

Temple Israel of Highlands County
1305 Temple Israel Drive
Sebring, Florida 33870
863-382-7744 NOVEMBER 2021 / 5782



Temple Israel's Web Page 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 ensure Jewish continuity in Highlands County.



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Cell: 813-600-8013

*American Conference of Cantors
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The Jewish Connection to Thanksgiving – The Attitude of Gratitude

Surprisingly, there are strong historical connections between Judaism and Thanksgiving. Most of the Pilgrims who celebrated the first Thanksgiving were Puritans, a branch of the Protestant faith. The Puritans strongly identified with the historical traditions and customs of the Israelites in the Bible.

In their quest for religious freedom, the Puritans viewed their journey to America as identical to the exodus of the Israelites from Egypt. England was Egypt, the king was Pharaoh, the Atlantic Ocean their Red Sea, and the Puritans were the Israelites, entering into a new covenant with God in a new Promised Land. In fact, most of the Puritans had Hebrew names and there was even a proposal to make Hebrew the language of the colonies!

Many people believe that the Pilgrims modeled Thanksgiving after the holiday of [Sukkot](#), as they are both harvest festivals that take place in the fall. In Jewish tradition, Sukkot has a dual significance: historical and agricultural. Our ancestors lived in sukkot (temporary dwellings) for the 40 years of their journey in the desert. However, the Torah also refers to Sukkot as chag ha'asif, the Festival of the Ingathering. At this time of year in Israel, the harvest was ending and the final fruits and crops were gathered and stored. Sukkot is also known as z'man simchateinu, the time of our rejoicing, as our ancestors gave thanks for the conclusion of the harvest and the bounty of the land.

Of course, the main theme of the holiday of Thanksgiving comes from the name itself, reminding us of the importance of giving thanks. Saying “thank you” is a primary Jewish value. When we Jews sit down to eat, we say the motzi: “Blessed are you God, for bringing bread from the earth.” When we say a blessing over bread, we affirm that God played a role in creating the universe where the sun rises each day and the rain falls and the growth of food is possible.

Cantor Riselle Bain's Message *Continued*

The rabbis taught that we are to say 100 blessings a day! This teaching reminds us that no matter how difficult life can be, we all have many blessings such as simply being alive, our health, our loved ones, and friends, even for the modern technology that has kept us together through the Pandemic for one year and eight months!

Traditionally we might reach those 100 blessings by praying the three daily services plus reciting the blessings before and after we eat. However, the rabbis also suggested a few special blessings for us to acknowledge the wonders of everyday.

Upon seeing lightning, one may say: “Blessed are you God, who made the world.” When you see the ocean, you can say: “Blessed are you God, who made the great sea.” And upon seeing fruit trees in bloom, one may say: “Blessed are you God, who leaves nothing lacking in the world, who created good creatures and beautiful trees, for the benefit of all people.”

What about the other 97 blessings? We might offer the following words: “Baruch atah Adonai – Blessed are you God,” and then insert whatever we have to be thankful for – our family, our friends, our food, our homes, our country, Israel, our Temple Israel synagogue, and any of the myriad of blessings in our lives.

From the historical connections of the Puritans to Sukkot and the Torah, to the primary importance in Judaism of saying thank you to God for all our blessings, Thanksgiving is a holiday steeped in Jewish values.

Cantor Riselle Bain



Message From the President

NOVEMBER 2021/5782

Julia Ruden

Dear Friends and Family;

We are going to try (TRY AGAIN) to re-open our Temple doors on Friday, November 19th 2021. By the grace of God this “Pandemic” will turn to “Endemic” from the CDC guidelines.

Highlands County has had improvement in the Covid numbers halleluiah!

On one day in the beginning of August, there were over 28,000 new cases of Covid reported for all of Florida (thousand is correct BTW). So we checked what was happening in Highlands County.

When we tried to re-open August 6th, the number of new cases of Covid in Highlands County spiked to an average of 74 cases a day. That’s higher than the average any time in the last 1½ years. We absolutely could not reopen in August. The cases continued increasing to 164 cases a day. [source New York Times] Florida was considered a “Hot Spot” in September.

At the end of October in Highlands County, there is now an average of 7 new cases a day (keep that in mind that there is less testing). Hopefully, the numbers will continue to decrease.

We will let everyone know if something changes but for now we will plan to Re-open our Services at the Temple November 19th, 2021.

Masks must be worn inside the shul at all times.

