



**HIGH  
HOLY DAYS  
AT  
MISHKAN  
SHALOM**

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## Rabbi's Letter

by Rabbi Shawn Zevit

### Finding Hindsight, Insight and Foresight in The Days of Awe

*Shalom* and welcome back from the summer into the season of individual return and communal consciousness-raising! We re-gather under ongoing shape-shifting circumstances, thankfully in larger numbers in person more frequently, and on-line for services and programs, as the Jewish New Year brings us together again. We have, with creativity and commitment, found safe and nourishing ways to rejoice together, thanks to our member volunteers' technical skill and gift of time.

Each of us has had discoveries and losses, breakthroughs and dissolutions, moments of isolation and meaningful connections. Having lost my beloved mother, Sheila, this past year (she was one of Mishkan's first "online friends" in this digital age), and my father, Les, the year before, Simcha and I thank you all so much for your caring support in the wake of their deaths. We will continue to encircle each other with love and support through our *Acts of Caring/Gemilut Hasadim*, for being in a covenantal community with each other means being there at peak moments, and the everyday sacred opportunities across the unfolding of time.

The *Yamim Noraim* - The Days of Awe, ask us to face the truth of our circumstance, strengthen communal bonds, make amends to live in solidarity with all beings, and explore for the long haul, the connections, and tools for resiliency. We might call this the practice of Hindsight-Insight-Foresight from a philosophical and organizational perspective- as our president, Jean Brody, refers to in her inaugural President's column. In our liturgy and many theologies, we might express awareness as: "Is/Was/Will Be" or "*Melech/Malach/Yimloch*" (The Divine or Sovereign Self of past, present and future coming towards us), in the context of the High Holy Days.



Along with myself and a host of member leaders in the months ahead as well as guest clergy and teachers this year, we will explore these themes and apply them across the board of our programs and practices. This includes offerings during our High Holy Days; a visit on *Sukkot Shabbat* by Rabbi Deborah Waxman, the President of Reconstructing Judaism; and guest spiritual leaders speaking about Ecology and Jewish wisdom,

*(continued on the next page)*

contemporary approaches to soulful living and the transcendent in our lives, facing down anti-Racism through Jewish wisdom practices, and other programs informed by our [Statement of Principles](#) and your interests.

In fact, based on some of your input from last year's Strategic Learning process, we have a goal of revisiting our Statement of Principles this year (last amended in 2001), engaging with who we aspired to be when we formed as an inclusive and spiritually activist Reconstructionist community in 1988, and seeing where we need to redefine and reaffirm the covenant of our mission and all that flows from it.

Let us continue to be bold and claim this coming year. Let us not wait for hindsight and lament what we might have done for the sake of the planet, our nation, and communities, for our own lives and those of our loved ones. Too much is at stake to "sit this one out" or wait for the perfect solution or candidate or time. And at the same time, let us be kind with ourselves and do what we need in self-care to stay well and available for the long-term.

We can reach for clarity, compassion, and action, and engage more fully with the expanse of life's choices, blessings, and challenges in clear, true, and accountable ways. This does not have to mean grand gestures at every turn. It could mean a quiet loving act or supportive moment as much as safely taking to the streets, getting out the vote, or otherwise responding to inequity, war and prejudice of all kinds, individually or systemically.

And so, we lean into the ancient call of the Days of Awe to explore with determination amid the fires burning literally and figuratively in our world - who will we be? What will you let go of or take on in your life? How can we as a sacred community realize our collective potential linking together our individual journeys with those of all in our community and country?

We will take our inspiration from the very names the sages ascribed to *Rosh Hashanah: Yom HaZikaron - The Days of Remembering* (what learning do we want to remember from the challenges of the last

year?) and **Yom Teruah - the Day of the Shofar Blast** (clearing a way into the future and the year ahead, to integrate and put into real action what we have awakened to).

So many of you have risen to the challenge in the last months by offering on-line programs, mutual and financial support. Our community, both needs you, your engagement and your support and is a place to tap into reservoirs of renewed strength, clarity, and connection to our life purpose and to the possibility of who we may yet be together.

As I take these words in myself, I assess my own leadership of service, my partnering, parenting, and friendships. I see my contributions and growth, and often my falling short of the person I long to be in this precious one life - especially coming off a very unusual sabbatical into societal upheaval. If I have unintentionally hurt or missed the mark with any of you, please let me know compassionately, so we may move into this next year with a more open heart together. If we can strengthen our own connections to each other, please let our Membership Team and me know better ways to do so or ways you can better support, engage and encourage each other. These are indeed the times we were made for and the times that are forging who we are becoming.

*Elul tov v'Shanah Tovah U'Mitukah* -- wishing all of us and our precious world renewal, reawakening and repair in the month of [Elul](#), [Rosh Hashanah](#) and [Yom Kippur](#) and the year ahead.



**NOTE:** In entering the month of *Elul* we explore some ways of responding to our times (check out our recorded Elul program from our [Live and Learn on-line](#) series).

