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Cantor's Column

A Note of Thanks

Steve Friedrich

I suppose this essay could be considered my farewell address to Society Hill Synagogue. Please don't view this as a negative statement. On the contrary, in taking my leave of SHS in my short tenure as your Cantor, I genuinely hope you all fare well as you continue to further Jewish values in the city of Philadelphia, keeping a place for Torah in the City of Brotherly Love. My experience at your shul has been decidedly positive, well worth the hour-long drive from and to my home in West Chester. I have enjoyed my time with you as your prayer leader and teacher of your children. I hope that you have enjoyed my davening and teaching, as well as my enthusiasm for Jewish music and traditions.

I want to express my gratitude to the many people of SHS who have made my experience so rewarding. Rabbi Avi, thank you for making me feel like a colleague, even with my interim status. It was a pleasure to work alongside you, to experience your warmth, humor, and tremendous knowledge. Best of all, you are fun to have as a singing partner. I have had the fortune to work with several rabbis during my career, but you are the first who was so willing to try out new melodies and to add harmony and counterpoint. I will miss being your partner on the bimah.

Rabbi Nathan, it was hard for me to remember that you are a rookie rabbi. You also were easy to work with, showing excellent preparation and real professionalism on the bimah during Avi's sabbatical. Best of all, you are an excellent Torah reader and Torah teacher. I am confident you will have a most excellent career in your new profession as a Rabbi.

You are most fortunate to have Sahar Oz as your Education Director. Managing so many students in such minimal space, Sahar has made Jewish education an exciting adventure for your children. My students here have always attended classes and private lessons with an eagerness to learn and with a desire to perform well. That can only happen when there is good leadership at the top. Sahar has managed to hire a dedicated and capable teaching staff. He has also brought an element of authentic Israeli life into your school, a definite plus. Sahar has made my teaching experience at SHS both challenging and rewarding.

I also must thank Betty van de Rijn, our Executive Director, and all her office and support staff; Leanne, Rhonda, Bobby, Dave, and Rob, for making my work at SHS so much fun. I will miss our chats together, and I will most definitely miss your coffee and awesome lunches. Your dedication to your work and to the synagogue makes it possible for the services and programs to run so smoothly. You have all gone out of your way to make my stay at SHS very comfortable. I will remember all of you with great fondness.

But not least, I wish to thank all of you for the tremendous opportunity it has been for me to experience singing in your marvelous Sanctuary. Constructed prior to the advent of microphones, your sacred space was designed perfectly to transmit vocal music.

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Student Rabbi's Column

Ritual: Finding the Balance Between Modernity and Antiquity

Nathan Kamesar

Ritual. For thousands of years, our tradition, our religion, and our civilization have been based not only on readily understandable ethical exhortations (“Love your neighbor as you love yourself,” “Do not oppress the stranger for you were strangers in the land of Egypt”) but also on mysterious, strange ritual laws. Don’t mix milk with meat (even poultry). Don’t wear a garment containing both wool and linen. Refrain from eating leavened bread for seven (or, for some, eight) days at a precise time during the spring. Utter distinct blessings before *and after* meals. Affix parchment containing specific texts to your doorways, as well as in small boxes that you will wear during morning prayer services. Put your right shoe on before your left, but tie your left shoe before your right. (Yes, this last one is an actual, lesser-known Jewish law.)

Maybe some of these don’t seem bizarre anymore, because two thousand-plus years of practice have worn off the sheen of mystery, and yet, looking at these laws and rituals compiled in this way, we can’t help but be struck by the idiosyncratic, provocative nature of our ancestors’ practices.

So it raises the obvious question: what do we moderns, with our ever-so-enlightened sensibilities, do with practices that don’t make intuitive, ethical sense to us?

I’ll lay out two ends of the spectrum, and, perhaps, a middle ground, all of which I’ve explored in personal experience. One end is to take what can be termed a modern approach: ritual law was written by an ancient people. Whatever merit it may have had at the time of its inception, we are past that. We know the principles that make the most sense in a modern context—equality, liberation, love of fellow human beings. All the rest is, frankly, quaint: harmless if it doesn’t get in the way of our modern values but not to be central to our existence.

Then again, modernity isn’t exactly utopia. Sure, we’ve made progress on countless measures: life expectancy, economic standards of living, and racial and gender equality, to name some. But few would suggest our work is close to done on those fronts. And we needn’t get into the specifics of the horrors wrought by modern warfare technology. As my father, Rabbi Daniel Kamesar (z”l), once wrote, “It has been seen throughout the ages, particularly in our century, that reason can be as cold and ruthless as steel, completely without mercy or morality. I needn’t name examples.” We know the calamity he is referring to, and there are others. At times it seems modernity could be well served by a steady dose of antiquity.

At the other end of the spectrum, conventionally thought of as orthodox, law takes a heavy precedence, sometimes arguably at the cost of women’s’ rights, LGBT rights, and other liberal values we might not be willing to compromise on, even if we do want to pay some deference to the past. While there are certainly appealing aspects of imposing the level of order on one’s life that comes from highly prescribed practice—I know several people whose anxieties were mitigated by subjecting their lives to the full extent of ritual law; that level of instruction helped provide them with a sense of purpose—most Jews I encounter are not willing to outsource their judgment about daily practice entirely to past generations.

