

OUR SHIR SHALOM

Congregation Shir Shalom of Westchester and Fairfield Counties

Early Winter 2022 / Heshvan-Kislev-Tevet 5783

An afternoon with the incomparable...

Debbie Zecher in concert!

December 11 @ 3:00 pm

**Deborah Zecher brings her cabaret show,
Jewish Caroling: The Music of Carole King,
Carole Bayer Sager and Carolyn Leigh to
Congregation Shir Shalom!**

Jewish Caroling celebrates the work of King, Bayer Sager, and Leigh, extraordinary songwriters who are all Jewish women, sharing (more or less) the same first name. Carole King's Tapestry celebrated the 50th anniversary of its release just last year and the songs are as beloved today as they were 50 years ago. Carole Bayer Sager is renowned for having collaborated with just about everyone in show business, including Marvin Hamlisch on the Broadway musical, They're Playing Our Song, and Burt Bacharach on the Oscar winning song, Arthur's Theme (The Best That You Can Do), and Carolyn Leigh has given us some great American standards like When In Rome and Young At Heart.

Enjoy post-concert hors d'oeuvres with wine and cheese.

There is no charge for this event made possible through the Cantor's Music Fund.

OUR WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Join us in-person or via Zoom for all worship services throughout the year.
Zoom links are made available through our weekly congregant eblast.

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER WORSHIP AND PROGRAM SCHEDULE

November 4	6:00 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship	December 2	6:00 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship
November 5	5:00 p.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Afternoon Worship, <i>Bar Mitzvah</i> , Reed Sapadin	December 3	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101 with Rabbi Reiner
November 6	3:00 p.m.	Trio Berjeiro Concert	December 4	3:00 p.m.	Author Talk with Jeffrey and Craig Weiss - "Fighting Back"
November 11	5:30 p.m.	Tot <i>Shabbat</i> 2.0	December 9	5:30 p.m.	Tot <i>Shabbat</i> 2.0
November 11	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship	December 9	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship
November 12	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101 with Rabbi Reiner	December 10	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101 with Rabbi Reiner
November 12	5:00 p.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Afternoon Worship, <i>Bat Mitzvah</i> , Alexa Rubinfeld	December 11	2:00 p.m.	Congregation Annual Meeting
November 18	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship with Beth Styles	December 11	3:00 p.m.	In Concert: Jewish Caroling with Debbie Zecher
November 19	9:00 a.m.	Torah 101 with Rabbi Reiner	December 16	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship
November 19	10:30 a.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Morning Worship, B'nai Mitzvah, Henry and Annabel Darst	December 17	9:00 a.m.	<i>Shabbat</i> Music and Meditation
November 25	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship	December 18	Sunset	<i>Chanukah</i> First Candle
			December 23	7:30 p.m.	<i>Chanukah Shabbat</i> Worship
			December 30	7:30 p.m.	<i>Kabbalat Shabbat</i> Worship

Please join us in-person or online for Shabbat, holiday and festival Services!



OUR NEWEST CONGREGANTS

Robert and Emily Altman, Ella and Ava (Ridgefield, CT)
Milanie Cleere (Sherman, CT)
Shari and Stephen Cohen (Wilton, CT)
Heather and Douglas Kornreich, Daniel and Levi (Ridgefield, CT)
Linda Lebovitz (Ridgefield, CT)
Sara and Jon Lebovitz, Maya and Abigail (Ridgefield, CT)
Paulette Schneider and Roy Lenord (South Salem, NY)
Adina and Derek Oberman, Talia and Sammy (Bethel, CT)
Tina and Terry Weinstein (South Salem, NY)

And our newest ECC families:

Daniela and Ryan Burger, Davis and Scarlett (Ridgefield, CT)
Gabriel and Ashley Levit, Benjamin and Maya (Ridgefield, CT)

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM OF WESTCHESTER AND FAIRFIELD COUNTIES

46 Peaceable Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877 203-438-6589

email: office@OurShirShalom.org OurShirShalom.org

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SHamilton@OurShirShalom.org

Jane Emmer, Early Childhood Director Emerita

JWeilEmmer@gmail.com

Leslie Gottlieb, Religious School Director Emerita

Leslie@OurShirShalom.org

OFFICE HOURS

Our office is generally open Monday-Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. and by appointment. If you are unable to visit during our office hours, there is a clear plastic bin on the porch by our main entry door. *Yahrtzeit* candles, prayer books, Jewish calendars and seasonal items are available for home use. Our clergy and staff are eager to connect by email or telephone and (consistent with our Jewish values) our practice is not to check or respond to e-mail on *Shabbat* or other Jewish holy days, except in the case of a life-cycle emergency. Thank you.

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK

Rabbi David Reiner



It was wonderful and uplifting to celebrate and observe the High Holy Days in late September and early October. The presence of

so many in our sacred community – in person and online, from near and far – added meaning to our gathering as we reconnected in new and old ways. I am hesitant to suggest that our High Holy Days were “back to normal;” as I observed on *Erev Rosh Hashanah*, “normal” is relative and constantly changing. To see seats in our Sanctuary and Pavillion filled during morning and evening worship was a refreshing change after the past two years. The growth of our afternoon Tot and (new) Youth/Family services and shofar service on *Rosh Hashanah* afternoon was inspiring and one of many highlights. Significant attendance online demonstrated our continued need for an integrated worship experience and that many are eager for a meaningful

connection even when not physically present.

We continue to reflect upon and learn from our experiences this year and I am eager to thank the many people who made our celebrations and observances wonderful.

It was wonderful to again share the *bimah* with my clergy partner, Cantor Debbie, and I was again moved and uplifted by her voice. Our fantastic musicians added to our worship, complementing Cantor Debbie beautifully: our new piano accompanist, Bob Scrafani, Mark Fineberg (clarinet/sax/flute), and

"To see seats in our Sanctuary and Pavillion filled during morning and evening worship was a refreshing change after the past two years".

Andrew Woodruff (cello), and the return of our adult choir was a blessing.

