are happy to continue **Stay, Play and Pray** - an exciting series of creative workshops designed to introduce our **youngest students (ages 4 and 5) and their parents** to the Jewish holidays, Shabbat and Israel.

Join us as we discover the Jewish year through projects, stories, songs, food, fun!!

Sundays 9:00 - 10:15 am
December 15, January 25, March 9

Open to Temple members & the community (at no charge)

Religious School Consecration



We welcomed and blessed some of our newest students during the Simchat Torah service.



Times & dates of programs may change. Refer to flyers, emails and the calendar at www.templechaverim.org

Loving Learning at Chaverim!



Families Celebrating Fall Festivals



TEEN YOUTH ENGAGEMENT: An Exciting Jewish Teen Experience (Grades 8-12)



Tuesday Night Live involves our teens in meaningful, innovative, and fun experiences that will enhance their Jewish identity and encourage a lifelong connection to Judaism. We seek to help our teens acquire the tools to make decisions throughout life based on Jewish values and to further strengthen their connections to the Jewish community and to each other.



Questions? Please contact Rabbi Bennet at (516) 367-6100 ext. 121 or rabbibennet@templechaverim.org.

Joining **Tuesday Night Live!** includes membership in our **CHATY** youth group and **NFTY**.

TNL Dates to Remember

Chanukah Celebration	Tuesday 12/3
HUC Soup Kitchen in NYC	Monday 12/9
Cooking for the Needy	Tuesday 1/14
NFTY Winter Kallah	Friday-Sunday 1/31-2/2
Midrash & Manicures for Girls	Tuesday 2/11
Religious Action Center in Washington DC (10th graders only)	Friday-Monday 3/21-3/24



*Tuesday Nights
Come Alive
at Chaverim!
Be a part of the fun!*



Junior Youth Group – JCHATY

- **JCHATY for boys and girls grades 5-7**
- **JGirls (for girls ONLY!) grades 5-7**

Events are from 6:15 to 8:00 pm

Contact Robyn Smith (robyn@templechaverim.org) for details.

Adult volunteers are needed to chaperone and assist at events.

Please contact Youth Committee Co-Chairs Michelle Chalfen (Michntodd@verizon.net) or Beth Tabak (Bethjon@optonline.net).

Chanukah Party	Tuesday 12/3 (JCHATY & JGirls)
Make Holiday Cards for Elderly	Tuesday 12/10 (JGirls only)
Cooking for the Needy	Tuesday 1/14 (JGirls only)
Sandwich Making	Tuesday 1/28 (JCHATY & JGirls)
Pizza & Midrash Manicures	Tuesday 2/11 (JGirls only)
Old School Game Night	Tuesday 2/25 (JCHATY & JGirls)



Chalk the Parking Lot—JCHATY Fundraiser



LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMMING

Sociable Seniors



More than 270 people attended the October program of Sociable Seniors where Touro College Law Professor Christopher Williamson presented the **“Eight Jewish Supreme Court Justices.”** You could hear a pin drop as he regaled everyone with stories that ranged from funny to poignant.

On **Thursday, December 5th, at 11:45 am**, join the Sociable Seniors for a journey to the Jews of the Far East. Rabbi Marvin Tokayer will captivate you with amazing stories when he presents **“Pepper, Silk and Ivory: the Exotic Jews of China, Japan and India.”** After his ordination, Rabbi Tokayer served as a United States Air Force Chaplain in Japan. Upon his discharge, he returned to Tokyo to serve for eight years as the rabbi for the Jewish community of Japan.

Based on his travel and research throughout China, Japan and India, he uncovered 2,500 years of Jewish life including literally the last of the Chinese Jews and a long lost Jewish cemetery in Nagasaki. Rabbi Tokayer researched how these countries opened their doors to Jews seeking asylum, becoming a sanctuary for thousands of Jewish refugees escaping first, the Russian Revolution, and later the Holocaust. Learn about the Jewish communities that still thrive there today.

On **March 6, 2014**, we are in for a special treat when **Alice Golembo**, presents **“Aunt Goldie,”** based on growing up as the grandniece of Golda Meir. She will share amusing stories of her aunt, with whom she briefly lived in Israel. Golda, the younger sister of Golembo’s grandmother, Shayna, was a frequent visitor to Golembo’s childhood home in Maryland during her many visits to the United States to raise funds in Israel’s early years.

A light lunch will be served. Cost is \$11 per person for Temple Chaverim members, \$14 per person for non-members. Please note the new start time is 11:45 am. Parking is extremely limited; we urge you to carpool and come early for the best choice of parking and seating.

