

# the Connection



**Purim At Kol Ami Is Back!**  
**March 16, 2022**



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Rabbi Tom Weiner  
Cantor Daniel Mendelson

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## Our Story

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 seven and a half 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.

# Let's Go to Morocco!

## With Rabbi Tom Weiner

### March 9-19, 2023

Dear Kol Ami friends,

As the world is becoming increasingly open and available to us, please join me and other Kol Ami friends for a fascinating, colorful, and delicious adventure throughout Morocco!

- Join us as we “begin some beautiful friendships” at Rick’s Café in **Casablanca**.
- Explore the ancient and modern **Jewish History** of Morocco from 800BCE to the present.
- We’ll travel to **Fes** to learn of the Golden Age for Jews from the 8th to 12th centuries, including the oldest continuously operating university in the world.
- In **Rabat** we will visit Royal Palaces and learn about *The Kings and the Jews* and the role that the king plays in Moroccan life today.
- Visit the Arab world’s only Jewish Museum. According to legend, Jews arrived in Morocco as early as 800 BCE. By 1948, the Jewish population had grown to an estimated 350,000 and was the largest, and arguably most integrated Jewish community in any Muslim country.
- Then to the Oasis of **Marrakech**, to visit with local Jews, learn to bake together, explore ancient and vibrant market places, magnificent synagogues, palaces, traveling in Jeeps, Coach busses, horse drawn carriages and camels!

Coming soon to all Kol Ami members:

- Detailed itinerary and all costs
- A special Kol Ami Website with all trip information
- Scheduled info meetings to learn about the trip

Looking forward to a magical journey!

*Tom*



# Where is the Spirit?

## Rabbi Shira Milgrom

The Torah portion of the week that ends February 5th is Teruma. It follows the dramatic narratives of the exodus from Egypt and the gathering at Mt. Sinai. No one actually knows where Mt Sinai is. Archeologists, historians, Bedouin traditions – all point to different rocky mountains all over the Sinai desert. This indeterminacy has given rise to the question: why would our Torah tradition have placed this moment of God's revelation in a place that no one can find? Or that no one can agree upon?

In Jewish lore, we have a particular love for the wilderness – for the unknown. We worry about idolizing a place or a shrine, a tomb or a temple.

And so it comes as a surprise that shortly after the giving of the Ten Commandments, the Torah moves on to tell us about the construction of a Mishkan, a Tabernacle. These chapters of Exodus are filled with the details of construction: planks and dowels and sockets and linen and ram skins and goat hair and acacia wood and gold and silver and copper and blue, purple and crimson yarns, lapis lazuli, oils and spices.

People need to weave and hammer and mold and sew and measure and saw and attach and hang and touch and smell.

They need to get physical.

Even the experience of God's revelation at Mt. Sinai wasn't apparently enough.

They need to get physical. They need a physical space. They need to connect the planks – one next to the other. They need to connect the curtains – one next to the other. Over and over again, the instructions for assembling the Tabernacle repeat: *isha el achota* – they need to be joined to one another.

And finally – join the clasps, join the planks, join the curtains – *isha el achota* – join them to one

another so that the Tabernacle becomes one whole. *V'HAYA HA-MISHKAN ECHAD.*

The Tabernacle will become whole.

God's spirit has certainly sustained us in the wilderness

of covid. Indeed, perhaps like the wilderness of Sinai, in some ways it might have been easier to experience the raw power of spirit when we were in the wilderness. We were more vulnerable, we were more open, we were more in need.

But we are coming through this wilderness – and we will need to be physical again. We will need to touch and be touched; we will need to hug and hold hands and comfort and dance and hear and sing. We will need to be physical.

As the weather warms and the cold recedes, as our Covid concerns hopefully subside, we will find our way back together. We have found God during this pandemic, but we have missed each other. We need one other. It is true that God blesses us through one another – and when we are back together, we will feel the power of God's blessings – through our arms and our voices – we will feel those blessings rushing back in.

We, too, need to be joined one to another – so that we and the Tabernacle will be whole.



*Shira*

# B'nai Mitzvah CONNECTION

## Cantor Daniel Mendelson



We start on FaceTime. Parents appear with their children to gather simple, concrete information on how this ancient process will unfold. I ask each prospective B'nai Mitzvah young adult if they're nervous. If they

say no, I start getting nervous. Almost no one says they're not nervous and after I explain why it's healthy to be at least a little anxious, even the confident kids admit to a bit of nerves.

Between myself, Rabbi Tom, Pam Pass and our team of tutors (I'll let you guess which one of them is my favorite), we work diligently to ensure that our young people are as prepared as they can be for their special day. But when we get there, it's important to realize that no matter how prepared you are, this isn't a Broadway show. It's not a sporting event. This is a personal Jewish experience. An experience grounded in the imperfect humanity that we all share.

Just before we closed our school for February break, I noticed a bunch of my 11th and 12th grade students camped around our beautiful sanctuary bimah re-enacting moments of awkward folly from their own B'nai Mitzvah experiences. It was clear to me that this wasn't at all an attempt at pointing out what went wrong years ago on that bimah, but rather a joyful acknowledgement of what felt so right.

It's not lost on me how challenging this experience can be for our young people, especially during a pandemic. This process is hard enough, without the constraints of distancing and virtual learning. Over the last year and a half, I've stood in admiration at the poise and character our students have shown in completing this chapter of Jewish life. From our first meeting, all the way through to the rehearsal and final service, we cherish the privilege of guiding these young people through their introduction to Jewish adulthood. That feeling of gratitude and accomplishment is a two-way dance between mentor and student. The ultimate payoff is not complete until our students finish that precious final Aliyah of Torah. The moment where I begin singing Siman Tov backed up by our instrumentalists, while glancing over at the B'nai Mitzvah and sneaking a peak at their parents, never fails to energize and excite me. That 90 seconds of celebratory relief brings into focus the over 6 month journey we've taken together. I'll leave you with the words I offer at the end of each introductory FaceTime B'nai Mitzvah intake: Onward and upward.

