



קול עמי

An Intimate and  
Dynamic Community

## Rabbi's Message

### The Highest Level of Tzedaka

I don't usually share the ins and outs of my discretionary fund with the congregation (If I did, it wouldn't be very discreet!). However, I recently received a beautiful thank you letter for one special disbursement, and I felt that the whole congregation would take pride in what we were able to provide for this refugee family in our community.

Maimonides tells us that the highest level of *tzedaka* is to offer a gift, a loan, employment, or a business partnership to the person in need, so that they will no longer need assistance (Mishneh Torah, Laws of Tzedaka 10:7). Your generous donations are making it possible for us to perform this highest level of *tzedaka* as a congregation.

Additionally, I wanted to share that this gift was made possible through a generous gift that was made years ago in memory of our beloved member Jensen Toth. Her memory continues to be a blessing.

I also want to acknowledge that Kol Ami members Shelley Chamberlain and Roz Holtzman are taking part in a Welcome Circle for two other Ukrainian refugees, and we are grateful and proud for all the incredible work they have been doing as well.

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## WORSHIP SERVICES

### **Kabbalat Shabbat service**

**Friday, July 7, 14, 21,  
28 and August 4, 11,  
18, 25 at 6:30 p.m.**

**Wall Park (weather  
permitting)**

Join us for a short, outdoor, musical service led by our Cantorial Soloist Rebecca Schwartz with a story or short *drash* from Rabbi Berkowitz. Please bring chairs and blankets or whatever you'd like to sit on. Feel free to bring a picnic dinner for before or after the service.

### Important information:

1. The park in which services are held is relatively flat, and should be easily accessible from the parking lot. Please let us know if you have questions or concerns or need assistance.
2. In case of inclement weather services will be held in the Bornstein Auditorium on the Beth Sholom/Kol Ami campus. We will give 24 hours notice by email if services are going to be in Bornstein.

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## **WORSHIP SERVICES**

***(continued)***

3. Because of our outdoor setup, our summer services will not be livestreamed, so please join us in person when you can.

### ***Shabbat service and***

#### ***Torah dialogue***

**Saturday, July 8, 22 and  
August 5 at 10:00 a.m.—  
Zoom only**

## **HIGH HOLY DAYS**

**September 9—*Selichot***

**September 15—*erev Rosh  
Hashanah***

**September 16—*Rosh  
Hashanah***

**September 17—*Tashlich***

**September 24—*Kol Nidrei***

**September 25—*Yom  
Kippur***

**September 29—*Sukkot***

**October 7—*Simchat Torah***

## **Rabbi's Message** *(continued)*

May 12, 2023

Dear Congregation Kol Ami,

We were delighted and surprised when a check arrived in the mail to assist the C---- family. This was a life-changing gift to Yevhen, Yuliia and Nikol, who are refugees from the war in Ukraine. They have very limited English but they ok'd me writing to you on their behalf.

The C---- family was in a difficult spot. They had come to Elkins Park in need of emergency housing. Their plan was to share a one-bedroom apartment with their friends (who were themselves a family of three) until they could find emergency housing (which was us).

We got to know them, and we learned that their savings just wasn't going to cover the first month's rent, last month's rent and a security deposit required in the Philly suburbs. They used almost all their resources to get to Poland, live for a year, and then to travel to the US. We all did the math and realized that without major help, it would be a long time until they could afford a place on their own.

Through all of this, we saw a path to this family being okay. Yevhen had been a truck driver in Ukraine, and he wanted to get a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) to earn a living here. He happened to be in Poland on a work assignment when the invasion began. They decided to use the funds from Kol Ami to enroll in a local trucking school. Now, he has a pathway to earning a good living for his family at a real job with benefits. It is a life-changing difference.

Yevhan is focused. He first had to get a "normal" driver's license with a written test and a driving test, and then pass the CDL learner's permit test. The CDL exam is only in English, so he's been hard at work studying the materials from trucking school and practicing the "interview" questions [We recently received an update that he passed this part as well!]. Yevhen got a job doing construction during the day, so he studies at night and goes to trucking school on the weekends.

Yuliia is now working at a nail salon nearby. Nikol is enrolled at Wyncote and she excels in math, soccer, and art. Our neighbors are in Tokyo for a work assignment, and they agreed to rent their home to the C---- family at a reduced rent in exchange for them taking care of the home. So just a few days ago our house guests officially became our neighbors.

Thank you for your gift to the C---- family. We will always be thankful for you.

Crystal & Geoff Stryker

Elkins Park, PA

(Hosts of the C---- family until just a few days ago)



## SUMMER GREETINGS FROM CO-PRESIDENT BEN LONG

Dear All,

Summer is the perfect time to enjoy the warmth of the sun, the light of the longer days and all the sights, smells, and sounds of favorite outdoor activities. All these activities reconnect us with ourselves, our family, our friends, and provide sustenance for the remainder of the year.

