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## ***MINUTES***

**January 24, 2023 2 Shevat 5783 7pm**

**ATTENDANCE:** Ellen Rawicz, Michael Smolen, Ellie Short, Beth McAleese, Jared Fingerman, Jeff Cohen, Helen Berman, Marc Luber, Brandon Weiss, Jon Stevens, Rabbi Briskin, Phil Nordlinger, Cantor Kohlbrenner, Rabbi Goldberg

**ABSENT:** Rachel Tyler, Stephanie Kravatz, Melissa Rubenstein, Jason Cohen, Andy Salsman

**Guests:** Kory Grushka, Marc Weiss, Jodie Levinson

### **I. Welcome & Remarks**

- Approval of 12-13-2022 minutes **Motion to approve the committee by Jeff Cohen, second by Beth McAleese, unanimously approved**
- Tzedekah
- WoSA Board meeting – Feb 8 – Beth (Please do not use the abbreviation WOSA in announcements, please use “Women of Shir Ami”)
- Need Board dinner sponsors for March, thank you to Ellen & Michael for sponsoring tonight’s dinner
- Dvar for February - Stephanie  
– in ShirBoard drive folder
- Reports on ShirBoard drive under 2022-23 Gatherings- Bldg & G, RS/LLL, Pastoral Care, Ritual, Rabbi Briskin, Exec Dir, Inclusion, SHAFTY, Marketing & Communications, ELC, Tikkun Olam, Cantor
- Circle of Giving Fund – Board members are expected to make a contribution, another way of demonstrating leadership
- **Congregational Meeting Feb 6, 7 pm** to vote on new cantor – **need quorum of 60 people in person and online to vote, please encourage people to attend**
- Dvar Torah – Marc Luber

**Mazal tov to Cantor Kohlbrenner as she has accepted a new position as the first cantor, and first female clergy person at Mikve Israel in Savannah, GA**

**II. Marketing & Communications Committee Presentation – Jeff Cohen, Kory Grushka (previously an attorney, now graphic designer has own design firm), Mark Weiss (pharm marketing background), Jodie Levinson (Shir Ami communications, background in non profit Jewish world). Also part of the committee: Stacey Cohen and Melanie Cutler**

Theme is to be very deliberate about what we are doing

Cohort: group of people with shared characteristic

Persona: fictional character created based on research and insights to represent different cohorts of members to provide deep understanding of target audience

Use ‘cohorts’ and ‘personas’ to develop a better ‘product’ to understand expectation, concerns, motivations and to determine how to utilize our limited resources

Next step: Jeffs suggestion....look at goals, see which cohort is the target, take to committees, auxiliaries,

**III. 2022-2023 Goals:**

**Learning Together - Ellen Rawicz (with input from Rabbi Eric)**

Review of goals, Rabbi Eric, Rabbi Briskin are starting discussions about how to most effectively reach people, what is the best frequency, formats, etc

**IV. Synagogue security – Ellen Rawicz**

Discussed concerns around security stemming from someone looking for Code Blue center entering the building during the Chanukah Hop. Discussed lack of security protocols, including when to have a security guard, policies around having someone at the door during events, etc. Phil/Ellie to request that building and grounds committee draft a policy for board review

**V. Update on ShirGroups – Rabbi Briskin**

See report

**VI. Governance – Ellie Short**

Jon is the chair of the committee, someone will reach out if your term is up

**VII. Golf Outing with Mahjong and Cards Update – Marc Luber**

Sponsorships starting to come in, any communication board can promote

Marc to work with Jeff and committee on communication around personas, etc

**Promotion of Purim Baskets**

Marc has suggestions for stronger marketing...

