



The Voice

Office: 182 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 204, Frederick, MD 21702 • **Worship:** 4880 Elmer Derr Rd., Frederick, MD 21703

Shavuot

By Rabbi Simon Stratford



Each year, precisely seven weeks after we celebrate Passover, the festival of Shavuot (meaning “weeks”) occurs – and it is perhaps the

biggest Jewish holiday that many know nothing about! The origins of this festival are strictly biblical. Shavuot is one of the three occasions in the year where, in ancient times, the Israelites would make pilgrimage to Jerusalem and offer the first fruits of their spring harvest as a sacrifice at the temple to God. The Festival of Shavuot was a big deal for our ancestors. Historically, the Israelites lived in an agricultural society and observed the commandment our Torah mentions on various occasions. But when the Temple was destroyed in the year 70 C.E., the primary means of celebrating Shavuot was gone. In an effort to keep the holiday’s spirit relevant for Jews in a post-temple era, the rabbis brought new meaning to the festival of Shavuot – which coincides with

Continued on page 3

Our Mission

To be an inclusive Reform Jewish congregation that is family focused, community oriented, emphasizes spiritual and cultural identity, and is dedicated to the Jewish education of all generations.

Closing Thoughts from President Joanna Sieger



This is my last message as President of Congregation Kol Ami of Frederick, a home to me and my family. While the last two years have been challenging,

I’m glad I was here. I think of everything we accomplished as a community, and I am in awe.

During Rabbi Stratford’s time with us, we have held strong to our values and traditions while adding some firsts. We have reinstated a committee structure to help more of you get involved and identify those things you are passionate about. And I highly encourage you to do just that.

Our Passover Seder this year had 80 attendees. The event brings us together at a time where many don’t have local family with whom to celebrate. Additionally, this year’s Seder hosted over 10 prospective members. This was a wonderful event and many attendees – even those not signed up to do so – jumped in to help to get chickens cut, food placed, tables erected, chairs put out, and to make sure every table had what it needed.

Rabbi Stratford also coordinated a multi-faith Seder, and out of the 50 people there, about one third were Kol Ami members. It was another great event. And we were able to tell “our” story. It was special to share Judaism with other members of the Frederick community. At both events, many hands made for light work.

I have always felt spring is a time of renewal. Even when snow is still forecast, we know something new, something fresh, something warm is on the way. And, just like the buds on the trees or our perennial

flowers, we are recharged and refreshed—and reflective of the year gone by.

So I ask, what part of Kol Ami have you been involved in? What parts do you wish you were involved in? Have you signed up to join a committee? Is there something we’re missing that you want to see?

I can tell you don’t want to sit on the sidelines. Maybe the first step to getting involved is to see we are a wonderful, vibrant group of people and we are growing. Our members come from all over Frederick – many professions and various family structures. We are a diverse, interesting, passionate group of people who care about the future of Judaism in Frederick. And, some of us are even funny. Don’t miss out by not getting involved. Our Kol Ami community has so much to offer you and your family that I cannot list every opportunity. But here are a few things that come to mind. Join our religious school staff or substitution list. Share your love of Judaism and your Hebrew knowledge with our youth. Step into a role helping to plan and organize our programming – we are always in need of people to help our events run smoothly. Send your kids to KATY events – they’ll share fun times with other Jewish youth in our synagogue, strengthening their own community. Don’t know anyone? Attend Brotherhood dinners and Girls Night Out. These are smaller groups of people; then, when you come to services and events, you’ll see familiar faces. These are just a few ideas. There are so many ways to get involved in Kol Ami, and my final wish is that you all find the special one for you.

—*L’shalom*, Joanna

Casino Night is May 5!

It's not too late to come to Casino Night at the Clarion Inn. Contact David Silberman at dssilberman@aol.com for more information.



5th/6th grade Matzah house building competition.

