

TEMPLE ISAIAH
ישעיהו

The Prophet

Magazine

Vatikah Rabbi Dena Feingold

Interview with Rabbi Daniel Plotkin

Jessica Carmen

Interview with Ian and Zachary Carmen

Ellen Strichartz

Interview with Rabbi Craig Axler

Eishet Chayil



Gender: Moving Beyond Binary

Update: Building Expansion

Meet Matthew Weil

New Members

2022:3

In This Issue:

p. 3, 14

From the Rabbi

by Rabbi Craig Axler

p. 4–5, 15

Vatikah Rabbi Dena Feingold

Interview with Rabbi Daniel Plotkin

p. 6–7

Jessica Carmen

Interview with Ian and Zachary Carmen

p. 8, 15

Gender

Moving Beyond Binary

by Rachel Petroff Kessler

p. 9

Connecting with Israel Connect

by Janis Wasser

p. 10–11

Getting Closer Every Day

Building Expansion Construction Update

by Denny Rapport

p. 12–13

Ellen Strichartz

Interview with Rabbi Craig Axler

p. 14

MatzohBall 2022

by Lisa Jolles

p. 16–17

Bits & Pieces

Welcome New Members!

Who's Who @ Temple Isaiah

Matthew Weil

MatzohBall T-Shirt CALL TO ACTION!

p. 20

2022 High Holy Day Food Drive

Photo and Illustration Credits

p. 4: photoillustration by RLDK; p. 7 photo courtesy of the Alliance for Regenerative Medicine.

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.

All articles are the property of their authors and Temple Isaiah, and may not be reproduced without written permission. Articles that originally appeared in other publications or are the property of the Union of Reform Judaism are attributed accordingly. All artwork is either original art provided by Temple Isaiah members, created by professional artists with a license purchased for use, or created by professional artists and is covered under the Creative Commons license.

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

From the Rabbi



Welcome to the most recent edition of *The Prophet*, in which we are thematically focused on the impact of women in our synagogue and our world — an issue dedicated to the principle of *Eishet Chayil* — A Woman of Valor. Originating in chapter 31:10-31 of Proverbs, this text is an alphabetical acrostic that attempts to detail the “ideal woman (or wife)” in the Jewish tradition. Of course, as goes without saying, the picture is not so simple — as “two Jews, three opinions” certainly applies to this task as well. Of interest, though, is that the total picture is one of strength — seen in various manifestations and realms.

The most widespread use of this poem in the Jewish tradition is its association with the Friday evening table, when the suggested practice is to include it just before the Shabbat evening kiddush. An interesting side-note is that this custom was first introduced by the Kabbalistic mystics of Tzfat, whose inclusion of these verses on Friday night was not at all intended to be about their wives, but rather was a recognition of the *Shechinah* — the Divine Feminine, the aspects of God seen in the mystical tradition (where God is most certainly beyond any single gender) as giving thanks for all the ways in which these aspects of God flowed in the energy that surrounded the Shabbat table. I find it interesting that this custom, first meant to depict God, becomes generally associated with praising the “Mistress of the House,” the wife (in ultra-traditional terms). I’ll let everyone make what they will of the implications here!

There can be no debate that women of every description have influenced and shaped Jewish and human history from the very beginning. Though our religious tradition reflects its first few thousand years of deep patriarchy, the impact of “the matriarchs” is beyond question. Jacob would never become “Israel” without the guidance of Rebecca. Moses would still be a baby floating on the Nile River without the active hands of Miriam and Yocheved (not to mention the Pharaoh’s daughter). The great Rabbi Akiva would have remained an illiterate laborer if not for the spark of Torah that his beloved wife, Rachel, saw in him and pushed him to begin his learning as an adult. And on, and on. And yet, the role and impact of women in our traditional texts is so often pushed to the side or the rear.

Our Reform Jewish tradition begins in 19th century Europe and then in America, with an absolute affirmation of the full equality of women and men in all realms of ritual, obligation, and community leadership. However, it is an affirmation does not translate immediately into reality.

