



קול עמי

An Intimate and
Dynamic Community

THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ

Receiving the Torah in the Digital Age

Those of us who were around at the dawn of the digital age might remember a little gadget called a Palm Pilot. I received one for my college graduation, and quickly found it to be completely useless in my rabbinical studies. I still prefer scribbling things in notebooks to tapping them into a device. But there was one feature that was ahead of its time. If you had a file or application saved on your device, and you were standing near another device user, you could “beam” content from one device to the other (similar to an “AirDrop” on an iPhone).

One day, two of my classmates were comparing devices, when one mentioned that they had the entire Torah on their Palm Pilot. Obviously, this was a desirable text for any rabbinical student to have on their device. So the second student asked their friend to “beam” them the Torah. As they prepared to sync their devices, a warning popped up on the screen:

“Are you sure you want to accept ‘The Torah’?”

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WORSHIP SERVICES

All services and programs will take place virtually until further notice. Check your e-mail for login information or find us on Facebook and YouTube.

**Saturday, May 1 at
10:00 a.m.** – *Bat Mitzvah* of Dahlia Madden

**Friday, May 7 at
7:30 p.m.** – Interfaith Relationship Dialogue *erev Shabbat* service with music by our Adult Choir

**Saturday, May 8
10:00 a.m.** – *Shabbat* service and *Torah* study with Carol Nemeroff delivering the *d'var Torah*
5:30 p.m. – *Bat Mitzvah* of Ivy

**Friday, May 14 at
7:30 p.m.** – *erev Shabbat* service

**Saturday, May 15 at
10:00 a.m.** – *Bat Mitzvah* of Abby Ellner

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THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ *(continued from page 1)*

Sunday, May 16 at 7:00 p.m. – *erev Shavuot* Confirmation service

Monday, May 17 at 10:00 a.m. – *Shavuot* service

Friday, May 21 at 7:30 p.m. – *erev Shabbat* service

Saturday, May 22 at 10:00 a.m. – *Bat Mitzvah* of Sadie Weinstock

Friday, May 28, June 4, 11, 18 and 25 at 7:30 p.m. – *erev Shabbat* service

Saturday, June 19 at 5:00 p.m. – *Bat Mitzvah* of Marisa Sanchez

Saturday, June 26 at 10:00 a.m. –
Shabbat service and *Torah* study



I think of this exchange every year as we approach the holiday of Shavuot, which celebrates the moment when over a million Israelites stood at Mount Sinai and agreed to accept the Torah from God. When we stay up late studying on Erev Shavuot, and when we chant the Ten Commandments on Shavuot morning, we are reenacting that moment at the foot of Mount Sinai, when our entire people shouted, “We will do and we will listen!” Every year on Shavuot, it is as if we are standing at Sinai ourselves, preparing to receive the Torah anew. It is as if we are making a pilgrimage, once again, to the ancient Temple in Jerusalem.

We also reenact and celebrate this moment through the ritual of Confirmation, when we invite our 10th and 11th graders to affirm their commitment to this covenant, and share with us their own new wisdom and insights.

Last year, because we did not have a whole class that was ready to be confirmed, we did not have to answer the questions we face now: What does it look like to celebrate this milestone during a pandemic? What does it look like to “accept the Torah” over Zoom?

While we still have logistical questions to address in this area, we already have a lot of data on how we might receive Torah during this time. We have always received the Torah in many different ways: through the prayers in the siddur, by engaging in Torah study, and by committing ourselves to living up to the ideals of social justice that the Torah lays out.

Over this past year and a half, we have discovered a plethora of new ways to receive Torah. There are [daily podcasts about the Talmud](#), as well as one-time and ongoing online courses from many major Jewish learning institutions. Using technology, we’ve been able to cross both geographical and financial barriers to access learning with some of the greatest scholars of our time. And we’ve continued to connect with one another weekly to study the Torah portion during our Shabbat morning services.

So while we would much prefer to bless our confirmands in person (and will hopefully do so someday soon!), there’s something fitting about having this generation of students receive the Torah and affirm their commitment to Judaism online. So much of the Torah they will receive in their lifetimes will be through some kind of new technology, much of which likely hasn’t even been invented yet. Who knows, they might be the ones to discover creative new ways to transmit our people’s wisdom to the next generation.

Please join us to receive the Torah with our Confirmation Class James Beatus, Cecily Shandell, Elad Shoham, and Mason Warsaw on Sunday, May 16 at 7 p.m. on Zoom.

NEWS FROM OUR EDUCATION DIRECTOR

Having not met in person this year, I find it hard to believe that our academic year is coming to an end. Learning virtually for an entire year certainly has been a unique challenge for our students, parents, teachers, and Director. I am proud of the resilience and flexibility that our students have shown this year, and I am looking forward to hearing them laugh, chat, play, and joke with each other when we can all be in person again.