RSVP is **ABSOLUTELY A MUST!** Many programs “sell out” and we have to turn people away. Please **CALL AHEAD** to **516-367-6100, ext. 103**; it is important to leave the specific name of each person for whom you are reserving a seat for the reservation to be valid.

(Note: There are no programs in January and February until the snowbirds fly north again.)

Jewish Meditation & Spirituality - Strategies for Relaxation and Inner Peace

Join Donna Bloom in celebrating the success of her dream: to lead a Jewish Meditation class. This terrific program now beginning its fourth year at Temple Chaverim, meets **Thursday evenings December 5 and 19, January 16 and 30, February 6 and 20. All classes run from 7:30 pm to 9:00 pm.**

Donna’s original idea was to give Temple members a taste of meditation through a series of 8 classes. Her dedication and persistence have paid off. Now, many classes later, her creativity and passion keep each session fresh and inspiring. Most importantly, each class is a welcome sanctuary from everyday stress and truly helps to put life into perspective.

For example, a recent class discussed the story of Noah’s Ark. The Hebrew word for ark is “teva,” which also means “word.” Noah was instructed to build an ark for safety and sanctuary. Today, how do we find our own “ark,” our own safe place? What words do we say to others and especially to ourselves that provide sanctuary?



Classes typically begin with a Jewish spiritual discussion, followed by a guided, visual imagery meditation, then a closing discussion. New participants -- young adults to seniors -- are welcome to join at any time. Jewish meditation is good for the mind and the soul.

Upcoming topics include:

- The Tree of Life and the Tree of Knowledge
- Gratitude and Appreciation
- Rekindling Dreams

Please bring a mat, pillow, blanket and a writing journal. No experience necessary.

Contact Donna for more information at **516-933-3669**. Please check out Donna’s monthly blog at **www.LIJewishMeditation.Wordpress.com**.



Donna Bloom,
Instructor and
Temple member

Adult Education: Jewish Film Series Brightens up the New Year

Clear your afternoon on **Sunday, January 26th** and join Rabbi Hecht for two wonderful movies celebrating Jewish Film.

The festival begins at 12:30 pm with the Israeli film **Noodle** starring Mili Avital as an El Al flight attendant. She is twice widowed as a result of the ongoing Arab-Israeli wars, and has been going through the motions of living but is somehow detached from a real connection to life itself. Miri finds herself responsible for the young son of a Chinese woman who worked for her when she is suddenly deported for overstaying her work visa.



Miri, decides to help reunite the child, whom she nicknamed "Noodle"-- with his mother, now back in Beijing. She ends up helping, not just the boy and his mother, but herself in ways she could not have expected. The film won Best Supporting Actress from the Israeli Film Academy and numerous other awards at various film festivals. It is an opportunity to explore several important issues confronting Israeli life.

At 2:30 pm we continue with an American movie, **Hava Nagila**, a glorious celebration of the song and music we all know so well.

According to Rachel Saltz of the New York Times, "Hava Nagila": maybe you find it too kitschy, too clichéd, too easy a shorthand for all things Jewish. Or maybe you find it catchy and incontrovertible, a song you associate with losing yourself in a crowd, shoulder to shoulder with other revelers at a wedding. Whether it makes you squirm or dance, you're in good company and part of a larger tale, as the director Roberta Grossman and the writer Sophie Sartain show in their buoyant documentary, "Hava Nagila (The Movie)." Through the unlikely prism of this song the documentary manages to tell a complicated story of cultural adaptation while providing a fresh look at a good chunk of modern Jewish history, from poverty to plenty, from the shtetl in Ukraine to Israel to the suburbs of America, that "other promised land." Discussion will follow each film. All are welcome, and it is free, including the popcorn!



Sisterhood

Let's welcome Rhonda Green to her new position as co-president of Sisterhood with Alyssa Feller. Until recently, Rhonda has been Chairperson of the Community Action Committee. She is looking forward to bringing that same dedication and energy to Sisterhood.

Women, one and all! Get out your calendars and pencil in the following dates so that you will make sure you remember to attend as many of these events as possible! Please note that all these events take place at the Temple and the **RSVP is five days before the event.**

Coming up quickly is **Hanukah Hannah** on **Thursday, December 5th at 7:30 pm.** This lovely evening starts off with lots of latkes and a vodka tasting, followed by a hilarious gift exchange game. You have no idea what you may end up with! Call **Susan Stewart 516-695-1320** or **Rhonda Green 516-361-2008** with questions. Everyone brings a gift for the game. In addition, the donation for this event is a set of gloves and a scarf for the needy.

