

THE CHRONICLE

FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY

OUR NEW PRAYER BOOK: YOUR NEW PERSONA? | Rabbi Robert N. Levine, D.D.



In just my second year of rabbinical school, I became the student rabbi of Temple B'nai Israel in Laconia, New Hampshire. Though I felt more than a little intimidated, I was comforted by the fact that my immediate predecessor was Eric Yoffie who went on to become the president of what was then called the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and that there was a number of veteran congregants to assist me in

my fledgling career.

In my first trip there I scheduled a meeting with longtime Ritual chair, Abe Gozonski. He handed me their Orthodox *machzor* that they still used. I grew up with a traditional High Holy Day prayer book, but I never led services with that thick, prayer-packed volume.

*"So, tell me Mr. Gozonski, how are services conducted here?"
"I don't know. You are the rabbi."
"Me?"*

Over the years I've grown to love my role as rabbi and service leader. During my first full High Holy Days at CRS in 1991, we introduced *Gates of Repentance* and experienced a generation of powerful, meaningful High Holy Day services with the GOR.

"These holy days are about your attempt to overcome your base instincts and attempt to fulfill your potential as a human being."

Now we will begin to pray using the Reform Movement's newest *machzor*. While I remain humbled by my role as prayer leader, our Board of Trustees, Ritual Committee, and clergy team are excited to embark on this spiritual journey with you. Our new High Holy Day prayer book is fully transliterated which will make accessibility and participation much easier. There is theological diversity in the book which will help our members continue to assess God's power and role in their life. Join us for services on the second day of Rosh Hashanah when I will lead a discussion about the theology of the *machzor* and what it means for us and our relationship with the divine. In my view, once we know who God is, we can better figure what is expected of us.

What I particularly like about the *Mishkan HaNefesh* is the wonderful study material on the left side of the page. I can promise you a

magnificent musical experience from our brilliant cantors, and profound commentary and sermons from our fabulous rabbis. However, among the most important moments during the High Holy Day services are those you spend alone – reading, thinking, and emoting. These holy days are about your attempt to overcome your base instincts and attempt to fulfill your potential as a human being. This is stunningly important, difficult work. Most of us do not put in sufficient effort. Those who do, however, can have a life-changing spiritual experience. Our *machzor* really will help. Here is a sample of the text which awaits you:

"Your Book of Life doesn't begin today on Rosh Hashanah. It began when you were born. Some of the chapters were written by other people: your parents, siblings, and teachers. Parts of your book were crafted out of the experiences you had because of other people's decisions: where you lived, what schools you went to, what your homes were like. But the message of Rosh Hashanah... is that much of your book is written every day – by the choices you make. The book is not written and sealed; you get to edit it, decide which parts you want to emphasize and remember, and maybe even which parts you want to leave behind. Shanah Tovah means both a good year and a good change. Today you can change the rest of your life."

Shanah Tovah. I wish you, along with my family, Gina, Judah, Ezra, Katie, and Maya, a good year and a good change.

CRS FAMILY TRIP TO ISRAEL August 21 – 31, 2017

Experience Israel with your congregational family! First-timers and returnees of all ages are welcome. We will eat, laugh, sing, and pray together and, if you are interested, we can celebrate becoming b'nai mitzvah together!

Wednesday, September 21 at 6:30 pm Join us for an information session with Rabbi Weitzman, Cantor Garfein, and Deb Zaluda from Puzzle Israel, our tour company, to discuss trip details, timeline, and trip itinerary.

We look forward to seeing you in September and hope you consider joining us in 2017! *L'Shanah Haba'ah Yerushalayim!* Next year in Jerusalem! Contact: Rabbi Weitzman at rabiweitzman@crsnyc.org.

IN THIS ISSUE

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 FROM THE RABBI'S STUDY | 4 SAVE THE DATES | 6 DEVELOPMENT |
| 2 EXECUTIVE COMMENTARY | 5 175th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION | 7 SCHOOLS |
| 3 FEATURES | | 8 TEMPLE LIFE |

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FROM THE PRESIDENT | Martin Flumenbaum



Welcome back. I hope everyone had a relaxing, safe, and healthy summer and is looking forward to a rewarding and spiritual High Holy Day season. As I begin my third year as president of this great congregation, I want to mention several of the important initiatives that have dominated our summer.

First, we have finalized our extraordinary plans to commemorate the 175th Anniversary of Rodeph Sholom. This year-long celebration provides all of us with an opportunity to remember our heritage, rejoice in our current accomplishments, and renew our commitment to find deeper meaning in each of our lives – in part by doing more for each other, our synagogue, and our community. We will start this Friday, September 16 with a stirring and joyful Shabbat service for all generations. The service will be followed by klezmer music, dancing, and a celebratory oneg for the entire Rodeph Sholom family.

