



CONGREGATION
BETH ISRAEL

ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS

2022 – 2023

5783

Sunday, May 7, 2023

3:30 PM

Annual Meeting Agenda

May 7, 2023

1. Welcome / Determination of Quorum
2. D'var Torah - Rabbi Samuels
3. Reports
 - a. Rabbi's Report - Rabbi Samuels
 - b. President's Report – Josh Greenberg
 - c. Treasurer's Report and Budget - Karen Sloss
4. New Business
 - a. Election of Board of Directors - Miriam Schwartz
5. Eternal Flame Award - Rabbi Samuels
6. Adjournment

2023 - 2024 CBI Board of Directors Slate

EXECUTIVE TEAM:

President:	Jodi Litt *
Vice President 1:	Erin Cohen *
Vice President 2:	Jane Relin *
Treasurer:	Karen Sloss
Secretary:	Tammy Dixon *

AT LARGE BOARD MEMBERS:

Steve Ban
Jason Benhaim (new) *
Stuart Berman *
Paul Blum *
Tamar Clark (new) *
Miriam Davids (new) *
Kevin Donner
Josh Greenberg (Past President)
Binnie Perper
Terri Weiner *

YOUTH MEMBER:

TBA

* Indicates those members who are new, are up for re-election, or are in new roles.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Nominating committee: Miriam Schwartz (chair), Vicky Jaffe, Marcy Probst, Joan Wayne, Jodi Litt (Board Rep), Josh Greenberg (Ex-Officio)

We have several Board members who are new to the Board, or who are holding different positions. The Board members who are stepping down are Harriet Markell, who is moving to Jerusalem, and Isaac Konikoff and Miriam Schwartz, who have completed their Board service. Josh Greenberg is stepping off the Executive Team to the position of past president for a two-year term. The bios for the new Board Members are below.

This year also concludes Vicki Jaffe's term on the Nominating Committee, and we thank her for her service. We welcome Joan Wayne and Marcy Probst, who have stepped up to join the Nominating Committee this year. Josh Greenberg will be adding new members to this Committee in the fall. Please let him know if you are interested in being on this committee, or serving on the Board.

Jason Benhaim has been involved in Jewish life since his earliest days, attending the same Bay Area day school as Rabbi Samuels and ultimately graduating from Milken Community High School in Los Angeles. After earning a BA in English from Stanford University, he began working at various food co-ops around the country, including Seattle's PCC Community Markets, gaining leadership experience and a taste for tikkun olam along the way. He has since switched gears, and is now an academic coach and Keshet teacher. For the past ten years, he and his wife Carly have been enjoying life in the Pacific Northwest, sharing in big adventures like thru-hiking the Pacific Crest Trail, living aboard a sailboat, and attending regular meditation retreats. Last year, they embarked on their biggest adventure yet: parenthood! You can find them with their son Oren at Tot Shabbat and family services—just look for the blue-eyed baby with chunky cheeks and a big smile.

Tamar Clarke grew up north of Seattle in a close-knit and adventurous Jewish family, spending time living on kibbutzim in Israel and endless summer months sailing in the San Juans. She worked at the Union for Reform Judaism in Chicago for four years as Assistant Director of Olin-Sang-Ruby Union Institute and then moved back to the West, eventually landing in Anchorage teaching high school. In 2008, Tamar, her husband Shawn, and their two daughters, Talia and Mia, moved to Bellingham and joined CBI. She's enjoyed working on various CBI committees and thinks that the Keshet library and collection of new books is the synagogue's best kept secret. Tamar coordinates library services for youth for the Whatcom County Library System and is always ready to talk about whatever it is that you are reading.

Miriam Davids has been a member of CBI for 30 years, joining, as many families do, when it was time to start her son in Religious School. Over the years, she became interested in many aspects of synagogue life. Anne Brown invited her onto the Membership Committee, and, from there, she found herself more and more involved. Over the years she's served on many committees and was a former Board Member and Board President. She recently rejoined the Membership Committee and has served on the Ritual Committee for several years. Outside CBI, she serves on the Board of the Kulshan Chorus, has 3 dogs who keep her on my toes, helps take care of two of her great-nieces, runs, bowls (mediocre) with friends, plays Wordle, Quordle, Octordle and Nerdle daily, spends some time "learning" Italian on Duolingo, tries to keep her personal impact on the planet small, and stays connected with friends and family.

RABBI'S REPORT

It is hard for me to believe that I am about to enter my twelfth year as your rabbi. Nicole and I continue to feel embraced by the Beth Israel community and I am grateful for how my life has unfolded since I arrived in Bellingham with my family in the summer of 2012. I continue to feel blessed and privileged to be able to walk with you on our Jewish journeys.

The following is a brief recap of this past year.

Adult Education

My Judaism 201 class that caters to both folks new to Judaism and those who want a refresher, saw the largest attendance to date. I was thrilled to offer this class in person with a few joining via Zoom. My favorite aspect of the class, however, was not teaching it, but hearing how students formed friendships and created community. I am still trying to figure out what "Judaism 301" might cover. If you have any suggestions, let me know.

I also just finished teaching Jewish Medical Ethics. This is topic I have always been interested in, ever since I learned from Rabbi Elliott Dorff while I was in rabbinical school. The class itself was only three sessions, but we covered a lot of ground and I think this might be a topic I'd like to continue exploring over the years.

Stuart Berman taught a class, once again, for the CBI community. This time it focused on the King David story. I am so appreciative of Stuart for teaching classes and I always look forward to discussing possible course topics during the summer. He is also my substitute for Torah Study when I am away. If you have not yet learned with Stuart, sign up the next time it's possible.

Jewish Festivals

By the time of this meeting, we will have celebrated Passover and held the first 2nd Night Community seder in four years. That is something to be grateful for. A big kudos to Jane Hammerstrom, Nicole Samuels, and the rest of the seder committee for making this year's event happen.

