

TEMPLE ISAIAH
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The Prophet

Magazine

Interview with
Rabbi Stephen Fuchs

TI's Emerging Leaders
Saying "Yes!"

Perfect B'nai Mitzvah Photos

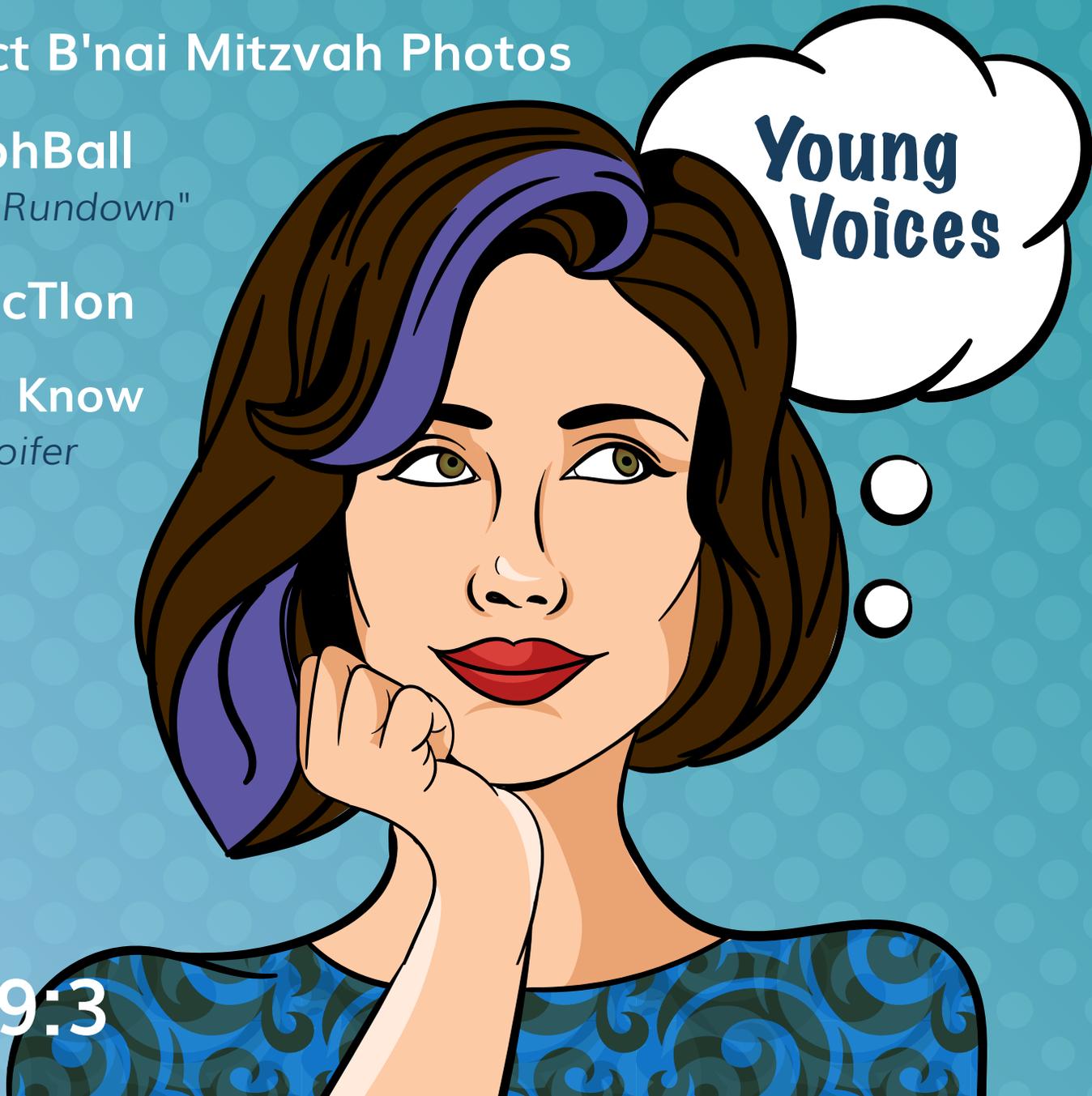
MatzohBall
A Final "Rundown"

connectIon

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The Prophet Magazine is the quarterly publication of Temple Isaiah, a Reform Jewish congregation in Howard County, Maryland, 12200 Scaggsville Rd., Fulton, MD 20759. Find us online at www.templeisaiah.org. The main office can be reached at info@templeisaiah.org or 301.317.1101.

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Please send submission proposals to Raya Kridel, Communications Coordinator and Editor of *The Prophet Magazine*, at Raya@templeisaiah.org.

From the President



We'd been wanting to introduce our daughter to *Schindler's List* for years. Finally, just after this past Yom HaShoah, it not only seemed appropriate, but we were finally able to find three hours when there wasn't homework, or rehearsal, or something else. I'd seen the movie a few times, but this time, as the tears flowed, something new struck me. I realized as the film transitioned from black-and-white to color near the end of the film (spoiler for those who still haven't seen it!), the survivors who started to grace the screen either were gone or would not be with us much longer. I can still feel the chill that went down my back.

Experts estimate that there are just over 100,000 Holocaust survivors living in the United States. This sounds like a lot, until one realizes that the youngest among them is in her 70's. It is highly likely that in my lifetime, they will all be gone. How, then, to ensure we "never forget?"

