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**CONGREGATION SHA'ARAI SHOMAYIM  
SPRINGHILL AVENUE TEMPLE**

**FOUNDED 1844**

**THE TEMPLE BULLETIN**  
[springhillavenuetemple.com](http://springhillavenuetemple.com)

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We are coming together as a caring, inclusive community united in a common commitment to Judaism and to furthering our spiritual growth. We desire to do this recognizing that worship of God, study of Torah, caring for the Jewish people and our community, are central to our being as a Reform Jewish congregation. With these principles as our foundation and guided by a historic past, we anticipate our future, one of continual lifelong self-renewal.

**RELIGIOUS SERVICES**

Friday, December 5	6:00 p.m.	Friday Evening Shabbat
Friday, December 12	6:00 p.m.	Friday Evening Shabbat
Friday, December 19	6:00 p.m.	Hanukkah Family Shabbat Service and Hanukkah Dinner Cantor is with us
Saturday, December 20	9:30 a.m.	Maury Friedlander Memorial Shabbat Breakfast featuring salami and eggs (his favorite)
	10:30 a.m.	Shabbat Morning Service Cantor is with us
Friday, December 26	6:00 p.m.	Friday Evening Shabbat

*The Temple offices will be closed on Wednesday and Thursday,  
December 24th and 25th for the Christmas holiday and on  
Thursday, January 1st for New Year's Day*

ALL SHABBAT SERVICES ARE CONGREGATIONAL SERVICES.  
PLEASE JOIN US IN WORSHIP



**TORAH SELECTION:**  
Genesis 32:4-36:43  
Haftarah – Obadiah 1:1-21

## FROM THE RABBI

When most people think of Hanukkah, they think of it being a holiday celebrating religious liberty. Seldom is it pointed out that this is really a holiday that celebrates a victory of the Jewish people over our own weakness.

During the historical period of the Hanukkah story (160 BCE), we were a religion losing its staying power. The Jews were all too eager to embrace the pagan Greek ways and to forget their Jewish customs. The Greek games, which had religious content, were extremely popular among the Jews. Jason, the High priest, was probably more Greek at heart than Jewish. The leaders of Judea were happy to become Greek in all ways and cast aside their ancient Jewish ways. Probably, the assumption of the Jewish leadership was that it was only a matter of time. Against this background, one of accepted assimilation, Antiochus issued his decrees to destroy Judaism. He believed the Jewish people would be all too willing to forget their faith. Though it is impossible to second guess history, Antiochus would probably never have tried to convert the Jews had he not been reassured by the Jewish leadership that Judaism was no longer paramount in their lives.

What do most people remember when they tell the story of Hanukkah? It is not the story of military victory, rather it is the miracle of the

oil of the Temple burning for eight days, when it was only enough to burn for one. This symbol contains the real essence of Hanukkah. At a time when commitment to Judaism was waning, the flame of faith was still burning ever brighter among the faithful of Judaism.

Seeing the unwavering dedication and commitment of our President, Alan Goldberg, and our Board of Trustees, ensuring a glowing future for our congregation, I know differently. Seeing the devotion of our Religious School Director, Sam Small and our outstanding teachers to our Religious School, I know differently. Seeing the continuity of our regulars at Shabbat services, I know differently. Knowing and talking to you, our devoted and long-standing members, I know the flames are indeed burning bright and will only burn brighter in the years ahead for our beloved and historic congregation.

It all starts at Temple with regular Shabbat commitment, with regular Religious School commitment, with regular Jewish educational commitment, and with regular commitment to our Social Action programs. You can make a commitment and help to make the lights burn ever brighter.

Patti joins me in wishing you a happy and healthy Hanukkah. May the flames of this festive week light a renewed light for Judaism in your heart.

*Rabbi Donald M. Kunstadt*



Spend five incredible days with 1,000 Jewish high school students from all over North America. Attend over 200 interactive workshops on current events and hot topics, hear from well-known speakers and musicians, sing and dance during concerts and song sessions, spend a day touring Atlanta, and celebrate Shabbat.

<http://www.nftyconvention.org/>

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## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings and thank you. Our first Town Hall Meeting was a huge success. With eighty members in attendance, we were able to respond to a few key questions about our congregation. Well done!

You provided over two hundred and fifty responses that were compiled into the following summations which will be used in our search for a rabbi, as well as our search for what will make us a stronger congregation.