This past year we celebrated across the world the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Rabbi Sally Priesand, the first woman ordained by a rabbinical seminary (HUC-JIR). Rabbi Priesand is quoted as saying that, while she was always proud of “opening the door” for women’s rabbinic ordination, that she is even more proud of the ways in which she “held the door open” for others to come. I love that imagery, and the occasion of her ordination was also a moment to appreciate the ways in which that watershed moment changed not only the rabbinate, but all of Judaism for the better. Rabbi Priesand reflects on this impact in a short piece published by our Reform rabbinical group, the CCAR. There she writes:

“My experience tells me that we are richer for the gifts that female rabbis bring to our shared task: rethinking previous models of leadership; empowering others to become more responsible for their own Jewishness; discovering new models of divinity, knowing that God embodies characteristics both masculine and feminine; training new leaders to be more gender-aware by welcoming to our institutions of higher learning respected female scholars able to share with us lessons and insights unique to women; creating new role models and allowing to be heard — often for

...continued on page 14

Rabbi Dena Feingold

Interview with Rabbi Daniel Plotkin

Fifty years ago in June of 1972, Sally Preisand was the first woman ordained as a rabbi in the US and only the second ever, after Regina Jonas was ordained in 1935 in Germany. Sadly, Rabbi Jonas shared the fate of so many German Jews of that period. Since the Ordination of Rabbi Preisand, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion has been ordaining women as rabbis every single year (except 1973). The Reconstructionist Rabbinic College followed close behind, ordaining Sandy Eisenberg Sasso in 1974, and the Jewish Theological Seminary came along a little later with the ordination of Amy Eilberg in 1986.



From my own perspective growing up in the 1980s, while the number of women who were ordained rabbis was still small, the presence of women as rabbis wasn't a remarkable thing. I had to learn that at one point, women were not allowed to do this. This is because the summer

I turned eight, my synagogue in Milwaukee hired Rabbi Dena Feingold as its assistant rabbi. She would be the first woman to serve as a rabbi not only in the state of Wisconsin, but the entire western Great Lakes region that includes Chicago and Minneapolis.

Rabbi Feingold was only with my congregation for three years, moving on to take a solo pulpit in Kenosha, a small city between Milwaukee and Chicago. She has remained the rabbi of Beth Hillel Congregation to this day. During her brief time in Milwaukee she had an impact on me, not showing me what a female rabbi is, but showing me what a rabbi is. I will never forget when, after my grandfather passed away in the winter of 1984, Rabbi Feingold came to my house in a huge snowstorm to make sure there was someone present to lead the shivah service. I didn't realize at that time she was a Janesville, Wisconsin native, well-accustomed to the snow.

In later years I encountered and learned from Rabbi Feingold in other ways. At a NFTY Kallah she had her brother, former US Senator Russ Feingold, come and speak with us. When I served my pulpit in St. Louis, she was in the leadership of the Midwest Association of Reform Rabbis, and we spent many hours together with colleagues for our annual conference in Scottsdale, AZ.

I recently had a chance to speak with Rabbi Feingold as she was generous enough to give me an hour of her time as one of the "Vatikot," the first 100 women ordained by Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, and share some details of her career as one of the pioneers among women serving as Rabbis. Please note: the following answers are paraphrases of the answers she gave to my questions, with direct quotes noted.

Rabbi Daniel Plotkin: What inspired you to become a rabbi when there were virtually no role models?

Rabbi Dena Feingold: I graduated high school in 1973, only one year after Sally's ordination so the concept of a woman serving as a rabbi was "out" there, that began my thought process.

I went to Madison, Wisconsin for college in 1973 and "I was choosing something to do with Judaism" for any elective choices — language, history — this was a passion that developed.

Even as I was moving in that direction, I went to Camp Interlaken (Wisconsin's JCC Camp) but I was intimidated by the knowledge of the other counselors (future rabbi Aaron Petchuowski was songleader on accordion) and I began having second thoughts. Did I really know enough? After my uncle, Rabbi Louis Binstock of Temple Sholom in Chicago, a revered and respected figure died, I was encouraged in my path through his example.

I also received, "tremendous support all around from my family, and from my rabbi." In particular, Hannah Rosenthal, the Education Director at Temple Beth El in Madison was very supportive, along with Rabbi Kenneth Roseman.

DP: What was it like in the first job search out of HUC-JIR? Were there places that refused to consider you just for being female?

DF: Contrary to what some might expect, by 1982, congregations were vying to be the "first" to have a female in their community. I only wanted to be in the midwest, which was an advantage due to most female colleagues being more comfortable on the coasts.

DP: Besides the Wisconsin connection, what drew you toward Congregation Shalom, what made you feel that the rabbi there could be a good mentor for a woman, considering that he had only one woman in his class (1974)?

DF: It was Rabbi Ron Shapiro who was kind, gentle, and genuine; he was, "a real mensch." Some rabbis asked inappropriate questions, but because of Rabbi Shapiro, Shalom seemed like a good fit.

DP: What challenges did you face as you assumed the role of a rabbi in a place where a woman had never been in that role prior?

DF: I met relatively minimal resistance; there were some who didn't want a female rabbi doing a funeral when Rabbi Shapiro was on vacation, but I was who was there, so I did it.