Idea to make sponsor list more community based...pictures, messages

Marc is open to ideas

**VIII. Director of Operations Report – Phil Nordlinger**

**IX. Closing Prayer - Rabbi Eric Goldberg**

Rabbi Eric, MyTree....olive oil, \$300 for 6 bottles of olive oil, \$90 back to the  
Tiyul fund to support Israel

**Respectfully submitted, Ellen Rawicz, Secretary**

# MONTHLY BOARD REPORT

**NAME:** Ken Standig

**DATE:** 1-20-2023

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Buildings & Grounds

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you and/or your committee have been up to since the last meeting. Bullet points are fine.**

- Attended meeting to discuss bimah accessibility, including a specialty contractor.
- Attended meetings to determine next steps for completing Emergency Action Plan (EAP).
- B&G Committee decided to focus our efforts on the following:
  - Capital plan update
  - Social Hall as an event/catering space
  - Feasibility of installing solar panels
  - Program use of south wooded area.

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

- Follow up meeting on completing EAP.
- Scheduling emergency response training sessions for staff and congregants.

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

None.

**If you have any documents that you would like to include with your report, please email them with this form.**

None.

## **BOARD REPORT- CLERGY/STAFF**

**NAME:** Rachel Kohlbrenner  
**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Cantor

**DATE:** 1/24/23

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you have been up to since the last meeting. Please include an update on your goals when relevant or indicate activity pertaining to your goals. Bullet points are fine.**

- We had an extremely successful Rock Shir Shabbat on 12/16/22 with a full band that I worked with Michael Smolen and Rabbi Eric Goldberg to put together the music, the practices and all of the setup and details. We had Michael Smolen, Matt Hoffman, David Chesner and Avi Briskin on guitar, Yale Saltzman and Asher McAleese on bass guitar, Jay Miller, Jeff Eder and Ezra Briskin on drums, Ben Hoffman, Brandi Chesner, Michael Smolen and myself on vocals and Beth LaPat on electric violin. We had around 150-200 people attend services with lyrics available on multiple screens and included many times and time periods of rock music.
- Folk Shir Shabbat was also a successful musical service that I collaborated with Rabbi Paula Goldberg and Bob Golden on guitar. The choir participated in this Shir Shabbat service with the theme of social justice with it being on the weekend of MLK weekend. We focused on folk songs in the 60s and included a singalong for the congregation as well.
- There were 2 b.mitzvah services in December, Sydney Young became b.mitzvah on 12/10 and Avery Bonn became b.mitzvah on 12/17

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

- Choir is rehearsing again on Wednesday evenings to prepare for Shabbat Shira and Intergenerational Shabbat on 2/3 and then we will rehearse to prepare for the choir service on 3/24
- There are 2 b.mitzvah services upcoming: Sarah Fiely becomes b.mitzvah on 2/4 and Drew Holzman becomes b.mitzvah on 2/25
- I will be leading the Israeli book club on 2/23 to discuss the book, Where the Desert Meets the Sea
- The next Shir Sprouts Shabbat is happening on 2/24 at 5:30pm where we will be honoring the 3 year olds. I am working with Nina and Jodie Levinson to make sure it well advertised and the program is set and ready to go.

- I will be working with Rabbi Briskin, Rabbi Eric, Ferne and the band to solidify my roles for both the Purim carnival and Adult Purim spiel. I will begin to rehearse with the band as needed upcoming and plan any other aspects of Purim with Rabbi Briskin.

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

**If you have any documents that you would like to include with your report, please email them with this form.**

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## **BOARD REPORT- CLERGY/STAFF**

**NAME:** Nina Orr

**DATE:** 1/19/23

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Preschool Director

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you have been up to since the last meeting. Please include an update on your goals when relevant or indicate activity pertaining to your goals. Bullet points are fine.**

- Preschool registration began on January 19<sup>th</sup> for congregants, 24<sup>th</sup> for ELC members and will open to the public on the 26<sup>th</sup>.
- I am giving multiple tours a day to new families and feedback has been positive.
- We are engaging families outside of the school day to get involved in the Shir Ami community. This past Sunday, we had 30 families come to the synagogue for songs, snacks, and fun for our first family engagement program. We plan on hosting several more events this school year.