Over the last few years, our planet has seemed to become more and more filled with hate; the individual stories proliferate the news and social media. How do we overcome statements like those of a high school principal in Florida, who recently said "I can't say the Holocaust is a factual, historical event because I am not in a position to do so as a school district employee?" Maybe part of the answer is the work of organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League, which provides a variety of anti-bias educational resources to school districts. I'm hopeful that these initiatives will begin to make their way into budgets (the Howard County Board of Education requested a 32% increase in funding for diversity, equity, and inclusion activities for FY2020).

But is that enough and will it be in time? That's where we all come in. Teaching our children about the Holocaust is a start, but to me, more important is teaching them how it started. I am buoyed, hearing the conversations of young people like my daughter, as they actively reject the bigotry and prejudice harbored by so many in the generations immediately preceding them. They want to move our world past injustice and hate, but sometimes struggle to find the ways. We must help them. How? By not sitting mutely when we hear acquaintances, friends, and even family espouse hateful views. By talking about how some of today's news could have been news in the 1930s. By modeling the words of Elie Wiesel: "The opposite of love is not hate, it's indifference." Oskar Schindler was a lot of things, but he was not indifferent. Let's show our kids that we aren't either. ■

Marshall Kohen

A Special Thank you

For all your hard work on Temple Isaiah's 50th Anniversary Celebrations:

Ellen Strichartz, *Chairwoman*

Richard Goldberg, *Co-Chair*

The Temple Isaiah Council of Past Presidents

Susan Green, *Isaiah Fest Chairwoman*

Thank you For Your Participation in Isaiah Fest

Susan Green — *Event Planning Resources*

Dr. Steven Geller — *Centennial Medical Group/
First Call Urgent Care*

Howard County Police Department

Jill Apperson, *Co-Owner — Encore Event Designs*

Joshua Levine, *President — Electra Entertainment*

Wendy Appleby — *Your Home by Wendy*

Interview with *Rabbi Stephen Fuchs*

with Denny Rapport
and Doug Silverstein

As a matter of context, less than a third of us were members when we worshipped at the Meeting House. Even fewer remember the days before we had our own religious school, much less a preschool. In this interview with our first rabbi (1974–1987), Rabbi Fuchs tells us about his vision for and challenges of leading a congregation of fewer than 60 families, growing to almost 400 during his tenure.



Denny Rapport (DR): Many in our congregation probably do not remember the Meeting House, where the concept that became Temple Isaiah (TI) started about fifty years ago. Since then, there have been many changes. Many of those changes had their origin in what you set in motion and have persisted a half-century later.

RSF: I'm glad. I cannot say that I go back 50 years. I came in the fall of 1973 as an intern.

Doug Silverstein (DS): Please elaborate on your relationship with Rabbi Richard Sternberger and his role in the development of TI.

RSF: Columbia, Maryland was a new city being launched. The dream was to create the next America where all incomes, races, and religions would live together in peace and harmony. Part of that concept was the Wilde Lake Interfaith Center. In those days, we were committed to the interfaith concept because we thought it was cool, but also because we had no other choice.

When I came to interview in Columbia, there was an avant-garde Jewish congregation led by Rabbi Martin Siegel. At that time, there was a group of people who wanted a more mainstream type of synagogue who got together and reached out to the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (currently the Union for Reform Judaism).

Rabbi Sternberger's role in my life has been huge. He started TI and was 100% responsible for bringing me to TI. Rabbi Sternberger agreed to come out to Columbia once each month to conduct a service and another time each month to conduct a study session. That was the origin of TI.

At that time, the Jewish community in Columbia had one very small office and TI was part of the Interfaith Center. I was at Hebrew Union College. I had not written my rabbinic thesis so I was not eligible for ordination, but was seeking something to do. Along comes the congregation that needed rabbinic leadership beyond that which Rabbi Sternberger could provide. That is what led to me being the rabbi at TI.

DS: Please explain what it was like sharing your congregation with other groups at the Interfaith Center and The Meeting House, and being part of an interfaith community.

RSF: I loved our time at the Interfaith Center. For me, our time there was very successful, and it shaped my attitudes towards other religions. We should not simply tolerate one another, but we should learn to affirm and respect one another, whether part of an interfaith [structure] or in our own building.

DS: Did you have any reservations at the start about leading the congregation of TI in what was a very challenging situation?

RSF: I thought that coming to TI was a fantastic opportunity. I thought it would allow me an opportunity to write my thesis and teach locally. Teaching positions [in Baltimore and Washington] provided opportunities for me to learn about large Jewish communities that were very significant in the Reform movement.

The congregation was growing, and in March 1974, they asked if I would consider becoming their first full-time Rabbi. That was very exciting to me for all the reasons that brought me to TI: I was emotionally invested in the congregation, cared about what we had started together, and my fiancé was comfortable in the community.

DS: What were your specific goals during your first few years at TI?

RSF: One of my major aims was that we have services that were meaningful (i.e., for Jewish observance). I also wanted our b'nai mitzvah services to lead to a continued life of education for our candidates. I believe that these goals helped serve the congregation, helped define who we were, and established TI as a synagogue that had ceremonies with integrity. The most important element for me was that our bar and bat mitzvah [ceremonies] not simply be about how many verses a candidate could chant. The emphasis was on content.

DR: During your entire tenure at TI, the students were educated at the Howard County Jewish Community School. Please describe the education of TI students.

