

WAJC Annual Meeting

Rabbi Ilene Haigh

Annual Report

August 23, 2020

אחת | שאלתי מאת־יהוה אותה אבקש | שבתִי בבית־יהוה כִּלְיָמִי תִּגֵּי לַחַזוֹת בְּנֹעַם־יְהוָה  
וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכָלוֹ: <sup>i</sup>

One thing I ask Adonai, only that do I seek: to live in the house of Adonai all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of Adonai, to frequent God's temple.

These words come from Psalm 27,

a psalm that the rabbis encourage us to consider

each and every day of Elul

the month leading up to Rosh Hashanah

the days leading up to our days of Awe

it continues....

אל־תִּסְתֵּר פְּנֶיךָ | מִמְּנִי אֶל־תִּטְּבֵאֵךְ עֲזָרְתִי הִגִּיתָ | אֶל־תִּטְּשֵׁנִי וְאֶל־תִּעַזְבֵּנִי  
אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Do not hide Your face from me; do not thrust aside Your servant in anger; **You have ever been my help. Do not forsake me, do not abandon me, O God, my deliverer.**

Perhaps this year

We need to add

Please God,

Especially now!!

When the world changed in March

I invited you to focus on these three

Words of prayer

Indeed we hold ever fast to them today

Equanimity

Resilience

And Hope

On the cusp of the new year 5781

We look back at the year that's been,

With awe

With amazement

And with so much gratitude

Its hard to believe that

Since our last Annual meeting

We have

Dedicated our Holocaust Torah

Taken twenty -four more of us on our second mission to Israel

Studied Torah each and every week with

an ever- growing community of scholars

Gathered over a 150 people for Seder

Met every shabbat since March

Celebrated our first on-Line Bar Mitzvah

Laughed

Cried

Celebrated

And sustained our Jewish community

Through our weekly minyanim

Our scholar in Residence

And our gorgeous on-line gala

In the face of a global pandemic

In the face of quarantine

The depth of connection

That we have been blessed to sustain

Has indeed been breathtaking

And for this, we offer gratitude

To God

For sustaining us

To each of you

For your support,

Your confidence

Your willingness to stand together

Hand in hand,

Across the digits,

Across the Zoom

Across the country (and the world Canada and Portugal)

To keep our community  
strong

וַעֲשׂוּ לִי מִקְדָּשׁ וְשָׁכַנְתִּי בְּתוֹכְכֶם:

And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.

These words come from the Torah,

They were our text

In the first days of the pandemic

And we have done just that

We have built a magnificent

Sanctuary in love and hope

That God might dwell amongst us

The year has not been easy

(Rabbi tell us something we don't know)

Some of us have felt loss

Ever so keenly

All of us

Recalibrating our priorities

The year has been profound

With so many of us waking up to the

Racial injustice, the second plague

That eviscerates our nation

At our last Board meeting

I was awed by the care and attention

That our board was prepared to offer

Considering what we institutionally might do

To be a force for change

To be upstanders not bystanders

Waking up

Acknowledging that it is indeed the silence of the good people

That perpetuates

Injustice

When we sent our Holocaust to The Green in Woodstock

To stand against racism

Or the High School production of Anne Frank

In Hanover

To educate the children of our neighbors

Or a church in Taftsville

we know that our Torah is bearing witness

with us

to who we need to be

as individuals and as a Jewish community

I am honored beyond measure to serve this community

Working with Phyllis Forbes as my sacred partner

And with our incredible board  
Has been a gift to me and to all of us  
And for Shirley Gramling  
Words can not really express  
A gift, an angel  
Bringing to our community  
Balance and wisdom, graciousness  
We are ever blessed

Elul calls upon each of us  
To wake up  
To engage in an accounting of our soul  
To dig deep, looking for gratitude  
And turn our hearts to the divine.  
Psalm 27 reminds us in its closing words,  
Let your heart be strong and of good courage.....<sup>ii</sup>

קִוְּה אֱלֹהֵי הַיְהוָה חֲזֹק וּבְאַמְצָן לְבָבְךָ יְקִוְּה אֱלֹהֵי הַיְהוָה:

Look to the LORD; be strong and of good courage! O look to the LORD

May each of us this year  
Have the courage

The equanimity and the hope

To see us through the year to come

You are not alone,

May you feel the Presence of the divine

And the love of our community

As we go forward together.