There was a lot of discussion about whether I would be accepted into the Wisconsin Council of Rabbis, as there was more Orthodox participation in such councils back then. It was Rabbi Louis Swichkow of

Beth El, a Conservative congregation who raised the question; then Rabbi Herbert Panitch of Beth Israel, also a Conservative congregation who said "we will welcome her as a member." Among many others, Rabbi David Shapiro at Anshe Sefard, an Orthodox congregation, was very welcoming.

DP: Upon deciding to move on from Congregation Shalom, what attracted you to Kenosha? Were there other opportunities available to you that you bypassed?

DF: I was initially looking to serve as an associate Rabbi at a congregation in a bigger city, but then I started dating (future husband) Brad Backer, who was on the partner track at a Milwaukee law firm. I switched my goal to stay close to Milwaukee and I liked the idea of being a solo rabbi, as that was my long-term goal. Serendipitously, the opening in Kenosha came available in May, very late in the process and it hadn't been in the CCAR newsletter yet (which was then the only source of announcing open pulpits). The outgoing Rabbi let me know that he was leaving and the director of placement, Rabbi Stanley Dreyfus, gave permission to interview before the opening was public.

DP: What did it mean to be the "lead" rabbi in a community as a woman, especially as young as you were? Were there struggles getting accepted by other clergy? By political leadership?

DF: At that time, there was a lay-run Conservadox congregation along with Beth Hillel, so I was the only rabbi in Kenosha. "The pioneer thing was a surprise to me" having been 10 years since Rabbi Preisand had been ordained. As I said earlier, most early female rabbis went to the coasts, not the upper midwest. I was in some ways in greater demand for TV coverage, speaking engagements, Rotary, church groups, and Pioneer Women (a women's Zionist group). I was the only exposure to a female rabbi in the area. It took 16 years for a second woman to serve as a full-time rabbi in Wisconsin, even as some others came to Chicago and the Twin Cities.

...continued on page 15

Jessica Carmen Interview with Ian and Zachary Carmen

Ian Carmen: Hello and welcome. [Laughing] This is the interview with Dr. Mom. [Ian and Zachary laughing] I am Ian Carmen.

Zachary Carmen: What do you want me to say?

IC: Your name.

ZC: Oh. I'm Zachary Carmen...

IC: Ok, starting seriousness. Starting now.

IC: I'm Ian..

ZC: I'm Zachary...

Jessica Carmen: I'm Jessica.

IC: We'd like to ask you a few questions. What do you do for a living?

JC: What do you guys think I do?

ZC: I think you help with pharmaceutical therapy? [Laughing] Consulting?

JC: What do you think Ian?

IC: You're a consultant, and you help other companies with their needs for selling [Laughing] medicine? Ok.

JC: My title is Executive Vice President of Science and Technology at Adjuvant Partners, which is a boutique business development consulting firm helping companies developing cell and gene therapy medicines. We help companies that are developing cell therapies or gene therapies to find other companies that they can partner with to help them raise capital, which is money. Basically help them get access to money and expertise to help them develop medicines that can help patients. Usually the medicines that our clients are developing are for diseases for which there is no medicine. That's why their work is important.

IC: Zach, is that what you thought?

ZC: Not really.

IC: Interesting. How did you know you wanted to get into cell and gene therapy?

JC: Ooh, very good question. I started getting interested in cell therapy when I was a post-doctoral fellow, well actually when I was a grad student at Johns Hopkins University getting my PhD in the Department of Molecular Microbiology and Immunology. My PhD advisor was working on stem cell therapies, which is what first got me interested in cell therapy.

I completed two post-doctoral fellowships, first at the NIH and then a second one back at Johns Hopkins, both looking at the potential role for stem cells in neurodegenerative diseases. I always knew that I wanted to work for a company and be on the company side of biotech and not on the academic side because I wanted to be closer to the process where new medicines are being made commercially available to patients. I left academia to work for a company called Lonza first, which is based outside of Frederick. At Lonza, we were manufacturing cell therapies for companies that were developing cell therapies. We were manufacturing the cells, the product cells for them, according to FDA specifications, which is known as current Good Manufacturing Practice, or cGMP. And from there I went to another company that was working on gene therapy, MaxCyte, so I kind of had experience in both gene therapy and cell therapy in my career before becoming a consultant. I think that these new therapies are not just the future





of medicine, but also the present, as several products are already commercially available.

ZC: So mom, who or what inspired you to be a consultant?

