



June 2023  
Vol. 45, Issue 8

# Hakol • הקול

## Our Responsibilities to Asylum Seekers

By Rabbi Benjamin Barnett

On May 11, the federal law known as Title 42 ended. As many of you know, this measure, established in 2020 under the pretext of public health, blocked people seeking asylum at the U.S.–Mexico border. On one hand, the end of Title 42 is good news, as people can apply for asylum as they did before. However, that process was already incredibly complicated and restrictive. In addition, a new set of restrictions was advanced by some federal lawmakers and President Biden in recent months, in preparation for the end of Title 42.

HIAS, a Jewish organization to follow and support on issues of immigration, shares a very helpful breakdown of the [key takeaways](#) of Title 42's ending. As I write this, there is a lot of uncertainty regarding what will happen. One way or another though, the situation for those arriving at our border seeking safety will certainly remain precarious and will likely get worse. While the Biden administration has attempted to distinguish their current restrictions from the previous administration's policies, they have the same effect: denying asylum seekers the protection they need and leaving them vulnerable to the very worst consequences.

Like many of us, my family history involves fleeing persecution and hardship to find refuge in the U.S. Were it not for that opportunity provided to my great-grandparents, I would not be here today. In light of this history, one shared by many



Havurah Shabbat School students play a game called gaga.

Americans, it feels particularly callous to deny so many people the freedom they seek from violence, oppression, and insecurity.

I recently had the joy of spending time, along with our devoted Afghan Family Support Group, with the Darmani family. Hopefully you have read in past Hakol issues about Zakrullah, Horia, and their baby Zoya, the family whom our amazing group of volunteers is accompanying as they settle into their lives here after fleeing Afghanistan. I felt so grateful to be with them, learning more about their lives and simply being in their warm and engaging presence—and so grateful on their behalf that they are able to live with the freedom, security, and opportunities they have right now. For so many other Afghan people, that is not the reality. Zakrullah and Horia are profoundly concerned about their family and friends who

remain in horrendous conditions, and for most of whom there is likely no path to asylum here, as is true for so many others in Afghanistan and around the world.

The response, “Well, we can’t open our borders to everyone,” seems like a reasonable statement. But why begin from that place? What if we asked instead: “How much can we do?” At the heart of our immigration crisis is the denial that migration is a human right. Instead of fulfilling our responsibilities to those seeking safe haven, we are criminalizing their arrival. What if we, instead, began from our responsibilities to one another? What would our immigration policies look like then?

May we each take action as we are able — through organizations like [HIAS](#) and [T’ruah](#) and others—to help build a world based on that reality.

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## Havurah Simchas

**Have a happy**  
**announcement?**

Email it to  
info@havurahshalom.org

# Hakol • הקול

**The Voice of Havurah Shalom**  
**Portland's Jewish Reconstructionist Community**

825 NW 18th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97209-2333  
503.248.4662  
havurahshalom.org

**Hakol Contribution Deadline**  
June 16

**Havurah Website Calendar**

**Weekly Email**  
**Contribution Deadline**  
Tuesdays by Noon

**Misheberach List Form**

**Havurah Shalom:** Our mission is to provide a vibrant, diverse, participatory Jewish community steeped in spirituality, learning, and acts of social responsibility.

## Condolences

**Ellen Flamm**, mother-in-law of Robin Flamm, grandmother of Olivia and Jonah, died on May 7.

**Jacqueline (Jackie) Becker**, aunt of Bob Brown and great-aunt of Micah and Lela Brown, died on May 13.

**Janis Hollombe**, sister of Robin Flamm, aunt of Olivia and Jonah, died on May 20.

## B'nei Mitzvah

Havurah will call to the Torah the following B'nei Mitzvah:

June 10

**Shoshana Eisner**  
Child of Cheryl Schultz  
and Leo Eisner

June 24

**Hugo Emile Ungar-Gutierrez**  
Child of Cara Ungar  
and Rafa Gutierrez

Please join us in celebration.

## Tributes

### General Contributions

Barbara and Jack Schwartz, in memory of Lizzy Zackheim.

### Educator's Discretionary Fund and Educator Professional Development Fund

Dale Oller, in memory of Larry Mudrick.

### Adult Education Fund

Sarah Wetherson and Mark Kreider, in memory of Rochelle "Shelli" Wetherson.

Marni Glick and Hank Kaplan, in memory of Sonia Kaplan.

### Building Fund

Rachel Shimshak and David Barenberg, in honor of your graduation from the University of Oregon Executive MBA program!

Samuel Asarnow, in honor of Herman Asarnow.

### Rabbi Discretionary Fund

Dr. Simon Kipersztok, in memory of his grandmother.  
Anita Haeems, in memory of Edward Haeems.



# Looking Back—and Forward

By Ben Walters

My term on Steering as part of the Presidents' Team will end on June 30. As a simple matter of math, four years have passed, as I began my term on July 1, 2019. But it comes as no surprise that, as a matter of time and history, four years ago seems very remote.

