

“Transcend the Ordinary”

Av 5784 - Heshvan 5785  
September - November 2024

## MESSAGE FROM THE CANTOR

By CANTOR SHARON BERNSTEIN



When someone does something praiseworthy in Jewish life, we often say “yasher koach” – may your strength continue. The idea is that whatever they have done took some strength to do, and we wish the person continuing strength so that they can do more.

Going into this Fall, I have been thinking that we could all use some of that kind of strength: Strength to navigate an increasingly uncertain world; strength to discover and be true to ourselves; strength to be understanding with and open to others who might see things very differently than we do; strength to help us push forward and strength to take a break when needed.

Strength comes in a myriad of forms. Some examples from our ancestors include: Abraham, who found strength to question God; Rebecca, who found strength to envision and enact a different future; Joseph, who found strength to forgive; Moses, who, feeling himself lacking in speech, found strength to stand up to Pharaoh and speak for the whole people; Yael, who found strength to strike with a hammer; and Hannah, who found strength to persist in asking for her heart’s desire.

These were not their only strengths – these were just the particular ones that arose according to the needs of the moment. I believe that, as they each found different kinds of strengths, so can we each discover and utilize different kinds of strengths within ourselves.

Strength can be quiet or loud, soft or tough, durable or fragile. It can lead us to new paths, or help us revisit those well-trodden. It can arise in the most mundane tasks as well as the herculean. It can be surprising or unexpected, appearing suddenly or morphing over time. And it can be shared, reinforced, lent and borrowed as needed.

So, as we recite our wishes and apologies and hopes and dreams coming into the new year, know that you have strength. Your own, particular, beautiful, very special strength. And the strength of all those around you and everyone who came before you.

May all our strengths continue.

Shana Tovah!

**HIGH HOLY  
DAYS INFO**

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**Editor's Note:** *With this issue, we welcome Sha'ar Zahav's new President of the Va'ad, Mike Shriver!*

By MIKE SHRIVER



It is truly an honor to be President of the Va'ad at Sha'ar Zahav.

I've been coming to SZ for over ten years, during which I have served as a Va'ad member and Vice-President and assisted our development and

fundraising efforts alongside our outstanding Resource Development Committee. I bring to the Va'ad 34 years of non-profit Board experience. Before I retired, I served as the Special Advisor to the Mayor of San Francisco on AIDS and HIV Policy and as Health Commissioner for the City and County of San Francisco, and was co-director of the AIDS Policy Research Center at the UCSF Center for AIDS Prevention Studies.

For the next two years as SZ President, I plan to continue our conversations and processes around access and accessibility, around Israel and Palestine, and around security. I will support and expand the strong financial management of the shul, and with your help, we will wrestle down our structural deficit and increase financial support from our members. I look forward to working with our dynamic staff and strengthening and growing this brilliant, vibrant community. Please feel free to reach out to me at [President@shaarzahav.org](mailto:President@shaarzahav.org) with questions, concerns - or even compliments - or just to share some good news in your life!

Sha'ar Zahav is an incredibly important part of my life. Giving back to this community is the very least I can do to express my gratitude.

## Sha'ar Zahav

290 Dolores Street  
San Francisco CA 94103

**VOICE** 415-861-6932

**WEB** <https://www.shaarzahav.org>

Sha'ar Zahav is a member of the Union for Reform Judaism, the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Jews, California Interfaith Power & Light, and the San Francisco Interfaith Council

Our Journey to Judaism program is supported by grants from the National Center to Encourage Judaism

## Sha'ar Zahav Staff

### SENIOR CLERGY

Rabbi Mychal Copeland (she/her)

[rabbi@shaarzahav.org](mailto:rabbi@shaarzahav.org)

Cantor Sharon Bernstein (she/her)

[cantorbernstein@gmail.com](mailto:cantorbernstein@gmail.com)

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Danny Shapiro (he/him)

[danny@shaarzahav.org](mailto:danny@shaarzahav.org)

### DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

Rabbi Q (Lisa Levenberg, she/her)

[educator@shaarzahav.org](mailto:educator@shaarzahav.org)

### ASSISTANT DIR. OF ADMINISTRATION

Kerasha Tsokas (she/her)

[kerasa@shaarzahav.org](mailto:kerasa@shaarzahav.org)

### WELCOME HOME PROJECT

Rabbi Reuben Zellman (he/they)