The audio system in our sanctuary was original to the construction of the new portion of our synagogue and in need of refurbishment and upgrade (for example, our wireless microphones operated on

a frequency recently disallowed by the FCC). In the world of computers and communications equipment, seventeen years is several lifetimes – can you imagine using a cellphone or computer from 2005?! The system for live streaming worship was created by someone with little technical understanding or experience (me!) at the start of the pandemic and had slowly evolved over several years with hundreds of feet of unsightly wires throughout our Sanctuary – wiring and technical design were not subjects I studied in rabbinical school. While we hope that people will feel comfortable

and welcome attending worship and life cycle events in our Sanctuary, we anticipate a continued need for live streaming – congregants who live far away or are home bound and want to attend worship; family and

friends who want to attend lifecycle observances and are unable to participate in person – as well as interest in high quality recordings of worship and lifecycle events.

All that is to express my gratitude to Richard Lipton for researching, identifying, and designing options for

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TORAH 101 WITH RABBI REINER

Join Rabbi Reiner on select Saturday mornings at 9:00 a.m. for Torah 101.

You'll find this opportunity to engage in the study of our faith, observances and text to be extremely uplifting and interesting as we learn together. Check our weekly eblast and calendar for dates and in-person and Zoom information.

FROM THE RABBI'S DESK (CONT'D)

upgrading and replacing our AV systems, which enabled an integrated online and in person worship experience.

I am also grateful to Julie DeLange, a product of our congregation, for her efforts as the technical director for our worship live stream, Zoom attendant, technical support agent and more. Julie was able to quickly learn and master our new system and run the livestream from off site while also sharing prayers on screen for people to follow along from home.

I am grateful to our professional staff for all of their efforts and assistance with planning and leading the administrative side of our celebrations and observances, also greeting congregants with a smile. Thank you to our Executive Director, Mark Block, administrative assistant, Kim Franz, and our staff accountant, Susie Hamilton. Our Education Directors, Sarah Denyer (Early Childhood Center) and Cathy Deutchman (our B'Yachad Religious School) helped with our planning and worship and with engaging our young families. And my assistant, Allyson Bellio, was tremendously supportive going above and beyond her responsibilities and supporting my work, to fill in many gaps and help make sure that everything fell into place, especially as our plans evolved. Our facilities and security manager (and Chief Kindness Officer), Patrick Barry, kept us safe, was a cheerful presence and greeter, a great liaison with the Ridgefield Police Department, and helped ensure smooth setups. Our maintenance team, Maria and Julie

Silva, kept the synagogue looking beautiful.

There are many volunteers that I need to acknowledge and thank as well! In addition to our Board of Trustees, the Ritual Committee, led by Michael Salpeter and Laurie Dubin, helped with planning and executing our worship. I am grateful to our Torah and Haftarah readers: Cantor Debbie, Julie DeLange, Michael Salpeter, Joe Ellis, Laurence Furic, David Manners-Weber, Alan Pilch, and Elaine Gordon. Joe Ellis helped guide and coordinate our Jewish Journey speakers (Marc Sheridan, Jeff Hubsher, and Ellie Carter). Dawn Roberts, Michelle Blum, Josh Blum, and Laurie Dubin helped with our welcoming initiatives. Michael Salpeter and Marty Weisberg served as our ushers and helped maintain order in the Sanctuary. Alan Pilch continued his work on our *Yizkor* Memorial Book. And I am grateful to all the other members of the Ritual Committee, the Congregants Committee (led by Bobbie Cohan), and the Social Action Committee (for their work planning the annual High Holy Days Food Drive, especially Debbie Lavin, and Debbie Landzberg). I must also thank our Housing Chair, Hal Wolkin, for efforts to ensure our synagogue looked great and felt temperate. The temperature in our Sanctuary was a great concern as the furnace in the newer portion of the synagogue required replacement over the summer and I am grateful for the efforts of our Executive Director, Mark Block, Hal Wolkin, Bob Henry, and Richard Lipton, to ensure the installation of a replacement furnace. And, of course, I am grateful for the

consistent and continued support of our co-Presidents, Larry Brooks and Jeff Gorelick as well as our Executive Vice President, Terry Henry.

On a more personal note, I want to thank and acknowledge our congregant, Aron Hirt-Manheimer, a knowledgeable and skilled editor, for his wisdom, insights, ideas, and patience, helping me create sermons that were relevant, timely, clear, and reasonably brief.

And last, but certainly not least, I am grateful to my family for their continued patience and support, and for sharing joy during any "downtime." And I am in awe of Ashley, who was patient and supportive, balancing professional responsibilities, the start of a new school year for our active sons, while I was busily preparing for the High Holy Days, all while seven months pregnant. WOW.

May we all continue to find comfort, strength, and inspiration in our sacred community, and health and joy in this new year!

Rabbi David L. Reiner

CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Larry Brooks



It was great seeing many of you for *Rosh Hashanah* and *Yom Kippur*! I also hope you had the opportunity to visit Shir

Shalom during *Sukkot*. Along with many religious school parents, I had the pleasure of being under the *Sukkah* for the *Sukkot* family program – singing, shaking the lulav and etrog, creating a chain link and planting bulbs to bloom in the spring. Thank you Rabbi, Cantor, Cathy Deutchman and all the CSS staff and volunteers for making this happen!

During *Rosh Hashanah* I shared that we have over thirty new individual and family congregants, just this year! A special welcome to you. If we haven't met, I'm co-president of Congregation Shir Shalom, along with Jeff Gorelick. My wife, Jessica, and I moved to this area from New Jersey and joined this sacred community about sixteen years ago, shortly before Jessica and I were married. Jessica chose to convert to Judaism and joining a welcoming congregation that felt comfortable was very important to us. The warmth of Rabbi Haddon, and many congregants we encountered, made for an easy decision. Today we have two beautiful girls, Abigail (12) and Madison (8).

We all have reasons for joining and supporting this sacred community. My support starts with two words highlighted on our webpage: Inclusive and Caring. I

am grateful for the stable presence of our congregation in moments of uncertainty and sacred milestones, the focus on social action, the feeling of community, and that my daughters are learning how Judaism should occupy a meaningful place in their hearts and lives, on the holiest of days and every day. I also love this building.

