



קול עמי

An Intimate and
Dynamic Community

THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ

Gratitude for My Teachers

“Reish Lakish said, ‘Anyone who teaches Torah to another person’s child, it is as if the teacher has created them.’ – Babylonian Talmud Sanhedrin 99b.

In late spring, we have a convergence of events that remind us of the importance of teachers. School years and university semesters come to an end. We celebrate our last day of Religious School. We prepare for the holiday of Shavuot (June 4-5), commemorating the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai.

While we celebrate milestones in Jewish learning throughout the life cycle, Judaism doesn’t really have graduations. We believe that learning is a lifelong process. When we finish a cycle of reading Torah, we barely take a breath before starting over again.

The challenge of lifelong Jewish learning is twofold. First, how do we make time and space for learning when our lives are so full already? And second, how do we keep our learning fresh, when we are continually drawing from the same sources?

(continued page 2)

WORSHIP

SERVICES

**Friday, May 6 at
7:30 p.m.
(Sisterhood)**

Rebecca Song
“Simcha” First Friday
Shabbat service with
Adult Choir

**Saturday, May 7 at
10:00 a.m.
(Bornstein)**

Bar Mitzvah of Josh-
ua Levitt

**Friday, May 13 at
7:30 p.m.
(Bornstein)**

Interfaith Relation-
ship Dialogue Shab-
bat service

**Saturday, May 14
at 10:00 a.m.
(Price Chapel)**

Shabbat Morning
service and Torah
dialogue

**Friday, May 20 at
7:30 p.m.
(Bornstein)**

**Kabbalat Shabbat
service**

(continued page 2)

WORSHIP SERVICES

(continued)

**Saturday, May 21 at
10:00 a.m.
(Sisterhood)**

Bar Mitzvah of David
Madden

**Friday, May 27 at 7:30
p.m. (Bornstein)**

Kabbalat Shabbat service

**Saturday, May 28 at
10:00 a.m. (Price
Chapel)**

Shabbat Morning service
and *Torah* dialogue

**Friday, June 3 at 7:30
p.m. (Bornstein)**

"Simcha" First Friday
Shabbat service

**Saturday, June 4 at
10:00 a.m. (Price
Chapel)**

Shabbat Morning service
and *Torah* dialogue

**Sunday, June 5 at
7:00 p.m. (Bornstein)**

erev Shavuot service

**Friday, June 10 at
7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)**

Kabbalat Shabbat service

(continued page 3)

THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ *(continued)*

As far as making time and space, we might ask ourselves: Can I read one or two great books each year? Is there a blog, podcast, newsletter, or magazine that I can engage with on a regular basis? Can I read a page or paragraph of something each day, or read a commentary on the Torah portion each week?

This can be just as challenging for a Jewish professional as it is for a layperson. We're subject to the same distractions of work and life, and it can be difficult, as the Mishnah says, to "make for yourself a teacher, and acquire for yourself a friend" (Pirke Avot 1:6). So, I wanted to express some gratitude for two teachers, and two learning environments, that have been particularly enriching to me.

The Hadar Institute provides weekly divrei Torah, online courses in Jewish text, and in-person learning opportunities for both professionals and laypeople. This year, I was proud to take part in the first JJ Greenberg Fellowship for Rabbis and Senior Educators with thirty other fellows. We gather monthly to study Jewish theology with Rabbi Yitz Greenberg, an Orthodox rabbi and thought leader. I read Rabbi Greenberg's book, *The Jewish Way*, during my undergraduate studies, and it continues to shape how I think about Jewish belief and practice. It has been a gift to read more of his work (we're getting a sneak peek at his next book!) and learn from him directly.

Early in the pandemic, I was fortunate to discover online workshops offered by the Jewish Studio Project, which promotes creativity as a spiritual practice and a way of engaging with Jewish wisdom. My favorite learning experiences were writing classes centered around Jewish texts, led by master Jewish educator Rachel Brodie, who passed away suddenly just before Passover. She was known for being a "teacher's teacher" and a mentor to many Jewish professionals. Her work at the Jewish Studio Project was merely a fraction of the contributions she made to Jewish life and learning, and I'm so grateful for the two years I was able to learn and create with her. Her memory is a blessing.

