



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS

2020 – 2021

5781

Sunday, May 23, 2021

Annual Meeting on Zoom

5:00 PM

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA*

1. Welcome/ Determination of Quorum - Miriam Schwartz
2. D'var Torah - Rabbi Samuels
3. Rabbi's Report - Rabbi Samuels
4. President's Report - Miriam Schwartz
5. Financial Report and Budget - Terri Weiner
6. Election of Board of Directors - Steven Garfinkle
 - a. Slate selected by the Nominating Committee
 - b. Nominations from the floor
7. Looking Ahead - Josh Greenberg
8. Eternal Light Leadership Award - Miriam Schwartz
9. Adjournment

* All other reports may be found in the Annual Report Booklet

ELECTION OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICIERS

CBI BOARD OF DIRECTORS SLATE for 2021 - 2022

Bolded names are up for election.

Officers:

President: Josh Greenberg

Vice Pres: Harriet Markell

Vice Pres Jodi Litt

Treasurer: Karen Sloss

Secretary: Jane Relin

New Board Members:

Karen Sloss*

Stuart Berman

Up for Election to 3rd 2-year Board Term

Isaac Konikoff

Up for Election to 2nd 2-year Board Term

Paul Blum

Continuing Board Members (not up for election)

Steve Ban

Kevin Donner

Binnie Perper

David Schlitt

Tammi Dixon

Terri Weiner

* Appointed to the board in 2021 to fill a vacant seat.

Nominating Committee Members:

Steven Garfinkle - Chair

Tamar Clarke, Isaac Blum, Marta Brand, Lynn Korner (Board Rep), Vicki Jaffe

Candidate Biographies

Karen Sloss comes from a large, extended, pioneering family with roots in San Francisco and Portland, OR. Travel and a year in Israel at age 20 also had a major life impact. Now happily retired, she started out in nursing then continued helping others as a financial planner/investment advisor for 3 decades. A member of CBI for 34 years, Karen has served on a variety of committees, recently focusing on completion of the New Synagogue Project.

Stuart Berman was born and raised in Brooklyn NY, moved to the California, and resided in the San Francisco Bay Area where he lived for about forty-five years. He worked for many years for the City of Berkeley in Parks and Recreation but is now retired. He was president of Congregation Beth El in Berkeley as well as a trusty and longtime member of their board. He was one of the founders of a Jewish day school in the East Bay and has taught adult education courses at Beth El as well here at Beth Israel. He has been an ardent participant of Torah Study for many years and has lead Torah Study here as well as in Berkeley. He has also been a hospice volunteer for Oakland Kaiser for more than twenty years. He's interested in literature and mythology, as well as hiking and deep sea fishing.

FINANCIAL REPORT AND 2021-2022 BUDGET

Treasurer's Report

Terri Weiner

For Congregation Beth Israel's finances, as for every organization (and individual) it has been a strange year and a wild ride. The finance committee is grateful for the CBI community's unwavering support in these difficult times.

The spreadsheet included here shows CBI's financial status at the end of April 2021. While some types of revenue decreased, so did some of our expenses, so we have struggled through the shutdown without great fiscal crisis.

Also included here is a copy of the budget passed by the Board at our May meeting. It projects income and expenses based on a progressive reopening of our lovely home.

We know the pandemic and associated distress is not over yet. If you can do more this year, please consider aiding in CBI's recovery. If you are among those struggling, please continue to participate in the Beth Israel community. Your membership is more than your dues and we need each other even more in trying times.

No one is denied membership in Congregation Beth Israel for financial reasons. Please, however, do respond to your pledge letter. Without adequate information the budgeting task becomes impossible. Thank you all for your help.

I add my thanks, as well, to the people who serve on the finance committee, Karen Sloss, Marcia Lippman, Dan Ohms, Jeff Jaffe, David Robinson, David Goldman, and Miriam Schwartz.

And, of course, much gratitude is due to Mary Somerville, who maintains the accounting details at Beth Israel, making the treasurer's work possible.

**Congregation Beth Israel Income and Expense YTD
General Funds**

	Budget 20-21	7/1/20-4/30/21	% of Budgeted
		83% Amount	
Income			
Dues	315,000	303,266	96%
Religious School Tuition	51,700	27,803	54%
Religious School Scholarships	4,000		0%
Religious school Donations & Programs	8,000	286	4%
Donations - General	6,000	4,591	77%
HH Tickets & Donations	5,000	3,368	67%
Program Income	2,000	3,951	198%
Community Seder	10,000		0%
Social Hall Rental	2,500		0%
Solar reimbursement	4,500	4,564	101%
Fund Raising	12,000	5,810	48%
Shofar	1,200	1,010	84%
Investment Income	25	12	46%
Total Income	421,925	354,661	84%
Expenses			
Advertising	-		
Bank Service Charges	1200	1810	151%
Building Maintenance	25000	9926	40%
Security	18000	5434	30%
Committee Exp & leadership development	2400	165	7%
Conference for Congregational President	1500		0%
Volunteer appreciation	500		0%
HHD Expenses	3000	1390	46%
Donations	1500	360	24%
Insurance/ legal	7000	9753	139%
Licenses & Taxes	2500	2214	89%
PR: Rabbi & Administration	215000	179288	83%
Postage and Delivery	1000	593	59%
Programming	5000	2235	45%
Programming- Holiday	10000		0%
Religious School Expenses	85000	67457	79%
Supplies	11500	8888	77%
Telephone	5200	6564	126%
URJ Dues	17000	12444	73%
Utilities	9500	6189	65%
Total Expenses	421,800	314,710	65%
Income after Expenses	125	39,951	
PPP Grant		54,688	
T/R to Building fund		(50,000)	
Capital expenditures			
Comcast upgrade			
Balance adj to General Fund		44,639	

Bank Balances at 4/30/21

Non Restricted	
Operating checking	104,622.17
General reserves US Bank	198,721.38
	303,343.55
Restricted funds in these a/c	70,380.55
Total non restricted	232,963.00

