

A Message from Rabbi Eric Goldberg, Director of Religious School

There is a well-known story about Isidor I. Rabi, a Nobel Laureate in Physics, that goes like this: Every day when Isidor came home from school his mother would ask him the same question. Unlike most parents, his mom did not ask him ‘Did you learn anything today?’ Rather, she asked: **‘Did you ask a good question today?’** Looking back, Rabi remarked that his mom’s advice - to ask good questions – guided his life and his scientific pursuits.

This story teaches two important lessons at the heart of Shir Ami’s Religious School:

- a. **Parents have an immeasurable influence on the development and strengthening of their children’s identity – especially their Jewish identity.** Our clergy, teachers, madrichim (student assistants), office staff and I are honored to partner with you in this endeavor and thank you for entrusting your children to us. Please know we are always available should you, your child or anyone in your family need anything.

- b. **In Hebrew, the Jewish People are known as *Yisrael*, which literally means ‘to wrestle/struggle with God.’ And what better, more meaningful way to wrestle with God than to ask deep and thoughtful questions!** Such questions, such exploration and the discovery that results from these questions and exploration are not only encouraged at Shir Ami’s Religious School, but an essential element of our curriculum. We encourage this questioning and exploration outside the classroom as well, engaging in activities that serve and, allow us to interact with, our community. In addition, our school provides parents with materials that can be used at home for discussion, action and thought.

I hope your family sees Shir Ami as your ‘home away from home,’ where lifelong connections and friendships are built. I invite you to join us each and every day – learn with us, chat with us, ask questions of us, connect with us. Please know we love having your family as part of our Shir Ami family. If I am not in the hallways, classrooms, or my office, you can always be in touch via e-mail (egoldberg@shiramipa.org) and/or phone (215-968-3254/856-359-5758).

I am so excited for the year ahead! A year in which we partner together to deepen the Jewish identities of our youth. A year in which asking questions is encouraged, reminding us that we are *Yisrael*, forever wrestling with God in search of the answers to life’s most challenging questions.

L’Shalom,
Rabbi Eric Goldberg