Our High Holy Day experience was lovely, once again. David Goldman and the Acoustics Task Force have put in so much time to improve the sound in our sanctuary and this year felt much better than previous years. Highlights of this season for me were Kol Nidre, Tashlich at Lake Padden, and Simchat Torah. Writing a sermon about reproductive rights was something I had wanted to do for years, and I am appreciative for many peoples' comments and support.

We hosted our first Purim carnival since Covid began and a big thank you goes to Cathy Zitzer and everyone who helped make that day happen. It would be wonderful if we could give Cathy more support and create a Purim team, much like we have for the seder. I had a blast at the Erev Purim event which consisted of incredible megillah chanting, Purim trivia, a consume contest (congrats Serge Lindner!), and an interactive 1980's prom spiel.

Chanukah was also a lot of fun this year and we must acknowledge Victoria Mayers and so many Keshet parents and congregants who organized our communal party. The Program team hosted an 8th night dinner and movie event that was successful as well.

As I write this, I am looking forward to our annual Yom HaShoah service, led by our 8th grade class. They have been led by Leah Sauter and Ray Wolpow this year. The service will resemble past Yom HaShoah services when Ray was the primary teacher for this class. I am grateful that

Ray has been working with Leah and Kesher this year and I hope, for the sake of our students, that he is able to continue serving in the same or a similar role moving forward.

Shabbat

We are now offering the widest variety of Shabbat services that CBI has ever offered. The first Friday of the month is our Family service, led by Kesher song leader, Mikayla Goodkin and Kesher Director, Leah Bordman. They are fun, engaging, and campy, and we are utilizing visual tefillah. The fourth Friday is our Ma'ayan Shir Shabbat, and I am looking forward to the day when our ensemble leader, Rena Zeigler, will be back on the bima with our lay singing group. The first Saturday of select months is now led by congregants Miriam Buckman and Ella Katz, who are also leaders of the Renewal Jewish group, Shir HaShalom. The second Saturday is a Reform style service. The third is Tot Shabbat which has grown each month since the beginning of the year. The fourth Saturday is when our Conservative minyan meets. Talk about "Big Tent Judaism!"

Life-cycle Events

While we only held one wedding at CBI this past year (mazel tov to Samantha and Thalen!) we witnessed several conversion ceremonies and baby namings on the bima, as well as b'nei mitzvah services. The new b'nei mitzvah cohort is about to begin and I encourage everyone to join the families in these simchas. This past year saw the fewest funerals from within our community. I want to acknowledge Janis Ban and the incredible work she does with our Cemetery Committee and the Chevra Kaddisha. Thank you for showing the utmost care and compassion to families in times of distress.

There is so much more to kvell about from this past year. We've had a resurgence in programs, concerts, and speakers. Beit Cafe came back after a four-year hiatus. But the one aspect of CBI that I am most proud about is our wonderful staff. Mary Somerville is the glue that keeps much of what we do together. She is a terrific support to me and to the work I do for the community, and she loves interacting with congregants.

Victoria Mayers stepped into the role of Co-Director of Kesher this year and she has more energy than anyone! Victoria has been so instrumental in re-engaging volunteers, leading holiday efforts, and working with KAG last summer in setting up our teachers with curriculum materials and lesson plans. Victoria is also responsible, along with Katie Edelstein, for creating the travel havurah. Spain and Morocco this December, anyone?

Leah Bordman joined our community last summer and serves in several roles. She is a Co-Director of Kesher, and, in this role, her organizational skills are unparalleled. Her rapport with the staff is great, and I am thrilled she is part of the CBI family. Leah also leads the b'nei mitzvah class with me, and has successfully taught each of our students the basics of trope. Additionally, Leah oversees the madrichim program, our teen youth group (BAY), and the young adult group. We wish her and Brandon the best as they are expecting their first child in early May.

As I mentioned last year, "the rabbi/president relationship is a sacred one and I am so grateful to be serving with" Joshua Greenberg. I am comforted knowing that Josh will stay on the Board for another two years. His judgment and counsel are sound and we are in good hands with him at the head of our community.

I love serving the Beth Israel community. It is the greatest honor of my life. Thank you for entrusting this role with me. If I am not serving you in a way that you had hoped, please reach

out. With nearly 275 families, I know I don't get everything right and that I don't spend my time equally with everyone, and for that I am sorry. I want to continually improve, and I look to you for guidance. There is nothing I want more than to continue to be deserving of your respect and to serve CBI for years to come.

FINANCIAL REPORT AND BUDGET

FINANCE COMMITTEE AND TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer and Chair: Karen Sloss

Committee Members: David Goldman, Jeff Jaffe, Marcia Lippman, Jodi Litt, Dan Ohms, David Robinson, Miriam Schwartz, John Sternlicht and Terri Weiner. Also, Josh Greenberg and Rabbi Joshua Samuels, ex-officio.

CBI Finance Team: Jodi Litt as Financial Sustainability Director, Mary Somerville as Office Administrator & Bookkeeper and Terri Weiner as Bookkeeping & Accounting Consultant.

The Finance Committee oversees the CBI annual budget and various financial issues that may arise. Recently, the Committee has reviewed, discussed, and made recommendations to the Board on a new annual budget and how to take advantage of higher interest rates. The Finance Committee will be meeting more regularly to work on various policies and initiatives beyond the budget. With the recent implementation of CBI's 2022 Voluntary Membership Commitment Policy, and broad support from our congregants, Beth Israel's finances are in great condition! The Finance Committee and Board are incredibly grateful for the CBI community's enduring support of our operations, programs, and other endeavors.

Budget

The spreadsheet below reflects the current year finances through the end of March 2022. Expenses are in line with the budget, but this year's income is stronger than expected thanks to a new donor program (The Rabbi's Circle) as well as an unusual amount of spontaneous, unsolicited donations. Also, many members opted to increase their membership support by a meaningful amount this year! Thanks to past and present donors to the Building Fund, we have the use of a great facility with no mortgage payment or rent. This financial strength is good news as we strive to expand staff and programs in the coming year.

