Thirteenth Annual Meeting

May 15, 2018

1 Sivan 5778
President of the Board of Director’s Annual Report 2017-18

As I reflect on my first year as president of Shirat, we faced many challenges and accomplished more than I could have imagined. Both I, as the president of the Board, grew; and we, as Shirat Hayam, matured as an organization.

The first thing we did was develop our strategic vision. We aligned lay leadership with staff to figure out what it is that we are and where we want to go. Michael and I spoke about it during the High Holidays, but what this strategic vision gives us guard rails and assists us in making hard decisions.

And our congregation responded. We had the biggest LEV response ever. $255,000 was the largest general fund campaign in Shirat history. And this was not from a few big donors; this was a grassroots response. Our average donation increased by $300. The average LEV campaign garnered $138,000 which we almost doubled.

LEV Campaign since 2006

This year was also the smallest draw on the endowment in Shirat history. Since 2009 when the endowment was created, the average annual endowment draw is $242,000. We passed a budget with a $275,000 draw on the endowment, but we only needed $120,000, coming in $155,000 under budget. We did not touch the principal of the endowment this year, because
our interest income was $150,000. While we understand that never relying on the endowment would be IDEAL, this was still a huge achievement in light of our history of needing endowment support.

This financial achievement was due to a number of factors in many departments. Having the larger LEV campaign provided budgetary relief, as well as the Soiree fundraiser which garnered almost $25,000 in revenue.

The other contributing factor was the preschool. The Center for Early Education is back and better than ever; and, it is making money for our shul again. I have always said that the preschool is a for profit arm of our non-profit organization. The school netted over $125,000 this year.

We enhanced our leadership team in the CEE by adding Andrea Bernard, which is allowing our fearless Cheryl Schwartz to have retirement on her horizon. Andrea brings a new perspective from her experience in other early learning centers and families are thrilled. We have a large waitlist and are creating more business focused decisions; the phone rings off the hook for tours.
The preschool also remains a feeder of Jewish and Interfaith families to our organization. My journey as a parent at the preschool is ending next month as my youngest heads to kindergarten. But I have recruited two amazing preschool parents to join the Board and continue the positive trajectory.

Another area that created income for the organization was Barri's catering and events. The kiddush sponsorship and event rentals exceeded the budgetary expectation; almost half our kiddushes were sponsored this year. Shirat Hayam has the most impressive sanctuary and largest rental hall space in the area. And we need to work on our marketing and update kitchen to offset our operating costs. We should be selling our space to offset our operating costs, so we are investigating future options for the space. The opportunities are endless.

When two beloved staff members resigned, we paused on replacing them in order to align the staff with the strategic vision. What we realized was that nobody was more membership focused than our amazing Barri Stein. She loves and cares about every congregant and remembers their entire family tree dating back atleast two generations.

What we decided to do was identify a person with a financial background who could best align our financial needs and business opportunities. As a shul, we are BOTH a religious organization but also have a multi-million dollar business to run. I am thrilled to announce that we hired...
Anna Hathway, whom many of you may remember from her years at the Federation and at Midas. She starts working in early June. Anna will help manage many members of the staff and align our finances to keep this positive momentum that we have started.

I am so optimistic for the coming year. I was heartbroken when Elana gave her notice, but we found Alty Weinreb. He starts July 1 and he is going to be spectacular. He will continue us on the amazing musical journey that Elana began. Other exciting things for the coming year, we will be busy getting ready for voluntary dues. We have already received a multi year, six figure donation to help us offset operating expenses from a donor who believes in what we are doing and how we are getting there. Again, this is the first gift of this kind in the five years I have been working with the organization.

This new Board slate is terrific. We are adding local business people, CPAs, parents of young families & interfaith families, so that as many voices are at the table. We want the Board to be representative of our congregation and I believe we did just that.

I would be remiss to not mention what an amazing partner Rabbi Michael is. He is thoughtful, caring, and intelligent. He carries himself with grace in the most challenging instances. As a community, we are blessed to have him. In an environment where many of our congregants don’t appreciate our clergy & our staff until they’re needed at the saddest times in their lives,
we can learn so much from them on a regular basis. And I hope that we can all take a moment and thank the staff for their dedication and hard work. I pushed them this year beyond their comfort zones and they all came through. Barri, Marylou, Janis, Richard, Cheryl, Andrea, Eridania, Gus, & Yanira are truly the most lovely and delightful group of characters. They may fight like a family but that’s because they love like a family. And that is what makes Shirat a truly special place.