How does Kol Ami fit into this for you, and you for Kol Ami? We will be here all summer, offering services and opportunities to learn and connect until we all come back together for Religious School and the High Holidays early next fall. We hope to see and hear from you over the summer.

Justin (Krik) and I each accepted the position of Co-President knowing full well many of the challenges our beloved community and Jewish institutions in general are facing. Falling affiliation rates, changing demographics, and a move towards cultural Judaism rather than formal Judaism are all creating a strong current for congregations to swim against. We may be able to forge ahead or we may need to take a hard look at ourselves and what we want, and determine what strategic options we can implement to get us there, as we adapt to meet our own and the changing needs and desires of the greater Jewish community.

As your Co-Presidents, we see the strength of our bonds to one another, our excellent staff and the funds we have been able to set aside as key assets to build on and plot our path forward. Over this summer we will organize and start to vet our various options for discussion with all of you, our members and friends. At no time in our history has our name “Voice of My People” ever resonated louder.

We are confident that we can work together to ensure a future where we can pray, learn, and play together through old age as a community. Please read your emails and other announcements as we launch our campaign to explore our goals and options together in an open, honest, and transformative way.

Enjoy your summer and we look forward to serving with and for you all.

Ben (and Justin)

### SYNAGOGUE LEADERSHIP

#### **Main Office**

215-635-3110

#### **Rabbi Leah R. Berkowitz**

215-635-3110

#### **Rabbi Elliot Holin**

Founding Rabbi

215-882-0017

#### **Justin Krik, Co-President**

#### **Ben Long, Co-President**

#### **Linda Jacobs, Vice President**

#### **Gary Sender, Treasurer**

#### **Ronit Sugar, 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

215-635-3110

#### **Rebecca Schwartz**

Cantorial Soloist

215-572-6094

#### **Janet Falon**

Bulletin Editor

janetfalon@gmail.com

#### **Please send correspondence to:**

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Elkins Park, PA 19027

questions@kolamielkinspark.org

#### **Website:**

[www.kolamielkinspark.org](http://www.kolamielkinspark.org)

#### **Facebook:**

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

## RELIGIOUS SCHOOL MAY BE ON BREAK, BUT ACTIVE PLANNING FOR THE FALL IS UNDERWAY, SAYS DIRECTOR RACHAEL SIMON

While students and teachers take a break to reset during the summer months, my summer is spent planning and creating programming that fits our Religious School community's ever-changing needs.

To aid me in this process, some Religious School families will receive surveys over the next several weeks to help me determine what these needs are.

Once again, registration for the coming year will be automatic for current students. If your family has other plans or is a post-B'nai Mitzvah student who wants to discuss alternative learning options, please contact me at [rsdirector.kolami@gmail.com](mailto:rsdirector.kolami@gmail.com) by **August 1**. Registration for new students can be completed at <https://www.kolamielkinspark.org/education/religious-school/online-registration-new-students/>.

While your students' minds may be far from Religious School by now, there are a few upcoming opportunities to keep in mind. I am excited to propose our participation in the **Jewish Youth Climate Movement!** This year, we hope to create our own *kevutzah* (chapter) of the Jewish Youth Climate Movement, a teen-led organization under the umbrella of Adamah that allows youth to address the climate crisis through a Jewish lens. Students will participate in education, long-term projects, and community events with the support of a national network. While meeting times will mostly coincide with our regular programming for students in grades seven through ten, all Jewish students between grades seven and twelve are invited to join- regardless of their participation in our other programs! To get this group off the ground, we need students who are willing to lead our chapter (with support!). Please contact me if you are interested.

We will also once again participate in the **L'Taken Social Justice Seminar**. We are excited to offer another opportunity for high school students to travel to Washington, DC, learn about the relationship between social justice and Jewish values, and lobby members of Congress about issues important to them. This year's trip will be **February 23-26**. Please contact me at [rsdirector.kolami@gmail.com](mailto:rsdirector.kolami@gmail.com) by August 1 if you are interested in joining the trip.

We are also proud to offer a revitalized program for our students in grades seven through ten that includes outings, monthly dinners, interfaith programming, and social justice work. As always, student input has been crucial to building the curriculum for next year's program, and it will reflect their unique interests. If your student is interested in joining us -- even if they've taken a break from Religious School -- please contact me! **Look out for an upcoming survey to decide the best weekday meeting time for this program.**

And mark your calendars for the first day of Religious School on **Sunday, September 10**. Look for our academic calendar, updated handbook, and information on your childrens' class by August 15. As always, we would love to welcome new families to our Religious School. Registration for new families can be found at <https://www.kolamielkinspark.org/education/religious-school/online-registration-new-students/>

Enjoy the rest of your summer!



