

# THE CONNECTION



Summer 2021 Edition



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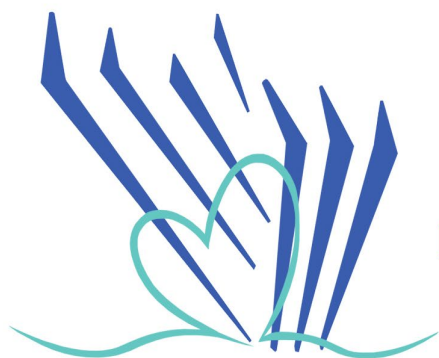
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In-Person. Virtual. Spiritual.  
**Kol Ami.** Here for you in every way.

1923-2021 ~ 97 Years  
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**A Jewish journey is about history.  
Where you are going, and where you have been.  
It is about times, and places, and people.  
It is about quiet moments with oneself and with God.  
It is about joyous moments spent with others.**

Congregation Kol Ami's Jewish journey began in 1923 when the Jewish Community Center of White Plains was formed and land was purchased on Sterling Avenue in White Plains to build a religious school and a temple. As the temple and the school expanded, in 1944 7 ½ acres of land were purchased at Soundview Avenue.

In May 1995 the Jewish Community Center of White Plains changed its name to Congregation Kol Ami, meaning "The Voice of My People".

From the start, and continuing today, our purpose has been to nurture the divine spark within, and to connect each of us to a meaningful Jewish journey.

**Whatever your "Jewish" is, you'll find it at Kol Ami.**

**Here, our members- of every age and with  
diverse backgrounds and identities-  
are our heartbeat.**

**Here, we cultivate relationships  
with family, friends, staff, and clergy.**

**Here, we are rooted in our synagogue, in our community,  
in our country, and in Israel.**

**Here, we celebrate Jewish traditions and culture,  
nourish our souls through music and arts,  
and explore relationships with God.**

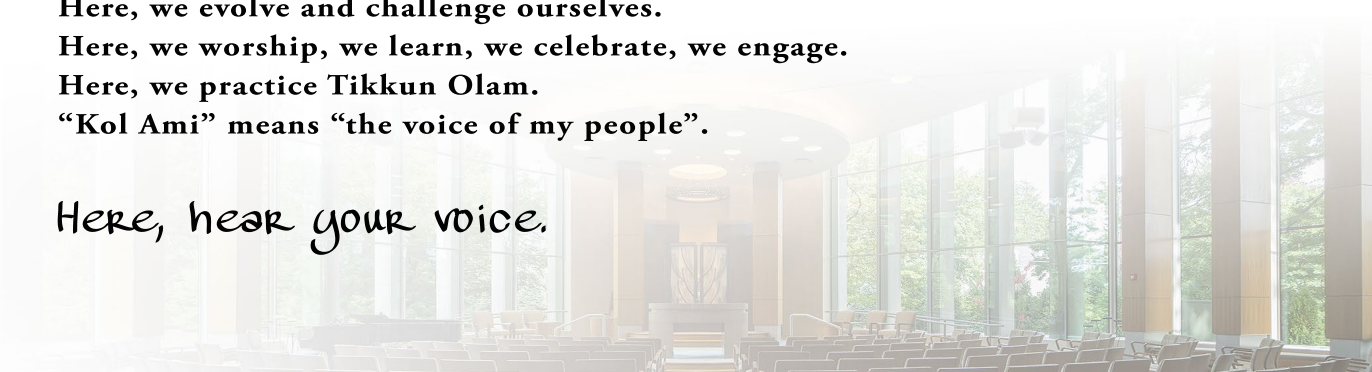
**Here, we evolve and challenge ourselves.**

**Here, we worship, we learn, we celebrate, we engage.**

**Here, we practice Tikkun Olam.**

**"Kol Ami" means "the voice of my people".**

*Here, hear your voice.*



# Weekly Worship Opportunities

## **Fridays 5:00pm Kaddish Gathering**

An in-person outdoor community gathering on Friday evenings for those in mourning or observing a yartzeit to light candles and say Kaddish. Registration and COVID questionnaire is required at: <https://nykolami.org/register>.

## **Fridays 5:30pm Shabbat by the Woods**

A weekly Shabbat Service in story and song for families with young children with Rabbi Shira Milgrom. Join on the front lawn. Registration and COVID questionnaire is required at: <https://nykolami.org/register>. Or online via Zoom click [here](#). Meeting ID: 891 1651 2442 Password: 8FFCbw

## **Friday 6:15pm Kabbalat Shabbat Service**

Our weekly Kabbalat Shabbat Service streamed on our website, Facebook, and Youtube pages from our Main Sanctuary with Rabbi Tom Weiner, Rabbi Shira Milgrom, and Cantor Daniel Mendelson. Click [here](#) to stream the service. Limited Capacity Seating returning to the Main Sanctuary on Friday evenings beginning June 4th. See inside the magazine for further details on this, and on upcoming Outdoor Friday Evening Shabbats.

## **Saturday 10:00am Shabbat Morning Lift**

We welcome you to join Rabbi Tom Weiner, Cantor Daniel Mendelson, Noah Lawrnece, and fellow congregants this summer for a morning of study, music, and prayer. Registration and COVID questionnaire is required at: <https://nykolami.org/register>. The program is held in the Chapel in the Woods. Or via Zoom click [here](#) Zoom Meeting ID: 816 7405 8864 Password: 6fkXyb

## **Saturday 8:00pm Havdallah Evenings**

Our virtual Havdallah services are a beautiful way to end Shabbat. Please check the *This Week* email every Thursday at 10am for upcoming Havdallah services with links and information about evening programs and music that follow. June 19 and July 10.



# Weekly Torah Portions

## June

### **Week ending June 5, 2021 Parashat Sh'lach L'cha Numbers 13:1-15:41**

This week's parasha continues the story of the Israelites wandering through the desert. Moses sends twelve emissaries to scout out the land of Israel. Only two, Joshua and Caleb, return with a message of hope. The other ten spies report that the land is filled with giants, and the people react to their terrifying account with fear and panic. As a result of this behavior, God threatens to wipe out the Children of Israel, but relents when Moses intercedes on their behalf. Instead, God announces that the members of this generation will not be allowed to enter the "promised" land and will wander the desert for another 38 years.

### **Week ending June 12, 2021 Parashat Korach Numbers 16:1-18:32**

Three rebels hatch an ill-fated "coup-d'état" against the leadership of Aaron and Moses in this week's parasha. Korach, Datan, and Abiram challenge Moses' and Aaron's leadership in front of the whole Israelite community. Moses offers the people a choice - remain with Dathan, Abiram, and Korach or separate from them and stand by Moses and Aaron. Those who persist in rebelling face dire punishment. For Dathan, Abiram, and their group, the earth bursts asunder, swallowing them. For Korach and his followers, fire and plague bring death and havoc.

### **Week ending June 19, 2021 Parashat Chukat Numbers 19:1-22:1**

Chukat begins with the death of Miriam - Moses' & Aaron's sister - at Kadesh. When the people complain that they have no water to drink, God instructs Moses to take his rod & order a rock to bring forth water. In his anger against the cantankerous people, instead of ordering the rock to produce water, Moses strikes the rock with his rod. As a result of this action, God tells Moses that he will not be allowed to lead the people into the Land of Israel. This responsibility will ultimately be given to Joshua. Moses' brother Aaron dies at Mount Hor and Aaron's son, Eleazar becomes Aaron's successor.

### **Week ending June 26, 2021 Parashat Balak Numbers 22:2-25:9**

In the parasha of Balak, the king of Moab, persuades the prophet Balaam to curse the Israelites so that he can defeat them and drive them out of the region. However, when Balaam speaks, the words that come out of his mouth bless the Children of Israel instead. He prophesies that Israel's enemies will be defeated, saying "Ma Tovu, ohalecha Ya-akov, mishknotecha Yisrael - How lovely are your tents O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel." The parasha ends with God punishing the Israelites with a plague after an Israelite man consorts with a Moabite woman. The plague ends when Pinchas kills them.

## July

### **Week ending July 3, 2021 Parashat Pinchas Numbers 25:10-30:1**

The parasha begins with God rewarding Pinchas for killing the Israelite and the Midianite woman, who profaned God, with a covenant of peace for all time, and continues with the taking of a second census. Moses allocates the land to each tribe according to its size. The daughters of Zelophehad appeal to Moses to inherit their father's land since their father died leaving no sons. God confirms their claim and instructs Moses to change the laws of inheritance. The parasha concludes with a description of the sacrificial ritual for all festival occasions.

### **Week ending July 10, 2021 Parashat Matot-Masei Numbers 30:2-36:13**

In the first part of this double parasha the laws for making vows are described; and Moses agrees to allow the tribes of Gad and Reuben to stay in the land east of the Jordan rather than enter the land of Israel, as long as they lend their support in settling the promised land. Masei recounts the forty years of journeys (mas'ey) that the Israelites have made since leaving Egypt. The Book of Numbers concludes with Moses providing instructions for conquering the land of Israel, defining its borders, and dividing it among the tribes.

### **Week ending July 17, 2021 Parashat D'varim Deuteronomy 1:1-3:22**

D'varim is the first parasha in the Book of Deuteronomy, which begins a series of speeches by Moses to the Israelites as they are preparing to enter the Land of Israel. In this parasha, Moses, who will not be allowed to enter the land of Israel & will die in Moab, reminds this generation that they are about to take possession of the land that was promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He recounts the route of travel and the challenges, chastisements, and triumphs that occurred along the way.

### **Week ending July 24, 2021 Parashat Va-et'chanan Deuteronomy 3:23-7:11**

In this parasha, Moses' appeal to God to allow him to enter the Land of Israel is again denied. Moses continues his oration to the people, reminding them of the covenant at Sinai and the Ten Commandments, and exhorting them to follow the laws given by God. Specific areas of the land are set aside to serve as cities of refuge for those who commit unintentional homicide.

### **Week ending July 31, 2021 Parashat Eikev Deuteronomy 7:12-11:25**

Moses continues to tell the Israelites that, if they maintain their covenant with God by observing all the commandments, God will make them fruitful and victorious over their enemies; and reminds them of the times that the Israelites disobeyed God's commandments and the consequences that befell them. Moses continues by saying that the land will flow with milk and honey if the people obey God's commandments and teach them to their children.

## August

### **Week ending August 7, 2021 Parashat R'eih Deuteronomy 11:26-16:17**

In this week's parashah, the people are instructed on how they are to enter and live in the land of Israel, and on the behavior expected of them once they have settled there. Rules about sacrifices, tithes, and care for the Levites are discussed, along with regulations for slaughtering and eating meat.

### **Week ending August 14, 2021 Parashat Shoftim Deuteronomy 16:18-21:9**

The Israelites remain on the plateau of Moab, across the Jordan River while Moses communicates God's prescriptions and proscriptions for governance. The parashah opens with the command to appoint judges and the regulations for choosing a leader, including a warning that this leader should follow the laws of Torah faithfully. The Israelites are told that they should pursue justice in all of their dealings.