We've been traveling through tumultuous times: catastrophic fires in Oregon and throughout the Pacific Northwest; ice storms; heat domes; a pandemic shut-down with momentous economic consequences; an assault on our nation's capitol, with continuing political turmoil; global conflicts; climate change; a national, ongoing struggle to address our history of racial injustice—the list seems endless.

And yet with all of these challenges, Havurah has achieved significant accomplishments during the past four years. When faced with lockdowns, Havurah pivoted to gathering virtually as a community. We held our first virtual Congregational Meetings and gathered virtually for the High Holidays. As public health measures advanced, we strove to balance the community values of protecting individual health (*pikuach nefesh*), inclusivity (*patuach l'kol*), respect (*kavod*), lovingkindness (*chesed*), and participation (*shituף*). In spite of the

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### Steering Committee

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challenges of the building closure, Havurah membership grew significantly. We undertook and completed a long-range planning effort to guide Havurah in the coming years (with much of this work already underway). We renewed the Rabbi and Education Director's contracts. We modified the Havurah Employee Handbook to provide more equitable benefits. We began the long and hard work of addressing our own implicit biases. New committees were created to address a wide range of interests and issues. We've begun an effort to raise funds to address our significant space and staffing needs.

I contributed in small ways to some of these efforts. Largely, these and other outcomes have been achieved by the contributions of many. It has been my distinct honor and privilege to have worked with wonderful people on the Presidents' Team, as well as on Steering. In the many and various ways in which they are each caring, sensitive, and committed, they are truly representative of Havurah. I am lucky to have had the chance to get to know them better. And through

each of these four years, I have had cause to wonder over and over again how lucky Havurah is to have our staff. They've demonstrated extraordinary capacity for caring, carrying, and teaching.

During my first six months on Steering, I was also preparing to participate in a Havurah Adult B'nei Mitzvah service. The Torah portion we read was from Parshah Bo. My drash centered on the *erev rav*, the mixed multitude encompassing a diverse, multicultural group. I've read that in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, Polish Kabbalist Rabbi Nathan Nota Spira suggested that each of those gathered at Sinai represented one letter in the Torah. Just as a Torah scroll is considered invalid if just one letter is missing, our community is not complete if even one person is missing. Rabbi Leah R. Berkowitz more recently wrote that a community "need[s] people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, races, backgrounds, and abilities. We need people who provide instruction, leadership, and guidance, but we also need the wanderers, rebels, and *kvetchers* who express our fear, doubt, anxiety, and impatience."

My hope is that every member of Havurah is inspired to share in community as a *shotef*, a partner. That is how Havurah will continue to grow and succeed.

*Todah rabah*; thank you for the opportunity to serve.

# HADRACHA

## Havurahnik Sacha Reich to be Honored at Song of Miriam Brunch

By David Kertzner

As you might have seen in Hineinu a few weeks ago, Havurahnik Sacha Reich and other outstanding Oregon Jewish women volunteers will be honored on June 4 at the 2023 Song of Miriam Brunch, sponsored by Jewish Women's Round Table. Sacha was selected by the Steering Committee as the Havurah honoree for this year from an amazing list of Havurah women whose names were submitted to Steering by leaders in our community.

For those of you who do not know Sacha, she simply embodies the participatory and generous spirit of our Havurah Shalom community, a community which she grew up in and has been a member of since 2003. Sacha has served on the Steering Committee as the head of the Spiritual Life Cluster and is currently chairing High Holiday Planning for the sev-

enth consecutive year, a role in which she is guiding our community through the challenges of celebration in a post-pandemic world. Her organizational acumen—combined with a warm and dynamic spirit, familiar to all who meet her—draw other volunteers into the work of generating creative solutions to the challenges of practicing Judaism today. Sacha is also increasingly active in making music and creating musical opportunities at Havurah, including April's Havurah MusicMakers Collective Gathering & Jam, which everyone agrees hit all the right notes!

In an earlier life, Sacha founded and ran the Jewish Theatre Collaborative, developing original works of theatre and rich collaborations with agencies across the city. She also worked as an educator at Portland Jewish Academy



and as cultural staff at Cedar Sinai Park.

We can't note all that she has accomplished without acknowledging the two fabulously artistic children, Lev and Ravit, whom she has raised with her husband, also a longtime Havurahnik, Aaron Pearlman.

We are honored by Sacha's presence in our community.

### Sign Up for the Oregon Community Solar Program

#### *Havurah Climate Action Team*

Havurah Shalom is about to sign up for the Oregon Community Solar program. Anyone with Portland General Electric (PGE) or Pacific Power as their electricity supplier can also sign up for the Oregon Community Solar program. If you live in an apartment or a home that is shaded, signing up for the Oregon Community Solar program al-

lows you to use solar power by way of the solar arrays (collections of multiple solar panels that generate electricity together) that are being built around the Portland metro area. Signing up will also save you money on your utility bill and take a step toward dealing with climate change.

Are you interested in signing up for Oregon Community Solar? Go to [oregonshines.com](https://oregonshines.com). Mention **Steve Katz** when you sign up for the program and Havurah Shalom will get a \$25 donation! If you need help with any of this, [email Steve Katz](mailto:steve@hshalom.org).