RSF: For me, our relationship with the Jewish Community School was satisfactory. At the start, my priority was not focused on developing curricula for each grade level, but I was completely invested in creating a meaningful bar and bat mitzvah experience for the children who were preparing.

The confirmation and b'nai mitzvah programs were very important to me and I felt that I needed to make a deep commitment to those to make it the best experience it could be. Until the day I left TI, I was involved in the tutoring of every b'nai mitzvah and confirmation student.

DS: What did traditional Reform Judaism mean to the founding families of TI and to you?

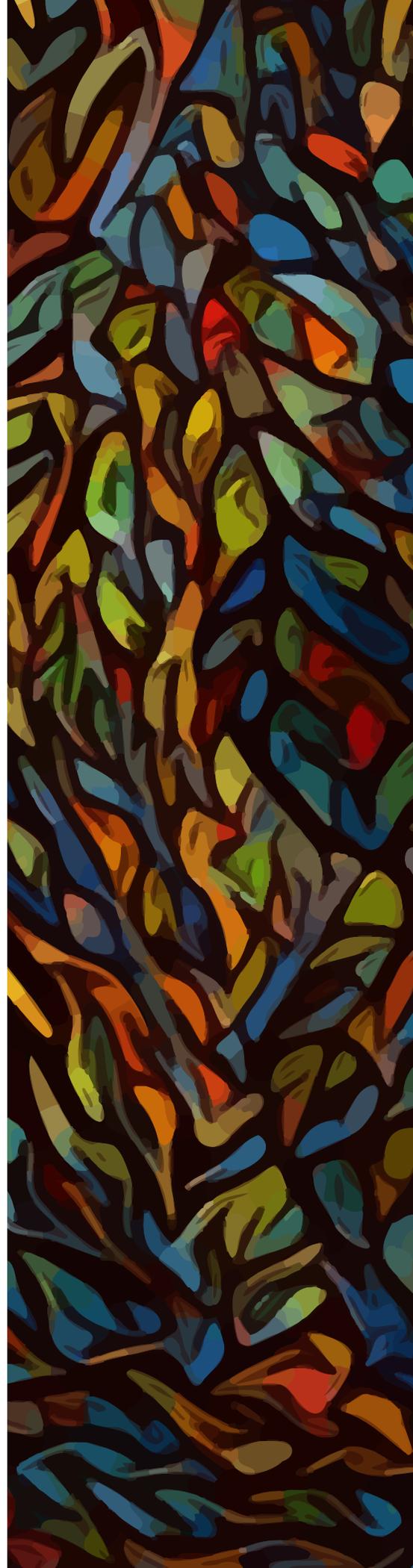
RSF: We were committed to helping people understand and appreciate practices, such as why we say prayers and what is the purpose of the order of the service. Traditional Reform means a respect for tradition with a desire to understand, explore, and analyze the whys that are behind the practices.

When I published my first book (*What's in It for Me? Finding Ourselves in Biblical Narratives*) in 2014, these thoughts had been gestating for 40 years.

DS: You seem very comfortable even when you are not doing something familiar. Please talk about that.

RSF: Coming to TI was a challenge that I am so glad was offered to me. I will always be grateful to the congregation for nurturing me along in my rabbinical career, and I am very excited to come back. ■

To learn more about Rabbi Fuchs, visit www.rabbifuchs.com/
To register for the Friday Night Shabbat Dinner and Saturday Kiddush Luncheon, visit <https://tinyurl.com/FuchsWeekendRSVP>.



Temple Isaiah's

Emerging Leaders Training Program

by Gary Perolman

As with most things, it began with a word, and the word was "yes!"

The Temple Isaiah leadership, clergy, professional staff, and the participants all had to say "yes!" Yes, to embrace a program created by the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ) and the resources they produced; yes, by then TI President Donna Kasoff, who coordinated with Rabbi Axler and Family Educator Rachel Petroff Kessler to initiate the program at Temple Isaiah; and yes, from the 11 congregants who invested their time, effort, and commitment to become cohort #1 in this pilot program. Finally, "yes" from our gracious and experienced facilitators. "Yes," began the TI Emerging Leaders Training program in mid- 2018, finishing up in April 2019. The idea behind this program was to invest in our congregational future by providing in-depth leadership and temple-operations knowledge to future leaders. Besides identifying those who expressed an interest and commitment to the Temple, the program ensures the cohort will be fully prepared to integrate into leadership positions if they so desire. The timing to begin this program couldn't be better, as our congregation reaches its 50th year and we renew our focus on the future, while being firmly committed to our past accomplishments. This coming year reflects, in many ways, a renewed declaration of our mission and vision.

The training program covered the following eight key areas of synagogue leadership:

- Congregational Community
- Reform Judaism
- Personal Leadership Style
- Leadership Skills
- Congregational Governance
- Finance
- Being a Congregational Ambassador
- Goal Setting

These topics were presented in one- or two-hour formats, familiarizing our participants with information about Temple Isaiah, the historical development of Reform Judaism, understanding and effective use of leadership techniques, the management of Temple operations, and a full appreciation of being a member of a sacred community.

Congratulations to our cohort #1 participants, who made a donation to the synagogue's Social Action Fund in honor of the program: Amy Bree Becker, Alisha Rovner, Erik Avant, Beth Magden, Brett Tiplitz, Jessica Cade, Felicia Hulit, Lesley Farby Berkowitz, Morey Kogul, Sam Pearson-Moore, and Michelle Stulberger. We are all strengthened by your involvement!



