



קול עמי

An Intimate and
Dynamic Community

Rabbi's Message

"When two sit together at the table and share words of Torah, it is as if the Divine Presence dwells among them." –*Pirke Avot 3:2*

You might notice a theme in the articles in this bulletin, as several articles talk about the value of coming together as a community. We didn't plan this, but it absolutely feels right as we emerge from the hibernation we experienced during winter, during our move, and during the pandemic. So I'm going to devote my article to the most important element of any Jewish gathering—the food.

Whether we are conducting a Passover seder, sharing a Shabbat meal, or engaging in Torah study, there are few things more fundamental to the Jewish tradition than sitting around a table together, preferably with food. In fact, historians believe that the earliest synagogues were gatherings of study and prayer that took place in people's homes, possibly over a meal.

The events of the last few years have made it necessary to rethink what it means to sit at the same table. Can we gather virtually? Can we gather outside or in each other's homes? Can we gather in spaces that feel new and unfamiliar? And how does food fit into all of this?

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WORSHIP

SERVICES

Friday, May 5 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

"Simcha" First Friday
Kabbalat Shabbat service
with Adult Choir

**Saturday, May 6 at
10:00 a.m.
(Bornstein)**

Shabbat Morning service
- Bar Mitzvah of Sam
Ellner

Friday, May 12 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

Kabbalat Shabbat service

**Saturday, May 13 at
10:00 a.m. (Price
Chapel)**

Shabbat service and To-
rah study

Friday, May 19 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

Kabbalat Shabbat service

"TAG" Talk with Alan
Gershenson

**Saturday, May 20 at
10:00 a.m.
(Bornstein)**

Shabbat Morning service
- Bat Mitzvah of Ciera
Horn

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WORSHIP SERVICES

(continued)

**Thursday, May 25 at
7:00 p.m. (Bornstein)**

Shavuot Confirmation service

**Friday, May 26 at 7:30
p.m. (Bornstein)**

Kabbalat Shabbat service

**Saturday, May 27 at
10:00 a.m. (Price Chapel)**

Shavuot-Yizkor Shabbat service and Torah study

**Friday, June 2 at 7:30
p.m. (Bornstein)**

Interfaith Relationship Dialogue (IRD) “Simcha” First Friday Kabbalat Shabbat service

**Friday, June 9 at 7:30
p.m. (Bornstein)**

*Kabbalat Shabbat service
“TAG” Talk with Natalie Dyen*

**Saturday, June 10 at
5:00 p.m.**

Bar Mitzvah of Eli Halpern

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Rabbi's Message *(continued)*

Sharing food when we gather is something we absolutely took for granted before the pandemic. It occurred to me recently how we used to all grab ends of a challah and pull off our own piece, something that was probably never a great idea from a sanitary perspective, but is now completely unthinkable post-Covid. We also had quite a bit of freedom when it came to cooking and bringing in food when Kol Ami had our own kitchen.

As we've begun to reintroduce *oneg Shabbat*, the Tu BiShevat Seder, and Martini Havdalah, we've had to navigate not only ever-evolving health guidelines, but also the *kashrut* policy on our new campus. While our original lease agreement did not include use of the kitchen, we've recently worked with the leadership of Beth Sholom to figure out what it would look like to make food a part of our gatherings once again.

Here is what we have worked out with Beth Sholom:

Our staff and a few volunteers are being trained in use of the Beth Sholom kitchen, so that we can, on occasion, prepare food there, using our own utensils, in accordance with Beth Sholom's *kashrut* policy. These occasions might be events like the Tu BiShevat Seder, educational activities such as a cooking class for the Religious School, or a *mitzvah* project like “Cook for a Friend.”

Outside of the Beth Sholom kitchen, we are now welcome to bring in any prepared food that is dairy or pareve (essentially, anything vegan, vegetarian, or containing kosher fish) to eat in our own spaces, such as our new Community Room and our classrooms, as well as in communal spaces like the Bornstein and Fischman Auditoriums. We will be responsible for preparing or purchasing these foods offsite, serving them on disposable utensils or bringing our dishes home to clean them.

We are also compiling a list of kosher caterers in the area, so that if anyone wants to sponsor a hot meal or a deli luncheon, we'll be able to do that as well.

This may seem like a lot of mundane details and rules, but working them out has brought us closer to something that is truly an essential part of our sacred purpose: sitting around the table together, sharing a meal and some words of Torah, and hoping that the Divine Presence dwells among us.