Speaking of the building, sacred space is expensive to maintain and improve. This year we needed to replace a furnace and both needed

"We all have reasons for joining and supporting this sacred community. My support starts with two words...Inclusive and Caring."

and wanted to upgrade our audio-visual system. You may never see our new furnace, but it will keep us warm this winter. Our new AV system is an upgrade of the outdated system installed when our Sanctuary was built in 2006. Today you can feel connected with our sacred community whether physically present or attending online. I hope our children will invite grandparents to join us for *Shabbat* services from around the world. Congregants who move to other states can continue to support and participate in our worship. Congregants and guests unable to attend in person because of illness can join our prayers for healing.

As I think about the new furnace and AV system, I must stop and thank Richard Lipton, Bob Henry,

and Hal Wolkin. Your support was tremendous and very much appreciated.

In addition to our building, the Board and our volunteer committees are working hard on innovative approaches to engaging our sacred community through rituals, our religious school (now named "B'Yachad"), our early childhood program, welcoming and engaging new and returning congregants, social action projects that repair our world, caring and supporting each other in time of need, programming for adults, sisterhood canasta and mah jongg, to name a few.

We also focused this year on the Atid Campaign for Our Future and we are grateful for the generosity and tremendous efforts of Tara and Max Axler, as they conclude their service as Campaign Chairs. Thank you Tara and Max.

We are also focused on maintaining the financial health of Congregation Shir Shalom. I mentioned earlier our Congregation's focus on being a "Caring" and "Inclusive" community. This includes socio-economic inclusion. Your generous pledges to our annual high holiday appeal ensure that financial considerations are not an obstacle to participation. If you would like to participate in our annual High Holy Day appeal please text your name and pledge to 203-556-0905.

During my *Rosh Hashanah* address, I concluded by thanking our incredible clergy, staff, and educators. I must

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CO-PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT'D)

admit, before I became co-President, I didn't have a great understanding for all the moving parts to operate a synagogue and I'm still learning. I know now it wouldn't be possible without an incredible professional team. You see the Rabbi's spiritual leadership, organizational vision and executive presence; and the cantor's uplifting music, programming and presence in our Jewish community. There are many others I must thank: our Executive Director, Mark Block, Allyson Bellio,

the Rabbi's assistant, Kim Franz, our Synagogue's administrative assistant, Susie Hamilton, our staff accountant, Sarah Denyer, director of our Early Childhood Center, and her team of awesome teachers, Cathy Deutchman, director of B'Yachad, our religious school, and all the teachers that work with her to inspire our students, Maria and Julie Silva, our custodians, Julie DeLange, technical director for our worship, and Patrick Barry, our facilities manager and security guard. Thank you, we are

grateful for all that you do for us.

On behalf of Jeff, our entire Board of Trustees, and my family, I wish you a happy and healthy New Year, filled with love, health, peace, happiness, and kindness.

If you would like to connect, please do not hesitate to send us an email to president@ourshirshalom.org.

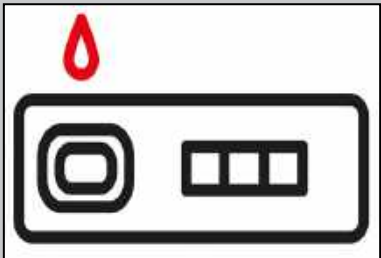
B'shalom,

Larry Brooks



COVID-19 POLICY UPDATE

As we head into the winter months when we spend more time indoors, it is anticipated that Covid-19 infection rates will rise, though the intensity of the illness should be mitigated by vaccine and booster shots. Therefore, in response to continued and expected infection rates in our area, and on the advice of our medical advisors, we continue to recommend and encourage masking at Congregation Shir Shalom. This recommendation extends to all visitors, guests, students and staff. Masks are available at our entrance for any visits, including before services and other programs and events.



COVID-19 TEST KITS AVAILABLE

We have the remainder of a limited number of FREE Covid-19 rapid home test kits still available. To schedule pick up or delivery of a test kits, contact RabbiAssist@ourshirshalom.org. The Caring Committee is available to assist with shopping and grocery delivery for congregants who are home bound or quarantining. Please give the office a call.



LOOKING TO ADD MUSIC TO YOUR SIMCHA?

Bob Scrafani can be privately hired to add piano to Bnei Mitzvah services. For more information, contact Cantor Debbie at CantorDebbie@OurShirShalom.org.

I HATE TO SEE OCTOBER GO...

Mark Block, Executive Director, FSA



Rabbi Hillel taught: "Do not separate yourself from the community." (Pirkei Avot 2:5). *When October Goes* we

prepare for the snows that will begin to fall. We also take time to assess the recent High Holy Days and subsequent holidays and all that occurred during the Days of Awe. What immediately comes to my mind is the quality and spirituality of our services and programs along with the high level of professionalism and expertise of our dedicated clergy, staff, and volunteers. From week to week throughout the summer and into September the efforts put into making the holidays especially meaningful, personal and spiritual for all our congregants and visitors in attendance was foremost in our minds and work. Beginning with the first mailing to you for ticket requests to the final return of the sacred Torahs to the *aron hakodesh* on *Simchat Torah*, every detail of the days is planned, reviewed, revised, revisited and critiqued so that the very best we can offer is made possible. I hope you agree with me that all those involved, both professional and volunteers did an outstanding job and made the days special ones. And though *When October Goes* the holidays are over, we are already giving attention to bettering our efforts for next year. If you have any feedback on what you liked or disliked, or any suggestions

for setting a higher standard, please let me, Rabbi Reiner or Cantor Debbie know, we want to hear from you.

When October Goes is a song I have enjoyed listening to for years; especially when the leaves change colors and the first blasts of cool air force the warm air to retreat this time of year. The song is a ballad based on a lyric the late Johnny Mercer had written but did not complete. It was matched to a melody and published in the mid-1980s. So why do I write about this particular song now when the words talk about the past and there is a haunting quality to the

"Rabbi Hillel taught: Do not separate yourself from the community. (Pirkei Avot 2:5)."

music? When I hear it and look out my office window I find my efforts and energy not on the past, but on the present and what we will work toward for our future. The lyrics of the song include the following: "I should be over it now I know. It doesn't matter much how old I grow. I hate to see October go." I know that is how some of us feel as the holidays fade and we attend to our regular daily routines again.