### **Week ending August 21, 2021 Parashat Ki Teitzei Deuteronomy 21:10-25:19**

Parashat KiTeitzei contains the greatest number of mitzvot of any single Torah portion, 72 in all, dealing with diverse subjects. These laws cover a wide variety of situations including family, animals, property, interaction with non-Israelites, and commerce. The portion concludes with a warning to remember how the Amalekites attacked the weary Israelites in the desert.

### **Week ending August 28, 2021 Parashat Ki Tavo Deuteronomy 26:1-29:8**

Ki Tavo addresses the time when the Israelites will settle in the Land of Israel. The Israelites are instructed to express their gratitude to God for their bountiful harvests and freedom from slavery by tithing ten percent of their crops for the Levite, the stranger, the orphan, and the widow. They are also told that if they obey God's mitzvot faithfully, they will receive every blessing imaginable; and if they do not fulfill their brit with God, many curses will descend upon them.



# Rabbi Shira Milgrom



## PREPARE FOR YOUR PASSOVER SEDER BY TRAVELING TO EGYPT IN MARCH 2022

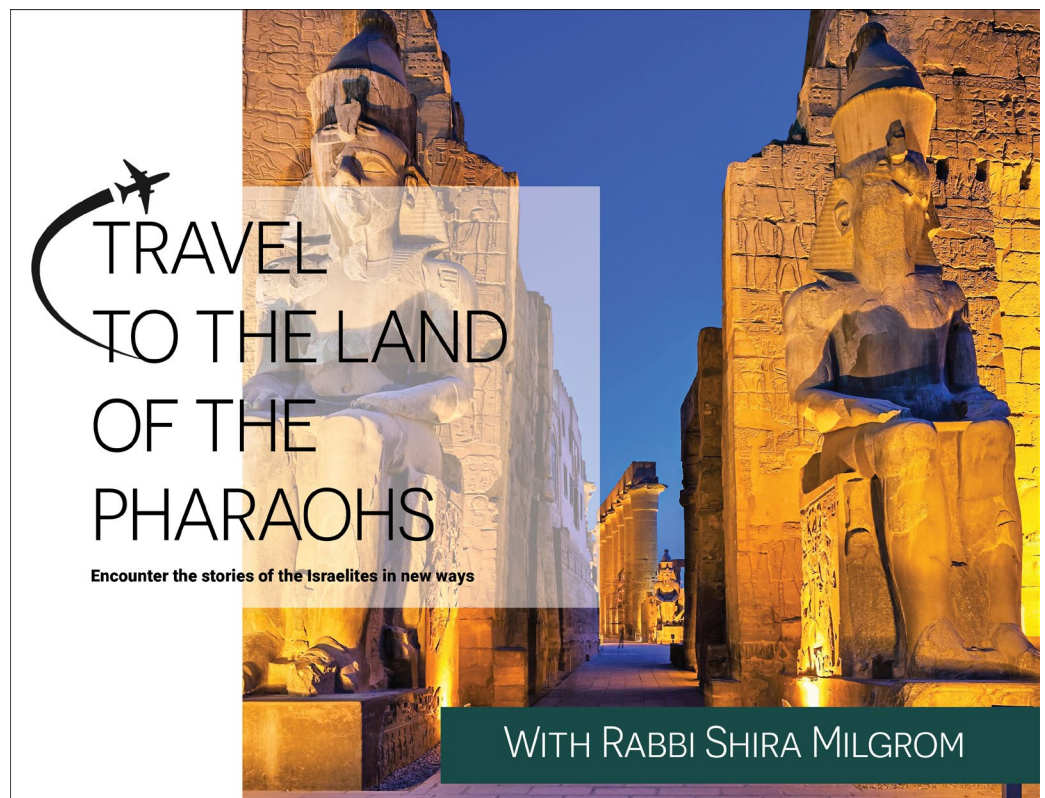
*Shira Milgrom*

In February of 2010, I flew from Tel Aviv to Cairo on El Al, a possibility which still felt somewhat miraculous. I had just left my parents' home in Jerusalem. The next time I saw my father he was deep in the coma that was to end his life. On this visit, my last in-person conversation, my father prepared me for my trip to Egypt. "You will understand Israelite religion better," he said, "when you are in Egypt."

I hope that in this coming year we will all have that opportunity. Whether or not you choose to travel with me to Egypt (**we are so excited the trip is full!**), the whole year itself will be devoted to themes of understanding the place of the Exodus story in our Jewish psyche, the development of the Passover Haggadah, and the many ways that the culture, religion and art of ancient Egypt influenced the development of Israelite religion. The year will be filled with teachers and scholars, visits to the Metropolitan Museum's Egyptian Galleries, the screening of the Philip Glass's opera Akhnaten (as performed by the Metropolitan Opera in 2019) and study of the Biblical texts that frame the stories and memories of the Exodus. I hope that the enrichment that this year provides will add depth and music and images and ideas for your Passover Seders for a long time!

[CLICK HERE](#)

to read the full  
brochure and  
see some of the  
places we will  
be learning  
about





# Rabbi Tom Weiner



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Weiner". The signature is fluid and cursive.

## The Mitzvah (Project) Following the (Bar/Bat) Mitzvah!

On occasion folks ask me, "Hey, do the kids ever follow through with those Mitzvah Projects they do as part of Bar/Bat Mitzvah?" In other words, is it a token one-off? Do they really follow through? Well, yes they do. They most often do wonderful acts of mitzvah that are meaningfully conceived and take real effort. Sometimes the ideas grow from family illness or something else that touches the students deeply from the life of a friend or their own family's history. And beautifully, it is not unusual for them to follow through with their commitment to the project for years to come. The examples are many, but here is just one family I happened to bump into just a week ago at their cousin's bat mitzvah. The family joyfully filled me in on the ongoing work that their daughters have put into these projects of passion. So I share them here for you to see these examples among many of the wonderful ways that our students' Mitzvah Projects can continue way beyond the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

### Genna Handel-

In 2017, I had my bat mitzvah and completed a mitzvah project in which I raised over \$1,000 for Relay For Life of Eastchester, a branch of the American Cancer Society. Since then, I have continued this endeavor and become a Relay for Life team captain and member of the event leadership committee in 2019. Throughout these years, I have taken a more proactive role in planning this community event and was given the responsibility of planning the survivor's Dinner for the 2019 event. This job entailed soliciting food donations from local restaurants, planning food pick-ups, and setting up the dinner for cancer survivors attending Relay For Life. In continuing with my initial fundraising efforts my team and I have amassed over \$30,000 in donations to fund the American Cancer Society's cancer research and valuable services given to cancer patients and caregivers by this organization. Although the covid-19 has slowed our fundraising efforts, I had the great opportunity to apply and be selected as an inaugural member for the American Cancer Society Lower Hudson and Fairfield County Youth Board this January. With this group, I am joined with like-minded individuals who all share the same passion and motivation to bring awareness to preventative measures against cancer and advocating for change through fundraising. I am so glad to have completed my mitzvah project and could not have envisioned how this effort would become a greater part of who I am.

### Julia Handel-

Hi! My name is Julia Handel and a little over 2 years ago, I had my bat mitzvah at Kol Ami. For my mitzvah project, I wanted to help animals and give back to the local rescue shelter where I adopted my dog, over 13 years ago. Since I was too young to volunteer at the rescue, I came up with a creative idea to raise money for this organization. I combined my love for cooking with my desire to help the rescues by making homemade dog treats. Every week, I walked around the neighborhood asking if anyone would like to purchase any dog treats. I sold 4 dog treats for \$1.50, and in a little over a year, I raised around \$2,500. I continued selling dog treats after my Bat Mitzvah but had to stop when the pandemic hit, a little over a year ago. My passion for animals still continues and I have found other ways to give back to the rescue population. I have taken a leadership role as Vice President of my school's Animal Rights Club. Being part of my school's Animal Rights Club, I have held numerous toy drives and bake sales to benefit the rescues in need. I hope that as the community opens up again, I will be able to go back to what I love and help the rescues.





## Cantor Daniel Mendelson

A handwritten signature of Daniel Mendelson in black ink, featuring a stylized 'D' and 'M'.

**A few Fridays ago**, at an outdoor ECP Shabbat singalong, a precocious little girl sitting in the front row yelled, “Cantor Danny, we know all your songs already!” I laughed and said, “The cantor needs new material!”

In congregational life, it’s a continual balancing act to offer the community prayer and energy that is both familiar and engagingly new. Full disclosure, I made sure to learn a new ditty or two for the kids the next Friday morning and it paid off nicely. I always want to make things interesting when leading prayer of any kind. That said, it’s important to have a musical blueprint that folks can count on throughout the yearly cycle. The same goes for our amazing ECP children.

We know what our new-pandemic-normal has forced us to give up as a community. We’ve also discovered some virtual programming benefits along the way. For every congregant who’s mentioned the difficulty of being stuck-at-home for services, there’s at-least one or two people who never realized how spiritually enhancing it could be to **daven in your pj’s**.

We keep talking and hearing about the **hybrid model** of worship. Truthfully, synagogue life has always dictated a hybrid structure. A conversation is underway about finding the right camera placement in our sanctuary to enhance the at-home experience, without distracting from our newly reinstated in-person worship. We’ve been addressing you via camera lense for the last year, and will now have to learn to **play to both audiences**. Recently, we had a laptop opened up on a chair outside, so I could interact with ECP children who couldn’t be in-person, while engaging with the rest of the school for Shabbat singing. And not too long after that, I was tasked with introducing some new tunes, to compliment the good-old Shabbat ditties that haveworked for years.

We are constantly using what we know and are comforted by and placing fresh ingredients into the mix, to see if we can reach that new normal. The girl in the front row at ECP Shabbat reminded me that the normal wasn’t new anymore. I took my zetz with pride!

Wishing all of you a rejuvenating and peaceful summer!



Hank Rouda

## President Hank Rouda

With apologies to The Grateful Dead, what a long, strange year it's been! I could write about how hard it's been (it has been) or the things we've missed out on (and there are lots) or the changes that we've needed to make just to keep going (again, lots). But we've seen plenty of those articles and heard plenty of those remarks. Instead, let's focus on how resilient and strong we've all been and how, as a community, we've stayed together and helped each other.