Religious School Update

From your Religious School Director

Sabrina Nail



As we bring closure to this 2017-2018 school year, it is with mixed emotions that I write my last Education Director's Voice article for Congregation Kol Ami Religious School.

It has been an 11 year journey working with Kol Ami's school. Starting with being a member on the education committee, then becoming a teacher and ending in the role as Education Director. I want to thank each and every one of you for all your support and for entrusting me with your children's education. Thank you to my husband Charlie for his support while I tended to the education director job that I loved. Our boys had to arrive early to religious school for set up, stay late for clean up, schlepp in supplies and help whenever asked (as much as boys do!) They became synagogue staples and it meant so much to our family. In addition, I appreciate all the guidance provided by rabbis, presidents, and boards. I do want to give a special mention to Judy Simpson, our outgoing assistant director. The support she has shown as a volunteer at school and behind the scenes has been immeasurable. I (and Kol Ami) are forever grateful.

The teachers at Kol Ami work tirelessly to provide quality, engaging education for your children and are committed to supporting our Kol Ami community. Without their hard work, education for students just doesn't happen. Thank you teachers for all you do each week! I know the job can be thankless, but your dedication to our children's future matters.

Lastly, the selflessness of parent volunteers to provide additional support for students is commendable. Volunteers continue to make a difference in the growth and strength of our Jewish community. For years, I've been known to say, "It takes a village to raise and teach our children." From day one, parents have demonstrated their dedication to our community and have shown that education is a joint endeavor between our congregation and home.

There has been much change during my tenure. We've changed religious school locations, rabbis, curriculum, and teachers. My team has worked diligently to lead us through these changes while seeking positive outcomes for our children's Jewish education. The result is that we have given your children the knowledge to discover their Jewish identity, the Hebrew skills needed to meet their goals, and the understanding to demonstrate kindness that will make a difference every day.

My journey would not have started without the kindness and support of a great teacher, Lisa Bordenick. Her memory brings joy to my heart. She made a difference in many lives, including mine.

Again I want to thank you, our Kol Ami families, for the support, understanding, and the memories with Kol Ami Religious School. I wish the school continued growth and success.

—*L'shalom*, Sabrina

From Rabbi Simon Stratford

Continued from page 1

present day observance of the holiday.

In addition to being the yearly marker of the spring harvest, the Festival of First Fruits, and yearly wheat harvest, current observance of Shavuot is based on the Talmudic identification of the holiday with the events at Mt. Sinai. Shavuot marks "the season of the giving of the Torah." On Shavuot, we celebrate the covenantal relationship with God and reaffirm our commitment to a Jewish life of study. On Shavuot, it is customary for families and friends to gather and study Torah well into the night, sometimes all night. Moreover, it is customary to eat dairy dishes on Shavuot. Rabbinic

tradition draws an analogy between the sweetness and physical nourishment the Jew receives from milk and honey and the sweetness and spiritual nourishment of the words of Torah. In this context, Shavuot festivities most often include sharing cheesecake with one another in addition to words of Torah. In my opinion, there is nothing that makes Torah study more enjoyable than cheesecake!

In many liberal Jewish circles, it has become customary to hold a confirmation service around the time of Shavuot. Confirmation (*Kabbalat Torah*) is the course of study that our

post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah students choose to engage in on Sunday mornings from eighth to tenth grade. Holding our confirmation graduation around the time of Shavuot provides an opportunity for our oldest students to affirm their relationship to Judaism and the Jewish people. This year, our confirmation service will be held on Friday, May 4th. Shavuot is not until May 19th. Nevertheless, when the holiday comes around, it is my hope that each of us will devote some time to study a piece of Torah and reflect upon how our sacred text of thousands of years can inform our lives today.

Rabbi's Introduction to Judaism Class

Learn fundamentals of Jewish thought and practice in a year-long class. This course is perfect for interfaith couples, those from different faith backgrounds considering conversion, and Jewish adults looking for an adult-level introduction to Jewish education.

