

“Transcend the Ordinary”

Adar I - Sivan 5782
March 2022 - May 2022

SZ's New Director of Administration

SUSIE IDZIK

I have been at Sha'ar Zahav serving as Director of Administration for six months now and I have experienced the warmth and welcoming of this community in such wonderful ways. I am thrilled to be here.

I have been inspired by the thoughtfulness that I have seen at Sha'ar Zahav, both in one-on-one conversations and in many meetings. The leadership is inclusive and welcomes input. I appreciate the care taken in discussions of CSZ's financial health now and in the future. I value the rich history of Sha'ar Zahav and I am honored to be a part of it. Mostly, I have been moved by the wisdom, love, and graciousness of the community.



I have spent the last twenty-five years deeply engaged in congregations working in an administrative capacity, as an educator, and as a committed volunteer. I am a long-time Unitarian Universalist and I feel quite at home in the open heartedness of Sha'ar Zahav. I am passionate about congregational life and understanding how to help religious communities sustain and maintain themselves energetically, fiscally, and spiritually. I believe that effective and efficient administration can create space for congregations to grow in deep and meaningful ways. I hope to bring my breadth of experience to Sha'ar Zahav and to offer significant support.

For the past twenty years I have had a private practice as a spiritual director and heart-centered coach. I was trained as an interfaith spiritual director and worked primarily with folks who describe themselves as spiritual but not religious; it was rich work which I adored. I am a long-time student of the Enneagram and trained in Family Constellation work. During the past year of the pandemic, I came to understand that I wanted to work in community and to be of service in a way that brings my skills to support a larger effort. I am a soon-to-be empty nester and delighted to have found this job as a way to use my energies and skills. My husband and I live in Redwood City. I am a painter and knitter and mom to three grown kids.

I look forward to getting to know you more!

“During the past year of the pandemic, I came to understand that I wanted to work in community and to be of service.”

**SZ Security
Changes** pg. 7

Filling Our Mouths With Praise

By CANTOR SHARON BERNSTEIN



There are four modes of Jewish prayer: shevach (praise), hoda'ah (thanks), s'lichah (reflection/apology), and bakashah (requests).

Which do you think occurs most frequently? One might think that there would be an emphasis

on requests or thanks, reflecting what might be described as conventional ideas about human relationships with God.

That was, after all, our ancestors' primary relationship with God (in addition to, of course, arguing with God, which is a time-honored tradition in Judaism, but not, I'm afraid, one of the formal modes of prayer).

In fact, the primary mode of Jewish prayer - more prevalent than the other three combined - is praise. Bar'chu is praise. Chatzi Kaddish and Mourner's Kaddish are praise. Every b'rachah we utter is praise. Which begs the question why. Who or what is this God we're praying to that needs so much of our praise?

I'd like to proffer that it's not God who needs to receive our praise; it is we who need to offer it. That there is an intrinsic benefit to us, individually and communally, in the act of praising.

When we fill our mouths with praise as part of regular prayer, we become used to it, and praising becomes a habit that spreads to the rest of our lives.

"...there is an intrinsic benefit to us, individually and communally, in the act of praising."

If we are in the habit of, multiple times a day, saying how fabulous something is (sun! moon! stars! trees! food!) as directed to the focal point of blessing which is God, then how much more are we likely to praise others, to fill them with the joy of being recognized and appreciated, and filling ourselves with the joy of providing that joy.

We begin the Amidah asking for help in opening our lips that we might utter praise. May it be so, and may our mouths be filled with it.

Sha'ar Zahav

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Sha'ar Zahav Without Borders

By MARC LIPSCHUTZ



"There is a certain population scattered among all the people in the provinces of your realm. Their laws are different and they do not observe the King's laws; therefore, it is not befitting to tolerate them. If it pleases the King, let it be recorded that they be destroyed. So the King took his signet

ring from his hand, and gave it to Haman."

The Scroll of Esther clearly describes the exiled Jewish population in Persia as different. We maintained a different language, different customs, different cuisine, and different perspectives, while we enhanced Persian society and its economy, similar to practices of immigrant populations today.

The Talmud teaches that the transfer of the King's ring was central to Purim and Jewish history. This fully human action empowered the Jewish-Persian population to self-reflect through fasting, speak out against injustice, and strive for a better future. Within Sha'ar Zahav, Jewish and additional faith members of color similarly

enhance our community while experiencing barriers to full inclusion and participation. To correct this injustice, we must recruit persons of color for membership and leadership, "providing a vibrant Jewish community to people

"Sha'ar Zahav leadership must represent the diversity we need to embrace, nurture, and support within our congregation."

of all sexual and gender identities, both Jewish and non-Jewish," as described in our bylaws to ensure the longevity of our congregation.

