



THE SHOFAR
שׁוֹפָר

United Synagogue of Hoboken

SIVAN / TAMMUZ 5777

JUNE 2017

Thank You!

by Rabbi Robert Scheinberg



I am so grateful to the congregation for putting together such a wonderful celebration in my honor last month! I am so grateful to all those who made the celebration a reality, including the members of the board under the leadership of President Lauren Blumenfeld; Louise Kurtz for organizing the service; the past presidents and officers who took part in the service including Rob Harari, Ron Rosenberg, Ken Schept, Jim Weinstein, Myrna Kasser, and Joel Freiser; Anne Pettit for creating a special Mi Sheberach in my honor; the speakers including (in addition to those listed above) Rabbi Naomi Kalish; Howard Olah-Reiken; Grace Gurman-Chan; Samantha Glass, Avery Olah-Reiken, Hannah Altberger, and Rev. Eugene Squeo; service leaders Adina, Shoshana and Talia Scheinberg; Lauren Calmas for organizing the kiddush and program; the USH Choir for the musical tribute; and all those who attended on Saturday to celebrate with me, and all those who donated to the special fund to bring top scholars to USH as scholars-in-residence for future years. I am also so thankful for the special gift from the congregation. I am also so grateful to my family for supporting me, as I am grateful to the congregation for welcoming my family into the congregational family.

I hope everyone in our community can take some great pride in what we have built here together! **(Continued on p. 2)**

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Lauren Blumenfeld



Greetings to everyone in the USH Community:

This is the last time I am writing a

Shofar column while serving as President of the USH Board of Directors. My term is complete and beginning next month I will be passing the torch to David Swirnoff. Please join me in welcoming David to his new role as President at our Annual Meeting on June 20th. I have had the privilege to work beside David on the board the past few years and I am certain that David is well-equipped to lead USH in the coming years.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for the support you have given to me during the last four years. It has been my distinct honor to serve the community as

USH President and I have really enjoyed the experience. I am having difficulty comprehending how the time flew by so quickly. So please now allow me to indulge a bit as I reflect on the past few years and describe some of the fondest memories I leave with. I think our journey together has been meaningful and I am excited to see what is next in store for our community.

We celebrated the 100th Anniversary of our 115 Park Ave. Synagogue, with a wonderful block party with children's games, adult-led tours of our sanctuary and its history and parve egg creams. Most importantly, many members volunteered their time to help us tell our story.

(Continued on page 3)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Mon Jun 5, 7pm Kumsitz evening of Jewish music, Pier A Park

Thur Jun 8, 7:30pm Explore Judaism – 5 session intro course

Fri June 9, 6pm Shabbat in the Park, Maxwell Park, 11th & river

Sat Jun 10, 11am Shabbat Shira - music program for families with children age 3 and under

Wed Jun 14, 7:30pm Planning a Jewish Wedding

Tues Jun 20, 7:30pm USH Annual Meeting

Fri June 23, 6pm Shabbat in the Park, Church Sq. Park

Fri July 14, 6pm Shabbat in the Park, Van Vorst Park, Jersey City

Fri July 21, 6pm Shabbat in the Park, Church Sq. Park

Friday night services 7pm

Saturday morning services 9:30am

See www.hobokensynagogue.org & USH Facebook page for more info on these and other upcoming events!

Thank You by Rabbi Scheinberg

Continued from page 1)

I am happy to share the comments that I shared with the community during the celebration.

I enjoy telling the story about how when I was in rabbinical school, I didn't merely THINK that I was not going to be a congregational rabbi. Rather, I KNEW that I was not going to be a congregational rabbi. In fact, I was so confident that I wasn't going to be a congregational rabbi that I took an internship at a congregation in Massachusetts to inoculate myself against the possibility. And it happened that my internship was at a synagogue that was unconventional enough that I thought: maybe synagogues DO exist that would be the right kind of fit for me. Because not every congregation would do.

- **It would have to be** a congregation where people are focused on the substances of things and not just on the surfaces.

- **It would have to be** a congregation that is radically non-pretentious.