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

- Registration for summer and 2023-24 school year will continue.
- We are expanding our hot lunch program, a great fundraising opportunity for the school.
- We have a Shir Sprouts honoring the 3's on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

- None at this time

## **BOARD REPORT- Executive Director**

**NAME: Phil Nordlinger**

**DATE: 1/24/2023**

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you have been up to since the last meeting. Please include an update on your goals when relevant or indicate activity pertaining to your goals. Bullet points are fine.**

- **Successfully completed CODE BLUE Coordination**
- **Installed new range/oven and refrigerator in kitchen. Repaired dish washer and walk in freezer.**
- **Obtained quote and signed contract to install Fiber Optics and new phones for the phone system. Install in 90 days.**
- **Sent out Budget worksheets to department heads and committee liaisons. (Philanthropy and Building)**
- **Created Budget Committee timeline for 23-24 budget.**
- **90% completed 501c3 application.**
- **Obtained CD rates and worked with “investment committee” on strategy to invest surplus cash on hand.**
- **Attended and gathered information regarding Grinspoon Life and Legacy campaign. (Endowment program through JFGP.)**
- **Purchased a new digital keyboard for the sanctuary. Item will be delivered 1/25/23.**
- **Prepared and sent out 2022 tax letters.**
- **In process of completing Emergency Action Plan with Ken Standig and Helen Berman.**
- **Worked on coordination plan for Sharing is Caring frozen meal program.**

**Circle of Giving pledges and donations to date: \$172,121**

**New households since July 2022: 20**

**Resignations since July 2022: 29**

# JANUARY BOARD REPORT

**NAME:** Bob Cherkin

**DATE:** 1/19/23

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Inclusion Committee (IC)

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you and/or your committee have been up to since the last meeting. Bullet points are fine.**

We've been busy developing the schedule of activities listed below.

I've shared information with Sharon Benoff re: inclusive practices and preparing students for B'nai Mitzvah.

KUDOS TO **PAULA SHAVEL**....who, in semi-retirement, has stepped up to support Nina Orr, the new ELC Director, while also working directly with the teachers who are responsible for implementing the IEPs of their students.

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

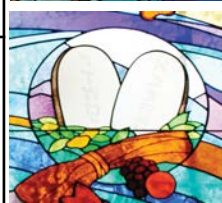
- 1) Members of the IC have been encouraged by Sharon Benoff and me to participate in the upcoming **DEI meeting on 2/2/23 at 7pm and all future meetings.**
- 2) Rabbi Eric and Staci Kincus have set aside **Sunday, February 5 as a special day of Inclusion programming for our Religious School family members** of all ages. This will include a special TuB'Shevat Tefillah/SongSession followed by a seder and learning session .Overall, the goal is to "provide opportunities for Shir Ami families to get to know each other better and to help make Shgir Ami feel more and more like their"home sway from home."
- 3) The **annual Inclusion Shabbat Service will be held on Friday evening, 2/24/23.**  
Keynote Speaker: our own Sarah Sharma, who will take us through her aunt's exhaustive journey to ultimately have her son become a Bar Mitzvah.

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

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# Learning

Objective	Actions/Activities	Measure of Success	Completion Date	Accountable / Responsible
<b>Review Shir Ami's philosophy behind the meaning of becoming b. mitzvah</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create b mitzvah task force comprised of various stakeholders within the congregation</li> <li>Update policies related to b mitzvah process and goals</li> <li>Evaluate importance of Hebrew in b mitzvah process</li> </ul>			B Mitzvah task force
<b>Realign religious school curriculum with philosophy and goals, beyond becoming b mitzvah</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure curriculum aligns with mission of Shir Ami Religious School</li> <li>Incorporate Tikkun Olam through RS curriculum</li> </ul>			Rabbi Eric, RS Committee, Education Committee
<b>We learn from each other and the community.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create 1-2 programs (Adult learning, religious school, post b.mitzvah.)               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Record Club</li> <li>Speaker Series</li> <li>Feed your mind and soul</li> <li>Book clubs</li> <li>Lunch &amp; Learn/My Israeli story</li> <li>RS Parent/Community led classes</li> </ol> </li> </ul>			Rabbi Eric



# **JANUARY BOARD REPORT**

**NAME:** Jeff Cohen

**DATE:** January 22, 2023

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Marketing & Communications

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you and/or your committee have been up to since the last meeting. Bullet points are fine.**

- Analyzed the current Shir Ami congregation and identified logical groupings of members based on age demographics / life-cycle
- Created personas for each of the 4 identified groups (or cohorts)
- Preparing to share with the Shir Ami Board of Directors at the January Meeting

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

N/A

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

N/A

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To be circulated as an action following the January Board Meeting.

