

## Events of the Month

### Shabbat services at de Toledo High School

Saturday, December 3 - 10:30 am  
Birthday Shabbat  
Saturday, December 17 - 10:30 am  
Anniversary Shabbat

### Annual Congregation Meeting Wednesday, Dec. 7, 8:00 pm at de Toledo High School

All Shir Ami members are encouraged to attend and participate in the election of officers for 2017.

### Around the Rabbi's Tisch Thursdays, Dec. 1, 8, and 15 7:30 pm at the Vorspans'

Our 5777 season of Rabbi's weekly discussion continues. Call Rabbi at (818) 888-9817 or see flyer.

### Soc. Action Chanukah Party Friday, Dec. 16, 1:00 pm

West Valley Healthcare Center  
See article on page 4.

**Torah and Shabbat Study**  
**Saturday, Dec. 10, 10:30 am**  
**Northridge Mobile Home Park**  
Stan Schroeder leads our monthly study and discussion session. See article on page 5 and flyer.



Visit our website:  
[www.shirami.com](http://www.shirami.com)



## Rabbi's Column

When we finish lighting the Hanukkah candles, we recite the prayer, "*Hanayrot hallalu*," which reminds us that we are lighting candles to recall the wondrous triumphs and miraculous victories God has wrought.

But within that prayer we read a strange verse: "These lights are sacred...and we may not put them to ordinary use..."

We are to merely look at them and remember the wondrous miracles. We are not to read a book by them. We can't even use their light to help us find our way through the room should the electricity go out and all we have is the candlelight from the Hanukkah menorah!

Imagine, impractical candles. How is that possible? With what light do we see by? Well—that's what the *shammash* is for. We use that additional candle not only to light the others, but to become the practical candle.

But this concept of not using an item for a practical purpose just seems so...wrong. Should we not find the utility in everything? How many videos on Facebook show us the manifold uses of a plastic bottle or a paper clip!?

Yet being impractical is, in fact, a Jewish trait! What practicality is there in reading a book for its own sake! Not to pass an exam. Not to impress people. Just to read.

Giving *tzedakah*—how practical is that? Giving things away! Handing money to someone who can't repay?

And so we look at a Hanukkiah full of candles and light just to remember how a small group of Jews vanquished a Syrian-Greek army. How Maccabees of old fought, at times in impractical ways, to retain the right to simply be Jewish.

In an age when we judge items for their utilitarianism and practicality, let us remember how impractical we can be, and how, even that, can bring light into the world.

*Hanukkah Sameach!*

Rabbi David Vorspan

Editor's Note:  
See my Chanukah article on page 7 and my Chanukah poem on page 9.

Stan Schroeder



Chanukah in Jerusalem

## President's Report

Shalom and Happy Chanukah,



Before we look forward, let's look back a little bit and thank everyone who made our **Mitzvah Day** one of the Mitzvah-est Days we've ever had. I'm not sure how high our pile of backpacks was, but I distinctly recall seeing snow at the peak! And just as Mallory said he wanted to climb Mt. Everest "because it's there," we do what we do because we are here! And "here" means that Congregation Shir Ami is "**the little shul that does.**"

Now, I am looking forward . . . to seeing everyone at our annual members meeting on December 7. Our committee vice-presidents will be recapping what we did this past year and let you all know what we are looking forward to doing next year. Then we will be electing a new Board of Directors and Officers and, as a special added attraction, there are actually *new* people being nominated.

And while we are all looking forward to Chanukkah, we still have our **Shabbat Services, Around the Rabbi's Tisch** (and on the Rebbitzin's Chairs), plus our **Shabbat/Torah Study Session!** We are truly the Energizer Bunny of Congregations.

Again, Happy Chanukah as we go forward into 2017.

As always, if you have any questions or want to provide your input, please feel free to email me at [JDPistol@aol.com](mailto:JDPistol@aol.com).

Thank you.

**Jordan Pistol**, President



The Annual Chanukah Dilemma

## Special Shabbat Service Saturday, January 7

by Ellen Fremed

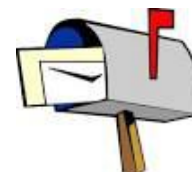
Please mark your calendars and plan to attend our January 7<sup>th</sup> service at 10:30 am at de Toledo High School, 22622 Vanowen Street, West Hills. Two very special things will be happening at the upcoming service.