Please join me in my enthusiasm for this coming year. Thank you for your investment in us at Shirat because investing in us is an investment in the next generation.
Our vision:

- CSH offers multiple pathways to Jewish life, learning, and prayer. We will deliver the most fulfilling spiritual experience and the best childhood and teen education on the North Shore.
- Every encounter with our congregation leaves you feeling welcomed, connected, and enriched.
- We embrace our responsibility to invest in strengthening our Jewish community for generations to come.

Below are the major initiatives that I, as rabbi, have helped advance in support of our vision.

1. Align the professional team with our mission
   The resignations of two full-time employees in June and December 2017, afforded us a unique opportunity to advance this critical goal. Alignment takes time, both to align the professional roles with our mission and to hire the best personnel. In the interim we were short-staffed, and the remaining professional team admirably took on added responsibilities to maintain the high quality of synagogue services for which Shirat Hayam is known. All reflections upon the past year should be in the context of being short staffed.

2. Improved communications
   The launch of the New Wave is a major step towards improved communications. I recruited Shelley Sackett who works graciously and tirelessly to produce the New Wave each month. We also investigated improvements to our website and back-office systems, but chose to postpone any decisions in these area until we had the right professional team in place.

3. Moved towards a balanced operating budget
   In a major affirmation of our strategic plan, the congregation responded with the most generous Lev giving in our history.

4. Implement a voluntary dues program
   With Steve Solomon as my co-chair, I have established an extraordinary team to implement a voluntary dues program in FY 2019. The team is extraordinary for its diversity and talents. It’s made up of young and old, men and woman, and people with backgrounds in finance, marketing, and communications.
5. The most fulfilling spiritual experiences
While the High Holy Days and Shabbat remain our most significant and important spiritual experiences, I want to highlight the implementation of a new ticketing system for Hanukkah and Purim (i.e. events in which we serve a meal). The meals at both of these holiday celebrations were sold out. Additionally, we held our 2\textsuperscript{nd} Night Seder after a one year hiatus with rave reviews. Finally, we successfully hosted three themed shabbatot: 1) a Kristallnacht commemoration, 2) MLK Jr remembrance with Dr. Marv Wilson, and 3) Jewish Disabilities and Awareness Month.

6. More effective volunteer committees, teams, and task forces
When I shared our new strategic plan at Kol Nidre, I asked people to get involved, to volunteer. A great number of people have gotten involved. From the Men’s Club to the women’s groups to the CJE parents’ team, so many people have devoted themselves to the service of our community. Of particular note is the initial formation of a team to revitalize our Chesed (caring) team. Additionally, Amy Powell heads the Membership team, a first since my tenure at Shirat Hayam.

Additional achievements

1. Six13 North
With a grant from CJP and a leadership team of non-member millennials, Six13 North is poised to build a vibrant millennial Jewish life on the North Shore. Our mission: \textit{Six13 North is an open community of young professional Jews and friends. We design environments to create, grow, and deepen connections on the North Shore.}

2. Campus Anti-Semitism Task Force of the North Shore (CASTF)
CASTF hosted its first two events, successfully boosting awareness of campus anti-Semitism among local teens and preparing our teens to respond to the anti-Semitism they are likely to encounter at college. Additionally, the task force has been a signatory to important letters of national significance, including the confirmation of Kenneth L. Marcus to head the Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights and letters to University of California presidents regarding environments on their campuses that are hostile to Jewish students.

3. Interfaith
I co-lead an interfaith group comprised of Jews, Muslims, and Christians has held two meetings in Lynn.
Summary

Our strategic plan guides our initiatives and aligns the efforts of the professional team and lay leadership. As we strive to deliver on our commitment to offer “the most fulfilling spiritual experience and the best childhood and teen education on the North Shore,” we simultaneously work to improve, strengthen and grow our internal systems and capacity. None of these achievements would’ve been possible without the extraordinary efforts of our professional team and lay leadership. With the guiding light of our strategic plan, we are truly a team, working together and committed to a bright future for Shirat Hayam.
Cantor's Annual Report 2017-18

The 2018 annual meeting marks the end of my 7th year as cantor of Congregation Shirat Hayam and the end of my tenure at this unique and incredible shul. I feel so blessed to be part of this community, and to work alongside Barri, Janis, Cheryl, Andrea, Richard, Marylou, Rabbi Michael and our other staff.

This year, I’ve continued teaching my B’nei Mitzvah students and my Epstein Hillel School fifth grade trope class. We just recently had the pleasure of hearing the EHS fifth graders read Torah at Shirat Hayam.

