

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

The Prez Says

by Bert Chessin

I am a wholly blessed and fully flawed person. The month of Rosh Hashana, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, and Simchat Torah washed over me, and I did a bit of reflection, examination, and admission. My thoughts and hopes for myself and Har Shalom are many, and I accept that not all of them will be realized before Rosh Hashana rolls around again.

I would like to take the long view about all this, and the reality is we have daily struggles around here. The changes and challenges around our shul, whether planned or unplanned, will continue to test us, yet they also help us grow and experience the life of community. We recognize that each one of us gives of our self, gives to our families and friends and community, here and afar. In some ways, Har Shalom holds a mirror up to the three B's that have been used to define and guide Jewish communities: being, belonging, and believing.

What is it that we want to be, to belong to, and to believe in? Jews are people of Torah, people of books and letters, a singing and dancing people, and a people dedicated to Kahal—community, justice and fairness, and truth in its many forms. How does Har Shalom build on our traditions to be a healthy and evolving institution? Whether you read and study the Torah directly or not, the basic truths of how one lives a moral and fulfilling life, recognizing life's realities, can be found in the basic values that are shared amongst the Jewish people.

Surviving is a particular Jewish trait. For Har Shalom, this coming year or two will go a long way in determining what we will look like in five or ten years and to the next generation. We are beginning a serious “visioning” effort to look at our future, build in reality checks as we move forward, and put programs in place that involve the congregation and wider community toward a Har Shalom that lives by our common Jewish values, believing and acting toward justice, caring, and learning.

If you believe in Har Shalom, support us in whatever way speaks to you. Join the visioning effort, organize or help with an event, come learn something new about Jewish philosophy, practice, history, or culture. If you value what we are and what we will become, contribute in ways that will solidify our future.

Shalom.

The Quiet Time

by Laurie Franklin, Student Rabbi and Spiritual Leader

Last fall, I wrote in a Sept-Oct Har Shalom newsletter article (<http://har-shalom.org/filelib/52.pdf>) about the action-packed holiday season: Slichot, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Simchat Torah.

“So, why are these holidays so closely grouped? Because renewal of self and relationship with the Divine, connection with the holiness of the natural world, and love of Torah are indivisible. Together, they ready us for another year of mindful living.”

(continued on next page)

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Atidaynu* News

by Sheehan Rosen

Atidaynu is off to a great start! We had a really nice turnout for High Holiday services and activities, and during the first few sessions of class we welcomed some new children to the group. From all of the laughter in the halls, it's clear the kids are happy to be back with friends they might not have seen all summer.

This year we are starting with two larger groups. Children eight and under are working together learning about holidays and creating their own Torah scrolls. The older children are learning about ancient and modern Jewish history. Both groups will be organizing Tzedakah projects throughout the year. And, everyone is getting back into the swing of working on their Hebrew. Thanks to parents for encouraging your kids to work on it at least a little bit over the summer.

New students are always welcome. Atidaynu meets twice a month on Sundays from 10 am till noon. Snack is provided and every meeting begins with song and prayer. Please contact Sheehan Ednie-Rosen at rosens@montana.com for more information.

*Atidaynu means “our future.”

What's new!

We have a beautiful new sign for the back of the building announcing who we are, so people will know the back entrance (from the large parking lot) is another entrance into Har Shalom. Thanks to Marlene Hutchins for the design and Dave Jolles for installing it.

The Har Shalom newsletter is written entirely by volunteers. Submissions are always welcome!

Next deadline: Dec. 15 for Jan. / Feb. Issue

Laurie's Letter *(continued)*

Now, the parties are over, and we begin the New Year. As we leave the month of Tishrei and enter Cheshvan, there is an audible hush in the Hebrew calendar. The intensity of the High Holy Days and Festivals subsides. We engage in the stuff of our everyday lives, fortified with renewal and connection. How do we bring holiness into the ordinary days? What shall we ask of ourselves in the pursuit of ethical living? How do we deepen our relationships with each other and the Divine Presence?