- 1) We will be welcoming our new members into the family with a special prayer from **Rabbi Vorspan** and;
- 2) we will be consecrating our new officers.

Please make every effort to attend and greet our new members as well as support our officers. Your attendance will mean a great deal to all!

### Mailbox



Congregation Shir Ami,

A sincere thank you to those who signed and sent me a lovely card with your warm and kind wishes. It was very thoughtful and very much appreciated.

**Al Simon**

### 2017 Shir Ami Officers and Board Nominees

- President: Jordan Pistol
- Executive Vice President: Ken Bereny
- Treasurer: Mike Easley
- Secretary: Karen Benson
- Program VPs: Sima Schuster and Gladys Sturman
- Ways and Means VP: Sherry Dollins
- Membership VP: Ellen Fremed
- Ritual VP: Stan Schroeder
- Social Action VP: Fran Kobulnick

Board of Directors:

- Owen Delman
- Barbara Grubman
- Sheilah Hart





# DONATIONS

Congregation Shir Ami wishes to acknowledge the following donations:

## Yahrzeits

- Doris Beck
- Fran Black for Morris and Dora Eisdorfer
- Ben Bloom for Linda Bloom
- Harvey and Betty Cohen for Jack Charles Gottesman
- Paul and Paula Frankel for Audrey Halem
- Lauren Levi for Marc Fremed
- Ann and Seymour Potell for David Potell and Yetta Blankstein
- Lonny and Nancy Scharf for Edward Halprin
- Edward and Fay Schneier
- Armand and Rae Wazana for Messoda Wazana

## Birthdays

- Lew Silverman (86)
- Harvey Tapper (77)
- Armand Wazana (80)

## Anniversaries

- Betty and Harvey Cohen (71)

## Other

Ethel Granik in memory of Shirley Esko

# Birthdays & Anniversaries

## Birthdays

- Harvey Tapper..... 12/2
- Davida Tydings..... 12/8
- Rae Wazana..... 12/8
- Rabbi David Vorspan..... 12/9
- Becky Finlay..... 12/14
- Steve Spetner..... 12/20
- Andrea Nachenberg..... 12/24
- Fran Friedman..... 12/25
- Mark Hyman..... 12/25
- Laura Simon..... 12/25

## Anniversaries

- Ellie and Jerry Zatz..... 12/6 56th
- Ann and Seymour Potell..... 12/9 65th
- Barbara and Neil Hattem..... 12/29 41st

## Our New Members for 5777

**Shushona Blaz**  
 19138 Topham St.  
 Tarzana, CA 91356  
 Phone: (818) 345-2983



**Elinor Grayer**  
 14903 Valley Vista Blvd.  
 Sherman Oaks, CA 91403  
 Phone: (818) 783-5667  
 Email: wemsa@sbcglobal.net

**Joan Magit**  
 20040 Community St. #67  
 Winnetka, CA 91306  
 Phone: (818) 435-6212  
 Email: joanmagit@gmail.com

**Dennis Myers**  
 8057 Maestro Ave.  
 West Hills, CA, 91304  
 Phone: (818) 230-2186

**Neal Tober**  
 20324 Bassett St.  
 Winnetka, CA 91306  
 Phone: (818) 346-4749  
 Email: mbiker10@sbcglobal.net

## Congregational News

Get well wishes *rafuah schleimah* to:

**Fran Kobulnick**  
**Al Simon**



May they be blessed with a complete recovery in body and spirit.

## Congregation Shir Ami Tribute Cards

Thanks to **Phyllis Schroeder** for sending your cards celebrating *simchas* and conveying your get-well and condolence messages.



She is creative with individualized, artistic cards that include a message and color graphics. Call her at (818) 718-7466. Minimum donation of \$5 per card is appreciated.



## Social Action Committee

I again want to thank you for helping to make our annual **Mitzvah Day** successful.

