

Temple Israel of Highlands County  
1305 Temple Israel Drive  
Sebring, Florida 33870  
863-382-7744 **DECEMBER 2025 / 5786**

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.



## **Congregational Board**

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Julia Ruden

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### **Officiating Cantor:**

**Cantor Riselle Bain**

[voiceofgladness@aol.com](mailto:voiceofgladness@aol.com)

Cell: 813-600-8013

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

### **Rabbi Emerita:**

Lorraine Rudenberg

### **Newsletter Staff:**

Mary Ann Romer

The Jewish people view Chanukah in many ways. For some, the “miracle of the oil” is central; for some, the achievement of the Maccabees is at its core; for others, it is a holiday of religious freedom.

This year, thank God, all living hostages who were taken by Hamas have finally come home to Israel. As of November 26, 2025, there are still two individuals whose bodies have not yet been returned to Israel from Gaza as part of the hostage return agreements: Ran Gvili, an Israeli and Sudthisak Rinthalak, a Thai national. But our world is still suffering from terrorism and war and increased anti-semitism.

As I thought about the lighting of our chanukiahs (menorahs for Chanukah!), I thought about making each candle we light represent a prayer for creating light and hope – for a world of peace, respect, and harmony. The great teacher Hillel taught us to add light each night. I thought about dedicating the light of each candle for the eight nights of Chanukah to one of our cherished Jewish values.

The first candle to FREEDOM. The Maccabean revolt against Antiochus Ephiphanes and his forced Hellenization of the Jews (167-160 B.C.E.) was a struggle for freedom – for their very existence – for rights of the minority without threat of repression. Let this candle's light inspire us to protect freedom for all.

The second candle to TOLERANCE. Let us continue to strive for a world in which the voice of hatred is no longer taught. Let this candle light the way for us to work for a world of mutual respect and tolerance among all the peoples of the world.

The third candle to PEACE. Let us use our precious freedom to create a world that uses words to build bridges among people and does not employ weapons of destruction – a world in which “they shall beat their swords into plow-shares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not learn war anymore.”

The fourth candle to COURAGE – most importantly to have the courage to stand strong with our moral ideals and convictions. Let this light remind us that without that kind of courage, those ideals will remain unfulfilled.

The fifth candle to KNOWLEDGE. The quest for Jewish knowledge for ourselves and our children can enrich our lives as Jews and so enable us to transmit the beauty and depth of our heritage to future generations. Let this light symbolize our commitment to expanding our Jewish knowledge.

The six candle to TZEDAKAH – TO JUSTICE – by giving of ourselves and easing the burdens of others. Let this light remind us of other's needs, physical, emotional, spiritual – and inspire us to share what we have and what we are with generosity and love.

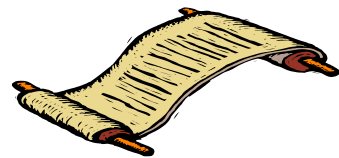
The seventh candle to RESPONSIBILITY – that we understand that each of us has a significant degree of responsibility for the welfare of others. Let the light of this candle remind us that we can proudly bear this responsibility.

The eighth candle is to the CONTINUITY OF THE JEWISH PEOPLE – to be an active participant in Jewish life, so that future generations will learn the joy and beauty of their Jewish heritage from our actions as well as our words. May the light of this candle encourage us to make all the wonderful aspects of Judaism a priority in our lives, intrinsic to our very being.

In lighting our Chanukah candles, in singing our songs of freedom, we join with Jews all over the world – today – in the past – as well as in the future. May the candles illuminate our minds and warm our hearts and rekindle our commitment to each other and to the Jewish people.

To all, a Joyous, Yummy, Meaningful Chanukah! Comme celebrate with us at Temple Israel.

*Cantor Riselle Bain*





# Message From the President Julia Ruden

**December 2025 / 5786**

Dear Friends and Family;

December makes me ( I think everyone) reflect again about life because of the regular calendar ending and I have a birthday (new beginnings) so like most Jews, I/we all get 2 or 3 “overall evaluations” during each year with their new beginnings and possibilities. I have to say, 2025 has been *the best year yet* of my life so far! I wish this happiness for everyone! No Fear and No Hate – Live life well and share/ rub off on others!

I hope everyone’s Thanksgiving created only the best memories filled with love, joy and friendships and family!

Our next service is Dec. 5<sup>th</sup>.

Our Chanukah celebration is December 19<sup>th</sup>. Bring your menorahs please and we will have our traditional sufganiyot (real homemade traditional Israeli donuts – thankxoxoxo you Donna), Latkes thankxoxox you Cathy (and me) and Chanukah gelt, play dreidel and sing our traditional songs.

We are going to have a fundraising concert Sunday February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at the Temple and the tickets will sell out fast like every year. Cantor Riselle has a plan so mark your calendars Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> 2026 3:30PM ... “Temple Israel presents.....”

Our congregation is first to purchase tickets for \$20.00 at our Chanukah Celebration, then it goes public and Mary Ann will have those 125 tickets sold by the end of December. If you are not able to attend our Fund-Raising concert, please consider sending in a donation for our shul to help our negative balance sheet as much as you can.