# Letter from the President

by Jean Brody

Greetings and welcome to our new year of 5783! As we enter another transformative High Holy Day season, I'm wishing you all renewal, re-connection, and reinvigoration. Let us each find wisdom and understanding in Hindsight, Insight and Foresight, as Rabbi Shawn urges in his letter.

Together we're closing out a year of many challenges and many blessings. The world around us can feel dangerous and out of control. Still, I'm inspired by so many of us doing what we can to repair our precious world. As Joanna Macy said in her interview with Krista Tippett on "On Being,"

*There's absolutely no excuse for making our passionate love for our world dependent on what we think of its degree of health, whether we think it's going to go on forever. This moment, you're alive.*

We have so much to be thankful for within our sacred community. We continue to be inspired by our amazing Rabbi Shawn. We have an incredible board, seeking the best for our community. We continue to support each other through Acts of Caring and through numerous volunteer opportunities.

This past year, we completed two major planning processes, our staffing "Think Tank" led by Ellen Tichenor, and our Strategic Learning process led by Janet Garretson. We are already acting on many of the key findings of these two discernment processes:

- We have hired Dr. Rebecca Phillips in the newly created role of Director of Synagogue Operations. Rebecca will help us to improve our internal operations. Please welcome her and help her to learn about our Mishkan community.
- We are happy to welcome two rabbinic interns (See Rabbi Shawn's letter for more information about them)
- We're increasing our focus on non-digital communications. Many thanks to Marc Jacobs; Roz Spigel and the Membership Team; and Abby Ruder and the Spiritual Life Council for leading this effort.

In the coming year, we're excited to re-visit our Statement of Principles and our By-Laws. Keep an eye out for opportunities to engage with these processes.

We officially completed our 5-year Mishkan@30 Capital Campaign, exceeding our goal and now approaching \$1

million. Thanks to Keely Newman for holding the final steps of the campaign, including the beautiful donor wall designed by Karen Singer that's currently in the works, and will be dedicated this December as part of Hanukkah, the holiday of rededication.

Are you looking to make new and stronger connections within Mishkan? Come to services, join a committee, join the choir or Mah Jongg, or get involved in supporting services as a Levite or Kohen. Be sure to read your Kol Shalom and Ma Hadash for news on our Tikkun Olam opportunities. If you'd like to find more ways to connect to Mishkan, feel free to reach out to me ([jeanbrody@comcast.net](mailto:jeanbrody@comcast.net)) or to Roz Spigel ([raspigel@aol.com](mailto:raspigel@aol.com)).

We're thrilled that Holli Goldenberg and Gabby Kaplan-Mayer will continue as co-Directors of Education for our Congregational School. This coming year, Gabby is undertaking a major revision of our school curriculum, and Holli is taking on a greater leadership role. We also celebrate Gabby's recognition for her work at [Jewish Learning Venture](#) with a [Covenant Award](#). Such *nachas!*

Many, many thanks to Immediate Past President Steve Jones for continuing to shepherd us through the transition to [ShulCloud](#), a web-based platform that will include member information, an informational website, an online payment system, and a messaging system. Check your email for a message from ShulCloud inviting you to set up a secure login and make a dues commitment for the coming year. Please contact Maria ([maria@mishkan.org](mailto:maria@mishkan.org)) or Steve Jones ([stjones18@gmail.com](mailto:stjones18@gmail.com)) if you have any issues.

Mishkan's strength as a community depends on each of our contributions – our creative energy, our time and talent, as well as our financial commitments. Together, we build connections to each other and to our world. We can all support Mishkan by encouraging unaffiliated friends, family and acquaintances to consider joining as new or returning members. Invite your friends to High Holy Day services, to join our school, or to join any of our programs and activities.

Wishing you all *L'Shanah Tovah u-Metukah*, a Sweet and Good New Year!

Jean Brody

# Congregational School

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## Note from Holli Goldenberg and Congregational School

I am so excited to be taking on some more of the leadership duties at Mishkan's Congregational School this year! In addition to leading the school with Gabby, I also run Mishkan's teen programs. During the week, I'm an administrator overseeing English Language Development programs within The School District of Philadelphia. In my free time, I love doing improv and trying new restaurants!

Thank you to our teachers, students, and parents for a great start to the school year! I feel so lucky to be able to visit classrooms and see the awesome learning that is taking place! Look ahead to future editions of Kol Shalom to see what's going on in our classrooms!

-- Holli

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## Shabbat/Saturday School Begins September 10! Mishkan's Congregational School Schedule

Here is the current online/in-person schedule for our school beginning this week:

**Saturdays, 9:30am-12:00pm** - in person, grades K-6

**Wednesdays, 6:00pm-7:30 pm** - in person, Zayin class (grade 7)

**Wednesdays, 6:00pm-7:30 pm** - online, Aleph thru Gimel classes (grades 3-6)

All registration and payment takes place on Shul Cloud: [Click here to register on Shul Cloud..](#)

Sign in to your Shul Cloud account and you will be able to register and pay on the website.