Here are some reflections by our participants:

"The ELT provided a valuable perspective about what it means to exercise leadership in our Temple. Modeling the concepts discussed should inspire others to realize what this program is designed to teach: engaging with the Temple through services, programming, or volunteerism, is as personally rewarding as it is beneficial to our community."

"I loved the program and was glad to participate. I know many of the volunteer leaders are often unprepared to deal with issues that present every day, so it is good to have training to help us prepare for the challenges ahead."

"I really enjoyed this program. There are not a lot of places that offer any sort of formal training prior to volunteer involvement and this is super, super valuable as we look to cultivate our involvement in the Temple. I have also found that this program was personally helpful in my professional life, in the leadership roles I currently hold."

"I think the program has had a successful trial run. I've enjoyed getting to know some of my 'classmates' better, and also meeting some of the more senior members of the Temple. I definitely feel more of a sense of connection to the synagogue as both a physical and community space."

Many thanks to our facilitators for sharing their expertise so generously: TI Immediate Past President Donna Kasoff; Rachel Petroff Kessler; Rabbi Craig Axler; former Jewish Federation of Howard County Executive Director Michelle Ostroff; Professor Jeff Kudisch, from the University of Maryland Robert H. Smith School of Business; Amy Kramer, former TI Treasurer and Financial VP; and TI Past Presidents Ben Sandler and Denny Rapport. ■



Q&A with Becca Bregman

SYTI President 2019–20 and NFTY-MAR head songleader
with Rabbi Craig Axler

A key to abbreviations in Jewish-youth land: SYTI=Senior Youth Group of Temple Isaiah; NFTY=North American Federation of Temple Youth; MAR=Mid-Atlantic Region; OSRUI=Olin-Sang-Ruby Camp Institute, the Reform Movement's Jewish camp in Oconomowoc, Wisconsin, which serves most of the Mid-West States; Camp Harlam=the Reform Movement's Jewish camp serving our region.

Rabbi Axler: How did you come to be involved, first with SYTI and then NFTY-MAR?

Becca Bregman: It was my sister, Miriam, who actually forced me to go to NFTY; she didn't give me a choice. She said "Rebecca, you are going to MAJYK, and if you don't like it, you're still going." I actually didn't like it in middle school. But, I kept going because it made her happy. But she told me that she was going to force me to go to three actual high school NFTY events, and if after three events you still don't like it, you don't ever have to go again. After that first one, I was immediately just right in there.

I made a friend within the first twenty minutes. She was sitting on the bus and she called out to Miriam: "I made friends with your little sister!" And it was just amazing how easily you can make a friend who can become family within minutes, and that was really what got me involved with everything.

RA: What drew you in to the depths of involvement that you are currently in?

BB: A lot of it was seeing my sister as Membership Vice President of SYTI for years. She was always someone that I looked up to. No matter how mad she made me as a little kid, she was just always my idol. So, seeing her in that leadership position made me want to do it. I wanted to be Membership Vice President as well. Then I decided to go deeper with songleading. I think it really initially got my interest going at Camp Harlam. Then I applied to be the NFTY-MAR songleader and I got it, then it just progressed from there.

RA: What was it about songleading at Harlam that attracted you?

BB: Seeing everyone's faces light up when they were with each other. I've always loved music — I've been in choirs at school since fourth grade. Seeing all of the songleaders in the middle and they seemed like they were having so much fun. The songleaders seemed like they were all so close with one another. It was so inspiring to look at this and to see this amazing picture of everyone coming together through music and it was just so cool, and I said "that's what I want to do." My dad had an influence on that as well, since he was head songleader at OSRUI for a number of years. He would sing me the songs that he used to teach to everyone. He definitely had a big impact on that as well.

RA: Were there things that were difficult about becoming involved in SYTI and NFTY-MAR?

BB: There were definitely a few challenges. One was that I don't have the highest confidence in myself. That sometimes gets in the way. I might get anxious to start a song. I may ask someone else, "Hey how does this go?" I'm still not 100% in everything I'm doing. I'm still not 100% where I want to be with this, but all of my friends are helping me with this so much. They always want to make me be better, which inspires me to do better.

RA: What is your favorite part of a weekend event?

BB: Oh gosh. One favorite part?!?! One of my favorites is definitely the bus ride there, especially if we are going a long distance like to North Carolina. Most people don't really like the long bus rides, but I personally love it, because it gives such a fun chance to just bond and get to know each other. We have fun dance parties on the bus.

Another part is being with everyone late at night. The staff might be scrambling to get a last-minute program together and we are all chilling with each other and talking. There's so much positive energy.

RA: Last year we helped to send you to NFTY's National Convention. How did attending it influence you?

BB: Honestly it was just seeing how many people were there, and how many people are involved in this. You hear about antisemitism on the news and we seem like such a small group. It makes you feel like you are part of such a small community. But being at convention with more than a thousand teens, you felt like something bigger. To see everyone come together from all over the place, the positive energy.

Everyone being with you and supporting you, whether they agree with you or not. You don't really hear about groups of teens coming together in this way. It was just jaw-dropping to see how much everyone cared for each other.

RA: Is there something you would bring back from NFTY National Convention that would enhance either SYTI or MAR?

