

CONGREGATION
Kol Ami
VOICE OF MY PEOPLE

WORSHIP SERVICES

**FRIDAY EREV SHABBAT
SERVICES ON THE MEADOW:**

5:45 p.m. - Bring your own dinner and blankets or comfortable chairs

6:30 p.m. - Worship service beneath the trees and evening sky

JULY 5

JULY 12 - "*Simcha*" Second-Friday *erev Shabbat* Service honoring July birthdays and anniversaries

JULY 19 - *erev Shabbat* Service celebrating Rabbi Leah Berkowitz's first year at our synagogue. A coffee and ice cream truck will be here to help us celebrate. Bring a friend!

JULY 26

AUGUST 2

AUGUST 9 - "Prospective-Member" *erev Shabbat* Service. Bring a friend!

AUGUST 16 - "*Simcha*" Third-Friday *erev Shabbat* Service honoring August birthdays and anniversaries

AUGUST 23

AUGUST 30

**SATURDAY SHABBAT SERVICES
AND TORAH DIALOGUES:**

10:00 a.m. - Service with potluck lunch to follow; please contact the hosts to coordinate lunch items.

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Leading Through
Community

CONGREGATION KOL AMI CREATES COMMUNITY THROUGH
AUDACIOUS HOSPITALITY, LEARNING AND SOCIAL ACTION

Save the Date

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 AT 6 PM

AND JOIN US IN HONORING

*Elijah & Gennifer
Dornstreich,*

THE EMBODIMENT OF KOL AMI VALUES



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF AMERICAN JEWISH HISTORY
101 SOUTH INDEPENDENCE MALL EAST
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Invitation to follow

SYNAGOGUE LEADERSHIP

Main Office
215-635-3110

Rabbi Leah R. Berkowitz
215-635-4182

Rabbi Elliot Holin, Founding Rabbi
215-882-0017

Ruben Honik, President
215-327-9166

Barbara Fink, Vice President
215-886-2297

Jeffrey Margasak, Vice President
215-635-9332

Lorie B. Slass, Secretary
215-635-0920

Lisa Landau, Treasurer
215-635-9996

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

**IN RESPECT OF SHABBAT, THE OFFICE
CLOSES AT 3:00 P.M. ON FRIDAYS.**

Elaine Stevens, Executive Director
215-635-3110

Rachael Simon
Director of Education
215-635-7106

Sheri Cutler
Early Learning Center Director
215-635-4180

Rebecca Schwartz, Cantorial Soloist
215-572-6094

Please send correspondence to:

Congregation Kol Ami
8201 High School Road
Elkins Park, PA 19027

Website: www.kolamielkinspark.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/kolamielkinspark>

BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS

Please send articles by the fifth of the previous month to **Janet Falon** at jfaloon@english.upenn.edu. Articles may be edited as needed. ■



WELCOME RACHAEL SIMON, OUR NEW DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



On September 8, Congregation Kol Ami will welcome Rachael Simon as our new Director of Religious Education. Rachael is no stranger to our Religious School, as she has taught the children in our K-2 class for the last two years.

But she has even stronger ties to our community: Her dad, Thomas Ellis, has been a member of our congregation since 1994. Her grandparents of blessed memory, Bud and Caryl Ellis, were also beloved members of our community. Rachael went through Kol Ami's Religious School and became a *Bat Mitzvah* and Confirmand. Rachael, her husband, Yehoshua, and their newborn daughter, Ahava, live in Elkins Park.

Later this summer, and in the early fall, there will be opportunities for the Kol Ami community to meet Rachael in person. Until then, Board of Trustee Member Lorie Slass interviewed Rachael to help you get to know her.

So is this a homecoming of sorts?

To come back to a place where I had such a positive experience as a child is a dream come true. It is amazing because, while I was in school in later years for Jewish education, my frame of reference was definitely my experience at Kol Ami.

Did you always know this is what you wanted to do?

I actually didn't want to be in Jewish education. I studied international development with an education focus while at Georgetown. After graduation, I taught in Morocco, and I was almost always having to hide the fact that I was Jewish. That made me realize that I wanted to continue in education, but specifically Jewish education, because it is such an integral part of my identity. It fed my desire to focus on Jewish education and get my Master's degree in Jewish Education from Gratz.

How do you look back on your religious schooling at Kol Ami?

One of the things that really stood out was the community focus and the warmth that I found there, as opposed to other places where I've taught. Also, I remember when I was younger, Kol Ami always did feel very child-centered to me. Specifically, the coursework that we did always seemed based on the children's interests in the context of Jewish education.

How do you envision the future of the Religious School?

I want to take the child-centeredness a step further and have more engagement from the students, especially the older students – particularly post-*Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Often the older kids may not see the value in coming to Religious School anymore, and I want to involve them in choosing what they'll be learning – always grounded in Jewish teachings – but reflecting their interests.