Each of us answers these questions differently, and our answers are like rudders, steering us into the waters ahead with certain purpose. Our tradition places high value on prayer, learning and community service. Maybe this year, you will adopt a prayer practice that will shape your view of the world (see "What's next", below)? Maybe this year, you will learn (more) Hebrew (see "Adult Hebrew", below)? Maybe this year, you will find meaning and purpose through Har Shalom's Family Promise commitment (see "Family Promise" under Tikkun Olam), or Missoula Food Bank donations and volunteerism, or through interfaith activities such as Interfaith Missoula world (see "Interfaith Missoula", below)? Whatever you choose to do, it's most important that our heartfelt words of the High Holidays are followed with action. May we go from strength to strength as we move into the New Year.

Interfaith Missoula: A campus-community initiative

Interfaith Missoula is the name of a new group on campus and in town that seeks to unite people of different faith traditions for friendship and service. A kick-off event at the University of Montana was attended by nearly 200 interested people, and a follow-up discussion panel drew approximately 60. The group has expressed a strong interest in cooperating to perform community service, share food, music and exchange of ideas, and to create a culture of inviting those from other faith groups to our places of worship and to our homes. If you have an interest in multi-cultural, pan-religious activities, please explore the Interfaith Missoula web site and blog at <http://interfaithmissoula.org/>.

Adult Hebrew Classes—yes, for YOU! *Wednesdays, 7 to 9 pm*

Nov 16, 23, 30 • Dec 7, 21 • Jan 4, 18, 25 • Feb 1, 8, 15, 22 final siyyum (celebration)

The 12-session class is based on the one-room schoolhouse model. Beginners will learn Hebrew reading and writing basics in a spiritual framework and learn about the mystical significance of the letters of the alphabet. We will use finger paints, charades, and other devices to practice alphabet skills. Returning students will get lots of reading practice in the siddur (prayer book) and from Torah, working in chevrua (with study partners). In addition, returning students will help new students with their basic learning, and by doing so, will reinforce their own. Please email Laurie Franklin asap at laurief@har-shalom.org with questions or confirmation of your participation. *Members, \$10 materials fee; Nonmembers, \$60/series.*

What's next after Service Leading 101?

A small but intrepid band of learners engaged in the four-week series, Service Leading 101. What's next? There's more to learn, and it's interesting and fun. For those who would like to continue, we propose a periodic workshop, every 4 to 8 weeks, on special topics in worship and worship leading. This series is open to those who did not attend Service Leading 101, and we will try to find a consensus time that includes as many as possible. Please contact Laurie Franklin at laurief@har-shalom.org if you are interested.

Chanukah Celebration

After the autumn High Holy Days and our harvest celebration of Sukkot, we get caught up in the Montana traditions of hunting and football; then, we celebrate the first snowfall of the season and Thanksgiving. While most of our neighbors and friends move into an often frenetic preparation for Christmas, we Jews prepare to celebrate the minor holiday of Chanukah, Festival of Lights, which falls during our winter solstice, the shortest day of the year.

There has been much discussion about how (or how not) we should celebrate Chanukah, with its roots in a revolution against Hellenistic assimilation *(continued top of next page)*

Yahrzeits

The Yahrzeit is the Hebrew-calendar anniversary of a loved one's death. The Hebrew date is invariant and is computed on the basis of the day and time of the deceased's passing, but the corresponding civil calendar date changes each year.

In the list below, the Hebrew date appears listed first, followed by the current year's civil date in parentheses. Yahrzeit candles are traditionally lit the evening before the specified date because the Jewish day begins at sunset of the previous day. At Har Shalom, we read our congregants' Yahrzeits and recite the Mourner's Kaddish at the Shabbat service before the Hebrew calendar yahrzeit date.

If you would like to add a Yahrzeit to the Har Shalom list, please contact our office at 549-9595 or email info@har-shalom.org.