What three qualities are most important to your congregation in your new rabbi?

- Compassion
- One who can build a sense of community within the congregation, while accommodating individual needs.
- Someone who can connect to all congregants, especially the younger generation.

The three most important priorities of our rabbi should be:

- To increase congregational involvement, attendance, and outreach.
- To focus on educational and social programs for youth and adults.
- Membership retention and expansion.

The single most important thing a rabbi needs to know about our congregation is:

- We are a historical, southern congregation that has a diverse and declining membership with financial challenges.

What are the three most important issues to confront in your congregation in the next five years?

- The demographic makeup of our membership (aging) and the fact that the Jewish community is dwindling.

- Our financial situation.
- Our relationship with Ahavas Chesed.

What are your congregation's core values?

- Remain true to Reform Judaism.
- Respect for other religions.
- An open and inclusive community within the congregation, including but not limited to encouraging members to participate on committees and to be involved.
- Encourage and educate our children about their faith.

What are your congregation's strengths?

- Our religious school.
- Our history and respect within the community
- Leadership
- Warm and friendly congregants

What are your congregation's greatest challenges?

- Participation through involvement and membership
- Finances

Our Search Committee is chaired by Aaron Solomon and the members of the committee are Nate Ginsberg, Maure Sternberg, Iris Klein, Nathan Handmacher, Jack Friedlander, Carol Eberlein, Michael Pereira, and Alan Goldberg. Your next communication on the status of our search for a rabbi will come from Aaron Solomon.

Look for a notice in the near future for another Town Hall Meeting as we address other issues Sha'arai Shomayim faces which you have brought to the congregation's attention. Buckle your seat belt and shoulder harness, this is going to be a great ride that I think everyone will want to be on.

*Alan Goldberg, President*

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## FROM OUR ARCHIVES

*By Susan Thomas, Archivist*

Last month an article in the Mobile Press Register listed Claiborne, Alabama, as one of seven “ghost towns” in the state. Claiborne, situated 140 miles north of Mobile on the Alabama River in Monroe County, was originally incorporated in 1820. A busy, riverfront town, Claiborne was home to several businesses, stores, hotels, and homes. Among the 5,000 residents in the 1830s were several prominent Jewish families, many with connections to Jews in Mobile. Most were merchants, with one, Nathan Feibelman, serving as postmaster. Jewish families in Claiborne included the Jacobsons, Kleins, Levys, and Metzgers.

During the years leading up to the Civil War, Claiborne suffered through epidemics of yellow fever and cholera. At the end of the War the town was badly looted by Yankee soldiers. With large cotton plantations no longer in operation the town lost much of its river trade. At the turn of the century railroads bypassed Claiborne and most of the remaining citizens, including the

Jewish families, had left for Mississippi, north Alabama, or Mobile.

Today not much remains of the town, except for its three cemeteries. One of those is a small Jewish cemetery, which contains by different estimates anywhere from 30 to 100 graves. According to the tombstones, the earliest burial was in 1843 and the last in 1899. For many years the cemetery was badly neglected, overgrown with weeds and subjected to vandalism. In recent years several Jewish organizations have spent time cleaning up the graveyard and recording information about each grave. Most of the gravestones contain inscriptions in both Hebrew and English; some graves are missing markers, or the gravestones are difficult to read. The cemetery contains the remains of children, adolescents, and adults, many of whom had relatives in the Sha’arai Shomayim congregation of Mobile. Located on private property in a remote, isolated area of Monroe County, the cemetery is difficult to find and to access.

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## VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED!

Volunteers are needed for the **Pinch Hitters program for Thursday, December 25th**. Volunteers will be working Providence Hospital, Mobile Infirmary and Thomas Hospital. The work shifts at all three hospitals are 8-11, 11-2 and 2-5. For those wishing to volunteer please call Robin Ayers. Our workers staff the Front Desk and Surgery waiting rooms, thereby freeing the non-Jewish workers to spend Christmas Day with their families.

Those of you who have participated in the past know that it's a fun way to spend a few hours on Christmas Day, and greatly appreciated in the community. Those of you who have not yet taken part, give it a try this year. You'll be glad you did! **If you can help with this worthwhile interfaith project, please call Robin Ayers at 621-3280 indicating which hospital and which shift (8-11, 11-2, or 2-5) you prefer.**





## **HANUKKAH SERVICE FOR THE HOME**

### **THE FIRST NIGHT OF HANUKKAH IS TUESDAY, DECEMBER 16**

The family should assemble around the Menorah, having the proper number of candles in place - one for the first evening, two for the second, etc.

