Season of Giving

Shirat Hayam’s CJE Students Raise Money for My Brother’s Table

Team CJE fielded more than 30 people (and one dog) and raised $1,100 to donate to My Brother’s Table in Lynn to help feed the hungry in our community. It was a chilly, blustery 4-mile walk but accomplished with great energy and generosity of spirit on a difficult day. Thanks to team captain and MBT board member, Jason Sidman, MBT president and CSH member, Mark Messenger, and all who came together for this important mitzvah work to help our local soup kitchen.

Shir Chesed Initiative Is Off and Running

Olam Chessed Yibaneh
I will build this world from love
And you must build this world from love
And if we build this world from love
Then God will build this world from love

This psalm sung at Shabbat Renewal service is the motto of Shirat’s Shir Chesed (“Our song of lovingkindness”) initiative. With 50 members and growing, it is off to a quick start! A survey sent last summer and answered by 45 members pinpointed four major areas for community involvement: Bereavement (shiva setup assistance to ongoing support through the first year); Home Visits (companionship); Meals (new baby, illness, surgery), and Phone Calls (follow up calls, emails, cards, texts to see how a congregant is doing). Ten Shir Chesed caring teams were established, with a point person coordinating each team.

Other plans for this year are to host a kosher chicken soup making party on December 12 at CSH to freeze and give to our congregants who experience a loss. A soup-tasting social is planned for the winter or spring, which will allow...
Sarah and I have been overwhelmed by the love and generosity bestowed upon us by Congregation Shirat Hayam. From delicious meals and thoughtful gifts, to help with chores and joining us for Aleza Rose’s naming, the Shirat Hayam community has been incredibly caring, for which we are grateful.

At Aleza’s naming I shared a few spiritual practices for pregnancy and birth. I’ll share them again for those who weren’t able to be present. If you know someone for whom these might be meaningful, please feel free to suggest they contact me.

**Pregnancy:** when lighting Shabbat candles on Friday night, set out an extra unlit candle. This represents the potential for life developing inside the mother, while respecting the inherent uncertainties of pregnancy. Set out this same unlit candle each week. On the first Shabbat after the baby is born, light this candle in celebration of the new life in your family. Note: our family lights one candle for each person in the household, so starting with our first child, we began to light three candles every Shabbat. We are now up to five!

**Birth:** upon the birth of a healthy baby...
- Give tzedakah
- Create a blessing box. This is a box to store written blessings. Ask people at the bris or baby naming to write a blessing which the newborn baby will read at their bar/bat mitzvah.
- If you serve liquor at the bris or baby naming, save 1/2 of the bottle for reopening at their bar/bat mitzvah.

One thing I’ve realized is that as Americans, we have a culture that values and respects privacy. At the same time, being part of a community requires us sometimes to sacrifice some of our privacy in order to reap the unforeseen benefits of belonging to a community. Specifically, by relinquishing some of our privacy and sharing our daughter’s birth with the Shirat Hayam community, we, in turn, have been cared for in extraordinary and touching ways that have been very moving for us individually and as a family.

As we move forward with creating a culture of chesed (“lovingkindness”) throughout Shirat Hayam and as we grow our many affinity groups (Men’s Club, Book Club, Rosh Hodesh, etc.), I am hopeful that we will find more opportunities to lend each other a hand, to show another person that they are cared for, as you have shown me and my family.
I remember traveling home to Queens from my Brooklyn Yeshiva dormitory for the first night of Hanukkah. I was a junior in High School and brought a classmate with me. He wasn’t very familiar with Hanukkah. He wasn’t raised in a Jewish home like me, much less an Orthodox one. It was a frigid December night, but toasty in our living room. We sang, danced, laughed and ate like convicts just released from prison.

We also did a peculiar thing. We decided to stare into the flame of Menorah candle number one. Thirty seconds led to a minute, which led to five minutes. We were daring the flame to see who could last longer. I was becoming spellbound by the fire and merged with the flame. We held out until the end. A youthful game turned into a meditation and a lesson in persistence.

Light it up.