- **It would have to be** a place where people understand that Judaism is not a spectator sport, but where everyone has some role of responsibility in participation.

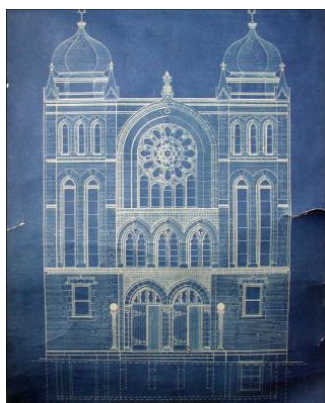
- **It would have to be** a congregation where many things that rabbis and cantors do, like reading torah and leading services, are done by knowledgeable people in the congregation who are not totally dependent on the rabbi.

- **It would have to be** a congregation where music and the arts are valued as a pathway for connecting with God and Jewish tradition, and where the arts are not left up to the professionals but where everyone is encouraged to participate.

- **It would have to be** a congregation that welcomes the voices of children and regards children as absolutely integral to the success of the community.

- **It would have to be** a congregation that values Jewish education for adults just as much as Jewish education for children, understanding that to do otherwise would be to send the message that as people grow older they "grow out" of Judaism instead of "growing into" Judaism.

- **It would have to be** a congregation where no one thinks that Judaism is one-size-fits-all, but rather people are encouraged to be engaged with Jewish tradition enough to figure out how they are going to express their Jewish commitments.



- **It would have to be** a congregation where people are comfortable disagreeing with each other and wrestling with Jewish tradition, and where people take it in stride when they find that they disagree with the rabbi, and where people show respect to each other at times of agreement and disagreement.

- **It would have to be** a congregation where people know that the strength of Jewish identity doesn't depend on how Jewish you feel, but on what you actually do to affirm your connection to Judaism.

- **It would have to be** a congregation where people feel deeply connected to Israel, and also create vibrant Jewish lives right here so their Jewish lives are not entirely lived vicariously through Israel.

- **It would have to be** a congregation where people know that the home is actually a more important Jewish space than the synagogue.

- **It would have to be** a community that understands that a rabbi may work AT a synagogue, but a rabbi works FOR God and the Jewish people.

- **It would have to be** a congregation that is continually asking questions: "What does it mean to be Jewish in today's world?" "What are the voices of God and Jewish tradition calling upon us to do, today?," with the expectation that the answers to these questions are partially stable and also changing every day.

- **It would have to be** a congregation characterized by the Jewish value of Chesed -- where people express their deep Jewish commitments through caring for each other at difficult times and through caring for the community and the world.

- **It would have to be** a congregation that would have an understanding of its own growing edges, that would always be experimenting year after year, continually trying new things and new approaches and not resting on its laurels.

I decided that if I can find a place about which even half of these things are true, or where many items on this list are part of a shared vision between the leadership and the community, that's a place where I could be happy. And I was so pleased, 20 years ago and ever since, to find that so many of these are values that are deeply embedded in the culture of this community. I have appreciated the opportunity to work together with so many of you to create a community that helps people to develop a vibrant and vital connection with Jewish tradition. And I look forward to continuing this sacred work together.☆

We just celebrated the 20th anniversary of Rabbi Scheinberg leading our congregation with wonderful Shabbat services led by Louise Kurtz along with the Rabbi's daughters and Rabbi Kalish giving a thoughtful Dvar Torah.

As a community, we created a Scholar-in-Residence Program Fund to allow us to host an influential Jewish leader at an annual weekend retreat where the USH community will enjoy services, lectures and programs inspired by our guest Resident Scholar. Rabbi Scheinberg's work in curating the program will enable USH to build on its strong reputation of being a welcoming, vibrant and collaborative place where the community can more deeply connect with its Jewish identity. We also loved giving Rabbis Scheinberg and Kalish tickets to Hamilton.