# Juneteenth:

## *Liberation and a Prelude*

By Bob Brown, Tikkun Olam Lead

When Juneteenth became a national holiday on June 17, 2021, the meaning of Juneteenth was something I still needed to learn about. The simple narrative about Juneteenth is that of enslaved African Americans who didn't hear news of their liberation until Union General Gordon Granger issued General Order No. 3 in Galveston, Texas on June 19, 1865, more than two months after Confederate General Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House. But there is much more to the real story of Juneteenth, which has been—as is so often the case with Black history—suppressed by the dominant white culture.

General Granger sailed into Galveston in June of 1865 with 1,500 Union troops. At the time, Galveston was the largest city in Texas, with a vibrant port managed by Black workers who transported goods and gossip from around the world. The notion that the people in Galveston did not know about the Emancipation Proclamation—issued more than two years before Granger's arrival—is quite ludicrous. At the time that Granger arrived, Black Texans had not yet been liberated from enslavement; Texas had remained under Confederate control.

Granger was tasked with bringing Texas into the unified United States. He announced publicly in his General Order No. 3 that: “All slaves were free.” Not quite! Granger's announcement itself undermined the freedom that it promised. In a foreshadowing of Jim Crow, the announcement continued the control of the newly freed Black community. “The freedmen are advised to remain quietly at their present homes and work for wages,” read Granger's order. But how could Black Texans enjoy freedom while remaining on plantations? Furthermore, Granger warned that the Black population would not be

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### *Racial Justice Committee*

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*The Racial Justice Committee has been hosting events to memorialize Juneteenth. Our next event is a discussion of the film *Judas and the Black Messiah* on June 4 at 6:30 pm. [RSVP](#)*

directly protected by the military for fear that his resources would not be able to provide the support needed for these newly arrived refugees. The troops were to enforce liberation from enslavement, but they would not support people trying to carve out a new life.

The newly liberated Black Texans had to navigate an environment that was often more dangerous than what they had left. Racial violence spread in Texas. The backlash of white residents against the idea of Black citizenship became a normal feature of Texas's political landscape, as it continues to be today. The limitations baked into Granger's emancipation announcement continued the racial discrimination that was

embedded into public policy.

The story of Juneteenth is both the joyous story of liberation and an example of how the idea of freedom was subverted by the dominant (albeit sometimes well-meaning) culture. I ask myself, then, why do we celebrate Juneteenth? The answer for me is that it is a holiday that memorializes the liberation of a people. The history is interesting and says a lot about good intentions not being enough. As Frederick Douglass said about Independence Day, “This Fourth of July is yours, not mine, you may rejoice, I must mourn.” We need a national memorial for the liberation of all those who were enslaved. We must also remember that the work to achieve true freedom is not yet complete.

#### Resources:

- IMDb.com. (2022, June 6). [Juneteenth: Faith & Freedom](#). IMDb.
- Joseph, P. (2023, May 18). [The story we've been told about Juneteenth is wrong](#). Texas Monthly.

# Welcoming the Stranger

By Miriam Reshotko and Lee Gordon

When we became empty nesters in 2021, sending our youngest child off to college, we weren't concerned about being lonely. However, we did feel that with a large home with many unoccupied bedrooms, this could be an opportunity to help those in need. We specifically hoped to help someone for whom a few months of free housing could give them what they needed to get their life in order. We found a lovely African American woman who became part of our household for six months until she had enough stable income to rent an apartment.

Fast forward to 2022 and the war in Ukraine, we felt a longing to help people escape a totally unjustified war. Perhaps because our families both fled Eastern Europe to escape violence and oppressive living conditions, we felt a particular connection with these people. Upon hearing that the U.S. had a program for citizens to sponsor Ukrainians to give them a fast path to shelter here, we signed up on various websites that allowed people in need of sponsors to contact us.

The requests were numerous and constant, and many were heart-wrenching. We screened the many inquiries and contacted a young couple we hoped to sponsor. We set up a Zoom call to "meet" them. We were thrilled when the application was approved and, shortly after, they received travel approval. We contacted many friends at Havurah, too, and asked them to join our "welcome circle." Eventually this group of people (about 12 to 15 in all) became the "Ukrainian Subgroup" of the Havurah Sanctuary Committee, joining other subgroups supporting Guatemalan and Afghan families.

The requests for help continued to pour in. Many of the requesters did not want housing or financial assistance – all they wanted was sponsorship so that they could legally enter the U.S. All in all, we have sponsored six Ukrainian couples and have additionally encouraged others in our group to sponsor as well. As of today, members of our group have sponsored 28 people. While not all of them have arrived in the U.S. (some decided to stay in Canada or needed to stay in Ukraine), we are currently housing a lovely young couple who have quickly become part of our extended family. They are studying English at Portland Community



Yuliia and Vitalii, two Ukrainian refugees sponsored by Miriam and Lee (right), celebrate Yuliia's birthday at Kachka.

To learn more about sponsoring a refugee, check out:

[ICanHelp.Host](https://www.icanhelp.host)  
and  
[U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services](https://www.uscis.gov)

Feel free to email [Lee Gordon](mailto:lee.gordon@havurahshalom.org) with questions about getting started.