Chag Purim Sameach!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel". The signature is stylized with a large, looping 'D' and a trailing flourish.

# A Message from our President

## Hank Rouda



Jean and I were away for an extended trip and came back to New York a little over a week ago. On the first Friday back, we eagerly and excitedly came to Kol Ami for services. Everything seemed

comfortingly familiar, and, yet, something felt different. The building was the same. Many of the people were the same (although there were far more in attendance than were attending when we left). The clergy were the same and so were the musicians. And, no big surprise, we hadn't changed the prayer book.

So, what was different? It was us. Like most of you, we've spent the better part of the past two years either avoiding gatherings or approaching them with a sense of trepidation. But this time? We had a much different attitude. The sense of fear, of the unknown, was subsumed by stronger and more positive feelings – feelings of hope and optimism.

It was comforting to be back “home” at Kol Ami and even more comforting to see so many people, many of whom we hadn't seen indoors in quite some time. Yes, we were still masked and everyone has to be vaccinated, but it was clear that people are ready to move on, to reengage in person. And we're so ready to do it with you!

Leadership has been asking the “what's next” question a lot lately. In fact, the Board just spent most of the last meeting on this very topic. We will, of course, continue to act in a spirit of *pikuach nefesh*, and continue taking the steps that we believe are best to keep everyone safe and healthy. We will continue to consult with our medical professionals and follow their advice as we have since the very beginning. But, where before, we did so in a preventative manner, it's

time to think more proactively. And to think boldly!

We know that some of the innovations that we've implemented will be “COVID Keepers”, as our Religious School Director, Pam Pass, calls them. Things like more outdoor Shabbat services and outdoor concerts are here to stay. Our task as a community is to return to temple in even more creative and inclusive ways. While we are still pretty much the same congregation as we were in early 2020, our view of the world and how we want to interact with the rest of our community has changed.

Will people come back to services on Friday nights? What about High Holidays? Will social events be even more important? We know many of the questions to ask, but we don't yet know all the answers. Much of it will depend on you and we expect there to be many different answers to these questions.

So, what do you want? How do you want to interact with each other? With the clergy? What can we do to support you? We need to hear from you. Please think about these and any questions that you may have and reach out to me, any of the officers and trustees, our clergy, Jess or our educators and let us know your questions. Or even better yet, your answers. Together, we will continue to evolve this *kehillah kedoshah*, this holy community.

You will be hearing more from Jess and me about changes to our policies and protocols, but, as I said, we will do so based on the excellent medical advice that we've relied upon throughout the pandemic. And you'll also be hearing from the clergy, Jess and me as we roll out programs to honor this new sense of optimism and return. It's time for us to be **BOLD!** Stay tuned!

L'shalom,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Hank Rouda". The signature is stylized and cursive.

# Counting My Blessings

## Jess Lorden, Executive Director



Our Rabbis have often spoken with us about gratitude, even in times of struggle like the COVID-19 pandemic. Each time, I consider all that I have to be grateful for . . . all of my blessings.

To count one's blessings means to make a special effort to appreciate the good

things in one's life. There is some anecdotal evidence that the idiom "count your blessings" is Jewish in origin. There was an ancient Jewish tradition where people would try to acknowledge 100 blessings by the end of each day, and literally "counting your blessings" would help to keep track of them.

I try to remember to count my blessings every day. I have been fortunate in so many ways, so creating a Top 10 Gratitude List is a challenge. Here is my attempt at such a list in no particular order:

- ✓ The sunrise I witness each morning since I am an early riser
- ✓ The spectacular sunsets I enjoy looking out my office window
- ✓ A day at the beach with family and friends and walking along the surf collecting shells or sea glass
- ✓ Working out every day and feeling energized and strong afterwards
- ✓ The Kol Ami community which nourishes my soul and with whom I enjoy celebrating our culture and traditions
- ✓ Dave, Sarah, Alex, Teddy, Robby and now Rachel
- ✓ My parents being in good health and continuing to live an active life
- ✓ A circle of friends I know I can count on and who know they can count on me
- ✓ An exceptional college and graduate school education
- ✓ Two careers both of which were challenging and rewarding

I believe there is a positive association between gratitude and an individual's well-being.

Gratitude is a way for people to appreciate what they have instead of always reaching for something new in the hopes it will make them happier. Gratitude helps people focus on what they have instead of what they lack. Here are some ways to cultivate gratitude on a regular basis (some of these I practice regularly and others I aspire to):

- **Write a thank-you note.** You can make yourself happier and nurture a relationship with another person by writing a thank-you note expressing your enjoyment and appreciation for that person or a gift the person may have given you.
- **Keep a gratitude journal.** Make it a habit to write down or share with a loved one thoughts about the "gifts" you've received each day.
- **Count your blessings.** Pick a time to sit down and write about your blessings – reflecting on what went right or what you are grateful for. As you write, consider how you felt when something good happened.
- **Pray.**
- **Meditate.** Mindfulness involves focusing on the present moment without judgment.
- **Pursue your dreams.**
- **Identify the things that cause unhappiness in your life and thoughtfully consider what you can do to improve them.** It is easier to pay attention to the positive aspects of your life when you change the things that make you unhappy.
- **Focus on one thing at a time.** Multitasking has become the way of the world. How many of us keep the TV on as background noise or look at our phone screens while spending time with family and friends? It's easier to count your blessings when you give one person or item your full and undivided attention.
- **Live in the present.** Like me, you may often be looking ahead to the next exciting thing. But when you do that, you can miss out on the small things around you every day. Planning for the future is great (and brings me happiness), but don't miss the present. The "present" is a gift.

Sending gratitude to you for being part of the Kol Ami community and wishing you countless blessings!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jess".

# A Message from our Youth Director

## Barak Stockler



Last March, I invited my brother to write an article to discuss far-right nationalism in Israel and what American Jews can do about it. Now, I would like to revisit some of the thoughts my brother brought to us. I will often

reference the 2020 Pew study on American Jews, which if you haven't read yourself, I wholeheartedly recommend.