We celebrated many simchas - baby namings, britot, bar and bat mitzvahs, and weddings. Personally over the last four years, I had the honor of celebrating the bar mitzvahs of both of my boys and seeing them start on their teenage Jewish journey. They will both spend the summer attending Jewish camps - Eli will be attending a Jewish sports camp in North Carolina along with a few other children from USH. Nathan will be doing community service in Seattle through Mitzvah Corps and I am happy to say that other teenagers at USH will be doing other Mitzvah Corp programs. I am also happy to say that USH will have over twenty kids going on Jewish overnight experiences this summer, and that our summer Kaplan program is full of young happy campers.



We have had some hiccups in the last four years. As an organization we have continued to learn what is working and what is not. For example, in order to get more families involved in our toddler program we opened classes in uptown Hoboken and ran programs in the park, and now -- with the help of our staff and committed Kaplan parents -- we have been able to engage more young families. Our teen program needs a revisit, so our staff and members have had several brainstorming meetings and now we have a monthly program which is very well attended by many of our teens.

So what is next? To name just a few: We need to review how best to educate our children at the Learning Center. We need to do a better job of building a community with new people who move into Hoboken. But without your input

we do not know what we need to change and how to make it better. A good friend once told me what makes our community so special is that it is one of the few places where you can be involved and your actions will make the difference.

So as I step down as President in the next month, I would like to ask each of you to think about how you can help make a difference in our community and help us reshape our future. Over the next year, there will be several different short-term committees to look into every area in which we operate. The goal is to develop a strategic plan for USH for the next twenty years. So please come join me at our Annual Meeting on June 20th at 7pm to help us take the next step in our future together - or at least come have a glass of wine and celebrate what we have already accomplished together. ☆

Explore Judaism:

5 Thursdays beginning 6/8, 7:30-9pm

A course with Rabbi Robert Scheinberg for anyone seeking a deeper understanding of Jewish tradition, values and spirituality.

5 Thursdays beginning 6/8, 7:30-9pm



115 Park Avenue

Members: \$50/individual, \$100/couple
Non-members: \$100/individual, \$150/couple
Parents of current Pre-school or Learning Center students: FREE

Register at www.hobokensynagogue.org or office@hobokensynagogue.org

PosterMyWall.com

A workshop for couples:

Planning a Jewish Wedding

rings... chuppah.... ketubah.... witnesses....
blessings.... breaking the glass....
what's it all about?



Learn about Jewish traditions and customs for your special day; ask your questions; meet other couples who are soon to be married!

Wednesday, June 14
7:30-9pm

led by Rabbi Rob Scheinberg
Free for USH members;
\$25/couple for non-members
United Synagogue of Hoboken,
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RSVP: 201-659-4000 or
office@hobokensynagogue.org

PosterMyWall.com



SHABBAT IN THE PARK

Join us for a song, prayer and friends to welcome Shabbat!

Bring a Picnic Dinner (Kosher or Vegetarian, Please!) and We'll Provide the Challah and Grape Juice!

Free and open to the community, special activities for families with children 5 and under. RSVP appreciated

FRIDAYS AT 6 PM

-WEATHER PERMITTING-

(Please note: regularly scheduled service takes place at the synagogue at 7pm as usual.)

2017 Dates & Locations*

May 19	Church Sq. Park - Ice Cream Party! (5th b/w Park & Willow)
Jun 9	Maxwell Place Park (7th and the river)
Jun 23	Church Sq. Park
Jul 14	Van Vorst Park (Montgomery b/w Jersey & Barrow in Jersey City)
Jul 21	Church Sq. Park
Aug 4	TBD
Sept 8	KPS (5:30pm start time) (115 Park Ave)

* Starts at 6pm unless otherwise noted



To RSVP or for more information please contact ushpreschool@gmail.com

115 Park Ave Hoboken, NJ 201-653-8666 www.kaplancooperativepreschool.org

EYTAN STERN WEBER: TEACHING JEWISH ETHICS

by Jeremy Morley



Eytan Stern Weber is a charming and humble young man who is clearly destined to make a difference in the world. Currently he teaches in our wonderful Learning Center, while working as a photographer and videographer, and engaging in local politics. It's

far too early to tell where Eytan will end up but my interview with him clearly showed me that he has a calling as a teacher. Indeed, while we met he taught me to look at some things quite differently.