Though the months go by, our sacred community has much to offer all year long, as you see in this bulletin, our weekly eblast and special flyers and emails we send out over the course of the year. Each of us has the opportunity to affect change by our participation and involvement here at Shir Shalom. All of which will benefit

not just ourselves, but our children and their children. Our Atid campaign was designed to generate the needed funds to secure the long-term future of Shir Shalom, and allow for growth. Many of you heard our co-Presidents, Larry Brooks and Jeff Gorelick talk about the need to support our house of worship in greater amounts than you have in previous years; all to benefit our future.

Some may suggest we move too slowly. Others will suggest we jump the gun. I am suggesting our leadership does a tremendous job of getting it right. Shir Shalom must have a concerted, coordinated and comprehensive plan to provide for our future and ensure from an engagement, fiscal and capital plan that we will do better at developing an even greater culture of warmth and stability in the months and years ahead.

We will develop new models for participation and inclusion; but we will also recognize the fiscal realities of operating a synagogue comprised of hundreds of congregants who are served week in and week out all year long. I want us to audit our entire communications and engagement efforts and develop a model that accounts for every age and demographic. We will be deliberate and we will be in a better position to be successful.

We will report to you on our progress and we will solicit your participation. We can ill afford to expect or leave this to a few to do. We must all be involved in a concerted effort to ensure success. Will it be easy? No. But, seldom is the hard work necessary for success easy. If it

I HATE TO SEE OCTOBER GO... (CONT'D)

were I suspect everyone would be doing it and the needs would be self supporting. I am also a realist. There are those who will say, "I pay my community commitment that should be enough." Let me tell you quite simply, it's not enough. It provides an annual down payment on success, a foundation to build if you will. But the hard work of building on that success, that foundation requires more. It is our reality as a sacred house of worship.

Here are some reasons the reality requires effort. Time and again, professional studies have shown that Jews who affiliate with synagogues are more involved in Jewish life, both in their community and in their homes; they more actively support their own community and the State

of Israel; they are more philanthropic in general; and volunteer more often than those who remain unaffiliated or have disaffiliated. Our growth as a congregation depends on participation in synagogue life.

The future of our synagogue depends on congregant participation at every stage of life. I know that of the forty-five percent or so of American Jews who affiliate with a synagogue, about forty percent join a Reform house of worship. We work very hard to ensure that young adults, single adults, interfaith couples and families, those of other faiths who are exploring the various facets of Judaism, LGBTQ+ and Jews of color know they truly are welcome in our congregation. Our challenge as a community is to reach the many

unaffiliated or disaffiliated Jews who constitute an untapped reservoir of energy and creativity for Shir Shalom, and invite them into our synagogue so they inject a vital energy necessary to the growth of our congregation while becoming life-long members of our sacred community.

So, *When October Goes* and the snows begin to fall we will not so much be focused on the past month of holidays, but rather on the excitement the months to come will bring as we embrace the challenge of growing our congregation to be even better than it is today. One we are all eager to support.

B'shalom,

Mark Block

WELCOME TO OUR NEW AND YOUNGEST CONGREGANTS



Sarah and Brandon Neufeld, and big brothers Hudson and Parker (far left) were thrilled to welcome baby boy Cameron to their growing family this summer.

Maggie and Eric Staub welcomed baby boy Aiden (near left), to their family, joining big sister Emma.

We wish Cameron and Aiden the blessings of good health as they grow, and their families enjoy only happy days of love and enjoyment together!

Congregation Shir Shalom CULTURAL ARTS CALENDAR 2022-2023/5783

Sponsored by The Cantor's Music Fund

NOVEMBER 6

Beryl Diamond-Chacon (violin),
Roni Ben-Hur (guitar), and
Eduardo Belo (upright bass)
Jewish, Sephardic, Brazilian, and
American Jazz Concert
@ 3:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 18

Spirited and Soulful Kabbalat Shabbat
Beth Styles @ 7:30 p.m.

DECEMBER 11

Debbie Zecher in Concert
Jewish Caroling: The Music of
Carole King, Carole Bayer Sager
and Carolyn Leigh
Annual meeting @ 2:00 p.m.,
followed by concert @ 3:00 p.m.,
hors d'oeuvres/wine & cheese following

DECEMBER 17

Shabbat Music and Meditation
Nosh and daven 9:00 a.m.
Service @ 9:30 a.m.

JANUARY 13

MLK Shabbat
Kimberly Wilson
Service @ 7:00 p.m.

MARCH 12

Julian Schwarz and Marika Bournaki
Music that Celebrates Life!
Cello and piano duets @ 3:00 p.m.

MARCH 18

Shabbat Music and Meditation
Nosh and daven 9:00 a.m.,
Service @ 9:30 a.m.

MARCH 24

Spirited and Soulful Kabbalat Shabbat
Beth Styles @ 7:30 p.m.

MAY 6

Shabbat Music and Meditation
Nosh and daven 9:00 a.m.,
Service @ 9:30 a.m.

MAY 19

Spirited and Soulful Kabbalat Shabbat
Beth Styles @ 7:30 p.m.



CONGREGATION
SHIR SHALOM
of Westchester and Fairfield Counties

46 Peaceable Street, Ridgefield, CT 06877 Visit: OurShirShalom.org

SOCIAL ACTION

Thank you to all those who donated food bags for the High Holy Days Food Drive. We collected approximately seventy bags. They were split between the Daily Bread Food Pantry in Danbury and the Community Center of Northern Westchester in Katonah. Thank you to several people who helped deliver the bags to the pantries: Elie Schecter, Deb Lanzberg, Kim Franz, the Darst family and Debbie Lavin. The Food Pantries were very grateful.

We will be doing a Breakfast Run to help the homeless in New York City on Sunday, December 4. This is an early morning event where we prepare breakfast for 40-60 homeless folks and bring it to one assigned spot in Manhattan, where we also give out new socks, underwear and gloves/hats to the clients. We need about fifteen



volunteers: 5th-8th graders (with a parent) and teens are welcome, as are adults. We need at least three or four drivers. And several adults to scramble up the eggs and make the egg sandwiches at 6:30 a.m. on Sunday! This is a very gratifying activity and a great parent-child experience together. We will also be doing our preparation and packing

up on Saturday, December 3, when others may also participate. Please email Debbie Lavin to volunteer at SocialAction@OurShirShalom.org.