According to Pew's 2020 study of American Jews, we remain largely democratic and liberal. About 7 in 10 of us affiliate with the democratic party. Amongst this data, we also see that American Jews are increasingly "liberal." It is not too surprising to see that reform and secular Jews are more liberal than their orthodox peers, who are more inclined to identify as conservative. By age group, young Jews (18-29) are the most likely to be liberal.

This brings us to the issue of how young Jews will vote and react towards America's Israel policies. Last year, my brother told us:

*"It is important that American Jews speak as loudly about Israeli social justice issues as they do about domestic issues as well as communicate those ideas with each other and their elected officials"*

American Jews are listening, brother.

Our elected officials are gradually being questioned, criticized, and supported, or not, because of their Israel policy views. This is true right here in Westchester County.

Jamaal Bowman, representative for NY-16, was recently criticized for his trip to Israel. As a member of "the squad," Bowman has broken from

his group's mold and the views of the Democratic Socialists of America, or DSA. The DSA has threatened to expel Bowman over his trip to Israel and his recent voting to fund the Iron Dome.

This political viewpoint, stemming from the DSA's support of the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanction (BDS) movement, is very worrisome.

The 2020 Pew study tells us that young Jews are the least oppositional to BDS than any other group; however, no subgroup was more supportive than oppositional to the BDS movement. Our young Jews are less likely than older Jews to be emotionally connected to Israel. They are also more likely to say that the "US is too supportive of Israel" than any other subgroup. Our youngest Jews were also the smallest subgroup that agreed with "The Israeli government is making a sincere effort towards peace with the Palestinians."

I expect these differences in opinion to grow as time passes. We cannot hide the fact that young Jews are growing up with a new and different Israel. So how will American Jews across the spectrum react to this growing population?

Will we follow the trend of the American left and right and become divisive and incendiary? Or will we hold our community accountable and provide discussion, discourse, and progress?

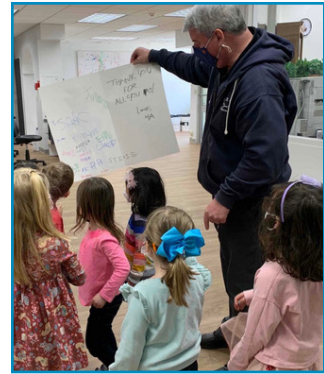
How will American Jews deal with increased criticism of Israel and anti-Zionists? Will we push out those who might disagree with us or find room to talk?

Our youth are telling us that they disagree. Will we listen to them?

*Barak*

# Early Childhood Program Highlights

The winter months have been filled with warmth in the ECP. Here is a small sampling of the ways in which the children *Shared the Love*, and filled their days with new learnings and discoveries.



February was the month for the children to Share the Love with their friends, family and community. We are grateful for those that help keep the ECP building safe and running smoothly. The children acknowledged the ECP community helpers with personalized Thank You cards, baked goods and art creations. During the ECP's special, Torah Alive, the 4's and 5's classes learned the value of hachnasat orchim, welcoming guests, and decorated welcome mats. We hope the value of gratitude and providing comfort for guests is instilled within the children and carries over to other aspects of their lives.



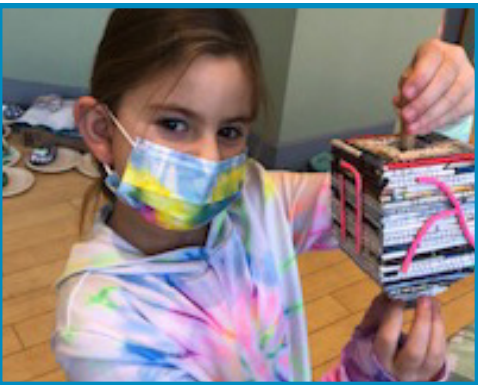
The cold winter weather brings incredible discoveries to our classrooms. The children read winter books, painted winter landscapes, learned about the elements of snow and ice and mixed ingredients to create 'snow' for shaping snowpeople. They studied migration and hibernation and constructed caves for bears to hibernate in from recycled materials.

On the nature trail, the children celebrated Tu B'shevat with Teva teacher Candice. They learned about recycling, the importance of trees and tapped a maple tree! The children were amazed to see the sweet sap flowing from the tree.



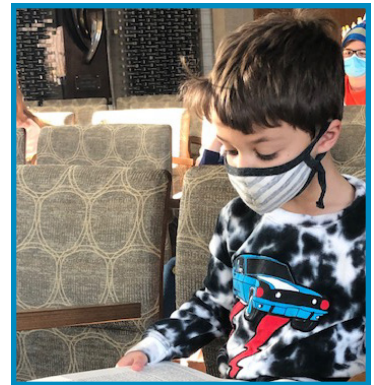
# Religious School Highlights

Masks haven't gotten in our way of filling our class days with rich, meaningful, creative and fun learning moments. Here is just a small sample of what's been going on in our Religious School lately.



During Kashkesh Art with Specialist Morah Candice (Pre-K - 2 Hebrew program), our 2nd graders made dreidels out of recycled materials, learning Hebrew letters and Ba'al Tashchit (not wasting).

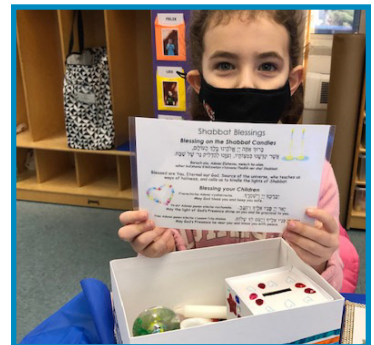
With Morah Jolanta and Morah Stefanie, our 3rd graders made their own Chagall stained glass windows incorporating ritual objects.



In Tefillah with Rabbi Shira, learning prayers, sharing Hallelujah moments, and hearing Torah stories are a regular part of our days.



In Moreh Adam's class, our 5th graders explored the history of Kol Ami's Holocaust Torah.



In Morah Charlene's class, our Kindergarteners learned about Shabbat by making a beautiful Shabbat Box. We were thrilled to hear from parents about how they used the Shabbat Box at home.

