

Staff and Committee Updates

FY 22-23

Religious School Annual Report

Updates

- New curriculum from the ISJL Institute of Southern Jewish Learning. Professionally crafted and maintained.
- New online Hebrew curriculum for classrooms and practice at home.
- New 7th grade Gesher gap project to energize their experience and empower the students using informal education format and principles.
- New grade level workshops with Rabbi Teller for students and their parents.

Enrollment and Attendance

We have been monitoring the growth of the religious school as we came out of the pandemic. Though recovery has been slow, the numbers show a positive trend which we expect to sustain this year.

Enrollment numbers:

2021-2022: 109

2022-2023: 114

2023-2024- 50 students enrolled at this point (June 9)

Ed Council - Diego Donzis - Chair

- Developed council charter
- Hosted 4 Council meetings throughout the year to provide feedback, help guide efforts, and align the religious school with its vision and mission.
- In process of recruiting new chair

Leadership and Staff

- Retained all teachers from last year - shifted roles and grades to maximize strengths.
- Training teachers through the new ISJL program
- Erin and 2 teachers will be attending the ISJL conference over the summer.

Program Highlights

- Holiday Programming: Sukkot, Hanukkah, Tu B'Shvat at the Nature Center, Purim, Passover
- The last day of school Israel program
- 7th grade attended the Holocaust Museum program hosted by the Jewish Federation
- 3rd-7th grade attended the Book Fair program at Beth Israel and got to have a meet and greet with the guest author all the way from England.
- Ruach singers were created! This group met several Sundays after Religious School for pizza and practice. We hope to expand this group and add more young Torah readers to the mix.

- The ADL came to do a program with the 7th graders, and it was such a success we plan to ask them back for the upcoming school year.

Kehillah High

Brith Shalom has 41 students attending Kehillah. Four students are joining the KH Israel trip. KH will be housed at the Jewish federation and Danielle Alexander will be a federation employee.

Special Thanks

- Religious School staff for guiding our students through their Jewish journey.
- The Ed Council for all their support and ruach throughout the school year.
- Rabbi Teller for his leadership, passion, and the wisdom behind our Jewish education.
- Cantor Levine for his mentorship, behind the scenes support, and paving the way for success.
- Diego Donzis for always providing exceptional support and guidance as Ed Council chair.

Respectfully submitted by Erin Lepselter

Building Update

During this fiscal year, we have done a significant amount of work on the building. We have also been awarded a Homeland Security Grant of \$150,000. While we have made some improvements, there is more to do.

Major items completed:

1. Facelift of the lobby including new ceiling tiles and high efficiency lights
2. Pressure washed entire building and added landscaping enhancements
3. Conversion of gift shop to a meeting space
4. Parking lot restriped with enhanced safety features
5. Multiple classroom leaks repaired
6. Roof repaired in multiple locations including gutter repairs and cleanouts
7. School wing east entry awning repaired
8. Professional building assessment
9. Mold survey with no significant issues
10. Structural survey with no significant issues
11. Restrooms in school wing renovated
12. Many more

Major Items to be completed budget permitting

- Replace sanctuary furnace
- Replace kitchen flooring
- Replace old and critical AC for the MPR and the largest classroom
- Repair/replace modular walls
- Replace ceiling tiles in remainder of building
- Wallpaper/paint throughout the building
- Update yearly maintenance plan and budget based on the building assessment
- AC repair/replacements for aging units

Items covered by the Homeland Security Grant

- New timer for building lights
- Wireless communication system
- Visitor Management System
- Bollards and planters at synagogue entrance and around playground
- Security film and impact glass on doors and windows
- Additional lighting around interior and exterior of building

Submitted by Melissa Magenheim

Membership Committee Report: 2022-2023

Co-Chairs: Erin Wright and Julie Pomerantz

The CBS Membership Committee relaunched in November of 2022. We formed a strong working committee made up of 10 members of varying ages. The committee has met 3 times this year, with plans to meet quarterly moving forward. The meetings have been hybrid in nature, with some members attending in person at CBS and some joining via zoom.