In the same spreadsheet, please note the column with the budget for next year (July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024) which was just approved at the April Board Meeting. Expenses are anticipated to grow by about 15% next year, so sources of income will need to rise accordingly to balance the budget. CBI primarily relies on the community spirit and generosity of our membership to make all this happen! Aside from donations from "friends of CBI", there is no outside funding, so everyone doing their part to sustain our vibrant congregation is appreciated.

CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL ANNUAL BUDGET

	CURRENT YEAR	BUDGET	Percent	NEWLY ADOPTED
	Budget 2022- 2023	As of 3-31-23	of Budget	Budget 2023- 2024
Income		75.00%		
Dues	\$353,000	\$337,844	96%	\$415,000
Kesher Tuition	47,000	41,909	89%	41,000
Kesher Scholarships & Discounts	9,000	0	0%	7,000
Kesher Donations & Programs	9,000	1,351	15%	15,000
Donations - General	20,000	22,065	110%	27,500
HH Tickets & Donations	4,000	4,625	116%	5,000
Program Income – Events/Adult Ed	8,000	9,839	123%	10,000
Program Income – Holidays	9,000	9,457	105%	9,000
Facility Rentals	3,000	2,184	73%	4,000
Fund Raising (Scrip)	8,000	5,606	70%	9,000
Shofar	1,200	636	53%	900
Investment Income	48	160	333%	9,000
Total Income	\$471,248	\$435,676	92%	\$552,400
Expenses				
Bank Service Charges	\$900	\$825	92%	\$900
Building Maintenance	33,000	22,737	69%	41,000
Security Guards & Systems	24,500	25,569	104%	28,000
Committee Exp & Leadership Dev	1,500	721	48%	2,000
Conference for CBI President	0	0	0%	2,500
Volunteer Appreciation	600	0	0%	500
HHD Expenses (non-security)	1,500	1,604	107%	9,000
Donations	1,500	0	0%	1,500
Consulting and Legal Services	800	136	N/A	500
Insurance Coverage	12,000	11,814	98%	12,000
Licenses & Taxes	2,500	1,045	42%	2,400
Payroll – Rabbi, Admin, Soloist, Yth Grp	240,000	177,147	74%	277,000
Postage and Delivery	1,000	752	75%	900
Programming - Event/Adult Ed	10,000	9,230	92%	12,000
Programming - Holiday	9,000	3,129	35%	9,500
Religious School Expenses	86,000	67,827	79%	100,000
Supplies	11,000	10,211	93%	14,000
Telephone & Internet	7,200	5,091	71%	8,500
URJ Dues	16,500	13,107	79%	18,500
Utilities	11,000	11,151	101%	12,000
Total Expenses	\$470,500	\$362,097	77%	\$552,700
Net Income after Expenses	\$748	\$73,578		(\$300)

Assets and Liabilities

Thanks to the generous New Synagogue donors, CBI has the good fortune to own its building and property outright (no debt) with a value of approximately \$9 million! In addition, CBI maintains a comfortable Savings Account balance of \$250–300k (equivalent of 6-8 months' expenses) and currently has a balance of over \$200k in the Building Fund (mostly earmarked for specific items).

Financial Strategic Initiatives

Ongoing financial strength is a key concern of both the Board and the Finance Committee. This coming year, the Finance Committee will be working on its own "Committee Charter" and reviewing strategies to securely grow CBI's budget, staff and programs.

EDUCATION

KESHER ANNUAL REPORT

Leah Bordman and Victoria Mayers

This year in Kesher has been such a joy for children, families, and staff alike. We are all extremely proud of the product that we have put out to our community through Kesher these past seven months! This year, we had 82 students enrolled in our school, ages Gan-10th grade, and we employed 10 teachers, including 2 specialists. We also trained 13 Madrichim, who worked with Leah Bordman once a month to dive deeply into their role in the classroom through conversations and activities based around role modeling and building connections.

The number one and number two goals of our school are for kids to be healthy and safe here, and for them to feel loved and respected by their teachers and their peers. Overwhelmingly, we have met these goals throughout the year. By ensuring our students feel safe and loved in the synagogue, we create a foundation for Jewish education that we can continue to build upon during their entire journey with us, and that they can take with them as part of their Jewish identity beyond Kesher as well.

Each of our classes from K-8th grade have led (or will lead) a service this year, and the ones that have happened already were awesome and meaningful. The students spent a month leading up to their class's service working with their teacher(s) and our new music specialist Mikayla to choose themes and music that matter to them.

With our new Hebrew specialist Elan, each class received pop-in Hebrew lessons every week where they not only learned Hebrew relevant to b'mitzvah, but began learning Hebrew-Through-Movement, conversational Hebrew, and Hebrew script as well. During the weekdays this year we also held a mandatory Zoom Hebrew class for all 5-6th grade students in Kesher, taught by Elan and our 3-4th grade teacher Jason. These small-group or individualized learning pods were a fantastic way for students to get specialized attention and assistance in their Hebrew education.

The 8th grade class spent this year studying Holocaust education with their teacher Leah Sauter and our visiting master teacher Ray Wolpov. This class read books and articles, interacted with artifacts, watched films, and went on field trips to gain a deep and meaningful wealth of knowledge on this important subject.

The b'mitzvah class and their parents spent this year learning with Leah Bordman and Rabbi Samuels in order to prepare for their upcoming b'mitzvah ceremonies. They learned prayers and Torah trope, as well as engaging in important conversations around social and emotional wellbeing and family communication. We also utilized student and family centered curriculum from Moving Traditions which we received from the Samis Foundation grant.

Our teen Massa class, led by Gaby Mayers, met once a month. They delved into many topics related to Israel in preparation for their upcoming trip in the summer of 2024. Our teens had multiple opportunities to meet with the Massa cohort from Temple Beth Or in Everett, including a joint field trip to the Seattle Holocaust Museum.