Even if you don’t believe in the ancient miracle story of the one day supply of oil that lasted eight days,

Light it up.

Even if you don’t like the commercialization of Hanukkah,

Light it up.

Or eight nights of gift giving…. And you’re cynical about the 19th century creation of a minor holiday into a big deal to compete with Christmas,

Light it up.

The days are shorter and the nights longer; Light it up and watch it glow.

Light it up.

The days are colder; Light it up and get warmer.

Light it up to commemorate those who struggled to practice Judaism when powerful forces sought to extinguish it.

Light it up.

The world can feel like a dark place — invite some friends over, light them up and feel better.

Happy Hanukkah!

Cantor Alty

Cantor’s News

Light It Up

Shir Chesed Initiative

Continued from page 1

congregants to cook up all kinds of soups both at their homes and at the temple to taste, swap and share recipes. Some soup will be frozen for later use by Shir Chesed. In the works are plans to set up meal trains for families who have a loss, as well as other congregants who may need meals due to an illness or a happy, but busy, time such as right after a birth.

The group is hoping to offer a congregant-led bereavement group to bring community members together who have experienced deep loss, and a knitting circle to make gifts, such as baby hats and healing shawls, that will combine camaraderie with the practical.

Bethany Roditi and Karen Madorsky, Shir Chesed co-chairs, along with Patricia Kreitzer, Jerry Kreitzer, and Sue Weiss, who have been instrumental in the development of the caring teams, plan to hold another meeting once they get a sense of the flow and all the teams have had a chance to participate at least once. Expanding services is not far off as Shir Chesed has been busy over the past two months, with 6 out of the 10 teams already active. Caring Team #7 is now ready to go when needed.

“The main point is all about building a caring community. Even those of us who have started to offer services have already felt the camaraderie building. Shir Chesed is really an extension of Rabbi Michael’s role, and we have his utmost support in all facets of this endeavor. Barri Stein was and is key to its success!” said Roditi.

For more information on how to volunteer with this important group or donate to the Chesed Fund, contact Rabbi Michael.
Happy Hanukkah!
CEE preschool classrooms explore Hanukkah through learning and play.

Top right: Practicing math skills by counting the Menorah candles.
Bottom right: Dreidel painting
Below: Thanks to Michael Cohen and A-1 Lighting for this outdoor menorah.

Rabbi Ragozin Educates About and Confronts Anti-Semitism

Rabbi Ragozin became the first rabbi to address the entire St. John’s Prep student body and faculty (over 1,500 people) on November 1 when he spoke about the mass murder at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh. Prep’s Jewish Student Union brought anti-Semitism into focus when Union members invited him to speak.

Headmaster Edward P. Hardiman later said of his talk, “He called on all of us to actively counter hate and anti-Semitism. Whether it is a ‘joke’ at the lunch table or a homophobic slur in the hallway, he urged us to challenge these acts and ‘harden not our hearts’ to those who are victimized by hate.”

Voluntary Dues Update

Congregation Shirat Hayam is making progress in moving to a voluntary dues model, called T’rumot HaLev (“Gift of the Heart”) that is designed to increase community engagement and attract new members. The proposed pledge model will include Membership, High Holy Day seats, Lev donation and CJE (Hebrew school) tuition. The plan is to roll out the new model next spring.

The Voluntary Dues Committee held three successful Town Hall Meetings in October to preview the new membership model, and generated some useful comments and insights. To date, more than 70 U.S. congregations have moved to a voluntary model. According a UJA-Federation report, the voluntary dues model generated, on average, a 3.6 percent increase in membership and a 1.8 percent increase in pledge revenue. The Voluntary Dues team’s goal is to finalize and announce the new model before the 2019 fiscal year.

Men’s Club Hosts Boston Globe’s Dan Shaughnessy

The Men’s Club filled the hall at its November 4 meeting to welcome Dan Shaughnessy, sports writer for the Boston Globe. Watch for the next Men’s Club event — don’t miss out!
CONDOLENCES

Our deepest condolences to those who have passed away.