Building Fund Accounts

Key Bank Bld Fund	211,617.90
Key Bank Brick Paver Fnd	6,752.27
Total Building funds	218,370.17

Congregation Beth Israel Budget 2021-22		
General Funds		
		Budget 21-22
Income		
Dues		330,000
Religious School Tuition		47,500
Religious School Scholarships		8,000
Religious school Donations & Programs		10,000
Donations - General		6,000
HH Tickets & Donations		4,000
Program Income holiday		15,000
Program income- events		6,000
rental income		4,000
Solar Reimbursement		-
Fund Raising		9,000
Shofar		900
Investment Income		20
Total Income		440,420
Expenses		
Advertising		
Bank Service Charges		1,000
Building Maintenance		25,000
Security		21,000
Committee Exp & leadership development		2,000
Conference for Congregational President		-
Volunteer appreciation		500
interim Exp		
HHD Expenses		3,500
Donations		1,500
Insurance/ legal		9,700
Licenses & Taxes		2,500
PR: Rabbi & Administration		226,000
Postage and Delivery		1,000
Programming		5,000
Programming- Holiday		10,000
Religious School Expenses		86,000
Supplies & Office		12,000
Telephone		6,500
URJ Dues		17,000
Utilities		10,000
Total Expenses		440,200
Income after Expenses		220
Capital expenditures		
PPP loan forgiven		
t/r to building fund		
Net change		220

EDUCATION

Kesher

Andrea Shupack

Our mission is to create enduring Jewish experiences that support and challenge our students and families to engage creatively with their Judaism, and inspire life-long Jewish learning.

Kesher's 2020/2021 school year certainly had its challenges, staying online all year because of Covid. But our program, with the continued efforts of our teachers and co-directors, provided meaningful content online all year, keeping our students involved in their Jewish learning. Students and teachers both reported enjoying classes. Overall, the year was as positive as it could be.

Some highlights from this year were incredible projects completed by 6th through 8th graders. From Israeli politics to Jewish role models, to family history and personal stories from the Holocaust, deep learning took place as students chose, researched, and presented their learning to their class, and to the community during student-led services. Family shabbat services led by each class were an incredible show of creativity and resilience by our students and teachers, as each class found unique ways to demonstrate their learning and lead prayers while on zoom. The videos put together by classes were incredible.

Other highlights were watching the younger students running back to the screen with items they found related to the topic of the day to share with the class and watching them jump and run around their room during Orly Ravitsky's and Josh Shupack's Hebrew Through Movement programs.

This year marked a brand new curriculum which I developed over the past summer. It was quite successful, and appreciated by teachers and students. I will continue to tweak and improve upon the positive changes implemented this year.

I am so optimistic and excited for where Kesher is going into the future. If this is what we could accomplish and learn while stuck on our screens, I know that our return to our building will bring some wonderful new opportunities. Our teachers (myself included), improved our skills, being stretched to think outside the box, adapt, and meet students where they are at in these new circumstances. These lessons and growth will carry over to in-person teaching in amazing ways. We have all become even better teachers through this process.

This summer, I will continue the curriculum work I started last summer by creating (among other things) a new holiday curriculum for each grade that builds upon the previous years. Some of my other main priorities for the upcoming school year are creating more opportunities for family engagement, continuing to improve our Hebrew program so that all students can decode Hebrew before entering 6th grade, building an effective Madrichim program, outreach to new families, and revamping our Mazel Tots and Gan programs. I will also be organizing and beautifying our space to get ready for our grand reopening. Thanks to the amazing work by Tamar Clarke and Joan Wayne, we will also have a newly remodeled Kesher youth library, which will be utilized regularly during classes.

Thank you to all those who have supported Kesher whether it is through teaching, volunteering, Mishloach Manot donations, or attending the school. It takes a village, and our whole community is a part of the success of our youth programs.

I want to personally thank Nicky Naiman, my Co-Director for the past year and a half. Nicky was an incredible partner, so easy to work and collaborate with. She took on the task of making all the administrative aspects of Kesher so easy to manage, she helped lead staff trainings, work with teachers on lesson plans, and step in wherever needed. We all pray for Nicky's complete healing, refuah sh'leimah.

Registration for the next school year will be opening in just one week. I will also be having Parent Forums in May and June to share new ideas for the school year, and hear feedback from families. As always, we hope you will reach out with any questions, ideas, support, or concerns. Kesher is all the richer because of your involvement.

Adult Education

Rabbi Joshua Samuels

2020/2021 was one of the strangest years we have ever experienced! Since our last Annual Meeting in May 2020, all of our classes have been held virtually. Coming on the heels of a very robust adult education menu the year before, this past year, at first glance, seems to be lacking in offerings. However, considering the environment, we were still able to offer courses throughout the year and fill many people's Jewish educational needs. With the new CDC guidelines, we are most anxious to get back to learning in person and we look forward to updating the community about these developments. Below are some of the highlights this past year.

Jay S Nahani led two courses this past year. In the summer, she facilitated a course titled, "**Writing Our Way Through: The Power of Words.**" This workshop set out to "tap into innate wisdom, challenge conditioned thinking, dispel myths, propel change, and open ourselves to potential shifts and deep healing." It used poetry as prompts, opening the doorway to free expression in a safe, mindfully held space.

In January and February, Jay S Nahani led a six-part series, titled, "**What is Righteous Writes Us.**" The class explored the concept of righteousness with readings by activists, scholars, and creative writers, as well as through their own writing and sharing. This generative writing class was mindfully designed for all levels. We are grateful to Jay for her offering this past year.

On March 7, we completed the **End-Of-Life series** with our final class centered on Jewish mourning rituals and traditions. Janis Ban spoke about the Beth Israel cemetery and representatives from three local funeral homes participated in a panel discussion. This was very well attended and we continue to urge our membership to fill out the End of Life wishes document. We thank the Chevra Kaddisha, Cemetery committee and Care committee for their leadership.

Judaism 201 saw the largest class in several years. The rabbi's Introduction to Judaism course was

conducted via Zoom and included one of the most interactive classes yet. As usual, the students came from a diverse background. Some were studying for conversion and some took the course for a refresher on Jewish topics.

