

Temple Israel of Highlands County  
1305 Temple Israel Drive  
Sebring, Florida 33870  
863-382-7744 *January 2024 / 5784*

Temple Israel's Web Page [www.templeisraelofhcf.org](http://www.templeisraelofhcf.org)



Temple Israel is a Reform Temple that promotes the enduring and fundamental principles of Judaism.

Through prayer, study and friendship we strive to enrich our lives and insure Jewish continuity in Highlands County.



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### **Officiating Cantor:** **Cantor Riselle Bain**

Cell: 813-600-8013

\*American Conference of Cantors  
Clergy Committed to Judaism and  
Jewish Music

### **Rabbi Emerita:**

**Lorraine Rudenberg**

### **Newsletter Staff:**

**Mary Ann Romer**

**Michelle Herchick**



Dear Family and Friends,

As we enter the secular year of 2024, are some of us still waiting for a Messiah?

Or do some of us believe our endeavors for Tikkun Olam can bring about a  
Messianic Age?

The idea of tikkun olam has been around for about 2,000 years and originated from the Mishnah (an edited record of the complex body of material known as oral Torah that was transmitted in the aftermath of the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE). It is generally believed by most Jewish people that tikkun olam will help usher in the coming of the Messiah or what is called the Messianic Age.

Jewishly, we pray for the coming of the Messiah. For some, that is a person, for others, an idea or an era in time. There is a traditional Jewish concept which says we are to work to bring about the messianic era and then the Messiah will come. This idea can be inspiring and move us to accept a responsibility to work hard to bring about the better world we believe to be possible.

We Jews don't think about the Messiah in the same way that Christians do. The Christian holiday calendar centers around the life of Jesus who they believe to have been the Messiah. Jews have no singular holiday dedicated to the Messiah. For Christians, Christmas, Easter, Advent and Lent are all about the coming of the Messiah. Rabbi Lawrence Kushner used to say that all religions work with the same deck of cards, but it is how we shuffle them that makes us different. Whereas for Christians, the "Messiah" card is toward the top of the deck, for Jews, it is further down.

If you asked a Jew in 19th-century Poland, Iraq, or even in New York about tikkun olam, they might have shrugged their shoulders and said they didn't know much about it. Today, tikkun olam — Hebrew for "repairing the world" — is ubiquitous. Many American Jews consider it a cornerstone of their Jewish identity, a key reason they're committed to making the world a better place.

The world is broken, the thinking goes, so human beings must repair it by committing to social justice, political activism, or, in the broadest sense, ethical behavior.



In an authoritative scholarly article in 2014, Jonathan Krasner, Assistant Professor of the American Jewish Experience at Hebrew Union College New York, traced the history and evolution of tikkun olam across nearly two thousand years of Jewish thought and practice to explain how it came to mean what it does today. He cited the world events and changes in Jewish thinking that led to tikkun olam's transformation from an obscure concept to a universal value.

In the Talmud, the rabbis wrote about mipnei tikkun ha-olam, Hebrew for "for the sake of the betterment of society." In this context, tikkun olam justified rabbinic interventions designed to maintain the social order.

Tikkun olam also appeared in the prayer *Aleinu*, which dates to the 3rd century CE, though it only became part of the liturgy in the early 1200s. The verse, translated from Hebrew, reads: "Let the time not be distant, O God, when all shall turn to You in love, when all the brokenness in our world is repaired by the work [tikkun olam] of our hands and our hearts, inspired by Your words of Torah." Here, it lost its economic connotation and took on a religious dimension. It was a messianic idea — repairing the world will bring about the Kingdom of Heaven. It was the belief that at the "end of days" (aḥarit ha-yamim, אחרית הימים), the brokenness of the world would be replaced by a more just and godly world.

In the Middle Ages, Kabbalah, a branch of Jewish mysticism, redefined tikkun olam. Isaac Luria, a leading kabbalistic thinker and rabbi, was disturbed by the problem of evil in the world. How could a world created by God, the supposed embodiment of perfection, contain evil? To explain, Luria expounded a mythic story of "the broken vessels." Evil comes into the world because divine sparks that were part of God's creative light became trapped in shards of broken vessels. How can humanity restore the sparks and God's wholeness, according to Luria? Through prayer, meditation, and performing God's commandments.

And then tikkun olam pretty much disappeared as a major concept in Judaism until the 20th century, when Zionism reappropriated it. A strain of religious Zionism saw establishing a Jewish state as a holy endeavor to repair what had been broken 2,000 years earlier when Jewish sovereignty in Palestine ended. Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook, the founder of the modern Chief Rabbinate of Israel in the 1920s, was among the first modern Jewish thinkers who believed that tikkun olam could be achieved by humans acting in history — in this case by creating a Jewish state.