Drop-Ins are always welcome; please let Rabbi Stratford know in advance if you are interested in attending a particular class so that a copy of the session's reading can be distributed to you. All classes are held at the Kol Ami Office, 182 Thomas Johnson Drive, Suite 204.

May and June's Topics

May 7: Pesach
May 20: Purim and More (Tishah B'Av and Tu'Bishvat)
June 3: Creating a Jewish Home and Life
June 18: Marriage, Partnership and More

For more information about the course, future sessions, or questions pertaining to the possibility of working toward conversion to Judaism, contact Rabbi Simon Stratford at (240) 575-9690.

**Join us for services
at the UU!**

**May 4 (Confirmation),
18 and 19
June 1, 15, and 16**

**Please welcome
new members!**

Herbert and Laurie Messite

Member Finances

As a volunteer-run organization, Kol Ami relies heavily on its members to do everything from setting up onegs on Shabbat to coordinating social programming. While everything we ask of members is important, honoring financial commitments to the congregation is consistently among the most important thing we ask of our congregants. Without your financial support, there could be no Kol Ami.

Remember that financial assistance agreements are valid for one fiscal year (July through June). While we are aware that some members may need help from year to year, we require that you resubmit a new application each year, as we do not

make assumptions regarding who requires assistance. No one will receive financial assistance without having submitted an application. Applications, found on our website, must be submitted annually by August 15th.

Some of our members find it easy to budget regular monthly dues/tuition payments. All you need to do is notify your bank online and they will mail a check to Kol Ami. No charge to you, no postage, no fuss.

Please direct any questions or concerns about your specific account and charges to Ralene Damanti, Financial Secretary, at financialsecretary@kolamifrederick.org.

Upcoming Events

Upcoming B'nai Mitzvah



Brendan Manetz
May 19, 2018

Brendan is the son of Scott and Debby Manetz and attends Windsor Knolls Middle School. He plays the trombone and piano, and enjoys video games and drawings. He also likes cats and guinea pigs (with special emphasis on guinea pigs). Brendan has a black belt in Karate, and currently takes Muay Thai boxing classes. He recently joined the 4-H Robo Rangers club, which has an emphasis on tech activities. Brendan plans to participate in the Lego Robotics competition at the Maryland State Fair in August.



Jordan Wanuck
June 16, 2018

Jordan is the daughter of Alan and Danielle Wanuck and sister of Joshua (14). A straight-A student at Middletown Middle School, she spends most of her free time taking dance classes. Her favorite genres are Jazz and Musical Theatre. She got the acting bug early on and performs in all her school plays. Jordan has been a Girl Scout since she was in kindergarten, and particularly enjoys mentoring the younger girls and helping others.

Kol Ami Brotherhood

Attention, Men of Kol Ami!

Interested in some time out with the guys? Hoping to avoid yet another meeting? The Kol Ami Brotherhood gathers on the first Tuesday of each month for dinner. (Depending on holidays, sometimes the second Tuesday!)

If you are not on the mailing list or if you have any ideas for additional programming, please contact Jeff Feiertag at brotherhood@kolamifrederick.org.

Tuesday, May 1 at 6:30 p.m.
BGR - The Burger Joint
7810 Wormans Mill Rd #G (Near Wegmans)

Interested and able to join us? Sign up using the link below:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JSRYR5B>



April Brotherhood dinner

Join us for Girl's Night Out!

Thursdays, May 24 and June 28
6:30 p.m.

Stay tuned for details.

Join us for Torah Study

Fascinating topics, interesting discussions.

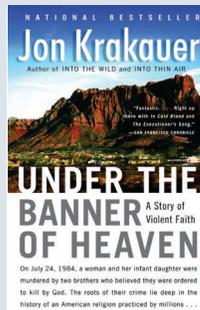
Mondays at 12:30 p.m. at the office.
(May 7 and June 4 are at Buckingham's Choice)

May 7, 14 and 21
June 4, 11, 18 and 25

Empty Nesters
Watch for a unique and fun event in June!

