



Community Chaplain

Chaplain Larry Batchlear is available for Jewish Life-cycle events and can be reached at 352-7191

Business Office

Larry Batchlear (806-355-0023) or Bob Blinderman (806-372-9401)

Looking for articles.

Have you read a good book lately? Or perhaps an inspirational reading or poem? Do you have a recipe you would like to share?

Temple B'nai Israel newsletter is published monthly. Submissions for the newsletter are due the 21st of the prior month. Send to:

bnaisraelamarillo@gmail.com

Attn. Mary Blinderman

We welcome your contributions to the newsletter.

Know someone interested in becoming a part of our community? New to town? Or looking to find a way to connect with Temple B'nai Israel? Contact any of our board members and we will be glad to assist you.

December 2020

President's Message

Shalom chaverim!

The theme for this month's message is Family. Mishpuchah!

The definition of the word "family" may vary. Some people consider a family to be a group of people related by blood or ancestry. However others think that a family is not defined by a genetic link; instead it is a relationship based on love, compassion, and support.

These days, it is easy to be dissociated, to lose the connection to people when we are unable to physically be with them. Phone calls, text messages, Face Time, Zoom, Go to Meeting, and other virtual platforms allow us to see and hear them, but we are not able to feel their presence, their body warmth or chemistry. It is very difficult now to maintain connections to people.

This idea of family came up at our last Temple board meeting. The discussion revolved around how to be a part of the family, rather than feeling like a guest. The solution: participation, being present, even if it is just virtually, and maintaining contact.

Think about your own mishpuchah: there is a balance of responsibilities and benefits. Each person must also be a giver, not just a taker. Before COVID limited our gatherings, someone would organize, others come, many contribute so that all family members enjoy the gathering.

Your Temple family works the same way: many contribute so that all can enjoy the benefits of the Temple. Contributions can be in the form of giving time and talent, as well as monetary donations.

Now more than ever, in these challenging times, your Temple family needs you, and you need your Temple family. Make a commitment to be present, join us for Shabbat services, meet our neighbors to the south when we join Rabbi Goldmann and Congregation Shaareth Israel in Lubbock...all of which are virtual. Offer to assist or lead a Shabbat service. Offer your time. Make a tzedakah donation. Send a contribution to the monthly newsletter. Be an active part of the Temple family!

I hope to see you, my Temple family members, soon, in person, or virtually.

With love and gratitude,

Candy



I like Hanukkah.

I like the candles, especially the ones that look like crayons with the twisting sides that look like they're made of sugar instead of wax. I also like the imported ones from Israel, all fancy and for some reason made to look like trippy 1970s Formica.

I like menorahs; the silly ones and the arty ones, made of wood, copper, bronze, ceramic. I like that menorahs can be made out of cupcakes or a brick. I once heard that during the Holocaust, someone stuck some candles into a potato and called that a menorah, and then surely, ate the potato.

I like the electric menorah because it is still lit in the morning when I go downstairs, having proclaimed while I slept. I like turning the next bulb to signify another night and I like the bulb, which is painted to look like a real candle if real candles burned blue.

I like the ugly Chabad hannukiyah they light on the Boston common. I like the cheap tin menorah the little Chabad boy gave my daughter, Emilia, in Chicago last weekend, which I lit when I was in Rockport last night – using the accompanying super-cheap candles, which burned out in 10 minutes.

I like latkes, mine in particular, which are the world's best. I am not being conceited; you can ask anyone. The secret to my latkes is hot oil. The secret is to make them much smaller than you do now, so they can really be crisp and cook all the way through.

I like latkes because they are sour cream delivery systems, though I'm perfectly fine if you want applesauce. But the real secret is that latkes have to be served directly out of the frying pan, with a quick stop on paper towels for drainage, and this requires that someone stand at the stove the whole time, which is really not a sacrifice, and stop telling me to sit down because making an offering of good latkes is a mitzvah, a good deed. A nice mitzvah; a happy, satisfying mitzvah.

I wish I could say I like the smell of fried potatoes on my towels all week, but I can say that it's worth it.

I like Hanukkah because it's good to have a jolly Jewish anchor in the vast sea that is Christmas. I like Hanukkah because it demands so much less of me than Christmas does of non-Jews and reminds me that sometimes it's easier to be part of a counterculture.

I like Hanukkah because it is a minor holiday, and there isn't a lot of liturgy involved. I like Hanukkah because the new music being composed for Hanukkah is funny and sweet and way better than anything associated with the other holidays. Also it's low-tech, small, and you do it at home. I like Hanukkah because kids love it.