JC: I decided to consult after leaving the gene therapy-focused company because it would be a good opportunity to work with many different cell and gene therapy developers at once, and to get a lot of experience. I also wanted to position myself to have a lot of visibility for new therapies that are being developed. I felt that I had a lot of experiences that could be helpful to companies in this space; four years later I have been very busy, and it's been very rewarding.

ZC: Is it difficult to do what you do and be our mom at the same time?

JC: I wouldn't say that it's difficult, but it definitely is challenging. I think that dad and I both work hard, and we both also work hard at being good parents. I think that the approach that we have has inspired a sense of teamwork in our family and you two pitch in quite a bit, which is very helpful. Dad and I tag team on taking care of you guys while taking care of the house, and taking care of what we need to take care of at work and I think that we all support each other, and love each other, which is very helpful. And you guys help out, by sometimes making dinner and other meals, and sometimes even doing dishes.

IC: What are some difficulties you've had to overcome?

JC: Some difficulties I've had to overcome in my career

you mean? I think that I have struggled a bit with being one of the few women in my workplace. I don't want to say in my industry, there are a lot of women in my industry, but I do unfortunately feel that even in 2022, it's harder for women to be successful compared to men. It's very often that I am the only, or one of the few women, in the business meeting or on the Zoom or phone call, but I try not to think about it that way, I don't like to think of myself as the token woman. I don't try to use that. I just try to do a good job because I think it doesn't matter whether you're a woman or man; I think anyone's capable of being successful if they work hard, do good work, and have good intentions.

IC: How does Judaism or being Jewish affect your work?

JC: A part of my job, that I do on a regular basis, is negotiate deals. I write up term sheets and negotiate contracts for my clients, helping them to form corporate partnerships with other companies. To me, an important part of negotiation is making sure that everybody gets what they need out of the relationship and so doing unto others as you would have done unto yourself as an important part of that. Some people look at negotiation as a winning and losing situation where one side must be winning and the other side must be losing, but that's not a partnership. I like to negotiate deals in which both parties are getting what they need from the arrangement, and so do unto others as you would have done unto yourself is an important way to create a fruitful and long-lasting partnership. That way, both parties can be successful in the business that they're trying to do, which in my field is developing new medicines for patients that need them, and I enjoy playing a role in that process. ■

Gender Moving Beyond Binary

by Rachel Petroff Kessler



Boys and Girls, Ladies and Gentlemen, Brothers and Sisters, Moms and Dad — these phrases might feel familiar to many of us, and they all fit into a certain worldview. They all understand gender and sex in the same way: as if there are distinct two circles, male or female, and everyone fits into one or the other.

Our understandings of gender identity¹ and gender expression² have expanded in recent years, with many coming to understand that the gender binary³ does not reflect the wide spectrum of human experience.

If this is a new way of thinking for you, you might be inclined to think of this framing as a trend or fad. But did you know that the ancient Rabbis of the Talmud identified eight different genders? (Check the resources below for a link to learn more.) Our tradition, as well as many other cultures around the world, have long understood gender to be more complex.

Temple Isaiah is committed to creating a sacred community that celebrates the uniqueness of each individual. How can each of us help foster a space where folks of all gender identities feel like they can be fully themselves? Here are a couple ways to start:

- Respect and use the names and pronouns that people ask you to
- Strive for more inclusive language that doesn't make assumptions about gender identity.

Language That Assumes

Men and women, boys and girls
S/He
Husband and wife
Bar and Bat Mitzvah
Sir, ma'am, miss, and ms.

Language That Doesn't Assume

People, congregants, children, young people
They, the individual
Spouse, partner, co-parent
Brit Mitzvah
The person's name. Say "excuse me" or "hello" to get someone's attention

¹ **Gender identity** is a person's inner understanding of the gender(s) with which they identify. This is each person's unique knowing or feeling and is separate from a person's physical body or appearance (although often related). [All definitions from KeshetOnline.org]

² **Gender expression** is the manner in which one outwardly expresses, signals, or performs their gender. Gender expression can encompass appearance (clothing, haircut, makeup, etc.), behavior, mannerisms, and more.

³ **Gender binary** is a system of thinking in which there are only two genders (man and woman). The gender binary posits these two genders as opposites and mutually exclusive and forces all people in one of these two options.

...continued on page 15

Connecting With *Israel Connect*

by Janis Wasser



Every Wednesday at 10am I meet with a young Israeli high school student over Zoom, through a program called Israel Connect. I learned of this program from a friend who had been a mentor for several years and it seemed like a great activity to do when we were in Covid lockdown. My 15-year-old student is adorable and smart; we laugh and have fun during our time together. I have continued to find it rewarding and enjoyable, and the lessons provided are interesting and have broadened my knowledge of Israel.