Cantor Riselle will continue to have our Facebook Services Live on her Facebook page.

We have ordered 2 air conditioners and hope that they will be installed by November 19th service as we cannot have services without air conditioners.

Prayers for all those who are sick, Speedy recovery! We miss you and hope to see you soon.

Thankxoxox you ALL for ALL you Dooooooo!!

May we continue to go from strength to strength!

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

Wishing everyone a Safe, Peaceful, and Happy Thanksgiving!

LOVE Julie

Donna Wasson

On November 9-10, every year we remember Kristallnacht, “The Night of Broken Glass,” which happened in 1938. We take the time remember the terror, the shock, the destruction, the sounds of glass shattering, and the heartbreak. When I was a teacher in Berlin, I walked with a candle in my hand in a commemorative silent walk through the streets. It was silent. It was safe. The victims of that time were never safe again. Kristallnacht is considered to be the beginning of the Holocaust.

Holocaust Education is mandated in Florida schools. Our youth are taught to remember, to reflect, to make the world a better place by taking action against hatred, intolerance, and prejudice.

The Holocaust Memorial Butterfly Garden at Temple Israel of Highlands County began as a reaction to the acts of antisemitism that have occurred right here in the United States in the past decade, as well as to commemorate the blessed memory of the victims of the Holocaust. It is a garden for reflection, peaceful thoughts, and beauty. The butterflies frolic, feed and continue to reproduce among the colorful blossoms that provide them with life-sustaining nectar.

The planting and the continued gardening of the Temple Israel’s Holocaust Memorial Butterfly Garden is always done with prayers for the victims and survivors of acts of violence. We choose to remember.

In our beautiful garden, you will see the golds of Jerusalem, the blues and whites of the flag of Israel, the whites of the robes of the Kabbalists of Safed, and also the reds of the blood shed of innocent people. (The red Penta flowers along the front border are one of the best nectar plants for butterflies.)

May we continue to be inspired to live with loving kindness and to make a difference in today’s world, as we remember and honor the blessed souls who were treated so inhumanely in the past.

Holocaust Museum using technology to preserve survivor testimonies
<https://www.abcactionnews.com/news/local-news/holocaust-museum-using-technology-to-preserve-survivor-testimonies>

All photos courtesy of Michelle Herchick





WE REMEMBER



November Yahrzeits ** Memorial Plaque in our Schul

Murray Brenner **	Dr. Harold Kirshner **
Jeno Greenstein **	Frank Roth
	Bernice Snoll
Elsie Gross **	Eva Stoller
Dora Hurwitz	Ruth Witle
Meyer Hurwitz	Martin Wohl **
Sadie Kahn **	Maurice Blumenthal**



Yahrzeit Donations



GIVEN BY:

CATHERINE BLUMENTHAL
MARJORIE WOHL
HOWARD SALLES

IN MEMORY OF:

MAURICE BLUMENTHAL
MARTIN WOHL
SAMUEL LEVY



To plant a tree, email your information of who you're honoring/remembering to jruden@embarqmail.com. Mail check (\$18.00/tree) to the temple. Write "Tree" in the memo line on check.



Announcements

NOVEMBER 2021/ 5782



NOVEMBER Onegs are sponsored by:

Nov. 19th 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

LUNCH BUNCH

The next Ladies Lunch Bunch Group Monday, 29 November at 12:30 at Morty & Edna's; 231 N Main Avenue, Lake Placid



Contact Renee Tepper
863-414-8811 or
reneetepper@gmail.com
and let her know you'll be there.

Happy Anniversary
Michael & Donna Wasson

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.

NOVEMBER 2021 DONATION CARDS

(All donations go to our Temple.)

To send a birthday, anniversary, get well, sympathy or mazel tov card

contact Mary Ann Romer at matromer@aol.com.

Write "Temple card" in the email subject box.

Send your minimum \$5.00 donation to temple.



Anniversaries

By: Congregation, Julie Ruden, Howard Salles, Cathy Blumenthal, Cantor Riselle Bain, Donna Wasson

To: Rolph and Narola Rosenberg

By: Congregation

To: Dr. Neil & Dawn Schectman



Cantor Bain's Schedule:



2021 / 5782

Future Erev Shabbat Services

6:30 PM (subject to change)

November 19 – Torah Vayishiach

**Kristallnacht was November 8-9, 1938*

December 3 – Chanukah 6th candle

December 17 – Torah portion Vayechi

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