In November, we will have an expanded Mitzvah Weekend, in which we will remember and commemorate our long history of community service. On Friday, November 11, Rabbi David Saperstein, Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, will speak on the issues of social justice facing us today. On Saturday night, a special Havdalah service will focus on our Torah-inspired mandate to welcome the stranger. Following Havdalah, we are planning an interfaith, multi-dimensional program and mitzvah project devoted to one of the key issues of our time – helping refugees in this country. Given the political rhetoric relating to this issue, we have an obligation as a community to focus on this topic. On Sunday, our community will come together to participate in over 25 hands-on projects devoted to alleviating hunger, fighting illiteracy, providing clothes and supplies to those in need, and donating blood. It will be a spectacular day of social action.

The following weekend in November, we have planned a series of events honoring and remembering Rodeph Sholom's heritage. Longtime members will be honored at Erev Shabbat services on Friday, November 18, and renowned architectural historian, Andrew Dolkert, will provide insights into the design and historical significance of our magnificent Temple House and Sanctuary. And on Sunday, November 20, we will visit the Lower East Side and the building at 8 Clinton Street which once housed our shul. We will have a special program and walking tour for all those interested.

Finally, on Friday and Saturday, December 2 and 3, we will join in celebration of a joyous milestone as we honor Rabbi Levine for his inspirational leadership at Rodeph Sholom for 25 years. We will continue the celebration of Rabbi Levine's contributions with a Lecture Series in spring 2017. Watch for more information later in the fall about this and other 2017 celebratory events, including a very special evening of community and comedy scheduled for February 7, 2017.

In addition to the plans for the 175th Anniversary celebration, I also want to highlight some changes that we are making for the High Holy Day services

this year. In order to enhance both our safety and our security, tickets for all services will have barcodes that will be scanned this year. Also new this year, all Family Services will require a separate ticket, different from the Congregational ticket. Our Family Services on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur have become so popular that our own congregants and their families were having difficulty in finding space. Separate tickets also function as an extra security measure.

We have completed an exceptionally strong year as an institution – spanning worship, social action, education, and celebration – and we look forward to an even more rewarding and meaningful year ahead. As Rabbi Levine has preached for years, each of us is capable of making a difference. We all need to find that extra spark that propels us to provide service to others – whether it be in the synagogue, the community, or both. The 175th Anniversary plans provide each of us with an opportunity for both increased engagement and greater service to others. Ruth and I wish you and your family a happy, healthy, and rewarding New Year. We are looking forward to seeing you often throughout the next few months.

SHIREINU: Our Voices Soar Together

Over six years ago our congregation took a sacred step forward. For years we prioritized the importance of opening our doors of welcome to shape a community of inclusion for ethnic, religious, sexual, and socio-economic identities. Through a listening campaign, we learned there were families who felt unseen due to the special needs and disabilities within their households. Through the charge of Rabbi Levine and the leadership of Dr. Nancy Crown and Gina Levine, we developed an initiative of inclusion for families with special needs. *Shireinu (Our Voices)* was founded on the sacredness of every person and the belief that all voices are necessary in holy community.

As *Shireinu* enters its seventh year, we celebrate what has been accomplished and our future plans. Our family holiday services provide an important Jewish worship experience for many; our *Shireinu* Committee has helped ignite similar initiatives in synagogues and churches around the country; our *Shireinu* website is an indispensable resource; and our new *Shireinu* B'nai Mitzvah Program provides personalized multi-year learning experiences for youth with special needs.

As our congregation continues to be recognized for our *Shireinu* initiative, receiving national awards from UJA and the URJ, we continue to further our efforts. The Central Conference of American Rabbis appointed Rabbi Ben Spratt, with Rabbi Shira Joseph of Congregation Sha'aray Shalom in Hingham, MA, as co-chairs of the **Committee on Disability Awareness and Inclusion** to bring our programming beyond our own walls. Building a national strategy for special needs and disabilities inclusion for the Reform Movement, they continue Rodeph Sholom's role as a trailblazer of this sacred work. Learn more at shireinu.rodephsholom.org.

Welcome New Trustees to the Synagogue Board



Dina Bakst and her husband, Evan, have been members for 15 years and have three daughters, Emily and Arielle (both b'nai mitzvah of CRS), and Talia (attends RSS with Arielle). As co-chair of the 175th Anniversary Kick-off Committee, she is

helping to make our year's grand celebration memorable. She participated in the 2011 Leadership Development Program, served on the Inclusion Committee, and is a member of Sisterhood. Dina is co-founder and co-president of A Better Balance, a legal advocacy organization promoting the rights of working families and fairness in the workplace. They have led the way in advancing public policies that promote caregiving and women's equality in New York and

nationwide. Dina has received awards for her work championing women's rights and is a National Commissioner of the Anti-Defamation League.

Ron Bernstein and his wife, Keri, have been members for more than 14 years and have two children who attend RSS. Zachary is in the 8th grade, having become a bar mitzvah at CRS last year, and Sophie is in the 5th grade. Ron served six years as an RSS Trustee and four years as Treasurer of the RSS Board of Trustees. Ron is a Managing Director of Blackstone Real Estate. Prior to that, Ron focused on condominium and rental development at Great Spruce Capital Partners, a real estate firm he founded. Previously, Ron was a senior acquisition specialist at Goldman, Sachs & Co., in their real estate principal investment area executing developments, re-developments, and value add transactions in residential condominium, multi-family, office, retail, hotel, industrial, and seniors housing properties.