Stay tuned for details.

Kol Ami Book Club



Wed. May 9 at 12:30 pm
Macaroni Grill at Westview

Under the Banner of Heaven:
A Story of Violent Faith

by Jon Krakauer

To register and for a synopsis please go to:
<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090a45a9a92d6-kolami1>

Women's Coffee

Wednesday, May 2 and June 5, 2018

10:00 am at Panera on Route 26

Women of Kol Ami meet on the first Wednesday of every month, unless otherwise noted. Come meet your friends and let us know what is happening in your life. Check this link for the latest coffee date: RSVP: signupgenius.com/go/4090a45a9a92d6-womens

Torah...“It is a tree of life to all who grasp it, and whoever holds on to it is happy; its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace. (Proverbs 3:17-18)

The Parashyot for May and June are as follows:

May 5 – Emor, Leviticus 21:1-24:23 All Holy Days in the Jewish calendar are described.

May 12 – Behar (Leviticus 25:1-26:2) and Behukkotai (Leviticus 26:3-27:34) Discussion of the Sabbath Years (every 7th) and Jubilee Years (after 49).

May 19 – Bemidbar, Numbers 1:1-4:20 God commands Moses to take a census of all Israelite males over age 20; duties of the Levites are detailed.

May 26 – Naso, Numbers 4:21-7:89 Moses consecrates the Sanctuary.

June 2 – Beha’ alotekha, Numbers 8:1-12:16 God describes the menorah for the Tent of Meeting; Miriam and Aaron talk behind

Moses’ back about his wife and she complains God speaks only through Moses and not them; Miriam is struck with leprosy.

June 9 – Shelah lekha, Numbers 13:1-15:41 Report of the 12 spies.

June 16 – Korah, Numbers 16:1-18:32 Korah and his followers lead a rebellion against Moses and Aaron; bad career move.

June 23 – Hukat, Numbers 19:1-22:1 The mysterious laws of the red heifer; Moses strikes the rock at the Wilderness of Zin; both Miriam and Aaron pass away.

June 30 – Balak, Numbers 22:2-25:9 Balak, King of Moab, persuades Balaam to curse the Israelites, but he blesses them instead.

Leviticus and Personal Prayer

By Kerry Reynolds

On May 19, the annual Torah cycle reaches *Bemidbar* – thus beginning the Book of Numbers. Some Jews will breathe a sigh of relief, since it also means we’ve left the Book of Leviticus. To be sure, more stuff happens (a theological term) in Numbers – the spies and their report, Korah’s Rebellion, the indecipherable “red heifer,” Moses striking the rock at the Wilderness of Zin, the deaths of Miriam and Aaron, Balaam and the talking ass, and several military conflicts during the Jews’ long march to the Jordan.

Though I’ve sometimes argued the virtues of Leviticus in these pages, I always focused on its second half – the Holiness Code (see *Kedoshim*). That describes the essence of Jewish ethical behavior and often is one of the first things rabbis teach their young students. Many adult readers never get that far, however, since Leviticus begins with several chapters devoted to sacrifices. In excruciating detail, we are told how priests were to conduct burnt-offerings, peace-offerings and sin-offerings – all of which included a variety of animals, birds and grains. Enough blood and gore to constitute an abattoir. Inasmuch as no such sacrifice has been conducted since the 2nd Temple was razed nearly 2 millennia ago, many ask simply, “Why should I read this?”

The various forms of sacrifice never made much sense to me

either, so this year I adopted a different approach. Being a guy, I’d never really taken time to read the directions. What if I tried that? At home, we use the old Soncino Torah (first edition circa 1937), still a bulwark of many family Judaica collections. There, on page 409, in its introduction to the Book of Leviticus, was an excellent one-sentence summation:

“The ‘burnt-offering’ expressed the individual’s self-surrender to God’s will; the ‘peace-offering,’ gratitude for His bounties and mercies; the ‘sin-offering,’ sorrow at having erred from the way of God and the firm resolve to be reconciled with Him.”