Without your financial, physical, and emotional support, our Committee could not do as many successful community projects as we do. Special thanks to **Leon Nachenberg**, Mitzvah Day coordinator and the entire Committee for a job well done! See pictures on page 8.



I know that you probably are overwhelmed with the holidays right now, but I am again reaching out to those of you who have not yet had the opportunity to support our **Target \$10 gift cards** collection for the **women and children in the domestic violence shelters** we help sponsor for the holidays. The women and children often come into the emergency shelters with only the clothes on their backs when fleeing from domestic violence. We are trying to collect 100 gift cards to be given out for the holidays. To those of you who have already donated, thanks so very much. We still are in need of 50 more cards to reach our goal. Please mail your gift cards to **Fran Kobulnick** at 5139 White Oak Ave. #13, Encino, CA 91316, or call me at (818) 345-2405 for more information. Thank you on behalf of the women and children who will use your gift cards to buy much needed personal items.



Our Committee will be going to West Valley Healthcare Center at 7057 Shoup Ave. in West Hills Friday, December 16 at 1:00 pm for our annual **Shabbat/**

**Chanukah party**. We will perform the Shabbat rituals with the residents and then we will bless and light the *Chanukiah* candles and have latkas, spin dreidls, and have a special dessert. **Claire Silverman** will lead a sing-along with her guitar and the Social Action choir. Please join us for this special mitzvah! Call me for more information.



Looking ahead, our annual **Linen Shabbat** will be Saturday, January 21 at our regular Shabbat service at de Toledo High School. The service starts at 10:30 am; please arrive early as we are collecting the linens before the service. Remember that all linens must be new according to health regulations. Please see the Linen Shabbat flyer in this newsletter for the list of much needed new linens. For those who do not know, every person in the shelter receives linens upon entering the shelter, and the linens are theirs to keep.

When they move on from the emergency shelter their linens go with them to their next form of rebuilding of their life.

Even further ahead, our annual **Walk Around Lake Balboa** will be Sunday, June 5, 2017, save the date please.

I personally wish you all a festive, fun, and healthy Chanukah on behalf of our Committee and our families. Remember to include those who have no families or friends with which to share holidays. Wishing you all good health and happiness in 2017 and always!

**Fran Kobulnick**, Social Action Vice President

### Fran Friedman, Our Sunshine Lady

We are indeed blessed to have **Fran Friedman** to brighten the lives of those of us in need of healing or just a cheery voice at the other end of the phone line. She calls us to offer her prayers and encouragement and let us know there is someone who cares about us. If you want to be on her list, or know someone who needs her healing energy, call her at (818) 514-6994.



### Operation Gratitude and Project MOT

by Charlene Kazel



It's Holiday time, a time for giving of gifts, celebrating, joy and laughter, and thankfulness. **Operation Gratitude, Project MOT**, and I thank you for your generosity and gift giving. Our count for the year so far is:

Operation Gratitude	Project MOT:
744 books	51 books
1,375 cards	272 cards

May the joy you bring to others be returned to you twofold and may your blessings be as numerous as the seeds of the pomegranate. I wish everyone a very Happy Chanukah and a Happy New Year 2017.

## Jewish World Watch

by Rae Wazana



At our Mitzvah Day November 6<sup>th</sup>, we participated in some **Jewish World Watch** activities. We decorated manilla cut-out hands which will be used on posters at the various Walks to end Genocide in the Los Angeles area. We also decorated large grocery-size bags and wrote notes to welcome some refugee families from Sudan who will be coming to the San Diego area. We are putting personal hygiene items for these families in these bags such as bars of soap, shampoo, liquid soap, deodorant, shower gel, toothpaste, toothbrushes, lotion, baby wipes, baby wash, baby lotion, and socks.

Many of our members and their friends and family have made donations to our JWW tzedakah can, so that we can purchase these items. We welcome your donations and/or purchasing some of the above items so that we can fill as many shopping bags as possible to give to these families as welcoming gifts as they begin new lives in the United States.