HIGH HOLY DAYS 5777

Selichot | Saturday, September 24

8:00 – 9:30 pm Beginning with *Havdalah*, *Selichot Service* followed by refreshments.

Erev Rosh Hashanah | Sunday, October 2

Evening Congregational Services

6:00 – 8:00 pm in the Main Sanctuary, Schafler Forum, and Schnurmacher Chapel

Rosh Hashanah First Day | Monday, October 3

*Family Services**

9:00 – 10:30 am in the Main Sanctuary (featuring the Children's Choir)

9:15 – 10:00 am in the Schafler Forum (Young Families)

Adult Study Opportunity

9:00 – 10:30 am at St. Matthew & St. Timothy Church

Teen Service (Grades 7-12)

9:30 – 10:45 am in the Leader Board Room

Children's Experience (Grades 2-6)

10:30 am – 1:45 pm in the 84th Street Gym

Congregational Services

11:00 am – 1:45 pm in the Main Sanctuary, Schafler Forum, and Schnurmacher Chapel

Rosh Hashanah Second Day | Tuesday, October 4

Congregational Services

9:30 am – 12:00 pm in the Main Sanctuary

Children's Experience (Grades 2-6)

9:30 am – 12:00 pm in the 84th Street Gym

Rosh Hashanah Shireinu Service for Families with Special Needs

11:00 am – 12:00 pm in the Schafler Forum with a Sign Language interpreter. RSVP: specialneeds@crsnyc.org or 646.454.3124.

Tashlich

Following Congregational Services in Central Park

Kol Nidre | Tuesday, October 11

Early Service (Family-friendly)

5:00 – 6:30 pm in the Schafler Forum

or

Evening Congregational Services

7:00 pm in the Main Sanctuary, Schafler Forum, and Schnurmacher Chapel

Yom Kippur Day | Wednesday, October 12

*Family Services**

9:00 – 10:30 am in the Main Sanctuary (featuring the Children's Choir)

9:15 – 10:00 am in the Schafler Forum (Young Families)

Adult Study Opportunity

9:00 – 10:30 am at St. Matthew & St. Timothy Church

Teen Service (Grades 7-12)

9:30 – 10:45 am in the Leader Board Room

Children's Experience (Grades 2-6)

10:45 am – 2:30 pm in the 84th Street Gym

Morning Congregational Services

11:15 am – 2:30 pm in the Main Sanctuary, Schafler Forum, and Schnurmacher Chapel

Afternoon Congregational Services

3:00 – 4:15 pm in the Main Sanctuary and Schafler Forum

Yizkor Services

4:15 – 5:00 pm in the Main Sanctuary, Schafler Forum, and Schnurmacher Chapel

Neilah Services

5:15 – 6:30 pm in the Main Sanctuary, Schafler Forum, and Schnurmacher Chapel

Havdalah

6:30 pm in front of the building on 83rd Street or in the Schafler Forum

Erev Sukkot | Sunday, October 16

4:30 pm *Erev Sukkot/Family Sukkot Experience* in the Courtyard Sukkah

Sukkot | Monday, October 17

10:15 am *Sukkot Morning Service*

Erev Simchat Torah | Sunday, October 23

6:00 pm *Erev Shemini Atzeret/Simchat Torah Service*

Simchat Torah | Monday, October 24

10:15 am *Simchat Torah/Yizkor Service*

NEW THIS YEAR FOR OUR SAFETY AND SECURITY

Tickets for all services have barcodes that will be scanned.

* All Family Services require a separate ticket other than the Congregational ticket. Families with children 0-12 received an invitation to print tickets. Contact: rbernstein@crsnyc.org.

Yom Kippur Food Drive. Food Drive bags will be given out on Rosh Hashanah and your filled bags will be collected by City Harvest on Yom Kippur, Wednesday, October 12, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm in front of the Synagogue building on West 83rd Street.

SELICHOT | Saturday, September 24

8:00 – 9:30 pm: *Havdalah and Selichot Services*

An overture to the High Holy Days, *Selichot* is a service that usually takes place on the Saturday night preceding Rosh Hashanah, and opens the season of penitential prayers. We will begin with *Havdalah* and let the language, music, and power of the High Holy Days guide, challenge, and inspire us for the days ahead.

ADULT VOLUNTEER CHOIR

Second Day Rosh Hashanah Service | 9:30 AM

Thursday, September 22, 6:30 pm | Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

Tuesday, October 4, 8:15 am | Final Rehearsal in the Sanctuary

To join, contact the Cantor's Study: cantordelowe@crsnyc.org.

