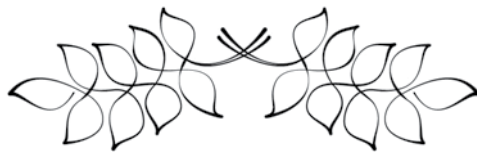


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CONGREGATION
SUKKAT SHALOM
Bulletin

Rabbi's Message

by Rabbi Sam Gordon

Among the most important influences that have shaped Congregation Sukkat Shalom's identity has been our relationship and partnership with First Congregational Church of Wilmette (FCCW). What began as a space-sharing agreement soon became a partnership for learning, social justice and spiritual growth. We have explored Christian and please turn to page 2

ISRAEL

WILMETTE INTERFAITH JOURNEY TO ISRAEL
LED BY PASTOR STEPHANIE PERDEW VANSLYKE
& RABBI SAM GORDON

**WE ARE GOING TO
ISRAEL & THE
PALESTINIAN
TERRITORIES.**

October 20-31, 2018

For more details about the program
and how to register, visit
arzaworld.com or call 888-811-2812

ISRAEL



My Journey by Andrew Schultz



I grew up in a Reform household but with Orthodox vegetarian grandparents on my father's side.

Orthodox Judaism was for me a small storefront *shul* I attended only when my Grandpa Myer visited. The men, dressed in heavy, dark suits with yarmulkes and tallit, and women in somber dresses and kerchiefs, sat separately and the *davening* was entirely in Hebrew. After a long Saturday morning service, herring, cake and schnapps were served in the tiny social hall. It was a Chaim Potok story made real and, while I enjoyed it, I did not feel suited to its strictures.

Instead, my family belonged to the United Hebrew temple in St. Louis, "the oldest congregation west of the Mississippi." I attended from 3rd grade through my bar mitzvah and all the way to confirmation. It was a big, family-oriented, friendly and active congregation. My parents were in the choir and my mother wrote and performed with my father and other congregants and clergy in a series of very successful fund-raising musical revues that freely pilfered the stories and melodies of popular Broadway shows, substituting in-jokes and local context for the existing lyrics.

My wife converted to Judaism more than

38 years ago and we raised our children in a Jewish home, even as we were part of

"This is the part I like best -- being a problem-solver for congregants and making sure everyone feels a valued member of a vital and welcoming community."

a diverse family that included members of different races and religious backgrounds. My father-in-law is a retired Methodist minister and, through much of my marriage, I believe I attended

more Sunday morning church services than temple worship.

Part of this was due to barriers we confronted after we joined a small Reform synagogue while our children were in grade school. The rabbi was a traditionalist in practice. He struggled with outreach to interfaith couples, refusing to participate in marriages between them. He ultimately drove us away from the congregation by not permitting a dear friend of ours to hold the Torah on the *bimah* during her son's bar mitzvah because she was not Jewish.

We moved to a new city and wandered in the desert of non-affiliation for many years. I looked into joining different congregations, but the fixed-dues structures simply didn't fit with what we could afford at the time. And I had a bad taste lingering from our previous experience.

Then circumstance drew me to Sukkat Shalom. I was in the midst of a career

please turn to page 2

Journey, cont'd

change into non-profit work when I came across JewishJobs.com and the posting for executive director. What immediately attracted me to the position and the congregation was the language on the website: "Sukkat Shalom is a transformational congregation celebrating diversity. Welcoming the intermarried, the unaffiliated, and those searching for a meaningful Jewish life."

I couldn't have expressed better what had been missing from prior congregational experience. Here was a place whose members not only shared much common experience as interfaith families, but a clergy that celebrated and supported this difference.

A thorough process of vetting and interviewing followed, and then I started the job this past June under the careful tutelage of the retiring incumbent, the famous Judy Buckman. I had to learn, and learn fast. Yes, I have considerable business, marketing, operations, finance and management skills and experience. But helping to run a temple is a different animal, indeed.