As we looked back on the past fiscal year (keep in mind that the temple's year is July 1 – June 30), we were amazed at the creativity of so many from our community who did what they thought was necessary to help those in need. Our juniors, led by Talia Levenson and Sam Kroin, helped found the "Juniors for Seniors". What started out as an idea to bring food to some in our community who might be alone has morphed into an intergenerational model of communication and connection. It was so heartwarming to see how the Juniors sought out the Seniors with whom they'd been in touch when they could finally see each other in person at our first Lot Shabbat of the year. Speaking of the Lot Shabbats, even the news organizations figured out that we had something special when they featured us on the Channel 7 news. While that may have been one of our higher profile activities, there were plenty of other equally important moments that ensured that we remain connected to each other and to the temple. Our myriad drive-bys afforded all of us a few moments of connection, while the Zoom Galis with the clergy provided the same thing but in the virtual world. We asked you in the survey that we sent out last month if you felt more less engaged to Kol Ami since the outbreak of the pandemic. The vast majority of the respondents said that they felt more connected and engaged because of all the efforts that the community, staff and clergy have made to find so many ways to make that connection. And those of you who felt less connected acknowledged that, while great efforts had been made to find ways to reach you, that you wanted and needed that personal touch.

Our Gala, Kol Ami's Big Night In, was a huge success! Not only was the talent unbelievable, but you could see the joy as our Broadway performers sang together with other people in the same room, most for the first time in over a year. Thank you to Mairi Dorman-Phaneuf for arranging the talent. Alex Hopkins, as usual, was a terrific host. Our Gala Chairs, Joele Levenson and Jenny Goldban, did an unbelievable job of making sure that the night was fun and financially successful. And you all responded! We raised over \$160,000 to "fund our future"! But the biggest thanks goes to all our Pandemic Heroes. We can never repay all that you've done to keep us safe and sane.

Yes, it's been a long, strange year, but it's also been a year of growth and commitment, of rebirth and renewal and of flexibility and strength. As we look ahead, I'm excited to work with our new Board and our new Officers, Judy Sarch and David Seif. It's been an honor and a pleasure to work with David Okun as our Treasurer and we are all indebted to him for his hard work, creativity and fiscal discipline. Several years ago, we amended the By-Laws to create the position of Chief Legal Officer and I'm thrilled that Michael Zweig will be the first person to fill that role. Michael is a true consigliere (and not the Tony Soprano/Silvio Dante kind). His steady and insightful leadership will be invaluable to our Board and staff in the times to come.

I cannot express how much it means that you have entrusted in me the role of President of this truly special k'hilah kedoshah, this holy community. Together, we will move from strength to strength as we continue the work of tikkun olam, of healing the world.





## Executive Director Jess Lorden

*Jess Lorden*

During my tenure as a lawyer for a large Wall Street firm, a senior partner told me that I would not be successful if I continued to prioritize my family before my career. It was devastating to hear at the time. In retrospect I am grateful to that partner because that statement became the impetus for me to pursue an opportunity to join IBM, where I enjoyed a long and wonderful career. When one door closes another door opens. As I write this, we are in the midst of the seven weeks between Passover and Shavuot when we count the Omer. The idea of counting each day represents spiritual preparation and anticipation for the giving of the Torah by God on Mount Sinai at the beginning of the month of Sivan. Just as a child often counts the days until the end of school, or Dave and I count the days until we see our adult children, the Jewish community counts up these 50 days as a sign of our excitement at once again receiving the Torah. The period of the Omer is also a time when we strive to grow and mature in our spirituality. It is a time to look inward, set high goals for ourselves, and then methodically strive to reach those goals. While I am by nature a grateful person, during the Omer I make a concerted effort to consciously acknowledge something or someone for which I am grateful on a daily basis. As someone who likes to have plans to which I can look forward, staying present in the moment a spiritual challenge. The period of counting the Omer, is a time for me to particularly focus on this spiritual challenge.

The poem "The Guest House" by Sufi philosopher and Muslim scholar Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Rumi ("Rumi"), uses the idea of a house guest as a metaphor that each day we have the opportunity to welcome something new into our lives, even if it is unexpected.

### **The Guest House**

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.  
A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.  
Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.  
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,  
meet them at the door laughing,  
and invite them in.  
Be grateful for whoever comes,  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

The poem is a reminder to meet the thoughts, experiences, and emotions passing through us with courage, warmth, and respect. For me, the poem elicits the same emotion as the counting of the Omer. Conscious gratitude for the obvious blessings in our lives. Gratitude even for unexpected experiences and disappointments because they too can lead to something great. Wishing each of you good and new experiences and the state of mind to recognize and appreciate them.

# Religious School Director Pam Pass



*Pam Pass*

The Religious School had a spectacular year, filled with creativity, innovation, and flexibility. I couldn't have asked more of our Religious School teachers—they responded spectacularly to the changed and constantly changing conditions, even with their own worries and families to contend with.

We pivoted nicely to take advantage of our new circumstances, which we – staff and teachers – considered opportunities for new ways to teach, delight, and create positive experiences. Our students thrived this year, and we were able to meaningfully connect with each other and the larger Kol Ami community.

So many contributed to our success—clergy, staff, parents and Kol Ami congregants all dedicated their time and talents to our school. Here are just a few highlights:



- **In-Person Outdoor classes:** We were one of a handful of Reform Religious schools in Westchester to offer in-person learning.
- **Online Learning:** Vibrant online classes through the winter via Zoom, with teachers taking advantage of a plethora of online resources
- **Small Group Hebrew Classes for Grades 4-6:** Launched this year, students moved forward in their Hebrew learning at a tremendous pace, strong connections were made between teachers and students, teachers customized lessons for each group, friendships developed among the students in the groups, and students were very engaged and felt their progress.
- **Full School Hanukkiyah STEM Project**
- **Grade 1 Sanctuary Tour:** Imagine Rabbi Shira in a GoPro!
- **Schoolwide Kabbalat Shabbat Service Scavenger Hunt**
- **Kol Ami-wide Hamantaschen Baking:** Religious School families, ECP families, and many other congregants joined for a morning of inter-generational hamantaschen baking.
- **Kol Ami Congregational Yom HaShoah Service:** Led by our 8th graders.
- **Grade 7 Electives:** Jewish Values in Movies, Shabbat-at-Home, Mentoring, Helping the Hungry, Activism, Shabbat Greeters, and more!
- **The Religious School Parent Network** had a very successful year, thanks to the sure leadership of co-Chairs Amy Goldstein and Charlene Bodner and our remarkable and dedicated volunteers– Havdallah S'ips 'n S'mores, Mah Jongg Lessons/Games, Presidents' Day Monday Mitzvah Activity, College Advising Workshop, Spirituality & Post Traumatic Growth Workshop.





# Early Childhood Director Merav Veetal



*Merav Veetal*

Every year, the children in the ECP celebrate Yom Ha'atzmaut by "hopping on a plane" and flying to Israel. Typically, parent volunteers come and help with set-up and clean-up, they supervise the stations, passport control, food preparation and airplane, and help create a festive environment for the children to celebrate.

We had our hesitations this year. Questioned if we can pull it off, but with some creative thinking and planning, and a lot of help from temple, staff members, custodial members, and temple volunteers the ECP celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut in the most memorable way!



The children packed their bags, grabbed their passports and went through passport control.



They boarded "an El Al plane"



They watched a short clip from Shalom Sesame as Temple Staff acted as their pilot and flight attendant.



Fishing in Eilat



Archeological digging in the sand



Planting a tree in the Jewish National Forest



Visited the Dead Sea to see the salt content in the water and experiment with a sink and float



Luxuriating at the famous Kol Ami Dead Sea Spa with natural mineral mud



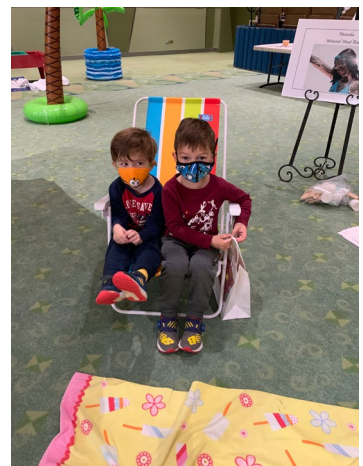
Placing prayer notes in The Kotel



Creating flower necklaces



Making stained glass windows like those in Hadassah Hospital.



Relaxing at the beach



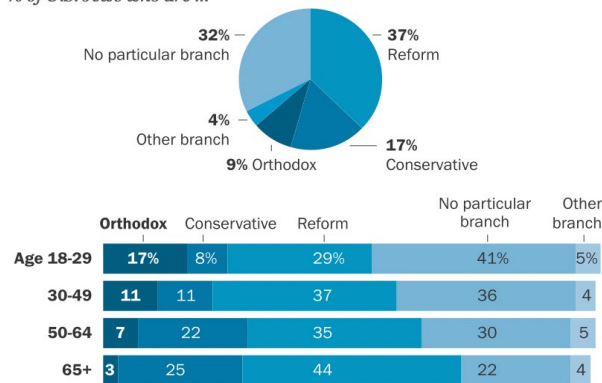


# Director of Youth Engagement Barak Stockler

*Barak Stockler*

## Compared with older Jews, youngest Jewish adults include larger shares of both Orthodox and people with no denominational identity

% of U.S. Jews who are ...



Note: Those who did not answer are not shown. Figures include both Jews by religion and Jews of no religion. Virtually all Orthodox Jews (99%) and Conservative Jews (99%) in the survey are Jews by religion, as are 88% of Reform Jews. Most Jews who are unaffiliated with a branch are Jews of no religion (65%).  
Source: Survey conducted Nov. 19, 2019-June 3, 2020, among U.S. adults.  
"Jewish Americans in 2020"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Pew conducted a fantastic study of America's Jewry in 2020; if you haven't read the report, I encourage you to do so now and check it out for yourself. I wanted to take this time to briefly go over some of the statistics that Pew was able to get at in their study – and how that relates to our youth now.

Right off the bat let's look at our inter-Jewish demographics – what denominations and practices do we follow? This is an interesting question and follows a trend we have been seeing for a few years now. Younger Jews are increasingly on opposite sides of the spectrum – either Orthodox or secular (what the survey calls "no particular branch"). For reference, 37% of Jewish adults identify with the reform movement, 17% conservative, 9% Orthodox, and 32% secular, and 4% various smaller branches. What might not be surprising here is that although 67% of Jews affiliate with a branch of Judaism, only 35% are or have a member of their family who is a member of a synagogue.

Another thing the study points out, without going into the numbers, is that "Compared either with U.S. Christians or with the adult public overall, U.S. Jews are far less likely to say that religion is important in their lives".

This is because, ostensibly, Judaism is not really a religion – and this is reflected heavily by Pew. Jews identified religion, ancestry, culture, or a combination of the three, as what being Jewish is about. This is not to mention that religion was chosen less than the other two – 36% vs ~55%.

This is also reflected in what Jews identify as being essential to being Jewish is – 76% of Jews marked "Remembering the Holocaust" and 72% marked "Leading an ethical and moral life."

For those who were at our confirmation service, this would be no surprise. As pointed out in Noah Tirschwell's D'var Torah – the threads that connect the two confirmation classes around raising Jewish kids is all about being good people and Tikun Olam. The kids did not mention Jewish tradition, holidays, or even getting Bar Mitzva'd.