**Reader:** Our heavenly Father, on this festival of Hanukkah we recall the heroism and devotion of the Maccabees who taught us and the world the true meaning of religious freedom. By kindling these lights we keep alive the flame of their faith and dedicate ourselves to carry on their spirit.

**Response:** And now that we live in a land of freedom, may we remain faithful to Thee and Thy word.

**Reader:** O God of Freedom and God of Justice! We glorify Thy holy name in this land of freedom and justice.

**Response:** We pray that these tiny candles may bring the light of blessing into our home and hearts.

BEFORE KINDLING THE LIGHTS, HOLD THE LIGHTED SHAMOS (HELPER CANDLE) IN YOUR HAND AND SAY OR SING THE FOLLOWING BLESSINGS:

*Ba-ruch Attah Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha-olam a-sher kid' shanu b'mitzvotav, v'tzivanu, l'hadlik ner shel Hanukah.*

**Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast sanctified us by Thy Commandments and commanded us to kindle the lights of Hanukkah.**

AFTER KINDLING THE LIGHTS, THE FOLLOWING IS RECITED:

*Ba-ruch Attah Adonia, Elohaynu melech ha-olam she-a-sah nisim, la-a-votaynu, bayamim ha-heyman bazman ha-zeh.*

**Blessed art Thou O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who performed miracles for our fathers in days of old, at this season.**

THE FOLLOWING BLESSING IS RECITED ON THE FIRST EVENING ONLY:

*Ba-ruch Attah Adonai, Elohaynu melech ha-olam Sheh-he-cheyanu, v'key-mahnu, v'heegiyanu lazman ha-zeh.*

**Praised be Thou O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who has kept us in life, has preserved us, and enabled us to reach this season.**

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## CONTRIBUTIONS

*A plaque has been placed in honor of Phyllis Stern's 90th birthday* – Amy & Jack Friedlander, Robin, Adam & Rachel Mayer, Jamie, David & Meryl McGinnis, Iris & Nate Ginsberg

*In honor of the Blassingame's 25th anniversary* – Iris & Nate Ginsberg

*In honor of the Ginsberg's 50th anniversary* – Elaine & Ron Berman

*A speedy recovery for Bettina Prager* – Priscilla Gold-Darby

*A speedy and continued recovery for Helen Small* – Rachel & Elliot Borak, Martha & G.B. Kahn, Priscilla Gold-Darby

*A continued recovery for Penny Adamo* – Priscilla Gold-Darby

*A speedy recovery for Bill Clower* – Iris & Nate Ginsberg

*In memory of Helen Heffler Silverman* – Amy & Jack Friedlander, Iris & Albert Klein, Phyllis Feibelman, Iris & Nate Ginsberg, Priscilla Gold-Darby

*In memory of Bill Clower* – Iris & Nate Ginsberg, Amy & Jack Friedlander

*In memory of Milton Maisel* – Martha & G.B. Kahn, Diane & Richard Frank, Odette & Mel Sternberg

*In memory of Sylvia Maisel* – Martha & G.B. Kahn, Diane & Richard Frank

*In memory of Leon Mishkin* – Judith & Samuel Strada, Ellen & Buzzy Zivitz, Martha & G.B. Kahn, Carol Carp

*In memory of David Conrad* – Suzy & Craig Ginsberg and family, Joan & Gordon McCracken, Mr. & Mrs. William C. Roedder

*In memory of Myer Weinstein* – Lucy & Steve Weinstein

*In memory of Sally Zell* – Barbara & Mitch Lawley

*In memory of Annice Miller* – Joan & Gordon McCracken

*In memory of Isidor Judenfreund* – Iris & Albert Klein

*In memory of Rachel Lipkin* – Violet Hirsch

*In memory of Alan D. Oboler* – Eileen Oboler

*In memory of Gretchen Weinstein* – Lucy & Steve Weinstein

*General Fund* – Karla & Robert Kahn, Michael Kiker

*Rabbi's Discretionary Fund* – Nancy & Richard Hill

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# 2014 SIMCHAT TORAH CONSECRATION SERVICE



*From left to right (both photos) Jay Handmacher, Hannah Touchton, Dori Small, Connor Furman, and Rabbi Kunststadt*