Once a quarter we prepare a meal for the Dorothy Day Hospitality Center in Danbury for 120-150 clients. Deb Gershner and Natalie Gros coordinate this effort. The next date is Tuesday, December 6 - Wednesday, December 7. On Tuesday they purchase roasted chickens and cut them up, make a big pot of mashed potatoes and cut up salad veggies. On Wednesday, the food is delivered to Dorothy Day center. Please email us at SocialAction@OurShirShalom.org if you would like to get involved in this on-going effort.

The next date will be the first week in March, 2023.

Debbie Lavin



Following the failure of our pavilion/sanctuary furnace this past spring (left), we found ourselves at a crossroads. Do we repair and hope for the best, or do we replace the single unit with an energy efficient dual boiler system; one that reduces the amount of fuel we use and extends the lifespan well past the life of a single unit (right). Through the months-long efforts of our Executive Director, Mark Block, and our House Committee, Hal Wolkin and Bob Henry, along with the invaluable help of Richard Lipton we were able to complete a total replacement in time for the High Holy Days and cold weather of the approaching winter – installed directly on the concrete pad of the old furnace.

SISTERHOOD NEWS

Yes, Sisterhood must be off to a fabulous year if our Kick-Off event was any indication of that! On October 19, forty-six women enjoyed engaging with each other in-person, and sharing the deliciousness of the Brick Oven Pizza Truck and tasty dessert treats courtesy of Stacey's Totally Baked. Information was shared for the coming year, including opportunities to join with members of the Social Action Committee, opportunities to enjoy special musical presentations provided through Cantor Debbie's efforts, opportunities for learning and playing Mah Jongg and Canasta as well as potential for Israeli Folk Dancing and more! Book Club

continues to be alive and well and we'll be making an excursion into NYC to the Morgan Library and Museum in conjunction with having read *The Personal Librarian* (this one is a very good one and very readable). In addition to the dessert donation by Stacey Sussman (Stacey's Totally Baked), others were generous as well, including Suzanne Sunday (knitter extraordinaire) who donated the making of a personalized lovely knitted scarf, and Massage Therapist Rhonda Lackow who donated a massage session, allowing for a simple Raffle that brought in some additional funds to be used (as needed) for Sisterhood programming. Other local

entrepreneurs who are Sisterhood members also had opportunity to let us know who they are and what their local businesses offered. ACT in Ridgefield is generously offering discounted pricing for current shows that are happening there. And, we are also sorting out another trip into NYC in conjunction with Adult Education to the Lower East Side.

We are all looking forward to a happy, healthy and full year ahead!

*Margie Gereklick,
Christina Gogish and
Laurie Welkin*

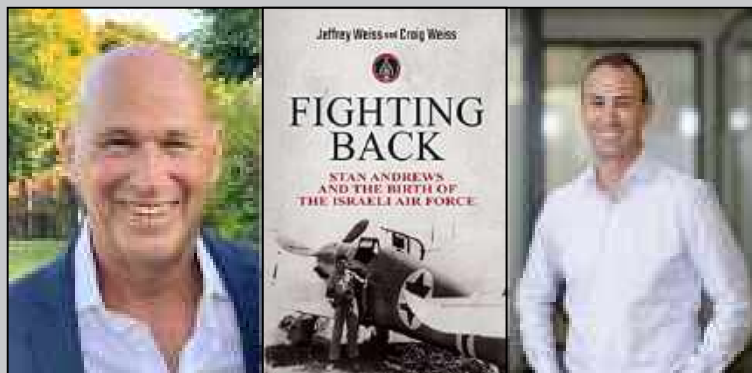
ADULT PROGRAMMING NEWS

Adult Programming committee is working on bringing some exciting events to the congregation.

Two author talks will be sponsored by the Federation for Jewish Philanthropy of Upper Fairfield County. These authors were selected by the Jewish Book Council for their 2022-2023 book tours. Both talks will be presented on Zoom as authors live outside of our area.

On Sunday, December 4 at 3:00 p.m. two writers, Jeffrey Weiss and Craig Weiss, will talk about their new book "Fighting Back." *Fighting Back* is about Stan Andrews, an assimilated American

Jew and World War II veteran who in 1948 became one of the first fighter pilots in the Israeli air force. This is the second book by these authors. The first one was "I



Am My Brother's Keeper" (about American volunteers fighting alongside with Israelis in their War for Independence).

Several years ago Adult Programming held a screening of the 2014 Nancy Spielberg documentary *Above and Beyond* where both, Jeffrey and Craig, were featured. It will be exciting to meet these authors in person on Zoom.

On Sunday, February 5 at 3:00 p.m. we will discuss the new culinary book "Cooking alla Giudia: A Celebration of the Jewish Food of Italy" by Benedetta Jasmine Guetta who is an Italian food writer and

photographer. More details to come.

If you wish to join Adult Programming committee please email to adultprogramming@ourshirshalom.org.



Sisterhood's Kick-Off event on October 19 was fun-filled for all those who attended, enjoying dinner, dessert, Raffle and camaraderie.



Sisterhood also wants you to know that our knitting group is back and will meet again Thursday, November 17 at 9:30 a.m.

The group is open to all knitters and those who want to learn. You can bring your own projects but we also have supplies to teach folks. If you have questions, please contact sisterhood@ourshirshalom.org.

RITUAL COMMITTEE

"If you concentrate on finding whatever is good in every situation, you will discover that your life will suddenly be filled with gratitude, a feeling that nurtures the soul." ~ Rabbi Harold S. Kushner

For many Americans the holiday of Thanksgiving is devoid of religious association. Dedicating a fall festival to a harvest, *Sukkot*, is the original Jewish take on being grateful that God has provided food to sustain people through a difficult time. Focusing on gratitude is a Jewish American value. The phrase, "*Modim Anachnu Lach*" we are grateful, songs and prayers are in our liturgy.