College and have received work permits, found jobs, and purchased a car. They are diligently striving to become part of the local community. Some of the others sponsored by members of our group have decided to move on to other parts of the country where they have friends.

A few are housed locally with their sponsors or in rentals with subsidies from the Jewish Federation of Portland. As one of the members of our team, Ted Scheinman, who is currently housing the couple he sponsored in an apartment attached to his house, exclaimed, "It feels so good," and, "Wow, it has been fun," when describing all he has done and accomplished with "his" Ukrainian refugees in their first three weeks in town.

We highly recommend anyone consider checking out the opportunities to sponsor!

## Progress on Forming Palestine Justice Committee

Twenty-eight Havurah Shalom members met in the Sanctuary on May 21 and agreed to move forward with the procedures to form a Havurah Committee for Palestinian Justice. Sally Goldman, David Lewis, and David Newman volunteered to serve as co-chairs and were approved by the attendees. A draft charter and mission statement were discussed. A sub-committee will be revising these documents in preparation for submitting them to the Havurah Shalom Steering Committee for approval.

Those assembled also unanimously agreed to ask the Steering Committee to have the congregation sign on as a community supporter of Rep. Betty McCollum's "Defending the Human Rights of Palestinian Children and Families Living Under Israeli Military Occupation Act" (H.R. 3103), proposed legislation which, as detailed on [Rep. Betty McCollum's website](#), "prohibits U.S. taxpayer funding to the Government of

### ***Palestine Justice Workgroup***

Israel from being used for 1) the military detention, abuse, or ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention; 2) supporting the seizure and destruction of Palestinian property and homes in violation of international humanitarian law; and, 3) any support or assistance for Israel's unilateral annexation of Palestinian territory in violation of international humanitarian law."

The current Jewish community supporters of the bill are the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association, J Street, Jewish Voice for Peace Action, the IfNotNow Movement, the Center for Jewish Nonviolence, Americans for Peace Now, and T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights. Altogether, over 75 community organizations have signed on as supporters of the legislation. They

include the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Methodist Church—General Board of Church and Society, the United Church of Christ Palestine-Israel Network, the American Friends Service Committee, the Muslim Peace Fellowship, Our Revolution, Justice Democrats, the Working Families Party, and the National Lawyers Guild. Sixteen Democrats are initial co-sponsors of the legislation, although neither Rep. Earl Blumenauer nor Rep. Suzanne Bonamici are among them. More than 40 members of Havurah Shalom have signed a letter to Rep. Blumenhauer—as individuals—along with 40 other Portland-area Jews, asking him to become a co-sponsor of the legislation.

The next meeting of this committee-in-information is set for Sunday, June 25 at 1pm, in person at Havurah Shalom. All interested Havurah members are welcome to join.

### **Read the Jewish Coalition for Immigrant Justice May 2023 Newsletter**

Help JCIJ celebrate their new nonprofit status, learn of the latest legislative wins, and read about other ways to engage in immigrant justice actions.

Click [here](#) to read the May 2023 newsletter.

### **Grief Group at Havurah**

The Ma'avar Committee is offering a seven-session grief-process support group for Havurah members. Havurahnik Chaplain Candi Wuhrman will facilitate the group, which will focus on the dying experience, the impact of the relationship, things unsaid, making peace within ourselves, and continuing the relationship after death.

The group will meet weekly via Zoom on consecutive Wednesdays (June 14, 21, and 28 and July 5, 12, 19, and 26) from 5:30 pm to 7 pm.

This group is open to Havurah members at any stage and with any type of grief. The group will be limited to eight to ten participants. [Sign up here to join.](#)

## June Update from the Staffing Task Force

### New staff to be hired to support our growing shul

We last reported on our activities this past October. As a reminder, this group began meeting in January 2022 and includes the following members: Adela Basayne, Program Director and Staff Representative; Oren Kosansky, Vice President and Steering Committee liaison; Shari Raider, Past Treasurer and Finance Committee member; R.E Szego, Shabbat School parent and participant in Governance 2.0; Alana Silverman, a longtime member who is a professional human resources director; and Julia Lager-Mesulam, Governance 2.0 participant and a former President, who was involved in the former Staffing Task Force, which hired our Program Director.

As a recap, we spent the initial months reviewing information from Governance 2.0 and the Life of a Member Project. We also reviewed staff recommendations for staffing scenarios and spent time with staff and various stakeholder groups with in Havurah.

Through all of that review and many conversations, we identified the following gaps: administrative support for the Rabbi and Program Director; membership; Music; B'nei Mitzvah support; programming for youth/post-B'nei Mitzvah; operations - human resource functions; and financial tracking and processes.

We requested that three new positions be included in the current, subsequently-approved budget.

First, we modified the responsibilities and increased the hours of the former position of Assistant Coordi-

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### Staffing Task Force

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nator of Education (ACE). The new position, Youth Education & B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator (*Madricha*), is held by Carrie Kirschner, who had been Havurah's ACE for many years. The Youth Education & B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator is supervised jointly by the Education Director and the Program Director and works in consultation with the Office and Facilities Manager, the Rabbi, the B'nei Mitzvah Committee, the Shabbat School Co-chairs, the Middle School/High School Committee, and other relevant committees.