So the question becomes how to navigate the way forward, with our tradition steadily perched on one shoulder and the awareness of our cultural context ever present on the other. What do we do if our *kashrut* (traditional Jewish eating) practice suggests one thing, but we find ourselves in the home of someone whose eating practices conflict with it, while wanting to maintain *shalom bayit* (peace within the house)? What do we do if we are the only family member who *shomer shabbat* (observant of the Sabbath in particular respects)? Or the reverse? How do we coexist?

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President's Column

Mark Your Calendars for the Annual Congregation Meeting on Wednesday, May 24

Harry J. Oxman

I know everyone is eager to know the result of our Cantor Search. Many factors have gone into this decision, and at the time of this writing, the process is not quite complete. I assure you that I will inform you who will become SHS's next Cantor as soon as possible—well before the next Keshet issue is delivered to your home. I am confident that the congregation will be delighted to welcome this new clergy member to our staff. In the meantime, I do believe that it is important to express thanks to Cantor Search Committee Co-Chairs Marc Schwartz and Terry Novick, along with their entire committee. This group has labored diligently and carefully in selecting the best possible candidates for this position. I would also like to convey my deepest thanks to the congregation members who have once again actively participated in this process by attending the auditions and completing the evaluation questionnaires. As we proceed through the home stretch, let us not underestimate the potential benefit of a little congregational prayer that the final phase will go smoothly.

Another group of members who deserves our recognition and thanks includes all of the individuals who worked to make the annual Second Night Passover Seder, which was held on Tuesday, April 11, such an outstanding event. This was our third community Seder on the second night of Pesach, and by all accounts it may have been our best so far. Unfortunately, an inconvenient illness caused me to miss the Seder but I received reports that were filled with praise and appreciation. I wish to thank Student Rabbi Nathan Kamesar for leading a wonderfully creative and inclusive Seder. The members of the Arts & Culture Committee namely, Betta Kolansky, Ellen Fennick, Carole LeFavre-Rochester, and my wonderful bride, Eleanor Oxman, also deserve thanks and praise for their commitment and effort in planning this wonderful event. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I extend on behalf of the congregation a special thank you to Executive Director Betty van de Rijn and her special group of support staff without whom events such as this would not be possible.

I also wish to extend my deepest thanks to Social Action Committee Chair Phyllis Denbo for sharing information about the issues confronting immigrants and refugees in the Philadelphia area. After the December 2016 Shabbaton, Phyllis has developed a survey to identify our congregation's capacity and commitment to address the needs of this population. I hope that all of you will take a few moments to complete the questionnaire (see the link posted in Phyllis's article). Your responses will help the Social Action Committee make a meaningful and realistic proposal concerning the extent and scope of our efforts.

On May 24, at 7 PM, I invite all members to attend the Annual Congregation Meeting in the Social Hall. Actually, there will be a lite dinner served at 6 PM. A number of subjects will be presented at this meeting. Exceptional Service Recognition Awards will be presented to 5 members of the congregation for their outstanding service to our community. We will also present information about the budget for the period from July 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018. I am certain that the budget update will be extremely enlightening and thought provoking. An additional presentation by Space Enhancement and Fundraising Committee Co-Chairs Jeremy Newberg and Jonathan Weiss is planned to share additional refinements of the Space Improvement Plan. Further, we will be announcing at this meeting our plan to solicit the participation of every member of the congregation to raise the funds necessary to achieve our space enhancement goals. I can tell you that at this point, the members of the Board of Directors have already made significant pledges to begin the fundraising process. I thank them for their leadership and commitment to our future. Still, our goals can only be achieved with generous participation from our entire membership. Over the balance of the 2017 calendar

Continued on page 8



Wishing a Speedy Recovery to Bobby

Betty van de Rijn

As you may know, our staff member, Bobby Senick, has recently been diagnosed with metastatic melanoma. Bobby is a beloved and devoted employee, and for the past few weeks, Playschool, Sunday, and Hebrew School kids have missed seeing his smiling face when they enter and leave the building. As is often the case, we don't appreciate the impact someone has on making our synagogue the warm and well-run place it is until they are absent from work.

I'd like to thank Rob, Dave, and Jess for stepping up to take on additional shifts and duties while Bobby is undergoing treatment.

The first of many benefits to support Bobby's family and defray some of their medical costs will be the The Second Street Irish Society's Mary T. Walker Golf Outing on June 9, at the FDR Golf Course (Navy Yard). The fee is \$125 per person and includes a round of golf, food, and drinks. If you'd like to sign up to play, sponsor a hole, or just make a donation, please contact Betty at bettyv@societyhillsynagogue.org or 215.922.6590, ext. # 23. Checks can be made out to the Mary T. Walker Golf Outing. Please add "Bobby Senick" to the memo line.

Alternatively, you may send cards and donations for Bobby to SHS at 418 Spruce Street. Checks can be made out to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund. Please add "For Bobby Senick" to the memo line, so that the funds will be appropriately earmarked.

On behalf of the SHS Board of Directors, staff, clergy, and members, we send Bobby love, hugs, and prayers from his synagogue family and hope that he is feeling better soon.



Join Us for a Special Concert: *Together in Struggle*

Join us in the Sanctuary on Sunday, June 25, at 7 PM, to experience ***Together in Struggle (Ale Tsuzamen in Kamf)***, a new composition and community collaboration by Klezmer musician and composer Dan Blacksberg. The composition is a musical response to the social justice work of Society Hill Synagogue and other congregations who have joined forces with POWER.