Rabbi Samuels is enjoying teaching Confirmation class which focuses on social justice issues and the intersection of Judaism and politics. He chaperoned 10 teens to Washington DC this winter, where they participated in the L'taken Social Justice Seminar, run by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism.

Registration for Keshet 2023-2024 opens on July 1!

Thank you to this year's incredible Keshet staff:

Darcie Donegan (Gan)

Kellan Moss (K-1)

Robin Curtis (2)

Jason Benhaim (3-4)

Abby Kroopkin and Parker Geffen (5)

Hannah Shernicoff (6-7)

Leah Sauter (8)

Elan Maxim (Hebrew)

Mikayla Goodkin (music)

We couldn't have made it through this year successfully without all your hard work and dedication to our school! In addition, thank you to KAG and all of the volunteers who made Keshet a priority – our school wouldn't function without helpful folks like you! And finally, thank you to the families who put your trust in us for your child's Jewish education!

FACILITIES

FACILITIES MAINTENANCE & MANAGEMENT (FMMC)

Chairs: Kevin Donner and Isaac Blum

Committee Members: Josh Greenberg, Katie Edelstein, Marta Brand, Isaac Konikoff, Karen Sloss, Dan Raas, Dan Ohms, Miriam Shwartz, Steven Garfinkle, Brooke Kassen

The Facilities Maintenance & Management Committee (FMMC) is sometimes referred to as a super-committee, and that doesn't just refer to the great group of people that make up the committee. The FMMC includes the chairs of Property & Grounds, Building Maintenance, Safety & Security, Technology, Interior Design, Events and Rentals, Legal & Liability, and Finance among others. The underlying purpose of the Facilities Maintenance & Management Committee is to ensure that there is always open discussion and transparency between the

various sub-committees to ensure that the decisions we make in the present for the future of the CBI community are carefully considered and impact us all in the best way possible.

Committee chairs bring decisions that need to be weighed or voted upon to the FMMC, often before they are presented to the Board of Directors. Recent additions to the synagogue, like our commercial kitchen, which is presently being installed, and newly installed Bimah lighting are examples of topics that have been discussed at committee meetings over the past year.

A current example of how the FMMC best operates can be seen by looking at the posting for our Part-Time maintenance person. A representative from the committee tasked with creating the position presented to the FMMC before ultimately presenting to the Board of Directors for approval. Since the hiring of a new employee for CBI would impact our community in a variety of ways, it is helpful to have the input of the various members of the facilities committee to fine-tune the expectations that we would have for the new employee.

If our committee were to be summed up in one word, it would be COMMUNICATION. We make sure that the left hand and the right hand know what each other are up to. Ultimately, it's the sub-committees who do the amazing work required to keep our synagogue operating. It's the job of the Facilities Maintenance & Management Committee to keep sight of how all these individual committees fit together like a mosaic and are accountable to budgetary and logistical constraints. Congregation Beth Israel is a large facility, and it takes a lot of coordination and cooperation behind the scenes to keep it running smoothly.

AUDIO-VISUAL

Co-Chairs: Marta Brand and David Goldman

Committee Members: Hank Levine, Vicky Garfinkle, Tracey Levine, Isaac Konikoff, David Cohn, Joshua Greenberg.

The Audio-Visual Task Force was initially formed to improve the acoustics in the synagogue. The placement of acoustic panels, wall hangings, window shades, and draperies greatly reduced echo in the sanctuary, social hall, and Beit Midrash, making it far easier for congregants to converse with each other in these spaces and understand presentations over the amplified sound systems in the sanctuary and social hall. The original sound system worked well in the sanctuary, but, during large events when the sanctuary and social hall were combined, congregants seated in the social hall often had difficulty hearing the service. We were able to fix this problem with the installation of a third powered speaker in the social hall. We also found a high quality and relatively inexpensive assisted listening system for members of the congregation with impaired hearing. An FM radio broadcasting station was purchased, installed, and connected to our sound system and transmits to receivers/headphones used by congregants with impaired hearing. This system, which can currently accommodate up to 12 people, cost \$2000 which was covered by donations. Shabbat services are routinely transmitted over the internet with Zoom by three volunteers (David Goldman, Tammy Dixon, Kevin Donner) who run the computer equipment that controls the sound and video and hosts the Zoom transmissions. The B'nai Mitzvah services are recorded and made available to the

families. We now have high quality sound equipment that can accommodate professional musical events set up by the programming committee. We have equipment for guest speakers who need a large screen projector for their power point presentations. This projector is also used for movie nights. Another project, primarily set up by Joshua Greenberg, was to outfit the Beit Midrash with equipment to support hybrid meetings for the Board and committees, making it possible for groups of under 20 people to meet in person at the synagogue with additional attendees participating online over Zoom. This required a large screen TV and a smart device, the Owl, that operates the microphone, speakers, and video camera. This system has also been used by the Rabbi to make the Torah study groups on Saturday mornings available online via Zoom. We also own five powered speakers that provide mobile sound systems that can support services, presentations, live music, and recorded music in the social hall, outside on the patio, or in other locations in the synagogue.

Our plans for the future are mainly to build upon and improve these computer, sound, and video systems that support the many activities in our synagogue, and to make further improvements to the acoustics in the Beit Midrash and the foyer. We are in the process of setting up Google Workspace to support the Audio-Visual Task Force and uploading our files to the shared drives. It is our goal to have a detailed inventory of all the electronic equipment, with appropriate manuals to document the setup, use, and maintenance of this equipment. We plan to recruit and train more congregants to run the audio-visual equipment, so that our group of three volunteers grows to six. Our current video recordings over Zoom are low quality, and we plan to upgrade the video recording quality, a project that can be done at no additional cost. It is also our goal to encourage more members of the congregation with hearing impairments to try out and use our assisted listening devices to make our in person services and programs more accessible.

