

## Rabbi's Column

We came across some interesting language tidbits during this past week's Torah portion. We often refer to the building in the center of the Israelites as The Tabernacle, and sometimes Moses is told to go to The Tent of Appointment/Set Apart Time. The later portion of the complete Torah portion was concerned with the Dedication of the Altar.

The answer that I gave on Shabbat morning was that each of these terms might have been used in separate stories about how life was lived during the wilderness journey. When the Torah was assembled, some parts of each story were included, so that all would feel that their story was included.

Upon reflection, I thought of a different answer. Synagogues are variously termed House of Self-Study, House of Gathering, House of Interpretation - all of which refer to the same place. The only question is which aspect of Jewish life is being focused upon in the conversation, as to which name will seem most appropriate. In the same fashion, when the text is referring to the needs of the sacrificial system, then the aspect being focused upon is the altar. When the text is referring to the visible sign of God's presence, then the word used is "House of Dwelling." When the text is referring to conversations between God and Moses that are near the camp, then the text refers to the "Tent of Appointment/ Set Apart Time". Same basic space, three different functions.

Changing hats now. As you probably have heard about, I am Chairman of the Wyoming Interfaith Network. I was trying to wait until we had a new website up and running to ask people to join up or donate. We are working on migrating our information to a slightly new framework - and there have been several Sunday messages since the last one on the page. The website is [wyinterfaith.org](http://wyinterfaith.org), and if you do a donation of any amount, it will be considered as paying "dues" for the calendar year. Recurrent donations are also accepted.

When the real replacement website is up and running, my projected dues structure is \$18 or less per individual; \$180 for a sustaining member (which will help offset dues for those who cannot afford the \$18). There are also dues for institutions and regional organizations, which are substantially higher.

As I am already on the Board, the basic perk of membership is the ability to vote at the Annual Meeting, which this coming year will be held in Gillette in late October. You could also join any of the standing subcommittees (called "Teams"). From the website: **On Sacred Ground:** We of the Sacred Ground Team do what we can, right where we live, to conserve the land and honor the web of life. We persistently network throughout Wyoming with others who care about the environment; provide resources from our interfaith partners on earth keeping; and host various educational, networking, and outreach events about honoring and conserving the earth.

**For Peace and Justice:** We are one family, whatever our nationality, ethnicity, faith community, economic and ideological differences. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever or whoever they may be. We envision a society that promotes

human dignity and the capacity of all individuals to learn and grow, a society which is supportive of all peoples. In a society that is troubled by deepening divisions amongst us, politically, economically, socially and morally, as a moral duty we advocate for and stand in solidarity with the most oppressed of those among us. We speak for those who have no voice. We advocate for and with the poor, with prisoners, with people of diverse backgrounds, people of all types and persuasions, with the underserved and disenfranchised, and with all those who are left vulnerable by society. Therefore, we support systems, causes, actions and laws that lead to the fulfillment and accomplishment of these objectives.

**For Spiritual Life:** The Spiritual Life Team is committed to exploring the spiritual nature of justice. We approach the Holy and one another in humility, seeking to appreciate and better understand the other's faith tradition; thus, we bring our rich spiritual heritage into a wider conversation and learn from other spiritual traditions, and, when together, we worship the Holy and the sacredness of life in mutual respect which encourages human concern for others.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING A TEAM, PLEASE EMAIL SUSIE MARKUS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AT [SMARKUS@WYOINTERFAITH.ORG](mailto:SMARKUS@WYOINTERFAITH.ORG).**

Thanks for listening to the message from the other hat. May we all be able to walk between the raindrops between now and the Yiddish Food Festival.