**FAMILY HANUKKAH DINNER**  
**FRIDAY, DECEMBER 19TH FOLLOWING**  
**THE 6:00 P.M. SHABBAT SERVICE**



**LOTS OF FOOD AND FUN!**  
**SURPRISE ENTERTAINMENT FOR OUR KIDS!**  
**BRING YOUR MENORAH FOR A GROUP CONGREGATION**  
**LIGHTING CEREMONY, SONGS, AND DINNER**

**The Famous Men's Club Latkes!**

***PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS BY WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2014***  
***ADULTS - \$10, CHILDREN (UNDER 10) - \$5***

***Temple Office (251) 478-0415***

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**Come Visit your Temple Gift Shop**

We have all of your gift and holiday needs

Jewelry  
Chanukah gifts (1<sup>st</sup> night, Dec. 16th)  
Mezuzahs  
Gifts for the Home  
Plus much, much more!

**Please shop us FIRST for better prices  
and no tax/shipping additional costs!**





## FROM OUR SHALIACH, ARAD LERNER



Shalom ya'll,

This month I would like to tell you a little bit about Hanukkah in Israel.

The atmosphere is set pretty early (like Christmas, here in the

United States). You see Soofganiyot, the Hanukkah donut, everywhere you go. It is a round pastry filled with jelly and covered with sugar. Its roundness is an indication of how you are going to look if you keep eating them and the temptation is huge, but it is definitely worth it. Of course, in the past few years the Soofganiyot has been upgraded and there are a variety of fillings and toppings.

All the symbols can be seen in the stores, on commercials, in packages, you name it. Candles, hanookiahs, gold coins, dreidels (sevivon), and cans of oil can be seen everywhere. (A Hanookiah is not a menorah - a menorah has seven canes, including the Shamash and a hanookiah has nine, including the Shamash). Usually, sales will use the magic number eight for the eight days of the holiday. Eight days that the miracle of the oil burned.

Invitations to light candles at night at your friends and families houses are given, which always involves food - Soofganiyot and levivot

(a type of pancake). Everyone sings songs around the candles and the atmosphere everywhere is always fun and happy.

As a kid, I really enjoyed Hanukkah, not just because of the presents and the great food, but also because the entire family would go to my grandma's house and have dinner and light the candles and sing together. Every year, we would mix up the words and laugh about making up new funny lyrics to sing in the songs.

Hanukkah is also the holiday for children's shows. The greatest of all is called the "FESTIGAL", which is a musical that changes themes every year and always has the coolest kids performing in it. When I was about ten years old, my aunt, who had no children at the time, took all of the smaller ones in the family to see this show. I had such a great time! Now, that she has children of her own, all of the cousins that she took to this musical as children have promised to pay her back by taking her children to see the "FESTIGAL". Hopefully, next year at this time, we can make it happen.

Until then, I would like to wish ya'll "Hanukkah sumeach" - Happy Hanukkah and also Merry Christmas.

I would also like to thank the Mobile Area Jewish Federation for bringing me here to Mobile.

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### High Holy Day Tribute Fund

We recognize with appreciation those members and friends who have made special commitments to our Temple by contributing to our High Holy Day Tribute Fund. This list was compiled as of our bulletin printing on November 21st. We thank you for your generous donations.

**Kavod (Honor) \$200 - \$499**

*Rabbi P. Irving & Pat Bloom*

**Shalom (Peace) – up to \$199**

*Barbara & Mitch Lawley*

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## **Yahrzeit**

**It is a true Mitzvah to honor those whose memory we hold dear by attending services on the Shabbat Yahrzeit (year's time), joining your congregation in reciting Kaddish, and the giving of charity in their memory.**

### **December 5**

Melvin Metzger, Stella Rubel Schwander,  
Harmon Saul Shufro, Joseph C. Fusco,  
Edith Maisel Laden

### **December 12**

Isadore Gordon, Rose Shulman,  
Harry Kravet, Frank Rubel,  
Marvin C. Altmayer, Jenny Buchman,  
Herman Kopelman, Betty Zimmerman Cohn,  
Sarabel Reiss, Etta May Friedman,  
Lucille Greenwald Metzger

### **December 19**

Carol Kopelman, Vera Heinrich,  
Jean Schjott, Rebecca Shulman,  
Nathan J. Friedman, Julius Kogon,  
Jack Silberstein