"Israel Connect pairs volunteer mentors in North America with students across Israel to improve their English proficiency, increase their access to higher education, and put them on the path to economic mobility. Once a week, from the comfort of their homes, Israel Connect mentors lead one-on-one video meetings focused on English conversation, reading comprehension, and vocabulary development. Through our immersive online approach, mentors give students the skills — and the confidence — to prepare for Israel's university entrance exams, which focus heavily on English proficiency, setting them up for future success. Israel Connect mentors aren't required to have a teaching or education background, nor do they need to speak Hebrew. Israel Connect provides the training and curriculum, and our mentors share their passion for empowering young

people in Israel."

When I presented this project to the Temple Isaiah Sisterhood, several members were excited to participate. We invited the Men's Club to participate as well. Those of us living in Howard County are linked to the very active group of Baltimore mentors. We have attended a Zoom Israel Connect meeting where the leaders introduced themselves and shared their mission. The idea that stood out to me most was that we are helping Israeli students improve their chances for academic and economic success in the future. That can impact career choices, status in the military, and other opportunities. Many of the students come from lower economic families in Ashkelon. They express their gratitude repeatedly for this opportunity. Some mentors from Baltimore shared their enthusiasm at the meeting, as well as ideas to enhance lessons. Ideas for a blog and other ways to connect were also proposed. Everyone was very positive about their experience. I recently attended an in-person meeting in Baltimore, where I met other Baltimore and Howard County volunteers.

I am very grateful to be a mentor in this exciting program. Israel Connect continues to need mentors. If you are interested please contact Jodye Russell at jodye@vintagevaultandgallery.com, or me at divajan17@gmail.com, and we will provide you with information on how to get started. It would be great to have an active group of Howard County mentors to share ideas and experiences! ■

Getting CLOSER Every Day

by Denny Rapport

There is a lot going on at Temple Isaiah these days. Of course, there is the normal full schedule of services, programs, and activities. But there has also been a lot of progress on the expansion project that we started in the late spring.

If you approach our building from the parking lot, you might not notice the new addition shown right. The exterior blends in perfectly with the rest of the building. Inside are the new chapel and lounge; the chapel will be a place for classes, study groups, Torah study, and small services in place of the main Sanctuary, or concurrent with services in the Sanctuary.



On the left is a view of these spaces from the inside, standing at the front of the chapel looking into the lounge. It's a beautiful space that will have an operable partition separating the lounge from the chapel when necessary. New chapel furniture has been ordered including an ark, reader's table, and lectern.

In the social hall extension looking into the Sanctuary, the openings in the bulkhead at the top of the entrance are for TV monitors, which will be on drop-down fixtures. This is so people in the social hall will be able to clearly view what is happening on the *bimah*.





In the photo (left), it's hard to see the new social hall that has been added to the back of the Sanctuary. The floor-to-ceiling windows that used to be at the rear of our Sanctuary have been pushed to the back of the social hall, looking out onto a small patio with plantings along the opposite wall. We'll be able to separate the social hall from the Sanctuary with an operable partition, as well as divide the social hall into two spaces. There will be TV monitors in these spaces for presentations, or to stream the activities in the Sanctuary when the rooms are used as overflow, like on High Holy Days.

We will be putting gardens all around the Temple grounds. Work on these will start in November, primarily for grading and installing some of the "hardscape," for example paths and the pad for our sukkah. Planting is scheduled for March 2023.

In the meantime, we have finished the tricycle path for our preschoolers to enjoy. ■



Ellen Strichartz

Interview with Rabbi Craig Axler



Ellen Strichartz: I want to show you something. This is my mother's (shows very old JNF Blue "pushke box"). My sister was cleaning out the basement and this is the last one my mother had. Isn't it something? There's not a whole lot of money in it. Stan wants me to take it down and give the money to the synagogue, but I think I want to keep it in there.

Rabbi Craig Axler: I don't know how much the change that is in there would amount to, but I do think that the money that's in there is kind of like a symbolic *pushke*-like representative of the commitment to *tzedakah* that you've learned from your mother. My first question for you is, who were the female role models that you looked up to in your youth? Who were the women who influenced you particularly?