Torah study continues to be a well-attended class and it also had at least a “minyan” each week. This weekly text study is open to anyone and is led primarily by Rabbi Samuels and sometimes by guests, including Roby Blecker, Mark Packer, and Stu Berman. We dissect the Torah portion, try to make sense of it in the context in which it was written, and then attempt to connect its messages and teaching to our own day and lives.

CBI Board member and Keshet teacher, Kevin Donner, continued to teach **Kuk Soon Won** (Korean martial arts) to a growing class, first via Zoom, and then in person, multiple times a week. This class has can be a great way for parents and children to bond while getting a good workout.

Finally, Rabbi Samuels led a mini-course on **Jewish Mysticism** through the center for lifelong learning at WWU. Several CBI congregants were in attendance and the rabbi plans to teach another course this winter.

Looking ahead: We hope to offer a **Nosh of Learning** this year in the spirit of 2020’s hugely successful Feast of Learning.

Stuart Berman is looking forward to getting back into the teacher’s chair and leading a course in Biblical literature. Stay tuned for the topic.

Cantorial soloist Andrea Shupack is also looking forward to teaching several courses.

If you have any ideas for Adult Education classes, please reach out to Rabbi Samuels and Andrea Shupack.

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Board Planning Activities

Jane Relin

In 2017, the Congregation Beth Israel Board of Directors created a three-year strategic plan and adopted six Priorities (goals) to be achieved. Those goals addressed: Community, Worship, Learning, Financial Stability, Social Action and Governance. In 2020, the Board took an in depth look at the congregation’s performance in these areas by asking all the major committees and taskforces to report their activities and accomplishments at a Board meeting.

Under accomplishments, the raising of \$8,000,000 and occupancy of the new synagogue was especially significant. Our finances have remained stable and we have maintained adequate reserves. Keshet was improved with new leadership, curriculum and advisory committee. Worship services were provided by well-respected clergy and were offered in keeping with Conservative and Contemplative traditions, in addition to those using the URJ prayer book. The Program Committee

was rejuvenated and there were more opportunities to come together in community. The Social Action Committee developed a Racial Justice statement and plans further learning on this important subject. A Facilities Maintenance Management Committee was developed and has taken on all the tasks related to the synagogue and surrounding property. We have learned much about how to keep the congregation and building safe and have implemented both technology improvements and procedures. The Human Resources Committee has established routine personnel procedures and assisted with documentation of office tasks and responsibilities. There are new Communication and Records Retention policies. The Nominating Committee standardized and improved Board member selection and the Governance Taskforce has updated Board and Committee job descriptions. Overall, there has been an improvement in standardization and documentation of synagogue practices.

Moving forward, the Board has decided not to do another 3-year plan at this time, but has identified 6 initiatives to be addressed this coming year. 1) Leadership training/development 2) Strategic financial planning 3) Develop a member in good standing policy 4) Improve outreach to Jews of color, LGBTQ Jews and others outside the mainstream 5) Increase outreach and communication with members 6) Provide more youth activities.

FACILITIES

Facilities Maintenance and Management Committee

Josh Greenberg, Chair

The Facilities Maintenance and Management Committee (hereafter FMMC) is a standing committee responsible for the maintenance, management, and rental of the building and grounds belonging to Congregation Beth Israel (CBI) at 751 San Juan Boulevard.

This model has been in effect for a full year and has been meeting monthly via Zoom. Even though the building has been closed due to Covid, there have still been lots of actions taken by the sub-committees. The individual sub-committees have end of the year reports so this doesn't need to reiterate all the great work they have done. As we see the light at the end of the tunnel for Covid restrictions, it won't be long before our building and grounds are again full of energy, warmth and prayer. Thanks to all the hard work from our volunteers who have put in their time and energy.

There are a number of sub-committees that meet on specific topics, and the chair of each sub-committee participates in the FMMC. The sub-committee reports by their chairs are as follows:

Ark Design Group

Vicki Jaffe

(Ark Design Group includes Vicki Jaffe, Katie Edelstein, Vicky Garfinkle, Miriam Schwartz, Marla Finkelstein, Warren Rosenthal and Dan Ohms)

The Ark Design Group is a subcommittee of the New Synagogue Task Force initiated by Warren Rosenthal five years ago. Our main directive was to create an Ark for the new sanctuary in collaboration with a local artisan of choice. The numerous meetings held over the years resulted in a final rendition designed by Tom Lutz which was unanimously approved by the NSTF and CBI Board. Our next goal was to construct and install the ark. A handful of generous donors made the first phase of construction a reality and the timber portals were installed March 2020. Since then we launched the "Mezuzah Project", mezuzot fabricated from the reserved wood of the Ark portal timbers. This was successful and funded a large portion of the Ark. We are currently approaching the completion of the remaining details of the Ark cabinet construction. We hope to have this installed as soon as possible.

Audio Visual Taskforce

Marta Brand, David Goldman

Members: Hank Levine, Josh Shupack, Vicky Garfinkle, Anne Marie Kroitzch, Tracey Levine, Isaac Konikoff, Rachel Lowenstein. Nancy Luster

Our task force was initially formed to improve the sound quality for services, musical and speaker events as well as everyday conversations in the sanctuary, social hall and foyer. To that end we have installed acoustic panels to reduce echo. We have also upgraded the sound system with line array Bose speakers that help reduce echo, by directing the sound into the audience and away from the ceiling. We have recently purchased a curtain which will separate the sanctuary from the social hall. The curtain should also dampen echoes which will help improve the sound quality in the sanctuary and social hall. We have met regularly throughout the Covid shutdown and will phase in more improvements for the hearing impaired after we test the improvements we have in place.