NEW! HAVDALAH UNPLUGGED SERVICES

Saturdays | October 22, November 12, December 17,
March 18, May 13

6:30 pm: Hors d'oeuvres and conversation

6:45 – 7:15 pm: Havdalah service

Always looking for meaningful pathways into prayer, we are introducing intimate, spiritual, and intergenerational Havdalah services throughout the coming year. This musical and meditative ceremony offers a beautiful way to mark the end of Shabbat and begin a new week. There will be noshing (wine and cheese) and socializing with clergy and your fellow congregants. Bring your family and friends, all are welcome!

SAVE THE DATES

*You are invited to***KATIE LEVY AND EZRA LEVINE'S AUF RUF****Erev Shabbat Service | Friday, October 21, 6:00 PM**

Join us for Katie Levy and Ezra Levine's auf ruf. A festive Oneg Shabbat in their honor will follow the service in the Main Lobby and Sukkah. Katie is the daughter of our members Janet and Gary Levy. Ezra is the son of Gina and Senior Rabbi Robert Levine. Both lifelong members, b'nai mitzvah and Confirmands of CRS, Katie and Ezra are believed to be the first RSS alumni marriage. Katie's mother, Janet, is on the CRS Board of Trustees and is chair of the Membership Committee.

Thursday, September 8, 7:00 – 9:30 pm: CRS BOOK GROUP. We are reading *The Celebrant* by Eric Rolfe Greenberg. Meetings are group-moderated in the Board Room. Next dates are Thursdays, October 6, November 3, and December 1. Register: bookgroup@crsnyc.org.

Friday, September 9, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT 9/11 MEMORIAL SERVICE.

Monday, September 12, 6:00 – 8:00 pm: CHALLAH FOR HUNGER. In the Schafler.

Friday, September 16, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT SERVICE/KICK-OFF FOR CRS'S 175th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION. See Page 5.

Tuesday, September 20, 11:30 am – 1:30 pm: LUNCH TOGETHER. A dairy lunch will be served. A contribution of \$8 is suggested. Next date is Tuesday, November 15. Co-sponsored by Adult Education, the Caring Community Committee, and Sisterhood. In the Eisner and Schnurmacher.

Thursday, October 13, 1:00 – 4:00 pm: MAH JONGG. Novices and veteran players are all welcome. Cards will be available for purchase. In the Board Room. RSVP: mahjongg@crsnyc.org.

Friday, October 14, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT/CONSECRATION SERVICE. For new students in the RSS Elementary Division and Religious School.

Saturday, October 15, 12:30 – 2:30 pm: CHAMBER MUSIC AT RODEPH SHOLOM. Artistic Director Eliot Bailen leads the chamber ensemble highlighting our Jewish musical heritage. In the intimate setting of the Schnurmacher following Shabbat morning services. Contact: chambermusic@crsnyc.org.

Sunday, October 23, 6:00 pm: EREV SHEMINI ATZERET/SIMCHAT TORAH SERVICE AND DANCING. The celebration continues on West 83rd Street following the service.

Monday, October 24, 10:15 am: SIMCHAT TORAH/YIZKOR SERVICE.

Friday, November 4, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT/KRISTALLNACHT SERVICE. Please join us to commemorate the Night of Broken Glass, November 9, 1938, that marked the beginning of the Holocaust.

Friday – Sunday, November 11 – 13: MITZVAH WEEKEND. Our annual weekend of social action is filled with activities for all. For more information or to participate: mitzvahday@crsnyc.org. See Page 5.

Friday, November 18, 6:00 pm: HERITAGE SERVICE AND ONEG. Festive oneg following services. See Page 5.

Sunday, November 20, 8:30 am – 3:30 pm: CRS 175th ANNIVERSARY EVENT: HERITAGE DAY. See Page 5.

Friday, December 2, 6:00 pm: EREV SHABBAT SERVICE IN HONOR OF RABBI LEVINE'S 25th ANNIVERSARY. See Page 5.

Saturday, December 3, 5:00 – 9:00 pm: HAVDALAH WITH RABBI LEVINE. See Page 5.

ADULT EDUCATION COURSES

These are some of the inspiring courses we are offering this year.

Learn about Jewish thought and culture, Torah and Hebrew, our history, and life cycle events.

Come to one class or come to many. Adult Ed has something to offer you!

Meet the *Machzor*

Saturdays | During Shabbat Morning Chapel Service
September 3 and 17

As the month of Elul begins, infuse your Shabbat worship with the words and melodies of the High Holy Days. Here's your chance to experience the new machzor, even before Rosh Hashanah starts!

Elul Learning 5776

Tuesdays, 7:00 pm | September 13, 20, 27

Throughout the holy days, we repeat a verse from Psalms, so redolent of this time and experience – Pichu li, sha'arei tzedeq – open for me the gates of righteousness, and I will enter them. As the gates open, so does the Book of Life. This year we open a new machzor. Join your clergy in an introspective workshop to introduce you to the new machzor, and prepare you for these High Holy Days.