# JANUARY BOARD REPORT

**NAME:** Helen Berman

**DATE:** 1-24-23

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Pastoral Care (Chesed)

**Chair people:** Helen Berman and Harriet Paley

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you and/or your committee have been up to since the last meeting. Bullet points are fine.**

- Continuing to solicit membership and solicit leaders for specific projects
- Soliciting information on congregational needs
- Birthday Cards – Dana Levy
  - Working with Rabbi Goldberg/volunteers to design Shir Ami celebration card
  - Birthday cards will be sent to kids and 80+ initially
- Emergency Cards – Sarah Sharma
  - Designing cards with critical emergency numbers for distribution
  - First draft complete
- We are planning to promote the clergy form on Shir Ami website as a way for people to tell us about events in their lives, so we don't miss things.
- Plan to work with clergy to do training to lead Shiva Minyans and expand number of lay leaders
- Re-establishing college connection
  - We have received minimal response from students.
  - Soliciting information from parents through ad in eNnews (Without current addresses, we are unable to send gifts to the students.)
  - Soliciting leadership for project
- Encouraging Chesed donations

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

Planning is beginning...

- Determine where our congregants are living in Senior Facilities – determine if we should do programs at facilities or bring residents to Shir Ami

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

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## **Rabbi's Report**

**December, 2022**

**Purim Planning:** Marc Weiss, Melanie Cutler will speak about it briefly during their presentation this evening. They, along with Michael Smolen and me are writing the spiel. Randi Cohen is the chair of the over all event (which includes dinner, drinks, spiel, and more). If there are questions after their presentation, please reach out to any one of us.

Adult Spiel is Sat. March 11.

Kids spiel and Purim carnival is March 5

Actual Purim day text study and some Megillah reading will be on Tues. March 7 as part of a lunch and learn.

### **December 2023 Israel Trip:**

An email will be going out this week with a link to the trip. Promotional materials will be sent to us later this week or next. The trip is Dec. 20-31, it is multi-generational, mostly geared towards first timers, but there are new experiences too for those who have been before. The cost per person is \$4900 or so, not including airfare. I worked hard with our trip provider to keep the price below \$5000 (and most congregational trips are in the \$5000-\$6000 range these days. Price will drop if we reach certain thresholds (25 or 30 participants).

**RAC L'taken:** I am taking four of our confirmation students to D.C. this weekend for the Religious Action Center's L'taken social justice seminar, a weekend of education and advocacy that culminates with a visit to Capitol Hill to lobby our elected representatives on issues that are important to us. If you want to learn more about it, please link [here](#). Also, the students will be speaking about their experiences during the Intergenerational Shabbat Service on Friday, Feb. 3. Many thanks to the Marcia Abraham Fund for Jewish Life for helping to subsidize this trip.

## Shir Groups:

The Recent Empty nester group is having its first meeting on Feb.3 Many thanks to Robin Firestone and Marc Weiss for organizing/hosting.

The “Born in the 50s—give or take” is scheduled to meet in early Feb. Margie and Mark Kopins are hosting and organizing.

The Bourbon Appreciation Group, led by Adam Dienstman will be meeting at the end of February

Jon Stevens is helping to coordinate Shabbat dinner groups and those will roll out in the next several weeks or so.

Other groups will be rolling out over the next month, including the wine tasting group and a social justice/JRA or TASK volunteer group.

Rebecca Kaufman has done an outstanding job connecting with folks who want to volunteer, help organize, host, etc. It is a slow process, but we are moving forward.