Just in time to perk you up from the January blahs comes a terrific event: **Wingo Wine & Wings** on **Wednesday, January 29th at 7:30 pm.** For more information call **Jody Steifman at 516-659-4426.** The requested donation item for this event is canned goods.

We get a big crowd for **Mah Jongg Night** on **Thursday, February 27th at 7:00 pm.** This is a really fun time; bring your friends to play, too. Lots of people are organizing this event so call one if you want more information: **Carolyn Tucker at 516-965-1558, Mindy Brown at 917-885-8106, Joanne Kellner at 516-864-1575** and **Marlene Wald at 516-349-1097.**

March 16th brings **Purim Baskets**, which you will be able to pick up at the **Purim Carnival.** Baskets **MUST** be preordered. For details contact **Sharon Bluth at 516-576-1109** or **Jan Kreckel at 516-528-1113.** Please come early and get a good seat at our fantastic Purim Schpiel. It is always a crowd pleaser.

If you would like to help with the **Women's Seder**, contact **Sherri Pagliaro at 516-822-4605.** This year it will be on **Thursday, April 3rd at 7:00 pm** and led by Rabbi Debra Bennet.



*Sisterhood's **Stitch and Schmooze** has extremely dedicated members and you can become one of them, too! Each week they come together on **Thursday evenings 7:00-9:00 pm** and enjoy a bit of "me" time that is so often difficult for women to do. They work on projects that have been waiting for attention. Above you can see some of the beautiful scarves they have completed in time for the chilly weather.*

*The afghan on the table is a group project for a sick friend. Bring whatever you like, knitting, crocheting, needle-point it doesn't matter. Everyone helps each other. All skill levels are welcome. It is just a lovely time to sit together without anyone wanting anything from you. Give yourself a treat and spend a Thursday evening with **Stitch and Schmooze.***



We invite new congregants to be our guests at these events. For additional information, contact Sisterhood Co-president Alyssa Feller at 516-650-2828, or fellup@aol.com.

Community Action a.k.a. Social Action

*Social Action is really in motion. First, a big welcome to the two new leaders of this committee: **Mindy Brown, the new chair, and Lisa Frenkel, the new vice chair.** Just so there is no confusion, Community Action is one and the same as Social Action! Since we also have a Social committee, it was felt that renaming this committee Community Action would make it a more accurate description of what it really does. So from here on, that is what they will be known as! Mindy and Lisa are not new to Community Action. They have both worked hard and closely with Rhonda Green, the past chair, who is now the new co-president of Temple Chaverim's Sisterhood. It is very exciting that these three dedicated, bright women are in key positions to make a difference at our synagogue.*

Community Action extends a big thank you to all the congregants who brought in donations during the **Annual High Holiday Food Drive**. We collected a significant amount of food that was donated to FECS Food Pantry. FECS said it was much more than we collected for them last year. Yeah Chaverim! **Birthday in a Box** was also very successful. Congregants' generosity helped to ensure that all the babies at MOMMAS House will have extra special birthday celebrations. The **TANS Coat Drive** was an overwhelming success from the amount of coats collected to all the volunteers.

In December, our **Annual Snowflake Campaign** will be a bit different than in the past. This year, we are partnering with **M'Yad L'Yad** and providing needy families with holiday gifts. Congregants who would like to participate will get a list of items to purchase, box up and then take to a participating UPS store where it will be shipped for free to the family. The families will not know who you are. For more information contact Mindy Brown at **mindy.f.brown@gmail.com** or Lisa Frenkel at **frenkels@mac.com**.

In January, **JCHATY and TNL** kids will be doing the community action by working on various tzedakah projects including **FECS Makes a Meal** on January 14th, **Midnight Run** in NYC (distributing food to the homeless) on January 18th, and sandwich making on January 28th at the **Mary Brennan Inn** on Long Island. Any questions, contact Rabbi Bennet or Robyn Smith.

From February to March you can volunteer to work on **Pack it Up for Purim** in conjunction with TANS. We will be collecting, sorting and making Shalach Manot Bags. This is a great family project. Shalach Manot is a Purim mitzvah tradition based on the Story of Esther where it speaks of "sending portions of food to one another and gifts for the poor." Tentatively, the event will be held at the Sid Jacobson JCC. For specifics, contact Mindy Brown at **mindy.f.brown@gmail.com** or Lisa Frenkel at **frenkels@mac.com**.