With that overview in mind, I found it easier to deal with the sacrificial minutiae in early Leviticus. But it also led me to another line of thought. In our last issue, in his article on Jewish prayer, Rabbi Stratford noted many Jews find it easier to pray at synagogue than at home. It seems that Jews might like to do more than simply recite the Shema, but they hit prayer-block when it comes to creating one.

May I suggest we could all learn from the old Soncino rabbis (may their memory be for a blessing)? Begin with a statement of submission to God’s will. Move on to gratitude for all your good fortune in this world. Conclude with regret for those times you fell short that day (we all do) and resolve to do better tomorrow. That sure touches a lot of the bases. Work for you?

**Not enough hours in the day?
Allow me!**

**Too many errands?
Allow me!**

**Gotta run to the store?
Pick up the cleaning?
Get a prescription?
Package being delivered?
Planning a Party?
Need help?
Have returns?
So little time? **Allow me!****

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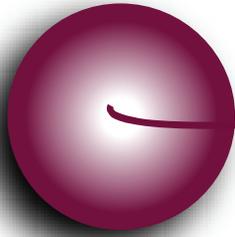
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Chesed is Here for You!

Did you know...in a time of need, through illness or after the death of a family member, your Kol Ami community is here for you? We set up a Sign Up Genius and members will chip in to ease your burden. We can organize rides, company, meals, or whatever support is needed.

Contact Ilene Freedman, *Chesed* Coordinator, at Chesed@kolamifrederick.org for more information or when a situation arises to set up a line of support.



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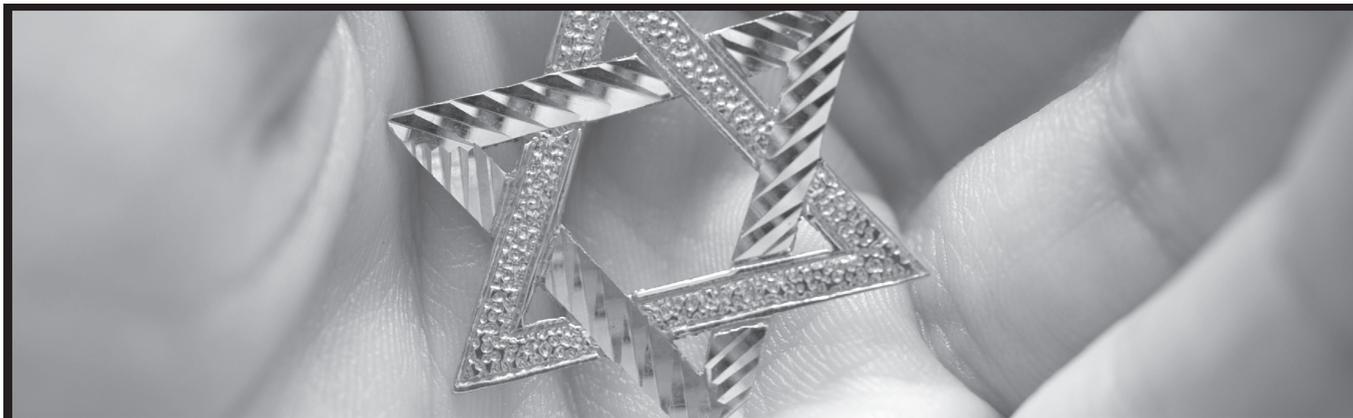
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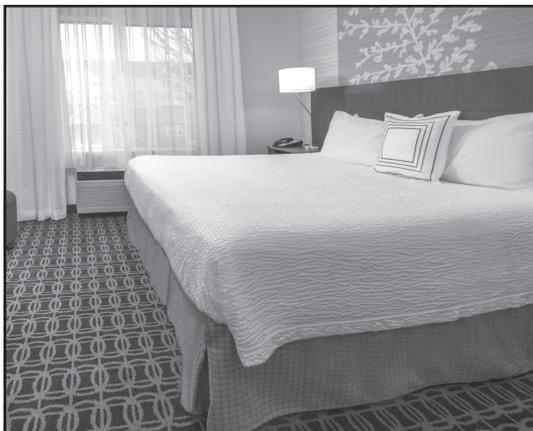
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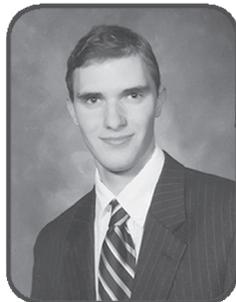