**Congregation Kol Ami participated in the Jewish Federation's Israel 75 Community Mitzvah Day activities on April 23. Clean-up at High School and food drive and sorting at Keneseth Israel.**





**Please save the date.....**

Plan to join us for two "Chai Tea" gatherings this summer. Chai Tea is a weekday morning opportunity to schmooze and do some casual learning with tea, coffee, and snacks.

Tuesday, July 25, 11 a.m. "You Can't Sit With Us!": How a Senseless Hatred--and a Social Faux Pas--Destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem.

Wednesday, August 30, 11 a.m. Preparing Your Heart for the High Holy Days--How to Use the Weeks Leading Up to Rosh Hashana for Reflection and Spiritual Centering.



## **High School Graduates**

So proud of our high school graduates and wish them the very best in their future journeys:

James Beatus	SUNY New Paltz
Emily Miles	Gap year
Ryan Packel	The Ohio State University
Mason Warsaw	SUNY New Paltz



## **Mazal Tov**

Mitchell and Jane Goldenberg on the engagement of their son Benjamin to Allison Winik

Ilene and Marshall Schafer on the marriage of their son Matthew to Sarah Amos on June 3 in Mudgeeraba Queensland Australia



## **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 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday. All levels welcome! Some basic instruction provided. Please bring your own materials. Join us for our next meeting!



Date: Mondays, July 10 and August 14

Time: 5-7pm, please bring snacks

Location: TBD

RSVP: Shari Johnson ([mommyone@aol.com](mailto:mommyone@aol.com)) or Linda George ([LindaSGeorge@gmail.com](mailto:LindaSGeorge@gmail.com))

**CONGREGATION KOL AMI'S RAINBOW ALLIANCE  
INVITES YOU TO A**



# RAINBOW

*social*



**ALL ARE WELCOME!  
MEMBERS AND FRIENDS, LGBTQ+ AND ALLIES**

**JULY 20TH  
7PM-9PM**

**AT THE HOME OF SHERRY COHEN AND JOHN MILES  
(ADDRESS GIVEN UPON RSVP)**

**TO RSVP - CONTACT ELAINE STEVENS AT [EXECDIR@KOLAMI.INFO](mailto:EXECDIR@KOLAMI.INFO)**



Congregation Kol Ami members enjoyed a tour of the Rosenbach Museum and Library on Delancey Street in Philadelphia on May 18. On the house tour led by the congregation's president, Gary Turetsky, the visitors got to view the art and rare book treasures in the collection, including the original Thomas Sully portrait of Rebecca Gratz and the first edition of the poems of Phyllis Wheatley, a volume printed in London in 1773 which is the first book ever published by an African-American writer. Our members also got to examine, with the expert guidance of the museum's curator, Judy Guston, several examples of rare Judaica, including the first Hebrew Bible, printed with commentary, in 1482 in Bologna, Italy, and the first Hebrew Bible printed in Lisbon, Portugal in 1491.

Pictured below are the members who attended (Betsy McKinstry attended but had to leave before the photo op): Gary Turetsky, Cheryl Turetsky, Karen Gurmankin, Merle Salkin.



## **CONDOLENCES**

We extend our condolences in loving memory of:

Angela Barry  
*Sister of Margaret Barry*

Marion Brettell  
*Mother of Jeffrey Buchanan*

Adam Hoffman  
*Husband of Lisa Landau*

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



## **BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO COLLEGE STUDENTS**

The Caring Congregants Committee will be sending birthday greetings to our college students in the form of e-cards. The purpose is to maintain the connection of our Hebrew School graduates to Kol Ami and to remind them that they are still a part of the Kol Ami family

# 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 in love and appreciation**  
*The Surkin Family*

### In Memory Of:

**Richard McKinstry**  
*Alan and Elaine Gershenson*

## BAR/BAT MITZVAH CONFIRMATION FUND

### In Honor Of:

**Bat Mitzvah of my granddaughter, Ciera Horn, and the wonderful job done by Rabbi Berkowitz, Rebecca Schwartz, and to Bill Hyman for his moving comments**  
*Michael Horn*

## DISCOVER ISRAEL FUND

### In Honor Of:

**Bat Mitzvah of Ciera Horn**  
*David Hyman*

## RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

### In Memory Of:

**Adam Hoffman**  
*Caring Congregants Committee*

**Gerry Seltzer**  
*Robert and Susan Seltzer*

**Louis E. Seltzer**  
*Robert and Susan Seltzer*

## SYNAGOGUE FUND

*Jeffrey Solomon*

### In Honor Of:

**Graduation of the grandson of David and Phyllis Harrison**  
*Bernard and Beth Johl*

### In Memory Of:

**Lois Bender**  
*Craig and Sharon Myers*

**Adam Hoffman**  
*David Baker and Irene Levy Baker*  
*Craig and Sharon Myers*  
*Gary Sender*

**Margie Jacobs**  
*William Hyman and Janine Pratt*

**William Meller**  
*Craig and Sharon Myers*

**Edwin P. Myers**  
*Craig and Sharon Myers*