I think another important element is to focus, from a young age, on understanding what it means to be a *Bar* or *Bat Mitzvah*. Instead of just waiting for that year and feeling pressured, I want them to better understand the Jewish

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ANOTHER “HAT” (A KIPPAH, OF COURSE) FOR RABBI BERKOWITZ

As of July 1, in addition to my work here at Kol Ami, I will be serving for two years as the co-president of the Women’s Rabbinic Network. The WRN is very dear to my heart—not any group could convince me to take on additional leadership responsibilities! So I thought I would share a little bit about who we are, what we do, and why it is so important to me.

I first went to a WRN conference in 2013, five years after I was ordained. Previously, I hadn’t felt the need to be part of a women’s-only organization. Like many of my young colleagues, I thought that being educated and ordained alongside our male colleagues (and sometimes, with more women than men in a class) meant that we were equal already. The WRN didn’t feel relevant.

But in those five years, I had many experiences that felt unique to women in the rabbinate: tense contract negotiations, hard bumps against the “stained-glass ceiling,” and the need to point out some basic gender differences that might necessitate new ways of doing things. This stretched from the sublime—figuring out how to include women’s voices in a tradition that has historically suppressed them—to the ridiculous—figuring out where to clip a mic pack when you don’t have suit pockets. I began to see how the support of other women rabbis might be helpful, even necessary, to building and sustaining my rabbinate.

At my first WRN convention, I noticed that there was none of the usual posturing I had found at our larger rabbinic gatherings—inquiring or boasting about the size of congregations and success of programs, looking over one’s shoulder to see if there was someone more important to talk to on the other side of the room. Instead, there was respect towards all kinds of rabbinic paths. After all, many of us had had to be creative when traditional paths were not an option. There was also a willingness to share openly about how things were really going and to offer support without judgment.

There was also a commitment to share knowledge that would be useful to us in our rabbinate. At one conference, we worked with The OpEd Project, a non-profit that seeks to broaden the range of voices found in public discourse. At this most-recent conference, we discussed gender, leadership, and Judaism with neuroscientist and actor Dr. Mayim Bialik, whose sister-in-law happens to be a Reform rabbi.

Each gathering creates space to connect with colleagues across geography and generations and provides avenues for rest and reflection. My favorite part of every meeting is the “roll call,” when each year of women rabbis stands to be celebrated, starting with the most recent ordinees and stretching all the way back to Rabbi Sally Priesand, who was ordained in 1972. At our next convention, we hope to celebrate 50 years of women in the rabbinate.

Though we only gather in this way every two years, we provide support and advocacy between our conventions as well. We host regional get-togethers and online learning sessions (arranging these was my previous position on the WRN board). We promote awareness of women rabbis in the media and engage in a number of social justice initiatives. Right now, the WRN is doing

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WORSHIP SERVICES

(continued from page 1)

JULY 13 at the home of Paul and Mindy Levy in Dresher (215-885-3672)

JULY 27 at the home of Abby Binder and Jane Tausig in Elkins Park (215-901-3910)

AUGUST 3 at the home of William and Betty Shapiro in Wyncote (215-517-8666)

SEPTEMBER 7 at the home of Carol Nemeroff in Huntingdon Valley (215-771-8300) ■

SAFETY & SECURITY UPDATE

by **Guy Appel and Robert Seltzer,**
Safety Task Force Co-chairs

We take the safety of every member of Kol Ami—youth to seniors, visitors and guests—profoundly seriously.

We have been visited by experts from local police and fire, emergency management, Department of Homeland Security, and a number of security equipment vendors. We have secured our doors, established new policies and procedures regarding unlocked doors, and installed interior locks on all classroom doors. We are exploring changes in exterior lighting, keyless entry systems, concrete barriers to protect intrusion, security cameras, and more. We have filed a grant application to try to reclaim some of the costs associated with these upgrades.

What does all this mean? It means we care about each and every one of you. It means that while you are enjoying your summer, Kol Ami leaders will be hard at work making our space safer, while retaining Kol Ami’s special welcoming environment.

Best wishes for a safe and enjoyable summer. ■

FROM THE RABBI (cont'd from page 3)

work to promote reproductive justice, pay equity, and safe workplaces. What could be more relevant than that? Having just returned from four inspiring and restorative days with my colleagues, I am so grateful that the WRN exists, and I'm proud to stand up and be counted amongst its leadership. Visit www.womensrabbinicnetwork.org to learn more about the Women's Rabbinic Network and how you can support it. ■

CONDOLENCES

Anne Berkowitz

grandmother of Rabbi Leah Berkowitz

Edith Kanter

aunt of Craig Myers

Leatrice Levy

grandmother of Morgan Selkirk

Miklos Sugar

father of Ronit Sugar (Robert Schiowitz)

Jensen Toth

wife of George Toth ■

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Caring Congregants Committee

Tuesday, July 16, at 6:00 p.m.