If you or your student is interested in continuing to practice Hebrew over the summer, I've listed a few resources below. Nevertheless, I urge you not to worry about your child's Hebrew and any "learning loss" you think may have occurred this year. We will work closely with each child to make sure every student is progressing in Hebrew once we return in the fall.

If your child is interested, here are a few ways to continue to work on Hebrew in the summer:

Attending Shabbat services is the surest way to retain the knowledge of prayers that your child has gained this year. It is also a great way for students to maintain a connection to the wider Kol Ami community.

Jewishinteractive.org offers several Hebrew games for all levels, from Aleph Bet practice to basic reading to Modern Hebrew vocabulary. The games are great for students and parents to learn together!

Hebrew by Nemo is a free Hebrew learning app. This is another great way for the whole family to learn together in a fun and interactive way.

YouTube videos from Shalom Sesame and Bim Bam teach Hebrew letters, phrases, and prayers. Just search for either on YouTube to subscribe to their channels.

Each child received a **Hebrew textbook** that they have been using in class this year. The texts include many fun activities that they may not have had time to complete in class. You may want to bring these books on a road trip for some practice in the car or pull them out on a rainy day.

As we look towards next year, please be checking your email for important announcements about the coming academic year, and remember to mark your calendars for these important end-of-year events:

Sunday, May 16, 10:00am: KARS End-of-Year Ceremony for Students and Families, Grades 2-7

Sunday, May 16, 7:00pm: Confirmation Ceremony and erev Shavuot Service

Have a wonderful summer!



SUPPORT LOCAL FARMS WITH YOUR FORK: Organic Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) at Congregation Kol Ami

In our 15th year, Congregation Kol Ami is proud to offer a Jewish Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. We were the first in our region to align with *Hazon*, a national nonprofit that links Jewish tradition with environmental action. Through its CSA network, *Hazon* uses Jewish purchasing power to support local organic farmers, foster vibrant Jewish communities who care about environmental and educational issues, and examine food and environmental issues from a Jewish perspective.

The *Hazon* CSA at Kol Ami partners with over 100 Amish and Mennonite organic farmers from Lancaster Farm Fresh Cooperative (LFFC). The diversity of crops among LFFC farmers ensures a good variety of fresh-picked seasonal produce each week. Enrollment keeps local sustainable farms and local food safe for future generations.

Our CSA is comprised of members from the local community. We safely distribute fresh, locally grown, organic vegetables, fruit, eggs, cheese and herbal medicines each week on Tuesday evenings from the Congregation Kol Ami kitchen.

The CSA at Kol Ami operates from late April through October for the Summer season, followed by a Fall season that ends in December. We are working on an alternative space in Elkins Park to distribute the CSA when we officially need to move due to the sale of our property.

Learn more and register NOW: Select **Pa: Kol Ami Hazon** as first choice. If you must pick a second choice, do so and be aware that you will get the 1st choice: Kol Ami location!

<https://lancasterfarmfresh.com/product-category/shares/2021-summer-shares/>

For questions, contact Robin @ Robinrifkin@comcast.net or Shelley @ Srchamberlain@comcast.net.

SUMMER CSA²⁰²¹

LOCAL, FRESH, & ORGANIC • COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE



27 WEEK SEASON
APRIL 26-OCTOBER 25

SIGN UP FOR YOUR SHARES
LANCASTERFARMFRESH.COM



HIGH SCHOOL PARK NEEDS YOUR HELPING HANDS

Friends of High School Park was created by volunteers in 1995 and continues to be a special place in our community thanks to volunteers who help maintain and develop the park.

The Park always welcomes people to help with upkeep and beautification. It's also a great opportunity to get outside with your neighbors and meet someone new! Great time spent for "community service credits" too!

Arrive at the shed beside the meadow a little before 10:00 a.m., weather permitting. We will work until noon. Social distancing and masks required. See dates below:



High School Park Workday Weekends The Park is waking up!

Wear a mask! Social distancing observed.

March:	6 & 7 20 & 21	June	12 & 13 26 & 27	October	2 & 3 16 & 17
April	3 & 4 17 & 18	July	10 & 11 24 & 25	November	30 & 31 13 & 14
May	1 & 2 15 & 16 29 & 30	August	7 & 8 21 & 22		27 & 28
		Sept.	4 & 5 18 & 19		

Special Workday requests contact:
Cynthia at fhsprestorationmanager@gmail.com

KOL AMI'S INTERFAITH RELATIONS DIALOGUE MEETS IN MAY

The meeting will be on Thursday, May 13, at 7:30 p.m., hosted by Cheryl and Gary Turetsky.

Kol Ami's Interfaith Relations Dialogue (IRD) group has for many years provided an inclusive and open environment in meetings with the Rabbi to discuss challenges unique to interfaith relationships. The group's mission is to provide support to all members, whether in interfaith relationships or not, who may nevertheless find that interfaith relationships within their families generate questions for which it would be good to have the opportunity to seek answers while sharing experiences and resources.