The level of detail an executive director has to command is vast—remembering names and family details, tracking b'nai mitzvah schedules and High Holy Days reservations, confirming pledges and finances, serving board member and committee needs, overseeing events like Shabbat dinners, beach barbeques and *Onegs*, and seeing that an array of vendors are keeping the physical plant of the temple in beautiful operation. And then there is the long-term planning and collaboration with Rabbi Gordon, the staff and board on the future of the congregation.

What I have also learned is that the job is not really about these elements, important as they are, but about providing outstanding member service and experience. This is the part I like best -- being a problem-solver for congregants and making sure everyone feels a valued member of a vital and welcoming community. It's a pleasant task because I'm a member of this community, too. I try to offer the level of attention, resolution and personal contact that I would want for myself.

Rabbi Hillel once said that the essence of the Torah is to treat others as you would want to be treated. I think the good rabbi was onto something!

"Here was a place whose members not only shared much common experience as interfaith families, but a clergy that celebrated and supported this difference."

Rabbi's Message, cont'd

Jewish faiths and teachings while building lasting friendships and meaningful relationships. We have celebrated and mourned and supported each other as one community.

Once more, we will learn together by jointly hosting one of America's greatest biblical scholars, Amy-Jill Levine, of Vanderbilt University. On Sunday, November 12th, at Sukkat Shalom, Professor Levine will share her incredible scholarship on "David and Bathsheba: Sex, Lies, and Politics." She is an extraordinarily engaging and inspiring teacher. Please plan to join us on the 12th.

In addition, Reverend Stephanie VanSlyke and I will offer two classes in anticipation of Professor Levine's lecture. On Wednesday nights, October 18th and 25th, at 7 p.m., we will gather to study the fascinating figures of David and Bathsheba. Those sessions will be held at FCCW.

I am also very excited to announce our plans for a joint Sukkat Shalom-First Congregational Church trip to Israel and the Palestinian Territories, from October 21st to November 2nd, 2018. Reverend VanSlyke and I will lead this unique interfaith mission that will explore history, politics, conflict, hope and tradition.

We will travel to Jerusalem, the Galilee, Bethlehem, Ramallah and Tel Aviv. We will see the Promised Land through Christian, Muslim and Jewish eyes.

The trip is a year away, but planning begins now. I encourage you to consider participating in this remarkable opportunity to travel and learn together.



Opportunities Abound at Hineinu (We Are Here) Committee

The Hineinu Committee exists to help congregants in time of need and to celebrate and support the families in our community. This past summer, we delivered Shabbat Bags to family members who lost a loved one.

We also delivered Rosh Hashanah "Honey Bags" to congregants who lost a loved one in the past year and to all of our new members. We would like to thank our volunteer drivers who made these deliveries.

We continue to have a Baking Registry with several bakers who make sweets for Shabbat and Honey Bags. Please let us know if you would like to be added to this registry by contacting Becky Fliegel at Becky.Fliegel@yahoo.com or Lynn Greenbaum at Imgreenie5@gmail.com.

The Hineinu Committee is here for congregants who are ill or have had recent surgery. If you or a family member needs assistance with meals, getting to appointments or medical situations, we are eager to help.

Sukkat Shalom's Welcoming Committee is closely linked to Hineinu. Please contact the temple office if you would like to participate in outreach to new families.

KENILWORTH UNION CHURCH



September 20, 2017

Congregation Sukkat Shalom
1001 Central Ave
Wilmette, IL 60091

William A. Evertsberg
Senior Minister

Jo Forrest
Associate Minister

Katie Snipes Lancaster
Associate Minister

Gilbert Bowen
Minister Emeritus

Lisa Bond
Director of Music

Anne Faurot
Director of Children's Ministry

Beverly Lang
Director of Business Operations

Silvi Pirn
Director of Youth

Dear Congregation Sukkat Shalom,

When we embarked upon a major renovation at Kenilworth Union Church, the opinions of what to do for our Sunday morning worship ranged from "just cancel it" to "meet at the beach" or "squeeze into the small chapel." Our inquiries to a variety of worship spaces or venues were quickly declined. Some of us were very anxious.