MEMBERS:
Arnold Spector 10/16/2018 Husband of Sandra Spector
Miriam Ostrovitz 10/26/2018 Wife of Sidney Ostrovitz z”l
Herbert Schultz 11/21/2018 Husband of Eleanor, z”l

RELATIVES:
Sylvia Eisen 10/10/2018 Mother of Dr. Steven Eisen
Larry Sargent 10/24/2018 Husband of Lois Sargent
Jamie Blau 11/12/2018 Granddaughter of Faith Kramer

Make a Donation
To make a donation, please visit shirathayam.org/Donate or mail your donation with a check made out to CSH or Congregation Shirat Hayam. Please specify the fund to which your donation should be allocated.

Donations listed were received through November 30, 2018.

RABBI’S DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of Rabbi Ragozin with great appreciation for his kindness
by Francine and Stanley Goldstein
In appreciation of your kindness to Sandra Cutler-Cohen at this difficult time
by her daughter, Jill Beck and family
Thank you to Rabbi Michael for all his support to our family during this difficult time
by Lori and Larry Groipen and family
In memory of Lori and Larry Groipen’s mother, Sylvia Lipnick
by Jerry Rosen
In memory of Paul Gulko’s upcoming retirement
by Phyllis Sagan
In honor of Mr. & Mrs. Barry Chadnowsky’s 35th Anniversary
by Louise Chadnowsky
In memory of Sylvia Lipnick
by Beth and Peter Shribman
In memory of Stanley Schwam, father of Marc Schwam
by Marilynn and Harold Epstein
In memory of Natalie Velleman
by Helaine and Harvey Cotton

CANTOR’S DISCRETIONARY FUND

Thank you to Cantor Alty for all his support to our family during this difficult time
by Lori and Larry Groipen and family

CENTER FOR JEWISH EDUCATION FUND

In memory of Lori and Larry Groipen’s mother, Sylvia Lipnick
by Phyllis Sagan
Lois and Bobby Kaplan
Center for Early Education Staff
Arthur and Cheryl Schwartz
Helaine and Harvey Cotton
Jennifer from Red Rock Nails
Ruth Ercovitch
Sanford, Carol & Lissi Nemshin
Phyllis and Alan Bolotin
Beth and Marc Andler
Michael and Randee Lipnick
Beverly, Larry, Risa Kahn and Family
Barry Turkanis
Anna Hathaway
Rosann and David Liebman
Karen and David Rosenberg
Michael and Robin Blake
Terri and Todd Bender
Harold Cohen
Harris Family
Marjorie Bean
Elaine Groipen
Stephanie Motamedi
Julie and Scott Sagan

In memory of Robyn Kaplan’s father Gerald “Jerry” Rabinovitz
In memory of Mimi Ostrovitz
In memory of Michael Lunder’s mother, Ruth Lunder
In honor of the birth of Rabbi Michael and Sarah’s baby daughter
by Lori and Larry Groipen
In memory of Uncle, Lt. Bernard Lipsky
by Beverly Kahn

CENTER FOR JEWISH FAMILY SERVICES FUND

In honor of Nancy and Herb Miller grandson, Brayden Miller, becoming a Bar Mitzvah
by Donna and Archie Cohan

SAMUEL BRODY MINYAN FUND

In honor of Jason and Mikaela Levine’s daughter, Ellie, becoming a Bat Mitzvah
by Michael Lunder’s mother, Ruth Lunder
In memory of Lori and Larry Groipen’s mother, Sylvia Lipnick
by Eli and Muriel Tolkov

Many thanks to Shelley Sackett by Lois Ogan
In honor of Rabbi Michael and his support and guidance during Eliana’s Bat Mitzvah by the Levine Family
In honor of the birth of Isaac Jack Strom, grandson of Albert & Gila Namias by Eli and Muriel Tolkov
In honor of Eliana Levine becoming a Bat Mitzvah by Jeffrey and Sandy Hirshberg
In memory of Faith Kramer’s granddaughter, Jamie Blau by Eli and Muriel Tolkov
Doris Villa
Beatrice Strome
Marsha Gerber
Herb and Arlene Leventhal
In memory of Arnold Spector by Herb and Arlene Leventhal
In memory of Jonathan Pierce by Lawrence and Marcia Feffer
In memory of Phyllis Grosser, mother of Terri Goldberg and Melinda Abbisso by Marilyn and Harold Epstein
In memory of Kenneth Roos, brother of Helaine Hazlett by Leslie and Robert Ogan