This is to say that our kids are increasingly identifying, once again as Noah so eloquently pointed out, with morality and cultural truths of our religion, including the ten commandments. That our kids learn from the teachings of our synagogue culture should be commended. Trips like the Religious Action Center to D.C. are popular among our teens for a reason. It is why our Be the Light committee is so popular. It is why our push for Racial Justice and education over the summer was so popular.

I would like to leave us with a thought about the mixed reception of this trend. While I find it commendable that younger Jews find things like "remembering the Holocaust" and Tikun Olam important. I am increasingly worried about the drastic increase in secular Jews and the lack of importance of tradition and practice. While we continue to see the evolution of whatever "American Judaism" (or "diaspora Judaism" for that matter) is, I hope that we can instill a robust understanding and appreciation for some of the traditions we have fought for over the years in these future generations of Jews as well.

## Most Jews say remembering the Holocaust, leading an ethical and moral life are essential to being Jewish

% of U.S. Jews who say \_\_\_\_\_ is an essential part of what being Jewish means to them

	NET Jewish %	Jews by religion %	Jews of no religion %
Remembering the Holocaust	76	81	63
Leading an ethical and moral life	72	81	47
Working for justice and equality in society	59	63	47
Being intellectually curious	56	58	49
Continuing family traditions	51	61	24
Caring about Israel	45	52	27
Having a good sense of humor	34	36	28
Being a part of a Jewish community	33	40	12
Eating traditional Jewish foods	20	23	11
Observing Jewish law (halakha)	15	19	3

Source: Survey conducted Nov. 19, 2019-June 3, 2020, among U.S. adults.  
"Jewish Americans in 2020"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER



# B'nai Mitzvah



Our students this year are learning and celebrating in a variety of ways! We look forward to wishing them Mazal Tov on their big days. Whether in small groups at the synagogue, or via digital gatherings, we know how hard they have worked and what an amazing milestone they have come to.

## Blake Feinstein

Son of Laurie and Dave Feinstein and brother to Emma and Shane, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on June 5, 2021. He is in 7th grade at Edgemont Jr./Sr. High School in Greenburgh. He enjoys creative writing and filmmaking, and plays piano. For his mitzvah project, Blake used his talents to create and edit a video clip with fellow classmates to raise funds for devices for remote learning and at-home technology for students in need. He is excited to share his special day with friends and family.



## Jake Menell

Son of Eric Menell and Stephanie Golden and brother to Alex, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on June 5, 2021. He is in 7th grade at Scarsdale Middle School. Jake loves spending his summers at Camp Mah-Kee-Nac in the Berkshires. Jake enjoys playing basketball and following professional and college sports. He was very happy to get a pandemic puppy, Flynn. He is excited to share his bar mitzvah with friends and family via live stream.



## Allie Elisabeth Garelick

Daughter of Deborah and David Garelick and younger sister to Daniel and Benjamin, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on June 5th, 2021. She is a 7th grader at Highlands Middle School in White Plains. Allie likes adventure and thrills. She loves skiing, ice skating and amusement park rides. She plays lacrosse for Highlands Middle School. She has a great sense of humor and is very funny. She is musical and likes to sing and play the piano and the trombone. For her mitzvah project, Allie volunteered filling bags of food for Feeding Westchester. She is also volunteering at The Kids Klostet. Allie is excited to share her special day with friends and family via live stream.



## Phoebe Meizlik

Daughter of Corey and Alan Meizlik and sister to Max, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on June 12, 2021. She is a 7th grader at Scarsdale Middle School. In her free time, Phoebe enjoys experimenting in the kitchen, playing sports like field hockey and softball, and hanging out with her friends. Her lifelong dream of having a dog was finally realized last summer when her family got their pandemic puppy, Rudy the cavapoo. Phoebe lives "10 for 2" and spends the school year looking forward to her summers at Camp Westmont in the Poconos. For her mitzvah project she has been leading Zoom tutoring sessions for a young student through the organization Bake Back America, an experience that she finds very rewarding. After this crazy year of Covid, Phoebe is especially grateful that she will be able to share her milestone in person with close family as well as virtually with extended family and friends.





### **Eliana Lieber**

Feels honored to be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on June 12, 2021. She is in 7th grade at Highlands Middle School in White Plains. At school, Eliana is involved in student government and the student newspaper, among other clubs, and loves to sing with the Highlands Select Choir. She is a senior member of The Techno Girls, an all-female robotics team, and very active in Girl Scouts. For her mitzvah project, Eliana combined the leadership learned through Girl Scouts with her love of reading. She taught younger girls about the importance of charity to help those in need, and organized a book drive to benefit local charities that work with kids to improve literacy. Eliana, her proud parents Jaime and Hal Lieber, and her brother Stuart are looking forward to celebrating with family and close friends after so long a time apart, as Eliana becomes part of Kol Ami's adult community.

### **Will Maister**

Son of Jeanette Leeds and Dominic Maister and brother to Jackie, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on June 12, 2021. He is in 7th grade at Edgemont Junior High. Will loves spending his summers at Camp IHC in Pennsylvania and plays MLS academy soccer with New York Soccer Club. He also plays baseball for Elmsford Little League Juniors Division along with the Bulldogs travel team. For his mitzvah project, Will has been involved in Feeding Westchester. Over the past year Will has been diligently learning his torah portion with his parents and tutor and is looking forward to sharing his special day with his friends and family.



### **Blakely Helena Sapirstein**

Daughter of Amy and Jared Sapirstein and big sister to Keaton, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on Saturday, June 19, 2021. Blakely is in 7th grade Butler at Scarsdale Middle School. Blakely rows on the crew team for City Island Rowing and plays goalie for White Plains. During the summer, Blakely attends sleep away at Camp Lenox. Blakely has worked hard and enjoyed learning her Torah portion and can't wait to share her special day with her family and friends, both in person and virtually!

### **Daisy Gilmore**

Daughter of Alison and Matthew Gilmore, sister of Caroline Gilmore, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on June 19, 2021. Daisy is an eighth grader at Edgemont Junior-Senior High School. Outside of school, she spends her free time kickboxing, designing clothing and hanging out with her friends. For her mitzvah project, Daisy led several craft activities for the children of the Coachman Family Shelter. She is looking forward to her special day and thankful for the support of the Kol Ami community.





We are thrilled to  
announce our  
return to in-person  
Shabbat Worship in  
the sanctuary on  
Friday evenings

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Space is limited, reservations required

June 4th  
Registrations opens:  
10am on May 27th

June 18th  
Registration opens:  
10am on June 10th

To join us please go to:  
[www.nykolami.org/register](http://www.nykolami.org/register)

And look for other additional  
information about registrations  
for Friday night outdoor  
shabbat services for  
June 25th and July 2nd.



We are so excited to  
welcome you back



# Summer 2021



Live Outdoor  
Concerts in  
July and August with  
Cantor Danny Mendelson  
and Guests

Look for dates coming soon!

## “KA RETREAT AT HOME”

SATURDAY, JUNE 19TH, 2021  
3:00-9:00PM

Unplug & Reconnect with Friends &  
Family:  
Community Programs,  
Cocktails/Coketails, Dinner/Picnic,  
Havdalah & Concert with Cantor Danny

More info to come.....





# SHABBAT IN THE LOT

## Congregation Kol Ami

### Friday, June 25 and July 2 6:15pm

Join us on the front lawn of Kol Ami and enjoy a beautiful evening of Shabbat services outdoors. For those who prefer to worship at home, our service will still be live streamed. Please note there will be no access to the inside of the temple building or bathrooms.

Masks and Social Distancing Required  
Event is weather permitting



Register now at:  
[www.nykolami.org/register](http://www.nykolami.org/register)

# We are collecting for a 2nd Bench!

Dear Fellow Congregants,

Plastic waste is polluting our planet! Let's do our part to reduce its impact. Your Green Team is leading the effort to get a **SECOND BENCH** for Kol Ami by donating our used plastic for recycling. Trex is a company that makes wood-looking material out of recycled plastic. Their products are used for decking, furniture and playgrounds. To qualify, we must donate over 500 pounds of plastic over the next 6 months. The Food Pantry is collecting all of its plastic wrap for this goal!



Please help us once again by bringing your clean plastic to Kol Ami. It can have paper labels still attached, but no food residue. The flyer below details what is recyclable.

There will be 2 bins set up at Kol Ami - one outside the gym and one outside the sanctuary main entrance. Thank you for your participation!

Please help us by continuing to bring your plastics (as described in the flyer) to the collection boxes outside the Kol Ami Gym.

Please also be considerate to your two schleppers, Pam Millian and Mary Ann Latona Nadler, and put all your plastic together in one tied bag before putting it in the bin.

The plastic must also be cleaned of food. Thank you!

**RECYCLE BEYOND THE BAG**

Recycle your household bags & wrap into Trex's Earth-friendly composite decking and railing!

**FROM THE STORE**

- ✓ Produce bags
- ✓ Store bags
- ✓ Ice bags

**FROM YOUR PANTRY**

- ✓ Ziploc® & other reclosable bags
- ✓ Cereal box liners
- ✓ Case overwrap
- ✓ Bread bags

**FROM YOUR FRONT DOOR**

- ✓ Newspaper sleeves
- ✓ Dry cleaning bags
- ✓ Bubble wrap
- ✓ Plastic e-commerce mailers

Plastics must be clean, dry and free of food and organic residue

**NexTrex**

[trex.com/recycling](http://trex.com/recycling) 1-800-Buy-Trex





# **Pride Shabbat June 18, 2021 Pride Shabbat with Captain Ofer Erez, “The first transgender IDF officer in Israel’s history.”**

**Captain Ofer Erez is the Director of Public Affairs at Israel Religious Action Center  
on the Board of Directors of the Israel LGBTQ+ Task Force  
and a Captain (reserve) at the Gender Affairs Department, IDF**

Ofer, 27, grew up in Kfar Menachem in the south of Israel. Born a female, at age 16 he found the courage to share with his family that he didn't identify to the gender to which he was born and came out as transgender.

Ofer is the first openly transgender officer ever to serve in the Israel Defense Forces. During his army service, he led a historical change with regard to the regulation on the conscription of transgenders, becoming an advisor on LGBTQ-related issues to the IDF, as well as for other foreign countries.

**He will be joining us live at Congregation Kol Ami from Israel at  
Kabbalat Services on June 18th at 6:15pm. Live Stream at:  
<https://nykolami.org/watch-our-services-live>.**

**#nykolami**



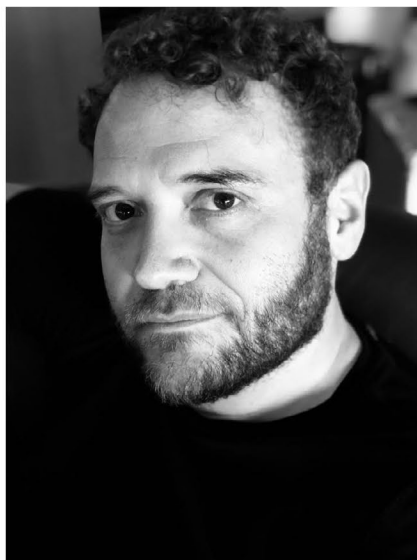


# Explorations in Jewish Music Havdalah and Broadway Night June 19th at 8pm

Via **LIVE STREAMING** at  
<https://nykolami.org/watch-our-services-live>

The songs and musicals of Jason Robert Brown have been a high point of musical theatre for the past 25 years. Shows such as 'Parade', 'Songs for a New World' and '13' have explored themes such as racism, love and loss and the joy and anxieties of adolescence. Join musical director Adam Ben-David as he explores the inter connectivity of Jewish themes in these musicals.