(Re)Soul

Rabbi Jonathan Slater | 7:00 pm
Thursday, October 20, Tuesdays, April 4 and May 23

Martin Buber taught that there is no holy and profane in the world, only the holy and the not yet holy—and our task is to transform the not yet holy into the sacred. Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel taught that ours is a religion of time, aimed at the sanctification of time. We are asked to create and mark sacred time, but it is all too easy for the demands of everyday life to get in the way. We will look at the three pilgrimage festivals—Sukkot, Passover, and Shavuot—and create an intentional practice for and encounter with these holidays and beyond. With sessions on mindfulness, using meditation and focused text study, you can stop, take a deep breath, and reflect on the life you are living and want to live.

Shabbat Study Series:

Words on the Page, Prayers of our Hearts: Shabbat Morning Liturgy
Saturdays, following Shabbat morning services. Lunch included.
November 19: Shema and Its Blessings

The ancient rabbis described prayer as avodah she-ba'lev, the service of the heart, yet for centuries, our services has been filled with words. Join us as we eat a little, and then explore the history, meaning, and possibilities within the main framework of the Shabbat morning service. What did the words mean then, and perhaps more importantly, what can they mean for us now? Hebrew familiarity is not required, curiosity is! Come to one session, all, or as many as you can.

For questions contact Kelly Barrett: kbarrett@crsnyc.org.

CRS HOMELESS SHELTER

The Rodeph Sholom Shelter begins its 34th season on Tuesday, October 25. Providing a clean, safe, and caring temporary home for homeless men since March 1, 1983, it will remain open, Monday – Friday, until June 2017. Some congregants participate for one or two nights each season, while others spend one night per month. Would you like to volunteer for this meaningful mitzvah? Contact: kbarrett@crsnyc.org.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THESE PROGRAMS AND OTHER EVENTS AT RODEPHSHOLOM.ORG

CONGREGATION RODEPH SHOLOM AT 175

We rejoice in being a vibrant community with innovative programming and services and together we will renew our commitment to the future of our congregation. Join us for these special events that celebrate our beloved congregation's rich history!

KICK-OFF SHABBAT

Friday, September 16 at 6:00 PM

Kick off our 175th Anniversary year with a stirring and joyful Shabbat service for all generations. Join us after services for dancing to contemporary klezmer music and a delicious oneg. This is an evening devoted to the entire Rodeph Sholom family – children, teens, and adults! Laugh, dance, and celebrate!

MITZVAH WEEKEND

Friday – Sunday, November 11-13

For over 20 years, Mitzvah Day and Mitzvah Weekend has helped thousands in our community. This year, we will take our commitment to the 175th degree with a weekend of service, learning, and inspiration.

Erev Shabbat Services We will remember our long history of community service. Rabbi David Saperstein, Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom, will speak on issues of social justice facing us today.

Saturday Night Havdalah Services As we rejoice, we will renew our mandate to welcome the stranger. Following Havdalah and refreshments, join us in an interfaith, multi-dimensional program and mitzvah project devoted to helping refugees.

Mitzvah Day Sunday will be a day of action. That's when our community comes together to participate in over 25 different hands-on projects for the whole family. We will help alleviate hunger, fight illiteracy, donate blood, and provide clothes and supplies to those in need.

HERITAGE WEEKEND

Friday and Sunday, November 18 and 20

Congregation Rodeph Sholom was founded in 1842 on the Lower East Side. During this weekend we remember and honor our past.

Erev Shabbat Services Longtime members will be honored and we will learn about the historical significance of our Temple House and Sanctuary, designed by renowned New York architect Charles B. Meyers. Noted architectural historian Andrew Dolkart, Professor of Historic Preservation at Columbia University, will provide insights into the design of our magnificent home. A festive oneg will follow.

Sunday Afternoon Our Heritage Weekend continues with a visit to the Lower East Side. In 1850, our building was at 8 Clinton Street, now the home of Congregation Chasam Sopher. Join us at noon to nosh, socialize, and take a step back in time to learn about our history. A special program at 1:00 pm at the Lower East Side Tenement Museum will be



hosted by Rabbi Levine with Annie Polland, head of education and programs, who will illuminate what life was like for our founding congregants. Also, we will take a walking tour of the neighborhood led by our congregant Justin Ferate, an acclaimed NYC tour guide.

RABBI ROBERT LEVINE'S 25th ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Friday and Saturday, December 2 and 3

Join the celebration of this milestone as we honor Rabbi Levine for his inspirational leadership for 25 years. Worship, learn, and socialize with our congregational family and with past and present CRS clergy.

Erev Shabbat Service The joyous celebratory service will feature special guests, music, and more. It will be followed by an oneg where you will reconnect with clergy alumni.

Havdalah Join us Saturday evening when Rabbi Levine and his CRS rabbinic colleagues, past and present, will engage in a fascinating theological conversation. A beautiful Havdalah service will conclude the festivities.

Our celebration of Rabbi Levine's contributions and legacy will continue with a compelling Lecture Series in spring 2017.



Janet Neuberger, portrait artist Ray Kinstler, Barbara Lustig, Marty Flumenbaum, and Rabbi Levine.