Next, we modified Havurah's Membership and Communications position and are now calling this role Participation and Publications Coordinator, or *Kesher*, which means linkage or connection in Hebrew. The Participation and Publications Coordinator acts as the administrative coordinator facilitating Havurah's participatory, communal, and spiritual ethos among prospective, new, and longstanding members; creates, edits, and manages internal and external communications and databases; and works closely with relevant committees and staff. Tara Anderson was hired for this position and has been working in this role since March 21. Welcome Tara!

Most recently, we created a new position for Havurah: Finance Manager (or *Gizbar*, which means Treasurer in Hebrew). This role will fill a gap and take work off the plates of staff and members related to human resources and finances at Havurah.

This position will not duplicate our Treasurer role but will partner with that person as well as the Finance Committee, Steering, and staff. The job description for the Finance Manager role was approved by Steering in May 2023 and has been publicized online. We have an interview team assembled for this role as well.

With the creation of the Finance Manager role, we also documented the member role that had historically been held by Karen Westerman for many, many years. The name of this member-filled role is to be determined. Many of the tasks that Karen has done so diligently and with the utmost skill and integrity will now be within the Finance Manager's scope of work. The one piece that will remain with the member role will be the conversations we have about dues and dues adjustments. We decided to keep this important and relational task with a member, as it has been forever. Thank you to Karen for the endless hours you have spent doing so many fiscal tasks on behalf of our community. Your work is valued and greatly appreciated!

After we fill the Finance Manager position, we will move our energies towards the music position, administrative support needs, and reviewing our current supervision structure for those positions that report directly to the Presidents.

If you have questions or input, please reach out to anyone on the Staffing Task Force.

B'shalom,

**Julia Lager-Mesulam, Shari Raider, Alana Silverman, R.E. Szego, Oren Kosansky, and Adela Basayne**



# Share Your Interests

## Lead an Elul Activity

Summer is just beginning, but by mid-August we will start our journey into the High Holy Days with a wide range of Elul activities. Elul has become our time to gather and learn in preparation for the more focused reflection of the Days of Awe. We come together to cook, pray, make art, create holy spaces at home, and discuss ideas, books, and films.

Did you know that **any Havurah member** can propose, design, and lead a class or activity during Elul? Whether you have never considered doing this or have taken this work on many times before, you are welcome. And right now is the perfect time to explore the ways you may contribute to Havurah's 2023 Elul programming. We already have many great offerings, **but we are looking for more.**



**Here are examples of activities we hope people will step forward to lead:**

- Cooking classes for families, children, and adults
- Studying passages on *teshuvah* by famous rabbis
- Creating *kedusha* (holiness) at home
- Discovering ways to pray during the week and during the holidays
- Discussing films
- Creating *yizkor* (remembrance) rituals or memorials with photos, art, music, or writing

These are suggestions to get you thinking. **We want to hear your ideas!** We are ready to provide you with whatever support you need to feel welcome in becoming Elul programming leaders.

Please contact [Carolina Martinez](#), Elul Program Lead (initially via email, and after that, via Zoom or your chosen form of communication) to discuss class and activity ideas and to get support in submitting your proposals. If you have logistical questions, please contact Rachel Pollak ([rachel@havurahshalom.org](mailto:rachel@havurahshalom.org)).

Check out [our Havurah Elul 2023 programming website](#) to get answers to frequently asked questions, learn about our Elul vision, see a collection of example Elul programming ideas, and access the submission form for Elul class and activity proposals. (*Note: The submission deadline for Elul 2023 class and activity proposals is **July 6, 2023.***)

# TIKKUN OLAM

## After May 7 Outside the Frame Gathering: *Looking Toward Next Steps*



After working with the nonprofit Outside the Frame, young filmmakers presented their films and shared their thoughts at Havurah Shalom on May 7. Seated second from the right is Havurahnik Nili Yoshi, Founder and Artistic and Executive Director of Outside the Frame.

### By Marcia Suttenger

In May, the Poverty and Homelessness Committee sponsored a program with the non-profit [Outside the Frame](#). Youth who have experienced homelessness showed films they had made about their personal lives and discussed systemic obstacles to achieving affordable, permanent housing. The films were moving and well made. We had over thirty people in attendance, including seven Havurah students engaged in the process of developing community service projects for their b'nei mitzvah. (We will be following up with those students and any other young folks who express an interest in doing a project involving homelessness.)

One of the films many of us found very useful was one depicting [a brief training on “de-](#)

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### *Poverty and Homelessness Committee*

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[escalation” communication techniques](#). These techniques may be of relevance as we ask ourselves: What is the best way to communicate with homeless folks in the Havurah courtyard and in our neighborhoods? How can we engage in a way that is respectful, comfortable, and safe for all? The Havurah Poverty and Homelessness Committee might follow up with a program for any interested Havurah congregants. If this is something that might interest you, please contact [Marcia Suttenger](#).