[rabbireuben@shaarzahav.org](mailto:rabbireuben@shaarzahav.org)

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**RECORDER  
TREASURER**

By DANNY SHAPIRO



When I was a Hillel professional, one of my favorite times of the year was the installation of a new student board, bringing new energy, perspectives, ideas, and talents. Here at Sha'ar Zahav it's also an exciting

time! I am so grateful to the previous Va'ad, which I will always remember as the board that introduced me to SZ, and I am sad to see it go. At the same time I am looking forward to being part of whatever comes next. I found the passing of the Torah during the installation ceremony to be incredibly moving. It was timed perfectly after my 6 month anniversary at SZ, and it reaffirmed my excitement and commitment to this amazing community. Thank you to all past and new Va'ad leaders, and to everyone who supports the needs of our holy community.

There is no slow season at Sha'ar Zahav. On campus, summer was the time for planning, and other congregations usually have a summer lull, especially in June. Lucky for us, we have Pride month right between Passover and High Holy Days! Our Pride festivities were amazing, and being in San Francisco, and specifically at Sha'ar Zahav, was so special. I wish every LGBTQIA+ Jew (and non-Jew too) can celebrate Pride with us at some point. Most recently, we've had the Membership drive. Most of the congregation has already renewed their membership - if you haven't, please email or call me today to help ensure that we meet our budget goal.

The last big part of SZ that I have yet to witness are the High Holy Days. A huge shoutout to our lay leadership and clergy for this enormous undertaking. I'm looking forward to celebrating with everyone in a few weeks. Don't forget to register on our website, [shaarzahav.org](http://shaarzahav.org), and invite all your friends to join us online or at the Herbst Theatre.

## Va'ad Members

Barbara Cymrot, Brad Friedman, Quinn Martinez, Josh Muller, Tirtza Pearl, Heidy Zohar Ramirez, Shelli Rawlings-Fein, Ruth Schoenbach, Brandie Solovay

## Membership

Danny Shapiro  
[danny@shaarzahav.org](mailto:danny@shaarzahav.org)

## Hineni Caring Community

If you need help or can volunteer to help other Sha'ar Zahav members in need:  
[webmarla@mc.com](mailto:webmarla@mc.com)

## Jewish Gaily Forward

Read the JGF online:  
<https://www.shaarzahav.org/newsletter/>

### EDITORIAL TEAM

Ann Daniels, Mark Mackler,  
 Sharyn Saslafsky, Andrew Williamson

To reach the JGF editorial team:  
[jgf@shaarzahav.org](mailto:jgf@shaarzahav.org)

### DESIGN AND LAYOUT

Hien Nguyen: [hien.h.nguyen@hotmail.com](mailto:hien.h.nguyen@hotmail.com)

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**BEYOND APPLES AND HONEY, OR "CHILDREN ARE PEOPLE"**

By RABBI Q



Janusz Korczak, a Polish Jewish pediatrician and children's rights activist, wrote, "Children are not the people of tomorrow, but people today. They are entitled to be taken seriously. They have a right

to be treated by adults with tenderness and respect, as equals..." Treating children with tenderness and respect is, luckily, now the norm in most educational settings. All too often, though, we educators think of children as delightful, if generic, vessels, for us to fill with information that will be important to the people that they will someday be.

Sometimes, this produces activities that may be interesting or fun, but don't lead

anywhere: "On Rosh Hashanah, we eat apples and honey. How many apples can you find in this picture?"

Here at Beit Sefer Phyllis Mintzer, I've noticed the deep, authentic respect that our faculty has for children. Whether in Ila's storytelling, Marty's discussions, or Andréa's hands-on creating, our students are, first and foremost, treated like people. We assume that, like us, they have spiritual needs, substantive ideas, and perceptive questions, even if they have less life experience than we do. During these High Holy Days, our students will explore the same big questions that we do: How do we prepare ourselves? What does it mean to start fresh? How can I become a better version of myself?

And then, of course, we eat apples and honey.

## SHA'AR ZAHAV MEET THE B'MITZVAH

**Riley Hannah Luftman**

Riley Hannah Luftman, daughter of Reva and Adam Luftman, will be called to the Torah as a bat mitzvah on November 9. Riley lives in the Castro with her parents and younger sister Nora. She is a 7th grader at Hoover Middle School and attends Beit Sefer at Sha'ar Zahav. She loves playing flute, gymnastics, tennis, reading, singing, dogs, learning new languages, cooking, and being with her friends and family. Riley has a positive and outgoing personality and will quickly bring a smile to your face with her sense of humor.