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Jordan Schneider, in memory of Holli Wasserman Hupart

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Jeff Feiertag, in honor of Eliza Nelson's Bat Mitzvah

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Jordan Schneider, for the speedy recovery of Pastor Barbara Daniel

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Join our New Member Mentor Program

Be part of our New Member Mentor Program. The program will welcome new members to our congregation and help them meet people and get involved.

We match new members with volunteer mentors. The matches are made based on age, geography and/or interests.

Mentors are expected to contact the new members throughout their first year, invite them to join them in activities, such as services, girls/guys nights out, and social events, etc.

Mentors meet with the new member to make them feel welcome, to answer any questions they may have and find out what they would like to see in the future at Kol Ami.

If you are interested in participating, please contact Anne Cohen at membership@kolamifrederick.org to get your name on our mentor list.



182 Thomas Johnson Dr., Suite 204
Frederick, MD 21702

Return Service Requested

May/June 2018 Upcoming Events

May

Tues, May 1	6:30 pm	Brotherhood Dinner
Wed, May 2	10:00 am	Women's Coffee
Fri, May 4	6:30 pm	Tot Shabbat Service (K - 1st/2nd Grade Service)
	7:30 pm	Erev Shabbat Service (Confirmation Class Service)
Sat, May 5	8:00 pm	Casino Night
Sun, May 6	9:30 am	Religious School - Mitzvah Day
	1:30 pm	KATY Pop-Art Painting Party
Mon, May 7	12:30 pm	Torah Study
	6:00 pm	Intro to Judaism Session 7
Tues, May 8	12:30 pm	Fundraising Committee Mtg
Wed, May 9	12:30 pm	CKAF Book Club
Sun, May 13		Mother's Day
Mon, May 14	12:30 pm	Torah Study
Fri, May 18	7:30 pm	Erev Shabbat Service
Sat, May 19	10:00 am	Shabbat Morning Service Bar Mitzvah Brendan Manetz
Sun, May 20	1:00 pm	Intro to Judaism Session 8
Mon, May 21	12:30 pm	Torah Study
	7:00 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting
Mon, May 28		Memorial Day-NO Torah Study

June

Fri, June 1	6:30 pm	Tot Shabbat Service
	7:30 pm	Erev Shabbat Service
Sun, June 3	1:00 pm	Intro to Judaism Session 9
Mon, June 4	12:30 pm	Torah Study
	6:30 pm	Brotherhood Dinner
Wed, June 6	10:00 am	Women's Coffee
Mon, June 11	12:30 pm	Torah Study
Tues, June 12	12:30 pm	Fundraising Committee Meeting
Fri, June 15	7:30 pm	Erev Shabbat Service
Sat, June 16	10:00 am	Shabbat Morning Service Bat Mitzvah Jordan Wanuck
Sun, June 17		Father's Day
Mon, June 18	12:30 pm	Torah Study
	6:00 pm	Intro to Judaism Session 10
Mon, June 25	12:30 pm	Torah Study
	7:00 pm	Board of Trustees Meeting