Our regular services have been evolving beautifully, from the High Holy Days, to Friday night services, including our Share-a-Shabbat, Holy Happy Hour Minyan and our Shabbat morning synaplex.

When we remember our Shabbat services this year, we must not forget our Ruach Rally Band, whose members work closely with me to infuse our Shabbatot and holiday programs, with energy and spirit. So, thank you to our dedicated Ruach Rally Band. They are all amazing musicians and singers, and freely give of their time and their talents many of our program including Purim, Pesach, Renewal, Share-A-Shabbat, Holy Happy Hour Minyan, and of course all of our Shabbat services. The Ruach Rally Band deserves major recognition for all of their dedication this past year.

In addition to our adult musicians, I also continued to work with iShir, our kids’ choir and the Chai Notes, our teen choir, most of whom have been singing with me since day one.

As I move forward to the next chapter of my life, I look back at everything we’ve created together with so much nachas. I will miss you all, I will not be far, and I look forward to staying in touch.

May you go from strength to strength,

Cantor Elana
CJE continued to improve this year with a revamp to the Hebrew curriculum and an even more determined journey away from textbooks and toward more Project-Based Learning and more experiential educational experiences. This meant that students didn’t merely learn about Sukkot, but built their own with Lego’s or went out and built and decorated two for our congregants with our Rabbi. 5th Grade students learned stories for the holidays but then went into the Gan or Preschool class and told those stories to the younger children.

Technology has become a larger part of our faculty’s toolbox and our students have delighted in using the same tools that they have in public school to learn with when they come to CJE. iPads have allowed our 7th graders to explore their immigrant ancestral homes. 4th and 5th grade students created and filmed their own Purim shpiel in stop action photography. The 6th grade illustrated and created a movie trailer to chronicle the origin of the Talmud. Tutors have made use of the tablets to work with their students. They also provide a welcome break for those of our students more easily overwhelmed by the bustle often found in energetic classrooms.

Prayer and spirituality have continued to play a large role in the activities of our students. While learning how to decode, read and chant the prayers in Hebrew are important parts of our Hebrew curriculum, those are not our only focus. Class time is prayer practice; coming into a service and using those same prayers is akin to “playing in the game”.

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Every Tuesday afternoon, the Rabbi and Cantor lead a service for all the students, discussing the meaning of the prayers we sing and bringing in melodies from our Renewal services. Cantor allows the kids to choose a closing song and it has most recently been “One Day” by Matisyahu. We use Visual Tefilah methodology meaning that we create slides for each prayer that include the Hebrew, the transliteration, and an illustration that picks up the theme of the prayer, as well as the relevant English.

Shabbat mornings begin with Tefilah led by Janis Knight & Spencer Garfield in the Chapel. Using Siddur Mah Tovu, students are introduced to the Shabbat morning service and its concepts of gratitude, appreciation, and connection. Often, we choose one specific prayer or theme to explore. Some days, we have gone outside to have a Walking Tefilah or just to really experience the moment during our prayer. On the first Shabbat of each month that we meet, we celebrate all the folks with birthdays that month by calling them up for a special blessing and to receive the now-famed CJE Hebrew Birthday Pencils.

Faculty Development workshops have been an important part of moving the mission and impact of the school forward. Our devoted teachers have come to workshops offered through our grant from the Gateways Center for Professional Learning. Our focus this year was on teaching Hebrew and prayer for both learning challenged and more typical learners. Our membership in the Gateways Consortium as a partner site has yielded excellent results for our students in terms of new approaches, better understanding, and increased resources for our teachers and for me.

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Our new CJE Vision Committee grew out of my work with the Strategic Planning Committee during the past year. Our Vision statement includes: *We will provide the best childhood and teen education on the North Shore.* The CJE Vision Committee’s job is to determine what “best” means for our students and families.

I am excited to roll out some new curricular pieces and tools in the coming academic year, including a virtual classroom and more rigorous Hebrew reading skills assessment. Family education options will be offered for several more grades, as well as some opportunities for CJE families to come together for fun, for celebrations and for community.

As we continue to strengthen and refine the curriculum and the role of CJE in the life of our congregation, I look forward to continuing as your partner and friend in the sacred work of educating our children.
Center for Early Education’s Annual Report 2017-18

This was a year of change, growth and development.