Our Temple is open because of your donations! We are ALL Volunteers (Thankxoxox you Board and helpers) and the only people that are paid are our clergy Cantor Riselle Bain and our security. (Other bills are for Security/electric/water/trash).

Thankxoxox you everyone for all you DOooooo and for keeping Temple Israel going!

The hope always 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 and Happy Chanuakah!

Love, Julie



# Announcements

DECEMBER 2025/ 5786



## DECEMBER Onegs are sponsored by:

DEC. 5, 2025      The Board  
DEC. 19, 2025    Chanukah Party

Challah, wine, decaf coffee & fruit are the basics for our onegs. If you would like to sponsor an Oneg contact Karen delValle.

## LUNCH BUNCH

The next Ladies Lunch Bunch  
Monday, December 29, 2025

Panera Bread  
1760 US HWY 27N  
Sebring, FL

Contact Renee Tepper  
863-414-8811 or  
[reneetepper@gmail.com](mailto: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!

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



# *December Yahrzeits*

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



Ida Biener	Albert M. Moses**
Ida Chinsky	Gertrude Pearl
Sylvia Cohen	Herman Pintzow Past President
Ralph E. Crews**	Lena Pintzow
Ruth E. Davis**	Helen Rivers
Benjamin Donde	Jacob Rosenberg
Sylvia Dorfman	Nate Sadowsky**
Elaine Eckles**	Ethel Gottlieb Shapiro**
Isaac Elias	Steve Siegel
Benjamin Garthwait**	Marilyn Schustrin
Ella Garthwait**	Joseph Sornstein**
Roger Jarlow	Mamie Asher Smith
Kathleen Johnson	Harry Stoller
Michael Kahn**	Eleanor R. Trachtenberg
Lillie H. Kessler**	Meyer Vinik
Jean Levene**	Ethel Werner
Gerda Levy**	Sam Wolkove**
Frieda Moscovitz	

### **YAHRZEIT DONATIONS**

### **ZICHRONAH LIV'RACHAH**

#### **GIVEN BY:**

**Catherine Blumenthal**  
**Mary Ann Romer**  
**Julia Ruden**  
**Nancy Beyer**  
**Elsa Kahn**  
**Andrew Haines**

#### **IN MEMORY OF:**

**Maurice Blumenthal, Ruth E. Davis**  
**Marilyn Schustrin, Edith Romer**  
**Jacob Rosenberg, Zack Kelly**  
**Benjamin Gordon**  
**Michael Kahn, Lillie H. Kessler, Gerda Levy**  
**Janice Mann Meredith, Anthony Haines**



## CARDS SENT

*(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](mailto:matromer@aol.com).

Write "Temple card" in the email subject box.

Send your minimum \$5.00 donation to temple.



### November Greeting Cards Sent

#### Thank You Cards Sent for Donations

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

**To:** Donald Snoll, Marc & Stephanie Hauser, Linda Waddell

#### Get Well Card Sent for Donations

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

**To:** Joyce (JJ) Wiebbecke



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

### 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)

Phone (863) 314-5334

Board of County Commissioners

COMMISSIONER, DISTRICT 2

600 S. Commerce Ave. Sebring, FL 33870

Email: [delwell@hcbcc.net](mailto:delwell@hcbcc.net) Phone: (863) 402-6835

Cell: (863) 381 - 5622

**ALAN JAY**  
Automotive Network



### Stephenson-Nelson Funeral Home & Crematory



**Craig M. Nelson**

Licensed Funeral Director



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

207 N. Ridgewood Dr.  
Sebring, FL 33870

**863-402-9190**

BOARD CERTIFIED



LAKE PLACID EYE CLINIC  
GARY J. PEARCE, M.D.  
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211 US 27 South  
Lake Placid, FL 33852  
(863) 465-1880

# Cantor Bain's Schedule:



## Future Erev Shabbat Services

6:30 PM (subject to change)

Services will be at the Shul.

Here is the link to access the live services or the saved videos of our past services since we closed our doors due to the pandemic.

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

There is usually a Judaism class on the Saturday morning after the Friday night service. Come join us for 10AM breakfast and learning.

Friday 12/5/25 – Torah Portion Va-yishlach

Friday 12/19/25 – **Shabbat Chanukah** (6<sup>th</sup> night) Torah Portion Miketz  
**Bring your Chanukiah**

Friday 1/9/26 -- Torah Portion Sh'mot

Friday 1/23/26 -- Torah Portion Bo

Friday 2/6/26 – Torah Portion Yitro (Revelation at Sinai)

Friday 2/20/26 – Torah Portion T'rumah

Friday 3/6/26 – **Purim The Scroll of Esther** Torah Portion Ki Tisa

Friday 3/20/26 – Torah Portion Vayikra

**Passover Seder Wednesday April 1** (first night)

Friday 4/17/26 **Yom Ha Shoah/Yom Ha Atzmaut** Torah Portion Tazria/Metzora

Friday 5/1/26 – Torah Portion Emor

Friday 5/15/26 – **Shavuot** (actual day 5/21-5/23) Torah Portion Bamidbar