**Rabbi Sam Spector** of Temple Judea was very impressed with Shir Ami's Mitzvah Day projects and our commitment to *Tikkun Olam*. He is inviting our Congregation to take part in a virtual, interactive experience called *This is Hunger*, brought to Temple Judea by **MAZON, the Jewish Response to Hunger**. This is a free traveling exhibit on a large truck which will be at Temple Judea on December 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>. For more information, or to register for a specific date and time, visit [www.thisishunger.org](http://www.thisishunger.org). The truck holds up to 30 people at a time.

Rabbi Spector sent the following:

*We adore Shir Ami and are so grateful for your partnership and commitment to Tikkun Olam. I appreciate your enthusiasm for the This Is Hunger experience brought to our campus by MAZON, the Jewish response to hunger. As I said, it is a 45 minute experience that gives an interactive, virtual experience that reflects the 42 million Americans who struggle with hunger on a daily basis. At the end of the program there are action steps for how you can make a difference.*

The Conejo Valley JWW **Walk to End Genocide** will be held in Thousand Oaks on Sunday May 7, 2017, and Shir Ami will again have a Congregation Walk Team. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact me at (818) 881-5549. Thank you for your continued support and for **NOT STANDING IDLY BY**.

## Ritual Committee

As 2016 comes to a close (where has the year gone?) it is time, as a congregation, to count our blessings. Here is my list:

**Shabbat services:** Our twice monthly Contemporary service led by **Rabbi David Vorspan** and featuring **Torah Reader Rebbetzin Bonnie Vorspan**, includes sharing what we are thankful for before the *Amidah* prayer. I have the privilege of ending the sharing by telling of some Jewish event or person that has enriched our lives. Rabbi's commentary on the Torah portion leads to a lesson and discussion of how it can be applied to our lives. We conclude with an upbeat *Adon Olam* and a Kiddush for shmoozing. Everyone is invited to sing and pray with us.

Thanks to **Claire Silverman, Jacquie Gordon, Sheilah Hart, Helga Unkeless, and Judy Eisikowitz** for setting up and cleaning up and **Jerry Gort and Phyllis Schroeder** for making and bringing coffee.

**Around the Rabbi's Tisch** (and on the Rebbetzin's chairs): We spend 20 Thursday nights per year in the Vorspan dining room discussing the Rabbi's selected Jewish wisdom and writings and viewing current events from a Jewish perspective. It is an hour of learning, humor, and comraderie. All members are invited to participate and enjoy. See flyer for more details.

**Torah/Shabbat Study with Stan Schroeder:** We spend one Saturday morning per month discussing the weekly Torah portion, the Shabbat prayers that are included in our Contemporary service, and various subjects relevant to Conservative Judaism. Our small group reads a synopsis of the *parshah* of the week and commentaries by rabbis and scholars to help us understand how the timeless Torah can lead to a more meaningful Jewish life in our time. See flyer for more details.

**Shir Notes, our monthly newsletter:** You are reading Shir Ami's Sollie gold medal award-winning newsletter that I have been editing, publishing, and writing articles for nine years. I hope it keeps you abreast of our services and events and provides interesting and entertaining reading. Thanks to **Rabbi Vorspan, Jordan Pistol, Owen Delman, Fiona Taylor, Fran Kobulnick, Charlene Kazel, Rae Wazana, Sherry Dollins, and Mike Easley** for their contributions through the years.

Hag Sameach Chanukah,  
**Stan Schroeder**, Ritual Vice President

## Biography of the Month: Rabbi Joseph Telushkin

by Stan Schroeder

Editor's Note: **Rabbi Vorspan** is using the revised edition of Rabbi Telushkin's book *Jewish Literacy* as the text for this season's *Around the Rabbi's Tisch*. I have long been an ardent admirer and occasionally attend services he leads. This bio was in the first 2015 bulletin.



**Joseph Telushkin** was born in Brooklyn in 1948, the son of **Solomon** (Shlomo), an accountant, and **Helen** [Schneerson] Telushkin of the Lubavitcher family. He attended Yeshiva of Flatbush, along with his future co-author and lifelong friend **Dennis Prager**. He was ordained at Yeshiva University and he and Dennis attended Columbia University where they authored *Nine Questions People Ask About Judaism* and *Why the Jews?: The Reason for Antisemitism*.