CHESHVAN

4 (November 1) Bill Martin
Marilyn Dayries's father

5 (November 2) Flora Kaplan
Maeta Kaplan's mother

5 (November 2) Frances Blindman
Elizabeth Howard's grandmother

9 (November 6) Harry Komisar
Melissa Porter's father

12 (November 9) Richard Albert
Litfin Merce Litfin Zingmark's father

17 (November 14) Max Marshall
Connie Campbell's father

25 (November 22) Donald S. Brown
Ed Brown's father

KISLEV

11 (December 7) Albert Ginsberg
Beth Leibowitz's father

14 (December 10) Cherrie
Steinebach Tyler Steinebach's mother

15 (December 11) Mildred Shulman
Joy Earls' mother

18 (December 14) Bill Weisz
George Weisz's father

19 (December 15) Barbara Lumpkin
Candy Miller's mother

24 (December 20) Morris Leibowitz
Gary Leibowitz's father

TEVET

1 (December 27) Jonathan Kast
Sigrun Kuefner's son

4 (December 30) Fanny Rosenberg
Ed Rosenberg's mother

Chanukah Celebration (continued)

and suppression of Jewish culture. But each family and individual can create traditions that highlight the stories that have given Chanukah its place in Jewish tradition. The traditions most often observed include lighting the Hanukia (candelabrum) each of the eight nights, playing games with the dreidle, and eating latkes (potato pancakes).

Whether you choose to celebrate this holiday a lot or a little, join us at Har Shalom on Sunday, December 18, at Noon for our Chanukah party as we add a bit more light to the season.

Tikkun Olam

Alleviating Hunger

As the weather cools, remember there are those in our Missoula community who have to choose between paying for heat or paying for food. Won't you help out by bringing cans of food to Har Shalom to be taken to the Missoula Food Bank? The collection box is located in the Har Shalom lobby. Our most recent contribution was 50 pounds of food.

Hunger, of course, is a critical issue in many parts of the world, and it often seems impossible to know how to help. We have just recently learned about hunger-related campaigns being sponsored by American Jewish World Service, an organization dedicated to alleviating hunger, poverty, and disease in developing countries. The first of these is "Reverse Hunger: Ending the Global Food Crisis," which addresses the unintended detrimental effects on the food crisis of current US food policy. Go to www.ajws.org for information about supporting this effort. You might also want to check out Rabbi Lauren Kurland's commentary, "From Dreams to Dependency: Biblical Lessons for Contemporary Food Aid" (with reference to the biblical story of Joseph and the Egyptian famine—also on the AJWS website).

Their second campaign is "Global Hunger Shabbat—and 18 Days of Action." This campaign begins November 4, so we will not have time to participate as a congregation, but it's definitely food for thought, and there are aspects of it that are suitable for individuals and families (on the home page of www.ajws.org).

Family Promise

Back to hunger and poverty issues in Missoula: Har Shalom has committed to being a support congregation for the local chapter of Family Promise, a national interfaith organization through which congregations offer housing, meals, and other support to homeless families. Har Shalom will be paired with a host congregation where families will be housed. Each host congregation hosts the Family Promise families four times a year, for one week at a time. With the host congregation, members of Har Shalom will provide meals, logistical support, and support such as homework help for children during our assigned weeks (roughly once every three months). We are hoping Family Promise will be up and running in Missoula by March. Stay tuned. Meanwhile, if you have any questions, please contact Robin Abeshaus (robina@imt.net or 542-7535), who will be coordinating Har Shalom's Family Promise volunteers.

Blessing Bags

Want to help a person down on their luck? Here's an easy idea. They are called "Blessing Bags", and they are small bags of toiletries and snacks you prepare at home and give to homeless folks when you come across them. A ziploc sandwich bag makes a good bag, or reuse plastic and paper bags you have at home. Ingredients should be unopened small containers of any or all of the following:

Deodorant, Cleaning wipes, Band Aids, Antiseptic gel, Waterless hand cleaner, Toothpaste, Toothbrush, Floss, Kleenex, Soap, Vitamin C, Instant Coffee, Tea Bags, Candy, Crackers

Make some blessing bags with extra items you have at home (or even items that you purchase). If you are comfortable, you can carry these with you and hand them to a homeless person you see. You can also drop these blessing bags off at Har Shalom, where they will be collected and distributed to the Food Bank and the Poverello Center.