## Special Shabbat Services in the Weeks Ahead:

- a. Friday, January 27—Rebecca Kaufman will lead the service with Cantor Kohlbrenner (while I am in D.C.). She will offer a d’var Torah, and Ilana Hessing will chant Torah. Please come to support Rebecca and Ilana.
- b. Friday, February 3—Intergen. Service and Shabbat Shira. The choir will sing a few songs, the kids who returned from L’taken will speak.
- c. Friday, Feb. 24—Jewish Disabilities, Awareness and Inclusion Month (JDAIM) Shabbat service, featuring a talk from Shir Ami member Sarah Sharma about inclusion of b.mitzvah students with special needs.

## Pastoral:

I’ve revamped my pastoral care in recent weeks, with more frequent attention to members, not only who are in “critical care” but also who are chronic. Our CRM program is the best way to manage and navigate the long list of folks who are dealing with chronic illness.



Since last board meeting: Five funerals, multiple shiva minyanim, weekly visits to Corrine Austein and Jeanne Winerip who remain in a rehab center and hospice respectively. Several post death conversations with those who have lost a loved one.

**Community:**

Led Shabbat Services at Ann's Choice and led a Hanukkah program at Attleboro/Oxford in December.

# **JANUARY BOARD REPORT**

**NAME: Beth McAleese**

**DATE: 1/24/2023**

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE: Ritual Life Committee**

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you and/or your committee have been up to since the last meeting. Bullet points are fine.**

## **Culmination of feedback from HHD:**

- **Facilities: Grounds:**
  - \*Feedback:** Newtown Police Startled some drivers. Parking took those attendees about 45 min to leave each service.
  - \*Suggestions:** Internal Parking lot?
- **Security/Greeters/Check-in:**
  - \*Feedback:** was to have an increase of visible security presence; doors locked; only allowing entrance via Sanctuary door (not side doors) ensuring all are checked in and Greeters are available.
  - \*Suggestions:** check in tables sit security, thus security does not allow a guest in the building and who is then declined at checked in. Suggestions: mail/pick up color HHD name tags/tix, members can then walk in with quick identity, and can leave wearing them.
- **LiveStream Option**
  - Feedback:** very appreciated, not just for those with COVID, those who were traveling for work and visiting family; those who don't drive; and elderly.
  - Suggestions:** keep this as an option; the sound is in/out; and also does not pick up band or choir.
- **Music: Erev RH (The Band)**
  - Feedback:** The Band was seen as inappropriate (loud, out of context, too targeted a population) for High Holiday. Cantor & Michael were praised on duets.
  - Suggestion:** Bring a more traditional approach to broaden the audience. Change instruments, Reduce the amount of people (Duo/Trio), Incorporate traditional, Provide handouts.
- **Music: Choir and Jason Calloway**
  - Feedback:** The choir and Jason enriched the experience, Cantor's voice/singing/chanting and chanting were praised. It was noted that not everyone "grooves on the band". Teens were a highlight.
  - Suggestion:** While many expect and rely on tradition during holidays, cameos may be strong highlights as this coming year will be a mix up.
- **Children's Service: RH and YK morning**
  - Feedback:** RH was more fluid and organized, while YK was disjointed and forced.
  - Suggestions:** Add songs the kids know/movement; engage the kids, their parents and older siblings; Give ELC & RS kids a role.
- **Sermons/Speeches:**

**-Feedback:** There were many positive comments for each sermon individually and many as a group. Feedback acknowledged each being inspirational, relatable, and motivational. While one commented how appreciative they were not to be political in nature, another was waiting for a comment to be. And, one person did mention that the RH sermon felt like a scolding at one point, yet the overall comments were positive, and including Rabbi Strom speaking, the 'Rabbi force' received high praise. Ellie Short and Alan Sheinberg's speeches were also recognized as impactful. Also, important to note that Cantor Elson's presence was a highlight to many.

- **Family Experience in the Park:**

**-Feedback:** There is not a service, it is spending time with your family and other families doing an activity on HHD.

**-Suggestion:** Have an actual service for school age children. There is missing programming for elementary school age whose parents want to attend and want their kids to also be involved in services.