While at University, Telushkin was an active leader of the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry. As part of his position, Telushkin visited the Soviet Union where he met with dissidents such as **Andrei Sakharov**. He was eventually listed by the KGB as an anti-Russian agent.

In 1977 Prager became director of Brandeis Bardin Institute in Simi Valley, following its founder **Shlomo Bardin**, and Telushkin was his educational director.

Telushkin lives in New York City with his wife, **Dvorah Menashe Telushkin**, and their four children. Dvorah was personal secretary and assistant to Yiddish author **Isaac Bashevis Singer** for twelve years. She has translated short stories by Singer and other Yiddish writers and performs at storytelling festivals. She wrote about her years with Singer in a memoir, *Master of Dreams* (1998).

Rabbi Telushkin never intended to be a pulpit rabbi. He states, "...my career has always been primarily devoted to writing and lecturing. It seemed to me that there were certain aspects of Judaism that needed to be taught, that weren't getting proper attention. I was particularly interested in the laws of *lashon hara*, and the other Jewish teachings on the ethics of speech, including the principle of *ona'at dvarim*, of not oppressing others with words. The truth is that if you'd listen in at a therapist's office, I think you'd learn that more people are hurt by things that people have said to them than by things that may have been said about them. Things that are said in anger, unfair criticism - there's a whole host of issues."

He is a versatile author, writing everything from mysteries to TV shows to biographies to books on Jewish ethics, wisdom, values, and humor. He is one of the most sought-after lecturers in the Jewish world. However, he has been a part time rabbi at **Synagogue for the Performing Arts** since 1993, conducting a Friday

night Shabbat service every other month at American Jewish University, as well as their High Holy Day services.

Rabbi Telushkin maintains an orthodox life style, but bridges the gap to the liberal Jewish world as well as anyone can. He promotes Jewish values and emphasizes Jewish behavior and community.

He is a Senior Associate with CLAL, the National Jewish Center for Learning and Leadership, and is a member of the board of directors of the Jewish Book Council. He has been on the Newsweek's list of the 50 most influential Rabbis in America since 1997.

Among his many works that should be in every household library are:

*A Code of Jewish Ethics: You Shall be Holy A Code of Jewish Ethics, Volume 1:*

*Volume 2: Love Your Neighbor as Yourself*

*Jewish Literacy: The Most Important Things to Know About the Jewish Religion, Its People and Its History*

*The Book of Jewish Values: A Day-by-Day Guide to Ethical Living*

*Words that Hurt, Words that Heal: How to Use Words Wisely and Well*

*Jewish Humor: What the Best Jewish Jokes Say About the Jews*

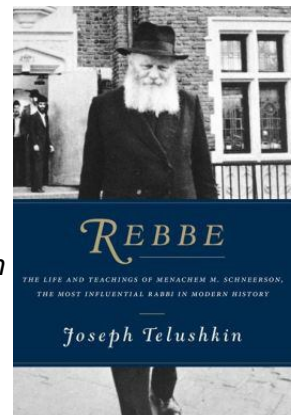
*Biblical Literacy: The Most Important People, Events, and Ideas of the Hebrew Bible*

*Jewish Wisdom: Ethical, Spiritual, and Historical Lessons from the Great Works and Thinkers*

*The Ten Commandments of Character: Essential Advice for Living an Honorable, Ethical, Honest Life*

*The Golden Land: The Story of Jewish Immigration to America*

His latest book, published in 2014, is *Rebbe: The Life and Teachings of Menachem M. Schneerson, the Most Influential Rabbi in Modern History*. It not only tells the story of his life and how Chabad has changed the Jewish world, it relates how the Rebbe changed Joseph Telushkin's and our lives and continues to "repair the world".





## Modi'in and the Maccabees: Then and Now

by Stan Schroeder

As we enter the Hanukkah season, I reflect on the stories of miracles we tell as we celebrate the holiday and the reality of the miracle of the Jewish State



of Israel. We read from the first **Book of Maccabees** about the Jewish revolt against **Antiochus IV Epiphanes**, ruler of the Seleucid Empire, who issued decrees in 167 BCE banning Jewish practices such as sacrifice and circumcision. When Antiochus' emissaries went to **Modi'in** to enforce the decrees, **Mattathias**, a high priest, killed a Hellenistic Jew who stepped forward to offer a sacrifice to an idol. Mattathias and his five sons fled to the wilderness.