(continued page 4)



REBECCA SONGS SHABBAT

featuring the Adult Choir!!

Please join us on Friday, May 6 at 7:30 p.m. for a special service featuring many liturgical melodies you already know, composed by our Cantorial Soloist and

award-winning Jewish composer, Rebecca Schwartz. The Adult

Choir will also be singing special choral arrangements of Rebecca's music, written by Fran Surkin. Rabbi Berkowitz will be giving special blessings for May birthdays and anniversaries.



WORSHIP SERVICES

(continued)

Saturday, June 11 at 10:00 a.m. (Price Chapel)

Shabbat Morning service and Torah dialogue

Friday, June 17 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

Kabbalat Shabbat service

Saturday, June 18 at 10:00 a.m. (Bornstein)

B'nai Mitzvah of Jackson and Lucas Malkiel

Friday, June 24 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

Kabbalat Shabbat service

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Caring Congregants Committee

Tuesday, June 21 at 6:30 p.m.

Co-Chairs: Natalie Dyen and Elaine Gershenson

LGBTQ+ Inclusion Committee

Sunday, May 1 at 7:30 p.m.

Co-Chairs: Morgan Selkirk and Robin Shane

Membership Committee

Thursdays, May 26 and June 30 at 7:00 p.m.

Co-Chairs: Abby Binder and Linda George

Religious School Committee

Tuesday, May 3 at 7:30 p.m.

Co-Chairs: Rachael Simon and Tamara Sniad



THOUGHTS FROM RABBI BERKOWITZ *(continued)*

Both teachers helped “create” me, as a person and a rabbi. What teachers have helped “create” you?

Of course, I also want to thank our teachers and learners here at Kol Ami. Our Religious School Director, Rachael Simon, has overcome many challenges these past two years to create a learning environment that is safe, nurturing, and inspiring for our young people. I’m grateful to our teachers, Ben Rubin, Beck Epstein, and Neal Beatus (and a few special guests); our madrichim James Beatus, Elad Shoham, and Mason Warsaw; and Merle Salkin, for helping with coverage during Morah Simon’s parental leave. And I’m grateful to our learners of all ages, as Rabbi Hanina says, “I have learned much from my teachers and even more from my friends, but from my students I have learned most of all” (Babylonian Talmud Taanit 7a).



Please join us for Interfaith Relationship Dialogue Shabbat:

May 13, 2022, 7:30 p.m.

Guest Speaker, Rabbinical Student Allyson Zacharoff, "Nurturing Interfaith

Relationships: In the Community and at Home"



Allyson Zacharoff is graduating from the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Wyncote, PA in May 2022. She grew up as the Jewish child of a beautiful interfaith marriage on Long Island, and has studied and worked in interfaith dialogue for

*the past decade and it was this interfaith work that inspired her path to the rabbinate. Allyson studied as a Russell Berrie Fellow in Interreligious Studies at two Catholic universities, the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome (which she jokingly calls her "Christian year"); a Conflict Resolution Fellow at Pardes Institute of Jewish Studies in Jerusalem (her "Jewish year"); and focused on Islam and the Qur'an as an International Peacemaking Program Fellow at Hartford International University for Religion and Peace in Connecticut (her "Muslim year"). She has built up a Multi-faith Engagement program at Har Zion Temple in Penn Valley over the past three years, currently serves as a Jewish representative on several national interfaith dialogues, regularly attends international multifaith convenings, and writes about her interfaith life on her blog, [*Of Christmas and Kreplach*](#).*

CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences in loving memory of:

Sophie Orzech
Aunt of Ronit Sugar

Margaret Tino
Sister-in-law of Elaine Lotto

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



LOCA Tea Party

Sunday, May 22 at 2 p.m.

at the home of Jane Finkle in Jenkintown

267-252-1689

Let's reconnect! Join us for a lovely afternoon of conversation and a cup of tea

*Bring a few teabags of your favorite tea and some tea sandwiches or cookies



MAZAL TOV

Shari Johnson on the birth of her grandbabies, Chelsea and Garrett Grayson on January 31 to parents Jessica and Matthew Grayson.