BB: Definitely there were some good leadership experiences that we did. There were a lot of teens that led sessions. Personally, I really like services at NFTY. I think they're really fun. As a songleader, I am doing something during services, so it doesn't go by slowly for me. They gave us 15 different Shabbat services that we could go to. There was a painting one, there was a kids-music one that I went to that was so much fun. I think the guy who was leading it was in my grade. And I want to be able to incorporate that kind of choice into our services here for NFTY-MAR. To bring some different services here. For teens that might just be getting started and don't want a straight-forward service, to make it more appealing, to get teens involved.

RA: How does your MAR and SYTI experience connect you to Temple Isaiah?

BB: Everything connects back to Temple Isaiah, with being Jewish. The idea of your friends being as close as family, I have that both in Temple Isaiah and in NFTY. It's amazing to me how tight the community is. A lot of my friends from Temple Isaiah are involved in BBYO and others are involved in NFTY, and we come back and talk to each other, and try to convince each other that one is better than the other. But really, when you think about it, we're just telling each other the exact same things. It's kind of hard to describe.

RA: Why do you think you have become such an active and involved Reform Jew?

BB: Part of it was hearing my dad and all of the stories he's told me. Spending semesters in Israel, and he was born in Israel. Both of my parents were heavily involved at OSRUI. My dad's side of the family was very involved there. Judaism was always a big part of my life, but I never really understood it, and understood why being Jewish was so important and fun for me, until I got involved in NFTY, when I got that first taste of leadership, and seeing my friends lead programs. Then I had that "aha moment" and said "that's what I want to do. That's how I want to spend my high school years." Personally, being at a high school where there are not a lot of Jewish kids and where I have been bullied for being Jewish, that makes me want to be even more involved and to be a Jewish leader.

RA: What do you look forward to in the future in your Jewish involvement?

BB: I want to set a good example for the younger generations. One of my biggest worries is that no one is going to be interested, to want to be involved in SYTI, to run for board. So, I am trying to make sure that others get involved and make sure that others, to get that connection spark started for others. I want to create a better environment for everyone.

RA: What am I missing in terms of your future commitments, your involvement in coming years?





Holiday Highlights 2019/5780

Sukkot

Sunday, October 13

Erev Sukkot Service, 7pm — Join us in the Temple Isaiah Sukkah (weather permitting) as we enter the holiday with prayer and song.

Tuesday, October 15

connectIon Sukkot Social, 7pm

Wednesday, October 16

Sukkot Lunch & Learn, 12pm
Pizza in the Hut, 5:30pm

Thursday, October 17

Axler Family Open Sukkah, 5–8pm

Friday, October 18

Sukkot/Shabbat Service, 8pm, followed by Sundaes in the Sukkah

Saturday, October 19

Food Truck Fiesta, 6:30pm
Men's Club will be hosting this event, part of Temple Isaiah's 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

Sunday, October 20

Yizkor, 7pm

Simchat Torah

Monday, October 21, 7pm

Join us for a special service celebrating the completion of a cycle of Torah reading, as we sing and dance with our Torah scrolls. We'll be accompanied by the TI Simchat Torah band.

Hanukkah

Saturday, December 7

Hands-on Hanukkah, 4–6pm — We are proud to put on this annual Hanukkah event for the greater Jewish community, featuring crafts, tasty treats, and a holiday sing-a-long.

Friday, December 27

Hanukkah Dinner, 6pm
Hanukkah/Shabbat Service, 7pm

Practicing Audacious Hospitality on

Sukkot

by April Baskin

I cherish the holiday of Sukkot. It beautifully encapsulates the quintessential magic of this bountiful time of year. We see that we can build a holy space with our own hands, and experience the pride, warmth, and contentment that welcoming people into our sukkah and wholeheartedly celebrating the holiday together engenders. Who will you welcome into the sukkah, and your congregation, this year?

Nearly two months ago, I joined the URJ as its inaugural vice president of audacious hospitality. Audacious hospitality is a bold, new, and multi-faceted URJ initiative that encompasses some of our tradition's most treasured values — loving kindness, respect, and *tikkun olam* (repair of our world). It is all about putting the ideas of diversity, outreach, and inclusion into action in a framework that addresses both today's Jewish communal needs and our highest aspirations. At the core of audacious hospitality is the belief that we will be a stronger, more vibrant Jewish community when we welcome and embrace the diversity that is the reality — and future — of modern Jewish life.

In her book, *Kabbalah Month by Month: A Year of Spiritual Practice and Personal Transformation*, Melinda Ribner writes,

"During the holiday of Succot, Jews wave the lulav... These four species are said to represent the four personality types... Others say these species represent parts of a single person."

In the spirit of audacious hospitality, I offer these Sukkot-inspired recommendations to help your work and community thrive.