The secular holiday of Thanksgiving is typically celebrated by sharing a meal with family, friends, or strangers. Many families have a tradition of going around the dining table with each participant revealing what they are grateful for. This year many families will be gathering for the first time in

over three years. We do not take for granted celebrating holidays in person with our congregation families. It was delightful to see new and familiar faces partaking in the



High Holy Days services, both on site and via Zoom.

We would like to take the opportunity to express our thanks to our clergy Rabbi David Reiner, Cantor Deborah Katchko-Gray, and Rabbi Jon Haddon for providing us with warm and meaningful services throughout the year. Shir Shalom's Executive Director, Mark

Block and office administrators and staff Kim Franz, Allyson Bellio and Susie Hamilton support the Ritual Committee's happenings. We would also like to thank Congregation Shir Shalom's co-presidents, board of trustees, and committee liaisons. A big shout out and thanks to Patrick Barry, our facilities director and "welcome officer." Finally, we are grateful to the members of the Ritual Committee who will continue to plan and celebrate Shabbat and holidays with our Shir Shalom family. Thank you to Michelle Blum, Joseph Ellis, Dawn Roberts, Scott Trachtenberg, and Martin Weisberg.

Look out for upcoming Chanukah celebration plans!

In gratitude,

*Michael Salpeter and
Laurie Dubin*

NEWS FROM THE B'YACHAD RELIGIOUS SCHOOL

Cathy Deutchman, Director



My family is going through a difficult time right now, as my mom died early Sunday, October 30. I'm incredibly grateful to everyone

(Rabbi, teachers, Education Committee and *Madrichim*) who have stepped up to help run the school in my absence.

My mother lived her life in service to others and showed through her compassionate acts all the values that I came to know later in life

"Pay tribute to your loved ones..."

as Jewish values: Visiting the sick, comforting the mourning, showing up to celebrate everyone's lifecycle event, and making sure no one was

alone unless they wanted to be. She gave tirelessly and inspires me to do the same.

As we approach Thanksgiving and *Chanukah*, pay tribute to your loved ones by doing acts of *chesed* (lovingkindness). Your example will be the best way to transmit Jewish values down the line.

I look forward to seeing everyone soon!

Cathy Deutchman



OUR EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Sarah Denyer, Director



Autumn at the ECC has been joyous! In September our students transitioned beautifully to their new classrooms for the

2022/23 school year. We have nine new families as well as two returning families in our 2's Class and we are thrilled to have them join the ECC and Shir Shalom.

Rosh Hashanah celebrations kicked off our Jewish learning with apple and honey recipes, tastings and projects galore as well as sing alongs involving shofar blasting. We were

very excited to move onto *Sukkot* and help decorate Shir Shalom's *Sukkah*. Our Pre-K made decorations with sticks, yarn and beads. The 2's constructed a paper chain to hang on the doorway and our Art Studio enrichment students made

"Autumn at the ECC has been joyous!"

a beautiful chain using paper towel tubes, paint and glued yarn. Our 3's Class made their own cardboard box *Sukkah* that they enjoyed using in the Purple Room. On October 14, our families joined us for a special Young Community Shabbat in the Sukkah. Our Science Enrichment Students

also made a *Sukkah* for the animals, complete with apples for them...and several tiny bite marks proved we had visitors...yay!

In late October, the ECC went to Gossett Brother's Nursery in South Salem for our annual field trip. The children planted bulbs, climbed the soil mountain, went on a hayride and picked their own pumpkin from the patch. Always a lovely morning with our families.

We look forward to our upcoming ECC celebrations for Thanksgiving (November 16) and *Chanukah* (December 22) and hope many of our families can join us for the fun.

Sarah Denyer



Our ECC students really enjoy being outdoors and enjoying the seemingly endless piles of leaves fall brings!

SUKKOT/SIMCHAT TORAH 5783

Thank you to the Hirschbein and Sussman families, and Michael Zeitz for this year's Sukkah build. It was a tight timeframe following Yom Kippur, but steady hands made for good work so we could celebrate together.



CONTRIBUTIONS

RABBI'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Memory of:

Lev Gogish, z"l
Serafima Dashevskaya
Anita Better, z"l
Michael and Rona Salpeter
Robert Trachtenberg, z"l
Scott and Alisa Trachtenberg
Zelda Zieselman, z"l
Judi and Paul Stoogenke

In Honor Of:

Rabbi Reiner
Alan and June Rubin
Will Knispel becoming Bar Mitzvah
Jeffrey and Kimberly Knispel

CANTOR'S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In Memory of:

Zelda Zieselman, z"l
Judi and Paul Stoogenke

In Honor of:

Will Knispel becoming Bar Mitzvah
Jeffrey and Kimberly Knispel

EDUCATION FUND

Heather and Douglas Kornreich

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Rick and Bobbie Cohan
Max and Tara Axler

In Honor of:

Rabbi Reiner
David and Phyllis Amerling

In Memory of:

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Jack and Lee Stoogenke
Judi and Paul Stoogenke
Lesly and Jeff Burns

Mary Taylor, z"l and David Kusher, z"l
Karen Taylor and David
Kaminer

Helen and Jack Bergson, z"l
Rabbi Marcus Burstein, z"l
David and Phyllis Amerling

CARING FUND

In Memory of:

Leopold Weisberg, z"l
Martin Weisberg

Sunday, December 11 @ 2:00 pm

Annual Meeting

Join us immediately prior to the Jewish Caroling concert in the sanctuary. The Annual Meeting offers the opportunity to hear about the "State of the Congregation," and to ask questions of the board and clergy. You will also be presented with recommendations from the Nominating Committee, and the proposed synagogue budget for fiscal/calendar year 2023.