The short version of the story is that Mattathias died the following year, and Judah, one of his sons, led a small army of Jewish dissidents to victory, over the vastly larger Syrian army of the Seleucid dynasty, using guerrilla warfare. Judah and his followers became known as the **Maccabees**, derived from the Aramaic word for hammer. After the victory, the Maccabees entered Jerusalem in triumph in 164 BCE and ritually cleansed the Temple, reestablishing traditional Jewish worship there, and installing **Jonathan** Maccabee as high priest. More than 400 years later the rabbis of the **Talmud** elaborated on the story to state that one small cruse of oil lasted eight days, enabling the menorah to stay lit while more ritually pure oil could be obtained.

Today **Modi'in-Maccabim-Re'ut** is a city in the Center District of Israel; it is located roughly halfway between Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

It was formed by the merger of Modi'in and Maccabim-Re'ut in 2003. According to the Israel Central Bureau of Statistics the city's 2009 population was 72,700. It is a modern planned city, and the highest standards of urban planning, environmental concern, and planning for future growth were taken into consideration during its design. Large green spaces were incorporated into the city's layout and comprise half of the area within the city limits. The long term projection of the Ministry of Housing is for the city to be home to 240,000 residents, thus becoming one of the largest localities in Israel.



The name "Maccabee" has been adapted to become the *Maccabi* or **Maccabiah Games**, an Olympic style competition for Jewish athletes. (This is ironic since the Olympic Games originated in Greece, and glorified the very culture the revolting Jews opposed.) It is held at an

international level in Israel every four years, the year following the Olympic Games. Most traditional Olympic sports are included. Some additional "sports" include bridge, chess, golf, and bowling. There is also competition in junior (15 – 18 year-old), masters (35 or 40 and over, depending on event), and para-olympic categories.

The first Maccabiah was held in the spring of 1932, in Tel Aviv, a city of 50,000 residents. Israel's first sport stadium was completed there, barely in time for the Games. The Maccabiah was opened by a colorful parade through the streets of Tel Aviv led by Mayor **Meir Dizengoff** riding a white horse. 390 athletes from 18 countries attend, including 69 participants from Egypt and Syria. The U.S. delegation was the smallest – only ten participants. Poland, Austria and the United States finishes 1-2-3 in team medals won. The Maccabiah stirred an athletic spirit throughout Palestine and inspired the development of sports in the Holy Land.



The **19th Maccabiah** took place July 18 to 30, 2013. The 19th Maccabiah games brought together 7500 athletes, making it the third largest international sporting event in

the world after the Olympic Games and FIFA World Cup. The Maccabiah held competitions in 42 disciplines in 34 sports. A number of new sports were introduced or brought back including Archery, Equestrian and Handball; Ice Hockey was brought back for the first time since 1997. Israel won the most medals, 855 (285 gold), followed by the U.S., 317 (103 gold).

In keeping with its Mission to perpetuate and preserve the American Jewish community by encouraging Jewish pride, strengthening Jewish bonds, and by creating a heightened awareness of Israel and Jewish identity, **Maccabi USA** established a Pre-Camp in Israel in 1989, including B'nai Mitzvah and touring of Israel. The organization has used the athletic competition to promote Judaism and Israel with American youth.

We see the evolution of the miracle in the examples of Modi'in-Maccabim-Re'ut and the Maccabi movement. Whereas the biblical/historical holiday teaches us miracles performed by God to protect and perpetuate the Jewish people, the miracles of modern Israel and Jews everywhere teach us the process is ongoing, and we must do our part.

See my Chanukah poem on page 9.



# Pictures from Mitzvah Day at Temple Judea Sunday, November 6





## TREE OF LIFE

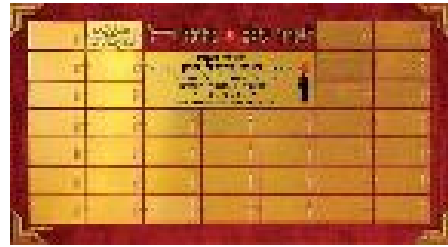


This beautiful Tree of Life, with leaves priced at \$100 and rocks at \$250 (one remaining), makes a perfect way to celebrate family occasions and support Congregation Shir Ami.