After speaking with members of the SHS leadership and the leaders of other congregations associated with POWER and attending meetings and protests, Dan has identified specific issues central to SHS's work in the struggle for justice and equal rights. With this foundation of information, Dan gathered Yiddish texts and songs that represent these issues at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York and the Robert and Molly Freedman Jewish Sound Archive at the University of Pennsylvania. We, at SHS, will be honored to hear how he used this material to create a new long-form composition, ***Together in Struggle (Ale Tsuzamen in Kamf)***.

This new piece, based on Yiddish and Klezmer music, as well as Dan's own repertoire of contemporary music, will be presented as a "works-in-progress" concert. An ensemble of expert Jewish and creative music performers from Philadelphia and New York will play the music in both its original and recomposed forms to show how songs and texts can be transformed into new compositions. Dan would also like to share his research and creative process with the SHS community during an afternoon talk. Participants will be encouraged to give feedback with their own thoughts and stories about the process and the music. Further details will follow.



Ann Spak Thal School

An Exciting End to the Year

Sahar Oz

As we wrap up a fantastic year of Jewish learning and exploration, I am excited for three more wonderful weeks of Hebrew growth, discussion and debate, artistic creation and intergenerational celebrations, and soulful Shabbat services featuring our students.

Please join us on **Saturday, May 6, at 10:30 AM for a Shabbat Shahrith (morning) service in the Sanctuary featuring Kitah Bet** – our 2nd grade superstars – followed by a delicious lunch in the Social Hall. Six days later, the fantastic 4th graders from **Kitah Dalet will lead the Kabbalat Shabbat service in the Sanctuary at 6:15 PM on Friday, May 12**, with a delicious dinner to follow in the Social Hall.

Your family's RSVPs to Betty (bettyv@societyhillssynagogue.org) for the meals following these services are requested no later than two days before each service. Participation in each of these services is a great way for all of our students to showcase their skills—whether on the bimah as the featured class, or as enthusiastic attendees with their families.

While we're on the subject of Shabbat services, all students in Kitot Gimel-Zayin (grades 3-7) who have reached their Shabbat service attendance goal for the current school year by Saturday, May 20, will be publicly honored on Tuesday, May 23, our last day of classes.

On this special day, May 23, at 5:30 PM, we invite parents and siblings of students in grades 3-7 to attend the last Ma'ariv (evening) school service of the year, where we will celebrate everyone's *aliyah* (ascent) to their new grade. The Ma'ariv service will be followed by dinner at 6:15 PM. Please RSVP to Betty for dinner by May 21.

Please remember that there are no classes on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 14, to enable families to celebrate together. Then, to end our school year on a sweet note, Sunday, **May 21, will be our traditional "Sundae Sunday,"** with ice cream sundaes for Sunday and Hebrew School children and parents to enjoy at 10:30 AM and 12:30 PM, respectively.

Want to make your June 24 that much more special? Then come and celebrate **Noah Kauderwood's Bar Mitzvah in the Sanctuary on Saturday, June 24, at 9:30 AM!** Even if you can't join us for the entire service, please arrive by 10:15 AM to experience the full Torah service, including Noah's cantillation and his commentary on the Torah portion.

Finally, please remember to submit the completed packet of 5778 / 2017-2018 school enrollment forms for each child with the tuition deposit by Tuesday, May 23. And please spread the word about our school! Share your family's experiences at our school with your friends and neighbors, and invite them to join our engaging, exciting, and inclusive Jewish learning community.

Our faculty and I look forward to welcoming everyone back to school on Sunday, September 10. Have a wonderful summer!



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Playschool

Looking Forward to a Great Camp Season!

Gloria Parris & Ali Kaplan

We can't believe that school is almost over! We have had an exciting year filled with new field trips, special guests, and interactive projects. We still have some surprises in store before the school year comes to a close at the end of May!

On Tuesday, May 4, the Pre-K class will go on their final field trip to Morris Arboretum. The children will explore the four seasons through the five senses. The children will use their senses to discover the ways people and plants respond to changes in the season.

Students in the 3–4-year-old class will take their last field trip to the Art Museum on Tuesday, May 9. On Wednesday, May 10, school will be closed for parent–teacher conferences. Staff will be available to watch children during your scheduled conference time, if needed. For an additional charge, childcare will also be offered that day between the hours of 7:45 AM and 6 PM. On Thursday, May 11, we will follow a regular school day schedule.

On Friday, May 12, the Pre-K class will celebrate Pajama Day! Our school day schedule will be “backwards” because we will participate in activities that usually take place at night, including wearing our pajamas, reading bedtime stories, and even popping some popcorn!

Tuesday, May 16, Playschool students will have a chance to join the Franklin Institute Traveling Science Show as they present “Stop That Ball!” Friends from the Franklin Institute will present an interactive lesson on different types of balls, and how they roll and move. Children should keep their eyes peeled for a special caped crusader who could join in on the fun! All children, regardless of their scheduled school days, are invited to attend this special presentation.

During the final week of school, we will have two special presenters join us for our last Afterschool Arts Club.

On Thursday, May 25, Laurel Redding and Melissa King will present an interactive (and furry) lesson on being a veterinarian. Sign up now if you don't want your child to miss this wonderful program!

The last day of Playschool is Friday, May 26.

The graduation ceremony for the Puppy class will occur from 10 AM until 11 AM. The ceremony for students in the 3–4-year-old class will occur from 11 AM until 12 PM, and the ceremony for the Pre- K will occur from 10:30 AM until 11:30 AM. Please join us for graduation luncheons after the ceremonies.

We are looking forward to a great season of summer activities! SHS Summer Camp will run from Monday, June 5, through Friday, July 28.