Not being able to afford shelter is a real problem for so many folks these days. For those of us blessed

to have comfortable homes, it is often hard to figure out any ways we might offer support. Our committee works closely with a few organizations: Havurahnik Jenn Louis' [Common Good Project](#) (food, supplies, and other services), [Rose Haven](#) (day shelter for women and children), [Path Home](#) (transitional housing for families), and [Lift Urban Portland](#) (emergency food program). If any congregant would like more information about these programs or other resources in our community, please contact our committee co-chairs [Gloria Halper](#) and [Steve Rudman](#). What might feel like a small gesture can really make a difference to someone living on the streets.

[View a recording of Havurah's May 7 gathering with Outside the Frame.](#)

# Book Group follows Palestinian musician

Sandy Tolan, author of *The Lemon Tree*, tells the story of Ramzi Aburedwan, a boy from a Palestinian refugee camp who participated in the First Intifada.

*Children of the Stone* chronicles Ramzi's journey—from stone thrower to music student to school founder—and shows how, through his love of music, he created something lasting and beautiful in the midst of the violence of the Occupation.

Returning to the West Bank after studying in a French conservatory, Ramzi establishes a network of music schools based in West Bank refugee camps. Musicians from around the world, including Daniel Barenboim, the Israeli musician and

## June Book Led by Joel Beinin

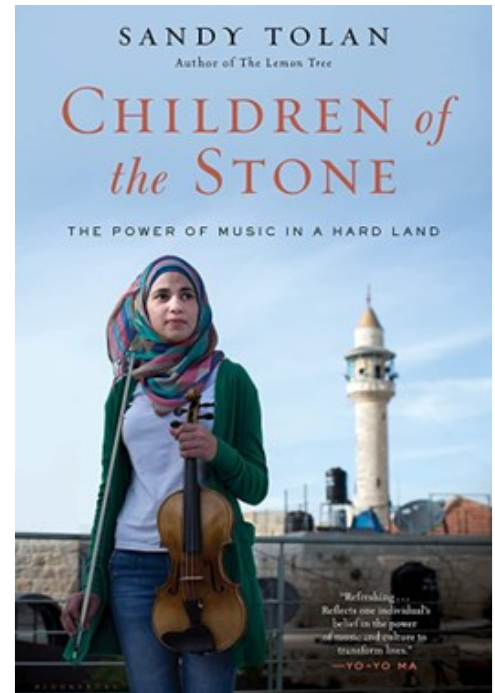
**Children of the Stone**  
by Sandy Tolan

Nonfiction, 480 pages

**Tuesday, June 27, 7 pm**  
**Zoom Room Bet**

music director of La Scala in Milan and the Berlin Opera, help Ramzi realize his goal.

Discussion led by Joel Beinin. Nonmembers welcome. [RSVP](#) for Zoom info.



Want to know more about Book Group? Please [visit the webpage](#).

## Spotlight on Havurah's Library

**The Havurah Shalom Library is managed by Marjorie Bennett. It supports Havurah members in our pursuit of learning as follows:**

- ✦ Support for staff and students of current and forthcoming Havurah educational programs, classes, and workshops
- ✦ Support for the creation of new classes
- ✦ Support for informal study of Jewish knowledge, practice, and heritage
- ✦ Exposure to current Judaic issues, thinking, and literature
- ✦ Books (fiction, non-fiction, reference)
- ✦ Media (music CDs, cassette tapes, videos)
- ✦ Periodicals (Commentary, Hadassah, Hakol, Jewish Life, Jewish Woman, Moment)

**Library Search:** The Havurah Shalom [library catalogue is available online](#) and searchable by author, title, and subject.



# HAVURAH TEENS EDITION

Information for Teens 7th-12th and their families

## Teen Engagement Committee

We need your and your teen's help in keeping the momentum going as, together, we develop engaging opportunities for them to connect.

**First Tuesday of the month from 7-8 in Zoom Room Hey**

**Next meeting: *June 6th***

Help us support our youth in building community.



June- End-of-year picnic.  
See flyer below.

July- Ice Cream Social &  
Mural Making-  
Sunday, July 30th

August-To be announced.



Do you have fun decorating and making a space feel comfy? We would love teen helpers to make our High Holiday Teens Room a homey space to hang with snacks, activities and more. If you are interested, email [annamafchir@gmail.com](mailto:annamafchir@gmail.com) and we will add you to the list.

## April's Laser Tag Event

We had fun getting to know each other and strategizing how to beat our blue or red team opponents.





# TEEN PICNIC

SUNDAY, JUNE 18 4PM

PARTY

FOOD  
MUSIC  
FUN

SELLWOOD PARK  
SE 7TH AVE & SE MILLER ST

RIISING 7TH GRADERS AND 8-12 GRADERS

## Discuss Proposed Budget at Congregational Meeting

By Loree Devery  
Co-President

At the annual Havurah congregational meeting on June 11, the congregation will be asked to approve the budget for the 2023-24 fiscal year. As you have heard us say before, our budget is not just a spreadsheet. It is not just a bunch of numbers. The budget should reflect our values. How we spend our money should align with what is most important to us. The Steering Committee believes that the 2023-24 budget does that.