LEADERSHIP

Andrea Bernard has joined our leadership team as Co-Director of the CEE. Andrea brings to our center an extensive knowledge of current early childhood curriculum including Developmentally Appropriate Practice and the Reggio Emilia Approach of instruction for outdoor learning. Andrea has a Bachelor’s Degree in Early Childhood Education and is currently pursuing a Master’s Degree in ECE at Salem State University. She became a Bat Mitzvah on the bimah of Temple Beth El and is the niece of one of our senior members, Bea Strome.

In her short time at the center, Andrea facilitated many innovations including, for example:

- Appropriate iPad use in the classroom (donated by a generous grant, shared with CJE)
- Seesaw, a phone app that is used for daily parent communication
- New software for office use for easier timecard management and billing
- Restructuring of classrooms to allow for more children
- Development and construction of new outdoor play spaces.

FACULTY

Currently, there are 30 full and part-time staff members on our team. They insure that the children are learning and well cared for from 7:30 am until 6:00 pm every day. Staff members are all CPR and First Aid certified; they have all been CORI’d, SORI’d and fingerprinted. Many staff recently completed the required course work to be teacher certified by the state. In addition, all staff members will be participating in a Sunday, full-day workshop for outdoor education training.
LICENSURE/CERTIFICATION

The CEE is fully licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC). To ensure compliance, we receive frequent, unannounced inspection visits from Michelle Haines, our licensor.

It is imperative for the Board and congregation to appreciate that state rules and regulations are constantly becoming more demanding and precise. This consumes a large amount of the leadership time and increases our expenses to varying degrees. To date, we have been very successful in meeting our compliance obligations.

PHYSICAL FACILITY

We are fortunate that we updated two of the three outdoor play space. The toddler play area was funded by the Giggling Gala held last May and by a generous gift from CSH Capital Fund. A synagogue member who is vested in the preschool graciously donated the larger area, for our older children.

An on-going fund-raiser "LEND-A-HAND" will help to furnish the outdoor classroom. We want to enhance and leverage the amazing land we have at Shirat and allow the kids to learn by exploration.

As exciting as our new outdoor facility is, we must realize that we are housed in a 1968 building with classrooms that were built for older children, not infants, toddlers and preschoolers. The long-range plan includes upgrades to all the classrooms and the basement play areas.
CHILDREN & FAMILIES

Currently, there are 99 children enrolled; 77 families.

FINANCIALS

The fiscal year ended with the CEE having a PROFIT of $125,000.00!!! Please note that this is PROFIT. In addition to this profit, the CEE has fulfilled all financial obligations to the synagogue: occupancy, $45,000.00; custodial, $15,000.00; bookkeeping $15,000.00; liability insurance; workmen's comp; and more. (Jason Levine has the exact numbers for all allocated expenses).

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

The CEE is pleased to include enrichment programming for all students:

- Music on Mondays with Mr. Philip
- Hebrew on Tuesdays with Rachel Jacobson
- Spanish on Wednesdays with Little Lingos
- Yoga on Thursdays with Jenny Frontero
- Fridays to welcome Shabbat with Marcy Yellin and Rabbi Michael

All Jewish holidays are observed with age-appropriate projects and stories. Explanations of the holidays are sent home with the children so that all families will have an understanding of each holiday.

LUNCH MUNCHERS

The Lunch Munchers program is our most successful innovation to date. Parents love it, and it is a perk of our school. Erin Green Kelly prepares Thursday and Friday snacks and lunches. Each lunch includes a protein, a vegetable, a fruit and occasionally a sweet treat. All lunches are dairy or vegetarian, nut-free and Kosher. Some of our lunches are: grilled cheese sandwiches, bean and cheese burritos, fish sticks, or pancakes. Friday lunch is always pizza, delivered by Omega Pizza in Salem. The charge for lunch is $5.00/lunch, payable in advance.
THANK YOUs

We have many people to thank for our success: the CEE staff for their love and care of the children; the administrative staff, Barri, Marylou, and Richard for always being there when we need teamwork; the custodial staff, Gus, Eridania and Yanira for keeping our center clean; Rabbi Michael and Cantor Elana for helping us with all things Judaica. An extra special thanks to Janis Knight and the CJE staff for making it easy to share space.
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT
VICE PRESIDENT, PHILANTHROPY
VICE PRESIDENT, FINANCIAL CLERK
VICE PRESIDENT, MEMBERSHIP
VICE PRESIDENT
TREASURER
CLERK
MEMBER AT LARGE