Book Review

from the Har Shalom library

The Tent of Abraham by Joan Chittister, OSB, Murshid Saadi Shakur Chishti, and Rabbi Arthur Waskow

The subtitle of this book is "Stories of Hope and Peace for Jews, Christians, and Muslims". This book is accessible and well written by three highly regarded religious leaders, from the Jewish, Muslim and Christian faiths. The authors bring alive the teachings of the Torah, the Quran, and the Bible as they each tell the story of Abraham, our common ancestor. The authors make the collective point that this fact has the potential for reconciliation and is a must read for those doing interfaith peace work.

David Crumm, Detroit Free Press, summed it up when he stated, "Want an antidote to tragic headlines about religious conflict in the Middle East? Try this remarkable new book. It is a celebration of religious diversity that is likely to leave readers more optimistic about the potential for peace."

Todah Rabah

Thank you to Lesley Lotto, and the Lotto family, for permission to use their photo of Ben Lotto from his Bar Mitzvah at Har Shalom. The photo will appear in Har Shalom's announcement the Missoulian's December "Faith" pull-out section.

Connect to your
Jewish roots.
Right here
in Missoula.

Explore your Jewish connections at Har Shalom. We're an egalitarian, inclusive congregation in Missoula, Montana, affiliated with Reform Judaism. We serve a growing, vibrant Western Montana Jewish community and welcome Jews of all denominations — and all who want to learn about us.

For over fifty years, our Missoula community has gathered for Jewish holiday celebrations, religious education, services, and community service projects. Har Shalom offers Shabbat services, Torah study, Hebrew classes, festival celebrations, Bar and Bat Mitzvah, and other life cycle events—led by our resident Student Rabbi, Laurie Franklin, and lay leaders. We also host concerts, lectures, social gatherings and outdoor activities.

Visit our website for information about all our events, or contact us to receive weekly email updates and our newsletter.

You'll discover Har Shalom connects with you.

Har Shalom
Welcome Home.

Har Shalom • 3035 South Russell St. • 549-9595 • www.har-shalom.org • info@har-shalom.org



Donations and Tributes

We are grateful to our current and past contributors. Every donation, regardless of size, is deeply appreciated. Making tributes and memorials is a wonderful way to honor someone and support the Jewish community.

To make a donation, pay membership dues or religious school fees, go to www.PayPal.com and send your payment to HarShalomMsla@gmail.com. Please specify the intention of your donation: Memorial; Honor; Membership; Capital Campaign; school, camp, or special event fee. Your donation will be deposited directly into the synagogue account. If you use a credit card, please consider adding 2% to your donation to cover our credit card fees. If you send a donation by conventional mail, please remember to use Har Shalom's new post office box: PO Box 3715, Missoula 59806.

Capital Campaign Donations

Ed Rosenberg & Trina Valencich

Honors and Memorials

Maeta Kaplan — In Memory of Hank Butzel

Joel & Esther Weltman — In Honor of Matthew Weltman's receiving UM tenure

Frederick Meyers — In Honor of Bnot Mitzvah – his cousin's triplet granddaughters Abby, Julia, Rachel Lawrence in Lexington, MA

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Susanne Woyciechowicz

Vermeda Fred — Thank you for the welcome

Freddie Yudin — With thanks to Bert

Support Har Shalom with a tax-free gift from your IRA

by Toba Winston

Looking for the way to make the most tax-effective gift to Har Shalom? Congress recently extended a law that allows people 70½ or older to make tax-free charitable gifts using funds transferred directly from their IRAs. You can transfer up to \$100,000 through the end of 2011.

Every donation, large or small, is greatly appreciated. To learn more, contact Har Shalom Treasurer, Jeff Bendremer at 406/493-1908.

Every circumstance is different and Har Shalom is not giving out tax advice. Each potential donor should consult a personal tax professional before making an IRA transfer to Har Shalom.



P.O. Box 3715, Missoula, MT 59806

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