- **Service: Traditional RH & YK**

**-Feedback:** Positive regarding service, honors selections groups/individuals with regard to diversity, new faces, youth readers, and visibly seeing involved members and community. Temperature was cold in one service; Game score was not appropriate on the Bima; RH service began with all being asked to take their seats and "stop socializing". Many liked the timing frame of the services, a few wanted the rolling services back. Apples and honey were enjoyed.

**-Suggestions:** Suggest having youth practice their Torah reading more. There was much feedback/suggestions specifically regarding wanting the long confessional back and wanting Tashlich to follow RH.

- **Yizkor:**

**-Feedback:** mixed reaction to candling and 7 stories. While there was feedback of connection and interest of listening to member stories, it also took time away from personal reflection. There was not an honoring for all loved ones, just those presenting but observers too.

**-Suggestion:** Consider bringing back the previous or another approach.

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

- **Seeking to meet with the Ritual Life Committee to review feedback and engage members further.**

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

**N/A**

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# BOARD REPORT- CLERGY/STAFF

**NAME:** Eric Goldberg

**DATE:** Board Meeting 1/24

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Rabbi/Director of Education

Please provide a summary for the board of what you have been up to since the last meeting. Please include an update on your goals when relevant or indicate activity pertaining to your goals. Bullet points are fine.

## **Religious School Update**

1. Religious School: Over the past month we have had classes on Sundays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. In addition to our ongoing curricular focal points, the past month has provided opportunities for us to emphasize the following ideas, Jewish values and people: a. Equality/Tikkun Olam/We all have a piece of God inside of us (B'tzelem Elohim)/We are all part of the same family (b/c we all came from Adam)/Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel and Rabbi Joachim Prinz; b. Tu B'Shevat/The unofficial start of Spring in Israel/Our connections to Israel/the 7 species of Israel; c. The rise in anti-Semitism and what we can do about it as individuals and a community. Through art, music, cooking, classroom learning and all five senses, our amazing teachers and madrichim have led our students to a deeper understanding of themselves and how these values are integral to living a Jewish life in 2022. A special 'todah rabbah' to Michael Smolen, Rabbi, Cantor, our teachers and madrichim for making this month a great one!
2. Our 3rd Grade Family Program took place Sunday 12/18. We focused our time on Hanukkah and how it is relevant to our lives as kids, parents and families in 2022-2023. In addition to fun games and learning, each of our students made delicious sufganiyot!
3. Ferne Levy and I traveled to Israel with 25 teens from 12/24-1/4. There is not enough space to describe this experience and how it transformed our teens. Using all of our senses, traveling from North to South and everywhere in between, it was a powerful experience. I am happy to share any and all of the details (including many pictures) at any time. I know Ferne feels the same. You are also more than welcome to ask any of our teens about their experiences. You are also more than welcome to ask Rabbi Briskin (Avi) and/or the many board

members whose teens joined us (Marc Luber — Zach; Beth McAleese - Asher; Ellen Rawicz - Matthew; Melissa Rubenstein - Evan; Michael Smolen - Aaron).

4. Regarding Israel and the teens, it was an honor to have them speak/lead services at synagogue on Friday 1/6 and 1/20.
5. Robin Burstein of the ADL came and led an interactive program for our 6th-10th graders on Wednesday 1/11. We had 125-150 people in attendance and the program focused on Teens, the Rise in Anti-Semitism and How to Combat/ Address any such activity.
6. Our 4th Grade Family Education Program took place this past Sunday (1/22). Our 4th grades focus on Life Cycle throughout the year, and presented their 'B.Mitzvah divrei Torah' from the bimah. They were tasked with researching a bible story, summarizing that story and making one connection to their life. They were thoughtful and funny! Todah Rabbah to Nancy Levitt and Stephanie Clark, Brandi Chesner, Asher Levitt and Ilivia Cohen for all of their leadership and guidance.
7. Our 5th grade Family Program will be this Sunday (1/29). Our 5th Graders are going to share a Shabbat and Tu B'Shevat experience together.

