



קול עמי

An Intimate and
Dynamic Community**THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ**

I never imagined that we would have to do a second High Holy Day season during this pandemic. Last year I joked that it would be easier next time because we'd know what we were doing. But in many ways, the second year of virtual (or hybrid) High Holy Day services was even more difficult than the first. We had all hoped that everything would be "back to normal" by now and had planned our holidays accordingly. We had to make some pretty quick pivots, even in August and September, to hold services and open Religious School safely in light of new variants and breakthrough infections. This on top of the multitude of logistical details to iron out from our move!

Once again, this community showed its true colors. You volunteered for all sorts of tasks, from unloading supplies for the Religious School to helping us navigate our various streaming challenges. Many committees met regularly, and often on short notice, throughout the summer to respond to issues that arose during this season.

Even if you don't think you fall into one of these categories, you helped make this High Holy Day season meaningful. You did that by complying with safety precautions, by coming to services, singing, doing readings and writing poems. And you did that by watching from home and sharing our community with your friends and families. I am especially grateful for the people who took the time to offer good wishes, and to share what resonated with you, after each service.

WORSHIP
SERVICES

Friday, October 1 at 7:30 p.m.
(Bornstein Auditorium)

"Simcha" First Friday erev Shabbat service with Adult Choir

Saturday, October 2 at 10:00 a.m.

(Zoom)
Shabbat service and Torah dialogue

Friday, October 8 at 7:30 p.m.

(Bornstein Auditorium)
erev Shabbat service

Saturday, October 9 at 10:00 a.m.

(Zoom)
Shabbat service and Torah dialogue

Friday, October 15 at 7:30 p.m.

(Bornstein Auditorium)
erev Shabbat service with Student Choir

Saturday, October 16 at 10:00 a.m.

(Zoom)
Shabbat service and Torah dialogue

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WORSHIP SERVICES

(continued)

**Friday, October 22 at
7:30 p.m. (Bornstein
Auditorium)**
erev Shabbat service

**Saturday, October 23 at
10:00 a.m. (Zoom)**
*Shabbat service and Torah
dialogue*

**Saturday, October 23 at
5:30 p.m.**
*Bat Mitzvah of Leah Stein
(Fischman Auditorium)*

**Friday, October 29 at
7:30 p.m. (Bornstein
Auditorium)**
erev Shabbat service

**Saturday, October 30 at
10:00 a.m. (Fischman
Auditorium)**
Bar Mitzvah of Jack Selkirk

THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ *(continued)*

It's always a little risky to thank people specifically, as you know if you've ever been with me when I'm helping our b'nai mitzvah write their speeches. It is likely that I will leave someone out (and please tell me if I have!). Please know that my gratitude extends to our entire community.

Thank you to the team at Play by Play Productions for helping us coordinate our live-stream, and for making it possible for us to include closed captioning for the hearing impaired. Thank you to Jeff Cohen and Justin Krik, who gave way more of their time, energy, and expertise than could reasonably be expected of volunteers, to make sure that our technology ran smoothly and that everyone could access it.

Thank you to our cantorial soloist Rebecca Schwartz, our choir director Fran Surkin, and our adult choir for making beautiful music in less-than-ideal circumstances.

Thank you to the Selkirk family for hosting our Rosh Hashana Family Service at their home so that we could be outside and safe.

Thank you to Elaine Stevens, our Executive Director, for all the work she does behind the scenes so we can be together for Shabbat and holidays.

Thank you to our Religious School Director, Rachael Simon, for working overtime this summer so that we would be prepared to run the Religious School during her parental leave. Thank you to Merle Salkin, our teachers, parents, and students for their support, flexibility, and positive attitudes during this transition.

Thank you to our friends at Beth Sholom Congregation, for welcoming us with open arms and helping us to feel safe and secure in this new space.