The 2023-24 budget invests in personnel. It invests in providing space for our activities and for the upkeep of that space. It invests in cybersecurity and community gathering. The 2023-24 budget is an investment in our future.

Next year's projected expenses are significantly higher than this year's expenses *and* higher than next year's projected income. This was not a surprise. Steering knew we were on this path, and we have been planning for it. We have been building our reserves for this very purpose. To make ends meet, the 2023-24 budget taps into our Excess Reserves and assumes a 6% dues increase.

This article will attempt to answer questions you may have about the 2023-24 budget and share a bit of our roadmap for the future.

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### Steering Committee

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**How much larger is the 2023-24 budget than the current budget?** Next year's budget is about \$160,000 larger than the current budget.

**Where are the biggest differences in expenses between this fiscal year and next?** The two largest differences between this year and next year are in Personnel and Building/Occupancy expenses.

**Personnel expenses are up \$107,050 in the 2023-24 budget.**

Next year's budget includes a Finance Manager, the full budget for the Youth Education/B'nei Mitzvah Coordinator position, and six months of a Music Coordinator position. The total of these differences, plus reasonable raises for our existing staff, and a 13% increase in health insurance, put our total personnel costs up over \$107,000 from last year.

**Makom/Building expenses are up \$50,600 in the 2023-24 budget.**

The two largest Makom/Building expenses in next year's budget that were not in the 2022-23 budget are:

**The Annex** - \$32,300 in lease,

janitorial, and internet expenses for our Annex space.

**Courtyard Management** – increased expenses related to ongoing courtyard management.

Other significant expenses in the 2023-24 budget include \$11,500 in cybersecurity investments and increases in food and catering costs for subsidized High Holidays meals and Kabbalat Shabbat. Even with increases in requested member contributions for those meals, the projected total cost difference between last year and this year is over \$5,000.

**How are we paying for these increased expenses in the 2023-24 fiscal year?** We are raising dues and tapping into our Excess Reserves.

**Raising dues.** Steering is recommending that dues be raised 6% next year, which is projected to increase our dues income by about \$76,000. This recommended raise will increase a couple's monthly dues by \$15 and a single person's monthly dues by \$9.

**Excess Reserves.** Excess Reserves are funds in the Reserve Fund which are above the Targeted Minimum Reserves (or "prudent reserves"). We keep three months' operating expenses as our Targeted Minimum Amount. In 2023-24, we will have about \$168,766 in Excess

*(Continued on page 15)*

# HADRACHA

## Steering Recommends 6 Percent Dues Increase

By Loree Devery  
Co-President

At the congregational meeting on June 11, Havurah Shalom members will be asked to approve the proposed 2023-24 budget, which includes a dues increase of six percent. This article will explain the rationale behind the dues increase and attempt to answer questions you might

have about it. Before going into those details, let's look at what a six percent dues increase means to you and your household budget.

### Dues increase chart:

The chart below shows the impact of the dues increase. For a couple over 36, the annual dues are increasing by \$180, which translates to a monthly increase of \$15. For singles

over 36, annual dues will go up by \$108 - a monthly increase of \$9.

### Will the dues increase give us a "balanced" budget?

Steering Committee is presenting a balanced budget, as we are required to do. But, in addition to raising dues, we will also need to dip into our Excess Reserves to balance

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The breakdown:	22-23 Annual Dues	23-24 Annual Dues	22-23 Monthly Dues	23-24 Monthly Dues	Percent Change	Monthly Dues \$ Change
Couple over 36	\$3,024	\$3,204	\$252	\$267	6%	\$15
Single over 36	\$1,836	\$1,944	\$153	\$162	6%	\$9
Couple under 36	\$2,208	\$2,340	\$184	\$195	6%	\$11
Single under 36	\$1,404	\$1,488	\$117	\$124	6%	\$7

## Discuss Proposed Budget at Congregational Meeting, cont'd

Reserves. To balance the 2023-24 budget, Steering has recommended pulling \$107,483 from the Excess Reserves.

**But what about future years? How will we cover these expenses down the road?** Our fundraising campaign that will start next fiscal year – the Campaign for Havurah – includes the creation of a Staff Expansion Fund. That fund will subsidize personnel expenses over time as we continue to steadily raise dues. We will draw down the Staff Expansion Fund in future years to cover the cost of the additional staff we are hiring now and in the near future. Eventually (exactly how long depends on a variety of factors), Havurah's operating income will be sufficient to meet our expenses. Until then, we will be relying on the Staff Expansion Fund to make up the difference.

**Conclusion.** By the time you read this article in Hakol, you will have received the notice of the Congregational Meeting which includes a link to the proposed 2023-24 budget. Do you have questions about the budget? About the issues raised in this article? About the Campaign for Havurah and the role of the Staff Expansion Fund? Reach out to me, Loree Devery (in the Havurah Directory). I am here to answer your questions.

# HADRACHA

## Steering Recommends 6 Percent Dues Increase, cont'd

*(Continued from page 15)*

the 2023-24 budget. See the article in this Hakol about the 2023-24 budget for more information about overall budget. The dues increase alone would not balance the 2023-24 budget.