COLLEGE KIDS COOK FOR A CAUSE

Cook & Serve for the families at Ronald McDonald House
Sunday, December 22
from 3:20 (promptly) to 6:30 pm
Bring your parents to help, too!
\$25 per family
 Contact Emily Willens for details at **emilywillens@gmail.com**



Social Action Glossary

TANS -- Tikkun Alliance of the North Shore -- a consortium of 11 synagogues and 2 Jewish Community Centers on the North Shore of Long Island; focuses on tikkun olam (repairing the world).

FECS - Federation Employment and Guidance Services, Inc. (part of Federation of Jewish Philanthropies, now **UJA (United Jewish Appeal)-Federation** of New York) -- meets the needs of the Jewish and broader community through a network of health and human services.

MOMMAS House -- a home for adolescent mothers and their babies; the young mothers continue education or vocational experience, and with guidance learn to support themselves and their children.

Birthday in a Box -- a TANS initiative that provides a birthday party for children living in the three Mommas House locations.

M'Yad L'Yad -- Long Island's Helping Hands -- makes it possible to give in a way that is personal, yet always anonymous, by matching volunteer sponsors with recipients. Sponsors might send toys, clothing, gift cards, school supplies, or other gently used or new items best suited to their recipient's and their family's needs.

HATZILU -- the Hebrew word for rescue or save -- assists people in distress; it provides the Jewish elderly and poor with food, financial aid, social work intervention and assistance, and emotional support. A volunteer network of people from synagogues, Men's Clubs, Sisterhoods, Youth Groups and other service organizations, it maintains the largest kosher food warehouse in Nassau County.

Our Own Lone Soldier, Rachel Bressner



Rachel Bressner, daughter of congregants Karen and Jon Bressner, is our very own Lone Soldier in Israel. She completed her Hebrew Ulpan course with flying colors and was formerly drafted into the IDF on November 14th as a combat soldier. She received her first choice, Electronic Warfare. She's ready to serve sporting her new uniform.

Mitzvah Maker — Amy Isaacson Klein, a Survivor and Thriver

Many members of our congregation devote their efforts to important causes in addition to their volunteer work at the Temple. We hope you will celebrate their hard work and achievement. Mostly, we hope you will find ways to support their efforts: join their walks, ride in their bike rides, play in their golf outings, and contribute to their causes.

On June 7th 2011, Amy Isaacson-Klein was diagnosed with breast cancer. She underwent a double mastectomy, five months of chemotherapy and two reconstructive surgeries, and later two more surgeries. From the beginning, she was determined to fight. Her two young children were only in kindergarten and 3rd grade; she knew they needed her. Amy, a teacher for 25 years, was astonished by all the extraordinary kindness so many people bestowed upon her and her family throughout this difficult period; however, Amy amazed everyone with her courage and tenacity.

During the past two years, her husband Rich wrote to friends periodically to let them know how Amy was doing. He said that during this time “she showed us all how she and others like her find the strength and courage to battle and fight in order to defeat this horrible disease. Through it all, she never gave up. Even on her worst days, she still did homework with the kids and all the other things only a mother and wife can do.”



Rich says, “Amy is not only a SURVIVOR but also a THRIVER! She has kicked cancer’s butt and gone back to the job she loves teaching children, resumed her “mommy duties” carpooling for various activities the kids are involved in, doing things on the weekends, and still finds the time to support those who are going through what she did a short time ago. Most importantly, she is happily enjoying life!”

Over the last two years, her team, “Amy’s Anchors” with 120 members, has participated in the Annual Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk at Jones Beach. She and Rich have also done Relay for Life and the Woodbury Magazine Pink Book. Together they have raised over \$50,000.00! They hope that these funds will help make advancements in the prevention and treatment of this disease. One day they want to see breast cancer eradicated once and for all!

There is still time to support Amy and Rich Klein’s efforts by donating to “Amy’s Anchors” at the American Cancer Society Making Strides Against Breast Cancer Walk 2013. You can help them reach their goal by making a donation to their team: http://main.acsevents.org/site/TR?fr_id=55922&pg=team&team_id=1481883.

Ask Dear Yenta - Volunteer Opportunities

Dear Yenta,

I am retired and would love to find a really rewarding volunteer opportunity. I want to feel I can make a difference by using my time to do something important and meaningful. Where should I begin to find something I will enjoy and feel I am using my skills and experience?

Sincerely,

Retired from my job but not from life!