ES: Let me start by telling you that I grew up in a family that was extremely charitable. I'm talking about my mother's family and my father's family, especially my father's family. I had five aunts and five uncles; there was another one but he passed away when he was a teenager. I don't remember a time in my life when charity wasn't a part of my life... There were a lot of small Orthodox *shuls* in the Scranton area; as a child, these were active synagogues. As I grew older, people moved out of those areas and these *shuls* couldn't sustain themselves. My uncle and my cousin paid all of the bills at all of these synagogues for years and years. My aunts were extremely charitable as well. Two of them were married and their husbands were the same way as well. Three of them were "spinsters," they never married. We called them the "board of directors." We had to get EVERYTHING approved by them. Before we could do anything, including my prom date — but I don't want to get into that! That was the way I grew up. My mother, especially, was an extremely charitable person. She used to collect for every Jewish charity (plus some others for the heart fund and diabetes). She was always collecting for something or emptying *pushkes*. My mother used to collect and people would see her on the street and say "Oh, no, you're not coming to collect for this or that???" But she was "that" person — any event, my mother was putting money in the *pushke*, because that is just what you do. She always knew if there was anyone who was in need of a meal; she was the first one there. She worked really hard on the PTA; she chaired my high school parties and things like that. I learned a lot from watching her. My mother

was the best baker ever, and she would give her cakes to anyone who wanted them. She was a very plain woman, she wasn't a showy lady and she didn't tell people what she did — she just did it. She was probably the biggest influence of my life. But I can't leave out my other family members, because they were important too.

CA: So you talked about all of the small Orthodox *shuls*. What was synagogue involvement like for you and in your youth? Were you connected to a synagogue?

ES: My parents belonged to an Orthodox *shul*. It was like the most religious of all the *shuls*. Rabbi Fine was the head rabbi in Scranton, the head Orthodox rabbi. I would go there but I didn't go very often, and I'll tell you why — because I didn't understand what was going on... but about half a block from my house was Temple Israel, which was the Conservative *shul*. My mother didn't want to send me to Hebrew school at the Orthodox *shul* because it was about five blocks from my house. She wanted to send me to Temple Israel because then I only had to cross one street and it was a half a block from the house. So as soon as I was able to go to Hebrew school, I became a Conservative Jew at Temple Israel. Really the only time I would go to the Orthodox *shul* was Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur after I was done at Temple Israel. And, I had to sit with the women, you couldn't sit with the men, and everyone was *davening* (praying) at a different pace. Stan and I were married at Temple Israel, and I always considered it my *shul* in Scranton.

I wasn't actually that active in *shul* at those times. The JCC, I was very active. I was in a sorority, and I ended up being national president of my Jewish sorority after we were in charge of the national convention. I helped with collecting money for Federation, things like that.

CA: What is your sense of the role that women

have played in the leadership over the history of Temple Isaiah?

ES: Well that's easy. There's no question it's equal. I mean, who even looks if someone is a man or a woman. It just doesn't make any difference. We've had some wonderful men be president, and we've had some wonderful women be president.

CA: As a perennial volunteer, what are some of the values that you would hope to pass on to the next generation of Temple Isaiah volunteers?



ES: The same thing that I have tried to pass on to my children, that anything you can do for somebody else is a plus. That it makes you feel good when you do for other people. Sometimes you need to step out of your own little wall and do for other people, not just for your own family. And I don't do these things for any kind of recognition or because I want it back. But I

will tell you that this past summer has been amazing. I have never seen anything like this in my life. People came out of the woodwork to bring us meals, to make calls to see how I was doing, to bring us gift cards so we can do DoorDash or something like this. And most of these people are from Temple Isaiah. You do it because it makes you feel good when you do for other people, and what I've learned this past summer is that you never know when the shoe is going to be on the other foot. And that's not something that I've thought of before. But I am so grateful to everyone who came forward.

One last thought about what it is to be a woman of valor. I think it comes with a responsibility to show others how they can also do and give back. To volunteer, whether there is public acknowledgement or not. And, of course I am also very proud that my children are following in Stan's and my footsteps, including our sons-in-law and now our four grandsons. All of them are doing what they can to help those in need. ■

the first time — the stories of those whose voices have been silenced for too long, the countless number of women who have enriched our people from biblical times on.”

I could not agree more, and am grateful that Rabbi Priesand (and others who came before, but whose memory take more work to uncover, such as Rabbi Regina Jonas — another topic for another time) both opened the door and held it open. We are all better for the presence of Women of Valor in leadership positions throughout the Jewish community and beyond.

I would be remiss if I did not end this column with a note of appreciation for the love and care that this community has showered upon Pamela, myself, and our whole family following the sudden and unexpected death of her father, Saul Shenberg z”l just before Rosh HaShanah. It was truly a comfort to receive the many notes and cards, calls, and expressions of support that we were flooded with over the last month. Returning home after the funeral and *shivah* in New Jersey to observe *shivah* in the filled sanctuary of Temple Isaiah was a reminder of the comfort provided by our extended congregational family. Thank you for these expressions of care and love, and for allowing me to share words of tribute to him at our *Kol Nidrei* service.