For the June 2020 JGF, I wrote that my commitment to connecting included developing "multicultural sensitivity for Jewish members of color, interfaith families, and millennials." Sha'ar Zahav leadership must represent the diversity we need to embrace, nurture, and support within our congregation.

As my presidency nears its conclusion, I hope to have moved Sha'ar Zahav closer to full inclusion as a moral requirement of justice.

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Helping Children Find Their Shelter of Peace

By NANCY LEVIN



This summer I had the chance to work with refugee children who crossed the US-Mexico border. I returned home with a new appreciation for the words of the "Hashkiveinu," our prayer for a shelter of peace.

The children, mostly from Central America, traveled thousands of miles seeking safety from violence, poverty, and natural disasters. Their numbers spiked in early 2021 due to a reversal of border restrictions for unaccompanied minors.

Once here, they are held by border patrol, and then sent to an emergency site where they get the basics – food, clothing, shelter. Case managers work to unite them with family or sponsors in the US. My first day on-site, I was overwhelmed by the enormity of the operation. Massive white tents, a maze of gravel roads, the rumbling of construction and supply trucks, 100-degree heat, and dust everywhere. I was equipped with an N-95 mask and assigned to a tent filled with rows

of double-decker cots for the almost 1,000 children who lived inside. My job was to roam the tent, be friendly, and look out for kids that were crying or in distress. In my limited Spanish, I'd ask "Why are you crying?" or "Would you like to talk?" or "Would you like to draw a picture?" I'd help kids with English or play ping-pong or make bracelets with them - anything to distract them from the boredom, loneliness, and anxiety. It wasn't much in the scheme of things, but it was something I could do.

Many had been there for more than a month. They'd watch other kids leave, never knowing when their turn would come. Some girls got their first periods in the tents. Some had already had children. We were told not to ask questions, as it could re-traumatize the kids. We couldn't hug or touch them, for obvious reasons. Our faces were covered with masks, so they couldn't even see our smiles. It was, and remains, a complicated situation. Many children were united with family members and sponsors in the US; yet there were monumental challenges.

As one person, I could maybe elicit a smile or a laugh, or teach a kid to say "See you later!" in English. I honestly don't know how much it mattered. But, every day I was also praying that, soon, each child would find their shelter of peace.

SHA'AR ZAHAV CONGREGATION - ANNUAL MEETING

Sha'ar Zahav's Annual Meeting
Wednesday, June 8th at 7:00pm

At this year's Annual Meeting, in addition to reviewing the past year and hearing about plans for the next one, we will be voting on revisions to our bylaws, which govern how Sha'ar Zahav is organized and operates. The Bylaws Committee has reviewed the 2017

document, and, after much hard work, has recommended a slate of proposed revisions which will enable us to adopt best governance practices while ensuring that we remain true to our values and core principles. Our bylaws are the heart of who we are, and everyone's vote is vitally important and will ensure that we continue to function as the best community we can be.

All SZ members are invited to attend.

Introducing New Member Carlos Coronado

By BARB CYMROT

Carlos Coronado recently moved to San Francisco from New York City, “with a short stop in Los Angeles.” In New York, he used his nursing assistant skills to be a Covid 19 Case Investigator for the Public Health Department. He contacts folks who have laboratory-confirmed exposure to the virus and provides remote guidance to stop ongoing transmission. Carlos secured a similar Covid 19 Case Investigator post when he moved to San Francisco this October. He enjoys his work very much.

Carlos has been active in competitive archery. “I started in LA, and find that there’s lots of opportunities to compete all throughout California.” He’s also looking to do flamenco dancing in his free time. Carlos was born in Würzburg, Germany, when his father was stationed in the Army there. In 1985, when he was 3, his family moved to the US. Carlos grew up in a religiously secular home. With a Catholic father and Jewish mother, he says he doesn’t have much knowledge of Jewish culture. “I never had a bar mitzvah or celebrated Jewish holidays.” Carlos moved on his own to New York City in 2002. He continued, “Later on in New York, I tried wearing a yarmulke out on the street.

It was so heartwarming having people just come up to me, say hello and good Shabbas. Now I want to explore what I was shielded from. I want to participate in a Jewish life I never had as a kid.”



Why is Carlos interested in joining Sha’ar Zahav? “I just moved here and I want to meet Jewish people. Simply put, I just want to meet people.” He heard this was an historic LGBTQ synagogue and wanted to try it out.

Carlos is interested in doing SZ service projects and social gatherings following pandemic safety guidelines. He appreciates checking out the weekly email newsletter for current Sha’ar Zahav opportunities.