If you have a question for Dear Yenta, write to connections@templechaverim.org with “Dear Yenta” in the subject line

Dear Retired,

I love people like you -- always wanting to make the world a better place! There are lots of volunteer opportunities at Temple Chaverim. You are welcome to call our Executive Director, **Eileen Schneyman, at 516-367-6100, ext. 108**, to discuss ways small and large that you can help out at the Temple.

Another great place to donate your time is through the FECS Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP). This is a terrific volunteer opportunity for people who are 55 years of age or older and a Nassau County resident looking for a meaningful way in which to help others. RSVP connects you with rewarding volunteer opportunities in various settings based on your interests, skills and talents.

For example, you might provide friendly visiting to isolated or homebound seniors or educate individuals and families about financial literacy.



There are many ways to help. Your lifetime of knowledge can make a difference in the lives of others. How powerful that is!

For more information and to learn about the rewarding opportunities, contact: **Mindy Fischer at 516 496-7550, ext. 302268**, or email mfischer@fecs.org.

Your Yenta

Get involved in Temple life!

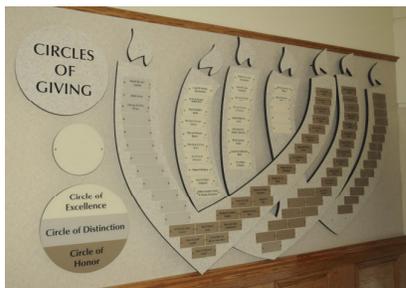
Join a committee!

Leave message with
Eileen Schneyman
at (516) 367-6100.

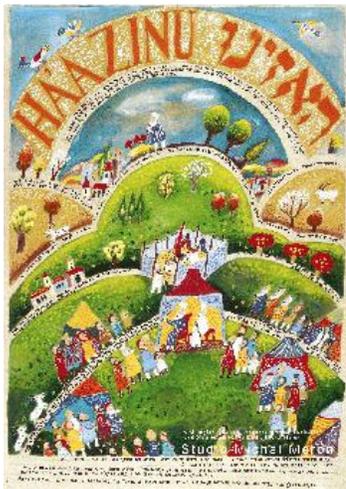
Fundraising and Fun-Raising!

The Fundraising Committee has been very busy this past fall. Many thanks go to all the people who contributed to our **High Holy Day Appeal**. The funds collected ensure that anyone who wants to be a member of Temple Chaverim can do so, even if they are experiencing financial challenges. In addition, we will be sending a gift to our sister Reform congregation, Darchei Noam, in Israel. Your donations make an important difference in the lives of many. It begins the New Year in the right spirit.

There is still time to join the **Circles of Giving** campaign. On the facing page, please see the list of generous supporters who have already made a commitment. Your name can be there, too, in the next edition of *Connections*. Just think of the great role model you will be with your name on the Circles of Giving wall plaque in the sanctuary lobby.



We are very excited about our **Illustrated Torah**. You can purchase the illustrated version of the 'parashot' that your child is chanting at his or her Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Next time you are at Temple, take a moment to look at the gorgeous artwork of our Illustrated Torah, located to the left of the doors to the Sanctuary. Framed, it will be absolutely stunning hanging in your home, a real conversation piece and a lifelong keepsake.



The **Winter Raffle** is going on as you read this! There are great prizes: **two tickets to the Broadway production of Rock of Ages** -- any performance except Friday and Saturday nights. To make sure you look gorgeous for your night of theater, you can also win a **facial, manicure and pedicure** (valued at \$150) from Nubest Salon in Manhasset. Smell absolutely delicious if you win the five **Estee Lauder Spray Favorites**. Then put on the dazzling ladies' **gold necklace** with matching **earrings**, donated by **Talisman Jewelers**. If none of this appeals to you, then cuddle up with your new **Kindle Paperwhite** and enjoy a lovely time reading. Any of these raffle prizes are going to be either fun to have or give to someone you love.

The Raffles cost \$5 each, with a book of 12 for \$50.

Raffles will be sold in the Temple lobby after Religious School, at Temple events, or can be purchased by calling Rosemary Nucci in the Temple office.

Look for flyers and eblasts with prize details.

The winners will be selected January 14th at Comedy Night.