The Tree is on a rosewood background and consists of gold-colored leaves and rocks. It is displayed at all Congregation Shir Ami services and events.

For more information or to place an order, call Sherry Dollins at (818) 886-7590.

## Congregation Shir Ami Memorial Board



If you would like to honor the memory of your loved ones by dedicating plaques on our new Memorial Board, please call Sherry Dollins at (818) 886-7590 so she may mail you an order form. The cost of each plaque is \$36.

Each plaque may contain up to three lines of engraving: English name, Hebrew name, and the years of birth and death. Both of our Memorial Boards are displayed at all our services.

## THE MIRACLES OF CHANUKAH

For well over a century  
The culture in Israel was Greek.  
The Jews adapted to a way of life,  
Form and beauty to seek.

For many years it wasn't hard  
To follow the Torah laws.  
But then an edict was issued  
That caused some Jews to pause

In the Temple Antiochus IV,  
An altar to Zeus erected.  
Jewish worship was forbidden,  
And many Jews defected.

Soldiers went to the town of Modin,  
And forced the Jews to bow.  
Though many decided to obey,  
Mattathias said, "No way, No how!"

He killed one Jew for bowing down  
And the soldier who gave the order.  
Then fled to the hills with his sons,  
To the other side of the border

There they launched swift attacks;  
The Syrians were in disarray.  
Mattathias died the following year,  
And his sons continued the fray.

The next year, 165 BCE  
The battle had been won.  
And in Jerusalem the  
Cleansing of the Temple begun.

Then came the celebration,  
Eight days of sacrifice and song.  
The Holy Lamp burned anew,  
A symbol of right over wrong.

Some 600 years later  
The rabbis of the Talmud said  
Oil that should last a single day  
Burned for eight days instead.

A miracle straight from God  
Enabled the rededication.  
A manifestation of the Light  
That He formed at His Creation.



So now we have two  
miracles,  
And we are free to choose  
Whether the Maccabean  
victory or  
Menorah is more important  
as Jews.

I think they're both  
important,  
Each miracle in its place.  
The victory is the province  
of man,  
The Menorah from God's  
Grace.

Stan Schroeder

## Shop at Ralphs - Earn Money for Shir Ami

by Maralyn Soifer

Here is an easy way to earn money for our Temple. We

are now officially a **Ralphs' community agency**. All you have to do is follow these simple instructions to help earn money for Congregation Shir Ami.



1. If you don't have a Ralphs' rewards card already, go to the store or go to website **www.ralphs.com** and select **Order a Ralphs reward card**.
2. Once you have your card, go to the website: **www.ralphs.com** and select **Create an account**
3. If you have an account, your email address is your account ID. If you forgot your password, select **Forgot your password?** and you will receive an email with instructions to reset it. Follow the instructions to enter your email address and create a new password.
4. If you already have a Ralphs' reward card and an account, you will see Account Summary when you login. You can change to our Temple by clicking on **Edit** within **Community Rewards**.

You can do a search for Congregation Shir Ami by putting in the number **92785**. Our congregation will pop up and click on the button next to the name. Click on the button that saves the changes.

5. You should also check the bottom of your receipt when you shop. It should say "**At your request, Ralph's is donating to CONGREGATION SHIR AMI**".
6. If all else fails, call me in the evening at (818) 704-0306. I'll be happy to walk you through it.
7. Start Shopping!

**Make sure that the clerk swipes your card each time you shop. Verify that your receipt shows a contribution to Congregation Shir Ami at the bottom.**

**Important Note: All participants must confirm their selection annually starting in September. On or after September 1, sign into your account and reconfirm Community Rewards selection.**

Congregation Shir Ami  
P.O. Box 6353  
Woodland Hills, CA 91365



## Thursdays December 1, 8, and 15, 7:30 - 8:30 pm “Around the Rabbi’s Tisch” at the Vorspans’

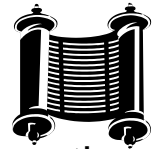


This popular Shir Ami educational series continues its 5777 season. Come join us for our weekly discussion of Rabbi Vorspan’s selected topics of Jewish interest. We discuss Jewish texts and current events as they relate to Jewish values and our lives as Jews. This is a unique opportunity to learn and share in an informal format around the Vorspans’ dining room table.