Eytan grew up in Central New Jersey. Both of his parents are reform synagogue rabbis. Rabbi Donald Weber has been the rabbi at Temple Rodeph Torah in Marlboro for more than thirty years and Rabbi Shira Stern is the Rabbinic Associate at the same synagogue and the Director of Marlboro's Center for Pastoral Care and Counseling. As a tribute to his mother, who was one of the first female Jewish rabbis, Eytan and his two brothers use her surname, "Stern," in their own names.

Presently, Eytan teaches 7th and 8th grades at USH, and he clearly loves doing so. I asked him to tell me how he works.

He explained that he seeks to engage students in the application of the traditional texts to the issues that they - and we - face in our daily lives and to current events. As an example, we discussed the *middah* (virtue or ethical principle) of *Ohev et HaBriyot*, which translates as "loving all creatures." Eytan explained that he sparked discussions among the 7th grade students concerning the extent to which life is sacred, by asking questions such as whether "loving all creatures" applies equally to all humans regardless of their nationality, religion, beliefs or conduct, and also to wild animals, to domesticated animals, to bacteria and to cancerous cells. The challenge with all of the ethical principles is to apply them appropriately to the conditions of real life. As a teacher Eytan believes that he should not provide the "right" answers, or even disclose his own responses to the difficult issues. Instead, he asks questions and guides students as impartially as possible to consider the implications of potential responses and to find their own ways to answers that they consider correct.

For 8th grade students Eytan raises issues that the students will face in contemporary life, such as those concerning drinking, stimulants, relationships, social norms or peer pressure. He explains that he presents the various sides of issues, but that his clear goal, and the essential core of the program, is to show that students can live a full Jewish life outside the walls of the synagogue.

Eytan enjoys the *middah*, *Samayach B'Chelko*, which translates as "Contentment with One's Lot." We even discussed how he uses his work as a photographer – an arena in which, for example, companies digitally alter their models' looks for the purpose of selling products – to illustrate the point. His purpose as a teacher is to provide tools to his students and an understanding of the ethical elements of Judaism so that they may make their own decisions about how they might appropriately implement these precepts into their daily lives.

Eytan moved to Hoboken just four years ago. He enjoys the sense of community at USH that just does not exist in the 'burbs. Together with his older brother, Noah, he has established a photography studio, the Stern Weber Studio, to collaborate on creative portraits and event photography. Here is just a peek at some of their work:



Eytan is also committed to political involvement. He focuses currently on the Civic Action Network, which works "to promote and sustain a livable, compassionate community in Hudson County by empowering residents to engage in local democracy." He is especially active in the area of refugee protection, about which he is most passionate.

For Eytan, Judaism calls upon us to be involved in improving our communities. He is just as fervent about teaching our children to make their own decisions. I enjoyed learning

about his focus in both teaching and in politics on listening to the point of view of the other person. At my request, he sent me the outline of a program that he had organized on Conflict Resolution for teens for the High Holidays. The students were divided into competing teams and were asked to follow certain instructions about possession of two oranges. The program was designed to stimulate discussion, to anticipate potential disputes, and to create

buzz. But its core focus was to encourage students to put themselves in the shoes of the other side, to sense that personal attacks and harsh rhetoric serve merely to harden existing positions, and to see things from an entirely fresh perspective.

The thrust of the program is that, "we are geared to take our cues from the existing positions of competing sides. But if we think outside the system, and don't accept the conventional ideas that have only yielded conflict, and address the problem from a solution-oriented standpoint, maybe we can do something that our parents' and grandparents' generations never could."