GARY TURETSKY'S FINAL MESSAGE AS PRESIDENT: *Get Back!*

A recent headline in the Jewish Exponent trumpeted the news that as the pandemic recedes synagogues are reopening and people are coming back. If true, this is great news, as one of the key roles of the synagogue is to hold a community together, and it is the in-person part of the synagogue experience that preserves community. I think we knew this before the pandemic; if not, the pandemic has surely reinforced the lesson that when the in-person activities of synagogue life – such as gathering together to pray, sing, learn and kibbitz -- are missing, the sense of community that ties us to each other and our synagogue wanes, and is in danger of being entirely lost.

During the two years that I have served as your president (the first as co-president with Ben Adams), the enormous challenge has been to hold our community together. All synagogues dealing with the Covid virus and public health regulations that mandated long periods of masking and social distancing confronted the same challenge -- but our challenge was made even more of a struggle as we had to adjust, just as Covid hit, to a new home, a move that we successfully navigated after working through two years of Covid-related delays and interruptions. Still, moving in the midst of the pandemic undoubtedly had a negative impact on our ability to retain our sense of community.

Like other synagogues, we initially responded to the Covid challenge with Zoom worship services, Zoom religious school and adult education classes, Zoom Board and committee meetings, and Zoom holiday and other special celebrations. And like those other synagogues, we learned that Zoom has its place, even as the pandemic lifts, to bring our services and programming to those who are unable for various reasons to attend in person. But Zoom, I think we can all agree, does not offer the kind of community that we feel when physically together in our religious home.

So now that President Biden has officially declared the pandemic to be over, are Kol Ami members coming back home and reviving the community spirit that was almost lost over these past two years? I'm happy to report that the answer is yes, and this gives me hope for the future of our small but vibrant synagogue. While we have worked to improve the audio-visual experience for those members needing Zoom, in-person service attendance is up at Friday night services, with attendees enjoying Oneg pastries and conversation afterwards.

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WORSHIP SERVICES

(continued)

Friday, June 16 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

PRIDE *Kabbalat Shabbat* service with Special Guest Speaker Dr. Amy Milligan

Saturday, June 17 at 10:00 a.m. (Bornstein)

Shabbat Morning Service - Bat Mitzvah of Aria Kraemer

Friday, June 23 at 7:30 p.m. (Bornstein)

Kabbalat Shabbat service

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

Kabbalat Shabbat service



SAVE THE DATE

**CONGREGATION
ANNUAL MEETING**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 22
AT 7:00 P.M.
BORNSTEIN
AUDITORIUM**

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Caring Congregants Committee

Tuesday, May 9 at 6:30 p.m.

Home of Elaine Gershenson

Chairs: Natalie Dyen and Elaine Gershenson

Interfaith Relationship Dialogue

Tuesday, May 23 at 7:30 p.m.

Chairs: Vincent Pace and Jane Katzer Pace

Membership Committee

Thursday, May 30 at 7:00 p.m.

Chair: Abby Binder

Religious School Committee

Thursday, May 22 at 7:30 p.m.

Chair: Rachael Simon

Social Action Committee

Thursday, June 1 at 7:15 p.m.

Chair: Shelley Chamberlain

Worship Enhancement Committee

Sunday, June 25 at 9:15 a.m.

Chairs: David Hyman and Mindy Levy

NEWS FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

The past two months have allowed us to come together in ways that have been impossible for most of my time as Religious School Director, when COVID-19 precautions prevented us from gathering physically as a community.

For instance, this year we joined hundreds of volunteers to pack food for those in need at the Jewish Learning Venture. We came together as a Religious School to prepare for Passover with a Chocolate Seder. We invited guests to help us learn more about relevant topics, such as Israel, disability inclusion, and anti-semitism. We joined our neighboring synagogues in a community mitzvah day.

During a recent Religious School class, I asked students to share their favorite thing about Kol Ami. Each student expressed how much they value our special sense of community above all else. I am ecstatic that our students have continued to feel the warmth of our community over the last few challenging years and have been able to experience it this year more fully.

This month, we will come together yet again to celebrate our year; the first year fully in person of my tenure, it has been a busy and fruitful year. In celebration of the year, I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at our End-of-Year Awards Ceremony on Sunday, May 21 at 11:00am, which will honor our students in first through seventh grade.