EVENTS & RENTALS

Chair: Katie Edelstein

Committee Members: Dan Raas, Karen Sloss, and Josh Greenberg

The goal of this committee is to make sure best practices are followed. To do this, policies and procedures relevant to rental usage of the CBI facility were created by the Events and Rentals Committee in 2018 and were adopted by the board of directors prior to the opening of Congregation Beth Israel's new synagogue in 2018. Another goal of this committee 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.

Events and Rentals at Congregation Beth Israel is back in business after being closed for events during Covid. During 2022, there were six B'nei Mitzvah families who rented space at Congregation Beth Israel for their special simchas. In addition, an outside organization rented space at CBI twice within a 2 week period for their events. 2023 CBI's events and rentals were

kicked off as the CBI community celebrated a wonderful wedding celebration, open to all CBI members.

Based on requests that have already been received, several of the B'nei Mitzvah students' parents have contacted the Events & Rentals Committee regarding the use of CBI's facilities for their child's upcoming special event in 2023. CBI will also be the venue of choice as the CBI community celebrates a Passover Seder this year after a 3 year hiatus. On July 22, 2023, Rabbi Samuels, in conjunction with the Programming Committee and the Social Action Committee, will honor Noemi Ban, of blessed memory, at CBI's facilities. Because the local Sikh community is aware that the Jews of Whatcom County face antisemitism, they would like to show their support for the CBI community in a joint event held at Congregation Beth Israel.

Looking ahead, we're hopeful that by year's end, CBI will have a functioning main floor commercial kitchen which will be ready for use by all who rent space at Congregation Beth Israel.

If you have a special event coming up that you feel CBI's venue will meet your expectations, don't hesitate to contact Katie at events.rentals@bethisraelbellingham.org. If you're interested in being part of the Events and Rentals Committee, please contact Katie Edelstein.

INTERIOR DESIGN GROUP (IDG)

Chair: Katie Edelstein

Committee Members: Vicki Jaffe, Vicky Garfinkle, Miriam Schwartz, Marla Finkelstein, Dan Ohms, Cherryne Kravitz

The Interior Design Group (IDG) is a subcommittee of the Facilities, Maintenance and Management Committee.

The IDG was initially formed in 2017 with the goal of selecting and overseeing interior design finishes during construction of the new synagogue. The IDG continues to integrate the original vision set forth by the IDG when it was initially formed, "maintain the overall 'feel' of warmth, quietness, formality, and sacred space" of the new synagogue.

During the past year, the group has worked in conjunction with several CBI committees/task forces including: Dedications Committee, Facilities Maintenance and Management Committee, Art Design Group, and the Acoustics Task Force.

Dedications Committee: the IDG collaborated with the Dedications Committee to finalize the design and installation of the Community Recognition Device, honoring all CBI members (*based on their desire to be recognized*) who donated \$1,000 or more to the building of the synagogue at 751 San Juan Boulevard between the years of 2000-2022. This special dedication has now been completed and installed in the foyer of the synagogue.

Facilities Maintenance and Management Committee: the IDG has been working with this committee to find suitable containers for waste and compostable items in the social hall that will not be an eyesore, but that will blend with the look of the room. The intent is to identify containers that will be on wheels, allowing them to be moved when needed.

Acoustics Task Force: the IDG is represented on this task force by Vicky Garfinkle and she keeps the IDG updated regarding acoustics discussions with any ideas the task force suggests that might impact the overall interior design of the building. The IDG is considering different options to improve the acoustics in the foyer and will continue to work with the Acoustics Task Force.

Art Design Group: during the past year, CBI has received a few Judaica art pieces. One of CBI's members donated a beautiful antique Judaica marble piece from an ancient synagogue in Morocco. In conjunction with the donor, the IDG will work towards finding the best way to display this special piece of Judaica at CBI.

In addition to collaborating with other groups during the past year, the Interior Design Group has completed research on the option of purchasing new chairs for the bimah or refinishing/reupholstering the existing chairs on the bimah. As a way of integrating pieces of CBI's history into our current synagogue (as the group has done in the past), the IDG made the decision to breathe new life into the bimah chairs by refinishing/reupholstering them. If the bimah chairs could talk, the stories they would tell of all the memories of B'nei Mitzvah students who sat in them while on the bimah would be amazing. Another project the IDG worked on during the past year was reviewing the ceiling lights on the bimah and the spotlights on the first beam towards the back of the social hall. With support from the board, the IDG worked with Chuckanut Lighting and Express Electric and the lights were replaced. The group also took the Ner Tamid from the old synagogue, had it rewired, added a vintage Steuben glass chimney, and had it installed above the ark as another example of integrating meaningful historical pieces of Judaica from our old synagogue.

In the coming year, the IDG's focus will be centered around the bimah. The group has already begun to consider next steps in replacing the current bimah lectern with a new lectern that will complement the beautiful Ark that was built and installed two years ago. To date, the group has discussed lectern design options, including but not limited to one larger lectern vs. two lecterns, as in the past, including next steps with getting pricing. As a way to enhance and beautify the bimah, we hope to install wall hangings on either side of the Ark this year that will include the beautiful needlepoint pictures of the six days of creation being made by Roby Blecker. The group is also working on a decorative display for the large wall in the foyer between the social hall doors and the sanctuary doors.

In the coming year, the Interior Design Group will continue to be available to work in conjunction with any group as it relates to interior design features of the synagogue, including but not limited to the Acoustics Task Force, Dedications Committee, Yahrzeit Task Force, Kitchen Task Force, and any other group in need of input from the Interior Design Group.

TECHNOLOGY

Chair: Isaac Konikoff

Committee Members: Dave Smith, Jeff LaPlante, Erik Hammerstrom

One of our main objectives this year is to staff the CBI Technology Help Desk so that we can help new and experienced users navigate the usage of the CBI Google Workspace. Questions?

Feel free to send an email to help@bethisraelbellingham.org, keeping in mind that the help desk is staffed by volunteers. We will do our best to reply to your questions in a timely manner.

