



Chadashot Ha'am

A bi-monthly newsletter for Congregation Bet Ha'am

January/February 2021

Shevat/Adar 5781

Welcome to the Chadashot! Some articles are presented in part; click the "Read More" link to go to our website where you can finish the story. Other content is presented here in full.

RABBI JARED H. SAKS

Social justice has been part of Reform Judaism since its beginnings. In this article, Rabbi Saks outlines how our leaders have seen social justice work as a religious obligation and how he understands social justice work in his own life.



Social Justice and Reform Judaism

This embodiment of Jewish values, engaging in justice work, is one of the first ways that I learned to live and love Judaism. I grew up hearing stories of my great-great-grandmother who used to place bags of groceries on her back stoop...

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LYNN URBACH, President

What is our Jewish community? Lynn Urbach considers how it could be Bet Ha'am, the greater Portland Jewish community, southern Maine's Jewish community, and *k'lal yisrael*, Jewish people throughout the world.



Community

As human beings, we crave a sense of belonging. We count on our communities for companionship, for support, for collective resources. When we think about our community, we may think of our local, geographic community, or our extended family...

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SAM SPINRAD, Education Director

This year, we've been online for school and we're finding that it often works well for us. When we return to in-person classes, what can we take that we've learned and bring to religious education at Bet Ha'am?



Online Learning Post-COVID

Looking ahead to 2021, like most people I anticipate the reopening of schools, businesses, and life as we knew it. As the education director at Congregation Bet Ha'am, reopening the religious school will be a major milestone that I've been...

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L. MARK STONE, Treasurer

Our treasurer is asking everyone to answer the calls that board members will be making; we need extra support to balance this year's budget. We are also looking at new ways to help revenue exceed expenses.



(Report is under the "December 2020" tab.)

Treasurer's Ledger

As the effects of COVID on our operations were becoming apparent, we forecasted a loss of \$74,000 for this fiscal year. Soon after, the board voted to authorize additional expenses to be used towards the eventual reopening of our building...

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RACHEL LEFKOWITZ, Synagogue Administrator

Rachel Lefkowitz attended a conference for synagogue administrators where she found herself again considering the power of asking questions as a way of connecting to each other and building community.



Asking Questions

Many of my colleagues thought the process sounded much too time intensive. How do we do all that listening? It does take time, but when we approach people with questions, we are showing respect for experiences and opinions...

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Sophia Gavin—January 23, 2021

Sophia is a 7th grade student at Breakwater school in Portland. She is the only child of Andrea Krasker and Chip Gavin. Sophia dances with Portland Ballet and has performed in the Victorian Nutcracker for six years. She plays piano and enjoys swimming. She also loves to read and travel and has a pet bunny named Mochi. Sophia is thankful for her close group of friends at Bet Ha'am, some of whom she has known since Shalom Yeladim.



For Sophia's Bat Mitzvah Project, she chose to spread awareness about period poverty and stigma and to raise funds for period products to be distributed through the Michael Klahr Jewish Family Services (KJFS) food pantry. Girls and women all around the world menstruate, and one in four of them don't have access to the products that they need. Not having the right products leads to health issues, stigma, and missing work and school. Sophia hopes that period products become more available for all women and that as people talk more about menstruation, they realize that it is normal and natural and should not have stigma around it.

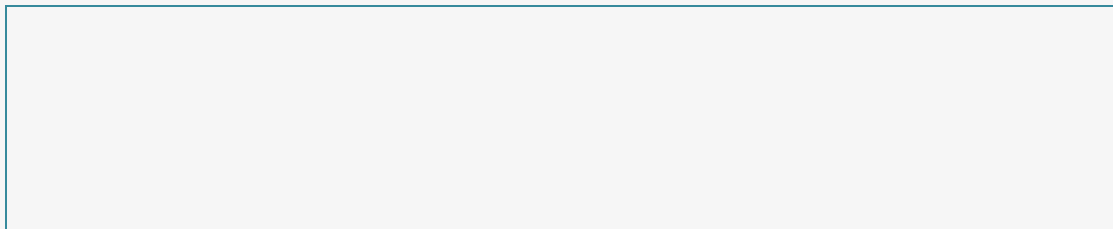
Sophia would like to thank everyone who helped her on her journey to becoming a Bat Mitzvah – her tutor Ellie Miller, Rabbi Saks, Sam Spinrad, all of her past and current Bet Ha'am teachers, and her friends and family for all their support.



Co-chairs Toby Rosenberg and Michael Levine are excited to invite you to Bet Ha'am's fourth annual gala.