In memory of

Sister, Ronna Goodman by Murray Frank
Miriam Jacobson by Albert Stein
Mother, Helen Gulko by Paul Gulko
Father, George Leventhal by Herbert Leventhal
Husband, Kenneth Miller by Lois Miller
Mother, Mollie Rosenberg by Ira Rosenberg
Grandmother, Henrietta Lillian by Marsha Feffer
Mother, Merle Cohen by Michael Cohen
Father, Sam Gerber by Marsha Gerber
Husband, Sidney Strome by Leslie and Robert Ogan
Father-in-law, Louis Strome by Beatrice Strome
Mother, Bertha Leidner by Charles Leidner
Grandfather, Mark Meyer by Charles Leidner
Father, Edward Flanzbaum by Barbara Meyer
Great uncle, Bennie Gartz by Karen Hirsch
Father, Leonard Cooper
by Robert Cooper

Friend, Pearl Pearlstein
by Robin Cooper

Father, Norman Revman
by Audrey Linsky

Mother, Bertha Yanofsky
by Barbara Levine

Mother, Annie Spector
by Arnold Spector, z’l

Mother, Sylvia Polsky
by Bernice Mitchell

Father, Chester Titchell
by Arlene Leventhal

Mother in law, Rebecca Gorfinke

Mother, Rose Diamond
by Dr. Alan Diamond

Grandmother, Marguerite Michel
by Albert Namias

Sister, Eunice Freedman
by Dr. David Levy

Grandfather, Israel Greenbaum
by Dr. Maurice Greenbaum

Father, Morris Finn
by Brenda Cohen

Mother, Lillian Talcove
by Jane Alexander

Sister, Louise Klein
by Melvin Shapiro

Son, Joel Spector
by Benjamin Spector

Father, Harry Weinstein
by Reva Surette

Great grandmother, Esther Calish
by Karen Rosenberg

Mother, Edna Gordon
by Gerald Gordon

Mother, Sarah Dubinsky
by Michael Dubinsky

Father, Samuel Frank
by Murray Frank

Mother, Helen Bloom
by Esther Salinsky

Mother, Susan Jepsky
by Robert Jepsky

Grandmother, Rose Goldberg
by Leslie Ogan

Brother, Gary Ogan
by Robert Ogan

Father, William Shapiro
by Carol Denbo

Father, Jacob Denbo
by Samuel Denbo

Mother, Lisa Noskin
by Semyon Karasik

Brother, Victor Shulman
by Irina Karasik

Father, Louis Cohen
by Mark Cohen

Mother, Ana Cohen
by Mark Cohen

Mother, Ada Millstein
by Ann Segal

Mother-in-law, Jenny Poster
by Cynthia Poster

Mother, Sarah Rosenberg
by Toby Bell

Father, Sidney Lewis
Grandmother, Lena Lewis
Uncle, Reuben Lewis
by Constance Lewis

Father, Israel Bluestein
by Janice Kelley

Grandmother, Emma Stark
Uncle, Alfred Elsberg
Grandfather, Albert, Elsberg
Grandmother, Martha Elsberg
by Madeline Stark

Mother-in-law, Rebecca Goldenberg
by Ruth Goldenberg

Mother, Mildred Shanker
by Ruth Shanker

KIDDUSH FUND

In appreciation of the kindness of
Congregation Shirat Hayam
by Ann Jean Flaxer and Scott Flaxer

In honor of the marriage of Maria Samiljan
and Alan Lensky’s daughter
by Stephen and Ethel Harris

In honor of Jason and Mikaela Levine’s daughter,
Elaina, becoming a Bat Mitzvah
by Rand and Arnie Bergman