Another goal is to monitor the use of our ever-expanding in-building wifi/wired network which has been well used over the past year. Wifi coverage has also been a point of discussion so that we can offer the best coverage possible without incurring additional hardware and installation costs. If you experience any in-building wifi or other network problems, please contact help@bethisraelbellingham.org to let us know!

Special thanks to Harriet Markell for setting up the foundation and training for using our new CBI Google Workspace.

Please let us know how we are doing. Your feedback and suggestions are always welcome!

COMMITTEES

CARE COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Harriet Markell and Else Sokol

Committee Members: Sylvia Williams, Geraldine Reitz, Joan Wayne, Corinne Gimbel-Levine, Becky Van Glubt, Tracey Levine, Jodi Litt, Jerome Rosen, and Sarah Witte, and Cherynne Katz.

The Care Committee has engaged in another full and meaningful year of practicing G'milut Hasadim and Rachamim. The restrictions related to the pandemic slightly have eased, so 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.
- Organized meal trains for multiple congregants with temporary needs for support.
- Provided our expertise/participation in the Covid Reopening taskforce.
- Assisted with the delivery of the *mishloach manot* for Purim.

Plans for the coming year include continuation of our routine support for the community, including advocating for those still unable to return in-person. We are considering another End of Life series as well.

Harriet will be leaving our community in April 2023, and Sarah Witte and Joan Wayne have stepped up to assist Else.

We encourage congregants who want or need support to contact us at carecommittee@bethisraelbellingham.org.

CEMETERY COMMITTEE & CHEVRA KADDISHA SUBCOMMITTEE

Cemetery Committee Chair: Janis Ban

Chair of Finances: Marcy Probst

Committee Members: Diane Garmo, Dan Ohms, Cora Boothby, Kathi Paluch

Members of *Chevra Kaddisha*:

Women: Diane Garmo, Cora Boothby, Janis Ban, Corinne Gimbel-Levine, Marcy Probst, Geraldine Reitz, Sarah Bauman, Miriam Schwartz, Andrea Shupack, Teresa Sommers

Men: Emil Hecht, Steve Ban, Hank Levine, Barry Landau, Dan Ohms, Mark Weinstein, Miles Bryant, Todd Witte, Serge Lindner, John Schapiro

Mission Statement of the Cemetery Committee:

- Continue the ongoing sale of cemetery plots
- Provide ongoing community education on burial practices and end of life issues
- Provide Chevrah Kaddisha services as well as help families with burial arrangements, coordinating with Rabbi and Bayview Cemetery at the time of death
- Ongoing maintenance of CBI cemetery
- Maintenance of cemetery records, financial records, and policies.

The Cemetery Committee continued the ongoing work of maintaining the 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. Since April 1, 2022 we have performed 0 Tahara, had 2 burials, sold 8 plots, and had 2 headstones installed.

We posted a map of the cemetery and a directory of who is buried where on the CBI Website. A sign was put at the cemetery to inform people of this resource.

We are revising the cremation policy to incorporate alternative disposal methods, such as aquamation and composting.

We had a new sprinkler system installed in the shrub garden that should be less susceptible to damage from animals.

The Cemetery Committee's plans for next year include installing three benches and continuing our ongoing work.

COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE

Chair: Melissa Schapiro, chair

Committee Members: Mary Somerville, Rabbi Samuels, Leah Boardman (Keshet), Nora Mazonson (Shofar).

Formed in 2010, our mission is to assist and support the CBI community, including its staff and lay leadership, in maintaining current communications and marketing tools, while identifying and realizing innovative communications opportunities and strategies that will enhance and

meet the needs of the congregation and the broader community. See Policy/Procedure approved 2020 for specific details.

Highlights of this past year's activities:

- 2022-2023 activities included managing updates to the website, such as adding events, maintaining members-only documents and member registration, and updating with new Google calendars. Also trouble-shooting member registration and calendar issues and malfunction.
- Creating and updating Payquiq online signup forms, including Kesher registration, and event ticketing such as concerts, classes, and other programs
- Creating print and online marketing materials for programs and events
- Created Facebook and Instagram accounts and created a format and timing to keep posts consistent, with help from Rabbi Samuels and Kesher co-director Leah Bordman
- Migrating documents to new Google Workspace and creating a system to store images for use in the Shofar, weekly newsletter, website and future marketing, and social media posts
- Began training Leah Bordman on the Payquiq system to have an additional manager of forms

Plans for the upcoming year:

- Continue to update the website, with information to be shared by appropriate parties, whether committees or staff
- Have social media planned, written, and scheduled for publication at least a month out
- Continue to organize the Workspace shared folders with photos, templates, and documents to be used across the organization, for internal and external publication

New members are welcome. The committee has been more of a team, with various staff or volunteers helping with specific tasks as needed. Skills and experience that would be helpful on a regular basis would be someone knowledgeable about web design and management, marketing, and/or public relations.

FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE

Chair: Karen Sloss

Committee Members: Steven Garfinkle, John Schapiro

The CBI Fundraising Committee oversees all fundraising for CBI and stands ready to assist other committees in any fundraising aspects of their activities. From 2000 to 2022, fundraising at CBI mainly consisted of the Capital Campaign for the New Synagogue, the occasional fundraising event for a specific project, and CBI's Scrip Program (managed separately - please see the separate Scrip Report in this packet). Additionally, Kesher runs a successful annual fundraiser (Happy Purim!) to support Kesher tuition scholarships.

The Capital Campaign for the New Synagogue has officially ended, but the Building Fund will always need contributions for furnishings, improvements, or equipment replacement. The final Capital Campaign efforts brought in enough money to complete the extensive landscaping installed in 2021 and to build out and equip the commercial kitchen - currently underway. Funds for a few smaller items, including acoustical panels for meeting spaces and Bima furniture to match the new Ark, were also secured. We deeply appreciate all those donors who have made the New Synagogue possible!