**If you need to set up your Shul Cloud account for the first time....**



Find your "Welcome to Shul Cloud" email from Mishkan (dated 4/4/22, subject line: "Welcome to ShulCloud - Mishkan Shalom's New Member Portal") and click the link to set up your account. Use your current Mishkan email address for your Username, then click "forgot password" to get an email allowing you to set up your new password. If you have questions or issues, email Steve Jones, [stjones18@gmail.com](mailto:stjones18@gmail.com)

**For prospective members** who are interested in joining Mishkan to send their children to the congregational school, please reach out to Holli Goldenberg, [holligoldenberg@gmail.com](mailto:holligoldenberg@gmail.com).

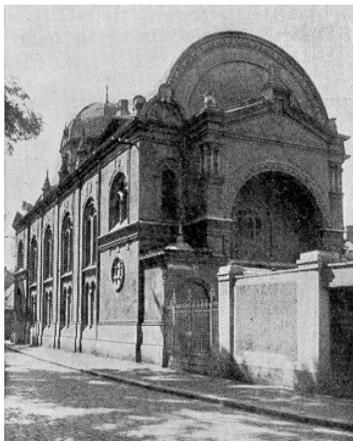


## Meet Our New Director of Synagogue Operations

Mishkan Shalom President Jean Brody is happy to announce the appointment of Dr. Rebecca Phillips as Mishkan's first ever Director of Synagogue Operations (DSO). Rebecca will begin her tenure with the congregation shortly after Labor Day.

The DSO position was created as a result of our Strategic Learning process last year, as well as the Staffing Think Tank, both of which concluded that we need more administrative leadership to support our rabbi and all of our congregational activities. "Rebecca brings strong experience as a synagogue administrator to this role, and we're confident that she can work with us to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of our synagogue operations," Jean said, adding "Please join me in welcoming her to our community."

Rebecca expressed her excitement at joining Mishkan Shalom as DSO. "I look forward to working with Rabbi Zevit, the staff and leadership, and meeting all congregation members and wish to thank the Hiring Committee for all of their thoughtful work," she said, adding "I know we have a lot of work ahead as we navigate this new time we find ourselves in, but together, we will meet this compelling challenge."



The synagogue of Uherské Hradiště as it appeared in the 1930s, before its destruction

## Preparing for Our Annual Uherské Hradiště Shabbat Memorial Service

**January 28, 2023** is the date set for the annual *Shabbat* service to remember the nearly 300 Jews of Uherské Hradiště (Czech Republic), who perished in the Shoah. We have been honored to guard a *Torah* scroll from that community since Mishkan Shalom's very first days.

Our scroll is one of 1,564 scrolls from the Czech Republic that were saved from the Holocaust and are on permanent loan to Jewish organizations around the world through the London-based Memorial Scrolls Trust.

Our tradition each year is to chant from the scroll, to offer teachings inspired by the *parasha* – this year it's *Parasha Bo*, to read the names of those who died and to say kaddish for them. We will again join Rabbi Shawn to co-lead the service.

This is an invitation to help us expand and enhance our remembrance. We are calling on any Mishkan members who are interested to join us in building on our research and to perhaps learn more about the individuals in Uherské Hradiště's Jewish community.

Ideally, we would like to improve the web page for the *Torah* scroll -- <https://mishkan.org/mishkan-shaloms-holocaust-torah-scroll> -- and to make connections with other local congregations who have scrolls as well as seven other congregations who have scrolls from the same community.

If you are interested, or if you want more information, please contact Carol and Ron at [rongoldwyn@yahoo.com](mailto:rongoldwyn@yahoo.com)

– Carol Towarnicky and Ron Goldwyn



## Progress on Our Donor Wall by Artist Karen Singer

Follow Karen Singer's progress as she creates the donor wall to celebrate our successful completion of the Mishkan@30 Campaign.



At our June community meeting, Mishkan member and tile artist Karen Singer presented a watercolor rendition of her design for our donor wall which you can see above. Karen's design is based on the outdoor landscape of our amphitheater and Holocaust Memorial. She's working on the sculpting for about two weeks in late August, and then a few weeks later will begin the glazing process.

The mural will be located on the third-floor stair landing, on the wall to the right of the existing donor wall. The tile section will be in clay, in bas-relief – art you can touch! It will be 2' high and 6' wide, and the text section will be 1' high and 6' wide. The names of all donors will be included in the bottom section. Names will be listed alphabetically, and will all be the same size regardless of the size of your donation.

Keep your eye on upcoming Ma Hadash weekly newsletters for more information on Karen's process, including a possible opportunity to see her at work in her studio.

If you've already donated, be sure to complete [this form](#) so your household's names will appear correctly. If you haven't donated yet, but you'd like to be included, please [click here](#) to join the many Mishkan members who together have already exceeded our \$950,000 goal. Donations of any size – and we mean any size – are very much appreciated. Wouldn't it be exciting to be the one to tip us over \$1 million?