With performances by Broadway stars Jarrod Spector (Jersey Boys, Beautiful) and Kelli Barrett (Fosse/Verdon, Doctor Zhivago) and Cantor Sheera Ben-David of Temple Sholom in Chicago, experience the majesty and melody of one of Broadway's most important theatrical writers.



**ADAM BEN-DAVID** has been living his "bucket list" dream of accompanying Mandy Patinkin in concert since 2016. He has been active as an arranger, music director, conductor and pianist on Broadway for the past 25 years. Adam's credits include: The Book of Mormon, Jersey Boys, Spring Awakening, Wicked, High Fidelity, The Light in the Piazza, Bombay Dreams, Aida, and Once Upon a Mattress. He has accompanied numerous artists including Kelli O'Hara, Jarrod Spector, James Taylor, Patti LuPone, and Megan Hilty. Adam is currently composing a theatrical adaptation of the children's classic From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler. He is a graduate of the Juilliard School.





# MEN'S STUDY GROUP

**Ethical Masculinity: Discussing and Celebrating Being a Jewish Man in Today's World**  
**WITH RABBINIC INTERN NOAH LAWRENCE**

The "Season Finale" of our 2020-21 sessions is on Sunday morning June 13th, 10-11:15am, via Zoom together. Whether you've joined before or are coming for the first time, come join us for discussion in good company.

## Kol Ami's men's study group has been renewed for a "second season"!

Following last year's sessions on the Biblical era, from Joseph to David, "Season 2" will continue along the Jewish timeline to the era of the Talmud and the classical rabbis, broadly spanning the 1st century BCE through the 8th century CE.

We'll encounter such figures as:

- Hillel, and what motivated him to sum up the Torah to a convert-to-be standing on one foot
- the brawny former bandit and gladiator Reish Lakish, and what happened when he decided to study with the great Rabbi Yochanan and become a rabbi
- Rabbi Akiva, his brilliant skills of interpretation, and the purposes for which he believed they should be used

Come join us on monthly Sunday nights – think of it as a Talmud nightcap – as we continue to engage with the stories of classic Jewish men from throughout the ages, and to envision how they speak to our moment, together in good company.

**Join us on Zoom.**  
**Meeting ID: 997 150 3155 Password: Mezuzah**

With appreciation to Gene Kava for his initiative





# Saturday Morning Lift Summer 2021

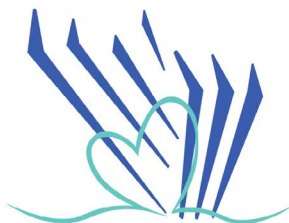
Join Rabbi Tom Weiner, Cantor Danny Mendelson, Noah Lawrence, Lisa Borowitz, and others for our Summer Series on Saturday mornings for study, teaching, music, and prayer.

Beginning at 10am, in the Chapel in the Woods

Go to [www.nykolami.org/register](http://www.nykolami.org/register) to join in-person.

To join virtually via Zoom use Meeting ID: 810 5241 6448

Password: xTjum8



In-Person. Virtual. Spiritual.  
**Kol Ami.** Here for you in every way.





**Saturday, July 10  
8pm**

## **Havdalah and Program “What’s Jewish About The American Songbook”**

In this program the group explores the influence that Jewish composers such as George Gerwshin, Irving Berlin, Jerome Kern and others, had in creating the canon of songs known as the “Great American Songbook”. These songs were the soundtrack to the American dream myth in the 20th century. The group will present their interpretations of popular songs from that era and discuss the Jewish values hidden within the music of these composers.

### *With Jazz Without Borders*

Jazz Without Borders is a product of the vibrant and multicultural New York jazz scene, where Israeli born musicians have had a strong presence in recent decades. Co-lead by saxophonist Nir Naaman & drummer Nadav Snir-Zelniker and joined by pianist Eldad Zvulun and bassist Daniel Ori, all band members are active and in-demand musicians on the scene. The group is set to explore the common grounds of jazz traditions, Jewish and Israeli music. With concerts and workshops all over the tristate area, the group brings a dynamic event, both entertaining and educational, to a wide variety of audiences.



**On the front lawn at Congregation Kol Ami**



# In-Person or Virtually, we are keeping busy at Kol Ami!



Our garden was back in full swing this spring! Can't wait to see what grows this summer.

From virtual baby namings to in-person Adult B'nai Mitzvahs, Confirmation, and our 2nd/3rd Grade Torah Projects... so many simchas to celebrate!

















# Pointing with Pride



a Amaro's art is one of the submissions to a project called Dispatches from Quarantine.  
i Amaro via Alexandra Zapruder

Historian Alexandra Zapruder wanted to document what the young people of today are going through, so she asked a number of students to send her diary entries. The project, called Dispatches from Quarantine, launched in April 2020, and those questions were explored and answered through all sorts of mediums — like the stringing of words, the strokes of a paintbrush or to the strums of a ukulele.

Kol Ami's Sam Kofman writes about sharing the Internet with four other members of his family, and the stress of submitting a paper while the Internet keeps giving out. Click the link below to read the full article.

<https://www.npr.org/2021/04/16/986927761/dispatches-from-quarantine-how-young-people-are-documenting-history>

## The Scarsdale Inquirer

### McCormacks awarded Edgemont's Silver Bowl

By NICHOLAS PERRONE May 3, 2021 Updated May 5, 2021 0



Members of the Edgemont Community Council officially recognized Betsy and Tom McCormack as the recipients of the 2021 Silver Bowl — the council's Distinguished Community Service Award — during the ECC's annual meeting April 21, held virtually for the second year in a row.

Click the link below to read the full article.

[https://www.scarsdaleneews.com/top\\_stories/mccormacks-awarded-edgemont-s-silver-bowl/article\\_257fa890-ac0b-11eb-b9b5-3b75da17f534.html](https://www.scarsdaleneews.com/top_stories/mccormacks-awarded-edgemont-s-silver-bowl/article_257fa890-ac0b-11eb-b9b5-3b75da17f534.html)



Nu-Way Cleaners and Tailors in White Plains, New York, has been owned and operated by Kol Ami congregants from the Bayliss family since 1945 and a GreenEarth® Affiliate since 2009. We were inspired to see them featured on Fox News opening up about the hurdles themselves and their industry have had to tackle over the past year.

Click the link below to read the full article.

<https://video.foxnews.com/v/6233655151001#sp=show-clips>





# KOL AMI

## YEAR IN REVIEW

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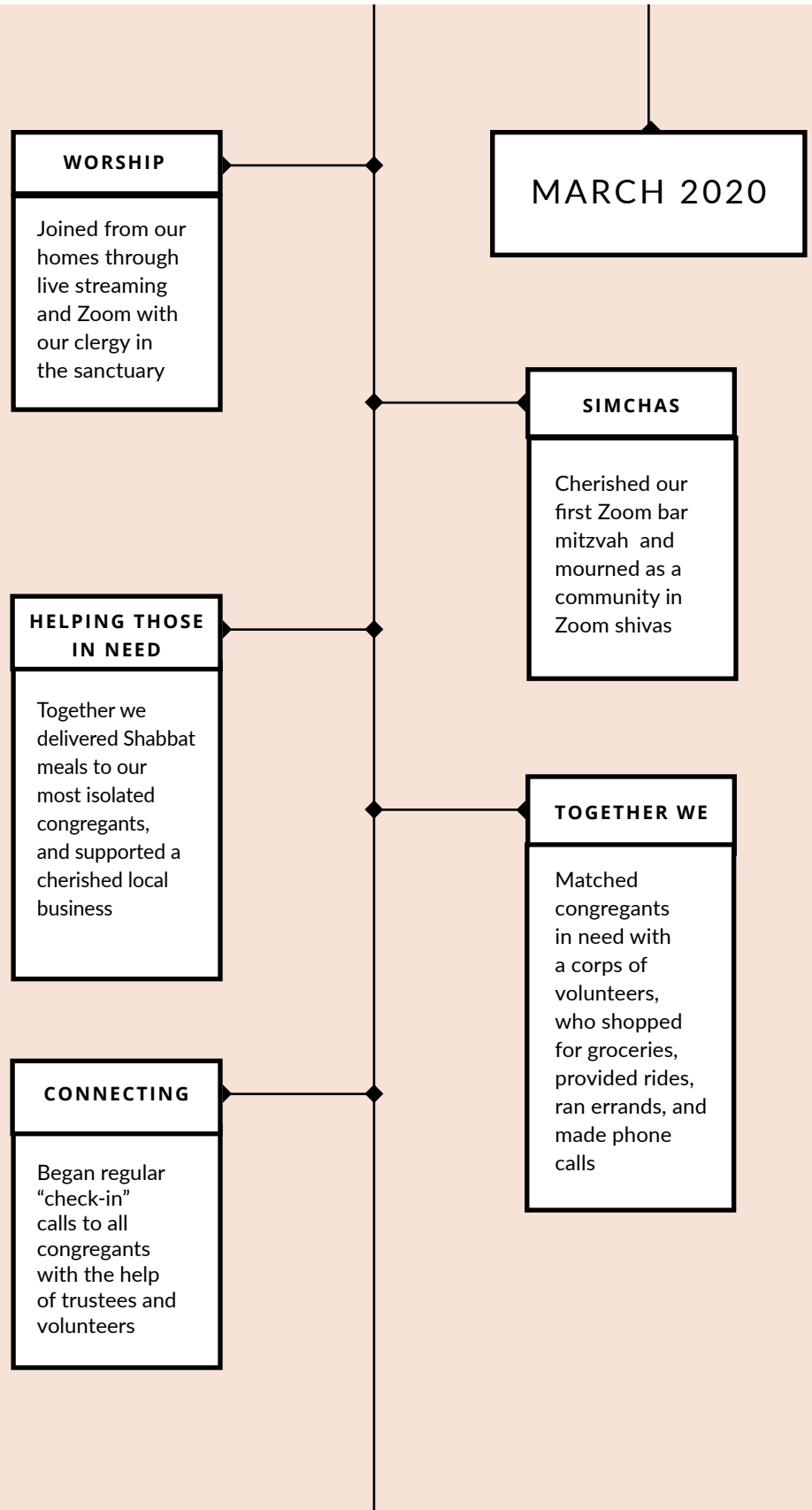
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2020-2021

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Over the past year, we — the Kol Ami community — have come together like never before, literally and figuratively. We found new pathways for connection, uncovered meaning in unexpected places, and ignited our collective power to shed light in challenging times. As we worshipped, learned, celebrated, grieved, and engaged, we did so with an elevated commitment to caring for one another, and ourselves.

