



Teach All of Our Children

By RABBI MYCHAL COPELAND

*These words which I command you this day shall be upon your heart.
And you shall teach them diligently to your daughters and sons...*

(Dt.6:6-7)

These were some of the very first words in Sha'ar Zahav's siddur that I tripped over: "livnotecha ul'vanecha." No other siddur that I had ever used had added the word "daughters" to the V'ahavta prayer. As the note in our siddur explains, this verse served for centuries "as the proof text excluding women from the obligation to fulfill the mitzvot, God's commandments," and by extension, to be educated Jewishly. The verse takes on added significance in our community where children studying in our Beit Sefer are seen as the children of all of us. We are raising these kids together.

In my time here at Sha'ar Zahav, I have experienced Beit Sefer from multiple vantage points. Personally, our family made the decision to leave the religious school where our kids grew up in favor of Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer. Professionally, I began teaching at BSPM, and, when our Director of Education needed to take a leave of absence, I took on the role of Interim Director. I am thrilled with the topic I stepped into and what it says about our school. The past few months have been dedicated to learning about LGBTQ Judaism and celebrating CSZ's 40th anniversary. In order for our kids to get a sense of what makes our synagogue unique, they created an anniversary quilt in memory of the AIDS quilt, examined gender in the Torah, and drew parallels between their own families and the diverse family structures in our texts.

They learned about LGBTQ Jewish leadership through the ordination of queer clergy and were visited by CSZ members Sharyn Saslafsky, Mike Shriver and Ron Lezell who conveyed our history and the legacy of activists like Harvey Milk. Our kids explored who they are becoming as individuals within a loving community. We are approaching Passover when our tradition asks us to consider how we pass our stories onto the next generation. Our goal for Beit Sefer is not only that our kids carry on the narrative of the Jewish people. We are also offering a new generation a context for exploring their most authentic selves within the context of a synagogue with a rich legacy. (See page 2 for pictures from BSPM's celebration of Rabbi Copeland.)

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Frank's Blessing for Rabbi Mychal (Unedited)

May the one who blessed our ancestors bless you with
Plants, to symbolize endurance when things go wrong,
Fruit, to symbolize how sweet and sour life is,
Yoga, to symbolize unity of the body and soul,
and most importantly
Community, to guide you when you are lost and need help.

And so together, we say:

May you find success and satisfaction in your labors,
Purpose and Direction in your study,
the element of Fun in your work and in your play.

May you attain the fruit of your labors,
May you find Joy in all you do.

May G-d bless you and all who walk with you,
from here to Jerusalem,
all around the world,
and let us say together, Amen.

- Frank M. Post, Age 10 1/2
January 27, 2018



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Strong Hand & Outstretched Arm

By CANTOR SHARON BERNSTEIN



When's the last time you thought about your hand? Your arm? What kinds of things do you do with them? What abilities, what powers, do they hold?

The haggadah, which we will shortly be delving into at our Passover seders, quotes the Torah in saying that God brought us out of Egypt

with a strong hand and an outstretched arm. It's a phrase that, like so many things that I heard from childhood, I took for granted. Just part of the scenery. But recently, I found myself thinking about it, imagining it. That strong hand, that outstretched arm. I wondered about the meaning of it – is it theater? Or metaphor? Perhaps a connection between thought, body and action?

To delve deeper, I looked to the ever-amazing Rav Kook:

Strong Hand — Dramatic Transformation

If the objective of the Exodus had been only to liberate the Israelites, then no special Divine intervention would have been necessary. By the usual laws of nature and history, the Jew-

ish people would have gradually progressed to a level of culture and morality prevalent among nations. However, God wanted the newly freed slaves to swiftly attain a high moral and spiritual plane. God's 'strong hand' dramatically raised the Jewish people from the depths of defilement and degradation in Egypt to the spiritual heights of Sinai.

Outstretched Arm — Toward the Future

The "outstretched arm" implies an unrealized potential, a work in progress. The Hebrew word for 'arm' is zero'a, from the root zera (seed), indicating future growth. While the 'strong hand' gave the initial push, it is through the 'outstretched arm' that we steadily advance.

The interesting thing is that, in the Torah, it is not only God's hand and arm that brought us out of Egypt. Moses's and Aaron's hands and arms are also involved. I take this to mean that Rav Kook's words can apply to everyone, that we can each see within ourselves the strong hand and the outstretched arm – the power to enact change and the vision to grow into the future. May we each feel within ourselves that power and that vision, and find great joy and wisdom in growing into the future, as individuals, as a community and, particularly in these times, as a world.