## Cantor Riselle Bain's Message Cont.

After the Holocaust, tikkun olam underwent another shift in meaning. Throughout Jewish history, there was a belief that if Jews lived up to their side of the bargain and did what God expected of them, God would favor and reward them. The trauma of the Holocaust shook up this understanding. For some, this led to a reevaluation of the covenant between God and the Jewish people. Some theologians saw the Holocaust as a rupture and argued that the relationship with God needed to be repaired. But this time, rather than God being the dominant partner, humans were. In fact, God was unable or unwilling to intervene in the affairs of humans, so humans had to take responsibility to rebuild this world.

Eventually, tikkun olam became associated with social justice. It was largely done by Conservative and Reconstructionist Jews who were politically active in the 1960s and the early 70s. Ending the Vietnam War was seen as an act of tikkun olam. So was combating deforestation and caring for the Jewish elderly in transitioning urban neighborhoods.

Yes, Tikkun Olam is Jewish, but it has come to have universal implications. It's certainly a term that has taken on a huge number of meanings. For some, it's a grand utopian vision. But for others, it can mean something as small as taking out the recycling or putting solar panels on your roof. Tikkun Olam is supposed to challenge us to move out of our comfort zone.

In this season of darkness, longing for the light, seeking hope for the future, I think we are all praying and working for something better...Tikkun Olam perhaps is just around the corner.

May 2024 bring us all a time of shalom,

*Cantor Riselle Bain*

Portions of this newsletter are based on an article by Jonathan Krasner



# Message From the President

**Julia Ruden**

Dear Friends and Family,

Our Chanukah celebration was awesome, it was wonderful to see so many of you and hope you all will continue to come in person to services when you can. You are missed when we don't see you but are thankful you join us online. Grateful for the upgraded technology.

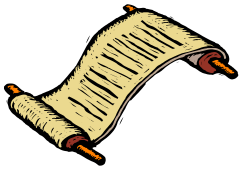
Thank you Phyllis and Bruce Behrens, Mary Ann Romer, Cathy Blumenthal, Sara Rosenbaum, Rolph Rosenberg, Donna Wasson, and Cantor Riselle Bain for all the effort you put into our Temple and our celebrations! Rolph, thank you for working so hard with Donna on our beautiful Butterfly Garden.

I see the LOVE and LIFE for our Judaism and our Jewish Community every time I'm at Shul.

Thank you Stacy Naroditsky for celebrating again with us with your festive guitar playing.

We are going to have a concert on **February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at 3:30PM** at Temple Israel and Cantor Riselle will be performing **"A Celebration of Broadway Divas"**.

To purchase tickets for \$20.00 contact Mary Ann Romer, at **matromer@aol.com** ASAP to reserve your tickets.



***January 2024 /5784***

***Julia Ruden***

## Message From the President, Cont.

If you are not able to attend our Fund Raising concert please send in a donation for our shul that has been renovated and help our negative balance sheet as much as you can.

Our Temple is open because of donations. We are all volunteers and the only one that gets paid is our clergy, Cantor Riselle Bain, and our Security for every service.

Thank you everyone for all you do and keeping Temple Israel Alive!

I still light a third candle on Shabbat for all the IDF and innocent suffering souls of this war! The hope lives for World PEACE, Tikkun Olam!

Continued Prayers Mi Shebeirach for all who are recovering and healing!

May we continue to go from strength to strength!

Be thankful for everything, everyone, everyday – I am!!

Have a SAFE, Healthy and Happy New Year 2024.

Love, Julie





## **“ A Celebration of Broadway Divas”**

*Cantor Riselle Bain and Joy Katzen Guthrie*

*Sunday, February 18, 2024 at 3:30 PM*

*Temple Israel*

*1305 Temple Israel Drive*

*Sebring, Florida*

*Tickets -- \$20.00*

*To purchase contact Mary Ann Romer, [matromer@aol.com](mailto:matromer@aol.com)*



# Announcements

JANUARY 2024 / 5784



January Onegs are sponsored by:

January 5, 2024 – The Board  
January 26, 2024 – The Board

Challah, wine, decaf coffee & fruit are the basics for our onegs. If you would like to sponsor an Oneg contact Karen del Valle 863-260-0325



*Happy Anniversary*

Jay & Rebecca Clarke	1/14
George & Pearl Zelma	1/18
Judy Albin & Clint Wallbank	1/24



## LUNCH BUNCH

The next  
Ladies Lunch Bunch Group  
Monday, January 29, 2024  
at 12:15pm

**Thai House Restaurant**

3750 US Hwy 27N

Sebring, FL 33870

**Contact Renee Tepper**

**863-414-8811** or

**reneetepper@gmail.com**

**and let her know you'll be there.**



**תודה רבה - Thank You**

**Alan Wildstein** for your  
continued and generous  
support for Alan Jay

**Automotive** for our  
transportation to and from  
Services! And for ALL  
YOU Dooo!

Please Contact Cantor  
Riselle Bain 813-600-8013  
if you need assistance to  
get to services.