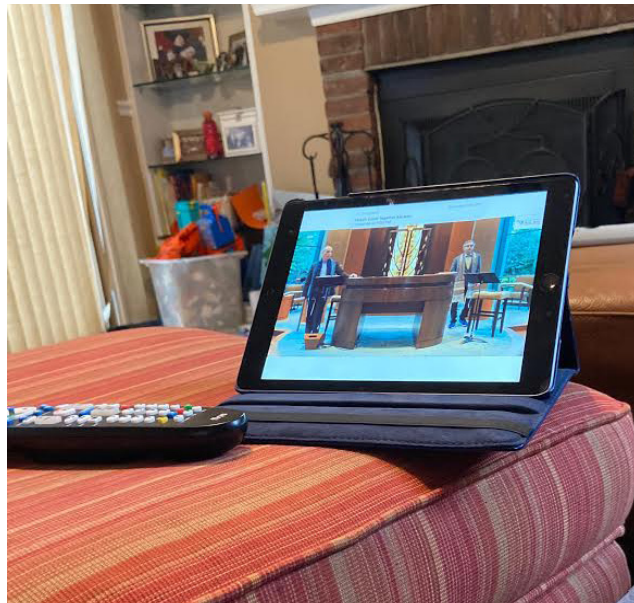
Let us pause for a moment in gratitude and pride for our incredible community.  
May we continue to build on the strength and wisdom we have gained.





# Together we...

APRIL 2020



## COMMUNICATE

Created 1hr email reminders for worship and programming, to make finding Zoom information easy for congregants

## WORSHIP

Welcomed Havdalah with beautiful music and prayer

## LEARNING

Ensured our youngest congregants in the ECP and Religious School continued to learn by shifting to virtual platforms

## JOIN TOGETHER

Joined as a community for 24 hours of entertainment, and raised much needed funds, through our Zoom-a-Thon

## HOLIDAYS

Provided Passover meals to our most isolated congregants and prayed together during a congregation wide Zoom 2nd Seder

## ADULT ED

Expanded our hearts and minds by attending new adult education classes, such as our "Zoom Gali Gali" calls, which are still running

## SPIRITUAL

Endeavored in mindfulness practice on Sunday afternoons through "Pause to Be Present" and learned to cultivate spiritual moments in new outdoor classes



May 2020

## Together We

Ensured that our Men's Study Group was able to learn together through virtual platforms

## Making History

Secured the smooth transition of synagogue leadership by electing officers and trustees at our Annual Meeting, held virtually for the first time in our history.

## Responding to a Call to Action

Responded to the Call to Action from White Plains Mayor Tom Roach and quickly mobilized to provide over 300 bags of groceries each week to residents throughout lower Westchester.

## Youth Group Support

Assured our 9-12th grader could join together in both new and traditional ways for learning and socializing.

June 2020



Led the "Circle the City with Love - Stand Against Racism" march in White Plains

Met outdoors with families of young children to celebrate Shabbat in the Woods

Cared for the Earth through a gardening initiative that led to our certification as a Monarch Butterfly Waystation and as a Wildlife Habitat

Supported mourners by beginning our weekly outdoor Kaddish gathering

Together we hosted Pride Shabbat Services with Zoom Guests from Israel





Welcomed Interim Cantor Danny Mendelson, whose voice and presence ensured continuity and enriched congregational life

Re-imagined our branding to reflect how Kol Ami is: "In-Person. Virtual. Spiritual. Here for you in every way."

July 2020

Engaged our students, from ages 3 to 17, for fun summer programs

Hosted a bonfire and outdoor movie night for our high school students

Opened our minds and addressed difficult issues in anti-racism workshops and our "Summer Read-In Against Racism" program

Participated in a High Holy Day congregational survey to evaluate the needs and priorities of all congregants

August 2020

#### WORSHIP

Celebrated Havdalah via Zoom with a delicious virtual wine tasting

#### TRANSITIONS

Said goodbye to our ECP Director of 16 years, Nan Blank and welcomed our new ECP Director Merav Veetal. All while preparing for full-time in person school for our little ones for the Fall

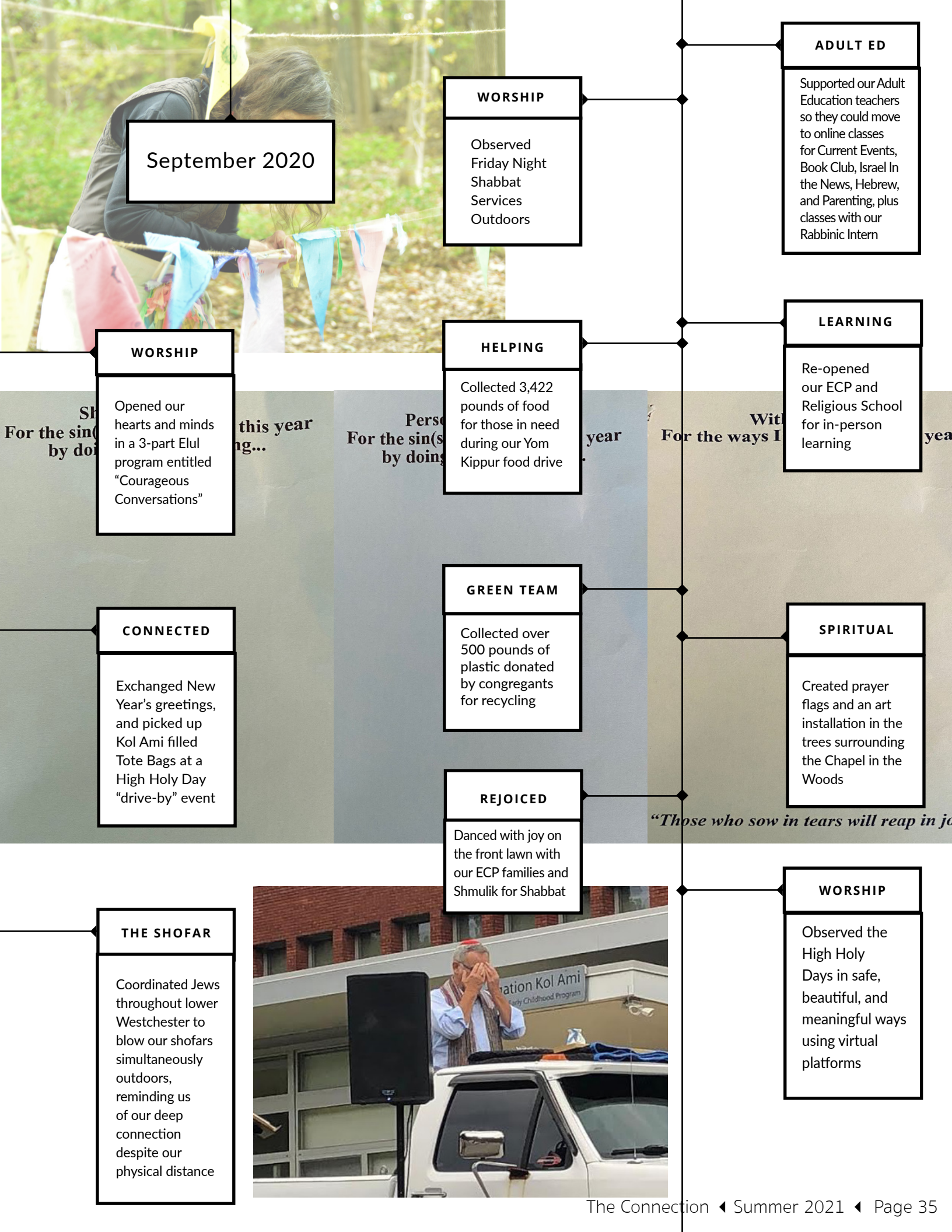
#### SOCIAL JUSTICE

Addressed voter suppression by writing thousands of postcards to voters in Florida, encouraging each person to vote and participate in the U.S. Census

#### MAKING HISTORY

Fulfilled the commandment (outdoors!) to write a Sefer Torah with scribe Julie Seltzer





September 2020

**WORSHIP**

Observed Friday Night Shabbat Services Outdoors

**ADULT ED**

Supported our Adult Education teachers so they could move to online classes for Current Events, Book Club, Israel In the News, Hebrew, and Parenting, plus classes with our Rabbinic Intern

**WORSHIP**

Opened our hearts and minds in a 3-part Elul program entitled "Courageous Conversations"

**HELPING**

Collected 3,422 pounds of food for those in need during our Yom Kippur food drive

**LEARNING**

Re-opened our ECP and Religious School for in-person learning

**CONNECTED**

Exchanged New Year's greetings, and picked up Kol Ami filled Tote Bags at a High Holy Day "drive-by" event

**GREEN TEAM**

Collected over 500 pounds of plastic donated by congregants for recycling

**SPIRITUAL**

Created prayer flags and an art installation in the trees surrounding the Chapel in the Woods

**REJOICED**

Danced with joy on the front lawn with our ECP families and Shmulik for Shabbat

*"Those who sow in tears will reap in joy"*

**THE SHOFAR**

Coordinated Jews throughout lower Westchester to blow our shofars simultaneously outdoors, reminding us of our deep connection despite our physical distance



**WORSHIP**

Observed the High Holy Days in safe, beautiful, and meaningful ways using virtual platforms



October 2020

### **Sukkot**

Built a beautiful sukkah with the Sisterhood, which was enjoyed by the congregation and was the safe, magnificent setting of a Bar Mitzvah service and a Sukkot Get Together for ECP Families.

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### **Making History**

Welcomed our new Torah on Simchat Torah, with a procession down Soundview Avenue and a holiday service on the front lawn

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### **Re-Imagined Synaplex**

Elevated our Shabbat experience with a re-imagined Synaplex program "Around the Shabbat Table". Featuring amazing Guest Speakers via Zoom and enjoyed having dinner together

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### **Kol Ami Food Pantry**

We learned during our annual pantry inspection that our community distributed over 142,391 pounds of food to those in need both within our congregation and in the broader lower Westchester community over the preceding year.

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### **CONNECTING**

Launched the first of many modern, artistic, Kabbalat Shabbat virtual evenings for congregants in their 20s and 30s

Together we...