At the onset of the pandemic the synagogue was closed and the CBI Board asked our task force to explore ways to bring the High Holidays and Shabbat services to the congregation using the internet to live stream our services from our homes. We helped facilitate the use of Zoom, making recommendations to the Rabbi and Andrea Shupack on sound and video equipment to improve the quality of the live video streaming. As the pandemic comes under control, we expect to return to the synagogue and the Audio/Visual Task Force is being asked to set up live streaming video of religious services and other events held in the synagogue, so that congregants who cannot attend in person, can still participate in these events from remote locations. The Task Force is currently designing, purchasing and installing video and computer equipment that will allow us to conduct hybrid religious services which are services held in our synagogue that allow congregants at remote locations to participate in the religious services, connecting with the synagogue over the internet using their home computers, tablets and smart phones. This project requires the purchase and installations of cameras, projector screens, computer equipment to mix video and sound and send/receive live streaming video over the internet.

We are mindful that our sanctuary is a sacred space and the installation of this equipment will be done to hide the computer equipment in a control booth, make the cameras discreet, and try to make the projector screens blend into the decor so that we preserve the feel of our sanctuary as a sacred place

of worship. Covid has taught us a lot about the benefits of being able to enjoy services and meetings from our homes. We want to improve the experience for those who choose to participate at home as well as for those in the Synagogue.

Interior Design Group (IDG)

Katie Edelstein

The Interior Design Group (IDG) is a subcommittee of the Facilities, Maintenance and Management Committee and the following people serve on this group:

Katie Edelstein (Chair)	Vicki Jaffe	Vicky Garfinkle	Miriam Schwartz
Marla Finkelstein	Warren Rosenthal	Rabbi Samuels	

The IDG was initially formed to select and oversee interior design finishes during construction of the synagogue. The IDG continues to integrate the original goal set forth by the IDG when it was initially formed, *"maintain the overall "feel" of warmth, quietness, formality and sacred space."*

Since CBI During the past year, the group has worked in conjunction with several CBI groups including: Artwork Group; Ark Design Group; Dedications Committee; and the Acoustics Task Force.

In the coming year, the Interior Design Group is available to work in conjunction with any group as it relates to interior design features of the synagogue. The IDG will continue working with the Ark Design Group as it relates to furniture for the bimah, Acoustics Task Force, Kitchen Task Force and any other group in need of input from the Interior Design Group.

Events and Rental Subcommittee

Katie Edelstein

The Events & Rentals Subcommittee is composed of the following members:

Katie Edelstein (Chair)	Dan Raas	Karen Sloss	Josh Greenberg
Steven Garfinkle	Dan Ohms	Miriam Schwartz	

The goal of this subcommittee is to make sure best practices are followed, and, to do this, policies and procedures relevant to rental usage of the CBI facility were adopted when Congregation Beth Israel's new synagogue was opened. In addition, the Events and Rental Subcommittee's goal is to work with every person who is interested in using the facility to ensure their event experience is one that meets their event objectives while maintaining the decorum and sanctity of Congregation Beth Israel.

Due to the Covid pandemic, CBI has been closed for more than a year and therefore has not been available for anyone to rent space for any events. As soon as CBI is open again, a letter will be sent out to all parents of upcoming B'nei Mitzvahs to remind and encourage them to consider holding their

celebrations at CBI. In addition, CBI members will be notified when our synagogue is open to reserve space for future events.

The Events and Rentals chair will continue to oversee the process and meet with anyone interested in renting CBI's facility for their event. Anyone requesting additional information should contact Katie Edelstein at the following email: facilities@bethisraelbellingham.org.

We look forward to the day when we can open the doors of Congregation Beth Israel and begin celebrating in person again.

Maintenance Committee

Marta Brand and Marcia Lippman

Members: Marcia Lippman, Marta Brand, Isaac Blum, Isaac Konikoff

Covid put a damper on much of the activities of the maintenance committee this year. We suspended cleaning services with Merry Maids and garbage services, while having routine maintenance done on the furnace, elevator, fire suppression system and gutters. We also cleaned the restrooms, social hall, sanctuary and entry areas as needed. Per the Covid Task force request, signage was made for restrooms and trash collection areas. Isaac continued to keep our high-tech systems running and Isaac Blum watched over our elevator maintenance. We have also shopped competitive bids for cleaning services.

We are in process of phasing in cleaning and garbage services with the reopening of the synagogue.

Since we were unable to accomplish last year's goals, we'll give those another try this year.

- Expand number of volunteers serving on the Maintenance Committee
- Organize paperwork related to the building construction and maintenance.
- Clean and organize the storage rooms.
- Get competitive bids for services.

Property and Grounds Sub-Committee

Kevin Donner and Miriam Schwartz

Members: Marta Brand, Paul Blum, Cora Boothby, Mike Braunstein, Ian Horton, Karen Sloss, Mark Sommers

Even though the synagogue has been mostly unused due to the pandemic, things have been very busy on the property over the past year. The raingardens were completed in January, and these places receive and filter all the rainwater that comes off our parking lots. We have also completed the general landscaping, which includes hundreds of trees, plants, and flowers so that we all have a beautiful synagogue to return to. The county inspectors have approved the landscaping installation, and now we are moving into the maintenance phase.

The back patio also now has lights, so that we can celebrate outdoors well into the evening! The Memorial Garden will be completed soon, and this will be a cozy, contemplative spot to enjoy.

Our work coming up focuses on the maintenance and nurturing of the new plantings, while battling the weeds. We also hope to avoid hiring a commercial company to do the watering, but could use some reliable volunteers, so if you are interested, please let us know. Any money we don't spend on the necessary garden upkeep is available for other building projects, so we are doing our best to do it ourselves. Please contact Kevin Donner thekcd@hotmail.com or Miriam Schwartz pieface88o@gmail.com if you are interested in helping.

Safety and Security Committee

Dan Ohms

The members of the Safety and Security committee are Kevin Donner, Steven Garfinkle, Joshua Greenberg, Brooke Kassen, Isaac Konikoff, Kicky Naiman, Dan Ohms (Chair), David Zimmerman and Miriam Schwartz ex-officio.