I hope many of you will join me in celebrating our Confirmation Service on May 25 at 7:00pm. This year's confirmands have been committed to their Jewish education through the pandemic and our congregation's move. I am proud of their thoughtful approach to the topics we've studied and the unique ways in which they have made Judaism a part of their identity and their lives.

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**Congregation Kol Ami's
Spring Social Action Event
Sunday, May 7th, 1 - 3 pm**

Your helping hands are needed to pack nutritious boxes of food that go directly to seniors and Philadelphia families in need at:

**Share Food Program
2901 W. Hunting Park Ave, Philadelphia**

33+million meals were distributed to individuals, families, and food pantries across the region so far this year! Let's gather in the warehouse to help those in need.

This is a great activity for the whole family, ages 13 and up.

Registration link: (first and last name required with one point of contact to include phone or email)

<https://secure.everyaction.com/HOEvaj5oOkOg6IyecJeKBg2>

For more info: [Share Food Program | Leading Food Bank in the Philadelphia Region](#)

Park on site in Lot A located at the corner of W. Hunting Park Avenue & Henry Avenue. The warehouse can be chilly, so wear closed-toed shoes and dress appropriately. We'll find a spot that works for your physical strength on the assembly line. (Standing required)

For more information, email Shelley: Srchamberlain@comcast.net



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215-635-3110

Rabbi Elliot Holin

Founding Rabbi

215-882-0017

Gary Turetsky, President

Justin Krik, Vice President

Ben Long, Treasurer

Ronit Sugar, Secretary

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

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

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NEWS FROM OUR DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION *(continued)*

As a reminder, registration for the 2023-2024 Religious School Year is automatic! Please feel free to contact me with any questions or changes to your registration by August 1. You will receive more information via email in June.

Please be sure to mark your calendars for the dates below:

- ♦ **Saturday, May 6, 10:00am:** Bar Mitzvah Service of Sam Ellner
- ♦ **Sunday, May 7, 10:00am:** Sixth Grade Family Bnai Mitzvah Program
- ♦ **Sunday, May 14:** No Religious School
- ♦ **Wednesday, May 17, 4:30pm and 6:30pm:** Last Wednesday of Religious School
- ♦ **Saturday, May 20, 10:00am:** Bat Mitzvah Service of Ciera Horn
- ♦ **Sunday, May 21:** End-of-Year Awards Ceremony; last day of Religious School
- ♦ **Thursday, May 25, 7:00pm:** Confirmation Service
- ♦ **Saturday, June 10, 5:00pm:** Bar Mitzvah Service of Eli Halpern
- ♦ **Saturday, June 17, 10:00am:** Bat Mitzvah Service of Aria Kraemer



President's Message *(continued)*

Our Tu B'Shvat seder and Purimspiel were well attended, and a great number of our members came together to celebrate Passover's second seder held jointly with our friends at Keneseth Israel. Many members of our congregation gathered in February for a tasty Soup-In hosted by Melissa Cohen, and our "Martini" Havdalah in April was a blast for all who attended and enjoyed refreshments and Rebecca's music. In addition, Rabbi Berkowitz has been hosting a series of "Chai" teas in our newly refurbished community room behind the Fischman Auditorium, and more members are meeting in person to conduct committee work or simply to enjoy each other's company while knitting.

In this Bulletin's calendar you'll see more opportunities for community for the coming months and this summer, including plans for outdoor services in Wall Park, and I encourage you to take advantage of everything Kol Ami has to offer, whether worship, music, education, or schmoozing with friends. As I complete my service as President, I urge you to get back, if you haven't already, to our community, and invite others who are not affiliated to join us and grow this community. You will be doing your part in sustaining a special synagogue which, as it has done in the past, preserves the community we thrive on.

Thank you to everyone -- professional staff, officers and trustees, and volunteers -- who helped me during my term as President. I am grateful for the opportunity the congregation gave me to serve. It has been challenging, personally rewarding, and oddly enough, fun (at times.)