The Vorspans’ home is located at 22320 Philipprimm St. in Woodland Hills. Call Rabbi Vorspan at (818) 888-9817 for more information.

## Saturday December 10, 10:30 am: Torah/Shabbat Study at Northridge Mobile Home Park

Stan Schroeder leads a Shabbat study session one Saturday morning a month at 10:30 at the Northridge Mobile Home Park Rec Room, 19120 Nordhoff St. We discuss the weekly Torah portion, the Shabbat prayers that are included in our Contemporary service, and various subjects relevant to Conservative Judaism.



Our next session will be December 10. The Torah reading will be parsha *Vayetze* (Genesis 28:10 - 32:3), the story of Jacob’s dream of a ladder connecting heaven and earth and his marriages to Leah and Rachel. We are commanded “*la asok b’divre torah*” (to engage in the study of Torah). Join us and fulfill the mitzvah.

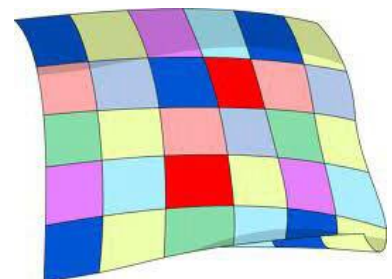
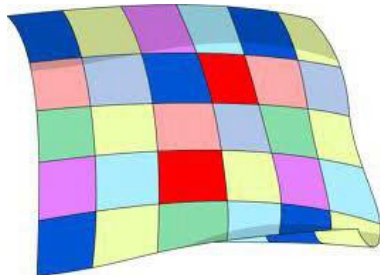
Call Stan at (818) 718-7466 for more information.

Please join Congregation Shir Ami  
on Saturday, January 21 at 10:15 am  
(Service starts at 10:30 am)



at de Toledo High School  
for a special Linen Shabbat.

Please bring **NEW** twin, full, or queen size blankets or quilts, **NEW** full or twin size sheet sets, **NEW** full or twin size waterproof mattress pads, **NEW** pillow cases, and **NEW** bath towels and washcloths to Shabbat services on **Saturday, January 21st**. They will be given to moms and their children in domestic violence shelters. There will be a speaker to discuss the shelters and ongoing projects.



We look forward to seeing you and your family at this special community *mitzvah* project Shabbat. Please bring your non-perishable food donation to the service.



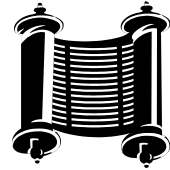
For more information, please call  
**Fran Kobulnick** at (818) 345-2405  
or **Laura Simon** at (818) 883-1765.





**Congregation Shir Ami Schedule of Shabbat Services 2017**  
**Conducted by Rabbi David Vorspan at**  
**de Toledo High School, 22622 Vanowen St., West Hills**  
**Services held in library near the front entrance**

**Saturday 10:30 am (unless otherwise noted)**



**December 2016**

Saturday, December 3 - Birthday  
Saturday, December 17 - Anniversary

**January 2016**

Saturday, January 7 - Birthday  
Consecration of Officers  
Saturday, January 21 - Anniversary  
Social Action Linen Shabbat



David Vorspan  
Rabbi

**February 2016**

Saturday, February 4 - Birthday  
Saturday, February 18 - Anniversary

**March 2016**

Saturday, March 4 - Birthday  
Saturday, March 18 - Anniversary

**April 2016**

Saturday, April 8 - Birthday  
Saturday, April 22 - Anniversary



Jordan Pistol  
President

**May 2016**

Saturday, May 6 - Birthday  
Saturday, May 27 - Anniversary

**June 2016**

Saturday, June 10 - Birthday  
Saturday, June 24 - Anniversary

***If you would like more information about our congregation please visit our website at [www.shirami.com](http://www.shirami.com)***