This past year we have been reviewing our security infrastructure. Additionally, we were awarded a generous grant for window film, which will strengthen the windows. This project is now going out to bid. Under the leadership of Steven Garfinkle, who is heading up our grant writing group, we have applied for another grant to improve our boundary fencing. Although there are no guarantees, we have hope of securing this follow-up grant.

The Safety and Security committee is working closely with the Facilities Maintenance committee and the Covid-19 Reopening Task Force.

Technology Committee

Isaac Konikof

Members: Isaac Konikoff, Josh Shupack, Renee Relin, Erik Hammerstrom, Ann Suloway, Melissa Shapiro

The CBI Tech Committee formation was approved by the Board in October 2020.

We currently have 5 volunteers and are open to other congregants joining us if interested.

Past few meetings have been spent bringing committee members up to speed on the various technological systems in use at CBI.

Future plans are to document as much as possible so that IT work at CBI can be spread among volunteers more easily.

We also plan to assist other committees as needed.

COMMITTEES AND TASKFORCES

Archives

Tim Baker

The Archives Committee has not been involved in any specific projects or activities this past year, but is now in the process of transferring materials to the Special Collections Department at WWU, which is better equipped to preserve the material and make it available to more people.

Care Committee

Harriet Markell

Current members include Harriet Markell (Co-Chair), Else Sokol (Co-Chair), Sylvia Williams, Geraldine Reitz, Joan Wayne, Corinne Gimbel-Levine, Becky Van Glubt, Ruth Evans, Tracey Levine, Jodi Litt, Jerome Rosen, and Sarah Witte.

The Care Committee has engaged in another full and meaningful year of practicing G'milut Hasadim and Rachamim. The restrictions related to the pandemic limited our activity slightly, but we continued to provide meal trains, cards, and check-in calls to those in need.

This past year we have accomplished the following:

- Provided ongoing phone and other support for those on our Chavurim list: congregants and greater Jewish community members who are at risk for adverse emotional, spiritual and physical health consequences due to physical ailments, social isolation, or mental or physical disability;
- Conducted the last End of Life Planning workshop via Zoom in partnership with the Cemetery Committee;
- Organized meal trains for multiple congregants with temporary needs for support;
- Facilitated Covid vaccination access for our congregants in partnership with Health Ministries Network (HMN);
- Advocated for the vaccination of our clergy via HMN/PeaceHealth;
- Provided our expertise/participation in the Covid Reopening Taskforce, and
- Assisted with the delivery of the *mishloach manot* for Purim.

Plans for the coming year include continuation of our routine and COVID-19-related support for the community, including advocating for those still unable to return in-person. When the building opens, we will follow up on securing a wheelchair for the building to assist those who need help getting into services and events and discuss with the Social Action Committee the possibility of sharing permanent bulletin board space for information/education and notices for the congregation.

Cemetery Committee and *Chevra Kaddisha* Subcommittee

Janis Ban

Members of the Cemetery Committee: Debbie Adelstein (chair of finances), Janis Ban (chair), Diane Garmo, Dan Ohms, Cora Boothby, Marcy Probst

Members of *Chevra Kaddisha*: Women: Diane Garmo, Barbara Boothby, Janis Ban, Corinne Gimbel-Levine, Lynn Korner, Marcy Probst; Geraldine Reitz, Sarah Bauman, Miriam Schwartz Men: Emil Hecht, Steve Ban, Hank Levine, Barry Landau, Dan Ohms, Mark Weinstein, Miles Bryant

The Cemetery Committee continued ongoing work of maintaining cemetery, responding to inquiries, helping families buy plots and deal with burial issues at time of death, facilitating details around setting headstones, arranging for *Chevra Kaddisha* services, etc. We had 2 burials, sold 7 plots, and had 0 headstones installed.

- We changed our landscaping contractor to DeGroot Lawncare because Whatcom Lawns had greatly raised our rates because it took them much more time to mow than they expected.
- We had both entry gates repaired so they now open and close fully and easily.
- We had a virtual workshop for the 4th End of Life Session which completed the series. The Rabbi, Janis Ban, and three funeral directors spoke and answered questions.
- We revised and updated all our forms and handouts.
- We finalized and adopted a Greenish burial policy.

Communications Team

Melissa Shapiro

Team members: Melissa Schapiro (Chair), Isaac Konikoff (Technology), Harriet Markell (Board Liaison). With ongoing input from staff and lay leaders.

With the entire year working remotely, time was spent maintaining the congregational website, updating items and pages and providing online resources to the community. Also built a photo directory of members to add to the members only section of the website.

Ongoing: Maintaining payment forms online making it easier to register and pay for dues, classes, Keshet, and programming events.

Fundraising Committee

Karen Sloss

The CBI Fundraising Committee oversees all fundraising for CBI, although Kesher does some additional fundraising of its own. For the past 20 years, fundraising at CBI has mainly consisted of the Capital Campaign for the New Synagogue, the occasional fundraising event for a specific project and CBI's Scrip Program.

During the past fiscal year, the main fundraising activity was to support the New Synagogue Project including a 5-month Match Challenge that ended on March 31, 2021. The goal of the Match was to complete fundraising for the Project and a certain amount of new furnishings. Donations and pledges to the Match totaled \$180,000—with the matching funds a total of \$360,000 will be collected. Since that amounts to just over half the stated goal, additional money is still needed in the near future. But, major items including landscaping, acoustic improvements for the sanctuary, streaming services equipment and additional security measures scheduled for 2021 have been covered. Separate from the Match, an additional \$166,600 was raised over the past year for the New Synagogue.

With the completion of the Match Challenge, the Capital Campaign is officially winding down. Future fundraising for the New Synagogue, including direct outreach to members, will fall to the Fundraising Committee at large. We hope that all members will join us in supporting our New Synagogue Project to the extent they can, be it a first-time donation or an additional contribution. The success of our effort is directly related to broad congregational support. Aside from a few grants from the Homeland Security Administration to install security measures, the New Synagogue Project has been solely funded by members and friends of CBI. We sincerely thank all those who have the project over the years!

The CBI Scrip Program is an important, ongoing fundraiser coordinated by Joan Wayne that supports overall CBI operations. Please consider supporting the Scrip program as you shop locally or online or make use of gift cards.