As the final verse of *Eishet Chayil* says: “Let the fruit of her hands praise her, and let her actions sing her praises in the public square.” ■

MatzohBall 2022 by Lisa Jolles

The 18th Matzohball 5K and 1 Mile Fun Run was held on Father's Day 2022. It was a beautiful day at Centennial Park, filled with TI and community members, runners, joggers, walkers, and spectators, including our own Matzohbelles, to add encouragement by ringing their cowbells! There were prizes, the infamous "Running of the Rabbis," family-friendly activities, and community information tables provided by Family Wellness Day. Thanks to our sponsors, as well as our generous TI members, the event raised \$20,000 to be distributed between TI and three worthy Howard County charities: Grassroots, Hopeworks (Domestic Violence Center), and DreamBuilders.

Mark your calendar now for the 19th annual Matzohball on June 4, 2023! Our committee is already well into the planning. We are hoping for new energy and looking for help to create an even better event with more community involvement. We need help at all levels, but particularly with social media and website management. There are plenty of jobs, before, during and after race day, so if you can't help ON June 4, but can give us a few hours, please let us know! Look out for an email with a sign-up genius to volunteer. ■



Because I was the only rabbi in Kenosha, “it was nice to be just ‘the rabbi’ not the ‘female rabbi.’” There were other female clergy of a similar age, so I wasn’t alone in a male-only clergy environment.

DP: How has the Rabbinite changed since your ordination?

DF: People of my age group and younger are “more human rabbis rather than lofty God-like figures” of older times. We wanted to be seen as peers by our congregants. There was also very little path back then to be a “part time” rabbi, but that is now a very positive career option for rabbis.

DP: What are some challenges you no longer encounter as a woman, what barriers still remain? In what ways is it easier (or harder) for female colleagues who have been ordained in the last 20 or so years?

DF: Still much hasn’t changed: pay disparity, job advancement challenges, sexism; the CCAR report on Women in Rabbinite showed those challenges are still very present, even if not as obvious as in the past. The path is easier in some ways, but there are still plenty of barriers.

DP: Have you mentored female colleagues, in particular regarding navigating the Rabbinite as a woman?

DF: My mentoring has been both toward men and women who are now rabbis, encouraging them to go into the Rabbinite, giving opportunities to serve in my place as a Sabbatical Rabbi. I’ve had two rabbis, one female and one male, grow up at my congregation including one who was my first Bar Mitzvah in Kenosha, and I also worked with a student who came to the University of Wisconsin Parkside and would go on to be a rabbi, along with another rabbi who grew up in neighboring Racine, Wisconsin.

DP: How has having women in the Rabbinite changed Reform Judaism?

DF: The movement has become more open to women in leadership all over the place, not just on the *bimah*, but in lay leadership as well. It also paved the ground a bit for today’s openness to various gender identities, and a generally more-inclusive movement.

Rabbi Feingold’s congregation, Beth Hillel, will be celebrating its centennial in the 2024–25 year, along with Rabbi Feingold’s 40th year as the Rabbi of the congregation. As the centennial year concludes, Rabbi Feingold will transition into retirement after a 43-year career. ■

Want to learn more? Here are some resources to check out:

- <https://www.keshetonline.org/resources/whats-in-a-pronoun/> — Learn more about pronouns, including the use of “they” as a singular pronoun
- <https://www.keshetonline.org/resources/what-is-an-ally/> — Learn more about Allyship and how you can support the creation of gender expansive and LGBTQ-Affirming communities
- <https://rac.org/blog/what-torah-teaches-us-about-gender-fluidity-and-transgender-justice> — Read a sermon from Rabbi David Meyer on gender diversity in the Jewish tradition
- <https://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/the-eight-genders-in-the-talmud/> — Learn more about the different gender categories described in the Talmud ■