In one of our 7th grade electives, Jess Lorden and Pam Millian taught their students about Hunger in Westchester and about Kol Ami's Food Pantry. They made soup jars to be distributed through the pantry to families in need.



# B'nai Mitzvah

With love and tremendous pride, we look forward to having these B'nai Mitzvah students lead us in worship, carry our sacred scroll through the congregation, and chant from the Torah. We rejoice with them and their families as they share their intellectual gifts by teaching us from the weekly Torah portion and deliver their "D'var Torah."



**Teddy Spitalnick**, son of Carey and Jared Spitalnick, and brother to Lilly, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on March 5, 2022. Teddy is in 7th grade at Edgemont Junior High School. He loves spending his summers at Camp Starlight in Pennsylvania. Teddy loves baseball, hockey, listening to music and spending time with friends. For his mitzvah project Teddy is running a food drive for Bridging Dots, a local organization started by students to address food insecurity. He has also organized a fundraiser for Feeding Westchester. Teddy is looking forward to sharing this special day with family and friends, and feels very lucky to be able to celebrate in person.



**Braden Herbsman**, son of Jodi and Adam Herbsman and brother to Spencer, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on March 12, 2022. Braden is in 7th grade at Louis M. Klein Middle School in Harrison. Braden enjoys playing baseball for Game On 13 Fury in Westchester, as well as playing on local basketball teams with his friends. Braden loves spending his summers at Camp Equinunk in Pennsylvania. For his mitzvah project, Braden raised money for FACES (Finding a Cure for Epilepsy and Seizures), which is dedicated to furthering epilepsy care and research and supporting programs that improve the lives of children and families who live with epilepsy. Braden

has worked hard preparing for his Bar Mitzvah and is excited to share his special day with friends and family at Kol Ami and via livestream.



**Ethan Paul Shifrin**, son of Cori Shifrin and Peter Shifrin, and brother to Ellie, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on March 12, 2022. Ethan is in 7th grade at Highlands Middle School in White Plains. Ethan enjoys spending time playing on his computer, and on his virtual reality headset. He spends his summers at Breezemont Day Camp. Ethan has enjoyed working with Pam Pass as his tutor. He looks forward to celebrating, in person, with family and friends on his special day.



**Teddy Kroin**, son of Michelle and David Kroin, and brother to Sam and Julia, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on April 2, 2022. Teddy is a 6th grader at Rye Country Day School. He loves spending his summers at Camp Laurel up in Maine, where he enjoys metal-smithing, rock climbing and ukulele lessons. At home, Teddy is a budding web designer, an avid gamer, an enthusiastic tennis player, and a true out-of-the-box thinker. For his mitzvah project, Teddy partnered with Sunrise Day Camps to help them with various projects to support children living with cancer. Teddy is excited to share his special day with friends and family and thanks everyone at Congregation Kol Ami for their love and support.

# B'nai Mitzvah



**Samantha (Sammy) and Natalie Goldban**, daughters of Jenny and Michael Goldban and sisters to Eliza, will be called to the Torah as a B'not Mitzvah on March 26, 2022. They are in 7th grade at Scarsdale Middle School. Both girls love spending their summers at Camp Wayne for Girls in Wayne County, PA. Natalie enjoys playing soccer

and both girls enjoy playing volleyball, tennis and skiing. For their mitzvah project, Natalie and Sammy spent time volunteering with Mott Haven Fridge, an organization that provides fresh produce to areas of the Bronx. They have spent several Saturday mornings sorting, packing and delivering groceries. On March 5th they organized a special Mitzvah day for families from Kol Ami to join them in this volunteer effort. Sammy and Natalie are excited to share their special day with friends and family.



**Alexander Harrison Kirsch**, son of Suzanne and Matthew Kirsch and brother to Ben Kirsch, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on April 2, 2022. Alex, an eighth grader at Edgemont Junior/Senior High School, is a soccer fanatic, and he plays for the Kol Ami basketball team. He also plays both guitar and drums, and he writes for the school newspaper. Alex enjoys spending his summers at Camp Starlight. For his Mitzvah project, he is organizing a collection event for Stack the Caps, a foundation that distributes new baseball hats to local hospitals for children who are going through cancer treatment. Alex is looking forward to celebrating his special day with his family and friends.



**Abigail Florin**, daughter of Aimee and Mike Florin, and younger sister to Max Florin, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on April 9, 2022. She is a 7th grader at Scarsdale Middle School. Abigail loves cheerleading, tennis and spending time with her friends and family. She is also a huge Gilmore Girls fan. Abigail enjoys her summers at Camp Timber Tops in Greeley, Pennsylvania. Abigail is devoted to her dogs Belle and Apple and her cat Felix and her Mitzvah project is based on her love of animals. She is organizing a pet supply drive and will bring donations to the Humane Society of Westchester. Abigail is looking forward to celebrating her Bat Mitzvah in person with friends and family.



**Tyler Greenberg**, son of Jennifer and David Greenberg, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on April 30, 2022. Tyler is a 7th grader at Highlands Middle School in White Plains. He is very active in sports and an excellent student. He loves basketball, lacrosse and wiffle ball and excels in mathematics and Spanish language arts. He is always active with his friends and enjoys good food, music and traveling to new places. He always looks forward to visiting family in Chicago, IL and rooting for the Chicago Bulls. For his Mitzvah project, Tyler is putting his love for animals to work by helping local shelters, creating fundraisers to provide them with much needed supplies. He is thankful to his tutor from Kol Ami, Pam Pass, and looking forward to celebrating his Bar Mitzvah with family and friends.

# B'nai Mitzvah



**Riley Kur**, daughter of Deena and Benjamin and sister to Dylan, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on April 28, 2022. She is in 7th grade at the Rippowam Cisqua School in Bedford. Riley loves spending her summers at Camp Timber Tops in Greeley, PA and plays travel soccer and basketball. For her mitzvah project, Riley is volunteering with the Mott Haven Fridge Network. She is excited to share her special day with friends and family!