In honor of the marriage of Judy Feldman
and Norman Spack
by Sue Weiss

In memory of Ruth Lunder
by Phyllis Sagan
Helaine and Harvey Cotton

In memory of Sondra Rubchinsky Cooper
by Roz and Marty Goldberg

Get Well wishes for Ron Gilefsky
by Reggie and Lew Weinstein
Charlotte and Donald Fine
Phyllis and Jack Karas
Gerry and Gail Gerson

Get Well wishes for Jacob Segal
by Gloria Sax

In honor of Maria Samiljan’s daughter’s marriage
by Larry and Susan Goldberg

In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of Laci
Robbins, granddaughter of Donna &
Spencer Kagan
by Lois and Bobby Kaplan

In honor of the birth of Harvey & Helaine
Cotton’s first great-grandchild
by Lois Ogan

In honor of Ron Kafker’s special birthday
by Doris Villa

In honor of the naming of Moshe and
Bethany Roditi’s granddaughter,
Dani Anna Mendal
by Sandra Goldstein

In memory of Sylvia Lipnick
by Leslie and Robert Ogan

In memory of Miriam Ostrovitz
by Dr. Charles and Mrs. Alice Leidner

Susan and Larry Goldberg

In memory of Jamie Blau, granddaughter
of Faith Kramer
by Reggie and Lew Weinstein
Gloria Sax
Diane and Ira Rubchinsky

In memory of Kenneth Roos, brother
of Helaine Hazlett
by Reggie and Lew Weinstein

In memory of Carolyn Oleski,
sister of Sara Winer
by Jerrold Rosen

In memory of

Father, Abraham Karis
by Israelia Abrams

Father, Irving Goldberg
by Howard Goldberg

Husband, Joseph Sadur
by Louise Sadur

Father, Joseph Saretz
by Judith Rosenberg

Mother, Sara Goldman
Brother, Philip Goldman
Brother Paul Goldman
by Gloria Sax

Father-in-law, Samuel Silverstein
by Sheldon Rubin

Father, Benjamin Hander
by Helyne Hamelburg

Brother, Mitchell Blake
by Michael Blake

Father, Kenneth Miller
by Robin Blake

Grandfather, Louis Pekin
by Joan Rich

Father, Maurice Klasky
by Phyllis and Jack Karas

Father, Jack Namias
by Albert Namias

Mother, Wilma Alexander
Brother, Robert Alexander, DMD
by Richard and Ellen Alexander