Chair: Elaine Gershenson 215-887-3994

Religious School Committee

Thursday, August 22, at 7:00 p.m.

Chair: Tamara Sniad, 215-782-3848,
and Emily Stein, 215-375-4807 ■

MAZAL TOV TO...

Our High-School Graduates!:

Talia August, Abigail Brown, and Abraham Moss.

Abby Binder and Jane Tausig on the birth of their second granddaughter, Emma Lily, on May 11 to Sarah and Marc Silverberg, and big sister, Maya.

Rabbi Leah Berkowitz on her appointment as co-president of the Women's Rabbinic Network.

Thomas Ellis on the birth of his granddaughter, Ahava, on May 10, to Yehoshua and Rachael Simon. ■

NEW EDUCATION DIRECTOR

(continued from page 2)

world and how it links to the rest of the world, and to have responsibilities on the path to *B'nai Mitzvah*.

I also want to make more distinct goals and intentions for each grade level, working closely with the teachers and the families. I look forward to learning from the other teachers; many have been with Kol Ami much longer than I have, so I will be relying on their expertise. I want them to be involved in looking at the curriculum and taking it further.

How has it been to work with Rabbi Berkowitz?

I've really enjoyed it. When I started teaching, Rabbi Holin was here and that was wonderful because I had a relationship going back a long time. And now, Rabbi Berkowitz is very easy to work with and extremely knowledgeable. I admire her and

think she's a great leader for the kids. I had a terrific Rabbi when I was in religious school and I hope the kids at Kol Ami are going to have that kind of experience.

Tell me about a Religious School teacher you had who made a difference?

I remember, even my first year, in first grade, I actually had a teacher who was Orthodox. She was so respectful that we were a Reform congregation. That's one of the things I loved about the school, that influenced me, that not every teacher was Reform but everyone respected that we were.

What haven't I asked you that you want our community to know?

I'm very excited to get back and to work with everyone. I hope that I can continue making Kol Ami's Religious School a positive learning environment for students as well as maintaining a pleasant work environment for the teachers. ■



Members of Congregation Kol Ami participated in the 16th annual Interfaith Walk for Peace on April 28, working towards peace, justice, and reconciliation with various faith groups in our region.



Congregation Kol Ami
8201 High School Road
Elkins Park PA 19027

Dear Elaine and the whole Kol Ami team,

What a success! The 24th Annual Arts in the Park was a fun and exciting day for the whole community. On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Friends of High School Park, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you for your sponsorship in the amount of \$500 for Arts in the Park which took place on Sunday, June 2, 2019.

The day was beautiful, and we had our usual great music lineup, terrific food and beer, a bountiful plant sale, fun activities for kids, and a varied group of artisans. As the largest fundraiser for our organization, all revenue raised from Arts in the Park supports the native plant restoration efforts in High School Park and is a great showing of community of support.

Your sponsorship of Arts in the Park enables us to continue our mission to create, manage and preserve a viable 11+acre native ecosystem in High School Park for the enjoyment of the community, in cooperation with Cheltenham Township. We also featured Sustainable Cheltenham, an initiative of the Cheltenham Environmental Advisory Council, whose mission is designed to guide the community to become more environmentally friendly and resilient. As we continue to grow, please know that partnerships with our sponsors are vital to the success of this organization. You are truly appreciated!

Thanks again for your generosity and dedication to the community.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Blackwood
President

PS We have included a certificate that we hope you will consider displaying at your workplace. It will let your employees and clients know that you support Friends of High School Park, while also informing the community about our organization.

PRESIDENT Cynthia Blackwood **VICE PRESIDENT** Robin Locke Nagele
RECORDING SECRETARY Catherine Callan **TREASURER** Howard Soloman

AT LARGE MEMBERS

Doryan De Angel Karen Lindenbaum Kisha Martin Leigh Howard Nachod
Beth Yount Chris Sacco Tarsha Scovens Lisa Stockebrand Risa Robinson

OPERATIONS MANAGER Gail Korostoff

PARK RESTORATION MANAGER

PO Box 163 • Cheltenham, PA 19012 • 215-782-8082 • highschoolpark.org • info@fhsp.org