The Fundraising Committee intends to expand the number of events and efforts at supporting CBI over the coming year and is actively seeking new members who either have fundraising/marketing/business experience or want to gain those skills. Besides funding the New Synagogue Project, the Committee aims to support CBI operations and eventually secure CBI's future with an Endowment Fund.

Fundraising Committee Members: Steven Garfinkle, Lynn Korner, Karen Sloss (Chair), and Joan Wayne with President Miriam Schwartz and Board Member Jodi Litt, Ex-Officio.

Governance Committee

Co-chairs: Mitch Press and Rena Ziegler,

Members: Roby Blecker, Josh Greenberg, Harriet Markell, Bruce VanGlubt, Ray Wolpow

The Governance Committee makes recommendations to the Board regarding ways to improve the organizational structure, communication flow, and operations of the synagogue. The Committee is sometimes tasked by the Board to update an existing Board position description or CBI policy or to develop a specific policy if there is no existing policy document. Our overall goal is to make sure that we have consistent, fair, and consensual governance guidelines for CBI.

Two of our members are CBI Board Vice Presidents, which ensures our continued focus on issues important to the Board.

Our work in the past year:

1. *Creation of a Governance Committee Charter* Governance existed as a task force for many years without a charter. Creation of the charter document helped clarify all aspects of Governance structure and scope.
2. *Revisions to the Treasurer Job Description* These revisions made clear the relationship of the position to the Board.
3. *Reassessment of CBI Governance Needs* Review of work that we have done in the past 13 years and analysis of areas still to be addressed.
4. *Review of the Two CBI Vice President Positions* (ongoing) Clarification of the roles of the two vice presidents and evaluation of the current system of succession.
5. *Analysis of Existing Committee Structure at CBI* (ongoing) An analysis of CBI committees is being done along with gathering information about committees at other URJ synagogues.

Human Resources Committee

Joan Sager

Members: Paul Blum, Roby Blecker, Dan Ohms, Miriam Schwartz, Bruce Van Glubt (Hiatus)
Joan Sager (Chair)

Since the inception of this committee in 2013, our mission statement has remained relevant and applicable:

"The Human Relations Committee will work towards facilitating positive employee relations; train to enhance employee skills, performance and job satisfaction and strive to create an atmosphere of professional work environment."

"Through this focus, the committee will work together to implement systems that would increase organizational effectiveness and promote compliance with federal and state nondiscrimination laws."

Our committee works in a collaborative/consensus style that thrives on the exchange of information, expertise and ideas that each committee member brings. We meet monthly to stay current with any employee related issue that might be occurring and to continue ongoing work in the areas of:

- Completing annual reviews for all CBI staff
- Maintaining Personnel Files so that they are up to date regarding forms and content
- Updating Job Descriptions
- Completing an annual legal review of our Employee Handbook
- To assist when needed with hiring and mediating
-

As a committee, we remain constant in our goal to ensure that employees are treated professionally, fairly and consistently at all phases of employment.

Kesher Advisory Group

Katie Edelstein (co-chair) and Rita Spitzer (co-chair)

The Kesher Advisory Group (KAG) is a standing committee responsible for providing guidance and support of the Kesher Center for Learning. KAG provides support to the Kesher Director (s) in matters of curriculum, programing, financial planning, administrative issues and strategic planning. This year we have continued our support in delivering Kesher programing in a virtual format. At The conclusion of the 2020 Kesher year, the KAG provided an opportunity for parent feedback in the form of a survey. The feedback gathered from the survey was helpful in planning the 2020/2021 Kesher school year. The KAG has assisted in developing a bank of instructional strategies that can be used when working with students with challenging needs.

Kesher Konect, an informational digital newsletter for Kesher families and the CBI community was created this year. Kesher Konect's objective has been to provide "at home" activities focused on the Jewish holidays. A unique Pre-K to 3rd Grade edition and 4th to 8th Grade edition were created. All Kesher Konect editions are available on the CBI website. We are currently in the process of planning for next year's Kesher Leadership, with a potential continued job share format.

KAG members are Tammy Dixon, Robin Curtis, Darcie Donegan, Sharon Feller, Rabbi Samuels, Miriam Schwartz

Kesher Parent Group

Tammy Dixon

With parents suffering from a severe case of Zoom burnout as well as being overwhelmed with the many new challenges the Covid pandemic brought to us, it was decided that the KPC would take a break for the past year. Pre-Covid we were really gaining momentum as a community and it is my sincere hope that the Kesher parents will continue their involvement as life settles back into a more predictable schedule. I look forward to planning more social gatherings like last year's Super Bowl party and helping our parents to feel included in the Kesher community through volunteering, in and out of the classroom.

Library Committee

Joan Wayne

Our building is closed but work on the adult and children's libraries has continued. We have acquired many new children's books. The catalogue can be found online in the Beth Israel website under ADULTS. There are thousands of books waiting for eager readers!

Membership Committee

Ann Suloway and Susan Mahar

Members: Becki Van Glubt, Joan Wayne, Kristin Sykes David, Marta Brand, Michelle Beller-Siegfried, Rita Spitzer, Erin Cohen and Sarah Witte. Board Liaison: Jodi Litt

This fiscal year the membership committee had to rethink how to support potential members and welcome new members that joined during Covid 19. As a committee we all agreed that reaching out either by phone, email or written notes was how we could achieve our collective goals.

During the High Holidays we wrote handwritten notes to the entire congregation. We have called all new members several times to both welcome and connect and we were even able to deliver welcome bags using Covid 19 precautions.

New members who indicated interest in committee work were referred to committee chairs. We also connected new members with other interests for example, the Sisterhood Book Club.

We have decided to add to our mission to follow-up by phone on those who are not renewing membership. We will be sharing this with the board.