For questions regarding donations, recognition or honors, please contact Keely Newman at [keelymccarthy1@gmail.com](mailto:keelymccarthy1@gmail.com).



## *Start a Sweet Year*

# HIGH HOLIDAYS AT MISHKAN SHALOM

We look forward to welcoming the New Year at Mishkan Shalom. Either in person and on-line, we will enter the New Jewish Year of 5783 together.

Remember that it is a wonderful time to invite friends and family to our warm and meaningful services. Tickets are not required but donations are accepted.

Mark your calendars and plan on joining us in person or on Zoom for services, workshops and dynamic programming on the following dates:

- **Rosh Hashanah:** Sunset, Sunday, Sept. 25 thru Tuesday, Sept. 27
- **Yom Kippur:** Sunset, Tuesday, Oct. 4 (Kol Nidre) thru Wednesday, Oct. 5
- **Sukkot:** Sunset, Sunday, Oct. 9 thru Sunday, Oct. 16



**ALL HIGH HOLY DAY SERVICES will be at Mishkan Shalom again this year.**

In accordance with our current Covid policy, we will be offering hybrid programming with up to 150 people in person per service through advance online registration. RSVPs will be honored on a first come, first served basis. Attendance via Zoom is unlimited, however, pre-registration is required to receive Zoom links.

**HIGH HOLY DAY REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN** and closes on September 12th.

There will be multiple service options, workshops, and inspirational experiences for all ages offered both in person and on Zoom. **[Click Here For the 5783 High Holiday Booklet and Schedule.](#)**



**VOLUNTEERS** are key to making our congregants and guests feel welcome and included whether they participate online or in person during High Holy Days services. Ushers, greeters, Zoom Levites are just some of the many opportunities available. Training will be provided. **[Please sign up here to volunteer.](#)**

# Meet Our New Interns

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## Alana Krivo-Kaufman says *Shalom*

I am grateful to be joining Mishkan this year as Rabbinic Intern. I look forward to bringing my spiritual and political wrestling into conversation with all of you. Reflecting on this year's High Holiday themes, I found myself asking: **What is possible?**

In my role as a political organizer for a decade, creating possibilities was my daily work. The word "impossible" resounded in my ears, an admonishment to dream smaller, fight less fiercely for myself and my beloveds, accept the world; to give up on imagining and building the world as it should be, a world where no one is disposable and collective liberation is a shared project.

And yet, my stalwartness, my commitment to the engine of strategy, became a burden, a not-enoughness. My desire to defend the possibility of collective liberation with every fiber of my being cut me off from my fears, my doubts, my questions and myself. I ran out of the possibility within myself to create more possibility.

And, I have been left wondering: if, as I so fervently believe, God, and by God I also mean people power, is the power that makes for salvation, then what keeps that power source running?

**Can we prepare for the impossible?** As a dogged planner, former Girl Scout and descendant of immigrants, I believe one can be prepared for anything with a calendar, snacks and a first-aid kit. And, so much which I thought of as impossible, happened these past few years: a mainstream discussion of the abolition of prisons and police led by queer women of color, an attempted coup on the capitol by white nationalists, a raging global pandemic. Spiritually, politically, I was unprepared, cynical and naive, all at once. I struggled, often, to be present with the unplanned, the impossible.

### **How do we remain present to possibility, in ourselves, each other, and the world?**

As a seeker of the Divine presence, thirsty for the vocabulary to share my own experiences of God-ness in the world, the wisdom of Octavia Butler: "God is change" resonates with all my hopes and fears for Divine possibility. What is Divine encompasses all things. Every being. All possibilities. All that is gained and lost. *Ha'kol* (everything).

I have learned in these years, that while relationships, movements, and spiritual connection require on-going work and intentionality, they cannot entirely be planned.



Relationships, connection, belonging, must also be felt. The incredulity that can happen when the Divine spark passes between two people happens when we are present with ourselves, with each other and with the joys and birth pains of our world.

Womanist theologian Ruby Sales asks all of us on our path toward liberation: Where does it hurt? For me, it hurts to grieve the not-enoughness of our flailing democracy. To grieve an ideal unfulfilled, struggling to breathe, to become a reality. The reality of a multi-racial, multi-ethnic, multi-gendered democracy, here, and in Israel/Palestine, feels both like the only possibility, and like the most impossible thing in the world.

Detroit movement-philosopher Grace Lee Boggs asks us: **What time is it on the clock of the world?** For me, it's time to say the unsayable things, to share the hopes and fears of our whole hearts, minds and beings.

Our tradition asks us each day to strive for redemption, to yoke ourselves to the future, the *olam ha'ba*, the world to come, that we all deserve, and to every night forgive those who cause us harm. To every new day open ourselves up with immense vulnerability to the disappointment and despair of being harmed again, and to each new day open ourselves up to the possibility that is redemption, the future we deserve.