### **Havurah used to balance its budget without dipping into Excess Reserves. Why can't we do that this year?**

Until recently, Havurah was able to increase dues gradually to meet our staffing and space needs. Two things happened which changed that: our growth rate increased in the past few years and the impact of that growth was masked by the pandemic. Havurah added nearly 150 new members since the 2019-20 fiscal year (a net growth of 73 members). In that same time frame, our building was closed much of the time. The pandemic artificially dampened demand on our building and it shifted demand on staff. We didn't raise dues for three years because our expenses were down due to the pandemic. Last year, dues were increased as we started on our path of increasing staffing. The 2023-24 budget continues our investment in staff and includes our short-term space investment in the Annex lease. To pay for these immediate expenses, we needed to raise dues and tap into the Excess Reserves.

**Our operating income will need to grow in future years to cover the true cost of operating Havurah.** We must face the fact that it costs more to keep Havurah up and running than it used to. In addition to personnel expenses, the building itself costs more to operate, and we have expenses that we never used to have: hybrid technology, cybersecurity, Annex lease and technology expenses, and courtyard monitoring and cleanup. These are all expenses that were not in our budget just a few years ago. Our current levels of dues increases do not cover these increased personnel and operating expenses. Havurah will need to continue to raise dues over time to pay for growing expenses.

**How will we pay for these expenses in future years when the Excess Reserves are gone?** In the immediate future, we will start our fundraising campaign, which will include a Staff Expansion Fund. That fund will subsidize personnel expenses as we continue to raise dues. Over time, we will reach a point where our operating income matches our operating expenses, and we will no longer need the Staff Expansion Fund subsidy to balance the budget. Tapping into the Excess Reserves this year was part of the plan. It buys us time to start our fundraising campaign.

**Can't we just "tighten our belt" to make ends meet?** Unfortunately, no. We need to make staff and space investments now and the cost of those expenses is more than what we could cover by mere belt-tightening. The reality is that the 2023-24 budget is actually quite prudent. There are no extraordinary expenses in the budget and several expense categories decreased. There really isn't "fat" to cut, and even if there were, the accumulative effect would not get us the revenues we need to cover the big investments we need to make now in staff, space, and security.

**A reminder – we are so fortunate to have these "problems."** While it is tempting to see our current budget stresses as a negative, we must remind ourselves that growth is a good "problem" to have. We are succeeding as a Jewish community. We are attracting more members. Our fiercely participatory model is resonating with individuals and families seeking to connect with a Jewish community. In short, Havurah is thriving. The staff, space, and security investments in the 2023-24 budget will allow us to continue to thrive.



## Gratitude to Havurahniks

By Ben Walters  
Immediate Past-President

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### Steering Committee

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I am writing this in May, which started out wet and chilly and then suddenly felt like July. The extreme turnaround provided no time for transition or adaptation. How often do our lives change abruptly? There is no promise that things will continue as they have, yet I often lull myself into the comfort of thinking that they will. Amidst this, one constant that I am comforted by is the many significant and varied ways in which Havurah members are involved in *mitzvot*, individually and collectively.

Havurahniks greet refugees at the Portland Airport and provide them with financial support. Havurahniks lead book group discussions and volunteer at Kabbalat Shabbat. Havurahniks tend our courtyard, both in gardening and in attempting to provide a space of sanctuary. As is usual, there are too many activities to list. Here are just a few examples of how Havurah members have given their time and energy:

Gratitude to Katherine McDowell and Michael Evans for their significant contributions of time and effort over the past few months in addressing a challenging legal situation facing the Havurah community.

Appreciation to Buff Medb, Rachel Pollak, and Adela Basayne, and all of the many other volunteers who pitched in to make Havurah's Electrify Everything event run smoothly and successfully.

Gratitude to Diane Fredgant for updating the earthquake and emergency supply kits at Havurah

and for applying her immense organizational skills to the kitchen, office, and basement over the past months.

Appreciation from Anti-Racism and Belonging to Alanna Hein for shar-

ing her masterful facilitation skills, Karen St. Clair for looping Becky Chiao into the next phase, and Becky Chiao for agreeing to be Havurah's point of contact with Tabitha St. Bernard-Jacobs as the effort continues forward.

Gratitude to Michael Rice as lead organizer for HIAS advocacy meetings with Congress.

Appreciation to Julia Lager-Mesulam for representing the Tikkun Olam Cluster on the High Holiday Planning Committee.

Gratitude to Denny Karas for joining the Garden Committee as the Co-Chair and doing a wonderful job.

Appreciation to Steve Rudman, Marcia Suttenger, Barbara Gundle, Joan Peck, Rachel Pollak, Joel Bettridge, and David Kertzner for serving as members of the Courtyard Task Force and for contributing many hours of thought and discussion in developing recommendations to Steering.

To all those many other individuals and groups not specifically mentioned for their contributions – *Todah rabah!* While I have said this before, it bears repeating that Havurah thrives because of the nurturing of volunteers such as you and your many and various acts of *tzedakah*.

If you have any appreciations you think should be mentioned, please [email Ben Walters](#) and be sure to put **Gratitude** in the subject line of your message.