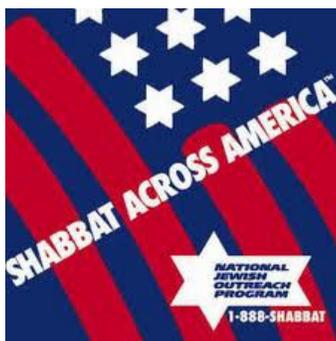
Comedy Night takes place, **Saturday, January 11, 2014 at 8:00 pm**. Join us for a great night of laughs, food and music. Doors open at 8:00pm for pre-show music starring Temple Chaverim's very own Lucky Chai Lounge Band. Come and listen to the music, while you enjoy wine, soda, cheese and other yummy stuff in the company of friends. The main Comedy Night event begins at 9:00pm, starring Lenny Marcus, Sherry Davey and Randy Levin. The entire evening costs just \$36.00 per person. Bring friends and family -- adults only, please -- and your own bottle, for a fun and affordable evening.

Mark your calendars now for **Club Chaverim, Saturday, May 10, 2014**, featuring an evening of music, gaming, food and fun! Details to follow in the spring issue of *Connections*.

Jill Schwartz, Fundraising Committee Chairperson

Celebrate Shabbat Across America

The 18th Annual Shabbat Across America and Canada takes place on Friday, March 7, 2014, at Temple Chaverim of Plainview!



The evening's format will include a Shabbat dinner at 6:30 PM, a special service, and a festive oneg.

Reserve a place at the table for yourself, your family and friends to become part of this dynamic continent-wide event, unifying Jewish communities across North America.

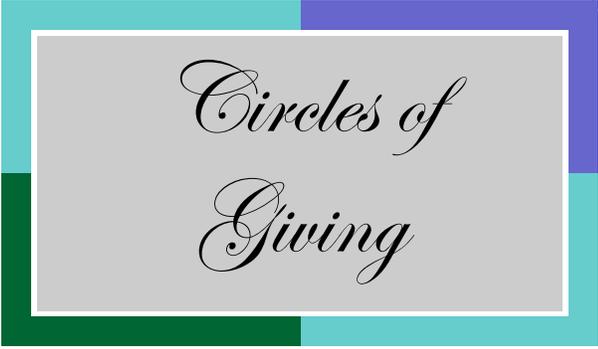
Contact **Nirit Weiser**, Vice Chair of Congregant Relations Committee, at (631)777-1976 for more information.

Deadline for reservations is Tuesday, February 25, 2014.

Open Cast Call for Purim Schpiel!



Start warming up for Temple Chaverim's Purim Schpiel. Tryouts start in December. Look for flyers and eblasts. Purim is Sunday, March 16th, 2014.



*Circles of
Giving*

Circles of Giving is a vital pledge program whereby congregants voluntarily enhance their annual support to Temple Chaverim by a fixed amount. While our dues are in line with other local Reform synagogues, they do not completely cover the cost of running our Temple. In fact, Temple dues, tuitions and fees cover only 80% of our expense budget. The gap of \$500 per household must be made up through voluntary donations and fundraising efforts.

Temple Chaverim is committed to excellence in religious, educational and social programming, and to outstanding professional leadership. Your gift ensures that all children and adults in our congregation will continue to enjoy all the benefits of membership, and provides scholarship to those in need. To help strengthen our synagogue and secure our future of upholding Jewish values, please make your pledge to the **Circles of Giving Program**. Contact Fundraising Chair, Jill Schwartz at **(516) 364-8650**.

CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

*A donation of \$1,500 or more above the basic dues,
Circle of Distinction recognition PLUS
A special plaque for your home or office AND
two non-transferable tickets to annual fundraiser*

CIRCLE OF DISTINCTION

*A donation between \$1,000 to \$1,499 above the basic dues,
Circle of Honor recognition PLUS
Special honor at a Friday night service*

CIRCLE OF HONOR

*A donation between \$500 to \$999 above the basic dues,
Listing on "Circles" plaque displayed in the Temple lobby,
Listing in "Connections" (Temple newsletter)
throughout the program year,
Certificate of Appreciation presented at a special
"Circles" Wine & Cheese reception*

*Join or renew your participation
in Circles today!*

*Thank you to Our
Circles' Donors 5774*

CIRCLE OF EXCELLENCE

*Lloyd & Pamela Abramowitz
Arthur & Phyllis Angstreich
Michael & Susan Ashner
Jon & Karen Bressner
Allen & Linda Greenbaum
Rabbi Jonathan Hecht & Gladys Rosenblum
Robert & Leslie Herenstein
Michael & Janice Kerr
Daniel & Jill Leav
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Bruce & Jody Steifman
Jeffrey & Stephanie Stern
Mark & Debra Wells
Michael & Beth Wiener
Elliot & Meryl Wittenberg
Elan & Gail Wurtzel*

IN GRATEFUL APPRECIATION.... Thank you to our members for their generous donations July 18 - October 13, 2013

Every effort was made to ensure accuracy. We apologize in advance for any errors or misspellings.