Riley would like to thank Laura Trupin, Ann Daniels, and Miriam Menzel for all of their support and dedication in getting her ready for her bat mitzvah.

**STILL TIME TO SAVE DEMOCRACY**

By GERI KAHN

SZ's John Lewis Memorial Voter Engagement Group works with Reclaim Our Vote to send thousands of postcards to rural voters of color in crucial states throughout the election season. Will you join us as we push toward election day? Your cards will give voters crucial information on registration, how to find out about candidates, and ways to spread the word about the importance of voting - plus Get Out the Vote messages. We'll provide everything you need as you join the fight to save democracy!

Contact Geri Kahn ([gekahn@gmail.com](mailto:gekahn@gmail.com)) or Tirtza Pearl ([tirtza.pearl@gmail.com](mailto:tirtza.pearl@gmail.com)).

***Read the JGF Online!***

The JGF can be found online.

Read current and previous issues at:

<https://www.shaarzahav.org/newsletter>

**FOOD FOR THE BODY AND SOUL**

By MARTIN TANNENBAUM

What could be better than attending a transportive Kabbalat Shabbat service ... listening to a heartfelt drash, singing in community, making space for Shabbat? The answer: attending services and then having delicious food to nourish our bodies as well as our souls.

For those who can attend in person, we now benefit from dishes created by volunteer members. Think mock chopped liver (a concoction of lentils, caramelized onions and walnuts) which, absent the label, you'd swear was your Bubbe's chopped liver...or Kathleen Friedlander's deviled eggs, or Eli Schlenker's fruit tart, Tom Medin's savory tarts, Ann Bauman and Kelly Thiemann's chocolate feasts, Steve Shotland's cakes, Ellie Rose Maas' brownies or Alex Ingersoll's date pinwheels — which he first baked 70 years ago on the farm! Cheese platters, crudité, kugels and dips also make regular appearances.

Over the last two months, we have created an Oneg Chavurah to plan enticing menus and share shopping, recipes, baking and cooking responsibilities. If this appeals to you, please join us at [oneg@shaarzahav.org](mailto:oneg@shaarzahav.org). All skill levels are welcome. And if you'd like recipes to create favorite oneg dishes in your home, so we can enjoy knowing that our whole community has a chance to enjoy the same tastes even if we are not in the same space, please write to us.

Did you know SZ has a food and kitchen policy that covers kashruth, environmental and health concerns?

Check it out:

<https://bit.ly/SZfoodpolicy>

We are grateful to all our donors! Your generosity supports everything that Sha'ar Zahav does.

This issue lists donations, sponsorships, and all other announcements through July 25. Later information will be in the next issue.

### **General Fund**

**Christopher Archuleta**

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in memory of Allan Berenstein

**Gregg Biggs**

**Diana Buchbinder and Jeane Redsecker**  
in honor of SZ leadership

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in memory of his grandmother,  
Giovanna Tuzzolino; in memory of his  
mother, Jan Tuzzolino;  
in honor of the birth of Tiela Chalmers'  
grandson

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**Steven Elman**  
in memory of Harvey Chertok

**Jonathan Funk and John Arnold**  
in honor of the birth of August Levi  
Sun

in memory of Brian Weiss

**Simon Glinsky**  
in memory of Harvey Chertok,  
cherished father of Michael Chertok

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in honor of Ron Edelman's 80th  
birthday

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### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

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in memory of his parents and brother,  
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Jerry Greenspan

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Plotch

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in memory of his father's yahrzeit

**Michael Shriver and Susan Wolfson**

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in honor of Cantor Bernstein's fabulous  
teaching for the Chevra Kadisha

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in memory of Rabbi Julius Funk

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in celebration of Naomi Rosenmoss  
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**Howard Steiermann**  
**Samuel Walters and Roberto Acordi**

**The Welcome Home Project**

*in memory of Paul Cohen z"l and Ray  
Bernstein z"l:*

**Jonathan Funk and John Arnold**

**Andrew Fyne**

**Karen Schiller**

**Shawn Rosenmoss**

in celebration of Dr. Sophie Rosenmoss  
being selected as a Chief Resident in  
Internal Medicine at UCLA Med Center

