

Temple Shabbat Shalom

Volume 6, Issue 3

Chanukah

5767/2006

The "Global Village" Congregation

Rededication and Home Observance: the Seder of Chanukah

Chanukah has become one of our beloved holidays. The lighting of the Menorah is widely practiced and is especially enjoyed by interfaith couples.

Traditionally we explain the light of Chanukah as a rededication of the Temple and Altar. The word Chanukah literally means dedication. The root word in Hebrew also means education, so we may read Chanukah as "a rededication to education."

After the destruction of the Temple we might have expected an end to the lighting of the Menorah. Was it possible to worship God with The Temple in ruins? Our Rabbis of blessed memory show their genius by their answer. Quoting the prophet Ezekiel (11:16) they suggest that God is also a sanctuary. We meet this aspect of God when we create a small sanctuary for God to enter. If we rededicate our homes for divine worship we have a place to encounter God even in exile. Our homes are for worship. Every table where we mention God when we break bread becomes an altar.

What about the modern day synagogue and Temple? Are they not houses of worship and study? Yes. They also are "a small sanctuary". In fact the design of every synagogue is modeled on the Temple in Jerusalem that was destroyed. The Temple-Synagogue as an institution is not mentioned in the Torah. We do not know how the synagogue became one of the replacements for the temple, but they did. Large rooms in private homes served as public places of worship in the ancient world. In the modern world Chassidic Rabbis often have their living rooms as a place of worship and study, and for the communal meals of their congregants. This works, since Judaism recognizes both The Home and The Temple as essential.

Chanukah as dedication means we redefine our mission as part of our education. This year as we rekindle the Chanukah lights we restate our mission. The mission of Temple Shabbat Shalom is to teach you how to transform your home into a temple, a place of prayer and study. Consider giving books as gifts this year. Commit to follow the Seders that transform your table into an altar. Chanukah and Passover are reminders that home worship and observance work. For interfaith couples the home is the ideal place for practice. You are the teachers and students of your little sanctuary. We are here to teach you the narrative, the *Haggadah*, the *Seder* (Order) of your table services.

Each of us faces the challenge that Chanukah be more than rituals based on folk tales. This is the year we truly understand the symbol of the Menorah when we follow the Kabbalahistic teaching that the Menorah is a *Nor Maeh*, an illumination by questioning. I ask you to consider these questions about this holiday: Why is the story of the Maccabbes absent from the Hebrew bible? Why is the prophetic reading for Chanukah about the power of non violence while the prayers sing of military victory? What is the role of women in the story? Bottom line, what are we to learn from Chanukah?

We begin to answer these questions in our Chanukah Seder.

Enjoy.

Rabbi Aryeh and Karen Alpern

RabbiAlpern@aol.com 518-893-0808

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Page 1 The "Global Village"

Page 2 Mazel Tovs

Page 3 Membership Form

Page 4- 13 **Chanukah Seder**

Chanukah Begins December 15th

Temple Shabbat Shalom Chanukah Party

December 16th 4pm- 6pm Kindly call 518-893-0808 to RSVP by December 1st

Simcha's- Mazel Tov to all

A Special Thank-you

Bob and Barbara Cohen for their generous donation in honor of Amanda and James' marriage
And for their continuing membership

A very special Thank you to Bill and Julia Reagan for the donation of our Torah and their continual support

Jim and Sandra Shuster on their generous donation to Temple Shabbat Shalom

Robyn and Jason Decker for their generous donation- you are family now
Marc and Kate Haber for their generous donation

Mazel Tov to our Newest Newlyweds

David and Amy – New Jersey

Dana and Dave- NYC

Alex and Suzanne- Boston

Josh & Alexi-MA

Alissa and James- Atlanta

Michael and Sarah- NYC

Joshua and Katherine-CA

Adam and Jackie-NYC

Marilyn & Don- New Jersey

Amy and Thomas- Syracuse

Amanda and James- NY

Jonathan and Kelly-NYC

David and Jen- NYC

Evan and Jen- VA

Mazel Tov to our Newest Bundles of Joy

Priscilla and Fabrice on the birth of their son Raphael – Paris France

Robbye and Castor on the birth of their son Aaron Rey-New Jersey

Scott and Diana on the birth of their son Leo Joseph- NYC

Josh and Laura on the birth of their daughter Ila Symone – Connecticut

Rabbi Nelson and Margie Golden on the birth of their granddaughter Annie Halligan Schultze

Newest Congregants

Robbye and Castor Losada-NJ

Howard and Ruthy Spector-PA

Rebecca Kron & Eric Montijo-NY

Elizabeth Benjamin and Adam Lardieri-PA

Mara Keshen and Merrill Mathews-Canada

Josh and Alexi Allen-NY

Celia Cohen and Tony Pelligrino- NYC

Louis, Kenny and Liz Salzberg-NH

Happy Anniversary

Nov 5 Jason and Robyn-Binghamton, NY

Nov 15 Raina and George- NYC

Nov 15 Adam and Megan-NY

Nov 19 Scott and Diana- NYC

Nov 19 Marty and Maura- MA

Dec 22 Doug and Karen- Saratoga Springs

Dec 31 Jody and Dallas- Cape Cod

Nov 6 Butch and Barrie- New Paltz

Nov 15 Raina and George-NYC

Nov 16 Stu and Connie-Ottawa

Nov 24 Linda and Michael- Colorado

Dec 20 Michelle and John – Minneapolis

Dec 25 Ken and Cindy- Albany

TEMPLE SHABBAT SHALOM

Enclosed is our donation of \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZipCode: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Kindly mail your checks to or if you prefer you may make a donation by credit card on our website:

Temple Shabbat Shalom
340 Plank Road
PO Box 53
Porter Corners, New York 12859

Remember all donations to Temple Shabbat Shalom are tax-deductible

Thank you for your most generous support