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Why I Serve as Chief Thank You Officer

By MICHAEL CHERTOK



Many of you at our High Holy Day services heard me thank the many members of our community who helped make the services a reality, and I referred to my role as “Chief Thank You Officer.”

I am truly grateful for so many people in our community

who volunteer in so many ways. I thank the people who volunteer in our community because I believe that active volunteers serving our community in a variety of ways is the secret to our congregation's success for 40 years – and the way we will thrive in the future.

A long list of members volunteer at High Holy Days, and each of them deserve thanks and recognition. Beyond this, many more members volunteer during the rest of the year. Members volunteer to help lead services with our clergy and deliver drash'ot, to greet us each week for Shabbat, to prepare, purchase and bring food and set it up on Friday nights, ensuring that we have delicious noshes for oneg.

Others serve on our ritual committee to plan services, or participate in social action, or plan events or support our fundraising. Still others serve as members of the Va'ad, our board of directors, helping us chart our direction and make policy decisions. It would take more room than I have for this column to identify all the ways that volunteers are engaged in making Sha'ar Zahav the thriving community that we are.

The first time I volunteered at Sha'ar Zahav was to organize a Chanukah party. I wasn't sure what to do, but I was paired with a seasoned member who mentored me. I was concerned that

no one would show – and that the latkes would be a soggy mess – but people came, the latkes were delicious and, more importantly, I made a lasting connection with my mentor, other congregants got to know me and I got to know them. My first volunteer gig connected me to this wonderful community that has become my chosen family.

Strong member engagement enables our success because we are a community. Volunteering at Sha'ar Zahav is not merely fulfilling a mitzvah of service. By volunteering, we are connected with others. We become known and get to know others, fulfilling the deep yearning that each of us has for community.

Because we make connections with others through service, our acts of service are truly holy. The fact that we've structured our community so that our small staff works in partnership with volunteer congregants means that we function in a virtuous cycle to deepen these relationships.

Several years ago, we established a process for our voluntary service so that each year members have an opportunity to indicate the areas in which they would like to volunteer at the same time that they make a financial commitment. This “avodah” or service commitment is a beautiful reminder that money and service work together to make our community strong.

But you don't have to wait until you receive your avodah form with your membership renewal. We need volunteers all the time. If you haven't volunteered at Sha'ar Zahav – or haven't volunteered in a while – consider this your invitation. Contact the office and let them know how you can help. Or email me and let me know what you're thinking.

Email Michael at: president@shaarzahav.org

Music in the Mishkan Celebrates its 19th Season

Sunday, March 4 and April 22, 4:00 pm

Our own Cantor Sharon Bernstein, preeminent interpreter of the Yiddish song repertoire, will once again join violinist Randall Weiss and The Bridge Players for the 19th season of Music in the Mishkan. Mark your calendars for the chamber series' two concerts in 2018 on March 4 and April 22.

Highlights of the season include:

Brahms' monumental A Major Piano Quartet and Faure's fiery C minor Piano Quartet on March 4, and a collection of Yiddish songs called "Doubly Suppressed, Doubly Forgotten" plus Shostakovich's haunting E minor Piano Trio on April 22. Concerts are followed by a wine and cheese reception. You can order tickets by calling the Sha'ar Zahav office or by finding a link on the SZ website. Don't miss these beautiful concerts in our lovely sanctuary!

Sunday, March 4 - MARCH MADNESS

Randall Weiss, violin / Patricia Whaley, viola
Michael Graham, cello / Marilyn Thompson, piano

Serenata – Robert Dauber

Piano Quartet in C minor, Op. 15

– Gabriel Faure

Piano Quartet in A major, Op. 26

– Johannes Brahms

Sunday, April 22 - APRIL ANTICIPATION

Randall Weiss, violin / Victoria Ehrlich, cello
Amy Zanzrosso, piano / Sharon Bernstein, voice and piano

Sonata for Piano and Violin in A major, Op. 100

– Johannes Brahms

Doubly Suppressed, Doubly Forgotten:

Yiddish Songs from the Archives

Piano Trio No. 2 in E Minor, Op. 67

– Dmitri Shostakovich

Renovations

By IRENE OGUS / BUILDING COMMITTEE CHAIR

Say goodbye to duct tape and tin foil - the two products that have held our kitchen together for the past few years.