Robert Schiowitz and Ronit Sugar on the birth of their grandson, Miles Joe Millner on March 30 to parents Amy Schiowitz and Geoff Millner.

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

8231 Old York Road

Elkins Park, PA 19027

questions@kolamielkinspark.org

Website:

www.kolamielkinspark.org

Facebook:

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



Congregation Kol Ami's

KOL A-MINIS PLAYGROUP

**Friday, May 6, 10:00am-11:00am
8231 Old York Road, Elkins Park, PA**

Activities!

Art!

Friends!

Music!



Ideal for ages 0-5 with caregiver

Register at tinyurl.com/kolaminis



***Caregivers must provide proof of vaccination;
Masks required ages 2+**

NEWS FROM THE RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Between preparing for Purim and Passover and feeling safe enough to offer mixed-age programming, these last two months have been busy!

Students rediscovered the Purim story while demonstrating their remarkable creativity during our schoolwide Purim program. They learned about the Ugandan Jewish community and made a Ugandan charoset recipe for their Seders.

Our students heard from several speakers, including Adina Lichtman, founder of Knock Knock Give a Sock, an organization that aims to humanize homelessness, and Professor William Carter, Jr. of University of Pittsburgh School of Law, who spoke about civil rights and racial profiling.

Our Confirmation Academy and Post-Confirmation Academy students participated in a mosaic workshop with Danielle Brief (<https://hamsamadegifts.com>), who educated them on upcycling in the art world.

And Sixth and Seventh grade students participated in family programming to think about the B'nai Mitzvah process and ceremony in a new light.

As we look towards our last month of Religious School, I am grateful for all our Religious School families who continued to support us as we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic through yet another academic year.

We are always looking to strengthen our community with new members, so please do not hesitate to refer any friends or family who are interested in a Religious School education directly to me!

We are looking forward to several exciting events during these next two months. Please mark your calendars for the events below and contact me for more information.

May 1, 11:00am: KARS hosts Sigal Kanotopsky, US Northeast Regional Director of the Jewish Agency for Israel, to speak about her experience emigrating from Ethiopia to Israel as well as the Israeli story of integrating new immigrants. Parents are invited to attend!

May 3, 7:30pm: Religious School Committee Meeting via Zoom, <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86323827366>

May 4, 6:30pm: Confirmation Academy and Post-Confirmation visit the Holocaust Awareness Museum and Education Center. More information will be sent via email.

May 6, 10:00am: Kol A-Minis Playgroup for children ages 0-5

May 8: No Religious School; Happy Mother's Day!

May 18, 6:30pm: Post-Confirmation meets

May 22, 11:00am: End-of-Year Ceremony for Third through Seventh Grade Families

Evening of June 5 through Evening of June 6 - Holiday of Shavuot



CO-PRESIDENT BEN ADAMS CHECKS IN

Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel Independence Day, will be observed this year from sunset on May 4 to sunset on May 5. As it is every year, it will be immediately preceded by Yom HaZikaron, Israel's Memorial Day, from sunset on May 3 to sunset on May 4.

The proximity of these two dates is intentional and meaningful. Established in 1951 under Prime Minister David Ben Gurion (and enacted into law in 1963), it is a reminder that the independence of Israel was hard won by tears and bloodshed. Yom HaZikaron itself was subsequently expanded to include all those people who have fallen throughout the struggle of Israel's existence – both soldiers and civilians.

Israel does not take this commemoration lightly. We are probably all familiar with the awe-inspiring sight of life coming to a complete standstill when the siren is sounded on Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Memorial Day, when even those people driving on roads and highways stop and stand beside their vehicles as a sign of respect; also all businesses close, and all entertainment ceases for 24 hours.

Yom HaZikaron is the other occasion marked annually in this same way, and it is no less moving. Indeed, because it seems everyone in Israel has someone close to them or their family who has been lost in an action or as a victim of terror, it is a reminder that such loss is not a legacy of an increasingly distant past, but with us every day.

The juxtaposition of a somber day of remembrance followed by a day of celebration serves another purpose as well. Each year it prompts us to reflect on where we are now. How it is that real peace remains elusive and names are still being added to this most terrible of lists.