Our regular summer camp program is designed for children between the ages of 2 and 5. Each day, campers will participate in arts and crafts, water activities in our outdoor pool and sprinklers, bicycle time, music and movement activities, and snack time. Camp hours are from 8:30 AM until 12:30 PM, Monday through Friday. Children should bring dairy lunches from home.

We will also be continuing to offer our early care, late care and our After Camp Arts Club. Early care begins at 7:45 AM. Late care hours are from 3 PM until 6 PM, and the After Camp Arts Club will run from 12:30 PM until 3 PM, Monday–Friday. Please contact the Playschool office at 215.922.6590, ext. 28, if you have any questions!

We are SO excited to continue our very successful SHS Specialty Camps, which will run during the first two weeks of August. Children between the ages of 3 and 7 can sign up for one or both exciting themed weeks!

We still have a limited number of classroom spots available for the 2017-2018 school year. Please contact Co Directors, Gloria Parris at gparris@societyhillssynagogue.org or Ali Kaplan at abernstein@societyhillssynagogue.org for more information.

Student Rabbi's Column

Continued from page 2

Mordechai Kaplan's formula of giving the past "a vote but not a veto" comes to mind: the past—our tradition—should be one of the factors (if not the primary factor) when formulating our way in the world, but it need not dictate, unwaveringly, our path forward. As my father put it, "We can afford neither the arrogance to reject our tradition, nor the desperate fear which causes some to kiss its feet."

It takes a heavy dose of humility to undertake ritual practice that bears no hallmark of direct benefit to us. We are essentially saying: even though I see no direct benefit to praying daily, or to keeping some version of *kashrut*, or to attending services on Shabbat, perhaps our ancestors were onto something when they constructed these practices. Perhaps they were operating in a cosmic key that we can't always hear in our world of constant content: Netflix, DVR, and Spotify; NPR, the *New York Times*, and the latest podcast. Perhaps our ancestors, and the nakedness with which they were exposed to the wild, and to God, led to cosmic insights that allowed them to lead lives and develop practices that are beyond our ability to intuitively understand yet would appreciably improve our sense of ourselves and our relationship to the universe if observed consistently. Perhaps these ritual practices, bizarre as they may seem, help blaze a trail for a better pathway toward being more in tune with ourselves, our relationship to others, and to the Divine. Perhaps we do not pay enough attention to their insights in a world where we are tugged in so many different directions.

I know I find myself in a constant struggle with respect to the proper balance of antiquity and modernity, usually aspiring to do more than my ancestors have passed down to me, sometimes wishing I did less. As the influential Jewish philosopher Franz Rosenzweig responded, when asked whether he took on the practice of wrapping *tefillin* (phylacteries—the small leather boxes containing sacred texts some Jews wear during prayer), "Not yet." Perhaps Rosenzweig's response is suggestive of the modern Jewish journey: always on a path, experimenting with the proper level of practice, aspiring to pay due deference to the wisdom of our ancestors but being tugged elsewhere by the insights of the present day.

Continued

All I can say is to keep trying. Show humility: take on the practices of our ancestors even if they don't make intuitive sense. At the same time, don't be fearful: deviate if an honest, thoughtful wrestling suggests that you need to. After all, this is who we have always been: wrestlers. As we know, the Hebrew word "Israel" means "wrestling with God," and that's who we are: the Children of Israel.



2016 Specialty Camps at SHS! JULY 31 TO AUGUST 11

**Are you looking for new and exciting
summer camp
programs during the month of August?**

Society Hill Synagogue is now offering two Specialty Camps for children aged 3–7 years old, following our regular camp season.

Each of the two-week sessions will focus on projects based on a creative theme. During the week of **July 31-August 4**, the program will focus on puppetry and drama. The children will have the opportunity to create their own puppets and present a puppet show for their families at the end of the first week.

During the week of **August 7-11**, the program will focus on ceramics. Campers will create art projects using clay. They will end the second week with an art show to debut their one-of-a-kind projects.

Two snacks will be provided each day. Children must bring packed dairy lunches from home. Campers may be enrolled for one or both programs. Reserve your spot by May 17. Space is limited!

Cantor's Column

Continued from cover

I have never felt as comfortable singing in any other environment as I have in that tremendous chamber, whether from the bimah or from the floor. Singing there felt both effortless and exhilarating. It was also a joy to see attendance at religious services increase during the year. Many of you have graciously expressed your delight with my contributions to your services, both musical and liturgical. I humbly thank you for having graced me with this opportunity and experience. I wish you all hatzlahah (success) with your new Cantor and in all your future endeavors.

Most fondly and sincerely,
Cantor Steve

President's Column

Continued from page 3

year, members of the synagogue leadership will be reaching out to each and every one of you to discuss your commitment to this fundraising effort. Naturally, I encourage all of you who plan to attend the May 24 meeting to feel free to pose questions about any subject on the agenda or to raise any questions you may have about new business.

On a personal note, as I am rapidly reaching the end of my first year as your President, I wanted to share with you that it has been an interesting and challenging experience. I thank all of you for your help and input. I recognize that there is much to be done in the second year of my term, but I am confident that with your continued support and the dedication of all the individuals in specific leadership positions, we will continue to build a solid foundation for the congregation's future.



The Young Friends of SHS Join Our Mailing List!

Natalie Lesser & Jordan Segall

The Young Friends of Society Hill Synagogue are a group of individuals who are creating a community that fosters Jewish identity, culture, and friendship. We meet for potluck dinners, pre-Shabbat drinks, and discussions about spiritual exploration.