**Ariella Shiloach**, daughter of Ruth Berkowitz and Doron Shiloach and sister to Noa, will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on April 30, 2022. She is in 7th grade at Scarsdale Middle School. Ariella enjoys competitive synchronized skating, cross country and track, reading, cooking, and spending time with her dog, Scout. In fact, she is well known in the neighborhood as the girl who walks her dog every day. For her mitzvah project, Ariella made dog toys out of fabric, tennis balls and water bottles, and is donating them to the Paws Crossed shelter. Ariella is excited to share her special day with friends and family.



**Jonah Glazman**, son of Rachel and Mo Glazman and brother to Lev, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on May 21, 2022. He is in 7th grade at Highlands Middle School in White Plains. Jonah loves spending his summers at URJ Camp George in Ontario, Canada. He plays hockey with the White Plains Plainsmen and on his school hockey team. He enjoys anything sports related including sports stats. For his mitzvah project, Jonah volunteered with adaptive sports. Jonah has enjoyed learning his Torah portion with his dad as his tutor. He is excited to share his special day with friends and family.



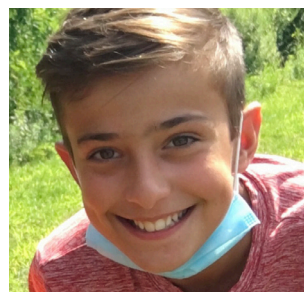
To all of our B'nai Mitzvah students  
and their families as they reach this joyous and  
memorable milestone in their lives.



**Gianna Pestone**, daughter of Maxine Helman and Roy Pestone will be called to the Torah as a Bat Mitzvah on May 7, 2022. Gianna is a 7th grader at Edgemont Middle School and is enjoying her first new challenges of Middle School. Her athletic skills are on display when she practices her aerial circus arts on the silks, yoga hammock and lyra. Gianna loves playing with her precious cat, BooBoo and she is happiest at the happiest place on earth, Disney World. Gianna looks forward to celebrating her special day with family and friends.



**Aaron Schwartz**, son of Jessica and Michael Schwartz, brother to Jared and Eden, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on May 7th 2022. He is in 7th grade at Louis M. Klein Middle School in Harrison. Aaron has really enjoyed the journey to his Bar Mitzvah and has learned so many new things about Judaism. He can't wait to see the results of his mitzvah project which is collecting items to help sick children and teens who are in the hospital. These items are meant to pass the time and alleviate stress while the patients endure painful and invasive procedures. In his free time, he loves watching the NY Mets, helping to commentate, playing baseball and video games and spending time with his family and friends. This summer he will spend his fourth summer at Camp Watitoh in the Berkshires. Aaron has worked hard on his Bar Mitzvah preparations and he and his family are so thankful that they will be able to celebrate his Bar Mitzvah in person with so many friends and family in attendance.



**Max Towle**, son of Sarah Hochman and Edward Towle and big brother to Juliet and Anna, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on April 9, 2022. Max is in the 7th grade at Highlands Middle School in White Plains, where he plays the cello in the school orchestra. He enjoys running and has a nationally ranked time for the mile. He also enjoys cycling, hiking, and playing soccer for White Plains Youth Soccer. This year, Max volunteered as a madrich in the Kol Ami Religious School. He is grateful to Cantor Fredda Mendelsohn for her help in learning his Torah parshah. Max is looking forward to sharing this special occasion with family and friends.

## WEEKLY WORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

### 5:30pm Friday Shabbat by the Woods:

A weekly Shabbat service in story and song for families with young children led by our rabbis and cantor. Register to join us in person at [nykolami.org/register](https://nykolami.org/register)

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

Our weekly Kabbalat Shabbat service in our Main Sanctuary with Rabbi Tom Weiner, Rabbi Shira Milgrom, and Cantor Danny Mendelson. Join us in person by registering at [nykolami.org/register](https://nykolami.org/register)

Our weekly Kabbalat Shabbat is also streamed on our website, FaceBook, and Youtube pages.

### 9:30am Saturday Shabbat Lift and Service:

Join Rabbi Shira Milgrom and fellow congregants for community, Torah study, and Shabbat services. Join for all or part of the morning. Bring your curiosity! Join us in person by registering at [nykolami.org/register](https://nykolami.org/register) or join us via Zoom. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87953883896?pwd=UmlHUzljSTJSTFdvUzR2QXBKcEpPQT09>  
Meeting ID: 879 5388 3896  
Passcode: PA5z5t  
Dial-In Number: (646) 876-9923

## Weekly Torah Portions

### MARCH 2022

#### Week ending March 5, 2022 *Parashat P'kudei* *Exodus 38:21–40:38*

P'kudei is the last parashah in the book of Exodus. Moses describes the specifications for the building of the Mishkan (sanctuary) for God. Every article needed, every attribute of the structure, every manner of work, and every detail for the altar is specified. As the building of the sanctuary and its holy objects are completed, Moses blesses all of the people who took part in its creation.

#### Week ending March 12, 2022 *Parashat Vayikra* *Leviticus 1:1–5:26*

We begin the third book of the Torah (Vayikra – Leviticus) with a description of five types of sacrifices offered in the Temple. They are: burnt offering, meal offering, sacrifice of well-being, sin offering, and guilt offering. While the burnt offering, meal offering, and sacrifice of well-being are voluntary, the sin offering and guilt offering are mandatory for guilty individuals. One remnant of these practices is the importance of our intentions when we enter into prayer.

#### Week ending March 19, 2022 *Parashat Tzav* *Leviticus 6:1–8:36*

Tzav, the second parashah in the book of Leviticus, continues with the regulations for sacrifices, and then outlines the ritual of priestly ordination for Aaron and his sons. Limitations on the consumption of meat are given, and the preparation of the Tabernacle as a holy place is given.