By the time you read this, we will have a completely new kitchen – cabinets that extend right to the entryway, drawers that glide in and out, stone counter, a new 36" LG refrigerator and a new electric stove.

The cabinets were crafted by Peter Doolittle, the fine craftsman who built our current bimah. The floor is new marmoleum – eco-friendly, manufactured in Sweden.

The walls are freshly painted. The floor in the large classroom is also the same new marmoleum and the walls have also been painted. A lovely new storage cabinet will be built in the sanctuary along the east-facing wall. It is something we very much need.

The Building Committee's future plans and cost estimates include:

1. Purchase another 122 chairs and remove the remaining pews - \$30,000
2. Install a new hardwood floor in the sanctuary - \$40,000
3. Redesign the lobby with new furniture, artwork etc. - \$20,000
4. Upgrade the heating system – Cost TBD.

The building is our greatest asset. Maintaining it and enhancing it is an ongoing challenge. We were able to accomplish the recent projects because of the generosity of some members. Until we are able to create a building reserve account to fund the needs of our building, we depend on donations made specifically to the Building Fund. If you like what we're doing, please consider donating to this fund. Let's have no more duct tape!

Introducing the B'Nei Mitzvah

ARIEL BERNSTEIN SPAGNOLO

Ariel Bernstein Spagnolo, son of Sharon Bernstein and Francesco Spagnolo, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on March 10.

Ariel is a 7th grader at King Middle School in Berkeley where he is actively involved in playing bassoon in the concert band and piano with the jazz ensemble. In addition to music, he particularly likes math, science, English, and learning languages (currently French). Outside of school, he enjoys kung fu, sailing in the great San Francisco Bay, doing theater (especially Shakespeare), practicing prestidigitation (sleight of hand), and, recently, playing Dungeons & Dragons with his friends.

Ariel wishes to give his heartfelt thanks to his mentor Alan Gordon, Rabbi Mychal Copeland, and everyone at Sha'ar Zahav for their love and support over the years.



JONAH COPELAND

Jonah Copeland, son of Rabbi Mychal Copeland and Kirsti Copeland, will be called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah on April 14.

He is in his first year at Gideon Hausner Jewish Day School in Palo Alto as a 7th grader. Jonah likes to run cross country, play baseball, and study math, humanities, biology and mythology. He knows a ridiculous amount about whales (perhaps because he is named Jonah), loves dolphins (and those who rescue them), and has a passion for languages and coding. He would like to learn how to play just about every woodwind instrument, but currently focuses his attention on the bass clarinet which he plays in his school band. Jonah is an avid Magic: the Gathering player but will happily play any deck-building game.

When one of his moms became the rabbi at Sha'ar Zahav, he liked the community and decided he wanted to celebrate his bar mitzvah at SZ. He thanks Frank Yellin for being his mentor.



Torey Kromnick & Yuval Gnessin

By HEIDY ZOHAR RAMIREZ / Director of Engagement

Victoria (Torey) Kromnick and Yuval Gnessin are LA-native high school sweethearts who recently celebrated ten years together and are currently planning their 2018 wedding. They spend their time exploring SF's culinary scene, playing tabletop games, shopping for records, hosting dinner parties, going to concerts and relaxing on sunny days at Alamo Square Park.

Yuval is a software engineer who studied computer science and music at UC Berkeley and has worked at a small startup ever since. He was born in Israel and grew up in Los Angeles where he attended Jewish day schools and summer camps. Yuval plays bass in a hard rock band and is an avid consumer of music as well as being passionate about aquatic life.

Torey is a behaviorist who works with individuals on the autism spectrum. She completed her undergraduate studies at UC Davis, where she studied Linguistics, Education, and Religion. Her graduate studies were in Special Education, Autism Spectrum Disorders, and Applied Behavioral Analysis through programs at UCSB and SF State. She grew up in an interfaith family and had her bat mitzvah at age 20 as a camp staff member. Torey loves baking yummy treats, particularly while listening to records from her vinyl collection. Torey and Yuval moved to Alamo Square in 2014 and



began looking for a congregation to join in San Francisco. Torey found Sha'ar Zahav and told Yuval the good news in an email entitled "Cool Jewish Things!" It may have taken them three years to actually join, but they are thrilled to finally be a part of this inclusive and vibrant community.

SHA'AR ZAHAV MEMBERSHIP

Welcome Our New and Returning Members!

