

## Temple Or Olam's Books of Life

*Each person has a Torah  
unique to that person  
his or her innermost teaching*  
—Rabbi Lawrence Kushner

In celebration of the High Holy Days this year, our rabbi put together a book of life for every family. The books feature an individual blessing for each family, they are decorated with stars, sparkles, and bright colors, and they feature the words "abracadabra" – an Aramaic phrase that actually announces that we can create that which we speak. In the coming year, we want to remember that our words have creative power, that those things we pray (and even those things we just say) can, and often do, come to fruition. How important is it then that those words be constructive and positive?

During the High Holy Days, we were given poetry, kavannot, and meditation exercises built around our "abracadabra" theme and around the process of doing teshuvah. We wrote down our prayers for our families and our community. We meditated about our own "inner Torah" – sometimes our souls recognize it immediately and sometimes the recognition can take years. We reflected on how we would want to complete our lives. The rabbi asked us to take

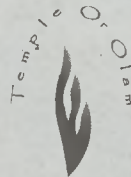
our books home and promised to send us more exercises and questions, more meditations to work on throughout the next liturgical year.

Although the High Holy Days are over, the Jewish liturgical year is packed with opportunities for reflection and personal growth. At Simchat Torah, we looked for the verse that we could take as a mandate for how we wanted to live this next year and wrote it in our Books of Life. At Hanukkah, we will want to reflect deeply on the way that winter darkness can help us explore our need for light. Tu B'Shevat can offer us the opportunity to journal about our relationship to the earth and our need to support sustainable practices. We can also be reminded that blessing our children every Friday night is a critical way to begin Shabbat, and we can write down the prayers and blessings that we give them each week.

Someday we hope that we'll look back at these books and all we wrote. Someday we hope to look at the pictures our children drew in them, or the photos we glued inside. When we reach High Holy Days next year, we hope to have a record of how we grew Jewishly this year. Did we figure out our "inner Torah" and are we

finding ways to "sing" it as often as we can? Were our words positive and constructive? Did the things we wrote or repeatedly spoke about become manifest in our families and community? We hope - always - that this year we'll do better.

Temple Or Olam is a Jewish Renewal community that serves Cabarrus county and parts of Mecklenburg county (including University City, Davidson, and Huntersville). We support the full participation and empowerment of all our members regardless of denominational background, financial means, age, or sexual orientation. We encourage heartfelt, easy access to all things Jewish. For more information, please visit our website at [www.or-olam.org](http://www.or-olam.org) and subscribe to our mailing list. You can also email us at [info@or-olam.org](mailto:info@or-olam.org), or call 704-720-7577. ✪



## Girls Night Out – The Jewish Women's Circle

Jewish women have always played a pivotal role in Jewish life. On a personal, familial and community level it has always been the Jewish woman who has created and developed an aura of pride in being a Jew. While bringing inspiration to our daily lives, through gaining deeper insight into our own innate spiritual qualities, we can contribute and transform our own lives and our communities in a most profound way.

The Jewish Women's Circle is an ongoing monthly program designed for the contemporary Jewish woman. This group comprises women of diverse affiliations and backgrounds who join together to learn, laugh, experience and rejuvenate the mind, body and soul. Each of our meetings feature lively, meaningful discussions, a great do-it-yourself activity, delicacies to taste, a chance to socialize, and the

opportunity to meet new friends.

For more information or to RSVP to a specific event contact Leah Levin: call 704-246-8881, email [Leah@JewishBallantyne.com](mailto:Leah@JewishBallantyne.com), or visit our website [www.JewishBallantyne.com](http://www.JewishBallantyne.com).

### Coming up next:

#### Knead a Break?

Sunday November 13, 7:30 PM, at the home of Leah Levin, 11408 Snapfinger Dr.

Join us for our second annual Loaves of Love Challah Baking class. If you're a beginner, learn

the ins and outs of kneading, shaping and baking challah. For the Challah pros out there share your own tips and tricks for everyone to learn from. From the yeast to dough, from regular braided challahs to napkin rings, baskets, and much more, there is something for everyone.

Discuss the meaning of Shabbat and how it affects our lives today.

Covert: \$10.

Sponsor: \$100.

#### The Feminine Side of Chanukah

Monday December 5, 7:30 PM, at the home of Leah Levin 11408 Snapfinger Dr.

Celebrate the miracle of the oil by learning the art of herbal oil blending and bottling. Discuss feminism in Judaism. Enjoy latkes and a delicious salad bar.

Covert: \$10.

Sponsor: \$100. ✪



## School in the Sukkah

Temple Emanuel Religious School students learn and celebrate in Temple's Sukkah on Sunday, October 16 at the home of Alan and Suzanne Nash in Gastonia.



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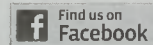
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