Welcome *New and Returning Members!*

Nathan Alexander & Stacey Rubin
Ari Alexander

Sheryl Amster

Susan Berkson Slaff & Jerald Slaff

Marlene Bishow

Janice Blum

Charles & Judith Broida

Andrew & Ilana Burgh
Gavriel and Yana

Barry & Rona Cohen

Steven Cohen & Jeffrey Williams
Benjamin Cohen-Williams

Ruth Cope

Matthew & Shannon Diamond
Elizabeth and Jacob

Ira & Judy Dwoskin

Jeremy & Shonte Eldridge
Elena

Gerald & Stacey Engel

Sheryl & Nick Forman
Spencer and Lila

Gordon & Sharon Fuller

Bernard Geller

Ari & Jennevie Giberman
Isabelle and Joshua

Alan & Lori Glazer
Sophia, Hannah, and Lauren McKee

Hirsh & Debbie Goldberg
Hallie and Shira

Ronald & Susan Golkow

Ellen Goodman

Charles & Susan Goorevich

Robert & Susan Gould

Lynn Green

Neal Green

Gregg & Allison Greenberg
Jacob, Colin, and Caleb

Hannah & Jonathan Herrington
Zoey and Mikayla

Judith Iliff

Harris & Alison Kaplan
Hayden and Dylan

Noah & Elizabeth Kenez
Emily and Jacob

Stephanie & Ted Kaufman
Emery and Maya

Marshal Klaven & Christina Ebert
Jasper and Ruby Ebert-Klaven

Ricky & Emily Lasser

Ellen Lerner

Nelson & Ellen Levin

Judd Lewis & Jennifer Recant
Ethan and Noah Lewis-Recant

Elaine & Andrew Liss

Heather Mongilio & Will Malone

Rory & Emilie Murray
Theodore, Cora, and Eila

Alicia & Kraig Nussbaum
Hailey, Avery, and Riley

Jeffrey & Barbara Packer

Alexandra & Bradley Palmer
Tripp

Stephen & Corinne Polsky

Robert Rabinowitz & Marjorie Fass

Scott & Lauren Reed
Adeline and Sophie

Zachary & Chelsea Salzberg
Noah and Eliana

Ronald & Betty Ann Secorie

Pam Skulsky

Sarah & Rudy Yukich
Nina and Bayla



Who's Who @ Temple Isaiah



Name: Matthew Weil

Family: My wife, Allison (the new TIPS director), and daughters, Abigail and Isabel (both at Gorman Crossing Elementary School).

Hometown: Wayne, NJ

Something You Might Not Know About Me: I work with most of the country's secretaries of state and local election officials. I regularly appear on TV, radio, and

in major newspapers. I have also been an official government spokesperson for the US Treasury Department. I'm an Eagle Scout and diehard Yankees fan.

Position at Temple Isaiah: VP of Communications

I've Been a Member Here Since: 2019 (TIPS family since 2016).

People Can Come to Me If They Need: Have suggestions to better meet the community's needs. I want to hear if any member believes we are not being clear communicating within our congregation or when we are sharing our great programs externally.

Why I love being at TI: It truly is the vibrant Jewish community my wife and I were seeking when we moved to Howard County. The clergy and lay leaders are super engaged and impressive. There are fun and appropriate programs for all ages. TI will fit our family during all stages of our life into the future. I am excited to be taking on this leadership role in such a dynamic congregation. ■



For next year, the MatzohBall would like YOUR idea on the iconic MatzohBall shirt. Please send any slogans and sketches to brian@jollesfinancial.com by December 31, 2022!



Temple Isaiah
12200 Scaggsville Rd.
Fulton, MD 20759

Non-profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Columbia, MD
Permit No. 139



Temple Isaiah Board of Trustees 2022–23

Alex Hoffman

President

Michelle Ostroff

Executive VP

Richard Slavkin

*Financial VP
and Treasurer*

Jessica Cade

Membership VP

Morey Kogul

Religious VP

Matt Weil

Communications VP

Felicia Hulit

Secretary

Deanna Putterman

TIPPS Representative

Aaron Brodsky

Kulanu Representative

Larry Levin

Men's Club

Sue Tafler

Sisterhood

David Glenn

Trustee

Mitch Kavalsky

Trustee

Jodye Russell

Trustee

Gary Perolman

*Immediate
Past President*

THANK YOU for Donating to Our Annual HHD Food Drive!

"I can't thank the members of Temple Isaiah enough for your generosity during this year's annual food drive benefiting Elizabeth House! We are so grateful for the 314 bags of groceries that you delivered earlier this month. You are all truly a blessing!"

As you can imagine, the lasting impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have tremendously increased the need for food assistance. During the last quarter, we provided pantry groceries to 565 families (1,933 family members), a 35% increase over the same period in 2021. Temple Isaiah's members' generous donations help FISH of Laurel meet the increased need for food security within the greater Laurel area. Elizabeth House / FISH of Laurel, Inc. is very grateful for our partnership with Temple Isaiah — with your annual food drive, your monthly opening team, and all the work you do in preparing and serving dinner on both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day — you are exactly the type of partner that we love.

Again, on behalf of the FISH of Laurel, Inc. Board of Trustees, our hardworking volunteers, and the individuals and families we serve, thank you for your generous donation!"

—Linda Crossley (Elizabeth House Food Pantry Coordinator)