Renée Sidman  
Janna Schwartz  
Nathaniel Weiss  
Amy Powell  
Jessica Heller  
David Zion  
Alexandra Shube  
Larry Groipen  

Continuing Term May 2018 – May 2019
Larry Goldberg  
Gitte Kushner  
Corey Lewis  
Amy Powell  
Janna Schwartz  
Joe Simons  
Steve Solomon  

New Term May 2018- May 2020
*Indicates new member
Stephanie Greenberg*  
Larry Groipen  
Jessica Heller  
Bethani Hipsh*  
Diane Levin*  
Jason Mahler*  
Mark Messenger*  
Emily Packer*  
Alexandra Shube  
Renée Sidman (1 year)  
Nathaniel Weiss  
David Zion*  

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New Slate Biographies

Stephanie Greenberg, CPA

Stephanie D. Greenberg, CPA, graduated from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst with a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Stephanie has over 30 years of experience in public accounting. Stephanie has experience in many different industries and services areas including Non-Profits. Stephanie has resided in Swampscott for the 26 years with her husband David and their two children. She grew up in Marblehead and was a member of the former Temple Israel.

Bethani Hipsh

Bethani Hipsh and her husband Yoni moved to Marblehead from Watertown in 2014. Her two children, Max (aka: Maxyboy) and Maya, both attend the preschool at Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education. Bethani is co-chairperson of the Parent Advisory Committee to the preschool. Her husband, Yoni, served as a Director for two years with a focus on security and was instrumental in the installation of our security cameras throughout the property. Bethani works at Fidelity Investments in Boston. In her free time (what free time?!), she enjoys shopping, cooking, and exploring the north shore.

Diane Levin

Diane Levin, an attorney and professional mediator for over two decades, is delighted to return to the CSH board after a hiatus of 2 years. You can find Diane at the bimah on Shabbat leyning Torah or chanting the Haftarah, and as a devoted Shirat volunteer she has served on numerous committees including the 2014-2015 Rabbi Search Committee which she co-chaired. Diane and her husband, Steve Hicks, longtime residents of Marblehead, have 3 adult kids who all phone home regularly.

Jason Mahler

Jay lives in Swampscott with his wife Sara, son Nat and daughter Kay. A guitar player for over 30 years, Jay enjoys performing weekly with the Ruach Rally Band as well as with local musicians in various clubs and restaurants around the North Shore. When not pursuing music, Jay is an Associate General Counsel at Boston University, where he specializes in commercial real estate and international law. He is also the author of "Real Estate Development, Leasing and Financing: A Sustainable Approach" (Thomson Reuters/West Publishing). Prior to his career in
law, Jay was an evening and drive time jazz DJ for WAER, Syracuse Public Radio. Additional passions include kayaking our beautiful coastline, watching baseball, trap shooting and running. Jay is very much looking forward to supporting the continued success of Shirat Hayam as a board member.

**Mark Messinger, MD**

Mark and his wife Ellen joined Temple Beth El in 1988 when they moved from NYC. At Temple Beth El, Mark chaired the Ritual committee, was a Vice President on the Board, and later chaired the Brotherhood. He proudly was on the committee that formed Congregation Shirat Hayam and served on the committee that hired Rabbi B. Over the years, he continues to lead evening minyan weekly and shiva minyans. Currently, Mark is chairing Ritual Committee and looking to build out a team of volunteers. He also served on the recent Cantor Search Committee. He is the current President of My Brother’s Table in Lynn which has partnered with Congregation Shirat Hayam for many years.

**Emily Packer**

Emily Packer has recently moved back to her home town of Swampscott with her husband Adam and two young children, Archie and Nora. Her children happily attend the Shirat Hayam Center for Early Education. Emily works in a local urban school district with children with social and emotional difficulty. She loves the Shirat Hayam community! Emily is co-chairperson of the Parent Advisory Committee to the preschool. Emily hopes to continue to foster the work that has been done in creating a welcoming community for all interfaith families at Shirat Hayam. Her paternal grandparents are longtime members, Rose Arlyne & Harlan Shapiro.

**David Zion**

David became a Bar Mitzvah at Temple Israel in 1971. He graduated Swampscott High School in 1976; University of Pennsylvania/Wharton School Philadelphia Pennsylvania in 1980 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in economics majoring in Finance. He has lived in Marblehead since 2005 with Laura Sherry. He is the father of 4 fantastic daughters- Sara age 29, Lauren age 27, Diana age 24, Morgan age 10. David is excited to be Treasurer and bring his financial expertise and successful business background to the organization.
THANK YOU!