**JUNE**

*Oneg Sponsors:*

**Michele Sullivan**

in memory of Mirthe Beal

**Sophia De Anda**

**JULY**

*Flowers Sponsors:*

**Nancy Kates**

in memory of her grandmother, Annabelle  
Harris, and her father, Marshall Kates

**Beth Berenson**

in memory of her mother and father,  
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Sandra Lowry

*Oneg Sponsors:*

**Deborah Levy**

in honor of Mike Shriver's presidency

**Barb Cymrot**

in memory of her father, Marty Cymrot

(continued from page 7)

## AUGUST

*Flowers Sponsors:*

**James Carlson**

in memory of his mother, Jan Tuzzolino

*Oneg Sponsors:*

**Ernest and Kathleen Friedlander**

in memory of Frances Friedlander, z"l  
and in celebration of Cecil Arnold, z"l

in memory of Ann Arnold, z"l

**Jonathan Funk and John Arnold**

in celebration of their 40th anniversary

**Geri Kahn**

in memory of her mother, Sandra Kahn

**Got something to celebrate? Send your Mazel Tov Announcements to [office@shaarzahav.org](mailto:office@shaarzahav.org) to be included in future newsletters.**

## JUNE

**Tiela Chalmers**

and family, on the the birth of Tiela's grandson August Levi Sun, son of Kailin and her husband Andy

**Daniel Loftus**

on his graduation

## AUGUST

**Sarita Groisser**

on her retirement

**Cheryl Magid and Janelle Magid**

a fond farewell as they begin a new chapter of their lives in Washington

## SEPTEMBER

**Jeffrey Lewis Cohen**

**Penny Dachinger**

**Lee Gierson**

**John Golebowski**

**Kevin Johnson**

**Elliot Klein**

**Bernard Pechter**

**Mike Rankin**

**Edith Schwartz**

**Diane Swanson**

**Edward Wolberg**

**Phillip Yanofsky**

## OCTOBER

**Harry Clint Bigglestone**

**Annye Bone**

**Maely Daniele Dufty**

**Osna Elsa Frischman**

**Alice Katz**

**Rabbi Benjamin Marcus**

**Henry Mautner**

**Jeffrey A. Miller**

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**Victor Villaluna**

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## NOVEMBER

**Donald Albert**

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**Harvey Levine**

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Lillian Yanofsky

SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

**In Memoriam**

The congregation notes with sorrow the deaths of:

**MAY**

**Debby Lee Cohen**  
sister of Ellie Cohen

**Bruce Elliot Shotland**  
brother of Elliot Shotland

**JUNE**

**Irv Taub**  
uncle of Michael Tyler and Amy Schustack

**George Paul Roniger**  
father of Lori Roniger

**JUNE**

**Richard Riffer**  
friend of Sha'ar Zahav

**Ed McCanless**  
friend of Tony Harris

SHA'AR ZAHAV CONDOLENCES

**Avraham Bardugo**  
friend of Smadar Lavie  
**Shoshi (Shoshana) Zeid**  
friend of Smadar Lavie

SHA'AR ZAHAV PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW MEMBERS!

**JULY**

**Mirac Fittro (he/him)**  
**Ellie Rose Maas (she/her) and Jim Chowdry (he/him)**  
**Jacob Coblentz (he/him) and Kirsten Walters (she/her)**  
**David Sanchez (he/him)**

*Thank you for your donations!*

Your contributions help us realize our commitment to building and maintaining a vibrant, living community for 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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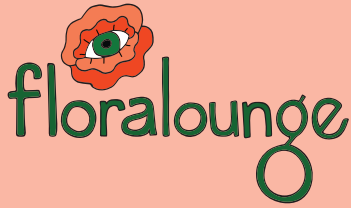
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Do you have digital photographs or video of Sha'ar Zahav activities or events? The Archives Project would like to add copies to our growing photography and video library as we document the history of Sha'ar Zahav.

Please contact Lawrence Helman ([heytheresells@gmail.com](mailto:heytheresells@gmail.com)) or Robert Tat ([rob@roberttat.com](mailto:rob@roberttat.com)) for more information.

If you would like to join the team working on organizing our archival document materials, please contact Ron Lezell at [Lezell.ron@gmail.com](mailto:Lezell.ron@gmail.com)

Congregation



# Shaar Zahav

290 Dolores Street  
San Francisco CA 94103

Voice 415 861 6932

Web [www.shaarzahav.org](http://www.shaarzahav.org)

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