For further information or to join our mailing list, please contact Co-Chairs: Natalie Lesser at lesser.natalie@gmail.com or Jordan Segall at segall.jordan@gmail.com.

We invite you to "like" our Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/SHSYoungFriends/.



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Young Families Group

Friday Nights With Young Families: Join us in May and June!

Joanna Hart

Join us for our final two dates of *Friday Nights With Young Families* this season! On Friday, May 5, and Friday, June 2, at 5:15 PM, we will gather for our joyful and playful kid-friendly service and potluck (vegetarian) dinner. Our group can celebrate Shabbat together until regular services begin in the Sanctuary at 6:15 PM, or we can continue our own program until around 7 PM.

Please RSVP to me at Joanna.lee.hart@gmail.com if your family plans to attend, but feel free to drop by even if you don't!

Stay tuned for a couple of upcoming summer events and the 2017-2018 *Friday Nights With Young Families* schedule!

Please continue to take full advantage of our wonderful children's book collection located outside the main Sanctuary, and remember that child care services are available in the rear Playschool room (AKA the Wiggle Room) during regularly scheduled Shabbat services..

To join our email list, contact me at the email address listed above. Members, prospective members, expectant parents, and any caregivers are welcome to join!



Join Us on May 24 for the SHS Annual Congregation Meeting!

Please plan to attend the SHS Annual Congregation Meeting in the Social Hall on Wednesday, May 24. A lite dinner will be served at 6 PM, and the meeting will begin promptly at 7 PM. President Harry Oxman will deliver a "State of the Synagogue" address, with additional reports from Treasurer Mark Steinberger and other members of the Executive Committee. We will hold elections for new and returning Board members and we will honor five SHS members for their exceptional service to our congregation.



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Happy belated March birthday to Libby Kaiser!

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What is a Kiddush or Oneg?

Customarily at the end of Shabbat morning and holiday services, the SHS community joins together to bless the wine (make "Kiddush") and the bread (make "Motzi"), and enjoy good food and company! This is what we call "the Kiddush."

Similarly, at the conclusion of Friday evening Kabbalat Shabbat service, we gather for an Oneg or a Shabbat dinner, where we bless the wine & bread and share light refreshments or dinner. Sponsoring this weekly community event is a wonderful way to celebrate a *simha* or joy, mark a special moment in one's life, honor someone, or commemorate a Yahrzeit. Sponsoring a *Kiddush, Oneg, or Shabbat dinner* helps the community to get to know you and share important moments in your life. It is also a way to say thank you to your community.

Please call the SHS office at 215.922.6590 or email us at office@societyhillsynagogue.org for more information.

Community News

Speedy Recovery to

Bobby Senick
Barbara Zalkind
Susanne Kaplan

Mazel Tov to

Mark Dembert and Mary Fish on the birth of their granddaughter, Zoe Fish Ain.

Walter and Margie Ferst on the birth of their grandson, Micah Simon Ferst.

Walter and Margie Ferst on the engagement of their daughter, Sarah Ferst to Seth Finkelstein.

Lindy and Michelle Nelson on the birth of their son, Zachary Abrams Nelson.

Erica Ginsburg and Dan Bogen on the birth of their grandson, Zion Otero.

Andrew Newman and Jane Nathanson Newman on the birth of their son, Jacob Nathanson Newman.

Irv and Sharon Shapiro on their 50th Wedding Anniversary.

Ron and Robin Feinberg on their 35th Wedding Anniversary.

David and Julia Gutstadt on their 15th Wedding Anniversary.

Ed and Etta Krauss on their 64th Wedding Anniversary.

Sam and Joan Lear on their 60th Wedding Anniversary.

Marc and Nancy Goldenberg on their 45th Wedding Anniversary.

Jay Meadway and Roberta Jacobs Meadway on their 35th Wedding Anniversary.

Micah and Joanna Hart on the birth of their daughter, Matilda Genevieve.

Stephen Starr on receiving the James Beard best restaurateur in America.



Condolences to

Richard Braemer (Amy Finkel) on the death of Richard's father, Fred E. Braemer.

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General Fund

In Honor of

Bar Mitzvah of Aaron Davidson

Michael & Diane Marinoff

Mark Dembert & Mary Fish on the birth of their granddaughter, Zoe Fish Ain

Jay Meadway & Roberta Jacobs-Meadway

Gerry Schneeberg's 90th Birthday

Lorraine Weissbach

Birth of our first Grandchild, Zion Otero

Erica Ginsburg & Dan Bogen

Yahrzeit Remembrance**Aaron Markowitz, Father of Sayde Ladov**

David & Sayde Ladov

Meyer Acker, Father-in-Law of Beatrice Acker

Beatrice Acker

Yette Dubin, Mother of Beatrice Acker

Beatrice Acker

Sarah Paller, Mother of Robert Paller

Robert Paller

David Merlin, Father of Marina Merlin

Merlin-Rubinov Family

Annual Giving Fund

In Honor of

Bar Mitzvah of Lysander Michaels-Koenig

Barbara Spector

Yahrzeit Remembrance**Leon Spector, Father of Barbara Spector**

Barbara Spector

Social Action Fund

In Memory of

Larry Rubin, Father of Bonni Rubin-Sugarman

Bill & Debra Stewart

Yahrzeit Remembrance**Stanley Dubin, Brother of Murray Dubin**

Murray Dubin & Libby Rosof

Benjamin Dubin, Father of Murray Dubin

Murray Dubin & Libby Rosof

Jay R. Baer Fund**Yahrzeit Remembrance****Jay R. Baer, Husband of Carol Baer Mott**