Rabbi Teller and Melissa Magenheim assisted in re-writing the charter for this committee, and it was approved and edited by the committee during our first meeting. Our main focus over the last 6 months have included: creating a strong working committee, improving the outreach and connection process to new members when they join, setting up a New Members Event, and consistently having committee members present at services and synagogue events to answer questions and reach out in person to potential new members.

New Member Outreach Process:

When a new member joins CBS, an assigned committee member along with the committee chairs reach out within 2 weeks. The goal is to help integrate the new members in any way that is needed, and to help them feel welcome in the CBS community.

New Member Event:

On Sunday April 23rd, 2023 the membership committee hosted a very successful new member event! We included members who have joined at any time in the past 3 years, or since COVID. This way we were able to integrate any members who joined since COVID began but have not been able to develop a strong connection within or to CBS. We had about 20 members attend this event, and it was enjoyed by all. We ate a lovely breakfast, Rabbi Teller introduced himself, and everyone socialized. We plan to have more events like this in the future, on varying days and times.

Committee Member Synagogue Presence:

The committee chairs created a sign-up sheet on google docs and requested that each committee member sign up to attend at least one Friday night service and one Saturday morning service. We specifically ensured we had committee members attending Friday and Saturday Ruach. This process worked well and efficiently. We recently ordered buttons for the committee members attending services to wear that read "Brith Shalom: Ask me about membership!". These will serve as an effective ice breaker for committee members to speak to potential new members. In addition, each committee member has a name tag embossed with their name and Membership Committee.

We are excited to move forward with this wonderful committee!

CBS Women

CBS Women had an exciting year filled with a variety of programs.

We were honored to support Friday Night Ruach Dinners, kiddush luncheons, and our youth with B'nei Mitzvah gifts and camp scholarships. We assembled and delivered Purim Mishloach Manot gift bags.

Our social action efforts included collecting food and clothing items for local charities and an in-person Christmas Day Bingo party for the Veterans at Midtown Terrace Veterans Home. We joined in The Friendship Circle Walk and supported the ERJCC in its Book Fair and Film Festival.

We baked desserts for kiddush luncheons and for our annual congregational meeting and learned to make bourekas.

We learned and were creative. We held a High Holy Days themed Pilates class and a women's finance seminar. We designed a Shavuot study program followed by a hands-on holiday papercutting workshop. We visited the Holocaust Museum to view the works of our cherished former Rebetzin Alice Lok Cahana. We played billiards.

We supported The Torah Fund initiative of the Women's League for Conservative Judaism to financially support educational opportunities for our future clergy, educators and leaders in the Jewish community. We honored our own for Laurie Silverblatt for her long-term commitment to CBS Women, our shul, and our community.

We won an international award for our programs!

Join us!

Lyn Rosenberg-Johnson
CBS Women President

Men's Club – Committee Report 2022-2023

The CBS Men's Club is an integral part of our Brith Shalom community and affords congregants the opportunity to socialize and help the Shul.

Here are the highlights of the past year:

We held our Men's Club Shabbat Weekend in April. Shabbat morning services honoring the Men's Club was a warm and welcoming Shabbat.

Aaron Howard delivered the D'var Torah.

A special thanks to Steve Conaway for helping to organize our Shabbat weekend.

Our Man of the Year award recipient was Steve Conaway.

We have strived to maintain our breakfast and dinner meetings.

Glenn Lowenstein has worked hard to keep a monthly Men's Night Out active.

Thanks to the hard work by Men's Club member Eric Lipman, we are holding our blood drives regularly again.

We are an active participant in the Houston Kosher Chili Cook Off.

We volunteer and BBQ for Shul events as requested.

Since its formation, the Men's Club has had a mission of giving back to the congregation. In keeping with this tradition, we have funded the purchase of a new video camera for the sanctuary, High Holiday prayer books, Morning Minyan prayer books as well as providing funds for camp scholarships. We also help with general maintenance as requested by the Shul.

Wayne Lidsky