RABBI HECHT'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Larry & Michele Blumenclanz
Richard & Randi Gertler
Harleen Ruthen
Glenn Liebman
David & Rhonda Green
Alvin & Faith Zubasky

IN HONOR OF

David's recovery
Edwin and Ethel Lokshin
Emily Blank reading Torah and Elisa Blank's
Aliyah on September 6th

Ellen Jackson

IN MEMORY OF

Harold Yacker
Susan Stewart
Ruth Port
Fred & Cheryl Kuster
Harvey Gertler
Temple Chaverim Sisterhood
Jeff & Steph Stern and Family
Al Silverstein & Marcia Shiller
Albert Kannett
Roger & Sheila Schroeder
Samuel Cohen
Gerald & Jodi Kirschner

RABBI BENNET'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Philip & Lisa Schrank
David & Rhonda Green
Jeffrey Mendelson

IN MEMORY OF

Harvey Gertler
Howard and Elise Rubin
Jenny Rosenfeld
Debby Kovensky
Their beloved family members
Walter & Rita Rosenthal
Ben Klarich
Debby Kovensky

CANTOR HYMAN'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Jeff & Lauren Waxman
David & Rhonda Green

IN MEMORY OF

Georgiana Schroeder
Nirit Weiser
Jerry Kushner
Steven & Paula Lefkowitz

**EISNER CAMP/CRANE LAKE CAMP
SCHOLARSHIP FUND**

Rabbi Jonathan Hecht

GENERAL FUND

IN MEMORY OF

George Tutshen
Fran Tutshen
Moe Malawitz

Lois Salerno

HEALING FUND

Robert & Sharon Dym
Jack & Holly Beller
David & Rhonda Green
Richard & Rhoda Gould

MEMORY/YAHRZEIT FUND

IN MEMORY OF

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Burton Bellask
Lilia Livshits
Leonid & Marina Kazakevich
William Lokshin
Edwin & Ethel Lokshin
William Steckler
Ken & Maxine Steckler
Barbara Becker
Marvin & Joyce De Siver
Evelyn Baron
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Diana Rothenberg

Arline Rothenberg

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Mark & Beth Rabinowitz
Rita Rabinowitz
Mark & Beth Rabinowitz

Isaac Fields

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Julius Rehfield

Dorian Rehfield

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Mark & Michelle Cowit

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Ted, Pamela & Evan Kramer

Stephen Brook

Michelle Dank

Samuel Gould

Richard & Rhoda Gould

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

IN MEMORY OF

Adam Engel
Mayra Engel
Arnold Kass
Sharon Feller

**RELIGIOUS SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP
FUND**

IN HONOR OF

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IN MEMORY OF

Rabbi Alan A. Kay

Jo Kay

Oren & Lisa Tzah

SOCIAL ACTION FUND

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SUNSHINE FUND

IN MEMORY OF

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Temple Chaverim Sisterhood
Walter Marx

Burt & Carol Minov

TIKKUN OLAM FUND

David & Rhonda Green

TREE OF LIFE

IN HONOR OF

The Bat Mitzvah of
Emily Lauren Feller
Michael & Alyssa Feller

YOUTH PROGRAMMING FUND

IN MEMORY OF

Paul E. Reinhold
Allen & Linda Greenbaum

**MEMORIAL LIST
July 1–October 13, 2013**

Pearl Menkes, 7/9
grandmother of Adam Menkes
Marcy Luxenberg, 7/23
mother of Michael Luxenberg
Yetta Schrank, 8/6
mother of Philip Schrank
Harvey Gertler, 8/9
father of Richard Gertler
Walter Marx, 8/13
father of David Marx
Gordon Wallach, 9/3
brother of Iris Koplitz
Samuel Cohen, 9/12
father of Jodi Kirschner
Jerome Kushner, 9/19
uncle of Glenn Kushner
Elaine Feldman, 10/11
mother of Sylvia Gilman

MEMORIAL PLAQUE LIST

*In loving tribute, the following names
have been inscribed on our Memorial Wall.*

Max Weiner
Rabbi Alan Kay

*If you would like to make a donation,
purchase a brick or plaque in memory of
or in honor of a loved one,
please contact the Temple office at
516-367-6100.*

Connections

connections@templechaverim.org

Sheila Schroeder, *Editor*

Darlene Friedman, *Design & Layout*

Mindy Brown, Beryl Griliches, Marilyn Levy, *Proofreaders*

OFFICE DIRECTORY 516-367-6100

Rabbi Jonathan L. Hecht, Ph.D.