- * "Lulav is the spine": Center and ground yourself in your unique and empowered identity. A fundamental element of effective Jewish outreach and inclusion is self-awareness. It is important for us to honor our own heritage, as well as others' in our community.
- * "...the hadas the eyes": Take time to observe: who is in your community? How can we not only see with our eyes, but also see through spiritual eyes of intuition and empathy? Often members in our community have differences in racial background, family make-up, gender and sexuality, or ability from our own. Pause and take note of the unique attributes of our fellow community members because they are important and can enrich our Jewish experience.
- * "...the aravah the mouth": We are a diverse community. Honor and celebrate that! Some of our diversity can only be learned of through authentic conversation and deep listening. In addition to greeting people with a warm "Welcome!" or "Shabbat shalom!" we can go deeper. We can share more about ourselves and, without asking questions that are too personal such as "How are you Jewish?", invite others to tell us more about them. One good question to ask is, "What inspired you to be part of this community?"
- * "...and the etrog the heart.": Practicing audacious hospitality is meaningful and important, but not always easy. Audacious hospitality is a spiritual practice that encourages us to not simply open our doors, but also proactively open our hearts to strangers and members of our communities whose customs or identity may differ from ours. We all have much to teach one another. ■

This piece is reprinted with the kind permission of URJ.org, and originally appeared in Women of Reform Judaism's email blast on September 25, 2015.

April Baskin, a longtime advocate for Jewish diversity and inclusion, is a graduate of Tufts University, a member of the Selah Leadership Network, and an alumna of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Foundation's Insight Fellowship and Jews United for Justice's Jeremiah Fellowship in Washington, D.C. She most recently served as the vice president of Audacious Hospitality at the Union for Reform Judaism. In addition, she previously served as the national director of resources and training at InterfaithFamily.com and president of the Jewish Multiracial Network.

hello!

shalom!

hola!

salut!

welkom!

namaste!

bienvenidos!

wilkommen!

More Young Voices

by Ash Tarantino,
Kate Goldscher,
and Becca Bregman

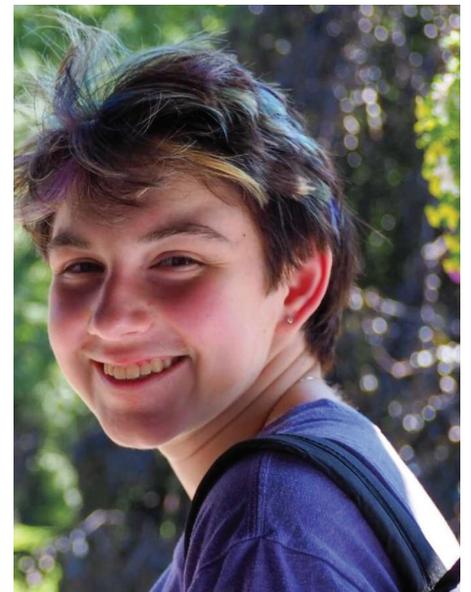


Exploring Creative Arts

Going to URJ 6 Points Creative Arts Academy (CAA) has changed my life. To some, it may just be a camp but for me, it is a second home.

CAA is a Jewish creative arts camp where they teach arts such as dance, theatre, cooking, visual arts, creative writing, and vocal music, all within the lens of Jewish values. This year, I chose to stay for two sessions; it was amazing and the friends that I've made there will last me a lifetime.

Every day, we have majors, minors, and Kinesthetic Arts. Kinesthetic Arts is CAA's way of getting the campers to be active. Since it is an arts camp we try not to say "sports," so we refer to the activities as a moving art. Some choices for Kin Arts are swimming, walking around a track, or playing kickball. For minors, there are things like songwriting, playwriting, baking, a cappella, and instrumental music.



When I went to camp, first session I was in Musical Theatre and second session I was in Creative Writing. My musical theatre class was run by Cassie. The way she teaches is amazing. I acquired many acting techniques after studying with her. In creative writing, I was honored to be under the instruction of Carly. Carly's talent in writing was super beneficial for young writers like me, to blossom into even better writers.

Every day we have *Menucha* (מנוחה); *Menucha* is our time of rest in the day. This year, I spent my hour writing music in the music corner on my dorm floor. You can do anything from napping to chatting during this time.

This summer was amazing for me and I recommend 6 Points Creative Arts Academy to anyone who loves or is interested in Jewish camp and loves the arts. ■

—Ash

The Power of Youth Group

Excerpt from Confirmation Essay

Being Jewish to me is different than what it means to you. Everyone expresses their Judaism in different ways, from keeping kosher to going to Temple. For me, being Jewish is being kind. Being Jewish is being helpful. Being Jewish is being passionate about what you do. Being Jewish is helping yourself, and others too.

When I tell people I'm Jewish, I say it proudly. I'm not afraid, despite the increase in antisemitic actions in recent years. I know that as a Jew, I'll get through it, because we always do. And I'll be Jewish when I'm sharing facts in class when everyone asks, "why do we have two random days off in September?" I'm being Jewish by educating younger people, so they can grow to be proud of their Judaism too. Being Jewish is helping yourself, and others too.

Youth group is a key part of my Judaism. NFTY-MAR taught me about making friends, speaking up for what you believe in, and tying a little Judaism into your everyday life. I was taught that Israel isn't always right, that having different ideas on core concepts like keeping kosher or how religious you are doesn't make you a better Jew. And I carry those and many more ideas with me when I bring them back to our youth group, SYTI. I encourage people to come, so they can learn that they can be Jewish through cooking, singing, crafting, and helping, with other teens their age. By making connections like those, it makes us stronger as a community. And for me, the most important part about being Jewish isn't praying every day or blind faith in religious leaders, but community. Because Jews are nothing if we're not tough.