Carol Baer Mott

Cantor's Discretionary Fund

In Appreciation of

Cantor Friedrich's Guidance and Assistance

Anne Ballen Ladenson and Family

March 31st Shabbat Dinner

Stanley & Judith Woloff

In Honor of

Mark Dembert & Mary Fish on the birth of their granddaughter, Zoe Fish Ain

Stanley & Judith Woloff

Yahrzeit Remembrance**Marion Shapiro**

Stanley & Judith Woloff

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**Sale of Chametz**

Iris Levine

Speedy Recovery to**Bobby Senick**

Stanley & Judith Woloff

In Appreciation of

Weekly Torah Study

Valerie Joseph

In Honor of

Holman & Gail Massey on the birth of their grandson, Asa Massey

Stanley & Judith Woloff

Erica Ginsburg & Dan Bogen on the birth of their grandson, Zion Otero

Stanley & Judith Woloff

Bar Mitzvah of Lysander Michaels-Koenig

Bonny Hohenberger & Nathan Farbman

Geoffrey & Beverly Michaels

In Memory of

Larry Rubin, Father of Bonni Rubin-Sugarman

Bonni Rubin-Sugarman & Jerry Faich

Yahrzeit Remembrance**Helen and Louis Gallun, Parents of Fran Gallun**

Len Weinberg & Fran Gallun

Charles Gallun, Brother of Fran Gallun

Len Weinberg & Fran Gallun

Bernice Hoffman

Stanley & Judith Woloff

Michael Palmer, Former Husband of Karen Palmer

Karen Palmer

Richard Druckman, Father of Karen Palmer

Karen Palmer

Baruch Blumberg, Husband of Jean Blumberg

Jean Blumberg

Lillian Dictor, Mother-in-Law of Joel Chernock

Joel Chernock

Gertrude Koche, Mother of Judith Spiller

Judith Spiller

Kiddush Fund

In Appreciation of
SHS Shabbat Dinners
 Bill Resnick

In Honor of

Betty van de Rijn
 Michael Rochester & Carole LeFavre-Rochester

Aaron Davidson's Bar Mitzvah

Michael Davidson & Christi Reardon

Emma Grace Graham's Baby Naming

Steve Graham & Amy van de Rijn Graham

April Yom Ha'atzmaut TGISHabbat Service

Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

Lysander Michaels-Koenig's Bar Mitzvah

Geoffrey & Beverly Michaels

Maxon Raphael's Bar Mitzvah

Michael & Jennifer Raphael

Maxon Raphael's Bar Mitzvah

Paul & Wendy Rosen

Tree of Life**Leaves****In Honor of****Birth of Sosi Shelley**

SHS Board of Directors



*2017—2018
 SHS B'nai
 Mitzvah
 Celebrations*

June 24

Noah Kauderwood

Son of Ira Kauderwood & Peter Kauderwood

September 16

Jenna Makuen

Daughter of David & Rebecca Makuen

October 7

Stephen Stein

Son of Dennis Stein

October 21

Anya Applebaum Licht

Daughter of Rafi Licht & Gabrielle Applebaum

Continued

October 28

Cora Rosin

Daughter of Dan & Anya Rosin

November 4

Jacob Mono

Son of Brian & Jessica Mono

November 25

Harry Feinberg

Son of Dan & Dana Feinberg

December 2

Scotty Jordan

Son of Brent & Leah Jordan

January 6, 2018

Cole Pressman

Son of Craig Pressman and Sandra Lazovitz

March 3

Rachel and Max Ladenson**Anne Ballen Ladenson**

Daughter, and Son of Anne Ballen Ladenson & Michael Landenson

March 10

Sadie Margolin

Daughter of Rachel Margolin

March 17

Raphael Englander

Son of Brian & Juliette Englander

May 26

Nathaniel Stover Steerman

Son of Amy Steerman & Maryann Stover

June 9

Maya Saltzman

Daughter of Matthew & Brooke Saltzman

June 23

Chuck & Nick Schaeffer

Sons of Brett Scheffer & Sarah Rottenberg

Membership Renewal Forms

You will receive your annual Membership Renewal/High Holy Day Information packet in the mail by June 30 or earlier. Please fill out all forms and return them in the enclosed envelope with the required membership dues and holiday related payments. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the office at office@societyhillssynagogue.org or 215.922.6590. Remember, membership renewal fees and previous balances must be paid in order for you to receive your High Holy Day tickets. The deadline for entries to be included in this year's Yizkor Book is July 26.



A Message From Bonni Rubin-Sugarman & Jerry Faich...

It is with heartfelt appreciation that we write this note of thanks to the Society Hill Synagogue community. Jerry and I, Kara and Ryan, and Josh and Shannon want all of you to know how appreciative we are for the warmth and support provided to us as we mourned the loss of my dad, Larry Rubin. The support from our fellow congregants and new friends during the funeral and the subsequent days of shiva were true examples of what a family needs as they move through this process. Our rituals and practices are enormously helpful and comforting, but when they are coupled with the support of a wonderful synagogue community the healing really begins.

A special thank you to Student Rabbi Nathan for leading the shiva minyan at our home and for providing us with another opportunity to further remember my dad.

Please know how happy we are to be a part of the Society Hill Synagogue community.



Social Action

Meeting Immigrant Needs: What Can Society Hill Synagogue Do?