Warmly,

Gary



Mazal Tov

To Guy and Karol Appel on the birth of their granddaughter, Ella Harley, on March 10th to Bryan and Samantha Appel

To Jon and Sheri Cutler on the marriage of their daughter, Julie to Jason Kleinman on April 14th

Ruben Honik on the birth of his grandson, Sacha, to daughter, Sophie, her husband Benjamin, and big brother Rami on April 11th

Friday, June 16th, 2023 PRIDE Shabbat
With Special Guest Speaker Dr. Amy K. Milligan

PRIDE and the Pink Triangle: How a symbol of Nazi persecution became an emblem for
Jewish LGBTQ young adults



Dr. Amy K. Milligan is the Batten Endowed Associate Professor of Jewish Studies and Women's Studies at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, where she is also the director of the Institute for Jewish Studies and Interfaith Understanding and the faculty advisor to ODU's Hillel. She is a folklorist and ethnographer who is particularly interested in manifestations of selfhood and identity on the body and uses these questions of bodylore to explore lived experiences of gender, sexuality, and religion. She also specializes in the study of small or marginalized Jewish communities, especially in the American South. Milligan's research has been recognized with the Innovative Scholarship Award from the Association for Jewish Studies, and her work has been supported by the Rabbi Ferdinand Isserman Memorial Research Fellowship and the Rabbi Theodore S. Levy Tribute Fellowship at the American Jewish Archives; the Southern Jewish Historical Society; the Shneer Fellowship in American Judaism at the University of Colorado at Boulder; the Wilson Library Fellowship at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; the Rubenstein Research Fellowship at De University; and the NEH Summer Institute on Jewish History in the American South.

**YOU'RE INVITED TO THE CARING
CONGREGANTS COMMITTEE
MEETING**

Tuesday, May 9 at 6:30 is the next Caring Congregants meeting. It will take place at the home of Elaine Gershenson and on Zoom.

**INTERFAITH RELATIONSHIP
DIALOGUE GROUP EVENTS
COMING UP**

The next scheduled meeting of the Interfaith Relationship Dialogue group (IRD) is Tuesday, May 23 at 7:30 p.m. Additional details will be provided closer to the meeting date.

Also, the IRD Shabbat service is scheduled for Friday, June 2.

“Chai Tea” with Rabbi Berkowitz

Please join Rabbi Berkowitz for a "Chai Tea" in our community room on Thursday, May 18th, at 10 a.m. Our topic will be, "Making Menschen: Jewish Thought and Spiritual Development." We'll look at some of the foundational principles of *mussar*, a Jewish spiritual practice that helps us develop our best human qualities. No previous knowledge is required, and we'll probably do a fair amount of *shmoozing* as well. Snacks and hot beverages will be provided. Please RSVP to Elaine at execdir@kolami.info or 215-635-3110

AUTHOR JANET BENTON TO SPEAK IN JUNE



Author Janet Benton to speak on Wednesday, June 21 at 7:00 p.m. as the next program in LOCA's Educational, Cultural, and Social series.

The award-winning author of *Lilli de Jong*, Janet Benton, will give a talk and slide presentation about the history behind her novel and the real Philadelphia institutions in it. This will be a Zoom presentation.

Everyone is invited. You do not have to read the novel prior to the presentation, though familiarity with the plot and characters would be a plus.

Stay tuned for details.

SAVE THE DATE

CONGREGATION ANNUAL MEETING

THURSDAY, JUNE 22 at 7:00 P.M.

BORNSTEIN AUDITORIUM

**Congregant “TAG” Talks....Torah (Learning), Avodah (Service),
Gemilut Chasadim (Lovingkindness) — Kol Ami’s Variation on the
“TED” Talk**

Friday, May 19 at 7:30 p.m.

Alan Gershenson

“Religion, the Constitution, and My Journey in the Law”



Alan Gershenson will describe how issues involving religion and the Constitution were among the first things that, as a teenager, interested him in the law. After retirement from practicing law as a commercial litigator, he began teaching adult education courses on legal subjects, and a perfect opportunity arose to teach a course on religion and the Constitution with the Supreme Court’s decision about the football coach who was fired for insisting on praying on the field at the end of public high school games. Alan will conclude his presentation with a summary of that case and what it means.

Alan Gershenson is a graduate of Penn State and the Harvard Law School. He was a commercial litigation attorney for 42 years, mostly as a partner in a large Philadelphia based law firm. Since he retired nine years ago, he has, among other things, been teaching adult education courses on legal subjects.

Friday, June 9 at 7:30 p.m.

Natalie Dyen

Writing: Life Lessons of a Late Bloomer

Natalie will talk about the life experiences that led to her finding her voice as a fiction writer after retirement. And she will share some of the challenges she has faced and the rewards she has enjoyed as a writer.