The CBI Endowment Fund was established a year ago. The Endowment Fund is guided by an "Investment Policy" currently under development by the Endowment Committee. All donations to the CBI Endowment Fund will be invested in perpetuity (not spent), monitored, and managed by the Endowment Committee and/or Finance Committee. Over time, the income generated may be spent on operations or capital projects as outlined in the Endowment Policy and subject to Board oversight. Gifts to the Endowment Fund can be made during one's lifetime or as a bequest at death, usually indicated in a will or trust.

The Rabbi's Circle giving program was also launched in the past year and a handful of donors have joined so far. Its purpose is to generate extra income for expanded staffing as well as social and cultural programming to keep pace with our growing congregation. Currently, CBI staff is the same as 20 years ago when we had half of today's membership and only a fifth of the building size to maintain! Programming is now re-energized by an active committee but constrained by budget limitations. The Rabbi's Circle is aimed at households that are already contributing the target annual amount or more and would like to offer further support to help realize these particular goals. Suggested giving levels are \$1,800+, \$3,600+, and \$7,200+ per year. Participants will receive periodic briefings from the Rabbi and/or Board President, invitations to exclusive social events with the Rabbi and, if desired, recognition on the CBI website as Rabbi's Circle supporters.

The Fundraising Committee plans to eventually add an annual fundraising event to support operations. The Committee is actively seeking new members who either have or want to gain skills in fundraising, marketing, or business development.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Chair: Ken Levinson has chaired the committee for most of the last year; however, he is stepping away for six months, and Mitch Press and Rena Zeigler will be resuming their co-chair roles.

Committee Members: Roby Blecker, Ken Levinson, Harriet Markell, Bruce VanGlubt, Ray Wolpow, Suart Berman, Josh Greenberg, Mitch Press, Rena Ziegler (Co-Chair until January 2023)

The mission of the Governance Committee is to facilitate improved structure, communication flow, and operations of the CBI congregation. The Governance Committee helps create a more effective, accountable, and open structure in which the congregation, Board, committees, Rabbi, and staff work together cohesively, efficiently, and effectively.

The Governance Committee has existed for approximately 10 years and does not have a sunset indicator.

Our work over the past year has focused on analyzing and developing policies regarding CBI committee formation and structure. We have completed a comprehensive analysis of the current constellation of committees throughout CBI and made recommendations regarding definitions of specific entities, such as committees, subcommittees and workgroups. We will continue this project by making recommendations to the Board regarding possible consolidation of committees, templates for committee charters, and processes for committee creation.

Though our member roster (above) appears flush, we are in need of new members due to current members stepping away (or making aliyah!). Experience with system building and policy creation are necessary skills for incoming members.

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Chair: Paul Blum

Committee Members: Ellen Smith, Dan Ohms, Roby Blecker, Bruce Van Glubt, and Josh Greenberg,(ex-officio). Kayla Schott-Bresler has resigned from the Committee to focus her energy on new parenthood, (mazel tov!) and we thank her and will miss her.

The HR Committee has continued to assist in the yearly performance review process for CBI staff, which is the main mechanism for ensuring that employees of CBI are treated professionally, fairly, and consistently. Additionally, the Committee has submitted our Employee Manual for legal review and will be making minor revisions to the Manual soon.

A major focus for the Committee has been the review and revision of job descriptions and we are grateful for the extraordinary assistance of Karen Sloss in this task.

KESHER ADVISORY GROUP REPORT

Co-Chairs: Katie Edelstein and Rita Spitzer

Committee Members: Nicky Naiman, Tammy Dixon, Robin Curtis, Darcie Donegan, Sharona Feller, Sarah Zarrow, Rabbi Samuels, Leah Boardman, and Victoria Mayers

The Keshet Advisory Group (KAG) is a standing committee responsible for providing guidance and support to the Keshet Center for Learning. KAG provides additional support by:

- Assisting the Keshet Directors in matters of curriculum, programming, financial planning, administrative issues, and strategic planning
- Updating the Keshet Parent Handbook
- Planning for the opening day of Keshet, staff training, and holiday events

This past year, members of KAG assisted Victoria in selecting and preparing curriculum for the Keshet program as well as developing a curriculum map. This ensures that both the Hebrew and Jewish Concepts Curriculum are aligned across grade levels. We also assisted in selection

and purchasing of additional needed curriculum materials, as well as cleaning and organizing the Keshet classrooms and storage area.

A number of KAG members participated in the fall teacher orientation, as well as the open house event for Keshet parents to visit their student's classroom. KAG also assisted with the annual Hannukah Party and Purim Carnival as well.

Sarah Zarrow, our newest KAG member, shared her expertise in a presentation on the Holocaust in conjunction with the book/movie titled "Who Will Write Our History" by Roberta Grossman.

Members of KAG have also played a role in overseeing the three-year grant awarded to Congregation Beth Israel and Temple Beth Or in Everett, WA from the Samis Foundation. The grant program titled *Massa: A Teen Journey Towards Israel and Self-Discovery* is a three-year program intended to create transformative Jewish experiences for post B'nei Mitzvah students (8th through 11th grades). Studies focus on Israeli history, geography, people, current events, including a focus on environmentalism and climate work being done in Israel. Sixteen students from Congregation Beth Israel (CBI) in Bellingham, WA and eight students from Temple Beth Or (TBO) in Everett, WA meet, learn together, and will eventually work on social action and/or philanthropy projects related to their Israel studies. Fundraising is an important component of this program and most students have put in time to earn money through babysitting, yard cleanup, and helping at designated fundraisers for the Massa program. Keep in mind if you're looking for students to help with babysitting or yard cleanup, many are willing to help. For more information, contact Victoria Mayers or Katie Edelstein. As June approaches, and the program's first year comes to a close, students will have participated in 9 monthly classes led by Gaby Mayers from CBI and Rabbi Rachel Kort from Temple Beth Or. In year two, students will continue to study various aspects of Israel, culminating in a 2-week trip to Israel for all students participating in this pilot program.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Joan Wayne and Rob Lopresti

The library collection is strong. Thanks to suggestions from Tamar Clarke we continue to add new books to our children's and teen's collection. We are not accepting new donations for the adult library at this time.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Co-chairs: Sue Mahar and Ann Suloway

Committee Members: Becki Van Glubt, Erin Cohen, Joan Wayne, Sarah Witte, Miriam Davids, Melissa Schapiro, support from Rita Spitzer.