Brother, Robert Alexander DMD
by Susan and Dave Willis

Father, Emanuel Hamelburg
by Stephen Hamelburg

Father, Louis Hotz
Sister, Elaine Lewis
by Joyce Rosenthal

Mother, Bessie Tassel
by Frances Babbitt

Father, Israel Shuman
by Arnold Shuman

Father, Shloma Gankin
by Bella Fridman

Mother, Suzie Namias
by Marcia Yellin

Father, Jacob Yellin
by Benjamin Yellin

Father, Alfred Goldstein
by Judith White

Grandmother, Ida Glosband
by Daniel Glosband

Florence Kaplan
by Howard Kaplan

Mother, Rebecca Bainen
by Jacob Bainen

Mother, Anna Schachter
Aunt, Rose Glassner
by Sandra Hirshberg

Brother, Mark Hirshberg
Brother, Peter Hirshberg
by Jeffrey Hirshberg

Mother, Esther Goldstein
Grandmother, Flora Goldstein
by Marsha Feffer

Grandmother, Pauline Feffer
by Lawrence Feffer

Father, Alec Weiner
by Rachelle Rosenbaum

Father, Maks Birnbach
by Norman Birnbach

Mother, Sylvia Gelb
by Harold Gelb
by Richard Gelb

Mother, Gail Silverman
by Marcia Alperin

Father, Isaac Myerson
by Robert Myerson

Mother, Ida Woogmaster
by Barbara Gilefsky

Brother, Martin Dillon
Step-father, Joseph Marenberg
by Nonnie Rubin
GENERAL FUND
Mazel Tov on the birth of Aleza Rose
by Wendy and Michael Dubinsky
Arthur Epstein and Bryna Litchman
Jerome Winkler
Fredric and Amy Gold
In honor of their grandson,
Brayden Miller, becoming a Bar Mitzvah
by Nancy and Herb Miller
In honor of the Bat Mitzvah of
Laci Robbins, granddaughter of
Donna and Spencer Kagan
by Myra and Paul Galko
In honor of the Bar Mitzvah of
Nancy and Herb Miller’s grandson, Brayden
by Bobbie and Richard Cohen
In honor of the engagement of Robert
and Shari Cashman’s daughter, Alyssa
by Ilana and Greg Mogolosko
In honor of the Hands’ 65th anniversary
by Beth, John, Jeff and Kelinie Saltor
In memory of Sylvia Lipnick
by Henry and Wilda Gebel
Susan and Jon Yorks
Paula Ridge
In honor of Nancy and Herb Miller’s grandson,
Brayden Miller becoming a Bar Mitzvah
by Myra and Paul Galko
In memory of Jamie Blau, granddaughter of
Faith Kramer
by Ira and Diane Rubchinsky
Adah Parker
Barbara Abramson
In memory of Mim Ostrovitz
by Edye Baker
In memory of Herbert Schultz
by John and Ann Doherty
In memory of Carolyn Oleski
by Brenda Miller
In memory of Sondra Cooper,
sister of Ira Rubchinsky
by Michael Fishbein and Mary Ann Oppenheimer
In memory of Stella Levine, mother of
Madeline Levine
In memory of Janice Cohen, wife of
Harold Cohen
by Judy and Dan White
In memory of Frances Gennaco, mother and grandmother of the Gennaco family
by Barry Follick
In memory of
Husband, Jay Porter
by Gay Porter
Son, Charlie Namias
by Yvette Namias
Father, Martin Bendetson
by Carol Shube
Brother, Richard Sorkin
by Kenneth Sorkin
Husband, Daniel Turkanis
Brother, Harold Kirstein
by Ruth Turkanis
J. SAMILIAN LIBRARY PROJECT
In honor of Paul Galko’s retirement
by Donna and Arthur Cohan
LEV FUND
In honor of the birth of twin grandchildren of
Arnold and Rand Bergman
In honor of the engagement of Robert and
Shari Cashman’s daughter, Alyssa to Adam Frank
In memory of Sylvia Lipnick
In memory of Faith Kramer’s granddaughter, Jamie Blau
by Marla and Philip Gay
In honor of the marriage of Dr. Judith Feldman
and Dr. Normam Spack
In honor of the marriage of Eileen Trebbin
and Alan Maltzman
by Ron and Shari Pressman
HENRY MERKEN TALLIT MEMORIAL FUND
In memory of
Father, Maurice Dinerman
by Elaine Merken
PRAYER BOOK FUND
An Era Hayim Chumash has been donated in honor of the 30th wedding anniversary
of Wendy and Richard Polins
by Donna and Spencer Kagan
POLONSKY BUILDING FUND
In memory of
Father, Nathan Polonsky
Mother, Rose Polonsky
by Norma and Sherman Freedman
RENEWAL SIDDUR
A Renewal Siddur has been donated in memory of Faith Kramer’s granddaughter, Jamie Blau
by Larry and Susan Goldberg
SHIR CHESED FUND
In honor of the marriage of Judith Feldman
and Norman Spack
by Bethany and Moshe Roditi
In honor of the birth of Bethany and
Moshe Roditi’s new granddaughter, Dani
by Sue Weiss
Gitte Kushner
In honor of the marriage of Eileen Trebbin
and Alan Maltzman
by Joel Kobey and Jan Gattedoni
Get well wishes for Ron Gilefsky
by Phyllis and Jack Karas
In honor of the baby naming of Bethany
and Moshe Roditi’s granddaughter,
Dani Mendel
by Michele and David Tamaren
In honor of Sandi and Arnie Shuman’s
daughter’s wedding
by Larry and Susan Goldberg
In honor of the birth of Rabbi and
Sarah’s daughter, Aleza Rose
by Robert and Shari Cashman
Alan Lensky and Maria Samiljan
In memory of Jamie Blau, granddaughter of
Faith Kramer
by Phyllis and Jack Karas
Phyllis Sagan
Hedaine and Harvey Cotton
In memory of Max Lirioff, nephew of
Karen and Jerry Madonsky
by Phyllis and Jack Karas
In memory of
Father, Barnett Cohen
by Sheldon Cohen
Mother, Rebecca Kreitzer
By Jerome Kreitzer
Mother, Belle Klasky
by Phyllis and Jack Karas
Father, Richard Sorkin
by Nancy Sorkin, Shari Cashman,
and Jeffrey Sorkin
TIKVAH FUND
In honor of Aleza Rose Ragozin
by Marcy and Ben Yellin
TORAH FUND
In honor of Aleza Rose Ragozin
In celebration of the marriage of Arthur Epstein and Bryna Litchman
by Charlotte and Donald Fine
In honor of the 30th Wedding Anniversary
of Wendy and Richard Polins
by Donna and Spencer Kagan
REFUGEE SUDDAR
In memory of
Father, Nathan Polonsky
Mother, Rose Polonsky
by Norma and Sherman Freedman
In memory of
Father, Nathan Germain
by Marion Garfinkel and Family
TREE PLANTED IN ISRAEL
In appreciation of Rabbi Ragozin sharing
his message at St. John’s Prep
by Beth and Jeffrey Kasten
In honor of the Bar Mitzvah of Jacob
Krumholz
by Charles and Alice Leidner
In honor of Dolores Jordan’s 90th birthday
by Gloria Sax
In memory of Paulina Cherkassky, mother
of Monica Reizen Bailen
by Anna and Jack Bailen
Every issue, The New Wave spotlights a congregant as a way to help us get to know each other better by putting a face with a name. For Doris Villa, who converted to Judaism in 2014, Shirat Hayam is more than a place of worship. It is her home. She shares her journey with us this month.