Natalie Dyen was born in Philadelphia and never left the area. She is the mother of two sons and currently lives in Huntingdon Valley with her husband, Jim. A graduate of the University of Pennsylvania, Natalie started her professional life as a French teacher, then switched careers and worked as a technical writer for computer companies until she retired. Since embarking on her journey as a fiction writer, her short stories have appeared in a number of literary journals. Her short story collection, “Finding Her Voice” was published in 2019. Natalie’s stories span multiple genres including literary fiction, dystopian fiction, science fiction, and humor. She has also shared her poetry with the congregation during High Holy Days.

Her novel, *Locked In Silence*, has been accepted for publication and will be released in February.



Springtime Museum Tours!

Wednesday, May 17, 10:45AM - Philadelphia's Rosenbach Historic House and Rare Book Museum, 2008-2010 Delancey Street, Philadelphia.



Join us for a tour of the house and museum led by our very own President, Gary Turetsky. The museum showcases impressive holdings of rare books, manuscripts, furniture, and antique art. Gary has volunteered at the Rosenbach, the home of Dr. Abraham Rosenbach who was recognized in his lifetime as the world's premier rare book dealer, for 5 years, and he will share with you his knowledge of Dr. Rosenbach and his collection of rare books and art, including the original Thomas Sully portrait of Rebecca Gratz. Following the house tour, Rosenbach curator Judy Guston, will present, and share with the group her knowledge of, several examples of rare Judaica drawn from the collection.

The museum's charge for the Judaica presentation is \$17.50 per person (a 50% discount), the cost to be paid when you arrive for the tour on May 17th (the museum is not charging for the house tour as you are Gary's guests). The tour is limited to 10 guests. RSVP to Gary Turetsky at gsturet@gmail.com; reservations will be accepted on a first come, first served basis. If there are more than 10 requests to attend, Gary will schedule a second tour in the fall.

Gary will meet everyone attending at 10:45am on May 17th at the museum, 2008-2010 Delancey St., Philadelphia (Rittenhouse Square neighborhood). The house tour will start at 11 and you should expect the tour and Judaica presentation to take approximately 2 hours. Questions/rsvp, contact Gary at gsturet@gmail.com.

Sunday, May 21, 1:00PM- Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History. 101 South Independence Mall East, Philadelphia

Join us for a docent-led tour, led by our very own Bonnie Scheer! The Museum presents experiences that preserve, explore, and celebrate the history of Jews in America. We will meet at 1:00 in front of the museum, 101 South Independence Mall East.

Please rsvp to Bonnie Scheer at bonniescheer1@verizon.net



CONDOLENCES

We extend our condolences in loving memory of:

Margie Jacobs

Mother of Eve Jacobs

Theodore Johnson

Sister-in-law of Shari Johnson

Professor Richard H. McKinstry

Father of Betsy McKinstry

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



Knitting/Crocheting Group



You're welcome to Kol Ami's Knitting/Crocheting Group! Members Shari Johnson and Linda George have started a monthly group that meets monthly on the 2nd Monday. All levels welcome! Some basic instruction provided. Please bring your own materials. Join us for our next meeting!

Date: Mondays, May 8 and June 12

Time: 5-7pm, please bring snacks

Location: May 8 at home of Elaine Gershenson; June 12 TBD

RSVP: by 3/10/23 to Shari Johnson (mommyone@aol.com) or Linda George (LindaSGeorge@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 Memory Of:

Richard McKinstry
Caring Congregants Committee
James and Natalie Dyen

Sigmund Zellat
James and Natalie Dyen

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Honor Of:

Robert and Susan Seltzer
Carol Laskin

RABBI'S EMPOWERMENT AND VISION FUND

In Honor Of:

Mark and Karin Kaplan
Cliff Bayuk

The celebration of our
Purimshpiel
Cyana Perry

SYNAGOGUE FUND

In Honor Of:

Guy and Karol Appel on the birth
of their granddaughter, Ella
Harley
Alan and Elaine Gershenson

Rhea Applebaum on the birth of
her great-grandson
Alan and Elaine Gershenson

Special Anniversary of James and
Natalie Dyen
Alan and Elaine Gershenson

In Memory Of:

Ethel Abrams
Rhea Applebaum

Howard Abrams
Jeffrey Abrams and Margaret Barry

Sissy Bases
Rhea Applebaum

Arthur Hutkin
Robert and Susan Seltzer

Richard McKinstry
William Hyman and Janine Pratt
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