The committee has been pleased to welcome 12 new member families into our CBI community this year. 4 moved away, 6 have died (3 of those were spouses of people who are still members), 7 have told us they are not renewing and 5 have been taken off the membership due to lack of response in more than 2 years. Total membership at this time is 261. (Last year we had a membership of 267)

Thank you to Mary Somerville for all her administrative support. Thank you, Rabbi Samuels and

members of the Board for their support in the welcoming process. A special thank you to Jodi Litt, our Board liaison.

NFTY (serving 9th through 12th grade youth)

Amanda Robins and Daniel Zagnoli

This year has seen some exciting changes for the BAY (Bellingham Area Youth) Group. We have a board of three dedicated teens who help plan and lead events each month for their peers. These teens are all juniors and sophomores. In the past, the group has lost whole rosters of board members as they've graduated; this year we are excited to continue to have these teens' leadership and participation into next year as well. Our board president is Shalem Blum, the Religious and Cultural Vice President is Ben Sommers, and our Fundraising Vice President is Adin Sokol.

Just like every other committee, our work has been impacted by COVID. The youth group events usually pause for the summer, but since Camp Kalsman and many other engagement opportunities were canceled, the BAY Board decided to continue to host events over the summer, albeit virtually. The teen board has done a great job in planning creative and engaging events for their peers online. We've held Jewish themed events like a Purim costume contest and discussing anti-Semitism, making matzoh balls for Passover (a live cooking class hosted by Amanda), many Saturday night Havdalah evenings led by Ben Sommers, our Religious and Cultural Vice President. We've also hosted events that were "just for fun" including a virtual Chopped competition, a scavenger hunt, and playing games online together.

One of the event highlights for the year was co-hosting an event with CABIT, the temple youth group from Boise, Idaho. CBI teens partnered up with their board counterparts from CABIT and planned an event full of fun and learning. Teens played Jewish charades, discussed social action initiatives related to climate change, and discussed the weekly Torah portion. Fun was had by all and we look forward to continuing to connect virtually with other smaller congregations around the region.

A final piece of news we would like to share with you all is that Daniel and Amanda will be stepping down from their role as youth group advisors at the end of this school year. Serving as the CBI youth group advisors for the past five years has been very fun and rewarding. We feel so lucky to have gotten to know and work alongside an amazing group of Jewish teens. We will be available to support whoever steps into this role next to ensure a smooth transition.

Oneg Committee

Joan Wayne

This has been an easy year for the oneg committee. When we are ready to meet in person again our committee will create a hostess list. We will consult with the Covid committee on how to make onegs safe and welcoming.

Program Committee

Andrea Shupack and Emily Weiner

Members: Roby Blecker, Erin Cohen, Bob Goldman, Dan Raas, Jane Relin, Melissa Schapiro, Miriam Schwartz, Ann Suloway, Joan Wayne, Terri Weiner.

Emily and Andrea took over as co-chairs in July 2020. The committee meets monthly. We have created effective systems for communication, decision making, evaluation, and leaving a written record of our events including logistical details, financial information, and lessons learned. Any committee member who wants to propose a program recruits a few people willing to work on it with them and fills out our event proposal form; the committee discusses the proposal, offers suggestions, and typically says: Great, go ahead! Other CBI members and Rabbi Samuels also sometimes propose programs they want to work on with the Program Committee—so please get in touch with Andrea or Emily if you have an idea.

The Program Committee provides meaningful Jewish learning and experiences through our programs to the CBI and wider communities. We aim to use programming in a variety of ways, depending on the nature of each event we plan, to accomplish one or more of the following:

- build and strengthen the CBI community
- welcome students involved with Hillel
- attract unaffiliated Jews to CBI
- build relationships with the broader community

This year all events have been on Zoom:

- **October 2020:** “Exploring Jewish Topics in the film *They Ain't Ready for Me*,” a panel discussion featuring Rabbi Samuels, Bryant Heinzelman, Chana Suarez, and Andrea Shupack; in cooperation with the Pickford Film Center (video of panel is on CBI website under Adult Education)
- **October 2020:** Talk and discussion about Israel with Stand With Us
- **November - December, 2020:** Visiting scholar Joel Hoffman presented “Hidden Jewels of the Prayer Book,” in three sessions
- **April 2021:** Talk and discussion with Anat Hoffman, Director of Women of the Wall and Executive Director of Israel Religious Action Center of the URJ
- **May 2021:** Poetry reading by Richard Widerkehr
- **Upcoming: June 6, 2021:** Author interview of Jonathan Ned Katz about *The Daring Life and Dangerous Times of Eve Adams*; co-sponsored by Village Books and two units of WWU: Western Libraries’ Heritage Resources and The Ray Wolpow Institute for the Study of the Holocaust, Genocide, and Crimes Against Humanity

Throughout the year, our committee also suggested that CBI publicize many other programs with Jewish content that were being presented remotely by other organizations. In the coming year, we expect to collaborate on programs with the Social Action Committee. And we are looking forward to when it is safe to present in-person and hybrid events.

Ritual Committee

Rabbi Samuels

Members include: Roby Blecker, Steve Ban, Rena Ziegler, Andrea Shupack, Geraldine Reitz, Miriam Davids, Dan Ohms

The Ritual Team has met several times since last year. The majority of meetings centered on two main topics. Earlier in the year they focused on High Holy Day planning during Covid-19. Andrea and I could not have led the services via Zoom without the support and guidance of the Ritual Team. We spoke about all facets of HHD worship and debated how the multi-day observances should look and feel to the community. In the end, we are pleased with how it all worked out. While the services were all virtual, there was a lot of planning behind the scenes and so much credit goes to Andrea Shupack for facilitating the various singing groups, musicians, and soloists. One highlight of the season was our in-person gathering at Lake Padden for Tashlich. This was the first time our community had been together and while we did not sing together, it was an emotional experience nonetheless.

The other topic we have discussed several times focuses on the use of electronics needed for a hybrid model. Specifically, what does a hybrid model of worship and learning look like? What parts of a hybrid system will feel unnatural and perhaps sacrilegious? Will the use of screens deter one from experiencing a sense of kedusha during worship? Will screens interfere in any way, even if not in use? It has been helpful for the Ritual Team and Audio/Visual Task Force to meet and talk about these issues together.