DEVELOPMENT | Lyndsie Levine

In anticipation of the High Holy Days, I spent some time reading through our new *machzorim* and found an essay in the Yom Kippur prayer book by Rabbi Dalia Marx, PhD that has stayed with me, titled *The Bayit and the K'neset*. In it, Rabbi Marx muses on the community's role in our individual experiences as Jews:

"Jewish tradition does not ask us to choose between the private and the public, the personal and the communal. Rather, it calls us to exist in both of these realms, actively living in the tension. No community is perfect, just as no individual is perfect. Yet, for all its frustrations, Jewish community remains a sacred vessel for our shared hopes, yearnings, struggles, and fears. The whole is greater than the sum of its parts; the community elevates and enhances each individual's experience."

The idea that even our individual experiences are shaped by a sacred community is one that has always resonated with me, especially on the High Holy Days. At this time our entire community comes together and from the moments of resounding communal prayer to the quiet times of personal reflection, there is a sense of belonging – not only within our own Sanctuary, but with others around the country and world.

This feeling of togetherness also brings with it a sense of accountability. We belong to, and are therefore responsible for, our community. Members of CRS embody this concept in so many ways, from volunteering in our Homeless Shelter, to visiting those among us in need of connection and cheering up, to contributing to the financial wellbeing of our congregation via

the Yom Kippur Appeal (YKA). The YKA is so vitally important for the same reason that it can be hard to explain. "Unrestricted operating support" is an amorphous concept and "Where does the money really go?" is a question I often hear. Here are a few answers:

When our membership dues only cover 55% of our operations and yet we reaffirm our commitment to providing dues assistance to any family in need, it is the philanthropic support of our community that means we never have to lose an individual or family from the CRS circle of worship, religious education, and cultural enrichment because of cost. When we needed to make sure that our security measures met the test of these uncertain times, it is your *tzedakah* that meant we could increase the hours of the off-duty police officers who protect our building when it is open six days a week. When we realized that there was a real need to provide a b'nai mitzvah track for students with special needs, it was your ongoing generosity that meant we could respond with a customized and personalized program that ensures every child at CRS can experience this special lifecycle moment with their family and friends regardless of what it costs us.

"Unrestricted operating support" may sound like the least exciting of all the ways you can support your synagogue, but it is truly the most profound. Our operations encompass **all** that this community has to offer – it is felt in every program and initiative, every profound moment of worship, every time a clergy person is there for you, each time we are embraced by our "sacred vessel" of community. On behalf of the entire congregation, thank you for the important role you play in making this possible. All good wishes for a sweet and happy 5777.

MAZEL TOV TO THE RECIPIENTS OF THE 2016 GEMILUT CHASADIM AWARDS



Longtime Sextons and Ushers:
Front row: Fred Rudd, Francine Tramantano Lehat, Molly Gordy, Roberta Semer (Sexton), Marjorie Fagan, Marilyn Mauler (Sexton). Back row: Chuck Weiss, Stephen Pearlman, Mark Gerstle, and Seymour Lesser (Not pictured: Catherine Sull, Sexton).
Top left: Brad Zimor. Bottom left: Annie Epstein



THANK YOU FOR SERVING | Yvette Perry

Our congregation benefits from the wide array of experience and skills that our members have. That they willingly choose to share them is a testament to their devotion and commitment to Rodeph Sholom. And when asked to serve on the Board, there is even more opportunity to make an impact. **Sally Kaplan, Jane Dystel, and Karen Bendit** – we thank you for your outstanding service on our Board of Trustees. Your generous participation is evident in the programs and services made better. You may be stepping down now, but your time, effort, and commitment to making our temple life more fulfilling is a lasting legacy we can pay tribute to – thank you for making a difference. *Yasher Koach!*

WELCOME SUSAN TICKER



We are delighted to welcome Susan Ticker as our **Director of Community Engagement**. Susan brings strong strategic thinking and implementation skills to our congregation and has over 20 years of experience in Jewish communal settings. An effective change agent, Susan has strong expertise in leadership development, program evaluation, and small group facilitation. She recently served as a consultant at the Jewish Education Project, helping congregations in NYC, Westchester, and Long Island develop innovative educational models and engagement strategies. *"I am passionate about Jewish life and learning, and eager to help people connect. I am excited to join the CRS leadership team and look forward to partnering with clergy, staff and congregants to craft a vision of adult engagement for members that deepens their connections with CRS and with each other."* Susan lives in Queens with her husband, Hazzan Henry Rosenblum, and has three children and two grandchildren.

COUNSELING & SUPPORT SERVICE: RUTH KOBRIN, LMSW

Ruth Kobrin, CRS's resident social worker, helps us to deal with many challenges, problems, and crises we may face. She also reaches out and visits our congregation's lonely, ill, and housebound and provides information and assistance to those needing any type of health care facility or assisted living situation.

For confidential assistance, please contact Ruth for an appointment: 646.454.3180 or rkobrin@crsnyc.org.

REMEMBER, REJOICE, RENEW. | לזכור, לשמוח, לחדש.

Kerith Braunfeld

Each year, the Religious School has a theme based upon a concept or value we want to highlight for our students and parents. Our theme this year is the same as our congregation's: Remember, Rejoice, Renew. Congregation Rodeph Sholom Celebrates 175 Years!