This June will mark 35 years since a member of my own army unit was lost in action defending Israel's northern border. At age 19 and fresh out of high school, Kobi had barely begun his life. Unlike me, a new immigrant in my 20s, Kobi always knew he was destined for national service just like all his friends, family, and classmates. In fact, he entered the army with his youth group cohort from HaNoar HaOved v'HaLomed (literally the "Working and Studying Youth"). Noar HaOved is a parallel movement to Camp Galil's Habonim Dror locally here in America and around the world, which also has its origins in Labor Zionism.

Such a tight-knit group of progressive-minded youngsters who have literally grown up together provides enormous support for the grueling physical and emotional challenges of service in the army's front lines, and they suffer like family when one of their own is torn away. For Kobi and for all those before and since, "may the darkness of their loss not obscure the light of peace." [From the Reform prayer for Yom HaZikaron, on page 10.]

Finally, while events in Israel or actions of its government may give us pause from time to time, I am reminded of the tenets of Kol Ami's own mission statement that reflect on the importance of "the survival of Jews, Judaism, and the moral values of Jewish traditions" and "strong bonds with Israel, recognizing the importance of the historic partnership between Israel and the Diaspora."

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CO-PRESIDENT BEN ADAMS CHECKS IN (continued)

We pray that in our time we may never need to look to Israel as a refuge in the way so many Jews have been grateful for since its founding (and as recently as the current Ukraine crisis.) Indeed, there is a real and meaningful connection just waiting for us to explore at any time and from wherever we may be, and I encourage us all to find it.

Alternative Reform Yizkor for Yom HaZikaron

Fully compassionate God on high:

To the souls of those among our people

Who bravely gave their lives for the redemption of our

Land, grant clear and certain rest with You

In the lofty heights of the sacred and pure

Whose brightness shines like the very glow of heaven.

Source of mercy:

Forever enfold them in the embrace of Your wings;

Secure their souls in eternity.

Adonai: they are Yours.

They will rest in peace.

Amen

Remember our people who could not escape past tyranny and hate;

May their memory be more than a distant shadow.

For their dreams left unfulfilled and lives taken too soon: we remember.

Remember our brothers and sisters whose sacrifice gave birth to the state of Israel;

May their courage be our inspiration and our strength.

For life cut short and vision unrealized: we remember.

Remember the fallen of the Israel Defense Forces, the victims of terror and tragedy;

May their darkness of their loss not obscure the light of peace.

They were in love with the land and in love with life.

For the agony, the tears, the mothers and fathers,

For the children who were and for the children yet to be: we remember.

For more information on these two important holidays, see:

<https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/yom-hazikaron-yom-haatzmaut/yom-hazikaron-history-and-customs>, and

<https://reformjudaism.org/jewish-holidays/yom-hazikaron-yom-haatzmaut/yom-haatzmaut-history-and-customs>

MULTI-FAITH VOLUNTEER WEEKEND

**YOU'RE
INVITED**

Share Food Program is inviting community members from all faiths and backgrounds to join us in the fight against hunger. Help us sort, pack, or deliver boxes of nutritious food and feed our neighbors most in need in and around the Greater Philadelphia region.



GET INVOLVED!

Volunteers 13+ up are permitted; under 18 requires a chaperone. Registration required. Questions about volunteering? Contact volunteer@sharefoodprogram.org.

MAY 21

9 AM - 12 PM

MAY 22

1:30 PM - 3:30 PM

2901 W Hunting Park Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19129

WWW.SHAREFOODPROGRAM.ORG

Presented by Congregation Kol Ami's LGBTQ+ Inclusion Committee

"A must-read in today's political environment, this courageous book demonstrates how to fight prejudice and embrace acceptance."