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OUR CO-PRESIDENTS LOOK FORWARD TO A YEAR OF ENGAGEMENT AND AN ENRICHED EXPERIENCE

Shana Tova! While it's hard to believe we are greeting another New Year still enveloped by the uncertainty of a global pandemic, we have much to look forward to in our Kol Ami community. Completing the sale of our old home and securing a new home at the Beth Sholom campus, all under the constraints of Covid restrictions, has been no small accomplishment. And while there is much to be done to settle in and set up, we are grateful for the nurturing support of our new hosts and can take pride in being part of the revitalization of this landmark space and the continuation of a Jewish presence in the "Old York Road corridor".

We are excited, too, about the prospects for reenergized Kol Ami programming that will be engaging, inclusive, impactful, and fun – physically in our new space, virtually in ways we did not imagine before Covid, and broadly in our community as those opportunities begin to reemerge,

Whether you have been a member of Kol Ami forever or have joined more recently, it bears repeating that our congregation prides itself on being a warm and welcoming community that wants everyone to feel at home here, recognized, engaged, and involved.

One of the best ways to make connections and find fulfillment at the synagogue is to become an active participant on one of our various committees. These committees exist to advance our programming and assist our staff in achieving the goals of the synagogue and the religious school, while at the same time affording our members real opportunities to develop new relationships and to share their skills with the congregation.

Before Covid, when social distancing was not a term or concept any of us was familiar with, Kol Ami held an annual Activities Fair where congregants could come and meet with representatives from the committees and sign up for activities that interested them. Hopefully in the not-too-distant future we will be doing that again, but for now we wanted to use this month's message to whet your appetites for committee engagement. There are many to choose from, but here are just a few of our committees we wanted to highlight for your consideration. If you find one or more intriguing, please contact either of us or our Executive Director, Elaine Stevens for more information:

- **Inclusion Committee:** This committee evaluates, develops, and recommends to the Board of Trustees policies and procedures concerning the inclusion and participation of all people in Congregation Kol Ami's religious and communal life. We have focused our inclusion efforts through two sub-committees: (1) **LGBTQ**, which fosters Kol Ami as a safe space in for all LGBTQ Jews and provides education for those looking to learn, grow, and provide support to this community; and (2) **Special Needs**, which seeks out ways to enhance the Kol Ami experience regardless of physical, cognitive, emotional, or behavioral ability.

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THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ *(continued)*

Thank you to our Reopening Task Force, our Accessibility Task Force, and our Operations Committee, who worked tirelessly to make sure that we would be able to start our year in this building smoothly and safely. Having our beautiful signs, and our familiar furniture, made this new place feel more like home.

Thank you to our Board of Trustees, past and present, who have been faced with questions and challenges that no body of leadership ever could have anticipated, and who stepped up to do the work to bring us to this moment.

Thank you to our Founding Rabbi Elliot Holin, without whose vision none of us would be here. I am grateful for his unwavering support as we enter this new chapter of our community's story.

And thank you to Kol Ami. It is a true blessing to serve this community, and be a part of it, and I'm grateful for that every day.



CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences in loving memory of:

Stephanie Cohen
Stepmother of Sheryl Cohen

Earl M. Latterman
Uncle of Shelley Chamberlain

May their memories forever be a blessing in the midst of our people.

OUR CO-PRESIDENTS LOOK FORWARD TO A YEAR OF ENGAGEMENT AND AN ENRICHED EXPERIENCE *(continued)*

- **Caring Congregants** reaches out to members in times of celebration, sympathy, life cycle events, and transitions (births, birthdays, engagements, weddings, hospitalizations, death, or extraordinary need) and develops activities to sustain this important outreach. The program provides a consistent means for members to recognize, respond, and provide companionship to one another during important times in each other's lives.
- **Israel Connection Committee:** The purpose of this committee is to foster education, engagement, and dialog through a series of speakers and programs focused on Israel-related topics.
- **Interfaith Relationship Dialogue:** This committee provides programming to educate around and address interfaith concerns and help ensure a welcoming environment for all interfaith couples and families at Kol Ami.
- **Social Action:** This committee organizes meaningful activities to address needs of the surrounding and larger communities such as food insecurity and homelessness, improving the environment, and advocating for social justice.
- **Membership Committee:** Dedicated to identifying and encouraging prospective members to join our congregation and overseeing programs designed to retain our members.
- **Worship Enhancement Committee:** Works with the Rabbi to develop quality worship experiences, exploring innovative options for special services and seeking to attract more congregants to our worship services.
- **Religious School Committee:** This committee works with our Rabbi and Education Director to guide the development of curriculum, support Youth Groups and Family Education, and propose policies for the operation of our school.