#### Week ending March 26, 2022 *Parashat Sh'mini* *Leviticus 9:1–11:47*

Sh'mini refers to the eighth (sh'mini) day of the ordination ritual. The priestly ordination of Aaron and his sons is described. Two of Aaron's sons, Nadab and Abihu, offer "alien fire" to God on their own initiative and are immediately consumed by fire. Moses, Aaron, and his surviving sons are forbidden to mourn their deaths. The parashah also stipulates the dietary laws concerning which animals are fit and which are unfit for consumption, and concludes with a rationale for being holy and distinguishing between the impure and the pure.

### APRIL 2022

#### Week ending April 2, 2022 *Parashat Tazria* *Leviticus 12:1–13:59*

Tazria begins with a discussion of defilement and purification following childbirth, and continues with a discussion of tzara-at, which denotes a variety of skin rashes and blemishes.

#### Week ending April 9, 2022 *Parashat M'tzora* *Leviticus 14:1–15:33*

This parashah continues the discussion of the laws pertaining to 'uncleanness' that was begun last week in Tazria. M'tzora contains descriptions of forms of 'uncleanness' which are thought to refer to various molds or mildews that could discolor surfaces of fabric or stone, and the laws concerning the purification of clothing and houses.

# Weekly Torah Portions

**Week ending April 16, 2022**  
***Yom Rishon Shel Pesach***  
***Parashat Bo***  
**Exodus 12:37-42, 13:3-10**

By God's mighty hand, our ancestors fled the house of bondage and were brought to "a land flowing with milk and honey." As a reminder of God's redemption, we are instructed to eat only unleavened bread during Passover. Furthermore, the text tells us to explain to our children, "It is because of what God did for me when I went free from Egypt." The Hebrew word for explain, *v'higgadta*, has the same root as Haggadah, the book from which we read at the Passover seder. In doing so, each year we fulfill the sacred obligation to tell this story to our children.

**Week ending April 23, 2022**  
***Parashat Acharei Mot I***  
**Leviticus 16:1-17:16**

We return to the book of Leviticus this week. In this parashah, God speaks to Moses after the death of Aaron's two sons, who were killed for coming too close to the presence of God. This parashah also delineates the duties that the head kohein must perform on Yom Kippur, as well as the laws for fasting and atonement.

**Week ending April 30, 2022**  
***Parashat Acharei Mot II***  
**Leviticus 18:1-30**

In this continuation of last week's parashah, Moses condemns the sexual practices of some neighboring peoples.

The taboos for certain sexual practices are outlined in detail in this chapter.

## MAY 2022

**Week ending May 7, 2022**  
***Parashat K'doshim***  
**Leviticus 19:1-20:27**

K'doshim (holiness) continues with the practical and interpersonal applications of holiness. God explains to Moses what it means to be a "holy" people and describes the many ethical and ritual laws aimed to help people live lives of holiness. The laws described include some of those recorded in the Ten Commandments, such as respecting one's parents, keeping the Sabbath, and not stealing.

**Week ending May 14 2022**  
***Parashat Emor***  
**Leviticus 21:1-24:23**

Emor provides details about the lives of the priests and their families. The Israelites are commanded to bring clear olive oil for lighting the sanctuary menorah, and the ingredients and placement of the displayed loaves of sanctuary bread are explained to them. This parashah also includes the most comprehensive holiday calendar in the Torah.

**Week ending May 21, 2022**  
***Parashat B'har***  
**Leviticus 25:1-26:2**

This parashah presents a vision of a society guided by God-given principles of human freedom, human dignity, and

concern for the most vulnerable in society. It includes laws regulating the sabbatical year (every seventh year) giving the earth a complete rest, and the jubilee year (every 50 years) in which land and vineyards must not be worked. It also provides for the granting of liberty to all Israelites enslaved during the previous forty-nine years.

**Week ending May 28, 2022**  
***Parashat B'chukotai***  
**Leviticus 26:3-27:34**

The book of Leviticus is completed this week with B'chukotai. Another name for this week's Torah portion is Parashat HaToch'chah — the portion of reproach. It contains a list of curses so terrible that traditionally the Torah reader chants them quickly and in a hushed tone so as not to call attention to them. These curses come just after the promise of blessing - if we follow God's ways. The parashah begins "Rain in abundance, good crops, peace, victory, and fertility are all ours if, ... you walk in my statutes and guard my commandments and do them." (Leviticus 26:3) The parashah also includes a brief discussion of the payment of vows and gifts made to the sanctuary.

# CALENDAR

## MARCH

### **Mar 4, Refugee Shabbat 6:00PM**

Refugee Shabbat is a moment for congregations, organizations, and individuals in the United States and worldwide to dedicate a Shabbat experience to refugees and asylum seekers. Congregation Kol Ami is partnering with Hitchcock Presbyterian Church in resettling a refugee family. Members of Hitchcock Church will be joining us, we hope in person, at our Kabbalat Shabbat service. Following services, Around the Shabbat Table at 8:00pm, we will meet (by zoom) Khalid, an Afghan man and Achta, a woman from the Congo, who will share with us their stories of seeking refuge in the United States.

### **Mar 6, Open Nominating Committee Meeting 9:00AM**

Join our nominating committee via Zoom to select members of our community for leadership positions on our Board. To participate, go to: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89873034733?pwd=TDdhRnp4Y1VqajdnRnorUzJKZC9TZz09> Meeting ID: 898 7303 4733. Passcode: 531778. Dial-In: (646) 558-8656

### **Mar 6, Mendelson Birthday Bash 4:00PM**

Join us as we pay tribute to Cantors Jack and Fredda Mendelson on their 75th birthdays! A spectacular afternoon of music is planned featuring the guests of honor, Cantors Jack and Fredda, Cantor Danny Mendelson,

world renowned soprano, Kelli Butler, Metropolitan Opera accompanist, Linda Hall-Gerson and Kol Ami Musical Director, Alex Hopkins. Repertoire will include traditional cantorial music, opera, Broadway, pop and more. Registration and proof of vaccination required. To reserve your seat, go to [https://CongregationKolAmi.formstack.com/forms/mendelson\\_birthday](https://CongregationKolAmi.formstack.com/forms/mendelson_birthday)

### **Mar 14, Security Awareness Training 12:00PM**

A safe community requires our collective effort. Preparation and training are key. Please join us for a virtual security awareness training class designed to empower each of us to help protect our community.