Phyllis Denbo

At the Immigration Shabbaton in December, we learned that more than 65 million people worldwide have been displaced by conflict, the highest level ever recorded. We heard stories of the dangers and difficulties they encounter as they seek safety and stability. And we were told of programs in Philadelphia that are reaching out to refugees and providing much needed services. After the Shabbaton, the Social Action Committee met with members of the congregation to review what we had learned, took a closer look at Philadelphia programs serving immigrants, and explored possible next steps. We agreed that meeting the needs of immigrants is the most complex social justice issue we have ever addressed and so we are reaching out to the members of the congregation before deciding upon an action plan.

In addition to our ongoing advocacy work, the list of possible action plans includes adopting a family or interacting with refugees on a more limited basis, providing services to refugees without personal interaction, and fund raising. These activities are not mutually exclusive. Please check out the survey we created to help us decide what direction to take. Read through the choices carefully and check all options in which you would like to see SHS participate.

While not always the case, there are immigrant families with intense needs that require a committed support team with the time, energy, interest, and expertise to meet those needs. Depending on the family, this could include helping immigrants to learn English, conduct job searches, schedule and get to medical appointments, navigate the city, and/or shop for food and other necessities. Volunteers are also needed to provide social support, companionship, and guidance for interacting with immigrant children's teachers, and/or to help with rent payments. While none of this means that we should not adopt a family, an approach in which many of you have expressed interest, we need to think about it realistically. The ultimate goal is to help the family become self-sufficient. The commitment is for one year. When you complete the survey, please consider the likely capacity of the congregation to fulfill its commitment, particularly with respect to adopting a family.

Copy and paste the following address into your browser:

http://survey.constantcontact.com/survey/a07ee093ioci0y712hg/_tmp/questions

The deadline for completing the survey has been extended to Monday, May 22. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me at prdenbo@gmail.com.



Last **TG**Shabbat Service before the Summer!

May 19

Featuring Joe Oxman and Jud Aaron

Shabbat Dinner following services
Hosted by Irv and Sharon Shapiro, in honor of their 50th
Wedding Anniversary and Ric and Carmen Haymen, in honor of
SHS's graduating seniors.



Here are some photos from this year's Despicable Me-themed Purim Cantata





Hebrew School students enjoy learning about Israel through puzzles and games.





Hebrew School and Hebrew High students, parents, and faculty volunteering at the Jewish Relief Agency (JRA) in northeast Philadelphia, where they put together food packages and then delivered to local Jewish neighbors in need of assistance.

Arts & Culture

A Second Night Seder Recap & an Upcoming Concert

Ellen Fennick, Eleanor Oxman, & Betta Kolansky

1. Second Night Community Pesach Seder

Tuesday, April 11, 2017. Why was this night different from all other nights?

For one thing, it was the night when eighty-five SHS congregants and guests celebrated our third annual Second Night Community Pesach Seder. We each enjoyed our choice of apricot chicken or grilled salmon with mixed vegetables, along with garden salads, side dishes of onions, pickles and tomatoes, and assorted Pesach desserts. Yes, we ate "lotsa" matzah, as well as the other items found on the Seder plate at each dining table.

Student Rabbi Nathan Kamesar led a lively and informative service with opportunities for adults and children to read portions of the Passover story, and at the right time, children searched for the afikomen and found it easily. We finished the Seder with group singing of holiday favorites, such as *Had Gad-yah* and *Ehad Mi Yodea*.

So, why else was this night different?

For the first time, Society Hill Synagogue hosted a refugee family at our Seder. The family, originally from the Congo, were clients of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. A number of congregants were able to meet and converse with the parents and their four children. The youngest children participated in the hunt for the afikomen and were rewarded for their efforts.

We enjoyed our sharing the holiday with our guests, and we will look forward to our fourth annual Second Night Seder in 2018.

2. Join Us for a Concert at the Curtis Center

Join the Arts & Culture Group to attend a concert by Nashirah. This select Jewish choir, of which SHS's own Marty Rosenberg is a member, is holding its annual season concert on Sunday, May 21, at 3 PM, at Field Hall at the Curtis Institute, located at 1726 Locust Street. The concert will feature new and classic masterpieces of the Jewish Choral Repertoire.

Tickets can be purchased by visiting: <https://www.eventbrite.com/d/pa--philadelphia/nashirah/>

Tickets cost \$18 +\$1.98 handling fee. Students with ID will be admitted for free.

If you plan to attend, please email Ellen Fennick (efennick@gmail.com) after you purchase your tickets so that all SHS members can arrange to meet before the concert.



The ADL Walk Against Hate

Bruce Hirsch

The Anti-Defamation League was founded in 1913 with a dual purpose: “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” However, as we all know, anti-Semitism still persists, as well as hatred and bigotry in their other many forms.

In recent months there has been a noticeable change in our country, with bigots feeling freer to express and act on their prejudices. The ADL has long kept track of anti-Semitic incidents and has recently reported that the number from January through March of this year is 86% higher than during the same period last year! Moreover, the number of these incidents in 2016 was more than a third higher than in 2015.

We in Philadelphia are not immune to anti-Semitism, as recently seen in the acts of vandalism at Mt. Carmel Cemetery and the bomb threats to schools and other Jewish institutions. In fact, Pennsylvania is one of the states with the most anti-Semitic activity, and it is increasing. The number of incidents increased by 56% in 2016 over 2015, and the trend is continuing.