SHA'AR ZAHAV NEW MEMBERS

NOVEMBER

Mark Boorstein
April Robinson
Elizabeth Steinfield and Janell Fischer

DECEMBER

Carlos Gabriel Coronado
Nick and Stacey Friedman

Sarah Kistler
Michelle Lerman and Sam McCandlish
Elias Siddall (Eli)
Dina Wallin

JANUARY

Kay Magilavy
Anton Sabodashevskiy and Iuliia Dudareva
Michael Zimmerman

Glad to Be Here

By KERASA TSOKAS

I am so glad to be at Sha'ar Zahav in the role of Assistant Director of Administration. I was first introduced to this congregation two years ago. I interviewed Rabbi Copeland as well as a few other members about LGBTQ+ Jewish representation in the media for a class. Growing up I was immersed in a multitude of cultures.

When I was a kid, my dad would tell me all about the Jewish holidays that were coming up because he had worked at Shenson's Deli in the Richmond District from when he was a teenager until well into his 20s.

These experiences motivated me to go to San Francisco State University and get a degree in Journalism and a minor in Women & Gender Studies. My main goal in life is to break down societal taboos as well as cultural ones. Despite being Greek to the bone, I'm so blessed I can give back to a community that has inspired me since a child. I look forward to learning more about the congregation.



SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

Yizkor Elohim

The sympathy of the congregation is extended to the family & friends of our member:

Jose Hernandez Jr.
3 Shevat - January 5

In Memoriam

The Congregation notes with sorrow the deaths of:

NOVEMBER

Mark Herzog,
friend of Tiela Chalmers

DECEMBER

Ewan McManus,
nephew of Eli Ramer

JANUARY

Dick "Grampy" Adams,
grandpa of Eliana Frank

Marilyn Naparst,
mother of Diana Naparest
and grandmother of Lila Naparest

Susan (Frank) Steigman,
friend of Nancy Wecker and Lisa Wuennenberg

Charles (Tod) Oliver,
father of Mark Oliver,
father-in-law of Steve Polsky
and granddad to Gabe Oliver-Polsky

Helena Wecker,
mother of Nancy Wecker
and mother-in-law of Lisa Wuennenberg

SZ Security Changes

By KELLY THIEMANN

I am writing this the day after three congregants and the rabbi were held hostage in a synagogue outside of Dallas, Texas.

Thankfully, all escaped safely. As the chair of the SZ Security Task Force, I want to share with you an important change regarding access to our building that will make it more secure. In February, we implemented an access card system of entry for in-person Friday night services.

Members who have been attending Friday night services have been contacted to sign-up so that an access card can be issued to them. A card reader has been installed outside of the door and the card allows members access at certain times like Friday night or Saturday morning for services.

There will continue to be in-person greeters but this will allow every person to open the door for themselves without having to be buzzed in over the intercom. COVID protocols will also be followed.

The parents at Beit Safer Phyllis Mintzer have been utilizing access cards since October 2021. The Security Task Force and the Va'ad would like to thank the parents for their willingness to pilot test the program and provide valuable input on the launch of the program. The next group to receive the cards were Saturday morning service regular attendees.

As more people attend Friday night services, members will be given an opportunity to request their access cards. The next stage of implementation will be for attending in-person committee meetings at SZ.

If you have not yet received your access card and would like one, please contact Susie Idzik in the SZ office to have the application sent to you. We will also be implementing a policy requesting that all groups/committees/services utilizing the building provide one volunteer for each event to be a door greeter. Door greeter training will be provided. Please let the SZ Security Task Force know if you have any concerns about security.

SHA'AR ZAHAV MAZEL TOV

NOVEMBER

Julia Deluliis has been promoted to product manager of the iPhone at Apple.

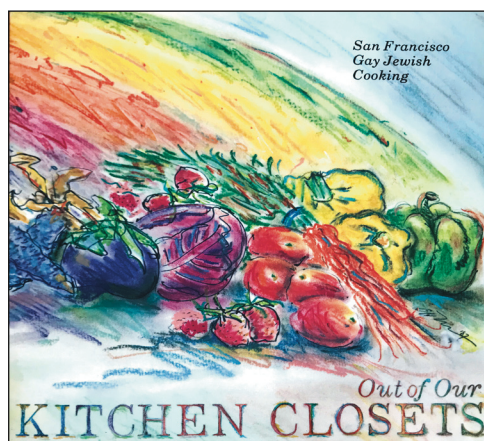
DECEMBER

Nick and Stacey Friedman
on the birth of Oliver Felix Jonah Yerucham

JANUARY

Liat Bird and Jacob McKibben
on the birth of Ziva Max

Rachel and Ricky Ralston
on the birth of Selah Honor



See page 181 and the winning recipe by Steve Elman for Hamantaschen.