So, to me, being Jewish is helping others. Being Jewish is learning about new ideas, different cultures, yourself, and others. And most importantly, being Jewish is about being a community. ■

—Kate



My NFTY Family

For me, defining our NFTY family is incredibly challenging because I can't really put a label on it. It just means so much to me; it's completely indescribable. People will ask me before events if I'm excited to see my friends, and I'll say "no," because I'm not going to see my friends, I'm going to see all my brothers and sisters, because we're literally one big family.

If I had to put a definition to it, I would say my NFTY family is my world. It means so much to me and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

NFTY has done so much for me. It has not only made me a better person and changed me in the best possible way, ever, but it has made me a happier person and has helped me be the person I want to be. And often, confidence for teenagers can be kind of scary...NFTY has helped me overcome my fear of the person I want to be and helped me bring her out and bring her into my life. So, I want to give a big thank you to NFTY-MAR for making me who I am today. ■

—Becca



**The Reform Jewish
Youth Movement**

Making Connections With

by Erik Avant

As an interfaith couple, my wife Lauren and I knew that finding the right synagogue for us might be a challenge. We knew what we wanted: a welcoming community, an opportunity to meet people who shared our values, and a place that we could feel comfortable participating despite Lauren not being Jewish. After our first visit to Temple Isaiah (an Outdoor Shabbat service), we knew that it was the right place for us. Shortly after that, we joined and went to our first connectIon event: happy hour at Frisco Tap House.

I remember being nervous before we went to the happy hour; would we be welcomed? Would we fit in? As we got to know the other members over drinks and snacks, my worries disappeared. Everyone was welcoming and Rachel (Petroff Kessler) did a great job of cultivating a friendly and laid-back atmosphere — a perfect introduction to the group. Over the past few years, I've realized that the atmosphere at that first happy hour wasn't a rarity. No matter where the event is, what we're doing, or who is there, the group is always welcoming and fun.

In 1995, the URJ created a resolution called "Synagogue membership: Young Adults." One goal of the resolution was to develop models of successful programs to engage young adults in congregational life. To me, this is a perfect description of the connectIon group at Temple Isaiah. connectIon has allowed both me and my wife to learn more about Judaism, Temple Isaiah, and the other young people in our community in a way that feels natural and meets us where we are.

We've gone for hikes, learned to make challah, enjoyed happy hour and other outings, had fun at game night, shared dinner with friends before Shabbat services, and more. I leave each event feeling like I've gained something — friends, an understanding of someone else's tradition, or just a fun memory.

The best part about connectIon, though, is that it helped me to feel like part of the Temple Isaiah community very quickly. With connectIon events happening every month, I had plenty of chances to meet new people — people who soon became familiar faces at Shabbat services or other TI events. I learned about different opportunities and programs throughout TI and Howard County.

With synagogue membership around the country slowly diminishing, it's clear to me that in spite of that fact, Temple Isaiah continues to grow. Programming for every stage of life makes the Temple a thriving community. The connectIon group engages a forgotten and important segment of the Jewish community in Howard County and I am proud to be a part of it. ■



connectIon



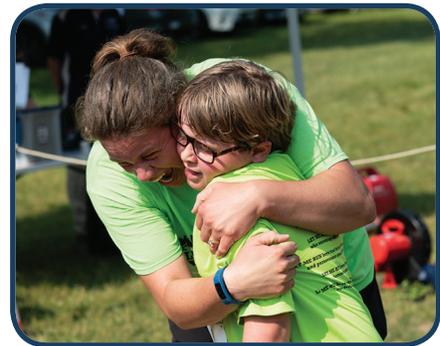
A Final "Rundown" on the *MATZOHBALL*

by Alex Hoffman



The 15th Annual MatzohBall 5K was held on June 2, 2019 at Centennial Park. It was a great day with beautiful weather, and a record number of 437 registered runners (355 5K and 82 1-Mile participants). We had 44 Individual/Family sponsors and 27 Corporate sponsors. Proceeds from the race were donated to Temple Isaiah, Grassroots, DreamBuilders, and HopeWorks. Most importantly, we had a great turnout of volunteers from the TI community to help out with all the race day logistics!

We want to give a special shout out to the following individuals for their help in planning/organizing the event: Paul & Barbara Warshowsky, Lisa & Brian Jolles, Karen & Dave Zolet, Fred Berko, and Robert Dubin. Thanks to the TI Men's Club, our fabulous M.C. Jeff Kudisch, our race support team at Charm City Run, Eric McCormick Photography, and all the runners and coaches from Let Me Run Howard County. Together, we made this event a huge success, and we hope to see you on June 7, 2020 as we celebrate our "Sweet Sixteen" along with TI's 50th Anniversary! ■



Visit our website at www.templeisiah.org/a-final-rundown-on-the-2019-matzohball-run/ for a photo gallery (courtesy of Eric McCormick Photography), as well as a full list of all our individual and corporate sponsors.

Many Thanks

to all of our wonderful 50th Anniversary sponsors!

50th Anniversary General Fund

Visionary/Chazon

- * Oren Blam & Alisha Rovner
- * Hagafen Cellars, Inc.