These three concepts, *lizkor* (to remember), *lismoach* (to rejoice), and *l'chadesh* (to renew) are deeply engrained mitzvot (commandments) and *middot* (Jewish values) within our tradition:

The mitzvah **to remember** is mentioned over 150 times in the Bible—a few examples are to remember creation, Shabbat, our exodus from Egypt, when we were strangers in Egypt, to wipe out Amalek, and that our ancestors each had a unique relationship with God. We are commanded to remember in order to honor those who came before us, understand that because of our ancestors we merit a relationship with God today, to remember that we have enemies who we must stand up against, and recognize that those who came before us help shape who we are today.

It's a mitzvah **to rejoice!** Why do you think we have a reputation of always eating and trying to feed people?! We are actually commanded to have parties and feasts to mark milestones such as brit milah, simchat bat, a bar/bat mitzvah, the holiday of Purim, and more. We must celebrate these special times as a community amongst family and friends to express gratitude and joy for reaching these moments in life. A few years ago, when revising the Religious School's mission statement, we wanted input from our high school students and asked them a number of questions as to why they continued their Jewish education post-bar and bat mitzvah, why they

keep coming back to teen programming. We asked them to list key words about their experience. We were elated to see that so many used the word "joy" to describe their experience—so much so that we included it in our updated statement which says, "...inspires a community of pre-K to 12th grade learners and thinkers to embrace Judaism with joy."

To renew means to take something old that came before us and to give it new life and meaning. We learn this concept from *Parshat Toldot* in the Book of Genesis 26:18, "Isaac dug anew the wells which had been dug in the days of his father Abraham and which the Philistines had stopped up after Abraham's death; and he gave them the same names that his father had given them." Isaac could have simply dug new wells for water, but he specifically re-dug the wells his father had made. We are foolish if we think that we would dig our own wells from scratch, essentially create ourselves. We must take on the legacy of our ancestors and then make it our own: renew it and give it new life. As the renowned Torah scholar Rav Kook states, "What is old shall be made new, and what is new shall be made holy."

As we celebrate Rodeph Sholom's 175th Anniversary this year, our students will continue to learn about their own family's Jewish story within the context of the larger story of the Jewish people, and specifically those who came before us at CRS. We will continue to celebrate *s'machot* (happy occasions) together that remind us to be grateful for what we have and the joy in our lives. We will highlight our special CRS community and will build upon and grow from those who came before us at CRS to ensure its strong future. We will truly remember, rejoice, and renew!



WELCOME RACHEL DULITZ

Rachel Dulitz joins our Religious Education Department in a newly created position, **Family B'nai Mitzvah Program Administrator**. She previously served as the Program Director at The Skirball Center for Adult Jewish Learning and the Education and Adult Programming Coordinator at Central Synagogue. She will be working with b'nai mitzvah families to facilitate all aspects of our revised b'nai mitzvah programming for 4th through 7th grade students and will be the central contact for all items related to bar and bat mitzvah at CRS. Rachel looks forward to getting to know our congregants as they embark upon the exciting journey to becoming b'nai mitzvah. Contact Rachel at bnaimitzvah@crsnyc.org or 646.454.3197.

COLLEGE COMMITTEE



Do you have a college student? Did you know that the College Committee sends *care packages*, including letters from our clergy, to our students while they are away at school? Last year we sent Chanukah, Passover, and special Shabbat packages to nearly 150 college students across the country. We will start this year with a mailing at Rosh Hashanah. We also help students get in touch with Jewish organizations on campus and local synagogues. Please let us know about your child at collegecommittee@crsnyc.org.

CRuSTY | Sara Spanjer

"Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, one can raise the other." (Ecclesiastes 4:9) Our extraordinary teen community of 9th – 12th graders is loving, happy, engaged, and supportive of each other. The CRuSTY board and its members are dedicated and enthusiastic about the CRS teen community. There is a special place for all within our group, and we invite you to be part of the team!

An exciting new year includes educational and social programs, involvement in CRS's 175th Anniversary celebration, activities with other synagogues around NYC, and with NFTY, the National Federation of Temple Youth. Join us in September:

Sunday, September 18

1:00 – 3:00 pm: Senior CRuSTY Kick-off event,
Picnic in the Park (9th – 12th graders)

Sunday, September 25

1:00 – 2:00 pm: 8th Grade CRuSTY Kick-off event,
Chocolate Works

CRuSTY and CRS teen programming is rewarding with activities for anyone looking for friendship, learning experiences, Jewish connections, service, and camaraderie. Teen programming is growing with participants who are post-b'nai mitzvah from the Religious School and RSS alumni. Beginning in January we will welcome 8th graders into Senior CRuSTY, offering them the opportunity to make connections and experience our senior youth group before their high school years begin.



Read with your child! Receive FREE high quality Jewish books and music in the mail each month for children 6 months to 7 years old. The second Thursday of each month is PJ & Play Story time! The first date is Thursday, October 13 at 4:30 – 5:15 pm. Go to rodephsholom.org to sign up.