I invite Rachel Kahn

To share her Torah

Her breath through the Shofar

A call to Hope

A call to Justice

*Tekiah*

לְדָוִד | יְהוָה | אֹרֶךְ יָיִשׁוּעֵי מִמִּי אֵינְךָ יְהוָה מְעוֹז־חַיִּי מִמִּי אֶפְקֹד:

Of David. The LORD is my light and my help; whom should I fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my life, whom should I dread?

בְּקָרֵב עָלַי | מְרַעִים לְאַכֹּל אֶת־בְּשָׁרִי צָרִי וְאִיבִי לִי הִמָּה כְּשָׁלוֹ וְנִפְלוּ:

When evil men assail me to devour my flesh—it is they, my foes and my enemies, who stumble and fall.

אִם־תִּתְקַהֵּה עָלַי | מִחֲנֹה לֹא־יִירָא לִבִּי אִם־תִּקְוִים עָלַי מִלְחָמָה כְּזֹאת אֲנִי בֹטָח:

Should an army besiege me, my heart would have no fear; should war beset me, still would I be confident.

אֶחַת | שְׁאַלְתִּי מֵאֵת־יְהוָה אֹתָהּ אֲבַקֵּשׁ שְׁבִתִּי בְּבֵית־יְהוָה כָּל־יְמֵי חַיִּי לַחַנּוּת בְּנֻעַם־יְהוָה וּלְבַקֵּר בְּהִיכָלוֹ:

One thing I ask of the LORD, only that do I seek: to live in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to gaze upon the beauty of the LORD, to frequent His temple.

כִּי יִצְפְּנֵנִי | בְּסֹכֶה בַּיּוֹם רָעָה יִסְתַּרְנִי בְּסֹתֵר אֶהְלֹו כְּצֹר יְרוּמְמֵנִי:

He will shelter me in His pavilion on an evil day, grant me the protection of His tent, raise me high upon a rock.

וְעַתָּה גֵרוֹם רֵאשִׁי עַל אִיבֵי סְבִיבוֹתַי וְאֶזְבַּחְתָּה בְּאַהֲלוֹ זְבַחַי תְּרוּעָה אֲשִׁירָה וְאֶזְמַרְתָּה לִיהוָה:

Now is my head high over my enemies roundabout; I sacrifice in His tent with shouts of joy, singing and chanting a hymn to the LORD.

שְׁמַע־יְהוָה קוֹלִי אֶקְרָא וְחַנּוּנִי נַעֲנֵנִי:

Hear, O LORD, when I cry aloud; have mercy on me, answer me.

לָךְ | אָמַר לִבִּי בְקוֹשׁוֹ פָּנֶי אֶת־פָּנֶיךָ יְהוָה אֲבַקֵּשׁ:

In Your behalf my heart says: "Seek My face!" O LORD, I seek Your face.

אֶל־תִּסְתֵּר פָּנֶיךָ | מִמִּנִּי אֶל־תִּטְּטֵבֵאֵף עֲזַרְתִּי עֲזַרְתִּי הִגִּיתָ אֶל־תִּשְׁעֵנִי וְאֶל־תַּעֲזֹבֵנִי אֱלֹהֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל:

Do not hide Your face from me; do not thrust aside Your servant in anger; You have ever been my help. Do not forsake me, do not abandon me, O God, my deliverer.



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כִּי־אָבִי וְאִמִּי עֲזָבוּנִי וַיהוָה יִאֲסֶפֶנִּי:

Though my father and mother abandon me, the LORD will take me in.

הוֹרֵנִי יְהוָה דְּרָכְךָ וַנְּחַנֵּנִי בְּאַרְחַח מִישׁוֹר לְמַעַן שׁוֹרְרָי:

Show me Your way, O LORD, and lead me on a level path because of my watchful foes.

אַל־תִּתְּנֵנִי בְּנֶפֶשׁ צָרִי כִּי קִמוּ־בִי עֲדֵי־שֹׁקֵר וַיִּבֹּחַ חֲמָס:

Do not subject me to the will of my foes, for false witnesses and unjust accusers have appeared against me.

לִילֵא הָאֲמֵנֹתַי לְרָצוֹת בְּטוֹב־יְהוָה בְּאַרְצֵי חַיִּים:

Had I not the assurance that I would enjoy the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living...

קִוֵּה אֱלֹהֵי־יְהוָה חֲזַק וַנְּאֻמָּץ לִבְךָ וְקִוֵּה אֱלֹהֵי־יְהוָה:

Look to the LORD; be strong and of good courage! O look to the LORD!

<sup>ii</sup> Translation from Rabbi Richard Levy