### **Lifelong Learning (LLL) Update**

- a. iEngage continues with Rabbi Briskin. Through the consideration of major historic moments, this year long series grapples with the different ideas and values that shape the meaning of modern Israel, Zionism, and Jewish identity today. Our next session is Wednesday 2/15.
- b. Thursday January 12th was our 2nd 'Jerusalem Masterclass' session for the year. Our focus was on the 'Secrets of Jerusalem - Death and Burial.' We learned about general burial/death practices in modern and ancient times, as well as some lesser known 'famous' people buried in Jerusalem — Harry Potter and William Shakespeare?! You'll just have to watch the video to find out. All LLL events are being posted to the Shir Ami website.
- c. Thursday December 15th was 'Dinner and a Movie.' We discussed 'Maktub,' an Israeli film that is funny, challenging and heartwarming.

- d. Speaking of 'Dinner and a Movie,' we are asking everyone to watch 'Abe' for a 1/26 discussion — the movie is about a 12 year old who one Israeli parent and one Palestinian parent. Abe is available of Amazon Prime.
- e. Looking ahead, we have several exciting events: On 1/26, 'Dinner and a Movie' (Abe), 2/2 Shir Ami Record Club (Guns n' Roses w/Rabbi Eric), 2/7 The Life and Times of a Progressive/Reform Female Rabbi in Jerusalem w/Rabbi Stacey Blank, 2/12 ADL Program on Anti-Anti-Semitism for Adults).

### **Additional Items**

1. Continue to make daily birthday and anniversary calls.
2. Continued pastoral care calls, emails and texts
3. Officiated at life cycle events.
4. Hanukkah Rock Shabbat was awesome! It was a pleasure to write/adapt the music and 'lyrics' with Michael and Cantor. Thank you as well to the incredible band members: Avi Briskin, Ezra Briskin, Brandi Chesner, Dave Chesner, Jeff Eder, Ben Hoffman, Matt Hoffman, Beth LaPat, Asher McAleese, Jay Miller, Yale Saltzman, Eric Schnitzer and Michael Smolen.
5. The band looks forward to playing at the Adult Purim Shpiel and we have begin planning our 'set list' for the evening!
6. Continued planning for the Shir Ami Golf Outing taking place May 15, 2023. Todah Rabbah to Brett Cohen, Todd Leon and Marc Luber for all of their incredibly hard work and dedication.
7. Walking/Running group continues.

As always, do not hesitate to be in touch should you have any questions or want to know more. I can best be reached via phone/text (856-359-5758) and/or email ([egoldberg@shiramipa.org](mailto:egoldberg@shiramipa.org))

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

Nothing specific, but please know that we would love to see board members any time at Religious School! Thank you for all of your support!



## **BOARD REPORT- CLERGY/STAFF**

**NAME:** Ferne Levy

**DATE:** 1/23/2023

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:**

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you have been up to since the last meeting. Please include an update on your goals when relevant or indicate activity pertaining to your goals. Bullet points are fine.**

- In December, Sr Shafy went to Wax n'Scents in New Hope and had dinner then celebrated Hanukkah 2 weeks later with dinner and white elephant
- Bonim/Chalutzim celebrated Hanukkah at our 22nd annual Hanukkah Hop we had 70 participants
- Canteen & Shabuddies started last Wednesday night! Canteen is run by our 8th graders with guidance from our senior treasurer and fundraising chairperson. And all our Sr Shafy board members now have a 6th grade buddy. They spent 30 minutes getting to know each other.
- WINSTY was a really fun time. We had 24 participants from many different synagogues come to us. We had dinner, havdalah, ran a meaningful program related to MLK, made 70 meals for Caring for Friends, made 30 dog toys, went bowling, slept over and had breakfast.
- Purim is underway. We will be at Shir Ami from 11:30-1:30 or so preparing every Sunday until March 5th
- Shafy's football pool fundraiser is underway so if you are interested in a box they are \$20/box and you can pick your number (just let me know)
- We sent another 2 boxes of shoes to Soles 4 Souls

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

- JCrew has laser tag on January 28th
- Bonim/Chalutzim is going to the NJ Aquarium on January 29th
- SAVE the Date for the SHAFY flea market on April 16, 2023!!