NOVEMBER YAHRZEITS

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 4

Howard Cohlan
father of Rick Cohlan
Joseph Emmanuel Brenner
grandfather of Scott Brenner
Esther Fenster
sister-in-law of Elinor Darvick
Helen Garfiel
grandmother of Karen Blum
Helene Howard
stepmother of Laurie Dubin
Sidney Klein
father of Karen Taylor and
Lori Stalowicz
Irwin Krulwich
father of Jeffrey Krulwich
Marvin Schattner

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Herbert Abraham
father of Vivian Hoffman
Jack Bergson
father of Phyllis Amerling
Mayer Blum
brother-in-law of Sandra
Rosenhouse
Jerry Butchen
father of Jeff Butchen
Jay Davis
husband of Elyse Davis
Harold Heffler
father of Jill Teich
William Keleher
father of Catherine Mishkin
G. Leonard Lazarus
father of Lorraine Lazarus-
Morley

Fannie Levy
mother of Richard Burg
Mordecai Lewittes
relative of Matthew Meister
and Dafne Sanchez-Aldama
Samuel "Poppy" Mofson
grandfather of Bonnie Pazer
Freda Shuler
mother of Robi Margolis
Jeremy Soloff
brother of Scott Soloff
Leo Staub
grandfather of Eric Staub
Jack D. Weiler
grandfather of Joshua Arnow

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11

Mae Wishod
mother-in-law of Lora Wishod
Sheila Ravitch Gitlitz
Horst Leffkowitz

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 18

Bernard Etish
grandfather of Rochel Gorman
Adele Kleinbaum
grandmother of Stacey
Rubinfeld
Aline Lawrence
sister of Adrienne Orlan
Seth Lawrence
brother-in-law of Adrienne
Orlan
Philip Levine
uncle of Joan Isman

Gloria Maron
sister of Resa Fremed
Ruth Kurzweil Rothwax
aunt of Ken Kurzweil
Anita Sax
mother of Liz Winson
David Hoffman

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Louis Heit
grandfather of Stephen Heit
Frances Kempler
mother of Felice Kempler
Beatrice Krulwich
mother of Jeffrey Krulwich
Joseph Victor Meister
relative of Matthew Meister
and Dafne Sanchez-Aldama
Seymour Needleman
father of Kenneth Needleman
Rachel Rosenhouse
mother of Harry Rosenhouse
Pauline Silverman
grandmother of Marsha
Antkies
Norman Silverman
father of Marsha Antkies
Betty Slone
mother of Judith Shapiro
Fred Yolen
uncle of David Yolen
Morton Birnbaum
William Goldman



In Memoriam

The Memory of the Righteous is a Blessing

We extend condolences to:

Judi Stoogenke on the death of her mother, Zelda Zieselman, z"l
Patrick Barry on the death of his father, Kevin Barry, z"l
Kenneth Needleman on the death of his mother, Shirley Needleman, z"l
Cathy Deutchman on the death of her mother, Lynn Langman Lilienthal, z"l
May their memory be for a blessing.

DECEMBER YAHRZEITS

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2

Marvin Baker
uncle of Carlyn Bergman
Ethel Feinleib
grandmother of Leslie Gottlieb
Leo Fine
grandfather of Peter Fine
Gertrude Frankel
grandmother of Scott Brenner
Herman Hoberman
grandfather of Meridith
Sonnott
Evelyn Kurzweil
mother of Ken Kurzweil
Gladice Levenson
aunt of Elaine Gordon
Lillian Lotstein
mother of Susan Lapine
Howard Malloy
father of Betsy Higgins
Benjamin Ringler
grandfather of Elyse Arnow
Peter Vandervelden
father of Steven Vandervelden
Jack Himoff

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

Robert Arnow
father of Joshua Arnow
Harold Broder
father of Stanford Broder
Mary Jane Denzer
mother of Holly Alexander
Natalia Glicklich
mother of Mark Glicklich
Abraham Isaac Gordon
father of Elaine Gordon
Joan Hammer
mother of Michael Hammer
Lindsay Karlin
daughter of Roger and Helene
Karlin, sister of Samantha,
Molly and Jolie
Mina Kaye
mother of Steve Kaye
Murray Milrod
father of Marion Milrod
Marvin Olarsch
father of Judy Vandervelden
Claus Pappenheimer
father of Julie Held
Frank Policoff
grandfather of Steve Kaye

Ruth Rosenthal
grandmother of Susan
Westlake
Jacob Puteska
Lauren Rousseau

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16

Martin Davis
grandfather of Suzie
Rabinowitz
Alexander Davis
father-in-law of Elyse Davis
Yvette Epstein
mother of Andrea Jacobs
Bernard Glaser
father of Laura Agisim
Joan Holson
mother of Robin Heit
Millie Jacobs
mother of Alan Jacobs
Jacob Kornreich
son of Heather and Douglas
Kornreich
Belle Krietzberg
great aunt of Joshua Arnow
Bernard Lipman
father of Steve Lipman

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23

Rita Bergman
mother of Michael Bergman
Evelyn Brenner
grandmother of Scott Brenner
Gussie Ellis
mother of Joseph Ellis
Norma Etish
grandmother of Rachel Gorman
Anna Heit
grandmother of Stephen Heit
Sadie Kaplan
grandmother of Steve Kaye
Arthur Karsch
father of Karen Blum
Joy Koy
great aunt of Jamie Garrett
Jane Langer
grandmother of Karen Gerard
Jeff Lederman
brother of Linda Lederman
Oscar Lowy
grandfather of Terry Henry
Percy Paget
father of Debra Paget

Harry Poushter
father of Bruce Poushter
Grayce Romeo
mother of Harry and Sandra
Rosenhouse's son-in-law
Elizabeth Wood
mother of Trudy Wood

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30

Samuel Antkies
father of Michael Antkies
Seymour Berman
father of Michael Berman
Mildred Block
aunt of Barbara Manners
Martha Cohen
grandmother of Tiffany Zezula
Pearl Elkin
grandmother of Stephanie
Herbstman
Seymour Eslofsky
father of Ellen Barth
Gay Golman
aunt of Jamie Garrett
Bernard Gorman
father of Martin Gorman
Billie Kaserman
mother of Wendy Meyer
Martin Lipton
father of Richard Lipton
Paul Lowy
father of Terry Henry
Helen Milrod
mother of Marion Milrod
Michael Mishkin
father of Richard Mishkin
Naomi Price
aunt of Terry Henry
Jacob Schneider
grandfather of Margie Gorelick
Irving Sernick
father Tina Weinstein
William Tandet
father of Naomi Shapiro

HIGH HOLY DAYS DONATIONS

Includes Congregant's General High Holy Days, Memorial Book and Guest Ticket Donations, Prayer Book Dedications and Prayer Book Borrowing.