We all recognize the benefit our virtual services have had in terms of outreach and inclusivity. How can we continue to serve those who are unable to be with us in person while at the same time honoring our Jewish traditions? These are questions we continue to ponder. Rabbi Samuels has introduced texts and responsa literature to help with these conversations.

Records Retention Task Force

Harriet Markell

A Records Retention Task Force was chartered by the Board of Directors in August 2020 to develop a policy and procedures for the ongoing maintenance and retention of official/essential CBI records. Included in the charge is:

- Identification of categories of records/files deemed official/essential – paper and electronic
- Identification of storage locations – paper and electronic, including establishment of a central electronic file database and authorized access
- Identification of people (board positions, employees, volunteers) responsible for ensuring storage implemented per policy
- Specification of length of maintenance of various categories of files
- Plan for oversight of policy and procedure implementation
- Other policies/procedures as identified by the taskforce

- The estimated timeframe for completion of this task was 18 months, at which time the task force would sunset.

A team of key committee chairs and other stakeholders was constituted with Tammy Dixon and Harriet Markell as leads, to design and execute on a project plan. After multiple meetings, it was decided that a smaller group should work through the initial steps and bring various others in as content experts/record-holders. Harriet, Tammy, and Isaac Konikoff have been working together and are now collaborating with the Technology Committee to facilitate the critical decisions about synagogue technology platforms, a necessary piece of the puzzle about file storage and maintenance. A survey of document-holders is part of the plan, to identify what documents we have, where they live, and where they need to go, including archiving and destroying.

Scrip Program

Joan Wayne

The Scrip Program has been a consistent fundraiser for Beth Israel for over a decade. Because of Covid-19, many congregants have chosen to have their groceries delivered and SCRIP cannot be used for curbside pickup groceries. Scrip Revenue is down this year. As more of us are vaccinated and we return to grocery shopping, please consider using SCRIP again or for the first time! These merchants are always available: Haggen, Safeway, Fred Meyer, Food Co-op, and Starbucks. Contact Joan Wayne with Questions or to place an order at jwayne2@gmail.com or 360-676-8939.

Social Action Committee

Linda Blackwell

Members - Linda Blackwell and Corinne Gimbel-Levine (co-chairs), Andrea Shupack, Miriam Schwartz, Arlene Feld, Minda Rae Amiran , Jerome Rosen, Nancy Auerbach , Gloria Lebowitz, David Schlitt, Kristin Sykes-David , Sarann Donegan , Wendy Miller, Joan Wayne and Howard Sharfstein .

The pandemic did cause alterations to how the committee operated but we were able to continue our commitment to the Interfaith Coalition and also begin the CBI Anti-Racist campaign. We further remained committed to a focus on Climate Change solutions .

With the Interfaith Coalition the committee was able to continue support for the Family Promise program by supplying meals on four different weeks this year. We collected coats for the fall Coat Drive. We had Food Drives for the Bellingham Food Bank in a limited format during the High Holidays and Passover. We encouraged direct donations to this organization as well as the DVSAS charity during the winter.

The Anti-Racist focus for the social action committee began last August. There were a number of drafts and discussions in our committee and at the board level. The Board approved an Anti- Racist

Pledge for Congregation Beth Israel in November. The social action committee is planning a forum to discuss the intersectionality of racial inequality and anti-Semitism. The congregation's concern with racial justice is mirrored at the national level by The Reform Movement of Judaism with the launch of a Racial Justice Campaign April 6th 2021. A Racial Justice Survey is being collected to assess the desires of congregants on future engagements and activities on this topic.

The Social Action Committee is committed to a focus on climate change solutions. An Earth Day /Mitzvah Day event this year was held at the end of April. The event featured speakers Howard Scharfstein and Steven Hollenhorst on "Creating a Carbon Conservation Trust Movement." We sponsored a letter-writing campaign and petitions on climate change. Andrea led us in some wonderful songs celebrating Earth Day. We hope to develop more programs on sustainability in the upcoming year.

The Social Action Book Club has met twice this year. The books we discussed covered the subject of racial injustice. We are thinking of a cookbook for our next meeting. Please contact us if you have ideas for books. Our next book club will meet via Zoom.

If you have other ideas, if you would like to volunteer with one of our ongoing projects listed above, or you are interested in joining the Social Action Committee, please let us know! You can email the committee / Linda Blackwell, at blackwellbham@gmail.com. If you are interested in The Family Promise program please contact Joan Wayne or Corinne Gimbel-Levine. We need more volunteers to make all this happen!

University Liaison

Steven Garfinkle

As of this writing, WWU is currently in its fourth quarter of remote learning as result of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Campus activities have been significantly curtailed because of the closing of all indoor, and most public, activities. I continue to work to support the Hillel advisor and the Hillel Community Board. CBI's ongoing support (financial and otherwise) of Hillel of WWU plays a role in making Hillel programs available to Jewish college students who wish to connect with other Jews, who wish to celebrate Shabbat or holidays, and who are looking for ways to grow in their Jewish identity. These activities have continued remotely, and all students are also invited to participate in our remote CBI activities.

I continue to work, along with other members of our community, with WWU to ensure implementation of the recommendations of the task force on responding to and preventing antisemitism.

SCRIP GIVES BACK

What is Scrip? Pre-paid gift cards that give back 3%-17% to CBI.

Scrip is currently earning CBI about \$600/mo. It could be 3X that amount if everyone participated. It is **easier than you think!!** Really!!

Scrip can be used for **things that you buy already** – like groceries, coffee drinks, books, and clothes. It also makes a **lovely gift** – while **helping CBI get more funds to do more exciting things in the year ahead.**

Scrip is now available for:

Safeway, Haggens, Fred Meyers, Food Co-op, Village Books, and a long list of other stores and vendors – like Amazon, Starbuck's, Land's End, and a whole lot more!

Contact Joan Wayne to order, jawayne@gmail2.com

Contact Miriam Schwartz for a testimonial on how easy it is to use: pieface88o@gmail.com.

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