Eytan impresses me as a fun but very serious young man whose resolute commitment to Jewish ethical precepts is leading him on a path to pursue not only his personal passions (such as photography and videography, as well as poetry) but also to be dedicated to making a real difference in the world (such as through teaching and political activism). I look forward to observing the particular paths that he may choose to take as he puts his commitments into practice.☆



REFORMERS PREVAIL OVER USH CONSERVATIVES IN HUDSON COUNTY JEWISH CLASSIC

By David Plotka, USH Sports Editor & Team General
Manager

Photographs by Eytan Stern Weber



The "USH Heroes"

On Sunday, May 21st fourteen courageous USH softball players took time out of their (not so?) busy lives to bravely face off against Temple Beth-El of Jersey City. The "Conservatives" of USH got off to a 2-nil start over the "Reformers" only to fall behind 6-2 through 5 innings. In the top of the 6th and final inning (it was enough already!) USH rallied to score 4 runs and tie the game. Unfortunately the Reformers had not only the last licks, but also the last laugh as they won the game by a score of 7-6 on a walk off double. The game, which did not end in the victory we had hoped for, had a little bit of everything including: a no quit attitude, VERY aggressive base running, creative bat wielding on the base paths, outstanding pitching, and even some (semi) heated words along with a very spirited *brokhe* which almost propelled us to victory.



Strike!!!



Another Strike!!

Please see what the General Jewish Manager (GJM) had to say about the play of these heroic men and women of USH:

Too often today in society the word greatness is tossed about with reckless abandon thus rendering the word meaningless and void of any significance. Having said that I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge the "greatness" that was on display at the Lincoln Park West Softball Field on Sunday 5/21/17. It is rare in sports history to observe a game that captures the complete spectrum of human potential

and emotion. I witnessed things that day that I have never seen during my 50 years on this earth, and I can honestly say that for the first time this year, that group of 14 players was a "team." Off season training begins now people.



In "shape" & raring to go (home)

Yasher Koach to both congregations for pulling off, what clearly was a very successful event with each team fielding 14 players. Beth El was *especially* impressive by also bringing along their own fan base. Perhaps this was the difference maker for the Jews from Jersey City in what turned out to be a hard fought game. Mazal Tov to the Reformers and to the entire USH team. The 2017 Conservatives are listed below along with their positions.

1. Adam Laden (3B/OF)
2. Alan Welner (P/1B)
3. David Plotka (1B/OF)
4. Diana London (OF)
5. Donna Olah-Reiken (OF/Team Trainer)

6. Eytan Stern Weber (OF/2B)
7. Frank Rosner (P/OF/Mgr)
8. Gene Steinhart (P/2B/ Team Enforcer)
9. Gordy Haas (3B/OF)
10. Jordan Firestein (SS)
11. Kent (C)

12. Paul Adam K Bongiorno (C/DH)
13. Phil Cohen (OF)
14. Rachel Conway (OF/2B)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS:

Chesed Fund

Jim and Alicia Weinstein in memory of Corey Blumenfeld; in memory of Susan Moss

General Fund

Jason and Cindy Altberger in memory of Max Eckler, Gertrude Eckler and Ruth Polansky
Orit Carmiel in honor of her son's bris
Jason and Rachel Dulberger in memory of Leon Dulberger
Boris Fuks and Larisa Lakhovskaya
Dante Medici
Mordechai and Karen Nemet-Nejat in honor of the wedding ceremony of their son Rafi to Leona Brown
Sharon Stern

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Jackie Danicki
Bob and Lesley Kamenshine in honor of the wedding anniversary of Wendy Kamenshine and Scott Mirelson
Drew and Liana Moss in memory of Susan Moss
Marc and Linnie Neuman in honor of Rabbi Scheinberg's 20th anniversary
Mark Orman
Bruce and Kathy Prussack
Yehuda and Keren Shpigel in honor of their granddaughters, Lila, Arianna, and Zohar

Scheinberg Memorial Lecture

Paul and Suzy Scheinberg

Siddurim

Esther Rosenberg in honor of Sierra Messner's bat mitzvah

Special Needs Fund

Steven Gleicher and Tara Tripodi-Gleicher

Scholar-in-Residence Fund in Honor of Rabbi's 20th Anniversary

Tom and Robin Ahern
Jason and Cindy Altberger
Kitty Bateman
Bob and Jeanne Becker
Isaiah and Anita Belle
Charles Berendt
David and Beatriz Bernal
Mike and Lauren Blumenfeld
Joan Borod
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Joseph and Susan Chanin
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Scholar-in-Residence Fund (cont'd)