November 2020

### **Giving Thanks**

Made holiday cards and donated pies for every resident and staff member of the Coachman Family Center in celebration of Thanksgiving

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### **Social Justice**

Wrote and sent a second round of postcards to Georgia residents to encourage them to vote in the Senate run-off election

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### **Traditions**

Continued the annual tradition of our ECP Book Fair through online sales and activities

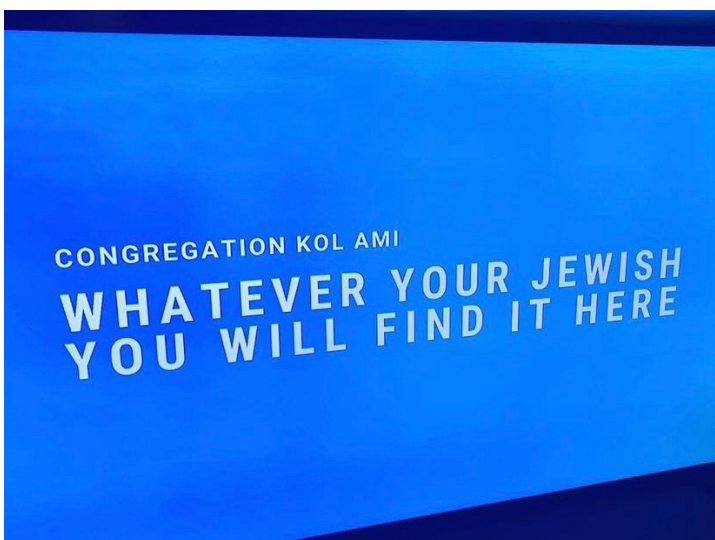




December 2020

# Together we...

- Enjoyed seeing our big, new, bright roof top menorah during our holiday drive-by as we kindled the spirit of Hanukkah together
- Celebrated 8 Nights of Virtual Hanukkah in a multitude of fun ways, including our choir's recording of Lots of Latkes, a special drive-by celebration, Virtual Bingo to raise money for Dorot, story time and Latke-making events, a special STEM project, a concert, a puppet show, and more.
- Engaged in a letter-writing campaign to Jewish soldiers in the US and Israel
- Collected toys for families at the Coachman Family Center ensuring that all children received a holiday gift







January 2021

## CONNECTING

Connected Kol Ami teens with senior congregants through a "Juniors to Seniors" support program

## HISTORY

Elected Cantor Daniel Mendelson as Kol Ami's new Cantor through a special virtual congregational meeting

## TOGETHER

Celebrated Havdalah at "Sips & S'mores" with Religious School families hosted by our Religious School Parent Network

## SOCIAL JUSTICE

Engaged in important advocacy work with RAC-NY to support the parole reform initiative known as "Less Is More"

## YOUTH

Began a 5-episode podcast entitled "Peace, Police & Everything in Between," led by our Youth Group





February 2021



### Celebrated

Celebrated Purim in a variety of ways including a large CAR-nival, children's concert, magic show, megillah reading, mini-spiel, and a comedy show. Plus, a visit from Channel 2 News!

### Learning

Registered many Kol Ami seniors in a technology program offered through Westchester Jewish Community Services, which provided them with a tablet with pre-paid internet service and technology training. And through our Religious School Parent Network congregants learned to play mah jongg with weekly on-line games

**Mitzvahs** — Launched "Mitzvah Monday" in our food pantry, a program for families with school- age children

March 2021

# Together we...



Evaluated and shared our preferences for 2021 High Holy Day worship in another congregational survey

Purchased Kol Ami logo blankets in an effort to support Kol Ami and "blanket our community with love"

Rejoiced during a drive-in Passover/Shabbat service that included a fun rendition of Chad Gadya and left with delicious macaroons to enjoy at home

Observed the second night of Pesach with a Zoom Seder

Kvelled when our young children led a mitzvah project collecting dry goods for families at the Ossining Children's Center



April 2021

*Zoom*

*Zoom*



Worshipped at a beautiful Yom Hashoah  
Service led by our 8th grade students

Celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut with a  
concert featuring Jewish rock stars

Returned to the front lawn for in-person  
Shabbat in the Woods services

Worshipped together during Spring  
"Lot Shabbats"

Studied and prayed in-person during  
Saturday morning Lift Services in the  
Chapel

Showed our support for our beloved  
community and met our fundraising goals  
during an incredible virtual gala, "The Big  
Night In"

May 2021

Rejoiced as 15 members of our  
congregation became adult  
B'nai Mitzvah

Kvelled as 31 confirmands led us  
in worship during a beautiful  
Shavuot service

Enjoyed the artwork of our  
youngest children at the  
ECP Art Show

Celebrated the end of our  
immensely successful year  
of Religious School learning

Gratefully acknowledged the  
challenges overcome and  
accomplishments achieved  
during our fiscal year, elected  
officers and trustees of the  
synagogue, and celebrated a  
return to the Kol Ami campus  
at our in-person Annual  
Meeting, also accessible to  
all congregants via Zoom.





## Exodus 20:21

בְּכָל-הַמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר אֶזְכִּיר אֶת-שְׁמִי, אָבוֹא אֵלֶיךָ וּבֵרַכְתִּיךָ.

*B'chol mako masher azkir et sh'mi avo eilecha uveirachticha.*

In every place where My name is mentioned, I will come to you and bless you.

Every act of goodness and creativity you have read about –  
from classes to services to food delivery to phone calls and zoom  
gatherings and bonfires and marching and concerts –  
each of them has been a moment of the sacred.

God has spoken through us and blessed us  
time and time again.

**Congregation Kol Ami**  
**252 Soundview Avenue, White Plains, NY 10606**  
**[www.nykolami.org](http://www.nykolami.org) #nykolami [membership@nykolami.org](mailto:membership@nykolami.org)**



# Life Cycles

## Congratulations

- ✧ To Jack Berger & Randy Stein on the birth of their granddaughter, Laurel Hannah Berger
- ✧ To Janet & Mark Hershey on the birth of their grandson, Theodore (Theo) Hershey
- ✧ To Janet & Mark Hershey on the birth of their grandson, Zachary Jacob Hershey
- ✧ To Lauri & David Carey on the birth of their grandson, Quinn Arthur Carey
- ✧ To Donna & Larry Dunkelman on the birth of their granddaughter, Rose (Rosie) Sia Dunkelman
- ✧ To Nikki & Milos Silber on the birth of their daughter Nessa Allegra Silber
- ✧ To Debbi & Steve Marcus on the marriage of their Daughter, Melissa to Justin Wass
- ✧ To Janet & Mark Hershey on the birth of their granddaughter Ruth Basford Hershey

## Condolences

- ✧ To Ellen Kurtz & family on the passing of Ellen's friend, Leonard (Lenny) Weisman
- ✧ To our Kol Ami Executive Assistant, Alison Adler, family on the passing of Alison's mother, Leila Attia
- ✧ To Alan Smith & family on the passing of Alan's wife, Helane Smith
- ✧ To Andrea Birenbaum & family on the passing of Andrea's mother, Lyn Harrow Birenbaum
- ✧ To Barbara Block on the passing of her cousin, Shirley Pastore
- ✧ To Pam Levine & family on the passing of Pam's father, Sheldon Cousin
- ✧ To Dave Lorden & family on the passing of Dave's cousin, Tim Lorden
- ✧ To Pat Grossman on the passing of her cousin, Gladys Goodstein
- ✧ To Joel Figura on the passing of his brother-in-law, Dennis Bobet
- ✧ To David Elcott & family on the passing of David's father, Edward Elcott
- ✧ To Steven Baker & family on the passing of Steven's mother, Rebecca Baker
- ✧ To Mitch Ginsberg & family on the passing of Mitch's cousin, Garret Lederman
- ✧ To Charles Blumberg on the passing of his wife, Norma Benardette
- ✧ To Barak Stockler, our Director of youth Engagement, on the passing of his grandmother, Gertrude Fischer
- ✧ To Maryann Nadler & family on the passing of Maryann's father, Louis Latona
- ✧ To Glenn Miller & family on the passing of Glenn's mother, Evelyn Miller
- ✧ To Alison Smith & family on the passing of Alison's father, Leonard Paul Nalibow
- ✧ To Lauren Levine & family on the passing of Lauren's father
- ✧ To Diane Morrow-Lert & family on the passing of her husband, Richard Lert

## In Memoriam

- |   |                |                 |                    |
|---|----------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| ✧ Leonard, (Lenny) Weisman                  | ✧ Helane Smith | ✧ Malcolm Baehr | ✧ Norma Benardette |
| ✧ Mathilda (Loebel) Maslow Goldenberg Abler |                | ✧ Richard Lert  |                    |



# Generous Contributions

## **Rabbi Shira Milgrom's Discretionary Fund**

- \* In memory of Jane Friedberg, from Michael and Rhonda Friedberg and the Friedberg family
- \* In memory of Helene Smith, from Janice Block Chaddok
- \* In memory of his wife, Helene Smith, from Alan Smith
- \* In honor of Michelle Lichtenberg, from Fredda Cohen and Eric Nussbaum
- \* In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Attia Family, Evelyn Attia and Marcel Laufer
- \* In memory of Leila Attia, Alison Adler's mother, from Barbara Block
- \* In memory of Bob Heller, from Stephanie Levine
- \* In memory of her dear friend Lori Samet Davis and her parents Miriam and Morris Appleman, from Linda Appleman Shapiro
- \* In memory of her parents, Janet and Stanley Robinson, from Susan Robinson
- \* In honor of the B'nai Mitzvot of Betsy Bach and Fern Schwartz, from Eric and Bonnie Eilen
- \* In honor of the B'nai Mitzvot of Sheryl Brady and Ronnie Farley, from Eric and Bonnie Eilen
- \* In honor of Barbara Wexler, from Joyce Hoffman and Harold Selden
- \* In honor of Myrna Barzelatto, from Doris Dingott
- \* In memory of her mother, Edna Lichtenstein, and of her husband, John Hein, from Jane Hein
- \* In honor of the Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class, from Ellen Bittner
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Judy and Jeffery Gelfand
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Stuart and Lorrie Rosenbluth
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, and congratulations to the Adult B'nai Mitzvah Class, from Barbara Block
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Bernice Gale
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Cindy and Scott Musoff
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Ron and Julie Carran
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Judy Asher
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Carol and Gene Klein
- \* In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, from Marian L. Steinberg
- \* In appreciation, from Judy and Jeffrey Gelfand
- \* In memory of his mother, Evelyn Miller, from Glenn and Ilene Miller
- \* In memory of Rabbi Shira's father in law, Edward Elcott, from Ellen Sarna
- \* In memory of Rabbi Shira's father in law, Edward Elcott, from Myrna Barzelatto
- \* In memory of Mattie Abler, from Barbara Block

## **Rabbi Tom Weiner's Discretionary Fund**

- \* In memory of Jane Friedberg, from Michael and Rhonda Friedberg and the Friedberg family
- \* In memory of Bob Heller, from Stephanie Levine
- \* In memory of Steven Glazer, son of Florence Glazer and in memory of David Sheff, her father, from Barbara Block
- \* In memory of Lenny Weisman, from the Weisman Family
- \* In honor of Lilli and Brooke's B'nai Mitzvah from Kat and Danny Siry and Liz and Michael De Robertis
- \* In memory of her dear friend Lori Samet Davis and her parents Miriam and Morris Appleman, from Linda Appleman Shapiro
- \* In honor of Alexa Cole's Bat Mitzvah, from David and Amanda Cole
- \* In memory of his mother, Rebecca Baker, from Steven Baker
- \* In honor of Jeremy on the occasion of his baby naming from his parents, Julian and Ashley Gompertz
- \* In memory of Lenny Weissman, from Lisa Borowitz
- \* In memory of her parents, Janet and Stanley Robinson, from Susan Robinson
- \* In honor of Samantha and Harley's B'nai Mitzvah, from Daniel Pfeffer and Heather Landau