I join you with my questions, yearning, fear, and ever deepening desire to be present with the God that is change, which is the spark between us, who is all that is possible and impossible.

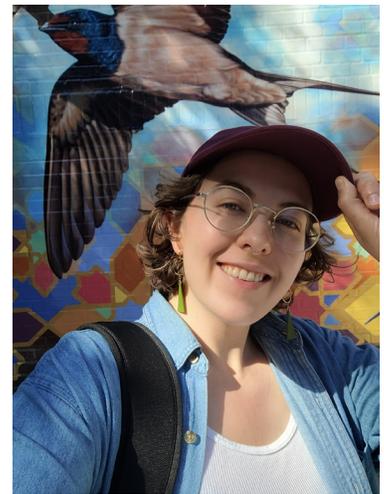
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(More on next page)

## Meet Noah Lind

My path to the rabbinate began with my love for art and creative expression. I have a bachelor's degree in Digital Art from the University of Oregon. My grandmother, Susanna Cohen, who studied visual art at UC Berkeley, warned me, "Don't let school suck the joy out of your creativity." I was unable to follow her advice. By the time I graduated college my relationship to artmaking was severely damaged. It took years for me to reestablish my art practice.

During the first summer of the pandemic my close friend gifted me a copy of *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron. 2020 was a tragic and disorienting year, yet it was in this period of isolation that I was able to establish a deep love for life through art and ritual. *The Artist's Way* connects personal creative practice directly to the creative pulse of the universe, and it helped me find the spiritual heart of my creative expression.



"The heart of creativity is an experience of the mystical union...Those who speak in spiritual terms routinely refer to God as the creator but seldom see *creator* as the literal term for *artist*."

Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*

As it is said in Psalm 104:30, *t'shalach ruchachah yibarei'un ut'chadeish p'nei adamah*, send forth Your breath, they are created, and You renew the face of the earth. Here the verb form of *yibarei'un*, they are created, describes an incomplete action, meaning the act of creation is ongoing. Hashem is perpetually creating the world, and this creative life force is present in every living thing.

"Creativity is the natural order of life. Life is energy: pure creative energy." -- Julia Cameron

Through *The Artist's Way*, I realized that the value of art is in the act of making it, not in its subjective quality. The worth of making art is not for it to be good, but for it to be a free, untamed expression. I meet many people who say to me, "I'm not an artist! I can't draw at all." What they don't observe is in the moment when they reluctantly put pen to paper, the act is holy.

Art is my spiritual practice. I use art to process information and emotions. I recently completed my first unit of Clinical Pastoral Education, a requirement for rabbinical ordination. I spent my summer working at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital as a spiritual caregiver for patients and their families. When I experienced something particularly stirring or difficult, I painted to express my feelings. These paintings were a dialogue with *Hashem*. As I painted each color selection and brush stroke became a meditation on what I had experienced at the hospital. The Divine Creator held me and moved through me as the work unfolded.

"Our struggles with Judaism are about a search for meaning in life through a lived tradition, involving exploration at countless levels of learning, teaching, thinking, and experiencing. Art renders the search visible and tangible, communicating what is discovered through dancing, singing, drawing, creating, designing, building."

Elizabeth Bolton, "Toward a Jewish Theology of Creativity"

There are many forms of creative expression. Even a daydream is as sacred as painting or a song. I strongly believe in my core that we are a species of artists. When the *Torah* says humans are made *b'tselem Elohim* (Genesis 1:27), in the image of the Divine Creator, it means that we in turn are creators and Hashem is reflected in everything we create.

## News from Mishkan's Immigrant and Refugee Rights Committee: Resettlement of Afghan Refugees, and Ways to Help

As you may know, members of Mishkan Shalom and St. Vincent's Catholic Church have formed a "Co-Sponsorship Resettlement Team" working along with HIAS PA to resettle three Afghan men who arrived in Philadelphia earlier in the summer. The men, Abdullah, Khalid, and Mukhtar, are not related, but knew one another when living in Afghanistan. Sadly, they have left behind family members but hope someday they will be reunited in the United States.

The men were greeted at Philadelphia International Airport by Mindy Maslin and Sid Ozer, a hot meal was prepared by Nancy Fuchs Kreimer, and delivered by Judi Bernstein-Baker. After two weeks in two different Airbnb rentals and then two more weeks in the home of a St. Vincent's couple, Lenny and Diana Thompson, the men are now living in a three-bedroom house in the Greys Ferry section of Philadelphia. The Co-Sponsorship team assisted the men in their search for housing, setting up and cleaning the house, and securing furniture and other household items. Many items were generously donated including air conditioners, furniture, kitchen and bathroom supplies, etc. Mishkan member, Brenda Lazin, has been assisting the men with medical and dental appointments, and other individuals from both congregations have pitched in for various tasks, as needed.