KOL AMI JULY 2019 AT A GLANCE

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--|--|---|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 Early Learning Center CLOSED | 5 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 Early Learning Center Storyteller Bill Wood 9:30 a.m. | 11 | 12 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. "Simcha" Second-Friday <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 13 <i>Shabbat Service</i> and <i>Torah Dialogue</i> 10:00 a.m. Home of Paul and Mindy Levy |
| 14 | 15 Early Learning Center Water Safety Program 9:30 a.m. | 16 Caring Congregants Committee Meeting 6:00 p.m. | 17 | 18 | 19 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow honoring the first year anniversary of Rabbi Berkowitz 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 27 <i>Shabbat Service</i> and <i>Torah Dialogue</i> 10:00 a.m. Home of Abby Binder and Jane Tausig |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | |

KOL AMI **AUGUST 2019** AT A GLANCE

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|---|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| | | | | 1 | 2 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 3 <i>Shabbat Service</i> and <i>Torah Dialogue</i> 10:00 a.m. Home of William and Betty Shapiro |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. "Prospective Member" <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 10 |
| 11 | 12 Early Learning Center Petting Zoo 9:30 a.m. | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. "Simcha" Third-Friday <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 Religious School Committee Meeting 7:00 p.m. | 23 Early Learning Center <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> 10:00 a.m. <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 24 |
| 25 | 26 Early Learning Center CLOSED | 27 Early Learning Center CLOSED | 28 Early Learning Center CLOSED | 29 Early Learning Center CLOSED | 30 Early Learning Center CLOSED <i>erev Shabbat Service</i> on the Meadow 6:30 p.m. 5:45 - BYOD | 31 |

KOL AMI CONTRIBUTIONS: Thank you to the following individuals for their generous donations.

ADULT EDUCATION FUND

In Honor of:

Carol Laskin

Ira Cooperman

ARTS & CULTURE FUND

Rhoda Ryba

In Honor of:

Rebecca Schwartz

Eileen Brill

In Memory of:

Jensen Toth

John Alexanderson

Stephen and Beth Bauer

Carl Duzen and Susan Jewett

James and Natalie Dyen

Joel Edelstein and Elizabeth McKinstry

David and Phyllis Harrison

Gary and Denise Hayes

Carol Nemeroff

William and Betty Shapiro

Clara Zellat

James and Natalie Dyen

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Ira and Sherry Tackel

In Honor of:

Abby Binder and Jane Tausig on the birth of their granddaughter, Emma Lily Silverberg

Russell Cooke and Nancy Kirsh

Lighting the Shabbat candles

Robert and Ellen Fischer

50th wedding anniversary of Alan and Elaine Gershenson

Russell Cooke and Nancy Kirsh

Ira Cooperman and Carol Laskin

James and Natalie Dyen

Paul and Mindy Levy and the birth of their granddaughter, Hattie Bea Western

Alan and Elaine Gershenson

William Shapiro thanking him for officiating at the shiva of my father Ronit Sugar

In Memory of:

Anne Berkowitz

Guy and Karol Appel

Nigel Blower and Julie Cohen

Jeffrey Buchanan and Linda Jacobs

Jeffrey Cohen and Ellen Friedman

Russell Cooke and Nancy Kirsh

Anne Berkowitz (continued)

Ira Cooperman

Stephen and Jean Ettinger

Joel Fishbein and Rachel Ezekiel-Fishbein

Alan and Elaine Gershenson

Brad and Bonnie Goldstein

David and Phyllis Harrison

Rabbi Elliot and Susan Holin

David Hyman

Carol Laskin

Mark and Roseanne Mulherin

Stanton and Merle Salkin

William and Betty Shapiro

Hubert Rice

Brad and Bonnie Goldstein

Miklos Sugar

Gabriel and Orly Maravankin

Jensen Toth

Alan and Elaine Gershenson

Joan Greenberg

Amy Gross

Jon and Gale Love

RABBI'S EMPOWERMENT AND VISION FUND

Cyana, Roxy, and Lulu Perry

In Honor of:

Special anniversary of Alan and Elaine Gershenson

Bart Weiner and Nadine Liez-Weiner

RELIGIOUS SCHOOL FUND

In Honor of:

Rachael Simon assuming role as Director of Education

David Hyman

SYNAGOGUE FUND

In Honor of:

Our 2019 College Graduates

Elaine Stevens

Our 2019 Confirmands

Elaine Stevens

Our 2019 High-School Graduates

Elaine Stevens

Our 2019 LAMED Graduate

Elaine Stevens

Bar Mitzvah of Joshua Salkin, grandson of Stanton and Merle Salkin

Craig and Sharon Myers

Michelle Sokoloff

Jean Ettinger

In Memory of:

Anne Berkowitz

Andrew August and Barbara Fink

David Baker and Irene Levy Baker

Paul and Ellen Kovnat

Lisa Landau

Craig and Sharon Myers

Robert Schiowitz and Ronit Sugar

Elaine Stevens

Alvin Turetsky

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David and Meryle Twersky ■