# Generous Contributions

## **Cantor Danny Mendelson Discretionary Fund**

- ✧ In honor of Lilli and Brooke's B'nai Mitzvah, from Kat and Danny Siry and Liz and Michael De Robertis
- ✧ In honor of his being named Cantor, from Cindy and Scott Musoff
- ✧ In appreciation, from Susan and Ken Gordon
- ✧ In memory of her parents, Janet and Stanley Robinson, from Susan Robinson
- ✧ In honor of Alexa Cole's Bat Mitzvah, from David and Amanda Cole
- ✧ In honor of Sophie's Bat Mitzvah, from Jill and Jason Weisberg

## **Refugee Fund**

- ✧ In honor of Carrie Barotz, from Elizabeth and Scott Rothstein

## **Petschek Music Fund**

- ✧ From Nina and Phil Blumenfeld

## **Synaplex**

- ✧ From Nina and Phil Blumenfeld

## **ECP Fund**

- ✧ In honor of Liz Ilberg in recognition of her receiving the Juilan Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Award, from Nan Blank

## **Religious School Fund**

- ✧ To Alison Adler, our colleague and friend, in loving memory of your mother, Leila Attia, from the Kol Ami staff
- ✧ In loving memory, dearest mother of Alison Adler, a special friend and co-worker, from Kay Osborne
- ✧ In loving memory of her dear friend, Robert Heller, from Kay Osborne
- ✧ In honor of Mattie Abler's special birthday, from Kay Osborne

## **High Holiday Prayer Book Fund**

- ✧ In memory of Uncle Milton Sabin and of Cousin Stuart Sabin, from David and Karen Cole
- ✧ In honor of Myrna Barzelatto, from Shelly Rosenthal

## **Gala Fund**

- ✧ In honor of Myrna Barzelatto becoming a Bat Mitzvah, from Kay Osborne

## **Kol Ami Cares Fund**

- ✧ In memory of Louis Latona, from Jennifer Koestler

## **Biennial Fund**

- ✧ In honor of Lisa Borowitz for hosting the 2nd Passover seder, from Susan and Joseph Rozin

## **Flowers & Landscaping Fund**

- ✧ In honor of Debbi and Steve Marcus for the marriage of their daughter, Melissa to Justin Wass-Mazel Tov, from Jen Josephs
- ✧ In honor of Fern Schwartz, from Judy and Matt Gluckson
- ✧ In memory of Mattie Abler from Beth and Gene Kava

## **Adult Education Fund**

- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Ellen Sarna
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Elizabeth Nelson Egan
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Ellen Umansky



# Generous Contributions

## **Kol Ami Fund for the Needy**

- ✧ From Marsh Feldman
- ✧ From Remi and Lauren Kraver
- ✧ In honor of Elizabeth Ilberg not only for all she does for our synagogue but for receiving the Julian Y. Bernstein Distinguished Service Award, from Judy and Kevin McEvoy
- ✧ In appreciation of Harriet Kraver, from Madiha Tubman
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, from Abdul and Madiha Tubman
- ✧ In memory of Emily Campbell's dog Brodie, from Abdul and Madiha Tubman
- ✧ With congratulations to Liz Ilberg, from Abdul and Madiha Tubman
- ✧ In honor of Jess Lorden, from Bonnie and Eric Eilen
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Devorah Lissek and Josh Barash
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Leslie Phillip-Kelman
- ✧ In honor of Lisa Borowitz and the beautiful 2nd Seder, from Robin Cohen
- ✧ In honor of Ronnie Cohn's Bat Mitzvah, from Judi Brown
- ✧ In memory of Edward Elcott, father in law of Rabbi Shira Milgrom, from Judy and Matt Gluckson
- ✧ In appreciation, from Madiha Tubman
- ✧ In honor of Janet & Mark Hershey's new grandchildren Theodore, Zachary and Ruth, from Ilene Miller
- ✧ In memory of Edward Elcott, father of David Elcott, from Beth and Gene Kava

## **Kol Ami Fund**

- ✧ Thank you to those involved with the Juniors for Seniors program, from Doris Hettmansberger
- ✧ In honor of Lisa Borowitz for sending the beautiful and delicious Purim Box, from Florence Glazer
- ✧ In appreciation of Judy Sarch's hard work on the Purim baskets, from Susan and Ken Gordon
- ✧ In appreciation of Pam Pass for tutoring Zachary Cole for his bar mitzvah, from David and Karen Cole
- ✧ In memory of Robert B. Heller, from Robert Gianola
- ✧ In memory of Robert Heller, from Jude McCartin
- ✧ In memory of Robert Heller, from David Levitsky
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Jennifer and Paul Lemberg
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Alice Adler
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Sanford and Madeline Zevon
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Myrna Barzelatto
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Lisa Hochman and Kevin Worth
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Jen Josephs
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Jess and Dave Lorden
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from Liz and Stephen Kaufman
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, and in memory of Muriel and Simeon Gluckson, from Judy and Matthew Gluckson
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Lori and Patrick Paradis
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Howard Sendrovitz
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Julie Ratner
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Lauren Nauheimer
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Sally Kopstein
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Mary Grigsby
- ✧ In memory of Helane Smith, from Liz and Jim Weingast
- ✧ In memory of Malcom Baehr, from Robin and Robert Baldera
- ✧ In loving memory of her mother, Rose J. Rutfield, from Pearl Cohen
- ✧ In memory of her mother, Hope Coe Arner and cousin Harriet Shorr, from Judi Brown

# Generous Contributions

- ✧ In memory of Milton Pushkin, from Stacey and Rob Pushkin
- ✧ In memory of Lance Appleman, from Lawrence Appleman
- ✧ In memory of Norma Blumberg with our deepest sympathies, from Barbara and Martin Marks
- ✧ In memory of Louis Latona, from Anastassi Sunday
- ✧ In honor of the bat mitzvah of Susan Rozin, from Judy and Jeffrey Gelfand
- ✧ In honor of the bat mitzvah of Debra Rubin, from Joan, Jay and Michael Fertig
- ✧ In honor of the bat mitzvah of Deborah Rubin, from Harvey and Arlyn Becker
- ✧ In honor of Daniel Hagen and Hannah Pacicca for their Confirmation, from Barbara Block
- ✧ In honor of Ernestina Sanchez's anniversary, from Debbi Marcus
- ✧ In memory of Leila Attia, mother of Alison Adler, from her father, Albert Attia
- ✧ In appreciation for Rabbi Shira Milgrom and Rabbi Tom Weiner, from Lisa Lesavoy and Marco Paniccia
- ✧ In honor of Doris Dingott who insured that the Book Club continued throughout the pandemic-"I really appreciate her effort"from, Beth and Gene Kava

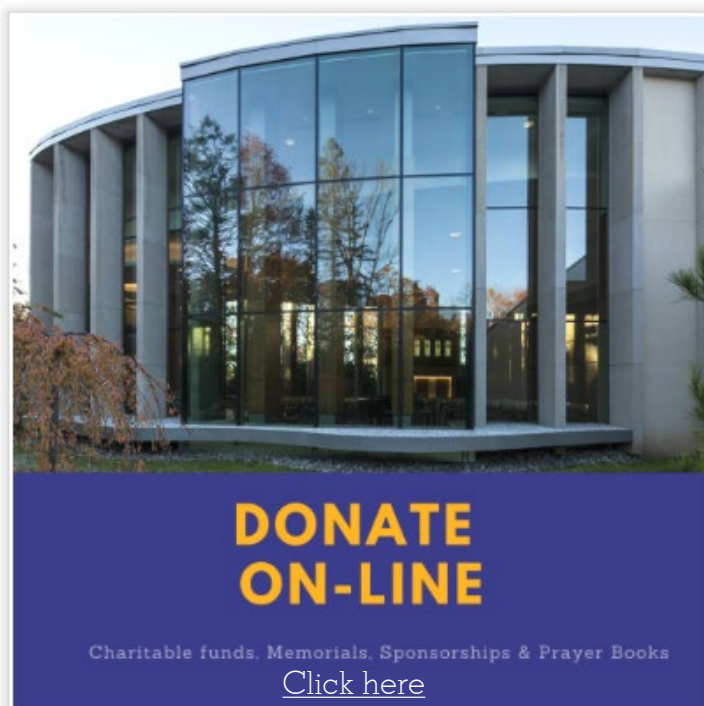
## Annual Fund

- ✧ In honor of the B'not Mizvot of Brooke Siry and Lilly DeRobertis, from David and Lori Okun

## Food Pantry

- ✧ From Uri Cohen
- ✧ From Jerry and Sheila Rothman
- ✧ From Susan and Ken Gordon
- ✧ From Barbara Shore
- ✧ In honor of Theodore Solomon Hershey and Zachary Jacob Hershey, their new grandsons, from Janet and Mark Hershey
- ✧ In honor of her father, David Elcott, being honored as a Pandemic Hero at the Kol Ami Gala, from Talia Milgrom-Elcott
- ✧ In honor of her father, David Elcott, being honored as a Pandemic Hero at the Kol Ami Gala, from Liore Milgrom-Garter
- ✧ In honor of Myrna Barzelatto's Bat Mitzvah and for her friendship, from Nina and Phil Blumenfeld
- ✧ In memory of Joanne Casey's mother, in appreciation of Loretta Prosser for a job well done as VS leader; and to Rabbi Shira, David Elcott and their family in memory of his father, Edward Elcott, from Robin Cohen.
- ✧ In memory of Mary Ann Nadler's father, Louis Latona, from Bonnie Gordon-Rabinowitz and Marc Rabinowitz
- ✧ In memory of Mary Ann Nadler's father, Louis Latona, from Jerry and Mary Ann Nadler
- ✧ In memory of Edward Elcott, father of David Elcott, from Jerry and Mary Ann Nadler
- ✧ In memory of Edward Elcott, father of David Elcott, and in honor of the extraordinary work of David Elcott with the Food Pantry from Susan and Ken Gordon
- ✧ In memory of Edward Elcott, Rabbi Shira's father in law, and Evelyn Miller, mother of Glenn Miller, from Janet Hershey

*Thank You*





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CONGREGATION KOL AMI

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252 Soundview Avenue ☆ White Plains, New York

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A Member of the Union for Reform Judaism

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**Religious School Director** ☆ Pam Pass

**Director of Youth Engagement** ☆ Barak Stockler

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Maurice Davis ∞

Mark L. Winer

### CANTOR EMERITUS

Raymond Smolover ∞

∞ of blessed memory

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