General Fund**Wayne Bender**

in memory of his father,
Herman (Hy) Bender

James Carlson

in honor of Sharon Heath
and in memory of Bob Emerson and Rick Brattin

Paul Cohen and Robert Gutterman

in memory of Edgar Zingman

Barbara Cymrot

in memory of Isa Leah Cymrot-Wu

Estate of Gerald Rosenstein**Joseph Feiner****Judith Feiner**

in honor of Joseph Feiner

Manny and Leslie Kane-Fishman

in honor of Steve Mazer
for the lovely NYEve touches

George Frankel

in memory of Louis Forman.
May his kinderlach Bryan & brother serve
as his legacy

Jonathan Funk and John Arnold

in honor of Sharon Heath's retirement

Estate of Gerald Rosenstein**Alan Gordon and Steven Schumacher****Alice Harron**

in memory of Annys Bone and Aahz Maruch

Guillem Megias Homar**Rose Katz**

in memory of her friend Judy Jaeger
and in memory of Ray Bernstein,
Shoshana Levenberg, Florence Nacamulli, Rose Wong

Ron Lezell

in appreciation of Sharon Heath

Irving Mintzer and Amber Leonard

in memory of Phyllis Mintzer,
mentor, educator, friend

Dana Nightingale

in memory of Ray Bernstein

Walter Obermyer

in memory of Ray Bernstein

Michael Pierce

in honor of Martin Tannebaum's birthday

Stuart and Lee Pollack

in honor of Deborah Levy

Jill and Britta Pomerantz**Rachel Reiley****Jim Frazin, Alisa Stern, and Adam Stern**

In celebration of Amelia's bat mitzvah
and Beit Sefer

Dana Nightingale

in memory of Ray Bernstein

Molly Singer**Randy Weiss**

in honor of Steve Mazer for being
a paragon of generosity & menschlichkeit

Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes

in memory of Shirley K

Ami Zusman

in memory of my mother, Hilda Cohen Saperstein

David Zusman**Rainbow 2021****Steve Polsky and Mark Oliver****Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk****Musical Events Fund****John Arnold**

in honor of Jonathan Funk

Jonathan Funk and John Arnold

in memory of Alan Harap, Andy Weiser,
Mike Kozlowski, and Michael Rafferty

Nina Gordon

in honor of Jonathan Funk

Jonathan Funk

in memory of Pearl Funk, Minnie Wiseman,
and Bernice Wiseman

Evan Arnold-Gordon

in memory of Rabbi Julius and Pearl Funk

Cantor's Discretionary Fund**Rose Katz**

in memory of Aahz Maruch
and in honor of Sharyn Saslaffsky's
milestone birthday

Steve Elman and Tom Holt

in memory of Aahz Maruch

Stacey Lawson**Judith Wolfe and Jennifer Hughes**

in memory of Aahz Maruch

Disability & Accessibility Committee**Gail Ludwig and Clarissa Kripke**

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Francisca Antman

in celebration of the bar mitzvah of Jonah,
son of Francisca and Bryan Antman

Jeffrey Auman

in honor of Rabbi Copeland's birthday

Mary Faria

in celebration of Sha'ar Zahav's
commitment to Tikkun Olam

Michael Frank

Stacey and Nick Friedman

in honor of
Oliver Felix Jonah Yerucham Friedman

Social Action Fund

Neil Young

in memory of Edgar Zingman

Lisa Geduldig

in memory of my father Irving Geduldig

Jewish Gaily Forward

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Chai Fund

Jonathan Funk

in memory of Cindy Jane Rubenstein Andrews

Chai Fund - Cantor

Jan Half

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Estate of Al Baum

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in memory of his father, Howard Hirschfield

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in memory of her father, Jay Schiller

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DECEMBER

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in memory of her father, David Caplan

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in celebration of the birth
of their daughter, Liora

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in honor of Sharon Heath

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in memory of her parents,
Roslyn Ludwig Menzel and Herbert Menzel

Saturday Kiddush sponsor:

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in memory of his grandmother,
Rebecca Greenberg

JANUARY

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Nick and Stacey Friedman

in celebration of the birth
of their son, Oliver

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in memory of his mother, Pearl Funk,
and his grandmother, Minnie Wiseman

FEBRUARY

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Purim and Passover Events 2022

Erev Purim - Wednesday Evening, March 16th

Reading of the Megillah

Purim - Thursday Morning, March 17th

Shacharit service & Reading of the Megillah via Zoom

Passover - Friday Evening, April 15th

First Night Seder

Passover - Saturday Evening, April 16th

Second Night Community Seder via Zoom

For more up to date information see our weekly email.