Jews are not the only victims of hatred. African Americans, of course, have suffered and still suffer from bigotry. Latinos, those who came with their paperwork in order as well as those who came in under the radar, live in fear of what might happen. There are many refugees from Muslim countries who hope to come to America or are already here, victims of unspeakably horrible events, who are singled out for their beliefs or even their dress and viewed as latent terrorists.

All of these people, Jews and non-Jews, benefit from the activities of the ADL. The Philadelphia regional office of the ADL is active in eastern Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey, and Delaware. It works to identify, expose, and counteract anti-Semitism. It provides resources and support to all groups that are victims of bigotry. It defends civil rights of individuals and groups. It develops and runs programs for schools and other organizations and helps with the education and training of law enforcement personnel. It supports Israel. You can learn more about the Anti-Defamation League and all of its activities in the Philadelphia area by visiting their website at <http://philadelphia.adl.org>.

I know that the members of the Society Hill Synagogue share the same goals as the Anti-Defamation League. On Sunday, May 21, the regional office will hold its annual fundraiser, the Walk Against Hate. I am inviting and encouraging members of the Society Hill Synagogue to join in this fun activity as a way to promote the goals which are so important to all of us. The Walk, which is only 2 miles long, takes place at the Philadelphia Navy Yard.

More information and the about the Walk is available at <http://www.walkagainsthate.org>. You can register at that site. Click on the button when it asks you if you want to join a team and scroll down to Society Hill Synagogue. And please ask your friends, relatives, business associates, strangers you stop on the street, and anybody else you can think of to contribute in Society Hill Synagogue's name. I have set a team goal of \$1000, but I promise you that there will be no objections at all if we exceed that. If you have further questions, please contact me at Bruce@Hirsch.comcastbiz.net.

I look forward to seeing you at the Walk Against Hate. As the slogan goes, “Let's Take a Step in the Right Direction.”

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--|-----|--|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| | Yom Ha'atsmaut | 7:15 AM Minyan 4:15 PM HS | 7 PM Ed Com Mtg 7 PM Adult Ed - The Amidah with Nathan Kamesar | | 5:15 PM Young Families Shabbat 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat & Memorial Plaque Service | Aharei/K'doshim 9 AM Torah Study 10:30 AM Bet Class Service & Lunch |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 9 AM SS 11 AM HS 11:15 AM Adult Ed - I See Bagels with Rafi Licht | | 7:15 AM Minyan 4:15 PM HS | Playschool Parent Conferences 7 PM Adult Ed - The Amidah with Nathan Kamesar | | 6:15 PM Dalet Class Service & Dinner | Emor 9 AM Torah Study 10 AM Shabbat Study with Marjorie Berman 10 AM Services Society Hill Spring Clean Up Day |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| Mother's Day Building Closed | 7 PM ECM | 7:15 AM Minyan 4:15 PM HS | 6:30 PM Past President Group Lite Dinner & Meeting | | 6:15 PM TGIShabbat Featuring Joe Oxman and Jud Aaron | B'har/B'hukkotai 9 AM Torah Study 10 AM Services |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 9 AM SS 9:15 AM Nuts & Bolts 11 AM HS 11:15 AM Adult Ed - I See Bagels with Rafi Licht Last Day of SS | 7 PM BDM | 7:15 AM Minyan 4:15 PM Last Day of HS 5:30 PM Ma'ariv Followed by dinner | 6 PM Lite Dinner 7 PM Annual Congregation Meeting | | Last Day of PS 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service | B'midbar 9 AM Torah Study 10 AM Shabbat Study with Marjorie Berman 10 AM Services |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |
| Building Closed | Memorial Day Building Closed | 7:15 AM Minyan | Shavuot I Office & PS Closed 9:30 AM Service & Yizkor | | | |

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|----------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | | | | Shvuot II Building Closed | 5:15 PM Young Families Shabbat 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service | Naso 9 AM Torah Study 10 AM Service 10 AM Meditative Service |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| 9:15 AM Nuts & Bolts 11:15 AM Nosh & Schmooze | PS Camp Begins | 7:15 AM Minyan | 7 PM Ed Com Mtg | | 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service | B'ha-a lot'kha 9 AM Torah Study 10 AM Services |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| | | 7:15 AM Minyan | Flag Day | | 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service | Sh'lah L'kha 9 AM Torah Study 10 AM Services |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| Father's Day | 7 PM ECM | 7:15 AM Minyan | | | 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service | Korah 9 AM Torah Study 9:30 AM Bar Mitzvah Service of Noah Kauderwood |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | |
| 7 PM Dan Blacksberg Concert | 7 PM BDM | 7:15 AM Minyan | | | 6:15 PM Kabbalat Shabbat Service | |

Kesher

SOCIETY HILL
SYNAGOGUE

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Nathan Kamesar, **Student Rabbi**
Steven Freidrich, **Interim Cantor**
Harry Oxman, **President**
Betty van de Rijn, **Executive Director**
Sahar Oz, **Education Director**
Gloria Parris & Ali Kaplan, **Playschool Co-Directors**
Staci Schwartz, **Kesher Editor**

SOCIETY HILL SYNAGOGUE'S KESHER



Shavuot is coming! From 7 PM on Tuesday, May 30—7 AM on Wednesday, May 31, we will once again be gathering as a community to celebrate Shavuot all together with food, learning, and prayer. This year's event will be at the Gershman Y at Broad and Pine. We look forward to celebrating with you!

For more information and registration, check out <http://centercityjews.org/shavuot/> or our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/events/1765622797082657/.

Suggested donation per adult: \$18—36