Let us know how we can support your engagement and fulfillment at Kol Ami. We look forward to seeing you soon – in person or virtually – and wish you and your loved ones a New Year that is happy, healthy, and *mtukah* – sweet – for all of us.

Gary Turetsky and Ben Adams, Co-Presidents



MAZAL TOV:

Jon and Sheri Cutler on the engagement of their daughter, Julie to Jason Kleinman

SYNAGOGUE LEADERSHIP

Main Office

215-635-3110

Rabbi Leah R. Berkowitz

215-635-4182

Rabbi Elliot Holin

Founding Rabbi

215-882-0017

Ben Adams, Co-President

Gary Turetsky, Co-President

Jeffrey Margasak, Vice

President

Ben Long, Treasurer

Morgan Selkirk, Secretary

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

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Elkins Park, PA 19027

questions@kolamielkinspark.org

Website:

www.kolamielkinspark.org

Facebook:

https://www.facebook.com/
kolamielkinspark

Study at the Shul for Adults with Ira Cooperman

CHECK OUT “THE SPYING GAME,” A CLASS ABOUT THE CIA VS. MOSSAD

Israel is where spies and espionage first appeared thousands of years ago. With the rise of the modern Jewish State in 1948, the **Mossad**, Israel's foreign intelligence service, was created by Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion to meet the demands of the country's security beyond its borders. Its focus primarily is the Middle East.

The C.I.A., on the other hand, was created by an act of Congress in 1947 because of the Pearl Harbor surprise attack, the beginning of the Cold War, and the need for a group to coordinate U.S. government intelligence efforts. Like Mossad, the C.I.A. collects foreign intelligence from human sources and other means and conducts secret operations against the nation's enemies. Its focus is global.

Join Alex Miller and former intelligence officer Ira Cooperman in a Kol Ami Adult Education class as they discuss the major similarities and differences of these two vital agencies and their history of secret operations.

The class, open to members of Kol Ami and Beth Sholom, will meet from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. on Zoom three Mondays: November 8, 15, and 22. Please register for the class, which has no charge, with Elaine Stevens, (215) 635-3110. For further information, send email to: ira-cooperman@gmail.com.



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, 8231 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA 19027 and indicate to which fund it should be applied, or visit our website at <https://www.kolamielkinspark.org/donate/>

ARTS & CULTURE FUND

In Honor Of:

Rebecca Schwartz for the extraordinarily beautiful service she officiated at the wedding
Fran Surkin

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Memory Of:

Brian Kleger
Shirley Barr



WE ARE IN A CLIMATE CRISIS. JEWISH TRADITION COMPELS US TO RESPOND

Faithful choices for a flourishing world matter. Personal and community actions accelerate cultural and political change. The Brit Hazon – a covenant of vision – is designed to support a personal journey toward a more sustainable life. Included in the Brit Hazon is a six-week learning series that guides you through a sustainability track of your choice, such as how to decrease home energy or switch to a plant-based diet. Once you complete one learning track of your choice, come back and check out another one of the five remaining journeys. In the Congregation Kol Ami Brit Hazon Community Group, participants can support each other on our journeys, share successes, challenges, and questions along the way. Sign up at <https://hazon.org/commit-to-change/brithazon/takeaction/> and be sure to choose the Congregation Kol Ami community group. Look for programs in support of this group at Kol Ami throughout the coming year.

Brit Hazon Challenge

It's as easy as...

- 1 Sign up for the Brit with our community
- 2 Invite friends & family
- 3 For a bonus point, join the Brit Hazon Facebook group

Sign up at hazon.org/brit