- Steve Adler, Mayor of Austin

"An excellent speaker, Jo inspired us and gave us hope for a better future"

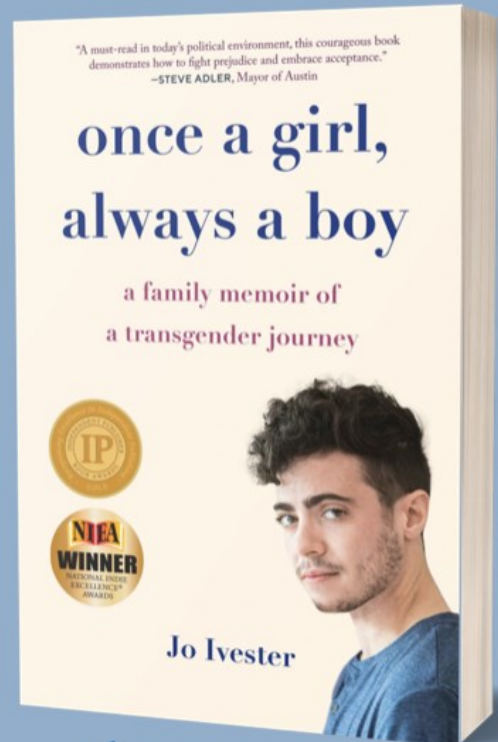
- Peggy Greenawalt, Librarian, West Lake Hills Presbyterian Church

Let's
talk!

Meet the Author



Jo Ivester



May 23, 2022
7pm

Congregation Kol Ami at Beth Sholom Synagogue
8231 Old York Road; Elkins Park, PA
www.kolamielkinspark.org

This is a FREE event, but we ask that you preregister here:



**First 20 registrants receive
a copy of Jo Ivester's
*once a girl, always a boy***



~ as part of the ADL Signature Synagogue Program ~

Congregation Kol Ami is excited to offer a special program:

Recognizing and Responding to Antisemitism Today

**On Tuesday May 24th
at 7:30 - 9:00 p.m. via zoom**

Register at https://adl.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJAsceGgrz4iHdwIcI-8lcH7KhzLnqrLQ79_



Robin Burstein

Deputy Director, ADL Philadelphia
serving eastern PA, southern NJ and DE

will address antisemitism in the U.S.

~ Ms. Burstein's presentation will include ~

- **Real life situations for discussion**
- **Exploration of what we, individually and as a community, can do to combat antisemitism**
- **Opportunities to ask your questions of the ADL Deputy Director in our region**

Robin Burstein serves as Deputy Director, ADL Philadelphia, and is involved in management, regional operations, fund raising, and education programs. She is the staff liaison to the Outreach and Civil Rights committees and the Black-Jewish Alliance. Robin joined the ADL after serving alternatively in the nonprofit and for-profit arenas her entire career, including directing senior centers, marketing training programs, management, and fundraising. Over the years, she has served on many boards and committees including her Synagogue and Women's League, the North Penn Collaborative for Health and Human Services, Hadassah and more. Robin & her husband Bob belong to Tiferet Bet Israel in Bluebell. She has two *practically perfect* daughters Sara and Samantha. And five *absolutely perfect* grandchildren.

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/>

ADULT EDUCATION FUND

In Honor Of:

Elaine Gershenson for a speedy recovery
William and Betty Shapiro

ARTS & CULTURE FUND

In Honor Of:

Adult Choir for their generosity
James and Natalie Dyen

Michael Chernoff and Rhea Applebaum
William and Betty Shapiro

Birth of Elie Henry Shapiro, grandson of William and Betty Shapiro
James and Natalie Dyen

In Memory Of:

Sigmund Zellat
James and Natalie Dyen

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Elaine Schwartz

In Honor Of:

Birth of Cole Chamberlain, grandson of David and Shelley Chamberlain
James and Natalie Dyen

Birth of Oliver DeGroff, grandson of Gary and Cheryl Turetsky
James and Natalie Dyen

In Memory Of:

Terry Schiowitz
David and Shelley Chamberlain

Harriet Schwartz

David and Shelley Chamberlain

SYNAGOGUE FUND

In Memory Of:

Dora Levin
Alvin Turetsky

Morris Rosenblatt
Craig and Sharon Myers

Terry Schiowitz
Elaine Stevens
David and Meryle Twersky

Sadie Zulkow
Craig and Sharon Myers

YOUTH FUND

In Honor Of:

Rachael Simon
Rabbi Shoshanah Tornberg



College Bound:

Anna Goldstone

American University

Andy Langman

University of Delaware

Farren Levitt

University of Pittsburgh

Cecily Shandell

Brandeis University

MAZAL TOV!!!