I like the size of the Hanukkah miracle; no parting of red seas, just a story about finding extra oil when you didn't think you had any and you really needed it and all the stores were closed. That's the kind of miracle with which I am familiar, along with the miracle of good food and feeding people I love.

I like dreidels, and the fact that they multiply like rabbits; wooden, plastic, art glass, Fimo clay, all good. Best of all, I like wind-up dreidels with feet. In fact, I like all Hanukah kitsch (a.k.a. Hanukah crap). I mourn the demise of our Hanukah Harry, an ugly plush toy who sang the "Dreidel Song"; likewise the singing menorah, which blared "Rock of Ages" until your ears bled. Dreidel salad servers, menorah magnets, blue tinsel. I have no explanations, and I make no excuses.

I like the fact that there is a rabbinic argument about the meaning Hanukkah; oil v. religious resistance. And to make it even more problematic (i.e.: more Jewish) the Maccabees turned out to be a nightmare – not uncommon with warrior-kings and/or warrior-priest-kings. These guys were constitutionally unable to stop fighting, forced conversion to Judaism upon conquered populations, and over the course of a few generations, their family relations got into Borgia territory.

Can I get an "Oy vey"?

I even like Hanukkah Facebook postings, though enough with pictures of latkes. Latkes are delicious, but pretty? Meh.

I hope you find much to like about Hanukkah, too.

Light, light, light, light, light, light, light.

Anita Diamant is an author of fiction and non-fiction books, including the New York Times bestselling novel *The Red Tent*. She blogs at [Anita Diamant: Thinking Out Loud](http://AnitaDiamant.com), where this post originally appeared.

In 2020, Hanukkah starts on Thursday December 10th.

Temple Contacts

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Sisterhood Contacts

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Karen Schroeder , Secretary	681-5196
Mary Blinderman , Treasurer.....	372-9401

Shabbat Services

Because we take Covid-19 seriously, Shabbat services and Adult Ed continue to be held virtually. This will be our “temporary normal” until further notice. We hope you will join us using modern technology to stay connected. Volunteers lead services via “Go To Meeting.” The services begin at 7 p.m. After services, we visit and catch up with our Temple family. In addition, we are invited to attend “Zoom” Shabbat services at CSI in Lubbock Texas. **Please watch for communications regarding the December Shabbat service schedule.**

To receive an invitation to all services, please send an email to: bnaiisraelamarillo@gmail.com

Adult Education

Adult Ed classes are on hold while Bob Blinderman is recovering from an accident. Bob will send an announcement to let you know when the class will resume. The next book will be Einstein and the Rabbi by Naomi Levy. Class meets Sunday morning at 10:30 CST in our virtual classroom.

If you wish to join the class, please call Bob at 372.9401 for an invitation to join.

Sisterhood News

New Concrete at Entry

Welcome to our Temple and enter safely. Let's celebrate the new concrete walkway at the Temple funded by the Temple Sisterhood. The concrete walkway to the front door was degraded with high aggregate content causing a bumpy journey for anyone using assistance to walk - scooters, wheelchairs, and canes. The concrete has been completely demolished and replaced with new continuous concrete paving from the parking lot to the front door with smooth broom finish. It will be easier to maintain and increase safety.



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to all our donors for your continued support! (as of November 25, 2020)

General Fund

In Support of Temple B'nai Israel

Anonymous

Dorrie Carskadon

Larry Batchlear

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

12/4 Daniel Kohn

12/5 Louise Adelman

12/8 Neal Scott

12/8 Dr. Sarah Shields

12/9 Paul Pan

12/14 Lily Roberts

12/14 Harry Tallert

12/14 Kim Hooker

12/18 Nathaniel Lapp

12/20 Cleon Roberts

12/21 Lillian Schaer

12/22 Dan Schneider

12/26 Jacob Aron Kohn

12/27 Sarah Schachter

12/27 Bess Schachter

12/28 Aaron Kothari

12/28 Meera Kothari

12/31 Dyana Duman

December Anniversaries:

12/19 Eliezar and Eva Pena

12/24 Lily and Cleon Roberts

Note:

If you would like to be included in the birthdays and anniversaries, please send an email to bnaiisraelamarillo@gmail.com Attn: Newsletter Editor

Simchas

Chaverim:

The Temple family is happy to announce that we will host a wedding in December! The announcement is below!