Many tasks remain to be accomplished, including 15 components of a cultural orientation program. We are hoping that members of both co-sponsorship

organizations can assist with the sections of the program that deal with such topics as: Philly Transportation; Philly Safety; Budgeting and Finance; Philly and US Laws. By the time you read this, you may have seen a "Sign-Up Genius" asking for individuals to work with the men on these topics. An orientation will be held for volunteers who sign up for topics. There are helpful slides created by HIAS PA for each topic, interpretation can be provided, and sessions can be done virtually or in person.

HIAS PA will assist the men financially for several months until Abdullah, Khalid, and Mukhtar are able to secure employment. They already have work permits, medical insurance, and social security numbers.

Additional funds are needed to supplement their expenses, and many individuals have already donated to the "Afghan Emergency Fund" that has been set up. If you would like to donate to the fund, please send your check made out to Mishkan Shalom, and send it to Gail Bober at 7900 Old York Road, Unit 606 B, Elkins Park, PA 19027. Mark the memo section of the check "Afghan Emergency Fund."

Thank you for any support you can offer.

– Gail Bober  
and the Co-Sponsorship Team





## Let's Use Our POWER to Save Democracy and Reproductive Rights in PA

Mishkan's Voter Engagement team (*Gail Bober, Julie Curry, Lior Feldman, Lance Laver, Mindy Maslin, Ellen Tichenor, and Sharon Weinman*) invite you to join us this fall with voter registration and phone banking with POWER.

Why do this work with Mishkan and **POWER** when there are great organizations focused solely on getting out the vote? We believe there are three important reasons:



- After more than two years of Covid, this is a way to build community and foster relationships within Mishkan. And, we celebrating and having fun along the way!
- POWER is a key player at the city and state levels on critical issues of racial justice—education, climate justice, economic dignity, and justice reform. POWER's influence comes **US**. When POWER's leaders meet with the Governor, mayors, politicians, and policy makers, they know POWER represents a very large and growing number of people who can **be mobilized** to act, to vote, and activate other voters.
- We have God on our side.

We have to do our part to keep abortion legal and safe in Pennsylvania, to save democracy, and to enact stronger gun control laws.

**[SIGN UP HERE for Phone Banking and Voter Registration](#)**

### Mishkan's Voter Engagement Hall of Fame

Many Mishkan members have given their valuable time on very hot days to register voters this summer. They registered 60 voters!!! This has contributed significantly to POWER's summer total of approximately 300 voters. Please join us.

**[SIGN UP HERE for Phone Banking and Voter Registration](#)**

#### A Hearty Thank You to:

Irv Ackelsberg  
 Claudia Apfelbaum  
 Meredith Barber  
 Judi Bernstein-Baker  
 Maralin Blistein  
 Gail Bober  
 Bobbi Breitman  
 Shoshana Bricklin  
 Wendy Caplan  
 Andrea Casher

Jessie Diamond  
 Lior Feldman  
 Wendy Galson  
 Janet Garretson  
 Elissa Goldberg  
 Sharon Gornstein  
 Anndee Hochman  
 Marc Jacobs  
 Andrea Konow  
 Judy Kleppel

Arnie Kohn  
 Lance Laver  
 Mindy Maslin  
 Julie Meyers  
 Lisa Moss  
 Sid Ozer  
 Cindy Perkiss  
 Steve Perkiss  
 David Piver  
 Susan Schewel

Gilda Sedgh  
 Cindy Shapiro  
 Roz Spigel  
 Ellen Steiker  
 Lisa Joy Tuttle  
 Linda Weiner  
 Susan Windle  
 Orly Zeewy

## Justin Carson September 10, 2022

In 2018, Justin's family planted a garden. Two years later, his mom noticed two green frills poking from the soil. She pulled: two carrots—one orange, one purple—each the size of Justin's head. "They just got to grow and grow and grow," he says.

Something similar happened with Justin's *bar mitzvah* journey. Only a few years ago, "I didn't even know what a *bar mitzvah* was. I was level negative-one Jewish then. I was nervous and not at all excited; I thought it would be so much work."

He began slowly, studying with Cantor David Acker, using a book and weekly Zoom sessions to learn the aleph-bet, then whole words, then *Torah trop*.

"The hardest thing was starting off—having to read and then chant whole sentences and then paragraphs on my own. Now I'm really good at it," Justin says.

He started attending Mishkan in 5th grade; it was his first experience with Hebrew School, and it turned out to be less arduous than he expected. "I didn't have to study-study-study to connect. We learned a bit, and I got to hang out with my classmates." A favorite project was a DIY Chanukah menorah, fashioned from a tin box, glue, hex nuts and a marker.

Then the pandemic forced all learning—Hebrew School and regular school—to pivot online. Justin liked that, especially the extra time he had at home. "It cut my hours of school to about 2-3 a day. I did the basic work, had an hour or two to eat lunch, then I got on math, then did some homework and my day was done."

In the past few months, he's focused on his *parasha*, *Ki Teitzei* (Deut. 21:10-25:19), a litany of counsel about "treating people right." For instance, Justin says, if you lend a person something, and they can't return it, you may take whatever they've offered as



security—even their clothing—but you must give it back at night, so they can sleep in their own clothes.