**What sparked your interest in Judaism?**
I was a hairdresser at Fashion on the Ocean for many years. A number of my customers were Jewish (including Cheryl Schwartz's mother) and I would hear them talking. My mom and dad did the best they could, but we didn't have the “family thing” that I kept hearing about. My interest in wanting to learn more about Judaism really started there.

**What happened next?**
Around 2000, I fell in love with Shabbat. I attended Kabbalat Shabbat services at a chavura (small group of like-minded Jews who assemble for the purposes of facilitating Shabbat and holiday prayer services, sharing communal experiences such as lifecycle events, or Jewish learning). Lighting the candles was just so beautiful. The reverence and holiness was different from anything I had known. Then, in 2013, I did the 25-week Lappin Foundation “Intro to Judaism” class. The first half hour we learned Hebrew and then different Rabbis taught. My heart was already there.

**When did you convert to Judaism?**
Rabbi B was my sponsoring Rabbi. I went to the mikveh (ritual bath) on June 10, 2014 at Mayyim Hayyim in Newton. It was special and holy. You have to submerge and be suspended and then say the Shema when you come back out of the water. I didn't say it — I sobbed it. And I still cry when I think about it. That Shabbat I had my first aliya at Shirat Hayam. My sister, daughter, her family and friends came to help me celebrate.

**Why do you attend morning Minyan?**
Minyan is so important for so many people, it's part of their lives when someone dies to say Kaddish and you can't do that without a minyan. It helps with the process. That's also why I like to bake, because then people sit around the table and they talk. I feel like it's my contribution. In many ways, I feel like the gift Hashem has given me is that I like to serve. I like to be in the background and help; that's what makes me feel part of everybody.

**What drew you to Shirat Hayam?**
This congregation is so welcoming. When I first came here, I didn't know anybody. Natalie White was the first person to come over to me and say, 'come sit with us' at lunch after Shabbat services. I never felt like an outsider. This is home for me. These are my people.