# We Remember



## January Yahrzeits

### *\*\* Memorial Plaque in our Shul*

Miriam E. Amster **	Freda Moscovitz
Elliot Berkowitz **	Milton M. Myers **
Louis Biener	Gertrude Pearl
Mary D. Blumenthal **	Bella Romer
Mariah H. Brenner **	Calman Rosen **
Sam Chinsky	PFC Seymour C. Rosen **
Irving Dorfman	Max Rosenbaum **
Samuel Fishman	Frank Roth
Nora Good **	Simon Ruden
Nathan Gottlieb **	Nate Sadowsky
Jordon Greenberg **	Arthur Schwartz
Ralph Greenberg **	Ida Schwartz
Ralph Jaret	Esther Sewelson
Olivia Johnson	David Sheldon
Marc Randall Kahn	Jennifer Aimee Sherr **
Jacob Kamen	Elmer D. Spence
Bernard Krasner **	Joan Spero
Jack Kravitz**	Nettie Spero
David Levy	Sarah Vinik
Jennie Liss	Charles Wasoff
Judy Mass	Olivia Wortman
Michel Miller **	Gladys Zenchoff



# We Remember



## YAHREZEIT DONATIONS

### Given By:

Cathy Blumenthal  
 Herb Moscowitz  
 Julie Ruden  
 Jill Liebeck  
 Mary Ann Romer  
 Jay & Susie Luck  
 Sara Rosenbaum  
 Rolph Rosenberg  
 Gloria Soltes  
 Norman & Anna Spero  
 Ron & Renee Tepper

### In Memory Of:

Mary Blumenthal  
 Frieda Moscowitz  
 Simon Ruden  
 Gertrude Pearl  
 Bella Romer  
 Judy Mass, David Sheldon  
 Max Rosenbaum  
 Narola & Fritz Rosenberg  
 Frank Roth  
 Joan & Nettie Spero  
 Ida Mazen



To plant a tree, email your information of who you're honoring/remembering to [jruden18@gmail.com](mailto:jruden18@gmail.com).

Mail check (\$18.00/tree) to the Temple.  
 Write "Tree" in the memo line on check.



**Mrs. Blumie's  
 Porcelain Doll Studio**

207 N. Ridgewood Dr.  
 Sebring, FL 33870

**863-402-9190**

BOARD CERTIFIED



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## **Don Elwell**

DIRECTOR OF MARKETING  
 & PUBLIC RELATIONS  
 401 U.S. Hwy 27 S. Sebring, FL 33870  
 Email: [don.elwell@ALANJAY.COM](mailto:don.elwell@ALANJAY.COM)  
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## **Stephenson-Nelson Funeral Home & Crematory**



**Craig M. Nelson**  
 Licensed Funeral Director

## CARDS SENT

*(All donations go to Temple Israel.)*



**To send a birthday, anniversary, get well, sympathy or mazel tov card contact Mary Ann Romer at [matromer@aol.com](mailto:matromer@aol.com).**

**Write “Temple card” in the email subject box.**

**Send your minimum \$5.00 donation to temple.**

### **Get Well Card Sent**

**By: Congregation, Board of Directors, Trustees, Cantor Riselle Bain**

**To: Emma Sherwood**

### **Thank You Card Sent**

**By: Congregation, Board of Directors, Trustees, Cantor Riselle Bain**

**To: Paul & Helen Hymen for yahrzeit donation  
In memory of Lillie & Walter Kessler**

### **Condolence Card Sent**

**By: Congregation, Board of Directors, Trustees, Cantor Riselle Bain**

**By: Mary Ann Romer**

**To: Donna Wasson on the tragic loss of her husband, Mike Wasson**

# Cantor Bain's Schedule:



## Future Erev Shabbat Services

6:30 PM (subject to change)

<https://www.facebook.com/662042600572611/live/>

Friday 1/5 – Torah Shemot

Friday 1/26 – Torah Bo/Beshalach–  
Observe Holocaust Remembrance actual date 1/27

Friday 2/9 – Torah Portion Mishpatim

**Sunday February 18 – Concert with Cantor Riselle Bain**  
**“A CELEBRATION OF BROADWAY DIVAS”**

Friday 2/23 – Torah Portion Tetzaveh

Friday 3/8 – Torah Portion Vayakhel (Rosh Chodesh Adar II)

Friday 3/22 – Purim

Friday 4/5 – Torah Portion Shmini

**Tuesday 4/23 Passover Seder**

Friday 5/10 – Yom Hashoah/Yom Haatzmaut – Torah Portion K'doshim

Friday 5/24 – Torah Portion Behar