I N M E M O R I A M

Herbert Lesser, brother of Marvin Lesser

Joan Thau, mother of Jonathan Thau

Georgine Cooper, mother of Steven Cooper

Agnes Parnass, mother of Ita Parness

Frank Wasserman, father of Madeline Silverman

Steven Mendelow, husband of Nancy Mendelow

Carolyn Barasch, mother of Jane Novick

Robert Segal, husband of Wendy Segal

Donald Breslow, father of Richard Breslow

Alvin Tahlor, father of Shelley Levine

Joan Josephson, mother of Rachel Josephson

Zina Ben Ishay, mother of Yael Shapiro

Marjorie Lorber, mother of Susan Lorber

Stephen Gelber, brother of Alexis Gelber

Sophie Diatlo, mother of Zelda Eden, grandmother of Labe, Rachel, and Jake Eden

Ruth Eckstein Goldman, aunt of Michael Abram

Leona Ilowitz, sister of Arnold Schickler, aunt of Sloan Schickler

Nick Sprayregen, husband of Jaynee Sprayregen, father of Matthew, Emily, Jonathan, Benjamin and Lilee, brother of Pamela Sprayregen-Weissman

Miriam Biddelman, mother of Paul Biddelman

Zita Lorraine Rabin, mother of Dr. Jill Rabin, grandmother of Aaron Rabin

Mark Salitan, father of Laurie Salitan

Susan Kurschner, wife of Robert, mother of Jackson and Marc

Joanne Irgang, mother of Steven Irgang

Sarah Cohen Gotbaum, mother of Noah Gotbaum



Susan Kurschner
*Our Remarkable
Blessing*

"She always chose life," praised Rabbi Levine. On July 24 we lost our beloved Susan Kurschner, who recently retired after working in

the CRS accounting office for 39 years. If you knew her, you loved her, and she loved you back. Generous, warm, and big-hearted, she will be forever celebrated and her friendship a cherished vestige. Our thoughts are with her husband Robert, sons Jackson and Marc, and their families.

As inscribed on the plaque honoring her admirable service here, *"Many women have done excellently, but you surpass them all."*

(Proverbs 31:29)

*"As the old year and
its maledictions end,
The new year and
blessings begin."*

(Talmud)

Shanah Tovah!

L'SHANAH TOVAH

SHARE YOUR RODEPH SHOLOM STORIES!

For our 175th Anniversary Celebration, we are collecting your stories and anecdotes about your favorite CRS moments and sharing them throughout the year. What does CRS mean to you? Go to rodephsholom.org to tell us what you love about CRS!

ABOUT CONGREGATION RODEPH SHOLOM

Rodeph Sholom, one of New York's most distinguished Reform congregations, embodies a strong commitment to purposeful Jewish living and the pursuit of human dignity. Our congregation is a true community, excelling in meaningful worship, educational opportunity for all ages, social and tzedakah programs. We strive to be an extended family of people who care about each other and our community.

Founded in 1842 on the Lower East Side and entering our 175th year, Rodeph Sholom has always sought to blend the teachings of our Jewish heritage with the best lessons of modern culture. We are proud of our beautiful worship services, our commitment to social action, and our emphasis on Jewish education for people of all ages. Rodeph Sholom was the first Reform congregation to open a Jewish Day School. Our schools, like our congregation, are flourishing. Remaining true to our name which is Hebrew for "pursuer of peace," Rodeph Sholom takes great pride in our history and is hard at work to fulfill the promise of our future.



Congregation Rodeph Sholom

Robert N. Levine, D.D. Senior Rabbi
Sari R. Laufer Associate Rabbi
Benjamin H. Spratt Associate Rabbi
Greg D. Weitzman Assistant Rabbi
Juliana S. Karol Rabbinic Intern
Rebecca Garfein Senior Cantor
Shayna De Lowe Associate Cantor
Ephraim Biran Cantor Emeritus
Julie Womack Cantorial Intern
Barbara Zakin Executive Director
Marc Fried Chief Financial Officer
Lyndsie Levine Director of Development
Ruth Bernstein Director of Membership Services
Rachael Evans Operations Director
Susan Ticker Director of Community Engagement
Kirsten Major Communications Manager
Gail Becker Sexton

Rodeph Sholom Religious School

Kerith Braunfeld Director
Marcia Stein Associate Director
Sara Spanjer Associate Director of Youth and Teen Engagement
Rodeph Sholom School
Dr. Jerrold I. Katz Head of School
Danny Karpf Head of School Elect
Susan Weiss Newman Head of Schnurmacher Early Childhood Division
Colleen Dundon Head of Hirschberg Elementary Division
Maxine Borenstein Head of Middle School Division
Leslie Silverstein Director of Admissions and Financial Aid



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Brad Zizmor Brotherhood Co-President
Beth Rubin Chair, Sisterhood Steering Committee
Isabel Hochman Sr. Youth Group Co-President
Rachel Markowitz Sr. Youth Group Co-President

The Chronicle

Yvette Perry Editor