If you are a parent of a child in an interfaith relationship, have grandchildren being raised in an interfaith family or in a different religion, are adoptive parents of a child born into a different religion, or if you are simply anticipating being in one of those categories at some point, and have questions or concerns, IRD is hoping you will consider joining our group discussions.

At our May 13 meeting, the topic for discussion will be "Does Adoption make us an Interfaith Family?" Please RSVP to 215-570-3395 or gsturet@gmail.com. The zoom link and a link to a reading will be sent to those who have responded one week before the meeting.

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

Barbara Fink, Vice President

Lorie B. Slass, Vice President

Gary Turetsky, Secretary

Ben Long, Treasurer

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

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

Elaine Stevens

Executive Director

215-635-3110

Rachael Simon

Director of Education

215-635-7106

Rebecca Schwartz

Cantorial Soloist

215-572-6094

**Please send correspondence
to:**

Congregation Kol Ami

8201 High School Road

Elkins Park, PA 19027

questions@kolamielkinspark.org

Website:

www.kolamielkinspark.org

Facebook:

[https://www.facebook.com/
kolamielkinspark](https://www.facebook.com/kolamielkinspark)

BULLETIN

SUBMISSIONS

Please send articles by the fifth of the previous month to Janet Falon at: janetfalon@gmail.com.

Articles may be edited as needed.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Interfaith Relationship Dialogue

Thursday, May 13 at 7:30 p.m.

Contact: Gary Turetsky, 215-570-3395

Religious School Committee

Sunday, May 2 at 12:15 p.m.

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

Social Action Committee

Thursday, June 10 at 7:30 p.m.

Chairs: Shelley Chamberlain, 215-680-7408 and Rocky Weinstock, 215-782-3848

GET INVOLVED!

HELPING HANDS ARE NEEDED!

Opportunities and dates to consider:

- Gardening at Share Food Program
Sunday, May 23 from 1:30-3:00 p.m.
2901 W. Hunting Park Avenue, Philadelphia

Kol Ami's Social Action Committee has planned a volunteer afternoon in the Share gardens. We will be planting summer crops in the high tunnels, planting annual and perennial flowers throughout the garden/grounds, weeding beds, and spreading woodchips, all at safe distances. Ages 10 & above are welcome! Wear a mask, hat, and sunscreen. Bring a water bottle.

To sign up:

[Kol Ami Social Action at SHARE: Garden Volunteer Sign-up](#)

- Pack and/or Distribution Opportunities at Share Food Program

Share Food Program needs volunteers to pack and/or deliver nutritious food to homebound seniors and distribution sites.

Consider these opportunities. Feel free to forward this to family and friends. Sign-up is easy!

- ⇒ **Pack Share Boxes:** Pack boxes of nutritious food for local seniors who fall below 130% of the poverty line. These boxes are distributed to over 6,500 seniors each month across the region. For safety precautions there are wash stations, gloves, and room for social distancing.

Sign up: <https://www.sharefoodprogram.org/get-involved/packing/>

- ⇒ **Knock, Drop and Roll:** Deliver nutritious food packages to homebound seniors and people with disabilities on Saturday mornings.

Sign up: <https://signup.com/go/LbZUcwW>

The Share Food Program is a nonprofit organization serving a regional network of community organizations engaged in food distribution, education, and advocacy. Share provides food to school lunch programs in Philadelphia and families in need in Philadelphia and surrounding counties.

Your assistance is greatly appreciated! Our partnership continues to grow as individual members volunteer at Share. If you have any questions, please reach out to Shelley Chamberlain at srchamberlain@comcast.net.

Thank you for lending a helping hand.



Kol Ami Contributions

We thank the following individuals for their generous donations to Kol Ami Funds. To make a donation, send it to Congregation Kol Ami, 8201 High School Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027 and indicate to which fund it should be applied, or visit our website at <https://www.kolamielkinspark.org/donate/>

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Memory Of:

Brian Kleger
Shirley Barr

SYNAGOGUE FUND

In Honor Of:

B'nai Mitzvot of Ava and Emma Sabulsky
Elaine Stevens

Rebecca Schwartz
Robert and Susan Seltzer

SYNAGOGUE FUND (continued)

In Memory Of:

Jack Bender
Craig and Sharon Myers

Henry Kanter
Craig and Sharon Myers

Mary Longer
Rhea Applebaum

Emily Popkin
Philip and Phyllis Feinert

SYNAGOGUE FUND (continued)

Ivan Popkin
Philip and Phyllis Feinert

Morris Rosenblatt
Craig and Sharon Myers

Sadie Zulkow
Craig and Sharon Myers



THE "KOL AMIGOS" SOFTBALL TEAM IS UP AT BAT FOR A NEW SEASON

Spring is here and Kol Ami's softball team, the "Kol Amigos," welcomes additional players for our upcoming 2021 season. We play friendly matches against other synagogues in the area, Monday through Thursday evenings, 1 or 2 games per week between May and July. All interested players will be eagerly welcomed!

If you are interested in learning more about the team, please contact Jonathan Shandell at jonathan.shandell@aya.yale.edu.