Paisha Rochlin-Lehrman & Marvin Lehrman
Yvette & Pierre Adida
Victoria Kromnick & Yuval Gnessin
Naomi Jatovsky & Trudi White
Beth Kaufman
Rebecca Robbins & Andrew Sullivan
Richard & Rachel Ralston
Emily Dorian
Rachele Huennekens & Aaron Buchbinder
Charlie Shaw

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Julie Mamet
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 in honor of Phil Charney
 Lonnie Weiss
 in memory of her mother, Vera Weiss
 Judith Wolfe
 in memory of Mike Rankin
 in honor of the High Holy Days oneg
 & break-fast volunteers
 Ami Zusman
 in memory of her mother, Hilda Saperstein

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Bradley Neuberg & Abby Volk
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Rainbow 2017

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Irene Ogus

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SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

November

Diana Lynn Henrich,
 daughter of Diane Swanson
 Susan Goltsman,
 sister of Nathan Robinson
 and Jacob Robinson
 Suzanne Mersky Gordon,
 mother of Bob Gordon

December

Lilah Groisser,
 mother of Sarita Groisser
 Hugh Watts Ruben,
 nephew of Judith Wolfe

December (cont.)

Michael Richard Farkas,
 brother of Deborah Farkas

January

Susan Levin Renert,
 sister of Nancy Levin
 Myra Sima Kramer,
 mother of Scott Kramer
 Erwin Alpert,
 father of Dan Alpert,
 father-in-law of Rabbi Eric Weiss

November 10-11:

Flowers by Anna & Josh Katz,
in honor of Abe Katz's bar mitzvah

December 1-2:

Oneg by Mark Mackler & Wendell Choo,
in memory of Phyllis Mackler

December 8-9:

Oneg by Karren Shorofsky and Carolyn Reiser,
in memory of Rafi Ben-Natan

December 15-16:

Flowers and Oneg
by Martin Tannenbaum and Alex Ingersoll,
in memory of Martin's brother
and Alex's brother-in-law, Larry Tannenbaum

December 22:

Flowers
by Karren Shorofsky & Carolyn Reiser,
in honor of Rabbi Copeland
and Cantor Bernstein
Oneg by Wayne Bender,
in memory of his father, Herman Bender

January 5-6:

Flowers by Jeane Redsecker,
in honor of Diana Buchbinder

January 26-27

Flowers by the Va'ad,
in honor of Rabbi Mychal Copeland
Oneg by the Past Presidents,
in honor of Rabbi Mychal Copeland

Your contributions help us realize our commitment to building and maintaining a vibrant, living community for Congregation Sha'ar Zahav. A donation can be a meaningful way to honor friends or family, engagements, anniversaries, graduations, for special thanks, or to memorialize a loved one. Collectively, with your financial support, we continue to prosper, grow, and celebrate our future.



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3/2 Evelyn Slenker
 3/4 Paul Nemrow
 3/6 Eileen Cohen
 3/6 Pearl Lewin
 3/7 Isabel Fishman
 3/11 Jamie Rosen
 3/16 Theodore G. Mendonca, Jr.
 3/23 Noah Nacamulli
 3/26 Michael Lipson
 3/28 Neill Rosen
 3/31 James Harris Freedgood
 3/31 Marvin Steele

April

4/1 Adam Harris
 4/2 Ronald Gertz
 4/3 Abraham Cohen
 4/6 Dennis Mitchell
 4/21 Robert Sterman
 4/23 Michael Randall
 4/24 Norma Faini-Pick

May

5/9 Richard Inlander
 5/9 Jack Jacobs
 5/13 David Delroy
 5/14 Thomas Yazman
 5/17 Nanci Stern
 5/19 Allan Altman
 5/20 Robert Coffman
 5/21 James Perkins
 5/24 David Loebel



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CSZ's "Home Made" Passover Seder

Saturday, March 31, 5:30 pm
290 Dolores St., San Francisco

**Celebrate Pesach with the CSZ community
at our Congregational Second Night Seder.**

Our CSZ Congregational Seder is a "homemade" seder, since attendees bring a dish to share, but it is not a potluck. We supply the seder plates, gefilte fish, wine, juice, kosher chicken and lots of ruach (with your help!). You bring the vegetable, fruit, fish and salad side dishes, all kosher for Passover.

There is always plenty of good food and good company!

Bring your family and friends. **Advance registration is required.**
Space is limited. Watch your email for registration information.