Please SAVE THE DATE: Saturday evening, May 1, 2021

What will be the story this year? We will have details soon and promise a fresh and different approach to this well-loved event.



HERE ALL ALONG



FINDING MEANING,
SPIRITUALITY, AND A
DEEPER CONNECTION
TO LIFE — IN JUDAISM

(After Finally Choosing to Look There)

Sarah Hurwitz

Book Review: Here All Along

by Catherine Share. One of the things I like best about this book is that as a new Jew, just beginning to figure out my identity, Hurwitz's story tells me there is not just one way to become Jewish.

[Read more](#)
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Reflections on Chanukah

This year, on each night of Chanukah, we sent an email in which some of our congregants shared written reflections of the holiday. They are gathered [here](#).

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to:

- Zara Bohan and Andy Nesheim, Ari and Corinne
- Tania and Sam Zuckerman, Alder
- Sam Rothman

CONDOLENCES

Zecher T'zaddik L'vrachah to:

- Ellen Peck on the loss of her mother, Margaret Daoust
- David and Julie Dubovsky on the loss of David's father, Robert

THANK YOU!

[Volunteer Opportunities](#)

- To everyone who contributed to our Chanukah emails
- To everyone who donated to us through Amazon Smile and Clynk--in six months, we have received \$700 in Clynk donations

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Annual Fund

- In honor of Russell Kaback by Toby Rosenberg
- In memory of Michael Barriault by Toby Rosenberg
- Izzy Chaleff
- Joel Bass

- In celebration of Catherine Share as she became bat mitzvah by Karen Lukas
- In celebration of Catherine Share as she became bat mitzvah by Ki and Bill Leffler
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks by Ginger Spiro
- Toby Rosenberg
- Ellen Peck
- Phil Hirschorn and Nancy Merwin
- Lynn Urbach and Jerry Olshan
- Steve and Elaine Smith
- To honor Brooklyn Glaser and her love of religious school by Katie Getchell
- In memory of Judith Krassner by Celeste Hynes
- Jonathan and Karen Zuckerman
- Paula and Jamie Zeitlin
- Jonathan and Fae Spath

Capital Campaign

- In memory of Judith Krassner by Karla and Devra Krassner
- To honor Avis Smith, Toby Rosenberg, Rachel Stamieszkin, and Ellie Miller by Catherine Share

Rabbi Cohen Fund for Worship & Learning

- In honor of Catherine Share becoming bat mitzvah by Rachel and Piotr Stamieszkin

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

- In memory of Ruth Bader Ginsburg by Claire Gonyo
- In memory of my so Will Spinrad by Caroline Kreitzberg
- In appreciation by Judith Sokoll
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks as Daniel became bar mitzvah by Jen and David Polisner
- In memory of Howard Kohn by Patrycja Fortula Kohn
- In memory of Howard Lemack by Jenn Harriman
- In appreciation of Rabbi Saks by Ruth Skoglund
- In honor of Catherine Share becoming bat mitzvah by Kathryn Albert
- In honor of Aliana Goldman as she became bat mitzvah by Michael Goldman
- In honor of Ginger Spiro by Rachel Posner
- In memory of my beloved son, Michael Card by Arlene Shatz

General Fund

- In memory of Doria Merson by Barbara Merson
- In honor of Lucinda Hirshkorn becoming bat mitzvah by Nathan & Sarah Szanton
- In honor of and in great celebration with Rabbi Leffler on his 91st birthday by Ki Leffler
- In honor of Sharon Newman by Jenn and David Polisner
- In memory of my mom Rita Bubela by Donna Landau
- In honor of Catherine Share becoming bat mitzvah by Donna Landau
- In memory of Dylan Hart by Vicki Fox
- In memory of Lillian Sandler by Trudy Goldstein
- In appreciation of holiday services by Joel and Mirema Bass
- In memory of parents Harriet and Robert Weisman on their yartzeits by David and Sherrill Weisman
- Wishing mom Jane Snerson happy Hanukkah by Margot Snerson
- In honor of Sharon Newman by Michelle Dietz
- Alan and Jill Morris
- Richard Abramson
- In appreciation by Peter and Jennifer Segal
- In memory of Ghetto Spierer by Wendy and Bill Sirois

Rabbi Sandmel Education Fund

- In honor of Daniel Polisner on becoming bar mitzvah by Rachel and Piotr Stamieszkin

Religious School

- Izzy Chaleff

Religious School Library Fund

- In honor of Jodi and Bill Welch by Kathleen Griffith

Scholar in Residence Fund

- In memory of Rosalyne Bernstein by Karla Krassner

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