"Another one was about treating animals right. And if you're picking fruit, don't take it all. When I first read [the *parasha*], I didn't really understand it. But as I got along with learning it, I thought: Ohhh..."

Justin's *tikkun olam* project, a river clean-up of the Schuylkill, is the perfect fit for someone who's been swimming since he was six weeks old and fishing for the past seven years. He fishes with his grandfather nearly every Saturday, a catch-and-release pursuit in various rivers and lakes within a few hours of Philadelphia.

"I love to fish. I love water. It's my favorite place to be. I want to help the water," he says. Given that, it's no surprise that a beloved part of the service, for Justin, is *Mi Kamocha*, the song that exults in having crossed the Red Sea.

How has he grown in these past few years of study and preparation? "I've learned how to connect to more people and have better conversations with them. I feel like [*bar mitzvah*] is a marking point for the end of learning and the beginning of remembering."

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(More on next page)

## Sasha Newman October 22, 2022

Sasha remembers running around the Mishkan amphitheater during recess, hopping from rock to rock. And it's easy to connect the dots (or boulders) to one of his current passions, ruck marching—fast-paced treks with a backpack bearing 20-40 pounds of metal plates.

“Ruck marches last a while,” he says. “I carry three bottles of water. I usually do a regular march of three miles, a few laps around the Cresheim Trail, into Valley Green. The longest one I've done was ten miles.”

Sasha's interested in the military and law enforcement. He's also an avid mountain-biker and rower, gamer, computer programmer and coin collector. His seven fish tanks are scattered about the house; at school, he's president of the Ocean Club.

And he paints—probably hundreds of canvasses by now, including abstracts in vivid colors. “If I sat here and named all my hobbies,” he jokes, “I'd be here until the year 3000.”

While his interests may be eclectic, his drive and discipline are a consistent through-line. “I have a little drill sergeant running around in my head every day. If I sit down to play video games, the voice says, ‘Make your bed. With military corners.’”

That focus has powered him through *bar mitzvah* preparation. “I always wanted to have a *bar mitzvah*. I like culminating events, and I enjoy discipline and discomfort. I don't get that much homework from school, so I wanted a challenge. I wanted a transformation.”

Working with Cantor David Acker, Sasha developed a strategy for learning *Torah*. “If I'm having trouble, I'll break up the *aliyah*. I had so much trouble for the first few weeks; I'd do the first three words over and over until I got it. I'd do that with every line, then with the *trop* added.”

It helped that his *parasha*, *Bereshit* (Gen. 1:1-6:8) was an ideal fit. “I love nature, so [reading about] the six



days of creation was perfect for me.” Even though the story was familiar, Sasha found some surprises in the text. “I was kind of shocked to find out that ‘*elohim*’ is plural, so it could be many gods, not one single God.

“Also, I didn't know that the seventh day was about relaxation and rehabilitation.” A recent discussion with Rabbi Shawn led to another “aha” about *Shabbat*: “You can't just relax and go to sleep. You have to keep *Shabbat* in mind throughout the week so you conserve energy for it.”

Sasha's always loved the Mishkanathon, and his *tikkun olam* project mirrors that effort; he'll work with Wissahickon Restoration Volunteers—trail restoration, planting native species—lining up sponsors for each hour he works and donating the funds to a veterans' group or to WRV.

He's an 8th-grader at George Washington Carver High School of Engineering and Science, another perfect fit—not only because of its emphasis on the STEM fields Sasha loves, but because it's across the street from his father's Temple University office. They commute together.

Sasha's clear that his *bar mitzvah* will be an entryway, not a stopping point. “I think it is a kind of rite of passage, like a New Year's resolution that you actually keep. A lot of people don't grow after their *b'nai mitzvah*; they say, ‘Thank God it's over.’ I definitely want to grow.”

## With Gratitude, Mishkan Thanks Our Amazing (\$22,988 Raised!) 2022 AUCTION TEAM

THANKS to Bob Prischak, Julia Weekes, Mark Heller, Sharon Gornstein, Joyce Hanna, Kris Soffa, Cindy Shapiro, Maria Paranzino, Lynn Edelman, Jean Brody, Madeleine Boskovitz, Rabbi Shawn Zevit



## MISHKAN SHALOM'S 2022 ONLINE AUCTION WAS A REVERBERATING SUCCESS!

*Our Not So Silent Auction team would like to thank: Our 55 Bidders for their generous 115 purchases that raised \$22,988 to surpass our \$20,000 goal! And our wonderful donors and sponsors whose incredible offerings made our event the most fun and successful auction ever:*

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Allison Hoffman & Sam  
Krasnow  
Amy Goldman  
Amy Pittel  
Andrea Casher  
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# Library Committee

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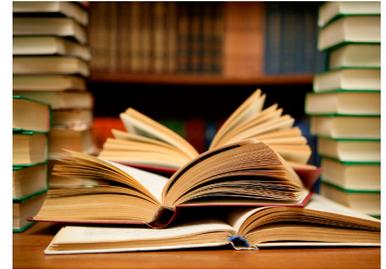
## Note from The Library Committee's New Chairperson, Andrea Nunez

Andrea Nunez, the new chairperson of Mishkan's Library Committee, has high praise for her predecessor, Adam Blistein. "The library has grown in leaps and bounds under his guidance," she said. "Adam has always been dedicated to expanding knowledge and literary discourse at Mishkan."