### **Mar 16, Glitz & Glamour Purim Celebration 4:00PM**

Don your ball gown, tux or fanciest attire and join us for an evening of fun! Festivities will include Simon Sez led by professional Simon Sez caller Steve Max; a bouncy castle and inflatable obstacle course for little ones; magic, carnival games, and of course, plenty of hamantaschen. Food trucks with pizza, grilled cheese and vegetable paninis will be available for purchase. Outdoor seating, weather permitting, underneath heat lamps. Megillah reading and a dynamic Purim Spiel Revue will follow at 6:00PM in the Main Sanctuary. Registration and proof of vaccination required. To register, go to [https://CongregationKolAmi.formstack.com/forms/purim\\_carnival](https://CongregationKolAmi.formstack.com/forms/purim_carnival)

## APRIL

### **Apr 1-2, Scholar In Residence Weekend with Rabbi Larry Hoffman 6:15PM on Apr 1 and 9:30AM on Apr 2**

We are honored to have Rabbi Larry Hoffman joining us for Kabbalat Shabbat services on Friday evening and for our Torah Study and Lift service on Saturday. Lunch will be provided, hopefully in person, following Saturday's session. More details to follow.

### **Apr 8, Kabbalat Shabbat Service Honoring Rabbinic Intern Noah Lawrence 6:15PM**

Join us as we celebrate and extend our gratitude to Rabbinic Intern Noah Lawrence as he moves onto a new chapter in his personal and professional life. Our fifth graders will also be leading us in song and prayer that evening, adding to a truly joyful service.

### **Apr 27, Congregational Yom Hashoah Service 7:30PM**

Join our eighth graders as they lead the community in a beautiful and meaningful Yom Hashoah service filled with music, poetry, and prayer.

# CALENDAR

## MAY

### **May 1, Jonathan Comisar: To Bigotry No Sanction 1:00PM**

To Bigotry No Sanction is a magnificent musical work based on George Washington's historic letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, composed by Jonathan Comisar. Join us in the Main Sanctuary for a screening of Comisar's stunning new cantata that embodies touchstones of Jewish and American music in an orchestral/choral setting.

### **May 6, New Member Shabbat 6:15PM**

Join us for a spirited Kabbalat Shabbat to welcome our new member families. Dinner for our new members will follow services. More details to follow.

### **May 10, Annual Meeting 7:30PM**

Let your voices be heard at our 2022-23 annual meeting. Stay for wine and dessert afterward to honor past presidents, Susan Kohn Arovas and Scott Musoff.

### **May 25, Gala Honoring Rabbi Tom Time TBD**

Save the Date for an evening of comedy and celebration in honor of Rabbi Tom. More details to follow.

SAVE THE DATES



COMEDY NIGHT

HONORING  
RABBI TOM WEINER  
MAY 25, 2022



PURIM BALL

HONORING  
RABBI SHIRA MILGROM &  
DR. DAVID ELCOTT  
MARCH 5, 2023

# LIFE CYCLES

## CONGRATULATIONS

To Mindy and Neil Tucker on the marriage of their daughter, Melissa, to Ben Krause

## CONDOLENCES

To Betsy, Tom, Mark, Jack, Sam and Matt McCormack on the passing of their son and brother, David Ross McCormack

To Michael Goldrich & family on the passing of Michael's step-father, Edward Shufro

To Elizabeth Ward & family on the passing of Elizabeth's father, Herbert Bernard Hirsch

To Rabbi Tom Weiner & family on the passing of Rabbi Tom's aunt, Doris Weiner

To Our ECP Teacher Cheryl Bernstein and family on the passing on Cheryl's mother, Blanche Silver

To Paul Mauro & family on the passing of Paul's mother, Nancy Mauro

To Suzie Oshatz Perlman & family on the passing of Suzie's uncles, Michael & Alfred Bierman

To our music director, Alex Hopkins & family on the passing of Alex's grandfather, Geoffrey Colin Luck

To Suzy Berkowitz Weksel & family on the passing of Suzy's father, Richard Berkowitz

To Ruth Stern & family on the passing of Ruth's husband, Jerry Stern

To Michael Moss & family on the passing of Michael's mother, Eleanor Brenner Moss

To our ECP teacher Elizabeth Vickery & family on the passing of Elizabeth's father, David Kenneth Burke

To Dr. Robin Cohen & family on the passing of Robin's brother, Dr. Gary I. Cohen

To Rachel Eckhaus & family on the passing of Rachel's father, Allan Eckhaus

To Leni Glauber & family on the passing of Leni's brother, David Gross

To Debbie Linder on the passing of her friend, Deputy Abigail Rose Bieber

## IN MEMORIUM

David Ross McCormack

Jerry Stern



### We want to hear from you...

*Kol Ami is about the ways we can care for each other in community through major life events. We can all sing and dance, share the joy of bride and groom, or celebrate the birth of a child. When we sing the prayer for healing in the synagogue, we learn who needs a visit or some other source of support. We see the mourners rise for Kaddish and know whom we must comfort. Our passage through life gains much meaning through our connections with other people when we share our most significant transitions.*

# DONATIONS\*

## RABBI TOM'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation from Betsy and Stanley Weiner

In memory of Bernice Koch from Linda and Robert Koch

In appreciation from Robert Goldwater

In appreciation from Lauren and Charlie Pollak

In memory of Richard Berkowitz, her husband, and father of Suzy Berkowitz Weksel from Carole Berkowitz

In honor of Carly's Bat Mitzvah from Joan and Bruce Zolot

In memory of his mother, Eleanor Moss, from Michael Moss

## RABBI SHIRA'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation from Bonnie and Daniel Tisch

In memory of Diane Keller from Susan Rudnick and Neal Keller

In honor of the baby naming of their granddaughter, Brooke Sanchez, from Robbie and Andrew Seidman

In appreciation for the baby naming of her daughter, Brooke Sanchez, from Lauren Sanchez