Rommel-Toombs Wedding:

Alexandra Rommel & Charles Toombs are happy to announce their wedding will take place on the evening of December 12th at Temple B'nai Israel. Rabbi Alexis Erdheim will be officiating. Any members who are interested in attending their wedding virtually via Zoom please reach out to Alex directly at the email: becomingtoombs12122020@gmail.com. The in-person wedding ceremony has been limited to immediate family and close friends.



Hanukkah Shabbat:

Alexandra Rommel and Charles Toombs are excited to share Rabbi Alexis Erdheim will be leading the Shabbat services for December 11th. This will include a Torah service and blessings for the couple. Please join them via Zoom for a fun Hanukkah celebration with an old friend to the synagogue.

REFUAH SHELEMAH

The following people are in our thoughts and prayers:

Joan Altman	Bruce Kriegel
Bob Blinderman	Mabel Knox
Joel Kaplan	Carolyn Dowlen
Larry Katz	David Altman
Carrie Delaney (Yael bat Sarah Imani)	Harriette Tallert

Please offer prayers that they all have a full and speedy recovery.

Hodaah, the daily prayer of Thanksgiving

By Rabbi David Wirtschafter

We are all too aware that this year is not like all other years. Too many of our sick and elderly are spending holidays alone. Too many households are putting out fewer chairs than



anyone can remember. Too many of our loved ones have died from the pandemic, and too many are unable to join with others because of it.

Appreciation is mixed with anxiety. Hospitals are filled to overflowing with patients. Medical personnel infected with the virus are going to work because there is insufficient staff to relieve them.

No one ever said that being grateful would be easy; indeed, it can be difficult to be thankful when we have lost so much. Modim anchunu lach, Grateful are we to all those whose have helped us to persevere through this crisis.

For doctors and nurses continuing to treat their patients,
Modim anachnu lach.

For mental and behavioral health professionals continuing to offer comfort and encouragement,
Modim anachnu lach..

For teachers and professors continuing to offer instruction,
Modim anachnu lach.

For first responders continuing to rush to our aid,
Modim anachnu lach.

For essential workers continuing to put food on our tables,
Modim anachnu lach.

For nursing home employees and care givers continuing to tend to the elderly and infirm,
Modim anachnu lach.

For the unemployed and underemployed continuing to help their families and communities,
Modim anachnu lach.

For family and friends continuing to inquire about us,
Modim anachnu lach.

For continuing to see and hear one another remotely until we can gather in person,
Modim anachnu lach.

Baruch ata, Adonai, hatov shimcha ul'cha na-eh l'hodot.

Blessed are You, Adonai, Your name inspires goodness, and Your caring deserves our thanks.

Yahrzeits for December

*David Spector 12/1	Abbe Kischinovsky 12/12
*Nathan Spector 12/1	Janet Ziffer Wells 12/13
*Sarah Jeanne Harris 12/2	*Dan Berg 12/13
*Dr. Daniel J. Schwartz 12/3	*Minnie Cohen 12/13
Deanna Brown 12/3	Ada Brenner 12/15
Sadie Blank 12/3	Milton H. Dresner 12/16
*Albert Kligman 12/4	Alice Maples 12/17
Mannie Rubin 12/4	*Julia Ecker Berger 12/20
Anne Block 12/5	Leopold Kischinovsky 12/20
George Skora 12/6	Annie Sisson 12/20
*Sol Levine 12/6	Johanna Ellen Kramer 12/22
*Abe Latman 12/6	Mike Bruton 12/22
Dorothy Gimp Brand 12/7	*Julius S. Grodjieski 12/23
Sara Munic 12/7	*Neita Axelrod Benjamin 12/23
*Audrey Ball-Kaufman 12/7	Carolyn Lipshy 12/23
*Jayne Cowen Seliger 12/7	*Lucy Bessie Weinberger 12/24
Golda Meir 12/8	*Bella Lotman 12/24
*Raye Blinderman 12/8	*Meyer Darryl 12/27
*Ben Hirschland 12/9	*Max Silverman 12/29
Elaine Gaynor 12/9	*Eli Raffkind 12/30
Nathan Goldstein II 12/10	*Julian Levy 12/31
Frieda Genzer 12/11	Gloria Altman 12/31
*Sam A. Fenberg 12/11	Isadore Goodman
Dennis Weisbart 12/11	Minnie Samuels
Arnold M. Gates 12/11	Charles Robinson
Robert Blank 12/12	

The “” indicates individuals whose names are on the Yahrzeit boards in the sanctuary.*

If any member would like to add a name to the monthly yahrzeit list, please send the name, date of yahrzeit and your relationship to BnailsraelAmarillo.org, Attn: Mary Blinderman. Thank you.