Board Liaison: Erin Cohen

Events: Due to everything opening back up after Covid 19, we were able to host two successful welcome events for our newest members. In July we held an outdoor ice cream social, and in February we held an indoor Havdalah and soup social, both held at CBI. Both were well attended and engaging events. We greeted everyone at High Holiday services, including checking in visitors. If you are attending the annual meeting, we will welcome you and check you in.

Ongoing: We have committee members available at Shabbat services to welcome any new or interested folks. We have also lent support to onegs and kiddush lunches after special services, such as the group b'nai mitzvah, baby namings, and services in which new converts were welcomed. New members continue to receive a welcome email and information in the mail about how things work as soon as they join, a call from a board member, and a visit with a welcome bag from a committee member. New members are listed in the Shofar. If a new member has indicated interest in committee work, either in their application or our contacts with them, they are referred to the appropriate committee chair or staff person. As soon as we meet interested folks, we start letting them know about ongoing groups, such as Sisterhood book and walking groups, and upcoming events at CBI.

Beth Israel has welcomed 24 new member units to our congregation so far this fiscal year. The committee thanks Rabbi Samuels, Mary Somerville, and members of the board for their support in the welcoming process. Total membership as of 4/12/23 is 280. Four members discontinued membership over the previous year, one of whom moved away. In other words, more new members joined this year than last, fewer discontinued membership, and the total number of members has increased.

The committee extends their gratitude to Michelle Beller Siegfried for her years of service on this committee, and Jodi Litt for board support. We also welcomed Miriam Davids to our committee as well as Mellissa Schapiro.

ONEG COMMITTEE

Co-Chairs: Joan Wayne and Sarah Witte

It's wonderful to be together again and enjoy onegs. Oneg hosts are currently assigned through June. A list for July 2023 to June 2024 will be created soon. Congregants will be reminded about their assignment by email at least one week before their hosting date.

PROGRAMMING COMMITTEE

Co-chairs: Emily Weiner and Melissa Schapiro

Committee Members: Ann Suloway, Joan Wayne, Erin Cohen, Sara Geballe, Dan Raas, Terri Weiner

Mission: 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

The current iteration of the committee was formed in 2017.

This past year's activities:

- In 2022-2023, the programming committee brought congregants and non-congregants back to the building after the COVID shutdown, with events such as the Noah Aronson Musician in Residence weekend (June 2022), the Deborah Sacks-Mintz and Chava Mirel Concert (Sept 2022), Dec. 25th movie-Chinese food event, revival of the Beit Café (Feb 2023), and the Klezmer Benefit Concert (Feb 2023).

Plans for the upcoming year include:

- A collaboration with the Pickford Cinema in showing a movie, "Kaddish for Bernie Madoff," and a Q&A with the creator
- Collaboration with the Social Action Committee for a One Whatcom event in July 2023
- Concert or musician in residence with Linda Hirschhorn, fall/winter 2023
- Continue on the successful course we've been following, while clarifying what type and scale of events are under the purview of Programming Committee
- Schedule some matinee events, and in doing so make a special effort to bring elderly members who are less likely to come out in the evenings
- Visual Arts programming

We are looking for new members to add to our committee. New members should have an interest in a variety of program types, and a willingness to plan and assist others in putting on events.

SCRIP

Chair: Joan Wayne

The scrip program was impacted negatively by online shopping during the pandemic. As congregants go back to in person shopping, increased participation is needed. The most popular scrip is from Fred Meyer, Haggen, and the Co-op. This year, Zelle was added as a payment option, to facilitate easier transactions. This program contributes \$600 to \$700 to Beth Israel each month and costs participants \$0. To order scrip, contact Joan Wayne.

SOCIAL ACTION COMMITTEE

Chair: Linda Blackwell

Committee Members: Peggy Hanley, Minda Rae Amiran, Jerome Rosen, Nancy Auerbach, Gloria Lebowitz, Wendy Miller, Joan Wayne, Binnie Perper, Corinne Gimbel- Levine, and Howard Sharfstein

The social action committee has focused on refugee resettlement this past year. We were able to fully equip an apartment for a family of four. The congregation, board members, and social action committee members were very generous with donations. These were delivered to Jewish Family Services in Seattle in January of 2023. We continue to collect further donations for local refugee families with the World Relief Organization of Western Washington. We had a local organizer talk on a Shabbat dedicated to refugees in February.

With the Interfaith Coalition, the committee was able to continue support for the Family Promise program by supplying meals on different weeks this year. This was organized by Joan and Corinne. We collected coats for the Fall Coat Drive. We had Food Drives for the Bellingham Food Bank during the High Holidays and Passover. We encouraged direct donations to this organization as well as the DVSAS charity during the winter.

Mitzvah Day was held at the end of April. We had wonderful attendance with many projects involving Keshet. The younger children potted small plants as gifts to seniors and disabled members of the congregation. The Congregation grounds were beautified with planters outside Keshet as well as weeding and landscaping.

Donations were collected for Northwest Youth Services, refugees, CAST, and the Massa trip. There are also plans for a OneWhatcom Event on July 22nd to honor the memory of Noémi Ban. This will be held in conjunction with the Sikh communities of Whatcom County and other anti-racist groups in Ferndale and Lynden. We wish to meet as social activists to discuss antisemitism.

We plan for a book group discussion this summer.

We always welcome new members and are recruiting for a co-chair on the committee.