Rabbi@TempleChaverim.org ext. 112

Assistant Rabbi Debra Bennet

Rabbibennet@TempleChaverim.org ext. 121

Cantor Bradley Hyman

CantorBrad@TempleChaverim.org ext. 112

Executive Director Eileen Schneyman

Eileen@TempleChaverim.org ext. 108

Principal Debbye Brandell

DBrandell@TempleChaverim.org ext. 109

Youth Engagement Specialist Robyn Smith

Robyn@TempleChaverim.org ext. 116

Clergy Administrative Asst.

ext. 112

Main Office Adm. Asst. Rosemary Nucci

Rosemary@TempleChaverim.org ext. 101

Religious School Adm. Asst. Louise Sunshine

LSunshine@TempleChaverim.org ext. 128

Bookkeeper Vicky Gladowsky

Vicky@TempleChaverim.org ext. 124

Temple Chaverim Cemetery Plots

It is both a sacred duty and a Jewish tradition to return our bodies to the earth after death. Making final arrangements for our loved ones is, Jewishly, a final act of caring and respect. Temple Chaverim views these duties as a sacred obligation.



Our congregational cemetery is an eternal home that affirms life and community even in the midst of profound sorrow and mourning. We have single, multiple and family plots located in Wellwood Cemetery at significant savings to our membership.

As difficult as it may be to think about needing a cemetery plot for anyone we love, it is far more challenging to begin making arrangements at the moment a loved one dies. Planning ahead gives you time to choose what arrangements you want for your loved ones.

We encourage you to discuss this with Eileen Schneyman, our Executive Director and a licensed social worker, at your convenience. Plots are available for purchase by contacting Eileen at 516-367-6100, ext. 108, or Eileen@TempleChaverim.org.

TEMPLE CHAVERIM OFFICERS, TRUSTEES, PAST PRESIDENTS & BOARD MEMBERS 2013-2014

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<i>Partners in Caring Liaison</i>	Dr. Fred Krellenstein

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS

Help with Temple mailings
Stuff Envelopes & Stick on Mailing Labels.
Very relaxing & much appreciated!

**Call Executive Director Eileen Schneyman,
at 516-367-6100, ext. 108**

Be Strategic on December 8th

Currently, the Long Range Planning Committee is in the process of exploring how we can improve our synagogue and insure that future generations will have a place to pray, learn and celebrate.

Since our congregation's founding over 25 years ago, much has changed, both in terms of our synagogue and our community. Pressures on our families have evolved and people face many challenges, including time, finances, health issues; it seems endless what families must balance today. However, our commitment to a strong Jewish community has not wavered.

As a result, this past September, the Long Range Planning Committee began a process, including working with a consultant, to explore ways that our synagogue can better serve the needs of our members. They have reviewed some of our strengths, challenges and potentials. Last year's congregational survey results have been reviewed to learn what congregants want from their Temple. Many areas are being looked at: for instance, is the Temple Vision Statement up to date? Does it reflect and set the tone for Temple Chaverim today?

One of the most important things the committee has learned is the power of relationships. They believe this is the key to making members feel close to the synagogue, become active in Temple initiatives and, most importantly, stay life-long members, keeping the Jewish community strong for our children and grandchildren. What can we do at Temple Chaverim to build positive life-long relationships with our members?

Do you have ideas that you would like to add to this process? Do you come to Temple and think "I wish, or if only...?" Would you like to be a part of this strategic process? If you are interested, please contact Larry Wald, chair, at lwald@waldandwald.com or 516-578-5669.

All Temple members are invited on Sunday morning, December 8th at 9:30am to attend a workshop led by our consultant, Robert Leventhal. We will learn how to advance our team structure, learn to build congregation and board consensus, and focus on shared congregational goals so we can plan wisely for our future. Please contact Larry if you plan on attending.



Ron Samuel tends this small garden in front of the Temple. He buys plants, brings cuttings from his own garden and makes this small circle beautiful for all of us to enjoy.



The Temple Chaverim Walkers: Follow us on Temple Chaverim Facebook or join us on the trail (Sunday mornings 10:30 am, meet in front of Temple.)



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Plainview, NY 11803



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