After much reflection, Adam has decided to step back from his leadership role. Andrea is grateful that he will continue to be an active member of the Committee which is already hard at work selecting a book for this year's One-Book-Mishkan program.

Once the book is selected, the Committee will develop programming to expand our learning and understanding of the book - its topic, time period, author, etc.

Past programs have included movies, lectures, panel discussions, with time for lively discussion and of course, refreshments.



If you would like to help plan this programming, please consider joining the Library Committee which meets on Zoom every other month.

Please feel free to reach out to Andrea Nunez, [evolveart@yahoo.com](mailto:evolveart@yahoo.com), if you are interested in joining or learning more about the Library Committee.

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**Email articles by the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month**

to [levinsone@yahoo.com](mailto:levinsone@yahoo.com)

# G'milut Hasadim/Acts of Caring

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by Stephanie Shell, Ariel Weiss and Susan Schewel

## **Mazel Tov**

We send a hearty *mazel tov* to Justin Carson, Sasha Newman, and their families, as they celebrate *bar mitzvah* ceremonies this month.

## **Condolences**

We send condolences to Rhoda Kavensky on the death of her husband, Mishkan member Ray Kaplan; to Joan Wider on the death of her husband, former Mishkan member Saul Wider; to Mark Soffa on the death of his sister Carol Soffa Baldrige; to Lisa Mervis on the death of her brother, Stephen Eric Weinreb; and to Meryl Crean on the death of her sister, Sharon Burwell. May Ray's, Saul's, Carol's, Stephen's and Sharon's memories be for a blessing, and may Rhoda, Joan, Mark, Lisa, Meryl and their loved ones be comforted among all who mourn.

## **Love and Support**

This month we send our ongoing love, support, and prayers for healing to Mishkan members Stacey Meadows, Wendy Caplin, Peggy Jacobs, Yosaif August, Wendy Erslev, Cindy Perkiss, John Palmer, Deenah Loeb, Robin Berenholz, Robin Leidner, Mindy Dorfman and Natalie Gorvine.

**We also send ongoing love, support, and prayers for healing to all those Mishkan members in need of healing but who seek to remain private.**

We are keeping these individuals in our prayers as well: Debra Singer (sister of Karen Singer), Patrick Windle (brother of Susan Windle), Sal Berenholz (father of Robin Berenholz), Jackie Berman-Gorvine (daughter-in-law of Natalie & Harold Gorvine), Edgar Galson (father of Wendy Galson and father-in-law of Susan Windle), Jack Tarash (father of Rabbi Ariel Tarash) and Julie Post (sister of Nancy Post). May they all experience a *refuah sheleimah* (full healing).

**Please notify us** if you want a name added to, or removed from, our "Ongoing love, support, and prayers of healing..." list.



**A reminder:** Snail mail cards are always welcomed by all those who are healing and mourning. If you think of it, do it!

## **Are you receiving Acts of Caring via email?**

Acts of Caring goes out to all Mishkan members. It is our communication central for sharing life cycle events and community needs for help. If you are not receiving Acts of Caring, please check your spam, or if you have gmail, your solicitations folder (Acts of Caring is distributed by Constant Contact). If you unsubscribe from *Ma Hadash*, intentionally or accidentally, you will also be unsubscribed from Acts of Caring. Please contact the office for clarification.

## **Acts of Caring**

Acts of Caring lets the Mishkan Shalom community learn about significant events in the lives of our members. In this way, we can reach out to one another in times of grief, illness, and joy. To reach us simply email: [actsofcaring@mishkan.org](mailto:actsofcaring@mishkan.org).

## **HINENI--HERE I AM**

If you could use a little help because of illness, or joy (new baby!) or you know of a Mishkan member too shy to ask, please email [actsofcaring@mishkan.org](mailto:actsofcaring@mishkan.org) and we will reach out. *Hineni* offers concrete support to members in need of short-term help, including meals, visits, transportation, etc. If you would like some help, but do not wish a public solicitation, please contact the rabbi, or [actsofcaring@mishkan.org](mailto:actsofcaring@mishkan.org) and we will speak with you privately and seek to arrange help. Our *Hineni* coordinators are Lisa Mervis and Chris Taranta.

**Got Nachas?** Sharing your good news is a marvelous way to connect our community! Please don't be shy - send all lifecycle events you would like to be posted to our email address: [actsofcaring@mishkan.org](mailto:actsofcaring@mishkan.org).