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Leon Hen-Tov and Natalie Shuster
Hal and Donna Hochhauser
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Jonathan Katell and Rachel Glasgow-Katell
Michael and Rachael Kerstetter
Jane Klueger
Hope Koturo
Russell and Marni Kriegel
Sean and Amy Kron
Louise Kurtz
Adam Laden and Liz Lieberman
Bob and Elysa Lyons
Soren and Shamira Malekar
Mike Marcello and Karen Jurman
Gregory Marx and Debbie Greenberger
Ricky and Beth Mason
Alan and Orah Massarsky
Matt Meistrich
Jonathan Tarshis Neil and Sarah Kafka
Sergio Neissen and Risa Becker
Avi and Rochelle Ohring
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Ben and Lisa Zablocki

THANK YOU FOR SPONSORING KIDDUSH:

May 6 - USH in honor of Rabbi Rob's 20th anniversary at USH
May 13 - Melissa Landera in honor of Jacob's bar mitzvah
May 20 - USH in honor of the Learning Center's year end celebration
May 27- Kitty Bateman in memory of her parents, Abraham and Rachel Belsky

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Rachel Meltzer and Scott Warren on the birth and bris of their son Ezra, and to his sister, Liliana
Keren and Avi Siegel on the birth of their twin daughters, Arianna and Zohar
Allison and Adam Levy on the birth of their son, Daniel, and to his brother, Jake
Rebecca and Aaron Weitman on the birth of their daughter, Ariella Perri, and to her big brothers, Joshua and Gabriel
Natalie Diamond and Adam Gerhart on the birth of their daughter, Sophie Rose
Lisa and Ben Zablocki on the birth of their grandson, Henry Sol Zablocki, and to the parents, Matthew Zablocki and Rachael Levy
Jacob Landera on his bar mitzvah and to his mother, Melissa and brother, Joshua
Vered and Garrett Asta on the simchat bat of their daughter, Lila, and to her aunt and uncle, Avi and Keren Siegel
Danny Cohen on the engagement of his daughter, Shifra to Marshal Grobois
Karen and Mordechai Nemet-Nejat on the wedding ceremony of their son, Rafi to Leona Brown
Sarah Katz on her election as Communications VP for the Hagalil (NJ) Region of United Synagogue Youth
Harriet Taub on receiving New York City's Sloan Public Service Award
Salomon and Jessica Kalach on the birth of their son, Gabriel
Elle Moss on her bat mitzvah, and to her parents Liana and Drew Moss and her sister Hannah
All USH graduates at this time of year

CONDOLENCES TO:

Anne Pettit on the loss of her mother, Betty, and to Anne's husband, Marc Cobert

MITZVAH DAY REQUEST

September 10th is Mitzvah Day

Please collect travel-sized toiletries this summer. We make individual care packages for the Hoboken Shelter. If you stay in a hotel, please collect shampoo, conditioner, soap, toothpaste, mouthwash, etc. A collection box will be in the USH lobby. Thank you! The Mitzvah Day Committee.

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115 Park Avenue, Hoboken, NJ 07030
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www.hobokensynagogue.org

President: Lauren Blumenfeld
president@hobokensynagogue.org

Rabbi: Robert Scheinberg
rabbi@hobokensynagogue.org

Preschool Director: Rachelle
Grossman 201-653-8666
preschool@hobokensynagogue.org

Learning Center Director: Grace
Gurman-Chan: 201-659-4000 x4
lc@hobokensynagogue.org

Shofar Editor: Jeremy Morley
shofar@hobokensynagogue.org
Proofreading provided by Jane
Kluger, Louise Kurtz, Allen Reuben
and Rabbi Scheinberg

USH Office administrator: Laura
Forino 201-659-4000
office@hobokensynagogue.org

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