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- * Lisa & Brian Jolles
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Event Sponsors

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- * Jeri Shuster, MD, PA

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- * Roberta & Frona Dubin
- * Stan & Ellen Strichartz

**There's still time to support TI@50 and add your name to this list!
Contact Mitch Markowitz at mitchmarkowitz@yahoo.com for sponsorship details.**

Perfect *B'nai Mitzvah* Photos

by Raya Kridel

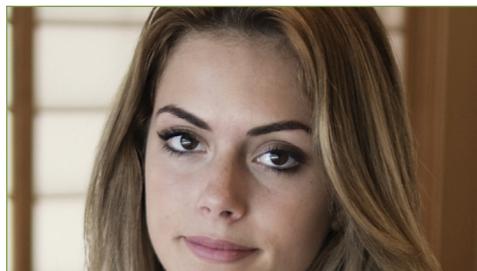
Did the title get your attention? Of course it did, because the months leading up to the day your child becomes a bar/bat mitzvah are joyous. Or stress-filled, but most likely, a combination of both. It's a big event in your child's life and you sweat the details to make sure that it's memorable.

One thing on your list might be arranging for a photographer to commemorate the event with a carefully-orchestrated photo session in front of an open Torah scroll, but before that, take advantage of Temple Isaiah's two large digital screens in our lobbies. In the week preceding your child's bar/bat mitzvah date, we can run a photo offering them a hearty and heart-felt Mazel Tov. But what makes a great photo for this? It doesn't necessarily require a professional photographer; if you want to try and do it yourself, there are a few things you can keep in mind to make sure that your child's greeting looks great.



First of all, make sure it's in focus and well-lit, and the colors are accurate. I can work some Photoshop magic but the more it's off, the harder it is to make sure they don't look like they're seasick, in a dark cave, or on the surface of the sun.

Look out for distracting objects in the background, like vehicles or signs. Large patterns (like the steps) are ok, but a clean background is better. A tree, pole, or stop sign coming out of their head is definitely something to avoid.



Our screens have a specific size, so sending a photo that is already too narrow looks unfortunate when I crop for the screen. Just make sure that it's a high enough resolution so it will fit our screen, and leave some room on at least one side.

If you're ever unsure if a photo is large enough for the screens, too dark, off-color, won't crop well, has a background that's too distracting, or any other issues, just email it to me at Raya@templeisiah.org and I'm happy to try it out. Good luck!

Bits & Pieces

Did you Know?

You can download a .pdf file of back issues of *The Prophet* from our website, at www.templeisaiah.org/the-prophet/



Who's Who @ Temple Isaiah



Name: Susan Aufhouser Soifer
Family: Matthew, Terri, and Jake.
Hometown: Rochester, NY; Roslyn, NY; and Teaneck, NJ

Something You Might Not Know About Me: I studied Film in college and in my early career, I worked as a film editor in NYC.

Position at Temple Isaiah: Preschool Teacher, in the 3's class.

I've Been a Teacher Here Since: 2004
Parents and Students Can Come to Me If They Need: Parents — early childhood guidance and insight into Temple Isaiah Preschool, and the Temple Isaiah community. Students — help, support, play, laughter, and hugs!

Why I love being at TI: Teaching at TIPS lets me combine my love for Jewish worship and congregational life, with my joy for working, playing, learning, and growing each day with our incredible 3- and 4-year-olds! ■

In the Next Issue...



- * L'dor v'dor: Multi-generation families at TI
- * Homecoming Weekend
- * Life-cycle Events
- * Engaging Your Kulanu Kids
- * The Importance of Community
- * TI2020 Updates

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BB: This year I do plan to make it my last year as head songleader so that I can make my senior year one that I can just relax. I'm really excited to have my senior year be one that I can enjoy as just a participant, maybe songleading a little bit during friendship circle. This is my first year as SYTI president. I am excited for that. I would like to make sure that our board is cohesive and to bring other upcoming teens into SYTI so that they want to be involved and want to be Jewish. I am excited to go to college and leave high school. But also, I know that I am going miss NFTY and I am going to be an absolute mess at my last event. But I am excited to get the future generations involved so that they can do even greater things than we have. ■

Welcome

New Members!

Adam & Emily Arker
Brian & Laurie Avrunin
Andrew & Toba Barth
David & Pam Bernstein
Geoffrey & Kerry Bloom
Anna Bowen
Jason & Jessica Bowman
Evan & Emily Braunstein
Marc & Marcy Burkom
Jerry & Toni Carr
Jody Chaitovitz
Nina Davis
Mark & Elyse DeVries
Steve & Laurie Diner
Jeremy & Sarah Dommu
Nathan Baum & Diane Eidelman
Grant & Michelle Forman
Zachary & Jennifer Gamiel
Daniel & Sabrina Gordon
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Ira & Lynne Hochstadt
Dan & Ellen Horak
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Bill May
Cory & Sara Miller
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Chad & Shana Perman
Daniel & Alexis Plavnieks
David & Kendra Reisner
Jonathan & Gina Rothbaum
Menelaos & Lysandra Sarantos
Stephen & Rachel Shaul
Wayne & Alice Snyder
Matt & Allison Weil
Danny & Shira Weiss
Jeremy & Amy Weissenburger



Check out some of the great photos from Isaiah Fest on our website, at www.templeisaiah.org/isaiah-fest-a-huge-success/



Temple Isaiah
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Wanted: talented writers!

If you have a way with words and a knack for telling great stories, *The Prophet Magazine* could use your skills.

We're looking for "reporters" to:

- + interview long-time members about their lives and Temple Isaiah's history
- + write great stories about ways that members connect with each other
- + profile TI staff and board members
- + write stories about Jewish practice and some of the ways to get involved and care for the world

Interested? Email
Raya@templeisaiah.org
with your story ideas and
she'll put you to work!