The generous welcome you gave us was truly a breath of fresh air. You restored our confidence in the expansiveness of God's love between faith traditions. Your invitation also allowed us to step into a new adventure – and we LOVED it.

From the first service to the last, the spirit in your house of worship sparked a renewed sense of our community within our church and with other faith communities. Our attendance at your home was higher than in prior summers. The Sunday morning Sam Gordon preached recorded the highest attendance for that weekend in August in the church history. His message resonated with so many and remains a highlight of the summer experience.

We are all deeply grateful for your gifts this summer and welcome an ongoing relationship in our common bonds of faith.

In faith,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jo Forrest". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

The Reverend Dr. Jo Forrest

211 Kenilworth Avenue, Kenilworth, Illinois 60043
847-251-4272 | kuc.org

Thanksgiving is Time to “Share the Harvest”

With Thanksgiving around the corner, it's time to Share The Harvest again with local families in need. Members of Sukkat Shalom can “adopt” and shop for a family. Or purchase a gift card for them in any denomination.

Collection will be held at Family School on Sunday, November 19th. For more information, please visit our sign-up table at Family School on Sunday, November 5th, or email Stephanie at gotogalsteph@gmail.com.

With your help, we can make more local families truly thankful this holiday season!



Campers Wanted for Fun and Learning

This past summer I had the privilege of serving as faculty at the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) Olin Sang Ruby Union Institute Camp (OSRUI). The URJ runs 16 summer camps in different states around the U.S, where children experience a Jewish living and learning environment while experiencing the fun of summer camp. Each unit or eidah has two faculty members (rabbis, cantors and educators) attached to it for at least a two-week period.

I worked with Geshar -- campers entering 7th – 9th grade. The faculty creates learning programs based on each unit's theme for the summer, teach short Hebrew sessions, and help organize and lead daily t'filot (prayer services) and Shabbat services. We also can go with our unit to their various activities like horseback riding, water skiing, cooking, sports, music and swimming. OSRUI campers are always having fun, and it was wonderful to experience camp with them.

Sukkat Shalom has sent many campers to OSRUI, and we look forward to continuing to grow that relationship. OSRUI is a wonderful opportunity for your child to experience the joy of Jewish summer camp in a supportive, welcoming and inspiring environment. In addition, OSRUI has special programs and units for specific areas of interest like the arts, Hebrew immersion, Kibbutz life, and outdoor challenge.

Registration for Summer 2018 is now open! You can check out the Summer 2018 programs at <https://osrui.org/summer/>. Please contact me at cdaniels@sukkatshalom.org if you have questions or want more information. I'd love to connect you and your child with this special place!



OSRUI campers and faculty (from left to right) Emma Fliegel, Rabbi Carlie Daniels, Lainie Fliegel and Anna Caffarelli

Stocking the Shelves for Refugee Families

by Rabbi Carlie Daniels

Last year around this time we began researching the possibility for Sukkat Shalom to cosponsor a refugee family through the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) resettlement program. Due to recent changes in the laws regarding refugee resettlement in the U.S., we were unable to cosponsor a family this year. However, we decided to partner with our wonderful neighbors at First Presbyterian Church of Wilmette (FPCW) on a number of important initiatives to help the local refugee community.

One such initiative is Stock the Shelves, a program to provide local refugee families with household essentials. Stock the Shelves works to connect the abundance of the North Shore with refugee families living in the Rogers Park area. The Stock the Shelves initiative is made possible by generous donations from our congregations and local schools. Once a month, volunteers help to count and sort donations for distribution. On the fourth Wednesday of each month, volunteers load a truck filled with supplies to distribute to more than 100 refugee families at Warren Park in the Rogers Park neighborhood.

Our faith tradition calls on us to do this work. Rabbi Jonathan Sacks teaches that the concept of "loving your neighbor" is less of a challenge than "loving the stranger." He writes: "What is hard is to love the stranger, one whose color, culture or creed is different from yours. That is why the command, 'Love the stranger because you were once strangers,' resonates so often throughout the Bible. It is summoning us now."