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Hal and Laurie Wolkin
David and Victoria Yolen
Nathan and Tiffany Zezula

WE APPRECIATE YOUR GENEROSITY

Thank you to the generous congregants listed who have pledged to our High Holy Day Appeal
(This includes donations through October 24th, additional Contributors will be included in our next bulletin.)

Jeffrey Berg and Debra Paget
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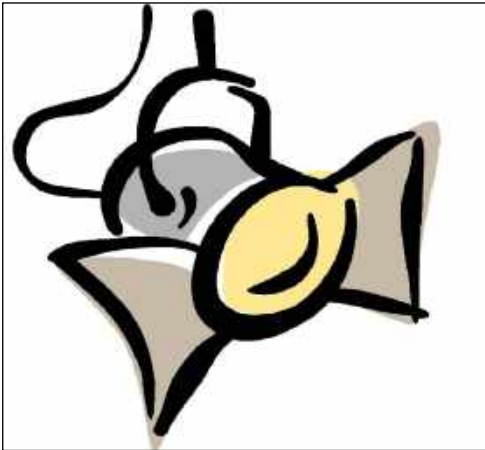
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CONGREGANT SPOTLIGHT

Suzanne Sunday and Ken Kurzweil



Tell us about how you came to live in the area and how you came to find your way to JFC and now Shir Shalom.

Suzanne: I grew up on Long Island in Glen Head between Roslyn and Glen Cove. The school I grew up in was one third Catholic, one third Protestant and one third Jewish. Ken (my husband) grew up in East Meadow. We met when he was doing the computer summer day camp and I was teaching and doing research at Manhattanville. We bought a home here (in Bedford) thirty-six years ago. Because we both had careers and were both working we were looking around for different daycares for our son David. At that point the YM-YWHA in Pleasantville had a daycare center that they ran out of the Antioch Baptist Church in Mount Kisco. Since their workers were unionized and were paid more, it was a really good daycare and appealed to me because they did *Shabbat* every week and they did Jewish holidays with the kids. So David got some stuff when he was in daycare and then I said we can take a couple years off but I felt strongly that he

needed to go to Hebrew School and have a *bar mitzvah*. Before David was eight we looked at different synagogues in the area. Years before we had gone to a few services at Jewish Family Congregation (which were at the South Salem Presbyterian church) and I liked the very friendly and welcoming people so we went back and liked it even more. Then we discovered that friends were actively involved and we met others we really liked so we joined. I wasn't that involved until the year David was working on his *bar mitzvah*. When David was studying I, having converted, knew some stuff but I hadn't been brought up with it. I thought I need to get serious about this or I'm going to look like I don't know what I'm doing

"I truly believe in community. I feel that's how we age in a healthy way..."

and I started going more. As I went more I started meeting more people and feeling a part of the community.

When did you convert?

Suzanne: Before I got married. I was brought up in a very liberal Presbyterian church which had an activist minister. We were taught to question everything which was good for me. I got involved in the civil rights movement and the anti war movement. The message was you need to come to your own views. It doesn't matter what the law says. What we're doing is helping you find



your own moral perspective. When I was seventeen I was questioning everything and it became clear to me that I believed that Jesus was just a human being so I knew from that point on that I would either become

Unitarian or Jewish. I feel very strongly that kids need to grow up with a religious perspective so I knew before I had a family I would convert. Ken and I started seeing each other in July and in November we were visiting his parents. Since Ken didn't have a menorah (which surprised me) I asked his mom if she had an extra menorah and she said she had a few so I picked one and she was thrilled. After converting, I added more and more Judaism to our household, including writing my own *Haggadah* which I modify each year.

Is there any memory about Shir Shalom that sticks out in your head?

(continued on page 23)

CONGREGANT SPOTLIGHT (CONT'D)

Suzanne: When my mother-in-law died Ken and I went down to Long Island and we were taking things that we wanted and getting rid of the stuff that nobody wanted. I wanted the things that I made for them. I took some quilts that I had made for them. I gave one of them to my one of our nieces and another one to a friend and I kept one. I didn't know what I was going to do with it; It was a dove with an olive branch and it said *Shalom*. I stopped and I thought I could put Shir above that and so I took the quilt and I did that. One Friday night I brought it with me and I was showing Rabbi David and a couple of other people who were there. I don't remember who it was but they said "Okay so who spilled the beans to you?" I said "What are you talking about?" They said "That's like the logo we picked." I said "I had no idea you were even looking at a logo." It's almost identical to the logo and hangs in the temple.

What keeps you connected to Shir Shalom?

Suzanne: Making the world a better place is a central tenet of Reform



Judaism. Not all Reform temples do that but Shir Shalom does. I'm looking forward to when we can have Mitzvah Day again. That was my favorite day at the temple. Everyone was doing stuff to make a difference and the kids got that. They understood they were doing something that would make things better for other people. It's that moral perspective that drew me to Judaism and keeps me staying involved with Shir Shalom. Ken has always done all of this social action stuff. He lives *Tikkun Olam* every day.

I have been the representative from first JFC and then Shir Shalom to the Community Center of Northern Westchester for twenty-six years. When Covid is over and I'm off the board, social action is where I will work again.

I'm very attached to Shir Shalom. It combined the best of TSI and JFC. I think that it's extremely welcoming. I've made friendships. The Sisterhood is a big piece of that and playing Mah Jongg but before Covid I went almost every Friday night to services. I really love Friday night services. I truly believe in community. I feel that's how we age in a healthy way is to be involved and have a sense of community. For me Shir Shalom is that. I drive 25 minutes to get there when I have another congregation that is less than a mile from my house. When you find a place that fits how you view Judaism, if Judaism is important to you, the drive is insignificant. I wouldn't belong to any place else but Shir Shalom.

OUR MISSION

WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

We are a vibrant and inclusive community inspired by Jewish values and traditions.
We honor the diversity of our backgrounds, experiences, and aspirations.

We celebrate our shared values: the study of Torah, participatory worship driven by music, the promotion of lifelong learning, the ongoing project of *Tikkun Olam* (Healing the World), and the work of social justice. We embrace the responsibility/task of being "a light unto the nations," building a brighter future for our community and the world.

**Congregation Shir Shalom
of Westchester and Fairfield Counties**

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