### **December 26**

Willis Darby, Jr., Max Fry,  
Jerry Rose, Frieda Lewis,  
Leah Newfield, O.W. Allen  
Julia Holberg Kohlman,  
Annie Greenwald Salmon,  
Cyril Rich, Marcus Cecil Pierce,  
Emma Rheinstrom

### **January 3**

Joseph Kogon, Lucille Schwarz,  
James H. Zelnicker, Ethel Mutchnick,  
Betty Schwarz, Antoinette Pollock Altmayer,  
Bette Taranto, Jean Rose Kozlove

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## December Birthdays and Anniversaries

### Happy Birthday To ...

1 Jon Fusco  
 2 Meagan Leah Furman  
 3 G.B. Kahn  
 4 Emily Fink  
 4 Patricia Silverman  
 6 Pam Friedlander  
 8 Nick Aronson  
 9 Mimi Fry  
 10 Maria Seikin  
 11 Michael Ennis  
 12 Sydnie Allen  
 12 Leighton Silverstein  
 12 Michael Sternberg  
 13 Cassie Fishbein  
 13 Eric Lansky  
 13 Jeffrey Rosenbaum

14 Ryan Kunstadt  
 15 Wendy Rich Albright  
 15 Carolyn Shulman  
 18 Jason Friedman  
 21 Steven Friedlander  
 21 Mindy Friedman  
 22 Anna Swan Gardberg  
 24 Steve Prager  
 26 Harold Fink  
 27 Yaffa Brown  
 27 Frances Mutchnick  
 28 Renee Stein  
 29 Suzanne Brown  
 30 Sam Borak  
 30 Karen Singh  
 30 Anne Zelnicker

31 Kelsey Kunstadt  
 31 Sharon Vega

### Happy Anniversary To ...

1 Jinks & Marc Loeb  
 6 Penny & Joe Adamo  
 14 Edith & Irwin Misrok  
 18 Alicia & Mike Pereira  
 24 Nancy & Roy Hoffman  
 26 Bobette & Lowell Friedman

## January Birthdays and Anniversaries

### Happy Birthday To ...

3 Claris Feibelman  
 3 Stacy Goode  
 4 Ann Miller  
 6 Nan Altmayer  
 6 Diane Garden-Monheit  
 6 Alice Rose Handmacher  
 6 Mimi Holberg  
 7 Jane Rosner Allen  
 7 Phillip Feibelman  
 8 Jeff Conrad  
 9 Jeanne Garfunkel  
 9 Lynne Switzkey  
 10 Will Kinsella  
 10 Bill Susman  
 11 Alan Franco  
 11 Harvey Gandler  
 13 Vicki Silverman-Lugar  
 14 Judith Dittman  
 14 Madison Friduss  
 17 LeNae Denson

18 Terry Passman  
 18 Corine Yonge  
 21 Lowell Friedman  
 21 Ryan Fusco  
 22 Stephanie Dittman  
 22 Sam Lansky  
 23 Jonathan Lubitz  
 24 Barbara Cherniak  
 24 Leslie Goldberg  
 25 Hugh Borak  
 25 Debra Fetterman  
 25 Deanne Schjott  
 26 Jonathan Hirsch  
 27 Marjorie Altmayer  
 28 Andrew Brown  
 28 Matthew Friedman  
 29 Daniel Kinsella  
 30 Joshua Mutchnick

### Happy Anniversary To ...

6 Jewel & Ronnie Williams  
 29 Susan & Terry Susman  
 30 Dana & David Furman



## **CALENDAR**

<b>Torah Study – Wednesdays</b>	<b>5:30 p.m.</b>	<b>December 3, 10 and 17</b>
<b>Adult Religious School – Sundays</b>	<b>10:30 a.m.</b>	<b>December 7</b>
<b>Hebrew School – Sundays</b>	<b>8:30 a.m.</b>	<b>December 7 (no classes December 14, 21 &amp; 28)</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>4:00 p.m.</b>	<b>December 19</b>
<b>Religious School – Sundays</b>	<b>9:45 a.m.</b>	<b>December 7 (no classes December 14, 21 &amp; 28)</b>
<b>Friday</b>	<b>5:00 p.m.</b>	<b>December 19</b>



Friday, December 5	6:00 p.m.	Friday Evening Shabbat
Friday, December 12	6:00 p.m.	Friday Evening Shabbat
Friday, December 19	6:00 p.m.	Hanukkah Family Shabbat Service and Hanukkah Dinner Cantor is with us
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