Stock the Shelves is an ongoing project, and your help is welcome. Here are ways in which you can support this project and the refugee families in our area:

Donate Resources: You may order needed items through the Stock the Shelves online registry. (There's a link at our congregational website.) You may also make a monetary donation to Sukkat Shalom and indicate that you would like it to go to Stock the Shelves. Or, if you prefer, you may purchase items and drop them off at the synagogue (M-F, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.). The following items are needed: laundry soap, dish soap, hand soap, body soap, shampoo, lotion, deodorant, razors, shaving cream, toilet paper, feminine hygiene pads, toothpaste, toothbrushes (individually wrapped), formula, diapers and household cleaner.

Donate Time: We need volunteers to help sort donations, drive the truck, and/or be a host on distribution days. A link to volunteer for sorting and/or distribution is available at our website.

I hope that you will join in supporting this ongoing effort to "love the strangers" in our midst.

Musical Notes: Learning About The Jewish Role in American Music

by Kenny Lyons, Cantorial Soloist

When I was around 12 years old, I discovered the Beastie Boys. I was quite taken. Hip-Hop already had become a staple of my musical diet, so I was delighted to discover that this wildly successful, multi-platinum group was comprised of three Jewish kids from New York.

I had long been aware that Jews permeated the Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame, including icons like Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, Gene Simmons and Lou Reed. To learn of the Jewishness of the Beastie Boys, and to watch the success of other Jewish Hip-Hop artists like Matisyahu, was a wonderful thing!

As I grew older and more serious about studying music, I was inevitably taken by jazz. Here, too, I discovered a Jewish contingent! Stan Getz, Benny Goodman, John Zorn, George and Ira Gershwin, Irving Berlin—some of the biggest names in the jazz world were Jewish.

It could be argued that the three musical genres mentioned above—Jazz, Rock 'n Roll, and Hip-Hop—are the three most important in American popular music of the 20th Century. I make this claim because of their tendency to produce music that deals in social commentary and inspires social change. Worth noting is that all three of these genres are decidedly African-American in their origins.

“How, then, did Jews come to entwine themselves so fully in African-American music?”

welcomed or seen as problematic?

To explore these and other questions, I will

How, then, did Jews come to entwine themselves so fully in African-American music? Were we co-innovators or simply along for the ride? As Jews became progressively more “white” in the view of other Americans, was our involvement in African-American protest music offer an adult education course on the intersectionality of American music across races, religions and culture. I hope you will join me at Sukkat Shalom for these sessions at 7 p.m. on November 9th, 16th, and 30th. I look forward to our learning -- and listening to great music -- together!

Greetings From the New President of Sukkat Shalom

by Betsy Katten

LShanah Tova. This past year I was honored to join Congregation Sukkat Shalom's board of directors, and to be named president of the board.

Since my family joined Sukkat Shalom more than 12 years ago, we have participated in Family and Hebrew School, celebrated a bar and bat mitzvah, attended holiday and Shabbat services, received cards of encouragement from the Hineinu Committee, and enjoyed a wide variety of stimulating programs and events. In addition, both of my children, Maya and Ethan Wernikoff, served as madrichim (helpers) in Family School and Ethan is currently a madrich for the Hebrew-Bet class.

“I believe it is the responsibility of each congregant to take part in maintaining and ensuring the development of our unique spiritual community.”

Both my husband, Steve, and I were raised in Jewish homes and were active in Jewish youth groups and activities. When our kids were old enough for “Sunday School” we began looking for a spiritual home for our family. When we met Rabbi Gordon and Judy Buckman and learned about the philosophy behind Sukkat Shalom, we knew we had found our home.

We like the diverse, inclusive, generous and welcoming community that Sukkat Shalom offers. When asked to join the board, I agreed because I believe it is the responsibility of each congregant to take part in maintaining and ensuring the development of our unique spiritual community.

I encourage you to consider what role you might play in supporting the congregation. I know you will feel rewarded through your involvement, and Sukkat Shalom will greatly benefit from your participation.

Please feel free to reach out to me with questions or suggestions at any time. I look forward to getting to know you.

May the New Year be one of good health, happiness and peace for all.



CONGREGATION SUKKAT SHALOM

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