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

**If you have any documents that you would like to include with your report, please email them with this form.**

# JANUARY BOARD REPORT

**NAME:** Helen Berman

**DATE:** 1-24-23

**TITLE OR COMMITTEE:** Tikkun Olam

**Committee Chairs:** Barbara Roth and Essie Cherkin

**Please provide a summary for the board of what you and/or your committee have been up to since the last meeting. Bullet points are fine.**

The Tikkun Olam has several concurrent efforts in progress. Each has a congregant leader.

- **Code Blue – Shir Ami** completed the our month as Code Blue hosts under the direction of AHTN (Advocate for Homeless and Those in Need)
  - Hosted 169 guests over 15 nights
  - 60 volunteers from our congregation and beyond, supported the effort
  - Shanika, Jodi Friedman and Jodie Levinson were very helpful
  - Plan to offer to host again next year
- **Food Drives – Marc Luber**
  - December donated 3,197 pounds
  - 2022 Total donated was 28,247 pounds
  - Next distribution is Sunday 2/12 - Monday 2/13 - working with Ellen Rawicz to include 6/7th graders in this event.
  - A \$750 donation to the pantry was received from DVSA (Delaware Valley Sunoco Alumni) – grant request submitted by Helen Berman
- **Caring for Friends**
  - The number of groups who want to prepare meals for Caring for Friends is increasing – friend groups, auxillaries, youth groups, religious school
  - Volunteers will be solicited to take frozen meals from Shir Ami to the Caring for Friends Warehouse
  - Maria Pisano from Caring for Friends would like to visit Shir Ami to see our facility and to talk to congregants (Friday night?) to talk about needs and opportunities are Caring for Friends
- **Education Fair Funding – Janis Bader – No Update**
- **Social/Racial Justice – Janis Bader and Harriet Paley**
  - The first of the new racial justice discussion series was held Jan. 19 and attended by 9-10 people on Zoom
  - Additional discussion scheduled Feb. 16, Mar. 16 and Apr. 20
  - Each discussion is based on a reading available before the meeting
- **Political Activism (Get out the vote) – Arthur Kraus and Andee Losben – No Update**
- **Coat Drive for Afghans/Ukrainians – Stan and Shelley Cohen**
  - Collection was very successful. Latest count is 120 bags of coats and clothes donated to JFS,

- Advocacy – Arthur/Andee
  - There was a lengthy discussion about Reducing Gun Violence/Promoting Gun Safety/Banning Assault Rifles/ Background checks and found that it could be very controversial amongst our members.
  - One member will check with Rabbi Briskin and Newtown Police for their position about gun safety and related issues.
  - We discussed having Police speak about gun safety.
- Appreciation for Police & Fire Depts.
  - SHAFTY presented gifts to Police and Fire Departments
  - Tikkun Olam will look at doing something later
- Biblical Garden improvements
  - Barry and Stacey Groder interested in leading this effort,
  - Action waiting on discussions re: goals for the garden
  - This will be referred to the Building and Grounds Committee
- Providing support to the Buffalo community impacted by the recent Tops tragedy – Ron Smolow
  - Ron has circulated a draft proposal for how local congregations can collaborate with the groups in Buffalo to help. It is yet to be determined if/how Shir Ami can help.

Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events. -Scheduled December zoom meeting to continue discussion of additional projects

Under discussion:

- Expanding political activism (RAC priorities) – common sense gun control
- Congregational education on current topics, such as the BDS movement
- Road clean-up

**Please list and describe any upcoming initiatives and/or events.**

Next meeting TBD

**Are there any items that the board needs to discuss or actions that the board needs to take at this time? If so, please specify the question, topic and/or required action.**

There is an interest in cleaning-up plantings, repairing dedicated benches, and improving the Biblical Garden. Discussion and decisions are needed to determine direction/plan. Will it remain a “Biblical” garden, or be converted to plants that are better suited to our climate? Will it be moved/extended into other parts of the property – closer to the front, on the other side of the parking lot. Will outdoor meeting spaces be created? How will it be funded? Does this really fall under Tikkun Olam, or should it be part of Building and Grounds?

**If you have any documents that you would like to include with your report, please email them with this form.**