In appreciation from Betsy and Stanley Weiner

In memory of her mother, Diane Keller, from Ammi Keller

In loving memory of their father and grandfather, Shimmy Greenblatt, from the Altman, Gottfried and Rozin families

In memory of Bernice Koch from Linda and Robert Koch

In appreciation from Robert Goldwater

In appreciation from Lauren and Charlie Pollak

In appreciation from Kenneth Cohen and June Helme

With gratitude and in memory of Jerry Stern from Ruth Stern, Kim Yellin and Marc Stern

In memory of Jerry Stern from Marian Steinberg

In support of Synaplex from Jean Pollak

In memory of Ruth Denison and John Hein from Jane Hein

## CANTOR DANNY'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In appreciation from Rose and Mitchell Blank

In honor of Carly's Bat Mitzvah from Joan and Bruce Zolot

In appreciation from Robin Cohen

## KOL AMI FUND

In honor of Patty Wohl's birthday from Jess & Dave Lorden

In loving memory of her parents, Sophie & William Stern from Janet & Mark Ackerman

In appreciation from David, Amy, Jake & Finn Roy

In honor of Ike Lubochinski becoming a Bar Mitzvah from Michelle & Glenn Reisman

In loving memory of her mother, Rosalyn Kornfeld from Judy Gluckson

In loving memory of her husband, Marvin Cooper from Joan Cooper

In loving memory of his mother, Eleanor Brenner Moss from Michael & Daryl Moss and family

In loving memory of her father, Edward Winnick from Stacey & Robert Pushkin

In loving memory of his mother, Esther Pushkin from Robert & Stacey Pushkin

## KOL AMI CARES FUND

In loving memory of our Mother/Grandmother, Shirley Greenblatt, from the Altman, Gottfried, and Rozin families.

*\*As of February 15, 2022*

# DONATIONS\*

## ADULT EDUCATION FUND

In loving memory of our beloved mother, mother-in-law & grandmother, Annette Rozin, from Joseph & Susan Rozin

## ECP FUND

In honor of Patty Wohl's birthday from Beatrice Pogal

## ECP SCHOLARSHIP FUND

In appreciation from Milos & Nicole Silber

## FUND FOR THE NEEDY

In loving memory of her mother, Elaine Weil & father, Roland Kalb, from Lore Kalb

In appreciation of Kay Osborne from Susan & Ken Gordon

In honor of Barbara Block's birthday from Beth & Gene Kava

## FOOD PANTRY

In honor of Patty Wohl's birthday from Barbara Block

In loving memory of her mother, Marion Sheff, from Barbara Block

In loving memory of David Gross, brother of Leni Glauber, from Barbara Block

In appreciation from Elaine S. Libman

In appreciation from Barbara Wexler

In appreciation from Paul & Nell Plaine

In appreciation from David & Rena Schwartzbaum

In appreciation from Judy Asher

In appreciation from Myra Oltsik

## PETSCHEK MUSIC FUND

In honor of Cantor Danny and his Installation from Rabbi Sandy Bogin

## REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT FUND

In appreciation from Barbara Shore

In appreciation from Harriet & Vito Sessa

In appreciation from Amanda & Zachary Mazin

In appreciation from Adrienne & Scott Pollak

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In honor of Patty Wohl's birthday from Kay Osborne & staff

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL/ SCHOLARSHIP FUND

A donation has been made, with love, to the Religious School Scholarship Fund in honor of Pam Pass's special birthday by her teachers.

In appreciation from Richard Handel

## YOUTH LEADERSHIP FUND

In honor of Ike Lubochinski becoming a Bar Mitzvah from Susan & Arthur Littman

*\*As of February 15, 2022*

# OPEN NOMINATING COMMITTEE MEETING

Sunday, March 6 at 9:00am via Zoom.



## **Committee Co-Chairs:**

Susan Kohn-Arovas  
Scott Musoff

## **Committee Members:**

Sara Akst  
Charlene Bodner  
Patricia Grossman  
Suzanne Lasser  
Julia Schonfeld  
Caryn Trbovic  
Bob Ziff

*If you would like to provide input to the  
nominating committee about the selection of Kol Ami Officers  
and Trustees, you are invited to participate via Zoom.*

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89873034733?pwd=TDdhRnp4Y1VqajdnRnorUzJKZC9TZz09>

Meeting ID: 898 7303 4733    Passcode: 531778    Dial-In: (646) 558-8656



Register by April 1, 2022  
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# JOIN KOL AMI'S JOURNEY TO **MOROCCO** LED BY RABBI TOM WEINER

**MARCH 9-19, 2023**

*Traveling in Morocco is an opportunity to encounter the wonders of this ancient land. We will cover its width and breadth, growing through our shared experiences, from the fun and adventurous to the historical and spiritual, as we explore Morocco together!*

## ON OUR JOURNEY WE WILL:

- Discover Jewish heritage and history in **Casablanca, Fes, Marrakech** and beyond
- Experience the different lifestyles and cultures of Moroccans in **urban and rural communities** dotting the landscape
- Bring to light the glory of **Moroccan Jewry** from past to present
- Savor the flavors of Morocco with a taste of local delicacies at the **bustling marketplaces**
- Celebrate **Kabbalat Shabbat** at Casablanca's beautiful **Synagogue Beth-El** with members of the community
- Explore the **mellahs (Jewish quarters)** of Fes and Marrakech, once home to brilliant scholars, poets and innovators, discovering similarities to the ghettos of Europe

**and so much more!!**



PRICING CHART (based on double occupancy)	CHECK/CASH PRICE	CREDIT CARD PRICE
LAND TOUR	\$4,050	\$4,172
ADD FOR SINGLE OCCUPANCY	\$1,875	\$1,931

Group flight option will be available by May 2022.

Learn more about this amazing trip at  
**[secure.ayelet.com/KolAmiMorocco2023.aspx](https://secure.ayelet.com/KolAmiMorocco2023.aspx)**  
Paper registration form also available - call 800-237-1517 or email [ayelet@ayelet.com](mailto:ayelet@ayelet.com)



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