

## ANSHE EMETH MARCH 2022 E-NEWSLETTER

**JOIN THE PURIM SPIEL!** Saturday, March 19, 10 AM In-person and also by Zoom

We have a tradition of volunteers reading the parts in our Purim scripts with gusto as the congregation grinds their greggors. We need 4 volunteers willing to act dramatically and wear some costume props.

**Please bring back your script** If you were one of the volunteers last year (when we did it by Zoom). We have a few extra but need more.

**Yahrzeits for March.** May their memories be for a blessing.

**Lillian Altschul, Berne Cohen, Edith Kastner Benjamin, Harry Schutz, Israel Schuchat, Lois Snyder**

### **MESSAGE FROM RABBINIC INTERN CAITLIN BRAZNER:**

This March, as Purim approaches, we will come to the book of Leviticus in our Torah cycle. With its chapters of priestly codes, sacrificial rites, and often unmodern laws and restrictions, Leviticus can be challenging for some of us to read as contemporary, progressive Jews. What does a user manual for Temple practice have to do with us, Reform Jews living a millennia after the destruction of said Temple? What can we glean from its many teachings around sacrifice and ritual giving?

Before the destruction of the Second Temple, it was the priestly class, the Levites and *Cohenim*, who carried out the tasks of Jewish life. The way in which Hebrew peoples showed their devotion to God was by bringing sacrifices and offerings to the Temple in Jerusalem. In the first portion of Leviticus, *Vayikra*, we begin to learn the details for carrying out these sacrificial rituals. We're told to bring "a male calf without blemishes" (Lv 1:3), or "choice flour" (Lv 2:1), or "fresh grain" (Lv 2:14)" before the priests. Any offering one makes must be done with products of quality, that our sacrifice should truly be just that - a sacrifice. This was not an opportunity to give away the weakest animal in the herd, or the old, molding fruit from your field. You were to sacrifice something of value, something that truly represented your devotion and care for the

Eternal. Ultimately, a sacrifice was a way to give something good up, in order to merit good tidings and blessings for you, your family, and your people.

Today, we may not give up the fattest cows of our flocks, or sheaves of our choicest wheat; sacred service nowadays doesn't look like it did in the times of the Temple. Today, we serve God and the Jewish people by sacrificing other things: our time – perhaps arriving early to synagogue to help set up the *oneg* or a special program, or taking on a position of synagogue leadership, or by simply coming to Temple and praying alongside one another at Shabbat services. We sacrifice our energy, volunteering to organize the newsletter, or making visits to homebound congregants and friend. We 'sacrifice' or give up a portion of our earnings to synagogue dues and membership, or by donating to good causes that help bring healing and repair to the world. We find new ways to give of ourselves and our possessions or wealth to support the Jewish community to which we are committed and the greater world of which we are a part. Our 'sacrifices' today, while they make not look the same as priestly Temple service, still translate to very real blessings for our community, and ourselves.

In Exodus 19:6 we are told, "...you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation..." Today, as we make our sacrifices and engage in the sacred service of supporting, contributing to, and being part of the Jewish community, we transform ourselves into that very nation of priests. We take inspiration from the sacrificial rituals Leviticus describes, and we make sacrifices of our own. In being part of and actively contributing to the Jewish community, we serve a purpose higher than ourselves - we become that holy nation. Yes, Leviticus may describe the work of the Temple, a ritual space long lost to us. But its lessons on sacrifice, giving, and communal obligation are timeless.

#### **TEMPLE SECURITY MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT STEVE SHUCHAT:**

After two years of changes due to the pandemic, it has been wonderful seeing people in person again at the temple. During her last service our new Student Rabbi, Caitlin Brazner, lead us in a discussion about the Torah Portion, which focused on the Jewish tradition of welcoming strangers. It is my experience our Temple Anshe Emeth congregation does a very good job being an example of this Jewish tradition.

It is always a challenge to maintain this tradition while maintaining the safety of everyone who enters our temple. Due to the consistent efforts of the Feinsteins our congregation has a strong relationship with the Piqua Police Department and at the beginning of our services on February 15 a police cruiser

was parked across the street from the temple while people entered. Prior to every service the police department is informed that we will be there and they have consistently made sure there is a police presence around the temple prior to and during our service.

The national Jewish community has made some recommendations for small temples in an effort to increase the security of the temples and congregants. One recommendation to make sure we are always conscious and knowledgeable of every new person who is entering our temple. Please let me know if you have invited someone new to Temple. You can text this to me at 937-726-2116 or email me at [sshuchat@cleanall.com](mailto:sshuchat@cleanall.com).

There may be some new safety procedures you will notice when attending services. These are not intended to make anyone feel uncomfortable or unwelcome. But we do want to take additional steps to make sure everyone is safe and secure at Temple Anshe Emeth. Thank you!

**WITH GRATEFUL THANKS:** Cory & Sharon Lemmon

**MISHEBERACH PRAYERS FOR HEALING:** Neal Schmidt

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS:** Saturday, April 30, Shabbat Service at 10. Class at 1 PM. "The *Shmita* Year: a Year of Rest and Renewal for the Land and Us". Our "*Judaism 101*" class for 2022 – All Welcomed to this in-person and also Zoom class @ 1 PM taught by Rabbinic Intern Caitlin Brazner

**FRIDAY, MARCH 18, PURIM VIA ZOOM FROM ELYRIA OHIO.** Offered to small congregations in the Jewish Community Legacy Project. 7:15 PM (Zoom starts at 7)

Temple B'nai Abraham would welcome members of small congregations in Ohio to join us for our special Purim Shabbat service and celebration on Zoom. Rabbi Werber always does a fantastic job, and it's a lot of fun! There's a new theme every year, and even we won't know what it is until the service itself!!

**If any of the small congregations have members that would like to join us, those members can send me an email at [adsteig@outlook.com](mailto:adsteig@outlook.com) with their name and congregation, and "Purim Guest" in the subject line.** I'll make sure they get a Zoom link to join us.

There is no cost for participants from the small congregations; donations are always appreciated but purely optional. If anyone participating would like to make a small donation they can do so at:

<https://tbaelyria.org/2016/04/02/2015-07-25-17-23-13/>

**To Join Zoom**

**Service:**<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/7643723318?pwd=STJIR1drNXFoL29XRGw0L1AzMThxQT09>

**Or go to your Zoom App and put in this information:**

**Meeting ID: 764 372 3318 Passcode: 0092**

**Or simply dial by your location: 646 876 9923 US (New York)**

When prompted, put in for the Meeting ID: 764 372 3318 and push #

Passcode: 0092 and push #